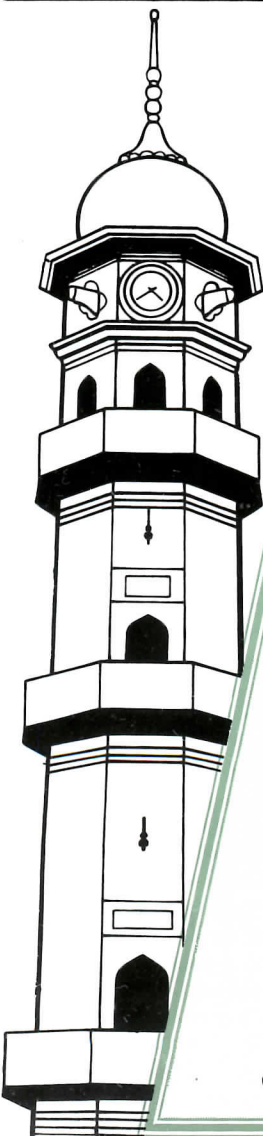


# THE REVIEW of RELIGIONS



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## THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the expected world reformer and the Promised Messiah whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Movement is an embodiment of true and real Islam. It seeks to unite mankind with its Creator and to establish peace throughout the world. The present head of the Movement is Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad. The Ahmadiyya Movement has its headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan, and is actively engaged in missionary work.



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# The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

A monthly magazine devoted to the dissemination of the teachings of Islam, the discussion of Islamic affairs and religion in general.

*The Review of Religions is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents the pure and true Islam. It is open to all for discussing problems connected with the religious and spiritual growth of man, but it does not accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.*

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## EDITORIAL

### EID-UL-AZHA

Eid-ul-Azha marks the completion of the pilgrimage to Mecca by Muslims from multifarious nations of the world on the tenth day of the Islamic month *Zul Haj*. It is obligatory to bring the pilgrimage to a successful termination with the sacrifice of an animal. Like prayer and fasting, the performance of pilgrimage is a mode of worship seeking the spiritual, social and economic upliftment of Muslims.

Pilgrimage accustoms a person to leave home and, for the sake of God, to undergo separation from friends and relatives. It also serves as a symbol of respect for the holy places of God frequented by the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). When visiting these sacred places the pilgrim experiences spiritual elation. The universal bond of Islamic brotherhood is also strengthened as pilgrims of worldwide nationalities gather together in a spirit of unity and harmony.

The pilgrim offers the sacrifice of an animal at the end of the pilgrimage which is also done by Muslims all over the world. This is done in remembrance of Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son Ismael (not Isaac as recorded in the Bible) who, in turn, resigned to being sacrificed under the belief that it was the Will of God. We read in the Holy Quran:

*And when he (Ishmael) was old enough to run along with him (Abraham), he said, 'O my dear son, I have seen in a dream that I offer thee in sacrifice. So consider what thou thinkest of it!' He replied, 'O my father, do as thou art commanded; thou wilt find me, if Allah please steadfast in my faith.'*

*And when they both submitted to the Will of God, and Abraham had thrown him down on his forehead, We called to him 'O Abraham, thou hast indeed fulfilled the dream.' Thus indeed do We reward those who do good.* (37:103-105)

The Holy Quran succinctly describes the significance of animal sacrifice:

*Their flesh reaches not Allah, nor does their blood, but it is your righteousness that reaches Him.* (22:38)

The act of sacrifice is symbolic reminding the person who offers it that  
(continued on page 38)

## LIFE WITH THE PROMISED MESSIAH

(Hazrat Maulvi Sher Ali)

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam lived in seclusion and was little known to the outside world when he sounded his trumpet call to the nations of the earth. Following the publication of his voluminous work *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya* people started to visit him. They were, however, far and few between because Qadian was an out of the way village. Those visitors who did come found their stay to be the happiest days of their lives and they were loathe to part from him.

When I came to Qadian in 1897 I saw a writing on a wall of the *Jamia* Mosque which had been written by Qazi Zia-ud-Din of Qazi Kot, Gujranwala district. He was the father of our present headmaster, Qazi Abdullah, B.A.B.T., who was formerly an Ahmadiyya Muslim missionary in London. If my memory is correct the writing bore the date 1885 and was to the following effect:

*Had it not been for my old and infirm mother at home, I would never have left the company of Hazrat Mirza Sahib. The words of the poet, 'Suhbate bad az liqae to haram' which means 'It is unlawful to seek any other company after meeting thee', were never more applicable to anybody than they are to him.*

I have quoted these words to show how much were those attracted to the Promised Messiah who came in close contact with him. Years later the same person who had inscribed the inscription on the wall told me that he became so devoted to the Promised Messiah that he emigrated to Qadian with his children so that he could enjoy uninterrupted bliss with him and to enable his children to enjoy the blessings of life in Qadian. He told me that one day when he was sitting in the company of the Promised Messiah he said to him:

*I feel contradictory desires rising in my heart. On one hand I earnestly desire that your truth and spiritual charm should be realised far and wide and that people of all races and creeds may come and drink from the fountain which God has caused to flow here; but at the same time the thought pains my mind that when others begin to come here in large numbers then I shall be debarred from the pleasure of enjoying your close company as I do now because then*

*you will be surrounded by other people and I shall be deprived of the happy privilege of sitting close to my beloved master and talking with him. Such are the contradictory desires which rise alternately in my breast.*

The Qazi Sahib added that the Promised Messiah smiled when he heard these words.

The fears and the desires of that old and venerable disciple of the Promised Messiah soon began to be realised. In 1891, on the basis of divine revelation, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad announced his claim to be the Promised Messiah. Although there arose from all sides a storm of opposition against him, many thoughtful persons accepted him keeping in mind the sanctity of his past life, the force of his arguments and the heavenly signs which God manifested through him. During the course of time when people saw more and more of his prophecies being fulfilled they flocked around him leaving their homes to live in his company. When I first came to Qadian on the eve of that memorable Eid which was followed by the fulfilment of the Promised Messiah's great prophecy relating to the woeful end of Pandit Lekh Ram on the 5th of March, 1897. I saw that many people had already settled and established their homes in Qadian.

Among the early emigrants to Qadian were two most noteworthy persons. One was Hazrat Maulvi Hakim Haji Noor-ud-Din, of Bhera who became the first successor to the Promised Messiah after his death. He was a man of great learning and before he came to Qadian he had acquired a great reputation for his learning both at home and abroad. The other person was Maulvi Abdul Karim, of Sialkot. He also was a very learned man and he devoted his life to the service of Islam. For some time he had been an adherent of the Aligarh school of thought; the school of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan but soon accepted the claims of the Promised Messiah and adopted Qadian as his home. He recited the Quran in a very melodious and charming manner. It was he who usually led the five daily prayers and also the Friday prayer. He was an eloquent speaker. he was a man of keen intelligence as may be judged from his book *A Character Sketch of the Promised Messiah*, which has been translated into English for the benefit of Western readers.

The Promised Messiah used to eat with his guests in the morning and evening in the small mosque attached to his house. He continued this practice till a few years before his death when the deterioration of his health and the increased number of visitors prevented him from doing so. Instead guests were given their meals in the Guest House which he had established. In the same small mosque he offered his five daily prayers in

congregation. He, himself, seldom led the prayers.

The daily routine of the Promised Messiah was usually as follows. He would take a regular walk in the morning and would be accompanied by his followers present in Qadian. The next time his followers could enjoy his company was usually between *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers (2 to 4 p.m.), when he remained in the mosque. He also spent some time with them after the sunset prayer. They spent their remaining time either in the Guest House or in the company of Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Din where he treated his patients and gave Islamic discourses. They would also meet Maulvi Abdul Karim in the small mosque. Between *Asr* (late afternoon) and *Maghrib* (sunset) prayers they would listen to the addresses on the Holy Quran by Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Din in the *Jamia* Mosque.

The topics of conversation with the Promised Messiah during his morning walks and when sitting in the small mosque were of miscellaneous nature. The Promised Messiah did not occupy any prominent position when sitting in the mosque which often made it difficult for a stranger to distinguish him from his followers. The first thing his followers were eager to hear from him was some fresh revelation. These revelations generally contained prophecies, and their fulfilment in due time. They were published in the papers for the information of the public and also for his followers who did not live in Qadian. If there was a prophecy of particular importance the Promised Messiah published it by means of posters and handbills which were circulated widely throughout the country. He also included them in the books he was writing at the time.

His followers often asked him questions on religious topics and his answers usually developed into a short speech. Occasionally he received visits from enquirers or tourists who asked him questions and to produce evidence in support of his claims. Although some of them spoke rudely to him he always replied calmly and dispassionately and restrained his followers from showing anger at their rude language. Once a young Arab from North Africa came to Qadian. He was barefooted and very simple in his habits and dress. When the Promised Messiah went out for his morning walk the new visitor met him and very indignantly asked him how he could be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and said that it was very preposterous for him to make such a claim. The Promised Messiah explained to him the nature of his claim along with evidence, but even after more than an hour's discussion the visitor remained unconvinced. He appeared to be a sincere and straightforward man. The Promised Messiah received a revelation encouraging him both to pray for him and

to continue his discussion with him. Encouraged by this revelation, he too began to pray for him and continued to talk to him during his daily walks. These ended in his conversion and the former indignant Arab became a sincere believer and a devoted follower. He wrote and had printed a poster in Arabic in which he had set forth arguments in support of the truth of the Promised Messiah. He also purchased a number of the Promised Messiah's Arabic works before leaving for home where he promised to convey the message to his countrymen. Since then we have not heard from him. He was offered some travelling expenses but he declined. I remember seeing him walking barefooted to Batala railway station, a distance of eleven miles, carrying on his shoulders the bundle of books and posters which he had taken from Qadian.

Sometimes, when in the company of the Promised Messiah, his followers would tell him how they were persecuted in their villages or towns, how they were boycotted, how they were not permitted to draw water from their wells and every effort was made to make their lives intolerable. Sons related how their fathers shut them up in their houses, bound them hand and foot, thrashed them, abused the Promised Messiah and called upon them to renounce their faith. Some related how false cases were brought against them in the courts of justice to get them punished. Some of his young followers told how they had been dispossessed of their belongings, stripped of their clothes and turned out of their homes. Others told him how the maulvis pronounced them to be *kafirs* (disbelievers) and that their marriages with their lawful wedded wives had become null and void. Such were the various forms of persecution to which they were subjected and which they related to the Promised Messiah with tears in their eyes. Some told how on a cold night while journeying to Qadian they sheltered in a village mosque but were turned out hungry and shivering by the local maulvi. The Promised Messiah said that his followers should never conceal the fact that they were travelling to Qadian as that would serve as an advertisement that the Movement was spreading far and wide.

Even those residing in Qadian were not exempt from persecution. In order to cause annoyance and inconvenience to the Promised Messiah and his followers, a wall was erected by his cousins near the entrance to the mosque which necessitated worshippers to make a long detour. Later the wall was demolished by order of the court following legal proceedings. They were also harassed in other ways not only by Muslims but also by Sikhs and Hindus who did their worst to trouble them.

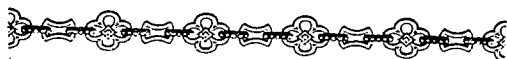
When in the company of the Promised Messiah his followers would



sometimes relate how the vengeance of God had overtaken certain opponents who had insulted him and how God had verified the truth of His revelation *Inni Muhiṇun mān arada; iḥanataka* which means *I will disgrace him who will seek to disgrace thee*. They all testified that the promise contained in the above revelation invariably proved true, as an infallible law of God. They related stories how those who had abused the Promised Messiah or who had sought to disgrace him in any way had themselves, without fail, met with disgrace.

Sometimes they would relate to the Promised Messiah accounts of debates; and discussions with the maulvis which were generally very interesting. In those days there were no appointed missionaries. Every one acted as a missionary by introducing the message of Ahmadiyyat to their friends and neighbours. At other times they would recite to him poems of their own composition which were usually in Punjabi which dealt with signs of his truth and, in particular, the prophecies which they had seen fulfilled with their own eyes.

The subjects which the Promised Messiah usually addressed his followers when sitting with them pertained either to the evidence of his own claims, refutation of objections against Islam, an exposition of the beauties of Islam or a critical review of other faiths. He often exhorted them to live holy and pure lives and told them how they could enjoy special divine protection against the manifold visitations of God which had come upon the earth in fulfilment of his own prophecies as well as those of the prophets of yore. He said that the times were like the times of Noah and only those could escape the tribulations of the times who would embark on this ark which was not made of wood and iron, but of the teachings which he gave to his followers. Later he embodied these teachings in a small book which he named Noah's Ark in allusion to the fact that those who faithfully acted upon the teachings would enjoy the special protection of God and would be held as his real followers in the sight of God. This book has been translated into English and has been published under the title of *The Teachings of the Promised Messiah*. The reader would do well to obtain a copy for himself and see what kind of life the Promised Messiah expected from his followers. If they took these noble teachings as a model for themselves and tried to act upon them, they will lead a life of angels on earth.



## HAZRAT SETH ABDULLAH ALLADIN

(Ali Muhammad Alladin, M.A. Edin)

My father Hazrat Seth Abdullah Alladin was one of those servants of Allah whose personality went through a complete transformation after he recognized the Divine Reformer of the Age and accepted Ahmadiyyat. Initially a worldly man, he became an exceedingly God-fearing and virtuous person after the truth of Ahmadiyyat illumined his heart. He was born on 12th October, 1877 and accepted Ahmadiyyat on 9th April 1915, during the early days of the Khilafat of Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the Second Successor of the Ahmadiyya Movement (may choicest blessings of Allah be on him). The Almighty Allah blessed him with a long life and he died at the age of 84 on 26th February, 1962. I now present an account of his early life and the circumstances that culminated in his acceptance of Ahmadiyyat in his own words:

I was a member of the Khoja Community of Sir Agha Khan. My name is Abdullah. I was born in Bombay on 12th October, 1877. My late father Mr. Alladin was a resident of Calcutta; from there he came to Bombay and thence to Secunderabad in the year 1882. As we were Agha Khan Khojas we were absolutely ignorant about Islamic tenets, because in this Khoja Community there is no observance of namaz (prayers) or fasting etc. therefore we neither observed namaz nor kept fasts. We used to go to the mosque for prayers only twice a year on the occasions of Eid. But my father was a holy man. In all his activities he had complete faith in God.

I am now going to deal on a topic which is not only extremely surprising but is also of paramount importance to humanity and as such well worth knowing. The Merciful and Gracious God had decreed that I should come out from the Khoja Community, and join the true Islam and that the true Islam should be propagated through me not only to the Gujarati knowing public in the world but also to the people belonging to various other communities. I am narrating these facts in obedience to the command of Almighty God. i.e.:

*Oh son these are the days of the illumination of thy destiny. There is thy father's photo on the royal throne.*

One day while I was ascending our two storeyed building, all of a sudden the above couplet came out from my mouth and I was astounded

by this experience. We were worldly men, day and night absorbed in business. If we had gained a lakh or two of rupees by lottery or from any other source and had become rich I would have considered my destiny to have been illumined, but that did not happen. I, therefore, regarded this event as of no significance and forgot it altogether.

As time went on, I was inundated with worldly as well as spiritual blessings one after the other from Almighty and Gracious Allah; I then remembered the above couplet. It then dawned upon me that this couplet was not meaningless but was a mighty prediction from Almighty Allah heralding the illumination of my future destiny.

Almighty God out of His special Grace and Mercy had decreed to bless my humble self with His mighty Grace and Beneficence. He started to inundate me with His religious bounties.

I was absolutely ignorant of religious matters. He, therefore, in a wonderful manner, brought to my notice *The Teachings of Islam*. This book is the English translation of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's Urdu book entitled *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*. I had never heard the name of Hazrat Mirza Saheb or of Qadian where he lived. When I read this book I realized that it was not an ordinary book but was a mine of spiritual treasures. Various matters dealing with Islam have been beautifully explained in this book with Quranic verses. By studying this book two or three times, I, who was hitherto in utter religious darkness, came into the light by God's Grace. I felt as if I was born anew. I ordered several copies of this book and presented them to Muslims and non-Muslims. They all praised this book immensely.

The interest of my Khoja Community led me to publish it in Gujarati. I, therefore, translated it into Gujarati and distributed hundreds of copies free. I had a talk in this connection with my dear brother Khan Bahadur Nawab Ahmad Nawaz Jung. I expressed to him my desire that I wanted this book to be translated into various languages and to have it published and I desired that he should also take part in it. He gladly complied with my request. Before doing so he sent a copy of this book to Nawab Sir Amin Jung Bahadur, M.A. who was the Chief Secretary of His Exalted Highness the Nizam and requested him to give his opinion about the book. Sir Amin Jung replied to him as follows:

*Many thanks for a copy of your 3rd edition of the great Mirza's Teachings of Islam. I have read it more than once. It gives a quintessence of the Holy Book of Islam. It is so good and so free from any sectarian or denominational bias that I entirely agree with you*

*in thinking that you would render a real service to Islam if you could publish it in several languages. The translation should be as simple and pleasant as the English translation itself.*

Soon after, I got this book translated in Marathi, Canarese, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Gurmukhi, Sindhi, Burmese, Malaylam etc; and had them published. All praise be to Allah.

One strange thing which I read in this book was that God listens to our supplications and even answers them. In order to satisfy myself about this, one night after namaz I prayed to the effect that: *Oh Allah if it is true that Thou listenest and even answerest prayers, then I beseech Thee to grant one supplication of mine so that I may be convinced about the matter.* Afterwards I prayed to Allah thus: *Oh Allah reveal to me the condition of my father.*

Many years had elapsed since the death of my father and I had never seen him in any dream; but when I prayed thus, I saw him in my dream within a couple of days. he said to me that he was happy and showed me a ring of which one or two jewels were sparkling and the remaining one or two were black. At that time I could not interpret its meaning. But it was after some time that I realised that the four jewels represented his four sons. God alone knows its true significance. After seeing this dream I was convinced that verily God listens and even answers our prayers.

I was totally ignorant of religion. In order, therefore, to enlighten me as to the true faith, Almighty God brought about such circumstances which led me to study the Teachings of Islam — an Islamic book replete with spiritual treasures. After reading this book two or three times, a profound interest for religious knowledge was aroused within me. When I was young I had studied the Gujarati translation of the Holy Quran. But I was given to understand that the Holy Quran was meant for Arabs who used to worship idols; we believe in one God and so we do not stand in need of it. Moreover there are contradictions in the verses of the Holy Quran. Only those who are well versed in Arabic can understand its true meaning. If they who do not know Arabic study the Holy Quran they will, not understand its real meaning and therefore instead of gaining reward they will commit sin. I, therefore, stopped reading the Quran altogether. When I had studied *The Teachings of Islam*, it dawned upon me that all I had been told about the Holy Quran was completely wrong.

I realised that when a small book like this, comprising selections from the Holy Quran, could contain so much spiritual treasure, it would be impossible to estimate the invaluable treasures packed within the entire Holy Quran. In this way interest was aroused within me for reading and

understanding the Holy Quran. I ordered a copy of the English translation of the Holy Quran and began its study. I found that there are no contradictions in the Quranic verses, nay, on the contrary they support each other. It then occurred to me that just like myself many others might be involved in similar erroneous views concerning the Holy Quran. I, therefore, began to collect as many Quranic verses as possible on different subjects with a view to publish and distribute them to people, so that they might realize that there are no contradictions in the Quranic verses. After compiling the verses dealing on several subjects I published them in the form of a book entitled *Extracts from the Holy Quran* and distributed it free.

According to the Holy Quran the true Islam is only one. But gradually Muslims divided themselves into different sects by incorporating erroneous beliefs, rites and ceremonies into Islam. I was also entangled in an erroneous sect, therefore the Almighty Allah planned, from the very outset, to guide me to the true Islam. It has been a Divine Law that, in order to show the truth and beauties of Islam Almighty God had been raising at the beginning of every Islamic century a Divine Reformer through whom the true Islamic sect is established. Accordingly in this 14th century a Divine Reformer was raised through whom the Ahmadiyya Movement came into being. In order to make me understand the truth of Ahmadiyyat or the true Islam, Almighty God made such a wonderful arrangement for me that a distinguished member of the Ahmadiyya Community Hazrat Yaqoob Ali Saheb Irfani, great lover of the Holy Quran and commentator was sent to my place from Qadian which is at a distance of 1500 miles. He began to explain to me the truth of Ahmadiyyat from various points of view but at that time I was intimately connected with one gentleman belonging to Ahl-e-Hadith sect, who was a partner in one of our businesses. I had great friendship with him. He prejudiced me against Ahmadiyyat to a considerable extent. I therefore did not accept anything about Ahmadiyyat which Hazrat Irfani Saheb explained to me.

Finally Hazrat Irfani Saheb said that as you have studied *The teachings of Islam* written by Hazrat Mirza Saheb and you have appreciated it very much, you should read his other books as well; I agreed to do so. However I read them in such a way that wherever there was mention of the superiority of Islam and that of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) I read with great zeal, but I used to skip over those portions which dealt with the death of Jesus Christ or with Ahmadiyyat. In this way I read many of his books and I acquired the essential knowledge about Islam, but remained ignorant about Hazrat Mirza

Saheb's claims. As such Hazrat Irfani Saheb, who had come from Qadian, had to return without success.

Almighty God sent Hazrat Irfani Saheb from Qadian to make me understand Ahmadiyyat i.e; the true Islam, but I did not accept it.

By means of a dream Almighty God instructed the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community (2nd caliph) to convey the truth of Ahmadiyyat to His Exalted Highness, the Nizam, the then king of Hyderabad. To carry out this Divine Command he wrote a nice book entitled *Tuhfatul Malook* (present to the Kings) and sent two distinguished Ahmadies to present him with the book. He accepted it with thanks. After this, hundreds of copies of this book were distributed to the public of Hyderabad.

Because Almighty God had planned all this for my humble self, He inspired His Caliph to send again new Ahmadiyya missionaries to Hyderabad. Accordingly two new learned personages Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Saheb and Hazrat Hafiz Roshan Ali Saheb were sent. To help them, Janab Syed Basharat Ahmad Saheb who is an Advocate of the Hyderabad High Court and the Amir of Hyderabad Jamaat were nominated.

At first they delivered lectures in Hyderabad but no one was fortunate to accept Ahmadiyyat. Afterwards they began to deliver lectures in Secunderabad. I also used to attend their lectures. Later on we also invited them to deliver a lecture in our Alladin Building. After this they used to come to our place every day for giving *Darsul Quran* (commentary on the Quran). Lest I should become an Ahmadi and the Ahmadiyya Jamaat be established in Secunderabad learned Maulvies of Sunni and Shia sects also used to come and preach me against Ahmadiyyat. In this way I was able to listen to the arguments of both the parties. This programme lasted for three months. In order to make me realize the truth of Ahmadiyyat through the Holy Quran, the Traditions, and Bible etc. Ahmadiyya missionaries used to bring those books to me when necessary.

Finally by God's Grace and Mercy the truth of Ahmadiyyat became clear to me. In spite of this I had not the courage to accept it and thus take the risk of incurring the displeasures of my relatives, and my Ahl-e-Hadith partner. Nay after this I even stopped the *Darsul Quran* which the learned Ahmadi missionaries used to deliver daily.

I was shown one night a dreadful dream in which my Ahl-e-Hadith partner, along with another person was talking ill of some one. Just then the police arrived and arrested three of us and presented us before the

(continued on page 49)

## RIGHTEOUSNESS DRAWS DIVINE SUCCOUR

(Extract from an address delivered by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, in Qadian on January 19, 1889.)

I draw the attention of my followers to the indispensable necessity of righteous conduct which alone pleases God and ensures Divine help. God says in the Holy Quran:

إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ

Unto Him ascend pure words, and righteous deeds does He exalt. (35:11)

In this age the pen will achieve the ultimate victory of Islam – not the sword. It should be borne in mind, however, that Divine aid and victory will be the lot of those who are righteous. God says:

وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا

Allah will not grant the disbelievers a way to prevail against the believers. (4:142)

Your victory, therefore, depends upon your *taqwa* or righteousness. The pre-Islamic Arabs were only speakers, lecturers and poets, but when they became righteous God sent His angels to their succour. If one studies the history of Islam one will find that the victories won by the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him), were not the result of human efforts or power. Within a short period of twenty years after the death of the Holy Prophet, Islam became dominant over most of the known world. Was such success within human power? God says in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ

Verily, God is with those who are righteous and those who do good. (16:129)

The word *muttaqi* means one who fears God. One kind of virtue is to shun evil and the other is to do good. *Muttaqi* is one who refrains from evil and *Muhsen* refers to the doing of good. A truly righteous person, therefore, is one who after shunning evil reviews his conduct to find out what good he has done.

It is recorded that once a slave of Hazrat Imam Hasan brought him a cup of tea and inadvertently spilt it over his head. Hazrat Imam Hasan gave him an angry look whereupon the servant recited the following

words from the Holy Quran in a low voice:

*Those who suppress anger.(3:135)*

وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ

The Imam replied that he had suppressed his anger. The slave then recited a further portion of the text:

*And pardon men.*

وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ

One may suppress anger without being satisfied at heart; so this verse in the Holy Quran also calls for pardon which the Imam granted. The slave then recited the final portion of the verse:

*And God loves those who do good.*

وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

That is to say those who do an additional favour after suppressing their anger and granting pardon and forgiveness. On hearing this last portion of the verse Hazrat Imam Hasan told the slave that he was now free.

What a sublime example of righteousness! The spilt tea led to the freedom of the slave. Such noble conduct was the result of *taqwa*. God says in the Holy Quran:

تَأْتِقُمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتُمْ

*So stand thou upright, as thou hast been commanded.(11:113)*

God will be pleased with you if you are upright and there is no crookedness in your conduct. Also make others upright. What an arduous task it was to set the Arabs right!

In answer to a question the Holy Prophet of Islam replied that the chapter in the Holy Quran, Al-Hud, made him feel old because it laid upon his shoulders the great responsibility to be righteous and also to make others righteous.

One may be able to rectify one's own conduct but it is not so easy to rectify the conduct of others. The success of the Holy Prophet in this respect proves his sublime dignity and rectifying power. He raised a holy community of people about whom God says in the Holy Quran:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

*You are the best people raised for the good of mankind.*

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ

(3:111)

*God is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him.(5:120)*

(continued on page 18)



## RUSHDIE – SATANIC FICTION

(S.M.A.Nasser exposes the *Satanic Verses* as *Satanic Fiction*)

(The following was published in the Dorset Institute Law Student Magazine. Mr. S.M.A.Nasser is a Principal Lecturer in Law)

### INTRODUCTION

It is amazing that so much has been written about Salmon Rushdie's book *Satanic Verses*, yet no one has analysed possible motives (other than profit) or tried to explain where the ideas might have come from. Most news reports have focused on Khomeini's *fatwas* – which have been universally condemned. Although occasional indirect support for the *fatwas* by some writers and commentators has existed. For instance, Yaqub Zaki, an ethnic Scotsman, writing in *The Times* tried very hard to convince us that the reactions of extremist *mullahs* and those of Khomeini were understandable and indeed were no different from what has happened in the past and could happen in the future in both theocratic and secular states. More on such extremist view points later.

It is an undeniable fact that Penguin Publishers and Rushdie have made a lot of money from the book - perhaps most of it is attributable to the publicity surrounding it. It is impossible to believe that more than a small percentage of purchasers have actually read the book. The average English reader has not only to enter Rushdie's psychotic trance but also has to put up with the book's tedious literary style incorporating innuendos in words and names that mean little to him. Who knows the meaning of *ekdumjaldi*, *tinkas*, and so on? To make any sense the reader also has to be familiar with characters from Hindu mythology and Islamic history and tradition. Obviously, there was no sense to the book unless the intention was to mock and defame.

It is curious to note that slanderous and defamatory words and statements appear to be used in a calculated manner directed against names and personalities that have a particularly strong emotional and religious attachment with Muslim sentiments in general and Iranian Shia sentiments in particular.

### THE MOTIVES

Questions then arise – why should Rushdie write a book that is potentially a flop because of its limited appeal? Why write a defamatory work of fiction which can offend but not be subject to academic review? Why should Penguin publish a book with limited appeal and a potential

flop with the possibility of law suits against them for blasphemy in the various Islamic states? The justification of freedom of speech is a non-starter. First, because that is an idea put forward after the event to defend the book. Second, the book does not claim to be putting forth ideas that have not been allowed to be aired before. Third, because neither Rushdie nor Penguin are in the business of championing causes such as freedom of speech and expression.

It is interesting to note that the title *Satanic Verses* is a plagiarism from *Muhammad at Mecca* (1953) by the Scotsman Professor W. Montgomery Watt. What a revelation! Indeed, one could be forgiven for believing that Rushdie's book - the parts relating to the Prophet were actually written by Professor Montgomery Watt. The similarities of presentation are uncanny. One difference is that Watt's book is a serious one subject to academic review and scrutiny. But, his book is known only to a handful of scholars. It is ironic that none of the vociferous Muslim *ulema* have picked up on these points made by Professor Watt in 1953! Rushdie, on the other hand can argue that his book is only a novel - a fiction that cannot be debated.

It is stranger indeed to note that Rushdie did not acknowledge the principal source for his book other than an oblique reference to *those who must remain anonymous*. Such a blatant omission, coupled with the provocative title, the subject matter and subsequent events, is difficult to explain.

### POSSIBLE OBJECTIVES

First, to hurt Iran's sensibilities as it had failed to bow down to Western might and influence in the face of overwhelming pressures. Second, to besmirch the good reputation and name of Islam by exploiting the inevitable over-reaction of the Khomeini regime. Predictably, the book has succeeded in exploiting the fundamental departures from true Islamic values and traditions that have been invented by Muslim fundamentalist groups. Such fundamentalists have only themselves to blame.

### PUNISHMENT FOR APOSTASY AND BLASPHEMY IN ISLAM IS NOT DEATH

These fanatic groups have adopted the theories put forward by Khomeini and Abul Ala Maududi (*Jamaat-e-Islami* the counterpart of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt). Followers of their theories include the late President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan. *Maududi* advocated a method of Islamic reform modelled on Marxism and Khomeini used similar ideas to lead a revolution. One such theory was that in Islam the punishment for

apostasy and blasphemy was death. In reality, there is no authority in Islamic law to support this viewpoint. Indeed clear authority actually points to no punishment.

Even Khomeini with his life-long study of the Quran based his *fatwa* against Rushdie on verse 5:34. The text reveals that the death penalty occasionally applies to:

*those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and strive to create disorder in the land..... (5:34)*

This clear reference to persons committing acts against the state can by no stretch of the imagination be attributed to simple apostates or blasphemers. Clear references to apostasy in the Quran, namely 2:218; 47:26; 5:55; 4:138; 3:145; etc., invoke neither capital nor corporal punishment in this world – only punishment in the hereafter by Allah. The declaration *there shall be no compulsion in religion (2:257)*, speaks for itself and no amount of secondary sources to support the Maududi viewpoint can override it.

Likewise for blasphemy, Islamic law advocates no penalty in this world. Instead, the Quran relies on goodwill to uphold the honour of Allah and his prophets. It says:

*And abuse not those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they, out of spite, abuse Allah in their ignorance. Thus unto every people their deeds seem fair. Then unto their Lord is their return; and He will inform them of what they used to do. (6:109)*

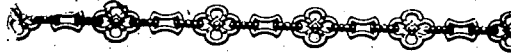
So we have come a full circle with this story. Clearly there are powerful forces that may have wanted adverse publicity against Islam in general and Khomeini in particular. Rushdie and Penguin became their instruments – motivated by monetary gains. The only losers were Khomeini's Iran, Islam's good name (by the perpetuation of a false doctrine on apostasy and blasphemy) and even good racial relations in countries with significant Muslim minorities.

In these days of world gloom with the rise of fundamentalism in all religions and of nationalism it is encouraging to see the occasional glimmer of moderation and humanity elsewhere. It is foolish to judge Islam on the basis of *fatwas* and pronouncements from politically motivated extremist groups – just as it is foolish to judge Christianity by reference to Hitler, South Africa or Hiroshima. Moderate and rational groups are now speaking out against fanaticism. Indeed, one Muslim

group, the Ahmadiyya sect, has peacefully opposed the extremist viewpoint for over a century – and has been prosecuted in the process.

If there is one single thing that we can learn from the Rushdie affair – it is that *fatwas* issuing forth from self-appointed clergy (there being no priesthood in Islam) rarely represent the true Islam because they are usually based on extraneous considerations such as a thirst for political power quite divorced from Islamic law, scripture or tradition. This appreciation may ensure that the Rushdie affair causes no real lasting damage.

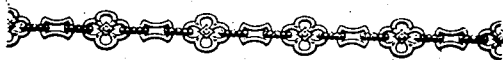
[References from 'The Holy Quran' are based on a system that counts the initial verse as verse 1. Some systems exclude the first verse from the count so that 5:34 becomes 5:33 etc.]



(from page 14)

During the life of the Holy Prophet not a single person in Medina was left a hypocrite. He was blessed with a success the like of which is not to be found in the history of any other prophet.

We should not be satisfied with mere lip profession otherwise what will distinguish us from other people? Set a practical example of piety and righteousness. Let there be such an excellence in your conduct which would attract others to you otherwise no one will accept you. Does a person like a dirty thing? A single spot on a piece of cloth spoils it. Similarly if there is no purity and excellence in your conduct, no one will be attracted to your way of life. Everyone likes a nice or excellent thing. Therefore, as long as your moral life is not of the highest order, you will attain no position and nobody will accept you.



## MESSAGE OF ISLAM

(Mrs Rashidah Hargey)

(Lecture given on the occasion of Ladies Seminar on different Religions  
on 18th February, 1990, in Cape Town, South Africa.)

Islam is the last of the great revealed religions and contains in itself the essential principles of all earlier religions. Islam is a strongly monotheistic religion with the worship of One God as its central theme. Islam requires its followers to believe in all earlier prophets and scriptures, because according to Islam, all the great religions that preceded it were revealed by God. Sadly, most of the old scriptures have been changed and tampered with, leaving them doubtful.

The word *ISLAM* in the Arabic language is derived from the root *SLM* and means *peace and obedience*. God Himself has named this religion *Islam* through revelation to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessing of God be with him (Holy Quran 5:4). The religion is called Islam because it offers peace and requires complete submission to the Will of God.

Islam is not a religion of an ethnic group or a specific nation, rather it is the religion for all mankind. Some of the teachings of Islam were already preached by the earlier prophets Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc., peace be on them. Islam was perfected at the time of prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be on him, as a favour unto mankind by God.

### REVELATION OF THE HOLY QURAN TO THE MESSENGER OF ISLAM:

First of all, what is revelation? Muslims believe that God speaks to His chosen servants through the process of revelation. It is through this process that spiritual knowledge and wisdom is given to man by God.

Revelation can be of many kinds. It may comprise ordinances (i.e. established rules, rites and ceremonies), laws and injunctions. Revelation may be prophetic in nature and bring knowledge of future events. Revelation may bring great insight into matters of material or spiritual nature. Revelation may also convey God's goodwill, pleasure and love; or it may be the medium of God's warning, displeasure and rebuke.

The nature of revelation varies according to circumstances and the

spiritual station of the recipient. Muslims believe that of all revelations and divine communications, the most complete, the most perfect and the most comprehensive is the Holy Quran which contains all the types of revelations that I have just explained.

Now let us turn to the person who received the Quranic revelation. For one to receive such revelation from God, the person has to be honest, truthful, kind and compassionate, and these qualities should stem from early childhood until death. In other words, this person's character should be impeccable, faultless and incapable of sin. This person, we believe, was his Holiness, Muhammad Mustapha, the Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be on him.

There are some religions which proclaim that their prophets committed sins. Islam teaches us that all the prophets of God throughout the ages were faultless and sinless and the Quran clears them from any sins that were attributed to them. Some of these prophets were Moses, Noah, Job, Jonah, John, Ezekiel, etc.

You must keep in mind that when God reveals to a chosen servant His further plans designed for a long time ahead, then they are fulfilled. Sometimes prophets foretold of future prophets to come so these chosen servants of God will have a background of nobility, truthfulness and honour; and, of course, they will be righteous and God-fearing.

The Holy Prophet of Islam is described in the Holy Quran as an excellent exemplar. He was commanded to announce:

*If you love God, then follow me, God will then love you and forgive you your faults. God is Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful. (3:32)*

It was necessary that the life of the Holy Prophet should be open for all to witness. It was also necessary that his life should be multifaceted, in the sense that he should be called upon to fill a diversity of roles, and that he should fill them to perfection.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) was born in the year 570 A.D. He belonged to a noble Arabian tribe, the Quraish, who were among the Chiefs of Mecca. His family was highly respected and honoured.

We have a full and detailed account of his childhood, youth and adulthood till his death in the year 632 A.D. when his mission was completed. However, the time limit here makes it impossible for me to go into detail since I have other teachings of Islam to discuss as well. I intend

to highlight only some very important factors of this great Prophet.

He was since his childhood, truthful, sincere, honest, kind and compassionate. He was loved by so many people because of these qualities. Since most of the Arabs in those times had very low morals, their major interest in life was drinking wine, fighting and womanising. They had no time for honest courtesy and most of all for remembrance of God. Most of them were idol worshippers.

Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), therefore was indeed an outstanding person with dignity. At every stage and every step of his life, the hand of God was clearly visible as His Protector, his Guide and his Helper. All this could not have been contrived by the Holy Prophet on his own.

Under his influence Mecca underwent a tremendous change which many of his opponents did not like at all because of the equality and freedom he taught. He introduced the freedom of slaves, taught people to be kind to the needy and poor, that all men are equal irrespective of their race, creed or colour. He encouraged the proper upbringing of orphans and not to usurp their rights, to hand over what rightfully belonged to them when they reached maturity. He discouraged usury and he was a champion for women's rights and exalted their status, which had up till then been that of a mere possession of man. Women at that time were treated like cattle, no respect was shown to them and some were even won as prizes in their games of chance.

#### STATUS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM:

It is often wrongly believed by Westners that Muslim women are degraded with no rights and are kept hidden away. This type of criticism is entirely the result of ignorance and misconception because Islam liberated women fourteen centuries ago by giving them their full rights. Islam did not wait till women rebelled and demanded their rights as in today's world.

Fourteen hundred years ago while other Western and Eastern civilisations still treated their women as having no rights, treated them as their property and laid the responsibility of man's sinful fall upon a woman and declared her to be an instrument of the devil (as in the case of Adam and Eve), the Holy Quran testified to the spiritual equality of men and women. Sadly there are still some people who regard their sons as their great accomplishment and good future while regarding their daughters as unimportant and as an unwanted liability. I can assure you

that they do not act upon the teachings of Islam, rather they are still following ancient customs and traditions which have been abolished by Islam.

The Holy Quran teaches that men and women complement one another and are the means of mutual fulfilment. It also teaches that the rights and responsibilities of men and women produce a harmonious effect emphasizing the equal importance of both sexes. At the same time it does not ignore or overlook their different capacities and, therefore, their different roles in life.

Islam has given women complete economic independence. At the time when Western and Eastern civilizations disregarded women as rightful heirs, Islam gave them the right to inherit money and property. Even after marriage they have the right to retain it independently. Also, part of the Islamic marriage contract states that the husband should offer a substantial amount of dowry, according to his means, to his wife, which becomes her sole property. Amongst other rights, Muslim women may pursue a professional career or business. However, this should not be carried out at the expense of her marital and domestic obligations and of course, keeping in view her circumstances, Islam teaches that the family unit is sacred and has priority and its safety and true prosperity in every respect should be considered inviolable.

A woman is naturally more caring and protective in nurturing her children. A woman is also more vulnerable and needs man's protection, strength and support. God has designed women to bear children. God designed nature to function this way. Even animals bear witness to the different roles of males and females.

The task, therefore, of upbringing children largely falls on the shoulders of mothers. In any case a young child learns mostly from its mother since it spends more time with her in the early years, than with the father. In their turn, children are taught by Islam to respect and honour their parents and to treat them with kindness and compassion, to care for them in their old age and to always pray for them. Here, Islam puts special emphasis on treating mothers with dignity, kindness, love and respect, so much so that one may attain paradise through it. The Holy Prophet said that *Paradise lies at the feet of mothers*. Does not this make clear the high status of women in Islam?

Another right given to women by Islam is that not only did women become entitled to education but it is essential that they be educated to the highest level. In some respects the education of women is more important



than that of men because it is the mother whose influence most effects the next generation and is therefore, of vital importance. Islam has never stood in the way of education, rather it promotes it. The Holy Prophet has said *to acquire knowledge is the duty of every man and woman. and seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave.*

Now coming to another important aspect that the West does not understand is why Muslim women should be veiled and the segregation of men and women. First of all, Islam lays great emphasis on purity and chastity for both men and women. This is called *Purdah*. A woman especially is taught to cover her ornaments — these may be her hair, neck, bosom, legs, etc. — to guard and protect herself against the evil inclinations it might arouse in the mind of man if he sees her uncovered. This has been proved over and over in today's world where rape, incest and murder is reported daily in the newspapers. By displaying her beauty and making herself provocative and sensual for anyone else other than her husband, it will most certainly cause attraction, disturbance and excitement in other men. The same applies to the free intermingling of the two sexes. So as you can see now, there is definite reason and logic behind the Islamic teaching for covering up. In any case, if you go back to history you will find that in the majority of civilisations that existed women always dressed in such a way that their ornaments were covered and this applies to Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism as well. There must have been very good reasons for this.

Another important right given to women fourteen hundred years ago by Islam was her right to divorce her husband. Up to then in all history only men could divorce their wives if they wished. As I have already explained, Islam lays great importance on the special treatment of women. If a husband maltreats his wife severely and does not look after her needs properly and there is severe incompatibility, she has the right to divorce her husband. Though I also have to make it absolutely clear that generally divorce is not encouraged in Islam because of the devastating effect it has on both parties, as well as on the children. Divorce is described as being *hateful in the eyes of God* and this applies to both a man seeking divorce from his wife and to a wife seeking divorce from her husband. But still the right of divorce was given to women so that they do not have to spend the rest of their lives in a *living hell*.

In conclusion, I trust that those who are present here today, have become somewhat enlightened about the peaceful teachings of Islam and especially on the status, rights and responsibilities of Muslim women.

(continued on page 32)

## AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. ANTONIO R. GUALTEIRI

*(The following is a transcription of an interview with Dr. Antonio R. Gualteiri, Professor of Religion, Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada and author of 'Conscience and Coercion' in which he has related the persecution and harassment of Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan. The program was conducted by Peter Meggs and broadcast by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation on March 20, 1988.)*

**Peter Meggs (PM):** Dr. Gualteiri, the Ahmadis consider themselves Muslims. Why does Islam condemn them as heretics?

**Antonio R. Gualteiri (ARG):** I think this is the problem between self-definition and definition from outside. The Ahmadis themselves, as you said, do regard themselves as Muslims. More than that, they regard themselves as true Muslims. They feel that the reformist renewal Movement that started towards the end of the nineteenth century was the rebirth of true Islam.

**PM:** Tell me something about that Movement that got them going.

**ARG:** Well, it centres on a particular charismatic figure. His name is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who was from a prominent family in Qadian. This is in the Punjab, now a part of India. He had spiritual experiences. He was a scholarly sort — he read the Qur'an and other religious texts diligently. His interpretation was that God spoke to him and let him know that he was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, a figure in Islamic thought about the last days. He is the *rightly guided one* who will come at the end of the age to restore the religion of Islam and justice.

The Messiah — which might strike Christians as odd — is also a Muslim figure. Orthodox Islam has also assimilated the notion that (according to some of the mythology or stories) at some point in God's future, toward the end of time, the Messiah will come again to do God's work — to destroy unbelieving Christians and, basically, to renew Islam before the final judgement. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad thought that he was the fulfilment of those Islamic prophecies, that he was in his own person both Mahdi, the *rightly guided one*, and the Promised Messiah.

**PM:** Traditional Islam did not go along with that?

**ARG:** No, it did not. They might not have had so much trouble with

that, for there has been a great deal of dissent within Islam — contrary to some of our notions of its monolithic quality. What I think really tipped the balance against Ghulam Ahmad was his self-designation as a prophet. That ran in the face of Islamic orthodoxy that asserts that prophetic revelation ceased with the advent of Muhammad. There was a long succession of prophets, such as Jesus and Abraham, through whom God spoke to the world in the past. In the last days, that is, in the seventh century of the Christian era, God sent His final prophet and that was Muhammad. By calling himself a prophet, Ghulam Ahmad ran the risk of a serious misunderstanding.

**PM:** Isn't there a similar problem between Islam and the Baha'i on that kind of issue?

**ARG:** That is right. There are latter-day charismatic spiritual leaders who emerge who usually view themselves as renewing Islam, and who make claims for the authority of their message. This suggests that they are denying or violating that fundamental Muslim tenet of the finality of prophecy in Muhammad. I should quickly break in here to say that this is the way orthodox Muslims see this Movement. They see it as a Movement that originates in a prophetic claim that is heretical. The Ahmadis themselves are more subtle about their understanding of what occurred in the prophecies or revelations given to their founder.

Ahmad himself claimed that he was a prophet without a book and without a law. If one understands Islam, one understands that revelation in Islam is quintessentially scriptural. It is in a book. You have the Evangel of Jesus or the Torah of Moses. The essence of that scripture revelation is law. God is not interested in giving a lot of information about His metaphysical nature; He is interested in conveying a law which informs people how to live their lives compatible with the divine will. So when Ghulam Ahmad says: *I am a prophet without a law and without a book* — he is definitely subordinating himself to the definitive divine authority of Muhammad. But the orthodox did not see it that way.

**PM:** We are talking about the nineteenth century, aren't we?

**ARG:** The date they use for the emergence of the Movement as a community is 1889.

**PM:** Although there are ten million Ahmadis worldwide, in Pakistan they are outlawed, are they not?

**ARG:** What has happened in Pakistan is very interesting and it is that which drove me to Pakistan to do this research. I am interested in the

problem of self-definition; that is, how people regard themselves and how others look upon them.

In 1974, when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was still in power, the National Assembly of Pakistan made an amendment to the constitution that defined the Ahmadis as non-Muslims. It is very peculiar that outsiders were not content, simply to say: *You are not a good or true Muslim*. Muslims, after all, have been saying that to one another for a long time, just as Christians have. They now said: *You are not allowed to understand yourself as a Muslim*.

Of course, Ahmadis do, in the depths of their souls with a fervour that I have scarcely seen repeated elsewhere, understand themselves as Muslims.

**PM:** What does that mean to the Ahmadis when that was said by Bhutto back in 1974? Does that bring persecution to them?

**ARG:** It certainly did.

**PM:** What kind of persecution?

**ARG:** There have been popular disturbances throughout the last century. There was a disturbance with intensity in 1953 that generated the well-known Munir report on the subject, and then further disturbances in the 1970s that moved the National Assembly to decree the Ahmadis *non-Muslims*. That process of marginalization, harassment and persecution, I think, culminates with the military ordinances of General Zia-ul-Haq.

**PM:** The president now?

**ARG:** Yes, although there has been the rescinding of martial law, at least in theory. Under General Zia, the anti-Ahmadi legislation has intensified so that if an Ahmadi calls himself or herself a Muslim or calls his or her place of worship a mosque or gives the *azan*, the call to prayer which is standard for Muslim ritual worship, and in any other way outrages the feelings of Muslims, that person is liable to three years in prison and a fine. I visited a prison in Baluchistan and talked to four Ahmadis who were in prison for a year for the offence of wearing the *kalimah* badge. *Kalimah Tayyabah* is a formula that states the standard Muslim profession of faith: *There is no God but God and Muhammad is His prophet*. If an Ahmadi wears that, he or she is accused under Statute 298(c) of the Pakistan penal code of posing as a Muslim. It is as if, for example, you made certain Christian affirmations and, on the basis of my

prejudgements. I said that you cannot really be a Christian but are simply pretending to be one. When Ahmadis do what any devout Muslim would want to do, namely, pray, to profess the unity of God and the prophethood of Muhammad, to go on a pilgrimage, they are accused of pretending to be Muslims — a crime which is covered in the penal code.

**PM:** Does that apply to all the five pillars of Islam? If they practise any of them, are they accused of heresy?

**ARG:** They are not only accused of heresy. That is all right — religious people are accustomed to calling one another heretics. They are also accused of being criminals, of violating the law of the land. For instance, in one case, a person had a charge brought against him by some mullah (an orthodox religious leader) because he had said the *Darood-Ibrahim* (a kind of prayer that prays that God's blessings that were given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will also be given to the prophet). This person was accused of pretending to be a Muslim and was charged. The people who heard this prayer were also charged with posing to be Muslims. Some of them are out on bail; some, as I have already pointed out, are in prison.

**PM:** What form does this persecution take in Pakistan?

**ARG:** Besides imprisonment of people, discrimination in jobs (they are not promoted), their children cannot get into university, even kindergarten. In addition to the assassinations which, as I said, were inspired by certain fundamentalist pirs and mullahs, you also see their sacred buildings defaced or, in some cases, destroyed. In Mardan the mosque was utterly destroyed. In other towns — in Quetta, in Hyderabad, in Gujranwala — the mosques have been sealed by the authorities. In order to maintain law and order — to prevent a mass uprising so the argument runs — they simply put padlocks on some of these Ahmadi mosques and post soldiers there so that the Ahmadis are obliged to worship in homes. The sealing of the mosques does not seem to impede their worship. They simply move off to homes. Sometimes they are harassed there, being told that they are transforming homes into public places of worship, so they will move to other homes. Their cemeteries have had tombstones altered by the Ahmadis themselves in conformity to the law. They are told they are not allowed to put certain Muslim inscriptions on their tombstones. If you visit the cemeteries, you will see where these have all had to be removed. They have had to remove the word *masjid* (mosque) from their places of worship because, according to the law, their Ahmadi places of worship cannot be mosques. If they insist

on using that term, they are accused of pretending to be that which they are not — Muslims. You can see it in the restriction on their places of worship, as well as on their persons.

**PM:** What kind of threat does this coercion pose to traditional Islam?

**ARG:** That is where we are in the world today. For the people of fundamentalist persuasion, it is not a threat to Islam. It is the way of securing and protecting the purity of Islam. From a different perspective (which would be my own), I think it is a blight on Islam. My understanding of Islam is that, although no religion is perfect in this respect, it has a better record than Christians or Jews on the question of toleration of other faiths. I think what is happening in Pakistan is at best an embarrassment to good Pakistani Muslims of sound sense with an understanding of their tradition and, at worst, it is kind of a demonic, inhuman attack on a community. I mentioned imprisonment. That is the least severe of the punishments. There have been murders in shops. A prominent opthamologist was killed in Hyderabad. I would say that in Sind alone probably twenty people have been killed, and in Pakistan may be thirty or forty. Assassinations such as these are inspired by super-orthodox fundamentalist mullahs, or religious leaders, who think they are protecting Islam against these heretical pollutions. The police, to the best of my knowledge, do nothing about bringing assassins to court. The cases are not prosecuted.

**PM:** You mentioned Christianity a moment ago. I think I read somewhere that the Ahmadis have beliefs that are related to Christianity and Hinduism.?

**ARG:** Very interesting. Since we are close to Good Friday, it is germane to say that they have this intriguing doctrine of Christ's death. Christians, of course, affirm that Jesus died on the cross. It is absolutely essential for Christians to affirm that this is the way God redeems humankind. As you know, Jesus is in the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam. Jesus, according to orthodox Islam, did not die on the cross, but either a double or someone else died in his stead. Jesus was supernaturally raised up to God, like the Christian doctrine of the ascension.

**PM:** Is that because they could not believe that God Himself would die in that fashion?

**ARG:** Well, not quite that because for Muslims, of course, Jesus would never be God. Perhaps the largest and most critical objection Muslims

have to Christians is that they have taken a human person and ascribed to this person divine qualities. For Muslims that is the most heinous sin against God. rather, they feel that God would not abandon the prophet. It would be counter to God's protection of His holy prophets to allow Jesus, the prophet, to die on the cross. God triumphs — He raises Jesus up to heaven and those who are faithful to him are ultimately vindicated.

**PM:** You were going to tell me about the Ahmadis' belief in the crucifixion.?

**ARG:** Yes. The Ahmadis hold, like orthodox Muslims, that Jesus did not die on the cross but, unlike the orthodox Muslims, they deny his supernatural ascension to heaven from which he will return as Messiah at the end of the age. The Ahmadis say that Jesus retired Eastward to seek out and preach to the lost tribes of Israel, and died in Kashmir. They have his tomb in Kashmir. At that point, they are denying Christian claims that he died on the cross and are denying orthodox Muslim claims that he was supernaturally raised up to God. That is another point of dissension. I mentioned the most important point — the finality of prophethood in Muhammad — Muhammad being the seal or last of the prophets.

**PM:** How are they related to Hinduism?

**ARG:** Negatively and positively. One of the reasons that I think explains the emergence of Ghulam Ahmad in the late nineteenth century was a reaction to Christian missionaries and also to a renascent Hinduism. Ghulam Ahmad was trying to reassert what he thought were superior claims of Islam against Hindu preaching. They are also related in a positively way in that Ghulam Ahmad claimed not only to be the Ahmadi, *the rightly guided one* that was expected to restore religion and justice at the end of time, and not only the Promised Messiah that Christians, Jews and orthodox Muslims anticipate, but claimed also to be an *avatar*, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, one of the prominent Hindu deities.

**PM:** He made very wide claims then.?

**ARG:** Yes, he did. There is no doubt that, in trying to understand the Ahmadis, one cannot mask the centrality of the charismatic leader — not only the founder but even today. In London, England I visited the Khalifa, the spiritual leader of the community who is now in exile in London because his life would be in peril in Pakistan. I was moved and astonished to see the devotion that the devotees gave to the Khalifa. It is a community which is vibrant, highly trained (it has a hundred percent literacy rate), and has a very active missionary outreach in West Africa, Indonesia, and

all over the world.

**PM:** I do not think of Muslims as being people who go out to convert others, but the Ahmadis do?

**ARG:** Yes. I think Islam itself, of whatever persuasion, is a missionary movement.

**PM:** The Ahmadis, having ten million around the world, seem to be very, very successful as missionaries?

**ARG:** You are absolutely right. They are missionary minded, even beyond the expansion of ordinary Sunni, or orthodox Islam. All Muslims want to propagate what they consider to be the true and final revelation of God. But the Ahmadis do so with a particular intensity. In Rabwah, Pakistan, I visited their missionary college where even in these times when it is difficult for foreign Ahmadis to get visas into Pakistan, there are still students from Nigeria, Uganda, Ghana, Indonesia, United States, and Britain who train to be missionaries and who make this a lifetime vocation. Outside London they have an enormous missionary printing enterprise where they translate the Qur'an and writings of the founder and other theological works of the Movement into hundreds of languages. It is a translation work which reminds me of Christian translation work, such as is done particularly by the conservative Christian groups. They are highly organized and highly disciplined. They are very generous in the giving of their money to the Movement. It is a Movement which seems not to have lost that first flush of enthusiasm that revitalization Movements in religion usually have.

**PM:** Has it not been almost a century since they started?

**ARG:** Right. When I ask them the reason for their enthusiasm, they say it is because they have the living presence of the Khalifa. They feel that this enthusiasm, this level of dedication, would not persist were it not that they have a divinely guided leader who handles almost all the ongoing affairs of the Community. One of our architects at Carleton university is designing a new Ahmadi mosque in Toronto. He flew over to London to lay the plans before the Khalifa. I simply do not know how a simple human being has those resources of energy to attend to all the minutest details of a worldwide Community, but so it is.

**PM:** What is happening to that worldwide Community? Are other Muslim countries condemning the Ahmadis as heretics as well?

**ARG:** I think the condemnation is pretty well worldwide in my



experience.

**PM:** Persecution too?

**ARG:** No. I am not acquainted with all of the facts. It would be necessary there to make a sound statement. My impression so far is that harassment which then becomes persecution is expanding around the world because fundamentalism is in, whether it be Christian, Judaic or Islamic fundamentalism. In Pakistan I think the Government has made political mileage by aligning itself with the desires and designs of the fundamentalist mullahs. The easy way to appear to be super-Islamic — that is, as I say, politically advantageous today — is to pick on the Ahmadis. I think that maltreatment of Ahmadis exists in other countries as well, although it seems to exist with particular virulence in present-day Pakistan.

**PM:** What do the fundamentalist mullahs in Iran think of the Ahmadis?

**ARG:** The Shi'ites themselves are already accustomed to being somewhat on the outside with respect to Sunni Islam. I would expect that the relationships are not so acrimonious as they are with Sunni countries. In the case of Saudi Arabia, some have speculated that the intensity of Pakistan's governmental opposition to the Ahmadis is generated not only by a collusion with the fundamentalist mullahs in order to allow the Government to appear dedicatedly Islamic and therefore attractive to the religious masses, but is also motivated by a desire to acquiesce in Saudi Arabia's designs to be the orthodox spokesman or custodian of Islamic purity. Islam in Pakistan receives funding from Saudi Arabia. The gigantic new Shah Faisal mosque located in Islamabad has been built largely with Saudi money.

**PM:** What will happen in the future? They seem to be growing faster than Islam itself?

**ARG:** I am not sure what the future holds. From the point of view of the Ahmadis themselves, they are very optimistic. They feel they are in true line of fidelity to the Qur'an, to Muhammad, with the additional inspiration of their founder and the present-day Khalifa. They are supremely confident that the future belongs to them and their version of Islam.

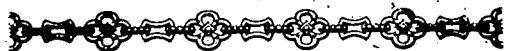
**PM:** Is it that kind of confidence that makes them so attractive?

**ARG:** I asked this question persistently. I travelled all over Pakistan. I

have never travelled so much as on this last trip to Pakistan. I would ask: *How are you viewed by your neighbours? How do the people you work with, or have to do business with, regard you? Are they distancing themselves from you lest they be contaminated by charges of associating with criminal and heretical Ahmadis?*

The answer was: *No, the relationships with immediate neighbours are very good. The neighbours come to Ahmadi weddings. The opposition is mainly official and stirred up by particular pirs, holy men or mullahs, who incite mobs usually belonging to super-fundamentalist youth organizations or an association for the protection of the finality of the prophet. The relations with immediate neighbours are convivial; they are respected. It is said that General Zia uses Ahmadi doctors because they are well trained and regarded as incorruptible. Because Ahmadi lawyers have a reputation for giving the best possible service, they have as their clients fundamentalist leaders. They are well regarded by the ordinary people in Pakistan.*

**PM:** Very, very interesting. I am very grateful to you for coming in and telling us about the Ahmadis. I have been speaking with Dr. Antonio Gualtieri, Professor of Religion at Carleton University, Ottawa. Thank you again.



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Finally, I wish to clarify one more point. Islam requires submission to the Will of God and in return offers peace. There are people, especially in the Middle East with its continuous war, who use the name of Islam to justify their acts of terrorism, bombing and killing of innocent people. The Head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Community in Islam, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, has beautifully explained that Islam does not teach violence and does not permit exploitation whether it be social, political, economic or religious. The political philosophy of Islam has no room for false or deceptive diplomacy. It believes in absolute morality and enjoins justice and fairness to friends or foes alike, in every sphere of human interest.

Islam neither permits compulsion for the spread of its own message nor gives licence to other religions to do so. Indulgence in terrorism, even in the name of the noblest objectives, is entirely incompatible with the teachings of Islam.

Islam teaches that unless man learns to live at peace with himself and his fellow human beings he cannot live at peace with God.

## CHASTITY

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)

The moral qualities that the true Creator has appointed for the discarding of evil are known by four names in Arabic which has a specific name for all human concepts, behaviours and morals.

The first of these moral qualities is called *Ihsan*, that is to say, chastity. This expression connotes the virtue that is related to the faculty of procreation of men and women. Those men and women would be called chaste who refrain altogether from illicit sex and all approaches to it, the consequence of which is disgrace and humiliation for both parties in this world, and chastisement in the hereafter, and dishonour and grave harm for those related to them. For instance, if a person is guilty of an approach towards the wife of another which, though it does not proceed as far as adultery, yet amounts to its preliminaries, it would become incumbent upon the self-respecting husband of the woman to divorce her on account of her willingness to tolerate such an approach. Her children would also be sadly afflicted. The husband would have to endure all this injury on account of the misconduct of a villain.

It should be remembered that the moral quality of chastity would come into play when a person who possesses the capacity for the compassing of this particular vice restrains himself from indulging in it. If he does not possess that capacity, because he is a minor or is impotent or is a eunuch or has arrived at extreme old age, we cannot give him credit for the moral quality of chastity. He has a natural condition of chastity but, as we have repeatedly pointed out, natural conditions cannot be described as moral qualities. They become moral qualities when they are exercised or become capable of being exercised on their proper occasions, under the control of reason. Therefore, minors and impotent ones and those who deprive themselves in some way of sexual capacity cannot be given credit for this moral quality, though apparently they would be leading chaste lives. In all such cases their chastity would only be a natural condition. As this vice and its preliminaries can be practised by both men and women, the Holy Book of God sets forth directions for both men and women in this context. It says:

قُلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَفْعَلُونَ مِنَ ابْصَارِهِمْ حِفْظًا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ مِمَّا رِثَايَا يَصْنَعُونَ ۖ  
وَقُلِ لِلرُّؤُسِ يَفْعَلُونَ مِنَ ابْصَارِهِمْ حِفْظًا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ مِمَّا رِثَايَا يَصْنَعُونَ ۖ



amount to criticism of the Divine Who has bestowed this capacity upon man. Besides merit depends upon restraining the exercise of a capacity on an improper occasion, through fear of God, and thus acquiring double benefit through its proper exercise. By destroying the capacity a person would deprive himself of both benefits. Merit depends upon the possession of the capacity and its proper regulation. What merit would a person acquire who has lost that capacity and has become like a child? Does a child deserve merit because of his chastity?

#### FIVE REMEDIES AGAINST UNCHASTITY

In these verses God Almighty has not only set forth excellent teaching for acquiring the quality of chastity but has furnished man with five remedies against un-chastity. These are to restrain one's eyes from gazing on those who are outside the prohibited degrees; to restrain one's ears from listening to their voices and to descriptions of their good looks; to avoid occasions which might furnish incitement towards this vice; and to control oneself during the period of celibacy through fasting, dieting etc.

We can confidently claim that this excellent teaching with all its devices that is set forth in the Holy Quran is peculiar to Islam. It should be kept in mind that as the natural condition of man, which is the source of his passions, is such that he cannot depart from it without a complete change in himself, his passions are bound to be roused, or in other words put in peril, when they are confronted with the occasion and opportunity for indulging in this vice. Therefore, God Almighty has not instructed us that we might freely gaze at women outside the prohibited degrees and might contemplate their beauty and observe all their movements in dancing etc. but that we should do so with pure looks. Nor have we been instructed to listen to the singing of these women and to lend ear to tales of their beauty, but that we should do so with a pure intent. We have been positively commanded not to look at their beauty, whether with pure intent or otherwise, nor to listen to their musical voices or to descriptions of their good looks, whether with pure intent or otherwise. We have been directed to eschew all this as we eschew carrion, so that we should not stumble. It is almost certain that our free glances would cause us to stumble sometime or the other. As God Almighty desires that our eyes and our hearts and all our limbs and organs should continue in a state of purity. He has furnished us with this excellent teaching. There can be no doubt that unrestrained looks become a source of danger. If we place soft bread before a hungry dog, it would be vain to hope that the dog should pay no attention to it. Thus God Almighty desired that human faculties should not be provided with any occasion for secret functioning and should not

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## DEFENCE OF CHASTITY

(Haven Bradford Gow)

According to the American Social Health Association, 12 million Americans from all areas and walks of life are affected by sexually transmitted diseases. In 1988, one million Americans contracted gonorrhea and about 500,000 new cases of genital herpes appear each year with the virus currently affecting an estimated 30 million across the United States.

Child psychologist Dr. David Elkind observes that *Contemporary teenagers are more sexually active than at any earlier time in our history..... There are more than a million teenage pregnancies in this country each year, a higher percentage than in any other Western country.....*

In this connection, the Gallup organization recently conducted a study of U.S. college students said they have sexual relations regularly or occasionally, while 51 per cent of the Protestant students surveyed said they likewise engage in sex. Fifty three percent of the Catholic students said they have had sex with more than one partner, while 49 per cent of the Protestants said that they had. Ten per cent of the Protestant students had procured abortions, while 8 per cent of Catholic students said they had.

Hunter College professor of philosophy Dr. Alice von Hildebrand, in her new book, *By Love Defined* (Sophia Institute), observes that all too many in our society think *selfgratification is the essential purpose of sex. Happily, they're wrong.... To view sexuality as merely biological, as an instinct that craves satisfaction is totally to misunderstand it. Such a view is the opposite of the sublimity of sexual union that is experienced when you are both animated by love, when you seek sexual intimacy not for its pleasure, but as a way of manifesting the deep love which exists between you. At these times, your sexual ecstasy transcends bodily pleasure and includes a genuine joy that springs from the union of your souls deeply delighting in each other.*

In his work, *Purity* (Franciscan University Press), the late Dr. Dietrich von Hildebrand, an eminent philosopher and the husband of Alice von Hildebrand, pointed out that *Human purity involves a distinctive attitude to the important domain of sex. According to the attitude which a man adopts to sex he is pure or impure. Impurity, said Dr. von Hildebrand consists in the abuse of sex..... In the first place I fling myself away by giving up this personal*

secret to another with no intention of a real and final surrender to that person or of entering thus into a lasting external union with my partner. Where the foundation has not been laid by wedded love and the deliberate purpose of forming a permanent objective community of life, secure from arbitrary whim, the act, which represents a unique self-donation and effects an intimate union of the most fundamental nature, signifies a specific squandering of self, the betrayal of one's self and one's partner.

Julia Duin, a religious writer for *The Houston Chronicle* and the author of *Purity Makes the Heart Grow Stronger* (Servant Books), tells us that *Many of our friends consider life without sex abnormal. If we are divorced or widowed, they wonder why we don't use our newfound freedom to explore sexual frontiers; if we used to sleep around before conversion but now do not, people wonder why we are acting virtuously all of a sudden. Virginity is rarely mentioned except during references to the Virgin Mary.*

Miss Duin observes that *Our culture is not enamoured with chastity, chastity meaning faithfulness within marriage and abstinence from sex outside of marriage. The view that people should be chaste, she points out, is different from celibacy, which means permanent abstinence from sex.*

In sharp contrast to the concepts of chastity and celibacy and sexual purity is society's popular view that *expects that everyone needs and wants sex. The unmarried are portrayed as sexually active on most TV sitcoms. Sex between the unmarried is considered normal, accepted and fashionable.*

Julia Duin notes the disconcerting statistics regarding sex devoid of commitment and responsibility: *Only 20 per cent of all unmarried women in their twenties are still virgins, including a 1983 study paid for by the National Institute of Health.... One-third of all single women in their twenties, about 2-4 million people, have lived with a man at some point, the study said.*

Clearly, in contemporary society, the most glaring assaults on the intrinsic moral worth and dignity of human beings are a result of our popular sexual attitudes and practices. For too many, sex is simply a plaything or a tool to enhance one's popularity or to alleviate one's doubts about one's masculinity or femininity. For them, sex is not a sacred union of life and love — as it should be — but simply a tool of masturbatory and voyeuristic gratification.

Premarital sex is considered the norm, and there are immense pressures on young people to engage in sex before marriage, to procure abortions and to live together. These pressures emanate from the media,

popular literature and films, the deleterious influence of the peer group and the pernicious moral climate that permeates society.

Young people who practise chastity are considered odd; indeed, they are scorned, ridiculed and ostracized by those people — young and old — who smugly and arrogantly think premarital and extramarital sex is a sign of love.

Consequently, our families, churches, schools and social organizations once again must emphasize the teaching and learning of such values as chastity, self-respect, respect for others and moral responsibility; they must courageously affirm — in word and deed — the sacredness of sex, marriage, family and human life.

[Mr. Gow is a Wilbur Foundation Literary Fellow and a columnist for The New York City Tribune, Christian News and Chinatown News.]

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as the animal is inferior to him so he, also, is inferior to God and should, therefore, be ready to sacrifice himself and all his personal interests and inclinations for the sake of God when he is required to do so. The attainment of righteousness should be the goal of every Muslim. The Holy Quran states:

*Verily the most honourable among you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most righteous among you.* (49:40)

*Those who do good and act righteously shall have a great reward.* (4:173)

*Verily he truly prospers who purifies himself, and remembers the name of his Lord and offers prayers.* (87:15)

The act of sacrifice is in no way an atonement for the sins of the person making the sacrifice. Islam emphasises that no creature or person can atone for the sins of anyone else and, therefore, rejects the Christian Doctrine of Atonement which declares that Jesus atoned for the sins of mankind by shedding his blood on the cross.

Eid-ul-Azha is an occasion on which Muslims everywhere are encouraged to make every kind of sacrifice for the spiritual, moral, social and economic uplift of mankind and especially their own. If they make it a common cause and strive to manifest in themselves the attributes of God in accordance with the teachings and guidance of the Holy Quran and teachings of the Holy Prophet then, indeed, the message of Eid-ul-Azha would have borne fruit.

EID MUBARAK!



## 80 YEARS AGO

### THE STORIES OF THE HOLY QURAN

*(The following is an extract from the July issue  
of the Review of Religions, 1910)*

The purpose for which the histories of the former prophets and the stories of the previous generations were revealed to the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) becomes still more apparent when we consider the warnings given to the opponents of Islam to learn a lesson from the fate of the previous people whose histories were rehearsed to them in the Holy Quran. The reader is requested to note the following verses of the Holy Quran:—

*There have been apostles before thee laughed to scorn: but that which they laughed to scorn encompassed the mockers among them! Say: Go through the land: then see what hath been the end of those who treated them as liars. (6:11,12)*

*But how many generations have We destroyed ere the days of these (the Meccans), mightier than they in strength! Search ye then the land—was there any escape? Lo! herein is warning for him who hath a heart, or lendeth the ear, and is himself attentive. (50:37,38)*

*They who preceded them accused their prophets of falsehood, so a punishment came upon them whence they looked not for it, and God made them taste humiliation in this present life..... Now have We set before men in this Quran every kind of example that haply they may take heed. (39:26-28)*

*And if they (the Meccans) turn away, then say: I warn you of a punishment of Ad and Thamood. (41:14)*

*They swore by God with their mightiest oath that should a warner come to them, they would yield to guidance more than any other people: but when the warner came to them, it only increased in them their estrangement, their haughtiness on earth and their plotting of evil! But the plotting of evil shall only encompass those that make use of it. Can they, then, expect aught but God's way of dealing with the peoples of old? Thou shalt by no means find any change in the way of God, — yea, thou shalt not find any variableness in the way of God. Have they never journeyed in the land and seen what hath been the end of those who flourished before them, mightier in strength than*

*they? God is not to be frustrated by aught in the heavens or in the earth; verily He is the All-knowing, the Almighty. (35:43-45)*

*This is, from the histories of the cities which We relate to thee. Some of them are standing, others mown down. And We dealt not unfairly by them, but they dealt not fairly by themselves, and their gods on whom they called beside God availed them not at all when thy Lord's behest came to pass, and they did but increase their ruin: Such was thy Lord's punishment when He punished the cities that had been wicked, verily His punishment is afflictive, severe! Herein truly is a sign for him who feareth the torment of the latter day. (11:102-104)*

*Before thee indeed have apostles been mocked at—and I bore long with the unbelievers; then, I chastised them; — and how severe was My punishment! (13:33)*

*Are they (the enemies of the Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) better than the people of Tobba and those who flourished before them, whom We destroyed? Of a truth, they were evil-doers. (44:38-39)*

*And how many cities were mightier in strength than the city which hath thrust thee forth! We destroyed them, and there was none to help them. (47:14)*

*Truly they who oppose God and His apostle shall be brought low. And now have We sent down demonstrative signs, and for the unbelievers is a disgraceful chastisement. (58:6)*

*Have they never journeyed through the land, and seen what hath been the end of those who were before them? Mightier were they than these in strength; and they broke up the land and cultivated it more than these have cultivated it; and their apostles came to them with proofs of their mission: and it was not God who would wrong them, but they wronged themselves; then evil was the end of the evil-doers, because they had treated the signs of God as lies, and laughed them to scorn. (3:10-11)*

These verses of the Holy Quran sufficiently indicate the purpose for which the histories of the former generations and their prophets were revealed to the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him). The Holy Prophet, said the Holy Quran, was a warner like the warners that had preceded him and it was the law of God that He

destroyed the enemies of the prophets and gave His servants victory over their opponents. That was an unalterable law of God and the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) being a true Prophet, his enemies were to be dealt with in the same way in which the enemies of the former prophets had been dealt with. *Verily*, proclaimed the Holy Quran:

*They who oppose God and His apostle shall be amongst the most low. God hath written this decree, 'I will surely prevail, I and My apostles.' Truly God is Strong, Mighty. (58:21-22)*

It was to illustrate this law of God that most of the histories of the former prophets and their people were repeatedly rehearsed to the enemies of Islam. The purpose of these histories becomes still more apparent from the histories themselves. When one reads these histories one feels that the object of the narrator is, not to tell a story, but to teach a lesson. To illustrate this, I will take certain concrete instances.

Let us begin with Noah. Read the story of this prophet in chapter 10 of the Holy Quran. It begins thus:

*Also recite to them the history of Noah.*

These words with which the story is introduced clearly indicate its purpose. God commands the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) to recite to his people the story of Noah. Why? Because there was a lesson in it for them. Then follow the words of Noah which he addressed to his people and which run thus:

*If O my people! My abode with you and my reminding you of the signs of God be grievous to you, yet in God is my trust. Muster, therefore, your designs and your false gods, and let not your design be carried on in the dark: then come to some decision about me, and delay me not.*

Does the reader think that these were mere words of a story? The Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) was not telling the story of Noah; it was as much his own story as it was the story of Noah and the words which the latter addressed to his people were really addressed by the Holy Prophet to his own people. The Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) said to his people in the words of Prophet Noah:

*In God is my trust. Muster your designs and your false gods and let not your design be carried on in the dark: then come to some decision*

*about me and delay me not.*

These were bold words and they contained a challenge to the people of Mecca and their allies to do all that lay in their power to destroy the Holy Prophet if they could. Instead of destroying him, it was announced they would only destroy themselves, like the people of Noah. Then after relating how God saved Noah and destroyed his enemies, the Holy Quran concludes the story with the following words which are very significant: *See, then, what was the end of these warned ones!* meaning that similar would be the fate of the warned ones of the days of the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him). In chapter 11, the Holy Quran quotes the words which the people of Noah addressed to him. It says:

*Then said the chiefs of the people who believed not, 'We see in thee but a man like ourselves; and we see not who have followed thee except our meanest ones of hasty judgment, nor see we any excellence in you above ourselves: nay, we deem you liars.'*

But this was actually what the proud chiefs of Mecca, such as Abu Jahl, Otba, Shaiba and the others, said with regard to the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) and his followers and therefore in the story of Noah and his people there was a lesson for them. Noah and his followers were deemed weak by their proud foes and were even treated with contempt, but God assisted those that were accounted weak and destroyed their haughty enemies. And the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) was a Warner from God, just as Noah was Warner and his enemies were to be brought to naught, as the opponents of Noah were brought to naught. Note the words with which the story of Noah as narrated in Chapter 11 concludes *this is one of the secret histories*, says the Holy Quran:

*We reveal it unto thee, neither thou nor thy people knew it ere this, be patient then, verily there is a prosperous issue to the Godfearing.*

Why is the story of Noah called a secret history? It is so called not because the story of the deluge was unknown to the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) and his opponents, but because it was really the future history of the Holy Prophet and his people themselves. The words which have been translated as *secret histories* literally mean *announcements of the things unseen*. 'Neither thou nor thy people knew it ere this'. This does not mean that the facts of the story of Noah were not known to them. It was their own future history foretold in

the story of Noah that was unknown to them. The chiefs of Mecca did not know that they were destined to meet with destruction. They were a powerful people who regarded the poor followers of the Holy Prophet with contempt. They had never even dreamt of their woeful end which was foretold to them in the story of Noah and his people. The Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) also did not know this until it was revealed to him by God. God says:

*Be patient then; verily there is a prosperous issue to the Godfearing.*

These words coming at the end of the story of Noah clearly indicate the purpose for which the story was revealed. They mean that just as there was a prosperous issue to Noah and his followers, and God assisted them against their enemies, similarly he would assist the Holy Prophet and his poor followers against their powerful enemies and would lead the haughty chiefs of Mecca to a disastrous end. Thus the story of Noah was a secret history inasmuch as it predicted triumph for the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) and ruin for his enemies. It is to this fact that the Holy Quran refers when speaking of Noah and his people, where it says:

*verily in this are signs. (23:31)*

What is true of the story of Noah is also true of the stories of the other Prophets. Read these stories carefully and you will find that they are so many prophecies relating to the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him). In every thing which is said about the former prophets there is a lesson for those who reflect. What the prophets said to their people was also applicable to the people of the Holy Prophet. In *Sura Hud*, for instance, we have the following account of what the people of Shuaib said to their prophet and what he said to his people, and these words applied with equal force to the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) and his people. They (the people of Shuaib) said:

*O Shuaib! we understand not much of what thou sayest, and we clearly see that thou art powerless among us. Were it not for thy family we would surely stone thee, nor couldst thou prevail against us.*

Now this was exactly what the people of Mecca said to the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) and the following reply which the Prophet Shuaib gave to his people was clearly meant as a reply

to the chiefs of Mecca, according to the Holy Quran:

*He said, O my people! does my family stand higher in your esteem than God? Cast ye Him behind your back, with neglect? Verily, my Lord is round about your actions. And, O my people, act with what power ye can for my hurt: I verily will act: and ye shall know on whom shall light a punishment that shall disgrace him, and who is the liar. Await ye; verily I will await with you.*

In these words, the chiefs of Mecca were told by the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) that they might act with what power they could to hurt him, that their efforts to ruin him would be of no avail, for his trust was in God, and that they would soon know who would be punished by God; and they were asked to wait for the fulfilment of this divine promise.

Space does not allow me to go on quoting instances of how the stories of the previous prophets serve as prophecies which foretell the success of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) and the destruction of his enemies. I will only quote here a few more verses to show that the people of Mecca were repeatedly warned to take a lesson from the fate of the people whose histories were rehearsed to them in the Holy Quran. The reader is requested to note the following verses:

*Before them the people of Noah, Ad, and Pharoah the lord of the stakes, treated their prophets as impostors; and Thamood, and the people of Lot, and the dwellers in the forest (the people of Shuaib); these were the confederates; all verily did naught but charge the apostles with falsehood, just therefore was My retribution. (38:11-13)*

*To the people of Pharoah also came the threatenings; all Our signs did they thread as impostures; therefore punished We them as He only can punish Who is the Mighty, the Strong. Are your unbelievers, O Meccans, better men than these? Is there any exemption for you in the sacred books? (54:42-44)*

*Verily, We have sent you an Apostle to bear witness to you even as We sent an apostle to Pharaoh: but Pharaoh rebelled against the apostle, and We laid hold on him with a severe chastisement. So, how, if you believe not, will ye screen yourselves from the day that shall turn children grey-headed? (73:16-18)*

*Their state is like that of the people of Pharaoh and of those before*

*them who believed not in the signs of God: therefore God seized upon them in their sin! Verily, God is mighty, severe in punishing ..... Their state is like that of the people of Pharaoh and of those before them who treated their Lord's signs as lies. We therefore destroyed them in their sins, and We drowned the people of Pharaoh; for they were all doers of wrong. (8:53-55)*

*Verily, in this present life We assuredly succour Our apostles, and those who believe and We will assuredly succour them on the day when the witnesses shall stand forth. (40:52)*

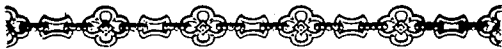
The foregoing verses clearly lead to the conclusion that the stories of the prophets and their people that are to be found in the Holy Quran are not related therein without a purpose. They are meant to serve as warnings for the enemies of Islam.

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be confronted with anything that might incite dangerous tendencies.

This is the philosophy that underlies the Islamic regulations relating to the observance of the veil. The Book of God does not aim at keeping women in seclusion like prisoners. This is the concept of those who are not acquainted with the correct pattern of Islamic ways. The purpose of these regulations is to restrain men and women from letting their eyes to rove freely and from displaying their good looks and beauties, for therein lies the good both of men and of women. It should be remembered that to restrain one's looks and to direct them only towards observing that which is permissible is described in Arabic by the expression *ghadde basar*, which is the expression employed in the Holy Quran in this context. It does not behove a pious person who desires to keep his heart pure that he should lift his eyes freely in every direction like an animal. It is necessary that such a one should cultivate the habit of *ghadde basar* in his social life. This is a blessed habit through which his natural impulses would be converted into a high moral quality without interfering with his social needs. This is the quality which is called chastity in Islam.

(The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam)



## PRESS REPORT

### JAILED FOR SAYING PRAYER

On 23rd February 1985, Mr Mahmood Ahmad Shams, an Ahmadi Muslim and sales and marketing manager of Heavey Mechanical Complex, Taxila, Pakistan, visited Wapda Power House, Multan, on an official tour. He was wearing the *Kalima* badge on his coat. When the time came for *Zuhar* (noon) prayer, Mr Mahmood Ahmad Shams and his Ahmadi friend Mr Amjad Ali, offered their prayers within the compound of Wapda Power House, Multan.

Later, the police instituted a case under sec, 298c, Pakistan Penal Code against both Ahmadis:

- (i) Mr Mahmood Ahmad Shams was charged for wearing the *Kalima* badge and for offering prayers.
- (ii) Mr Amjad Ali was charged for offering prayers.

The case was heard by Mr Muhammad Hussain Baloch, Magistrate class I, Multan. After giving a brief account of the incident he wrote in his judgement:

- (1) In his statement to the police, Mr Mahmood Ahmad Shams admitted that he belongs to the Ahmadiyya Community; that he came on an official visit to Power House, Multan; that he had a *Kalima* badge on his coat and that he had offered his prayers. Mr Shams further stated that he had committed no crime and that no body showed any reaction to the *Kalima* badge or his offering prayers during his visit. It was many days later that he came to know that he was involved in a case which he regarded as false. Mr Shams did not present any witnesses, nor did he appear as a witness.
- (2) Mr Amjad Ali said in his statement that he is an Ahmadi and that he had offered his prayers on that day as a daily routine. He had been doing so for the last 18 years. He had, therefore, committed no crime. He said that he was involved in the case due to religious enmity. No defence witnesses appeared.
- (3) The prosecution witnesses, Mr Jaafar Hussain Nasir and Nazir Ahmad Siddiqui stated that they asked Mr Amjad Ali why was Mr Shams wearing the *Kalima* badge? He replied that Mr Shams had done so in order to let others know that Ahmadis are Muslims too. They claimed



that due to that the religious feelings of the witnesses were hurt.

- (4) The defence council made a plea that the displaying of a badge by a Qadiani or Mirzai did not amount to an offence. Therefore by displaying the *Kalima* or offering prayer, the accused had not committed any offence. The Council for Prosecution maintained that the accused belonged to the Ahmadiyya Community and that by displaying the badge and offering prayers like Muslims, they had acted as Muslims and hurt the religious feelings of Muslims, hence both the accused had committed a criminal offence punishable under Sec.298/c of the Pakistan Penal Code.

Mr Mahmood Ahmad Shams has described the events of 28th January 1990 when he attended the court in connection with the case:

I reached the court at 9 am. Mr Amjad Ali was also there. We were called at about 1 pm. The magistrate, Muhammad Hussain Baluch, heard arguments from both sides. He then announced his decision. I was convicted for wearing the *Kalima* badge and offering prayers, while Mr Amjad Ali was acquitted. After about 15 minutes a copy of the decision was given to me.

In the meantime, Mr Amjad Ali had informed an Ahmadi advocate, Mr Chaudhry Abdul Hafeez, about my conviction. Mr Abdul Hafeez came to the court and asked Mr Amjad Ali to bring some food for me. The policeman insisted that he would take me immediately to the police lock-up, but the registrar of the court told him to wait until I had finished my meal.

The police constable had no handcuffs with him and, therefore, tried to tie my hands together with a piece of cloth. The registrar again intervened and told the police official to take me without being handcuffed.

He took me to the police lock-up, and handed me over to the officials. The person incharge asked me, 'What crime did you commit?' I replied, 'I offered my prayers'. He was much surprised at the nature of my crime. The place was very filthy and stinking. Some one had been urinating. Rubbish was on the floor. The latrine gutter was blocked and was overflowing. Some of the inmates were smoking. There was a strong odour of marijuana. The criminals were exchanging filthy abuses. They were surprised to see me among them. One asked, 'What brings you here'. I told him, 'Because I offered prayers'. They began to criticise the government for making such stupid laws.

After a while the roll call began and we were led outside handcuffed

and chained. When I was being handcuffed a fellow prisoner addressed the policeman and said, 'Shame on you. Shame on you. You are putting handcuffs on a person who is sentenced for saying his prayers'. We were bundled into a police van. I was busy in Tasbih and Tahmeed, i.e., remembrance of Allah, quietly. We reached the District jail. We came out of the van, all tied up to a long chain. The door of the jail opened. The officers started the body search. One by one the prisoners were thoroughly searched, even to the extent the cords of their shalwaars being loosened and hands being put inside. I prayed to God Almighty to save me from this indignity. My prayers were answered. When my turn came, they just checked my pockets and allowed me in.

We were taken to the office one by one. Our names and other particulars were registered. The officer again inquired me what crime I had committed and the sentence I received. I told him that I was given one year rigorous imprisonment and fined 1000 Rupees, for saying my prayers. He was surprised. He looked at me and offered me a seat. I kept standing. After the entries in the register, I was told to go to B-2 Ward where I was told that I would be given a blanket for the night. I performed ablutions, An in-mate spread a sheet for me and I offered Asr prayer. I prayed:

'O my Creator: Here I am. I submit myself to Thee, wholly and completely. Take me into Your care.'

I prayed vehemently for 15-20 minutes. The prisoners had gathered round me by that time. They were curious to know what crime I had committed. When I told them, they began to hurl abuses at the government and the mullahs who were responsible for my predicament.

After a while the orders for my release came. Ahmadi brothers were waiting for me outside the jail. They embraced me and congratulated me for being a 'prisoner in the name of Allah'. A tea party was arranged in my honour.

Mr Chaudhry Abdul Hafeez, advocate, and Mr Rana Bashir Ahmad advocate, told me: 'It was only by the sheer grace of God that you were released after only 3 hours. In similar cases the normal time taken by the courts for the release of a prisoner is 7-10 days.'

Mr Abdul Hafeez Advocate told me that he got the copy of the judgement immediately from the court. He, then, rushed to the Session Court, and told the judge about the case. The judge was so sympathetic that he gave orders for my release on bail immediately. Now the problem

was who would stand surety for me. It was 2.30 pm. At that moment Mr Rana Bashir Ahmad advocate, came into the court room and gave the guarantee required by law.

Thus by the grace of God I was out of the jail before 5 pm. This was indeed one of God's signs which I witnessed. The case would continue in the court of law and I hope that God would show another sign of His Mercy and Kindness in favour of Ahmadiyyat. Inshallah.

For further information please contact: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry, 16-18 Gressenhall Road, London. SW18. Tel: 081-870 8517 (Ext.147)

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(from page 12)

Criminal Court of Secunderabad. We were sentenced for eight days jail punishment. I was weeping in the jail and saying that it was my Ahl-e-Hadith partner who had been speaking ill and I was entangled unjustly. I was then asked why I was keeping his company. From this dream, I realised that my Ahl-e-Hadith partner being against Ahmadiyyat was opposing the Ahmadiyya Movement; whereas I was associating myself with him inspite of being convinced of the truth of Ahmadiyyat. For this reason I was given the jail punishment in this world, and if I had continued the same attitude I would have been given the punishment of hell after death.

I narrated this dream to my Ahl-e-Hadith partner and afterwards on Friday the 9th April, 1915, I embraced Ahmadiyyat through Alhaj Maulana Mir Muhammad Sayeed Saheb, the Amir of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat, Hyderabad. All praise to Allah

In a letter dated 24th March, 1925, the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II wrote to me:

*Before you accepted Ahmadiyyat, probably Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Saheb wrote to me about you, stating that you were inclined towards Ahmadiyyat and might perhaps soon join the Movement. I then saw in a dream that you were seated in a magnificent building, in the midst of which was a great verandah wherein a throne had been carved out. I saw you seated on the throne with divine effulgence falling upon you in the form of rain. I was then convinced that you would join the Movement and Allah would make your presence beneficial to humanity, and indeed it happened so. I trust in God that He will fulfil this dream of mine more clearly through your ownself as well as through your family.*

# **The REVIEW of RELIGIONS**

The Review of Religions is the oldest magazine of its kind published in English language in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent. Its first issue was published in 1902 and it has been continuously published since.

It bears the distinction that it was initiated under the direction of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah himself.

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It also presents solutions in the light of Islamic teachings of the problems with which the Islamic world is from time to time confronted.

A study of this magazine is indispensable for the appreciation of the doctrines of the Ahmadiyya Movement and the teachings of its Holy Founder.

