

THE REVIEW of RELIGIONS

VOL LXXXI

NO. 2

FEBRUARY 1986

IN THIS ISSUE

- GUIDE POSTS
- CURRENT TOPICS
- EXISTENCE OF GOD
- AN INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM
- WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT GOOD AND EVIL?
- CHAUDHRI MUHAMMAD ZAFRULLA KHAN
- YUZ ASAF AND JESUS: THE BUDDHISM CONNECTION
- GOODNESS AND PIETY
- LAST MESSAGE TO MANKIND
- JEHAD

European Edition

EDITOR: B. A. ORCHARD



THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the expected world reformer and the Promised Messiah. 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.



EDITOR

Bashir Ahmad Orchard

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dr. Khalil Ahmad Nasir

Dr. Qazi M. Barkatullah

Dr. M. Hussain Sajid

Mr. Abid Haneef

Syed Hasanat Ahmad

MANAGER EUROPEAN EDITION

A. R. Mughal

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

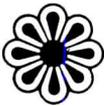
A monthly magazine devoted to the dissemination of the teachings of Islam, the discussion of Islamic affairs and religion in general.

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.

All correspondence should be forwarded directly to:

*The Editor,
The London Mosque,
16 Gressenhall Road,
London, SW18 5QL, U.K.*

*Annual subscriptions:
U.K. & Europe £10
U.S.A. & Canada \$15*



CONTENTS

	Page
1. Guide Posts (Bashir Ahmad Orchard)	2
2. Current Topics (A. R. Mughal)	4
3. Existence of God (Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad)	6
4. An Introduction to Islam (Dr. Sarah Saqi)	14
5. What do we know about Good and Evil? (Abdus Salam Madsen)	19
6. Chaudhri Muhammad Zafrulla Khan (Prof. Abdus Salam)	25
7. Yuz Asaf and Jesus: The Buddhism Connection (Tahir Ijaz)	31
8. Goodness and Piety (Afzalur Rahman)	38
9. Last Message to Mankind (Fazal Ilahi Bashir)	43
10. Jihad (Amatul-Shafi Nasser)	46

Guide Posts

SPIRITUAL HUNGER

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

“Excel one another in virtue
and good works.”

(Quran 2:149).

There are a great number of people who attend religious services and meetings but leave as empty as they were before they arrived. They are in no way moved or changed for the better. No doubt they may express their appreciation of the sermon or address and highly laud the speaker for his inspiring words; but that is as far as it goes. They enjoyed the speakers' eloquent talk in the same way that they might enjoy listening to a piece of pleasant music; but when all is over its effect completely vanishes. With whom does the fault lie? With the speaker? It does to a great extent if his manner of delivery is listless, monotonous or generally boring; otherwise it does not. The fault lies with the individuals themselves for they have no hunger for spiritual food.

Once there was a lady suffering from general ill-health. She was advised to move to a warmer climate from where she wrote letters to her friends extolling the lovely weather, beautiful scenery and luscious fruits. She wrote in glowing words about the variety of tempting fruits. However she always referred to her lack of appetite. Later news was received that she had died despite the abundance of exotic health building fruits. She did not die from the absence of nourishing food but from the want of appetite. So it is with many of us. We live in the midst of abundant spiritual guidance but we have no appetite for it. God has provided us with heavenly nourishment but most of us do not hunger for it. Only those with spiritual appetite assuage their hunger with God's heavenly fruits which sustain them not only for the moment but during the days that lie ahead.

God has provided divine laws and guidance for our spiritual welfare but unfortunately many of us have no appetite for His heavenly provision. What a waste of life! God says:

“Verily the most honourable person in the
sight of Allah is the one who is
most righteous.”

(Quran 49:14).

How true is the beatitude:

“Blessed are they which do hunger and
thirst after righteousness; for they
shall be filled.”

(Matthew 5:6).

He who earnestly seeks to appease his spiritual hunger constantly seeks and absorbs spiritual food. He feeds his mind with holy thoughts and incessantly strives to improve his character which he regards as his first duty. This is the central aim of his life. His innermost desire is to climb higher and higher in holy living and he perpetually strives to better himself towards this end being aware that it requires of him attention, effort, sacrifice and prayer:

“Beauty and truth and all that these contain,
Drop not like ripened fruit about our feet;
We climb to them through years of sweat
and pain.”

One of his favourite prayers is:

God be in my head,
And in my understanding.
God be in my eyes,
And in my looking.
God be in my mouth,
And in my speaking.
God be in my heart,
And in my thinking.
God be at my end,
And at my parting.

Let us eat the fruits of paradise from the table of the Lord!

Transition to Democracy in Pakistan

(By A. R. Mughal)

The road back to democracy in Pakistan may be paved with good intentions but it is also strewn with obstacles which make the journey both difficult and painful. The obstacles consist mainly of legislation passed by the military regime and a large number of amendments which had basically altered the spirit and concept of the 1973 Constitution. The rationale for passing such legislation was the belief that this would prevent recurrence of the political anarchy that had existed prior to the military take-over.

We are not really concerned with the political problems of Pakistan. The present regime was confronted with choices which it would have preferred not to have to make for the time-being. The harvest of speculation and fables is richer than ever in Pakistan and nobody knows when the political winds may suddenly change into the whirlwinds of unrest and uncertainty. The Parliament is more or less a ritual of irrelevance and is engaged most of the time in ridiculously trivial matters while the country is bleeding from unsolved economic and social evils.

In spite of the concerted put-down of any leadership challenge, it was admitted that the Administration looked pretty untidy and its supporters were nervous and the fanatical multitudes were visibly unsettled. There were also some diversions in the President's response to the spate of speeches and statements in the Parliament. It was obvious that the regime had loosened its hold on the dissidents — of course not voluntarily. There were many in the fanatical hierarchy who preferred to believe that there were no radical changes in the offing and that the apparent restlessness among the masses was only short-lived.

The dust has almost settled since the Government's last intervention in religious affairs of the nation. It has now assumed an attitude of politeness towards its earlier initiatives. This perhaps is a shrewd response which might have commended itself earlier to the small Ahmadiyya Community. Even if the Government had not pandered to those who convened regularly the anti-Ahmadiyya days as the hand-out days, it would certainly have continued to exist as it exists today. The official Islam everywhere had proved a

failure in the past. Its Pakistani brand of intolerance, perfidy and fanaticism is even more repugnant to common morality and decent theology. The inevitable gap between theory and practice is much narrower in Islam than in other faiths. But it is wider and more comprehensive in the theocratic set-up of Islam in Pakistan than anywhere else. True Islam, however, lessens superstition, falsehood and cruelty and lifts the lowly to dignity and pride and produces among Muslims a degree of sobriety and temperance unknown and unequalled elsewhere in the world. The Zia regime wanted to put some gloss over its Islamic image in the blind eyes of the public. The actual position was that it was damned if it did so and damned if it didn't do so. For the masses were less than pleased with its President's religious zealotry and all his efforts in this direction seemed to have run into the sands.

For nine long years, the President could find sufficient time for theology and accepted the fanatics' dualism as a satisfactory explanation of a creed so indifferently compounded of good and evil. He flirted for a pretty long period with the scepticism of the fundamentalists. He was an enlightened person who would normally be too emotional to remain long in suspended judgement. The Ordinance of April 1984 was and would always remain an immoral and filthy intrusion into the field of human living. Its immediate explanation defied all types of rationality. Claiming purity of heart and love of Islam when you are becoming like those you most loath, is as difficult as declaring that you didn't know what the Mullahs and their hirelings were up to. However, this is past history and cannot be undone unless the top echelons in Pakistan inculcate credibility in moral behaviour in their dealings with all sections of the population.

The events which happened subsequent to imposition of the black law of April 1984, were disturbingly reminiscent of the dark ages and the extremely primitive levels of the Meccans' Confrontation against the early Muslims. Nobody regarded the inhuman atrocities against innocent Ahmadis as immoral, criminal or even unusual. Especially the media, which tried conveniently to forget all about it until the next time. We cannot put the lid on what had already happened but we can forgive and forget. Or perhaps leave it to the nemesis of history.

Democracy or no democracy, there is one thing a true patriot should never forget. We should not negate all cultures *C* both secular and religious *C* outside the Islam of the Mullahs. There are certainly movements approaching in various degrees the Quranic understanding of God and the howness of the universe. This is because the world after all is still under God and not the 'devil's' occupied territory. Pakistan is a poor country, full of illiteracy and ignorance. The poor deserve justice and pity no doubt. But poverty is no virtue unless voluntary and it does not necessarily bring with it wisdom. It is, therefore, the duty of the intelligentsia to lead the people to the right path and not be swayed by sentiments or fear to tell the truth to their conceited rulers.

Existence of God

(Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad)

Of all the doctrines and beliefs, that have been subjected to in this age of materialism, the greatest is the belief in the existence of God. The idolater sets up other gods with God, but he believes at least in the existence of God. The atheist, however, denies the very existence of the Supreme Being. As in the present day science everything is based on observation, hence the demand of the Atheist is: If there is a God, show Him to us. How can we believe in Him without seeing Him? As Western influences have gone a long way towards effacing from the hearts of many young men the imprint of the Divine Being and hundreds of college students, barristers, etc., have begun to deny the existence of God, and there are thousands of persons, who, through refraining from an open declaration of their views through fear of the community, have really no faith in Him, therefore I made up my mind to write a small article on the subject that haply some lucky soul may be benefited by it.

The first demand which an atheist makes is that if you show God to us, we will believe in Him. I have heard this demand many times and I have always heard it with astonishment. Man knows different things by means of different senses. Some things we know by means of seeing, some by touching, some by smelling, some by hearing and some by tasting. A colour is known by seeing, not by smelling, touching or tasting. If anybody says that he will acknowledge a colour only if he is made to hear the sound of it, will not such a man be regarded as a fool? Similarly, fragrance, is known by means of smelling. Now, if anybody says that he will take a rose to be fragrant only if he is made to taste its fragrance, will such a person be regarded as wise? On the other hand, if anybody seeks to know by smelling things which can be known by tasting such as sourness, sweetness, bitterness and saltiness, he will never be able to do so. So it is not right that we should accept those things only which we can behold with our eyes and disbelieve those things which are not cognizable by the eye. If it be right to do so, then we shall have to deny the fragrance of the rose, the sourness of the lemon, the sweetness of honey, the bitterness of gall, the hardness of iron and the melodiousness of sound, for these are things which we cannot perceive with the aid of the eye. How absurd is then the demand

that God must be shown to us before we believe in Him? Do those who make such a demand believe in the fragrance of the rose or sweetness of honey because they have seen it? Why do they then, in the case of the Supreme Being, propose the seeing of God as a necessary condition of their accepting Him?

Moreover, there are certain things in man himself the existence of which he recognises without having seen them. Does man believe in his heart, liver, brain, bowels, lungs and spleen after having seen them? If these things be taken out of his body to be shown him he will die before he has time to look on them. I have given these illustrations in order to show that we do not know all things merely by seeing but that they are known by means of five different senses. Now I will show that there are many things which are not knowable even by the five senses, there being another way of knowing them. For instance reason, memory and intelligence are things which are not denied by anybody in the world but nobody has ever seen, heard, tasted, smelt or touched them. How did we then seem to know that there is such a thing as reason, or memory or intelligence? Or take energy for instance, which is possessed more or less, by every person whether weak or strong. But has anybody ever seen, smelt, touched, or tasted energy? Even the simplest man can see that we have not known these things by means of five senses, but that there are other evidences that have led us to a knowledge of their existence. For instance, we see that when man is confronted with a difficulty he thinks for a while and then devises a plan by which he is able to solve his difficulty. When saw difficulties being removed in this way, we concluded that there was something in man which was of service to him on such occasions and we called it reason. Thus we did not become aware of the existence of reason directly through the five senses, but we obtained a knowledge of it by means of its wonderful manifestations. Similarly, when we saw that man was able to carry heavy loads, and that some men could carry heavier weights than others, we inferred that there was a capacity in man which enabled him to bear these burdens and which some persons possessed more than others. This capacity was called strength, but we have seen the deeds that are done by strength, and from these we have concluded that there is in man something by which he can carry burdens and exercise a control over weaker objects. This something is called power or strength. Thus we find that the more subtle a thing is, the more hidden it is from the human eye and it is by their actions and not by the senses of seeing, smelling, tasting, hearing, or touching that we perceive the existence of such things.

But God is subtlest of all things. How unjust is it then to say that we cannot believe in the existence of God unless He is shown to us. Has anybody ever seen electricity? But can we then deny the transmission of messages and signals to long distances, lighting and the working of machinery by means of electricity? The discovery of either has brought about a revolution in the

domain of physical science, but has any scientist been able to find it by means of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling or touching? But if we deny its existence, we find ourselves unable to explain how the rays of the sun reach the Earth. How unjust is then the demand that in order to believe in God must be visible to the eye, while there are so many things which are believed in but they are not visible to the eye or perceptible by any other of the five senses. God is visible but only to the eyes that are capable of seeing Him. But if anybody is desirous of seeing Him, He is before the whole world through His powers and in spite of His being hidden, He is the most apparent of all. This fact has been briefly but very exquisitely mentioned in the Holy Quran in the following words;

“Eyes cannot reach Him but He reaches the eyes. And He is the Incomprehensible, the All-Aware.”

(Ch. 6:104).

In this verse, God draws the attention of man to the fact that this eye is not capable of seeing Him, for He is subtle and subtle things cannot be perceived by the eyes. What then is the way of knowing God? He answers this question by saying; “but He reaches the eyes”, i.e., though the eye of man is not capable of seeing Him, yet He reveals Himself to man by a display of His powers and by a manifestation of His attributes. Manifold are the ways in which He reveals Himself to man. He displays His unlimited power sometimes by terror-striking signs, sometimes through prophets, sometimes by signs of mercy and sometimes by accepting prayer. Having shown that if God is to be believed in only if He be perceptible by the eye, the we shall have to deny the existence of all things if we accept as true the view of certain philosophers that nobody can see the substance of anything in the world and that it is only the form that we see.

I now turn to the evidences which establish the existence of God and show that man has a Creator and is not his own Creator.

Believing as we do that the Holy Quran has pointed out all the ways of attaining to spiritual perfection, I will draw all my arguments from the Holy Qur’an. As the first knowledge of which a man obtains after he comes into the world is obtained through the ear, therefore, I too will begin with an argument which relates to the ear. The Holy Quran says; “Verily, he, indeed, will prosper who purifies himself, And remembers the name of his Lord and offers Prayers. But you prefer the life of this world, Whereas the Hereafter is better and more lasting. This, indeed, is (what is taught) in the former Scripture of Abraham and Moses.” Ch. 87:15–20.

In these verses felicity and prosperity is promised to those who become pure and who not only make a verbal admission of the existence of God but give a proof of their belief in Him by worshipping Him, but men give a preference to the life of the present world while the final welfare is a real and

enduring one. The verses further add that this truth is found not only in the Holy Quran but also in all the previous Scriptures, e.g., in the Books of Abraham and Moses. In these verses we are told that true felicity is enjoyed by those who purify themselves and not only believe in God but also obey Him, and in proof of this statement attention is drawn to the fact that this teaching is common to all the religions of the world. The chief people with whom the Holy Prophet had to deal were the Jews, the Christians and the people of Mecca. The former two peoples both believe in Moses, while all the three believed in Abraham and therefore to bring the truth home to them they were told that the same teaching was given by Moses and Abraham and therefore they were bound to accept it as true. Thus we see that one of the chief arguments of the existence of God given by the Holy Quran is this that all the religions of the world concur in holding that there is a BEING Who created the whole universe. Changes do occur in the beliefs and doctrines of a people owing to changed circumstances and conditions, yet notwithstanding this, all historical religions of the world agree in believing in the existence of God, though there may be some difference of opinion to His attributes. The religions that are extant, such as Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism, all believe in God Who is known as Allah, Elohim, Parmeshwar, Parmatma, Sat Guru or Yazdan, and as regards to the religions that have now become extinct whether they appeared in the isolated land of America, or in Rome, or the deserts of Africa, or England, Java, Sumatra, Japan, China, Siberia, or Manchuria, the traces that we still find of these religions all point to a belief in the SUPREME BEING.

How did this agreement of religions come about and who it was who informed the natives of China of the belief of the negroes of the Sahara of Africa, and the natives of America of the beliefs of the Indian people? In ancient times the people of the world did not possess these means of communication which they possess now, and the intercourse that the inhabitants of distant lands now have with one another was non-existent in days gone by. There were large tracts of land that were unexplored and large continents that were yet undiscovered. Then how did it come to pass that people that were so wide apart from one another, and were so different in their habits, customs and tastes, all agreed on this belief? It is difficult even for two men to agree on a self-invented fiction. Is not then the occurrence of so many different peoples who had no means of communicating their thoughts to one another on the belief in the SUPREME BEING a conclusive evidence of the existence of God being a FACT? All historians agree in holding that a question on which all the historians of different nations occur must be taken as a fact. Now when thousands of people are of one mind as to the EXISTENCE OF GOD, why should we not conclude that the existence of God is a fact?

The second argument of the existence of God given by the Holy Quran is contained in the following verse:—

“And that is Our argument We gave to Abraham against his people, We exalt in degree of rank whomso We please. Thy Lord is indeed Wise, All-Knowing. And We gave him Isaac and Jacob, each did We guide aright, and Noah did We guide aright aforetime, and of his progeny, David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. Thus do We reward those who do good. And We (guided) Zachariah and John and Jesus and Elias; each of them was of the righteous. And We also guided Ishmael and Elisha and Jonah and Lot, and each one of them did We exalt above the people. And We exalted some of their fathers and their children and their brethren, and We chose them and We guided them in the straight path. . . . These it is whom Allah guided aright, so follow thou their guidance.”

(6:84-91).

In these verses God requires us to consider whether we should follow that which so many good and pious persons bear witness or that which is said by other ignorant persons whose character can not stand comparison with that of the personages named. It is clear that weight must be attached to the witness of those persons who proved their virtue, purity, abstinence from sin, and truthfulness by their conduct and practice. So it is the duty of every person to follow them in preference to others. And we see all those who propagate virtue and morals and whose righteousness was universally acknowledged on account of their good deeds, bear witness to the existence of a Being who has been called Zoroaster in ancient Persia, Moses in Egypt, Jesus at Nazareth, Nanak in the Punjab and the chief of the righteous, the Holy Prophet of Arabia, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who when still young won the title of Al-Amin (the Truthful) and whose adversaries failed to cast a slur on his conduct when he referred them to his unsullied character by saying, “I dwelt among you for a long time before this, will you not then understand?” (10:17), these and thousands of other righteous men who have lived on this Earth all declare with one voice that there is a God, nay, they even claim to have seen Him and to have talked with Him.

The greatest philosopher that has ever lived on this earth cannot claim to have accomplished even a thousandth part of the work done by the least of this holy band. On comparing the lives of the holy Messengers of God with those of the philosophers, it is more words than deeds that we come across in the lives of the latter. How can the philosophers show that truthfulness and sincerity which has been shown by the prophets? The former preach truth but do not practise it. On the other hand, the holy personages whose names I have mentioned above suffered thousands of hardships merely for their loyalty to truth but they were never thrown off their balance. Plots were made to murder them, they were turned out of their homes, and were scoffed at in the streets and bazaars, and the whole world severed its connection with them, yet they stuck fast to their purpose and never sought refuge in dissimulating

from the tyranny of their persecutors. Their conduct, their abhorrence of worldliness and their aversion to display establish their disinterestedness and show that they never did anything from selfish motives. Now such sincere and trustworthy personages all declare with one voice that they have seen God, have listened to His voice, and have witnessed His glory. What reason have we then to reject their unanimous testimony? When a number of men whom we daily hear speaking falsely agree in making a statement, we have no choice but to accept it as true. When men, of whose characters we are quite ignorant, publish their investigation in the columns of newspapers, we readily believe in them. But alas; when men of established integrity and admitted sincerity such as the prophets are, unanimously testify in the existence of God, we disbelieve them. People say, London is a city, and we believe it. The geographers say, America is a continent and we believe it. The travellers say, Siberia is a vast, barren land and we do not deny it. Why, because many people have testified of these things, and this notwithstanding the fact we are ignorant of the character of our informants and do not know whether they are liars or truthful persons. But those who testify of the existence of God on the basis of their personal knowledge are men whose truthfulness and honesty are clear as the mid-day sun. They establish truth at the cost of their property, their homes, their honour, and even their lives. How can it be fair to believe these travellers and geographers and disbelieve these truthful of a number of persons, and sincere men. If the existence of a city can be proved on the testimony why can not the existence of God be said to be established on the testimony of thousands of truthful and sincere persons.

In short, we can by no means reject the testimony of thousands of upright and righteous persons who claim to be eye-witnesses to the existence of the Divine Being. It is strange that those who have devoted themselves to the acquisition of knowledge of things spiritual declare that there is a God while those who are quite strangers to spirituality say, "Do not believe the prophets, but believe us". Even if there are two equally trustworthy witnesses, preference will of course be given to the testimony of him who says he has seen such and such a thing and not to that of the other who says he has not seen it, for it is possible that the eye of the latter may have not fallen on the object in question, but it is inconceivable that one may have not seen a thing and may have fancied he was seeing it. Thus we are bound to give preference to the testimony of those who claim to have seen God.

The third argument of the existence of God to which the Holy Qur'an points is that the very nature of the man is an evidence of God's existence. For, there are certain sins at which the very nature of man recoils. For instance, even the most irreverent atheists will abstain from incest and falsehood and will have nothing to do with excrement, urine and other filths. Why is this so? If there is no God, why does he distinguish between his mother, sister, daughter, and other women? Why does he hate lying? What

are the reasons for which the foregoing deeds appear loathsome in his eyes? If he does not stand in awe of some Higher Power, why does he shun these deeds? Lying and truthfulness, justice and injustice should be the same to him. Everything should depend on his pleasure and he should be at liberty to do whatever his heart desires. What law is there that is controlling his passion? It is God that is governing him. His throne lies on the heart. An atheist may pretend to have outstepped the bounds of the kingdom of God, but it is impossible for him to out-leap the bounds of the God-made nature. His abstinence from sin or his reluctance to disclose his sin shows that heart is possessed of the fear of being called to account by a King, though he pretends to deny His sovereignty.

God says in the Holy Quran, "Nay, I swear by the Day of Ressurrection. Nay, I swear by the self-accusing soul, that the Day of Judgment is a certainty." (75:2, 3.) In this verse two things are adduced of the existence of God and of the great Day of Judgment. The first evidence is to be found in the fact that for everything there is appointed a judgment day when rewards or punishments are meted out accordingly as the deeds are good or evil. If there is no God, why are punishments and rewards dealt out in this very life? This portioning out of punishment and rewards is also an object-lesson for those who deny the Last Judgment Day, for it shows that the judgment begins from this world. Illicit intercourse gives rise to syphilis and gonorrhoea, while intercourse with one's wife does not give rise to these infernal diseases, though the action in both cases is the same. The second evidence is the admonishing soul or conscience which upraids a person for his evil deeds. Even an atheist regards adultery and lying as evil and will not approve of vanity and envy. But why? The atheists have no law. They disapprove of these things instinctively, and they do so because they have a fear of being called to account by a Supreme Ruler, although they are unable to express it in words. to the same effect, God says, "And He revealed to it (soul) the ways of evil and the ways of righteousness." (91:9.) i.e. God has inspired every soul with what is evil and what is virtuous. Thus the very sensibility of good and evil is a very strong evidence of the existence of God. If there is no God, there is no reason why one thing should be held as evil and another thing as good. On the other hand people should be at liberty to do what they please.

The fourth argument of the existence of God adducable from the Holy Qur'an is this; "And that with they Lord is the final judgment (i.e. the whole system of cause and effect ends with God). And that it is He who makes people laugh and makes them weep; And that it is He who causes death and gives life; And that He creates the pairs male and female, From a sperm-drop when it is emitted." (53:43-47.) In these verses God draws the attention of man to the fact that every action must have an agent and therefore if we ponder over the whole universe, we shall be led to the conclusion that God is the end of all things and that it is He Who is directing the universe. Directing our

attention to our initial condition, He reminds that it is from seed that we are created and that the more backward we go, we find ourselves more and more insignificant. How can we then under these circumstances be our own creators? There can be no creation without a creator and man cannot be his own creator, for, when we consider his condition, we find that it is from a very humble and lowly state that he rises upwards. When he is unable to create in his advanced state, how could he create when he was a very insignificant thing? Thus we are forced to the conclusion that he has been created by someone else whose powers are unlimited and unbounded.

The further we go back tracing the gradual development become more and more subtle and at last a stage is reached when human knowledge fails and science declines to go further. It is there that the hand of God is working. Every scientist had to admit that the end of all things is a Being Who is incomprehensible by reason and that Being is God. This is such a clear evidence of the existence of God that the dullest man can easily understand it. It is said that some one asked a Beduin "How do you know that there is a God?" He replied, "When I see the dung of a camel lying on the ground, I conclude that a camel has been there. When I see this big universe, how can I not know that it must have a creator?" In fact this answer is very true and consistent with the nature of man. If a person thinks over this huge creation, he has no choice but to accept the existence of a Being Who brought this universe into being.

Like Two Friends

Two friends can continue their friendship only if at times each of them does what the other says and at times each of them agrees to what the other does. If one of them always insists on the other doing whatever he says, the friendship will not last long. This is the case with God and man. At times God listens to what the man says and blesses him with His Grace and at other times man accepts patiently whatever God has destined for him.

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad – the Promised Messiah)

An Introduction to Islam

(Dr. Sarah Saqi)

Islam is the last of the great religions. It embraces all religions which went before it, and one of its most striking characteristics is that it requires its followers to believe in all the prophets who preceded the Holy Prophet Muhammed (peace and blessings be upon him). I quote from the Holy Quran: "Say we believe in Allah, and in that which has been revealed to us, and in that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and in that which was given to the prophets from their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them." (2:136).

A Muslim believes therefore, not only in the Prophet Muhammed (peace and blessings be upon him), but in all the prophets of God. By contrast, a Buddhist believes in Buddha, a Hindu in all the prophets raised in India, a Jew in the prophets of Israel and a Christian believes in Jesus Christ as well as the prophets mentioned in the Old Testament, though to a lesser degree. A Muslim believes in all of these, and in Muhammed (peace be on him) also, the last of the law bearing prophets. It follows then, that by becoming a Muslim, one does not automatically abandon one's faith. Rather one merely takes on a new perspective which incorporates one's past beliefs in a wider horizon.

What, then has Islam, a religion revealed by God to the Holy Prophet Muhammed (peace and blessings be upon him) in the year 610 — to offer mankind in this present age? Islam is a philosophy, a set of religious beliefs, and a way of life. Literally, the word Islam means peace and surrender. A Muslim surrenders himself totally to the Will of God. His central belief is that "There is none worthy of worship but the One and Only God Allah, who possesses all excellences, and Muhammed is His Messenger."

Islam is a monesthetic religion. God has no associates. The concept of a Trinity — God the father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit is totally rejected. Muhammed (peace be on him) has never been deified — indeed Muslims believe that all the prophets who have been sent for mankind were humans, who lived and died as did those before them. The concept of a God without equals is therefore fundamental to Islam.

What, then are a Muslim's beliefs? We are told in the Holy Quran that the ultimate object of a person's existence is to win nearness to God. In Chapter 84: Verse 6 we read: "O Man! Thou must strive to attain to thy Lord a hard striving until thou meet Him." Muslims have been instructed to live in the service of God whilst on this earth. On the Day of Judgment all their deeds will be assessed and weighed. All Muslims therefore believe in life after death. We are born sinless, the purpose of life on this earth is to strive to win God's pleasure, with a view to meeting Him in the Hereafter. The Holy Quran repeatedly condemns those who are content merely with the material aspects of life, and do not look beyond them. For a Muslim the purpose of one's life is to do good to our fellow beings and strive through prayer to attain nearness to God. In Chapter 2 Verses 46/47 of the Holy Quran, we read "And seek help with patience and prayer; and this indeed is hard except for the humble in spirit, Who know for certain that they will meet their Lord and that to Him they will return."

Prayer is therefore an integral part of Islam. Muslim's are required to pray 5 times a day. Prayer is a spiritual purification. Five times a day throughout their lives, Muslims affirm the Unity and attributes of Allah, and their belief in Muhammed, His messenger. Prayer is therefore a part of everyday affairs — there is a prayer in the morning before sunrise, another just after midday, a third in the afternoon, a fourth at sunset, and a fifth in the evening before going to bed. Prayer is thus the first daily work of a Muslim and also his last. Prayer enables man, even when at his busiest, to disengage himself from worldly affairs in order to remember his Maker.

Whilst Islam emphasises the accountability of each and every individual to Allah, it allows for the weaknesses and imperfection of man. Although one is supposed to pray five times a day, allowances are made for those whose work schedules are such that they cannot break off at the required times of day. Thus, certain prayers can be combined and said together. Furthermore, if one is ill or on a journey, concessions are made so that the number of prayers are reduced, or in the case of illness, the actual form of prayer may be changed.

Congregational prayer is also an important social institution. It is a time when people rich and poor, of high rank and low rank, stand next to each other as equals to remember God. None is given any preferential treatment as to where they stand in the Mosque. The concept of a family pew is unknown. Any differences between individuals in terms of rank, wealth or colour vanish in an atmosphere of equality before Allah.

Muslims are also instructed once a year to observe Ramadhan, or fasting. This entails complete abstinence from food or water from sunrise to sunset. The exercise is both a spiritual and a physical one. Spiritually, it enables one to attain a feeling of closeness to God. It is for His sake that one endures the discomfort of hunger and thirst. The fast is also an important physical exercise

in terms of the discipline required. It provides an opportunity for one to gain an appreciation of the discomfort that the poor have to endure in their everyday lives. However, whilst stressing the benefits to be obtained from fasting, the Holy Quran allows for the fact that some may find this too great a burden to bear. Those unable to fast for whatever reason, are instructed to give charity to the poor instead.

Islam is a complete code of life, providing instructions for its followers in all aspects of life — the kinds of foods that may be eaten, the way one should dress, how one should conduct business, social graces, marriage, divorce and human rights. The Holy Quran provides a standard therefore by which one may live one's life. However, throughout, we are instructed to reason and question and reflect upon what is written. Above all, it is stressed "that there is no compulsion in religion. Surely the right way has become distinct from error." We are told "If thy Lord had enforced His Will, surely all those on the earth would have believed without exception. Will thou then take it upon thyself to force people to become believers? Except by Allah's leave no-one can believe." (10:100, 101). Belief cannot be enforced upon people; indeed if it were it would be meaningless. The presence of Islam is not force, but persuasion.

Islam places great emphasis on the welfare of the community as a whole. It can confidently be asserted that this was the first religion to manifest the idea of a welfare state. Islam aims at merging all sectors of society into a single community so that all persons may feel themselves to be members of the same family. This is apparent in the institution of Zakat, which is in reality a form of income tax, which allows for the help of poorer members of society. It must be noted that begging in Islam is strictly prohibited.

Every possessor of wealth is required to contribute annually $\frac{1}{40}$ th of his wealth to a common fund which is managed by the state or the Muslim Community. This money is used for the amelioration of the condition of the poor, helping those in debt, supplying capital where talent is available but funds are lacking, and generally all community related projects — e.g. medical services, education, public works etc.

In addition to obligatory Zakat, great emphasis is placed on voluntary charity. This takes many forms, from simple acts of kindness to giving food to the poor and caring for orphans. However, all acts of charity must be conducted so that they convey no idea of the superiority of the giver or the inferiority of the receiver. We are told that "Those who spend their wealth night and day secretly and openly shall have their reward with their Lord. They shall not be subjected to fear or grief." (2:275). Indeed, one can say that the essence of the Islamic system is expressed in the verse: "They ask thee what shall they spend in the cause of Allah. Tell them, that which is spare.

Thus does Allah make His commandments clear to you that you may reflect.” (2:220).

Islam is also unique with regards to its system of inheritance. Instead of all the property of the deceased person automatically being handed over to the eldest son, Islam makes the female a co-sharer with the male. Persons who stand to inherit property may be divided into 2 groups — the first group consisting of children, parents, and husband or wife, and the second group consisting of brothers and sisters. Members of the second group inherit only if some or all those in the first group are wanting. The Islamic system is based on the notion that wealth should be circulated in society, and not concentrated in the hands of a few. Thus each heir of the deceased is entitled to take his or her share only, and no more. Furthermore, a person may not dispose of more than 1/3rd of his property by testamentary directions.

Islam also prohibits interest being made on loans. Again the reason is because this tends to draw wealth into the hands of a small circle of people. The money lender, in effect, takes advantage of, and makes a profit from the needs or distress of another. Although it is permitted that loans may be made, the lender is advised to be lenient and not exert undue pressure, and indeed even to remit if the debtor is in straitened circumstances, either part or all of the debt. However, the debtor is also instructed to pay the debt as soon as possible. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have said, “Among the best of you are those who are good in the payment of debts.”

Islam is often accused of being a barbaric religion because of its acceptance of the death penalty for murder. Certainly punishment in Islam is based on the notion of retribution in accordance with the severity of the crime. However, critics often forget that forgiveness and mercy are also emphasized. We are told “And the recompense of evil is punishment proportional thereto, but whoever forgives and amends, he shall have his reward from Allah.” (42:40). Time and time again, the Holy Quran stresses that forgiveness and mercy for a crime should be exercised wherever possible. Thus, if the relatives of a murdered victim wish, they can accept compensation instead of imposing the death penalty.

I posed the question earlier, what has Islam to offer mankind in this age. We believe that the Holy Quran is the word of God, revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammed (peace and blessings be upon him) for the benefit of mankind. The Holy Quran is “a Book — for a people who seek to acquire knowledge and to derive benefit therefrom.” (41:3, 4). It is a Book for all ages, and despite the great changes which occurred from the time it was revealed to the present day, it applies as much now as it did then. Today we live in an age where man has the capability to destroy the earth many times over. Only by stopping to pause and reflect on what we are doing, can we

attempt to bring sanity back to this world. Islam is the way of achieving this not just for one individual but for society as a whole, because it operates at both levels. Islam is the unifying force needed at this time of moral and material chaos. However, Islam rests on reason and logic, not blind dogma. Islam is based on persuasion and not force.

Love of Muhammad (The Promised Messiah)

My heart and soul are enchanted with the beauty of Muhammad and my body is like the dust of the path trodden by the progeny of Muhammad.

I have perceived with the eye of my heart and have heard with the ear of my intelligence that every part of the universe proclaims the beauty of Muhammad.

This fire of mine is borrowed from the fire of the sun of Muhammad and this water of mine is a portion of the flowing waters of Muhammad.

That my life should be wholly consumed in the love and service of the faith of Muhammad is my desire, my prayer, and the firm determination of my heart.

Next after my love of God, I am inspired by the love of Muhammad. If this amounts to disbelief, then by Allah, I am a disbeliever in the highest degree.

What do we know about Good and Evil?

(Abdus Salam Madsen)

Before I venture upon answering the question as to what we know about good and evil from an Islamic point of view, I feel I have to elucidate the meanings of the words “know”, “good”, and “evil”.

I do not intend to use the word “to know” in a specific religious sense, even if such a significance existed separately. Islam rejects all kinds of dualism — or should we say: splitting up or doubling reality, and therefore a consequent and internally coherent monotheism. The Persian-Greek dualism of body and soul, earth and heaven, light and darkness, good and evil has certainly left its stamp on the monotheistic Semitic religions, which we are considering this evening. I am only called upon to speak on Islam, which has also received its share in the course of history of that contamination or pollution which is termed dualism — and which is really a kind of shirk, or polytheism. But Muslims have succeeded in keeping themselves cleaner than the two other religions. Whatever the results of historical corrosion, I am endeavouring to keep clear of it and stick to the original and unequivocal teachings of the Quran:

“All perfect praise belongs to Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth and produced light and darkness — but then the disbelievers put up partners to their Lord . . . He is God in the heavens and on the earth . . . (al-An’am, chap. 6) He has created all things and gave all things their measure of progressiveness.

(al-Furgan ch. 25).

God has created man with his reasoning faculties and his sense apparatus, and he has equally revealed religion: science and religion derive from the same source and therefore cannot be but in consonance. Whatever we know from one field must be confirmed by what we know from the other, because there can be no contradiction in the being or essence of the One, Indivisible God — nor in His attributes or predicates. He is One and Unique and His creation is one and the laws that govern this creation are reducible to one, however multiple they may appear. In the end different formulas will be reduced to a single formula, and this work of reduction is really the effort of all true science.

Science expresses itself in factual statements about reality: such and such is the case — whereas moral statements do not intend to predicate anything about reality, they do not say what things really are, but rather how they should be, how they ought to be according to a system of personal subjective values. This dichotomy of human knowledge or perception of reality is really that kind of dualism or cultivation (and worshipping) of two principles which we have aimed at. It may even be a pluralistic attitude which is only a reflection of polytheism in a more refined philosophic garb, but nevertheless — when robbed of its finery of expression — the same old polytheism. Islam underlines as we have said unity and monotheism. In being monotheists we try to take monotheism seriously and demand that it is taken in all seriousness in all aspects of life and existence. There is only One God, and no different “gods” or principles who govern different areas. Everything has its source in One God, and a moral statement therefore deals with reality in the same way as any other meaningful sentence. When man ought to act morally, we must needs be able to explain to man that what he ought to do is basically what is useful and beneficent to him and spells progress and development for all the capacities still unfolded that are included in his nature and only await a transformation from being human instincts to being human and humane moral qualities of a high order.

Certain orthodox (or traditional) Muslim Theologians have been infected with dualism and have raised the question: is good good because God so wills? Or: does God will it, because it is good? As they think and believe that nothing whatsoever — and not a moral evaluation either — could stand above God, they consider it as an expression of right belief that God arbitrarily puts down something as good and something as evil — just as He likes — without the least consideration for human understanding or explanation and without taking into His revelation to make it conceivable for human knowledge. Formulated this way it all sound very pious and God fearing, but in reality it is a rejection of God’s knowledge and wisdom that necessarily adhere to Him — just as much as power and sovereignty adhere to Him. The problem is a would-be problem, and not a real one. It can only arise in a context where there is an a priori split between God and man, in a kind of Deism where God does not communicate and where the fact is ignored that man is created to realize the likeness of God.

What God has created is good — that could be said, but it is a fact that when humans use the words “good” and “evil” they apply them to things and persons and acts. So a Muslim would answer that things and persons are created directly by God, whereas an act (although created) as always earned and therefore belongs to man:

“We have certainly created man in the best shape.”

(Tin ch. 95).

On the basis of this verse we cannot say that man is created good or evil, but that he is created with all possibilities of a good development (or an evil degradation — all according to circumstances). For a good development — if it brings into useful application all the Godgiven abilities and capabilities of its nature according to their predetermination. For degradation if the same nature or form is misused or abused in contradiction of Divine predetermination (which is essentially know through Divine revelation). Good is beneficial, whereas evil is harmful: so in the Quran we often find a parallel between useful and good on one side — and evil and harmful on the other.

“Direct your full attention to religion or righteousness in sincerity to God and in true honesty: It is the true nature as created by God, and wherein He created man. There is no changing Divine creation: this is the true and eternal religion, even if the majority does not know.”

(Rum ch. 30).

According to Islam there is no radical change in life-conditions since creation. Since the time “when everything was just good”. No cosmic Sin has appeared, and no inherited Sin come into existence. God says:

“I have only created men — high and low — that they should worship Me by realizing My attributes.”

(Dhariyat ch. 51:57).

If we return to what was said about knowledge as one kind of knowledge, we are now in a position to add: Knowledge exists in its perfect form on in God. What we humans know is simply a reflection, an imperfect picture of Divine Knowledge. So it is also under the law of development, it is never absolute or static, it must progress — step after step.

In the same way good and evil are not absolute. The absolute good is God Who is the Only True Reality. The absolute evil is non-existent. Therefore devil or shaitan or iblis in the Quran is never “the Prince of this world” as in Christian scripture, but only a being or rather beings who have their definite place and function in the creational order of God — by being at work (along with good powers or angles) in enabling man to effectuate his free choice between good and evil.

It is common-talk and almost (theoretically) unopposed that war is evil, and peace is good — although it means an absolutization morally of the two cases. Now for what the Quran says about war:

“It is prescribed for you to fight, even if it is abhorrent to you. But it may be that you detest something, that is really good for you, and it is just possible that you love something which is evil for you. And Allah knows, whereas you don’t know.

They ask you about fighting in the forbidden month. Answer: Fighting in it is a serious matter, but to keep people away from the way of God and to reject Him and the Holy Mosque and to drive its people out is even more serious in the eyes of Allah. And persecution is more serious than battle.”

(al-Baqara ch. 2).

If it is possible to say it in a more lucid way, then please turn to:

“Permission to fight is given to those, against whom battle is already waged, because they were persecuted, and because they were driven out of their home without any other cause than they said: Our Lord is only Allah . . . And Allah has certainly the power to help them. If it wasn’t like that, that Allah repelled some people by the help of others (i.e. by giving them permission to defend themselves) then churches and cloisters and synagogues and mosques in which the name of God is much commemorated, would definitely have been pulled down.

(al-Hajj ch. 22).

Another quote that helps us to realize that we should never render moral categories absolute, but place them in their proper setting according to time and demand, we find just after our first passage on war quoted from chapter 2:

“They ask thee concerning wine and games of chance: tell them: in both there is much harm, but also different kinds of advantages to men. But their harm is always bigger than the benefit, you can derive from them.”

Things are not good or evil in themselves. Use for the benefit of men is termed “good” — their misuse to the harm of yourself or others we term as “evil”. There is always a graduation in good evil. The text we just quoted proceeds to give an instance of how just a graduation can be summed up in a single very meaningful Arabic word:

“They ask thee concerning what they should spend in the cause of God or good. Answer: What you can spare — and then: that which is best — and finally: you should spend in such a way that you voluntarily give out of your property without being asked to do so.

This triple-partition of good in spending is all contained in the same Arabic word al’afw.

Another example of graduation is found in the following Quranic verse that is repeated in the second part of all Friday sermons because of its enormous importance in being the most general exposition of Islamic morality:

Allah commands you that you first act in accordance with justice and equity — then in reciprocating with a bigger amount of good than you have yourself received — and finally: that you come to the point of doing

good instinctively like a mother to her child without expecting anything as a reward or appreciation.

(16:91).

The same verse then follows up with three different grades of evil, so as to enable us to limit the evil gradually, systematically and in a disciplined way. As we read:

“And Allah forbids you: evil thoughts (that are a source of all other evil) and then what is manifestly evil (seen by others, but not harming them directly) and finally that which is a real transgression against others.

In the case of evil: Baghy or transgression against others, whether on life, property or rights, we have (not a private moral problem but) a juristic problem, which man is obliged to try to confine. Moral transgressions are not punished by man, but by God through the moral law instituted by Him:

Whosoever does an atom's weight of good will see it,
and whosoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.

(Zilzal ch. 99).

Here we must needs add that God is the Lord and Master of His own Order and His own Law, as that He can forgive to whomsoever He wills. He is not a simple judge, He is Master of Judgment and the One Whose mercy comprehends everything, and Who created the world to manifest His mercy. If we are confronted with a direct assault against the person, properties or rights of others — it is definitely our task to repel, to judge and to reestablish order in this world. The Quran prescribes in certain extreme cases very severe punishment — and this is often criticized with great lack of understanding and appreciation — but here we are dealing with the principles of Islamic law, not with certain particulars. We find that the Quran does not teach any vindictiveness nor any extreme forbearance, but strikes a medium tone in upholding the harmony and good order of society. We are not considering revenge or justice as an absolute demand, neither does the appeal for forgiveness have any absolute weight in our deliberations. Our reason and discerning faculties are to be applied in every case to their limits (and God does not impose upon us a burden that is unbearable). The following verse is clear and conducive to a real human and humane attitude:

The punishment of evil should be in accordance with the gravity of the crime — but he who forgives and thereby reforms a transgressor, has a duty to do so and deserves thereby a special reward from God, for God does not love those who apply retribution and forgiveness in wrong places.

(shura ch. 42).

If my readers should have a desire to go deeper in this direction of the Quran, the whole context in Sura al-Shura should be taken into account. Then

you would — I am sure — really come to appreciate the deep philosophy of the Quranic injunctions both morally and juristically — and you would find that every command or prohibition or advice is based on reasoning and arguments. To elaborate this would lead us away from our sufficient — so I choose to conclude with a verse that also reveals some of the philosophy of the Quran in this respect, namely:

“He has only prohibited you that which dies of itself and blood and the flesh of swine and that which is sacrificed to any other than God. But whoever is forced by circumstances and does not desire the prohibited or transgress the limits of the barest need — on them there rests no sin, for Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

As we have already said:

“Allah does not emburden a soul beyond its capacity.”

(al-Baqara ch. 2).

That is exactly why we can sum up all true Islamic morality in the words:

“Good and evil are not equal. Repel or react always with what is best.”

(Ha Mim Sajda 41:45).

— Bear in Mind —

Keep your thoughts clean of all petty things. Do not fill your mind and your thinking with disagreeable thoughts.

To stand still is to go back.

When you give to others you are opening the way for more and greater blessings to be bestowed upon you.

Success is generally due to holding on, and failure to letting go.

True wealth is not what your estate amounts to but what you amount to.

The workshop of character is everyday life.

Of all the things you wear your expression is the most important.

Chaudhri Muhammad Zafrulla Khan

(Prof. Abdus Salaam)

Chaudhri Muhammad Zafrulla Khan was one of the greatest human beings I have had the privilege and good fortune of knowing in my life.

I saw Chaudhri Sahib first in December 1933 on the occasion of the annual gathering. I was then around eight years old. I can still see him in my mind's eye as very handsome figure with a most impressive bearing. I believe the first occasion when he knew of me was when my father wrote to him in 1940 seeking his advice about my future career. He wrote in reply that he would pray for me and he offered three pieces of advice. First, that I should look after my health; health was the basis of all achievement. Second, in respect of studies, he advised that whatever lectures in the classroom were due for tomorrow, I should prepare for them the day before. And whatever I learned today, I should revise the same day so that it became forever part of me. Third, I should broaden my mind; in particular, whenever I got the opportunity to make an educational journey — or even a journey for pleasure — I should take it, for journeying to new places was conducive to a broadening of one's range of interests.

My first personal contact with Chaudhri Sahib came in October 1946, when I sailed to the UK to join Cambridge University for studies. Our boat — the P.&O. Franconia — docked at Liverpool. It was a cold and misty morning. Chaudhri Sahib had come to the dockside to meet his nephew who was also travelling on the "Franconia". Chaudhri Sahib was at that time an Indian Federal judge. When we got down from the boat, our heavy cases — my mathematics books which I had packed — were lying around in the customs shed. There were few porters due to post-war conditions. Chaudhri Zafrulla Khan said to me, "Take hold of the case from one side and I will take it from the other and we shall carry it to the waiting boat train." This was an amazing reception for a humble student, who had never before encountered such gracious unselfconsciousness on the part of a personage so highly placed.

We travelled together to London. During the journey he kept pointing out the beauties of the English countryside, of which he was inordinately fond. The weather was very cold. Seeing me shiver, he kindly gave me one of his

(enormously heavy) winter coats. This, in spite of 40 years of use, still survives in the family.

I met him again in 1951 when he was Foreign Minister of Pakistan and came to the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study where I was a fellow. I spent two days in his company. He was then attending the General Assembly of the United Nations. With him I had the privilege of visiting some of the historical places on the East Coast. Fresh from his duels at the United Nations forum, fought with highest ranking adversaries, on behalf of the Palestine Arabs, Libya, Morocco and for Kashmir, my major recollection of him is of someone who would not suffer fools gladly.

But I really got to know him after 1973 when he came to live at the London Mosque after his retirement from the Presidentship of the International Court of Justice. He was gracious enough to accept to come to my house at Campion Road, nearby, for Sunday breakfasts whenever I was in London. It could be breakfast only because his day, which he spent working on his translation of the Holy Book or Books of the Hadith and the like, started regularly at 9 a.m. every day including Sundays and could not be interrupted.

These breakfasts were memorable occasions when sometimes we would go over some of the episodes in his life which are so beautifully described in his books, particularly his last book, "Servant of God". But the book does not convey the details which he would narrate to us. For example, he tells the story on pages 67-69 of his encounter with Mr. Churchill, but he omits the earlier parts of this story when Mr. Churchill was cross-examined by Sardar Boota Singh of the Indian Party and the hilarity of that examination. Even so, I shall quote here the story as he tells it in the book to convey some of the wonderful flavour of his narration:

"The public sittings of the Joint Select Committee commenced in the spring of 1933. A large variety of witnesses, Indian and British representing a diversity of interests and views was examined by the Committee. Participation in the proceedings of the Committee proved a very instructive experience. The most outstanding witness who appeared before the Committee was Mr. (later Sir) Winston Churchill. His examination extended over four days. He was firmly opposed to the proposals contained in the White Paper. He condemned them lock, stock and barrel. He looked upon them as a betrayal of its trust by Britain. The barrage of questions directed at him failed to move him a single inch from his stand. His eyes twinkled, he wore a smile, he waved his cigar, he was all courtesy and urbanity, but he was utterly unyielding. His questioners could win nothing from him. He held his own against all comers.

"Having watched the drama for a whole day, the Punjab Muslim Delegate felt that it would serve no useful purpose to cross-examine so formidable an adversary as Mr. Churchill. On the morning of the second day the Secretary of

State accosted him before the meeting was called to order and enquired: "Do you intend to put any question to Mr. Churchill?"

"No Sir. I consider it would be a profitless exercise."

"Well, he is our cleverest debater in the House, and it is no use trying to catch him out on his previous speeches in which he supported Dominion Status for India. You have seen how he gets out of them. Yes, Dominion *Status*, but status is one thing and function is quite another. India already has Dominion Status. It sent a delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, it is a signatory of the Treaty of Versailles, it is a member of the League of Nations. That is status. But it is not yet ready to function as a Dominion! He thinks India is still what it was when he was serving as a subaltern at Bangalore."

"(The Muslim delegate) thought over it. His turn came an hour before the close of the afternoon sitting of the Committee. His attitude was deferential, his tone respectful, bordering almost on the apologetic, with a slight touch of deference. Mr. Churchill was cautious, but made a reluctant concession here, a grudging admission there, hedged round with ifs and buts and provideds. When he perceived that he was letting himself be persuaded to yield ground, he began to evade the question put to him, so that it had to be reframed with great care. On one occasion he slipped out of answering the question in one direction, and when the question was carefully rephrased he slipped out in another direction. The questioner's tone became even more bland, almost humble: Mr. Churchill I beg to be forgiven. I am under a disadvantage. English is not my mother tongue. I have twice failed to make my meaning clear. Will you permit me to try once more? The response was gracious: Please, please. The question was put a third time in a shape that did not admit of evasion. Thereafter both the examiner and the witness became more alert. The Committee adjourned. The examination was resumed next morning and continued for another hour. When the questioner concluded with an expression of thanks to the eminent witness, the witness went on record with: My Lord Chairman, may I be permitted to say that I have not noticed that Mr. Zafrulla Khan suffers any disadvantage from lack of knowledge of the English language?

"When at the end of the fourth day his examination was completed, the cheers of The Committee had the quality of an ovation. (Mr. Churchill) rose from his seat, came over to his Muslim interrogator, shook him by the hand and growled: You have given me the two most difficult hours before the Committee. The questioner acknowledged the growl as if it were an accolade and a token of friendship and so it proved. In subsequent meetings the great Prime Minister would every time present him with a volume of his letters or speeches, and the inscriptions beginning with: Inscribed for Zafrulla Khan, W. S. Churchill; went on mounting the scale; To Zafrulla Khan, from W. S.

Churchill; To Zafrulla from his friend W. S. Churchill. Magnanimity was not the least among the many great qualities of the great Prime Minister.”

The amazing thing was that Chaudhri Sahib’s memory was faultless, not only about persons, but also about dates and even times of day for matters which had occurred 50 or 60 years earlier. I also recall with great fondness the narration of his United Nations fights with Big Powers for independence of Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria (described on pages 179–182 of “Servant of God”); likewise, the heart-warming story of his pilgrimage to Mecca, when he was King Faisal’s personal guest, narrated on pages 279–286, was repeated on our request many times. In the retelling of all these incidents in his life, what came across strongly was the greatness of his spirit, his intense love — bordering on near-veneration — for the Prophet of Islam, and his own complete reliance on Allah and His divine Will. Also manifest was his love of Persian poetry, particularly the mystical verse of Rumi in his *Diwan-e-Shams-Tabriz* which he could recite without effort from memory.

Regarding his love for the Prophet, let me tell a story. Chaudhri Zafrulla Khan was taken ill with a back-ache and was confined to bed in a hospital in Wardsworth. I visited him in hospital. I took to him *Shamail-i-Tirmizi*, written by Imam Tirmizi, which describes the Holy Prophet’s daily life, his looks, what he wore, his daily preoccupations, his family and public life. I said I hoped that sometime in the future, if Allah decrees, I would translate this book into English. I left it with him and went away to Trieste.

I came back about a couple of months later and went to see him at his residence. He presented me with a copy of a translation of *Tirmizi* into English, already completed and *printed* during these two months, with a gracious dedication to me. I was astonished at the speed with which he had worked. I mildly protested; I had wished to translate this book myself for my “ghufran”. He said “You may not have found time in the immediate future. So I thought while I was in hospital, this was the most rewarding use of my time.”

I have earlier said that he was generous — almost to a fault — to those in need. The story may not be well known, but after retirement, he dedicated *all* his life’s savings to charitable purposes. A large part was spent in rebuilding the living quarters for the Imam next to the London Mosque as well as towards building the Mahmud Hall. The rest — of the order of half a million dollars — he spent in setting up a charitable Foundation, the Southfields Trust, to help the needy and for educational purposes.

One Sunday when he honoured us with coming for breakfast, my brother protested with him on his generally neglecting own personal needs. He said he had asked his yearly pension (of around \$32,000 a year) to be deposited straight into the bank account of the Foundation he had created — the Southfields Trust. He did not keep any part of his pension. But he had an

agreement with the Trust that it would pay him seven pounds a week for life's necessities and once a year the Trust would permit him an economy fare to Pakistan to attend the annual gathering. He then added, "I know, through Allah's grace, I am a good advocate, but one judicial case I always lose. That is, whenever I plead to myself for myself."

He had such a love for Islam, such a "ghairat" for its honour that one could not come away from his company without being fired with his spirit. It is well-known that he spent the last years of his life occupied in translating the Holy Quran together with twenty volumes of Hadith as well as the words of the Founder of the Community, creating single-handedly a veritable one-man Library of Islam in the English language. As he says himself, "Gradually, over the years, the consciousness of God as an experienced reality rather than as a merely believed phenomenon, was strengthened".

His love for his long-departed mother and the lessons he had learnt from her were often repeated for us. In his book, on page 297, he quotes her as saying, "It is no virtue to be kind to someone we like; virtue is to be kind to those we do not like"; and then, "A friendship is for ever, else it is no friendship at all". His own oft-repeated saying used to be: "Call to mind when your Lord declared: If you will employ My bounties beneficently, I will surely multiply them unto you; but if you misuse or neglect them, My punishment is severe indeed". (14:8)

I can not do better than close this note by quoting from the moving end of his book "Servant of God" when he speaks about himself. "His career as a public servant came to an end with the expiry of his second term on the International Court of Justice. He was called to the Bar at the age of twenty-one, practised as a lawyer for twenty-one years, held executive office in India and Pakistan for fourteen years, was a Judge, national and international, for twenty-one years, and a diplomat for three years. He has worn many hats, but the one he now wears is the most honorific of all, and brings him the greatest satisfaction. He is now wholly the servant of God, for which honour all praise is due to God. His one care and concern is that his Gracious Master may be pleased with him, and may continue to afford him, for such time as He may, of His grace and mercy, grant him here below, opportunities of serving Him and His creatures, and bestow upon him the strength and ability to perform that service in a manner acceptable to Him. Of his own he has nothing to devote to His service; life, faculties, capacities, means, relations, friends are all His gifts. He supplicates for wisdom and strength to employ all his gifts in His service, to the winning of His pleasure, to the true service of his fellow beings. For himself he only seeks fulfilment in his Gracious Maker, Creator and Master. He hopes for His mercy, His forgiveness, His forbearance. May He continue to cover up all his numberless faults, defaults, shortcomings, vices, sins, disobediences and transgressions under the mantle of His mercy, and

safeguard him against humiliation here and hereafter. May He wash him clean of all impurities so that death, when He is pleased to send it, may prove to be a gentle transition from illusion to reality, from faith to fulfilment and utter submission. Amen.

All praise belongs to Allah.

Admit Your Mistakes

This precept is nearly always a good one. No honest man need ever fear the result of admitting an error. If the error is unnoticed do not call attention to it, if there is possibility of harm arising from its concealment. If it is noticed, and you attempt to dodge it, the result will be disastrous. A ready, straightforward acknowledgement of an error has a breezy air of frankness about it that always charms and captivates. Dishonest people generally seek to circumlocute and explain away their errors.

POWER OF THE WILL

You may become what you will, and it makes no difference how foreign to your nature the goal may be; if you are really in earnest, it is yours. That you must be thoroughly and completely in earnest requires no iteration. A seemingly impossible feat may be accomplished by the magnetism of the will.

POLITENESS

Politeness should be studied as an art and practised as such. It is sometimes practised only before company, but the shallowness is soon discovered. A person naturally polite will be so before a beggar and before a king.

(Edmund Shaftesbury)

Yuz Asaf and Jesus: The Buddhism Connection

(Tahir Ijaz)

The event of the Cross is thought to have occurred around 33 A.D. Before this, Jesus of Nazareth had foretold that his fate would be similar to that of Prophet Jonah.¹ In other words, he would not die on the cross, he would be placed in the tomb alive, stay inside the tomb for three nights alive, and come out alive. This is precisely what happened. When Jesus was laid in the tomb, his companions the Essenes, who wore white clothing,² looked after his wounds. To Christians, these men in white clothing have always been a mystery, hence they were described as angels in the Gospels.

After emerging from the tomb, Jesus was still in his earthly body, the body of flesh and bones.³ He was not a spirit or ghost, the nature of resurrected bodies.⁴ In the post-crucifixion scenes, Jesus is found hiding and concealing himself to avoid a second crucifixion. If Jesus had died and then resurrected, he should not have felt scared because a body cannot die twice.⁵

A body of flesh and bones has to remain in this world, and as to how Jesus spent the rest of his days, the answer is not far to seek. Jesus himself explained: "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."⁶ It is a historical fact that ten of the twelve tribes of Israel suffered army invasions from Assyria in 740 B.C. and 722 B.C. and later from Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia. The result was that the people of these ten tribes became dispersed, and most ended up living within the domains of the Persian Empire. Later, when the Persians under Cyrus and Darius extended their territories further towards the east up to India, these tribes moved with them. The ten tribes domiciled mostly in Afghanistan and Kashmir and as far away as Western China. Because they never came home to the Holy Land, they became known as the Lost Sheep of Israel. It was these people Jesus was referring to. Jesus had to move East.

1. Matthew 12:39-40, Luke 11:29-30.

2. John 20:12, *Funk and Wagnalls New Encyclopaedia*, vol. 9, p. 161 "Essenes".

3. Luke 24:36-40.

4. Luke 20:36.

5. Hebrews 9:27.

6. Matthew 15:24.

In 1899, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote the extraordinary book entitled *Jesus in India* which gave evidence from the Bible, Quran, old historical works, and ancient Buddhist records that Jesus settled in Kashmir where his tomb still exists. According to Kashmiri historians, and the oral testimony of distinguished people in Kashmir, the tomb is that of a Prophet of God. His name was Yuz Asaf and he came from another land about 2000 years ago. The historian Khwaja Muhammad Azam, who completed his book *Tarikh-i-Azami* in 1729, writes:

“The tomb next to that of Sayyid Nasr-ud-Din is generally known as that of a prophet who was sent to the inhabitants of Kashmir and the place is known as the shrine of a prophet. He was a prince who came to Kashmir from a foreign land. He was perfect in piety, righteousness and devotion; he was made a prophet by God and was engaged in preaching to the Kashmiris. His name was Yuz Asaf.⁷

Yuz Asaf arrived in Kashmir during the reign of Gopadatta (49–109 A.D.). Mulla Nadiri writing around 1400 A.D. says:

The King assumed the name of Gopadatta and started his rule in the valley of Kashmir . . . During this period, Yuz Asaf arrived from the Holy Land and proclaimed his prophethood in the Holy Valley.⁸

Others that mention the tomb of Yuz Asaf in Kashmir are, Ibn-i-Muhammad Hadi Muhammad Ismail,⁹ Mufti Ghulam Nabi Khanyari,¹⁰ and Mirza Saif-ud-Din Baig.¹¹ The official decree of the tomb, dated 1766 A.D. states:

“. . . in the reign of Raja Gopadatta who repaired the building on Mount Solomon and built many temples, a man came here whose name was Yuz Asaf . . . The Prophet Yuz Asaf had been sent as a prophet to preach to the people of Kashmir. He used to proclaim the unity of God till death overtook him and he died.¹²

An ancient temple in Kashmir called Takhte Sulaiman contained old inscriptions which established that Yuz Asaf came during the time of Gopadatta and furthermore that he was Jesus of the tribes of Israel.¹³ The testimony of the 2nd century A.D. Hindu book called *Bhavishya Maha Purana* is the same.

But was Yuz Asaf really Jesus? If so, how did the name “Yuz Asaf” come about? If we take a closer look at the origin of this name, there can, as we shall see, be no doubt that he was Jesus.

7. Khwaja Muhammad Azam, *Tarikh-i-Azami*, 82.

8. Mulla Nadiri, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, 35.

9. Ibn-i-Muhammad Hadi Muhammad Ismail, *Ain-ul-Hayat*, vol. 2, p. 177.

10. Mufti Ghulam Muhammad Khanyari, *Wajeez-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. 2 f. 279.

11. Mirza Saif-ud-Din Baig, *Khulasa-tut-Tawarikh*, f. 7(b).

12. *Truth about the Crucifixion*, 86.

13. Mohammad Yasin, *Mysteries of Kashmir*, 13–14.

A. Buddhism and Jesus

Jesus went in search of the Lost Tribes at a time when India was under Buddhist supremacy. In fact, in the time of Jesus, Buddhism had penetrated well into central Asia. Israelite tribes, resident in Afghanistan and much of Northern India, were lost in more ways than one. They were lost in the sense that they had forgotten the law of Moses. Many of them became Buddhists or idol worshipping Hindus. Hazrat Ahmad writes:

“Jesus, on being informed by God that ten tribes of the Jews had migrated towards India, set out for those regions. And, as parties of Jews had accepted Buddhism, there was no alternative for this true prophet but to turn his attention to the followers of Buddhism.”¹⁴

One interesting discovery of Hazrat Ahmad mentioned in his book *Jesus in India* was a prophecy of Guatama Buddha recorded in Buddhist works such as Laggawati Stutatta, Pitakkayayan and Atha Katha. The prophecy was concerning the appearance of a second Buddha whose name will be Bagwa Metteya.¹⁵ He was to come 500 years after Guatama Buddha to re-establish his teachings. “Bagwa Metteya” is a Pali name meaning a “Messiah who is light in complexion.” As Jesus came from the Palestine, he was lighter in complexion than the people of India.

Because of Jesus’ presence in India, we find many Buddhist teachings similar to those of Jesus. Hazrat Ahmad writes:

“Let it be remembered that this moral teaching and this mode of preaching, i.e., talking in parables, was the method of Jesus. This mode of preaching and this moral teaching, combined with other circumstances, at once suggest that this was an imitation of Jesus. Jesus was here in India; he was preaching everywhere; the followers of the Buddhist faith met him, and finding him a holy person who worked miracles, recorded these things in their books; nay, they declared him to be the Buddha, for it’s human nature to try to acquire a good thing for oneself wherever it may be, so much so, that people try to record and remember any clever remark made by any person before them. It is therefore quite likely that the followers of the Buddhist faith may have reproduced the entire picture of the Gospels in their books; as for example, fasting for 40 days both by Jesus and the Buddha; the temptation of both; the birth of both being without a father.”¹⁶

14. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Jesus in India*, 84.

15. *Ibid.*, 89.

16. *Ibid.*, 86-87.

B. Origin of the name Yuz Asaf

Any saint who came after Guatama Buddha was included in the Buddhist Pantheon.¹⁷ Such a person is known as a Buddhissattva, that is, any person destined for enlightenment. Jesus' mission was travelling in search of the Lost Sheep of Israel. He therefore performed the function of gathering "sheep." In the Gospel of John we read: "And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear my voice."¹⁸ Jesus was therefore known as Asaf, a Hebrew word meaning "gatherer" or "one who rallies people."¹⁹ The Buddhists confused this with Buddhissattva and changed Yehoshua Asaf to Budasaf. In Semitic dialects Budasaf becomes Yudasaf or Yuz Asaf.

For the next few centuries, the Buddhists of India and Tibet cherished the memory of Budasaf, and by the medieval period, there were a set of legends concerning Budasaf. In the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* we read:

"Modern research on ancient central Asian Buddhist Sogdian texts and on Old Turkish and Persian fragments discovered at Turfan in Chinese Turkistan has shown that there was current in those parts a set of legends about the Bodhisattva prince, whose name occurs in the form 'Bodisaf.'²⁰

A much modified and legendary story of Budasaf (Yuz Asaf) was made into a form of a book. This book found its way into Persia during the Sassanid period of Persian history, and it was translated into Pahlavi.²¹ The Book of Yuz Asaf was later transmitted to the Arabs, who called it *Kitab Bilawhar wa Yudasaf*.

In the 9th century, a Christian version of the Book was made by the Georgians, and later, the Greek recension was made, which is a highly embroidered rendering of the Georgian. Still more Christian versions followed. In the Christian versions Budasaf (Yuz Asaf) became Josaphat, the Greek form of the name. The Book was entitled *The Story of Barlaam and Josaphat*.

Thus the story of Jesus' life in India became modified into nothing more than a Buddhist legend. However, we find certain characteristics of Yuz Asaf which show he was Jesus. Yuz Asaf spoke in parables. We find the parable of the sower mentioned in the Arabic versions of the Book of Yuz Asaf as well as the Christianized versions. The Gospel version of the parable of the sower can be compared to this one from *The Story of Barlaam and Josaphat*:

"When a sower sows his seed, some falls on the highway where the passengers tread it under foot. Others are blown away by the wind.

17. *Truth about the Crucifixion*, 142.

18. John 10:16.

19. *Bagster's Polyglot Bible*, 33, appendix.

20. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 3, p. 168, 1972 ed., "Barlaam and Josaphat".

21. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 9, p. 850, "Iran: History of".

Others picked up by the birds. Some seeds fall on rocky grounds and grow only till the roots reach the rock. Others fall among the thistles. Only a small handful falls in rich earth, where it grows and brings forth fruit. The sower is the sage; the seed is his wisdom. The seeds that fall by the way side etc., are pieces of wisdom that come into one ear, only to go out the other. Those falling on rocky ground are not taken to heart. Those among thorns meet with opposition from the senses. Only that which takes root in the heart brings forth fruit in the character."²²

In the Book, we also read of an ancient Indian tradition which describes that Yuz Asaf was a Prophet who came to India from somewhere outside. He then settled in Kashmir and died there. A disciple by the name of Ababid (Babid) was at his side at the time of his death. Thomas in Arabic is Babid or Babad. It was of course Jesus who had a disciple named Thomas. Thomas accompanied his master on his long journey to India, and it is no coincidence that the tomb of Thomas is found in southern India.²³ The full quotation from *Kitab Bilawhar wa Yudasaf* regarding the death of Yuz Asaf reads:

"And he (Yuz Asaf) reached Kashmir, and this was the most remote place in which he ministered, and there the end of his life overtook him. And he left the world, bequeathing his heritage to a certain disciple, Ababid by name, who served him and accompanied him; he was a perfect man in all his doings. And he exhorted him and said to him: I have discovered and cherished and adorned a shrine and set therein lamps for the departed; I have gathered together the flock of the true faith which was scattered and to which I was sent. And now draws nigh my ascension from the world, and the separation of my soul from the body. Observe therefore the commandments given to you and do not diverge from the truth, but hold fast to it with gratitude. And let Ababid be the leader. Afterwards he commanded Ababid to smooth out a place for him, then he stretched out his legs and lay down; and he turned his head towards the north and his face to the east, and then he died."²⁴

C. Was Yuz Asaf Gautama Buddha?

Some scholars, basing their conclusions on just the Story and not Kashmiri historical records, say that Yuz Asaf is a corruption of Buddhisattva, meaning thereby he was Gautama Buddha who lived hundreds of years before Jesus. But when Yuz Asaf is taken as simply a form of Buddhisattva, the name *Asaf* in *Yuz Asaf* is ignored. *Asaf* in Hebrew means "gatherer." We have quoted this statement of Yuz Asaf in *Kitab Bilawhar wa Yudasaf*: "I have gathered together the flock of the true faith which was scattered and to which I was

22. *The Story of Barlaam and Josaphat*, edited by K. S. Macdonald, p. 111.

23. J. D. Shams, *Where Did Jesus Die?*, 119-124.

24. D. M. Lang, *The Wisdom of Balahar: A Christian Legend of the Buddha*, 129.

sent.” Here the Gatherer refers to the completion of his mission. So Yuz Asaf is not quite another form of Buddhisattva, but rather a form of Budisaf. Because of the Hebrew word *Asaf*, Yuz Asaf must be a Jewish prophet who gathered, and it was only Jesus who made this claim.

It is written in the Book that Yuz Asaf died in Kashmir, and because Gautama Buddha died in Nepal, in the city of Kusinagara,²⁵ it shows Yuz Asaf and Buddha were entirely different persons. David Marshal Lang in his book, *The Wisdom of Balahar — a Christian Legend of the Buddha*,²⁶ argues that Kashmir was meant to be Kusinagara. In other words, he is saying that Yuz Asaf has no connections with Kashmir whatsoever! He certainly overlooks the fact that there is a tomb of Yuz Asaf in the city of Srinagar. Kashmiri historians with one voice say a man by the name of Yuz Asaf came and settled in Kashmir, where he was buried.

Enumerated below are reasons that Yuz Asaf is none other than Jesus on the basis of just the tomb:

1. The tomb of Yuz Asaf is of a Jewish style.²⁷
2. The body itself lies in an East–West position, the Jewish custom.²⁸
3. The tomb is in possession of Muslims, not Hindus or Buddhists.²⁹
4. Yuz Asaf cannot be a Buddhist or Hindu as the people of these faiths cremate their dead and do not bury them.

The list is by no means complete, but that is all that is necessary to establish the point under discussion.

In conclusion, we quote the words of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad:

“We learn from the united testimony of Christians as well as Muslims that Yuz Asaf was the name of a prophet whose time is exactly the same as that of Jesus and who came to Kashmir after a long journey. He was known not only as a *Nabi* (prophet) but also as a *shahzada* (prince).³⁰ It is moreover stated that he came from Syria, the country in which Jesus lived. His teachings also have a striking resemblance with the teachings of Jesus, so much so that some of the parables and phrases of his book are the same as those which are met within the Gospels. These facts and similarities are so striking that even the Christians have been obliged to admit that the person who went under the name of Yuz Asaf and Prince Prophet was one of the followers of Jesus. It is for this reason that he is held in such great honour,³¹ and a church has been erected in honour of

25. Oldenburg, *Buddha*, 203.

26. D. M. Lang, *The Wisdom*, 128, 129.

27. *Truth about the Crucifixion*, 86.

28. Andreas Faber-Kaiser, *Jesus Died In Kashmir*, 100.

29. J. D. Shams, *Where Did Jesus Die?*, 149.

30. It should be remembered that Jesus was called the son of King David (Matt 1:1).

31. It is interesting that Josaphat or Yuz Asaf is venerated by the Roman Catholic Church on November 27 of every year.

his name in Sicily. It was also on account of the close resemblance of Yuz Asaf with Jesus that the story of Yuz Asaf was translated into almost all the languages of Europe and read so vastly. The zeal with which Christians in Europe worked and the interest which it took in spreading the story of Yuz Asaf, is in itself a strong evidence that if the Christians never recognized the actual identity of these two personages, they at least admitted a strong and close connection between them and took Yuz Asaf for a disciple of Jesus if not for Jesus himself. Taking all these facts into consideration, viz, that Yuz Asaf has (as admitted by the Christians themselves) a very close connection with Christianity, that his time is the same as the time of Jesus, that his life and teaching were translated with an ardent zeal into the different languages of Europe, that a church was erected in his memory, that the moral teaching of Yuz Asaf are admitted to have much in common with those of Jesus and that Yuz Asaf called his book *Bushra* or Gospel like Jesus, every unprejudiced mind will be of opinion that Yuz Asaf was no other than Jesus himself.³²

Pure Conduct

There should be no impure amusement or joking in your social gatherings. You should be pure in heart, pure in nature and pure in thought, and should develop the habit of forgiving and forgetting, and of patience and forbearance. Do not have recourse to any unfair criticism or fault-finding. Always keep your passions under control. In debates and religious discourse, speak gently and behave nobly. If any person behaves meanly with you, bid him good-bye, and leave that assembly at once.

If you are persecuted, abused and vilified by anybody, take care not to pay him back in his own coin, or else you will be classified in the same category. God wants you to set an example of goodness and righteousness.

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad – the Promised Messiah)

32. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *A Review of Christianity*, 30-2.

Goodness and Piety

(Afzalur Rahman)

Prayer is undoubtedly the most effective weapon for fighting against evil in society and the best means to ward off evil from an individual. But this is the negative aspect of prayer. Its positive function is to make people truthful and righteous, pious and virtuous, pure and good, so that they may become instruments for purifying society. The Holy Quran refers to this positive aspect of prayer in these words: "He indeed is successful who purifies himself and remembers the Name of his Lord and then prays." (87:14-15) Real success and prosperity, according to the Holy Quran, is for the one who attains purity and goodness. This verse tells us the means through which an individual may acquire it. It is prayer which enables man to attain that standard of goodness and piety enjoined by Islam: "Thou canst but admonish such as fear their Lord in secret and keep up prayer. And whoever purifies himself, purifies himself only for his own good." (35:18)

This shows that prayer protects man from moral weaknesses, guards him against evil in himself and develops his spiritual strength. In fact, it is a very powerful means of purifying man of his lower and mean carnal self and, instead, developing in him the nobler virtues of life. It lifts him from the depths of meanness and raises him up to the heights of goodness and piety. Prayer brings a man out of his animal self and adorns him with moral qualities of goodness, piety, love, affection, self-sacrifice etc., that render him an enviable object even for the angels.

There is only one way to crush the power of evil that is found in individuals as well as society. And it is this. That you should become more and more honest and pious and defeat the forces of evil by your goodness. And the best way to attain goodness is by practising prayer. It will help you not only to fight against the organised evil in society but will also assist you and prepare you in defeating it and establishing, instead, a system of goodness and justice. In short, prayer is a means of strength for the righteous.

The Holy Quran praises the high moral qualities of the believers against the wickedness of the evil-doers in these words: "Surely man is created impatient . . . fretful when evil affects him, and niggardly when good befalls

him . . . except those who are steadfast in prayer.” (70:18–22) This verse gives good news to those who practise regular prayer, that they will attain the highest degree of excellence and acquire the most valuable qualities of being faithful and righteous — will be charitable, truthful, chaste, true and honest in their dealings and most fearful of their Lord.

Moreover, it shows that the real source of good qualities and high moral values, which Islam wants to develop in its followers, is prayer. If it is performed properly in the right state of mind, fulfilling all its conditions, it will definitely produce the desired results on individuals, as described in the Holy Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Messenger. This is why the Holy Messenger described prayer as the real pillar of Din-Allah. With its strength, Din-Allah is strengthened and with its weakness the whole superstructure of Din falls down.

There is doubt that healthy development of human powers and faculties depends on the goodness of the inner self. If a man’s inner self is purified of evil tendencies, it is likely to develop his faculties on right and healthy lines. And prayer is definitely a very strong and effective means of purification of the heart, as is pointed out in the two verses of the Holy Quran quoted above (29:45) and (11:114). Therefore believers are told to purify themselves: “He surely is successful who purifies it (his soul) and he fails who corrupts it” (91:9). And the Holy Prophet said, “The key of Paradise is prayer, and the key of prayer is being purified.”

Abu Dhar said that the Prophet went out in winter, when the leaves were falling, and took two branches of a tree whose leaves began to fall. Then he turned towards him and said, “A Muslim observes prayer for God’s sake and his sins fall from him as these leaves fall from this tree.” Abu Hurairah reported God’s Messenger as saying, “If one of you has a river at his door in which he washes himself five times a day; do you think it would leave any dirt on him?” The companions said that it would not leave any dirt on him (and that he would be perfectly clean). The Prophet said, “This is an example of the five prayers with which God wipes out all the evils of man and make him completely pure and good.”

There are many sayings of the Holy Prophet which clearly state that prayer is a means of purifying the worshipper from evil tendencies from within and without. And the Holy Quran describes the state of such people in these words: “In it are men who love to be purified, and God loves those who make themselves pure” (9:108). Undoubtedly a true Muslim must be pure in body, mind and soul, and daily prayers help him to achieve this degree of purity and goodness. This is because the prayer is a form of remembrance of God and the latter is a very effective means of suppressing evil and thereby purifying the heart of unhealthy tendencies. The Holy Quran clarifies it in the following two verses: It is I Who am God, there is no deity but I, so worship Me and

establish prayer to remember Me" (20:14). And remembrance of God is the greatest thing in life without doubt" (29:45).

The real object of the prayer is that people should not neglect their obligations to God, Who is their Lord and Master and they are all His servants. The daily prayer is prescribed to remind them of the presence of God and their duties and obligations to Him. This remembrance suppresses evil tendencies in man and leads him to his moral advancement. The effective sanction of the presence of God in the prayer acts as a restraint upon his tendencies to break Divine Laws. The greater and the stronger the feeling of the Divine Presence in the prayer the greater and the more effective is the restraint upon his tendencies to break the Divine Law. Thus prayer by suppressing the evil tendencies of the worshipper, purifies his heart and soul of evil and leads him on the straight path to the growth of his inner self.

Another factor which greatly assists the worshipper to suppress feelings of evil and to attain goodness and piety is the fear of God. He is fully aware of the fact that God is watching him and his activities all the time wherever he goes, openly or in secret, in light or in darkness. He cannot hide anything from Him. This belief of the worshipper that God is present everywhere and that He sees everything restrains him from breaking the Divine commandments. It is the strength of this belief that determines the strength of his actions. The daily prayer is prescribed to strengthen this belief in the heart of the worshipper. The Holy Quran says: "Prayer restrains man from evil and unjust acts." (29:45) Without daily prayer, it is physically impossible to maintain the strength of this belief and, consequently, adherence to goodness and piety. If the heart of a worshipper is deprived of this feeling, how can he possibly adhere to goodness and avoid evil for fear of God in his daily life? The obvious recipe is the practice of daily prayer: to evoke and revive fear of God in the worshipper and strengthen his belief in the Omnipresent God so that he may walk in ways of goodness and piety and avoid evil.

Honesty

Who can be more honest than a true believer who expects to meet his Lord on the Day of Judgement for final reckoning and to give full account of his omissions and commissions in this life? Who is fully aware of the Grandeur and all-comprehensive Power of God; Who knows the open and the hidden and even the secrets of the heart? Who is completely obedient and submissive to His command? And who has totally given himself and all his affairs to the Law of Allah? Who is true to Allah, the Unseen and obeys Him completely and meets Him five times daily in prayer? How can such a man be untrue in his worldly affairs? He follows, in word and deed, the teachings of God's Messengers, who were the most honest of all people: Moses said, "O Firaun; I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds . . . One for whom it is right to say nothing but truth about God." (7:104-105)

The followers of the Messenger are the most honest and truthful of all people: "Who establish regular prayer . . . such indeed are the believers." (8:3-4) Their belief in the presence of God gets stronger and stronger through prayer and further strengthens their righteous character: "It is righteousness to believe in God, . . . to be steadfast in prayer . . . such are the people of truth, the Godfearing" (2:177).

A beautiful description of the righteous and God-fearing man is given in the above passage from the Holy Quran. People who possess all those qualities and practise regular prayer are surely, without doubt, people who can be trusted in all matters. They have been put to the severest tests and have come out successfully with honour and glory. They have proven their truthfulness and, therefore, they can be relied upon in all matters under all circumstances: "We did test those before them, and God will certainly know those who are true from those who are false." (29:3) True believers have come out safely, purified but unharmed as from the goldsmith's melting pot in which the fire burns out the impurities and pure gold is left behind.

Such people are amply rewarded by God while the hypocrites are punished: "Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with God . . . that God may reward the men of Truth for their truth, and punish the hypocrites." (33:22-23) The honesty and sincerity of the believers is judged by God and they are given their due reward. The dishonest and insincere, on the other hand, are punished in accordance with their misdeeds: "So he gave nothing in charity, nor did he pray; but, on the contrary, he rejected Truth and turned away . . . Woe to thee." (75:31-35)

These are those who do not do good deeds and do not obey God and do not practise regular prayer in obedience to His Command, in fact, reject Truth and turn away from Him. And there are people who do all these things and practise prayer, in fact, accept and obey Truth from their Lord. They indeed are the righteous and truthful people, who can be trusted in all matters.

People who believe in the teachings of the God's Messengers and do good deeds and show mercy and forgiveness to their fellow creatures can never be untrue in their worldly dealings with people. All Prophets came with Truth and taught people Truth and honesty in all their affairs. "We have already shown clear signs to those who believe (what greater sign could there be than that). We have sent you with the knowledge of Truth and made you a bearer of good tidings and a warner." (2:119) The Prophet Muhammad was given the Truth as the Prophets before him were given the Truth and they preached the same thing to their people. "He has sent down to you the Book, which has brought the Truth and confirms the scriptures which preceded it. Before this, He sent down the Torah and Gospel for the guidance of mankind, and He has sent down the Criterion (of right and wrong). Now there shall be a severe punishment for those who reject the Commandments of God, for God is Almighty, Avenger of wickedness." (3:3)

The Holy Prophet is commanded to judge between people according to the criterion of Truth revealed to him: "O Prophet, We have sent this Book to you with the Truth so that you may judge between people in accordance with the Right Way which Allah has shown you. So do not plead for dishonest people, implore Allah's forgiveness, for Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate. You should not plead for those who are dishonest to themselves. Allah does not like the one who is persistently dishonest and sinful." (4:105) This verse of the Quran strongly condemns partisanship in matters of Truth and Justice. It is sheer dishonesty that one should plead the cause of one's own party man, even though he may be in the wrong, and oppose the man of the opposite party, even though he may be right.

Glory of Islam

Islam is the most dynamic religion in the world because it is based on the pure Word of God. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace be on him) was the greatest of all the prophets. He was bathed in the effulgence of Divine Light and drank deeply from the fountain-head of revelation. Upon no other prophet was bestowed such an abundance of Divine grace as was bestowed upon him. God spoke to him as a father speaks to his son. Every word of the Holy Quran is the genuine and pure verbal revelation of the Master of the universe. It is a perfect book and there is no doubt about it. None can successfully combat its divine power for it is the Word of God in the literal sense.

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

The Holy Prophet's Last Message to Mankind

(Fazal Ilahi Bashir)

It is an established fact and admitted by all the religions of the world that God, our Creator is *ONE GOD*, and that it is He Who alone should be worshipped and loved. It is He Who manifested Himself to His chosen Messengers and appointed them to guide their fellow beings towards Him. The first Messenger of God was Adam, peace be on him, who represented God on the Earth to convey and enforce His commandments and to establish the first Divine Movement for physical, moral, social and spiritual advancement of mankind. That is why Adam is called God's Successor on earth. After Adam, peace be on him, came a period, a very long period, in which mankind remained divided and disconnected due to poor communications. God, therefore, sent His Messengers to each and every people; "and there is no people to whom a Warner has not been sent." (Quran 35:25)

Finally, the time came when Allah willed to unite mankind into one family. The means of communication appeared and nations came in contact with each other and they found, surprisingly, that their requirements, physical and spiritual, were similar. Inner brotherly feelings awaken latent desire of togetherness and union. Allah, the All-knowing sent His Messenger, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, with a perfect and complete Law — the Holy Quran for mankind. The Holy Prophet of Islam conveyed it to mankind and, in his lifetime, showed an excellent model and he, practically, established true fraternity and equality among the believers.

On the 11th day of the month of Dhul-Hijja, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, stood before a large gathering of Muslims at Mina and delivered an address, famed in history as the farewell address of the Holy Prophet. In the course of this address, he said:

"O men! lend me an attentive ear. For I know not whether I will stand before you again in this valley and address you as I address you now. Your lives and your possessions have been sanctified by Allah against attacks by one another among you until the Day of Judgement. God has appointed for

every one a share in the inheritance. No 'will' shall now be admitted which is prejudicial to the interests of a rightful heir. A child born in any house will be regarded as the child of the father in that house. Whoever contests the parentage of this child will be liable to punishment under the Law of Islam. Anyone who attributes his birth to some else's father, or falsely claims someone to be his master. God, His angels and the whole of mankind will curse him."

"O men! you have some rights against your wives, but your wives also have some rights against you. Your right against them is that they should live chaste, and not adopt ways which may bring disgrace to the husband in the sight of his people. If your wives do not live up to this, then you may admonish them. You can chastise them after due inquiry has been made by a competent authority, and your right to chastise has been established. Even so, chastisement in such a case must not be very severe. But if your wives do no such thing, and their behaviour is not such as would bring disgrace to their husbands, they your duty is to provide for them food and garments and shelter, according to your own standard of living. Remember you must always treat your wives well. God has charged you with the duty of looking after them. Woman is weak and cannot protect her own rights, when you married, God appointed you the trustee of those rights. You brought your wives to your homes under the Law of God. You must not therefore betray the trust which God has placed in your hands."

"O men! you still have in your possession some prisoners of war. I advise you, therefore, to feed them and to clothe them in the same way and style as you feed and clothe yourselves. If they do anything wrong which you are unable to forgive, then pass them on to someone else. They are part of God's creation. To give them pain or trouble can never be right."

"O men! what I say to you, you must hear and remember. All Muslims are brethren to one another. All of you are equals. All men, whatever nation or tribe they may belong to, and whatever station in life they may hold, are equal."

While he was saying this, the Prophet raised his hands and joined the fingers of one hand with the fingers of the other hand and then said:

"Even as the fingers of the two hands are equal so are human beings equal to one another. No one has any right, and superiority to claim over another. You are as brothers."

Proceeding the Holy Prophet said; "Do you know what month this is? What territory we are in? What day of the year it is today?" The Muslims said in reply, they knew it was the sacred month, the sacred land and the day of the Hajj. The Holy Prophet said:

“Even as this month is sacred, this land inviolate and this day holy, so has Allah made the lives, property and honour of every man sacred. To take any man’s life or his property, or attack his honour is as unjust and wrong as to violate the sacredness of this day, this month and this territory. What I command you today is not meant only for today. It is meant for all time. You are expected to remember it and to act upon it until you leave this world and go to the next to meet your Maker.”

In conclusion he said; “What I have told you, you should communicate to the ends of the earth. Maybe those who have not heard me may benefit by it more than those who have heard.”

(Sihah Sitta, Tabari, Hisham & Khamees)

Islam – Its Message

Of the great world faiths, Islam is unique in several respects. It is the only one that does not rely on any myth or mystery. It is based upon the certainty of proved and acknowledged fact. Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, peace be on Him, was an historical figure, and lived his life in the full light of day. The revelation vouchsafed to him, over a period of twenty-two years, has been fully safeguarded:

(1) The text of the revelation has been preserved in its purity and entirety for all time. Even Western scholars, who do not accept the Quran as Divine revelation, affirm that it is word for word that which Muhammad gave out to the world as Divine revelation.

(2) Classical Arabic, the language in which the revelation was sent has continued to be in use as a living language. The revelation of God – the Quran – expounds and explains all that is or may be needed by mankind for the complete fulfilment of life (16:90). It seeks to create faith in God through rehearsal of God’s Signs; it makes provision for mankind’s material, moral, and spiritual welfare; it teaches all that is needed for the beneficent regulation of human life and expounds the philosophy underlying it, so that reason being satisfied, wholehearted conformity to what is taught is assured (62:2-3). It expounds the necessity of establishing and maintaining communion with God.

The Quran speaks at every level; it seeks to reach every type of understanding, through parables, similitudes, arguments, reasoning, the observation and study of the phenomena of nature, and the natural, moral and spiritual laws (18:55; 39:28; 59:22). Man is left to his free choice and acceptance of the truth. Faith is not commanded on the basis of authority, but is invited on the basis of understanding (12:109).

This comprehensive message was conveyed in verbal revelation to the Holy Prophet of Islam over a period of approximately twenty-two years, and every aspect of it was illustrated by the Holy Prophet in his own life. He has been described in the Holy Quran as an excellent exemplar. This necessitated that his life should be lived in the light of day and that a full account of it should become available.

Jihad

(Ms. Amatul-Shafi Nasser)

In this modern day and age, when the world has become considerably smaller because of the technological advancement of the various forms of media, a word has arisen clouded with doubt, distortion and mysticism from the East. This word is Jihad, or as is better known in the West "Holy War".

The actual root of the Arabic word Jihad is Jahd, which signifies endurance or rigorous conditions. Thus, in essence Jihad means to strive to the utmost for the achievement of a purpose and to leave nothing undone in pursuance of it.

I will now take this concept of Jihad and look at it from two angles. First, what the Holy Quran says about Jihad, and secondly how Muslims of the Ahmadiyya sect interpret what is said in the Holy Quran.

The Islamic conception of Jihad is first introduced in Chapter 22 verse 39 of the Quran. This verse throws a flood of light on what the Islamic conception of Jihad actually purports to be. Jihad, as the verse shows is fighting in defence of Truth. But whereas Islam allows no aggressive war, it regards the waging of it to defend one's honour, country or faith as an act of the highest virtue. According to Islam, Man is God's noblest handiwork. He is the cause of his creation, its aim and end. Therefore, it is only natural that the religion which has raised man to such a high pedestal should also have attached very great importance and sanctity to honour life. Of all things, man's life, according to the Quran is most sacred and inviolable. It is a sacrilege to take it except under very rare circumstances which the Quran has specifically mentioned in Chapters 5:33, 7:34.

The 40th verse, Chapter 22 of the Quran is the first verse according to consensus of scholarly opinion which gave Muslims the permission to take up arms in self defence:

"Permission to take up arms is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged."

This verse lays down principles according to which Muslims can wage a defensive war, and sets forth along with the following verses the reasons

which led a handful of Muslims, without arms and other material means, to fight in self defence after they had suffered at Mecca ceaseless persecution for years, and had been pursued with relentless hatred to Medina, and were harassed there. So the first reason given in this verse is that they have been wronged.

Chapter 22, Verse 41 gives the second reason. The verse states:

“Those who have been driven out from their homes unjustly, only because they said ‘Our Lord is Allah’.”

This second reason is that Muslims were driven out from their hearths and homes without a just and legitimate cause, their only offence being that they believed in One God.

For years the Muslims were persecuted at Mecca, then they were driven out from it and were not left in peace even in the exile at Medina. Islam at that time was threatened with complete extermination by a combined attack by the Arabian tribes around Medina. Medina itself was honeycombed with sedition and teachery, and the Jews, compact and united were utterly opposed to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). It is under these highly unfavourable circumstances that Muslims had to take up arms to save themselves, their faith and the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) from extermination.

If ever a people had a legitimate cause to fight, it was the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) and his companions, and yet the critics of Islam have accused him of waging aggressive wars to impose his faith on an unwilling people.

After giving reasons why the Muslims were obliged to take up arms, the verse mentions the object and purpose of the wars of Islam:

“And if Allah had not repelled some people by means of others, cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft rembered, would surely have been destroyed.”

Thus, the object was never to deprive other people of their homes and possessions, or to deprive them of national freedom and compel them to submit to foreign yoke, or to explore new markets and get new colonies as the Western Powers do. It was to fight in self defence and to serve Islam from extermination and to establish freedom of conscience and liberty of thought. It was also to defend places of worship belonging to other religions — the churches, and synagogues, the temples and cloisters.

Thus, the first and foremost object of the wars of Islam was and will always be, to establish freedom of belief and worship and to fight in defence of country, honour and freedom against an unprovoked attack. Is there any person who can say that there is a better cause to fight for than this?

Islamic Jihad is basically of three types. First, there is the Jihad against oneself which in Islamic idiom is called the greatest Jihad (Jihad Akbar). Secondly, the Jihad that is waged against Satan and satanic teachings and designs and is called the great Jihad (Jihad Kabeer). Thirdly, there is the Jihad that is waged against the enemy of freedom of conscience; this is called the lesser Jihad (Jihad Asghar).

Let us now consider the attitude of the Promised Messiah, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, and the Muslims of the Ahmadiyya sect towards Jihad by fighting.

During the Promised Messiah's time, British rule had been established over the sub-continent of India, also comprising what today is Pakistan. Before the British, this part of the country was subject to the rule of the Sikhs who had abolished religious freedom, especially for the Muslims, for whom it became difficult even to freely carry out Divine Worship. But after British rule replaced Sikh rule in this part of the country, an announcement was made in Allahabad on the 1st November 1858 on behalf of Queen Victoria. The announcement stated that "No-one of our subjects shall be persecuted or granted any favour on account of his religious beliefs or practices. . . . In the eyes of the law, all people shall be equally entitled to impartial freedom." In such circumstances, where unlike the Sikhs, the British Government did not consider the Muslims as deserving to be killed and were granted complete religious freedom of profession and practice, the Promised Messiah in his booklet "Tohfah Qaesiriyya" explained the doctrine of Jihad as follows:

" . . . I have been made to understand by God Almighty that these practices that are currently regarded as Jihad are entirely opposed to the teachings of the Holy Quran. . . . In short, at the time of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), the basis of Islamic Jihad was that God's wrath had been raised against the tyrants. But living under the rule of a benign government, as is the government of our Queen and Empress, it is not Jihad to entertain rebellious designs against it, but it is a barbaric idea which is born of ignorance. To entertain ill-will against a government under whom life is lived in freedom and there is complete security and religious obligations can be discharged to the full, is a criminal step and not Jihad. . . ."

This makes it absolutely clear that in the view of the Promised Messiah there was no ground for undertaking Jihad by the sword against the Government in India at that time.

It is worthy of note that the Promised Messiah was not alone in holding the view that Jihad by the sword was not permitted against the British Government in India. All the eminent divines of his time made declarations to the same effect and in accordance with this refrained from any activity which

might be construed as Jihad by the sword, and thus confirmed their declarations by their conduct.

But it is important to remember that the Promised Messiah did not forbid Jihad absolutely. He urged his community to carry Jihad all the time. He said:

“The Jihad of this age is to strive in upholding the word of Islam, to refute the objections of the opponents, to propagate the excellences of the Islamic faith and to proclaim the truth of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) throughout the world. This is Jihad till God Almighty brings about other conditions in the world.”

(Letter addressed to Mir Nasir Nawab Sahib)

These last words are of very great importance in that they clearly indicated that he did not reject the concept of Jihad by the sword, but believed that the obligation of such Jihad had been postponed in this age on account of the absence of the conditions that call for it. He did not abrogate Jihad by the sword, nor could he do as he was bound by the Holy Quran. He merely declared its postponement.

I will conclude by saying that those who equate the term Jihad with fanaticism and terror and who seek to justify their horrific and barbaric acts of violence in the name of religion, are in great error and have not understood the true teachings of Islam and the Holy Quran.

Finally, under the banner of Jihad we should always remember the verses of the Holy Quran that sets this noble and ancient term in its rightful perspective, namely that above all, Jihad is to strive in the cause of God with the ultimate object of winning the pleasure of God. (Chapter 29 Verses 7 and 70).

The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

The Review of Religions is the oldest magazine of its kind published in the 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.

During more than eighty-one years the message of Islam has been conveyed through this magazine to hundreds of readers and many fortunate persons have recognised the truth of Islam and accepted it through studying it.

The articles published in it deal not only with the doctrines and teachings of Islam but also set forth a comparative appreciation of the teachings of other faiths.

One of its outstanding features is the refutations of the criticism of Islamic teachings by orientalist and non-muslim scholars.

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.

