



THE REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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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.



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The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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

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

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

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Guide Posts

Treasury of Prayers

(Selected by Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.
All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds,
The Gracious, the Merciful,
Master of the Day of Judgement.
Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help.
Guide us in the right path —
The path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy
blessings, those who have not incurred Thy dis-
pleasure, and those who have not gone astray.
(Quran).

O Allah, purify my heart from hypocrisy and my conduct from show and
my tongue from falsehood and my eyes from treachery; for Thou well
knowest the treachery of the eyes and that which the hearts conceal.
(Muhammad).

O Allah, put Thy light in my heart and in my tongue and in my eyes and in
my ears and put Thy light on my right and on my left and above me and
below me and in front of me and behind me and put Thy light in the
depths of my soul and bestow upon me vastly Thy light.
(Muhammad).

Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.
(Jesus).

Grant me the Grace of prayer.
(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad).

Lord, take my lips, and speak through them; take my mind, and think
through it; take my heart, and set it on fire.
(W. L. L. Aitken).

Write Thy blessed name, O Lord, upon my heart, there to remain so
indelibly engraven, that no prosperity, no adversity shall ever move me
from Thy love. Be Thou to me a strong Tower of defence, a Comforter in
tribulation, a Deliverer in distress, a very present Help in trouble, and a
Guide to heaven through the many temptations and dangers of this life.
(Thomas A. Kempis).

O God, everything is at your service, so protect me, help me and have mercy on me.

(Revealed to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad).

Help us, O Lord, with patient love to bear
Each other's faults, to suffer with true meekness;
Help us each other's joys and griefs to share,
But let us turn to Thee alone in weakness.

(Anon).

O Lord, forgive my sin,
And deign to put within
A calm, obedient heart, a patient mind;
That I may murmur not,
Though bitter seem my lot;
For hearts unthankful can no blessing find.

(Rutilius).

Our Lord, we have heard a Caller calling unto faith:
Believe ye in your Lord; and we have believed. Our Lord,
forgive us, therefore, our errors and remove from us our
ills, and in death number us with the righteous. Our
Lord, grant us that which Thou hast promised us through
Thy Messengers and humiliate us not on the Day of Judgement.
Surely Thou doest not contrary to Thy promise.

(Quran).

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

(F. R. Havergal).

Renew Thine image, Lord in me,
Lowly and gentle may I be;
No charms but these to Thee are dear,
No anger mayst Thou ever find,
No pride in my unruffled mind,
But faith, and heaven-born peace be there.

(P. Gerhardt).

I pray that your hearts may be purified and that all vices and corruptions and evil incitements may be removed from you, that the Satan of arrogance, vanity, self seeking and selfishness and meekness should prepare your breasts for the reception of your Lord, and then Allah should descend upon them and fill them with every type of blessing. May He illumine your hearts and souls with every type of light. May God

cause that fountains of human sympathy and compassion should burst forth from your pure breasts and the whole world should become the beneficiary of your selfless service.

(Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad).

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy steadfast love; according to Thy abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquities, and cleanse me from my sin.

(Book of Psalms).

Lord, be Thou near and cheer my lonely way;
With Thy sweet peace my aching bosom fill;
Scatter my cares and fears; my griefs allay,
And be it mine each day
To love and please Thee still.

(P. Corneille).

Lord I my vows to Thee renew;
Disperse my sins as morning dew;
Guard my first springs of thought and will,
And with Thyself my spirit fill.

(Thomas Ken).

Lord, I have given my life to Thee,
And every day and hour is Thine,—
What Thou appointest let them be;
Thy Will is better, Lord, than mine.

(A. Warner).

Thou Who hast given so much to me, give one thing more,
a grateful heart.

(George Herbert).

My Lord, forgive and have mercy, for Thou art the
best of those who show mercy.

(Quran).

Lord, grant me righteous progeny.

(Abraham).

Lord, I have been afflicted with distress and Thou art the Most Merciful
of all who show mercy.

(Job).

Send down Thy likeness from above;
And let this Thy adorning be:
Clothe me with wisdom, patience, love,
With lowliness and purity.

(Joachim Lange).

Make me patient, kind and gentle,
 Day by Day;
 Teach me how to live more nearly
 As I pray.

(Sharps Magazine).

Save us from the evil tongue,
 From the heart that thinketh wrong,
 From the sins, whate'er they be,
 That divide the soul from Thee.

(Anon).

May my Lord strengthen your faith and characterise it with sincerity and devotion. May your conduct in the cause of Allah be full of sincerity and zeal and free from every suspicion of disorder. May Allah so ordain that the ways you adopt should lead you to success and prosperity. May you ever dwell in the gardens of my Lord and be occupied with His praise and glorification, and may your greeting for each other be one of peace and may you be the recipients of peace from your Lord.

(Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad).

Teach me, my God and King,
 In all things Thee to see,
 And what I do in anything,
 To do it for Thee.

(G. Herbert).

Plant in us a humble mind,
 Patient, pitiful and kind;
 Meek and lowly let us be,
 Full of goodness, full of Thee,

(C. Wesley).

O most Merciful and Gracious God, Thou fountain of all mercy and blessing, Thou hast opened the hand of Thy mercy to fill me with blessings, and the sweet effects of Thy loving-kindness. Thou feedest us like a Shepherd, Thou lovest us as a Friend, and thinkest on us perpetually, as a careful mother on her helpless babe, and art exceeding merciful to all that fear Thee. As Thou hast spread Thy hand upon me for a covering, so also enlarge my heart with thankfulness; and let Thy gracious favours and loving-kindness endure for ever and ever upon Thy servant; and grant that what Thou hast sown in mercy, may spring up in duty; and let Thy Grace so strengthen my purposes that I may sin no more, but walk in the paths of Thy commandments; that I, living here to the glory of Thy name, may at last enter into the glory of my Lord, to spend a whole eternity in giving praise to Thy ever-glorious name.

(Jeremy Taylor).

Lord, without Thee I can do nothing; with Thee I can do all. Help me by Thy grace, that I fall not; help me by Thy strength, to resist mightily the very first beginnings of evil, before it takes hold of me; help me to cast myself at once at Thy sacred feet, and lie still there, until the storm be overpast; and if I lose sight of Thee, bring me back quickly to Thee, and grant me to love Thee better, for Thy tender mercy's sake.

(Archbishop E. W. Pusey).

This is my prayer to Thee, my Lord—
Strike, strike at the root of penury in my heart.
Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows.
Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service.
Give me the strength never to disown the poor or bend my knees
before insolent might.
Give me the strength to raise my hand above daily trifles.
And give me the strength to surrender my strength to Thy will
with love.

(R. Tagore).

God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in mine 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 mine end, and at my departing.

(Sarum Primer).

O Lord, help us to be masters of ourselves, that we may be servants of others.

(A. Paterson).

Oh, take this heart that I would give
Forever to be Thine own;
I to myself no more would live,—
Come, Lord, be Thou my King alone.

(G. Tersteegen).

O Lord, my God, Fountain of all true and holy love; Who has made me, and preserved me, that I might love Thee; give to Thy servant such a love, that whatsoever in Thy service may happen contrary to flesh and blood, I may not feel it; that humility may be my sanctuary, and Thy service the joy of my soul, and death itself the entrance of an eternal life, when I may live with Thee, my Strength and my Refuge, my God and everlasting Hope.

(Jeremy Taylor).

O Maker of the heaven and the earth, Thou art my Protector in this world and the Hereafter. Let death come to me in a state of submission to Thy will and join me to the righteous.

(Joseph).

Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; and if Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, we shall surely be of the lost.

(Adam and Eve).

God, who touches earth with beauty,
Make me lovely too;
With Thy Spirit re-create me,
Make my heart anew.

Like Thy springs and running waters,
Make me crystal pure;
Like Thy rocks of towering grandeur,
Make me strong and sure.

Like Thy dancing waves in sunlight,
Make me glad and free;
Like the straightness of the pine-trees
Let me upright be.

Like the arching of the heavens,
Lift my thoughts above;
Turn my dreams to noble action —
Ministries of love.

God, who touchest earth with beauty,
Make me lovely too;
Keep me ever, by Thy Spirit,
Pure and strong and true.

(Mary S. Edgar).

O Lord, give us more charity, more self-denial, more likeness to Thee. Teach us to sacrifice our comforts to others, and our likings for the sake of doing good. Make us kindly in thought, gentle in word, generous in deed. Teach us that it is better to give than to receive, better to forget ourselves than to put ourselves forward; better to minister than to be ministered unto. And unto the God of Love be all glory and praise, both now and for evermore.

(H. Alford).

Quench Thou the fires of hate and strife,
The wasting fever of the heart;
From perils guard our feeble life,
And to our souls Thy peace impart.

(J. H. Newman).

We ask Thee, O Lord, that we may be so filled with holy thoughts that our earthly life may be inspired with the spirit of Heaven. May we go to and fro about our business as those who have seen the face of God.

(F. B. Meyer).

Help us to worship Thee by righteous deeds and lives of holiness.

(Christina Rossetti).

Take away from our hearts, O Lord, all suspiciousness, indignation, wrath and contention, and whatsoever may hurt charity, and lessen brotherly love.

(Thomas A. Kempis).

O Allah! Make me from among those who repent of their sins and from among those who keep themselves pure and clean.

Lord, forgive me and have mercy on me, and provide for me and guide me and make good my shortcomings and raise me up, and grant me security and overlook my defaults.

(Muslim prayers).

Sanctify, O Lord, I beseech Thee, my heart which Thou hast created, and cast out from it all wickedness; Fill it and keep it filled with Thy grace, that I may be made a temple worthy for Thee to dwell in, Thou art sweeter than honey, brighter than the sun, more pleasant to the taste than nectar, more precious than gold and fine jewels. Mayest Thou alone give pleasure to my soul, may Thou be the only object of my earnest longing and desire.

(Louis de Blois).

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light
And where there is sadness, joy.

(St. Francis of Assisi).

Grant, Lord, that I may not, for one moment, admit willingly into my soul any thought contrary to Thy love.

(Archbishop E. B. Pusey).

Lord grant us good in this world and in the Hereafter; also grant us good and safeguard us against the torment of the Fire.

(Quran).

O God, the Light of every heart that sees Thee, the Life of every soul that loves Thee, the Strength of every mind that seeks Thee, grant me ever to

continue steadfast in Thy holy love. Be Thou the joy of my heart; take it all to Thyself, and therein abide. The house of my soul is, I confess, too narrow for Thee; do Thou enlarge it, that Thou mayest enter in; it is ruinous, but do not. It has that within which must offend Thine eyes; I confess and know it; but whose help shall I implore in cleansing it, but Thine alone? To Thee, therefore, I cry urgently begging that Thou wilt cleanse me from my secret faults, and keep Thy servant from presumptuous sins, that they never get dominion over me.

(St. Augustine).

I worship Thee, O my God, with all my best love and awe, with my fervent affection, with my most subdued, most resolved will. O make my heart beat with Thy heart. Purify it of all that is earthly, all that is proud and sensual, all that is hard and cruel, of all perversity, of all disorder, of all deadness. So fill it with Thee, that neither the events of the day nor the circumstances of the time may have power to ruffle it; but that in Thy love and Thy fear it may have peace.

(John Henry Newman).

Take my lips, and speak through them; take my mind and think through it; take my heart and set it on fire.

(F. B. Meyer).

Allah, I seek refuge with Thee against going astray or being led astray, or wronging anybody or being subjected to misbehaviour.

(Muslim prayer).

O Thou most sweet and loving Lord, Thou knowest my infirmities, and the necessities which I endure; in how great evils and sins I am involved; how often I am weighed down, tempted and disturbed by them. I entreat of Thee consolation and support. I speak to Thee Who knowest all things, to Whom all my inward thoughts are open, and Who alone canst perfectly comfort and help me. Thou knowest what things I stand in need of. Behold, I stand before Thee poor and naked, calling for grace, and imploring mercy. Refresh thy hungry suppliant, kindle my coldness with the fire of Thy love, enlighten my blindness with the brightness of Thy presence. Suffer me not to go away from Thee hungry and dry, but deal mercifully with me, as often-times Thou has dealt wonderfully with Thy saints.

(Thomas A. Kempis).

Oh God, please forgive us for forgetting you at times,
 Forgive us for our wrongs, correct our petty crimes.
 Help us to improve till we attain that perfection,
 Our aim is for Paradise, not the place of correction.

(Shahana Zafar Mirza).

O Lord, long-suffering and abundant in Goodness and Truth, fill us, I beseech Thee, with graces. Make us long-suffering and patient, cordial and sympathizing, kind and good; teach us to hold and speak the truth in love, and to show mercy that we also obtain mercy.

(Christina C. Rossetti).

Enlighten our souls with the brightness of Thy presence. May Thy Grace sink deeper into our hearts, purifying the springs of thought and action.

(F. B. Meyer).

Beloved Lord, come to our help. Make firm our convictions and our faith so that we should incline wholly towards Thee with all our hearts and all our desires and our full understanding, and with all our limbs and our lands and our cultivations and our commerce and our industry and our professions. Make us turn away from everything that is besides Thee. Let nothing besides Thee have any existence in our estimation. We should obey and follow Thee alone. O Creator of all and Master of all, why should we take any pride in wealth or the owner of wealth, and why should we be deceived by them? We present ourselves in Thy court of honour in the guise of the humble and the meek. We reject the world and part from it. We love the Hereafter and desire that alone.

(Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad).

Set my heart on fire with the love of Thee, and then to do Thy will, and to obey Thy commandments.

(F. M. Meyer).

O Thou, Whose name is Love, Who never turnest away from the cry of Thy needy children, give ear to my prayer this morning. Make this a day of blessing for me, and make me a blessing for others. Keep all evil away from me. Preserve me from outward transgression and from secret sin. Help me to control my temper. May I check the first risings of anger or sullenness. If I meet with unkindness or ill-treatment, give me that charity which suffereth long and beareth all things. Make me kind and gentle towards all, loving even those who love me not. Let me live this day as if it were to be my last. O my God, show me the path that Thou wouldst have me to follow. May I take no step that is not ordered by Thee, and go nowhere except Thou, Lord, go with me.

(Ashton Drenden).

Lord, grant us the best in this world as well as the best in the world to come.

(Quran).

If I can do some good today,
 If I can serve along life's way,
 If I can something helpful say —
 Lord, show me how.

If I can right a human wrong,
 If I can help to make one strong,
 If I can cheer by smile or song —
 Lord, show me how.

If I can aid one in distress,
 If I can help to make a burden less,
 If I can spread more happiness —
 Lord, show me how.

If I can do a kindly deed,
 If I can help someone in need,
 If I can sow a fruitful seed —
 Lord show me how.

If I can feed a hungry heart,
 If I can give a better start,
 If I can fill a nobler part —
 Lord, show me how.

(Grenville Kleiser).

O fill me with Thy presence, Lord,
 That love may shine through me
 To quicken that same presence, Lord,
 In all whose eyes can see.

(Ernest C. Wilson).

May I grow in patience and fortitude of soul, in humility and zeal, in
 spirituality and a heavenly disposition.

(F. B. Meyer).

All that we ought to have thought and have not thought,
 All that we ought to have said and have not said,
 All that we ought to have done and have not done;
 All that we ought not to have thought and yet have thought,
 All that we ought not to have spoken and yet have spoken,
 All that we ought not to have done and yet have done,
 For thoughts words and works, we repent O God, and ask
 forgiveness.

(Zendavesta).

O God, may we be more gracious to those around us.

(F. B. Meyer).

Deeds and Results

(N. A. Qamar)

It is universally admitted that every human being is born with different capacities and faculties and as he becomes mature he uses those inborn instincts according to training, intentions and aims of life. He performs different deeds according to his disposition. Those who are humble and submissive and have understood the purpose of life act with nobility and advance along the path of righteousness. Their intentions are pure and pious. Their thinking is bright, positive and constructive. They scatter pearls of wisdom and truthfulness around them. Their conversation and conduct is coloured with beauty, charm, grace and dignity. They shine like stars and the holy rays which emanate from them influence those close around them. They are a source of inspiration and guidance for others. They are a source of blissful benevolence for their bretheren.

On the other hand there are others who live wretched and wicked lives. They perform vicious deeds due to worldly motives and hunger for power. Their impaired temperaments lead them to acts of tyranny, violence and sedition. Truth is simply unknown to them. They speak hastily. Their conversation is absolutely devoid of good manners and courtesy. They live and grow in ignorance and darkness and their ignominious deeds plunge the world into difficulties, distress and destruction.

This great truth has been mentioned in the Holy Quran which states:

“Say ‘Everyone acts according to his own way, and your Lord knows full well who is best guided’.”

(17:85).

In this verse God has advised the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) to inform his opponents who accused him of being misguided and mad, that everyone speaks and acts according to his disposition and own way of life. God has commanded the Holy Prophet to say:

“Say, ‘O ye disbelievers!
I worship not that which you worship;
Nor worship you what I worship.

And I am not going to worship that which you worship;
Nor will you worship what I worship.
For you your religion, and for me my religion'."

(109:2-7).

The Holy Prophet announced to the disbelievers that as there was no similarity between his ways and their ways of worship then let them carry on their way and he would carry on his way. Again the Holy Prophet is commanded to say:

"Say, 'O my people, act as best you can. I, too, am acting. Soon will you know whose will be the ultimate reward of the abode.'
Surely the wrong doers shall not prosper."

(6:136).

That is to say the disbelievers are free to act according to their dispositions and the Holy Prophet was free to act according to his choice. Soon the divine decree of All-Knowing God would decide whose actions were correct. In this respect the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam operates in accordance with a code of conduct which let us examine.

The aims and objects of the Movement have been enumerated by its Founder — Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad — The Promised Messiah (1835–1908). He has declared that the gist and essence of the Movement is:—

- (1) Belief in La Ilaha illallah Muhammadur Rasulallah which means "There is none worthy of worship but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."
- (2) The object of the Ahmadiyya Movement is to promote and establish harmony and peace. In accordance with the teachings of Islam it is totally opposed to wars of aggression.
- (3) The purpose of bia't (initiation) into the Movement is to collect a community of God-fearing people who can exert their influence upon others and unify them under the banner of Kalimah i.e., "There is none worthy of worship but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." They should be so devoted to the welfare of the nation that their sympathy should serve as a shelter for the poor. They should become like fathers for the orphans and they should always be ready to sacrifice themselves for Islam like ardent lovers. All their efforts should be geared up in showing benevolence to the whole of mankind and the sacred spring of God's love and service for mankind should sprout from their hearts and flow like a river to quench the spiritual thirst of all mankind.

(Izala Auhaam).

It is by the Grace of God that the Ahmadiyya Movement has been faithfully

acting on these prescribed principles since the day of its inception on 23rd March 1889. By treading on the path of peace and harmony, and by following the commands of the Holy Founder of the Movement based on the Holy Quran and Sunnah, Ahmadis are busy in earnest preaching and propagation of Islam in all corners of the globe; and in accordance with the teachings of Islam they are rendering sincere, selfless and sympathetic services to humanity at large.

A well planned programme to conquer shirk (setting up equals with God) and atheism, establishment of the unpolluted and illuminated Unity of God and the pre-destined and prophesied universal victory of Islam is being vigorously pursued. Ahmadiyya missions have been established in all the continents of the world. The celestial voice of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad from the small insignificant town of Qadian, Punjab, India is resounding in all directions throughout the world with the aid of more than 600 missionaries and preachers, along with hundreds of thousands of Ahmadis who are busy in delivering the divine message in more than a hundred countries.

Under a grand scheme for enlightening the whole world with the teachings of the Holy Quran, large quantities of the Holy Quran have been printed in Arabic along with instructional booklets. Moreover hundreds of thousands of translations have been published in numerous languages along with Islamic books, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers in gigantic quantities. This peaceful method of propagating Islam has caused trepidation among the foes of Islam. As long ago as 1927 the newspaper "Bande Matram" published in its issue dated 18th September:

"Among all the Muslims only the Ahmadis pursue the propagation of Islam incessantly and uninterruptedly. Their preaching efforts are causing the greatest harm to us. I truly confess that Ahmadies are the most awful opponents of the Hindu religion. We should not ignore them. I wish to repeat emphatically that the Ahmadiyya Community is extremely disciplined and solidly organised in its preaching campaign."

The American magazine *Life* published in its issue dated 8th August 1985 (the gist of which is something like this) that

Symptoms of motion and might are appearing in some other sects of Islam and among them all, in the forefront is the newly rising Ahmadiyya sect by name. The sect has its missions in Europe, Africa, America and the Far East. Currently the Christian priests and Muslim missionaries are engaged in propagating their respective religions. The prevalent position is that ten Africans embrace Islam as compared with one Christian in Africa.

Concerning the preaching efforts of the Ahmadi Community a reputed Swedish journal *Tidens Tecken* stated:

“The appearance of the Promised Messiah in Islam and the missionary activities of his sect, have thrown a challenge to us. We should not forego and forget the fact that this sect has assumed an aggressive attitude towards Christianity in Asia, America and Europe. Their arguments are solid, strong and convincing. We tremble to think of the consequences that may appear as a result of their missionary efforts.”

Distinguished personalities have also recognised the services of the Ahmadiyya Community. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, editor of the *Zamindar*, Lahore, wrote in its publication dated 24th July, 1923:

“Ahmadiyya Muslim Missions are rendering priceless services to Islam. The extent of their spirit of sacrifice, agility, fore-sightedness, sincerity of purpose and reliance upon God displayed by them, if not unparalleled in modern times, certainly deserves limitless respect and appreciation. This resolute Community has offered grand services while our leaders and scholars are quite dormant and languid.”

Alhaji Abdul Wahhab Askari, a correspondent of Mutamari-e-Islami expressed his opinion on the preaching efforts of the Ahmadiyya Community in the following words:

“The members of the Ahmadiyya Community have won supremacy over the whole world in the field of Islamic preaching. These people exploit all the available resources for the upliftment of their faith. Among their remarkable deeds are the numerous mosques that they have built in different cities of America, Africa and Europe, and it is with this irresistible practice that they march forward for the progress of their faith. It has become now clear that the brilliant future of Islam is linked with these people.”

In short the Ahmadiyya Community is occupied in preaching and persuading people to prostrate to Providence in the establishment of a pure and peaceful society and by the publication of the sacred teachings of Islam through irrefutable, convincing and wise arguments. By the Grace of God the humble efforts of its members are being crowned with success and, as a result, numerous disbelievers in God have recognised the existence of a Living God with Whom they have had communion which is established by answer to their prayers and the sanctification of their lives and their experience of divine signs and assistance. Many of them have seen true dreams and experienced higher forms of revelation. Many such persons who used to abuse the Holy Prophet have been so transformed spiritually that on the mention of his name their eyes begin to shed tears of love and devotion. Out of their love for him they send their choicest greetings and blessings on him many times a day. That is not the end of their spiritual transformation. In the field of action they try their utmost to follow in his footsteps and are ever prepared to sacrifice everything to see Islam prevail throughout the world.

The basic principle of the Ahmadiyya Community is love and sincere sympathy towards mankind. The Holy Founder of the Community said:

“I want to declare to all Muslims, Christians, Hindus and Aryas that I have no enemy in this world. I love human beings just as a mother loves her offspring — even more than that. I am a strong enemy only of those creeds which falsify and injure truth. My duty is to deal sympathetically with mankind. My principle is to resent falsehood, infidelity, injustice, tyranny and every kind of bad conduct.”

(Arba’een).

Explaining the actual incentive for developing deep love and sympathy for human beings, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad — the Promised Messiah and Mahdi wrote:

“The origin of incentive and enthusiasm for love and sympathy for mankind is the discovery of a mine of gold and diamonds. Fortunately I have obtained a beautiful shining and priceless diamond from this mine. It is so valuable that if I distribute its worth among all the brethren they will all become richer than the biggest hoarder of gold in the world today. What is that diamond? It is the True God. In order to possess Him it is necessary to recognise Him, believe in Him and to create a connection with Him through true love and devotion. It would be cruelty of the worst kind if I deprived humanity of this limitless wealth. I am unable to endure this situation. My heart burns on seeing their perversity and I feel anguish on seeing their sinfulness. I wish their homes to be full of divine wealth and prosperity and that their courtyards be saturated with truth and piety. Hence the person who calls others to God should love the most. Therefore I love human beings more than anyone else. Nevertheless, I am opposed vehemently to obscenity, rebellion and hypocrisy. Therefore, having no personal opposition against anybody I offer the master-key to the divine treasure which I possess for all human beings out of my intense love for them all.”

(Arba’een).

The efforts of the Ahmadiyya Community, therefore, are motivated by true love and kindness towards humanity and are geared towards calling people to believe in the One, Everlasting and Living God and to establish close ties with Him thereby attracting His choicest blessings and bounties. In the same manner they are busy in obliterating all the social evils from the world and they are also rendering indiscriminate social and spiritual services according to their status and position to the whole of mankind on the basis of universal equality and brotherhood.

The Community has a separate department which caters for the needs of the distressed, poor, helpless, orphans and promising and deserving students.

There are twenty-four Ahmadiyya hospitals and clinics, thirty-one Ahmadiyya secondary schools and more than one hundred Ahmadiyya primary schools in Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Ivory Coast, Liberia and Uganda. In these institutions Ahmadi doctors and teachers, saturated with the spirit of selfless sacrifice, are rendering very useful services. Thousands of poor patients are given free treatment and hundreds of students have acquired enviable positions and are rendering distinguished services for their countries after completion of their education in Ahmadiyya Schools. The leading personalities of these countries have openly admitted the services of the Ahmadiyya Community and proclaim their opinions without reluctance.

Dr. Ajeman representing the Vice-Chancellor of Cape Coast University, Ghana, said:

“We are very grateful to the Muslims of the Ahmadiyya Mission. This is the only dynamic organisation that is assisting the Government and rendering unforgettable educational services to the country by establishing primary, middle, secondary and higher secondary schools and, above all, by opening a teachers’ training college.”

Mr. Chunry, the Director of Medical Services, Ghana, said in a public address during his officiating period as Minister of Health:

“The Ahmadiyya sect is the only Muslim organisation that has resolved to serve mankind by establishing hospitals, schools and colleges.”

It should be kept in view, however, that the Ahmadiyya Community does not receive financial help from any quarter. All its efforts and programmes are the result of individual and collective co-operation and sacrifices.

On the other hand there are some Muslim scholars who, while opposed to the Ahmadiyya Community, also claim to love and to be serving Islam. Their Islamic theology, however, is quite at variance with that of the Ahmadiyya Community. Let us examine their dispositions, intentions and designs.

Maulana Maududi the head of the Islami Jamaat writes:

“The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) continued to invite Arabs to accept Islam for 13 long years. He adopted every possible method of advice and preaching to impress them. Strong and sound arguments were given, clear and convincing eloquence was exploited, minds were melted through reasoning and rhapsody, supernatural signs were shown, the most pious personal example was set but his people refused to accept his message which shone like the sun. . . . But when, after the failure of peaceful preaching, the Messenger of Islam took up the sword in his hands the vicious and mischievous trends started to change gradually. Corrupt elements and the spiritual filth vanished. Not only the light of truth became evident to them, their rigidity, pride and vanity also came to an end which always keeps a man away from yielding to it.

Like Arabia, other countries also embraced Islam with such rapidity that within a century one fourth of the whole world accepted Islam. It was all due to the sword that rent the curtains that had enwrapped the hearts.”
(Al-Jihad Fil Islam, pp. 137, 138).

Thus according to Maulana Maududi, the only effective and final weapon to spread Islam was initially, as well as currently, is the sword. He continues to say further:

“If a person is serious in his determination to reform humanity, efface aggression and vice from the face of the earth it is absurd for him to act just as an advisor. What he should do is to rise and do away with the government based on wrong ideology, snatch political power from such people and should establish a government founded on right principles.”
(Haqiqat Jihad).

Describing the object of his sect he says:

“It is not a group of religious preachers or warners but it is a sect of divine commandments to bear witness against people, and its main purpose and duty is to efface tyranny, aggression, rebellion and illegal profiteering from the face of the earth by force.”

(Haqiqat Jihad, p. 58).

Thus the Ulema (religious leaders) who want to achieve political dominance try to do so under the pretext of propagating the faith and transforming the world by misguiding the innocent and illiterate public by advocating compulsion and force which leads to lawlessness and breakdown of peace. Whenever they like they declare whoever they like to be infidels and apostates fit to be murdered under the excuse of removing vices and tyranny from the world. They use this policy of bloodshed in the name of religion and for the sake of God as if it is an Islamic tool which they can exploit against their opponents whenever they choose.

Unfortunately in Pakistan such a group of nominal Muslim Ulema is actively engaged in urging people to shed blood in the name of religion. They proclaim that the greatest danger to Islam in modern times is the Ahmadiyya Community which, in truth, stands solely for the propagation of Islam based on the teachings of the Holy Quran which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) and whose sympathy and concern extends to the seven hundred million Muslims throughout the world. The preaching activities of the Ahmadiyya Community have caused consternation in the rank and file of Christians whose number is receding while those of Muslims are increasing. They are annoyed to know that the small community of Ahmadis have built mosques in the heart of Europe, have echoed the greatness of God in the wilderness of Africa and are rapidly transforming and illuminating this continent with the bright rays of Islam. There is no comparison with the

former era when Church leaders declared that the winning of Africa to Christianity was near at hand and the present era when ten Africans are accepting Islam to every one who accepts Christianity. It is on account of this remarkable and unprecedented service in the cause of Islam that the Ulema pronounce Ahmadis to be the greatest danger to Islam. In the opinion of the Ulema the line of action is not to convince people by arguments but to draw their swords and annihilate Ahmady men, women and children indiscriminately.

An example of their 'Islamic service' is the use of abusive language towards the pious ancestors of Ahmadis and raise false and fabricated allegations against them. They instigate the public to kill Ahmadis and as a result many of them have fallen prey to their brutality and have been martyred. Another example of their 'service to Islam' is their persuasion on the people to rob Ahmadi homes in day-time and as a result of these provocations many of their homes have been looted and set on fire. Their vanity is so great that they object to Ahmadis calling Azan (call to prayer) and facing Mecca to offer prayers. In 1984 the Government of Pakistan passed an ordinance banning Ahmadis from calling Azan, the disobedience of which is punishable by three years imprisonment. Other demands of the Ulema are that Ahmadi Muslims should not be allowed to pray in Muslim fashion and should not pray towards the Kaaba in Mecca. In other words their golden deed and greatest service to Islam is to prevent Ahmadis from propagating and practising their faith. They have also demanded a ban on all Islamic books and literature written by Ahmadis and also a confiscation on translations in different languages of the Holy Quran produced by them. In compliance with these demands of the Ulema the Pakistan Government has issued orders banning them and for their confiscation.

Their so-called reverence for Islam may be noted in another case when an Ahmady was fettered and imprisoned for saying to another man the Muslim greeting "assalamu alaikum" — peace be on you. There was a further instance in which a case was filed against an Ahmadi tailor in Peshawar for hanging in his shop some framed passages of the Holy Quran, sayings of the Holy Prophet of Islam and an urdu verse exhorting frequent prayers to be offered for blessings upon his soul.

A Government order has already banned Ahmady Muslims from calling their places of worship mosques. Now the Ulema are demanding that the arches and pulpits of their mosques should be demolished and the direction of their Qibla (direction of worship) should be changed. As a result Ahmadiyya mosques have been raided and some of them have been completely demolished while others have been set on fire and desecrated. Their malice against the righteous activities of Ahmadis has reached such a stage that they become provoked beyond toleration if the Kalimah (Declaration of Faith) or any portion of the Holy Quran is inscribed or written on their mosques or even

in their homes. They petitioned the Government to proscribe Ahmadis from publicising the Kalimah and that it should be erased from their mosques and homes. The Government which is always at the back of the Ulema decided to enforce this heinous task and took the repugnant step of erasing the Kalimah from Ahmadiyya buildings and mosques by dint of force; and there is no end to these manoeuvres till to-day. During the last two years this ugly situation has produced the following statistics.

- (1) The Kalimah was forcibly erased from 130 mosques and homes; and from some places it was repeatedly erased after being re-written.
- (2) 341 Ahmadis were imprisoned for displaying badges on which was written the Kalimah and inhuman atrocities were inflicted upon them.
- (3) 13 Ahmadis suffered martyrdom and murderous attacks were made on 20 more.
- (4) The bodies of 6 deceased Ahmadis were exhumed from their graves.
- (5) 4 mosques were sealed and two totally demolished.
- (6) The number of different newspapers, periodicals, magazines and books confiscated or banned during this period amounts to 135 including the translation and commentary of the Holy Quran.

It has been in this fanatical atmosphere that faithful Ahmadis continued to display the Kalimah on badges pinned to their chests. Hundreds have been prosecuted and jailed and sometimes tortured, beaten, abused and handcuffed. There have been instances when they have been hanged on trees and beaten with chairs. Their faces have been painted black and they have been dragged through the streets. They have been stripped naked and beaten. In one case two or three soldiers joined hands and lashed one Ahmady young man and after becoming exhausted would start beating him afresh.

The Ahmadis endured all this despicable treatment with steadfastness and cheerfulness out of their love for God and the Holy Prophet of Islam. It should be borne in mind that the opponents of Ahmadis committed all these assaults, inhuman atrocities and the obliteration of the Kalimah in the name of Islam!

An Ahmadi youth was arrested and taken to the police station. His offence was the wearing of the Kalimah badge. The police officer asked him why he was wearing the Kalimah badge to which the youth replied that he was wearing it out of love and reverence for it. He was told that he would be given a lesson whereupon he was slapped and punched but on every stroke he repeated the Kalimah and smiled. The police officer then asked him why he was smiling to which question he replied that he was thankful to God to be suffering for the sake of the Kalimah. This reply infuriated the "protector of peace" who tore off the badge and, after his clothes were removed, he was beaten on his bare body in public. The police officer told the onlookers that this was how they treated those Kalimah believers who wear the badge. Despite this the dauntless youth continued to recite the Kalimah *La Ilaha Illallahu Muhammad ur Rasul*

Allah — There is none worthy of worship than Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. The police officer exclaimed how was it that despite the severe beating he continued to recite the Kalimah. He replied, "You carry on with your malicious manoeuvres. I have no other alternative but to believe and recite the Kalimah.

How true and resplendent is the reply of that awe-inspiring Ahmadi youth! This was more or less the same response which God commanded the Holy Prophet to declare and this is the lesson he bequeathed to his servants and faithful followers. They should recite to their opponents the following verse from the Holy Quran:

"Say, 'O my people, act according to your power. I, too, am acting. Soon will you know whose will be the ultimate reward of the abode.' Surely, the wrong doers shall not prosper."

(6:136).

It is in perspective of this verse from the Holy Quran that we tell our opponents:

"If you are pleased and proud of your disgusting and destructive designs and devices then carry on. We will pursue the propagation of Islam according to our progressive plans and we pledge to up-keep and raise the banner of the greatness of God and His Messenger and will sprinkle our sojourn with solemn sacrifices. We have placed our affair in the hands of God and now it is He Who will display His decision as to whose conduct is conducive of truth and Who is inviting Divine wrath."

Again the Quran says:

"Say, 'O my people, act as best you can; I, too, am acting; soon shall you come to know who it is unto whom comes a punishment that will disgrace him, and on whom there descends an abiding punishment'."

(39:40, 41).

"Say, 'O my people carry on, on your side. I shall carry on, on my side; soon shall you know which side is afflicted with a degrading and abiding punishment'."

(39, 40:41).

Commentary on the Bahai Faith

(Paul Kelly)

[Mr. Kelly is not a member of the Bahai faith but an open-minded student of all religions. In this article he reviews the growth and teachings of the faith.—Editor]

The forerunner of the Bahai faith was Mirza Ali Muhammad who was born in Shiraz, Persia on the 20th October, 1819. He was a Sayyed i.e., a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad and he was also a Shi'ih Muslim of the Shaykhi sect. He married at the age of twenty-two and at the age of twenty-five he declared on the 2nd May, 1844, that God the Exalted had elected him to the station of Babhood. The majority of the Shaykhi sect accepted him as the Bab (Gate) or forerunner of the ultimate expected Imam known as the Qaim. The Mullas (Muslim priests) opposed him and hostility redoubled against him when he declared himself to be the Mahdi (expected one) whose advent had been foretold by the Prophet Muhammad. Later he adopted the title 'Nuqta-yi-ullah' or 'Primal Point' which was a title applied to Muhammad himself by his followers. Since the time of Adam, Muhammad is regarded as the 'Seal of Prophets' whereas, according to the Bahais, the title 'Primal Point' (Pivot) indicates a new cycle of religion. This was elevating him to the rank of the great founders of religions for which the Shiates denounced him. His son died while still an infant within the first year of his declaration and he himself was executed six years later without trial by the State for following the classical pattern of Jihad against the legally established regime.

I do not feel that previous articles which have appeared in this magazine written by Mr. A. R. Mughal and Mr. Fazal Dean have done justice in the cause of furthering good inter-faith relations because they have suggested that the execution of the Bab terminated the Bahai faith and that Bahaism was to be judged from certain quotations in the Bayan which is the law book written by the Bab when he was in prison. The quotations are:

"When you hear the name of the Bab mentioned stand up and show respect. God also enjoins upon you that if anyone displeases and troubles the Bab then you should kill such a person and put an end to his existence."

(Ch. 15. V. 6).

This injunction was acted upon by his devout followers. It is recorded that a certain Mirza Salih, a Babi of Shiraz, thrust a spear into the mouth of Haji Mulle Taqi for a similar "offence".

"If Babism had the power they (non-Babis) would all be put to death."
(By order of Kings)

(Ch. 15. V. 8).

It should be remembered that Islam clearly states that there is no compulsion in religion.

(Quran 2:257).

Again it is written in the Bayan:

"All books should be destroyed except those written of our religion."
(Ch. 6. V. 6).

These quotations from the Bayan are clearly not of God and suggest that the excess of power had corrupted the mind of the Bab which led to his followers perpetrating barbarities which in turn led to their own death and finally to the execution of the Bab.

It needs to be said again that these quotations are no longer held in authority. Baha'ullah has consistently demonstrated throughout his life that he is of a different character than the Bab. The harsh judgement of Mr. A. R. Mughal and Mr. Fazal Dean may have seemed appropriate in 1850. However, there is an evolutionary character to the Bahai faith and in 1986 another perspective is called for in the context of good inter-faith relations.

The Jihad which the Bab waged could not rid itself of the shackles of the corrupted form of Jihad which they inherited from their Shi'ih tradition. It is clear that more than persuasion was used by the Babi believers, some resorting to the sword and spear.

It seems likely that the Bab recognised the great spiritual qualities of Bahu'aullah from a young age and was conscious that his own declaration coincided with the birth of Bahu'ullah's first son who was born on the same day. Assuming the role of a forerunner the Bab let the impulsive side of his nature run away with him so that the initial God-given inspiration deserted him.

The Bayan no longer has scriptural authority within the Bahai Community. After the execution of the Bab greater devotion was given to a certain Mirza Hussain Ali, born in Teheran on 12th November, 1817 and who later assumed the title Baha'ullah (Glory of God). After witnessing the Bab's execution a certain Babi acting independently attempted to assassinate the Shah. Though the court tribunals proved that Baha'ullah was innocent of collusion, still he was exiled and imprisoned in Baghdad. Many Babis were also massacred. Political considerations led to a more remote exile in Constantinople which

was ordered by the Turkish Government at the request of the Persian Government. During the preparation for the journey (April 22nd–May 3rd 1863) Baha'ullah declared to several of his followers that he was the promised one whose coming had been foretold by the Bab and that he was:

“The long expected educator and teacher of all peoples, the channel of a wondrous grace that would transcend all previous outpourings, in which all previous forms of religion would become merged as rivers in the ocean.”

(Baha'ullah and the New Era, p. 5. — J. E. Esslemont).

Many notables, including the Governor of the city, are said to have honoured the departing prisoner. After four months in Constantinople the party was moved to Adrianople where Baha'ullah publicly announced his mission and where he was enthusiastically accepted by the majority of Babis who were thereafter known as Bahais. Baha'ullah's half brother Mirza Yayha became violently opposed to him with the result that the Turkish Government exiled him and his followers to Cyprus and the Bahais to Akka in Palestine where they arrived on 31st August 1868. He lived in this vicinity for the rest of his twenty-four years of life. As time passed by he gradually assumed greater freedom from his two years commencement in a prison cell to a comfortable position at Bahji where he wrote voluminously and lived in a majestic dignity though nominally under the order of the Sultan of Turkey. He died peacefully in 1892.

Baha'ullah abrogated numerous laws of the Bab contained in the Bayan and now Baha-ullah's book *Kitab-i-Aqdas* has, according to the Bahais, assumed authority over all other books including the Holy Quran. The *Aqdas* is now published in Arabic and an English edition is scheduled within the next few years which will give the Western world access to the core of Bahai teachings so that genuine independent research of truth may take place. During his life time Baha'ullah appointed tried and trusted friends to promote the cause of the faith. He gave them the title “Hands of the cause of God.”

His respected and devoted son Abdul Baha (Born 23rd May 1844. Died 1921) was appointed by his father to the position of exemplar and sole interpreter of Bahai teachings. Baha'ullah referred to him as the “most great branch” and “the branch from the ancient root”. He was succeeded by his eldest grandson Shoghi Effendi at the age of twenty-five while still studying at Baliol College, Oxford. Many were dismayed when he died leaving no heir. However, after November 1957, the work of the faith was co-ordinated by the twenty-seven “Hands of the Cause”. Today the supreme institution of the faith is the “Universal House of Justice” invested with authority to legislate on all matters not covered in the Bahai writings. Abdul Baha asserts that this institution is under the direct guidance of the Bab and Baha'ullah.

Although analogies are made with John the Baptist and Jesus, the Bahais

regard the Bab and Baha'ullah as co-founders of the faith. Bahullah has said:

"That so brief a span should have separated this most mighty and wonderous revelation from mine own previous manifestation is a secret that no man can unravel and a mystery such as no man can fathom. Its duration had been fore-ordained, and no man shall ever discover its reason unless and until he be informed of the contents of my hidden book."

It is often said by Muslims that since the Bab was executed in 1850 six years after declaring his mission he was, therefore, a false prophet since he died an accursed death. Never-the-less although John the Baptist was chosen by God to be a Prophet he was beheaded. In some way he failed in his mission because he did not become a follower of Jesus. Instead he doubted Jesus's Messiahship and did not bring his own disciples to Jesus. He chose to involve himself in chastising Herod. According to Bahai writings this was not the failure of the Bab as he sent Baha'ullah his pen and papers before he was executed, though it is written that the Bab did not meet Baha'ullah in his lifetime.

The Quranic Mahdi and the Judeo-Christian Messiah are regarded by Ahmadi Muslims and Christians to be one and the same individual. The Bahais categorically declare that the Mahdi and the Messiah are separate and distinct individuals. The Bab proclaimed himself to be the Mahdi whereas Baha'ullah proclaimed himself to be the Messiah. Abdul Baha has made interesting commentaries on the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Book of Revelations — the last Book in the New Testament in his book *Questions and Answers*. The Bahais highlight the following passage:

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered."

(Revelations 12:1, 2).

Christians who reject the theory of Jesus literally descending from the clouds generally consider these verses to be referring to the Messiah. Abdul Baha explains that the woman is the law of God enshrined in Islam; the sun and moon under her feet as the two Islamic kingdoms — Persian and Ottoman — under the shadow of that law; the sun is the emblem of Persian and the crescent moon is the Ottoman empire. The twelve stars are the twelve Imams expected from time to time by Shi'ih Muslims from the time of Prophet Muhammad. He explains that the child is the Bab — the Primal Point.

If the verses quoted from Revelations concern the Mahdi then the following passage from the same Book concerns the Messiah who is depicted as a tree of life bearing twelve manner of fruits (Children).

“In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was a tree of life, which bear twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”

(Ch. 22. V. 2).

My view is that scripture alone is not enough to ascertain the truth of the claimants of these titles. A comparative study is likely to generate more questions than answers. Genuine dialogue under the guidance of those invested with spiritual authority is necessary. Genuine religious leaders will surely agree.

Was Baha'ullah what he claimed to be? Was he the Qaim, Messiah, the ultimate Imam? Or did he inherit the mission of the Mahdi from the Bab? Or was he a religious leader whom God inspired among the Shi'ih Muslims synthesising traditional Islam with 'modernism'? Whatever or whoever he was, he was a man of God, a force for good in this world.

Bahaism is an independent world religion and I now give an outline of the faith as presented to-day by Bahais.

HAS:

As its aim — WORLD UNITY

As its Founder — Baha'ullah (1817–1892).

105,500 centres in 333 countries and territories.

Its own scripture — translated into 739 languages.

Its world council in the Holy Land.

No ritual, clergy or denominations.

ORIGINATED:

1884 in Persia.

OFFERS:

A blueprint for WORLD PEACE.

A practical solution for the world's ills.

Each individual moral and spiritual principles.

TEACHES:

The fundamental purpose of religion is to promote concord and harmony.

All religions have the same divine source.

The Unity of God, of religion and of mankind.

Everyone must seek truth for themselves.

All prejudices must be abandoned.

The harmony of science and religion.

Service to humanity is worship.

Religious truth is continuous and relative.

BELIEVES:

That the earth is one country and mankind its citizens.

In the adoption of a universal auxiliary language.

In the abolition of extremes of wealth and poverty.

In the quality of men and women.

In compulsory education for all.

That conduct here and now affects our mortal life.

That God reveals His word periodically through a Messenger.

That Baha'ullah is the Messenger for this age in fulfilment of God's promises including those of the Bible.

I am not a Bahai. My concern is in the context of good inter-faith relations. The fact that Bahais are unjustly treated by Khomeni's Iran as are Ahmadis under Zia's Pakistan, is surely one good reason why Bahais and Ahmadis should be friends. People of true faith should not fear genuine dialogue with people of another faith but it should be welcomed as a blessing.

Importance of Friday Prayer

Of all the obligations of a Muslim, the most important is prayer, and of all the prayers, none is so essential to be recited in congregation as the Juma (Friday) service prayer. The Juma is in fact the greatest Muslim festival. The Holy Quran regards it as a holiday. A whole chapter of the holy book entitled the Juma has been devoted to it. In that chapter Almighty God commands Muslims to quit all their worldly affairs when they are summoned to prayer of Friday, to assemble in mosques and to say the Juma prayers with due observance of all the requirements of the Law. The person who does not act in obedience to these injunctions is regarded by the Holy Quran as guilty of a deadly sin and almost outside the circle of Islam. Far more stress has been laid upon attendance at the Juma sermon and prayers than upon Id. It is on account of this importance of the Juma in the Muslim faith that Friday has universally been observed as a holiday among the Muslims from the very earliest time that Islam took its rise.

(The Promised Messiah)

True Islam

(Dr. B. M. Mirza)

If you ask a Westerner what he thinks Islam is, you will get a very distorted picture of Islam. The only introduction to the words *Moslem* or *Islam* he may have is Middle Eastern terrorism, Petrodollars, war and refugees. The fact is that the above picture no more depicts Islam than warlike activities in Northern Ireland, events in Central America or terrorist activities in Germany and Spain depict Christianity. We can no more blame Islam because a person calling himself a Muslim kills an innocent person than we can blame Christianity because a person calling himself a Christian murders an innocent person.

Modern means of transportation and the speed with which news from anywhere travels all around the globe are fast demolishing national barriers. The world is fast becoming one family and it is becoming increasingly important to learn about the views and ideologies of other people for the sake of better and more friendly atmosphere on an international level.

Although on a personal level, religion is not given much importance in the West, but on a national and international level, religion carries a great deal of influence. Some skeptics might say that religion seems to have a negative impact on our society today. A considered analysis of the situation, however, will make it obvious that the real cause is ignorance of religion. After all, it is human nature to fear the unknown. Religious ignorance and religious intolerance go hand in hand.

We believe that all religions originated from the same source — God — and there is bound to be a great deal of common ground among them. A proper use of religious knowledge (which most of us sadly lack) may in fact prove to be a unifying force between the different peoples of the world.

There are close to one billion inhabitants of this planet who profess Islam as their faith. Being the second largest religion in the world, its adherents are found in almost all the countries in the world. For better understanding on an international level it is important to know what Islam really stands for. With this in mind, we wish to define Islam — what it is and what it stands for.

According to the Holy Quran, the revealed Muslim Scriptures, Islam is a culmination of the various previously revealed religions. The following passages will demonstrate the point:

“Say, Allah has spoken the truth: follow, therefore, the religion of Abraham, who was ever inclined to God.”
(3:96).

“He has prescribed for you the religion which He enjoined on Noah, and which We have now revealed to thee, and which We enjoined on Abraham, and Moses and Jesus, viz, ‘Establish obedience to Allah in the earth and be not divided therein’.”
(42:14).

In chapter 2, verses 131–137, of the Holy Quran, we read a detailed account of the religion professed by Abraham and his progeny and the religion professed by the followers of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of God be on him):

131: And who will turn away from the religion of Abraham but he who is foolish of mind? Him did We choose in this world, . . .

132: “When his Lord said to him, ‘Submit,’ he said, ‘I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds’.”

133: “The same did Abraham enjoin upon his sons — and so did Jacob — saying: ‘O my sons, truly Allah has chosen this religion for you; so let not death overtake you except when you are ‘Muslim’ (in a state of submission).”

134: “Were you present when death came to Jacob, when he said to his sons, ‘What will you worship after me?’ They answered, ‘We will worship thy God, the God of thy fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, the One God; and to him we submit ourselves.’”

136: “And they say, ‘Be ye Jews or Christians that you may be rightly guided.’ Say: ‘Nay, follow ye the religion of Abraham who was ever inclined to God; he was not of those who set up gods with God.’”

137: “Say ye: ‘We believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob and his children, and what was given to Moses and Jesus, and what was given to all other Prophets from their Lord. We make no difference between any of them; and to Him we submit ourselves.’”

In the quotes above, the religion of Abraham, Jacob, and their sons is described as “Islam”. In verse 134, the sons of Jacob use the words *Nahno La’hoo Muslemoon* (to Him we submit ourselves). The very same words are used by the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad to describe their religion: *Nahno La’hoo Muslemoon* (to Him we submit ourselves). In other words, Islam had its origin in Abraham, according to the Holy Quran.

If Islam has its origin in the religion of Abraham, so do Judaism and Christianity. Looking from this perspective, it will not be surprising if there is found a great deal of common ground between Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The question naturally arises: Who is a Muslim? Our definition should embrace the Muslims as we know them today as well as the earlier prophets and their progenies. Again, we seek from the Quran, the definition of a Muslim.

In the Arabic lexicon, the word Islam has the following literal meanings: to pay the price of something in advance; to entrust your work to someone else; to seek peace; to abandon some contention or enmity.

The conventional meanings of Islam are elaborated in the following verse of the Holy Quran:

“Nay, whoever submits himself completely to Allah, and is the doer of good, shall have his reward with his Lord. No fear will come to them, nor shall they grieve.”

(2:113).

Thus Islam means a complete submission to the Will of God. A Muslim is he who dedicates himself to God, to fulfil His Will and to please Him. He becomes a creature of God in his belief and in his actions. He believes that his entire being is made to seek God, to obey Him, to love Him and to seek His approval in everything.

In his actions, an ideal Muslim performs all righteous acts just for God, using all his God-given abilities and strength with such fervour as if he is seeing the face of God in the mirror of his complete submission.

A person whose deeds emanate from such love and such natural fervour, becomes deserving of a reward from God. Fear and grief do not come near him and he attains to a state of salvation. This state of firm conviction in the Person and attributes of God brings him in complete harmony with God.

In this state, a person's thoughts harmonise with God's designs, his joy and bliss emanates from his complete submission and all his righteous deeds give him deep pleasure rather than appearing as a burden. This is a state synonymous with deliverance, prosperity and liberation. It becomes a foretaste of the state of bliss promised for the hereafter. In other words the taste of heaven for such a person begins right here in this life; and also a taste of hell begin in this very life for one who does not submit to the Will of God.

We have followed here the line of reasoning put forth by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Reformer of our age, in his book *Aa'ina Kamalat-i-Islam* (A Mirror of the beauties of Islam). Elaborating on the Quranic verse just quoted, he writes:

“Every intelligent person can infer from this verse that one can be a true

Muslim only when his whole being, with all his physical and mental strength, is dedicated for God in His way. All the faculties endowed to him by God are dedicated back to Him. His thoughts as well as his actions reflect his state of Islam.”

This means that the person professing Islam proves that his hands and his feet, his heart and his brain, his intellect and his understanding, his anger and his compassion, his gentleness and his knowledge, all his intellectual and physical strength, his honour and his wealth, his leisure and his pleasure, his fears and his passions, and his whole being from the hair on his head to his toe nails, all become subservient to God as if they belonged to God. In short, it becomes evident that his steadfastness has progressed to the point that whatever belongs to him does not remain his but becomes the property of God. All his faculties and capabilities are busy in serving God as if they were God's faculties.

The responsibilities of a Muslim pertain to two distinct spheres. His duties towards God and his duties towards his fellow beings. So the dedication of a Muslim has to take two forms — dedication to serve God and dedication to serve humanity. The dedication to God requires the focussing of all the love and worship of One God, no other being can be included in this love and worship. A person must accept all the commandments, limits and destinies willingly and with meekness.

The second aspect of the dedication is to devote one's life in serving humanity and to cultivate a true compassion for one's fellow beings. One must be willing to undergo hardships to provide relief for others and bear distress to give comfort to others. One must strive selflessly to benefit mankind, help those in need and constantly strive for their betterment in this life and the hereafter.

This will come about when one's faculties become God's instruments so that acts of God are carried out by them from time to time. He is so wholly dedicated that one can say that his hands become God's hands, his eyes become God's eyes and his limbs become God's limbs.

This is the sum total of Islam. An ideal Muslim is he *who submits himself completely to Allah* (2:113). In his complete submission he surrenders his total being — his thoughts, his feelings, his aspirations and his actions, all his capabilities and faculties. This is total annihilation in Allah and requires a death of oneself.

This supreme sacrifice requires a great deal of effort and hard work. Once accomplished, however, God bestows a new life to this person. He is born again and is endowed with new God-given capabilities and attains to an eternal life as a bounty from God.

The new life is not the only reward for this complete submission. The real reward for his earnestness, his steadfastness, and his belief is a union with his

Maker. He becomes so certain of the Person of God as if he sees Him. Now a reward from God is not just a conjecture but becomes such a reality as if he has already received it. All his past and present griefs are wiped away and any future fears are evaporated. He has no wants, no griefs and no fears because he has truly found God who becomes his support and protection. He becomes a child of God, under His complete protection.

In this state a person will perform miracles because his actions are not his actions but really the actions of God. This has happened notably in the case of prophets. All prophets have shown miracles. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) exhibited greater miracles than any other prophet.

This does not mean that a person in this state of union with God becomes a deity. He still remains a human being but he becomes a special one of God. Jesus Christ showed miracles in the same manner. It is a mistake, however, to elevate him to the rank of a deity. If this was done, then many other prophets who showed bigger miracles than Jesus would also have to be elevated to the rank of deities and we will have a confusing array of Gods.

The state of complete annihilation in God is attained by a personal struggle and a great deal of sacrifice, but the state of being born again and the state of union with God are bestowed upon a person after he accepts a death for his desires, his thoughts and his aspirations.

This, in short, is the true meaning of Islam. A true Muslim can only be a source of peace and prosperity for mankind. He can be only wholly beneficial and can in no way harm any human being.

It is unfortunate that approximately 700 million human beings profess to be Muslims but very few can reflect the picture of a Muslim just described. In the early days of Islam, the strength of the Holy Prophet Muhammad produced a large number of true Muslims and Islam made rapid progress in all walks of life. With the passage of time, the spirit of Islam had disappeared and only a shell remained.

It was the design of God to re-establish this true spirit once more, so He sent His Messenger in our age in the person of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India. He initiated a Movement designed to rejuvenate true faith and conquer the forces of evil.

As death has begun to stare in the face of these forces of evil, they have banded together and are trying tooth and nail to oppose the Movement initiated by Hazrat Ahmad. Slowly but surely, however, this Movement is gaining strength and is defeating the forces of evil. Today we find followers of Hazrat Ahmad in almost all the countries of the world. In due course, surely, the opposing forces will be routed and Ahmad's call will win over the hearts of people. Blessed are those who answer his call and bring the day of the downfall of Satanic forces nearer.

Egypt and Freedom of Religion

(Mushtaq Ahmad Bajwa)

A West German quarterly, *Aktuelle Fragen Aus der Welt des Islam* (Actual Questions from the Islamic World) has in its August issue published a letter to the Egyptian Ambassador signed by the editor and two German Muslims representing their organisations. This letter is based on the reports of *Evangelische Pressedienst* (Protestant Press Service) and Amnesty International Bonn. It mentions that during the year ten persons who gave up Islam and joined Christianity have been arrested. Among them are four Tunisian students. They write:

“We are also against every form of pushing one to change religion and exploiting the emergency situation in order to convert. But we believe that the basic teaching of the Quran that there should be no compulsion in religion (2:257) applies to this case. God alone is the judge. God has made both the right and wrong paths distinct to human beings and has left the choice to them.

“If in our time someone foresakes Islam in order to accept another religion, the question occurs to us what has impelled him to take this grave decision while the grip of Christianity in Europe is already becoming loose.

“We should ask ourselves whether we are not the cause of him remaining homeless among ourselves. We should know for certain that our attitude in this world causes reflection on Islam for which we are answerable before God. Do we not belie the mercifulness of God, being merciless ourselves where God will be loving? We are required to establish the position of Islam in the world by founding peace. We are entrusted with the task of continually reminding people of the presence of God. But we can be trusted only if there is harmony in our words and deeds. Every apostacy from Islam rebounds on us. It is a challenge which we should put to ourselves. It brings forth the question how we desire to develop Islam in our community. Compulsion, threats, imprisonment or even death penalty cannot be the proper means to

proclaim and realise the peace of God in the world. Fanaticism and aggression were never the way of God. We Muslims in diaspora demand general equality in exercise of human rights for our community along with the majority of the people. We regretfully point out the oppression against and persecution of Islamic minorities in some parts of Africa and Asia. But how can we do it in good faith, while the news is published about the discrimination of religious minorities in some Muslim countries? How can we seriously demand the right of freedom of belief and religion for ourselves, if we ourselves do not intercede for the rights of the minorities in the Islamic World? We believe that the repression of religious minorities is clearly against the Quran, the Sunnah and the practice of earlier Islamic communities. We, therefore, request you, much respected Ambassador, dear Brother in Islam, to have the press report checked up and in case it is proved to be correct, then appeal to your Government to release the arrested persons and to guarantee freedom of belief to all the religious communities in your country. We pray for the protection of God, the Almighty, for you and your country and remain with brotherly greetings . . .”

The above has raised a serious problem for Egypt, which has very friendly relations with the most powerful Christian country, USA and other Christian lands of Europe. *Aktuelle Fragen* has published in its columns (p. 118) a report from Cairo dealing with the proposed solution:

“SHOULD IN FUTURE THE CHANGE OF RELIGION BE FORBIDDEN IN EGYPT?”

Cairo (in). The Islamic Movement has accused the speaker of the Egyptian Parliament, Dr. Rifat Al-Mahjoub that he is preparing a bill aiming at ‘the prevention of the conversion of Christians and Jews to Islam’. As mentioned by the Movement, the title of the bill is: ‘Law for the Protection of the Religions’. This requires that in future, anyone in Egypt trying to persuade someone belonging to another religion to change his religion shall be punished with life imprisonment with hard labour. This proposed law shall apply alike to Muslims, Christians and Jews. Thus, Islam, as state religion shall be denied every possibility of preaching Islam to non-Muslims and spreading itself. Therefore, it would be more correct to declare the law ‘Law for the Protection of the Christians and Jews’. ‘The Islamic Movement’ blames the Parliament’s President in this connection to have been influenced by the Coptic minority. The Coptic Church has great interest in stopping ‘the wave of conversion to Islam’, which has been continuing for years, and thus hinder the Islamization of the country. If this law becomes a reality, the secularism shall have all avenues open in Egypt. The Government is in this way making itself the ‘Tool of the enemies of Islam’. Recently the Muslim Brotherhood has assured that it supported the freedom of

religious beliefs, the guarantee of which might be given to all the religious minorities. However, at the same time 59 parliamentarians had proposed a law which threatened all who seek to persuade Muslims to forsake Islam with the death penalty."

The whole confusion in Egypt and in some other Muslim countries has arisen on account of not fully realising the position of the Holy Quran and status of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him). God says: "We have revealed the book to thee explaining all things" (16:90). Muslims should turn to the Holy Quran for guidance. The Holy Prophet got all his guidance from the Quran and nothing he did or said could be against the Quran. He put the Quran into practice. If some jurist or narrator of the sayings of the Holy Prophet quotes something clearly against the Quran it could definitely not be from him. The quotations in *Aktuellen Fragen* bring forth two propositions. First, does Islam acknowledge and guarantee the right of every individual to freedom of faith and conscience? Second, can the preaching of Islam be banned in consideration of the non-Muslim minorities?

The Holy Quran declares in unequivocal terms the right of every individual to believe in what he pleases. The Magna Charta of Islamic Human Rights has already been quoted in the letter to the Ambassador: "There is no compulsion in religion (2:257)". The Holy Prophet was required by God to declare to the world: "And say: The truth is from your Lord; so let him who pleases believe, and let him who pleases disbelieve" (18:30).

Wherever the command "Say" used in the Quran is directed not only to the Holy Prophet but also to all Muslims. This is a warning for us to remember and continue repeating so that no one may forget this important teaching. Islam requires Muslims to possess sure knowledge: "Say. This is my way: I call unto Allah in sure knowledge, I and those who follow me" (12:109).

Use of force can only create hypocrites about whom Quran says "shall surely be in the lowest depth of the fire (4:146). God repeatedly asserts this principle of the freedom of Religion: "Say. O ye men, the truth has indeed come to you from your Lord. So whosoever follows the guidance, follows it only for the good of his own soul, and whosoever errs, errs only against it. And I am not a custodian over you" (10:109).

The Holy Prophet had great zeal for spreading Islam and over-exerted himself in preaching it. Allah said: "Maybe thou wilt grieve thyself to death for sorrow after them if they believe not in this discourse" (18:7). God consoled the Holy Prophet: "And if thy Lord had pleased, surely, all who are on the earth would have believed together. Wilt thou then force men to become believers?" (10:100).

God foretold the supremacy of Islam to the Prophet but that no compulsion

is permitted. He left the acceptance of Islam to the choice of the people, so he should not be grieved if some do not accept the Truth. The role of the Holy Prophet was not that of a custodian. He was only an admonisher and not a warder. God says: "Admonish, therefore, for thou art but an admonisher. Thou art not a warder over them" (88:22, 23).

God has in the Holy Quran narrated the history of the earlier prophets. The prophets never threatened to silence their opponents by using force against them nor did he ever do it. This was the practice of their opponents.

There is a great deal of misconception about apostacy for which many jurists and orientalisists have unfortunately mentioned the penalty of death for a male apostate. There is not a single verse in the Quran which supports this view. Islam clearly gives everyone the right to follow a religion of his choice and allows no compulsion.

The following verse does not support apostacy: "Whoso disbelieves in Allah, after he has believed — save him who is compelled while his heart is content with faith — but such as open their breasts to disbelief, on them is Allah's wrath; and they shall have a severe punishment" (16:107).

Here an apostate is threatened with punishment not in this world but in the next life. Even after the establishment of the Government in Medina, the above rule was affirmed by God: "And whoso from among you turns back from his faith and dies while he is a disbeliever, it is they whose works shall be vain in this world and the next. These are the inmates of the Fire and therein shall they abide" (2:218). So an apostate will be punished in the Hereafter. Again Allah refers to this class of people in Sura 3, Imran. God says: "Of such the reward is that on them shall be the curse of Allah and of Angels and of men, all together. They shall abide thereunder. Their punishment shall not be lightened nor shall they be reprieved" (3:88, 89)

God valued the freedom of conscience and religion so much that He mentions it as one of the grounds permitting Muslims to defend themselves against the infidels. God says: "And if Allah did not repel some men by means of others, there would surely have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft commemorated" (22:41). Lives of Muslims are to be sacrificed not only to stop their persecution and to save their mosques but in the first instance to save places of worship of other religions. The like of this religious freedom is unfortunately not found even in the present civilised world. It is extremely shameful if Muslim countries fail to observe this teaching. We do not find a single case in Hadith when a person was punished for apostacy. Some apostates were killed but for other crimes. Bukhari mentions the case of the tribe of 'Ukul. A party of them came to Medina and accepted Islam but the climate of the town did not agree with them. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) sent them to a place where the state milk

camels were kept so that they might live in the open air and drink of milk. They got well and then killed the keeper of the camels and drove away the animals. A party was sent in pursuit of them and they were put to death (56:152). They were not killed for apostacy but because of brutal murder.

In order to observe equality among its citizens, according to the report quoted above, Egypt is considering banning the preaching of one's religion. It would therefore not only be laying an axe at the root of religious freedom but also the ignoring of the position of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him).

Before Islam the Prophets were sent only to particular, tribes, races or nations. The Holy Prophet was the first universal Prophet. God says: "And We have sent thee not but as a mercy for all peoples (21:108). "And We have not sent thee but as a bearer of glad tidings and a Warner for all mankind" (34:29). "Blessed is He who has sent down the Furqan (i.e. Quran) to His servant that he may be a Warner to all the world" (25:2).

The Holy Quran is full of commands to the Holy Prophet and to Muslims to propagate their faith. Professor T. W. Arnold writes: "Thus from its very inception Islam has been a missionary religion, both in theory and practice, for the life of Muhammad exemplifies the same teaching, and the Prophet himself stands at the head of a long series of Muslim missionaries who have won an entrance for their faith into the hearts of unbelievers. Moreover it is not in the cruelties of the persecutor or the fury of the fanatic that we should look for the evidence of the missionary spirit of Islam, anymore than in the exploits of that mythical personage, the Muslim warrior with sword in one hand and the Quran in the other, but in the quiet, unobtrusive labours of the preacher and the trader who have carried their faith into every quarter of the globe" (The Preachings of Islam, pp. 4-5).

Spiritual conquest through preachers continued even after the political degeneration. Professor Arnold writes: "Although in after years this great empire was split up and the political power of Islam diminished, still its spiritual conquest went on uninterruptedly. When the Mongol hordes sacked Baghdad (A.D. 1258) and drowned in blood the faded glory of the Abbasid dynasty — when the Muslims were expelled from Cordova by Ferdinand of Leon and Castile (A.D. 1236), and Granada, the last stronghold of Islam in Spain, paid tribute to the Christian king — Islam had just gained a footing in the island of Sumatra and was just about to commence its triumphant progress through the island of Malay Archipelago. In the hours of its political degradation, Islam has achieved some of its most brilliant spiritual conquests: on two great historical occasions, infidel barbarians have set their feet on the necks of the followers of the Prophet — the Saljuq Turks in the eleventh and the Mongols in the thirteenth century — and in each case the conquerors have accepted the religion of the conquered. Unaided also by the

temporal power, Muslim missionaries have carried their faith into Central Africa, China and the East Indies Island" (The Preachings of Islam, T. W. Arnold, p. 2).

Professor Arnold who has made a thorough research in this subject asserts: "The duty of missionary work is no after-thought in history of Islam, but was enjoined on believers from the beginning" (Ibid, p. 3). Professor Arnold has given a long list of verses in chronological order enjoining preaching and we can add to it. But perhaps after the evidence of a renowned Christian Scholar, it would suffice to mention only two basic points. God says: "You are the best people, raised for the good of mankind; you enjoin what is good and forbid evil and believe in Allah" (3:111). The verse claims that the Muslims are the best people and gives reasons for it:

1. They have been raised for the good of all mankind and not only for any particular nation or country.
2. It has been made their duty to enjoin good and forbid evil, possessing belief in god for the ultimate success of Islam.

God made the Muslims torch-bearers of Islam in the World and history bears ample testimony that they contributed to the betterment of the world. This was the duty of every Muslim but even before declaring it God required a special body fully devoted to this job: "And let there be among you a body of men who should invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful" (3:105).

It is essential for success to have a special group of Muslims dedicated to the work of spreading Islam. The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, peace of God be upon him, can serve as a model for the general mass of Muslims in the world. Though a small community and these days under great stress on account of its persecution in Pakistan which increased manifold on the promulgation of General Zia's ordinance of 26 April, 1984. Under the guidance of the Head of the Movement, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, now in London, the preaching work has greatly increased in all the five Continents, as has always happened in the history of Islam during a crisis. Besides permanent missionaries, Ahmadi Muslims are also sharing this heavy burden according to the teachings of Islam. If the reports from Egypt are correct about banning of preaching and locking up of apostates in prison, and thereby depriving people of all forms of freedom of religion, then it is indeed a sad day for Islam. The basic teaching of Islam is being violated. May Allah guide all the Muslim countries and individuals to the right path. Amen.

Current Affairs

(Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry)

President Zia-ul-Haq addressing the Christian community of Pakistan recently said that every person in Pakistan was free to worship according to his faith and there were no restrictions in this regard. He also said that the members of all minority communities were enjoying equal rights and they were not being treated as second rate citizens.

The President was speaking in Rawalpindi at a dinner arranged in his honour by a Jordanian, Dr. Batarfeh, a spiritual leader of the Christian community.

I wonder how the President of a country could make such a public statement, which he knows fully well, is far from truth. A few months back, in the city of Rahim Yar Khan, a Christian Church was ransacked, and in Jacobabad Sind, 16 Hindu temples were gutted in a single day, which was the work of the government backed Mullahs. Not to talk of the minorities, even the smaller Muslim sects are fearful of their future. Only a few days ago an Ahmadiyya mosque in Mardan city was razed to the ground by a crowd of 200 led by the Mullahs, under the direct supervision of the law enforcing authorities.

The fact is that 4 million Ahmadis are virtually under siege in their own country. More than 500 have been arrested for professing and practising their religious beliefs, and many of them are awaiting court decisions. In one such case an Ahmadi was given 10 years rigorous imprisonment. They have been denied admission in educational institutions as well as employment opportunities. 132 Ahmadiyya mosques were desecrated by orders of police or magistrates. Their publications and literature proscribed, and the only daily newspaper belonging to Ahmadis ceased publication in 1984 due to Government orders. 19 prominent Ahmadis have been assassinated in the last two years and the most heinous crime of them all, is that their dead have been exhumed in certain cases. The total Ahmadiyya population has been disenfranchised as they can register as voters only if they denounce their faith.

That the Government is trying to annihilate the Ahmadis is clear from the

message General Zia sent to a religious conference held in London last year in which he stated:

“We will persevere in our efforts to ensure that the Cancer of Qadianism (derogatory term for Ahmadiyyat) is exterminated.”

And his Prime Minister declared on 27 November, 1985 in a conference:

“The government has taken many steps to deal with this problem (Ahmadis). It is hoped that other Muslim countries will take similar steps to crush this curse with full force.”

The Pakistan government has been afflicted with the disease of religious intolerance for a long time now. The minorities have therefore genuine fear about the intentions of the present government of Pakistan. This fear is aggravated by the passing of a new legislation which makes it a capital offence to what would appear to be an insult to the status of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him), in the eyes of a particular sect.

Mr. George Felix, President of Pakistan United Christian Organisations U.K. has rightly said, “This bill insults Pakistanis of all religions and beliefs because insults are the child of an irrational mind.”

Surely the Pakistani President cannot be fool the world any more.

Astronomy in the Quran

(Saleh Mohammed Alladin)

Religious scriptures have contributed a lot to the progress of man. In this article I propose to quote the English translation of some of the verses of the Holy Quran which are connected with astronomy, from which one can derive considerable inspiration and enlightenment.

The Holy Quran emphatically exhorts us to ponder over the creation of the heavenly bodies and discover the signs of God which they present. It admonishes us to make our studies in science not merely a means of understanding the material universe but also a means of remembering God, the Creator of the universe, for only by doing so we can be saved from the evil effects of science such as the world wars. Thus the Holy Quran says.

“Are you in doubt concerning Allah, Maker of the heavens and the earth?”

(14:11).

“In the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of the night and the day there are indeed Signs for men of understanding; Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and ponder over the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain; nay, Holy art Thou; save us then from the punishment of the Fire.”

(3:191, 192).

Seeking the truth is a common aim of both science and religion. Thus the Prophets of God have encouraged science. According to the Holy Quran, the Prophet Noah (peace be on him) preached as follows:

“What is the matter with you that you expect not wisdom and staidness from Allah? And He has created you in different forms and different conditions. Have you not seen how Allah has created seven heavens in perfect harmony. And has placed the moon therein as a light and made the Sun as a lamp?”

(71:14–17).

Our master the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of God be on him), came at a time when the world was steeped in ignorance. Almighty God revealed to him that a new era of knowledge and learning was going to dawn and the time of teaching the world by means of the pen had come (96:2-6). Through the Holy Prophet Almighty God taught us the prayer:

“O my Lord, increase me in knowledge.”

(20:115).

The Muslims of early times made great efforts in the acquisition of knowledge and were leaders in various branches of science for a long time. They contributed a lot to the progress of astronomy and developed algebra.

The Holy Quran has drawn our attention to astronomy in the very beginning. It begins with the declaration:

“All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds”

(1:2).

By using the words, “all the worlds”, the Holy Quran has drawn our attention to the multiplicity of God’s creation. The words “Lord (Rabb, in Arabic) of all the worlds,” have also been repeated in the Holy Quran very many times. The Arabic word Rabb gives the meaning of One who creates, sustains, develops and brings to perfection by degrees. The progress, in astronomy is unfolding to us the vastness and the evolution of the universe to which these words allude. While the Holy Quran is the word of God, science is the work of God. In order to understand the word of God, we should study His work; and in order to understand the significance of His work, we should study His word.¹

Let us recall the salient advances in astronomy made after the Holy Quran was revealed. The ancients distinguished two kinds of heavenly bodies. To the first kind belonged the fixed stars, many of which formed patterns on the sky called constellations; and to the second kind belonged the seven wandering bodies which comprised the Sun, the Moon, and five bright planets: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. The seven days of the week have been named after these bodies. The ancients noted that while the fixed stars do not change their relative position, the wandering bodies move slowly from one constellation to another. Most early concepts of the universe held the earth to be stationary. As early as the 6th century B.C. Greek scholars regarded the earth as a globe standing motionless in the centre of the universe. They regarded the boundary of the universe as a hollow sphere studded with stars on its inner surface. To account for the daily rising and setting of the stars,

1. “Why I believe in Islam” by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II (Nazir Dewato Tabligh, Qadian).

they imagined that this celestial sphere completed one rotation daily about an inclined axis through the earth. The wandering bodies were presumed to move in the space between the celestial sphere and the earth. This was the generally accepted view of the universe at the time the Holy Quran was revealed.

In the year 1543, Copernicus published a revolutionary theory in which he suggested that the sun is at the centre of the universe and the planets revolve around the sun and not the earth, and the earth is simply one of the planets. He also suggested that the earth rotated on its axis (a suggestion also made earlier by Aryabhatta and Albiruni). The daily rising and setting of the stars was ascribed to the daily rotation of the earth. The revolutionary ideas of Copernicus met with formidable opposition but the later researchers confirmed the views of Copernicus. We now know that in addition to the bright planets known to the ancients, there are other planets further away from the sun, namely, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto. Many of these planets are accompanied by smaller bodies called satellites which revolve around the planets. The Moon is the satellite of the Earth. Apart from the principal planets mentioned above, thousands of minor planets called asteroids as well as numerous comets and meteor streams also revolve around the sun. This is the sun's family or the Solar system as we know today. We have also learned that the sun is just one of the multitude of stars.

The Holy Quran says: "Allah is He who created seven heavens, and of the earth the like thereof" (65:13). The number seven is also used according to the Arabic idiom for "many". Thus elsewhere the Holy Quran says: "And if all the trees that are in the earth were pens and the ocean were ink, with seven oceans swelling it thereafter, the words of Allah would not be exhausted Surely, Allah is Mighty, Wise" (31:28). With the increasing knowledge of the universe, we are getting a deeper understanding of the verses of the Holy Quran.

The sun is a globe of intensely hot gas, 864,000 miles in diameter and about three hundred thousand times as massive as the earth. Some stars are much larger than the sun and some much smaller. The stars are of different colours. Blue stars are hotter than the sun while the red stars are cooler. The stars are subject to evolution. Our galaxy or the Milky Way system contains about a hundred billion stars. It is a vast stellar system consisting of a spheroidal central region surrounded by a flat disk of stars about a hundred thousand light years in diameter and a big halo. One light year is about 6,000,000,000,000 miles. Our sun was regarded as the centre of the universe until the early years of the twentieth century. The researches of Shapley in 1917 showed that the sun is far from the centre of the Galaxy. We now know that the sun is situated at a distance of about 30,000 light years from the centre of the Galaxy and makes one revolution around it in a period of about two hundred million years.

The Holy Quran says:

“And the sun is moving on the course prescribed for it. That is the decree of the Almighty, the All-Knowing God.”

(36:39).

The stars in the galaxy, and the planets in the Solar system all move according to the same law of gravitation. Sir Isaac Newton had discovered that the motion of the moon around the earth is governed by the same force due to gravity which operates on the surface of the earth and is responsible for the fall of an apple from an apple tree. Thus a glorious harmony and a wise plan is discernible throughout God's creation. It is very significant that in the Holy Quran, mention is made of the sun and the moon, the plants and the trees, and the higher heavens above, all in one place, and our attention is drawn to the comprehensive harmony and the remarkable balance that prevails throughout. The Holy Quran says:

“The sun and moon run their courses according to a fixed reckoning. And the stemless plants and the trees humbly submit to His will. And the heavens He has raised high and set up a measure, That you may not transgress the measure. So weigh all things in justice and fall not short of the measure.”

(55:6-10).

After drawing our attention to the natural phenomena, the Holy Quran enjoins us to maintain a just balance in our social affairs keeping in mind the Divine example.

In another place the Holy Quran refers to the perfection of God's creation as follows:

“Blessed is he in whose hand is the kingdom, and He has power over all things; Who has created death and life that He might try you — which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving Who has created seven heavens in harmony. No incongruity canst thou see in the creation of the Gracious God. Then look again; Seest thou any flaw? Aye, look again, and yet again, thy sight will only return to thee confused and fatigued.”

(67:2-5).

In yet another place, attention is drawn to the excellent design and order in the universe, as follows:

“It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day. All of them float in an orbit.

(36:41).

The word float used to describe the movement of heavenly bodies beautifully alludes to the tenuous nature of the medium in which they move.

We are encouraged to study the movements of heavenly bodies and develop mathematics. The Holy Quran says:

“He it is who made the sun radiate a brilliant light and the moon reflect a lustre, and ordained for it stages, that you might know the number of years and mathematics. Allah has not created this but in truth. He details the Signs for a people who have knowledge.”

(10:6).

The Holy Quran has drawn our attention to the high heavens in a number of places. It says:

“Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see.”

(13:3).

“And the heavens He has raised high and set up a measure.”

(55:8).

“Are you harder to create or the heaven that He has built? He has raised the height thereof and made it perfect.”

(79:28, 29).

“Do they not look at the camel, how it is created? And at the heaven, how it is raised high? And at the mountains, how they are set up? And at the earth, how it is spread out?”

(88:18-21).

The observations of modern astronomy have taken us to bewildering distances and have thus provided a deeper understanding of the above verses. We now know that our Milky Way galaxy with its about hundred billion stars is only one of the many billions of galaxies that comprise the observable universe. We are now able to look into regions of space that are billions of light years away from us. Thus with the progress of astronomy, man's mind is being stretched in an effort to comprehend the immensity of the universe. One wonders how many of the stars populating the innumerable galaxies have planetary systems like our own and how many planets support life. Our scientific knowledge is extremely scant, but there are indications that other stars in our galaxy have planets. The Holy Quran is ahead of science in telling us that there are living beings beyond our earth.

It says:

“All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.”

(59:25).

Commenting on this verse, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam (peace be on him) wrote in 1896 as follows “The dwellers of the heavens and the dwellers of the earth

glorify Him.” This is an indication that the heavenly bodies are also populated and their dwellers follow Divine guidance.²

Other verses of the Holy Quran on this topic are as follows:

“Of Him do beg all that are in the heavens and the earth. Every day He reveals Himself in a different state.”

(55:30).

“And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and of whatever living creatures He has spread forth in both. And He has the power to gather them together when He pleases.”

(42:30).

The following comment has been made on this verse:

“The reference in the last sentence of the verse may be to the possibility of the creatures living on earth and in heavenly bodies becoming united at some future time,”³

In conclusion, I quote from the Holy Quran a very touching appeal to look at the sky. Almighty God says:

“Have they not looked at the sky above them, how We have made it and adorned it, and there are no flaws in it? And the earth — We have spread it out, and placed therein firm mountains; and We have made to grow therein every kind of beautiful species, As a means of enlightenment and as a reminder to every servant that turns to Us.”

(50:7-9).

The heavenly bodies give us enlightenment. As Poincare wrote,

“the stars send us not only the visible and gross light which strikes our bodily eyes, but from them also comes to us a light which illuminates our minds.”⁴

2. “The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam” by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam (The London Mosque, 16 Gressenhall Road, London SW 18, 1979) p. 52.

3. The Holy Quran with English Translation and Commentary Vol II Part II (Oriental and Publishing Corporation, Rabwah, 1960) p. 2350.

4. “The Value of Science” by H. Poincare (Dover, 1958) p. 85.

Khitab of Lithuanian-Polish Tartars

(Czesław Łapicz)

This work is a monography of an eighteenth century religious writing relic of Lithuanian-Polish Tartars, the so called Milkamanovitch's Khitab. It consists of three basic parts. The first part presents the history of Tartar ethnic group inhabiting the territory of the former Great Lithuanian Duchy. This group is referred to in this work as Lithuanian Tartars in the sense "pertaining to historic; pre-partitional Lithuania". Other terms, such as Bielorrussian Tartars, Lipekhs etc. were considered inadequate, the view being also substantiated in the work.

Critical approach is taken in reference to the traditional explanation of rapid and total linguistic assimilation of Lithuanian Tartars; mixed marriages and army conscription, though auspicious to the assimilation process, were not the decisive factors. The factor which in the author's view is more important was that the language of the Tartars from Kipch Step had not been based in religion and had not been a national value that would have united various tribal groups: the migrants shared no common linguistic tradition, nor awareness of national community. While choosing a new homeland they accepted unreservedly also the new language. This part includes also a discussion of Lithuanian Tartars' religious literature emphasising its cause-effect link to the loss of their ethnic language.

Part II comprises paleography and graphy of the relic, with special focus on establishing the date of the manuscript. Both direct and indirect dating methods rendered credible the year 1197 of hijra or A.D. 1781 as the date Khitab had been written. Complete theoretical assumptions concerning the transliteration of the Arabic alphabet, in which Khitab had been written, into Latin alphabet are presented in the part devoted to graphy and ortography. An original transliteration system used in the work throughout is presented in Tables.

The earlier studies by A. Antonowicz were taken into consideration for purposes of comparison in the analysis of manuscript graphy. It was possible to find that the graphy in Milkamanovitch's Khitab differs greatly from other manuscripts so far examined. The differences include both frequency of some

graphemes and their function in the text. These differences are explained by the strong relation between the relic's graphy and the graphic tradition of Turcolingual writings. The impact of this writing is also found in phonetics, which is given a marginal concern in the present work.

Part III of the current work offers an analysis of relic language inflexion which permitted to substantiate its mixed Bielorussian-Polish character. However, the morphology of Khitab language is not the result of interference between Bielorussian and Polish linguistic structures; it is rather a result of transference understood as mechanical and random transfer of habits and features from one language into the other. In terms of quantity and volume, Bielorussian features prevail in this system. Therefore, Milkamanovitch's Khitab should be defined as Bielorussian-Polish, the term meaning not only an average linguistic system with prevalence of Bielorussian features but also a quantitative dominance of Bielorussian texts.

While discussing the linguistic complexity of the relic, it was emphasized that the Bielorussian language plane had no such features that would preclude the relationship between Khitab and Bielorussian South-western dialects, or, more precisely, Bielorussian dialect area contained in the fork of the rivers Niemen and Szczary. The Polish language plane had also offered no such features that would preclude manuscript's relation with seventeenth and eighteenth century Polish northern dialect. Other features, not contained in the indicated areas may be the evidence of different dialect boundaries in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries or may be a proof of Khitab's linguistic complexity due to accumulation of features of other copies based on different dialects.

The current work comprises also illustrative materials such as copies of relic's pages and transliteration of the text.

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