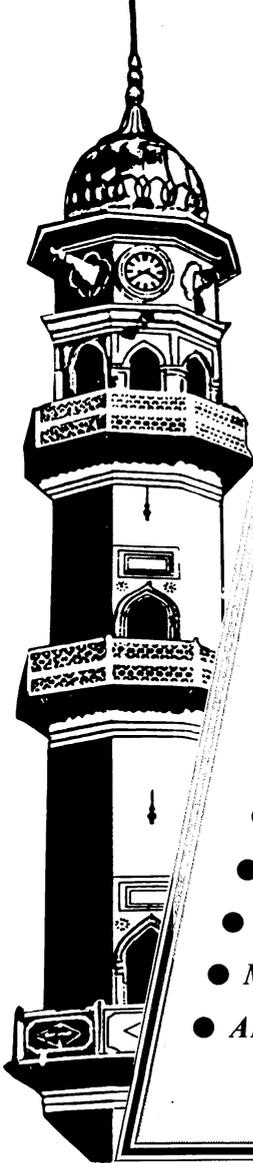


THE REVIEW of RELIGIONS



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THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

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



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The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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

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

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EDITORIAL

ISLAMIC BROTHERHOOD

Fourteen hundred years ago the tribes in Arabia were almost constantly at war with one another. There existed little love between them. Hatred and jealousy seemed to reign supreme. Then God raised among them the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, who united them in a miraculous manner during his twenty three years' ministry from 610-632 A.D. Unity is a basic principle of Islam which lays stress on the absolute Oneness of God. On the brotherhood of mankind God says in the Holy Quran:

“And hold fast, all together, to the rope of Allah and be not divided; and remember the favour of Allah which He bestowed upon you when you were enemies and He united your hearts in love so that by His grace you became as brothers; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire and He saved you from it.”(3:104)

The message of Islam brought about a spirit of peace and brotherhood among the belligerent Arabs who through the presence of the Holy Prophet turned to God and totally changed their lives in accordance with God's revealed law in the Holy Quran. Not only did they become spiritual brothers but they conveyed the message of God to all and sundry, home and abroad wherever they went.

The door of Islam is open to everyone which sets no distinction between colour and race. The only distinction between people is the degree of righteousness:

“Verily the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you.” (49:14)

The Holy Quran invites everybody to join Islam irrespective of their religion, race or colour. At the same time it calls upon them to be sincere in faith as it does upon all Muslims:

“But if they repent, and observe Prayer and pay the Zakat, then they are your brethren in Faith.” (9:11)

Islamic brotherhood aims at creating relationships of genuine affection based on the principles of righteousness. Good will prevail among them all because they have a common aim to serve and please God. They do not let differences divide them. They guard against rancour and jealousy. God says in the Holy Quran:

“Help one another in righteousness and piety; but help not one another in sin and transgression.”(v:3)

This injunction shows that spiritual ties are the real bond of brotherhood. Muslims are called upon to help those in distress. The Holy Prophet has said that believers are like the limbs of one body. If one suffers pain the rest of the body is aware of it. Islamic brotherhood requires that one brother should feel and demonstrate practical sympathy for his suffering brethren. The Holy Prophet of Islam has said:

“Whosoever fulfills the need of his brother, Allah fulfills his need and whosoever will rid a Muslim of anxiety Allah will rid him of one of his anxieties on the day of resurrection.”(Bukhari)

Islam is a message of universal brotherhood which can only be achieved through belief in God and His Messengers for it is through them that God has from time to time revealed guidance for the achievement of spiritual brotherhood. The final and complete code of Divine guidance for the brotherly unification of all mankind was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, who unlike all earlier Messengers who were raised to meet the needs only of particular tribes and nations, was raised by God with a final law of guidance for all mankind. As Muslims themselves have neglected and deviated to a great extent from the pure teachings of Islam, so God raised the expected Mahdi and Promised Messiah whose advent had been foretold. He was Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India, whose mission during the past one hundred years has spread all over the world. He was raised to guide mankind to the right path and to unite them into one devoted bond of brotherhood which by the grace of God, is slowly and steadily being fulfilled.

True brotherhood can only be achieved through the recognition of God and His holy laws. This is the simple secret. It is to us to strive to adhere to them then will brotherhood prevail everywhere. We all have our part to play in this fraternal crusade.

GUIDE POSTS

LIGHT OF ISLAM

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

Hearts cannot be won by the sword; nor can religion be imposed by coercion. During the period 610-632 A.D. Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, the Messenger of God, succeeded with divine succour to convert a nation of idol worshippers and debauchers into a nation of unitarians and saints. It is written in Scripture (Deuteronomy 18:19, Jeremiah 14:15) that the wrath of God descends upon a false prophet and he is destroyed. The mission of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, was a glorious success wherein he transformed a Godless and corrupt people steeped in every kind of iniquity into pious devotees of God Almighty thereby establishing without doubt the truth of his prophethood.

I believe in Islam because it has transformed my life more or less in the same manner that it transformed the lives of the Arabs in the days of Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

I believe in Islam because it does not refer only to miracles and heavenly signs of the past, but demonstrates them even in the present age thereby revealing the ever presence of God.

I believe in Islam because it proclaims the absolute Unity of God who has no partner or earthly form of any kind:

“Say He is Allah, the One! Allah the Independent and Besought of all. He begets not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him.” (The Holy Quran 112:2-5)

I believe in Islam because it is the only revealed religion intended for all mankind. Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, was commanded to proclaim:

“I have been sent for all mankind.”(Quran 7:159)

Previous prophets were sent only to particular tribes and nations with guidance suitable for the times and people to whom they were sent. Jesus, peace be on him, declared: “I am not sent but unto the lost

sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:24) for which reason he specifically instructed his disciples ‘Go not into the way of the Gentiles and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matthew 10:5, 6).

I believe in Islam because it seeks to unite people of all nations into one bond of brotherhood irrespective of colour and race. The real mark of distinction between one person and another is his or her degree of righteousness:

“Verily the most honourable among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous among you.” (Quran 49:14)

I believe in Islam because I find that the Quran provides clear evidence in support of its claim to be the Word of God. The transcendent eloquence of its Arabic text is matchless. No one has ever been able and never will be able to produce the like of it. Its style, diction and syntax is supreme. The challenge of the Quran remains open forever:

“And if they do not accept your challenge then know that it has been revealed, ” (Quran 11:15)

Keeping also in mind that Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, was illiterate, the text of the Quran is indeed a mighty sign of its divine origin and is not the work of any mortal.

I believe in Islam because it exhorts an attitude of tolerance towards people of other religions despite differences of belief. The Quran commands:

“Let there be no compulsion in religion.” (2:256)

Again:

“The truth is from your Lord; let him who will, believe, and let him who will disbelieve.” (Quran 18:29)

I believe in Islam because I observe heavenly light emanating from the countenance of true devotees of the faith which is as visible as the light of the sun reflected in the moon. This one sign alone is sufficient to convince me of the truth of Islam.

I believe in Islam because I know that a tree is known by its fruits. I have tasted the sweet fruit of Islam and know, therefore, that it is a tree planted by God.

I believe in Islam because I find that its teachings provide the only beneficial remedy to heal the spiritual ailments which prevail throughout the world. I proclaim this good news so that you may study and experience the beneficence of Islam and so bear witness to the truth of my testimony.

BOOK OF DEEDS

“So whoever does good works and is a believer, his endeavour will not be rejected and We shall surely record it.” (21:95)

“And the Book of their deeds will be placed before them, and thou wilt see the guilty ones fearful at what is therein; and they will say, ‘O woe to us! What kind of a Book is this! It leaves out nothing small or great but has recorded it.’ And they will find all that they did confronting them, and the Lord does not wrong anyone.” (18:50)

“He utters not a word but there is by him a guardian angel ready to record it.” (50:19)

“Surely there are guardians over you, Noble recorders, Who know all that you do.” (82:11-13)

“This is our Book; it speaks against you with truth. We caused all that you did to be fully recorded.” (45:30)

“And every man’s works have We fastened to his neck, and on the Day of Resurrection We shall bring out for him a book which he will find wide open. And it will be said to him, ‘Read thy book. Sufficient is thy own soul as reckoner against thee this day’.” (17:14,15)

AUDIENCE WITH ALLAH

(PART 3)

(Capt. M. H. Cheema)

(The first two parts of this article appeared in the December 1985 and September 1987 issues of the Review of Religions)

The third rung of the spiritual ladder is **Duaien** (Supplication, prayers). This stage includes both obligatory prayers as well as other voluntary prayers. Here, we are discussing the latter in detail. Thus supplication, here, means those prayers that one makes in one's own words and choice to Almighty Allah, as distinguished from obligatory prayer (Salat)

In the opening Chapter of the Holy Quran, God Almighty teaches us to pray:

“Thee alone do we worship, and Thee alone we implore for help.”
(1:5)

The question arises how does prayer or supplication effect the happening of something, and of what use are prayers if one has to work and struggle in order to obtain one's desired object? Thus, Allah, the Affectionate says it is He:

“Who responds to the afflicted person when he calls upon Him, and removes the affliction...” (27:63)

This verse of the Quran suggests that a very profound and total belief in the existence of Allah and His powers forms the basis of prayer. Disbelievers, on the other hand, do not enjoy the fruits of prayer as they do not believe either in God or in any of His attributes. Thus the Quran emphasises:

“... and despair not of the mercy of Allah; for none despairs of Allah's mercy save the unbelieving people.” (12:88)

Man sometimes becomes despondent and frustrated, especially when he finds no way out of his difficulties despite leaving no stone unturned. On such occasions supplication infuses inspiration and courage. This is the spirituality of prayer. In consequence of prayer, the grace of Allah, the Almighty descends upon the supplicant and bestows the fruit of success in diverse ways.

Now-a-days most people question the very concept of God and find it hard to believe in His existence. Yet in every nation, country and community, there have been and are people who, through prayer, have found the eternal truth of the existence of God within the recesses of their minds and hearts. This is the first and best attribute of prayer. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, peace be on him, says in his book *Ayyam-e-Sulh*:

“Prayer which like a flash of lightning pulls a person out of the pit of darkness and brings him into the open atmosphere of light and makes him stand before God, Almighty. Through prayer thousands of the wicked are reformed and thousands of the corrupt are purified.”

BENEFITS OF PRAYER:

1. It is a means to recognise Allah, the Almighty and to establish communion with Him.
2. It is a source of approach and of attaining nearness to Allah.
3. It leads one to virtue.
4. It enhances the spiritual as well as the physical life.
5. It heals both moral and physical illnesses.
6. It is a powerful weapon as well as a strong shield.
7. It provides such comfort and delight as are not to be found in any worldly pursuit.

The Holy Quran repeatedly invites us to pray and gives instances of deliverance achieved through prayer. The whole basis of the lives of the diligent ones, their great achievements and blissful successes, was through their prayers. Therefore, one should be diligent in prayer in order to foster one's capacity for faith and righteous conduct. It is through prayer that transformation can be achieved; and thereby, a good end of this worldly existence can, by the Grace of Allah, be expected.

Prayer is akin to a spring of sweet water. A believer sitting on its bank may drink his fill whenever he chooses. As a fish cannot survive without water, so a believer cannot live without prayer; it is his life giving water. The highest occasion for supplication is during the course of *Namaz* (prayer). That is the time when a believer is in command of himself, shunning all of his worldly thoughts, and deeply

concentrating on one job, namely the performance of Namaz, realising to a degree of certainty that he is present in the court of Allah, the Creator; seeing Him or at least realising that he is seen by Him.

I now quote from the paper Al-Hakam, dated 24.5.1904, in which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, explains how one may feel the presence of God during namaz (prayer):

“You should be praying for yourself during the prayer and you should never be pleased with a prayer offered absent mindedly. Try to concentrate, and if you fail in doing that, you should pray to God, in every Rakat of the five daily Prayers in this wise: ‘O God, who is All Powerful, I am a sinner, and the poison of sin has permeated my heart and has entered into all my views to such an extent that I cannot concentrate during my prayer. Do Thou forgive my sins, and overlook my shortcomings, and make my heart meek, and entrench Thy greatness and fear and love in my heart, so that my heart may not remain hard any more and I may feel Thy presence during my Prayers.’”

This prayer should not be restricted to the standing position only. You should do the same while in Roku and Prostration and after the recitation of Attahiyyat. It should be said in your own language and you should never get tired of it. With patience and steadfastness you should continue it in your five daily Prayers and also during Tahajjud prayer. You should ask for the forgiveness of your sins much, because it is due to sinfulness that the heart becomes hardened. If you do this, a time will come when you will achieve the desired aim. You should remember your death and try to realise that the days of life left behind are very few and death is fast approaching.

This is the method of feeling the presence of God during the prayers.

The fact is that, if there exists such a thing as gist and essence of religion, then it is only the supplication. But supplication is not the name of those few words which are uttered by a person and then he thinks his supplication has been made. Supplication is the name of melting oneself in the presence of Allah; it is the name of accepting a sort of death; to become a true replica of humility and humbleness. A person who just repeats a few words habitually while the state of humility and humbleness does not establish itself within him, whose heart and mind and every particle of his being is not activated with

the currents of love when praying, is merely making fun of the prayer. He is inviting the wrath of Allah at the cost of his time. Do not, therefore, make a prayer which is merely flowing out of your throat and is not creating a corresponding condition within your self. That is not a prayer, but a Satanic instrument which invites the wrath of Allah.

When you pray, then every part of you should bear witness to the Majesty of Allah, the Exalted. Every nook of your brain should be reflecting His power and glory, and each state of your heart, enjoying His bounties. Then, and only then, you are likely to be regarded as a supplicant. It appears difficult to create this condition apparently, but a person whose foundation of faith is grounded on the love of Allah (Ishq-e-Illahi), will find that there is nothing more easier than this for him. Indeed, this condition becomes a part of his nature and he is enjoying thereby all the time. It is not necessary for such a person to seek solitude and supplicate on the prayer mat. In fact, he is in the act of praying whether he is alone or is in the company of others. And when his tongue is reciting different words and his eyes envision different scenes, his spirit is prostrating on the threshold of mercy of his Lord and Creator, begging from Him mercy for himself and for the whole world.

PRINCIPLES REGARDING SUPPLICATIONS.

1. We should contrive to find ways and means to fulfil all our obligations to our fellow beings, as well as towards our Lord, the Creator. He who defaults on these obligations, is at loss and will find difficulty regarding the acceptance of his prayers.
2. We should try to make full use of the physical means required to achieve the certain object and put forth every effort for that purpose. Follow the laws of nature faithfully and earnestly. That means, we should work for the acceptance of our prayer. It is a truth that he who does not work for the acceptance of his prayer, does not pray, but instead, tries God Almighty.
3. The following are the ten principles to be followed regarding supplications, as described by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-din Mahmud Ahmad, (1889-1965), the second Caliph of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, (1835-1908).

The place of prayer and the garment worn should be clean. Every prayer should start with the recitation of Sura Fateha and end with Darood (invoking blessings of Allah on the Holy Prophet.)

Start with prayers for the spread of Islam and Tauheed (Unity of God) throughout the world.

No action of yours should be contrary to the teachings of Islam. If it is so you would have reduced the chances of your prayer being accepted.

Be courteous towards believers.

Be courteous, helpful and merciful to all human beings.

Try to remove the difficulty of an afflicted person.

Remain active and alert while offering your *Namaz* (daily prayers) adapting correct postures and offer whatever supplications you have to make, during the course of performance of *Namaz*.

If you have a particular and special requirement in mind, invoke the attribute of God most appropriate to your need.

Whereas it is advisable to pray in the prescribed wordings as laid down in the Holy Quran, the Ahadiths and the books of the Promised Messiah as it would certainly bring its blessings nevertheless, supplications should also be made in one's own language. This will enhance the earnestness of one's prayers. (When the heart is in ecstasy or in anguish it will not pause for words or phrases in which to pour itself at the footstool of the Almighty, the Creator, the Master, the True Beloved, the Source of all beneficence, solace and comfort. In such moments it does not need to be instructed as to the manner and words of its entreaty or supplication. It was at such a moment that the Holy Prophet's passion found expression in the tumultuous repetition of: "My heart and soul are in prostration before Thee.")

STEADFASTNESS IN PRAYERS.

There is a spiritual force in prayer which is beyond the comprehension of those whose horizon is limited only to physical means. There is a whole system of imperceptible means which come into play as a result of prayer. When people find themselves helpless in the face of prevailing hurdles, confusion and disorder, then Allah, the Most Gracious, bestows such faculties upon His favorite ones that by the aid of which everything is set right.

No one can derive any benefit from supplications unless he carries on steadfastly to the end, never thinking ill of Allah, and believing Him to be All Powerful, the Wisest of planners and the Master of His Decree and Designs. If one carries on praying in this spirit, a time will come

when Allah, the Affectionate will hear and respond to the prayers of His servant. Some people are impatient and desire that everything should be accomplished instantly like a magician's trick. They can do no harm to God but by being impatient they can only harm themselves.

It is most essential that a supplicant should never give up prayer in despair and think unworthy of Allah, the Almighty that nothing can be achieved through prayer. Sometimes a supplicant carries on praying to the point when the prayer is about to be granted, but he falls back short and gives up praying, with the result that nothing is left except frustration and despair. It should be remembered that a prayer has to pass through several stages. The lack of knowledge of this procedure often deprives the supplicant of its fruits. They are in hurry and lack patience. They do not understand the natural process of gradualness in divine designs.

The Prophet Jacob, peace be on him, lost his son Joseph but he did not lose the hope of finding him. He prayed continuously for his safe return over a period of about 23 years. 'It behoves me to be steadfast', he said, and made the supplications:

'Lord, I appeal to Thee again in the matter of Joseph'. (12:84)

His eyes welled up with tears but he did not permit his sorrow to be witnessed by others, He said:

'Go my sons, and enquire after Joseph and his brother and despair not of the mercy of Allah; for none despairs of Allah's mercy save the unbelieving people.' (12:88)

Patience and steadfastness are, in themselves, great virtues; and it is often mentioned in the Holy Quran that Allah loves those who are patient and steadfast and that He is with them. In this context we may learn a lesson from a mendicant who goes to the door of an affluent person and begs piteously and is rebuked and repulsed but does not bear a grudge and goes on begging then, even a miserly person yields in the end and gives him something. God, on the other hand, is so Beneficent, Loving and Compassionate that he desires to be called upon. He informed His noble Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him:

"And when My servants ask you about Me, say I am near. I answer the Prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me..." (2:187)

Allah, the Almighty, means that He is always there to help when a person needs Him; but as it is mentioned above, prayer needs complete faith in Allah, the Almighty, and the logical result of that faith is that in moments of apprehension and extreme grief, one would turn to Him. Patience and perseverance are two corner stones in the course of the acceptance of prayer.

The Holy Quran mentions numerous benefits and rewards resulting from patience and perseverance:

“... Allah is with those who patiently persevere.” (2:154)

“...Allah is with the steadfast.” (2:250)

“...but if you show patience then, surely, that is best for those who are patient.” (16:127)

“...and exhort one another to be steadfast.” (103:4)

Before the conclusion of the third part of my article “Audience with Allah”, I would say that this worldly life is certainly full of trials and tribulations. We should always think positively and look at the sunny side of everything and make our optimism come true. When our nights (period of trials and tribulation) are long, let us be patient. Soon the easy days (period of success and happiness) will come. Allah, the Most Gracious encourages us:

“Surely there is ease after hardship. Aye! Surely there is ease after hardship.” (94:6-7)

When a person joins the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam he or she undertakes, in the following words, to remain steadfast in faith:

“In all circumstances, be they moments of grief, comfort, hardship or affluence, I will remain faithful to Allah, The Almighty.”

In the end I pray that may our Lord, the most Gracious and ever Merciful, hear our prayers and grant us steadfastness in faith. I now list some prayers of the Holy Quran and of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him).

PRAYERS IN THE HOLY QURAN

1. Our Lord, grant us steadfastness and make our steps firm in the battlefield and help us against the disbelieving people. (2:251)
2. Our Lord, grant us the best in this world as well as the best in the world to come and safeguard us against the torment of the fire. (2:202)

MUSLIM ANECDOTES

(Qazi Muhammad Barakatullah)

1. The Holy Prophet was ill during his last days on earth. He addressed his companions and said:

“If I have hurt any one of you, even unknowingly, let him take his revenge now.”

The Companions were stunned and tears started rolling down their cheeks because the Mercy to the world could hurt no one in anyway. But one man stood up and, coming forward, said:

“O Prophet of Allah, once I was hit with your elbow in my side and I want my revenge.” The Companions were shocked and enraged on hearing these words. But the Holy Prophet, without hesitation, asked the man to take his revenge. He turned on one side and asked the man to hit him as he was hit. The man complained that he was without a shirt when he was hit. So the Holy Prophet asked his shirt to be raised to let the man hit that side with his elbow. The man came up to the Holy Prophet and with tears rolling down his eyes, kissed the bare body of the Holy Prophet. (Bukhari)

2. It is said that a poor woman of dark complexion was accustomed to sweep the mosque in Medina. As the Holy Prophet did not see her for several days, he inquired as to what had happened to her. His companions informed him that the woman had died. There upon, the Holy prophet said to them:

“Why did you not tell me about her death?” He immediately went to her grave and offered prayer for her. (Bukhari)

3. Once there was a sort of gathering of hungry people at a house, the Holy Prophet being one of them. The Holy Prophet asked the hostess, Umme Saleem, to send whatever food she had. Umme Saleem did accordingly but the food was so little that it was insufficient even for one person. The Holy Prophet prayed over the food and asked ten people to come in and eat as much as they could. The ten people did eat to their full and then left. Then another ten people were asked to eat and they also enjoyed their full meal. Likewise another ten came in and left and then another ten came in

and ate till they were full. In short, the food which was apparently insufficient even for one person became exceedingly blessed by the prayer of the Holy Prophet, so as to satisfy the hunger of seventy or eighty people. (Bukhari)

4. Once the Holy Prophet was passing through a market and saw a man standing who was not apparently good looking. The Holy Prophet went behind him and took him in his arms from behind. Then he said with a loud voice:

“I have a slave, would anyone buy him?”

The man realized that there could be no one except the Holy Prophet who would hold him affectionately like that. So he started moving back, touching more closely to the body of the Holy Prophet. Then the man said, looking back:

“O Messenger of Allah, you would not get a lot of money by selling me.”

The Holy Prophet let him go smilingly, saying:

“Your worth in the sight of Allah is very high.” (Bukhari)

5. During the course of a war, a man was noticed to be hiding in and killing Muslims. Usama Bin Zaid eventually got hold of him and drew his sword to kill him. Then the man at once proclaimed in a loud voice:

“There is none worthy of worship except Allah...” and right at that moment Usama Bin Zaid killed him. The man could not complete the other portion of the Kalima.

The matter was brought to the attention of the Holy Prophet that Usama Bin Zaid had killed a man who was reciting the Kalima. The Holy Prophet was very unhappy with Usama. Then Usama pleaded that the man was not truthful in his recitation of the Kalima because on being caught, he was scared and started reciting the Kalima. The Holy Prophet said displeasingly:

“Did you peep into his heart to see whether he was telling the truth? What will you say on the Day of Judgement when his confession of faith will be cited as evidence against you?”
(Muslim)

6. Once while travelling there occurred a shortage of drinking water. The Holy Prophet asked that whatever water was left should be brought to him. A utensil was brought to him with very little water in

it. The Holy Prophet put his hand inside the container and the water became so blessed that everyone in the company was able to drink as much water as he wished. (Bukhari)

7. Once Abu Huraira was very hungry and had been without food for over three days. He stood at the door of the mosque and saw Hazrat Abu Bakr passing by. He approached Hazrat Abu Bakar and asked the explanation of a verse in the Holy Quran which enjoins the feeding of the hungry and poor. Hazrat Abu Bakar explained the meaning of the verse and moved on. Then Abu Huraira saw Hazrat Umar passing by. He approached Hazrat Umar and recited the same verse and asked for the meaning and explanation. Hazrat Umar explained the meaning and passed on. Abu Huraira said to himself that both these pious people knew that I knew at least that much of Quran as they have explained. Abu Huraira, being a companion of the Holy Prophet, did not want to ask directly for food. He thought that both Hazrat Abu Bakar and Hazrat Umar would know what he meant by asking the meaning of that particular verse. Then Abu Huraira saw the Holy Prophet coming out of the mosque. So he approached the Holy Prophet, recited the same verse and asked for the meaning and explanation. The Holy Prophet looked at Abu Huraira, smiled and said:

“Abu Huraira! You are hungry. Come with me.” So Abu Huraira accompanied the Holy Prophet to his home and found that there was no food even in his house. Abu Huraira was so hungry that he could hardly keep his composure. By chance a person came who had brought a cup of milk for the Holy Prophet. Then the Holy Prophet told Abu Hurairah that there was only one cup of milk. But before drinking it, he should first go to the mosque and see if there were any other hungry people. He asked Abu Huraira to bring them to share the cup of milk which was hardly sufficient for one person and the Holy Prophet was asking for more people to share a drink from the same cup. Anyway, he went and found six hungry people. He brought them back to the Holy Prophet’s house.

Abu Huraira was much pleased because the Holy Prophet had understood what he meant by the recitation of the verse in the Holy Quran.

The Holy Prophet asked everyone to sit down and they formed a sort of circle with Abu Hurairah sitting on the left of the Holy Prophet. As of custom, the Holy Prophet passed the cup of milk to the person
the person

sitting on his right asking him to drink as much as he could and then pass the cup on to the next sitting on his right with the same instruction. Eventually, the cup reached Abu Hurairah who was thinking there would be nothing left for him to drink, but he found milk in it. So Abu Huraira took the cup of milk and started drinking it. The Holy Prophet said “drink more, Abu Huraira” and he did until he could drink no more. Then he passed the cup to the Holy Prophet who was the last to drink the milk. In that way a cup of milk was blessed and, by the grace of Allah, the milk satisfied the hunger of eight people. (Bukhari)

8. Among the early people was a man who committed ninety nine murders. Later he inquired of the people as to who was the greatest savant on the face of the earth. Upon being informed of a monk, the man went to him to learn if his ninety nine murders could be forgiven. The monk decreed that such sins could not be forgiven. So the man killed the monk, making in all one hundred murders. Again he asked, “Who is the greatest savant in the world?” This time he learned of another savant. Relating the tragedy of the hundred murders to the savant, he again inquired if forgiveness was possible. The savant commanded him to leave his land of iniquity and join in worship and prayer with a band of holy men in a foreign country.

While journeying to the strange land, the man died. There upon arose a quarrel between the angels of mercy and the angels of punishment. The angels of mercy declared, ‘In his heart he repented and turned to God, therefore, we are entitled to take him.’

The angels of punishment replied, ‘He did not do any good work, so he belongs to us.’ Suddenly an angel appeared in the shape of a man. Both opponents agreed that the angel should judge between them. So the judge ordered them to find out by measuring to which land he was nearest when he died. It was learned that he was nearest by one cubit to the land of the holy man. Therefore the judge decreed that he belonged to the angels of mercy who took him joyfully.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

9. The battle of Hunain was in progress and an incident occurred: Shaiba, a resident of Mecca and in the service of the Kaba, took part in the encounter on the side of the enemy. He says that he had only one aim before him in this battle that, when the two armies met, he would find an opportunity to kill the Prophet. He was determined that even if the whole world joined the Prophet (let alone the whole of Arabia), he would stand out and continue to oppose Islam. When

fighting became brisk, Shaiba drew his sword and started advancing towards the Prophet. As he came very near, he became nervous. His determination began to shake. 'When I got very near the Prophet,' says Shaiba, 'I seemed to see a flame threatening to consume me. I then heard the voice of the Prophet saying, 'Shaiba, come near me.' When I came near, the Prophet moved his hand over my chest with great affection. As he did so, he said, 'God, relieve Shaiba of all satanic thoughts.' With this little touch of affection Shaiba changed. His hostility and enmity evaporated, and from that moment Shaiba held the Prophet dearer than anything else in the world. As Shaiba changed, the Prophet invited him to come forward and fight. 'At that moment,' says Shaiba, 'I had but one thought, and that was to die for the sake of the Prophet. Even if my father had come my way, I would not have hesitated a moment to thrust my sword in his chest.' (Halbiyyah)

10. On the occasion of Prophet Muhammad's Hijrat from Mecca to Medina, the Meccans put a prize on the heads of both Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, and Hazrat Abu Bakar. Whoever captured and restored to the Meccans the Prophet or Abu Bakar dead or alive would have a reward of a hundred camels. The announcement was made among the tribes around Mecca. Tempted by the reward, Suraqa ibn Malik, a Bedouin chief, started in pursuit of the party and ultimately sighted them on the road to Medina. He saw two mounted camels and, feeling sure they were bearing the Prophet and Abu Bakar, spurred on his horse. The horse reared and fell before it had gone very far and Suraqa also fell. Suraqa's own account of what happened is interesting. He said:

"After I fell from the horse, I consulted my luck in the superstitious fashion common with Arabs by a throw of the arrows. The arrows boded ill luck. But the temptation of the reward was great. I mounted again and resumed my pursuit and nearly overtook the party. The Prophet rode with dignity, and did not look back. Abu Bakr, however, looked back again and again (evidently out of fear for the safety of the Prophet). As I neared them, my horse reared again, and I fell off. I consulted the arrows again; and again they boded ill luck. My horse's hoofs sank deep into the sand. Mounting again and resuming the pursuit seemed difficult. I then understood that the party was under Divine protection. I called out to them and entreated them to stop. When near enough I told them of my evil intention and of my change of heart. I told them I was giving up the pursuit and was returning. The Prophet let me go, but made me promise

not to reveal their whereabouts to anybody. I became convinced that the Prophet was a true one, destined to succeed. I requested the Prophet to write me a guarantee of peace to serve me when he became Supreme. The Prophet asked Amir bin Fuhaira to write me a guarantee, and he did. As I got ready to return with it, the Prophet received a revelation about the future and said, "Suraqa, how will you feel with the gold bangles of the Chosroes on your wrists?" Amazed at the prophecy, I asked, 'Which Chosroes? Chosroes ibn Hormizd, the Emperor of Iran?' The Prophet said, "Yes" (Usud al Ghabbah).

Sixteen or seventeen years later the prophecy was literally fulfilled. Suraqa accepted Islam and went to Medina. The Prophet died, and after him, first Hazrat Abu Bakar, and then Hazrat Umar became the Khalifa of Islam. The growing influence of Islam made the Iranians jealous and led them to attack the Muslims. But, instead they were subjugated by them. The capital of Iran fell to the Muslims who captured its treasures, including the gold bangles which the Chosroes wore at State functions. When the spoils of the war with Iran were placed before Hazrat Umar, he saw the gold bangles and remembered what the Prophet had told Suraqa. It was a grand prophecy made at a time of utter helplessness. Hazrat Umar decided to stage a visible fulfilment of the prophecy. He, therefore, sent for Suraqa ordered him to put on the gold bangles. Suraqa protested that the wearing of gold by men had been forbidden by Islam. Hazrat Umar said that this was true, but that the occasion was an exception. The Prophet had foreseen Chosroes' gold bangles on his wrists; therefore he had to wear them now, even on pain of punishment. Suraqa was objecting out of deference to the Prophet's teaching otherwise he was as eager as anyone else to provide visible proof of the fulfilment of the great prophecy. He put on the bangles and Muslims saw the prophecy fulfilled (Usud al Ghabbah). Once a fugitive the Prophet had become a king. He himself was no longer in this world. But those who succeeded him could witness the fulfilment of his words and visions.

FREE FROM IMPURITIES

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

PRESS DESK

(Rashid Ahmad Chaudhary)

History bears witness to the fact that whenever Divine Communities have been raised by God they pass through periods of trials and tribulations.

The Messengers of God have always been ridiculed, persecuted and rejected. They and their faithful followers always remain steadfast and are successful in the end. Among those persecuted were Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, peace be upon them, along with their followers.

Likewise Ahmadi Muslims have also suffered severe persecution on account of their faith particularly in Pakistan under the regime of President Ziaul Haque. They have borne them with patience, steadfastness and devotion.

I will now relate a couple of incidents which have occurred in Pakistan.

Dr. Mumtaz Ali of Jampur, Pakistan, is a highly respected member of the Ahmadiyya Community. He was arrested for writing on his house the Muslim declaration of faith known as the Kalima. For this 'offence' he was imprisoned for twenty four days. He has described his days of imprisonment :

“I entered the prison gates reciting allowed the Kalima ‘There is none worthy of worship save Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.’ Twenty four hours later I was released and came out singing the praises of Allah. All the inmates of the prison came to the main gate to see me off. There were all kinds of criminals ranging from petty thieves to fierce looking dacoits and murderers to whom human life is of little value. One by one they embraced me and requested me for prayers. I prayed that they may prove themselves to be the servants of mankind when they come out of prison.

I was sent to prison because I had written the Kalima on the water tank on the roof of my house. However, when I erected an extension to my house, this new building blocked the view of the Kalima so, out of love for the Kalima, I again wrote it on the second storey wall so that it was clearly visible from a distance.

I was arrested on the 5th October, 1987 and spent two days and nights in the police cell at Muhammad Pur. I could not sleep during day time or night time as the days were extremely hot and during the night I had regular visitors, huge singing mosquitoes and blanket bugs. This gave me the opportunity to cry out to my Lord from the depth of my heart and to converse with Him.

From behind the bars I could see the long bearded, proud mullahs (religious leaders) come and go from the police station. The purpose of their visits which I came to learn later was to press the police not to be lenient with me under any circumstances. The police regarded me as a dangerous criminal and, therefore, tried their usual tactics to humiliate me. They paraded me handcuffed through the streets of Muhammadpur and Jampur to win praise from the local mullahs and their followers although they remained apologetic to me saying that they were forced by authorities to act in such a manner.

An application for bail on my behalf was filed with the local magistrate at Jampur. He tried to evade the request for several days. The hearing for application for bail began on 17th October. I received news in prison that the mullahs of the area had made fiery speeches in their mosques threatening the administration and judiciary with dire consequences should bail be granted. Various deputations met the magistrate in this connection. The court room was full on the day when the hearing began. The discussion took one and a half hours. Most of the time my solicitor, Mian Iqbal Ahmad, advocate and the District Amir of the Ahmadiyya Community, Rajanpur, put forward his arguments. The magistrate nodded his head occasionally but seemed baffled and rejected my bail application.

The next stage was to file my application for bail with the session judge. The hearing took place on 29th October. The mullahs came in wagon loads but they were disappointed because the session judge had already granted bail in my case.

“I had sent a message from prison to my lawyer not to pursue my application because I wanted to continue my stay in prison. The bare walls of the cell gave me the solitude for which I had longed in my prayers. This inside world needs some Dai Illallah (preachers of God) to deliver the divine message of Ahmadiyyat (The True Islam). I took the opportunity to do it but my happiness in this respect was short lived due to my release from prison.”

In a letter to the Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Dr. Mumtaz Ali wrote:

“I came home to a relatively luxurious life, but believe me, I could not sleep on the mattress for the first three days. I had become accustomed to sleeping on the hard floor of the prison cell. Thinking back I can safely say that I experienced the love of God as I had never experienced it before. My imagination took me back to the days of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him. He and his followers were also persecuted for their love of the Kalima. My feelings were indescribable. I wanted to prove to the world that the Kalima is the life and soul of every Ahmadi Muslim and, for its sake, no Ahmadi would hesitate to sacrifice his life and honour. I am willing to go back again to prison for that crime.”

Then there is the case of Bashir Ahmad Sialkoti, an elderly Ahmadi Muslim living in Rabwah who was arrested while leaving the mosque for playing an audio cassette of a religious speech delivered by the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community on the occasion of the annual gathering, 1988. He announced that it would be played in the area mosque on 31st July 1988. The news leaked out to the police who sent a lorry load of armed policemen to arrest the person concerned. As they did not know in which mosque the cassette was being played they went to different mosques and when they found the one in which it was being played they surrounded it. When Sialkoti Sahib came out with the cassette and tape recorder, they took him along to Rabwah police station. The police then sent a jeep for the notorious Ahrari mullah, Allah Yar Arshad. On his arrival a case was registered against Bashir Ahmad Sialkoti under section 16. MPO section 298c. In a concocted story it was alleged in the police report that he was playing the cassette on the public road near the railway crossing. He was arrested on remand for ten days during which time he was tortured. He was not only handcuffed but his feet were also shackled as if he was a dangerous criminal.

AHMADIYYAT & PREACHING OF ISLAM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

(Aftab Ahmad Khan)

About a hundred years ago, to be precise in 1894, an international conference of missionaries of the Church of England was held in London. Presiding over a session dealing with missionary work in India the Lord Bishop of Gloucester, the Rt. Reverend Charles John Ellicot, DD, said:

“But perhaps the movement in Muhammadanism is the most striking. I learn from those who are experienced in these things that there is now a new kind of Muhammadanism showing itself in many parts of our empire in India, and even in our own island here at home. Muhammadanism now speaks with reverence of our blessed Lord and Master, but is not the less more intensely monotheistic than ever. It discards many of these usages which have made Muhammadanism hateful in our eyes, but the false prophet holds his place no less pre-eminently than before. Changes are plainly to be recognised: but Muhammadanism is not the less aggressive, and alas! to some minds among us, (God grant that they be not be) even additionally attractive”. (The Official Report of the Missionary Conference for the Anglican Communion, 1894, p 64).

How wise and perceptive the respected Lord Bishop was! He observed that a ‘new kind of Muhammadanism’, a western term for Islam appearing at the end of the century was intensely monotheistic and stood for the pre-eminence of Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. He noticed that the new movement had discarded false usages which had made Islam hateful in the eyes of the others and, further, the Lord Bishop feared that it was increasingly becoming more attractive and acceptable. This new phase in Islam was brought about as a part of a Divine scheme which had been prophesied by the major religions of the world. More specifically, the Holy Quran had mentioned that a time will come when, the Holy Prophet of Islam would say, “O my Lord, my people have indeed abandoned the Quran and made it a thing abandoned” (25:31). The Holy Prophet is reported to have said, “A time will come, when

when nothing will be left of Islam except its name.” However, God had promised that His word will not be abandoned to disappear. In Sura Al Hijr, He said, “Verily, we sent down the Quran and Verily we are going to protect it”. (25:31). He also gave an unqualified promise of the Victory of Islam. The Holy Quran points out in Sura Al Tauba, “He it is who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over every other religion.” (9:33)

Thus, there were Divine promises for the protection and preservation of not only the text of the Holy Quran but also of its message and purpose. Moreover, the victory of Islam has been guaranteed. These objectives were to be achieved in the time of the Promised Mahdi and Messiah. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian is the man who claimed that God had appointed him as the instrument for the implementation of the Divine design and he went on to prove the truth of the prophecy, “Thou art a warner from Me. Indeed, I did send thee so that the sinners should be differentiated from the righteous”. Let us examine how he triumphed in this mission with the grace and blessings of Allah.

The foundations of the mighty Mughal Empire in India were shaken by internal dissent and external intervention in the 18th Century. The final blow came in 1857 with the collapse of the Mutiny which brought India directly under British control. The defeated and dejected Muslims in India were facing destruction and disaster. Islam was under attack from all sides. At this time, Divine intervention in the form the advent of the Promised Messiah came to their rescue. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad came out with a clear declaration that Islam is a living and everlasting religion and its destiny is to triumph over all other religions. His monumental book *Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya*, completed between 1880 and 1884, not only provided the most logical exposition of the tenets of Islam but also challenged other religions to produce comparable arguments in support of their respective faiths. Its impact on the Muslim mind and morale was most dramatic. A contemporary religious scholar, Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi acknowledged that *Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya* “Is without parallel and, in view of our time and our needs, without an equal in the history of Islam”.

Beginning with *Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya*, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, spent the rest of his life in establishing the supremacy of Islam in every aspect of teaching, doctrine and beliefs and upholding its moral and spiritual standards.

His writings and teachings brought about a conceptual revolution in the study of Holy Quran and the understanding of Islam. He argued that Islam is a living faith and its supreme gift is contact with God. Therefore, the door to divine revelation is always open and a true Muslim can find paradise in this very world. Secondly, Islam is a universal multi national and multi-racial religion. Thirdly, he established that the use of force in religion cannot be justified on any account. He rejected the orthodox idea that the Mahdi will, along with the Messiah, wage bloody wars against all non Muslims. He believed that the supremacy and triumph of Islam can be brought through reason, logic and peaceful persuasion. Thus he started the process of weeding out superstitious practices and archaic ideas which had disfigured and distorted the beauty and purity of Islam. The rejuvenation and renaissance of Islam had begun. The Muslims got a new vision and their confidence returned. Islam had started its march to final victory. This victory had to be achieved through peaceful means and by arguments. The message of Islam was very clear. It had to be delivered to the whole world. This was an essential mission and the principal purpose of the second advent. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the resident of a small and insignificant village in the distant corner of a province in India, with no apparent resources at his command, was commissioned to carry that message throughout the world. Indeed, he received the divine revelation:

“I shall carry thy name and thy teachings to the remotest corners of the earth.’ And, was further told, ‘I shall bless thee to an extent that sovereigns shall seek blessings from thy clothing’. What a glorious promise. What a grand design.!

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement to fulfil the responsibility placed on his shoulders by Allah, of re-activating the spirit of Islam and re-awakening mankind to a spiritual life. He was the recipient of two Divine assurances concerning the success of his undertaking. The first related to his own life time when he started his mission without a single follower. The second foretold the great success of the Movement in the future under the guidance of his successors. Thus, Ahmadiyyat became the instrument for the revival, propagation and success of Islam. Preaching of Islam became the very soul and heart of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

Through his extensive writings and addresses the Promised Messiah conveyed the light of Truth to thousands of hearts. In the sub-continent of India, hundreds of people from all walks of life pledged their loyalty to him. Even those who did not join the

Movement, acknowledged his scholarship and service to Islam. On receiving a Divine revelation, he started a monthly journal in English, "The Review of Religions" in 1902 with the primary object of projecting Islam in the world. He wrote letters to dignitaries, including the Prince of Wales, Prime Minister Gladstone and Prince Bismarck. In 1897, he presented a brochure to Queen Victoria inviting her to accept Islam. The American Ambassador to the Philippines, Alexander Russell Webb, who was converted to Ahmadiyyat, paid his tribute to the Promised Messiah in these words: "More than twenty years ago I started my correspondence with him and ever since then I have been deeply affected by the fearless earnestness with which he continued to spread the truth in the pursuance of his purpose. Without a doubt God Almighty had chosen him for this great enterprise which he fulfilled completely".

The Promised Messiah inspired and instructed his companions to undertake the noble task of preaching and thus set an example for the future generations. Time does not permit me to describe in detail the accomplishments of such devoted people as Ch. Fateh Muhammad Sial, Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, Hafiz Ghulam Rasul, Maulana Rajeki, Hafiz Roshan Ali, Mir Muhammad Ishaq and Maulana Nazir Ahmad Ali in the field of preaching Islam. Their record forms a rich heritage of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

The concept that preaching is the way to secure contact with God became a reality in the time of Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the Second Successor to the Promised Messiah. By initiating the Tahrik-e-Jadid and Waqfe-Jadid he instituted preaching of Islam through missionary work at home and abroad. A large number of volunteers who had pledged their lives to the service of Islam were trained for the propagation of Islam in foreign countries. The first Ahmadiyya Mission was established in London in 1914. Subsequently Missions were opened in a number of countries in Europe, North & South America, East and West Africa. Today, Ahmadiyya Jamaats are located in 117 countries and in many of them the message of Islam has been carried exclusively by Ahmadi Muslims. A well known American magazine, The Christian Century, remarked sometime ago, "The Ahmadiyya Movement is the only active missionary Movement at work in Islam."

It is in Africa that the Ahmadiyya Movement has scored most remarkable successes and thus fulfilled the prophecy about the triumph of Islam over other religions. Hazrat Musleh Maud, the Second Khalifa, possessed the wisdom to foresee that Islam alone

could meet the social and spiritual needs of the African people who had been exploited for centuries. Ahmadiyyat did not go to Africa on the shoulders of colonialism and imperialism but in the arms of mutual respect and love. The African response has been amazing. The late Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih III, paid two visits to some African states and won the hearts of their people. More recently, in 1988, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV visited eight African countries where he was accorded most enthusiastic welcome by the public as well as their governments. The Ahmadiyya educational and medical institutions in Africa have played a supportive role in the efforts of our missionaries in preaching the message of Islam. Sometime back, *The Life* magazine of USA published a comprehensive illustrated report on the activities of Ahmadiyya Missions in Africa. In his book, "Islam in East Africa", Dr. Lyndon Harries wrote:

"Even though they are regarded by the orthodox as heretics, they are more able defenders of their faith than any of their contemporaries. There are no more active propagandists in the Muslim world today; it is significant that of all the Indian Muslim sects, this is the only one to establish itself among tribal Muslims." (Extracts from *Islam in East Africa*, By Lyndon P. Harries, M.A., Ph.D., published in 1954).

The Africans have been appreciative of what Ahmadiyyat the true Islam has done for them. A Minister of Sierra Leone acknowledged the debt that his people owed to Ahmadiyyat in these words:

"I cannot refrain from admitting that in Sierra Leone today if there is any Muslim organization busy in serving the country, it is only the Ahmadiyya Movement and its Missionaries. And it would also be an injustice not to admit the fact that if the Ahmadi Missionaries had not come to this country and defended Islam against the onslaughts of the Christian missions, hardly anything of Islam except its name would have been left in these parts by this time, and no one would have liked to associate himself with it."

Africa has also had the privilege of witnessing the fulfillment of divine prophecy concerning the blessings of the Promised Messiah. On his inauguration as Head of State of Gambia, Al Haj Singhateh, wrote to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III requesting a piece of cloth belonging to the Promised Messiah. At last year's Jalsa Salana, two Nigerian Chieftains also received similar gifts from the hands of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV. No account of preaching of Islam in modern times can be complete without referring to the pioneering work

work undertaken by the Ahmadiyya Movement in publishing and translating the Holy Quran into different languages. The message of Islam can not be understood properly unless the people from different countries and cultures can read the translation and interpretation of the Holy Quran in their own languages. The Ahmadis have performed this service by translating the Holy Book into more than a score of languages and as a thanks giving for Ahmadiyya Centenary Celebrations, excerpts from the Holy Quran will be translated into at least one hundred languages, under the guidance of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV. The Ahmadiyya Community has been able to provide to mankind a treasure house of literature dealing with the principles and practices of Islam and the life and achievements of the Holy Prophet of Islam. Many new converts to Islam particularly in Western countries were introduced to Islam and attracted to its teachings through the Ahmadiyya literature and, in the words of a brother from Africa, "their sleep was awakened with the light of Islam".

The Holy Prophet of Islam had said: "Knowledge disappears from the earth when men of knowledge disappear from the earth". It is a blessing of the second advent that the Promised Messiah revived the tradition of search and knowledge and the Ahmadiyya Movement has produced men of knowledge for the service of Islam.

Preaching is the hall-mark and characteristic of Ahmadis to such an extent that they have been persecuted and oppressed for that very reason. In some countries the orthodox religious groups have campaigned against Ahmadiyyat because it threatens their vested interest and privileges. This is particularly true in Pakistan where in recent times political extremists and religious fanatics have joined hands with a dictatorial military regime to prevent the Ahmadis from performing their duties as Muslims. Ahmadis in Pakistan have been deprived of their fundamental rights because they will not abandon the obligation to preach. A highly placed official of Pakistan told me: You give up your preaching and tabligh and you will be accepted as Muslims and all your worries and woes will be over. This the Ahmadis will not do. This they cannot do. This is the fundamental element of their faith and their commitment to the Promised Messiah who had foretold:

"For Islam the time would come once again of the same freshness and light which earlier had belonged to it; and the self same sun would once more rise in all its splendour which had illumined the world in the days of its inception." (Fateh Islam, p 9).

We want to witness that splendid sun shine. May Allah fulfil our wish. Amen. All Praise belong to Allah, Lord of all the worlds.

3. Our Lord, take us not to task if we forget or fall into error; Lord, place us not under responsibility in the manner of those before us; Lord, burden us not with that which we have not the strength to bear; overlook our defaults and grant us forgiveness and have mercy on us; Thou art our Master, so grant us succour against those who reject Thee. (2:287)

4. Our Lord, let not our hearts become perverse after You have guided us; and bestow upon us mercy from Thyself, surely Thou art the Great Bestower. (3:9)

5. O Allah, Lord of sovereignty, Thou bestowest sovereignty upon whomsoever Thou pleasest, and Thou takest away sovereignty from whomsoever Thou pleasest, Thou exaltest whomsoever Thou pleasest, and Thou abasest whomsoever Thou pleasest; in Thy hand is all good. Thou surely has power to do all things. You make the night pass into day and make the day pass into night; You bring forth the living from the dead and bring forth the dead from the living. Thou bestowest upon whomsoever Thou pleasest without measure. (3:27-28)

6. Our Lord, we believe in that which Thou hast sent down and we follow this Messenger, so write us down among the witnesses. (3:54)

7. Our Lord, forgive us our sins and our excesses in our affairs, and make firm our steps and help us against the disbelieving people. (3:148)

8. Our Lord, we have heard a Caller calling unto faith, "Believe ye in your Lord"; and we have believed. Lord, forgive us, therefore, our errors and remove from us our ills, and in death number us with the righteous. Lord, grant us that which You have promised us through Your Messengers and humilate us not on the Day of Judgment, surely you doest not contrary to Your promise. (3:194-195)

9. Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, we shall surely be of the losers (7:24)

10. Our Lord, make us not a trial for the wrongdoing people; and deliver us by Thy mercy from the tyranny of the disbelieving people. (10:86-87)

11. My Lord, make me constant in observing prayer and my children also. Our Lord, of Thy grace accept my supplication. (14:41)

12. Lord, have mercy on them (my parents), even as they nourished me in my childhood. (17:25)

13. Our Lord, bestow on us special mercy from Thyself and provide for us right guidance in our affair. (18:11)

14. There is no god except Thee, Holy art Thou. I have indeed been of the wrong-doers. (21:88)

15. Our Lord, we believe; so forgive us and have mercy on us; for Thou art the Best of those who show mercy. (23:110)

16. Lord, forgive and have mercy, for Thou art the Best of those who show mercy. (23:191)

17. Our Lord, grant us of our spouses and our offspring the delight of our eyes, and make us a model for the righteous. (25:75)

18. Lord, I am in need of whatever of good Thou mayest send down to me. (28:25)

19. Lord, grant me the favour that I may be grateful to Thee for the bounty that You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I may act righteously so as to please You; and make my progeny righteous also. I do turn to You and truly I am Your obedient servant. (46:16)

20. Our Lord, forgive us and our brother who preceded us in the faith, and permit not any feeling of rancour to arise in our hearts against those who believe; Lord, You are indeed Compassionate, Merciful. (59:11)

21. Our Lord, in Thee do we put our trust, and to Thee do we turn in repentance, and to Thee is the final return. Lord, make us not a trial for those who disbelieve, and forgive us, Lord, for You alone are the Mighty, the Wise. (60:5-6)

22. Our Lord, perfect our light for us and forgive us; surely You have power over all things. (66:9)

PRAYERS OF THE HOLY PROPHET

In the name of Allah, Whose name affords protection against all that is in the heavens and the earth. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.

I seek protection through the perfect words of Allah against the evil of all created things.

I seek protection through the perfect words of Allah from His wrath and His retribution and the evil of His creatures high and low and from the incitements of Satan, and I ask protection with Thee, O Allah, that they should approach me.

I seek protection through the perfect words of Allah which none may outflank, whether he be pious or vicious, and through His beautiful names, those that I know and those that I know not, against the evil of all that He has created and made and spread out, and the evil of that which descends from heaven and the evil of that which ascends unto it, and the evil of that which is spread in the earth and the evil of that which issues forth from it, and from the evil of the disturbances of the night and the day, and the evil of all that moves by night unless it should move for good, O Thou Most Gracious One.

Allah, I seek Thy protection against being involved in distress, or encountering misfortune, or being afflicted with an evil decree, or being the subject of the taunts and reproaches of my enemies.

Allah, I seek the protection of Thy forgiveness against Thy wrath, and the protection of Thy pleasure against Thy anger and Thy protection against Thyself. O Thou of Glorious Countenance.

Allah, I seek Thy protection against problems and anxieties, and I seek Thy protection against helplessness and shiftlessness, and I seek Thy protection against cowardice and miserliness, and I seek Thy protection against indebtedness and the tyranny of people. Allah, guard me with that which is lawful against that which is unlawful, and enrich me with Thy grace, so as to make me independent of all except Thyself.

There is none worthy of worship save Allah, the Forbearing, the Noble, Holy is Allah, the Lord of the Great Throne, and all praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. I beg of Thee the means of attaining Thy mercy, and the high resolves for winning Thy forgiveness, and a large portion of every virtue, and security from every sin. Do not leave any of my sins unforgiven, nor any of my anxieties unrelieved, nor any of my needs which hast Thy approval unfulfilled, O Most Merciful of all those who show mercy .

Allah, bestow upon us so much of Thy fear as should become a

and such conduct as would lead me to Thy Love.

Allah, bestow on me Thy love and the love of those loving whom would be of benefit to me in Thy sight. Allah, make that which Thou dost bestow on me of that which I love a source of strength for me in respect of that which Thou lovest, and make that which Thou dost take away from me of that which I love a release towards that which Thou lovest.

Allah, purify my heart of hypocrisy, and my conduct of showing off, and my tongue of falsehood, and my eye of treachery, for indeed Thou knowest well the treachery of the eyes and that which is hidden in the minds.

Allah, make that of me which is hidden better than that which is manifest, and make that which is manifest righteous. Allah, I beg of Thee the purest of that which Thou bestowest upon people of family and property and children, neither going astray nor leading others astray.

O Allah, diffuse light into my heart and ears;
 Diffuse light on my eyes and on my tongue;
 Diffuse light on my right and on my left;
 Diffuse light above me and under me;
 Engulf me in Thy light.

O my Lord, while seeking the fragrance of Your pleasure, I seek refuge from Your wrath; and while seeking security in You, I seek in You from Your displeasure. My heart is full of praise for You, but the truth is that I cannot adequately praise Thee. Thou art, indeed, as Thou definest Thyself; the Lord of the worlds, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful, The Praiseworthy.

Master, O my Master! I have come to Thee - a wretched and greatly afflicted begger, to implore You for mercy, and with great humility I have come in search for Your protection. Trembling with fear, I have come not to seek any reward but only to plead guilty and confess my sins. Like the poor and the needy I have come to Your door begging for Your mercy and Your favours. O my Lord! have pity on me, and bestow Your favours on me.

Look! my Master, like a weak and sinful person I am prostrating before Thee. I am imploring humbly! Gripped with fear and deeply afflicted, I beg mercy from You; and I lean in full humility before You. My eyes are shedding tears of repentance. My soul as well as my body

is prostrating in humility before You. My Master, for Your sake I have humbled myself like a worm of the clay; and I am prostrating in utter humility at Your Divine threshold.

Master! Who is greater than you I should turn to and beg from him? Who else is there who can grant me my supplications? So my Beloved, do not banish me; do not reject my prayers; do not abandon me to my misfortunes. Master, look at me with compassion. Master, Mercy; Mercy; Mercy; Ameen.

O my Allah, I seek of You Your Own love and the love of those who love You. Please grant me the ability to do such deeds as may beget in me Your Love. O Allah, make Your Love, in my heart dearer to me than my ownself, my family and the fresh water is to a thirsty person.

“O God! Keep me humble while I am alive and keep me humble when I die and let my resurrection on the Day of Judgement be with the humble.”

“Allah has revealed to me that you should comport yourselves with humility towards one another so that no one transgresses against another, nor boasts of any superiority over another.”

FAULTS

In speaking of a person's faults
Then don't forget your own;
Remember those with homes of Glass
Should seldom throw a stone;
If we have nothing else to do
Than talk of those who sin,
'Tis better we commence at home,
And from that point begin.

POSITION OF WOMEN

(*Wahab Bin Adam*)

Talking of the equality of man, one is reminded of the place of woman in society.

“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, not to usurp authority over the man but to be in silence. (*1st Timothy. 2:11*)

“For Adam was first formed then Eve. And Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in transgression.” (*1st Timothy. 2:14*)

Mark the words, “woman”, “subjection”, “silence”, “deceived”, “transgression” and anyone who has been brainwashed to believe that Islam teaches that women should be kept in subjection will mistake the passages for Quranic verses! But they come from the Bible.

The truth is, the story in the Bible of Eve’s dealings with the serpent is the most devastating thing ever written against women to prove conclusively that they are responsible for the evils of the world.

In the story of creation, as told in the Bible, woman is a fatal after-thought. Light was created by a simple device, and man by the loving hand of God, but woman was created by a stratagem!

It was due to these Biblical stories that the ancient saints like St. Bernard, St. Jerome and St. John Chrysostum, to mention but a few, spoke so disparagingly about women.

For instance, St. Barnard had declared:

“Woman is the organ of the devil”.

St. Jerome adds:

“Woman is the gate of the devil, the road to unicity, the sting of the scorpion.”

St. John Chrysostum has equally strong words to say about women:

“Of all the wild beasts the most dangerous is woman. If she is young she was a trap set by the devil and if she was old and

withered she was likely to be a witch.”

It is with wonder that we read in the Times of July 22, 1797 the following shocking news item:

“The increasing value of the fair sex is regarded by many writers as the certain index of growing civilization ... In the market the price of the fair sex was again raised from one half to three and one-half guineas.”

In 1856, Emerson informs us in English Traits:

“The right of the husband to sell his wife has been retained down to our time.”

As opposed to these outrageous opinions about and the treatment of women, the Holy Quran declares that both man and woman have been created from a single soul. (4:2)

The Holy Quran goes further to accord women the same rights as are due men:

“For men is a share of that which parents and near relations leave; and for women is a share of that which parents and near relations leave, whether it be little or much a determined share.”
(4:8)

The Holy Quran then declares in no uncertain terms that every virtue that is attainable by man is equally attainable by woman. (33:36)

The Holy Quran even goes further to cite a woman as an example of virtue worthy of emulation by all the men of her time. (21:92)

After defining the position of woman in Islam it appears rational to examine critically the Islamic teachings about polygamy.

At the Conference of Archbishops, Metropolitans and other dignitaries of the Anglican Communion held in London in 1958 and presided by the Archbishop of Canterbury, one of the most baffling problems that was considered was what was to be done in case a person, having more than one wife, wanted to accept Christianity!

That was a vexed question, a big headache that faced the conference which has come to be known in history as the Lambeth Conference.

But was it necessary?

As far back as 1650, well-meaning Christians are said to have seen the need to “advocate polygamy with fervour.”.

It is recorded in *the History of Human Marriage* by Westermarck that:

“In 1650, soon after the Peace of Westphalia, when the population had been greatly reduced by the Thirty Year War, the Frankish Kriestag at Nuremberg passed the resolution that henceforth every man should be allowed to marry two women. Certain Christian sects had even advocated polygamy with such fervour”. (Vol. III pg. 51)

Then Amram Scheinfeld, an American sociologist, says in an article published in the 1964 issue of the *Collier's* magazine and condensed by the *Reader's Digest* under the caption *Shortage of Husbands*:

“Following World War I, as a result of war casualties and other factors, the surplus of women in Europe was enormous. The excess of women in Poland was 38 percent, in Russia, 32 percent, in France, Germany and Italy 21 to 22 percent.

The situation was so bad that population experts tell us, ‘that there was serious discussion of giving polygamy legal status. Actually it went beyond the discussion stage.’”

Bernard Shaw sums it all up when he says:

“Monogamy is imposed by the economy of nature which more or less equalizes the birth-rate of the two sexes. If war upsets it, you would have polygamy in ten minutes.”

These opinions of some of the world's best known thinkers need no comment from me.

Then there is the problem of a wife falling prey to some serious malady and in consequence being unable to attend to household affairs.

For such a contingency, no less a person than Pope Gregory in the year 726 issued this edict:

“If a wife be attacked with a malady which renders her unfit for conjugal relations, the husband may marry another but in that case he must allow his sick wife all necessary support and assistance.”

Another consideration would be an issueless marriage. In such cases considerate wives themselves permit their husbands to take a second wife.

The more one reflects upon this matter, the clearer becomes the wisdom underlying it.

Allan Field says in an article published in *Digest Review* of 1946 on the proposal made in the house of Commons to legalise polygamy:

“The proposal made in British House of Commons to the effect that polygamy be legalised has served to draw public attention to a question which has been of much concern to leading sociologists in all civilized countries.

Although under public ban and branded as immoral by official public opinion, nevertheless there is indisputable evidence that polygamy is now practised by thousands of people throughout Europe.....”

“In plain fact, the situation is that many women prefer to share a husband with one or more women, than do without a husband at all.”

There is no doubt that illegal polygamy that has gained ground in the West lowers the status of women, deprive them of their legitimate rights and become a source of untold misery to them and their children.

Islam claims to have given to the world a perfect and flawless law. Could the law be described as perfect and flawless if it had failed to provide a solution to problems of surplus women as happened after the war?

Islam permitted polygamy where and when necessary and imposed restrictions upon it at a time when there was no limit to the number of wives any man might marry.

These restrictions are designed to give dignity to woman, protect her legitimate rights and raise the moral standard of the society.

Having considered plurality of wives, the natural sequence seems to be the consideration of celibacy or monasticism.

The Holy Quran says of monasticism that it was not prescribed by Allah but was self-imposed by the Christians.

“And monasticism they invented. We did not prescribe it for them.” (57:28)

Islam condemns celibacy with the same intensity with which it condemns promiscuity whereas the ideal Christian is the one who leads a life of an eunuch! (Matthew 19:12)

“And there are some eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of heaven’s sake.” (Matthew 19:12)

Quite apart from the fact that if all of us were to lead the life of an eunuch there would be no procreation and the world would come to an end, insistence on celibacy would willy-nilly drive people to promiscuity.

The fact that a great percentage of those who claim to practise celibacy are dying of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is one evidence!

In the final analysis, they would confess that what they are required by the Church to practise is celibacy and not chastity!

Those who wish to study the subject in some detail may turn to the pages of the 23rd February 1987 issue of NEWSWEEK.

An article titled “Gays in the Clergy” gives you an insight into the fact that celibacy and promiscuity are indential twins who move together!

LOVE FOR ALL

Look kindly on all and especially on enemies and persecutors; smile upon them and greet them with pleasant words, healing all bitterness within thee and quenching the heat of anger by sweetness of holy Charity. Be ready to help and comfort all. Show compassion for those who are afflicted and for those who sin. Rejoice at the virtues of others, as if they were thine own. Be careful to despise no one. Cast out rash judgements and evil suspicions from thy heart with all diligence. Be accustomed to think well of all. Esteem all others in thine own mind as better than thyself.

(Ludovicus Blosius)

ZAKAT AND SADAQA - FITR

(Olayiwolo Jegede)

Among the five pillars of Islamic faith, Zakat, as described by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, occupies the third position after Kalimatul Shahadat and Salat. Its obligation upon the Muslims has been repeatedly stressed in the Holy Quran by Allah and His Prophet, Muhammad, peace be upon him, in the books of Hadith. God says in the Holy Quran:

“The similitude of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like the similitude of a grain of corn which grows seven ears, in each ear a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies it further for whomsoever He pleases and Allah is Bountiful, All knowing” (2:262)

“O you who believe, spend of the good things that you earne, and of what we produce for you from the earth, and seek not what is bad that you may spend out of it when you would not take it yourselves except that you connive at it. And know that Allah is Self Sufficient, Praiseworthy” (2:268)

“If they repent, and observe the prayer and pay the Zakat, then they are your brethren in faith” (9:11)

ZAKAT

Obligatory charity, while on one hand is the backbone of Islamic social and economic structure, has also been counted as part of worship which a Muslim is obligated to do for his Creator. In all the righteous acts which Islam exhorts us to do, some have been made compulsory for believers to perform while others have been left for them to undertake voluntarily. Zakat is compulsory alms which a Muslim is commanded to give in the way of Allah, in accordance with prescribed rules and regulations. The Holy Quran does not accept the claim of a believer unless he undertakes to pay Zakat. (9:11)

Elsewhere, Allah says:

“Those who observe prayer and pay zakat and who have firm faith in the Hereafter it is they who follow guidance from their Lord and it is they who shall prosper” (31:5,6).

Zakat therefore is a tax which Islam has prescribed for Muslims to use for running the affairs of the state and community. Basic resources, namely land, water, minerals etc. have been created for all mankind.

In addition, the production of wealth requires the help and co-operation of a number of people besides the one who actually earns it, which implies that any sort of wealth earned by a person includes in itself, the share of many others who had contributed in one way or another towards its production. Rightly enough, Allah has said: *We have made men subservient to each other.* Zakat is thus prescribed to purify one's earnings from the shares of others. The responsibility of collecting the zakat has been placed by Islam on the Islamic government and, the items for its expenditure have been defined in an organized manner. The Quran admonishes:

“Take alms out of their wealth so that you may cleanse them and purify them thereby” (9:103).

It also dispels the fear that payment of zakat would ultimately reduce the amount of individuals' wealth. On the other hand, it is described to be a source of benefit for them, as this common fund would enable the government to widen the fields of activity and catering for the needs of the poor, without which a society can not really prosper:

“Whatever you give in zakat seeking the favour of Allah, it is these who will increase their wealth manifold” (30:40)

This verse promises that divine bounties are derived as a result of payment of Zakat. At the same time, this has been supplemented by a divine warning:

“And those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah, give to them the tidings of a painful punishment” (9:34)

At present the Islamic economic concept of payment of zakat is not in vogue as this has been replaced by a sort of western oriented system of taxation and the people are not held responsible to pay zakat to the government, even in Muslim states, whose governments profess Islam to be the basis of their constitution. Payment of zakat has been replaced by another system of taxation.

BASIC PRINCIPLES UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS

As explained, a Muslim under a non-Islamic government, finds it difficult to pay zakat because of the reasons thus far adduced, coupled with lack of organization by the Muslims themselves. Nevertheless a Muslim must in one way or another pay the zakat as to do so is commanded by Allah. The following measures can be adopted to effect this payment.

(1) If a person is paying tax to the government on such categories of wealth or earnings on which payment of zakat is made compulsory by Islam, his payment of tax will be considered to be substituted for zakat and this is the right of the government.

(2) If the amount of tax paid on one's earning is less than the amount of zakat, he is obliged to pay zakat on the remaining difference.

(3) If no tax is imposed by the government on certain categories of earnings while Islam has imposed on them, then the amount of zakat imposed by Islam should be paid.

Before considering the categories of wealth on which zakat is paid, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, was reported to have said:

(1) On every bone of the fingers charity is incumbent every day. One assists a man in riding his beast or in lifting his provisions, this is charity, and a good word is charity. Every step which one takes in walking over to prayer is charity and showing the way to another is charity.

(2) Removal from the path that which is harmful is charity. To treat a wife tenderly and put a morsel in her mouth is charity.

(4) To treat children affectionately and kiss them are charitable acts.

(5) To extend consideration towards neighbours and send them presents are charitable acts.

CATEGORIES OF WEALTH ON WHICH ZAKAT IS PAID

(1) Gold, Silver and Money.

(2) Animals, Camels, Cows, Goats etc.

(3) Agricultural products, dates, grapes, oranges etc.

- (4) Trading goods or capital.
- (5) Minerals.

MEASURES OF PAYMENT

(A) On silver and gold 2.5% on 20 1/5 ounces and above after a year. This is equivalent to 5 Auqiah in Arab measure. On money 2.5 % on amount up to 100.00 in a year.

(B) Agricultural products (Quran 6:142), Payment of 1 / 10th of zakat on products up to and above 1600lbs.

(C) Mineral Oil - 1/10th on 1600 lbs.

(D) Vegetables - No zakat is paid but if sold and converted to money, this should be done.

N.B. 1/5 on mineral resources should go to the state, This is called Khumus.

SADAQATUL FITR OR FITRANA

It is pertinent at this juncture to refer to Sadaqatul Fitr or Fitrana. Basically defined, it is the Sadaqah or obligatory charity to be paid at the end of Ramadhan and the payment was made incumbent by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, on every Muslim. It was reported by Nafiu that Ibn Umar said that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, made it incumbent on every male or female, free man or slave, the payment of one ounce of date or barley as Sadaqatul Fitr. (Bukhari Kitabul Sadaqatul Fitr). It is also reported in the same Hadith that this payment should be paid before going for Eid-prayer and any payment after Eid-prayer is nothing but mere giving of alms.

TO WHOM SHOULD ZAKAT BE GIVEN?

The Holy Quran is the best reference to answer this question which states:

“The alms are only for the poor and the needy and for those employed in connection therewith and those whose hearts are to be reconciled and for the freeing of slaves and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the wayfarer - An ordinance from Allah. And Allah is All Knowing, Wise”.

This verse defines the objects and persons (eight in all) on whom zakat or sadaqatul fitr is to be spent and they are:

- (1) Those suffering from poverty or disease.

(4) Trading goods or capital.

(5) Minerals.

MEASURES OF PAYMENT

(A) On silver and gold 2.5% on 20 1/5 ounces and above after a year.

(4) New converts to Islam in need of financial help.

(5) Slaves, captives and such other persons who are called upon to pay blood money to secure their freedom.

(6) Those unable to pay their debts or who have suffered extraordinary loss in business.

(7) Any noble cause

(8) Those stranded on a journey for lack of money or those who travel in search of knowledge or for pronouncing social relations.

Allah has emphatically ordained that Islam is a way of life (30:31). The above treatise has lent support to the fact that an ideal Islamic government or society takes care of its people. This is why Allah makes it compulsory for every Muslim to pay Zakat and Sadaqatul Fitr. It is incumbent on all Muslims to pay their own Sadaqatul Fitr for according to the words of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, this is an expiation for any sin committed advertently or inadvertently during the month of Ramadhan. It does not behove any big Imam, Muallim, Sheikh, all powerful chairman, secretary or treasurer of any Islamic organization to connive at paying this blessed charity but seeking to devour whatever is collected. This is forbidden for it is solely for the poor and the less privileged.

Sadaqatul Fitr should be paid and collected and distributed at least a day before Eidul Fitr to help the poor purchase food. Having taken food they will be extremely joyful to participate in the festivities terminating the month of fasting. May the blessings of Allah, be on all the true followers of the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Amen

80 YEARS AGO

(An extract from Review of Religions dated December 1908)

We are glad to notice that Christianity is changing its attitude towards other religions. There was a time when the Christians looked upon all the religions of the world, with the exception of their own religion and that professed by the ancestors of the founder of Christianity, as the outcome of the Devil's designs, but of late years it has gradually come to be believed that there is some truth in other religions. The New Theology advances a step further still and looks upon all religions as revealed in the same sense in which Christianity is a revealed religion. And now we meet with articles in orthodox Christians magazines in which the truth first proclaimed Islam that every nation has had its seer is openly recognised. Thus writing in the London Quarterly Review, Brailsford says:

“There have certainly been most valuable additions to the Christian consciousness within the last half century, enriching its thought and energy and feeling. Our idea of God, the Builder of the infinitely great and infinitesimally little, has immensely expanded. We have realized also, that His methods of working in the realms of the natural and supernatural are identical; that each is governed by law, and not by arbitrary action or caprice. We have learned that in His manifestation of Himself to the religious instinct He has been no respecter of nationalities. That the torch of inquiry has been kindled in all lands, and that every race has had its seer. That while a creed or dogma is a necessity of our limitation, it can never contain the whole of truth. That the revelation of the Divine mind has been so broad and full and free, that no section of the Church, or, indeed, of the human family, can monopolize, any more than Moses, Elias, or the Christ could be contained within three tabernacles. That the development of truth has been ceaselessly progressive. Malachi was not the last of the Prophets, nor John the last of the Apostles. That the Bible is not the final word and God is not dumb, That He should speak no more.”

“God is not dumb that He should speak no more. ” That sentence deserves the attention of all religionists who claim that God spoke to

their ancestors but not to those of other people or that God spoke in a particular age but that He has ceased to speak now. The attributes of God cannot change, and if He still sees as the followers of every religion hold, He must also speak now if He ever spoke in the time past. It was the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement who first proclaimed this mighty truth in this age, viz, that God has not become dumb that He should cease to speak after a particular time, and it was he who forcibly and incessantly preached this truth until the hearts of men were drawn to it and filled with conviction. It is indeed a happy sign of the times that even the Christians whose religion is based on exclusiveness have found it possible to believe in the Divine origin of other religions; and in the great truth, which is subversive of all exclusive doctrines, that before as well as after the revelation of the Bible God has been speaking to His righteous servants among all people.

REQUISITE FOR PREACHING

He who desires to preach to others with fruit must first preach to himself, treasuring up lessons of true piety in his own mind, imprinting deeply in his heart the sentiments of all virtues and learning to practise first what he would afterwards teach others. The gift of true spiritual knowledge cannot be obtained but by sincere humility and purity of heart, which is freed from vices and earthly affections, and by holy meditation, which alone can give heavenly tincture and frame to the mind. As our food is assimilated to our flesh by digestion, so spiritual affections pass, as it were, pious meditation and the exercises of holy compunction, divine love, and all other interior values, which he will be able to teach others who is possessed of them himself.

(Lives of the Saints. p 1289)

MY FRIEND

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

*Sometimes my heart bleeds for you!
Believe it or not, it is true.
Have you known me to speak a lie?
You will not till the day I die.*

*What is the cause of my concern?
Because some things you will not learn.
I want to be your help and guide
So that downhill you may not slide.*

*Please, I ask, watch the way you go.
God has shown the way, as you know.
Why go astray and pay no heed
As if for it you have no need?*

*Life is not to do as you please,
Neglecting to pray on your knees.
I know not always where you go;
What you do, I do not know.*

*If you would God's path try to tread
No longer have I need to dread
That may be you have gone astray
Caring not for God's holy way.*

*You are my friend, thats why I pray
Five times for you every day
That God may guide you the right way,
And bless you always every day.*

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What is Islam?

Islam literally means *Peace, surrender of one's Will*; and to be in amity and concord. The significance of the name Islam is the attainment of a life of perfect peace and eternal happiness through complete surrender to the Will of God. The Quran — the Holy Book of the Muslims — interprets it to be the religion whose teachings are in consonance with human nature. Islam, as the Quran has stated (5:4), is the completion of the religion inaugurated by God in the beginning of the world, on His sending the Quran through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him). As a child is taught his alphabet, so God taught the religion to the world gradually and little by little, by sending His prophets at different times and to different peoples.

When the world reached that stage of understanding when it was ready for the final lesson, He sent the last and complete Book through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him). This Book not only corrects the errors which had found their way into various religions, but preaches the truths which have not been preached before, on account of special circumstances of the society or the early stage of its development. At the same time it gathers together in itself the truths which were contained in any Divine revelation granted to any people for the guidance of men (The Quran 98:4). Lastly, it meets all the spiritual and moral requirements of an ever advancing humanity.

This is Islam which is wrongly called Muhammadanism.

According to Islam, the object of man's life is its complete unfoldment. Islam does not support the idea that man is born in sin. It teaches that everyone has within him the seed of perfect development and it rests solely with a person himself to make or mar his fortune. *We created man in the best make* says the Holy Quran (95:5).

The cardinal doctrine of Islam is the Unity of Godhead. *There is none worthy of worship but the one and only God, and Muhammad is His Prophet.* He is free from all defects, Holy and Transcendent. He is All Good, All Mercy and All Power. He has no partner. He neither begets nor is He begotten, because these are the traits of frail and weak humanity. Furthermore, Islam helps us to establish a permanent relationship with God and to realise Him during our earthly life as our Helper in all our affairs and undertakings. This Unity of God is the first and foremost pillar of Islam and every other belief hangs upon it.

Islam requires belief in all the prophets, including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Confucious and Zoroaster. We regard them all (and many more not mentioned here) as heavenly teachers born to reform and regenerate man and lead him to God. Adherents of some other religions may consider it an act of piety to use disrespectful words and heap abuse on the prophets of other religions, but if a Muslim were to show the slightest disrespect towards the founder of any other faith, he does so at the cost of his own faith. He has to utter the respectful benediction *Alaihis-Salam* (peace be on him) after mentioning the name of every prophet. Thus Islam establishes peace between all religions.

The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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

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

During more than eighty-six years the message of Islam has been conveyed through this magazine to millions of readers and many fortunate persons have recognized the truth of Islam and accepted it through its study.

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