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June 2007

The Ahmadiyya

Gazette

USA



Artist's rendition of expanded Masjid Baitur Rahman, Silver Spring, MD

Humanity First

Making a difference around the world...

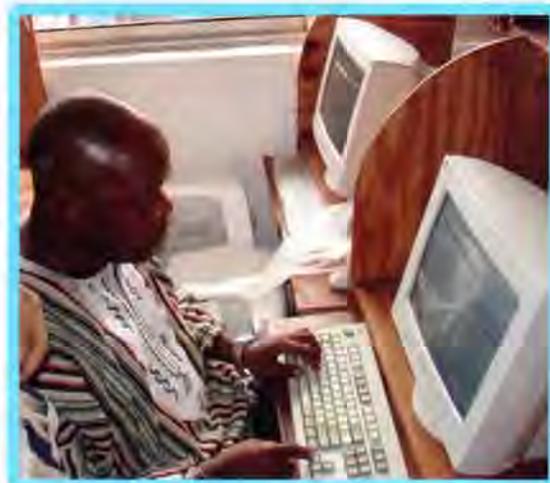
Ghana



Humanity First USA partnered with the Neuro-Spinal Research Development Organization and performed the most recent surgical mission in Ghana during 2006. This effort had been started in 2000 by a private practice neurosurgeon in Baltimore, who is affiliated with the Johns Hopkins Hospital and other Baltimore area hospitals. He has been very successful in organizing a group of physicians and nurses who have been going to Ghana to perform surgical procedures free of charge for the past six years. An average of approximately 15 team members go each year and this past year, two surgical teams were deployed for the first time. In coordination with hospital administrations, Humanity First teams gather unused supplies that would be wasted within our system, sort, and then ship supplies to Ghana in a container in advance of the annual effort (the 2007 container for this year's upcoming trip left during the last week of March 2007). This past year the team performed neuro-surgical and general surgical procedures out of the main university hospital in Accra but also did more than 30 simple and complex procedures on children and adults in sparsely-outfitted hospitals in remote areas.

Liberia & Guyana

Earlier this year Humanity First Institutes of Computer Studies were opened in Monrovia, Liberia and Guyana. Humanity First USA provided the computer schools with computers, printers, software, and other technical supplies. The objective of these Computer Institutes is to empower the citizens of Liberia and Guyana with the necessary IT training to obtain employment to support themselves, their families and help rebuild the economy. Collectively, over a 100 male and female students have enrolled in these schools. The Liberian Computer Institute was inaugurated by the Minister of Professional and Technical Education and in his speech he admired the efforts of Humanity First and promised to help Humanity First in every way possible.



Indonesia

Humanity First USA continues to carry out rebuilding efforts following the 2005 tsunami in Indonesia (Phase II). In different parts of Banda Aceh, Humanity First USA has installed over 15 water wells along with piping and motors. These wells have provided clean drinking water to over 5,000 people displaced by the tsunami. Humanity First also helped in rebuilding two schools in addition to providing classroom furniture, books, computers, school bags and many other school supplies. Humanity First also promoted self-sustenance by providing three villages with 'Begans' (fishing nets). This netting will enable fishermen to catch fish and shrimp potentially becoming a source of livelihood for the entire village. A proposal for Phase III - Human Development and Disaster Recovery for tsunami victims is currently under review and a grant for \$100,000 has been approved.



Restoring Communities,
Building a Future

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Patron **Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar**
Ameer Jama'at USA

Editor-in-Chief **Dr. Naseer Ahmad**

Editor **Dr. Karimullah Zirvi**

Editorial Advisor **Muhammad Zafrullah Hanjra**

Cover: *Latif Ahmed* Photos: *Kalim Bhatti*

Ahmadiyya Gazette USA

Masjid Baitur Rehman
15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905
Phone: 301-879-0110 Fax: 301-879-0115
Email: karimzirvi@yahoo.com
www.ahmadiyya.us www.alislam.org

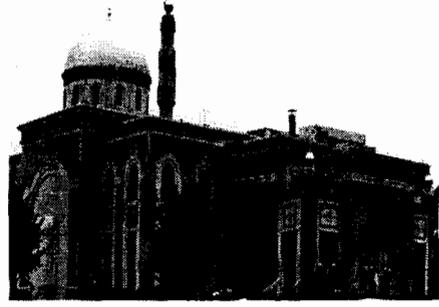


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Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

saw: sallallahu alaihi wasallam
(Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him)

as: alaihissalam
(Peace be upon him)

ra: radhi allahu 'anhu
(May Allah be pleased with him/her)

rh: rahimahullahu ta'ala
(May Allah shower mercy on him/her)

aba: ayyada hullah ta'ala binasrihil aziz
(May Allah strengthen him with His mighty help)

swt: subhana wa ta'ala
(Holy and Exalted)

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لَيْسَ شَيْئٌ أَكْرَمَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنَ الدُّعَاءِ

Al-Qur'an

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا 0

Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O ye who believe! you *also* should invoke blessings on him and salute *him* with the salutation of peace (33:57)

Al-Hadith

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
أُعْطِيتُ خَمْسًا لَمْ يُعْطَهُنَّ أَحَدٌ قَبْلِي نُصِرْتُ بِالرُّعْبِ مَسِيرَةَ شَهْرٍ
وَجُعِلَتْ لِي الْأَرْضُ مَسْجِدًا وَطَهُورًا فَأَيْنَمَا أَدْرَكَ الرَّجُلُ مِنْ أُمَّتِي
الصَّلَاةَ يُصَلِّيْ وَيُعْطِي الشَّفَاعَةَ وَلَمْ يُعْطَ نَبِيٌّ قَبْلِي وَيُعْتَبَرُ إِلَى النَّاسِ
كَأَفَّةً وَكَانَ النَّبِيُّ يُبْعَثُ إِلَى قَوْمِهِ خَاصَّةً -

نسائي كتاب الطهارة والتيمم باب التيمم بالمسجد

Hadhrat Jabir^{ra} bin 'Abdullah relates that the Holy Prophet^{sa} said:

"I have been bestowed five things which have never been given to any Prophet before me. I have been helped with the awe of one month's travel. The whole earth has been purified for me and has been declared a mosque. Wherever any one of my followers notices that it is Prayer time, he can offer Prayer at the same place. I have been bestowed the honour of intercession, which has not been given to previous Prophets. I have been sent as a Messenger to all the people, whereas before me, the Messengers were sent to particular nations."

(Nasa'i kitabttaharat bab tayammum bissa'id)

SAYINGS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{as}

Exalted Status of the Holy Prophet^{saw}

Manifestation of the Living God and the Light Divine

That light of high degree that was bestowed on perfect man was not in angels, was not in stars, was not in the moon, was not in the sun, was not in the oceans and the rivers, was not in rubies, emeralds, sapphires, or pearls; in short, it was not in any earthly or heavenly object. It was only in the perfect man whose highest and loftiest and most perfect example was our lord and master, the Chief of the Prophets, the Chief of all living ones, Muhammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). That light was bestowed on this man and, according to their ranks, upon all those who bore the same colour to some degree. . . This dignity was found in its highest and most perfect form in our lord and master and our guide, the immaculate Prophet, the righteous one, testified to by the righteous, Muhammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). [*Ayena-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Roohani Khazain, Vol. 5, pp. 160-162*]

I always wonder how high was the status of this Arab Prophet, whose name was Muhammad, thousands of blessings and peace be upon him. One cannot reach the limit of his high status and it is not given to man to estimate correctly his spiritual effectiveness. It is a pity that his rank has not been recognised, as it should have been. He was the champion who restored to the world the Unity of God which had disappeared from the world; he loved God in the extreme and his soul melted out of sympathy for mankind. Therefore, God, Who knew the secret of his heart, exalted him above all the Prophets and all the first ones and the last ones and bestowed upon him in his lifetime all that he desired.

He is the fountainhead of every grace and a person who claims any superiority without acknowledging his grace is not a man but is the progeny of Satan, because he has been bestowed the key to every exaltation and he has been given the treasury of every understanding. He who does not receive through him is deprived forever. I am nothing and possess nothing. I would be most ungrateful if I were not to confess that I have learnt of the true Unity of God through this Prophet. The recognition of the Living God we have achieved through this perfect Prophet and through his light. The honour of converse with God, through which we behold His countenance, has been bestowed upon me through this great Prophet. The ray of this sun of guidance falls like sunshine upon me and I continue to be illuminated only so long as I am adjusted towards it. [*Haqiqatul Wahy, Roohani Khazain, Vol. 22, pp. 118-119*]

A TRIBUTE TO HADHRAT SAHIBZADA MIRZA WASEEM AHMAD SAHIB

Summary of the Friday Sermon Delivered By Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} On May 4, 2007 At Baitul Futuh Mosque London

In today's Friday Sermon Hazoor^{aba} paid tribute to the extraordinary life of Sahibzada Mirza Waseem Ahmad Sahib who passed away in Qadian last week. Mian Waseem Ahmad was the grandson of the Promised Messiah^{as} and the son of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra}. Hazoor^{aba} felt that in light of the services, sacrifices and the excellences of Mian Waseem Ahmad certainly Allah would elevate his station in Paradise.

Hazoor^{aba} acknowledged the numerous messages of condolence that are being received by him. He said everyone has to depart from this world one day but fortunate are those who spend their lives in seeking the pleasure of Allah, in service of faith and by exemplifying compassion for the creation through their practice. Mian Waseem was

such a man, may Allah grant him Paradise.

Hazoor^{aba} said people are expressing through their letters that there remains no more representation of the family of the Promised Messiah^{as} in Qadian. It is true that through his special bond with the Jama'at of Qadian in particular and with India in general, people felt a sense of contentment in his presence.

Hazoor^{aba} said there was a long period of time when the relationship between the governments of India and Pakistan was frosty and Qadian had no direct communication with the center, Rabwah. The means of communication were not like they are today, yet the *dervishes* of Qadian exhibited extraordinary courage as they had the contentment that the grandson of the Promised

Messiah^{as} and the son of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} was among them. Through his practices Mian Waseem continually made those around him realise that the Jama'at and indeed Khilafat were all-important.

For about thirty years he served most humbly and sincerely as an ordinary member of the Jama'at. In 1977 when he was made the *Nazir-e-Ala* he fulfilled his obligation most meticulously. He had assumed the role of a dervish and spent his life accordingly.

A few days after Mian Sahib's marriage, which took place in Rabwah as he was arranging the paperwork for his bride's travels, Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} felt that tension between Pakistan and India was growing. He advised Mian Sahib to drop what he was doing and head straight

back to India. He advised him to fly to India and if an airline seat was not available then to charter a plane, but returning to Qadian was paramount, lest it was assumed that Qadian had been abandoned. He said if the family of the Promised Messiah^{as} did not make sacrifices what could be expected of others? Hazoor^{aba} said Mian Sahib had related this incident to Hazoor^{aba} during his trip to Qadian of 2005.

Although an airline seat was booked for the travel, the plane was not to leave for two days. Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} travelled to Lahore (where Mian Waseem awaited the flight). He advised and guided Mian Waseem and saw him off himself. At the airport, he kept the airborne plane in his sight as long as he could, as he prayed.

Mian Sahib had stayed on in Qadian at a young age. From a worldly point of view he was the owner of the property in Qadian and was the son of the Khalifa of the day. However his obedience to the administration of the Jama'at was exemplary. His father had advised him to be mindful that he was the grandson of the Promised Messiah^{as} and that he had to shape his life in accordance

to that. Hazoor^{aba} remarked what inspired him as the grandson of the Messiah, and quoted the revelation of the Promised Messiah^{as}:

“He has liked your humble ways.” This is what he based his life on and this is what he inculcated in the Qadian and the Indian Jama'at.

Hazoor^{aba} explained that the marriage of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} with the mother of Mian Waseem, Aziza Begum Sahiba took place despite some unlikelihood. Hazoor's^{aba} aunt, Amatul Naseer Sahiba has written to Hazoor that Hadhrat Nawab Mubarka Begum Sahiba^{ra} (daughter of the Promised Messiah^{as} had a dream just before she heard that Aziza Begum Sahiba was expecting a baby (Mian Waseem) that she tells Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} that in a dream the Promised Messiah^{as} had told her that Aziza would have a son.

Referring to early days in Qadian for Mian Waseem Hazoor^{aba} said [post partition of India] the early days for all dervishes were of great hardship and fear; although a true believer does not fear anything but times were highly uncertain in terms of safety and security. Due to the

gravity of the political situation even the governmental sector kept a suspicious outlook. The Hindus and Sikhs who had left their homes in Pakistan and gone to India harboured severe animosity. Food was in limited supply. In short, this period was extremely difficult for the *dervishes*. Gradually, the prayers of the Khalifa, prayers of Mian Waseem and the other *dervishes* gained acceptance and the attitude of others eased and the *dervishes* had relative peace though the poverty persisted.

Hazoor^{aba} remarked that he considers there is great insight in the fact that from all the children of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} Allah gave the opportunity to spend life as a dervish and with great altruism to one whose maternal side of the family had Arabic lineage.

Mian Waseem Ahmad would pray with great fervour and deepest of sincerity to be able to stay on in Qadian. In those days the family of the Promised Messiah^{as} took turns in staying at Qadian. Later, people complained about the constant comings and goings of convoys, and the situation got such that the government banned the travelling and thus Mian

Waseem stayed on in Qadian. Later, in 1952 when Hadhrat Amaa Jaan^{ra} passed away, the [political] situation did not allow Mian Waseem to travel to Rabwah and he bore the grief alone in Qadian. At the death of his own mother he got permission to travel to Pakistan with great difficulty. After the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 all communications broke down. They got the news of the illness of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} on the radio and had it confirmed via the Jama'at in Sri Lanka. At the passing away of Musleh Mau'ood^{ra}, Mian Waseem gathered the Qadian Jama'at in Masjid Mubarak and advised them to bear the great loss with steadfastness.

His personal feelings were that he had always fervently prayed to be with his father during his last hours, however, he could not possibly go. He interpreted this as Allah guiding him to the fact that everyone in Qadian and in India were like the children of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} and that Mian Waseem had to endure the separation like them all.

In 1971, when situation between India and Pakistan worsened again, certain elements tried to

drive out the Ahmadi population of Qadian, albeit with cunning. Mian Waseem gathered everyone in Masjid Mubarak and addressed them in an ardently anguished tone saying that Qadian was their permanent center and that they would most certainly not leave it. He said 'we have one night to pray extremely fervently and supplicate ardently to God. Not even a single child should leave Qadian of his/her own accord. I shall not leave either; officials will have to drag me out of here. Each one of you should say we do not want to leave Qadian.' That night entire Qadian supplicated and beseeched to God, in each nook and cranny earnest prayers were made. The anguished supplications of the *dervishes* gained acceptance with Allah. The next day, they met up with officials and had discussions. Later the officials came to inspect Qadian and then cancelled the plan to remove people.

Mian Waseem's daughter Amatul Rauf says that her father's ardent devotion to Khilafat was such that although he was unable to go to the funeral of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IIIth he wrote a letter the day after his passing away and gave it to his wife and daughter to read. In the let-

ter he had signed his pledge of allegiance (*Bai'at*) to the Khalifatul Masih IVth not knowing who he was going to be. He explained that his *Bai'at* was not based on his knowledge of the individual; rather his *Bai'at* was for the Khalifa of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Next Hazoor^{aba} related the supreme sense of duty Mian Waseem displayed, despite his poor health, especially in the presence of as well as for the office of the Khalifa of the day. Hazoor^{aba} spoke of his great sense of reliance and trust in Allah, his ardent devotion to the Holy Prophet^{sa} and to the Promised Messiah^{as} – Hazoor^{aba} said his commitment to Khilafat was a succession of this. He had great love for people and huge affection for the dervishes. Hospitality was one of his excellences.

Hazoor^{aba} said many Hindus and Sikhs from all walks of life have paid tribute to him in that he rose above religious divide to strengthen the bonds of humanity.

Hazoor^{aba} said only a few days ago he had written to Hazoor^{aba} informing him that he had fully paid the contribution he had pledged for the Khilafat Centenary.

Due to his recent illness he had requested that Hazoor^{aba} entrust the duty of *Nazir-e-Ala* to someone else. Hazoor^{aba} had responded to him that there was no need for this, and that he could delegate tasks as he wished. Hazoor^{aba} said it seems after this he continued to work despite his illness. May Allah elevate the station of this son of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} who fulfilled his pledge to be a *dervish* in a superb manner.

Hazoor^{aba} said he was naturally concerned at his passing away in that a most assiduous elder has departed. He was not just my uncle, Hazoor^{aba} observed. Rather he was my right hand person and Allah had made him my great helper. However, one is assured by the Divine promise that with His grace He shall fill this vacuum.

Hazoor^{aba} prayed that may Allah enable the families of the *dervishes* and each resident of Qadian to keep his/her sense of sacrifice alive and may each inhabitant of Qadian appreciate their station in that when elders depart the responsibility of the next generation increases. Hazoor^{aba} said he hoped that the life-devotees of Qadian as well

as the office-holders will increase in their mutual love and affection and will further develop in piety and righteousness. Hazoor^{aba} expressed his hope in their growing spirituality that would free him from the concern that the righteous among us are decreasing.

Hazoor^{aba} asked the world-wide Jama'ats to pray for Qadian and for the bereaved family. Hazoor^{aba} prayed that may Allah enable Mian Waseem's children to follow in the footsteps of their great father.

Next Hazoor^{aba} advised the Qadian Jama'at to extend his gratitude to all those from outside the Jama'at who had come in their multitudes to pay their condolences. May Allah reward them all.

(Source: alislam.org)

HADITH

Hadhrat Ibn 'Abbas^{ra} relates that, "One day, I was riding behind the Holy Prophet^{saw} when he said: 'O Boy! I would instruct thee in certain matters. Be watchful of Allah, He will be watchful of thee. Safeguard His commandments, He will be ever with you. When you must ask,

ask of Allah alone; and when you must seek help, implore Allah alone for help. Remember that if all the people unite to grant favours to thee, they would not be able to benefit thee in anyway except that which Allah has destined for thee, and that if all of them were to unite to harm thee, they would not be able to afflict thee any harm except that which Allah has decreed against thee. The pens have been kept away and the writing in the books of destiny has dried.' "

According to another tradition, the Holy Prophet^{saw} said: "Keep your eyes focused towards Allah and you will see Him. Remember Allah during hardships and He will remember you in your hard times. Keep in mind that what you did not get was not destined for you and what you received, no one could have stopped it reaching to you because it was written so in your destiny. Remember, help comes with patience, and happiness is associated with discomfort, and the days of hardship are followed by the days of comfort and ease."

(*Tirmidhi abwab sifatul qiyamah*)



MIRZA MASROOR AHMAD
HEAD OF THE AHMADIYYA COMMUNITY
IN ISLAM

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِیْمِ
وَعَلٰی عَبْدِهِ الْمَسِيْحِ الْمَوْعُوْدِ
خدا کے فضل اور رحم کے ساتھ
هوالتاصر

Baitul Fazl
London
4th May 2007
MBE/100

Dear Amir Sahib USA,

اَسْتَلِمُوْا عَلَیْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ وَبَرَکَاتُهٗ

Jazakallah for the comforting words at the passing away of Hadhrat Sahibzada Mirza Waseem Ahmad Sahib, my maternal uncle.

انا لله وانا اليه راجعون

The loss is deep and profound, but we accept Almighty's will with bowed heads and souls.

May Allah the Compassionate and All-Forgiving be pleased with him and unite Sahibzada Sahib with his noble and eminent ancestors in the bliss of the Heaven.

His devotion to Jamaat and loyalty to Khilafat was unwavering and intense, yet the pleasant and softly spoken Sahibzada Sahib left a lasting impression on all those he met. He served the Jamaat as the Naazire Aala Qadian with unrivalled commitment. May Allah accept his humble services and sacrifices and bless him with His immense pleasure.

May Allah comfort the hearts that grieve with His affection and fill this void with His blessings. Ameen Thumma Ameen.

Wassalam.

Yours sincerely,

MIRZA MASROOR AHMAD
Khalifatul Masih V

AL -ALEEM: THE BESTOWER OF TRUE DREAMS

Zia H Shah MD

It is not given to a man that Allah should speak to him except by direct revelation, or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger to reveal by His command what He pleases. Surely, He is High, Wise. (42:52)

وَمَا كَانَ لَيْسُ أَنْ يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ
ذُرِّيِّ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِ
مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ حَكِيمٍ

He is Allah and there is no god besides Him, the Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Most Gracious, the Ever Merciful. (59:23)

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ
هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

THE DUAL NATURE OF HUMAN CAPABILITIES

The Promised Messiah^{as} writes about the purpose of human life and the nature of the human brain in his book *Haqiqatul Wahee*,

“Let it be clear that man has been created with the ultimate purpose to recognize his Creator. Man is supposed to have full awareness of his Creator and to understand His attributes to a level that his cognizance reaches a degree of certainty. Therefore, Allah has designed the human mind with two different talents. On the one hand, he has been given intellectual abilities. As a result of these abilities he is able to study Allah’s creations, and by observing divine purpose in every particle of nature, by studying the organization and order in the natural systems of the universe, he is able to fully realize that this elaborate infrastructure of the earth and the heaven cannot be by itself, without a creator. He can conclude that there should be a Designer and a Maker of all this!”

“On the other hand Allah has gifted man with spiritual powers and perceptions as well. This dual gift from Allah is for the reason, that, whatever limitations and short comings are left from the domain of intellectual capacity should be satisfied by spiritual abilities. It is obvious that through the intellectual abilities given to man he is only able to study the earth and the heaven and by observing individual details declare that this profound and organized universe should have a creator. It is beyond the capacity of intellectual abilities to go further and declare that such a Creator of this universe does exist! It is not within their scope to announce that there is indeed such a Maker!”

The Promised Messiah^{as} emphasizing the need of this spiritual facility of human mind concludes, “It is, therefore, self evident that man’s comprehension needs to advance to the point where he knows that there is indeed a Creator. A mere inference that there ought to be a creator cannot be considered to be a complete understanding.” It is through spiritual abilities that mankind finds certain knowledge about its Creator. This certainty of knowledge mankind owes to the prophets of God and not to the philosophers of nature. Allah describes the purpose of human life in these words:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٧﴾

And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me. (51:57)

In accordance with the purpose of human life, Allah has gifted the human mind with dual capabilities, intellectual and spiritual! What does science say about how the human mind works? What is the known physiologic basis of dreaming or revelation? To study all these questions one needs to study the unconscious or the subconscious mind.

THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

The human mind can be considered to have two aspects, a smaller well-known ‘conscious’ part and a much larger but elusive ‘subconscious’ module. The subconscious mind is the set of complex mental activities within an individual that proceed without his full awareness. It is understood by the psychologists that such unconscious processes may affect a person's behavior even though he cannot report on them directly. Freud and his followers felt that dreams and slips of the tongue were really concealed examples of unconscious content too threatening to be confronted directly by the conscious mind. All competent investigators now assume that the conscious part of the mind is a very limited and restricted area of the total personality. This conscious part of the mind extends in varying degrees out into a much larger area of reality.

The use of the terms the conscious and subconscious mind in no way indicates that we possess two minds. The varied activities of the mind should be considered as a part of a wide spectrum with a varying level of awareness of its activities. A good analogy should paint a picture that indicates the essential unitary character of the mind. The mind functions on two levels, or in two areas, namely, the conscious, self-aware part of the mind and the

creative and ingenious subconscious level. This twofold nature of mind activity does not indicate two minds or one mind with two separate divisions. The mind is a unit and functions as such. The two-fold activity of the mind is an interrelated process. The conscious mind can be considered to be the tip of the iceberg with a much larger capacity in the form of the subconscious lying hidden from our eyes.

Psychologists have used various illustrative analogies to describe the relationship and function of two levels of the mind. One approach to this problem is by comparing the conscious and subconscious mind to coral islands found in some parts of the ocean.

On the surface of these coral islands there is a small circular ridge of a rocklike substance surrounded by ocean water. On this protruding edge is found a fringe of tropic vegetation. This is all there is to be seen on the surface, with no suggestion of the mighty structure down to the ocean's floor built by uncountable millions of coral creatures during eons of time. The human mind is to a degree like these coral islands.

Yet another analogy can be that of a well. This will be an old fashioned well six to eight feet in diameter, walled up with stones and filled with water. The well is the human mind. Sometimes we think of it in terms of the diameter enclosed within the brick walls. However, on deeper reflection, it is an ocean of water, extending its subterranean depth, into the subsurface water extending miles in every direction away from the brick wall. The only point at which the infinite reservoir of mind activity can be observed is at the very surface of the water in the well.

The subconscious level of the mind constitutes a volume of experience and reality much greater in extent and in creative power than the conscious part of the mind, but it is obscure and is hidden from superficial examination. This subconscious mind carries with it all the mental images and emotional states which have been experienced during the life of the individual. In the analogy of a well it extends under the surface for miles and miles as ground water.

So much for the subconscious mind but we need to know a little about the physiology and basis of sleep to study this subject further.

SLEEP AND DREAMING

Sleep and dreams have aroused the interest of mankind since time immemorial, as reflected in the writings of the different religions and civilizations. These phenomena by their very nature have a mystique about them. Even though there are several poetic, philosophical and religious references to these phenomena, the science of sleep has began to develop in the last 50 years only and has picked up pace since. This revolution may be traced back to the discovery of a type of sleep characterized by rapid eye movement (REM sleep), first reported by the physiologists Eugene Aserinsky and Nathaniel Kleitman in 1953. This brought the awareness that sleep was not, as popularly believed, a state of unconsciousness. REM sleep proved to have characteristics quite at variance with the prevailing model of

sleep as the recuperative deactivation of the central nervous system. It was shown that various central and autonomic nervous system measurements during the REM stage of sleep seemed more akin to wakefulness than the other type of sleep, called non-REM sleep. It has been observed with the help of special scans by scientists that different parts of brain are as active in REM sleep as during the state of wakefulness. REM sleep is popularly associated with dreaming, especially bizarre, visual, and seemingly random dreams. So in the last few decades it has become common knowledge that sleep is not a passive phenomenon when different body actions are shut off. It is a different type of existence with all together different activities, far removed from a state of sheer unconsciousness.

Given sleep's heterogeneous nature, no single theory predominates, as it is difficult to describe one single "function" of sleep. Restorative theories of sleep describe sleep as a dynamic time of healing and growth for organisms. For example, during stages 3 and 4 of non-REM sleep, or slow-wave sleep, growth hormone levels increase, and changes in immune function occur. In some studies sleep deprivation has led to impairment in the immune function. Sleep helps in neurological growth also. The newborn infant or neonates may spend an average of about 16 hours of each 24-hour period in sleep, although there is wide variability among individual babies. In neonates as the brain is actively developing the majority of sleep is REM sleep rather than non-REM sleep. In neonates 75% of sleep is REM whereas the converse is true for the adults. It has been suggested, for instance, that the high frequency and priority in the night of REM sleep in the newborn infant may reflect a need for stimulation from within to permit orderly maturation of the central nervous system (CNS). Another interpretation of age-related changes in REM sleep stresses its possible role in processing new information, the rate of acquisition for which is assumed to be relatively high in childhood but reduced in old age. So sleep in general and REM sleep in particular has all the ingredients necessary for the reprocessing of all the learning during the daytime. The conscious mind goes to sleep but the subconscious mind is fully awake and well and kicking at full throttle. It continues to be the seat of creative ideas and possible dreams, both bizarre and fantastic on the one hand and true dreams on the other hand.

The Promised Messiah^{as} notes that the blessings of Al Rahman (the Gracious God) are general and for all. He writes in *Haqiqatul Wahee* about the nature of true dreams or revelations, "God Almighty has with a few exceptions granted all men eyes, nose and ears and blessed them with the sense of smell and other senses and has not been miserly towards any nation. Likewise, Allah has not excluded any people or nation from the blessings of the basic seed of the spiritual faculties. Just like you see that the sunlight reaches every place and no place whether clean or dirty is exempted from it. The same is the law for the light of the spiritual sun and it shines in all places regardless of the spiritual station. However, it is true that this spiritual light loves a heart that is clean, pure and true." In other words, dreams, even the true ones, are a shared feature among all humans. There are, however, some differences in the true dreams of the ordinary and the pious. That will be examined later.

THE POWERS OF THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

Thomas Edison the famous American inventor, who, singly or jointly, held a world record of 1,093 patents, got many of his creative ideas at night subconsciously. The great

French writer, Voltaire, known for his courageous crusade against tyranny, bigotry, and cruelty, frequently spent as much as fifteen to sixteen hours in bed, calling his secretary when there was anything to be committed to writing. Henry Cobb, the millionaire fruit packer, once said that all the really important ideas which helped him to build his business arrived in his mind at night while lying in bed. Elbert Hubbard, a freelance newspaperman, known for his moralistic essays, declared that his most important ideas came to him while working in his garden or riding horseback. There are numerous examples of creative work accomplished by men who moved through their activities with leisure and balance. Alfred Russell Wallace became a public figure in England during the second half of the 19th century, known for his courageous views on scientific, social, and spiritualist subjects. His formulation of the theory of evolution by natural selection, which predated Charles Darwin's published contributions, is his most outstanding legacy. He would go for days and weeks feeling no desire or interest in work. During these periods he occupied himself with his garden or simply by reading a novel. Then, a sudden impulse would come bringing him an explanation, a theory, a discovery, the plan of a book, and this impulse usually came to him like a flash of light. Subconscious activity generally brought with it not only plans but the material, the arguments and the needed illustrations.

From the time of Socrates, the founder of ethical science, and possibly a prophet of God, to the inventive genius of Ford, Marconi, Westinghouse, Einstein and Kettering, this little-understood field of mental activity has delivered the insight and know-how for many great achievements in science, industry and the arts. The noted German scientist, von Helmholtz, best known for his statement of the law of the conservation of energy, when speaking to a group of friends on his seventieth birthday said: "Happy ideas come unexpectedly, without effort, like an inspiration, so far as I am concerned. They have never come to me when my mind was fatigued or when I was at my working table." The French mathematician, Henri Poincare, described his creative work in almost the same terms. He stated that creative ideas did not come to him while he worked at his desk, but frequently flashed into his mind while he engaged in other activities. William Blake, the English artist and poet, did his immortal work while his subconscious was in complete control. The poet, Coleridge, developed in detail his great poem, *Kubla Khan*, while his confused conscious mind was under the influence of an opiate. Tchaikowsky, the composer, said, "The germ of a future composition comes suddenly and unexpectedly."

From the years of my youth the unearned assistance of sudden and unpredicted insight has been common. So says Walter Bradford Cannon, Professor Emeritus of Physiology at Harvard. "While a student in high school I was occasionally puzzled by "originals" in algebra, the solution of which was not at all clear when I went to sleep at night. As I awoke in the morning the proper procedures were immediately evident and the answers were quickly obtained. On one occasion I was handed a complicated toy which was out of order and would not operate. I examined the mechanism carefully but did not see how the defect might be corrected. I resorted to sleep for a solution of the problem. At daybreak the corrective manipulation appeared thoroughly understandable, and I promptly set the contraption going. As a matter of routine I have long trusted unconscious processes to serve me, for example, when I have had to prepare a public address. I would gather points for the address

and write them down in a rough outline. Within the next few nights I would have sudden spells of awakening, with an onrush of illustrative instances, pertinent phrases, and fresh ideas related to those already listed. Paper and pencil at hand permitted the capture of these fleeting thoughts before they faded into oblivion. The process has been so common and so reliable for me that I have supposed that it was at the service of everyone."

Freud, in his book *The Unconscious*, states, "Our most intimate daily experience introduces us to sudden ideas of the source of which we are ignorant, and to results of mentation arrived at we know not how." Frederic W. H. Myers stated that the achievements of any man of genius "are the products of ideas which he has not consciously originated but which have shaped themselves in profounder regions of his being."

The importance of the subconscious mind is indicated by Dr. Edmund W. Sinnott of Yale University, in his book *Cell and Psyche*, "He (man) is not a mere glorified robot, ruthlessly weighing everything in the scales of survival and physical satisfaction. He is a vast deal more than a bundle of purposes with an intellect to help accomplish them. From, far down within him, in that deep subconscious matrix where matter and energy and life are inextricably mixed together, there surge up into consciousness a throng of emotions, longings, loves and hates, imaginings and aspirations, some exalted and some base, which form the most important of what he is."

The great Swiss psychologist, Carl J. Jung, in his *Psychology and Religion* says, "The subconscious mind is capable at times of assuming an intelligence and purposefulness which is superior to actual conscious insight." Another authority, Dr. Leon J. Saul, states, "Since Freud, it has been fully established that consciousness and even the conscious ego functions are, in a sense, only surface phenomena, however important they may be for adaptation and for man's development. They are like the protruding tip of an iceberg, of which the main mass extends into the depths broad and deep."

An illuminating inquiry into the nature of the flash of ideas and the extent of its occurrence among scientific men was reported by Platt and Baker in 1931. In their inquiry into the appearance of hunches among chemists they received answers from 232 correspondents. Assistance from a scientific revelation or a hunch in the solution of an important problem was reported by 33 per cent; 50 per cent reported that they had such assistance occasionally; and only 17 per cent, never. Professor W. D. Bancroft, the Cornell University chemist, tells of talking to four fellow chemists regarding aid from hunches and finding that to three of them the experience was commonplace. The fourth did not understand what was meant by the reference and testified that he had never had the feeling of an inspiration, had never had an idea come to him unexpectedly from some strange "outside" realm. He had worked consciously for all his results and what was described by the others meant nothing to him.

In typical cases a hunch appears after long study and springs into consciousness at a time when the investigator is not working on his problem. It arises from a wide knowledge of facts, but it is essentially a leap of the imagination, for it reaches forth into the range of possibilities. It results from a spontaneous process of creative thought.

One night, after falling asleep over a trifling novel, Dr. Otto Loewi awoke possessed by a brilliant idea. He reached to the table beside his bed, picked up a piece of paper and a pencil, and jotted down a few notes. He was professor of pharmacology at the University of Graz and was working on demonstrating that chemical agents liberated at the end of nerves are the mediators of nerve activity to control the organs that they supply. On awakening next morning he was aware of having had an inspiration in the night and he turned to the paper for a reminder. To his utter despair he could not make anything of the scrawl he found on it. He went to his laboratory, hoping that sense would come to what he had written if he were surrounded by familiar apparatus. In spite of frequently withdrawing the paper from his pocket and studying it earnestly, he gained no insight. At the end of the day, still filled with the belief that he had had a very precious revelation the night before, he went to sleep. To his great joy he again awoke in the darkness with the same flash of insight which had inspired him the night before. This time he carefully recorded it before going to sleep again. The next day he went to his laboratory and in one of the neatest, simplest and most definite experiments in the history of biology brought proof of the chemical mediation of nerve impulses. He prepared two frog hearts which were kept beating by means of a salt solution. He stimulated the vagus nerve of one of the hearts, thus causing it to stop beating. He then removed the salt solution from this heart and applied it to the other one. To his great satisfaction the solution had the same effect on the second heart as vagus stimulation had on the first one: the pulsating muscle was brought to a standstill. This was the beginning of a host of investigations in many countries throughout the world on chemical intermediation, not only between nerves and the muscles and the glands they affect but also between nervous elements themselves.

In the cases described above, it may well be argued that all the necessary pieces of information needed for the resolution of the problem were already in the conscious mind, the subconscious only proving to be a more powerful tool for synthesizing such information in some mysterious manner. It is possible to attribute Dr. Otto Loewi's dreams to the subconscious mind for it can be argued that the subconscious had all the ingredients that went into the dream. But what about dream or revelation content that is totally foreign to that person. Sometimes the revelation can be in a language foreign to the recipient. This novelty of content is true for many dreams and revelations of the prophets of Allah. Many instances can be cited from the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} and the Promised Messiah^{as}. But, for the purposes of this article, let us examine two examples from the secular world in the experience of Friedrich August Kekule and Elias Howe.

THE SCIENCE REVEALED

In the words of Hadhrat Khalifahtul Masih IVth, "We observe that many authentic cases of revelation are also reported outside the domain of religion. For instance, there are many interesting cases of highly complex information conveyed through revelation to some scientists."

In 1865 a German chemist, Friedrich August Kekule, was struggling to solve a problem in chemistry that had baffled all researchers. One night Kekule had a dream in which he

saw a snake with its tail held in its mouth. This dream instantly put him on the right track leading to the solution of the perplexing question. Thus was unraveled the secret of molecular behavior in certain organic compounds, a discovery which created a revolution in the understanding of organic chemistry. He interpreted this dream to mean that in the benzene molecule, carbon atoms bond together to form a ring structure. This knowledge gave birth to the huge and highly developed field of synthetic organic chemistry producing a vast new range of synthetic materials. The contemporary pharmaceutical industry has become growingly dependent on synthetic drugs. Mankind is indeed indebted to that one dream through which Kekule resolved the problem.

Elias Howe was the first person to mechanize the process of sewing. He too received the answer to a problem that had frustrated him for a long time through a dream. In his dream he saw himself surrounded by savages, who threatened to kill him unless he designed a sewing machine. Being unable to respond he was tied to a tree and the savages started to attack him with arrows and spears. It surprised him to see eyelets on their spearheads. On waking from this dream, he immediately realized the solution, which led him to invent the prototype of the sewing machine that was to dramatically revolutionize the sewing industry. Through his dream he understood that he should consider placing the eye of the needle in its point.

It was this idea which helped him resolve a seemingly impossible task. It is difficult to visualize the sorry state in which man would find himself today without the blessing of this dream. What a revolution was created indeed by this revelation!

How can we distinguish a dream arising purely from the subconscious mind versus a revelation? It will have to be based on the judgment as to whether the subconscious could host the information revealed in the dream or not. If the information is altogether new and novel and there is no reason to believe that a certain person's subconscious possessed that knowledge then the most reasonable explanation is to give credit to the All-Knowing Allah for that particular piece of information.

THE CRITERION: THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND ALONE OR REVELATION

In their uninhibited and unchecked secularism the majority of psychologists and psychiatrists attribute all the dreams to the unconscious mind. But there are certain things that the unconscious mind does not know. So there is no mechanism for it to come up with the secrets of the future, or for that matter the secrets of the past and present without being informed by the All Knowing Allah.

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ
هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

He is Allah, and there is no God besides Him, the Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Gracious, the Merciful. (59:23)

In the words of Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad Khalifatul Masih IVth, “There are two types of dreams—those which are generated by psychic factors, and those which are of Divine origin and carry a deeper significance. They may portend future mishaps or bring glad tidings. They may reveal information of which the viewer had no knowledge whatsoever prior to that particular dream. Such dreams bring to a sharper focus the probability of the existence of an invisible, conscious, transcendent, External Being who can, if He so pleases, communicate with humans on whatever subject He chooses.” He further states, “Revelation is just another name for the product of human psyche but only when commanded and controlled from on high by God Himself.”

We can reasonably conclude therefore, that God must have created such a highly advanced and intricate receptive system within the human mind for the ultimate purpose of communicating with Him. Divine revelation therefore has nothing of the bizarre and unnatural about it.

THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS} ABOUT TRUE DREAMS AND REVELATION

As all kinds of moral and immoral men can have intellectual abilities likewise this additional ability to have true dreams has also been distributed among mankind broadly. The Promised Messiah^{as} has described three categories of the recipients of true dreams, describing the first category he writes:

“There are three types of people who partake of true dreams. First there are those who possess no merit in themselves and have no relationship with God Almighty. On account of their intellectual appropriateness they experience true dreams and visions that are not characterized by any sign indicating their nearness to God and their being loved by Him, nor are they of any benefit for them. Thousands of wicked and vicious people share such experiences. It is often observed that despite such dreams and visions their conduct is not praiseworthy and their faith is very weak, so much so that they do not have the courage to bear true witness and they do not fear God as much as they fear the world and they cannot separate themselves from the wicked. They dare not bear such true testimony as might offend a person of high status. They are slothful and lazy in respect of religious obligations and are wholly preoccupied with worldly anxieties and concerns. They deliberately support falsehood and abandon truth..... Some of them see only evil dreams, of which a number come true, as if their brains have been fashioned only for evil and ill-omened dreams. They are not capable of having dreams that benefit them or indicate something good for another person. Their dreams are of a category which might be described as resembling the experience of a person who perceives smoke from a distance but sees neither the light of the fire nor feels its warmth. Such people have nothing to do with God and spiritual matters; they have been given only smoke which yields no light.”

The Promised Messiah^{as} extends the analogy of fireless smoke to the second category of people. This group has some relationship with God but that relationship is incomplete and not perfect. The analogy of their true dreams and revelations is that of a person who perceives the light of fire from a long distance in a dark and cold night. This light enables him

to avoid ditches, thorns, rocks, serpents and wild beasts, but cannot save him from dying of cold. If such a person does not arrive within the warm circle of the fire, he is also destroyed in the same manner as the one who walks in the dark. The testimony of all the scientists, researchers, inventors and writers described above is indeed in line with the description of the Promised Messiah^{as} quoted earlier, "Allah has not excluded any people or nation from the blessings of the basic seed of the spiritual faculties."

About the final and the best category Promised Messiah^{as} writes:

"The third category of people who experience true dreams and revelations can be compared to a man, who, on a dark and cold night, is not only guided by the bright light of a fire, but actually enters its warm circle, and is fully safeguarded against the effects of the cold. Only those people arrive at this stage who burn up the garment of low passions in the fire of love for the Divine and adopt a life of bitterness for the sake of God. They perceive death ahead of them and run forward to meet it. They accept every torment in the cause of God. For the sake of God, they become enemies of their ego and exhibit such a degree of strength of faith against it that even angels marvel at it. They are spiritual champions and all satanic assaults prove utterly ineffective against their spiritual strength.

They are truly faithful and devoted. Scenes of worldly pleasures cannot mislead them nor can they be turned away from their True Beloved by their love of wife and children. In short, no bitterness can frighten them nor can any physical pleasure bar their approach towards God. No relationship can disrupt their relationship with God."

So the true dreams have several functions to serve. The dreams of the ordinary person serve as a demonstration that this capacity is present in the human mind so that the masses in general can become more accepting of revelations of the prophets. For the chosen recipients of dreams, the dreams and revelations serve the purpose of consuming the fire of their mundane passions and bringing them in the fold of a close relationship with God. For this third group the Holy Qur'an says:

As for those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah;' and then remain steadfast, the angels descend on them, reassuring them: 'Fear not, nor grieve; and rejoice in the glad tidings of the Garden which you were promised. (41:31)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْوَاقِفَاتُ لَا تَخْزِيهِمْ وَلَا تُحْزِنُهُمْ وَآبَتْ لَهُمْ
بِالْحَيَاةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

According to the Promised Messiah^{as} the revelations of this third pious group have four distinctions from the dreams or revelations of the other two groups. Firstly, their revelations excel in clarity of the message and are not susceptible to multiple interpretations. Secondly their revelations excel not only in quality but also in quantity and are frequent and not

just episodic or paroxysmal. Thirdly, the majority of their revelations cover subjects of great and possibly global importance and are not trivial. Fourthly, and most importantly their dreams and revelation speak of special favor from Allah and describe His love and closeness to the recipient. These revelations are accompanied by special Signs of Allah through which He plans to establish the reverence and admiration of these recipients among the God fearing.

THE PROPHET JOSEPH^{as} (YUSUF)

The Prophet Joseph^{as} saw a dream while still very young. The Holy Qur'an describes the dream briefly:

إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ
كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٥﴾

Remember the time when Joseph said to his father, 'O my father, I saw *in a dream* eleven stars and the sun and the moon, I saw them making obeisance to me.' (12:5)

His father the Prophet Jacob^{as} being worldly wise was apprehensive that this may make his half brothers jealous of him so he advised the young boy, "O my dear son, relate not thy dream to thy brothers, lest they contrive a plot against thee." (12:6) He then went on to interpret the dream for him, "As thou hast seen, thy Lord shall choose thee and teach thee the interpretations of things divine and perfect His favor upon thee and upon the family of Jacob as He perfected it upon thy two forefathers - Abraham and Isaac. Indeed, thy Lord is All-Knowing, Wise." (12:7)

The Surah Yusuf goes on to describe the life history of Prophet Joseph^{as}. He, just as his father interpreted, and as had been promised became well versed in interpretation of dreams. He got a chance through Allah's Providence to demonstrate his profound wisdom in this sphere and his repute reached the royal court. In time he was asked to interpret the following famous dream of the king of Egypt.

وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ إِنِّي أَرَى سَبْعَ بَقَرَاتٍ سَوِيَّاتٍ يَأْكُلْنَ
سَبْعَ عَجَافٍ وَسَبْعَ سُنبُلَاتٍ خُضْرٍ وَأُخَرَ يَابِسَاتٍ يَا أَيُّهَا
الْمَلَأُ أُمَّتِي فِي رُؤْيَايَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لِلرُّؤْيَا تَعْبُرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

And the king said, 'I see *in a dream* seven fat cows whom seven lean cows are eating, and seven green ears of corn and seven others dried up. O ye chiefs, explain to me the meaning of my dream if you can interpret dreams.' (12:44)

According to the Qur'an, this dream was narrated to Joseph^{as} while he was serving a prison sentence under a false charge. It was a strange dream, which had baffled the great sages of the king's court, but did not present any difficulty to Joseph^{as} who rightly discerned its underlying message. It was this wise and masterly interpretation by him which was completely supported and testified by the events of subsequent years.

— In his dream the king had seen seven healthy, green ears of corn, and seven dried ones, carrying hardly any seed. He also saw seven lean cows devouring seven others which were strong and fat. When he related this dream to his courtiers demanding an interpretation, they dismissed it as mere subconscious ravings of his mind, carrying no significance. Now it so happened that a servant of the king who had served a term with Joseph^{as} in the same prison was present on this occasion. He too had seen a strange dream while in prison, which Joseph^{as} had correctly interpreted, indicating that he would soon gain his freedom and return to serve his master, the king, once again. Hoping that Joseph^{as} might possibly interpret the dream of the king as well, he suggested that he should be sent to meet him. Having obtained permission, he visited Joseph^{as} in prison and related the king's dream to him. Joseph^{as} immediately grasped its significance and explained it so logically that there was no ambiguity left.

Upon his return to the king, the servant related Joseph's^{as} interpretation which ran as follows:

In the seven years which would commence from the time of the dream, God would shower His blessings upon Egypt in the form of abundant rains, resulting in bountiful crops and fruits. After these seven years of bumper harvests, seven lean years would follow bringing drought in their wake. These years would result in disastrous famine unless crops from the previous seven years were saved and stored to compensate for the loss of the drought years.

This interpretation impressed the king so profoundly that he issued orders for the immediate release of Joseph^{as} who, opted instead to remain in prison until a fair enquiry was held and the false charges against him were dropped. It was after he was honorably acquitted and the real culprit confessed her crime that he agreed to be released. He was exceptionally honored by the king and was appointed minister of finance and economic affairs in his government.

To the surprise of all, the events foretold in the dream came to pass exactly as interpreted by Joseph^{as}. As such he not only saved the people of Egypt from disaster but also benefited the nomadic tribes and the populace of neighboring countries. The same events also resulted in reuniting Joseph^{as} with his family.

A dream like this with its subsequent fulfillment could in no way be dismissed as a creation of the subconscious mind. The king's subconscious mind had no access to this information whatsoever. This was a clear case of revelation. The Qur'anic description of this history should suffice for a Muslim to illustrate how the internal psychic mechanism is activated by God with a purpose.

Assuredly, in the narrative (of history in the Holy Quran) is a lesson for men of understanding. It is not a thing that has been forged, but a fulfillment of previous revelations and a detail exposition of all things, and a guidance and a mercy for people who believe. (12:112)

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَمَّا
كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُقْتَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِن تَصَدَّقْنَا الَّذِي بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً
لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

CONCLUSION

Examine the origins of the great masterpieces of literature, art and music. Study the beginning of mental processes that have led to great inventions and new chemical processes; in short, study the advances of our technological civilization and you will find that in some cases the new insight, the fuller understanding and integration, emerged from the field of subconscious activity during moments of relaxation and rest. The great and useful secrets of nature, as well as those intuitions which bring us peace of mind and soul, rarely arrive when we are traveling at supersonic speed. But, who gets useful and beneficial inspirations and who is the recipient of detrimental and sinful ideas? A false man's imagination can run wild with the images of unreal and unsubstantial things. His wishful thinking can create for him false dreams, a mere product of his psyche. But the person who is habitually straightforward, honest and true is very unlikely to let his imagination run riot and produce chaotic visions and intuitions. To keep our perceptions and dreams on the right track one needs to follow the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. The last few verses of Surah Shu'ara warn us against the factors that spoil the imagination, "Shall I inform you on whom the evil ones descend? They descend on every great liar *and* sinner, repeating what they hear, and most of them are liars. And *as for* the poets—it is the erring ones who follow them. Dost thou not see how they wander distracted in every valley. And that they say what they practice not?— Save those who believe and do good works, and remember Allah much." (26:222-228)

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Science Fair Announcement

Dear Future Scientists,

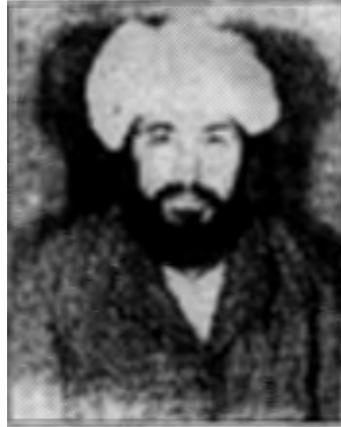
Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahe Wa Barakatohu

Majlis Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya is organizing the Dr. Abdus Salam Science Fair to bring Ahmadi youths together to compete, learn and have fun! This program honors Dr. Abdus Salam, the first Muslim and the only Pakistani Nobel Laureate.

The Science Fair will be held at the annual US Jalsa Salana and is open to older Atfal between the ages of 11 and 15 years. We ask that each Majlis produce two competitors (individuals or teams) that will attend the Jalsa, Inshallah! You can find more information about the Science Fair at <http://www.mkausa.org/atifal.html>.

If you have any question or comments, please direct them to maaahelp@yahoo.com. We hope and pray that many Atfal will participate in this event to make the Jalsa a more memorable event for everyone. In the end, we request special prayers that may this event be fruitful and a success for all.

Dr. Abdus Salam Science Fair Committee
Contact: Email: maaahelp@yahoo.com
Phone: 832-229-0778 (Galib)



Hadhrat Maulana Ghulam Rasool Rajeki^{ra}

Who are we?

An English Rendering of a Persian Poem by Hadhrat Maulana Ghulam Rasool Rajeki

Muhammad Sharif Khan, Philadelphia

Hadhrat Maulana Ghulam Rasool Rajeki^{ra} was prominent among the companions of Hadharat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian. Maulana Rajeki was born around 1878, in a small village Rajeki, District Gujarat, Punjab, Pakistan. He had a strong inclination to religion from his childhood. He mastered religious scriptures in a relatively younger age, developing an inclination to pray and supplicate in the wilderness for hours. He developed spiritual links, so that he often had true dreams and visions. His talks and sermons were full of wisdom, truth and guidance. The Maulana knew from his knowledge of scriptures that his was the time of the advent of the Promised Messiah for whom the Muslims, Christians, Jews and Hindus were waiting.

It was the period of Indo-Pakistan history when the Christian church in England resolved to expand its domain in India. An army of Christian preachers and nuns followed the invading British forces. They would approach the masses in schools, hospitals and welfare centers. They would quote wrong beliefs of Muslims to prove the status of Christ to be superior than that of the Prophet of Islam. The Muslim clergy could not withstand the rival strong arguments, based on their own wrong interpretations of Islamic texts. The number of Muslim conversions to Christianity rose rapidly. It stirred people of knowledge among the Muslims, but they could do nothing, because of a lack of arguments. Everybody was looking for the savior of the faith, the Promised Messiah.

Meanwhile Maulana Rajeki got hold of the book, "*Aina Kamalat-e-Islam*" (An exposition

of the wonders of Islam) written by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as}. From the background of his knowledge of religious scriptures, Maulana Rajeki realized that the author of the book wrote the book from his deep understanding of religion. The book defends the faith against the attacks of Christian and Hindus on Islam, based on strong arguments from Christian and Hindu scriptures. The book almost stopped Muslim conversions. By the time Maulana Rajeki finished reading the book, he was convinced that Mirza Sahib was the destined guide of the time, the "Promised Messiah." He discussed this question with his teacher and mentor Maulvie Imamuddin. From him Rajeki learned that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} had already claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, and had established an organization of his disciples by the name "Jama'at Ahmadiyyah."

Maulana Rajeki was quick to write a letter requesting Hadhrat Mirza Sahib to accept him as a member of his Jama'at (organization). Within a few days of writing, Rajeki Sahib received a letter of acceptance from Hadhrat Mirza Sahib. In 1899, Rajeki Sahib and his teacher went to meet the Promised Messiah^{as} in person, and took the oath of allegiance at his hand.

Charged with an enthusiasm to preach, the Maulana when back to his home town and announced his conversion to Jama'at Ahmadiyya. There was an uproar of resentment against him among Mullahs big and small in his area, since Ahmadis were branded as infidels. Maulana Rajeki started a series of dialogues and debates, challenging his opponents to prove where he was wrong. The Maulana was always victorious in debates, since his arguments were based on strong evidence from the scriptures. These debates almost stopped conversions to Christianity, and people started realizing the faults of the Mullahs and their associates in understanding religion correctly.

Maulana Rajeki was soon known all over India as an excellent debater to establish the truth and beauty of Islam against Christianity and Hinduism. Maulana Rajeki represented the Jama'at's view point at the debates and refuted allegations made by antagonistic Mullahs and *Mashaikhs*. The Maulana would visit different cities across India, under the directions and instructions of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} across India, accepting debate challenges posed by the opponents. He always stood victorious.

Maulana Rajeki was a simple humble man. He was known for his piety and righteousness. His prayers were miraculously accepted; people would visit him to ask him to pray for them. He would readily comply and tell them if the prayer had been accepted or not. Maulana Rajeki repeatedly wrote in his autobiography "*Hayyat-e-Qudsi*" that the miracle of the acceptance of his prayers was because of his complete submission to the teachings of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} and his *Khulafa*.

Maulana Rajeki was a great scholar of Arabic, Persian and several local languages. He wrote innumerable articles and poems, delivered scores of sermons. Particularly his Persian poem "Who are we?" written in 1937 is most famous. He wrote this poem to present the exalted status of Jama'at Ahmadiyya in retaliation to the Jama'at opponents who repeatedly degrade and humiliate Ahmadis. In this poem the Maulana vindicates the mission of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani^{as}, and the activities of Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya in simple and decisive terms. The late Chaudhry Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan Sahib liked this poem so much that he committed it to memory.

The poem is written in a philosophical tone, the deep meanings of which are difficult to explain in words. The poem conveys the feelings and enthusiasm of every Ahmadi. May Allah reward Maulana Rajeki Sahib with best reward, for his services rendered to the Ahmadiyyah Community, *Ameen*.

The Urdu translation of the poem appeared in the March-April 2007 issue of "*Al-Noor*" under the Urdu title "*Ham Koan Hain*" along with the Persian text. The following English translation is presented for English readers, to enjoy enthusiasm and thrill expressed in the poem. The numbers beside the translation refer to the stanzas enumerated in the Urdu translation referred to above.

WHO ARE WE?

1-2: Our Tabligh is echoing across the four corners of the world. We manifest the glory of Allah, as the Mountain Sani reflected Allah's image for Moses to view.

Our faith in the Messiah of the time, has blessed us with the miracle of reviving the dead. We have miraculously revived centuries old spiritually dead (who lay buried in the graves of wrong beliefs) as Prophet Jesus did.

3-4: We do not hesitate to sacrifice our lives, in efforts to restore life to the "dead" throughout the world. Come what may, we are bent to convey the life-bestowing message of Ahmadiyyat, even if we have to sacrifice our lives for the task.

We are the chosen ones, destined to spread truth, and lay the foundations of a modern era based on truth and equality.

5-6. To sacrifice oneself in the love of Allah, is a long forgotten ritual. We are here now to revive the early days of Islamic history.

We are ready to sacrifice our lives in the love of Allah and truth, which is the only motive of our lives.

7-8. The status of a beloved is reflected by the depth of sacrifices of lovers, for that we are always ready to present the gift of our lives.

We are always ready to lay down our lives, if needed, to achieve our goal. We are the true selfless lovers.

9-10. Lovers attain immortality by sacrificing their lives for the happiness and approval of their beloved one.

To achieve communion with Allah was a secret, known only to a few, before the advent of Masih-e-Mau'ood^{as}. Now it is known all around the world to friends and foe.

11-12. Our enemies brand us infidels and non-believers; the fact is, it is now we who have become true Muslims, and this fact is now known to our every friend and enemy.

The darkness of ignorance hid our qualities, now our belief in Masih-e-Mau'ood^{as} has exposed our exalted status.

13-14. To our enemies we are mean and despicable, low as dust, while we enjoy a high status in the sight of Allah.

We are the providers of our time, intoxicated with the love of Allah! We offer a glass filled with Allah's love, to anybody who wishes to drink from it is to attain redemption from sins and eternal life.

15-16. Sipping from a glass full of the love of Allah, erases all other loves from hearts.

By the Grace of Allah, the love of Allah is a remedy for every affliction and pain.

17-18. We are the rescuers of those drowning in the storm of sins and ignorance. We save people from afflictions that rage far and wide in the world, for them we are Noah's Ark!

We are with the Promised Messiah's^{as} promised reformer son^{fa}. We are Allah's Jama'at, working to expound the greatness and grandeur of the Holy Prophet's^{saw} status.

19-20. We are Divine birds, our calls are echoing across the world, birds intoxicated with the love of Allah, come drawn from across the four corners of the world. .

Our strong arguments win over Christians and believers of other religions, for Islam.

21-22. We fight piggish miscreants with our strong arguments, wiping out intrigues and wickedness from all around.

Allah's greatness is the fountain of our strength, our continued miraculous presence in the world against high odds is due to Allah's grace, kindness, and help!

23-24. We, the Ahmadis have witnessed and been blessed by the grandeur and beauty of our Master Prophet Muhammad's^{saw}. We guide and help people in these troubled times, who are lost in the darkness of ignorance and despair, to light and redemption.

We are motivated by an eternal and perpetual light from Heaven, and guide people in desperation towards it.

25-26. We are the followers of the Messiah^{as}, the guide of the time, and are helped by Allah at every step. We direct our prayers and supplications to the Master of the Ka'bah, the Almighty Allah.

Anybody who wishes to have an audience in that eternal, grand and magnificent court, should bear in mind, the way to it is not easy. It does not pass through fields of soft sand, rather it lies across hard stony fields with razor sharp edges.

27. Qudsi! Your explanation of divine attributes is understood only by those, who long to reach to the abode of high eternal light.

Your speech is incomprehensible to common man, that is not even in grasp of their comprehension. It is deep heavenly wisdom, understandable only by those who are crazy in their search for it.

PUNISHMENT FOR ADULTERY ACCORDING TO THE HOLY BIBLE

Maulana Inamul Haq Kauser

Teachings

“Thou shall not commit adultery.”

(Exodus 20:14)

“Neither shalt thou commit adultery.”

(Duet, 5:18)

Different Punishments for Adultery in the New and Old Testaments

“If any man take a wife....and say, I took this woman and when I came to her, I found her not a maid: Then shall the father of the damsel and her mother, take and **bring forth the tokens of the damsel’s virginity unto the elders of the city** in the gate: and they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. And the elders of the city shall take that man and **chastise him**; and they shall amerce him in **an hundred shekels of silver**, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because..... And **she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all**

his days.

But if this thing be true, and **the tokens of virginity** be not found for the damsel: Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father’s house, and the men of her city **shall stone her with stones that she die....**”

(Deut, 22:14-20)

“When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find **no favor in his eyes**, because he hath found some **uncleanness** in her: then let him write her **a bill of divorcement**, and give it in her hand, and send her **out of his house.**”

(Deut, 24:1)

“If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then **they shall both of them die**, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.”

(Duet, 22:22)

“If a damsel that is a

virgin be betrothed unto a husband and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of the city, and **ye shall stone them with stones that they die**; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbor’s wife: so thou shall put away evil from among you.”

(Duet, 22:23-24)

“But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field and the man force her, and lie with her: then **the man only** that lay with her **shall die....**

(Deut, 22:22-25)

“If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel’s father **fifty she-kels of silver**, and **she shall be his wife**; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.”

(Deut, 22:28-29)

“For everyone that **curseth his father or his mother** shall **be surely put to death**: he hath cursed his father or his mother; **his blood shall be upon them.**”

(Leviticus 20:9)

“And the man that committeth adultery with another man’s wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall **surely be put to death.**”

(Leviticus 20:10)

“And the man that lieth with his **father’s wife** hath uncovered his father’s nakedness: both of them **shall surely be put to death**; their blood shall be upon them.

(Leviticus 20:11)

“And if a man lie with his **daughter in law**, **both of them shall surely be put to death**: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.

(Leviticus 20:12)

“If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall **surely be put to death**; their blood shall be

upon them.”

(Leviticus 20:13)

“And if a man takes a wife and her mother, it is a wickedness: **they shall be burnt with fire**, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.”

(Leviticus 20:10-14)

“And if a man lies with a beast, he shall surely **be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.**”

(Leviticus 20:10-15)

“And the daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: **she shall be burnt with fire.**”

(Leviticus 21:9)

“But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

A wound and dishonor shall be get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.”

(Proverbs 6:32-33)

“You have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shall not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust

after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”

If thy right eye offends thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.”

(Mat; 5:27-29)

A very special incident in the new Testament

“They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such **should be stoned**: but what sayest thou?So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them. He that is without sin among you let him first cast a stone at her.”

(John 8:4-7)

In March-April issue of the Gazette Please read as follows:

1. **Lajna Ima’illah instead of Lajna Ima ‘Ullah**
2. **Al-Fazl instead of Al-Fazal.**

A RESPONSE TO THE NEGATIVE PORTRAYAL OF THE HOLY PROPHET^{saw} IN WESTERN LITERATURE

Atif Mir

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the centuries, the Holy Prophet^{saw} has been falsely accused by his opponents for waging aggressive wars. To deal with this accusation, in my speech, I will discuss the following points:

- ❖ What do the Holy Qur'an and Holy Prophet say about War?
- ❖ Why is the Holy Prophet^{saw} often portrayed as a violent prophet in the western literature? What are the real reasons behind this negative portrayal?
- ❖ Finally, why should we strive hard to remove the misconceptions held about the Holy Prophet^{saw} in the western world?

What Do the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet^{saw} Say About War

It is true that the Holy

Prophet^{saw} fought wars. But the important question is why he fought those wars. The answer is to be found in the following verses of the Holy Qur'an:

"Permission to take up arms is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged and Allah, indeed, has power to help them..." (22:40)

Those who have been driven out from their homes unjustly, only because they said, 'Our Lord is Allah.' And if Allah had not repelled some people by means of others, cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft remembered, would surely have been destroyed. And Allah will, surely, help him who helps Him. Allah is, indeed, Powerful, Mighty – (22:42)

This verse clearly lays out that only defensive wars are allowed in Islam.

However, in case, the need for a defensive war arises, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} gave a list of things to his followers that they shouldn't do during the times of war. For instance, he said:

- ❖ *The old and decrepit and women and children are not to be killed. The possibility of peace should always be kept in view (Abu Dawud).*
- ❖ *When Muslims enter enemy territory, they should not strike terror into the general population. They should permit no ill-treatment of common folk (Muslim).*
- ❖ *The least possible losses should be inflicted upon the enemy (Abu Dawud).*
- ❖ *When a Muslim takes charge of a prisoner of war, the latter is to be fed and clothed in the same way as the Muslim himself (Bukhari).* It is clear from the

Holy Qur'an and the teachings of the Holy Prophet^{saaw} that even when Muslims are a target of an offensive war, they are to show respect to the life, liberty and property of the enemies, particularly civilians.

WESTERN PORTRAYAL

There are many western historians and scholars who have given an objective and true picture of the Holy Prophet^{saaw} as a peaceful prophet. However, the attacks on the Holy Prophet^{saaw} have been going on for centuries as well. However, lately, due to 9/11, we have seen a rising wave of attacks on the Holy Prophet^{saaw}.

Some of the recent books by Robert Spencer, Richard Dawkins and Sam Harris portray, directly or indirectly, the Holy Prophet^{saaw} as a violent person. My speech will focus on these three authors. For instance, Robert Spencer in his latest book, "The Truth about Muhammad" blames the teachings of the Holy Prophet^{saaw} for the violent acts of terrorism in the contemporary times. He argues that the war and conflict and bloodshed will continue as

long as the Muslims keep on using the Holy Prophet^{saaw} as an inspiration.

The accusations that Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris and Robert Spencer, and other writers, have made against the Holy Prophet^{saaw} are not new. They repeat the same criticisms offered by the opponents of the Holy Prophet^{saaw} throughout the millennium.

Why is the Holy Prophet^{saaw} portrayed in such a negative manner by some western scholars? There are five reasons. They are:

- ❖ Misrepresentation of the Holy Prophet^{saaw} by the so-called Muslim scholars
- ❖ Generalizations made by scholars based on selective readings of the verses of the Holy Qur'an or the teachings of the Holy Prophet^{saaw}.
- ❖ Prejudice of scholars
- ❖ Atheism
- ❖ Misuse of Freedom of Speech

These five reasons are very basic but they are crucial to understanding the nature of attack that has been launched on the Holy Prophet^{saaw} throughout the history.

1. So-Called Muslim Scholars

Even some so-called Muslim scholars argue that the Holy Prophet^{saaw} spread Islam through the sword. One such example of an Islamic scholar is Maulana Madoodi, who for his own political objectives, has argued in his books that the Holy Prophet^{saaw} spread Islam with the sword. People like Maulana Madoodi have damaged the reputation of the Holy Prophet^{saaw} by portraying him as a man of the sword; and even worse he has led the naïve Muslims to believe that violence and terrorism is the solution to the challenges faced by the Islamic world. These so-called Muslim scholars provide intellectual ammunition to the Western critics of the Holy Prophet^{saaw}. Hence, some of the responsibility of the negative portrayal of the Holy Prophet^{saaw} lies with extremist Muslims.

2. Generalization and Selective Reading by the Western Scholars

The opponents of Islam do not use all of the earliest sources of Islam such as the Holy Qur'an,

earlier biographies of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, Ahadith and Sunnah etc. when writing about the life of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. But when they do, they end up selecting those portions of the earliest sources that confirm their prejudice against the Prophet^{saw} of Islam. For instance, they may pick one verse or one aspect of the life and teaching of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and based on that make generalizations about the whole life and teachings of the Holy Prophet^{saw} while ignoring other verses which would give an accurate picture.

Let me illustrate this point by an example.

Listen to this quotation carefully, "You ask what our policy is. I will say, it is to wage war with all our might, with all the strength that God can give us". Listening to this quotation without knowing the background of this quotation, you might interpret this as the words of Osama bin Laden. But this quotation is taken out from the speech of Winston Churchill during WWII when the German army was bent on destroying England. So these are the words of a Prime Minister who is making a strong statement that his

policy is to defend his country against the tyranny.

Some of the critics of the Holy Prophet^{saw} also choose selective portions of the Holy Qur'an and hadiths. For instance, they take a verse of the Holy Qur'an totally out of context in order to prove that the Holy Prophet^{saw} preached the killing of non-believers. One of the verses often quoted is:

"And when you meet *in regular battle* those who disbelieve, smite their necks; and, when you have overcome them, bind fast the fetters—then afterwards either *release them as a favor* or *by taking ransom*—until the war lays down its burdens. That *is the ordinance*. And if Allah had so decided, He could have Himself exacted retribution from them, but He puts some of you to trial at the hands of some others." (47:5)

Robert Spencer uses the first part of this verse in his book, proclaiming that the Holy Prophet has given permission to Muslims to smite the neck of the unbelievers even in contemporary times. In his book, he explains how Zarqawi, an Iraqi terrorist who died last year, was

inspired by this verse to kidnap and behead an American citizen. What Zarqawi did deserves condemnation. But was Zarqawi inspired by this verse or misused this verse for his political objective is not the topic of my speech?

But what we do know is Robert Spencer fails to analyze the verse on its own merits. He does not offer the complete context and background of this verse. He also conveniently forgets to discuss the second part of this verse in his analysis. This verse was revealed when the Muslims were facing the Meccans in the Battle of Badr. The numbers of the Muslims were 313 while the Meccans were more than 1000. The *Quraish* had more weapons than the Muslims. The *Quraish* were ready to wipe out Muslims completely. The verse was revealed in this context. If you rationally think about this verse it is saying that in war Muslims are allowed to kill just like the American army or any other army of the world teaches its soldiers to kill during the time of war. The second part of the verse says that "when you have overcome them, bind fast the fetters". This part clearly points out that killing is allowed during

the time of a war but once you have subdued the soldier of an enemy, tie him strongly so that he doesn't escape and join the enemies again. Once the war is over you may free them out of generosity or for ransom.

As you see, Robert Spencer failed to give the complete context and failed to mention the other verses of the Holy Qur'an and the *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet^{saw} about the topic discussed in the war and made an extremely wrong conclusion about the teachings of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. He painted the Holy Prophet^{saw} not as a person who introduced the rights for the prisoners of war 1400 years ago. Instead, he painted him as a person who inspired the beheading of an innocent American civilian.

3. Prejudice

The second explanation for the negative portrayal is prejudice often displayed by Christian extremists. They don't represent the mainstream views of Christianity. But they have regularly received coverage in some popular channels so it is important to unmask their true intentions. Both of them see the Holy Prophet^{saw} as a person who has stolen stories from the Bible and after modifying

them, has included them in the Holy Qur'an. They can't grasp how a person who was a false prophet was able to convert millions of people into his faith. How do you explain such great success of a person who was a false prophet? The only explanation they can muster is that he used the sword to spread the religion of Islam. These extremist Christians, if I may use the phrase, are not trying to represent the Holy Prophet^{saw} as he is but they are representing him in a way that helps them to convince Christians of their own faith. Unfortunately, in the process they are misleading Christians about the true teachings and life of the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

4. Atheism

The third reason for the negative portrayal of the Holy Prophet^{saw} is the rise of the atheist movement in the West. These atheists are not against any one particular religion. They are against all religions. They have a very narrow interpretation of history. They believe in one theory; that most of the wars have been fought in the name of religion. They also fit the life of the Holy Prophet^{saw} into their theory. If he was able to convert so many people in such a short time, then

he must have used force. Sam Harris and Richard Dawkins belong in this group. They (Sam Harris and Richard Dawkins) try to justify their theories by implicitly blaming religion even for World War II. First of all, this conclusion is almost rubbish. WWII was not fought because of religion. You may argue that religion was a factor in that war but it was clearly not the primary factor. Wars are part of the human conditions. Unfortunately, wars have been waged since the beginning of civilization. That is one reason as to why the Holy Prophet^{saw} introduced the code of conduct for war. True that he used to find all the means possible to prevent the war but if war had been totally outlawed then the Nazis would still be ruling Europe and possibly all the mosques, synagogues, and maybe churches would have been destroyed.

5. Misuse of Freedom of Speech

The ideology of the freedom of speech has created unjustified attacks on the life of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. The supporters of freedom of speech who started the cartoon controversy attack the Holy Prophet^{saw} not because they

are necessarily atheist or extremist Christians but because their religion is freedom of speech. They published their cartoons of the Holy Prophet^{saw} to “contribute to the debate regarding criticism of Islam and self censorship”. They drew the offensive cartoons to make one point only that the Muslims should get used to the insulting of their prophet just like other religions have gotten used to the insults of their prophets. They might be promoting freedom of speech but at the expense of peace. The world is already divided due to religion, nationalism, ideology and ethnicity, and can hardly afford more divisions. Freedom of speech is important but when it becomes a license to spread hatred then it is no better than the Christian or Islamic extremists who are dragging the world to the brink of global violence. The purpose of freedom of speech should be to seek truth not spread hatred.

WHY REMOVING MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE HOLY PROPHET^{saw} IS IMPORTANT?

We live in Canada which is a multicultural country. People of all different cultural backgrounds interact on

a daily basis. One of the aspects of multiculturalism is to respect each other’s culture and religion. However, if the Prophet of Islam is portrayed as a violent person and is treated disrespectfully in the media while we consider him to be the perfect human being, it will create an awkward relationship between us and the people around us in our workplaces and school. It is our responsibility as revivers of Islam to educate ourselves about the history and life of the Prophet^{saw} and be prepared to rationally and accurately highlight his perfect life and answer the arguments of the critics when the need arises. In simple words, if we teach this society about the life of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, we will improve cultural relationships and at the same time we will be delivering the message of Islam. But the message must be delivered with effectiveness. What is the effective delivery of the message? The message will only be effective when we act upon the teachings of the message, when we ourselves incorporate the teachings of the Holy Prophet^{saw} into our daily lives. This is the best way to respond to the negative portrayal of the Holy Prophet^{saw} in the western world. The Holy Prophet^{saw}

absorbed the attributes of Allah into his heart and soul as much as a human can. And by doing so, he became godly and demonstrated compassion, love and forgiveness. That is the true reason behind the expansion of Islam. He used to give charity to the extent that he lived in a small house without a proper bed and without proper food while he could have easily lived the life of a king. This is the best part of his life that some critics of the Holy Prophet^{saw} conveniently forget to mention in their analysis.

The Promised Messiah^{as} describes the life of the Holy Prophet^{saw} in these powerful words. He says:

“He was the champion who restored to the world the Unity of God which had disappeared from the world; he loved God in the extreme and his soul melted out of sympathy for mankind. Therefore God, who knew the secret of his heart, exalted him above all the prophets and all the first ones and all the last ones.”

We should pray that Allah may guide us and help us to do our part in telling the truth about the Holy Prophet^{saw} to the rest of the world.

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**HELP
HUMANITY
THROUGH
HUMANITY
FIRST**

Accepting the Destiny and the Will of God

Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas^{ra} relates that Hadhrat 'Umar bin Khattab^{ra} left for Syria and when he arrived at *Saragh* he met Abu 'Ubaidah bin Jarrah^{ra}, the commander of the Muslim forces and his officers, who told him that an epidemic had broken out in Syria. Ibn 'Abbas^{ra} relates: 'Umar^{ra} said to me: Call in the earlier Emigrants. So, I called them and told them that an epidemic had broken out in Syria, and took counsel with them, but they differed among themselves. Some said: You started on an errand and we do not see why you should back away from it. Others said: You have the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and many other people with you and we do not see why you should expose them to this epidemic. He asked them to leave and asked me to call the Helpers. So I called them. He took counsel with them and they differed among themselves as the Emigrants had differed. So he asked them to withdraw and asked me to call the prominent among the *Quraish* out of those Emigrants who were present at the fall of Mecca. So I called them. Not any two of them differed in their view. They told him: 'We think that you should go back and not lead the people into the epidemic. So, 'Umar^{ra} had it announced that he would start back the next morning. When all was ready the next morning. Abu 'Ubaidah bin Jarrah^{ra} said to 'Umar^{ra}: 'Do you propose to run away from the decree of Allah?' 'Umar^{ra} replied: Abu 'Ubaidah, I wish someone else had said this. Yes, I am running away from the decree of Allah to the decree of Allah and added: If you had a herd of camels in the valley and the valley had two sides; one fertile and green and the other dry and barren. No matter in which area of the valley you graze your animals that will be the decree of Allah. None of your decisions will be out of the boundries of the Will of Allah.'

Hadhrat 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf^{ra} who had been absent on some errand of his own came back and said: 'I have some knowledge about this matter. I heard the Holy Prophet^{saw} say: If you hear of an epidemic in a land then do not enter it, and if you happen to be in a land where there is an epidemic, do not run away from it.' Hadhrat 'Umar^{ra} praised Allah and returned.

(Bukhari kitabuttib bab ma yadhkur fitta'un)

THE EXPLOITATION OF MODERN WOMEN THROUGH FREEDOM

Rizwan Khan

The criticisms of western scholars against the teachings of Islam have so often been repeated that many have simply assumed they are true. It is high time that mirrors should be placed before such people that they may see the planks in their own eyes before criticizing what they perceive to be specks in the eyes of others.

The purpose of every society is to preserve the rights of its people by restricting the freedoms of its individuals. In a state of anarchy, absolute freedom leads directly to the deprivation of the rights of individuals. The correct amount of freedom is necessary to preserve freedom; too little results in a violation of rights by society, and too much inevitably results in a violation of rights by individuals. Modern society claims to have established equality between the sexes through freedom, but has this freedom really brought about equality? If the truth be told, this degree of freedom between the sexes has only brought about the deprivation of women's rights.

With the behavior of men left largely unchecked, women have suffered from the freedom that men have taken the liberty to enjoy at their expense. This freedom was meant to be the guardian of the rights of women, but instead it is the very means of their oppression. The teachings of Islam establish a perfect balance of freedom between the sexes which upholds the rights and responsibilities of both. The ideas of modern culture, in this regard, differ from those of Islam in four fundamental ways. These differences are veiling, necessity of marriage, separation of the sexes, and guardianship. These very differences are sources of inequality between the sexes in modern society; injustices which Islamic teachings seek to correct.

The psychological relationship between a man and woman brought down to its most fundamental form is that men want sex whereas women are in greater need of security. This does not imply that men and women have no other need or desire for one another, but that

this is the foundation of the relationship in its most rudimentary form. It is only natural that this difference exists, for even if it is assumed that their desires for sexual gratification are equal, the fact remains that women get pregnant whereas men do not. A most burdensome consequence of promiscuity is impregnation, a consequence which does not directly burden a man. On the other hand, a woman becoming pregnant or having children results in a multitude of concerns that she cannot run from, the weight of which is greatly multiplied if she is left to bear them alone. The direct result is that women have little choice but to be more responsible with their sexuality than men.

In modern society, the current state of affairs is such that men and women go about engaging in sexual activity in the name of freedom, but the question arises as to whom in fact is free. In whose interest is it to refrain from premarital promiscuity? For the man only concerned with fulfilling his most immediate desires,

an environment in which women readily make themselves available for sexual relationships without any guarantee of commitment is ideal. In fact, our society encourages these men that, in turn, only take interest in women who give themselves freely. Women have little choice but to make themselves sexually available and vulnerable to the burdens of pregnancy and children if they wish to have any chance of attracting the attention of men. They are compelled to be more and more promiscuous in order to attract men who would otherwise pay no attention to them. In a society where sex is easily available, men have no urgent need to make a commitment of sacrifice and loyalty to any individual woman. They are free to do as they please. Women who demand security before giving themselves sexually are ignored and cast aside, after all, why would men go through the trouble. Men have succeeded in freeing themselves from their realistic responsibilities to women. It is the weight of these responsibilities that would prevent them from indulging in careless sex. Due to this irresponsibility, women have disinherited not only their sense of security, but also their rights as reputable women of soci-

ety. We find men going about doing as they please while women are forced to bear the burdens resulting from their never ending desire for pleasure, be it in the form of women enduring the difficulties of pregnancy and birth on their own, or single mothers raising children without any support. The direct consequences of a promiscuous society inevitably fall directly on the women of that society.

As if having exploited women was not enough, men of modern society have managed to convince women that sexual promiscuity is in their interest, a symbol of their freedom, and that anyone who informs them otherwise seeks to subjugate them. In the delusion of freedom, women brag having willingly chosen to flaunt their bodies and to be sexually careless. This apparent freedom is not the source of their independence but the means of their oppression. The similitude of those men who subjugate women in oppressive societies as opposed to those who oppress in free societies is like that of a wolf and a fox. With a wolf, one knows to be on your guard for it shows itself to be an open enemy. A fox, on the contrary, feigns friendship, waiting for its prey to let its guard

down. One only realizes that the fox is their enemy after they have largely been consumed and nothing can be salvaged. The only difference here is that the actions of men in this regard are often subconscious; however, the results are just as harmful. The current situation is so desperate that women have been deceived into fighting for their own oppression in the delusion of supporting their own freedom. This, in itself, is the greatest subjugation of modern women.

The teachings of Islam concerning women are founded on principals of universal human behavior. They protect the rights of women from being transgressed by men. Left on their own, the independent always deprive the dependant of their rights. Under any anarchic circumstances, women have always been the victims of crimes against humanity. Throughout history, under any conditions wherein lawlessness prevailed and men were left unchecked to do as they pleased, the deprivation of the rights of women became rampant. On their own, women could do little to protect themselves from being exploited and taken advantage of. In the absence of some fear of

consequences for their actions, men have always reduced the status of the women in their society to nearly that of slaves or animals. Under any circumstances, every parent knows to be more careful in protecting their daughters because they know that their rights are far more vulnerable to being violated. Without effective rules in place to restrict men and women in their interaction with one another, women are always on the losing end in their relationship with men. While the teachings of Islam place men and women as being equal, it would be an incomplete and unjust teaching if it did not acknowledge and address the differences between the two. The necessity of this acknowledgement is commonly accepted. For instance, professional sports have always separated men's and women's competitions, yet no one objects. This is because one has no choice but to acknowledge the differences between men and women and make appropriate accommodations. Even the most close minded enthusiast of blind equality would not support pitting men and women against one another in boxing matches to see which, under equal circumstances, would succeed in knocking the other unconscious first.

It is obvious that blind equality without recognizing differences is unjust. The fact is that everyone without exception acknowledges that the differences between men and women must be taken into consideration. The disagreement has never been as to whether men and women should be treated differently or not, but to what degree they should be treated differently. The degree of difference in treatment, which Islamic principles establish, best protect the rights and interests of both sexes.

The injunction of veiling is one of the principal teachings of Islam in regards to protecting the rights of women. It should be born in mind that, while this injunction is a command of Islam, this does not mean that anyone has the right to forcefully impose it. Muhammad (peace be on him), the Prophet of Islam, never compelled any woman to veil herself against her will, but merely delivered the instruction to the people and left the matter to God. No one has the right to claim possession of greater authority than that of the Prophet of Islam in implementing Islamic teachings in any society.

The institution of veiling strikes at the very root

of modern society's attempt to exploit the rights of women. Men would prefer that women compete with one another in flaunting their bodies and sexuality. Subconscious or otherwise, their purpose is served as long as women continue to do so in the hope of finding a loyal companion. The obvious flaw in this desperate anticipation is that those women who seek to draw the sexual attention of men in the hope that their shallow interest will somehow turn into loyal companionship often find themselves disappointed.

For those who claim that they do not flaunt themselves in pursuit of companionship, it should be borne in mind that their behavior still conforms to the standards of men. Whether they think themselves independent or not, every day, they live up to the standards set by men.

Nevertheless, a woman that seeks to attract men through promiscuity will only attract the attention of those men whose immediate concern is to fulfill their most basic desires. In our promiscuous society, such men have become the norm and exceptions are rare. What kind of loyalty can be hoped for from such men?

Small wonder and little surprise when a man breaks his relationship with a woman, a relationship initiated in his search for sexual gratification, in pursuit of his attraction to the sexual charms of other women who happen to come along. One cannot hope to expect pure fruit from a poisonous tree. This is the state that modern society, as a whole, is in. The attention span of men for women is decreasing. Everyone is constantly in search of the next excitement in the name of finding companionship and the reality of commitment is fading. Teen pregnancies and single mothers are becoming a common site. Once again, women find themselves on the losing end of the bargain. Islam teaches women not to flaunt their sexuality, but to cover themselves from those outside their family so that they do not become victims to this vicious cycle. By veiling, women free themselves from the chains that men have bound them in and are dignified above having to put themselves on display. By covering themselves, they transcend conformity to the shallow interests of men. Islam endeavors to remove this exploitation from women and to restore to them their freedom.

Marriage is an institu-

tion that has existed since the dawn of civilized society. In its most elementary and basic form, marriage is simply an exchange of sex and security. Both men and women want sex, but it is in the interest of a woman to obtain a commitment of security from a man before sexual relations begin. Thereby, a husband is required to take full responsibility for all the necessities of his wife. Through this, women are provided with consistent physical, psychological, and emotional support throughout their lives, and more specifically, during pregnancy and while raising children. Unmarried women have no such support; their security is at the whim of men. Whether they choose to give support or leave women with both of their burdens is completely at their discretion; men are under no compulsion to take responsibility. This, unfortunately, is all too often the case with modern society, and this condition has deep and underlying repercussions. In Islam, great emphasis is placed on the necessity of the institution of marriage. Psychologically, a person cannot enjoy luxuries until necessities are met. For someone deprived of air, thirst is the least of their concerns, and one whose source of water is in jeop-

source of water is in jeopardy can hardly turn their attention to procuring food. Similarly, the luxuries of companionship cannot be enjoyed until the necessity of marriage is met, for one cannot truly appreciate the subtleties of anything in the absence of its security. The security that marriage provides to a relationship naturally opens new potentials that are otherwise nonexistent. In our society, where real security has become such a rare commodity, the relationship between men and women all too often fails to progress past a weak and temporary state. Women, being in greater need of security than men, inevitably suffer far more from the suffocation in this vacuum of security. How can such women enjoy the real benefits of a relationship as they are constantly concerned with the ever present possibility that men are free to leave women with both of their burdens at any time they want with little or no fear of consequences? Under these conditions, women are at a loss of authority and control in a relationship and have been left all but powerless. In Islam, the importance of the institution of marriage is established so that this disparity of power can be taken out of the hands of men and returned to women.

Islam also prohibits men and women who are not related to one another from meeting in private. The freedom that men have to meet women in private has been a source of the deprivation of women's rights. In modern culture, dating and premarital relationships are the norm in finding a spouse. As trends of society progress, the time period in finding a spouse is rapidly lengthening. This is primarily because, living in a sexually free culture, men have little reason to restrict themselves to a single woman. It is imprudent to genuinely hope that men will go from having as many sexual partners as they please, with little responsibility or obligation, to taking on the heavy responsibilities of a life long commitment with one woman. The natural result of such circumstances is that, even if they do eventually settle down, many men will inevitably give in to their baser desires and habits and be unfaithful to their wives with the readily available women of such a society. It is this very pursuit of the ideal love marriage which has ultimately been little more than a source of harm to the cause of women. Again and again, doors of excess freedom are made to appear attractive and advantageous,

and are opened for men to enter and wreak havoc on the rights of women. Islam restricts men from being able to go about sampling as many women as they please for however long they want. Thus, women are saved from having to put out in the blind hope of finding someone who will choose to stay and men are conditioned to contain their sexual behavior. In finding a spouse, rather than trying to get to know people through dating, Islam advises that men and women rely on their family and friends in finding a suitable match, or that they choose from friends or those outside immediate family whom they have known growing up. One can, thereby, find someone whose nature they or someone they know are already familiar with. Thus, under safeguards that protect the rights of women, a proper system of selecting a spouse exists in Islam.

The rights of women are further protected in that a man interested in a woman must get the approval of her father before marriage, in the case that this is the woman's first marriage. This does not mean that a father can force his daughter to marry someone against her will or that he can disapprove of a man

simply because of his own personal preferences. His responsibility is merely to protect the rights of his daughter and see to it that the suitor is fulfilling his responsibilities. Under any circumstances, a woman can never fully trust a man outside of her family, for no matter how close or sincere she may consider the relationship to be, the potential of that relationship always exists and men are not unaware of it. Men with lower thoughts hidden in their minds can always be counted on to misuse their trusts, consciously or subconsciously. A woman's father is the only man who can best be counted on to protect her interests without ulterior motives and with the most sincerity. This is why men are always reluctant to meet the fathers of the women they take interest in, for men understand the thinking, tendencies, and potentials of men. A man with the intention of taking advantage of a woman would think twice knowing that he must first go through her father. Women could not have asked for a better guardian, and thus, Islam has provided the most perfect means to protect the rights of women from men.

These are but the mention of four basic teachings

of Islam regarding women which differ from the ideas of modern society. They are examples of how Islam seeks to give real freedom to women. The freedom that modern society promises is little more than a delusion, exploitation masked in the appearance of liberation. Every limitation that Islam places on men regarding women is to safeguard the rights of women, and for every step women choose to allow men to take inside those boundaries, the rights of women are inevitably transgressed. Through Islam, women are empowered with the knowledge necessary to recognize and seize their rights, and to free themselves from blindly following the harmful trends society is conditioned to.

What freedom is freedom which brings about slavery, that slavery is freedom which brings about freedom.

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3. "And they (the women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them in equity; but men have a degree of advantage above them." The Holy Quran 2:228.
4. The Holy Quran 24:32, 33:60.
5. "Whoever among you is able to marry, should marry" Sahih Bukhari, Book 62, Hadith 3.
6. "And I also marry women. So he who does not follow my tradition in religion, is not from me" Sahih Bukhari, Book 62 Hadith 1.
7. "It is not permissible for a man to be alone with a woman" Sahih Bukhari, Book 52, Hadith 250.
8. "There is no marriage without the permission of a guardian." Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 11, Hadith 2080
9. "A matron should not be given in marriage except after consulting her, and a virgin should not be given in marriage except after her permission." Sahih Bukhari, Book 62, Hadith 67

PAY ZAKAT

IT IS A

PILLAR OF ISLAM

HADITH

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet^{saw}, on behalf of his Lord, said: "A servant of Allah committed a sin and then supplicated: Allah, forgive me my sin. On which Allah, the Blessed and the High, said: 'My servant committed a sin and then realized that he has a Lord Who forgives sin and also calls to account for it. The servant reverted to it and sinned again and supplicated: Lord, forgive me my sin. The Blessed and High said: 'My servant committed a sin and then realized that he has a Lord Who forgives sin and also calls to account for it. The servant again reverted to it and sinned and supplicated: Lord, forgive me my sin. The Blessed and High said: 'My servant committed a sin and then realized that he has a Lord Who forgives sin and also calls to account for it. I will forgive My servant and protect him from sins, in the future. My servant will act as I Wish."

(Muslim kitabuttaubah bab qauluttaubah minadhhanubi wa an takrartudhdhamu-bi wattaubah, Bukhari kitabuttauhid)

Sheikh al-Akbar Ibn 'Arabi

Sufi and the Savant (1165-1240)

Zakaria Virk, Kingston, Canada

Mohyi al-Din Ibn Arabi was a renowned mystic, poet, sage, and philosopher of Islamic Spain. During his lifetime he was acknowledged as one of the most important spiritual teachers within Sufism. He was renowned for his great visionary capacity as well as being an excellent teacher.

This is how he signed his name: Muhammad Bin Ali bin Muhammad Ibn al-Arabi al-Tai al-Hatimi. In the East he is known by the name of Ibn Arabi, while in the West he is known by the name of Ibn al-Arabi. He was born in the famous city of Islamic Spain Medinat Mursiya (Murcia) in August 1165. He belonged to a well respected Arab family which traced its roots to the well known Hatim al-Tayy who was legendary for his generosity.

His father Ali Ibn al-Arabi was a man of influence as he considered Cordoba's chief judge Ibn Rushd among his intimate friends and was attached to the royal court of Muham-

mad Bin Saeed Mardanish. When Ibn Arabi was 8 years old, Murcia was occupied by Almo'ahidoon. (ruled 1147-1269). Their family immigrated to Lisbon, now the capital of Portugal. However, the Emir of Seville, Abu Yaqoob Yousuf offered him an important position in his royal court. The family then moved to Seville, the great intellectual center. This is where Ibn Arabi spent the next 30 years of his life.

Seville was also an important center of Sufism, with a record number of Sufis living in the city. He met two women saints there who had a strong influence on him, Yasamin of Marchena, and Fatimah of Cordova. About Yasamin, he observed, "*In her spiritual activities and communications she was among the greatest. She had a strong and pure heart, a noble spiritual power and a fine discrimination... she would often reveal something of it to me, as she knew of my own attainment, which pleased me.*" (1)

Ibn Arabi had completed his basic education in Murcia, and Lisbon. In Seville he got the opportunity to sit at the feet of learned scholars. One of his first teachers was, Abu Jafar al-Uryabi, a farmer who knew neither how to read nor how to count. He studied the Quran, exegesis of the Quran, the Hadith Nabawi, Law (*Shariah*), Arabic grammar and composition. He did so well in his studies that he was employed as secretary by the governor of Seville. Ibn Arabi's spiritual attainments were evident from an early age. He spent most of his time in the company of Sufis, because *Tasafuf* was already practiced in his family. At the age of 20 he entered upon the Sufi path.

Sufism in the Family

His family, in addition to its cultural connections was marked by religious tendencies. Two of his mother's brothers were Sufis, Abu Muslim al-Khawlani and Yahya ibn Yoghman. Abu Muslim al-Khawlani used to spend his

entire night standing in prayer. Ibn Arabi records that he would beat his legs with sticks when tired from standing all night in prayer.

The second brother Yahya Bin Yoghman who was at one time the ruler of the city of Tlemcen until he met a holy man Abu Abdullah al-Tunisi. Sheikh Abu Abdullah al-Tunisi, a Gnostic, who used to live on the outskirts of Tlemcen. One day al-Tunisi was going to the city, when the ruler happened to pass by with his entourage. Someone told the king this man Abu Abdullah is an outstanding divine. The king dismounted from his horse and exchanged pleasantries with the Sheikh. The King was dressed in fine costumes. He asked al-Tunisi, "Is it lawful for me to offer Salat in these fine clothes I am wearing." The Sheikh laughed. The King asked the reason for his laughter. The Sheikh replied back, "I laughed at the feebleness of your intellect, your ignorance, and your spiritual condition (*nafs*). In my eyes you are like a dog which does not hesitate to sniff around in the blood of a carcass and eats it despite its filthiness. However he lifts his leg when he urinates lest any soil touches its body. You are like a ves-

sel which is full of forbidden (*haram*) foodstuff, but you are concerned about your clothing." At this the King wept, gave up his kingship, and became a disciple of the Abu Abdullah.

The Sheikh kept Yahya for three days and then gave him a rope and said go fetch some wood. The King used to bring wood on his shoulders and sell it in the market. When people requested Ibn Arabi for his prayers, he would tell them: "go to Yahya ibn Yoghman, because he was a King and became a gnostic. If I was put into such a tribulation as he was, perhaps I would not have succeeded".

Ibn Arabi became a full fledged Sufi three years before the death of his uncle on his father's side, Muhammad bin Abdullah bin al-Arabi. In his book *Ruhul Qudus*, he has described the following incident about this uncle.

"There was a shop near his house which belonged to a man who sold fresh herbs and drugs. My uncle often used to go and sit with this man in the shop. One day a handsome young boy who bore the marks of worship, came up to him, thinking him to be the shop owner. The boy

asked him for some white *nigella*. My uncle said (in a light-hearted tone), 'and what might that be?' The boy explained that he had been suffering from a complaint and that a woman had instructed him to use white *nigella*. (a black aromatic seed). Then my uncle said, 'when I saw how ignorant you are, I laughed at you, because *nigella* is not white.' Then the boy said, 'O Uncle my ignorance in this matter will do me no harm in the sight of God, while your heedlessness of God will do you much harm, seeing that you persist in your opposition to Him despite your advanced years. "My uncle took this warning to heart and served the boy, becoming converted to the Way (*Sufism*) at his hands. He lived 3 years after coming to the Way. During this time he attained to high spiritual degrees and came close to the mercy of God. He spent much time behind closed doors in his room of retreat. (2)

Initiation into Sufism

Ibn Arabi states that he became a Sufi in 1184 when he was twenty. It is stated that Ibn Arabi was invited to a party at the house of a prominent leader of Seville, along with other

civic leaders. They started having a drink, when it reached Ibn Arabi, he heard a voice saying: "O Muhammad, did we create you for this?" He put down the drink, and left the party immediately. Outside the house he met a shepherd; he went with him to the outskirts of the city, exchanged clothes with him which were full of dust. After wandering around he arrived at a graveyard and decided to stay in a grave. He devoted himself to *Zikre Ilahi* (Remembrance of Allah) in the grave for four days. Finally when he came out, he was blessed with immense knowledge of numerous disciplines.

After this life changing experience, he spent 9 months in total solitude under the guidance of his master Sheikh Yousuf bin Yukhlaf al-Kumi. Ibn Arabi says: "my solitary stay started at the time of Fajr, by the time the Sun started to rise; the secrets of unseen world 'ghaib' were revealed to me. I stayed in this retreat for 14 months and all those secrets that were told to me I have penned them down".

His first employment in the civil service was as a scribe which was an important position in the

cabinet. His father was a minister of state and his family was well known throughout the country. After his spiritual experience, he gave up his employment. He preferred to live in piety (*fiqr*).

Meeting with Ibn Rushd

Due to Ibn Arabi's extraordinary scholarship and spiritual insights, his fame spread throughout Andalusia. The master interpreter of Aristotle, Cordoba's Qazi Ibn Rushd (1126-1198) requested his father for a meeting with Ibn 'Arabi.

This meeting is important in that of the two illustrious men, one was a follower of the edicts of reason, who became the most influential thinker in the West. The other was a Gnostic for whom knowledge meant "vision", who became a towering personality in Sufism.

Ibn 'Arabi related this visit in his own words: "One day I went to see Qazi abu Walid Ibn Rushd in Cordova as he wanted to meet me on account of what he had heard of the revelations which God accorded me during my retreat. Anyone who heard about these

secrets used to wonder. I was still a beardless young man. Ibn Rushd was my father's close friend. As I entered the room, he stood up out of respect for me. He embraced me. Then he said to me "YES". I in turn replied YES, he was pleased with this response thinking that I understood him. I on the other hand being aware of the motive for his pleasure, replied, "NO". Upon this, Ibn Rushd drew back from me, his colour changed and he seemed to doubt what he had thought of me. He then asked me, "What solution have you found as a result of mystical illumination (*Kashf*) and divine inspiration. Does it coincide with what is arrived at by speculative thought?". I replied, "Yes and No. Between the Yea and Ney the souls take their flight beyond matter, and the necks detach themselves from their bodies." At this Ibn Rushd became pale and I saw him shaking as he muttered, "*La haul wala quwwat*", (there is no power save from Allah"). This was because he had understood my insinuation. In cryptic language, the young boy had informed Ibn Rushd that rational investigation was not sufficient to attain complete knowledge of God and the world.

On another occasion, he asked my father to interview me so that he could tell me about things (knowledge) which he was in possession of. As he was one of the foremost intellectuals he thanked Allah for having met a person who went into solitude while he was ignorant but came out of it full of knowledge without having any discussions, lectures, research or studying under a teacher. He said, "Glory be to God that I have been able to live at a time when there exists a master of this experience, one of those who open the locks of His doors. Glory be to God to Who has given me the personal favor of seeing one of them with my own eyes." (3)

In this encounter, the young mystic gained the upper hand, leaving the aged Peripatetic philosopher dumbfounded. It shows Sheikh al-Akbar's philosophical thinking and mystical experience, how mysticism and philosophy were intertwined. Mysticism, in this case overcame philosophy, because Ibn Arabi was also a master of philosophy.

His Travels

In 1193 Ibn Arabi

made his first foreign trip when he was 30. He travelled to Tunis and took lessons from the book *Khula al-Nailain*, written by Abul Qasim Qasyi, the Sufi leader in Algarve. Later he wrote a commentary on this book. During this stay he met Abdulaziz bin Abu Bakr al-Qurashi al-Mahdavi on whose request he wrote a book on sufi saints of Andalusia, *Ruhul Qudus*. It is a biography of 55 Andalusian Sufis with whom he had been in close contact.

Perhaps because of the civil war in North Africa, Ibn Arabi returned to Andalusia. In the following year 1194 he travelled to Fez where he foretold the victory of the Almo'ahad ruler Yaqub al-Mansur (1160-1199) over Christian armies at *Alarcos*. By the year 1195 he was back in Seville where he spent most of his time in study and discussion. It appears that by this time his reputation for spiritual authority had made others to be deferential towards him.

In the year 1196 he travelled again to Fez, a seat of great learning, to attend lectures of Abdal Karim, Imam of the Azhar Mosque. In Fez he frequented the garden of Ibn Hayyun to meet men of the

spirit. During his stay here, his reputation drew to him many disciples. His own spiritual state was of the highest order as he tells us that he attained the knowledge of the Seal of Muhammad Sainthood. (*Khatim al-Auliya*). In 1198 he made his way back to Murcia, stopping at Granada to visit Sheikh Abdullah al-Shakkaz who was the greatest Sheikh he came in contact with. He attended the last rites of Ibn Rushd in Cordoba who had passed away in *Marrakesh* but his remains were brought to his birthplace for burial. On this occasion he composed the following lines:

"This is the Imam and these are his works.

Would that I knew whether his hopes were realized."

In 1200 we find him in *Marrakesh*, where he spent some time with Abu al-Abbas of Ceuta, keeper of the alms. Here he had two experiences which brought him to an even higher spiritual level. Then he went to *Bugia* and met Abu Abdullah al-Arabi and a group of other worthy men. From *Bugia* he journeyed to Tunis on his way to the East. In Tunis he stayed with al-Mahdavi

whom he had visited eight years earlier. At his house he partly completed his *Insha-al-Dawa'ir*.

Life in the East

He pursued his journey to the East with his companion al-Hasar. After spending a short time in Cairo and Alexandria, he arrived in Mecca in 1201. Once in Mecca he enjoyed the hospitality of an illustrious family of Mecca. Abu Shaja Zahir b. Rustam and his learned sister Bint Rustam was the family who had immigrated to Hijaz from Isphahan. Zahir bin Rustam was himself a Sufi and occupied a high position in the society.

While in Mecca he performed the Hajj. During the circumambulation (*tawaf*) of the Ka'aba he saw a vision on passing the Black Stone. This vision marked a critical stage in his spiritual maturity. (4)

In Mecca he completed four books; *Mishkat al-Anwar* (collection of Hadith), *Ruhu al-Qudus* (biography of Sufis of Andalus), *Taj al-Rasa'il*, *Hilyat al-Abdal*. Also he started the writing of his magnum opus *Futuh al-Makkiyya*. In 1204 he left

Mecca and travelled to Baghdad, then moved on to Mosul. Here he composed a book *al-Tanazzulat al-Mawsiliyya* (Revelations at Mosul). In 53 chapters it described the significance of ablution and prayer (*salat*). He arrived in Hebron in 1206 on his way to Cairo. In Cairo he was accused of heresy by the authorities. The ruler Nasir al-Din al-Malik al-Adil intervened because he had received a letter of commendation from Abu al-Hassan of Bugia.

Life in Konya

Ibn Arabi was discouraged by his reception in Cairo. In 1207 he returned to Mecca to renew his ties with the family of Abu Shaja Rustam. After a year long stay he made his way toward Asia Minor (Asian portion of Turkey). On his arrival in 1210, he was well received by the Saljuq Sultan of Rum, Kay Kaus (1210-1220) and people of Konya. The king had a house built for him worth 100,000 dirhams. One day a beggar passed by and asked for alms, Ibn Arabi gave him the house as this is all he had.

In Konya Sadr al-Din was his faithful disciple

who later became a major exponent of his teachings, and left many large commentaries on his works. Sadr al-Din was a close associate of Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi, whose *Mathnawi* is a monumental book in Persian poetry. Sadr al-Din was also the teacher of Qutb al-Din Shirazi (1236-1311), a notable Sufi/scientist of 13th century. Abd al-Razzaq al-Kashani was another disciple who wrote commentaries on *Fusus al-Hikam* and *Mawaqi al-Nujum*.

In 1211 with a few of his disciples he left Konya and travelled to Baghdad. Here he had a meeting with Shihab al-Din Suharwardi, a great Sufi master.

In 1212 Ibn Arabi wrote a letter to Sultan Kay Kaus who had asked him regarding the treatment of Christians as his subjects. Ibn Arabi advised him to adopt strict measures regarding the treatment of Christians as his subjects. Ibn Arabi advised him to adopt strict measures in his dealings and prevent them from harming the cause of Islam in his kingdom. This was perhaps due to the Crusades that were going on at the time. In 1213 he travelled to Mecca to clear up

the misunderstandings about his poems. He composed a commentary to explain the esoteric meaning of his verses. In 1215 he journeyed once more to Anatolia (Turkey) where he met Kay Kaus and foretold his victory at the battle of Antioch. For the next four years he stayed in Malatya where he gave certificates of authenticity for his books. The next year he went to Aleppo where he stayed until 1221. In 1223 he decided to settle in Damascus, as he wanted to spend the rest of his eventful life in relative peace. Here he completed his masterpiece *Futuhāt Makkiyā*, a sort of spiritual diary of thirty years. In 1240 he breathed his last and was laid to rest at *Salihiyah*, near *Mt. Qasiyun*, north of Damascus. In the 16th century Sultan Salim II built a mausoleum. The tomb is a place of pilgrimage for Sufis.

The ruler of Damascus, al-Malik al-Adil (d1227) and his son al-Malik al-Ashraf as also learned men of the city treated him with great respect. He completed *Futuhāt Makkiyā* and *Fusus al-Hikam* in this city. In addition he completed a collection of his mystical poems *al-Diwan al-akbar*.

His Children

Ibn Arabi got married three times, in three countries. During his stay in Seville, he married a girl Maryam, the daughter of Muhammad ibn Abdun, a wealthy man of great standing. This wife shared with ibn Arabi his aspiration to become a Sufi. The second wife Fatimah was the daughter of Sharif of Mecca who was the mother of Imad al-Din. The third wife was an unnamed lady whom he married in Damascus. She was a daughter of Qazi al-Qaza. (5)

He had two sons, Sa'd al-Din Muhammad (1221-1258), and Ima'd al-Din Muhammad (d1268). The older son was an accomplished poet whose daughter Zainab could answer theological questions at an early age

His Works

Among the Sufis Ibn Arabi is referred to as *Shaikh al-Akbar*, the greatest Teacher. The reason for this is that he was the first person to express in writing doctrines which had been confined to oral transmission and allusions. By doing so he compiled an enormous corpus on various subjects i.e. metaphysical

doctrines, ritual ablution, cosmology, numerology, oneirology, mystical states, Sufi doctrines.

Ibn Arabi himself listed 251 works in his list of books. Few of these have been printed or translated. Approximately 110 works are known to have survived in manuscripts, of these 18 are in Ibn Arabi's own hand. Some 71 have been printed, 33 have been commented on by Muslim scholars, 16 have been translated into other languages.

Some of his famous books are: *Fusus al-Hikam*, *Futuhāt Makkiyā*, *Mahazirat al-Abrar*, *Mashaid al-Israr*, *Tarjaman al-Ishwaq*, *Tanazul al-Imlak*, *Kitab al-Aqaid*, *Al-Aqd al-Manzoom*, *Jami al-Ahkam*, *Mawaiq al-Nujum* (The setting of the Stars, first book he wrote), *Insha al-dawair* (the creation of the spheres), *Uqlat al-mustawfiz* (the spell of the obedient servant), *Risalat al-Khalwa* (treatise on spiritual retreat), *Risalat al-Wasaya* (spiritual counsels), *Kitab al-Abadilah* (The book of Abdallah), *Diwan Ibn Arabi* (collection of his poems).

Some of his works are clear and simple, while

others are highly condensed. He had a language of his own. He created his technical vocabulary. Several of his followers wrote dictionaries of this terminology i.e. *Kitab Istilahat al-sufiyah* of Abd al-Razzaq al-Kashani (d1330), *Tarifat* of al-Jurjani.

He was as much at home with the Holy Qur'an and Hadith scholarship as with philology, letter symbolism, philosophy, alchemy and cosmology. He could write with equal facility in prose or poetry. The rhymed prose (*saj'*), which is found in the Holy Qur'an abounds in his works.

Futuhât al-Makkiyya, is a veritable encyclopaedia of Sufism (spiritual knowledge) which unites and distinguishes the three strands of tradition, reason and mystical insight. It was conceived and undertaken on his first visit to Mecca in 1201, and completed in Damascus in 1237. It treats unsystematically mystical experiences, metaphysical theories, visions, cosmological doctrines, Sufi doctrines and speculations. In 560 chapters, it is a work of tremendous size, a personal encyclopaedia extending over all the subjects in Islam as Ibn Arabi under-

stood and had experienced them, together with valuable information about his inner life.

He asserts in the book that it was not the result of free choice, or reflection but "*God dictated to me everything that I have written through the angel of inspiration.*" More than 100 commentaries have been written on it. In February 1979, the Egyptian parliament decided to halt the publication of *Futuhât* in progress as well as the distribution of those already published. However the decision was revoked under vehement disputes.

Fusus al-Hikam (The Bezels of Wisdom) was composed by him in 1229, 11 years before his death. It is an exposition of the inner meaning of the wisdom of the prophets in the Judaic/ Christian/ Islamic line. It is a book of 200 pages, but vast in content. Each of the 27 chapters is devoted to the basic doctrines of Islamic esotericism. It was inspired by a vision of the Prophet Muhammad^{saw} holding a book in his hand which he ordered Ibn Arabi to take and transmit to the world.

This book came under heavy criticism and he

was declared a heretic (*Kafir*) by many religious scholars (Ibn Taimiyah). It was translated into French by T. Burkhardt in 1955 with explanations. Khawja Khan made an English translation, *The Wisdom of the Prophets* (Madras, 1929). It has been printed many times in Arabic, the most critical edition was prepared by Abul Ala Afifi (Cairo, 1946). In Urdu it was translated by Maulvi Abdul Qadeer Siddiqui. His translation is interpretive and explains the terms and grammar while expounding Ibn Arabi's views.

Many commentaries have been written on *Fusus*, notably that of Sadr al-Din al-Konawi, and Abdul Ghani al-Nablusi. It is studied in those Islamic countries where Sufism flourishes as the most masterly text on gnosis (*Irfan*).

Tarjaman al-Ashwaq (The Interpretation of Desires) was translated into English in 1911 by R.A. Nicholson. *Ruh al-Quds and al-Durrat al-Fakhirah* were translated by Dr R.W. Austin, and published in 1971 in a single volume. Life sketches of 71 Sufis of Andalusia have been given in *Sufis of Andalusia*.

Some smaller works

were translated into Spanish by Asin Palacios in 1931. (6)

Only 18 of his works survive in his own hand, many exist in copies made with his authority. Numerous autographed manuscripts are stored in various libraries of Baghdad, Istanbul and Konya.

Style of Writing

While writing about the stomach, he cites the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

"Oh you who believe, fight against those infidels close to you." (9:123).

The lot of the Sufi, he writes, "is to consider that this verse refers to his own soul... for of all the 'infidels', it is the closest to him. When he has done battle with it and killed or imprisoned it, only then he does occupy himself with other infidels, according to the demands of the station that he has attained. This infidel soul possesses two powerful swords, the stomach and the sex – which make all creatures subservient. But of these two swords, the one more to be feared is the stomach. When the stomach is tamed, sex is also. In fact, he adds,

the body demands only what is strictly necessary." (7)

His Sayings

*"Whoever is truthful in something and pursues it diligently will obtain it sooner or later; if he does not obtain it in this world, he will obtain it in the next; and whoever dies before victory shall be elevated to the level of his diligence." (Editor's note: This interpretation is Ibn Arabi's own).

*"The knower of Allah knows through eyesight (*basar*) what others know through insight (*basira*), and - he knows through insight what virtually no-one knows. Despite this, he does not feel secure from the harm of his ego towards himself; how then could he ever feel secure from what His Lord has foreordained for him?" –

*"The knower's declaration to his student: 'Take from me this science which you can find nowhere else,' does not detract from the knower's level, nor do other similar declarations that appear to be self-eulogy, because his intention is only to encourage the student to receive it." –

*"The discourse of

the knower is in the image of the listener according to the latter's powers, readiness, weakness, and inner reservations." - "If you find it complicated to answer someone's question, do not answer it, for his container is already full and does not have room for the answer." –

*"The ignorant one does not see his ignorance as he basks in its darkness; nor does the knowledgeable one see his own knowledge, for he basks in its light." - "Whoever asks for a proof for Allah's oneness, a donkey knows more than him."

*"The movement which is the existence of the universe is the movement of love."

*"Neither my Heaven nor my Earth contains me but the heart of my faithful believer contains me," This is because the heart is a mirror in which the manifested "Form of God" is at each moment reflected on the scale of the microcosm".

Addressing his close associates he once said: *"For every type of knowledge, there are certain people. Everyone cannot master themselves for every type of knowledge, nor there is enough time to do*

it. Therefore, it is incumbent, that there should be every type of people in any community. There should be people with a different bent of mind, although their objective should be the same." (8)

Unity of Being

Sheikh Ibn Arabi (*Sheikh al-Akbar*) is generally known as the major exponent of the idea of *Wahdat al-Wajud*, though he never used this term in any of his books. Like every mystic, his emphasis lay rather on the true potential of the human being and the path to realizing that potential, which reaches its completion in the Perfect Man (*al-insan al-kamil*).

Wahdat al-Wajud is a peculiar type of philosophy. It means "that while God is absolutely transcendent with respect to the universe, the Universe is not completely separated from Him; that the Universe is mysteriously plunged in God." (9)

Ibn Arabi shows how 'A Perfect Man' is the complete image of this reality and how those who truly know their self know God. His writings provide ample exposition of the Unity of Being, the single and indi-

visible reality which transcends and is manifested in all the images of the world. For this theory he was accused of being a pantheist, which implies a substantial continuity between God and the Universe, whereas Ibn Arabi believed in God's absolute transcendence over every category. (10)

His Ideology

Ibn Arabi exerted a strong influence upon his friends and disciples, many of whom were spiritual masters in their own right. He considerably affected the whole course of spiritual thought and practice in the Islamic world. His books were studied by followers of Sufism. His poems were chanted in centers of various Sufi orders (*Tariqah*). In recent years his writings have also become increasingly the subject of interest and study in the West, leading to the establishment of an international academic society in his name.

Ibn Arabi believed in the continuous existence of non-legislative (*anbiya la tashri'a lahum*) prophecy. He also believed that the Sufi's are able to receive instructions from the Holy Prophet through the mediation of the angel Gabriel.

He is reported to have thought that the cessation of prophecy would amount to the death of Islam. (11)

He explained the relationship between a *muhaddath* (person who is spoken to) and the non-legislative prophet. A *muhaddath* is different from a legislative prophet (*anbiya tashri'ee*) in so far as the imposition of new law (*Shari'a*) is concerned. He is considered *Ra'sal auliya wa jami al-muqamat* (head of the saints and all the stages on the spiritual path are gathered in his personality). He has a share in the non-legislative prophecy and there seems to be little difference, Volume 2, page 103 between him and the non-legislative prophet. (12)

The cardinal idea in his thought is that persons who attained the spiritual rank of prophecy will never cease to exist in the Islamic *umma* (community). It is based on the *Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad^{SAW}, in which he asked Allah to "pray for Muhammad and for the family of Muhammad as You prayed for Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim".

There were Prophets among the descendants of Hadhrat Ibrahim^{AS}, hence it

is implicit in the supplication Allah will bestow the rank of prophecy on Muslims as well.

Ibn Arabi says the prophecy that ended "is the legislative prophecy and not its spiritual rank. No law will ever abrogate his (Muhammad's^{saw}) law... and will not add another law, to his. This is the meaning of the Prophet's statement that "mission and prophecy ceased and there will be no messenger after me and no prophet. " It means that after me there will be no prophet who will enact a law different from mine. Moreover, should there be a (prophet after me), he will be subject to my law. (And the meaning of the phrase) "no messenger" is that no messenger will be sent to after me with a law to a group of Allah's creature in order to invite them to implement it. This is the thing that ceased and its door was closed, not the (spiritual) rank of prophecy." (13) Servants of Allah in each generation were given a spiritual rank equal to a non-legislative prophet.

The greatest numbers of his adherents are to be found in Iran. Even today his metaphysics together with Suharwardi's (1155-1191), forms the basis of the worldview of Ira-

nian intellectuals

Glossary of Some Sufi Terms.

Ahl al-tariqah: follower of a Sufi order

Fana: self-annihilation

Faqir: a follower of Sufi path

Mutasawwif: one who participates in Sufism, derive in Persian

Shaykh: Master

Silsilah: spiritual chain

Sufi: a person who has realized the goal and achieved the state of supreme identity.

Tariqah: Sufi order

Zikr: repetition of the Divine name

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Zakaria.virk@ontario.ca

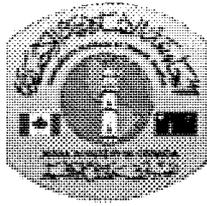
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Admission of Students to Jamia Ahmadiyya Canada for 2007 / 2008

We are pleased to announce that admission to the Jamia Ahmadiyya Canada for the academic year starting from September 2007 has started. The last date for the receipt of applications is **June 30, 2007**. Interviews of the prospective candidates from Canada will be conducted on **July 3, 2007**. Interviews of the prospective candidates from USA will be conducted in Washington USA on a date to be announced later. *Insha' Allah!*

- The Jamia offers a seven year comprehensive course in Islam and comparative religions.
- The medium of instruction is both English and Urdu.
- The age limit for students in the 1st year is from 17 to 19 years.
- The minimum educational requirement for admission will be Grade 12 certification or equivalent.
- Admission will be open to Waqfin-e-Nau children as well as those who dedicate their lives for the service of Islam.
- Preference will be given to those students who can correctly read the Holy Qur'an and those who have a basic knowledge of Urdu / Arabic.
- Applicants seeking admission should apply through our email or our postal address, so that the requisite application forms can be sent to them.

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- All applications must be accompanied by recommendation of the Jama`at President; and Ameer Jama`at and Missionary In-Charge.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES OF DIFFERENT JAMA'ATS IN THE CENTRAL EAST REGION

York/ Harrisburg

On March 4, 2008 a Religious Founders Day was celebrated at Noor Mosque. A speaker from the African American Baptist Church and one from the Church of Latter Day Saints spoke on Heavenly Signs along with our own Imam Kauser Sahib. Two guests were also present. 4 copies of Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam were given.

On March 10, 2007 from 11:00 to 3:00pm, Saleem A. Muhaimin, Tabligh Sec. attended Central York Middle School "Cultural Diversity Celebration". There were a number of interactive events and workshops for the public on "student problem identification and resolution of issues"; also a session on "how prejudiced words and phrases shape our lives and attitudes. A Native American professor and lecturer spoke on his culture, art and music. A book stall and display was set up. Sixty pieces of literature were given out: 30 booklets on "Understanding Islam" and 30 leaflets on "Peace and Tolerance in Islam".

On March, 25th two members of the Jamaat were invited to speak at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Harrisburg. Bhatti Sahib introduced 42 people in the audience to Ahmadiyyat. He explained to them that the second coming of Hadhrat Isa^{as} has occurred and answered basic questions about Islam, including how Islam has nothing to do with terrorism. Previously a copy of the Holy Qur'an and the "Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam" were presented to them.

Long Island, NY

March 7th at C W Post College topic: Interfaith marriages. Two members gave the Islamic perspective. The function was attended by 25 people. A Catholic Priest and a Rabbi gave their views from the point of view of their religions.

March 12th: Two members attended the meeting of a Multi-Faith group attended by 20 members. The meeting was attended by members of various faiths including 3 members from non-Ahmadi mosques. Many of the members who attended the interfaith meeting at Baitul Huda praised and appreciated the proceedings. Our invitation and our program was also printed and given to all the members.

March 21st: The Presbyterian Church in Sag Harbor held a meeting on "Understanding Muslims-Americans". The program was titled, "Islam, learn the basics of a faith" and was attended by 30 people. Respected Imam Kauser gave an excellent presentation, the audiences was very impressed and their questions were answered. In conclusion ,they were all satisfied. There was another woman Muslim speaker from Westbury who was very impressed by Imam Kauser Sahib's presentation After the event she emailed President Rizwan "...Also if you could give me the Imam's contact telephone # or email as I would like to to speak with ICLI executive committee to invite him to give a *Khutba* at our Masjid" (the Muslim lady is an American and probably has no concept about us, May Allah Guide her. *Ameen*) A total of about 100 pieces of literature were distributed.

March 9th: Held the Friday Sermon and Prayers; attended by 4 people at CW Post College. On March 28th: Rev Tom Goodhue, Executive Director of Long Island Churches and Chairman Arvind Vora, Chairman of Multi Faith Org will visit Baitul Huda and meet our Amila Members.

Queens, NY

- In March multiple copies of Jama'at books were either mailed or personally given out. Titles include *Jesus in India* (17 copies), *Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam* (26 copies), and *Pathway to Paradise* (12 copies).
- Over 500 copies of past issues of *Review of Religions* were mailed out to individuals and institutions.
- A postcard on the subject of "Jesus in India" was sent to over 315 addresses. We have been doing this regularly, and we have had a very positive response as we receive orders for books.
- On the individual front, the message of Islam and Ahmadiyyat was conveyed to at least 27 individuals during the past month.
- We are sending Jama'at literature to 17 Community Centers throughout New York City on a monthly basis.
- A total of 165 invitations cards were sent to all mosques in New York City and the Long Island area.
- We sent letters of congratulations to the officials from Bulgaria, Ghana, Mauritius, Ireland, Tunisian, Namibia, Greece and Bangladesh.
- Our monthly advertisements in Bengali and African newspapers continue to appear.

Philadelphia

Da'een Class: During the month of March we had 2 Da'een meeting, attended by an average of 5 Ansar and 1 Khadim. We are having this meeting every Wednesdays for approx 2 hours. The prime objective is examining individual achievements, to share success stories, and plan for the next time period.

One to One Tabligh Meeting: 8 Members of the Jama'at have been involved in one to one Tabligh to 14 people. Two Nasir had the opportunity to progress upon their Tabligh with 3 people; out of which one contact even attended the Masih Mau'ood day.

Tabligh in Small Towns: One member actively got involved in Upper Darby in meetings sponsored by the Mayor. The objective is to discuss ways to create harmony in the neighborhood by curbing the increased wave of violence. In this way they got the opportunity to discuss Islam and it's teachings. *Insha Allah* a faith-based seminar will be organized as a result of these meeting, to discuss various religious teachings for a peaceful society.

One Bai'at: Mr. Ashraf Jamal Khan accepted Ahmadiyyat on Masih Mau'ood Day by verbalizing the *Bai'at*, along with the present members of the Jama'at.

Willingboro, NJ Jamaat

An inter-faith meeting was held at the new mosque building on Sunday March 11, 2007. The topic discussed at this gathering was "Religious Tolerance and Social Interaction" The meeting

started at 2PM and ended at 5PM. And was followed by a social hour, during which snacks, tea and coffee were served. During this time guests/hosts had an opportunity to ask questions on a one to one basis and develop personal relations with each other. Members of the following six houses of worship participated: Samarpan Hindu Temple, Adath Emau-El Synagouge, St. Peter Celestine Roman Catholic Church, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Central Jersey Sikh Association

The Mayor of Willingboro, the Honorable Jeffery E. Ramsey was the special guest for the occasion. The meeting was chaired by Na'ib Ameer Munir Hamid Sahib. The speeches were followed by a question and answer session.

The representative of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints expressed the desire to bring the children of their church to our mosque at a future date for a familiarization trip, and the Mayor extended an invitation for a member of our mosque to fill a vacant seat on the Human Relations Committee of the Willingboro Township. All guests were handed a brochure on Ahmadiyyat for Tabligh purposes and an insert was added to the invitation and program schedule for similar reasons. The entire program was video taped, to be sent to MTA for broadcast at a future date.

The two Tabligh teams met on two occasions during the month of March, to prepare for Tabligh to Local Christians and Muslims of Indo Pak origin. The topics of *Khatam-e-Nubuwwat* and *the Death of Jesus Christ* were discussed. During the usual Friday Qur'an classes, held by our Missionary, I. H. Kauser Sahib, Tabligh techniques were discussed and he gave detailed references from the Bible, for use by the Tabligh teams.

Central NJ Jama'at

- * The new program was sent to the Jama'at on 2/28 and because of the feedback obtained, some minor changes were made to the program.
- * Flyers and letters of invitations to the churches were put together.
- * 18 Tabligh teams were made on March 4th to invite churches in the neighborhood of the Masjid in Old Bridge for the Holy Founders Day:

Some teams worked very diligently and we got a commitment from 4 churches. One of the church committed to bring 10 to 15 members, other churches also promised to bring members with them.

Mr. Sam Thompson, member of NJ Congress also accepted our invitation to attend the program.

A few meetings with the members of the Tabligh committee have been held to make new programs for the year and *Inshallah*, shortly more programs will be announced. The book stall in Newark and English Town flea market will also be restarted as the weather gets better.

North NJ Jama'at

1. One new contact was made during this month under Tabligh.
2. 30 pieces of free literature was distributed.

Tabligh Activity Report

Los Angeles West Jama'at

Ibrahim Naeem

On Saturday, March 24, 2007, the LA West Jama'at held a Religious Founder's Day event at the Torrance Civic Center, Torrance, California. The meeting, which was held in conjunction with the Salvation Army Church began at 3:30 p.m. and was attended by more than 50 people.

The program began with a brief welcoming statement by Ibrahim Naeem, Secretary Tabligh, who acted as the moderator. He then introduced the speakers, the first of whom was John Neu, Chief of Police for the City of Torrance. Chief Neu gave a very informative presentation about the Police Department and their activities regarding public safety. He also expressed a great appreciation of his relationship with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and the importance of having a long standing and cooperative working relationship with the Muslim community. After his presentation he answered a number of questions related to gang activity in the neighboring parts of Los Angeles and youth activities for local young people as deterrents from becoming involved in gangs. He introduced two other officers from his department that were in attendance and advised the audience that further questions could be directed to them after the program.

Next the moderator introduced Captain Ivan of the Salvation Army, who, as the pastor of the church, spoke about the primary tenets of the Christian faith. His presentation was thoughtfully planned and eloquently presented. Afterwards he answered a number of questions from the audience. Captain Ivan expressed on several occasions that he was representing what the Bible taught regarding the Christian faith and that, although there may be room for difference and disagreement, his effort was to convey the teachings of the Bible regarding the fundamental Christian beliefs. He did a wonderful job.

Imam Shamshad Nasir Sahib was the last to speak. He gave a brief but thorough overview of the five pillars of Islam and the six articles of faith. He particularly avoided any area of controversy in his presentation. During the question/answer period, he received the majority of questions and deftly answered them. It became clear during the question/answer session how much people are affected in their opinions of Islam by the media and the importance of our distinguishing ourselves from other Muslims as Ahmadies. After Imam Shamshad encouraged the young people in the audience to ask their questions, the question and answer session was extended. At the completion of which, everyone was invited to a very delicious dinner. Imam Shamshad presented Police Chief Neu with a copy of Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues and Captain Ivan with a copy of Absolute Justice.

The conversations at the dinner table were very lively. There was a wonderful spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood. People stayed a long while and continued the discussions. By the Grace of Almighty Allah, the event was very successful: thanks to the dedicated effort of Jalaluddin Ahmad, President of LA West, who organized this event and the support of the Ansarullah, Khuddam, Atfal and Lajna. All auxiliaries worked well to help make the event a success.

May Allah richly bless all who participated.

CNN TALKS TO GENEIVE ABDO AND LAJNA MEMBERS

Shahina Bashir. Potomac Lajna

“For years, Muslim American women have complained about being secluded in a separate room, if not the basement, of a mosque during prayer time. Women in a mosque, at times, neither hear the imam’s sermon directly nor see him. Often, they strain to make out the words coming through an old, scratchy speaker system. No matter where the mosque is located or whether it is old or new, it seems the quality of the speaker system is the same. It is as if someone planted old electronic equipment in all the mosques in America as part of a conspiracy to make it difficult for women to hear the imam.” This is an excerpt from the book, “Mecca and Main Street: Muslim Life in America After 9/11”, by Geneive Abdo. This book was published on the fifth anniversary of 9/11. It is a detailed study of the life of the Muslims in America and their challenges as a result of the tragedy of 9/11. The author traveled to various Muslim communities in the USA and interviewed the members. I read the book with great interest and after I finished reading it I decided to write to the author. In my email to Ms. Abdo, I mentioned that I am a member of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and that I, as well as the other women of our community certainly do not share the same sentiments as those she encountered during her research. I added that the women of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community are very active members and we do not have any qualms about the separation of the sexes; neither do we have any problems in regards to our involvement in the mosque activities. I ended my email with an invitation for her to come and visit Baitur Rahman. I was sure that I would not receive a response to my email, but to my great surprise Ms. Abdo wrote me back and accepted my invitation to visit Baitur Rahman.

When I made contact with Ms. Abdo, who is a journalist as well, my intention was to invite her to study our Jama’at and perhaps write a book if not some articles for the prominent newspapers. I contacted a few women from the Potomac Chapter, including Ruqaiya Asad who is the editor of the Ayesha magazine. We agreed that we should interview Ms. Abdo and include that in the upcoming issue along with a book review of “Mecca and Main Street”.

The initial date that we set with Ms. Abdo was not suitable for her and so we had to reschedule it. We were preparing to meet her at the mosque and that was about it. Then one day she emailed me saying that CNN would like to accompany her to Baitur Rahman and film the interview that the Lajna would be conducting. She explained that CNN was producing a documentary on the three Abrahamic faiths, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, which would be aired towards the end of August. The documentary would be six hours long and each episode would be two hours. The first in the series would be on Islam. Part of the filming would be done overseas in Lebanon and Egypt, but the episode would begin with Muslims in America. Needless to say that the moment CNN was mentioned, I suddenly became

nervous and did not know what to do. Immediately I forwarded the email to Sadr Lajna USA, Dr. Shanaz Butt Sahiba. She contacted Ameer Sahib for guidance. By the Grace of Allah and with a lot of prayers, CNN was allowed to come to Baitur Rahman on May 17 to film the four of us talking to Ms. Abdo. Before we conducted the interview with Ms. Abdo, she asked us some questions that were mainly related to 9/11. One of the questions she asked was whether the members of our Jama'at became more religious as a result of 9/11. The answer that we gave was that the members of our Community were already religious in the sense that we practice our faith and attend the mosque regularly. However, after 9/11, we all became a little more aware of our identity as Muslims. We talked about how we hosted several open houses and invited members of different faiths and dispelled the misconceptions about Islam.

The CNN crew, which included the producer, Mr Brian Rokus, director, cameraman, and a sound technician, were very impressed with the Baitur Rahman mosque. They found our discussion/interview with Ms. Abdo fascinating. They were very grateful for being able to come to the mosque and shoot for the documentary. Our hope and prayer is that the documentary will open up a window of opportunity for the Ahmadiyya Jama'at to be on a broader media coverage which would include television, as well as print, *Insha Allah*.

CERTAINTY, TRUST AND FAITH IN GOD

Hadhrat Jabir^{ra} relates that he accompanied the Holy Prophet^{saw} in a campaign towards Najd and returned with him. At noon the party reached a valley of thorny trees where the Holy Prophet^{saw} made a halt and his Companions scattered in search of shade. He hung up his sword from the branch of an acacia tree and lay down in its shade. We also took a siesta and suddenly we heard the Holy Prophet^{saw} calling us. We hastened to him and saw that a rustic Arab was standing near him. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said to us: "This one drew my sword against me while I was asleep. I woke up and saw that he had the drawn sword in his hand. He said to me: 'Who will deliver you from me?' I told him: 'Allah; and repeated it three times. The sword fell down from his hand and he could not do anything.' " The Holy Prophet^{sa} sat up and imposed no penalty on the man.

Another version runs: We were with the Holy Prophet^{saw} in the campaign of *Dhatir Riqā'*. We came to a shady tree and we left it for him to rest under. A pagan came and seeing the sword of the Holy Prophet^{saw} which was hanging from the tree, drew it, and said to him: "Do you fear me? He answered: 'No.' Then the man asked: 'Now who will deliver you from me?' The Holy Prophet^{saw} answered: 'Allah.' Thereupon, the sword fell from the man's hand and the Holy Prophet^{saw} having secured it asked him: 'Who will now deliver you from me?' The man said: 'You forgive me.' The Holy Prophet^{saw} asked him: 'Will you affirm that there is no one worthy of worship save Allah and that I am His messenger?' The man said: 'No.' But I promise you that I will not fight against you, nor will I join those who do so.' " The Holy Prophet^{saw} let him go free. He went back to his people and told them: "I have come back to you from one who is the best of the mankind."

(*Bukhari kitabal maghazi bab ghazwah dhatirriqa'*)

Bismilla hir Rahma nir Raheem - Nahmaduhoo wa Nusalli ala Rasoole hil Kareem

Karim Ahmed Naeem Sahib

Passed Away in Houston, Texas

On May 16th 2007, Karim Ahmed Naeem Sahib (the youngest son of Hadhrat Dr. Hashmatullah Khan Sahib^{ra}, a companion of the Promised Messiah^{as} and personal physician of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}), passed away in Houston, TX.

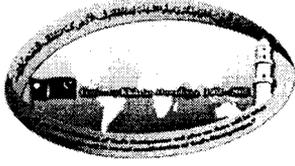
إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Respected Karim Ahmed Naeem Sahib was the beloved father of Munum A. Naeem Sahib, (Na'ib Ameer, USA), Mohsin Naeem Sahib, Amatul Aziz Nighat Ahmed Sahiba (Sadr Lajna Brooklyn, NY), Amatul Riffat Sahiba and Amatul Shafi Siddiqui Sahiba (Sadr Lajna Mirpurkhas). He also leaves behind his beloved wife Zubaida Begum Sahiba daughter of Dr. Sheikh Ghulam Haider Sahib of Lahore.

Karim Ahmed Naeem Sahib was born in Qadian, India on June 30th, 1929. He had the honor of being a close friend of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV^{rh} in his childhood. Hazoor^{rh} mentioned this on MTA in the Children's Class.

During the partition of India in 1947, Karim Ahmad Naeem Sahib was on duty for the security of Qadian. After migration to Pakistan he enrolled himself in the "Furqan Force" to serve on the border of Kashmir for three months. He was Ameer of District Mianwali, Punjab for 16 years.

He migrated to the U.S.A in 1976, and served as General Secretary of the New York Jama'at. In 1993, he was appointed National Financial Secretary of Majlis Ansarullah USA. He also served the Jama'at as Secretary Tarbiyyat of the New Jersey Jama'at. By the grace of Allah he was a *Moosi*. On Friday, May 18th, his Funeral Prayer was offered in Houston, Texas which was attended by a large number of people. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} offered his "Namaz Janazah Gha'ib" in London, at Fazl Mosque on May 28th, 2007. He is buried in the *Moosian* Section of the Ahmadiyya Graveyard in Houston. May Allah exalt his status in Heaven and give patience to the family to bear this loss. (Ameen)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Centenary Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya Essay Writing Competition

In commemorating the centennial jubilee of Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya a nationwide essay-writing competition is being held. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V عليه السلام has directed that these competitions should be arranged by Majlis Ansarullah. The topic, rules, and regulations of the competition are as follows:

Topic: The Institution of Khilafat

Due date: December 31, 2007

(Entries received after the due date will not be considered for the competition - no exceptions)

Rules and Regulations:

- Ansar, Khuddam and Lajna may submit essay as individuals or with co-authors from the same auxiliary. Similarly, Atfal and Nasirat may submit essay as individuals or with co-authors from the same auxiliary.
- The essay shall consist of a minimum of 30,000 words and a maximum of 60,000 words and must be submitted in English (limit for Atfal and Nasirat is minimum of 2,000 words and maximum of 4,000 words).
- A complete list of references must be provided: references must state authors' names, year of publication, title, edition, and publisher.
- The essay must be submitted as a MS Word file (on a disk or via e-mail).
- The following are sub-headings given only to *guide* the competitors. However, essays by no means should be limited to these topics:
 1. Definition, importance, and types of *Khilafat*.
 2. Institution of *Khilafat* according to the Holy Qur'an and *Ahadith*.
 3. Institution of *Khilafat* according to Muslim scholars.
 4. Importance of the station of *Khilafat*.
 5. The great objectives of *Khilafat*.
 6. Institution of *Khilafat* is a part of religion.
 7. Responsibilities of *Khilafat* and the great system of discharging them.
 8. The establishment of *Tauheed* (unity of Allah) through *Khilafat*.
 9. *Khilafat* as a means of spiritual elevation.
 10. *Khilafat* as a means of unity of Nations.
 11. Sayings of Hazrat Masih Maud عليه السلام and his *khulafa* (plural of *Khalifa*) about *Khilafat*.
 12. Blessings of *Khilafat*.
 13. Brief account of *Khilafat-e-Rashida*.
 14. History of *Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya* and a brief life sketch of each *Khalifa*.
 15. *Tahrikat* of *Khulafa-e-Ahmadiyyat* (schemes initiated by *Khulafa-e-Ahmadiyyat*).
 16. Great achievements of Jama'at Ahmadiyya during *Khilafat*.
 17. Establishment of *Khilafat* and our responsibilities.

Prizes:

- First place (over all and for each auxiliary): Prize and a certificate
- Second place (over all and for each auxiliary): Prize and a certificate
- Third place (over all and for each auxiliary): Prize and a certificate
- First, Second, and Third places for Atfal: Prizes and a certificates
- First, Second, and Third places for Nasirat: Prizes and a certificates
- All participants: Certificates

Please submit your essay (on a disk or as attachment to e-mail) to the following address:

M. Dawood Munir, Qa'id Ta'lim, Majlis Ansarullah, USA

11106 Brandon Gate, Houston, TX 77095-6603 (e-mail: mmunir52@sbcglobal.net)

Bismillahi-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahcem

AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM - USA
NATIONAL TARBIYYAT DEPARTMENT

Tel/Fax: 310-355-1380

e-mail: ntsusa@yahoo.com

May 22, 2007

All Missionaries
All Na'ib Umara
All Jama'at Presidents
All Auxiliary Presidents
All Tarbiyyat Secretaries
National Waqfe Nau Secretary

SUBJECT: 9th Annual National Tarbiyyat Class – 2007

Assalaamo Alaikum wa Rahmatullaaha wa Barakaatohu.

This year the subject class will be held in 4 locations. Thus, the students will have a choice of location and dates.

Please broadcast this announcement and the attached self-explanatory 'class enrollment' form as soon as possible to all parents. This form will also be posted on the ahmadiyya.us web site and can be downloaded from there.

Also, please use your good offices to motivate prospective parents and students to benefit from this excellent raining (*tarbiyyat*) opportunity.

Please know that your passionate support and fervent prayers are critical to the success of this class and we are counting on them.

Wassalaam. Sincerely,

Nasir M. Malik
National Tarbiyyat Secretary

CC: Mohtaram Amir Sahib
Na'ib National Secretaries, please promote this class in your area

AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM - USA
NATIONAL TARBIYYAT DEPARTMENT

Tel/Fax: 310-355-1380

e-mail: ntsusa@yahoo.com

9th ANNUAL NATIONAL TARBIYYAT CLASS – 2007

Purpose: Train the participants to learn and live Ahmadiyyat, the true Islam.

- General:**
- This class will be offered in four locations.
 - Students may attend any class of their choice.
 - All male members over 12 are eligible for this class.
 - Enrollment is required at least 2 weeks before the class.
 - Students will be responsible for transportation to the class.
 - Students will be expected to abide by the Class Rules and Regulations.
 - Students will be expected to stay at the class site for the full class duration.
 - Students will not be allowed to bring any electronic toys/games in the class.
 - Students will share the daily cooking, serving, and cleaning responsibilities.
 - Students will be expected to bring their own sleeping bags, pillows, toiletries, etc.
 - Typical class schedule is enclosed (more details will be provided after enrollment).

- Location:**
- (1) Baitus Samee Mosque, Houston, TX (Jun 30 – Jul 08)
 - (2) Al-Nur Mosque, Pittsburgh, PA (Jul 21 – Jul 29)
 - (3) Baitus Salaam Mosque, Los Angeles, CA (Aug 04 – Aug 12)
 - (4) Baitul Jamee Mosque, Chicago, IL (Aug 18 – Aug 26)

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

*Please send this form (2 pages), at least 2 weeks prior to the class start date, to:
Mr. Mansoor Ishfaq at mansoor_ishfaq@hotmail.com (13012 Sycamore Village Dr., Norwalk, CA 90650).
For more information, please contact him at 310-985-4317.*

Student's Name: _____ Age: _____

Father's Name: _____ Jama'at: _____

Waqfe Nau (Y/N): _____ e-mail: _____ Tel: _____ - _____ - _____

Complete Mailing Address (# Street, City, State, Zip Code): _____

Emergency Contact (Name & Number): _____

Class Location: _____ Class Date: _____

Traveling to the Class by (please circle one): CAR AIR BUS TRAIN

Special Needs: _____

2007 NATIONAL TARBIYYAT CLASS

Parental Permission / Emergency Release Information

(All students under 18 are required to have this form filled by his parent or legal guardian)

Class Location: _____ **Class Start Date:** _____

Personal Information: (Please print)

Parent's/Guardian's Name: _____ Jama'at: _____

Student Name: _____ D.O.B. ____/____/____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Parent's Cell: _____

Emergency Information: (Please print)

Drugs _____ or _____ Other _____ Allergies: _____

Special Medical Conditions: _____

Other Areas of Concern: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Emergency Contact Numbers: Cell _____ Home _____

Healthcare Insurance Provider: _____

Healthcare Insurance Member ID: _____

Healthcare Insurance Subscriber Name: _____

EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION:

Should this student require immediate medical attention at any time, he will be taken to the nearest Emergency Room. In consideration of the benefits to be derived and having full confidence that every reasonable precaution will be taken to ensure the safety and well being of the above named student during this class, I hereby agree to his participation in this class. I hereby authorize and give my consent and permission to the adult class leaders to obtain medical care as deemed necessary from a licensed physician, dentist, or pharmacist, including but not limited to diagnosis, anesthesia, treatment, surgery, medication or to hospitalize or order injection for this student. I agree to be responsible for any and all expenses thus incurred. I further authorize the adult class leaders to receive physical custody of this student upon completion of any treatment, and I specifically instruct any treating facility to surrender the physical custody of this student to the adult class leader. I certify that I am the parent/guardian having legal custody of this student.

I, _____ (parent/guardian's name), hereby give permission to student, _____, to attend the above class.

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Disclaimer:

This form has been instituted as a means to increase awareness amongst parents/guardians and should not be construed as a cause for alarm. While all necessary precautions are being taken to ensure the safety of the students, parents/guardians must understand that due to the duration and nature of the class activities there may be some unforeseeable risky circumstances