

Gazette

USA

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا
رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا
وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ^ج وَاعْفُ عَنَّا^{قفه}
وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا^{قفه} وَارْحَمْنَا^{قفه} أَنْتَ
مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ
الْكَافِرِينَ

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Ahmadiyya Gazette USA

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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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اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ صُمْتُ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ

Allah for Thy sake I observed the fast and I end it
with that which Thou has provided

(Abu Da'ud, Kitabussiyam Babal Qawl 'indal aftar)

Al-Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an says about fasting:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى
الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ۝

O Ye who believe! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become righteous. (2:184)

Commentary:

Fasting, as a religious institution, in whatever form or detail, is to be found in all faiths. "By the greater number of religions, in the lower, middle and higher cultures alike, fasting is largely prescribed; and when it is not required it is nevertheless prescribed to some extent by individuals in response to the promptings of nature" (Enc. Brit.).

It is the common experience of saints and seers that a certain degree of severance from physical relations or worldly connections is essential for spiritual advancement and has a powerful purifying effect on the mind. Islam, however, has introduced a new orientation and a new spiritual significance in this institution. According to it fasting constitutes a symbol of complete sacrifice. One who fasts not only abstains from food and drink which are the chief means of sustenance and without which one cannot live, but also from going in unto one's wife which is the means of assuring one's progeny. Thus he who fasts really evinces his readiness, if need be, to sacrifice his all for the sake of his Lord and Creator.

Al-Hadith

Islam has five basic duties which a Muslim has to perform. They are known as the Five Fundamentals of Islam or the Five Pillars of Islam. The pillars of Islam are mentioned in the following *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet^{saw}:

بَيْنِي إِلَّا سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ نَحْمِسٍ شَهَادَةٍ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ أَنَّ
 مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ، وَ إِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ ، وَ إِتْيَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ ، وَ حَجِّ
 الْبَيْتِ ، وَ صَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ 0

Islam is based on five (pillars):

- 1) Bearing witness that there is none worthy of worship but Allah, and Muhammad is His Servant and His Messenger (*Declaration of Faith*)
- 2) Observance of *Salat* (Daily Prayers)
- 3) Paying *Zakat*
- 4) Pilgrimage to the House of Allah (*The Ka'bah*) and
- 5) Fasting during *Ramadan*

(*Bukhari Kitabul Iman Bab Qaulunnabi^{saw} Buniyal Islamu 'Ala khamsin*).

SAYINGS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{as}

THE PURPOSE OF CREATION

Though different people, on account of their short-sightedness or lack of courage, appoint various types of objectives for their lives and stop short at worldly purposes and desires, yet the purpose that God Almighty has specified in His Holy Word is:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ۝

I have created Jinn and men so that they should recognize and worship me.

According to this verse the true purpose of human life is the worship and understanding of God Almighty and devotion to him.

The Three Objects of Life

The real purpose of all the external and internal limbs and faculties that have been bestowed on man is understanding and worship and love of God. That is why, despite a thousand occupations, man does not find his true well-being except in God Almighty. Having acquired great wealth, or achieved high office, or having become a great merchant, or having acquired governing authority, or become a great philosopher, he departs in the end from these worldly involvements with a sense of frustration. His heart rebukes him all the time about his deep concern with the world and his conscience never approves his wiles and deceits and wrongful actions. This problem can be appreciated in another way. The purpose of the creation of a thing is determined by its highest achievement beyond which its faculties cannot rise. For instance, the highest a bullock is capable of is ploughing, or irrigation, or transportation, and therefore these are the purpose of its life and it cannot rise above them. But when we take stock of man's faculties and powers to discover his highest capacity, we find that he is invested with the faculty of seeking after God so much so that he desires that he should become so devoted to God's love that he should have nothing of his own and that everything should become God's. He shares his natural needs like food and drink and rest with other animates, and in industry some animals are ahead of him; for instance, the bees produce such excellent honey from every type of flower that man has so far not been able to compete with them. It is clear, therefore, that the highest capacity of man is meeting with God Almighty and thus the true purpose of his life is that the window of his heart should open towards God.

Friday Sermon**Delivered By Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}
on October 24th, 2003****Translated by: Belal Khalid*****The fast is a shield, and Allah the Exalted is Himself the Reward******During Ramadhan make special preparations for prayers, tahajjad, nawafil, and recite once the entire Holy Qur'an******An enlightening rendition of the distinctions, blessings, and issues of the blessed month of Ramadhan***

After Surah Al-Fatihah, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} recited Verses 184-185 of Chapter 2, Surah Al-Baqarah

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلٰى الَّذِيْنَ
مِنَ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ۗ اَلَمْ نَجْعَلْ مِنْ دُونِهَا اَيَّامًا
مَّشْرُوعًا عَلٰى الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۗ فَاِذَا اَتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ
فِيْ سَفَرٍ اَوْ عَلٰى اَسْفَلٍ مِّنَ السَّنَةِ فَاِذَا رَجِئْتُمْ
وَلَمْ تَكُنْ اَسْفَلًا مِّنَ السَّنَةِ فَاِذَا رَجِئْتُمْ فَاِذَا رَجِئْتُمْ
فَاِذَا رَجِئْتُمْ فَاِذَا رَجِئْتُمْ ۗ

Then Hazoor^{aba} said:

Ramadhan will Insha Allah begin in the next two to three days. This blessed month brings limitless blessings with it. Before passing, it delivers innumerable blessings to the believers, seekers of taqwa (fear of God), those who

spend their lives in *taqwa*, and those who fast for the sake of Allah during these days. May Allah enable us to gather these blessings!

Allah the Exalted says in the verses just recited by me:

“O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become righteous. The prescribed fasting is for a fixed number of days, but whoso among you is sick or is on a journey shall fast the same number of other days; and for those who are able to fast only with great difficulty is expiation – the feeding of a poor man. And whoso performs a good work with willing obedi-

ence, it is better for him. And fasting is good for you, if you only knew.”

These verses mention the believers, who are these believers? Promised Messiah^{as} says about them:

“Believers are those people whose deeds substantiate their faith. Their hearts have faith stamped on them, and they give preference to God and His pleasure over everything else. They pursue the delicate and fine ways of *taqwa* for the sake of God. They are immersed in His love and abandon everything that like an idol stops from God regardless of whether it is a moral condition, a sinful deed, or negligence and indolence.

The Promised Messiah's^{as} above definition of a believer further clarifies that it is not easy to become a believer. One has to adopt the delicate ways of *taqwa* to become a believer. What are the delicate ways of *taqwa*, he says, "You can adopt the ways of *taqwa* when you lose your will and your every act and deed is for the sake of pleasure of God." Though food is good for your health, and lawful food is permissible, but you have to refrain from food for some time in this month for the sake of pleasure of God the Exalted. The permissible things are also prohibited from *Fajr* prayer to *Maghrib* Prayer. You have to refrain from lawful and permissible things also for the sake of pleasure of God. You will have to give up all sorts of lethargy. Do not disregard my instructions because of indolence and negligence. If you fast because everyone else in the family is fasting and you do not want to be embarrassed, but are neglectful in Prayers, *Nawafil*, reading the Holy Qur'an – everyone should complete at least one recitation of the entire Holy Qur'an during *Ramadhan* – then these fasts are not for the sake of Allah. If you are neglectful, then these fasts are to display to the world. There is a *Hadith* about it that Allah

does not need to starve such people. Your Allah has no interest in such people because these people are not believers, and fast is obligated only on the believers and the people with *taqwa*. Some people do not fast out of laziness, they love sleep; they cannot get up in the morning, or tolerate a little weariness or hunger in the fast. All these things take one away from belief. For this reason it is said that belief is attained by fully acquiring *taqwa* and by fasting as prescribed. Get up for *nawafil*, be punctual in your Prayers, recite the Holy Qur'an regularly and try to understand it. These things will produce *taqwa* in you. As *taqwa* is produced, it will make your belief stronger and stronger. It is said, that the secret to progress in belief and *taqwa* lies in refraining from lawful thing for the sake of God. Fasting has been prescribed for earlier nations as well; all the previous religions prescribed fasts. Among those nations only those people progressed in belief and *taqwa* who complied with their obligations to fast only for the sake of Allah. The commandment for fasting is prescribed in a much improved and defined way for you. Allah says that Allah Himself is the reward for the people who fast to attain

His pleasure. What else does one need if Allah Himself is the recompense and the reward? The condition is that fasting should be carried out as prescribed.

There is a *Hadith* narrated by Hadhrat Abu Huraira^{ra}, that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said, "Whosoever fasted in *Ramadhan* in the state of being a believer and carried out self-purification will have all his previous sins forgiven. If you were knowledgeable of the blessings of the *Ramadhan*, you would have definitely wished that *Ramadhan* spanned the entire year." Two conditions are stated here, first to be a believer, and second self-purification. Everyone should focus on self-purification in the month of *Ramadhan*. During *Ramadhan*, one should analyze the ills one has, which of these ills one could easily get rid of, what good things one is not doing, and which of these good things one should start doing. If one starts doing one or two good things and tries to refrain from one or two ills, then one has benefited of a big blessings of *Ramadhan*.

In another *Hadith* narrated by Hadhrat Abu Huraira^{ra}, the Holy Prophet of Allah^{saw} said, "This month is a shade for you.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} has categorically stated about this month that there is no month better than this month for the believers and there is no month worse than this for the hypocrites. Allah, the Glorified and Exalted, reserves reward and *nawafil* for believers before the commencement of the month and burden (of sins) and misfortunes for the hypocrites. A believer strengthens his abilities for the material sacrifices and a hypocrite increases his abilities to follow the ills in the footsteps of the ignorant. In fact this state is a treasure for the believers and favorable (appropriately) for a sinner.” (Musnad Ahmad)

In the material sacrifices, special attention should be given to alms and charity. It is said about the Holy Prophet^{saw} that his hands would greatly open up during this month.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} in his explanation says that the distinction and the prescription of fasting is described by the words

لَعَاكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

and it is told that fasting is prescribed for you so you are saved. What could it mean? For example first it could mean that fasting is

prescribed for you so you are saved from the objections of those nations that kept fasts and pleased God by bearing the hardships of hunger and thirst, and withstood the intensity of the weather. If you do not fast, those nations would question your claim of more spirituality than other nations and say that you do not have the *taqwa* found in other nations. Second, the

لَعَاكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

also has the connotation that God the Exalted becomes the savior of those who fast. *Itiqa* means to make a shield, a source of salvation, preserved, and more. Therefore this verse means that fasting is prescribed for you so you make Allah the Exalted your shield and so you are saved from every ill and lack of goodness. Fasting is a religious matter, but from health's perspective it has a link with the worldly affairs. So

لَعَاكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

means that you are saved from spiritual and worldly ills, you do not lose religious virtues and blessings, and your health is not compromised. Sometimes fasts save us from many kinds of diseases. I myself witnessed

it, when fasts are kept in the state of health, though you bear some inconvenience but after *Ramadhan* you feel a new vigor and strength. This is the benefit of *Ramadhan* from physical health's perspective but the spiritual advantage is God the Exalted's promise of protection. After the mention of fasting, God the Exalted mentions the acceptance of prayers and says that He is near to His servants and listens to their prayers. Therefore fast attracts God the Exalted's bounties and one who fasts make God the Exalted his shield that saves him from all kinds of afflictions and ills”. (Tafseer-e-Kabeer, Volume II, Page 374-375)

Hazoor^{aba} elaborating it further says, “Another benefit mentioned in

لَعَاكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

is that one who fasts is saved from evils and bad deeds. This is achieved as disengaging from the world improves his spiritual vision and he is able to see those faults that could not be seen before. Similarly man could be saved from sins as the Holy Prophet^{saw} said that fast does not mean that one only keeps his mouth shut all day and refrain from eating or drinking, rather the mouth should

also be saved from all kinds of spiritually detrimental and harmful things. One should not tell lies, call names, backbite and fight. Note that one should always control one's tongue but the one who fasts should specially control his tongue otherwise his fast would be broken.

It should also be remembered that the one who fasts if calls names, fights, backbites, or complains, breaks his fast. This should be carefully noted; if one controls one's tongue for an entire month then it becomes a source of protection for the remaining eleven months. Therefore, the fast saves us from sins forever" (Tafseer-e-Kabeer, Volume II, Page 377)

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} says:

"Another benefit of fasting mentioned is that as a result of fasting one becomes steadfast in *taqwa* and attains higher levels of spirituality. Not only do the well to do get nearness to God the Exalted, the poor also feel a spiritual transformation and enjoy God the Exalted's closeness. The poor bear hardships all year long and sometimes they miss many meals. Allah the Exalted has called their attention through *Ramadhan* where they can get a reward

by missing meals too. There is such a great reward from Allah the Exalted for missing meals that according to a *Hadith*, Allah the Exalted says,

الصَّوْمُ لِي وَأَنَا أُجْزَى بِهِ

It means that all the good deeds have their individual rewards but the reward of fasting is Allah Himself. What else can anyone desire after getting Allah, the Exalted? Through fasting Allah the Exalted has explained the point to the poor that if they do not show impatience and ungratefulness on the hardships, and do not complain like some ignorant people say, "What has God the Exalted given us?" and if they offer their Prayers and keep fast then the missed meals become good deeds for them, and (if they do not complain) their reward would be Allah the Exalted Himself. Thus Allah has made *Ramadhan* a source of contentment for the poor so they do not get frustrated and say that their poor and impoverished life has no use. Allah the Exalted has told them the secret that if they lead their poor and impoverished lives according to God the Exalted's will, it could lead them to God the Exalted. (Tafseer-e-Kabeer, Page 377, 378)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} says:

"The reality of the fast is that one gets control over one's *nafs* (self) and becomes *mutaqi* (God fearing). In the previous *rakoo* (portion) of the Holy Qur'an, it is mentioned about the holy month of *Ramadhan* that some needs of man are personal in nature and others are mankind related. Related to the survival of mankind, eating is one of the personal needs and relationship to one's wife is one of the needs for the survival of offspring. Fasting teaches us the ways to empower over both of these physical needs, and in reality one learns to become *mutaqi*. These days, the days are short, (fortunately *Ramadhan* is in winter and the days are short) and it is winters time and *Ramadhan* went by easily. The people who fast in the summer time know how hard hunger and thirst feels. Young men know really well how much they need their wives. While fasting one feels thirsty in the summer time, when lips are dry, and one has milk, ice, and delicious drinks but refrains from them. Why! Because his Gracious Lord did not allow him to drink them. One feels hungry, all sorts of delicacies including sweet rice, Pilaf, *korma*, *firni*

(dessert) are either present in the house, or could be readily made if not present, but the one fasting does not go near them. Why, because his Gracious Lord did not allow him. Then he said that the one who fasts and does not go close to his wife, only because if he does so, he will displease God the Exalted and be disobedient to Him. When one gets control over oneself, and does not use the every day things for personal need though they are available in the house, then why would his *nafs* (self) get attracted towards the things that are not available to him? A very significant teaching of noble *Ramadhan* is that the believers in God for the sake of His pleasure give up everything and do not care completely disregarding how critical their needs are. The noble Qur'an eludes towards the reality and philosophy of the fast and says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ
الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ
قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ٥

Fasting is for you so that you get used to *taqwa*. One who fasts relinquishes all those things that are permissible and allowed to eat according to the *shariah* (religious law) only because

the Noble Lord did not allow them. Then how is it possible that the same person would try to acquire those things that *shariah* has definitely forbidden, and eat and drink unlawful things, and indulge in sins to fulfill his lust? (Al-Hakam, Jan 24th, 1904 Page 12)

Allah says that these are only a few countable days, a believer should fulfill the requirements of *taqwa* and bear hardships if he has to face them in these days. Here Allah the Exalted commands that He allows you to use all lawful things 11 months of the year and you have been doing it, but now do not use permissible things for His sake for part of the day. Are you going to make excuses? This is not belief and *taqwa*. Allah the Exalted becomes the protector of the people who tread on the path of *taqwa*, and are willing to sacrifice everything for Him. These fasts of a few days not only become a source for Allah's pleasure but also are beneficial for our physical health. This is a proven fact that there should be a time during the year when we consume least amount of food. Thus we derive twofold benefits from this commandment, physical health and God the Exalted's pleasure. It is

said, as God the Exalted does not want to put us through difficulty, pain, and hardship therefore we should not fast in *Ramadhan* if we are sick or traveling, and complete the missed fasts in other days when it is convenient. Here we should remember that it is not the right line of thinking and actually against Allah's commandment to fast because everyone else is fasting, and because it is easy to get up with others, and the thinking of just getting over it one way or the other, and to say, "Who would fast afterwards?" We should always remember that the real objective is *taqwa*, obeying the commandments. The commandments say if you are sick or traveling, irrespective of the length of the journey, if the intention of journey is present then it is considered a journey, and we should not fast. The Promised Messiah^{as} said that even three miles journey is considered a journey if the intention of journey is present. Some people say that they have the perseverance and can bear it. Those people should remember, The Promised Messiah^{as} said:

"In reality, *taqwa* is in making use of the concessions mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. God, the Exalted has given permission and concession to the travelers

and the sick to fast at other times, therefore we should abide by this commandment too. I read that most elders leaned towards and considered it a sin to fast while in the state of journey or sick because the real intent is God the Exalted's pleasure and not one's will, and Allah's pleasure is in obedience. We should obey His orders and not fringe upon them He has commanded

مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى
سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ

There is no further qualification on the type of journey or sickness. I do not fast during a journey or sickness; therefore I did not fast today, as I was not feeling well." (Al-Hakam, Volume 11, Number 4, Jan 21st, 1907)

Then he said:

"One who fasts during *Ramadhan* while in the state of sickness or journey disobeys a clear commandment of God the Exalted. God the Exalted has clearly said that sick and travelers should not fast. One should fast after recovering from sickness and completing the journey. This commandment of God should be acted upon as emancipation is in blessings and no one should expect emancipation by showing supplementary

deeds. God the Exalted did not qualify that the sickness is small or big, the journey is little or long, rather it is a general commandment and it should be acted upon. If the sick and the travelers fast, they will have to face the verdict of being disobedient". (Al-Badar, Oct 17th, 1907)

Then he said:

"Allah has laid the foundation of *shariah* on convenience. The well-to-do travelers and sick should give *fidya* instead of fasting. *fidya* is to feed a poor person". (Al-Badar Vol 6 Number 42, Oct 17th, 1907, Page 7)

Then he said:

"My religion is that one should not put oneself through hardships. During any so-called journey, the rules of journey and break should be adhered to even if the journey is of two or three miles. Sometimes we walk for two or three miles and no one ever thinks that it is a journey, but when one gets his belongings with him (one's luggage, or bag) with the intention of journey then he is traveling. *Shariat* is not based on hardships. Any so-called journey is a journey and as God's commandments are acted upon similarly His leave should be acted upon.

Obligations and leave, both are from God". (Al-Hakam Volume 5, Number 6, Feb 17th, 1901)

He says, "So the sick and travelers should not fast, this instruction is a commandment. Allah the Exalted did not say that whosoever has the strength should fast and whosoever does not have the strength should not fast. In my opinion a person on a journey should not fast, and because most people keep fast therefore if someone keeps it just to comply then there is no harm in it but

عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ

should still be kept in mind. The example of the one who bears hardships in a journey to fast is equivalent to someone who wants to please God with the strength of his arms and not by obeying his commandments. This is a mistake. The real faith is in complying with his directives and prohibitions." (Al-Hakam, Volume 3 Number 4, Jan 31st 1899)

So those people who fast because the provisions of fasting are available in the house during these days should remember the saying that piety is in keeping fasts later on, and the fasts that are enforced like this are not real fasts.

A *Hadith* says, Hadhrat Jabir^{ra} narrates that the Holy Prophet^{saw} was in a journey and he saw a big crowd of people, and saw that shade has been provided to a person. He asked about the matter, they replied that the person was fasting. He said that keeping fast in a journey was not piety. (Bukhari, Vol. III)

Then there is another very clear *Hadith*. Hadhrat Ibn-e-Umar^{ra} narrates that once a person asked the Holy Prophet^{saw} about fast and prayers while in a journey during *Ramadhan*. The Prophet^{saw} of God said:

“Do not fast during *Ramadhan* if on a journey” On this a person said, “Oh Prophet of God! I have the ability to fast.” The Holy Prophet^{saw} said,

أَنْتَ أَقْوَىٰ أَمِ اللّٰهُ؟

Are you more powerful or Allah the Exalted? “Definitely Allah the Exalted has given a concession as charity to my nation’s sick and travelers who cannot fast during the month of *Ramadhan*. Would anyone among you like that He gives you something as charity and then you return it back to the One who gave it to you.” (Al-Musanaful Hafiz Al-Kabir Abu Bakar Abdul Razaq Bin Hamam –

Al-Sayyam Fil Safar)

This further clarifies that the fast should not be kept during a journey, but sometimes people lean too much towards the other end. Some people because of this concession to the sick decide themselves that they are sick and cannot fast. If you ask about their sickness that they are young, healthy, fully mobile, going around in the shopping malls. If they are sick they should see a doctor. If asked, you get the answer that they do not have any sickness of that kind, they just get tired and feel weak by the time of breaking the fast. This is exactly the fact that these people do not observe *taqwa*. Do not be deceived by excuses of your *nafs* (self). He said, that do not be deceived by your *nafs*, and always remember that Allah the Exalted knows what is inside your heart. I fear that if you may really get sick trying to excuse yourself from these obligations.

Hadhrat Masih Mau’ood^{as} says:

“No doubt, this is a Qur’anic commandment that one should not fast if on a journey or sick. We also stress it so that the Qur’anic commandment is not vilified. Those people who do not fast taking ad-

do not try to complete the missed fasts though they could have completed them, are sinners like the one who does not fast in *Ramadhan* without any excuse. Therefore every Ahmadi should later complete the fasts that he missed due to negligence or any other *shariah* (Islamic law) reason. (Reference Fiqah Ahmadiyya, Page 293).

This is the edict of Hadhrat Masih Mau’ood^{as}, therefore, the excess and shortfall both are bad. We should always act with *taqwa* when deciding to fast or not. Allah the Exalted says that those who have the capacity and have the material means should give *fidya* if they cannot fast because of any reason. What is *fidya*? It is to feed one poor person the way you eat yourself keeping in mind the self-respect of other people, so feed them well. It should not be like this that you would have eaten well if you had fasted because you are well to do and since the other person is not well to do, therefore, you give him leftover food as *fidya*. No, absolutely not! Your good deeds will be counted good only when you do this for the sake of Allah’s pleasure, and not for the sake of displaying your favors to poor. If you give *fidya* for the sake

of God's pleasure, it is possible that Allah the Exalted may turn your sickness into health. As it is said, it is definitely better to fast. Hadhrat Promised Messiah^{as} says:

وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ
طَعَامٌ مِّنْكَائِنٍ

Once I thought, "Why is *fidya* put into effect?" Then I came to know that it was done for the sake of capacity, so that the capacity to fast is granted. It is only the Being of God that could grant us the capacity. We should ask God for everything, God the Exalted is All-Powerful and Supreme, if He desires, He could grant the ability to fast to a consumptive. The purpose of *fidya* is to get the capacity even if one is sick, immensely enfeebled, weak or suffering with TB. This happens with the special grace of God. In my opinion it is wonderful that one prays to Lord, "This is a blessed month and I am deprived of it. Who knows whether I would live next year or not or I would be able to complete the missed fasts." If one asks Him for the capacity, I believe that God does strengthen such a heart. But some people have such diseases that they cannot fast in spite of the desire and have to perma-

nently give *fidya*. As said before, these people should give *fidya* according to their status. Allah the Exalted knows the intentions as explained by the Promised Messiah^{as}. He said, if God the Exalted had desired he would not have put in place any restraints for our nation, but these restraints are for our own good. In my opinion the reality is that when one pleads in front of Allah the Exalted with truth and extreme sincerity not to deprive one during this month, then God the Exalted does not deprive one. In this state if he falls sick during *Ramadhan* then this sickness is a source of blessings for him as every deed is dependent on the intention. It is expected of a believer that he proves himself to be daring in front of God the Exalted through his existence. One who has a heart-felt intention to be healthy enough to fast, but is deprived of the fast while his heart is crying for it, then angels will fast for him. He said, if his heart is crying for it and really grieving, and is very remorseful, then angels will fast for him provided he is not making excuses. God the Exalted will not deprive him of the reward". (Malfoozat, Volume 4, Page 258, 259)

Now let me mention

various other diverse matters regarding the fast. Some people do not fast because of negligence or other excuses. Sometimes the thought to fast strikes them. Some people think after a long time that they have spent such a long life, and should have fasted. They were healthy, had the capacity, means, and all conveniences but did not fast. They did not do the good things they were supposed to do, what could be done then? One such person came to the Promised Messiah^{as} and said that he never fasted before and asked, what *fidya* he should give. He said, "God does not give anyone a grief bigger than his capacity, he should give *fidya* according to his status and make a solemn promise for future to keep all fasts". (Al-Badar, Volume 1, Number 12, Jan 16th, 1903)

There is a *Hadith* narrated by Hadhrat Abu Sa'eed Khudri^{ra}, that he heard the Holy Prophet^{saw} say that the one who fasts in *Ramadhan*, recognizes all the conditions of fast, and avoids everything that was required to be avoided, his fast becomes a means for forgiveness for all previous sins.

There are some people who do not eat *sehry* (early breakfast), either habitually

or to prove their superiority, and keep prolonged fasts. There is a commandment for them, there is a *Hadith* narrated by Hadhrat Anas^{ra}, that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said, "Eat *sehry*, there is blessings in eating *sehry*."

Then, what is the time for *sehry*? Another point is that when you are eating *sehry*, whatever bite is in your hand or the tea you are drinking, you should finish it. It is narrated that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said that when one of you hears *azan* (call for prayers) and has a utensil in his hand, he should not put it down till he has finished his need and finish whatever he was eating.

Sometimes we make a mistake, we did not know when the time of the fast started and go over by few minutes. Is the fast not a true fast in that case? Someone asked Hadhrat Promised Messiah^{as} that he was sitting inside his house and he believed that there was still time left to start the fast, and he ate and made the intention for fast. Later someone told him that the dawn had already appeared, what should he do. Hadhrat Promised Messiah^{as} said, in this matter, that his fast was a true fast. He did not need to keep it again as he was careful and had the in-

tention, only mistakenly he went over by few minutes.

There is a commandment about hurrying at the time of opening the fast. Abi Atiyya stated that he and Masrooq went to Hadhrat Ayesha^{ra} and asked, "Oh mother of the believers! There are two companions among the companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} who are never behind in doing good and virtuous deeds but one of them always hurries in breaking the fast and offers Prayers at the earliest time. He says his Prayers in the earlier allowed time while other people delay the breaking of the fast and the Prayers." Hadhrat Ayesha^{ra} asked, who was the one who hurries. She was told it was Hadhrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood^{ra}. Hadhrat Ayesha^{ra} said that the Holy Prophet^{saw} used to do the same. What does it mean to hurry in breaking the fast? How do we determine this? There is a *Hadith* that sheds light on it. There is a tradition that the Holy Prophet^{saw} asked someone to bring food to break the fast. That person replied, "Let it be a little dark." Hazoor^{saw} said, "Bring the *aftari*." He said it again, "Hazoor^{saw}, there is still light". Hazoor^{saw} said, "Bring the *aftari*." That person brought the *aftari*. Hazoor^{saw} after breaking the

fast pointed towards the east with his finger and said, "After setting of the sun when you see darkness spreading on the east side, you should break the fast."

Sometimes one forgets during the fast that he is fasting and eats something. There is a *Hadith* about it that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said, "The one who mistakenly eats something during the fast should complete his fast, he was fed and made to drink by the God the Exalted and it does not break the fast, therefore it should be completed."

Now let me tell you the questions that were presented to Hadhrat Promised Messiah^{as} about the prohibitions. He was asked if it was permissible for the one fasting to see a mirror. The question was, is seeing oneself in the mirror permissible or not? Hazoor^{as} replied that it was permissible.

He was asked if wearing cologne was permissible and he said it was permissible.

A question was asked if staining one's eyes with collyrium was permissible or not as it is a wide spread tradition specially in the rural areas of India and Pakistan to stain ones eyes with collyrium. Hazoor^{as} said, it

is *makrooh* (a thing to be avoided). "What is the need to put collyrium during the day. If there is a problem then one should put collyrium at night" (Badar Volume 6 , Page 14, Feb 14th 1907)

A question was asked that some times *Ramadhan* comes during the season when tillers are busy with seeding or farming, it was really hot, what is Hazoor^{as} opinion about those laborers who live on their labor. Hazoor^{as} said,

أَنَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

these people keep their conditions to themselves, everyone should decide with *taqwa* and purity, if someone could keep fast while laboring then he may keep it, otherwise the rule of sickness applies to him. Whenever he has the means to complete the fasts later, he should complete them.

Hazoor^{as} said, "The one whose heart is joyful at the coming of *Ramadhan*, and awaits for *Ramadhan* to fast, and then sickness keeps him away from fasting, will not be counted as deprived of the fast in the heavens. There are many people in this world who make excuses, they think as they deceived the people of the world, similarly they would be able to deceive

God. The one who makes excuses find their excuses from within themselves. They justify their excuses by adding pretexts to them, but they are not justified in the eyes of God the Exalted. There could be numerous reasons for the pretexts; the chapter of pretexts is huge. If man desires, he could sit through the Prayers all his life because of pretexts. He would never stand up during Prayers considering himself sick or keep fasts during *Ramadhan*. But God knows his intentions and desire. God the Exalted knows the one who is truthful and sincere and has pain in his heart. God the Exalted gives him more reward, as the pain of heart is an admirable thing. People who make excuses depend on the support of long drawn explanations, but these supports have no materiality in front of God the Exalted. Once when I fasted for six months, I saw a group of Prophets in a vision. They asked me that why I was putting myself through such a hardship, and that I should stop this. When man puts oneself in a hardship for the sake of God, He shows mercy like parents and asks why one has put oneself through hardships.

These people have deprived themselves of hardships

due to pretexts. Therefore, God puts them through other hardships and does not get them out of them. On the other hand, He Himself takes hardships away from those who put these hardships on themselves. It is imperative for man not to show kindness to oneself. Rather he should try to be the one to whom God is kind. Because mans own kindness to oneself is hell for him while God the Exalted's kindness is heavens.

May Allah the Exalted enable us to benefit exceedingly from the bounties and blessings of *Ramadhan* and *Ramadhan* may bring limitless blessings for us.

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FASTING IN RAMADHAN

The Holy Qur'an refers to *Ramadhan* as a blessed month. The revelation of the Holy Qur'an ensued in the month of *Ramadhan*.

"The month of Ramadhan is that in which the Qur'an was revealed as a guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and judgment (between right and wrong)." (2:186)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is reported to have said about the month of *Ramadhan*:

"When Ramadhan arrives, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are locked up and Satans are put in chains."

(Bukhari - p. 255)

Ramadhan is the month of divine blessings and mercy. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} used to devote a lot of time, energy and money in supplications and charity.

OBLIGATION TO FAST

Every adult, sane and capable (healthy) Muslim male and female is bound to fast in the month of *Ramad-*

han. Travelers and sick persons are exempted with the condition that they should complete the omitted days of fasting later on (before the advent of the next *Ramadhan*). The following categories of people are excused from fasting on the condition that they should pay expiation (*Fidya*) by feeding a poor man for each omitted fast.

1. The sick and the aged and infirm who have no hope of having a chance to observe fasting in *Ramadhan*.
2. Expectant ladies and nursing mothers who breast-feed their babies.

The Holy Qur'an says:

But whosoever among you is sick or is on a journey shall fast same number of other days, and for those who are able to fast only with great difficulty is an expiation - the feeding of a poor man." (2:185)

BEGINNING OF THE FASTING MONTH

The following Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} deals with this issue:

"Do not start fasting with-

out observing the crescent (of Ramadhan)"

(Bukhari, p. 255)

It has two aspects:

- (a) Observing with the eyes
- (b) Observing as a result of knowledge

The sight of the crescent moon, on a clear day, by a single honest and dependable individual is legally sufficient to start fasting. The consequent announcement of the start of *Ramadhan* in the electronic media (radio, TV) is valid. The completion of 30 days of *Sha'ban* (month preceding *Ramadhan*) is also a valid reason. Knowledgeable authorities can decide the matter and guide the community accordingly.

However it is important to take into account the aspect of the horizon while considering the astronomical appearance of the crescent at a particular location. Such sighting of the crescent applies to only those areas or regions, which share the same horizon and are not too far away. For example, Pakistan and the United Kingdom do not have the same horizon and are separated by thousands

of miles. The observing of the *Ramadhan* crescent in England will not be binding on people living in Pakistan.

INTENTION (NIYYA) FOR FASTING

It is necessary that one should intend to keep the fast as a religious obligation. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is reported to have said:

“He who fasts without having an intention for observing fast, prior to *Fajr*, is without a fast.”

(*Tirmadhi*, p. 87)

There is no fixed set of words to be used as the declaration of intention. Intention or *Niyya* is actually the existence of that firm determination to refrain from eating, drinking, etc., for the purpose of fasting. For a voluntary fast, one can make intention up to *Zuhr* Prayer provided he/she has not tasted a food or a drink up to that time. The same applies to *Ramadhan* fast in case of a genuine circumstance.

TIME TO START AND END THE FAST

The Holy Qur'an says:

“*And eat and drink*

until the while thread becomes distinct to you from the black thread of dawn. Then complete the fast till nightfall.” (2: 188)

The following *Hadith* of The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} deals with the same subject:

“When the night approaches and the day retreats and the sun has set, the one observing the fast breaks it.”

(*Tirmadhi*, p. 88)

Keeping fast with some food around midnight or without taking meals at dawn is not in accordance with the practice (*Sunnah*) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. The showering of divine blessings is associated with following the practice of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, which is partaking of meals before breaking of dawn, known as “*sahoor*”. The Holy Prophet^{saw} advised his companions with the following words:

“Take breakfast before the fast begins, there is blessing in breakfast.”

(*Bukhari*, p. 257)

Nowadays we can easily estimate the time for the breaking of dawn (time to stop eating) with reference

to the time of sunrise. It is an hour and twenty-two minutes before the sunrise. The next activity is the *Fajr* prayer. The time between the two (end of *Sahoor* and start of *Fajr* Prayer) is roughly equal to the time spent on the recitation of fifty verses of The Holy Qur'an.

END OF THE FAST

Soon after the sunset, one should hasten to break the fast. Unnecessary delay in breaking the fast is not a correct attitude. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is reported to have said:

“My people will adhere to good as long as they do not delay in breaking the fast.”

(*Bukhari*, p. 263)

Another *Hadith* narrated by Abdullah Ibn Aufa^{ra} gives some interesting details:

“We were with the Holy Prophet^{saw} in the course of a journey, when he was observing a voluntary fast. When the sunset came he said to someone: so and so, dismount and prepare the food for us. He answered: Messenger of Allah^{saw} if you would let be dark. He repeated: Dismount and prepare the

Aftari (food) for us. The man said: there is daylight still. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said a third time: Dismount and prepare the *Aftari* for us. On this the man dismounted and brought him the *Aftari*. The Holy Prophet^{saw} ate of it and pointing to the East said: When you perceive the night approaching from that direction let the one observing the fast break it.”

(*Muslim*, p. 456)

Breaking the fast with dates, milk or water is the practice (*Sunnah*) of The Holy Prophet^{saw}. Salman Ibn Amir Dhabir^{ra} relates that The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} said:

“Break your fast with a date, or else with water for it is pure.”

(*Tirmidhi*, p. 87-88)

The following prayer should be recited at the time of breaking the fast:

“O Allah I observed the fast for Thy sake and I break it with food provided by Thee.”

(*Abu Daud*, p. 322)

After breaking the fast a believer may add the following words:

“Thirst has been quen-

ched, arteries have been refreshed and the reward for fasting would be granted by the grace of Allah.”

(*Abu Daud*, p. 321)

According to a saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, he who makes arrangement for breaking of the fast of another believer is granted the reward of observing a fast, without diminishing the reward of the other.

INFRACTIONS WHILE FASTING

The following factors invalidate the fast:

1. Eating and drinking knowingly/willfully
2. Sexual intercourse (Any seminal emission)
3. Enema
4. Injection
5. Deliberate vomiting

According to a *Hadith*, involuntary vomiting does not vitiate the fast. There is no ‘*Qada*’ or restitution for it. (*Tirmidhi*, p. 90) Such a person should complete the fast.

There is *Qada* (restitution) as well as *Kaffara* (atonement) for breaking a fast deliberately. ‘*Qada*’ consists of fasting one day for each invalidated fast. ‘*Kaffara*’ is the penalty for

the same offence and consist of two months of consecutive fasting or feeding of sixty poor or needy people. Sixty poor persons can be fed collectively on a single day or one poor man can be given provisions or cash to cover food expenses for sixty days.

If the man guilty of breaking a fast deliberately, himself is a poor and needy person and cannot afford to feed sixty poor people, he can leave his matter with Allah, heavily relying on his infinite mercy and forgiveness. (*Bukhari*, p. 259)

Women in their period of ‘*Hayd*’ (Menstruation) or ‘*Nifas*’ (post-natal bleeding) are not allowed to fast. Since there is ‘*Qada*’ for the omitted days of fasting, they are required to make up later for the missed days.

FACTORS WHICH DO NOT INVALIDATE FASTING

The following actions or incidents do not vitiate fasting:

1. Eating and drinking while truly forgetting that he/she is fasting.
2. Involuntary entering of smoke, dust, fly, gnat, etc. into throat or

mouth. It applies to droplets of water while gargling or swallowing of one's saliva.

3. Entry of water into the external ear
4. Pouring of ear drops
5. Bleeding from the gums and teeth
6. Brushing teeth with a brush or acacia twig ('*Miswak*')
7. Smelling of perfume
8. Anointing of the head or beard
9. Kissing a child or wife
- 10 Wet dream
- 11 Failure to take ritual bath before '*Sahoor*', after having consorted with wife during the night of fasting.
- 12 Nose bleed
- 13 Applying of *Kajal* (eye cosmetic) by females. Men are forbidden from doing this during the daytime.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} has prohibited men from using eye cosmetic while fasting

(*Musnad Darrmy*, p. 157)

In answer to a similar question, the Promised Messiah^{as} said:

"There is no express need for use of eye cosmetic during the day in *Ramadhan*. Let him apply it

at night."

(*Badr*, February 7, 1907)

DISRESPECT FOR RAMADHAN

Failure to observe fasting in the month of *Ramadhan*, without valid reason or for minor excuses is a wrong and unfortunate development. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is reported to have said:

"If someone neglects a single fast in *Ramadhan*, without an acceptable excuse, he cannot make amends for the omission even by fasting for the rest of his life."

(*Musnad Darrmy*, p. 156)

The following remarks of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} emphasize the importance of fasting:

"Some people, who regard fasting as an ordinary commandment, fail to observe it for trivial excuses. Some of them do not fast for fear of falling sick. This is not a valid excuse. One can be exempted from fasting only when he is actually sick and the nature of the sickness is such that fasting may worsen it. In the face of a minor indisposition or

a condition which cannot be affected adversely by fasting, neglecting of fast, being unlawful, cannot be justified."

(*Al-Fazl*, April 11, 1925)

PRONOUNCEMENTS (FATAWA)

FASTING AND INTENTION (NIYYA)

Question: Is the declaration of intention necessary for fasting?

Answer: Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} said:

"Intention is necessary for fasting. No reward is credited without intention. Intention is the determination of heart and mind."

(*The Al-Fazl*, July 28, 1914)

Take the case of a man who remained extremely absorbed in his work or slept the whole day without tasting food or drink. The hunger and thirst of this man cannot be regarded as fasting. The major difference is that he had no intention of keeping fast.

Question: A person did not intend to fast at the time of '*Sahoor*' but made an intention to do so around 10 or 11 O' clock. Is this type of

'fast' a valid fast?

Answer: The right time for making the intention for fasting is before dawn i.e. *Sahoor* time. However, an exceptional situation can be considered on its merit. As an example consider the case of a man who was not aware that the month of *Ramadhan* has already started. On getting up he learnt that it was the first day of *Ramadhan*. He can make the intention for observing fast provided he has not taken food up to that time.

Hadhrat Ibn-e-Umar^{ra} reports on the authority of Hadhrat Hafsa^{ra} that the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} remarked:

"Only that man's fast is valid who made a firm intention for fasting on that day before *Fajr*."

(*Tirmadhi*, p. 91)

Another *Hadith* shows that there is some flexibility in the case of voluntary fasting. The *Hadith* reveals that at times the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} would come home in the morning and ask for some food for breakfast. On finding that no food was available, he would opt to observe a fast.

(*Muslim*, p. 481)

Another *Hadith* refers to a particular situation when, before noon, the news reached Medina that the *Ramadhan* crescent had been sighted in the surrounding areas. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} decreed:

"He who has not eaten anything from dawn should intend to complete fast but those who have taken meals should fast on another day as restitution ('*Qada*')"

(*Abu Daud*, p. 320)

Question:

- (a) Somebody intended to observe a voluntary fast but could not take meals at *Sahoor* time. Should he complete his fast?
- (b) Another individual fell sick in the night of *Ramadhan* but felt much better at the time of *Sahoor*. Is he allowed to fast on that day?

Answer:

- (a) Taking meal at *Sahoor* is a highly recommended *Sunnah* (practice) of The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} but is not an essential for fasting. Such a person can proceed to complete the fast.
- (b) If he feels better and fit, he should fast on that day.

Question: Is taking of meals (*Sahoor*) a legal essential for fasting?

Answer: Partaking of meal for fasting is a source of great blessing. In case of a special situation one can fast without taking food before dawn.

It may be noted that it is an important *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. Hadhrat Anas^{ra} narrates that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said:

"Take food before fasting because such a food is blessed."

(*Bokhari*, p. 257)

Another *Hadith* conveys that angels invoke blessings on a person who takes meals before observing the fast.

(*Sharah (commentary) Muatta Imam Malik*, Vol. 3, p. 15)

Question: It is reported that the following question was presented to the Promised Messiah^{as} for guidance:

"While I was in my room, considering that there was enough time to keep fast, I ate with the intention of observing fast. Thereafter someone pointed out to me that the white thread of dawn was already visible. What should I do in this case?"

Answer: The Promised

Messiah^{as} replied:

“His fast is valid. There is no need to keep a substitute fast as retribution (*‘Qada’*) because he has observed precaution and has made intention for the fasting.”

(*The Badr, February 4, 1907*)

Question: What is the meaning of the following Qur’anic verse in the light of the Arabic lexicon:

“Then complete the fast till nightfall.” (2:188)

Answer: According to the Arabic lexicon the word ‘*lail*’ (night) refers to the time from sunset to sunrise but in accordance with the Holy Prophet’s^{saw} *sunnah* and its collective implementation by generations of Islamic *Ummah*, with reference to fasting, the word night in this verse does not mean the entire span of night but it refers to that part of the night which is meant for the breaking of the fast. The Qur’anic usage of the term confirms that it refers to the beginning of night i.e., the time of sunset.

An important *Hadith*, recorded in both *Bokhari* and *Muslim* endorses this concept. The *Hadith* reads:

“When you perceive the night approaching from the

East and sun setting in the West, let the one observing the fast break it.”

(*Bokhari, p. 262; Muslim, p. 456*)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is reported to have said:

“My people will adhere to good as long as they do not delay the breaking of the fast.”

(*Tirmadhi, p. 88*)

Yet another *Hadith* states:

“Jews and Christians delay the breaking of their fast. Muslims should not follow them (i.e., they should hasten to break the fast soon after sunset).”

(*Ibn-e-Majah, p. 122*)

FASTING AND TRAVELING

i. The Promised Messiah^{as} regarded fasting during journey or sickness as a violation of Divine commandment contained in the Holy Qur’an. The Promised Messiah^{as} deduced his pronouncement from the following Qur’anic verse:

“The prescribed fasting is for a fixed number of days, but who so among you is sick or is on a journey shall fast the

same number of other days.” (2:185)

ii. The Promised Messiah^{as} referred to Qadian (the *Jama’at* Headquarters) as the second home of all traveling Ahmadi Muslims and by virtue of that fact allowed them to fast while in Qadian. He also permitted them not to fast by benefiting from the leave granted to travelers.

iii. Considering the physical displacement, a journey terminating in the *Jama’at* Headquarters, is still a journey. Since the Holy Qur’an exempts travelers from fasting, the travelers who reached Qadian before sunset, were told to break their fast on the instruction of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

iv. The people who are obliged to travel as part of their professional duties i.e., railway guards, drivers, pilots and postal workers who deliver mail in rural areas, would not be regarded as travelers. The people belonging to this class, are required to fast during *Ramadhan*.

(*Fiqah-e-Ahmadiyya, p. 288*)

The Promised Messiah^{as} has elaborated this issue from another angle:

“If someone travels by rail and does not experience any difficulty, he may fast, otherwise he is entitled to benefit from the leave granted by Allah.”

(*The Al-Hakam*, December 24, 1900)

Question: Somebody is fasting but unexpectedly a situation has arisen that demands immediate traveling. Should he break his fast?

Answer: Traveling in *Ramadhan* should be avoided. It should be undertaken only when one is compelled by circumstances beyond his control. It should be left to his discretion to embark upon a journey or not. In that case he himself would be answerable to Allah for his choice.

FASTING WHILE TRAVELING

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} once gave the following remarks on the issue:

“My belief about traveling is that the journey which is undertaken after ‘*Sahoor*’ and which ends before sunset is not a journey from point of view of fasting. Maybe some jurists have a dissident opinion on this point but I think that Islamic *Shariah* stops us

from fasting while traveling but does not ban traveling while fasting. Therefore a journey which starts after ‘*Sahoor*’ and ends before sunset is not a journey for the purpose of fasting. One can travel in the state of fast but cannot fast when traveling.”

(*The Alfazl*, September 25, 1942)

Question: What does Islam teach regarding fasting while on a journey? What is the minimum distance in miles which makes a journey permissible for not observing fasting?

Answer: Travelers are exempted from fasting in the month of *Ramadhan*. However, it is important that such a person should not eat or drink in public places. Islamic *Shariah* has not stated quantitatively the minimum or maximum distance in miles. It has been left to the discretion of the traveler.

NURSING MOTHERS, EXPECTANT LADIES, MINORS AND STUDENTS

The Holy Qur’an exempts from fasting the sick and the travelers. Such exemption does not exist in the Holy Qur’an for nursing

mothers and pregnant ladies but the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} has placed them in the category of ‘the sick’. Likewise children, who are in need of rich nourishment for growth, can be placed in the same category. The same applies to the students, with a weak constitution, who are preparing for examinations and are exposed to extreme mental stress. At times such students fall sick physically or mentally. One should evaluate this situation with utmost care. What is the benefit of fasting for a few days, in such circumstances and becoming deprived of the blessing of fasting for the rest of the life.

(*The Al-Fazal*, Vol. 18, No. 88, 1930-31)

Question: With reference to fasting, what does Islam teach concerning a student who has to study hard for forthcoming examinations?

Answer: Islam does not teach us to make fasting an excuse to run away from our day-to-day normal activities. If the work schedule of a person makes fasting practically unbearable, then he can be placed in the category of ‘the sick’. In that case, he himself is solely responsible for this decision or choice. Allah would treat him in the light

of his intention and the existing situation. In such circumstances, a man himself is the best judge of his heart and mind.

A person who always falls sick on account of observance of fasting, is exempted from this exercise. If it is a kind of permanent condition, then he is permanently exempted. But if this condition is the result of a particular weather or season then he should fast the same number of days at some other time of the year. The situation must be handled with a high degree of righteousness. His excuse of being 'sick' must be valid and genuine.

(*The Alfazl*, May 22, 1922)

Question: Periodically *Ramadhan* comes in a season when farm-workers have to do a lot of labor work in the fields. The same applies to other unskilled laborers who have to perform heavy manual work. What is the Islamic teaching in respect to these affected people?

Answer: The following remarks of the Promised Messiah^{as} shed light on the subject:

"The *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet^{saw} teaches that actions would be judged in the light of intentions. The

affected people know the true nature of their situation. Every individual should decide in the spirit of high degree of righteousness and piety. If a person can substitute another laborer, he should do so in order to be able to observe fasting, otherwise he falls in the category of 'the sick'. Whenever he is able, he should fast for the omitted days of fasting, during a relatively convenient season.

(*The Badr*, September 26, 1907)

Somebody asked the Promised Messiah^{as} about fasting by a diabetic? He replied:

"The sick are exempted from fasting and it is more harmful for a person who is affected by diabetes."

(*The Al-Fazl*, July 15, 1915)

CHRONIC DISEASES AND AILMENTS

Some chronic diseases do not affect the daily activities and routine of the ailing individuals. Such a person cannot be regarded as 'the sick' with reference to fasting.

The Promised Messiah^{as} was once requested for guidance on the subject of

traveling as a part of profession, he replied:

"The traveling of such a person cannot be accepted as the journey for the purpose of fasting. His traveling is part and parcel of his profession. There are some medical conditions, which do not interfere with the routine of the affected person. It has been observed that some members of the armed forces, suffer from one or the other diseases but discharge all duties and do all sorts of jobs. A man who is afflicted by an attack of dysentery does not leave his job for good. If a man can manage to do all other things, why can he not observe fasting? The fact is that the people who do not wish to observe fasting, try to take refuge in lame excuses.

There is no doubt that the Holy Qur'an exempts the sick and the travelers from fasting and we do emphasize that this Qur'anic teaching should be duly honored, but those who overstretch this exception, despite the fact that they can easily fast or can make amends for omitted days of fasting, are sinful in the sight of Allah like a man who deliberately fails to fast in the month of *Ramadhan*. Therefore, it is binding on affected Ahmadis to fast

for the omitted days of fasting (on account of sickness or traveling) later on. Some jurists believe that omitted fast cannot be observed in the next year (i.e., after the advent of the next *Ramadhan*), but in my opinion, if somebody has not fasted for the omitted days of fasting, in the same year, out of forgetfulness or ignorance, his omission is pardonable. There is no restitution ('*Qada*') for not fasting for an omitted fast if it has been done knowingly. Same applies to deliberate non-observance of obligatory Prayer (*Salat*). But if he forgot to fast for the omitted days of fasting or maybe made a wrong legal deduction, he can fast for all the omitted days, as soon as possible, even in the next year."

(*The Al-Fazl*, August 16, 1948)

مَنْ لَمْ يَجْمَعْ الصَّوْمَ قَبْلَ الْفَجْرِ
فَلَا صِيَامَ لَهُ

If a person does not make an intention to keep fast before morning and keeps fast then his fast is not a fast.

(*Tirmadhi Kitabul Saum Babul Asyam*, p 91/1)

FASTING

Fasting is a form of worship found universally in the world religions. Although there are vast differences regarding the mode of fasting and the conditions applied to it, the central idea of fasting is present everywhere. Fasting in Islam is a highly developed institution. There are two types of injunctions with regards to fasting. One relates to obligatory fasting and the other to optional. Obligatory fasting is further divided into following two categories:

1. There is one full month in every year in which fasting is prescribed for Muslims all over the world. As the month is a lunar month, so it keeps changing around the year in relation to the solar months.

Fasting in Islam begins everywhere at the first appearance of dawn, and ends with sunset. During this period one is expected to abstain from all food and drink, and conjugal relations, completely. Furthermore, a greater part of the night is spent in spiritual exercises such as recitation of the Holy Qur'an and offering of the *Tahajjud* Prayers, which make the

very essence of fasting. During the month of Fasting, Muslims are required to redouble their efforts in alms-giving and care for the destitute.

2. Other obligatory fasting is most often related to seeking forgiveness of God for sins. This includes violation of the obligatory fasts.

The voluntary fasting is so well promoted that it becomes a part of the righteous Muslim's way of life. As it is expected that the Prayers offered in fasting are more productive, some people keep extra fasts to ward off their problems, but some do it only for the sake of winning Allah's special favors.

The institution of fasting is extremely important because it cultivates the believer in almost every area of his spiritual life. Among other things, he learns through personal experience about what hunger, poverty, loneliness and discomforts mean to the less fortunate sections of the society. Absentation from even such practices during the month of *Ramadhan* as are permissible in everyday life plays a constructive role in refining the human character. (*An Elementary Study of Islam, Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, pp 39-42*)

Tehrik-e-Jadid Communique: Caravan-e-Islam

Anwar Mahmood Khan
National Secretary Tehrik-e-Jadid

“To call each and every one is our task today. Those who are good natured will join after all.”

(Hadhrat Ahmad^{as})

‘The world is an Island and a new Island is being created within it, the name of this new Island is Ahmadiyyat the True Islam’

...

Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmadth

Hadhrat Ameerul Momineen^{aba}, in his second day speech, described the progress of Jama'at 'Alamgeer (worldwide) that was quite inspirational, heart warming and filled with factual statistics about our global progress. A brief summary of this address is presented below:

• **Jama'at is now established in 189 countries of the world.** *Alhamdolillah.* (The total number of countries in the world are 219). Since Hazoor'sth exile from Pakistan in 1984, the number of countries where the Jama'at has been established is 98.

In the present year the following four countries were added to this list:

Guadeloupe, St. Martine, French Guyana and Haiti

All these countries are the French territories in the Caribbean Islands. Jama'at France is credited for the expansion of Jama'at in these four countries. Hafiz Skindar Sahib along with few other members visited these Islands and he was bestowed with 13 *Bai'ats* in Guadeloupe, 5 in St. Matine, 30 in French Guyana and 6 in Haiti. *Alhamdolillah.*

Reconnection with the lost Nau Muba'een

Reconnection with the Ahmadi took place in 33 countries during the year.

o **Hungary:** Here Haji Ayaz Khan Sahib established the Mission 70 years ago. This Mission was re-established by Haider Ali Zafar Sahib, Missionary In-charge Jama'at Germany along with Dr. Abdul Ghaffar Sahib. A new

Missionary has been appointed and is now learning the local language.

o **Dr. Abdul Ghaffar Sahib** re-established contacts in Malta where our Missionary arrived in June of last year.

o **Romania:** A Missionary from Pakistan has been assigned in this country. He is currently learning the local language

o **Macedonia:** Missionary assignment has been made to redevelop the earlier contacts.

o **Gibraltar:** Abdul Ghaffar Sahib Missionary Germany is trying hard to rejuvenate the earlier contacts.

o **Swaziland:** 5 new Jama'ats have been established and a Mosque also has been built.

o **Uganda:** South African Jama'at developed earlier contacts. 80 new *Bai'ats* were realized. Center for *Salat* has been established. Two envoys from Rwanda went there to establish these contacts.

o **Cameroon:** 4 New Jama'ats have been established, 136 new *Bai'ats*

- realized. Two students have gone to Jamia Nigeria for studies
- o **Chad:** 5 New Jama'ats established, 220 *Bai'ats* were realized
 - o **Guinea:** 72 new *Bai'ats* were realized. One student has gone to Jamia Nigeria for studies. Khuddamul Ahmadiyya has been formed.
 - o **Botswana:** The Jama'at has now been registered
 - o **Italy:** New Jama'at has been formed. A place for a Mosque has been acquired; shortly the Mosque will be built.
 - o **Austria:** This country is also being organized with proper attention.
 - o **Somalia:** Two *Mual-lameen* visited the country and succeeded to establish 21 new Jam'ats and realize 2500 *Bai'ats*.
 - o **Ethiopia:** 20 new Jama'ats were formed and 4800 *Bai'ats* were realized.
 - o **Micronesia:** A Missionary from USA visited that country. 7 new *Bai'ats* were realized.
 - o **Kiribati:** After 18 years' struggle, *Masha Allah* the Jama'at has been registered
 - o **Solomon Island:** Jama'at Australia was able to establish *Nizam-e-Jama'at* in this country.
 - o **Estonia:** New contacts were developed.
 - o **Eretria:** A new Jama'at

is established.

- o **Serbia:** The Bosnian Jama'at rejuvenated 20 contacts.
- o **Martinique:** The Jama'at was established in 2004; new visits produced 2 new *Bai'ats*.
- o **Venezuela:** The Jama'at is being organized in this country.
- o **Bolivia:** 8 new *Bai'ats* were realized.
- o **Jamaica:** Jama'at Canada succeeded in rejuvenating the Jama'at, 10 new souls accepted Islam.
- o **Luxemburg:** Two new *Bai'ats* have been realized.

· **The Number of New Jam'ats created last year totals 653.**

· **Introduction of Ahmadiyyat for the first time resulted in 631 locations.**

The breakdown of the formation of New Jama'ats by Countries is as follows:

India:	154
Benin:	97
Nigeria:	71
Gambia:	50
Ivory Coast:	34
Sierra Leone:	28
Burkina Faso:	28
Somalia:	21
Mali:	21
Ethiopia:	20
Madagascar:	16
Ghana :	16
Congo	13
Indonesia:	11

Fifteen additional Jama'ats have created new Jama'ats in smaller numbers.

Special Events

- o **Benin** arranged Tabligh groups to visit areas where people are essentially Polytheists and deny the Unity of God. For the first time these people were approached and Allah blessed our efforts and 57 New Muslims signed up to uphold the Unity of Allah.
- o **Nigeria:** A program for *Nau Mubaeen* was carried out; a chief of an area participated and invited the members to visit his palace. At his palace, he praised their activities and accepted Ahmadiyyat by signing the *Bai'at* Form. 10 additional villages came into the fold of Ahmadiyyat.
- o **Gambia:** Saeed Hasan Sahib reported 12 *Bai'ats* and the introduction of Ahmadiyyat in three additional villages. 70 souls accepted Islam.

To rejuvenate earlier contacts, Hazoor^{aba} set a target of 70 % achievement by the year **2008. The Jama'ats followed this directive diligently with the following results:**

Ghana: 98,000 contacts

were reestablished this year. In the last three years the Ghana Jama'at was able to reach 604,000 Ahmadis. 71 new Jama'ats were established.

Ivory Coast established 64,000 contacts

Sierra Leone succeeded in regaining 31,909 contacts.

India could reach 27,000 individuals

Bangladesh also worked in this area and reached 6,000 Ahmadis.

Kenya was able to reach 33,609 individuals

Ethiopia rejuvenated 7209 contacts.

Benin The Jama'at reached 51 villages and contacted 26,000 individuals.

Tanzania regained 4,600 contacts.

Liberia achieved success in contacting 3,009 souls.

Burkina Faso had an interesting incidence. When our Missionary Muhibullah Sahib reached a village and began inviting them to Ahmadiyyat, they declared that they were invited 11 years ago by Tariq Mahmood Sahib and they accepted the Promised Messiah^{as} then. In this way these individuals remained steadfast in Ahmadiyyat. *Alhamdulillah.*

New Mosques

The total added this year 299. 169 Newly built

and 130 already built. (Last year total was 14,135, now the new total is 14,434).

Indonesia = 3, Bangladesh = 6, Nigeria = 28, Swaziland = 1, Ethiopia = 1, Sierra Leone = 24, Senegal = 3

Interesting event regarding Mosques

- o A survey regarding Minarets was carried out in Switzerland. Our Mosque was also in the survey and the results indicated that the residents have no issue with minarets of our mosque whatsoever.
- o Akbar Ahmad from Nigeria reported that the opponents with a stay order notice halted the mosque construction. In the meantime Allah enabled us to build 4 new Mosques with an estimated area of 47,000 square meters.

Mission Houses

In the current year 186 new Mission houses were added to the existing structures. Now we have 1879 Mission Houses in 97 countries of the World. Alhamdulillah

The largest increment took place in India with the addition of 82 New Mission Houses raising their total to 504.

Printing Presses

We have 8 Presses entitled: Raqueem Press. They are located in Ghana, Tanzania, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Kenya.

Significant instances:

- o In Burkina Faso, the publication status is so advanced that Air France have begun printing their work in our press instead of in Paris.
- o In Sierra Leone, UNICEF formed out their publishing work to our Press.
- o In Abidjan, a private Press owner visited our press where the book, "Where Did Jesus Die" was in the process of being printed. After scanning a few pages, the press owner offered that he would pay for additional 5000 copies that he will distribute to his friends.
- o A new machine has been installed in Ghana

Translations of the Holy Qur'an in foreign languages

- o The number of languages in which translation has been published now totals 64.
- o The translation in the Moray language of Burkina Faso is now printed. A Principle of One Institution has reviewed this.

- o In Gambia, three additional translations have been completed.
- o The translation of ten chapters is complete in Indonesian.
- o The translation of 20 chapters is complete in the Thai language.
- o 18 additional translations are complete and 11 additional are being translated at the moment.
- o Rabin Bookmark Sahib is revising the translation in Russian now.

Translation of other books of the Promised Messiah^{as}

- o The translation of 'Al-Wasiyyat' into Burmese and Norwegian is complete and these translations now total 10.
- o Dr. Salimur Rahman's translation now in the form of 'Essence of Islam' volume 5 has been printed
- o The following books of Hazrat Ahmad have now been translated and published this year:
 - o Lecture Sialkot, *Zaroratul Imam, Eik Ghalati Ka Izalah, Mayarul Mazahib, Barakatud Dua, Paigham-e-Sulah*
 - o Khalifatul Masih IV'sth book Revelation has now been translated into Urdu
 - o *Sirrukhillafa* and the Commentary of the Holy Qur'an volume 7 and the Homeopathic Book have been translated into Ara-

bic and published.

- o *Sahih Bukhari* Guide volume 3 is now published.
- o *Maktoobe Ahmad* has been published.

Inspirational Food regarding Hadhrat Ahmad's^{as} *Ilme Kalam*

- o Dr. Abdu from Morocco declared that the book Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam is perhaps the best expose from a *Mulhim minallah* (One who receives Divine revelations) and is being written by an *Arif Billah* (one who possesses insight of Divine understandings). I wish to prescribe to the course work at the University.
- o A professor in Mali initially refused to read our books, but after reading excerpts of Hadhrat Ahmad's^{as} writings about the Holy Prophet^{saw} praised the writings.
- o Dr. Mashhood read the *Khutbat* (of our present Imam) and was deeply moved and accepted Ahmadiyyat. A local newspaper 'Lorraine' on installment bases is now printing these sermons. 3 such issues have been published.

Exhibitions/Fairs/Bookstalls

- o 273 exhibitions were viewed by over 300,000 observers

- o 2861 Bookstalls and 55 Book Fairs were arranged that benefited over 800,000 people.
- o Nasim Bajwa Sahib gave Hazoor's^{as} lecture, "Message of Peace" to a Christian Priest who was so moved that he read its excerpts in his sermons at the Church.

MTA International has 14 departments and now runs 24 hours in two channels. The third Channel Arabia has also just been started,

Inspirational incidences related to MTA International

- o Jafar Sahib reported that in Mali MTA is being watched through a solar energy system that was installed recently.
- o 7 people accepted Ahmadiyyat in Holland while listening and watching MTA
- o One Iranian family watches Children Class and commented that other *Maulanas* in their classes have no smile but this one on MTA has a great smile.
- o Perusal of a Christian Missionary on Arabic channel was specially cherished.
- o Abdul Wahab from Egypt shared his thoughts and paid tributes to the Arabic channel
- o Yousuf Sahib from Syria

- has comments of praise for *Liqā Ma'al Arab* programs
- o Ibne Umar from *Aljazair* accepted Ahmadiyyat through MTA viewing
 - o Hussain Muhammad from Iraq was so moved by our MTA that he said he is a 40-year-old Sunni Muslim and was in search of truth for the last 20 years. Finally I found it on MTA and offered his hand for *Bai'at*. He offered his services for MTA
 - o Abu Hamid Sahib was moved by MTA and has requested me to accept his *Bai'at*.
 - o Abdul Munum Islam, a student from Egypt sent a note that he is doing research on Ahmadiyyat and is deeply moved by its truth.
 - o Mohammad Abdul Rauf Sahib sent a letter describing the dream of his daughter
 - o Ten additional people accepted Ahmadiyyat in Iraq by watching MTA
 - o Abdul Ghani Mahdi from Yemen shared his commendation views about MTA
 - o One Imam in Jordan accepted Ahmadiyyat via MTA viewing
 - o One person from Libya made a financial offer for MTA
 - Sharif Auday Sahib related that one opposi-

tion channel '*AlHikmat*' made nasty comments about the Jama'at, of which the answers were already covered in Ha-zoor's^{aba} address of previous days. So this response was sent to them.

Radio Stations

- o Two additional stations in Burkina Faso at Leo and the Dori region have been started in addition to the existing one (that was installed in 2003)
- o A new station in Sierra Leone has now been started.

Solar Stations

So far 55 stations have been installed, a target of 100 stations by 2008 is actively being pursued.

Waqifeen-e-Nau

This year an additional 1621 Waqifeen were added to the existing figure thus raising the total to 34,811. Out of this total 22,577 are boys and 12,234 are girls. *Alhumdolillah*. After Pakistan the largest number of *Waqifeen* are from Jama'at Germany.

Humanity First Services

Alhumdolillah, this

organization is now registered in UNO and in six countries its centers are operational.. In Pakistan 26,000 Kg of assistance in goods was sent. Over 650,000 dollars were spent in humanitarian assistance. They assisted in the storm of Madagascar. Medical Camps were organized for the ailing humanity.

Nusrat Jehan Scheme

Under this scheme, 36 hospitals are operational in 12 countries. A new hospital is being built in Kenya, 505 schools are in operation.

An Inspirational Incidence

4 patients who had been poisoned and no treatment could have possibly saved them, arrived at our Hospital in Kenya. Treatment with rudimentary facilities was undertaken, *Alhumdolillah* they all recovered. Dr. Iqbal reported this miraculous cure. *Noorul Ain* hospital in Rabwah is doing a great job in cornea transplants.

WORLDWIDE NEW BAI'ATS THIS YEAR

260839 New *Bai'ats* in 146 countries were realized this year. *Alhumdolillah*.

The significant breakdown is as follows:

Nigeria = 149,498

30 Imams accepted Ahmadiyyat, new Jam'ats were established at 67 places. A 21 Acre land has been purchased in Chad by the Nigerian Jam'a'at

Ghana = 21,300

Benin = 15,917

Burkina Faso = 14,000

India = 14,929 and

Sierra Leone = 7,000

In the end Hazoor^{aba} read a very powerful and inspirational piece from the writings of Hadhrat Ahmad^{as} and concluded the speech.

(This is an unofficial report prepared and provided by Mr. Anwer Mahmood Khan: Editor)

TEHRIK-E-JADID

FINANCIAL YEAR

WILL END IN

OCTOBER

PLEASE PAY YOUR

CHANDA BEFORE

THAT.

THANK YOU.

An Appeal to Respected Members of the USA Jama'at

Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah

Kindly listen to Hazoor's^{aba} speech personally with your family. It would give you a new meaning of life in the Jam'at. It will create an awe and impact that you will be filled with gratitude and would like to make offerings in the cause of Tehrik-e-Jadid.

Please do so as soon as possible, as only 90 days are left in the close of the year. Have each and every child born after October, 2005, join in *Daf-tar Punjum* that was initiated by our present Imam *Ayyadahullah ta'ala binasrihil aziz*.

Please donate generously, we have to aim for collecting \$ 1.5 Million this year. Please increase your donations by at least 20 % in order to make the national target to reach \$ 1.5 Million. Please note that the British pound is equal to US\$ these days. We have to work harder this year. May Allah enable us to donate in this cause with generous and sincere hand.

Wassalam

*Anwer Khan
National Secretary
Tehrik-e-Jadid, USA*

Rationalization

Rizwan Khan

“and Satan made all that they did seem fair to them.” 6:44

One of man's most vain fantasies is to escape the consequences of his actions, to do everything he pleases and be accountable for nothing, not to others, not to himself, nor to God. One means to this end is ignorance. If one is unaware that an action is wrong, he is not as accountable as one who does wrong intentionally. Thus, if one convinces himself that he is ignorant of the wrong in his actions, theoretically, he is not responsible. Accountability seems to dissipate in a myriad of deliberate confusions and calculated misunderstandings. In the desperate pursuit of this vain freedom, one is capable of going to great lengths to pretend to himself that there is nothing wrong with what he wants. The last resort of the irrational is to rationalize their actions.

Some may be inclined to believe that this is far fetched and rare, but on the contrary it is quite common. Such underestimate the foolishness man is capable of. However great our intellec-

tual capacity may be, proportional is our ability to use that capacity towards the most senseless purposes.

“And Satan made their deeds appear good to them, and thus turned them away from the path despite their being capable of discerning the truth.” 29:39

Rationalization constantly manifests itself before us in various forms. For example, people are always convincing themselves that a lie, carefully worded, is not actually a lie, or that cheating on a test, done with certain intentions, is not actually cheating. These are common occurrences which we witness regularly or may even be guilty of ourselves. We turn a blind eye to the obvious evil in our actions in the hope that, as a result, we will not be answerable.

“Is he, then, whose deeds are made to appear beautiful to him so he views them as good like one who believes and truly does good deeds?” 35:9

If we were straight forward with ourselves, we

would realize that we cannot divert blame for such faults away from ourselves by claiming ignorance. The fact is that we ourselves are responsible for that ignorance, for deliberately imposing it upon ourselves. If we try to fool ourselves into unconsciously doing a wrong, we cannot escape responsibility for consciously fooling ourselves and everything which results there from. The responsibility of our actions which we seek to escape ultimately finds its way directly back to us.

This deliberate ignorance, which we imagine is our freedom from responsibility for our wrongs, is, in itself, the worst wrong. Under its cover, we permit ourselves a host of new evils which we would have otherwise abstained from. In its delusional bliss, we sink deeper into self-righteous hypocrisy. Through it, we open a Pandora's Box of wrongs upon us which we had previously been secure from.

When we rationalize an evil, we know it. Though we may convince ourselves on the surface, deep down

we are always aware of the truth which we conceal from ourselves. It is for this reason that people always become so defensive when it is brought to their attention. Every defense mechanism in our personality reveals an insecurity which we seek to protect.

The sad result of this state of affairs is that, though we may know the difference between right and wrong, that knowledge fails to benefit us at all. When we make up our minds to believe what we need to in order to do what we want to, we abandon any advantage our knowledge could have afforded us. We may know what is right, but fail to profit from it: we may believe in the religion, but fail to gain from it. Under such circumstances, we find ourselves with scholars who know everything and comprehend nothing, with saints who believe in everything but have faith in nothing. The corruption of this hypocrisy is centered on one phenomenon, rationalization. Rather than administering the anesthetics of ignorance to subdue the symptoms of our moral diseases, perhaps it would be far better that we simply confront ourselves for what we are and be straight forward in our actions, whether they be good or bad.

C10 HERALD NEWS

Sunday, July 29, 2007

HERALDNEWS

Your voice. Your choice.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Emphasis asked on Islam lessons

I had the opportunity to read "Islam in America" and other related articles in the July 30 issue of Newsweek. In one article, concern is mentioned about the growing propaganda of the extremists, which could have a negative effect, especially on the younger generation. To uproot the propaganda of the extremists, the journalists and the media have to play a positive role by highlighting the true teachings of Islam.

There have been extremists in every religion throughout history. Some people have been resorting to terrorism in the name of religion. History bears witness to it. Islam literally means "peace". How could it advocate violence?

God Almighty is the creator, sustainer and developer (guided evolution by a conscious being) of this universe. He created science for our physical benefit and religion for our morality and spirituality. As God Almighty created physical evolution, in the same way, God created spiritual evolution. As a matter of fact, the religion of all the prophets was Islam. That is why a true Muslim is enjoined to believe in all the prophets without any exception. The Holy Quran enjoins Muslims to help in goodness and shun evil. It also enjoins to unite on common grounds, that is, on ideals we share to bring about harmony and peace.

In accordance with this commandment, the Ahmadiyya Muslim community organizes "Religious Founders Day" and "Interfaith Symposium" in more than 180 countries of the world in different cities every year. Once a Christian delegation from Najran came for dialogue with the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be on him). The dialogue took place in the Mosque of the Prophet (peace be on him). After the dialogue, the Christian delegation wanted to go somewhere to worship. The Holy Prophet (peace be on him) advised them to pray in the Mosque of the Prophet (peace be on him), which they did.

Furthermore, Muslims are enjoined to be loyal to the country they live in.

Amatul Latif Zirvi, Fair Lawn

Punishment for Adultery in the Holy Bible

Maulana I. H. 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 Testament

“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 a 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 until 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 shekels 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 wickedness: **they shall be burnt with fire**, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

(Leviticus 20:14)

"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)

Jesus^{as} Said:

"You have heard that it was said by them of the olden times, 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)

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The Relationship of the Promised Messiah^{as} with Allah the Almighty

**Bilal Atkinson
Hartlepool Jama'at, U.K.**

The subject which I have been asked to address you today is:

'The Promised Messiah's^{as} relationship with Allah the Almighty.'

In fact, Allah the Almighty's relationship with all His Prophets is clearly stated in the Holy Qur'an, which states:

'Most surely, We help Our Messengers and those who believe, both in the present life and on the day when the witnesses will stand forth.' (40:52)

This verse hold out a promise to all Divine Messengers that God's help, comfort and support will always be with them - and the evil designs and plans of their disbelieving opponents will all ultimately fail. The truth of this great promise has been demonstrated again and again throughout the history of prophethood and especially during the lifetime of Muhammad^{saw} the Holy Prophet of Islam. This everlasting promise of Allah the

Almighty to His Prophets has more recently been manifested during the lifetime of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi of the latter days.

There are so many incidents to illustrate this close spiritual relationship during his lifetime that it is impossible to count them all. However a few events will be highlighted to describe this Divine relationship that was demonstrated so manifestly during the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}

Throughout his life as a prophet of God, the Promised Messiah^{as} was often denounced and received all sorts of abuse from his opponents and he has remarked:-

'When such diseased people make Prophets of God the target of their insinuations and think ill of them, God becomes their enemy and stands up in defence of His Prophets. He guards the honor of His dear ones with such jealousy as is unparalleled.

When I was maligned and assailed in different ways, the same protective jealousy of God became operative in my defence.'

(Roohani Khaza'in, Vol.20: Al-Wasiyyat footnote p.317)

The Promised Messiah's^{as} relationship with Allah the Almighty began in his childhood: he related that he felt himself powerfully attracted towards God, and he was also faintly conscious and aware that sometime in the future God would engage him to fulfil some of His Divine plans. Even as a small child he requested his cousin Hurmat Bibi, the daughter of his maternal uncle, to pray that he may 'be granted the grace of prayer.' This most humble request from an innocent child proved that he had a pure heart filled with the love of God.

In 1869 the Promised Messiah^{as} was requested to hold a debate with and refute certain doctrines expounded by Muhammad Hussain of *Batala* who had recently qualified as a

maulvie, and whose views were not approved of or acceptable to his fellow citizens.

The Promised Messiah^{as} proceeded to *Batala* that same evening. Muhammad Hussain was in the Mosque and opened the debate with a speech in which the Promised Messiah^{as} found nothing objectionable regarding certain theological points as he found them in accord with Islamic teachings. He openly declared that there was nothing in the speech which required refutation and refused further debate.

For his open and truthful statement the Promised Messiah^{as} was ridiculed not only by his opponents, but, alas, also by those who had invited him to support their views in the debate. Such was his love for truth and honesty, he was prepared to receive their ridicule whether they were friend or foe. He knew, at the end of the day, he was answerable to God alone for his actions- and not to any worldly acquaintance or friendship.

He always suffered any humiliations with great dignity, cheerfulness and decorum. Only a man of upright and sterling character has the courage to speak the truth even when it is

very unpopular. In this particular incident in his life, the character he showed did him great credit, so much so that God was immensely pleased with him. That same night he received the revelation that God was pleased with the course of action he had taken and that He would bless him so much that *'Kings would seek blessings from his garments.'*

(Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya, Vol.1V, page 520)

Today, by the sheer Grace of Allah, we have witnessed on a number of occasions the fulfilment of this Divine promise when Kings have attended previous UK Annual *Jalsa Salanas* and have literally received blessings of the garments of the Promised Messiah^{as} from the Khalifa of the day.

The death of the Promised Messiah's^{as} father was a critical point in his life. He described his personal situation at his father's death in the following words:

"I was 34 or 35 years of age when my father died. In a dream I had been warned that his death was approaching. He was then in Lahore and hastened to Qadian. He was suffering from dysentery but I had no apprehension that he would

die the following day. In fact, there had been some change for the better in his condition and he appeared quite steadfast. The following day, we were all with him at noon when he kindly suggested that I should go and have some rest, for it was the month of June and the heat was intense. I retired into an upper room and a servant began to massage my feet. Presently I fell into a light slumber and the revelation came to me:

وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ

'We call to witness heaven where all decrees originate and We call to witness that which will happen after sunset.'

I was given to understand that what was to happen after sunset was my father's death, and that this revelation was by way of condolence on behalf of God Almighty.

Holy is Allah! How glorious is He that He conveyed His condolence on the death of a person who had died sorrowing over the waste of his life.

Most people would be surprised at this interpretation of mine that God Almighty consoled with me. It should, however, be remembered that when God, glorified be His Name,

treats someone mercifully, He deals with him like a friend. We read in the traditions that on certain occasions God Almighty laughed. This also is an expression of the same type. When I received this revelation, which foretold the death of my father, the thought passed through my mind, due to my humanity, that some of the means of income which were available to my father would now be closed and we might be confronted with difficulties. Thereupon, I received another revelation:

'Alai Sallaho bi Kafin Abdahoo'

'Is not Allah sufficient for His servant?'

This revelation conveyed great comfort and satisfaction to me and it found its firm place in my heart. I swear by God Almighty in Whose hand is my life that He has fulfilled this comforting revelation in a manner which I could not have imagined. He has provided for me as no father could have provided for anyone. I have been the recipient of His continuous bounties which I find impossible to count.

My father died the same day after sunset. This was the first day on which I

experienced a sign of divine mercy through revelation concerning which I cannot imagine that it would ever cease to have effect during my lifetime. I had the words of the revelation carved on a semi-precious stone and set in a ring which I have with me securely. Nearly 40 years of my life passed under the care of my father, and with his departure from this life I began to receive divine revelation continuously."

[Kitabul Bariyyah, (Qadian, Ziaul Islam Press 1898); Now printed in Roohani Khaza'in (London, 1984), Vol. 13, pp. 189-195, footnote].

The Promised Messiah^{as} often used to say that this message, a reassurance –

Alai Sallaho bi Kafin Abdahoo - came to him with such glory and majesty that it settled firmly in his heart like a steel nail hammered into a block of wood, and from that moment on Allah took care of him in a way that has no worldly parallel.

He often said that after this revelation, he received so many favors from Allah the Almighty that it was not possible to count them.

(Kitabul Bariyya)

Maulvi Rahim Bakhsh relates that the Promised Messiah^{as} said to him that he had received a revelation (in Arabic) that Allah will deliver him from some sorrow and his Lord was All-Powerful.

The Promised Messiah^{as} had continued: 'By God's grace, I have no sorrow but perhaps the revelation has reference to some future event.'

The very same day, Maulvie Rahim Bakhsh continues, someone came from Amritsar and told him that the stone for his ring that he had sent to Hakim Muhammad Sharif of Amritsar to be inscribed with the revelation: '*Alai Sallaho bi Kafin Abdahoo*' (Is Allah not sufficient for His servant?) had been lost. He also brought a page of his book *Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya* which had been very badly printed. Hadhrat Sahib was perturbed by both these pieces of news and both of us went to Amritsar. When we arrived at the house of Hakim Muhammad Sharif he told Hadhrat Sahib that the stone that had been lost was recovered and when we went to the printing press we found that printing of *Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya* was proceeding satisfactorily. Thereupon Hadhrat Sahib observed: 'God Almighty

had reassured me in advance that He would deliver me from sorrow. This was the sorrow.'

(Al-Hakam, Vol. XXXVII, no. 29, August 14, 1934, p.3)

At *Masjid-e-Aqsa* in Qadian on the day of *Eid ul Adhia* (13th April 1900) the Promised Messiah^{as} was divinely directed to deliver a sermon in the Arabic language. He requested Hadhrat Maulvie Noor-ud-Din^{ra} and Hadhrat Abdul Karim^{ra} to sit near him and directed them to write down what he was going to say.

Hadhrat Bhai Abdur Rahman^{ra} says, "When the Promised Messiah^{as} took his seat on the chair and started to lecture, it seemed as if he had been transported to the other world, His eyes remained closed and his blessed face seemed luminous, as if Divine light, having enveloped it, had illuminated and made it lustrous. At that time, one could not gaze at his face. His forehead radiated bright rays of light that dazzled the eyes of those who looked at it."

For more than one hour the Promised Messiah^{as} delivered the sermon which made a deep impression on all who were very fortunate to be present at the time. The main topic of this ser-

mon was the philosophy of sacrifice. This sermon – the *Khutba Ilhamia* - is a unique example of the mastery of the Arabic language bestowed upon The Promised Messiah^{as} by the Divine Grace of God.

Maulvie Abdul Karim Sahib^{ra} delivered an Urdu translation of the gist of this sermon and during this translation, the Promised Messiah^{as}, overtaken by God's Mercy, fell into prostration in gratitude for this great blessing, and the whole of the congregation followed his example.

After prostration the Promised Messiah^{as} mentioned that he had just seen the word:

'Mubarak'
(Congratulations),

spelled out in scarlet letters in front of him.

Also, regarding this miraculous speech, the Promised Messiah^{as} said, "*Subhanallah*. At that time a hidden fountain was gushing out.

I do not know whether it was I who was speaking, or some angel was speaking through my tongue, for I knew that I had no share in this speech. Self-made sentences came out of my mouth, and every sentence was a sign for me. It is an

Intellectual Miracle shown by God, and none can present the like of it."

(Haqiqatul Wahi, pp. 362-363)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} relates: In 1907 the Promised Messiah^{as} suffered from a severe cough. While he was in this condition, a friend from outside brought some fruit for him as a present. The friend says: I put the fruit before him. He looked at it and said: Say to him: 'May Allah reward you.' Then he took up a banana and asked me how this would affect his cough. I answered: It is not good. He smiled and peeled the banana and began to eat it. I submitted: You have a severe cough and this is not good for cough. He smiled again and continued to eat. Stupidly, I repeated that he should not eat it; on which he smiled again and said: 'I have just received the revelation (in Urdu): 'Cough has been removed', and since then I have no cough.'

(Al-Fazl Vol. XXX, No. 164, p.3 -17th July 1942)

Hadhrat Maulvie Nur-ud-Din^{ra} relates: On one occasion, in the course of a debate, an opponent asked the Promised Messiah^{as} to cite a reference from *Bokhari* and the Promised Messiah^{as} started turning over

its pages very rapidly. Then he stopped at one place and said: "Here is the reference." Everyone was surprised and someone inquired from Hadhrat Sahib^{as} how he had found the reference so quickly. He answered: 'When I took the book in my hand and started turning over its pages it seemed to me the pages were blank. I turned them over quickly and then came to a page where I saw some writing and then I was sure that this was the reference that I needed.'

(Siratul Mahdi, part II, No. 306)

The Promised Messiah^{as} once said: 'It came to my mind once that I should write a book setting out the bounties that Allah had bestowed upon me. When I was about to start on this project, I saw in a vision that heavy rain was falling and God said to me: If you can count these drops of rain you will be able to number My bounties. Then I gave up the idea.'

(Register of Rivayaati Sahaba, Vol. VII, p. 310)

The Promised Messiah^{as} writes:

"A friend of mine Syed Nasir Shah, Overseer in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, was much perturbed at having received

orders of transfer to *Gilgit* which would involve him in great hardship during the journey and his stay there, to which he did not find himself equal. He took leave and came to me and asked me to pray that he should be posted in Jammu and should not have to travel to *Gilgit*. One night, I supplicated for him and in respect of several other matters including the glory of Islam. Then I received the revelation: '*All prayers have been accepted, including the one for the strength and glory of Islam.*'

In this manner I was informed that Syed Nasir Shah's transfer had been postponed. It gave me great pleasure that God had accepted my supplication on his behalf. I informed him immediately of this and on the 3rd or 4th day he received a letter from some official of the State to the effect that his transfer had been postponed."

(Tatimma Haqeqatul Wahi pp.157-158)

Hafiz Hamid Ali^{fa} relates: On one occasion, the Promised Messiah^{as} sent me on an errand to a foreign land. I boarded the ship bound for my destination. About half-way, the vessel was caught in a storm and everyone was terrified that it was going to sink. I tried

to reassure all the passengers and stated confidently that I belonged to the Punjab and was going on an errand on behalf of one of whom God had appointed His Prophet for this age and that so long as I was on the vessel, it would not sink.

God Almighty thereafter stilled the waters and the vessel arrived safe at my destination and I disembarked. After a short stop the ship proceeded on but alas on its further voyage it sank after a short time.

When the news reached India, members of my family went to Hadhrat Sahib^{as} and told him that the vessel by which I was travelling had sunk; in which Hadhrat Sahib^{as} said: 'I have heard that the vessel by which Hamid Ali was travelling sank on such and such a day'; after a few minutes he added: 'But Hamid Ali is busy with his errand. He is safe.' It would seem that Hadhrat Sahib^{as} had learnt the truth through a vision.

(Al-Hakam, Vol. XXXVIII, No.2, p.5, 21st January 1935)

There was a man by the name of Patwari Munshi Ata Muhammad who belonged to the village of *Nathpur* situated near to Qadian. He had been married for a long time and had

three wives but, alas, no children.

One day an Ahmadi met him and started to preach to him about the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as}. His Tabligh effort was successful in that Munshi Ata Muhammad was ready to accept on condition that the Promised Messiah^{as} should pray that his eldest wife, not the youngest, but the eldest wife who was of advanced age, should bear him a son. Only by some miraculous means could his wish be fulfilled.

Accordingly, he wrote to the Promised Messiah^{as} and said, "You claim to be the Promised Messiah^{as} and Friend of God. The prayers of the Friends of God are accepted. I have now three wives.

Twelve years have passed since my last marriage, but I have no issue from any of them. I desire to have a handsome, promising and auspicious son, and that too by my first wife. Please pray for the fulfilment of this desire of mine." The Promised Messiah^{as} later intimated that the man's eldest wife would bear him a handsome and prosperous son provided he observed the repentance of Zakariah.

Some months later his

eldest wife had given up hope of bearing him any children and in one last desperate attempt to relieve her of her grief, Munshi Ata Muhammad engaged the services of a local lady gynaecologist who, after making a cursory examination informed the wife that she was incapable of bearing a child, but, astonishingly, she found the woman was pregnant and exclaimed that God (God forbid) must have made a mistake.

Munshi Ata Muhammad, overjoyed at this miracle, informed the gynaecologist of the prayer of the Promised Messiah^{as} and soon informed his friends of this magnificent Divine blessing.

In due course, Munshi Ata Muhammad was blessed with a handsome son. After the birth of his son, Munshi Sahib, along with several other people who came to know of this miracle, travelled to Qadian and took initiation at the hands of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

This was indeed a great sign of the truth of the Promised Messiah^{as} and especially for Munshi Ata Muhammad and others who now acknowledged the Promised Messiah's^{as} close connection and relationship with Allah the Exalted.

There was a small but sincere Jama'at in the state of *Kapurthala* and the members of the Jama'at had intense love of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Once, some non-Ahmadi Muslim opponents sought to take possession of the Ahmadiyya Mosque of *Kapurthala* and tried to remove the Ahmadis from it. Eventually the matter was brought to court. The local Ahmadis were greatly perturbed and repeatedly entreated the Promised Messiah^{as} to help with his prayers. One day, when requested to pray, the Promised Messiah^{as}, impressed with the sincerity as well as the perplexity of the brethren, assured them, 'Be not anxious. If I am righteous in my claim, you will get the Mosque.'

But the attitude of the judge was openly hostile. He had announced publicly: 'You have invented a new religion, so you shall have to build a new Mosque too, and I will decide accordingly.'

He had not yet written his judgement as he intended to write it in the courtroom. While preparing to go to court, he directed his servant to help him on with his shoes. The servant was about to do so when the judge suffered a heart attack and died within a few

moments.

The new judge who replaced him studied the record of the case and found that the Ahmadis were in the right, decreed the case in their favor and awarded the Mosque to them.

(Siratul-Mahdi & Ashab Ahmad – The Promised Messiah by M.M. Ahmad)

No false claimant to prophethood is permitted to survive more than twenty-three years after making his false claim. The punishment for such a false claimant is clearly illustrated in the Holy Qur'an where God has declared: -

And if he had forged and attributed any sayings to us, We would have seized him by the right hand, and then surely, We would have cut his life-vein. (69:45-47)

John Alexander Dowie was one such claimant. He was born in Scotland in 1847. In 1872, after studying for the Christian Church he migrated to Australia and soon became known as a healer.

In 1888 he migrated to the U.S.A. and within four years he became well known for his powers of healing and preaching. Some four years later he founded a Christian Catho-

lic sect and attracted many followers and amassed great wealth, so much so that in 1901 he started to build a town, which he named Zion City, for his ever-growing Christian sect. In the same year he claimed to be Elijah (A Prophet) and the forerunner of the second advent of Jesus Christ^{as}, who, he claimed, would soon descend on Zion City.

His well-published claim attracted many more followers, especially rich people and soon the number of his followers exceeded 100,000.

Dowie claimed that his mission (before Jesus Christ^{as} descended), was to destroy Islam. In so doing, a torrent of abuse poured from his mouth denouncing the Holy Prophet^{saw} and the religion of Islam. In 1902 he published a prophecy to the effect that unless Muslims became Christian they would meet with death and destruction.

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} came to know of this prophecy and wrote a leaflet highlighting the beauties of Islam and sent it to Mr. Dowie. He informed him that he had been sent by God as the Promised Messiah^{as} and challenged him to enter a prayer contest that each of them

should pray to God that the impostor should be punished and destroyed by Him within the lifetime of the other. The leaflet was also published widely throughout the U.S.A. and Europe where the challenge was discussed for more than a year.

Mr. Dowie did not take up the challenge and continued to pray for the destruction of Islam. In 1903 he published in his paper:

"I pray to God that Islam will soon disappear from the world. O God, accept this prayer of mine. O God, destroy Islam."

Later that same year he wrote:

'The black spot on the mantle of man (Islam) will meet its end at the hands of Zion.'

The Promised Messiah^{as} issued another leaflet which ended by saying:

'Though he (Dowie) may try hard as he can to fly from death which awaits him, yet a flight from such a contest will be nothing less than death to him and calamity will certainly overtake his Zion, for he must bear the consequences either of the acceptance of the challenge or its refusal.'

When prompted why he did not reply to the challenge, Dowie, indirectly referring to the Promised Messiah^{as}, made a claim that he would crush him with his foot as he would gnats and flies.

It is reported that he later wrote:

'If I am not a messenger of God on this earth, then no one is.'

The prophecy of the Promised Messiah^{as} soon began to take effect. The feet with which Dowie was going to crush Islam and the Promised Messiah^{as} suddenly began to crush him.

Dowie suffered an attack of paralysis - and though a supposed healer, was unable to heal himself and had to go in search of a cure. As his human weaknesses began to surface for all to see, he was accused of illicit and immoral practices. His wife and son later left him as well as many of his followers and he was eventually expelled from Zion City a broken man.

On 20th February 1907 the Promised Messiah^{as} issued another leaflet announcing the appearance of another Heavenly sign in which he said:

God says: I shall manifest a fresh sign of great victory. This sign will be for the whole world and will be wrought by God's hands from heaven. Let every eye wait for it, for God will manifest it soon, so that everyone might bear witness that this humble one, who is being reviled from all directions, is from Him. Blessed are those who would take advantage of it.

(Announcement of 20th February 1907. Inner title page of the pamphlet: Qadian ke Arya aur Hum)

Alexander Dowie died within a fortnight of the publication of this prophecy which is a sure proof for a seeker after truth that it related to him. The prophecy specified that the predicted sign would be for the whole world and would be manifested soon. Dowie did not survive it even for three weeks.

(Tatimma Haqeeqatul Wahi, p. 75 - footnote)

On 9th March 1907 Dowie died after suffering a paralysing stroke. Almighty God surely cut off the life-vein of the impostor.

(Siratul Mahdi and Ashab-e-Ahmad)

The Holy Qur'an clearly emphasises:

Allah has decreed: 'Most surely I will prevail, I and My Messengers.' Verily, Allah is Powerful, Mighty. (58:22)

This verse implants an absolute and invincible faith and conviction into the hearts and minds of the Messengers of God reassuring them of ultimate success, support and victory in their noble missions. The story of all the Prophets of God is a clear witness to this truth. They stood up against the prevalent customs and current trends of their societies. They were mocked, ridiculed, humiliated, persecuted and even thrown out of their homes and lands, and dispossessed of all their belongings and worldly wealth.

However, the outcome of their Divine mission always proved successful because God was the guarantor of their success.

The faith which Prophets of God have in the truth of their mission, their relationship with God and the unfailing character of His promises and assurances to them is quite outstanding and dazzling. Not only do the Prophets of God not mind the hostility and attacks of their enemies, they even challenge their opponents to use all their powers

to destroy them, because they are perfectly convinced of God's help, protection and support.

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} was no exception to any other Prophet. Allah the Almighty appointed him a Prophet of God, subservient to Muhammad Mustafa^{saw}, the Holy Prophet of Islam and in so doing his relationship with God grew stronger and stronger and he was reassured time and again of His nearness, guidance, protection and the ultimate victory of his mission. In one of His revelations, Allah the Almighty announced to Hadhrat Ahmad^{as}:

Despair not of the mercy of Allah. Harken indeed the mercy of Allah is near. Harken the help of Allah is near. It will come to thee by every distant track. Allah will help thee from Himself. Men will help thee whom We shall inspire from heaven. There is no changing the words of Allah. We have bestowed upon thee a manifest victory and We have bestowed upon him intimate nearness to Us. He is the bravest of people. Had faith ascended to the Pleiades he would have brought it down. Allah will illuminate his arguments. Mercy flows from thy lips, O Ahmad. You are

under Our care. Allah will exalt thy name and perfect His bounty upon thee in this world and the hereafter.

(Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya part III pp.238-242 sub footnote & Tadhkira p32-33)

The relationship of all Prophets with Allah the Almighty is deeply cemented and unbreakable. Their deep love for their Creator and their deep longing to draw ever closer to Him is unparalleled. Hadhrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi^{as} was no exception to this and God appreciated his love and blessed him with His Grace, Benevolence, Mercy and Protection.

I have only been able to relate a very small number of the thousands of incidents regarding the Promised Messiah's^{as} relationship with God. In conclusion I leave with the very words of Allah the Almighty, Who in one of His revelations to the Promised Messiah^{as} declared:

"Since this age, you are the standard bearer of My Unity, restoring the treasure to its lost place in the world; you are as dear to me as My own Singleness and Unity. And since the Christians, as a false doctrine, have taken Jesus

Christ as a Son of God, My sense of honour has demanded that I should love you, the Messiah of the dispensation of Muhammad, like a son, so that the world should know that among the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} there can be men who can attain as it were the position of Children of God. And since day and night you are absorbed in the service of the religion of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, who is My beloved, in the position of a spiritual son of this prophet, I bless you everlastingly with My own love."

(Tadhkira pages 67, 571 & 638)

*All praise belongs to
Allah – Lord of all the
worlds*

PAY ZAKAT

IT IS ONE OF THE PILLARS OF ISLAM

OUR GOD IS A LIVING GOD

Dr. Rasheed Sayyed Azam

Our God is One, the only
Creator of the Expansive Universe
Beyond human comprehension.

He is the Beginning;
He is the End,
He is near and far,
Every direction, everywhere,
The Highest of the High
Always awake, day and night
Sleep touches Him not.

He is the Master of today and tomorrow never getting old,
He does not need a son or wife for He will live forever.

Our God Almighty is the Living God,
He talks to His Creations as always and listens,
Listens to their prayers and supplications today as yesterdays,
His hands are not tied; He is free of any blemish or limits,
He does what He wills and says 'be' and 'it is done',
His Commands are according to His Laws,
You will never see any flaw or incongruity.

He created man and gave him reason and choice,
To choose between good and evil while he lives,
And move closer to God by being His obedient servant.
One who is born here must die here,
His servants are raised high in spirit after death,
To enter the eternal life in peace and harmony.

God will send His Messengers when He decides,
No man, nor Legislative Assembly, can bind His Hands,
This is His Choice; His Grace and only He can bestow
On anyone any time He is pleased.

He is Wise and Mighty and who can dare to defy His Will,
None except the cursed and the wretched, whose heart is sealed,
The ignorant one, never reflecting, never using his God-given brain,
He has eyes but can't see, has ears but can't hear,
And Allah will cut his abusive sharp twisted tongue!

Our God is the Living God and His Revelation makes the difference,
Between a filthy scattered fly and the organized curative honey bee
And between a misguided lost Satan and a chosen guided man
On The Earth His Prophet, the highest Award of God.
Intellect remains blind without the light of revelation,
And Allah's Mercy and Love saves mankind.

INTERFAITH SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS

Imran Tahir and Imran Hayee, St. Paul, MN

By the grace of God, an interfaith symposium was organized by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, St. Paul Chapter on July 29, 2007 at 1:00 pm in the auditorium of the Hennepin County Library in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota. In addition to having speakers from 4 different faiths (Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Sikhism), a total of about 70 people attended the symposium, which lasted a little more than 3 hours. Most of the attendees were non-Muslims with a few non-Ahmadi Muslims from the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The Q&A session and refreshment hour, which followed the well-prepared presentations by the guest speakers, were filled with vibrancy. The topic of the symposium was, "*The role of religion in achieving peace in our societies*". With this topic in mind, each speaker accounted for the need of all members of society, and in particular the members of their own respective faiths, to actively bring about a peaceful coexistence with their neighbors on the basis of a shared belief in God.

The Sikh speaker, who had graciously flown in from San Diego, CA, had an information-filled power-point slide presentation which urgently called attention to the need to establish continuous dialogue between members of different faiths, to avoid discrimination against all members of society, and to understand shared objectives that we may have. In addition, the Sikh speaker was very happy to give the audience some background information on his faith, including the spiritual reasons as to why Sikh males appear as they do, along with the historical and geographical origins of Sikhism.

The Jewish speaker, a prominent Holocaust and genocide studies professor at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, gave the general shared view that most religions teach peace and brotherhood at their core; however, the speaker was concededly pessimistic about the ability of religion to bring about peace in society, as he enthusiastically recounted historical instances where diverse religious beliefs had provoked dissension amongst populations, and even hatred, destruction, and death. The Jewish speaker did, however, narrate a few passages from the Old Testament of the Bible that encouraged human beings to be peaceful and considerate toward their neighbors in an effort to coexist.

The Christian speaker, an Evangelical Pastor at a local Church in Bloomington, utilized numerous quotations from the New Testament of the Bible to elucidate the main point of his presentation: that the way to peace was through acceptance of the Prophet Jesus^{as} as lord and savior. The speaker, while delineating the reasons why all human beings are forever tainted by sin, repeatedly came back to incidences or quotations from the life of Prophet Jesus^{as} as examples of how to conduct oneself. In short, the way to foster peace in our society, according to the Pastor's presentation, was through acceptance of Jesus^{as} in a godly form.

Finally, the Muslim speaker, Missionary Azhar Haneef Sahib, delivered a very direct, powerful, and heartfelt presentation on Islam's view of the necessity of fostering peace in society through sincere belief in Allah. Without a shared belief in Allah, human beings will be prone to drifting in selfish, divergent directions as autonomous bodies with no collective conscience or accountability to a Higher Being. It is through a sincere belief in Allah that human beings, Muslim or otherwise, are able to bring about a pure change in themselves in order to genuinely and selflessly promote harmony, brotherhood, and goodwill amongst their neighbors. Missionary sahib successfully persuaded the non-Muslim attendees to discard their preconceived notions about Muslims and Islam, if for only a few moments, in order to fully appreciate the role that true religious teaching plays in achieving peace.

The Q&A session afterward featured both speaker-specific as well as general panel questions on topics ranging from building bridges between people of different faiths, to inter-religious efforts to solve world problems (including those in the Darfur region of Sudan), to the spiritual deficiencies of those around the world seeking to take advantage of religion in order to sow disharmony and chaos amongst their presence. After the Q&A session, refreshments were provided for all of the attendees as well as the speakers, while the speakers and the attendees shook hands, and discussed the day's proceedings cheerfully. The program ended at its scheduled time of around 4 P.M. The president of the St. Paul Chapter, Dr. Muhammed Abdul Khaliq, presented a copy of the Holy Qur'an to all the guest speakers, and led silent prayers at the conclusion.

The Holy Qur'an: The Effective Divine Instrument for Every Age

Whenever Islam has been confronted with any other religion in consequence of some new condition of the age, the sharp and effective instrument that has immediately come to hand is the Holy Qur'an. In the same way, whenever philosophic thought has been given publicity in opposition to it, the Holy Qur'an has destroyed that poisonous plant and has so humiliated it as to provide a mirror to its students which shows up that the true philosophy is that which is contained in the Holy Qur'an, not the other.

In the modern age, when Christian missionaries started their propaganda and made an attempt to draw away unintelligent and ignorant people from the Unity of God and to make them worship a humble creature and employed every kind of sophistry for dressing up their doubtful ideas and thus created a storm in India, it was the Holy Qur'an which repelled them so that they are not now able to face a well-informed person and their extensive apologetics have been folded up like a piece of paper. [*Izala Auham, Roohani Khazain, Vol. 3, pp. 381-382*]

Report of the International Tabligh and Tarbiyyat Seminar Held on 27th July, 2007 at Baitul Futuh, Morden

Muqbool Ahmed Khan
Na'ib Secretary Tabligh UK

By the Grace of Allah, we have been able to convene for this year's International Tabligh and Tarbiyyat Seminar, a day before the UK Jalsa Salana. *Alhamdulillah*, we were provided with excellent facilities at Baitul Futuh mosque due to weather conditions. This affected the attendance by helping more delegates to be present in the morning, although some have now traveled to the Jalsa Gah where we usually have this seminar.

The total attendance peaked at 220 men and 49 ladies, representing 28 countries, including Saudi Arabia, India, Germany, Fiji, New Zealand, The Gambia, Malaysia, USA and Canada.

As per the program the day was divided in two sessions, with Tabligh in the morning and Tarbiyyat in the afternoon.

First Session

Following *Tilawate*

Qur'an-e-Kareem, Imam Ataul Mujeeb Rashed Sahib (Missionary i/c UK and Officer Jalsa Gah) opened the seminar with an introduction explaining that it covers both Tabligh and Tarbiyyat equally as these overlap. Ameers and Missionaries with a lot of practical knowledge and experience share it with others. The topic of the first session (chaired by Maulana Abdul Basit Sahib of Indonesia) was "Effective Methods of Tabligh to Remote Locations".

Jama'ats had used a number of varied and innovative techniques, for example New Zealand Jama'at uses community TV networks and Internet as well as stalls equipped with blues, juice and *samosas*.

Mohammad Jowahir Sahib of Mauritius related that they visited one house where a lady had told her family of a dream that same morning about the Jama'at visitors, and she did *Bai'at*.

The Jama'at there provides transport from villages to central *Seeratul Nabi Jalsas*.

Delegates gained valuable guidance on how The Gambia had overcome opposition from Mullahs, and how Hazoor helped the Fiji Jama'at to establish a new Jama'at on the Island of Vanuatu including registration and navigating approval by the national church.

Hassan Bashir Sahib spoke of using time already available in the media, while five mosques allowed an Ahmadi to deliver the Friday Sermon.

A contribution from Lajna highlighted the importance of gifts and helping others in order to portray our true Islamic character.

In Spain, they have gone through their history to pick out early press cuttings and letters to good effect.

Finally we heard how to do Tabligh to even those areas where the Jama'at or our publications are banned, e.g. Pakistan, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia. Maulana Hafiz Muzaffar Ahmad Sahib related that now that Tabligh is illegal in Pakistan, Allah still blessed them with 4,000 *Bai'ats* this year.

Second Session

After lunch and *Salat*, Mr. Malik Lal Khan Sahib of Canada chaired the second session regarding the Tarbiyyat topic "Successful Parenting in the Modern World".

The meeting heard of a number of difficulties and vices faced by Ahmadi children, particularly those living in non-Muslim countries. For example there are bad influences from the media, their circle of friends and western lifestyle. This leads to problems of discipline, obedience to parents and attachment to the Jama'at.

In a frank and open discussion. Ameers and Missionaries and those who have worked in Tarbiyyat and *Amoore Aama* repeatedly emphasized that:

- 1) parents must be good Muslim role models
- 2) children must be trained

to know right from wrong

- 3) congregational *Salat* and events keep children attached

Children sometimes get affected by disputes at home or become disaffected by strict Islamic code of conduct or apparently modest festivals such as *Eid* and can become overtaken by bad company outside the Jama'at.

To counterbalance this factor we can run training camps with Atfal and Nasirat and allow for things that appeal to youth, such as sports. We need patience to listen to our children.

We must look after our own children as parents, but as a Jama'at we must pay proper attention to integration of our New Ahmadis and their children as well.

In his concluding remarks Imam Sahib emphasized Tarbiyyat of New Ahmadis and requested prayers for *Jalsa*.

The Promised Messiah^{as} states:

"Of the many sects that subsequently appeared in Islam, the true one

derived great benefit from the true *Ahadith*. The correct way, therefore, is neither to treat the *Ahadith* as having greater authority than the Qur'an, as do the sect *Ahli Hadith* of this age, and not to prefer statements in the *Hadith* which are contradictory of the Holy Qur'an to the Qur'an itself, nor to regard the *Ahadith* as vain and false as is the belief of Maulvi 'Abdullah Chakralvi. The Qur'an and the *Sunnah* should judge the *Ahadith* and those that are not opposed to them should by all means be accepted. This is the straight path and blessed are those who follow it. Most unfortunate and foolish is the person who rejects the *Ahadith* altogether without regard to the test that we have proposed.

It should be the duty of the members of our community that a *Hadith* which is not opposed to the Holy Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, should be accepted and followed, however weak might be its authority, and it should be preferred to the rules framed by the jurists."

(Review of *Mubahisa-e-Batalvi and Chakralvi*, p 5,6)

BAITUR REHMAN

Sayyarah Hikmat

A citadel of peace, solace and calm
A vibrant place of magical wonder and charm

Gone are all my fear of cares as I enter
The beautiful mansion, majestic, grand!

A certain sense of comfort sings a lullaby to my soul!
The worldly anxieties, insecurities, uncertainties are evaporated like mist!

A Minaret of glory and sustenance!
In the glitter of gleam and spiritual darkness!

I feel like a wandering star, which has reached its constellation,
A Bird—who has wandered in the wilderness of wood—and found the net.

It is an abode of God whose blessings are showered on us day by day
The Call for Prayer awaken your soul from sloth and slumber
It stirs the embers of your soul into a Divine fire!

It touches the chords of your heart and you listen to the music of spheres!
Your tears and prayers can purge your soul of all worldly stress.

There is no more any talk of material profit and loss in these turbulent time of chaos.
From this Mosque is raised the voice of harmony, love and peace!

The Friday Sermon is an invitation to the doors of Islam
In immaculate English, it sounds like the pattering rain!

The Advocates of the Messiah^{as} (I meet in the Mosque) my Brothers and Sisters
Whose faces are radiant with Divine light, whose souls are enveloped with Angelic
Spirit!

In the Holy Month of *Ramadhan*, the atmosphere is permeated with God's Glory!
You experience a sense of fulfillment where ego gets crushed

And you transcend into a spiritual universe with Angels, Divinity and Word of God!
This world and its museum show seems empty, futile and hollow!
