



VOL.1 NOVEMBER 1979 NABUWWAT 1358 NO.4
AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT WEST COAST REGION

PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA

Thousands upon thousands of Muslims from all over the world flock to the Holy City of Mecca to perform the sacred duty of Hajj, the fifth pillar of the Muslim faith.

So it will not be out of occasion for readers to know something about the Hajj and what it stands for.

Every Muslim is required to perform this sacred duty once in his life. But it becomes incumbent upon those Muslims who are in a position to afford all expenses of the journey and for their families at home until their return. Physical health, security on the way and transportation facilities also count as certain conditions.

When a person undertakes a journey with the intention of pilgrimage, and he reaches the 'Miqat i.e. the fixed stations on the various roads leading to the Holy City, he denudes himself of all clothing — the sign of worldly respectability and distinction and the means of adornment and embellishment.

After taking bath he uses only the pilgrim's garb, which consists of two seamless sheets, one of which is worn around the loin and the other thrown over the shoulders. Both these sheets must be, preferably, white. As regards women they can wear their ordinary clothes, but they should wear a

simple dress.

In this state, called Ihram, the pilgrim is forbidden from amorous speech, using of scent, shaving and trimming of the nails. He has to spend all his time in prayer and in remembrance of God. From now onward he is required to repeat constantly the following formula: — "O Lord, here I am, here I am. There is no partner unto Thee. All praise, bounty and the Sovereignty belong to Thee. There is no partner unto Thee. Allah is most great. There is none worthy of worship but Allah. Allah is holy and all praise belong to Allah."

On arrival near Mecca when the Hajj i.e. the pilgrim, first gazes at the Ka'aba, the House of God, he is supposed to pray earnestly as that is considered a special moment for the acceptance of prayers. The kissing of the black stone which adorns the south east corner of the House of God after which the pilgrim makes seven circuits around the sacred House, each time kissing the black stone. This is called Tawaf or circumambulation around the Ka'aba, at the conclusion of which the Hajj has to offer prayer within the precincts of the Holy House standing behind Ma-Quami-Ibrahim, the place of Abraham.

Before going further, I would like to say a few words about the Ka'aba, the black stone, and its circumambulation and kissing respectively. That the Ka'aba the ancient House of God was rebuilt by Abraham is an historical

fact. The black stone was there before the advent of Islam and was even kissed. It must have been there at least from the time of Abraham, as the main features of the Hajj are traceable to that patriarch. Yet, it is remarkable that though the Ka'aba had three hundred and sixty idols within its walls before the coming of Islam, the black stone was never regarded as an idol by the pre-Islamic Arab, nor was it ever worshipped by them like the idols of the Ka'aba.

The fact that the practice of kissing it in the course of circumambulation has been retained, has been turned by the Western critics of Islam into an argument that Islam retains remnants of pre-Islamic idolatry.

There are even critics who are of the opinion that the Tawaf of the Ka'aba itself is an idolatrous practice. But a cursory glance at facts is enough to show the absurdity of this view.

Among the innumerable objects which were taken for gods by the pre-Islamic Arabs, the Ka'aba and the black stone are the only

two which are conspicuous by their absence, notwithstanding the reverence which the Arab mind had for them before Islam.

Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam while throwing light on the Ka'aba and the black stone says in his book *The Fountain of Knowledge*: — ".....So, in the other kind of worship, that is to say, love and self-sacrifice, there is an interplay of action between the body and soul. While in love, the human spirit all the time hovers round its beloved and kisses his "threshold." So the Ka'aba has been made a physical symbol for the true lover.

"God seems to say: Look This is My House; and this black stone is the stone of My Threshold. (God's Threshold is the Source and Spring of all bounties, that is to say every blessing emanates from His Threshold. And He commanded thus in order that man might give physical expression to his love. So the Hajjis at the place of Hajj go physically round the House, their countenance and their attitude showing their mad love for God — and assuming the role of the love intoxicated, go like lovers round the House of God, imagining this Stone to be the Stone of God's Threshold. They kiss it, their physical enthusiasm giving rise to warmth of spiritual love, the body goes round that House and kisses the stone of the threshold while the spirit goes round the real Beloved and kisses His spiritual Threshold.

It is not at all a polytheistic practice — a friend kisses a beloved friend's letter; no Muslim worships the Ka'aba nor does he pray to the black stone for blessings — he takes it only for divinely appointed physical symbol and nothing else."

Now, coming to the rest of the procedures, the pilgrim next proceeds to the mounts Safa and Marwa, and runs seven times between the two

Continued on Page 4

AHMADIYYA NEWS

KHALIFATUL MASIH'S HEALTH

According to the latest report reaching us from Pakistan, Hazrat Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad Khalifatul Masih III, is enjoying good health. Members should continue to pray for Hazrat's health, and for the rapid progress of Islam under his dynamic leadership.

Rabwah, Pakistan: Hazrat Ameerul Momineen Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad Khalifatul Masih III led the Friday prayer here on September 28, 1979 at Masjid Aqsa. In his Friday sermon, he rapturously shed light on the exaltation of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) as Rahmatul Lil Aalameen - Mercy for all the worlds. Elaborating on his subject Khalifatul Masih pointed out, that, as the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) was raised for the guidance of the entire mankind, hence, through him was exhibited the magnificent manifestation of Mercy for the mankind in two aspects: - Firstly, he brought such teachings which guarantee peace and security for the whole mankind. Secondly, this teaching establishes human dignity for all without discrimination.

As far as these aspects are concerned, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) did not draw any line of demarcation between man. In this respect he did not even differentiate between believer and disbeliever. In this connection, Khalifatul Masih referring to the various verses of the Holy Quran particularly described the teachings of Islam full of wisdom against embezzlement and treachery, and regarding the carrying out of justice at all cost. He impressed upon the minds of the congregation that dishonesty is neither permitted against believers nor the disbelievers. Likewise, Islam has emphasized on equity with friends, enemies, believers, disbelievers, in

short with the entire mankind without any discrimination. In this way, it has paved the way at a universal level for establishment of an atmosphere of peace and security, and respect for human dignity.

This is such a bright aspect of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) as Rahmatul Lil Aalameen - Mercy for all the worlds that it has encircled mankind.

Through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him) Islam has opened the door for every human being to benefit from the all pervading Mercy. Besides, it has established the true equality amongst mankind, Khalifatul Masih concluded.

EID MUBARAK

Washington, D.C.: - On Eidul Azhiyya - Festival of Sacrifices, Meer Mahmud Ahmad Nasir Missionary-in-Charge United States of America received the following cable from Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III: - EID MUBARAK MAY ALLAH BLESS ALL AHMADIES. SERVE HUMANITY AND REMAIN FAITHFUL TO ALLAH.

QURAN OFFERS GUIDANCE IN ALL CONDITIONS OF LIFE

San Francisco: - The Holy Quran offers guidance to all men in all conditions of life was told here by Maulvi A.U. Kaleem the Missionary-in-Charge West Coast region.

The Missionary-in-Charge who was addressing the Religious Founders Day meeting held in the Main Lounge of San Francisco University, on "LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD" quoted in his support Davenport who said: - "The Quran is the general code of the Muslim world; the social, civil, commercial, military, judicial, criminal, penal, and yet a religious code; by it every thing is regulated, from the ceremonies of religion to those of daily life, from the salvation of the soul to the health of the body, from the rights of the gene-

ral communities to those of societies, from morality to crime, from punishment here to that of the life to come."

Among the speakers who addressed the gathering of different denominations and various nationalities were Rev. Tosio Murakami National Director of Buddhist Education, Swami Prabudhananda In Charge Vedanta Society, Rabbi Saul White President Board of Rabbi's and Father Joseph Eagan who spoke on Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity respectively.

Mr. V. Latif Ahmad Malik the General Secretary of San Francisco Jamaat chaired the meeting and explained the importance of the Religious Founders Day meeting.

MUHAMMAD EXALTED STATUS OF WOMAN

Santa Clara:-

Sister Amatul Latif of San Francisco Jamaat delivered a speech on "The Status of Woman in Islam" at the Religious Studies Department of Santa Clara University. In her speech, she told her audience that the Holy Prophet Muhammad exalted the intellectual and spiritual status of woman. Intellectual:- "The acquisition of knowledge is an incumbent duty on Muslim both male and female." Muhammad knew the essential part the women had to play in the development of society. So he laid great stress on the upbringing of the girls by saying:- "A man who has three daughters and brings them up and educates them to the best of his capacity shall be entitled to paradise." Regarding the spiritual status the Holy Quran says:- "Whoso doeth good deeds whether male or female, and he or she is a believer such will enter paradise and they will not be wronged in the least."

After the speech a number of questions were asked to which Sister Amatul Latif answered to the entire satisfaction of the students. In answering the questions she was assisted by Maulvi Ata Ullah Kaleem and Mr. Latif Ahmad Malik who accompanied her to the University.

NEWS FROM GHANA

The first English translation of the Holy Quran to be printed in Ghana was officially launched by the Amir and Missionary-in-Charge, Maulvi Abdul Wahab Adam, who said that the local printing of the Holy Quran was not only meant to fulfil the long felt need to make the Holy Quran accessible to every seeker of truth in Ghana, but would also save the country the foreign exchange that would otherwise have been spent on its importation from outside. He expressed his sincere gratitude to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III without whose permission and assistance the Holy Quran could not have been printed locally. A reception marking the occasion was held at Palm Court, Accra, which was attended by some distinguished personalities. Ten thousand copies of the Holy Quran have been printed and more will be printed as the need arises.

Maulvi Abdul Wahab disclosed that there was already a move by leaders of various religions in Ghana to establish a Council of Religions and expressed the hope that an easy access to the Holy Quran would help promote understanding and harmony between Muslims and non-Muslims in the country.

THE GUIDANCE MERGED IN GAZETTE

In compliance with the directions of the Missionary-in-Charge United States of America Meer Mahmud Ahmad Nasir this is the last issue of The Guidance, and henceforth, it shall not be published.

The Missionary-in-Charge has further directed to the Editor of Ahmadiyya Gazette to publish the Gazette fortnightly.

PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA

From Page 1

summits along with prescribed instructions. This action is the commemoration of Hagar running in search of water for her son Ishmael.

After this Sa'ee, or the running, the pilgrim, the wayfarer to God stays in Mecca with his pilgrim's garb on, until the eighth of Zul Hajj. On that day he goes to Mina, a place three miles from Mecca.

On the morning of the ninth day, immediately after the early dawn prayer, the pilgrim proceeds to Arafat, a plain six miles from Mina. Arriving at the valley of Namrah, the pilgrim offers his early and afternoon prayers together and then enters into Arafat and remains there until sundown. This staying at Arafat forms a principal part of the ceremonies of Hajj. The pilgrim devotes himself solely to prayers and remembrance of God.

After sunset the pilgrim goes to Muzdalifa and on the tenth of Zul Hajj he visits the sacred Mosque of Mas-harul Haram, and from there goes to Mina where lie the three different pillars. Here he performs the ceremony called Rami-UI-Jimar or the throwing of the pebbles. He throws seven stones at Aquaba, each time reciting "Allah is most great". At that time he ceases reciting the formula, "O Lord, here I am," which he started assuming the pilgrim's garb.

After the performance of this ceremony the pilgrim slaughters his animal of sacrifice, and thus concludes the necessary ceremonies of Hajj. Now he gets his head shaved, cuts the nails, takes off his pilgrim dress and puts on his ordinary clothes.

Next comes another visit to Ka'aba and the circumambulation of the House of God. In case he fails on his arrival at Mecca to run between Safa and Marwah

he should do it now, else his Hajj shall remain incomplete. The circuit around the Ka'aba over, the pilgrim returns to Mina and stays there till the tenth of Zul Hajj. While staying at Mina he must perform the ceremonies of casting pebbles at pillars each day after noontide and spend all his time in prayer and in the remembrance of God.

On the thirteenth day, the pilgrim pays his last visit to Ka'aba and makes his farewell circumambulation of the Holy House at the conclusion of which he offers his prayer and thus brings his Hajj or pilgrimage to completion.

So the pilgrimage to Mecca is a symbol of the respect shown to places where the will of God was manifested and reminds people of the incidents connected with the manifestation. It reminds people of the incidents connected with the manifestation. It reminds us of Ishmael being left in the desert by Abraham and how those who make sacrifices in the way of God are protected and honoured, it fosters their faith in the Power and might of God.

The ceremonies of Hajj are not an end in themselves, but they are means to the desired end and, in our efforts to reach the end and attain to the goal we cannot afford to ignore the means. The pilgrimage to Mecca is a practical demonstration of Muslim's profession that he is ready to undergo every kind of sacrifice for the sake of his Creator. Away from his home and relatives, in a strange land, without any amenity of life, sometimes at a great risk to himself, with only two unsewn sheets on his body, the God-intoxicated spiritual wayfarer performs his pilgrimage.

In the eyes of the true Mus-

lims the pilgrimage is null and void unless each of the successive formal act which it involves is accompanied by corresponding movements of the heart.

Junayd of Baghdad, a great Muslim divine, explained the spiritual significance of the ceremonies of the Hajj to a man who just returned from the pilgrimage. Junayd said: "From the hour which you first journeyed from your home have you also been journeying away from all sins?" He said 'No' "Then" said Junayd, "you have made no journey. At every stage where you halted for the night did you traverse a station on the way to God?" "No," he replied. "Then said Junayd "You have not trodden the road stage by stage. When you put on pilgrim's garb at the proper place, did you discard the quality of human nature as you cast off your clothes?" "No". "Then you have not put on the pilgrim's garb.

"When you stood at the Arafat did you stand one moment in contemplation of God?" "No". "Then you have not stood at Arafat.

"When you went to Muzdalifa and achieved your desire did you renounce all sensual desires?" "No". "Then you have not gone to Muzdalifa.

"When you circumambulated the Ka'aba did you behold the immaterial beauty of God in the abode of purification?" "No". "Then you have not circumambulated the Ka'aba".

"When you ran between Safa and Marwa did you attain purity (Safa) and virtue (Murwa)?" "No". "Then you have not run." "When you came to Mina did your wishes (Muna) cease?" No, "Then you have not visited Mina".

"When you reached the slaughtered place and offered

sacrifice, did you sacrifice the objects of your worldly desires?" "No". Then you have not sacrificed".

"When you threw the pebbles did you throw away whatever sensual thoughts were accompanying you?" No, "Then you have not yet thrown the pebbles and you have not yet performed the pilgrimage."

So, in the words of Hazrat Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam—Everybody who undertakes to go on a pilgrimage should bear in mind that unless he realizes the full significance of the pilgrimage, and unless the bodily act of the pilgrimage is accompanied by the spiritual pilgrimage his performance of the rites of the pilgrimage is only a lifeless ceremony devoid of all meaning. But many people perform the pilgrimage only to be called pilgrims and spend their foully earned wealth for the visit to the Holy places. Almighty God does not accept their pilgrimages, for they are only crusts without any essence.

GIST OF OUR RELIGION

"THE gist and the essence of our religion is LAHA ILALAHU MUHAMMAD SULULLAH (There is no one worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammad is His Apostle). The faith we hold in the course of our life in this material world, and the faith with which, by the grace of God, we shall pass way from this transient universe, is just this that our Leader and Friend Muhammad Mustafa, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, is KHATAMUL NABIYYEEN, and KHAIROL MURSALEEN, at whose hands Religion has been made perfect—at whose hands the blessings reached the point of the fullest consummation, by means of which, having adopted the right path, the human being can reach God."

("IZALA-LAUHAM" by Hazrat Ahmad the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam).

SPEAK TRUTH ALWAYS