



THE

Ahmadiyya Gazette

إِنِّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

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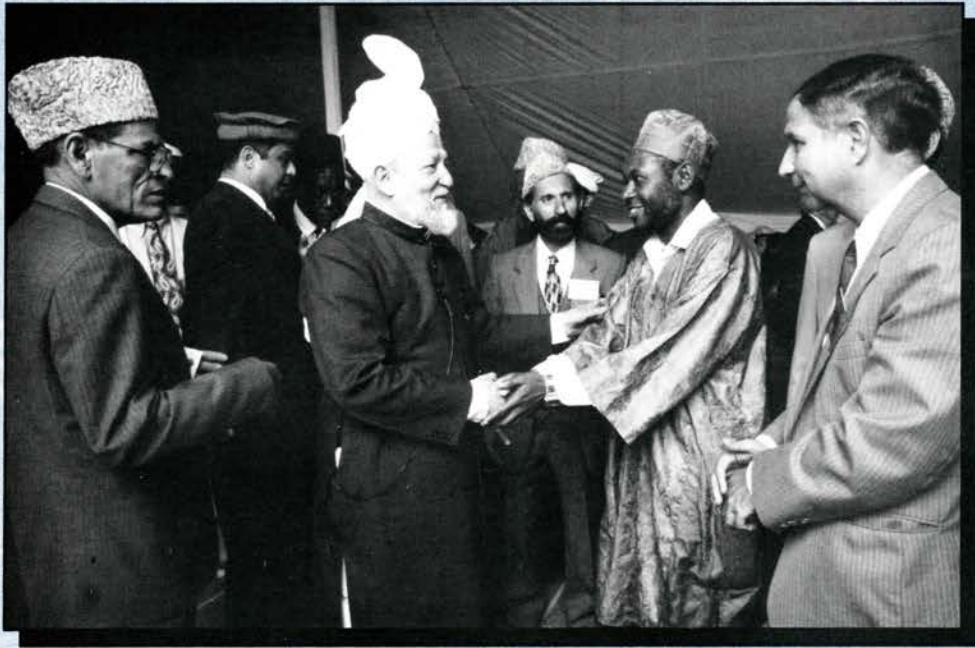
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أَهْلًا وَسَهْلًا وَمَرْحَبًا



**A MOST HEARTY WELCOME
TO OUR BELOVED IMAM**

(May Allah Strengthen him)



During Reception on the Occasion of Annual Convention
1994 Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (a.b.a.) with Some Guests



FROM THE HOLY QURAN

Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors *from among* those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security *and peace* after their fear: They will worship Me, *and* they will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be the rebellious. (24:56)

وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
لِيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ
قَبْلِهِمْ وَبَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ
وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي
وَلَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

SAYING OF THE HOLY PROPHET (S.A.W.)

تَكُونُ النَّبُوءَةُ فِيكُمْ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ ثُمَّ يَرْفَعَهَا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى ثُمَّ تَكُونُ خِلَافَةً عَلَى مِنْهَاجِ النَّبُوءَةِ
مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ ثُمَّ يَرْفَعَهَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ تَكُونُ مُلْكًا عَاضًا تَكُونُ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ ثُمَّ يَرْفَعَهَا اللَّهُ
تَعَالَى ثُمَّ تَكُونُ مُلْكًا جَبْرِيَّةً فَتَكُونُ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ ثُمَّ يَرْفَعَهَا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى ثُمَّ تَكُونُ خِلَافَةً
عَلَى مِنْهَاجِ النَّبُوءَةِ ثُمَّ سَكَتَ .
(مسند احمد جلد ٥ صفحہ ٤٠٢)

O Muslims, this prophethood will remain with you as long as Allah wishes it to remain. Then it would come to an end, to be replaced with Khilafat which would be on the pattern of prophethood (as if it is a supplement to it). After a short time, this Khilafat would also come to an end. Then rulers who cut (are cruel to people) will replace them. After a short time this period will also come to an end. Then there will be the rule of usurpers, and that period too will come to an end. After that Khilafat on the pattern of prophethood would re-emerge. After saying this the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not add any further comments.

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KHILAFAT - THE SECOND MANIFESTATION OF GOD

(The Promised Messiah, peace be upon him)

It is the practice of God Almighty, and since He created man on this earth, He has been demonstrating this practice, that He helps His messengers and grants them ascendancy. He has said "*kataballaho la'aghlebanna ana wa rosolee*"

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

Here *prevail* means as it is the intention of messengers and prophets that God's word must be established on earth and no one should be able to fight it, thus God manifests their truth with His mighty signs. The truth which they want to disseminate in the world, He sows its seed with their hands. But He does not accomplish it through them. Rather He causes them to die at a time when there is the fear of their collapse. Thus He gives his enemies a chance to laugh, jeer, ridicule and scorn. When they have done this, then He shows His hand of might and brings about grounds with which the goals that were a little unfinished reach their zenith. Thus He manifests two kinds of power.

1. He shows His hand of might through the

prophets.

2. Secondly at the time of the demise of the prophet when difficulties mount and the enemy is in full might and thinks that they (the followers of the prophet) are in a disarray and is sure that now this community will be destroyed. Even some within the community become hesitant and their backs are broken and some unfortunates among them even apostatize, then God manifests His strong hand of might and sustains the collapsing community. Thus he who shows patience till the end, watches this divine miracle.

You should therefore, neither grieve over what I have told you (that the hour of my demise is nigh) nor should you be heart-broken for it is mandatory that you see God's second manifestation. The coming of that manifestation is a lot better for you because it is eternal whose succession will not terminate till the end of days. This manifestation will not come till I depart. When I go, Allah will send to you the second manifestation and it will stay with you forever.

(*al-Wasiyyat* pp. 6-7)

"Everyone of you is a caller towards Allah"

Oh servants of Muhammad(s.a.w.) and devoties of the faith of Muhammad(s.a.w.) now forget about your concern as to what your assigned jobs are. Everyone of you is a caller towards Allah. Whatever may be your profession; whatever may be your job. Whichever part of the world you

live in. Your first and foremost duty is to call people to the Lord of Muhammad(s.a.w.) and change the darkneses into light. Turn them from dead bodies into living beings. May Allah do so.

(Excerpts from Friday Sermon of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV, February 25, 1983)

**Announcement of the Promised Messiah (On whom be peace)
regarding the importance of attending the
JALSA SALANA (ANNUAL CONFERENCE))**

JALSA SALANA, Annual Gathering or Annual Convention is an essential feature of all the Ahmadiyy Muslim Jama'ats' calendar in every country of the world. The foundation stone of this purely spiritual assembly of the believers was laid by the Promised Messiah and Imam Mahdi, the Imam of this age, more than a century ago, in 1891. What was his concept of this gathering and what benefits we should derive out of this exercise, let us read from Ishtihar December 7, 1891.

To all sincere friends,

Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahe Wa Barakatohu

On December 27, 1892, a conference of all my loving and sincere friends will be held in Qadian. The most important objective of this conference is to enable all sincere friends to derive spiritual blessings, to increase their knowledge and, with the help and succour of Almighty Allah, to promote a deeper spiritual insight among them. Moreover, the conference will also promote better acquaintence and increased brotherly love among the members. Similarly, an important objective of the conference is to consider ways of expressing increased spiritual sympathy and consideration for the people of Europe and America. It has now become abundantly clear that the rightly guided people of Europe and America are getting ready to accept Islam, but are turned off by the internal divisions of dissensions in the Islamic World. Only a few days ago I received a letter from an Englishman. He said that the Muslims show sympathy and tenderness for all of Allah's creatures, even animals. He added that he has become a Muslim, but needs help in understanding its teachings fully. Dear brethren! be certain that Allah is preparing these nations to join our Community. Almighty Allah does not cause the sincerity of anyone to go in vain; Insha-Allah these nations will be attracted to the truth of Islam. This is the Decree of God in heaven; no one can change it.

It is therefore essential that all who can afford the journey join the conference, which is filled with many considerations of expenses from undertaking this sacred journey for the sake of Allah and His apostle.

I repeat that the conference should not be treated like an ordinary worldly conference. It is an event based solely on the support of the true faith and propagation of the religion of Islam. The foundation stone of the Community has been laid down by Allah Almighty Himself; He has prepared nations to join it in near future. This has been done by the One Who is All-Powerful. Nothing is impossible for Him. The time is coming--indeed it is very near--that the faith of the Islam will be completely cleansed of the people with tendencies towards worship of nature and superstitious beliefs of those who mix their own ideas with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. Almighty Allah will firmly establish the straight path for this nation of Islam; the path that is shown by the Holy Qur'an, the path that was demonstrated to the companions of the Holy Prophet, the path which the truthfults, the martyrs, and the righteous have always travelled. This will be so. This will certainly be so. Let him who has ears, listen. Blessed are those who are guided to the right path.

I close this announcement with a prayer that Almighty Allah be with those who undertake this journey solely for the sake of Allah. May He reward them abundantly. May He have mercy on them and relieve them of their troubles, pain, and anxieties. May He fulfill all their noble desires, and may He raise them, on the Day of Judgement, in the company of His servants who have attained His Grace and Mercy. May He safeguard them throughout their journey. O Allah! O Ye with abundant Grace and Bounty! O Merciful! accept all these prayers and grant us a victory over our opponents with glorious signs. Verily Thou has all power and strength. Ameen. (Ishtihar December 7, 1892, Ishtiharat Volume 2 p.341)

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM

Study Guide - Part 2

The following questions and answers may help the members in the study of the Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam during this centennial year. The answers are in the words of the Promised Messiah(AS) as translated. Our thanks to Maulvi Mohammad Siddique Nangli who prepared the guide in Urdu and to Fouzan Pal and Kashif Malik who helped in preparing the English version. (National Talim Department)

Q 44: Why is no other book needed after the Holy Quran?

The Holy Quran is the Perfect Book which undertook the entire project of human reform and is not addressed only to one people. It seeks the reform of all and has set forth all grades of human development. It teaches savages the manners and ways of humanity and thereafter instructs them in high moral qualities. Thus there is no need of any other book beside the Holy Quran.

Q 45: What favor has the Holy Quran done to humanity by way of teaching the highest moral?

It is a bounty of the Holy Quran upon mankind that it has set forth the distinction between man's natural State and moral qualities. And that it does not stop merely at leading man from his natural conditions to the elevated palace of high moral qualities? But also opens the doors of the holy understanding that leads man to the spiritual heights. In this way it sets forth in an excellent manner the three types of teaching that we have already mentioned. As it comprehends all the teachings which are necessary for religious training, it claims it has discharged this function to perfection. It says:

This day have I perfected your religion for your benefit, and have completed My favour unto you and have been pleased to appoint Islam as your religion (5:4). This means the climax of religion has been reached in Islam. Which is that a person should be committed wholly to God and should seek his salvation through the Sacrifice of his self in the cause of God, and not through any other means, and should demonstrate this motive and determination in his conduct. This is the stage at which all excellences arrive at their perfection. Thus, The Holy Quran has presented the God Who was not identified by

the philosophers.

Q 46: What methods has the Holy Quran given for the existence of God?

The Quran has adopted two methods for the understanding of God. First, the method whereby human reason is strengthened and illuminated for the purpose of setting forth reasons in support of the existence of God, and thus saves a person from falling into error. Secondly, the spiritual method which we shall set forth in answer to the third question.

PROOF OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

We now proceed to draw attention to the excellent and matchless proofs of the existence of God that the Holy Quran has set forth. At one place it has said:

Our Lord is He Who has bestowed upon everything its appropriate faculties, and has then guided it to the achievement of its appropriate purposes (20:51). If we keep in mind the purport of this verse and then reflect upon the shape and form of man and all the animals on land and in the sea, and the birds, we are impressed with the power of God Who has bestowed its appropriate form on everything. This is a vast subject and we would urge our listeners to reflect deeply upon it.

The second proof of the existence of God that the Holy Quran has set forth is that God is the ultimate cause of all causes, as it is said:

Thy Lord is the final cause of all causes (53:43). If we observe carefully we find that the entire universe is bound together in a system of cause and effect. This system is at the root of all knowledge. No part of creation is outside this system. Some things are the roots of others and some are branches. A cause may be primary or may be the effect of another cause, and that in its turn may be the effect of still

another cause, and so on. Now, it is not possible that in this infinite world this pattern of cause and effect should have no limit and should be infinite. We are compelled to acknowledge that it must terminate with some ultimate cause. The ultimate cause is God. This verse set forth this argument very concisely and affirms that the system of cause and effect terminates in God.

Another proof of Divine existence set forth in the Quran is:

This means that the sun cannot catch up with the moon, and the night, which is a manifestation of the moon, cannot prevail over the day, which is a manifestation of the sun. Neither of them can move outside its orbit (36:41). Were there not a Regulator of the whole of this system behind the scenes, the system would fall into chaos. This proof is very striking in the estimation of astronomers. There are so many grand heavenly bodies that are gliding through space that the slightest disorder in their movements would bring about the ruin of the whole world. What a manifestation of Divine power is it that these bodies neither collide nor change their speed, nor alter their courses in the slightest degree, nor have they been worn out by their circulation during such a long period, nor has their machinery suffered any disorder. If they are not under the supervision of a Guardian, how is it that such a grand organization continues to carry on through numberless years entirely on its own? At another place in the Quran God Almighty draws attention to this in the words:

Can there be a doubt in the existence of God Who has originated the heavens and the earth (14:11)?

He has set forth another proof of His existence in the words:

All that is on the earth will perish and only the countenance of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour, will survive (55:27-28). If we assume that the earth might be reduced into particles and the heavenly bodies might be broken down and everything might be overtaken by a blast that would wipe out every sign of these bodies, yet reason acknowledges

and right conscience deems it necessary that after all this destruction there should survive One, Who is not subject to destruction, and can undergo no change and Who should continue in His pristine state. That One is God, Who has created everything mortal and is Himself immune from mortality.

Another proof of His existence that God has set forth in the Holy Quran is: God enquired from the souls:

Am I not your Lord? and they answered: Indeed (7:173). In this verse God Almighty sets forth, in the form of question and answer, the characteristic with which He has invested the souls, and that is that by its very nature no soul can deny the existence of God. Those who deny God do so because they can find no proof of His existence according to their own fancy. Yet they acknowledge that for everything that is created there must be a creator. There is no one in the world so stupid that if he falls ill he would insist that there is no cause for his illness. If the system of the universe had not been made up of cause and effect, it would not have been possible to predict the time of a tornado, or of the eclipse of the sun or the moon, or that a patient would die at a certain time, or that a disease would be reinforced by another disease at a certain stage. Thus, a research scholar who does not acknowledge the existence of God, in effect does so indirectly, for he too, like us, searches for the causes of effects. This is an acknowledgment of a sort, though it is not perfect. Besides, if, through some device, a person who denies the existence of God could be made unconscious in such manner that he should pass under the complete control of God, discarding all fancies, emotions, and impulses of his earthly life, he would in such a state acknowledge the existence of God and would not deny it. This is testified to by eminent experts. The verse that we have cited also indicates that a denial of the existence of God is only a manifestation of this earthly existence, for the true nature of man fully confesses His existence.

Q 47: How is the contented soul a spring of the spiritual conditions?

The third question is: What are spiritual

conditions? We have already stated that according to the Holy Quran the fountainhead of spiritual conditions is the soul at rest, which carries a person from the grade of a moral being to the grade of a godly being, as Allah, the Glorious has said:

O soul that has found its rest in God, return to thy Lord, thou well pleased with Him and He well pleased with thee. So enter among My chosen servants and enter My Garden (89:28-31).

Q 48: What is the paradise on this earth and in the hereafter?

It should be remembered that the highest spiritual condition of a person in this life is that he should find comfort in God and all his Satisfaction, and ecstasy and delight should be centered in God. This is the Condition which is called the heavenly life. In this condition a person is bestowed the heavenly life in this very world in return for his perfect sincerity, purity and faithfulness. Other people look forward to paradise in the hereafter, but he enters it in this very life. Arriving at this stage a person realises that the worship that was prescribed for him is the truth the food that nurtures his soul, and on which his spiritual life largely depends, and that its consummation is not postponed to the after life. All the reproof that the reproofing self administers to him on his unclean life and yet fails to rouse fully his longing for virtue and to generate real disgust against his evil desires, and to bestow full power of adherence to virtue, is transformed by this urge which is the beginning of the development of the soul at rest. On arriving at this stage a person becomes capable of achieving complete prosperity. All the passions of self begin to wither and a strengthening breeze begins to blow upon the soul so that the person Conceded looks upon his previous weaknesses with remorse. At that time nature and habits experience a complete transformation and the person is drawn far away from his previous condition. He is washed and cleansed and God inscribes love of virtue upon his heart and casts out from it the impurity of Vice with His own hand. The forces of truth all enter the citadel of his heart and righteousness occupies all the battlements of

his nature and truth becomes victorious and falsehood lays down its arms and is put to flight. The hand of God is placed over his heart and he takes every step under the shade of God. God Almighty has indicated all this in the following Verses:

These are they whose hearts Allah has inscribed faith with His Own hand and whom He has helped with the Holy Spirit (58:23). Allah has endeared faith to you and has made it to scorn fair to your hearts! And He has made you averse to disbelief, wickedness and disobedience and impressed upon your hearts the viciousness of evil ways. All this has come about through the grace and favour of Allah. Allah is All-Knowing Wise (49:8-9). Truth has arrived and falsehood has vanished, falsehood is bound to disappear (17:82).

All this pertains to the spiritual condition which a person attains at the third stage. No One can acquire true height unless he arrives at this Condition.

Q 49: How does Almighty Allah inscribe faith in our hearts and how does He help us with the holy spirit?

God's inscribing faith on their hearts with His Own hand and helping them with the Holy Spirit means that no one can achieve true purity and righteousness unless he receives heavenly help. At the stage of the reproofing self a person's condition is that he repents time after time and yet falls down and often despairs and Considers his Condition beyond remedy. He remains in this situation for a period and when the appointed time comes a light descends upon him at night or during the day which possesses divine power. With the descent of that light he undergoes a wonderful Change and he perceives the control of a hidden hand, and beholds a Wonderful world. At that time he realizes that trod exists and his eyes are filled with a light which they did not possess before.

Q 50: What is the significance of seeking the straight path?

The law of nature informs us that for the achievement of each purpose there is appointed

a straight path and the purpose can be achieved only by following that path. For instance, if we are sitting in a dark room, the straight path for obtaining the light of the sun is for us to open the window that faces the sun. When we do that, the light of the sun blatantly enters the room and illuminates it. Thus it is obvious that for the acquisition of God's love and real glaze these must be some window, and there must be an appointed method for the acquisition of pure spirituality. Then we should see the straight path that leads to spirituality as we seek a straight path for the achievement of all our other purposes. That method is not that we should seek to meet God only through the exercise of our reason and by following our self-appointed ways. The doors which can only be opened by His powerful hands will not yield to our logic and philosophy. We cannot find the Ever-Living and Self-Subsisting God through our own devices. The only straight path for the achievement of this purpose is that we should first devote our lives. Together with all our faculties, to the cause of God Almighty, and should then occupy ourselves with supplication for meeting Him, and should thus find God through God Himself.

Q 51: Describe an excellent prayer of the Holy Quran?

The most excellent prayer which instructs us concerning the time and occasion of supplication and depicts before us the picture of spiritual zeal is the one that God, the Beneficent, has taught us in the opening chapter of the Holy Quran.

Q 52: What is the meaning of paradise after death?

The paradise that will be bestowed in the hereafter would be a reflection of this paradise which will through Divine power, be manifested physically. This is referred to in the following verses:

For him who fears to stand before his Lord and is in awe of His Greatness and Majesty, there are two gardens, one in this world and the other in the hereafter (55:47). Those who are wholly devoted to God will be given a drink that will purify their hearts and their

thoughts and their designs (76:22). The virtuous shall be given a drink which is tempered with camphor from a spring wherefrom the servants of Allah drink. They cause it to gush forth through their own efforts (76:6-7).

Q 53: What are the drinks of camphor and ginger which will be offered to the righteous people in paradise?

We have already explained that the word Kafoor has been used in this verse for this reason that the Arabic word kafara means suppression and covering up. This is an indication that these people have quaffed the cup of cutting asunder from the world and turning to God with such Sincerity that their love of the world has become quite cold. It is well known that all passions originate in the heart and when the heart withdraws altogether from all undesirable fancies and never reverts to them at all, those passions begin to decline till they disappear altogether; that is what is conveyed in this verse, that is to say, that such people draw far away from the passions of self and incline so completely towards God that their hearts become cold to worldly pursuits and their passions are suppressed as camphor suppresses poisonous matter.

Then it is said: *They will be given to drink therein of a cup tempered with ginger (76:18-19).* The Arabic word for ginger (Zanjabil) is a compound of zana and jabal. Zana in Arabic idiom means ascending and jabal means a mountain, thus Zanjabil means: He ascends the mountain. It should be remembered that after a person recovers from a poisonous disease he passes through two stages before he is restored to full health and strength. The first stage is when the poisonous matter is completely overcome and dangerous tendencies are reformed and poisonous conditions are safely averted and the attack of the fatal upsurge is completely suppressed, but the limbs are still weak, strength is lacking and the patient treads wearily. The second stage is when the patient is restored to full health and his body achieves full strength and he feels that he can climb hills and run along the heights. This condition is achieved in the third stage concerning which God Almighty has said that godly people of the highest rank drink of cups

that are flavoured with ginners; that is to say, that arriving at the full strength of their spiritual condition they can climb high mountains; meaning that they carry out great projects and make great sacrifices in the cause of God.

Q 54: What is the significance of chains and fire for the disbelievers?

We have prepared chains and collars and a blazing fire for the disbelievers (76:5). This means that for those who reject the truth and have no inclination towards accepting it, God has prepared chains and collars and a blazing fire. The meaning is that those who do not seek God with a true heart suffer a severe reaction. They are so much involved with the world as if their feet are secured by chains, and they bend down so much towards worldly pursuits as if there are collars round their necks which do not permit them to lift their eyes towards heaven. They have a burning desire for the things of the world, property, authority, domination, wealth, etc. As God Almighty finds them unworthy and committed to undesirable pursuits He inflicts them with these three sufferings.

Q 55: How is the action of God manifested as a consequence of the action of human beings?

As we observe clearly that in our worldly life there is an inevitable result for every action or ours, and that result is the act of God Almighty, the same law operates in religious matters also. For instance, it is said that in consequence of the full striving of a person in seeking God, the inevitable act of God is to guide him along the ways that lead to Him (29:70). As a contrast it is said: *When they deviated from the right course and did not desire to tread along the straight path, the Divine action followed in that their hearts were made perverse (61:6).* To illustrate this even more clearly it is said:

He who remains blind in this life will be blind in the hereafter also, and even more astray (17:73). This is an indication that the virtuous see God in this very life and they behold their True Beloved in this world.

Q 56: How can the perfect relationship with

God be inculcated?

The method of establishing perfect spiritual relationship with God that the Holy Quran teaches us is Islam, meaning devoting one's whole life to the cause of God and being occupied with the supplications which we have been taught in Surah Fatiha. This is the essence of Islam. Complete surrender to God and the supplications taught in Surah Fatiha are only methods of meeting God and drinking the water of true salvation. This is the only that the law of nature has appointed for man's highest exaltation and for his meeting the Divine. Those alone find God who enter into spiritual fire of Islam and continue occupied with the supplication set out in the Surah Fatiha.

Q 57: What is Islam according to the Holy Quran?

Islam is the blazing fire that burns up our life and consuming our false deities presents the sacrifice of our life and our property and our honour to our Holy God. Entering it we drink the water of a new life and all our spiritual faculties establish such a relationship with God as subsists between kindred. A fire leaps up from our inside like lightning and another fire descends upon us from above. By the meeting of these two flames all our passions and our love for anything beside God are totally consumed and we become dead vis-a-vis our previous life. This condition is named Islam in the Holy Quran.

Q 58: How does Islam annihilate the lower passions and how do we attain life with prayer?

Through our complete surrender to the will of God our passions are killed, and through supplications we acquire new life. This life is signalized by the receipt of revelation. Arriving at this stage is interpreted as meeting with God, in other words beholding God. At this stage a person establishes a relationship with God by virtue of which he becomes as if he were beholding of God, and he is invested with power and all his senses and his inner faculties are illumined and he feels the strong pull of a holy life. At this stage God becomes his eye with which he sees, and becomes his tongue with which he speaks, and becomes

his hand which he assaults his enemy, and becomes his ear with which he hears, and becomes his feet with which he walks. This stage is referred to in the verse:

Allah's hand is above their hands (48:11). In the same way it is said:

It was not thou who didst throw, but it was Allah Who threw (8:18). In short at this stage there is perfect union with God and His holy will pervades the soul thoroughly, and the moral power that had previously been weak becomes firm like a mountain and reason and intelligence are sharpened to the extreme. This is the meaning of the verse:

He has strengthened them with His spirit (58:23). At this stage the streams of love for and devotion to Him surge up he such manner that to die he the Cause of God and to endure thousands of torments for His Sake and to become disgraced he His path. Become as easy as breaking a small straw. One is pulled towards God without knowing who is pulling. One is carried about by a hidden hand, and to do God's will becomes the purpose of one's life. At this stage God appeals very Close as He has said:

We are closer to him than his jugular vein (50:17).

In that Condition the lower relationships of a person fall away from him. As ripe fruit falls away automatically from the branch of a tree. His relationships with God deepens and he draws far away from all creation and is honoured with the word and Converse of God. The doors of access to this stage are as wide open today as they were at any time, and Divine grace still bestows this bounty upon those who seek it as He did before.

Q 59: What is the secret of attaining nearness to God?

This is not achieved by the mere exercise of the tongue. And this door is not opened by vain talk and boasts. There are many who Seek but there are few who find. Why is that so? it is because this stage demands true earnestness and true sacrifice. Mere words

mean nothing he this context. To Step faithfully onto the fire from which other people run away is the first requirement of this path. Boasts avil nothing: what is needed is practical zeal and earnestness. In this context God, the Glorious, has said:

When My servants enquire from thee concerning Me, tell them I am close. I respond to the call of supplicant when he calls on Me. So should they seek Me through their supplications and have firm faith in Me, that they may be rightly guided (2:187).

Q 60: Why does Allah give the example of a garden when describing faith?

Give glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness, that for them there are gardens beneath which rivers flow (2:26). In this verse God Almighty has described faith as a garden beneath which rivers flow, and has thus indicated that faith is related to righteous action as a garden is related to the water of the river or stream. As a garden cannot flourish without water, faith cannot Survive without righteous action. If there is faith but no righteous action the faith is vain; and if there are actions but not faith, the actions arc mere show or display. The reality of the Islamic paradise is that it is a reflection of the faith and actions of a person in this life and is not something that will be bestowed upon a person from outside A person's paradise is developed aside him and everyone's paradise is his faith and his righteous actions, the delight of which begins to be tasted in this very life and one perceives the hidden gardens and Streams of faith and righteous action which will become concretely manifest in the hereafter. God's holy teaching instructs us that pure and perfect and firm faith in God, His attributes and His designs, is a beautiful garden of fruit trees, and righteous actions are the streams that irrigate the garden.

Q 61: What example of kalima tayyiba has been given in the form of a tree and what are its signs?

The Holy Quran tells us that a word of faith which is free from every extreme and defect and falsehood and vanity and is perfect in

every Way is like a tree which is free from every defect, the root of which is firm in the earth and its branches spread into heaven. It brings forth its fruit at all times and at no time are its branches without fruit (14:25-26). Thus it will be seen that God Almighty has described a word of faith as a tree that bears fruit at all times and has set forth three of its characteristics.

The first is that its root, that is to say, its true meaning should be firm in the earth, meaning that its truth and reality should be acceptable to human nature and conscience.

Its second characteristic is that its branches should spread out into heaven, meaning that it should be supported by reason and should be in accord with the heavenly law of nature which is the work of God. In other words the law of nature should furnish arguments in support of

of its correctness and truth, and those arguments should be beyond the reach of criticism.

Its third characteristic should be that its fruit should be permanent and unlimited that is to say, the blessings and effects of acting upon it should continue to be manifested at all times and should not cease to be manifested after a period.

Q 62: What example of kalima khabisa has been given?

The case of an evil word is like that of an evil tree, which is uprooted from the earth and has no stability (14:27); meaning that human nature rejects it and it cannot be established by reason, or the law of nature or human conscience. It has no more stability than an idle tale.

MAJLIS IRFAAN

Questions Answered by

Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV(a.b.a.)

QUESTION - 1

How do you know that you are following the right religion?

ANSWER

If you are following a religion out of conviction, that is all that is expected of you. The ultimate decision will be made by God. Here on earth, all that we can do is that we should follow a religion with conviction. Not falsely. If we are not convinced of a thing we should not accept it. If we are honestly convinced of the truth then this is exactly what we are expected to do. So that is right by our standards, if that is the definition of right then we are following the right religion if we are honestly convinced that that religion is true. But that is all that can be said about decisions here on earth. It is only God who can decide and here I must tell you that if you are following a religion honestly and truthfully without any distortions in your own self, without being unjust to your fellow beings

and being in the right frame of mind, even if that religion has been cancelled by God and been replaced with a new religion in its place still the followers of that religion have been guaranteed heaven by the Holy Quran. So right or wrong are also important of course, but more important is the intention and the practice of the person who believes in any religion. If he's honest, he has no fears, if he practices what he believes he has no fears. If he is good to mankind as such and is well disposed, he should have no fears. But such a person with such an honest frame of mind when he confronts truth from another religion then it is the test for such a person, whether he was really honest or not.

For instance, such a Christian as I have described, when he confronts the Holy Quran and the truth of the Holy Quran then such a person should accept it because it is definitely much more logical and right. Logically, compared with the Christian teachings, ordinary human beings should accept this

teaching because it's more rational, and if still he rejects, then you would know that person was not all right or straight within. He only thought that he was honest and straight but when confronted truth he rejected it. So this is a criterion mentioned in the Holy Quran. The Holy Quran says that those of the Ahle-Kitab - the people of the Book - who believed honestly and genuinely in whatever was given to them by their forefathers and practiced that with all sincerity and were good of intentions and good of acts, they have no fear, they would not be punished by Allah. But again, the Holy Quran tells us that when such people are told the message of the Holy Quran then they accept it because they are in the right frame of mind, they cry with the impact of the Holy Quran, they melt within and they have accepted the message and this is exactly according to our nature, this is how it should be.

So as far as the claims are concerned it is very difficult to establish one thing as truth and another as falsehood because then the dilemma would be that Hindus would say that "we honestly and genuinely believe that this is truth, and we are satisfied". And the Muslims would say: "Yes we know this is the truth that we find ourselves in and we are satisfied", and so would the claim be of the Christians. So what would be the different criteria. How would you differentiate between one claimant and another? So to avoid that, the best golden rule is the one I have just told you, drawing my conclusion from the Holy Quran, that tell these people that as long as you are honest and truthful, you have no fears. You have been an honest and truthful man can be detected by his behaviour towards certain more apparent truths. For instance, here in the Christian society you can take this attitude. A person can say: "I honestly and truthfully believe in Jesus Christ and his son-hood and I believe that whatever is claimed about him as miracles and things that they are all true and I cannot go to heaven and I cannot be delivered from suffering but by believing in him and all his claims". You'll say: "Alright, you may be honest, but if we have such honesty within you, why is there the paradox in your attitude towards the wordly affairs. In the wordly affairs your scientists, your matter-of-fact men do not accept any claim without first thoroughly

examining the merits of the case. If I tell you that I saw a horse turning into a dog, you would treat me as a mad person, maybe you'll lead me to an asylum somewhere. But if somebody of your forefathers told you that God married a woman and a son was born out of that union you accept that without a scruple. So that shows that you are not truly honest, there is a paradox in your lies and behaviour. In one region you are very strict and rational and in the other region you accept everything that is told to you without turning a hair. This attitude tells us that you are deceitful or you are self-duped, you don't know the reality. So you can open up these things and help them understand their own position.

QUESTION - 2

(A child asked) Could you please tell me why Muslims think that Jesus was a prophet, why not the son of God as Christians believe?

ANSWER

There are so many reasons why. In fact as a general principle when you look at the world religions as they are seen today, we notice that the concept of godhood having appeared in person, is present always with every religion of the world. No religion of the world is devoid of such a concept and Christianity is just one example among so many cases. So it is impossible for God to appear Himself as a personification in every religion of the world and keep it secret from the other religions. One who bestows himself, for instance, or personifies himself in the form of Jesus as his son, he does not let be known to the Indians or Chinese or people of other religions who also have the same visitation from God as if God had appeared to them in person Himself. For instance, Krishna, who is supposed to be a god visited the earth in the form of a man. And there are so many other so-called gods and sons of God, manifestations of Gods, who appeared everywhere and if they were all true gods, that is the question. Then they should have told every people of every religion that: "We appeared as Krishna there and so on and as such here, etc. Now we have appeared before you as Christ or somebody else". But no such reference is ever made anywhere. So we can

safely infer that that is all human imagination, a creation of human mind.

But another phenomena we do observe is the phenomenal prophethood which has a common factor everywhere. We find people as claiming to be messengers of God in every religion and their fundamental claim is the same. They have the same claim that God does speak to people and does come into contact with His servants and gives a message or a religion to certain people. This concept has universality. That is the second general observation I made of this.

The third general observation is that whenever somebody appears as a prophet there is a general tendency among the people that when that prophet is dead, out of extreme love for him they begin to raise his status from manhood to something beyond man, superman or something, even beyond that. They generally tend to turn him into a god. This tendency in human nature, again, a universal tendency - there is no exception. This tendency is not only observed in the religious world, but also in the other world, that is to say - national heroes, they are turned into demi-gods later on. Every hero, in every respect, whom a certain people get attached to gradually elevated his real position to something of a mythical position. So this is why hero and hero-worship has ultimately ended into man-made stories and legends like Robin Hood, for instance, in England like King Arthur and his court and Sir Lancelot. All these, although we know, were ordinary human figures. They might have achieved some heroic feats but everybody agrees that the legends woven around them are not real. They are fiction more than reality. Some reality is found of course, in the central core but most of the stories built around them is fiction.

So it is the same tendency in our human nature which is responsible in religion to lift the status of prophets from ordinary human beings into something beyond humanity. And something like that must have happened to Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) because otherwise you do not understand this general phenomena of finding God in different forms in different places of the world or sons and

daughters and children of God. In fact, it is not the only solitary incidence in the religious history that you have come across i.e. the claim of somebody or attributed claim to him to son-hood. The realities, it is so many - sons and daughters of God are found everywhere in the world. Even in Arabia where the Hazrat Sallallahu Alayhi Wassallam, the prophet of Islam appeared. The Arabs of his time used to attribute daughters to Allah. So if one son of one particular nation having appeared in Palestine for instance, is to be accepted in total as such, why not the daughters? What is the fault of those poor daughters. I mean there the equality of man and woman would not come into the picture. There is no reason why we should accept the claim of one people to another. As far as the miracles are concerned, that is one region where the Christian fathers claim that they have some proof of his supernatural power. And they pronounce this very much. But the fact is, where is the proof? A claim is not a proof. All they have is a claim or a chain of claims because even the authenticity of the scriptures as having been dated back to the time of Jesus Christ (peace be on him) by how his own followers and so-called disciples are not trustworthy entirely from the historical point of view. How can we claim that those miracles attributed to Jesus Christ (peace be on him) were real miracles as did happen?

Now, if you claim, where is the evidence? The only evidence found is in some narrations reported by his own followers, and that is no claim. In fact if such things had happened actually during the lifetime of Jesus Christ, then the opponents must have got convinced because that was very extraordinary, some of those miracles, as if other had really witnessed it those miracles, then they should have accepted him totally and the news must have spread far and wide. But, for the time being let us consider that if those claims made about his miracles are true then what is his position. I mean that is a supposition.

Now I turn again to the other religions of the world, the claims made about Krishna and other so-called gods. In other religion of the world are not only similar in nature, even greater, much greater in fact. Not to

mention the great figures who are attributed gods characteristics or attributes, we find this phenomena even in the Muslim world where they do not believe in human beings representing God as personification. So everywhere in the world, taller claims are made than the claims made by Christianity about miracles performed by their so-called gods. Even lesser people than so-called gods have attributed miracles of a stupendous nature. So if you put miracle against miracle, even then Jesus's claim collapses, because the principle has to be set first. The principle in this case would be that because there is no evidence. I mean positive and definite evidence which can be proven in the court of law so we must accept any people's claim, whatever they say, we accept it. Because they are the custodians of their history. You accept this claim, this principle and then apply this principle to Christianity and other religions so that should be applied equally to everyone. If that be so then this is my argument, that the claims to greater miracles are made in other religions of the world as well. So how would you treat them? So if you in principle accept their claims then Jesus is not the only person to be accepted as the son of God. Then there would be so many others who would enter the race and whose claims will have to be accepted. Otherwise it would be unjust to them to reject their claims without reason and accept somebody else's claim without reason. So from the so-called miracles, you cannot establish anything. Again, as I told you lesser men than claimants to godhood have been attributed such miracles as are similar to the nature of those attributed to Christ (peace be upon him). So what does it prove?

For instance, in the Muslim world where the unity of God is so much stressed and idolatry is so much condemned and with belief in one God only. Yet, ordinary human beings think in Islam having attributed such preposterous claims, that if you accept them they have a better right to get accepted as the sons of God. For instance, Sayed Abdul Kader Jilani, is one of the saints in Islam. About him it is said (and his followers believe in that) it is a much recent claim than the claim of Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) and more authentic reporting has been done on this claim. We

know positively that these claims were made by close associations and not made by those who appeared hundred years later. His claims were committed to writing and earlier than the claims about Jesus Christ were recorded hundred years or more after his crucifixion. I will quote one claim of the followers of Hazrat Abdul Kader Jilani to help you understand this phenomena to establish your point.

His followers claim that once he was crossing the river by boat, there he observed an old lady who came to the banks and started wailing and she wailed in such agony and there was such pathos in her wailing when he asked why she was in such misery and pain. The lady said that she was old, quite advanced in age and that sixteen years ago her son who was just going across the river with his marriage procession going across to bring his bride from the village across the river. Right in the middle the boat capsized and all of them drowned and he was the only son she had. So since then, she told the saint, it was her custom to visit that riverbank every morning at that time and to wail for the terrible loss of her son. So when he heard that story, he said to her "alright, I will see to it that your son is returned to you". So he looked for the angel responsible for death who is called Israel and at that time it was reported to him that he was taking all the souls which he had prescribed on earth to present to God. And he was ascending to heaven to present those souls to Him. So this saint, Hazrat Abdul Kader Jilani is told to have ascended to heaven in pursuit of Israel before he could reach heaven and present the souls to God, he caught him halfway and told him to release the souls of not only the son but all the companions of the marriage party. He said it was against the rules, Allah has established the rule that whoever dies shall not be returned to earth. He said, to hell with your rules and things I order you to return that soul. So he said that he could not do it and the saint said that he will see to it and he grabbed the angel by the throat and said: "shall I return you or draw your soul out?" So the poor thing was so compelled by the saint and threatened that if he did not return these souls as he demanded he would capture all the souls he is carrying and liberate them and he would see to it that all return to their respective homes.

He was so frightened (Israel) that he had to release the souls of all the marriage party and then he returned with them and suddenly the boat reappeared from underneath and the entire marriage party was existing, they were just fresh, they were going across the river. Now this was a miracle. Can you find any parallel to this in the Bible or New Testament? Anything as fantastic or impossible as this? You cannot! So why do not reject this. No reason why.

There are good and pious people who have reported this, as pious as the people earlier. This is a thing of recent history. This is a thing of remote history. These stories were compiled by those who were really the companions of the saint. While in the case of Jesus Christ, either they were not compiled by the true companions, but in fact by those who had never seen him, for instance St. John, St. Paul, they had never seen Jesus Christ only in visions. And in all cases they were recorded long after the fact of crucifixion. This case the Muslims are saying, all these matters were recorded in the lifetime of his companions. So there is no other reason why you should accept one as against the other.

So if you begin to accept these tall

claims about such miracles then the entire world would be teeming with miracles and it would be impossible for you to accept a few and reject others. There is no logic in that, the true logic is in the phenomena, the general principle that if there is a God, and there is a God we believe, then He must send prophets, His messengers, from among men who are like others who deliver the message to them and set an example and establish a moral for them.

This is the phenomena of prophethood and because we know out of the tendency of hero-worshipping, people tend to raise the status of their respective prophets. So this is why we observe this elevated status everywhere in every religion, everywhere in the world. So this must have happened, we believe, to Jesus Christ's death. This is why we believe in him as a prophet, not as a son of God and we consider this an unjust to him to have raised his status for he himself was a humble man. All his life he suffered for the sake of establishing what he called father, i.e. the One God. To establish His honour, respect and unity. That is what he worked for. So if you raise or elevate his own status to that of godhood that would be unjust to his own message. Do you understand now?

CONFERENCE OF GREAT RELIGIONS

A Great Sign of Allah in Support of Islam and the
Promised Messiah (Alaihis Salam)

By: Munawar A. Saeed, Secretary, Taleem USA

Introduction

Given below is a review of the proceedings of the Conference of Great Religions held in Lahore on December 26-28, 1896. A note entitled "Signs of Allah manifested in the Conference of Great Religions" is given before the summary of the proceedings. The main point of this note is that in addition to the overwhelming sign of the success and acclaim of the lecture of the Promised Messiah (Peace on him) there were several other signs of the mercy of Allah which were shown during the conference.

An announcement was made by the Promised Messiah (peace on him) on 21 December 1896 in which he clearly prophesied that his lecture would prevail. Narrating a vision, the Promised Messiah (Peace on him) said: *It was thus disclosed to me that the wide publication of this paper would expose the untruth of false religions and the truth of the Quran will spread progressively around the earth till it arrives its climax...*

All brothers and sisters are requested to study the book during this centennial year of this great sign of Allah. A study guide to the

lecture of the Promised Messiah (Alaihis Salam) entitled, "Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam" is being printed in the Gazette.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds.

SIGNS OF ALLAH MANIFESTED IN THE CONFERENCE OF GREAT RELIGIONS

Before the Conference, which was held on December 26-29, 1896, the Promised Messiah made the announcement which was published widely as "A Grand Piece of News for Seekers After Truth." He stated that the paper which he had written for the conference "is not the result of ordinary human effort but is a sign among the signs of God, written with His special support."..."God, the All-Knowing, has revealed to me that my paper will be declared supreme over all other papers."..."I received the revelation (Arabic) God is with you, and God stands where you stand."...During the conference the excellence of the paper were acclaimed widely because:

- The number of listeners was the greatest during this lecture;
- One speaker willingly gave up his time for the completion of the paper;
- Time was extended once, and then the proceedings were extended by one day to complete the paper. These extension were greeted with wide acclaim.

Since the conference the paper has received international acclaim and millions have derived knowledge and wisdom from it.

There were several other signs of the support of Allah during the conference, in accordance with the promise that "God stands where you stand."

1. Even though all religions in India had been invited to send representatives to the Conference, Almighty Allah's decree so ordained that no polytheistic (shirk) views could be uttered during the conference. This is how it happened:

- The first speaker who was to represent the

Jen faith and could have expressed some polytheistic views did not attend.

- The representatives of the Araya faith presented the various *autars* as servants of the One God, i.e., equivalents of angels, and not originators of faith or worthy of worship in themselves.

- Finally, the cross was broken in a magnificent way during the conference. The main priests of Lahore, who had been invited, declined to participate. Christianity was represented by a lay journalist. Although he used the words "Christ was an embodiment of the Love of God" he did not even once call him a partner in Divinity. He did not similarly refer to any divinity for the Holy Ghost. He used the word trinity but referred to it as the "Wisdom, Purity, and Love. This is the Trinity that we worship." In other words, he presented three attributes of God as his concept of trinity.

2. Since the first speaker did not come, the organizers gave his time to Hadhrat Mir Nasir Nawab (Ra) who read a poem paying homage to Allah, describing the beauties of Islam. He also declared that the beauties of Islam and the Holy Qur'an will become manifest during the conference.

3. The conference was organized by Hindus. All testimonials make it clear that they selected the topics, and established the rules for the conference. Yet they could not do justice to them as shown below.

4. Several speakers abided by the rule that no other faith be attacked. No speaker, except the Promised Messiah (Peace on him) and Pundit Durgadas, discussed all questions. But Pundit Durgadas did not restrict himself to the Vedas (He made references to Gita and other epics). Thus the Promised Messiah (Peace on him) alone satisfied all conditions of the Conference.

5. The conference took place in 1896-- seven years after the claim of the Promised Messiah (Peace on him). This claim was denied by the Moulvies of his time. The two leaders in his opposition were Maulvi Muhammed Husain Batalvi and Maulvi Thanullah Amratsari. Both spoke at the Conference. By joining the Promised Messiah (Peace on him) in the same forum to represent Islam, they acknowledged

that the Promised Messiah (Peace on him) was representing Islam. This fact becomes particularly significant when we consider that objections were raised against Munshi Muhammed Imamuddin, whom many Muslims considered not to be a representative of Islam.

6. As noted in the following review the speeches of the two Moulvis were not adequate treatments of the topic, not to speak of any comparison with the lecture of the Promised Messiah (Peace on him). Maulvi Muhammed Husain, in particular, failed miserably at addressing the issues. He seems to have realized his inadequacy and tried to protect his reputation by stating at the beginning that he did not want any cheers. (He must have sensed that there are not going to be any!)

7. It also appears from the proceedings of the conference that after listening to the speech of the Promised Messiah (AS), the Arya Samaj became concerned about its impact. One speaker was scheduled to speak at the spur of the moment in addition to another previously scheduled to speak. Both acknowledged that there is truth in all religion, but emphasized that one should not change the religion in which one is born. As noted earlier, the Christian clergies did not accept the invitation to speak and Christianity was only represented by a lay journalist.

8. The Conference ended with a beautiful concluding address by Hadhrat Maulvi Muruddin which explained Surah An-Nas. Thus the conference started and ended with the name of Allah pronounced by two companions (RA) of the Promised Messiah (Peace on him) and its main lecture was by the Promised Messiah (Peace on him) about the beauties of Islam.

Summary of the Proceedings **Great Conference of Religions**

The Conference was organized by the leaders of Sanatan Dharm faith. In the Introduction written by the secretary Panjab Dharam Mahutsu, the rules established for the Conference are clearly stated:

1. Restrict Answer to the Five Appointed

Questions.

2. Answer from the Scripture in which you believe.

The introductory speech by Master Darga Parshad, President Organizing Committee added another rule:

3. Do not Attack other Faith, directly or indirectly.

The President also appealed for tolerance and broad mindedness in listening to the speeches.

The speech of the President was followed by a speech by Sardar Jawahir Singh, Moderator, who also emphasized that no attack should be made on the other faiths; each speaker should confine himself to the beauties of his own faith.

The first speaker, who was going to represent the Jen faith did not come. His time was given to Hadhrat Mir Nasir Nawab (RA), who had composed a poem in support of the objectives of the conference.

Poem read by Hadhrat Mir Nasir Nawab

The poem started with homage to Allah:

*sub hamd Khuda ko heymusallam
hey zat main sus sey jo muqaddam*

All praise is truly due only to God Who, in His being, precedes and sustains all life.

Mir sahib's poem went on to state a summary of the announcement of the Promised Messiah (Peace on him) which had already been publicized in the following magnificent words:

*Islam ka hal yan khule ga
Qur'an ka Jalal yan khule ga*

In this conference the faith of Islam shall be explained Herein the grandeur of the Qur'an will be expounded.

Speech of Maulvi Muhammed Husain Batalvi

Started the speech by Al-hamd, Ta'awwuz

and Tasha'hhud. Then went out of his way to request that no cheers be made. It seems that he was very self conscious that he would be overshadowed by the speech of the Promised Messiah (AS) and was trying to protect him.

Recited verses of the Holy Qur'an extensively, but instead of going into the subject directly, spent a lot of time on discussing what religion is and why it is needed. These comments did not address the assigned questions, and did not expound the beauties of Islam.

Maulvi Sahib then commented that the purpose of the Holy Qur'an is to reform the moral; therefore it does not give much attention to nature, "not it was necessary." This comments was not called for and is a desecration of the Holy Qur'an which draws attention to the phenomena of nature repeatedly. It also shows how superficial the knowledge of the Maulvi sahib was.

Maulvi Sahib did not restrict his comments to the Holy Qur'an; he brought in some events from history and also used his own logic to make his points.

Maulvi Muhammed Husain talked mainly about Question 3 and made some references to Questions 1 and 5. Questions 2 and 4 were generally not discussed. However, it is hard to pin down exactly which questions he discussed because there was no order in the discussion and most of the time was taken up in the recitation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an and reading their translation. The verses which recited have a direct bearing on the questions which were being discussed, but their import was not brought out in the speech.

Speech of Roy Broda Kantah, Pleader, Secretary Theosophical Society.

Roy Broda appreciated Maulvi Mohammed Husain Batalvi's eloquence and appealed for unity.

He started the speech by discussing the third question.

He stated that the Theosophical Society

invited all religions to join it and that he was representing the "Hindu Theosophist" point of view.

Roy Broda talked mainly about human desires -- the good and the bad. He described virtue as doing good and suppressing bad desires, but did not offer any references from the Vedas (or from the Theosophist literature) to determine what is good and what is bad. He referred mainly to ancient Indian history in support of his comments.

Roy Broda concluded his speech by apologizing that he did not possess much eloquence -- "only prophets do". He appealed to all who were present to follow their own respective religions.

The speech of Roy Broda Kantah was very courteous and he showed a lot of tolerance towards different faiths. However, his comments touched mainly on the third question. Moreover, they were a presentation of the Hindu doctrine. He did not present Theosophical Society as a faith.

Hadhrat Maulana Muruddin was appointed as the moderator for the second day. He started the proceedings by expressing his satisfaction over the orderliness with which the proceedings of the previous day had passed. He also thanked Allah for the increasing convenience in the acquisition of knowledge because of the easier access to books. He made an eloquent point that thankfulness to Allah is our duty because of His favors.

Speech of Maulvi Thanauallah Sahib of Amratsar

Maulvi Thanauallah sahib talked extensively about the first question and touched briefly upon the third question. He did not address the other questions except in casual references.

Maulvi sahib did not restrict his comments to the Holy Qur'an, but added references to the Ahadith.

On the whole the speech was well organized, and was made with a great deal of

courtesy. It ended by appealing the listeners to reflect upon the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet (SAWS).

After the speech of Maulvi Thanallah was concluded, Hadhrat Maulvi Nuruddin (RA), who was presiding that session, appreciated the loving manner of the speech.

Speech of Babu Beja Ram Chatterji, Ex-President Arya Samaj Sakher

(Only a summary of the speech is provided in the proceedings, because a written transcript was not provided by the speaker.)

Babu Ji started by praising God and then said objectives of life can be attained through (1) Faith and (2) Marriage. He concluded his talk by saying that sacrifice in the way of God is everything, without it, nothing matters.

The available summary does not elaborate the main points. The summary does not quote any references from the scriptures, nor does it provide any other supporting material. It is not clear whether the speech of Babu Ji was made without quoting any authoritative source or whether the writers of the summary were unable to record the references.

It seems that he talked only about the third question.

It appears that parts of his speech were quite humorous and made the audience laugh.

Speech of Pundit Gurdhen Das, Free Thinker

The speech was made in English, and was translated for incorporation into the report.

Pundit Gurdhen Das emphasized the inter-relationship of the five prescribed question and stated that he would deal with them in an overall manner.

Supported the views expressed earlier by the Theosophical Society that we should all view each other as human beings and should forget our identities as Hindus and Muslims.

He emphasized that human history is a common treasure of all human beings. We all inherit it. For all of us, each of the reformer worked, each martyr shed his blood, and each stalwart used his prowess.

He argued that when man commits himself to one belief, his faith is blinded. He suffers loss of perspective and starts emphasizing and exaggerating the theories derived from his faith at the cost of realities of practical life. Finally, faith leads people to emphasize hereafter (of which, according to him, nothing is known), rather than this life.

He did not quote any scriptures in support of his views. But he dwelled on the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you wish to be done by." He described it as a reflections of human thought process, but said that it provides a key to the reformation of mankind. He stated that humanity is good by its inherent nature.

He stated the object of our life is to develop all our faculties in a harmonious way. To do what benefits humanity and to shun what hurts humanity.

He denied the concepts of soul and life after death. According to him if there was life before our birth, we don't remember it. Therefore, if there is life after death, we will not remember our present life in it. He argued that if there is life after death, it is an independent new existence. The thrust of his comments was that we should forget about soul and life after death and concentrate on living harmoniously with our fellow human beings in our present existence.

Pundit Gurdhen Das did not quote any scriptures in support of his views. Indeed, contrary to the agreed rules, he criticized the scriptures of the other faiths as a reflection of human thought process. He dealt basically with the third question.

After the speech of Pundit Gurdhen Das, the speech of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed (AS) was started. It continued over later sessions.

Speech of the Promised Messiah (Peace

on him)

The Speech, published in English translation as the "Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam" is well known to all Ahmedis and continues to be a source of inspiration and insight into the teachings of Islam. It dealt with all questions in a comprehensive manner and based all its arguments entirely on the Holy Qur'an. It was courteous and indeed filled with the true love of humanity. It was a true manifestation of the Divine support as Allah had promised to the Promised Messiah (Peace on him). No summary can do justice to this master piece of divinely inspired piece of wisdom.

Sardar Jawahir Singh's Speech

Sardar Jawahir Singh talked mainly about the first question, but touched upon the fifth question also. He admired the knowledge and wisdom of the Promised Messiah (Peace on him) and quoted from Sat Bachan about the qualities of Guru Baba Nanak. The Sardar said that Guru Baba Nanak was elevated to a high stature by God. He quoted from Granth sahib and sayings of Guru Baba Nanak in support of the first question. He argued that the natural condition with which man has been created should not be changed (hence, not shaving any body hair and no circumcision). He stated that goodness consists of selflessness and freedom from ostentation. He also talked about chastity with reference to ancient Indian epics.

Sardar sahib briefly touched upon the sources of knowledge and then emphasized the need for devotion to God as the ultimate stage of development. He also said that some of what he said resembles Vedas and some resembles the Holy Qur'an. He concluded by describing ten good qualities of a strong believer.

The speech of Sardar sahib was appreciated by the Sikh audience as a very good representation of their faith. He quoted extensively from the Garanth sahib, but also added references from ancient Indian history in support of his views.

After the interval Lala Kanshi Ram, Joint

Secretary of the conference addressed the audience. He made a very eloquent speech stating that the Spirit does not die when the humans face physical death. After this speech, Lala Ramjidas, a well-known philosopher and representative of Religion of Harmony asked for permission to address the Conference, and he was permitted to do so.

Speech of Lala Ramjidas, of Religion of Harmony

Lala Ramjidas started by discussing the fifth question. Knowledge, according to him, is the knowledge about God. God speaks to every body -- birds, men, animals, Pundits Maulvis. There are four sources of knowledge -- Five senses, logic, historical facts, and intuition.

He touched briefly on the first question. Then he argued for universal brotherhood and universality of humanity. That according to him is the meaning of harmony.

The speech of Master Ramjidas was very soft and did not attack any other faith. However, his views were based only on generalities and did not quote any scripture in support of his views. Out of the assigned questions, he addressed only the first; the rest of his speech was about toleration and harmony.

Representation of Christianity

The Christian leaders boycotted the conference even though a deputation was sent to the principal of the Mission College and to two main Priests as well as other leaders of Christianity. However, a well known Christian journalist, John Maurice, attended the conference.

Speech of Mr. John Maurice, Journalist, Lahore

Mr. Maurice appreciated the objectives of the conference -- a feast in which everybody is offering spiritual food. He said our offerings should be for the Lord God alone. Then he said that all five questions posed by the conference were related to the need for religion. Therefore he would talk about his religion.

He emphasized humility as the cornerstone of his faith. Then he talked about thankfulness, prayer, love of God. The aim of life is happiness; but our happiness should be in things which make God happy. The essence of Christianity is love. He then described the doctrines of trinity and redemption of sins.

Mr. Maurice gave a new version of trinity: Wisdom, Purity, and Love. He said that this was the trinity he worshipped.

Mr. Maurice said that there are two sources of knowledge -- our intellect and revelation. But soon afterwards he went against the use of intellect by admitting that the concept of God's love by assuming human form goes against human intellect, and it makes people laugh. But this is the belief of the Christians: believe and be saved.

He concluded his by saying that God is One. We should believe in him and love humanity. He described his views about the relationship between love and the Grace of God.

Mr. Maurice was admittedly not a Christian scholar but a lay person. His speech consists of generalities and deals mostly with the first and the fifth question. Passing references, however, were made to other questions. Nothing was quoted from scriptures. He did not make any effort to reconcile the commonly prevailing Christian concept of trinity with his statements about trinity which was consistent with the Unity of God.

A second Christian speaker, Mr. Rao agreed with Mr. Maurice and gave his time to Mr. Maurice.

Speech of Pandit Gopi Nath

Pandit Gopi Nath, a Sanskrit scholar, was especially asked to make a speech to describe the Sanatan Dharm faith and the condition of making a prepared speech was waived for him. He opened his speech by describing the beauties of the Sanatan Dharm faith and bewailing the trend towards materialism and the spread of other faiths which is diverting the members of Sanatan Dharm to other

pursuits. But he said that does not reduce the value of Sanatan Dharm Faith, because "the value of a precious gem is not reduced if someone does not know its value."

Pundit Gopi Nath described the reasons why he believes Sanatan Dharm to be the best faith:

First: Sanatan Dharm as the most ancient faith on earth. There is no book on earth more ancient than that of Sanatan Dharm Hinduism. Its literature is the most extensive, which proves that countless lovers of God appeared in this faith. He argues that its being the oldest is a proof of its truthfulness.

Second: Despite being old, it still holds strength. Even though the political power has been lost, it has done no harm to the Sanatan Dharm faith.

Third: Its scriptures are the oldest.

Fourth: It did not start with a single prophet or reformer. Rather, a countless number of saintly individuals have graced it. He said that people criticize us because we worship 330 million gods. He said that we don't consider any of these 330 or 430 million to be the founders of our faith. of our faith is One God; all these are His servants.

Fifth: It does not restrict redemption to the members of any single faith. The division into castes is only to distribute work systematically. That is why Sanatan Dharm abhors the change of faith.

Sixth: Sanatan Dharm does not proselytise and does not "try to bring corruption into other faiths." He quoted Sri Krishna: It is better for every one to die in his own faith."

Seventh: It shows the path of salvation to all - rich and poor. There are three means of attaining salvation: (a) True love, (b) Worship, and (c) True knowledge of God.

Then Pundit Ji explained what faith is according to Sanatan Dharm. There are ten qualities; whoever has those qualities is a man of faith -- whether he is a Hindu, Muslim,

Christian or anything else:

1. Steadfastness
2. Forgiveness
3. Staying on the Right path
4. Not to steal
5. Chastity
6. Keeping all five senses under control
7. Intellectual honesty
8. Knowledge
9. Truthfulness
10. Not to be angry and excited

Pundit Ji also discussed the importance of worship without any consideration for reward as the key to true worship. He concluded his speech by referring to the doctrine: do unto others as you wish to be done by" as not being a monopoly of the other faith which claims it. It is the property of Hindus too. He said that this rule is present in the Sanskrit literature, and quoted three references to prove his point.

He concluded his speech by emphasizing again the beauties of his faith and that it needs no sword or political power to retain its strength.

A very noticeable theme in the speech was the trials alone test the faith, friendship as well as marital fidelity and made a plea to all Sanatan Dharm members in his audience to remain steadfast in their faith.

The speech did not address any of the question directly. Its main import was the good qualities of Sanatan Dharm, need for steadfastness, and the importance of adhering to the faith in which one is born. This speech was made at the spur of the moment and was not a prepared speech. It was made shortly after the speech of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ud (AS) had been completed.

It seems that the author of the speech and the organizers of the conference, who were Sanatan Dharm members, were fearful of the impact of the speech of Hadhrat Ahmed (AS) upon the members of their faith, and arranged this speech to try to protect them into their faith.

Speech of Pundit Bhanu Das

Pundit Bhanu Das was a very renowned scholar of Sanskrit and was serving as the examiner in the University. He started by categorizing people into two groups: believers and non-believers. He then talked about the cause and effects and stated three prime causes: (1) The human (2) Life and (3) A sense of Purpose.

What we consider to be a living being actually consists of three elements (1) An empty skeleton (2) Five senses and (3) Life.

He described man as the paragon of nature as the agreed belief of all faiths and called upon the audience to attend to the needs of goodness and not be content with the physical requirements of this life. The object of life is "Mukti" or "Param Shartha" -- i.e., attainment of the ultimate happiness. This can only be attained by not concentrating on this life.

Faith, according to him, does not refer to religion or faith. It refers to humanity. Humanity according to the Vedas consists of faith as a consequence of good deeds and disbelief as a consequence of bad deeds.

Faith requires the Following:

- Not to hurt anybody (ahinsa)
- Truthfulness
- Not to steal
- Acquiring the knowledge of faith
- Not to be stubborn and covetous
- Joy derived from the five senses
- Controlling the heart and mind
- Meditation
- Cleanliness and avoiding the intoxicants

Then he talked about the faith of the common man and the faith of the higher order. The ordinary faith consists of attaining the civil and good moral faculties whereas the faith of the higher order requires devotion and self-annihilation.

He concluded his speech by inviting all not to be the people of this world, but to attend to the requirements of faith with complete devotion and dedication.

Pundit Ji's speech was very scholarly.

He quoted extensively from the ancient scriptures, but did not identify a single source as the scripture as was required by the conditions of the conference. He talked extensively about the third question and made references to the fifth question. The treatment of the first and the fourth questions was very casual. The second question was totally untouched.

The import of the speech, just like the speech of the previous speaker, was to motivate the members of Sanatan Dharm to hold fast to their faith and not be swayed by any other attraction.

Speech by Munshi Muhammad Imamuddin Fatehul Kitabul Mubin

The unusual thing about the speech of Munshi Imamuddin was that before he spoke, an introduction about his religious association was read. He stated: "I am neither a Mohammedan, nor a follower of Moses or Jesus. I am a Muslim and I believe in Torah, the Gospels and the Qur'an. But I am not a Muslim in the sense in which the other followers of Islam are."

Munshi sahib then stated that redemption can only be attained by obeying God. He said that Torah is the only book which gives a criterion for determining the truthfulness of a prophet -- he should teach Oneness of God and his prophesies should be fulfilled.

Then he said that the Torah has instructions both about the body and the soul. It says that if you obey God, you will not die; a similar statement about Brahmans appears in the Manu Samarti. He then stated the laws concerning eating, based on the Torah, although he made references to the Holy Qur'an and Manu Samarti. He also referred briefly to one of the Ten Commandments.

He said that Torah was called a "guidance and light", but it has been forsaken. He concluded by saying that he accepted the Torah; but he was not a Jew. He accepted the Gospels to the extent that they do not conflict with the Torah; and he accepts the Holy Qur'an.

Munshi sahib's speech was very brief. It was a confused statement. He claimed to be a Muslim, though not in the sense in which the other Muslim are. But he did not make any reference to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an in support of his views. His comments were derived from the teachings of the Torah.

Munshi sahib did not really address any of the question in a comprehensive manner. The brief comments he did make touched upon the criterion for judging the truthfulness of a messenger, inter-relation between the body and soul, and the laws relating to eating.

There was a lot of commotion from the Muslim audience that Munshi sahib should not be considered a Muslim because he did not believe in the prophethood of the Holy Prophet (SAWS). Munshi Sahib said that he did believe in the Holy Prophet (SAWS).

Hadhrat Hakim Maulana Nuruddin (RA), who was presiding, made very wise comments saying the speaker had attested to the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet (SAWS) and has stated that he accepts Torah because the Holy quran calls it guidance and light. We have patiently heard people who deny the Holy Prophet (SAWS), so we should hear him, who despite his beliefs accepts the Holy Qur'an.

Speech of Master Durga Parshad, President Arya Samaj Lahore, and President Organizing Committee, Conference of Faiths

Master Durga Parsad spoke at this time, not in his capacity as the organizer of the Conference but as a representative of the Arya Samaj.

He started by apologizing for the shallowness of his knowledge and said that what he states should not be considered the sum total of the teachings of the Vedas.

He discussed all five questions systematically and basically drew his material from the Vedas. But he also referred to the epics (Ramaina and Gita) in his speech. He categorized the various aspects of the teachings of the Vedas similar to what the other Hindu

speakers had done before him and concluded by claiming that Hinduism is the most ancient of all religions. It teaches One God, who can be reached by worship and spiritual awakening.

Speech of Swami Shugan Chander Founder of Dharam Mahutsu

Swami sahib was introduced as the prime organizer of the conference. He stated his belief in the goodness of all faiths. Then he briefly gave the events of his life. Then he described his faith, which was Sadharan faith i.e., the easy faith. He said that Sadharan faith stays with man after death; everything else stays back. He summarized Sadharan faith as "Living in this world, yet remaining aloof from it, giving up pleasures, giving up personal desires, not considering one's intellect to be of any worth, and eschewing sin."

Sadhu sahib did not formally represent his faith, but was honored as the main person behind the conference and spoke in that capacity. But his speech and the speeches of the other organizers provide an important testimony in understanding the great signs of Allah which appeared at the conference; it is very obvious that the Promised Messiah

(AS) did not select the questions or the rules of the conference.

Sadhu sahib's comments were followed by a few comments of thankfulness by the secretary of the conference and the Moderator, after which the presiding officer, Maulvi Nuruddin made the concluding speech.

Concluding Speech by Hadhrat Maulvi Nuruddin (RA)

Hadhrat Maulvi sahib (RA) started his speech by reciting Tashahhud, Ta'awwuz, and Sura An-Nas. He said that the Holy Qur'an is the khatim of the scriptures and sura An-Nas is the khatim of the Holy Qur'an; therefore he has recited it at the conclusion of the conference.

He introduced the kahlimah and its emphasis on the Unity of Allah. He then gave a beautiful commentary on Sura An-Nas and how it is related to the physical, moral, and spiritual states of man which have been elaborated earlier by the Promised Messiah (AS). He made a very moving appeal to all listeners to turn to God and repent from their sins and then he declared the conference closed.

48th Annual Convention

Jalsa Salana

Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, USA

at

Masjid Baitur Rahman, 15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, Maryland

Program

Friday, June 28, 1996

2:30 PM Salat-ul-Juma & Asr

*Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul
Masih IV will lead Juma Prayer
and Inaugurate Jalsa Salana, USA*

Friday Afternoon Session

*Sahibzada M.M. Ahmad,
Amir USA, Presiding*

4:30 PM.....Talawat-e-Quran
Hafiz Samiullah Chaudhary (New Jersey)

4:40 PM.....Translation
Nasrullah Ahmad (Milwaukee)

4:45 PM.....Poem
Athar Bashir Malik (Virginia)

4:55 PM.....Translation
Dr. Yusef Abdul Lateef (Boston)

5:00 PM.....*Holy Prophet Muhammad's
(peace be on him) Compassion and Tolerance:*
Dr. Masood Ahmad Qazi (Chicago)

5:30 PM.....*Importance of Khilafat*
Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad Zafar (Dayton)

6:30 PM.....Dinner

8:45 PM.....Salat-ul-Maghrib & Isha

9:15 - 10:30 PM.....*Majlis-e-Irfan:*

(Question-Answer Session with
Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV)

Saturday, June 29, 1996

3:45 AM.....Salat-ul-Tahajjud

4:15 AM..... Salat-ul-Fajr
Maulana Syed Shamshad Ahmad Nasir

4:30 AM Dars-ul-Quran..&..Dars-ul-Hadith
Maulana Inamul Haq Kausar (Los Angeles)

Saturday Morning Session

*Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad Zafar, Naib
Amir USA, Presiding*

10:00 AM.....Talawat-e-Quran & English
Translation

Abid Haneef (Boston)

10:15 AM.....Poem
Kalim Ahmad Bhatti (York)

10:25 AM.....Translation
Umar Bilal Ebrahim (New York)

10:30 AM.....*Family Values in Islam*
Ismail Mayyer (New York)

11:00 AM.....*Islamic Teachings on Problems
Faced by Present Societies:*

Maulana Azher Haneef (Chicago)

11:30 AM.....*"Zikr-e-Habib": (Some Aspects
of Promised Messiah's Life)*

Maulana Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad
(Virginia)

12:00 Noon.....A Chorus
Children (Philadelphia)

12:30 PM.....Lunch

2:30 PM.....Salat-ul-Zuhar & Asr

Saturday Afternoon Session

Lajna - Women's Session
Under the Auspices of
Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV

- 3:00 PM.....Talawat-e-Quran
Tahira Mansoor Ahmad (Maryland)
- 3:10 PM.....Translation
Khadija Ahmad (Dayton)
- 3:15 PM.....Poem
Fatima Haneef (New York)
- 3:25 PM.....Translation
Shamim Sheikh (Los Angeles East)
- 3:30 PM.....Hazrat Khalifatul
Masih IV's Address to Lajna
(To be relayed to men's session)
- 4:30 PM.....Chorus
Nasirat (Milwaukee)
- 4:45 PM.....Distribution of Prizes
Salma Ghani, Sadr Lajna, USA
- 5:15 PM.....Election of Sadr Lajna U.S.A.
(in the Mosque's Women Area)

Men's Saturday Afternoon Session:

*Dr. Ahsan U. Zafar, Naib Amir II,
USA, Presiding*

- 3:00 PM.....Talawat-e-Quran
Maulana Mukhtar Ahmad Cheema (N.Y.)
- 3:10 PM.....Translation
Hussain Abdul Aziz (Philadelphia)
- 3:15 PM.....Poem
Syed Muhammad Ahmad (Maryland)
- 3:25 PM.....Translation
Tariq Sharif (York-Harrisburg)
- 3:30 PM.....Hazrat's Address to
Lajna.....Relayed to Men's Session
- 4:30 PM.....*New Opportunities for the
Propagation of Islam... Internet and Our Program:*
Munawar A. Saeed (Maryland)
- 5:00 PM.....*Centenary Celebration of
Promised Messiah's book, "The Philosophy of
the Teachings of Islam":*
Anwer Mahmood Khan (L.A.)

5:30 PM.....Auxiliaries Meetings/
Professional Associations' Meetings

6:30 PM.....Dinner

8:45 PM.....Salat-ul-Maghrab & Isha

9:15 PM- 10:15.....*Majlis-e-Irfan:*
*(Question-Answer Session with Hazrat
Khalifatul Masih IV)*

Sunday, June 30, 1996

- 3:45 AM.....Salat-ul-Tahajjud
- 4:15 AM.....Salat-ul-Fajr
Maulana Mirza Mahmood Ahmad
- 4:30 AM..Dars-ul-Quran & Dars-ul-Hadith
Maulana Daud Haneef (N.Y.)

Final Session

Under the Auspices of
Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV

- 10:30 AM.....Talawat-e-Quran
Hafiz Mubarak Ahmad Kukuyi (Chicago)
- 10:40 AM.....Translation
Harun Asad (Virginia)
- 10:45 AM.....Poem
Rashid Ahmad Bhatti (Philadelphia)
- 10:55 AM.....Translation
Ali Murtaza (New York)
- 11:00 AM..... **Concluding Address &
Dua by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV**
- 12:30 PM.....Lunch
- 2:30 PM.....Salat-ul-Zuhar & Asr

***** The End *****

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
تَشَهُّدٌ وَتَسْلِيَةٌ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِہِ الْغَرِیْمِ

LAJNA IMAIULLAH - SOUTH EAST REGION LAJNA AND NASIRAT IJTEMA REPORT

By: A. Bushra Salam Bajwa, Vice-President, Research Triangle Lajna
April 1996

The second South-East region Lajna and Nasirat *Ijtema* was held in Huntersville (Charlotte), North Carolina on April 7, 1996.

Three Lajna and Nasirat Chapters were represented in the following numbers:

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Lajna</u>	<u>Nasirat</u>	<u>Under 7</u>
Georgia/S. Carolina	4	2	2
Charlotte, NC	12	4	1
Research Triangle, NC	10	3	4

The program for the *Ijtema* was arranged by the President of the Research Triangle (RT) Lajna, Shamim Azam, while the Charlotte Lajna President, Najmul Tarqa Nasir, hosted the *Ijtema* and took care of all physical arrangements. Guests from Georgia-South Carolina were provided with food and lodging from Saturday evening until Monday Morning. These participants had the opportunity to offer all their prayers in congregation.

The program was graciously chaired by Nusrat J. Ahmad, South-East Regional Lajna President. The opening recitation of the Holy Quran was done by Najmul Tarqa Nasir with translation by Rashida Faizi, both from the Charlotte Lajna. Two messages of support were read at the outset, one from the President of the Research Triangle Jama'at, Dr. Wajeeh Bajwa and the other from the National *Sadr* Lajna, Salma Ghani, who would have been present but for a last-minute back injury. Sister Salma Ghani's message was full of love and prayers and encouragement for all participants and their efforts toward a successful *Ijtema*. As President of the host Lajna, Mrs. Nasir delivered the opening address to welcome all participants.

The Nasirat program commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran competition for each age group. This was followed by a religious knowledge competition between a

two-member team of older Nasirat from each Chapter. The final competition gave each Nasira, including girls under seven, an opportunity to present their choice of either a short prayer, a *Hadith*, an *Ilham* or a couplet from "*Durr-e-Sameen*". Each of these events was delightfully punctuated by a poem of the Promised Messiah (*Allaih-e-salam*), performed by two young members of the Research Triangle Chapter, Freeda and Mansoor Sayed.

An original format for presenting some "Misconceptions about Islam" was achieved through a question-answer session called "Quiz Me, Quiz You". This was based on questions about Islam posed by High School students during a young Lajnas Social Studies class in the Research Triangle.

The morning session ended with games for the Nasirat, after which lunch was served by the Charlotte Lajna and then *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayer were offered in congregation.

The Lajna session commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran by Ramla Rahman with translation by Amtul-Moid Bryant, both from the Georgia Lajna. There then followed a most interesting workshop centering on the misconception that "Islamic teachings are too strict, Muslims have no fun". The workshop was planned with much effort and conducted by Shamim Azam. Each Lajna Chapter participated actively and gained much insight into the subject, taking turns to present their refutation of this misconception through examples from the Holy Quran, *Hadith*, writings of the Promised Messiah (*Allaih-e-salam*), and from their everyday life. An impromptu speech competition ensued, in which eight members took part.

The following *Nasirat* were evaluated by the judges to have been the most outstanding in their age group.

Competition

Recitation of the Holy Quran

7-10 Years

1st: Maariya Bajwa
(Research Triangle, NC)

11-13 Years

1st: Sidra Ahmad
(Georgia-S. Carolina)

2nd: Sanna Rashid
(Charlotte, NC)

14-15 Years

1st: Bushra Sayed
(Research Triangle, NC)

2nd: Tayyaba Ahmad
(Georgia-S. Carolina)

3rd: Mansoor Sayed
(Research Triangle, NC)

Presentation of *Dual*/
Hadith/Ilham

7-10 Years

Tied 1st:
Maariya Bajwa
(Research Triangle, NC)
Anam Rashid
(Charlotte, NC)

11-13 Years

1st: Sidra Ahmad
(Georgia-S. Carolina)

14-15 Years

1st: Bushra Sayed
(Charlotte, NC)

Under 7: Salma Azam (RT),
Sara Azam (RT),
Maleeha Ahmad
(Georgia-S. Carolina)

Religious Knowledge

1st: Georgia-S. Carolina
2nd: Research Triangle, NC
3rd: Charlotte, NC

Not only these *Nasirat* but each and every other *Nasirat* and *Lajna* member present were then given a token of appreciation by our Regional President in recognition of their spirit of participation in the *Ijtema*.

The *Ijtema* closed with an inspiring speech by our Regional President and some words of encouragement from a guest from Chicago, Amtul Shakoor Kareem, after which everyone came together for silent prayer. May Allah bless all those whose tireless efforts helped make this occasion a success, *Ameen*.

THE BLESSED JALSA SALANA AND OUR OBLIGATIONS

By the grace of Allah, the 47th Jalsa Salana of USA Jama'at (June 28, 29, 30, 1996) is forthcoming. We must approach our Jalsa Salana in the spirit of making the most of it, in terms of receiving the spiritual and moral uplift, and learning more about Islam and Ahmadiyyat.

We should supplicate and beseech Allah's blessings and His help for the success of the Jalsa Salana, and His favors in enabling us to make the best possible use of this spiritual experience. We should also strive to achieve all those spiritual goals and objectives of Jalsa Salana, which are enunciated by the Promised Messiah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). I remind all the participants of Jalsa to observe the following points:

1. Jalsa Salana must enable us to feel a definite improvement in our personal relationship with God.
2. We must devote full attention to the timely observance of all prayers and pass most of our time in remembrance of Allah.
3. We must eagerly seize this opportunity to enhance our understanding of Quranic verities and Islamic teachings.
4. We should listen to all the speeches and derive the maximum benefits from them.
5. We must maintain a high standard of mutual affection among the members of the Jama'at and improve our ties of fraternity.
6. As we are going to receive many guests of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him), we should work hard for the comfort and convenience of our guests and everyone else.
7. We should give particular attention to observing cleanliness, especially, in the meeting place, dining area and washrooms and observe the Islamic etiquettes while taking food.
8. We should be punctual, obedient to organizers and cooperative in making the jalsa a great success.
9. We must be vigilant all the time, and conscious of security matters especially if our beloved Imam Hazrat Khalifa-tul-Masih is among us.

Pray Almighty Allah to be our helper in all our undertakings. Ameen!

(Abdul Shukoor Ahmed, Afsar Jalsa Salana)

ANNOUNCEMENT

1. The worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's recent publication, Al Fazl International (in the Urdu language with some articles in German) has brought our global community even more close together. It is extremely useful for keeping up with the news of the rapid progress of our dynamic Movement. Through the regular feature articles of this weekly newspaper you can drink deep at the spiritual fountain of the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the Promised Messiah, peace be upon him and contemporary research conducted by Ahmadi scholars all over the world. You will enjoy and cherish for years to come the written rendering of the Friday Khutba of our Beloved Imam Syedna Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (ABA). The annual subscription is \$90.00.

2. The Review of Religions and The Muslim Sunrise are also invaluable sources of information on Islam and Ahmadiyyat. Dating back to the times of the Promised Messiah, peace be upon him, the Review has truly kept up its fine literary tradition of scholastic research. Often, it has served as a means of dialogue between Ahmadi Muslim scholars and the renowned thinkers from other faiths. With a new Editorial Board, the Muslim Sunrise is making a welcome come-back commencing with the 1995 Jalsa Salana issue. Started in 1920, this magazine strives at beaming the rays of the Light of Islam all around.

Please contact the Publication Secretaries of your local Jamaat for starting your subscription. All Publication Secretaries of the local Jamaats should please contact the National Publication Secretary for an organized handling of their literature needs. The number to contact is (610) 688-4644.

A special bookstore is being arranged on the Jalsa Salana site for the sale of out new publications. Also, the National Exhibition will be located in the basement of Masjid Baitur Rahman. It will feature the History of Ahmadiyyat, Insha Allah. Come visit us, please.

(Dr. Col. Fazal Ahmad, Sec. Publication USA)

“ . . . This Jalsa must not be taken like other ordinary gatherings. This is an affair that has been based on help from God”.

(The Promised Messiah^{as} in Ishtihar 7th December 1891)

Muslim Group Explores Women's Role in Religion

Shan Anwar , Staff Writer

Two Ahmadiyya Muslims gave an overview of their sect and the role of women in Islamic society at a lecture yesterday, at Loeb Student Center.

Approximately 50 people attended "Women in Islam," sponsored by the Muslim Students Association. The lecture began with Mukhtar Ahmad Cheema, a missionary of the Ahmadiyya sect delivering a brief overview of the history of Islam and the Ahmadiyya sect.

According to Cheema, Ahmadiyya was established about one hundred years ago, when prophet Mirza Ghulam Admad of Quaidan "announced that God had informed him that the day of the renaissance of Islam was about to dawn, and that this revival would be brought about through him."

Cheema emphasized that Ahmadiyya was simply a different denomination of Islam, just as the Sunni and Shiite denominations.

Marium Chaudhry, president of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Society, situated in Chicago, continued the ideas of Cheema's speech, stating that Ahmadiyya represented the "evolution of spiritual thought.

"Just as the teachings of Jesus were tailored for his generation, so the teachings of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad are meant for this generation," she said.

Born and raised in a devout Catholic family in France, Chaudhry related the questions she had about her original faith. "I was constantly assessing and questioning Catholicism, as I do with Islam now," she said. "If someone would show me something better, I would change tomorrow."

Chaudhry asked why all the prophets of the Bible were chosen from the Jewish nation. "I could not believe that God, in his infinite wisdom, would offer salvation to only a select group," she said.

According to Chaudhry, Islam is the only religion which explicitly stated that its message was for all people, regardless of race or sex.

Chaudhry then delved into the topic of the lecture, the role of women in Islam. Frequently citing quotes from the Quran, Chaudhry asserted that there were no double standards for women in Islam. "It is written in the Quran that both men and women can achieve nearness to God and spiritual awakening," she said.

Chaudhry delineated some of the basic rights given to women at the outset of Islam, around 600 A.D. "Women in Islam have always had the right to own property, divorce, and be educated.

"In contrast, most European nations did not give women the right to divorce for mistreatment until the early twentieth century, and the U.K. did not grant women the right to inherit property until 1882," she added.

Chaudhry stated that men and women have been assigned different roles in society because of natural differences. As an example, she cited the physical strength of men as a reason for their leadership in the household. "This does not, however, mean that men are superior," she said. "In fact, in Islam, the mother is given more respect than men. As it says in the Quran, 'Paradise is at the feet of mothers'."

Addressing the conservative nature of women in Islam, Chaudhry stated that such conservatism was necessary for a "pure society."

"Our society is suffering from a lack of spirituality and morality," she said. "Teenage promiscuity is up, and drugs have infested our fabric. As for solutions, we can only provide temporary, Band-Aid solutions.

"In contrast, the Islamic approach (to these problems) is three-fold pro-active, positive and systematic. To these ends, women show modesty in their physical appearance,

saving shows of beauty for their husbands. In Islam, a woman need not compromise her dignity and respect in order to attract males."

Mazurul Sikder, vice-president of the Shmadiyya Muslim Association, said that the lecture was meant to clear up common misconceptions about women in Islam. "I was always being asked about how oppressed women are in Islam, and I thought this would provide a good forum to address the issue."

Sheila Rhodes, a College of Arts and

Science sophomore, said that she attended the lecture because she had questions about women in what was perceived to be an oppressive religion.

"I always thought that Islam was pretty backwards in its treatment of women," she said. "What I got here was a lot of pro-Islam rhetoric, but it was a tiny bit informative. I guess I'll have to experience it myself."

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SUMMARY REPORT FROM LAJNA IMAILLAH (USA) FOR MARCH, 1996

The summary of 33 reports received (from a total of 44 lajna chapters) is as follows:

TABLIGH: # OF BAI'ATS: 1 (E. LA), 1 (Chicago-S) # **PREACHED TO:** 224
LITERATURE DISTRIBUTED: 3 Qurans, 42 Books, 550 Pamphlets, 2 Tapes.

MEETINGS/DISCUSSIONS: Sisters talked about Ramadhan and Eid (Boston, Rochester), about the Basics of Islam (W. LA, Ala/Tenn), on Chastity and Modesty (Chicago-S), Islamic Jihad, Islamic Culture, Purdah and Holy Quran (Houston) at various schools. A lecture on Women in Islam was delivered at a nursing home and literature was distributed (Boston). Schools, colleges and libraries were contacted and books donated (Boston). Sisters worked on removing Misconceptions in Islam (Tucson, Fresno, Cleveland, Brooklyn, Maryland, NJ, St. Louis). Members discussed the distinctive features of Islam with a female Pasteur from Sri Lanka (San Francisco). A propagation program entitled "Honoring a Friend" was held and guests were given the Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam (Phila). A workshop on Women in Islam and Christianity was held and sisters watched a video prepared by a member (Chicago-sub). A symposium on "Contemporary Social Issues - A Religious Response" was held successfully (E. LA). Huzur's tape on the eclipse was shown to a muslim family (NY), members attended

Westbury Muslim Mosque (NY). An article was submitted to local newspaper requesting the US government to intervene in Pakistan (NJ). MTA programs shown regularly on local channel (Detroit, San Francisco). Books placed in libraries (Boston, W. LA, San Francisco). Masih Maud Day celebrated (Brooklyn/Staten Island, Baltimore, Chicago-sub, Houston, NY, Washington DC, Detroit, Dallas, York/Hsb and E. LA).

TA'LIM: Different lajna Chapters had discussions on the following topics in Education:

SALAT: Brooklyn/SI, W. LA, San Diego, Tucson, Ala/Tenn, Columbus, NY, Res, Tri. NC.

NAMAZE JANAZA: NY, Boston, W. LA, DC, Cleveland, St. Paul, Dallas, Baltimore, NJ, Brooklyn/SI.

UNITY OF ALLAH: Virginia, Rochester

TRINITY: Rochester

DEATH ON THE CROSS: Rochester

MUHAMMAD (SAWS) IN THE BIBLE AND

QURAN: San Diego

PROPER PRONUNCIATION OF QURAN: San Jose, San Diego, New Orleans, Res. Tri., NC.

URDU CLASSES: San Francisco, Houston.

OTHER: Speeches on the Claims of the Promised Messiah (AS) and Rejuvenation of Islam (Detroit), Signs of the Promised

Messaih(AS) (San Diego), Rules and regulation of gambling, drinking and halal (Boston, Brooklyn/SI, W. LA), Life of Holy Prophet(SAWS) (Portland, Fresno, E. LA), Nizame Jamaat (San Jose, Phila), Marriage in Islam (W. LA, Virginia, San Francisco, DC, Cleveland, Dallas, Rochester, E. LA, Baltimore), Jihad (San Diego), Women's role in Islam (Rochester, St. Louis, Virginia, Chicago-sub) and Jesus in India (Maryland).

AHADITH READ: St. Paul, Baltimore, Detroit, Portland, San Francisco, Fresno, DC, NJ, San Diego, Columbus, Virginia, New Orleans, San Jose, York/Hsb, NY, Chicago-sub and Res. Tri. NC.

BOOKS READ: Jesus in India (San Jose, Maryland, Chicago-S), Christianity-A Journey from Facts to Fiction (York/Hsb, NY, San Jose, NJ, DC, Virginia, Res. Tri. NC, Dallas), Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam (Dallas), Malfoozat (San Diego), Introduction of the Quran (Baltimore).

TARBIYAT:

LISTENING TO HUZUR'S KHUTBAS: NY, E. LA, York/Hsb, San Francisco, St. Paul, St. Louis, Baltimore, Res. Tr. NC., Tucson, Brooklyn/Staten Island, Chicago-S, Chicago-sub, Boston, Virginia, Detroit, DC, Fresno and Seattle.

OTHER: Workshop/discussions on Taqwa (Cleveland), Janaza prayer with preparation of body (Connecticut), Islamic Teachings (Fresno). Distributed the attributes of Allah (Milwaukee). Studying the Life of the Holy Prophet (saws) (E. LA). Ameen ceremony held for a 7 year old Nasirat (Chicago-sub).

KHIDMATE KHALO:

DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD, CLOTHES AND MONEY TO NEEDY PEOPLE: Items (food, clothes or money) donated to Salvation Army (New Orleans), Bosnians (DC, Rochester, York/Hsb, Dallas, Virginia), Pakistan (Detroit), S. Africa (DC) and other needy people (Res. Tri. NC, E. LA, W. LA, Detroit, DC, Tucson, Rochester, Chicago-sub, San Jose, MD, Baltimore, Boston, St. Louis, Ala/Tenn, San Francisco, Portland, Fresno, Dallas, Cleveland, NY, Columbus, Seattle, Houston). Sisters donated blood (NY). Money collected for Sadqa and Qadian fund (E. LA). Clothes and funds collected for Al-Sadiq Mosque (Chicago-sub). Food served to 480 people from July-Oct (Baltimore).

VOLUNTEER WORK; Teaching Quran/ Yassarnal Quran or Salat (San Diego, Phila, Rochester, Portland). Worked in schools (SF, E. LA, W. LA), breakfast cereal to shelters (San Jose), baby sitting (San Diego, NY), tax returns (San Diego), clothes drive (St. Louis), visited the sick (San Diego, NJ, St. Louis).

Total number of letters written by different lajna chapters to government officials regarding the persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan = 8717, and are detailed below: - Rochester (1,620), E. LA (1,233), Virginia (700), Maryland (560), NY (549), Phila (428), San Jose (350), St. Louis (324), Dayton (279), Detroit (272), Chicago-sub (270), Brooklyn/SI (216), Houston (216), DC (200) Pittsburgh (198), Milwaukee (180), York/Hsb (176), W. LA (142), Baltimore (145), Cleveland (135), Boston (109), Fresno (75), Res. Tri. NC (72), Seattle (50), Columbus (45), Portland (3)

SIHAT JISMANI: Discussed Heartburn (San Francisco), Color Therapy (Phila), Foods that prevent aging (NJ), Osteoporosis and Cancer (Baltimore). Picnic held (Miami), Nasirat Ijtema held-games played (Houston). Some sisters exercise individually (San Diego, Ala/Tenn, NY, E. LA).

ISHAS'AT: Total NEW subscriptions to magazines = 229 (Al-Fazal International = 69; Review of Religion = 160). One sister gave 3 subscriptions of Review of Religion as gifts (Boston). MTA programs prepared (VA). Printed first local lajna newsletter (Baltimore) and 4th newsletter (VA). An article on Women in Islam published in Pakistan Links (E. LA), article on Holy Prophet(SAWS) treatment of girls published in Lajna News (Res. Tri. NC).

HANDICRAFT/DASTKARI: Lajna members are starting to work on upcoming Jalsa Salana assignments (Res. Tri. NC, Phila, Rochester, Virginia, St. Louis, E. LA, Baltimore, Brooklyn/SI).

WAQF-E-JADID:

Lajna:	1993;	\$26,384
	1994;	\$30,001
	1995;	\$7,952
Nasirat:	1993;	\$2,707
	1994;	\$2,416
	1995;	\$4,433

Salma Ghani,
Sadr, Lajna Imaillah,
USA

Shanaz R. Butt
General Secretary
May 9, 1996