



THE *Ahmadiyya* **Gazette** **USA**

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

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**MORE THAN THREE MILLION NEW MEMBERS
JOIN AHMADIYYAT THIS YEAR**

**A UNIQUE EVENT IN THE HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION
A VERY SUCCESSFUL U.K. JALSA SALANA WITH 14000 PARTICIPANTS**

The 32nd Annual Convention, U.K., was held on July 25-27, 1997. Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV, addressed the Convention on four occasions. Regarding the International Bai'at which occurred on July 27, 1997, Huzoor said that it was a unique event in history. Never before have more than three million people affirmed at one time their adherence to a religious Jamaat at the hand of one Imam. It was sheer grace of Allah that this came about.

This is the year of Mubahala. The opponents of Ahmadiyyat are praying for the destruction of the Ahmadiyya Community, but it is the Grace of Allah that Ahmadiyyat is making unprecedented progress this year while the opponents are being afflicted with diverse problems. Huzoor mentioned some of the misfortunes that befell the enemies of Ahmadiyyat and enumerated some of the many blessings on the Ahmadiyya Jamaat.

There is a parallel with the year 1897. That was the year that the Promised Messiah (a.s.) was absolved of any complicity in the death of Lekh Ram. This is the year (1997) when the official report on the death of Ziaul Haq in a plane crash came out and absolved Huzoor of any complicity in this ignoble tragedy.

The more than three million new members came from 96 countries around the world and represented more than 200 ethnic groups. The MTA International has been playing a key role in the Tabligh as well the Tarbiyyat aspects of our activities. MTA is a special boon from Allah bestowed upon our Jamaat.

We thank Allah for all His bounties on us and pray that He may grant even more fruits of victory to Ahmadiyyat and He may grant a long and successful life, full of blessings, to our beloved Imam. Ameen!



While he was in the USA, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV travelled to Baltimore Graveyard and offered prayers at the grave of our late Bro. Muzaffar Ahmad Zafr.

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FROM THE HOLY QURAN

"And the Messenger will say, "O my Lord, my people indeed treated this Qur'an as a discarded thing." (25:31)

Commentary:

The expression "my people" may apply to the Quraish of Mecca who were the Holy Prophet's people and were the Quran's immediate addressees. More appropriately, the word may apply to all Muslims who have discarded the Quran and have thrown it behind their backs. Perhaps never during the last 14 centuries the Quran was so much neglected and ignored by the Muslims as it is today. There is a saying of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) To the effect: "A time will come upon my people when there will remain

nothing of Islam but its name and of the Quran but its words." (Baihaqi, Shuab al-Iman). The present indeed is that time.

The emphasis on the word "this" in the expression "this Quran" is full of pathos. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) is represented here as saying that his people have discarded such a blessed book as this Quran in which there is light and guidance for them and which is God's greatest boon for mankind and which has been revealed to raise them to the highest pinnacles of moral and spiritual eminence.

SO SAID THE HOLY PROPHET (peace and blessings of Allah be on him)

Hadhrat Uthman bin Affan (God be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said: The better person among you is the one who learns the Holy Quran and then teaches others.

Hadhrat Bashir bin Abdul Muzir (God be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said: A person who does not recite the Holy Quran with care and in a melodious voice has no relationship with us.

Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (God be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said: A person

who has not memorized any portion of the Holy Quran is like a house in ruins.

Hadhrat Anas (God be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said: A righteous momim who recites the Holy Quran is like an orange which smells good and tastes delicious. A momin who does not recite the Holy Quran is like a date which tastes good but has no fragrance. An unrighteous person who recites the Holy Quran is like a flower which smells good but is bad in taste. An unrighteous person who does not recite the Holy Quran is like a thorny bush which does not have any smell and is very bad in taste.

FROM THE WRITINGS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

The Holy Quran is a rare pearl. Its outside is light and its inside is light and its above is light and its below is light and there is light in every word of it. It is a spiritual garden whose clustered fruits are within easy reach and through which streams flow. Every fruit of good fortune is found in it and every torch is lit from it. Its light has penetrated to my heart and I could not have acquired it by any other means. If there had been no Quran I would have found no delight in life. Its beauty exceeds that of a hundred thousand Josephs. I incline towards it with a great inclination and drink it into my heart. It has nurtured me as an embryo is nurtured and it has a wonderful effect on my heart. Its beauty draws me away from my soul. It has been disclosed to me in a vision that the garden of holiness is irrigated by the waters of the Quran, which is a surging ocean of the water of life. He who drinks from it, comes to life and brings others to life. (*Ayena Kamalat-e-Islam; Essence of Islam*, pp. 232-233)

If an opponent of Islam should object that to hold the Holy Quran as being better and superior to all revealed Books would mean that other revealed Books are of an inferior quality, while they are the word of the same One God, and there cannot be superiority or inferiority between them. The answer would be that from the point of view of revelation all Books are doubtlessly equal, but some are superior to others on account of the quantum of their contents and the perfection of matters relating to the faith contained therein. From this point of view, the Holy Quran is superior to all Books inasmuch as other Books do not contain as much of these matters as are necessary for perfecting the religion, as for instance, questions relating to the Unity of God, and the negation of all types of *shirk* (associating others with God), and remedies for spiritual ills, and arguments for the rejection of false religions, and the proof of true doctrines,* that are set out forcefully in the Holy Quran. (*Braheen Ahmadiyya; Essence of Islam*, pp. 316-317)

THE 49TH U.S. AHMADIYYA ANNUAL CONVENTION INAUGURATED BY HAZRAT KHALIFATUL MASHIH IV THE JUMA KHUTBA WAS THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS WHICH WAS BROADCAST LIVE ALL OVER THE WORLD VIA MTA

(Translated from Alfazl, Rabwah, Pakistan)

Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the Supreme Head of the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, inaugurated the 49th Annual Ahmadiyya Convention with his Friday Sermon delivered at the Baitur Rehman Mosque, Silver Spring, MD. The Sermon was shown live all over the world on the MTA International. The sermon was heard in Pakistan from 11:30 p.m. to about 1 a.m. Pakistan local time.

The topic of the sermon was the tarbiyyat of children. Huzoor said that we should teach our children to feel proud of their religion. Encourage them when they do a good thing. Teach them the wisdom of good so they get used to doing good. This way, they will not be influenced by the surrounding

American ways but rather they will influence the American ways. It is a big task to change the American ways. If we don't do this, who else will do it. Ahmadies are making a change all over the world. If there are even 5,000 Ahmadies in America who have the capability to bring about a spiritual change, the whole of America can be saved.

Huzoor mentioned the martyrdom of Choudhry Atiq Ahmad of Vihari, Pakistan and praised his good traits. He also mentioned of the demise of Mr. Rashid Ahmad, Waqif Zindgi and said that the *Janaza Ghaib* Prayers for both of them will be offered after the Juma Prayers. (For more on this event, see page 15)

TABLIGH IS MANDATORY FOR ALL. IT REQUIRES ORGANIZATION, TRAINING, MONITORING AND PRAYERS

(Friday sermon by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV, delivered at the London Mosque on June 6, 1997. This English translation is being presented here at the sole responsibility of the Editor.)

After reciting *Tashahud*, *Ta'awuz* and *Surah Fateha*, Huzoor recited verse 68 of *Sura Al-Maidah*:

"O Messenger! convey to the people what has been revealed to thee from thy Lord; and if thou do it not, thou has not conveyed His message at all. And Allah will protect thee from men. Surely, Allah guides not the disbelieving people." (5:68)

Then Huzoor said: This verse refers to the subject I wish to discuss today. I had briefly talked about this in my last sermon. Since a short time remains before the end of the year and the UK Jalsa, I would like to emphasize this important matter of Tabligh.

Aside from Germany, other countries (European countries, America, Canada and UK) are lagging behind in this important task. People feel that this is an optional work and others can do it. If it were so, this verse would not be addressed to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). As there is no one with a higher status than the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). If it was incumbent upon the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) to convey the message, then it is incumbent upon all of us, his followers, to do the same. It is our duty to do so.

Tabligh is an important duty, made incumbent upon us by God, as stated above. Other sacrifices, including financial, etc., will not be a substitute for it. Even the prophet who had taken worship to its ultimate height is addressed in the words "*Fama Ballagta Risalata*". That is, if you do not preach, you would not have fully done your duty of prophethood. Based on this, I urge all of you to participate in the preaching efforts. It is not a duty of a few. It is a duty for all.

All Jamaats, especially in the Western countries, must review this in their Aamila meetings and come up with a workable program for all to participate. Until this system is established, Jamaat members can

carry out this duty individually, to the best of their abilities. There would be some who, because of their physical limitations, can participate only by prayers. They should do that.

Preaching is the prime responsibility of the Aamila of every Jamaat and the Amir is the brain behind it. This cannot be done by National Secretary Tabligh. This work cannot be split up between Ansar, Khuddam and Lajna. It does not work that way. This work needs to be under direct supervision of the Ameer.

These steps need to be followed. You must organize to start work today. The work is tedious and long. Take stock of your situation. Get volunteers (manpower you need to work). Train them, supervise them and periodically check the work and outcome.

Preachers who have a good track record must be assigned to a group of volunteers to train them in the proper methods of preaching. As the list of successful preachers enlarges, the circle of preachers becomes bigger and bigger. Supervision and repeated examination or check up is essential.

You must also realize that everyone does not have the same capacity and capability. Some are good speakers. Others can write or correspond better. Others have amiable personalities. All these qualities need to be recognized and work assigned accordingly. Also taking these qualities into consideration, some volunteers be assigned to preach to Pakistanis, others to Bengalis and others to Africans, etc.

All preachers must be aware of the literature available, written, audio and video cassettes, so these can be used appropriately and in time. The video cassettes about sittings with Arabs and Albanians can be used with great advantage. It is, therefore, important that in each Jamaat, catalogued libraries exist of audio cassettes and video cassettes and the catalogue must be available to all so they stay informed.

There is hardly a topic that has not been addressed. All answers are contained in our written material, audio cassettes and video cassettes. These libraries must be organized properly and material must be available on a needed basis and in a timely fashion.

As you would note, a National Tabligh secretary cannot do this job by himself. He can write letters "Do Tabligh". That may be the extent of his work and it is not enough. Preaching requires training. Mere lectures will not train anybody. Practical training is essential. As the program gets established, more and more people are required.

Younger volunteers can be organized to have our literature placed in libraries and schools. The Holy Quran with English translation by Maulvi Sher Ali is the best translation available. This is acknowledged by the Arabs and Saudi Arabia. He was a Holy Man who prayed at every step of translating the Holy Quran. This can be placed in various libraries, also this being the centenary of "*Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*". This book must be conveyed to the learned people. So there are unlimited ways of preaching. You must learn the best way you can.

In the Holy Quran, Allah promises help to those who struggle in His way.

Wallazena Jaahadoo Feena La Nahdeyunna-hum Sobolana. (29:70)

And for those who strive in Our path, We will surely guide them in Our ways.

That is, Allah will guide those people who struggle in His way to the right path by holding their hands and guiding them along.

The organization of Tabligh work is tedious, but once it is set up and is in motion, the Amir can then sit back and monitor it, encouraging those that are progressing and reassigning those that are not, to areas where they may do better. You must make each Ahmadi a person benefitting mankind and fulfilling the purpose of his creation.

The Holy Quran states that Allah created the universe and the whole organization in six periods then sat on His throne (*Sumastawa Alal Arsh*). That is, He created a system and an organization which runs flawlessly. Contemplating about this organization and system will give you more insight on how to better organize yourself and how to divide and assign your work.

You should strengthen and organize your work in this way. Remember, no work is successful and complete without prayers. So, fortify your work with prayers.

I would like to thank all of you for the condolences you have sent at the demise of Syeda Mehr Apa. Rest assured that I saw all of them and prayed for you and said *Jazakumullah*. This announcement should be regarded as a reply to all who wrote. *Jazakumullah Ahsanaljaza*. May Allah elevate the spiritual station of Syeda Mehr Apa and enable me and those entrusted to complete the pious work she started. Ameen.

SOME OF THE VERY SPECIAL BOUNTIES OF ALLAH ON AHMADIYYAT

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV spoke of the following exceptional bounties of Allah on the Jama'at Ahmadiyya, during his address in the U.K. Jalsa Salana, 1997.

NEW BAI'ATS this year: THREE MILLION FOUR THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED EIGHTY-FOUR. (3,004,584)

OUT OF THESE, 1,670,000 were from French speaking areas.

MOSQUES: Total increase this year: 915 mosques; 106 built and 809 joined with their congregations.

Since 1984, there has been an increase of 5,045 mosques; 4236 came to us with their congregations.

This was Allah's bounty in exchange of 30-40 mosques lost in Pakistan during the same period.

Alhamdo Lillah! Alhamdo Lillah!! Alhamdo Lillah!!!

WHY PARDON AND FORGIVENESS ARE ESSENTIAL FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTION OF THE HOLY PROPHET PERSIST IN CONVEYING THE MESSAGE

(Friday Sermon delivered by Syedna Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV on December 6, 1996, at The Fazl Mosque, London, U.K. This translation is taken from the Ahmadiyya Gazette, Canada, May, 1997, with due thanks to them.)

After reciting *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz* and *Surah Fatihah*, Huzoor recited 13th to 15th verses of *Surah al-Taghabun*:

"And obey Allah and obey the Messenger. But if you turn away, then our Messenger is responsible only for conveying the message clearly. Allah! There is no god but He; so in Allah let the believers put their trust."
(64:13-14)

Forgiveness And Pardon

While I was in Sweden, I received a letter from a sister to give a sermon on the subject of pardon and forgiveness also as it's need is being felt at this time. She did not write the reason for writing the letter, but I sensed that her husband was very severe on children even on petty matters. I felt that she was thinking more about the children than herself.

I thought that as I had repeatedly given sermons on the topic, therefore, I need not hurry up. But a night before my departure, I saw a vision which diverted my attention towards the subject that such a sermon was needed. I saw in the vision that I was delivering *Dars* of a book of the Promised Messiah (a.s.) and when I was coming to a close, I felt that the subject has been explained by the Promised Messiah (a.s.) several times before.

In my vision, I advise the Jama'at that until and unless they understand the real objective of the Promised Messiah (a.s.), they will not be able to follow the real intent of his writings. This is not mere repetition but is persisting and the vision ended here. When I thought about the rest of the things, I was astonished to discover that in the vision I was given the answer to my assumption that if I gave a talk on the same topic, it will be mere repetition. I was told that some topics were really important and should be repeated because people do not understand without persistence.

Repetition And Persistence

Therefore, repetition is merely of a thing which has already been understood and repetition is useless. But persistence means to repeat it again and again and if one does not understand then repeat it again till one has done his duty of explaining to the utmost. After this vision, I decided that I shall pay due attention to this subject.

The verse that has been selected for today's sermon, was not particularly chosen by me. When I asked the Private Secretary to search the verse for me on the subject, it was the will of Allah that he selected for me this verse which most suits this subject and explains the meaning of *balaagh*. Allah says,

"Obey Allah and obey the messenger, but if you turn away, then our messenger is responsible only for conveying the message clearly."

Therefore, conveying the message clearly means exactly the same which I understood in my vision that by persisting one should keep on saying the same thing, till the matter becomes clear. Exactly, this was the method of The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) that he would keep on repeating even if the people had understood his purpose. So much so, that he would ask if Sahaba had understood what he had said. There are numerous advice that have been repeated by him.

From this point of view, the stress on the word *zakkir*, i.e., to give advice and keep on advising is only an aspect of *balaagh al mubeen*. Therefore, wherever, the Promised Messiah (a.s.) has said something repeatedly, it is not mere repetition, but it is stressing in the sense that he will not leave stressing until people understand what he wanted to impress. Therefore, the subject that was shown to me in the vision became clearer with reference to this verse.

Further Allah says: "*Allah! there is no god but He; so in Allah let the believers put their trust.*" The first important thing to explain is how this verse is related to the latter part of the preceding verse which is but if you turn away, then our messenger is responsible only for conveying the message clearly. This will not harm him in any way. This is the subject that has been taken up by the following verse.

Allah says that He is the One and there is no god except Him and the God of Mohammad, the Messenger of Allah is also He Who is the Master of all and Creator of everything. It will make no difference to Mohammad the Messenger of Allah even if you desert him. He explained every thing and delivered his message which was his duty. If you turn back, it will make the least difference to him because Allah will never desert him. You also adopt his ways because in Allah let the believers put their trust. This is because, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) did not merely trust his personal admonition but his trust was in Allah. The subject of putting trust in Allah, diverts one's attention towards supplications also.

A Harsh Father

In this connection, we find an injunction of The Promised Messiah (a.s.) in his writings. Once, he received information about a father who was very harsh on his children, and he was angry to hear this news and called it polytheism.

In the verse: *Allah! there is no god but He*, our attention is particularly drawn towards the Unity of God which means that your duty is only *balagh* and thrusting is not your business. If you think that you can forcibly reform someone, then know it that this is polytheism and understand it fully that there is no God but Allah. You do not have the powers which Allah has. You can change no one according to your own will.

There was a *Sahabi* who was a sincere believer of the Promised Messiah (a.s.) but had some weakness in his heart which needed reformation. He used to be very strict with his children. When the Promised Messiah (a.s.) learned about it, he expressed his displeasure and said if he exhibited so much harshness, it was polytheism. If he thought that he will reform his children himself, it will not be. Better pray for them.

Trust In Allah

Next part of the verse is: *so in Allah let the believers put their trust* and it means that those who turned their back on the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) instead of being impressed by his advice, he is not going to abandon them. He would trust in Allah Who heard his supplications. Therefore, where *balagh* failed, trust in Allah worked, because He alone is worthy of worship and controls everything in the world.

How wonderful is the topic which is proceeding systematically and gradually in these verses. This was the way of the of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). He did not abandon those who abandoned him. In God alone, he trusted. He would pray for them and would turn towards Him regarding the success of his *balagh*.

Supplications Of The Holy Prophet—A Miracle

This subject has been mentioned by the Promised Messiah (a.s.) as the secret of the great success of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Here he did not present *balagh*, but he presented his supplication and trust in Allah. The final success came as a result of his supplications and trust in Allah. Therefore, he prayed to Allah that there is no one who can bring about this change. It is You alone Who can bring revolution in the world.

These supplications brought the revolution in the world, which is a great miracle and is not found anywhere in the annals of prophethood. The miracle was that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) die before revolutionizing his whole people. Those were the people who were his arch enemies and extreme polytheists but he completely changed them. If there is an instance like this, and some one knows this, let him bring it to us to see.

As Allah is One, and he who trusted in Him was also one, *i.e.*, the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) who was unique in the history of the prophets. All the prophets trusted in Allah according to their own ranks. All received the rewards of their prayers. But none got the reward of revolutionizing the whole of his people except the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

Allah goes on to say, applying the subject of advising to one's own family and environment, that it was an established maxim and eternal secret of suc-

cess of tendering the advice. You also pay attention towards it and start from your own family.

Do not think that they are your dear ones and you may treat them as you wish. If you will disregard the principles laid down by Allah, it is possible that even your own offspring may become your enemies.

This was the issue which was pointed out by the Promised Messiah (a.s.) to his companion not to ruin his offspring with his own hands. They may not be transformed into enemies because he was not following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

Allah says in the Holy Quran, *O ye who believe! surely, among your wives and your children are some who are your enemies* (64:15). When such is the condition then why don't you take heed. This means that there are some unfortunate people whose wives, and children can be and do become their enemies. But how and why does this happen? It is all due to faulty advice or poor *tarbiyyat*.

After giving warning in these words, it is said, *so beware of them*. Therefore, take care in these matters. It is said: *And if you overlook and forgive and pardon, then, surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, ever Merciful*. (64:15)

Regarding advice, there are three methods and you also introduce them in your homes. If you will act accordingly, Allah will forgive your faults, and not let any bad influence come to your children. But it is imperative that you adopt the ways of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

Three Things Proposed By The Holy Prophet

What are these three things? They are overlooking, forgiving and pardoning. Apparently, overlooking and forgiving are considered to be of identical meaning, *i.e.*, forgiving. But there is a difference, I mean to overlook in a way as if it did not occur. In the beginning, the wife and children do make mistakes but your treatment should be as if you did not even see or it did not come to your notice. Give them some freedom. Otherwise their lives will be miserable when someone always remains thrusting over their heads. It is not fair to find faults or criticize in everything.

Therefore, people living together should be forgiving and they should spend most of their time as if they do not know what is going on. But it should

not be in everything. Minor moral lapses which surface as something insignificant, I mean to say that they do not look like crime, should be taken notice of. There are faults, like a cup drops and breaks or someone stumbles and damages something, or food is not ready in time, must be overlooked. One should show off as if he did not even see it happening. This is what forgiving means.

The Ways Of The Promised Messiah

This is how the Promised Messiah (a.s.) used to see. I know about Hazrat Musleh Mau'ood. I know it from my childhood that we saw that he did not see anything, but everything was in his knowledge. The subject discussed by the Holy Quran is not that you remain stupid or oblivious. The topic of oblivion is discussed by the Holy Quran at another place.

But here, the topic is that despite knowledge, due to your broad mindedness remain as if you did not notice. If a cup has shattered, remain as if you did not hear it break. Something has been stained or food has burned, show as if you did not notice. These are daily affairs occurring in every home with wives and children and this is called *afv* (forgiving).

By Forgiving, Sins Do Not Multiply

Always remember that by forgiving, sins and crimes do not multiply. It develops modesty. Wife and children do understand that they are being forgiven. This modesty continues on both sides. This process of forgiveness must continue in our homes. Without this, pious atmosphere can not develop. Once I saw a woman who was saying to her child, "I shall hit you so hard on your face, that it will disfigure you." As there were more children present, the child did not comprehend what she had said. But what she said was very crude, and uncivilized. It seems that her own mother was like her.

Remember that if you will plant bad habits in your homes, they will be transferred to your next generations and will ruin them. Incivility never goes away. The families that are affected by incivility of parents, continue in it generation after generation. They also take pride in it. Men who behave insolently to their women think that this is also their pride that their father also behaved the same way. Likewise, some women who are used to incivility boast that their mother used to do in like manner.

Uncivil mothers who are insolent with their husbands, their daughters promote their ways proudly saying that they are very rude and will do this and do that. This is a false and meaningless pride and ruins the whole life. This mixes so much venom in mutual relationship that life becomes hell.

Take Refuge In *Afv*

Therefore, man as well as woman should control their life and take refuge in *Afv* (forgiveness). Such a person can never become uncivil. *Afv* is the start of civility. He looks at some fault, but looks away and shows as if nothing had occurred. Next comes *Tasfahoo* (pardon) which means cleaning as if it never existed.

In Arabic poetry, there is a verse which says, "Towns were leveled in a way that there remained neither temporary abodes nor permanent habitation." Arab poets have employed the word *Afv* in these meanings in very elegant verses. It means total obliteration. But its meanings that are applied here are something else and Arabic Lexicon explicitly explains it.

The meaning of *Safha* which applies here is that you show a little displeasure to the children. This should be done only when you see that *Afv* is not working effectively, and if so, then use *Safha*. *Safha* is an excellent choice of words for this occasion because *Safha* also means that you turn your face from someone for some time due to displeasure. It is not to hide, but to show that he has done something due to which you can not maintain loving relations with him.

A Useful Method

Afv means to ignore, which means that you show that nothing has happened. You have seen but you are tolerating it due to your nerve. But *Safha* means that when children do something undesirable, then as a sign of displeasure you turn your face from them, giving them the feeling that you are angry with the child. This is a good method to reform them. In English language we call it to reprove, meaning to reproach in a way which is not real punishment, but it gives the defaulter a feeling that he has done something which has made him not deserving of the past love.

Therefore, this is also an effective way to reform

someone which the Holy Quran has mentioned regarding husband and wife relations. Here I am using a Punjabi word which means a fussy woman, who creates trouble, talking rough language all the time, and whining in every matter. About her, it is said that she should be admonished, and if she does not improve, then leave her alone in her bed, *i.e.*, isolate her for some time. By this isolation, she should not feel as if the husband does not know about her shortcomings.

This isolation is a way by which the defaulter expressly feels that the matter has gone pretty far and is affecting the relationship. If he or she insists on the past behavior, it will not bring the same love and affection of the bygone days. This is called *Safha* after *Afv*. In *Safha* this subject has also discussed that you go out of your house as expression of your anger. It happens a number of times that you see something undesirable, and leave the place which clearly shows your disapproval and anger although it does not exhibit severity. Therefore, if someone talks foul about our faith, then leave that place which may show that you disapprove their behavior which is also *Safha*. Again, if the fault is repeated, then there comes *maghfirat* (forgiveness).

In some cases, after expressing anger, there comes *maghfirat* which means that after *safha*, not to prolong your anger that the relations are snapped and love relations are terminated. Show some courage and to go back to use *maghfirat*, *i.e.*, forgiveness.

Maghfirat

Therefore, when sometimes Allah mentions His devotees, saying that he committed such and such fault, then in the end comes the topic of *maghfirat*. Before this *maghfirat*, when Allah wants to love that particular person, He teaches him specific prayers and tells him certain methods and asks him to adopt those ways, so that he may look good when he comes back to Him. For this, there should be some excuse.

Otherwise, I have seen people, when they became angry with someone, they totally close the door of reconciliation. So deep is the chasm between the hearts, that he says that how can he talk with the other person. This causes long time separation. When it comes to my notice, I advise them to break their obstinacy which is merely false stubbornness. You think that it will be a shame for you if you advance

for reconciliation. Therefore, you should know that returning avenues are according to individual's dignity and status.

The Holy Quran has explicitly mentioned about the returning of Allah. He is displeased with His devotee and turned His face aside that He is not happy with him. His affection is not like as it was before. His prayers have not been granted. There are innumerable ways of Allah's displeasure which his devotee senses. Then Allah comes back. It is not the devotee who can get hold of Him as He is beyond His reach.

But His way of kindness is that He comes down Himself. The Holy Quran says that He taught him to adopt certain methods which will please God and He will forgive him. These are the lovely ways of Allah to forgive His devotees.

The Way Of Coming Back

But there are the ways of coming back among the people also. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also used to find out those ways. When false allegation was heaped upon Hazrat Ayesha, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) withdrew from her for a short time. When Allah disclosed that it was false allegation and Hazrat Ayesha was innocent, then he started speaking with her softly. Hazrat Ayesha said that what is the use of this soft talk now. He had come only when Allah had ordered him to do so.

But it was only human nature that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) talked with love and affection. Hazrat Ayesha understood that now Allah's orders had come and he was compelled to come to her. Therefore, a human being always tries to find ways of return. You may look back on the experiences of your own life. Once, you start acting upon *Safha*, then there is problem in going back. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has shown lovely ways in this regard which show that for *maghfirat*, one should make way after *Safha* and should turn back.

The Promised Messiah's Advice

To break this ego, the Promised Messiah (a.s.) has proposed a very beautiful prescription. Sometimes, *Safha* is right and anger is also true. But the second party also becomes mad and thinks that he is also on the right path. Then building bridges of return becomes quite difficult. In this connection, the

Promised Messiah (a.s.) says,

Being even on the right path, be humble like the liars.

Then there will remain no difficulty. This is the best way to break it. I have myself utilized this method and asked others also to use it and found it most efficacious. He did not say, "Admit being a liar even if you are truthful." But how can it be when you are truthful? If one knows that he is not a liar and is sure about it, then if the Promised Messiah (a.s.) says that being truthful, be humble like the liars will mean only one thing. There can not be two meanings of this phrase.

This can never mean that while you are truthful, tell lies and admit that you were telling lies. Many people do not understand the meaning of this phrase and as a result of it do not know the way of return. They say that they are truthful so how can they admit that they are liars. But here it is meant, not to admit that they are liars, but to be humble like liars.

This is like saying, to forgive us, may be it was our fault. Now this is one way of saying a thing. When you say, "Leave those things of the past and do not escalate them. Let us finish it. Let me be the liar."

Now, when you say, "Let me be the liar," that you told lies and admitted of your falsehood. But this is also one way of saying a thing. There are some tiny words in languages that are very useful and if twisted a little, which is not to get bad results but for good ones, often solve our problems.

Just yesterday, I received a letter from a brother to forgive him. He wasted a large part of his life while he was excommunicated claiming that he stood on truth, so why should he beg for a pardon. He persisted on it. I told him that evidence and proofs are both against him. But as he persisted on his stand, I asked him to remain outside the Jama'at.

At last God granted him some reason and he came begging pardon. The *umoor-i-aamma* officials asked him if he was still seeking forgiveness on his past terms. But he said, it was not so. He has now experienced sufficient loss of his stubbornness. Whatever he is, he may be forgiven. He does not want to discuss whether he was on truth or falsehood. Therefore, I readily pardoned him. To keep someone away from the Jama'at is painful for me too. But if someone is wrongfully stubborn, then it is not within

the scope of forgiveness, rather it is beyond this circle.

Maintain Justice In Forgiveness

When the Holy Quran discusses the subject of *but who so forgives and thereby brings about an improvement* (al-Shura 41), it is also conditional. Forgiveness will be implemented provided it improves the society. If, as a result of this forgiveness, blunders increase and wrong principles established, or mischief develops, then forgiveness is not permitted. Some people misinterpret my sermons and referring to those speeches, try to tell me that I have stressed so much on forgiveness or pardoning in my speeches and sermons but now I had forgotten them all.

But they forget that the Holy Quran has mentioned every kind of attributes of God which were manifested in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and all of them were well proportioned and balanced. It was imperative that justice must be maintained. If you forgive and overlook everything in the name of *maghfirat*, it will result in escalation of sins. They rebel and ruin the whole society.

Therefore, keep a balance between them. This was the reason that some times, the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.) vexation prolonged for pretty long time. It was all because he thought that he could not forgive without the permission of God. When permission came, he utilized *maghfirat*. But where such was not the case, he pardoned even bigger mistakes. Therefore, these affairs demand balance and you also maintain it.

If faults are such for which forgiveness is needed, then after the topic of *afaa* which I have explained above, when you separate from it, come back and then forgive. Forgiveness often boosts love. A poet has said:

How sweet is the union
When the couple unites after the fight.

Fight may have its bite, but to join after the quarrel has its own joy. Therefore, *maghfirat* is the name of that joy which one gets after some fray. Love gets boost much more than before. The Promised Messiah (a.s.) has also said in the same strain that Allah likes sinning because He likes to forgive. The same I had explained earlier in detail

that the Promised Messiah does not mean what you understand. This is quite correct that Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. He takes delight in forgiving because after this, sins do not get a boost. They are rather erased and man increases in the love of Allah. This is the wisdom that this topic has been mentioned again and again so much so that there is hardly a subject that has been mentioned so many times. This is not mere repetition, but has been mentioned as *balagh-i-mubeen*.

So surely Allah is most Forgiving, Merciful. Now, here there are two things which end the verse. Firstly, that Allah is Forgiving and if you don't become forgiving, you will sever yourself from Allah. Secondly, you will make your offspring your enemy and will lose them. The wife, who is created for your tranquility and to please your heart will be harboring hostility against you. The offspring on which preservation of human race depends will remain your enemy and will remember you with bitterness and rancor.

A Merciless Father

Sometimes, an ignorant person behaves so mercilessly that his children write to me that how will they pray for him after his death when they have been so much tortured. Falsehood can not come from the heart. We are in great trouble. On the one hand, Allah says, do this and do that for your parents. At the most we shall shut our mouths and will not say anything to his face. But how can we pray for him from the bottom of our hearts?

The man, who has sent this letter has written quite correctly. The way he wrote, was very clear and there is no duplicity in his expression. He seems to be pretty oppressed and helpless. Like other pious people, he also wanted to pray for his parents. But his father had done his utmost in oppressing him, his mother and his sisters. His letter said that his father was living in the house like their enemy. He has left no stone unturned in oppressing him and driving every grain of love from their hearts.

It is the actions of the father which makes his children his enemies. This has been expressly said by the Holy Quran that there are enemies from among your wives and your children. But whose enemies are the children? They are the enemies of him, "who does not forgive." When the children become enemies, then

his ties with God are also severed.

Allah Is Forgiving And Merciful.

He who does not forgive and pardon, can not be merciful and therefore, can not foster relations with *Ghafoor*. If he insists on this way of life, he is ruined in this world as well as in the next. Therefore, it is his duty to make his offspring commendable. If they become nasty, then the question is not that they will be cut off from him but they will make others target of their indecency.

Every child does not have identical reaction. There are those who feel the pain of it. They write to me for prayers and request me to guide them as they do not want to be indecent in the eyes of God. They have become helpless in their feelings. But they are few and far between. There are many who take the hue of their father. The moment he leaves the home, one child oppresses the other. Similar becomes the case of mothers also. There is commotion in the family. Hurling pots and pans on each other, throwing objects here and there, they make the house a place of tumult and turmoil. Thus this generation becomes most unjust for the coming generation.

Many complain when they come to me, and I immediately understand in what home this man or woman has been brought up. Their whole history is writ large on their faces which is repeating itself. Who knows for how many generations they will eat its bitter fruits. Therefore, they should be admonished time after time to come to their senses. What has happened to them? What is becoming of their family? They will not be able to avoid the disastrous consequences. They will not leave them even after their death.

Every coming generation will curse them. This was the reason that the vision of *Dars* of the Promised Messiah (a.s.) urged me to stress on this important subject repeatedly that without forgiveness and pardon we can not do *tarbiyyat* of not only our offspring but of any one in the world.

Some Ahaadith

Now, in the remaining time, I would like to place some *ahaadith* before you. I shall present the excerpts from the writings of the Promised Messiah (a.s.) at some later date.

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said that wealth does not diminish by giving *sadaqah* and forgiving someone increases your prestige and honor. Wealth always increases by giving *sadaqah* and blessings pour into the wealth. This is a vast subject and needs explanation separately.

I have discussed the subject in the past and shall have to repeat it again. One way to increase your wealth is by usury and the other by lending money to Allah. There is another way and that is by giving money in *sadaqah*. All of them are true in their own way. Wealth does not increase by receiving usury. It gets cursed. It surely increases by lending to Allah. Again it surely gets blessed by giving to the poor and the needy. I leave this subject here, as it is merely a side issue.

Pardon Increases Respect

The next thing is that it has never been that if someone pardons and he is not honored by God. If you will forgive, it will increase and not decrease your prestige. This is a great psychological secret which has been disclosed to us by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The prestige of parents always increases in the hearts of their children who forgive them. Pardoning increases your respect in society as well. He never goes down by forgiving. There is dignity in forgiveness. This includes in overlooking that one knows the fault of other and is overlooking only due to broad mindedness. This increases his love, honor, prestige.

Hazrat Musleh Mauood was a great model of this wonderful quality. I have seen Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad very closely and had company with him for a long time. Their overlooking was wonderfully strange. They would see what was happening but behaved as if they had not seen anything. But when they did see, then there was definitely *safh-i-jameel*. When the eyes met, and it was clear that everything has been seen, and the other has realized it, then the expression of displeasure was exactly according to the Holy Quran.

He would get aloof from him. There was alienation in the looks. But this is another way of forgiving. The meaning is the same but the way of expression is different. He did not receive the looks which he desired. One who is accustomed to loving

looks intensely feels if he feels alienated.

The expression of reproving enters here.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) says that if you will forgive, you will never be considered a mean person. There is another secret in it. I am going to end this sermon after describing "what is 'afv'" as the time is very short. *Afv* as a result of which children become vulgar, crude and go on making mischief, they never respect their parents.

Real *AFV*

Therefore, a very wonderful method of '*Afv*' has been told here. Real '*Afv*' is which increases your prestige. If you overlooked faults in the name of '*afv*' which escalate them and children become rude, then you are stupid that you are employing '*afv*'. You have jumped over the fence where '*afv*' ruled.

So the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has explained such a wonderful point to recognize the genuine '*afv*' in quite a small sentence. When '*afv*' increases your prestige, it is true '*afv*'. When it starts decimating your respect, '*afv*' also terminates. The mothers who give full freedom to the children especially when they go to others' homes, who romp in their homes, yell and scream and behave rudely and embarrass the host also lose their respect in the eyes of their children. This is my unflinching experience and I have never faltered that mothers who loosen their control, also lose their prestige.

This is the subject which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has explained. He said that remember that '*afv*' never diminishes the prestige. Allah always increases the prestige of that person. If you find that your prestige has lowered, then know that you have jumped over the fence of '*afv*'. Therefore, take care of yourself and do not jump over the fence of '*afv*'.

Now, when some children come to your home from outside, one does treat them with '*afv*', but if it does not protect you from damages, and your prestige is also lowered, then it is not fair to use '*afv*'. Do not be harsh on the child of other mother, don't hit him, but here, *safhun jameel* will come into force. You should advise other child's mother and father. It is because *safhun*, does not mean to express one's displeasure by alienating but according to lexicon, by

expressing displeasure with words also.

Advise Child's Mother And Father

Therefore, advise the child's mother or father. Tell them that they are not treating the child properly. They have damaged the things which is hurting. This does not mean punishment but it shows that you do not approve it and others should feel that some thing wrong has been done.

Therefore, reform the society according to the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and of the Holy Quran. If *tarbiyyat* is good at home, then remember that you will come out like a *murabbi* in the world. A community takes advantage from the advice that start from home and are very small, their status goes higher and higher.

In the phrase *zaadahullah* said by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) meaning that Allah honors such a man and tells that this is psychological, but to turn prestige towards Allah expresses two things. One is the law of nature made by God which will surely show itself. In this way, if '*afv*' is true, then you will surely be remembered with respect. You will be treated with honor. Secondly, when Allah grants honor to some one, then it has no limits, it goes on increasing.

Therefore, not psychologically, but if you will do it for the sake of God, or for His sole love, then your prestige will surely increase in the world. This concerns the whole international community in the sense that if they will utilize the quality of '*afv*' in their families, then Allah is not bound to increase their prestige only in their home. Their reward will expand throughout the towns, and countries. It is limitless. Therefore, this is important to increase the prestige of Jama'at also.

May Allah grant us strength to act on these advice in the light of instructions of the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and Promised Messiah (a.s.).



49th AHMADIYYA JALSA SALANA CONVENED SOUL INSPIRING ADDRESSES OF HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH IV

(Reported by Aftab Ahmad Bismil)
(Translated from the Alfazal International, London)

The 49th Annual Convention of the Jamaat Ahmadiyya, USA was held for three days at the spacious Baitur Rahman Mosque. It began with its characteristic tradition. The presence of our beloved Imam enhanced greatly the luster of the occasion, just as it had for the last three years.

The Jalsa was formally inaugurated with the Friday sermon of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV. From Masjid Baitur Rahman, this sermon was seen and heard live all over the world via MTA International. The main theme was the tarbiyyat of our future generations.

At 4:45 p.m. the first session began under chairmanship of Sahibzada Mian Muzaffar Ahmad, Ameer Jamaat, USA. After the recitation of the Holy Quran and a poem, with their English translations, Mr. Munir Hamid, Naib Ameer, USA, spoke in his characteristic style on the topic: *How to Win Allah's Love*. After him, Mr. Shamshad Nasir, Murabbi Silsila spoke on the *Exalted Status of the Holy Prophet Muhammad* (s.a.w.). The last speaker of the session was Mr. Dhul Waqar Yaqoub who spoke on the *Prophecies in the Holy Quran and Ahadith for the Advent of the Mahdi & the Promised Messiah* (a.s.).

Dinner was served after the session in the typical style of the Langar Khana of the Promised Messiah (a.s.). Thousands of persons were fed from this Langar Khana.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV met with the *Waqifeen Nau* and their parents. After that, the Majlis Irfan was held in which Huzoor answered many interesting questions. After the question-answer session, the *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers were held.

THE SECOND DAY

The first session of the second day began at 10 a.m. and was chaired by Dr. Ehsanullah Zafar, Naib Ameer, USA. After the recitation of the Holy Quran and a poem, and their English translations, Mr. Mureed Zafar spoke on *The Message of Ahmadiyyat* in a beautiful way. Then Maulana Azhar Haneef,

Murabbi Silsila, spoke on *A new Spiritual Era Through MTA*. He said that by the Grace of Allah, the scope of MTA is ever widening and becoming ever more useful. This global voice carries the message of Ahmadiyyat all over the world. The International Bai'at relayed on it shows millions of fortunate souls get the opportunity of Bai'at at the hand of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV at the same time. Dozens of languages simultaneously attest to the Unity of God and the Messengership of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him.

After this very effective speech, Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad Rajeki of Philadelphia spoke about his grandfather, Maulana Ghulam Rasool Rajeki. Maulana Rajeki had his Bai'at at the hand of the Promised Messiah (a.s.) in 1897. A narration of some soul inspiring events of his life gave strength to the *Eiman* of the listeners. The last speaker of the session was Mr. Anwar Mahmood Khan, National Secretary Tabligh, who spoke on *Future of Islam in the Light of the Promised Messiah's Prophecies*.

The second session of the second day started at 3 p.m.. Mr. Munir Hamid, Naib Amir I, presided. After the recitation of the Holy Quran and a poem, with their English translations, some new converts were introduced by Mr. Anwar Mahmood Khan, National Secretary Tabligh. He said that the Dae'e Ilallah scheme was first inaugurated by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV in 1983, which has been very fruitful. Four of the new converts spoke at this time on how they joined Ahmadiyyat.

At this time the Lajna Imaillah session began under the chairmanship of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV at 4:15 p.m. Men listened in by closed circuit TV. Huzoor's address began at 4:45 p.m. Huzoor stressed the importance of Tarbiyyat of the new generation. He said that in the West, especially in the USA, the denial of the existence of God is responsible for the degradation of the moral fiber. To safeguard from such an atmosphere, it is essential that children be brought up with religious education which can repel

atheism. Right from their very young age, children should be given a solid grounding in religious education. Mothers play a vital role in this. Mothers, therefore, should increase their own knowledge and become a role model for their children to guard them against satanic influences. If mothers do not safeguard the morals of their daughters, they will face dire consequences. You should work very hard on your tarbiyyat programs. Children should be engaged in such religious and educational things that they become satisfied with these positive projects so they will not be inclined towards useless pastimes.

Huzoor said that women have accomplished a lot of things in this world. Islam gives the good tidings of heaven being under the feet of the mothers. God has given a high station to women. Women should, therefore, take serious note of their obligations and mold your younger generation by the model of your own good conduct. The Holy Quran, in *Surah Tahreem*, gives examples of two women. One was Asia, the wife of the Pharaoh, and the second was Mary, the mother of Jesus. This shows the status of women in the sight of Allah. Huzoor ended his speech with a silent prayer.

After the dinner break, Huzoor went to the women's section of the Baitul Rahman Mosque at 8:15 p.m. for a question/answer session with the ladies. Huzoor's answers were also relayed in the men's section of the mosque by closed circuit TV. Many interesting questions were raised and Huzoor gave very satisfactory answers. After this session, Huzoor came to the men's section for the *Maghrib/Isha* prayers.

THE THIRD DAY

On Sunday, June 22, 1997, the last session began at 11 a.m. under the chairmanship of Huzoor. After the recitation of the Holy Quran and a poem, with their English translations, Dr. Ehsan Zafar introduced a special guest, Mr. Esiah Leggett. Mr. Leggett thanked Huzoor and the audience for the opportunity to address them and he welcomed Huzoor on behalf of the citizens of Montgomery County.

At 11:35 a.m., Huzoor began his final address. He said that just as he had explained in the last year's Convention, the main purpose of this Convention is to convey the Islamic message of love and peace to the world. It is the duty of every Muslim to convey this message of truth to the world. The verses of the Holy Quran he had recited admonish us to convey this message from God with love and patience. This call to Allah should be conveyed in such nice fashion that it attracts the hearts of people. Numbers are not important. What is important is the religious and moral improvement in those who join. When you call people to Allah in accordance with the Quranic teachings and methods, they will surely respond. So bear in mind the principles laid down in the Holy Quran when you engage in Da'wat Ilallah. We must call this society to Allah in such a way that we can reform their morals and bring them closer to God.

Huzoor's address continued until 12:50 p.m. After that Huzoor led a silent prayer and the Annual convention came to a close.

ANNOUNCEMENT

RISHTA NATA DEPARTMENT

Mr. Aftab Ahmad Bismil, Secretary Rishta Nata, who was out of the country for some time, has returned home and is available for consultation regarding matrimonial matters. He can be reached at:

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TABLIGH ON THE INTERNET

Dr. Ijaz Rauf, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

What is Internet?

Internet is a powerful emerging tool in the information and communication technology. It could be understood or visualized with the parallel of the telephone networks except with the difference that the telephone sets are replaced with computers. So in simple words it is a network of millions of computers around the world connected. And just as in case of telephones if you know the number you can connect your phone to any other phone in the world, similarly if you know the internet address of a computer you can communicate and transfer information with that computer. There are various aspects of the internet some of which have become obsolete and replaced by some newly emerged features so I shall briefly explain in the following the aspects which are most widely used at the present time.

Electronic Mail (e-mail):

Electronic mail or e-mail is the first one to emerge on the scene of an Internet. It is just like an answering machine on a telephone line or a mailbox in front of the house. Using this tool one can send messages to his/her friends. The messages one sends will go through the Internet and queue up on the line (if the other computer is off). Or it will go into a region (usually designated as mailbox) of the destination computer and as soon as the person you wanted to send your mail to opens up his/her account the computer will inform him/her of the new mails he/she has received. If the recipient desires, then he/she can also write to you or respond to your messages.

Mailing Lists:

For transmission of information or discussions of topics of interest, people create mailing lists. People interested in a particular aspect can subscribe to those mailing lists by requests. Some of the mailing lists are open to anyone. For example some companies or science agencies have open mailing lists to inform members of new developments in a particular area of interest. Say, for example, I am interested in the latest developments or research in the field of electron microscopy, I could subscribe to the microscopy list

and can get such information through e-mails. Similarly if I am interested in getting news from Pakistan I can subscribe to a mailing list, which delivers such news to Pakistanis abroad (like Dawn News Service), and receive such news. Some lists however are restricted to particular interest groups or people. For example some Ahmadi Muslims who have Internet connections have started mailing lists which are restricted to Ahmadi Muslims only and subscription to such lists is provided only after confirmation that the person requesting to be on the mailing list is an Ahmadi Muslim.

Mailing lists are a collection of e-mail addresses with a single common address given to all of them. So any message sent to the common address will be distributed to all the members of the list. There are certain restrictions one can impose on such a list. For example some lists are closed, which means that only members of the list can use the list (like the lists of Ahmadi Muslims). However, some other lists are open such that anyone can send a message to the whole membership using that list. Other than that, some lists are moderated, which means that any message sent to the list ends up on the mailbox of a moderator, after whose approval only the message can get distributed to the whole list. This is usually done to keep discussions on the track and free from abusive and foul language. To join the list of Ahmadi Muslims on the Internet all one has to do is that he/she sends his/her request to the following address. Once he/she is confirmed from the local Jama'at as being an Ahmadi Muslim, his/her name will be included in the list and he/she will start to receive newsletters, and other mails from Ahmadi Muslims around the world. The address for joining the list is: AMNC@ISLAM.ALISLAM.ORG

Internet Relay Chat (IRC):

This is something which one may call an Internet common room. To participate in IRC discussion, all one needs to know is the name of the channel for the appropriate discussion forum. Then one can enter the channel using his/her computer if it has the appropriate software. Once you enter the channel, either you can sit quietly and read the discussion going on in the channel or you can participate in the

discussion. Once you have entered the channel, whatever you type on your computer will also appear on everyone else's computer screen that is connected to that channel. And the same goes with others. There are many open channels like **#Islam**, etc. However, some channels are password protected and only those can enter who know the password. All the discussions on IRC are carried out in real time (*i.e.*, interactively). There are alphabetic Internet directories for IRC channels and if you want to set up your own channel you can easily do that.

Internet Newsgroup:

An Internet newsgroup is just like a newspaper, which one may buy at a news stand except that for this one you need an Internet connection; other than that it is free. Also, unlike local or national newspapers, an Internet newsgroup is propagated throughout the world and the estimated readership of newsgroups is more than 20 million people at the present time and is rapidly rising. Anyone in the world with a computer and an Internet connection can access these newsgroups and read whatever is published in them.

Newsgroups are of two types: Moderated newsgroups, which have a moderator who, just like the editor of a newspaper, decides what gets published in the newsgroups out of all the articles submitted for publications. Some of the examples of the moderated newsgroups are **soc.religion.islam** (for religious discussions relevant to Islam), **soc.religioin.christian** (for religious discussion relevant to Christianity) and many others. The second type of newsgroups are unmoderated newsgroups, these are open discussion forums where you can publish whatever you want but are expected to respect the purpose of the newsgroup.

Some of the unmoderated newsgroups are **alt.religion.islam** (for open discussion of the religion of Islam and relevant matters), **soc.culture.pakistan** (for open discussion of Pakistani culture), **soc.culture.pakistan.religion** (for open discussion of religions in Pakistan and religious culture of Pakistan) and many others. Internet directories for the newsgroups are also available. There are more than 6000 newsgroups at the current time.

If you like to start a new newsgroup you can do so but the process is a little more complicated than an

IRC channel. If you wish to start a newsgroup, the first thing you have to do is to prepare a charter for the newsgroup and request for discussion on the rationale for creation of newsgroup. This request you publish on the newsgroups created for this purpose (*i.e.* **News.Groups** and **News.Groups.announce**. Etc.). After a request for discussion (RFD) is posted there is a one-month discussion period on the pros and cons of the discussion forum. After which a vote taker is appointed by an independent body and a call for vote (CFV), including information on how and where to vote and what is the deadline for voting, is posted to various newsgroups where people interested in the new discussions forum may be found. If after the voting a 2/3 majority is achieved and the votes in favor of creating the newsgroup exceed the votes against it by a certain number, the newsgroup is created.

World Wide Web (WWW):

Just like the name says, it is a web of internet connections to the computers around the world. If one has an Internet connection and the proper software, one can start his/her own web site. To accomplish this one has to allocate some space on his/her computer to the public domain. Then every document in this region, if prepared in the proper format (generally known as html format) can be viewed, copied, printed etc., from any other computer, which has a web browser, in any other part of the world. This is a very useful tool and a very fast way of transmission of information.

Say, for example a book is placed on a web site in Toronto, and next day its copies are needed in Australia, all one needs in Australia is a web browser and an internet connection and one can copy the book and publish it. This will only take a few minutes. One does not have to spend hours in retyping or scanning the book, also no more editing will be needed for typos or scanning errors. So a lot of workload could be reduced as well as a lot of time could be saved as compared to normal means of transmittal of information. This is just one example; there are many other benefits of World Wide Web; for example, it could also be used as a tool for Tabligh and many other things.

Why Tabligh on the internet?

Many would agree with me that in the beginning

when the Radio and TV's were new, although they were expensive, everyone wanted to buy one and listen to it or see what it was. Those who could not afford to buy one went to someone else's home to quench their thirst of curiosity. Since internet is very new at the present time, everyone wants to get onto the internet and see what is available on the internet just as in the case of other media like radio and TV.

So we can draw the attention of a lot of people towards the True Islam which we may not do otherwise. Especially the intellectuals, who spend most of their time on computers and never see TV or listen to radio just because they don't have time for it; as well as people living in the remote areas where there are no Ahmadi Muslims, and where it is not possible for us to be present physically. So despite not being present there physically, we could still convey the message of True Islam to such regions.

Anti-Ahmadiyya forces are already on the Internet and spreading lies against us. Many people have turned to us after visiting their web sites. Their curiosity rose after reading anti-Ahmadiyya material and they wanted to find out who we were and other than that they had no contact with Ahmadiyyat. So had we not been present on the Internet, these searching souls would have been lost with misconceptions. Many of these people claimed that they had never heard of Ahmadiyya Islam.

Recently, this humble servant of Islam received an e-mail letter from Hong Kong from a Christian saying; "I have read your posts in the newsgroup **alt.religion.islam** and from your posts it seems like you are very devoted to the religion of Islam. Though I was born a Christian, due to my personal perspectives about life, I feel closer to Islam than Christianity and am interested in learning more about Islam, here are some of my questions." And I have been in contact with him since then. Who knows all his doubts are removed through this effort and he converts to Islam?

The point is that we can convey the message of True Islam and can help these searching souls for just being present on the Internet. I have cited just two examples above. There have been numerous inquiries like that from all kinds of people: Jews, Christians, Hindus, Non-Ahmadi Muslims etc. In the light of the above I feel our presence on the Internet is necessary and we need to make it more and more effective.

Our Humble Efforts on the Internet So Far:

Though this article is aimed at bringing the importance of Tabligh on the Internet to the attention of the readers and not to present a history of Ahmadiyyat on the Internet, I feel it is important to describe briefly how Ahmadiyyat made connection with the Internet.

As far as I know, it was around late 1990 or early 1991 when some Ahmadi students used to participate in newsgroup discussions on **soc.culture.Pakistan** that suddenly a flood of postings against Ahmadiyyat started to come in that newsgroup. These young Mujahids of Ahmadiyyat (Namely, Nabeel A. Rana, Nasir Noor and Dr. Hameed Mirza) sharpened their swords of arguments and stood up to defend the True Islam and clear misconceptions of some of the non-Ahmadi Muslims. This, however, also introduced a number of Ahmadi Muslim participants of those newsgroups to each other. They corresponded with each other for some time and introduced other Ahmadi Muslims with internet connections to each other.

Finally they decided to have a mailing list for Ahmadi Muslims so that they can correspond and exchange views with each other. The first mailing list was on a university computer in the USA. The membership of this list started to increase and also the members of the list brought this new technology to the attention of Jama'at officials. And thus around 1994 Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya Canada had the honor of dedicating a computer for the Internet and became the first Jama'at to have a full fledged internet site at Bitul Islam Mosque. Other Jama'ats to follow were USA, England, Indonesia. The mailing lists were then transferred, first to Baitul Islam site and then to the USA site and currently are on the USA site.

There are two main mailing lists for Ahmadi Muslims. At present there are more than 150 members of these mailing lists from all over the world. Both lists are closed and are open only to Ahmadi Muslims. One of these lists, **amni@islam.alislam.org**, is unmoderated. These lists have mainly been used to exchange views, discuss Tabligh strategy, help each other with references and arguments for Tabligh efforts as well as help each other in professional fields. Other than general discussion, to keep the worldwide membership informed about the activities in various countries, two

main services are offered. The AMNI newsletter which contains articles describing activities, events and news from various Jama'ats of the world, and the RAM service.

The primary purpose of RAM Service On-line Newsletter is to educate, enlighten, and inform its readers on religious, social, economic, and political issues with particular emphasis on Islam and Ahmadiyyat. The secondary purpose is to speed up the Tabligh activity on the net by providing necessary articles to the Internet community. RAM is an abbreviation for Religious Articles Mail which was started on September 1995 when Muslim Television Ahmadiyya (MTA) was cut off from the North American continent in early 1995. A collection of articles from various sources published by Ahmadiyya Jama'at (such as Review of Religions, Ahmadiyya Gazette, and others) was compiled into an edition and sent to the unmoderated on-line mailing list. In June 1996, a web site was developed to keep the archives of articles and to reach a wider audience around the world. A new, moderated mailing list was created on August 1996 at *Alislam Server*. By the Grace of Allah, we have gained about seventy-five members from different faiths through our web site registration at <http://www.alislam.org/ram/register.html>.

The plans for RAM Service are to reach a wider audience of different faiths and to prepare interesting articles based on readers' suggestions through our mail survey after every twelve editions. This service is provided and maintained by Br. Anil-Ullah of USA and Br. M. Amjad Tariq of Australia.

There are quite a few mailing lists established by other organizations to exchange religious views and some of our Ahmadi Muslim brothers and sisters have joined some of these lists to spread the message of Ahmadiyyat. Br. Chairul Bahri, Br. Nadri Saaduddin and Br. Zafar Pontoh joined an Indonesian mailing list discussing Islam. They participated in discussions and soon quite a bit of fighting against these brothers started. Eventually Br. Saad-ud-Din was banned from the Is-net list. Then a re-organization of the lists was arranged and during this re-organization, Br. Chairul Bahri's name was also quietly removed from the list. Br. Zafar Pontoh and Br. Nadri Saaduddin who were active in the mailing list with the name islam@isnet.org were asked to continue the discussion on Ahmadiyyat at the hikmah@isnet.org list.

The mailing list hikmah@isnet.org is strictly for discussions of sects in Islam, like Shiite, Ahmadiyya etc. Brother Zafar Pontoh also joined another mailing list with the name eropa@isnet.org which is for Indonesian Muslims in Europe only (mostly Indonesia students with a majority studying in Germany). Discussions on Ahmadiyyat appeared two months ago and was also asked to be moved to hikmah@isnet.org list after Br. Pontoh presented the Ahmadiyya points of view in several discussions.

Sister Aisha Sharif from the USA has been very active in the list server and IRC discussions on America On Line (AOL) internet service provider. She writes from the USA:

"Shortly after Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV (may Allah strengthen his hands) proclaimed Mubahalalah for the second time, I decided to use the free 30-days at Compuserve online service that had come with my computer. The three Islamic message boards at America Online, where I had been a member for several months, had gone overboard with lowly attacks against Ahmadiyya and it was beginning to sound like a schoolyard fist fight rather than the high level of discussion merited by the issue.

"At Compuserve, a group of Ahmadi and non-Ahmadi Muslims had left the main Islamic discussion because of the fighting, and established a separate Islamic area at the CNN boards. Several of our Ahmadi brothers from London had apparently impressed some of the others with their calm and spiritual methods of handling the Mubahalalah discussions to the point that an American Muslim lady became interested in Ahmadiyyat.

"This lady and I started an e-mail exchange and meeting in the CNN chat rooms, sometimes with her Sunni Muslim friends who were anxious to stop her drift in our direction. Around the same time, I received a call from our US headquarters that a Muslim lady who, like myself, was of Jewish background, was interested in discussing Ahmadiyyat Islam. In our first phone conversation, which is always interesting when one has only conversed electronically, I realized she was the same person from Compuserve and only a one hour drive from my home. Alhamdulillah. I pondered and prayed over the amazing circumstances.

"We became good friends and she visited Baitur Rahman Mosque in Silver Spring. But the crowning

miracle of the situation is that one of her daughters, now in college, dreamt as a small child that a kind man with a beard was standing in her bedroom. As my new friend began reading Ahmadi literature, she showed it to her daughter wherein was a picture of the Promised Messiah (alahis salaam). "This is the same man I saw in my dream," she told her mother. Kindly remember these people in your prayers.

"The aftermath of the Mubalah brought quite a bit of interest in Islam to our Ahmadi web sites and the internet in general. The opportunity for one-on-one tabligh on the internet seems unlimited. I was blessed to become part of a new Ahmadi Tabligh Response Team in which 11 of us from the USA, Canada, and Thailand, respond through e-mail to people's inquiries and comments about Islam and Ahmadiyyat. This has been a very educational and inspiring exercise about which I hope, *Insha Allah*, to write more at a later time. It certainly lets us know that there are from every nationality, culture, and perspective, increasing numbers seeking truth, seeking a path to the Almighty. May He in his Mercy allow us to serve them."

Besides the mailing lists there are numerous World Wide Web sites. The first one again appearing from Canada (Sultan Sial's homepage) and followed by USA (Ahmadiyya Muslim Students Association homepage from Austin) and many others. Then when various Jama'ats dedicated computers most of the stuff from these web pages was transferred to those Jama'at computers. USA Jama'at had the honor of broadcasting for the first time Huzoor's (aaba) Khutba on Internet using audio files. So that those who have an Internet connection and a sound card in their computer they can listen to Huzoor's Khutba in his own voice on the Internet. Since then quite a few audio files have been placed on our web pages and people, Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis, are benefitting from it.

Other than trying to build an effective presence on the World Wide Web, we have been always present in the newsgroups to answer questions as well as counter the attacks against our Jama'at. Our humble efforts have born us quite a lot of sweet fruits. one of the recent converts to Ahmadiyyat in Zion, expressed his views by saying that though he had some contact with the Jama'at, he was really moved towards Ahmadiyyat by reading the posts of

Ahmadi Muslims in the newsgroups. There was a clear difference and Ahmadis were always polite and always used Qur'an and Hadith in response to vicious attacks.

Our presence on the newsgroups has been instrumental in removing a lot of misconceptions and hatred against us, which non-Ahmadi Muslims usually have. One example, which I would like to quote, is that of a moderator of the newsgroup **soc.religion.islm**. In the beginning when I started reading the newsgroups he was one of the bitterest enemies of Jama'at and wrote furiously against us. However, through time I have seen a complete change in his attitude towards Ahmadi Muslims. So much so that when he became the editor of a magazine in the field of medicine, he requested this humble one to mail him a copy of an article published in Review of Religions (which he knew from one of my other post to the newsgroup, that I had) on medical ethics in Islam and Islamic view on genetic engineering, so that he may write an editorial on the same topic for his magazine. This I photocopied and sent to him.

Newsgroups are a kind of forum where a lot of people post their requests for information. One such request was posted on the newsgroup **soc.religion.islam**. Although I ignored it when it was posted to the newsgroup, however, the poster after waiting for a little while sent me a direct request through private e-mail for help on a radio program which he was preparing to broadcast somewhere in the USA where there was no Jama'at. I introduced Ahmadiyyat in Islam to him and put him in contact with Maulana Mubarik Nazir sahib, our missionary in-charge for eastern Canada, who also sent him some literature on death rituals in Islam. Thus a radio program was broadcast expressing Ahmadiyya point of view, in a region in the USA where there were no Ahmadis at that time. And thus the Promised Messiah's (a.s.) prophecy that Islam will be known by Ahmadiyyat alone was fulfilled in a unique way.

Other than Muslims, there are quite a few other religious forums. And many times Christians visit the Islamic newsgroups to attack Islam or some to seek help in understanding Islam. There are a few Christian missionaries who regularly visit the Islamic newsgroups and in their own subtle way attack Islamic teachings and try to win converts. One such person was quite regular and was not only himself

writing against Islam but was also posting books written by John Gilchrist against Islam to the Islamic newsgroups. For some time I read his posts and arguments with non-Ahmadi Muslims. However, there were quite a few points on which non-Ahmadi Muslims were losing ground. So much so that they publicly started saying to each other that this person has a good heart but is astray and here to deceive people and we should just ignore him.

This really shocked me and it appeared to me as if they were accepting the defeat. This was the point in the debate when this humble and lowest soldier of the Messiah (a.s.) as well as Shakeel Virk sahib and Adil Virk sahib of Kingston Jama'at entered the debate to defend against this Christian missionary. We posted our arguments for a little while to the Islamic newsgroups and the Christian missionary started to lose not only the debate but also his temper.

Eventually, he tried to run away from the debate by saying that since Ahmadis are twisting the Bible to suit their purpose he shall not respond to my posts. However, I requested him to come back into the debate saying that if he does not come back neither my twisting of the Bible will be exposed nor will I learn a lesson. But finally, he completely stopped responding to any of our posts and disappeared from the Islamic newsgroup for a while. And thus one more cross was broken in another unique way by the arguments taught to us by the Messiah (a.s.) of the age. And the prophecy of our beloved master Muhammad (pbuh) was fulfilled again in favor of the Promised Messiah (a.s.).

This debate certainly moved a lot of non-Ahmadi Muslims towards Ahmadiyyat and I had a lot of inquiries about the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. A lot of non-Ahmadi Muslims had a complete change of attitude towards Ahmadi Muslims and they certainly developed more respect for the Jama'at. Though during this period I also regularly received letters from non-Ahmadi Muslims saying, "You are such a nice person and have so much wealth of knowledge, why are you wasting your time as well as faith by associating with the Ahmadiyya Movement. Come back to real Islam."

Alas! Only if they knew that the knowledge which they thought I possessed was just a Blessing of my Lord because of my association with Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. And the fulfillment of the

prophecy Promised Messiah (a.s.) made in the words "My followers will be among the best in their knowledge and wisdom" and only if they knew that this is the True Islam.

Having been defeated on the Internet newsgroups, Christian missionaries decided to start a mailing list with the name Muslim/Christian dialogue (MCD). Since, when they started this list I was moving from Ontario to Alberta, I was unaware of this list. Some non-Ahmadi Muslims started to debate with Christians through this list. However, they were having a hard time because of their own beliefs and literal interpretations.

Having completed my move when I re-appeared on the Internet newsgroups, one of these non-Ahmadi Muslims wrote to me privately, inviting me to join the MCD list and defend Islam. *Subhan-Allah*, humble servants of Messiah are emerging as the only defenders of Islam on the Internet. So I, Sister Aisha Sharif (USA) and brother Z. Pontoh (Indonesia) joined the MCD list and have started defending Islam and have started to break crosses.

Our presence on the Internet has been felt in Pakistan too. Brother Masood Nasir sahib of Lahore Pakistan has sent the following two news items from Pakistani daily newspaper *Jang*.

Heading: Learning Qur'an Facility on Internet Now Available

News-item: (Islamabad) All the Islamic information/material have been gathered by American Muslims on the Internet. Stephan Malinger (information resource officer) told this in Islamabad. While giving a lecture in an American center Stephan showed the Islamic information pages on a large screen. In that he showed Islam's homepage where Maulana Sher Ali's translated Holy Qur'an and other Islamic lifestyle articles are available (*Jang*, May 11, 1997).

I would like to mention here that the Islam's homepage, the above news-item is referring to is published and maintained by Ahmadi Muslims.

Heading: Qadianiyat's Introduction on internet, Sub-heading: Ahmadiyyat is being shown as Pakistan's official religion (by Jama'at-e-Islami)

News-item: (Lahore): (pr) President of Jama'at-e-Islami, Punjab department of parliamentary affairs,

Farid Ahmad Piracha, has disclosed that Qadianis are showing Ahmadiyyat as Pakistan's official religion on the Internet and those who want to have information on Islam are being shown introduction to Qadianiyat. He was yesterday addressing the gathering at the opening ceremony of computer courses in Tameer-e-Seerat Model College Mansoor. He said the computer is a wonderful invention of this age, which has become a necessity in every field of life. The Internet has also connected the world together and now it has become possible to access hundreds of libraries and research institutes very easily. Farid Ahmad Piracha said that unfortunately the Islamic world has not done made much progress in this field despite the fact that they have billions of rupees at their disposal, while information on Islam is being provided by non-Muslims (*Jang*, May 13, 1997).

To mark the centenary celebrations of "*The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*" a brother from the USA (Anil-Ullah) prepared the text files of the book and this humble servant of Ahmadiyyat had the opportunity to post it to various religious newsgroups. These postings triggered a lot of inquiries about Ahmadiyyat and Islam from non-Ahmadi Muslims as well as people from other religions, including Jews, Christians and Hindus. Quite a few of them showed a very keen interest in Islam and are still in contact and under Tabligh by this humble servant of Ahmadiyyat.

Besides these there had been a lot of inquiries mailed to our World Wide Web pages or left at the guest books on these web pages. The maintainers of those web pages have been responding to such inquiries regularly and sometimes mailing those inquiries to the Ahmadiyya mailing lists for others to respond. And thus our presence on the net has become a good tool for informing people of our Jama'at and making a first Tabligh contact. It has also been instrumental in doing the Jihad of pen, *Alhamdo-Lillah*.

What we need to do more?

Certainly, like every other army we need more and more Mujahids on the Internet. We need Mujahids to participate in discussions on the newsgroups; to defend against attacks from our opponents; to help true seekers to make the first contact with the True picture of Islam. Help them

understand the beauties of the teachings of Islam. And to remove the misconception the West has had about Islam. People sometimes are afraid of doing Tabligh, because they feel that they may say something wrong during the arguments. For such people Internet is an excellent place to start doing Tabligh because here they can write articles and read them a hundred times before they post it or mail it and thus can minimize the chance of error. They can also get the article proofread by some one more knowledgeable before they post it.

On the World Wide Web side, there have been quite a few web sites developed independently and a lot of material has already been put on the net. This material is very useful for doing effective Tabligh. And many regular posters to the newsgroups use cut and paste technique for references as well as arguments from these World Wide Web sites in order to save time. However, it is some times quite difficult to know what is available on which site because a comprehensive list of literature is not available on the net. So people with internet connections can help in this regards too.

This will also prevent duplication of material and the time of volunteers preparing material for our web sites could be used more effectively to prepare new material, which is not already on the web. Secondly, people with expertise in computer programming could help in the development of search engines for our web sites so that anyone interested in a particular subject matter can get all the documents containing information about that subject matter. Certainly more and more volunteers are needed to prepare new material for the World Wide Web.

So O'Mujahids and servants of the Messiah (AS), who are connected to the battlefield of Internet via e-mail, come forward and join in this noble Jihad of pen. Sharpen your swords of arguments and expertise and help us maintain an effective and powerful presence on the Internet. Parents of those children who have Internet connection are also requested to encourage their children to participate in this Jihad of the keyboard. For further information and details of our activities on the Internet please send an e-mail to:

AMNC@ISLAM.ALISLAM.ORG

GLEN ELLYN, IL, MOSQUE FOUNDATION LAYING CEREMONY, JUNE 17, 1997 LED BY HADHRAT MIRZA TAHIR AHMAD, KHALIFATUL MASIH IV

The Chicago chapter of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, by the grace of Allah, held its foundation laying ceremony for the Glen Ellyn Mosque and Community Center on Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV (aba) blessed us by his presence and presiding over the ceremony.

It was an historic occasion. All the members, young and old, were instrumental in making sure that all the details were taken care of, so the event would proceed smoothly.

The planning meetings and follow-up meetings were held under the guidance of our President, Falahud Din Shams Sahib.

On Monday, all operational matters were implemented (ground, tents, etc.). Invitations were sent to dignitaries and press. Members of Detroit, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Zion and St. Paul Jamaats were invited and by the grace of Allah, their participation was an added feature.

Huzoor arrived at the Glen Ellyn location at about 2:15 p.m. and immediately led all the members to *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers. Next, Huzoor presided over the

Mosque Committee meeting. Mr. Nick Scarlitis, the Architect for the project, briefed Huzoor regarding the design and plan. Huzoor's input and suggestions were highly valuable. After the meeting, Huzoor very kindly met with about 60 families.

At about 6:30, Huzoor came to the main tent and blessed the waiting members and invited American friends with his presence. The Honorable Beverly Fawell, State Senator, was the guest speaker and was seated on the stage with Huzoor and Shams Sahib. Among other invitees, notable attendees were Honorable Thomas Walsh, State Senator, and Judge Bakalis of Dupage County.

All the guests were given a 12 page souvenir book, prepared especially for this occasion. After the speeches, Huzoor laid the foundation of the mosque. Huzoor led all in collective silent prayers.

Huzoor then proceeded to the guest tent to greet the American and non-Ahmadi guests. Sweets were distributed among all adults and children.

Huzoor continued *Mulaqat* with the rest of the families and the evening came to an end with *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers.

MY CONDITION

by Yusuf Ali

My condition is such that I sin with my age,
Every day I live, another sin filled page.

My beloved Allah true keeper of my heart,
I fill it with sin and you let it not rot.

You hide my weakness with your tender touch
And show your love so very much

You even showed me your current and showed me your light,
That shines through your Kalif so beautiful bright.

The tears that flow down from my eyes,
Should have made me become more wise.

Therefore I beg you Allah, I can't help myself
Transform me my Lord before I meet death.

And please transform every poor soul like me,
And have us become true Ahmadies.

THE AHMADABAD (BOSTON) MISSION HOUSE DEDICATION CEREMONY – A BRIEF REPORT

(by Majeed A. Mian)

The Ahmadabad Mission House located on Nasir Ahmad Road, Sharon, MA, was completed on June 3, 1997. A few days before the final inspection of the building, Amir Sahib informed the Jamaat that Huzoor (aba) would be present at the dedication ceremony. Members of the Boston Jamaat who were already experiencing the joyous feelings of seeing their Mission House coming to the end of its completion, now could not keep their feelings to themselves. They felt absolutely fortunate that they would be blessed by the company of the Khalifatul Masih of the time. They flocked together to offer their services in whatever capacity they could help.

The Majlis Aamila formulated four sub committees to plan the ceremony. Brother Abid Haneef was responsible for the reception, Qaid Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, Naeem Ahmad, for the security; Rashid Shams for Ziafat and Adil Mian for Audio/Video. Dr. Amer Malik was the overall coordinator. After a careful analysis, the ceremony was planned for 250 people. 300 invitation cards were distributed. Because of the beginning of the political season, most politicians were committed elsewhere. Yet invitations were extended.

The building consists of two floors. Each floor being identical has a capacity for 120 people. The first floor is for men and the second for ladies. The basement is partially finished where currently an office and library have been set up but if need be, at least another 50 people could get together for prayers. The building is situated on an acre lot surrounded by trees and a beautiful landscape. The sprawling lawns and the building can be seen from the main road.

A press release was issued to the area newspapers. *The Fitchburg Enterprise* and *Sentinel* carried a news item about Huzoor's visit along with his picture. Also *The Sharon Citizen*

carried a similar news item a week prior to Huzoor's visit. On June 15, 1997, a news reporter from *The Patriot Ledger* came to the mission house for a lengthy interview with the president. A canopy was pitched on the North lawn of Ahmadabad. The canopy was decorated with beautiful banners bearing the verses of the Holy Quran and prophecies of Hadhrat Promised Messiah *Alaihis Salaam*. A large welcome banner was hung over the Nasir Ahmad Road.

Huzoor arrived at the Boston Logan Airport at 1:15 p.m. on June 16, 1997. Our respected Amir Sahib could not come as his health would not permit him to do so although he had previously expressed his desire that he wished very much to attend the function. Naib Amir, Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar was representing him at this occasion. Dr. Ahsan Zafar and the president of Boston Jamaat, Majeed Mian, greeted Huzoor *Ayyadahullah Taala Binasrihil Aziz* as he emerged from the tunnel doorway into the VIP lounge.

Approximately 50 male members of the Jamaat received him at the Airport. Huzoor kindly shook hands with all of them as they had lined up outside the VIP lounge. The members' eyes lit up as they saw their beloved master coming out of the lounge. Huzoor was then taken to the hotel where meals were served to him. All meals for Huzoor and his staff were prepared by the members of Lajna. The members proceeded back to Ahmadabad.

At 4:45 p.m. Huzoor arrived at Ahmadabad. At this occasion, approximately 200 members who had lined up on the driveway, raised slogans of *Allaho Akbar* and *Ahmadiyyat Zindabad* as Huzoor emerged from his car. Huzoor responded with a big smile and by waving back to the crowd. Huzoor then walked towards the main door of the newly completed

mission house. The walkway passes through a beautiful bed of flowers. The whole crowd was following Huzoor into the building. This sight reminded one of the Biblical story of how Hadhrat Moses *Alaihis Salaam* was leading his followers across the River Nile into the valley of Sinai.

Huzoor, briskly walking towards the stairway, climbed up the steps and entered the building. He then proceeded to the *Mihraab* and sat down to wait for others to gather inside. Huzoor then lead the *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers. After the prayers, Huzoor was led into the room where *Mulaqaats* with the local members were arranged. 17 family groups who were on the list met with Huzoor, one by one. On some other families' persistence whose names were not on the list, Huzoor graciously granted audience to three more families. There were some other events related to Huzoor's kindness for Ahmadies, that were witnessed during this visit. These will be reported at some other time, *Insha Allah*.

During the *Mulaqaat*, Senator William R. Keating had dropped in as he was on his way to some other ceremony. Since he did not have much time at his disposal, he left a message of welcome for Huzoor and expressed his desire how much he wanted to meet with Huzoor. After the *Mulaqaat*, Huzoor arrived at the Marquee where the dedication ceremony was arranged.

Huzoor was received outside the marquee by Selectman Norman Katz, Chairman of the Board of selectmen for the Town of Sharon and other dignitaries. As Huzoor entered the marquee, the air burst into slogans of *Allaho Akbar*, *Ahmadiyyat*, *The Promised Messiah*, *Amirul Momineen*, *Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa* and other familiar slogans. Approximately 230 people had gathered in the marquee in addition to about 90 ladies who were inside the building. Audi/Video reception had been adequately arranged for them. There were approximately 60 non-Muslim and non-Ahmadi guests. News reporters and cameramen from at least 6 local newspapers were present to cover the ceremony.

Huzoor opened the session according to a previously prepared schedule. Recitation of the Holy Quran and its English translation was done by Mr. Rasheed Khalid. A poem of Hadhrat Promised Messiah *Alaihis Salaam* was recited by Mr. Naeem Ahmad and its English translation was presented by Mr. Yusef Lateef. This was followed by a welcome address by Selectman Norman Katz. In his address he warmly welcomed Huzoor and assured the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community of all possible help. In the end he first read out a proclamation that was prepared and signed by the three members of the Board of Selectmen for the Town of Sharon, and then presented the same to Huzoor. In the proclamation, June 16, 1997, was designated as the Ahmadiyya Muslim Day.

The president of Boston Jamaat then presented his short welcome address. He extended his warm welcome to all the guests and members who had taken the trouble of driving long distances to attend the ceremony. He then narrated a brief history of how Ahmadabad had come to be and then made a passionate and emotional welcome statement for Huzoor, expressing his own love and that of the members of the Jamaat for Huzoor. In the end he presented to Huzoor a pictorial of the historic new England for his historic visit as a token of love from the members of the Boston Jamaat. Huzoor *Ayyadahullah Taala* cheerfully accepted it. Two other proclamations sent by the Mayors of the City of Fitchburg and the City of Leominster respectively, were also presented to Huzoor.

Huzoor *Ayyadahullah Taala Binasrihil Aziz* then came to the podium. Amidst another loud round of slogans, Hadhrat *Amirul Momineen* began his address with *Tashahud*, *Ta'awwuz* and *Sura Fatiha*. Huzoor highlighted the need for the unity of human beings more so in the modern world than ever before. His hour long address kept the audience spell bound. Many guests who had come to attend on the condition that they would not be able to stay long enough as they had some other important commitments, continued to sit until the end. They admitted that

the address was so interesting that it was impossible for them to miss it.

Huzoor mentioned in detail about the ills of the modern material progress and how this progress was pulling the human beings apart instead of bringing them together. Huzoor, while presenting a remedy for the unity of human beings all over the world, emphasized the fact that without understanding the unity of God it would not be possible. Huzoor stated that only in the Unity of God lies the secret of the unity of human beings. Huzoor then warned that if people were not called to that center, *i.e.*, the Unity of God, then no other efforts will unite the nations and the people of the world. Huzoor mentioned to the audience that the Ahmadiyya Jamaat's mission was just that. He also advised the members of the Jamaat to always remember that central theme and with that background in mind they should carry out their *tabligh*.

The address was followed by a question and answer session. Many interesting questions were asked by the audience and Huzoor effectively answered all the questions. Some of the questions included the possibility of cloning human beings, the influence of the media, Christian teachings, and segregation of sexes in Islam.

Huzoor returned to the mission house for *Maghrib/Isha* prayers. After the prayers, sweets were distributed among the guests and others present at the occasion. Huzoor *Ayyadahullah Taala Binasrihil Aziz* also kindly accepted a bag of sweets presented to him. A delicious dinner was then served to everybody.

Huzoor then departed as this highly spiritual and very joyous occasion came to an end. The next morning, *i.e.*, June 17, 1997, Huzoor *Ayyadahullah Taala Binasrihil Aziz* returned for *Fajr* prayers. Surprisingly many members, both men and women were present. Huzoor shook some hands and where he could not reach because of the shortage of time, he smilingly waved at them.

Huzoor was seen off at the airport by a large number of Ahmadies, in spite of being a work day. They stayed with Huzoor for almost an hour. Finally with warm feelings our beloved master Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih *Ayyadahullah Taala Binasrihil Aziz* departed from us. From Huzoor's gestures it was obvious that he felt very happy with the experience in Boston. May Allah shower his choicest blessings and grant Huzoor *Ayyadahullah Taala Binasrihil Aziz* strength and long life. Amin. May Allah enable us all to attain the high standards set for us by Huzoor *Ayyadahullah Taala Binasrihil Aziz*. Ameen!

The following proclamations were issued on the visit of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV to Boston for the inauguration of the newly built Mission House on June 16, 1997.

1. Proclamation by the Mayor of the city of Sharon in which he proclaimed June 16 as dedication day for World Wide Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat and welcomed Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad to Massachusetts, and wished much success to Jamaat members.
2. A citation by the Mayor of Fitchburg, MA, welcoming His Holiness Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad on the occasion of the dedication of the new Mission House Ahmadiyya Muslim Center in Sharon, MA, and the citizenry extended its best wishes on the occasion.
3. The town of Sharon, MA, Office of Board of Selectmen welcomed the Supreme Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, at the dedication ceremony, expressing that the community always strive to overcome prejudices and inhumanity, and declaring June 16, 1997 as Ahmadiyya Muslim Day. Copies of these proclamations are displayed on the next three pages.

Proclamation

- WHEREAS: The WORLD WIDE AHMADIYYA MUSLIM JAM'AT has completed the building of its Mosque in the town of Sharon, Massachusetts; and
- WHEREAS: this Mosque serves virtually all of the Boston area; and
- WHEREAS: the Spiritual Leader, from London, England, *Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad*, the Iman of the World Wide Ahmadiyya Muslim Jam'at is coming to Sharon, Massachusetts on Monday, June 16, 1997 at 6:30 P.M.;
- THEREFORE: I, Dean J. Mazarella, Mayor of the City of Leominster do hereby proclaim June 16, 1997 as Dedication Day for the WORLD WIDE AHMADIYYA MUSLIM JAM'AT and welcome the Imam, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad to Massachusetts and wish much success to all of your members.

DATE

June 16, 1997
Dean J. Mazarella
DEAN J. MAZZARELLA, MAYOR
CITY OF LEOMINSTER



City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts
Official
Citation

*Be it hereby known to all that:
 The City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts
 hereby offers its sincerest congratulations to:*

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

*in recognition of
 the dedication of your new mission house "Ahmadiyya Muslim Center"
 in Sharon, Mass. and welcome to His Holiness Hazrat Mizra Tahir
 Ahmad who will be joining you on this very special occasion*

*The entire Citizenry extends its very best
 wishes on this memorable occasion and expresses
 the hope for continued good fortune.*

Given this 16th day of June..... 19 97.

by: .....
 Mayor

THE TOWN OF
SHARON, MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

PROCLAMATION

JUNE 16, 1997 - AHMADIYYA MUSLIM DAY

WHEREAS: The mission of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam is to promote the peaceful message of the religion of Islam to the people regardless of their race, color, creed or ethnic origin;

WHEREAS: The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community remains dedicated to promoting peace and prosperity throughout the world;

WHEREAS: The members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community have chosen the Town of Sharon to be their center for the Boston area and have built for that purpose a mission house on Nasir Ahmad road; and

WHEREAS: We welcome, the Supreme Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, who has graciously accepted to be present at the dedication ceremony;


Now, therefore, we, The Board of Selectmen for the Town of Sharon, proclaim that, in the hope that the community will strive always to overcome prejudice and inhumanity, that June 16, 1997 is hereby designated as the Ahmadiyya Muslim Day.



NORMAN KATZ, CHAIRMAN



HENRY D. KATZ



JANIS EDINBURGH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Dated: June 12, 1997

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GRANDEUR OF ISLAM

Flee not away from Islam;
This alone is the path of guidance.
Wake up! You sleepy souls;
The bright noon sun has risen hereby.

I tell you in the name of Allah,
Who made us all;
Under the canopy of the Heavens,
This alone is the divine faith.

O my dear ones!
Forget not the Day of Judgement;
Discover the beauties of this faith;
This alone the bright full moon.

The agony of the condition of this faith
has well nigh killed me;
My heart is torn into pieces;
Only the support of the Beloved Lord
is sustaining me;
Otherwise, it would cause me total destruction.

All thanks to the Gracious Lord,
Who granted us the Holy Quran;
All previous scriptures were small buds,
The Quran is a full blown flower.

This alone is the desire of my heart —
I wish to kiss Thy Scripture O Lord!
I wish to make circuits around the Quran
This alone is my Ka'aba.

That leader of ours,
From whom origin all light;
His name is Mohammed
He alone is my beloved.

All messengers of Allah are Holy,
One better than the other;
But he is the very best,
Sent by the Almighty Allah.

Better than all who came before him!
A bright moon in his noble qualities;
All eyes are focused upon him,
For he is the bright full moon.

شانِ اِسْلَام

اِسْلَام سے نہ ہانگو راوِ ہدٰی یہی ہے
اُسے سونے والو جاگو! شمسِ اِشقیٰ یہی ہے
بُھڑ کو قسم بُھڑا کی جس نے ہمیں بسنایا
اب آسماں کے نیچے دینِ بُھڑا یہی ہے
وہ دلتاں نماں ہے کس تہ سے اُس کو دیکھیں
اِن شُکلوں کا یارو! مِجھل کُشا یہی ہے
باہنِ سب سے ہیں جن کے اس دین سے ہیں وہ نگر
پر اسے اندھیرے والو! دل کا بڑا یہی ہے
دُنیا کی سب دُکائیں ہیں ہم نے دیکھی جہاں
آخر ہوا یہ ثابت دارِ اِسْتِغْنَا یہی ہے
سب نشتک ہو گئے ہیں جتنے تھے باغِ پستلے
ہر دُشمن میں نے دیکھا بُستاں ہڑا یہی ہے
دُنیا میں اِس کا ثانی کوئی نہیں ہے شریعت
پہلی لو تم اِس کو یارو! آپ بقا یہی ہے

SELECTED VERSES FROM THIS LONG POEM OF THE
PROMISED MESSIAH ARE BEING TRANSLATED HERE

He is today the King of Faith!
He is the Crown of all sent by God!
He is pure! He is the Trustworthy!
That alone is the true description of
his good qualities.

We gained everything from him.
You are, O Lord, our witness!
He indeed is the one
Who showed us the true faith.

I am a devotee to that light
To him I belong in my entirety;
He is everything, I am nothing,
That is the final word.

That Beloved Without a Partner,
is the fountain head of all knowledge;
All else is a fable,
He alone is the unquestionable Truth.

Show me O Lord
The days of the glory of this faith;
Annihilate all false religions,
This is my only prayer.

AHMADIYYA MUSLIM MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, USA ANNOUNCEMENT

A. MEMBERSHIP DUES

The membership year of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Medical Association (AMMA) is from July 1st of a year to June 30th of the next year. The membership dues are used to provide limited amount of help to Ahmadiyya Hospitals in Pakistan, Guatemala and West Africa. Furthermore, the dues are used to cover the office expenses of the Association, i.e., correspondence, etc. The members are requested to send their membership dues as soon as possible to the Financial secretary at the following address:

Dr. Naseer A. Tahir
14 Woodstone Rise
Pittsford, NY 14534

The membership rates are as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Physicians/Dentists, etc. | \$100/Year |
| Residents/Pharmacists/Ph.D./Nurses: | \$25/Year |

B. UPDATING AMMA MEMBERSHIP LIST

I am in the process of updating the list of Ahmadi Physicians, Dentists, Pharmacists, Ph.D. in biomedical fields and Nurses in the USA. All those members whose address has changed during the past year and all those who can become members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Medical Association and have recently arrived in the USA are requested to send their current mailing address and telephone number to the General Secretary, AMMA at the following address:

Karimullah Zirvi,
14-21 Saddle River Road
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

LET US LEARN SALAT (With Transliteration and Translation)

After reciting these verses or any other portion of the Holy Quran, the Imam announces the transition from the standing position to the bowing (*rukū*) by calling out *Allaho Akbar*, "Allah is the Greatest". The congregation follow him into that posture, in which glorification and praises are repeated in silence; three times:

رکوع میں جھکتے ہوئے یہ الفاظ کہے جاتے ہیں (تین بار)

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Holy is my Lord, the most Great. | پاک ہے میرا رب بڑی عظمت والا | رُكُوع سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ Subhana Rabbiyal Azeem. |
| al Azeem = الْعَظِيمِ the most Great بڑی عظمت والا | Rabbiya = رَبِّيَ my Lord میرا رب | Subhana = سُبْحَانَ Holy is پاک ہے |

The Imam then announces the return to the standing position by calling out:

امام سیدھا کھڑا ہو کر یہ الفاظ کہتا ہے

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Allah hears him who praises Him. | اللہ تعالیٰ نے اسکی (وہ) سنی ہے ہم نے اس کی تعریف کی۔ | تَسْمِيعُ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ Sami' Allahu Liman Hamidah. |
| hoo = هُوَ Him اسکی | Hamida = حَمِيدًا praises تعریف کی | Liman = لِمَنْ man = مَنْ who جو |
| li = لِي لے | Allaho = اللَّهُ Allah اللہ (سے) | Sami'a = سَمِعَ hears سنی |

*Children's Corner***THE WORD OF GOD**

The word 'Quran' literally means that which is recited, announced or proclaimed. It is the collection of the verbal revelations bestowed upon the Prophet during a period of about 23 years and is the actual word of God. The first revelation comprising only a few verses, was revealed to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) on the mountain of Hira. Thereafter, revelation continued until his death. Whenever any portion of the Quran was revealed to him, he committed it to memory. Many of his followers did the same as they heard it. Some of them even wrote the verses on anything available like pieces of leather, bark of trees or stones. In order to safeguard it, the Prophet had also appointed several persons who recorded it in writing whenever a revelation was received.

The Holy Quran is the book most often recited and quoted throughout the world. It is obligatory for every Muslim to participate in five Prayer Services during the day. The greater part of these Prayers is composed of portions of the Holy Quran. Thus a Muslim recites a portion of the Holy Book every day. In addition most of them start their day with a recitation from it.

During the time of Abu Bakr, the first Khalifa, it was decided to collect the whole Quran in one volume. Zaid bin Thabit, a prominent Companion of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was appointed for this purpose. He took great care to compile it in the form of a book, the sequence of which was laid down by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) himself.

During the time of the third Khalifa, Osman, an official version of the Holy Quran was issued. Seven copies were made, which were then sent to different parts of the Muslim world. These seven became the standard texts from which other copies were made.

All Muslims learn to read the Holy Quran in Arabic, even though that may not be their own language. Almost every Muslim knows some chapters of the Book by heart and in each generation there are hundreds of thousands of people who can recite the whole Book from

beginning to end from their memory.

The Holy Quran has been translated into all the major languages of the world and the work continues to be carried on. The Quran has 114 chapters, called '*Suras*'. Each chapter, except the ninth begins with the invocation 'In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful'.

The Holy Quran is the only book in the world which claims that every word contained in it is the actual word of God, and that He has taken upon Himself the responsibility of preserving the purity of the text in all ages. This has been demonstrated throughout history. The text of the Quran has continued without any alteration or modification.

A Muslim has to believe not only in the Quran but also in all the Books sent by God to previous Prophets from time to time. Unfortunately none of the previous Books retained its original text intact.

In the Holy Quran, mention has been made of Adam, Abraham, Joseph, David, Solomon, Jesus and several other Biblical Prophets (Peace be upon them all). They are honored as true Messengers of God. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is described as a model of righteousness. According to the Holy Quran, Jesus was a Prophet of God, and not a Divine being as believed by Christians.

The Holy Quran condemns the notion of the Trinity and the association of anything or any one else, with God as His partner. It teaches that there is only one God, whose proper name is Allah, and that the worst sin is to associate any other being with Him.

The Holy Quran stresses the equality of mankind. It recognizes the divisions between people into tribes and sub-tribes, but explains that these divisions are meant for identification only. The only badge of honor is a person's righteousness. It lays down that no nation, tribe or race is superior to others.

The Holy Quran teaches that worship does not merely mean that a man should concentrate upon

and offer homage to God but also consists in serving fellow human beings.

It seeks to bring about an equitable adjustment in the distribution of wealth through Zakat, alms and charity.

It determines the duties and rights of the State and its members. It discusses in detail the code of conduct in times of war and peace, as well as international relations and treaties.

It teaches man to lead a simple life, to be honest, kind and truthful in his dealing with others. It prohibits anything that has a tendency to incite people to foolish and irresponsible behavior. Hence it puts a ban on all intoxicants and gambling, etc.

The Holy Quran absolutely refutes the theory of hereditary sin, put forward by Christianity. It says that every child is sinless when it is born.

The Holy Quran contains several prophecies relating to later times, some of which have already been fulfilled. For example, it prophesied that the time when quicker means of transport would be used. It also mentioned about the extension of the earth, a prophecy which was fulfilled in a way when man set his foot on the moon. It claims that all heavenly bodies revolve in different orbits.

Another prophecy contained in the Holy Quran is about Pharoah. It was revealed that when Pharoah was drowned, his body was saved and was

preserved so that it should serve as a sign for future generations. This incident is mentioned only in the Holy Quran. The Bible and other authentic records of that time are silent about this.

The prophecy came true in this century when the body of the Pharoah was discovered and identified. This established the fact that after he was drowned, his dead body was recovered, embalmed and preserved.

The Holy Quran provides a solution for every problem of the world. It is a Book of guidance for the people of all ages.

QUESTIONS:

1. How was the text of the Holy Quran preserved?
2. How does the Quran differ from the previous Scriptures?
3. How many chapters are there in the Holy Quran?
4. What status does the Quran give to Jesus?
5. What, according to the Holy Quran is the worst sin?
6. Mention some of the teachings of the Holy Quran?
7. Mention some of the prophecies contained in the Holy Quran.

The Holy Quran should be recited daily.

Try to understand what you are reading. The Holy Quran should not be recited hurriedly. Slow recitation will enable you to understand and will also show proper respect for the Holy Quran.

An Ahmadi has asked what to do if one does not understand the Holy Quran. Such people should learn the meanings of a portion of the Holy Quran and include that portion in every recitation. You may ask, What is the use of reciting the parts which we do not understand? Remember that when something is done with sincerity and good intention, Allah definitely rewards it. If you recite for the sake of God without knowing the meaning, He will certainly bless you according to your

sincerity. Moreover, the words have an influence. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has commanded that the *Adhan* (Call for Prayer) be called in the ears of a new born child. The child is unable to understand or recognize anything at that time, but it is influenced by the words of *Adhan*.

As far as possible, perform ablution before recitation. I consider it permissible to recite the Holy Quran without ablution, but some scholars consider it undesirable. It is certainly more appropriate to perform ablution to obtain greater benefit and to earn higher reward.