



THE

Ahmadiyya Gazette

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

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SO SAID HADHRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD THE PROMISED MESSIAH (PEACE BE ON HIM)

We do believe that there is none worthy of worship except God Almighty and *Sayyedena* Hazrat Muhammad, the Chosen One, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is His Messenger and the *Khatamul Anbiya*. We believe that angels are a reality, that Resurrection is a reality and the Day of Judgement is a reality; that Heaven is reality and so is Hell.

We do believe that whatever the Glorious and Majestic God has stated in the Holy Quran and whatever our Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has stated is all, according to the aforementioned statement, the truth. We do believe that the person who subtracts an iota from the Islamic law or adds to it as much, or lays the foundation in any manner for rejection of Islamic injunctions, or attempts to declare unlawful what has been made lawful in Islam, is an infidel and a renegade to Islam. We admonish our Jama'at that they must adhere tenaciously to the fundamental article of Islamic faith. "There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is His Messenger" as long as they live and that they should die holding fast to the same belief.

Also they must have firm faith in all the Messengers of Allah and revealed Books which have been authenticated by the Holy Quran. They should abide strictly by the Quranic injunctions. They should strictly observe Prayers and Fast, pay *Zakat* and perform the *Haj* (pilgrimage). They should observe Islam by fully complying with all the injunctions, obligations and prohibitions pronounced by God and His Messenger. In short, all such matters, be they beliefs or deeds, on

which there was consensus of opinion among our righteous predecessors and as are understood to be Islam by the general consensus of opinion of those who follow the traditions of the Holy Prophet of Islam, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, should be complied with as being obligatory. We call to witness the Heaven and the Earth, that exactly is our Faith.” (*Ayyamus Sulh*, 1st Edition: *Roohani Khazain* Vol. 14, p. 323)

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FROM THE HOLY QUR'AN

“O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become righteous.

“The prescribed fasting is for a fixed number of days, but whoso among you is sick or is on a journey shall fast the same number of other days; and for those who are able to fast only with great difficulty is an expiation—the feeding of a poor man. And whoso performs a good work with willing obedience, it is better for him. And fasting is good for you, if you only knew.

“The month of Ramadhan is that in which the Quran was sent down as a guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and discrimination. Therefore, whosoever of you is present at home in this month, let him fast therein. But whoso is sick or is on a journey, shall fast the same number of other days. Allah desires to give you facility and He desires not hardship for you, and that you may complete the number, and that you may exalt Allah for His having guided you and that you may be grateful.

“And when My servants ask thee about Me, say: I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So they should hearken to Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way.

“It is made lawful for you to go in unto your wives on the night of the fast. They are a garment for you, and you are a garment for them. Allah knows that you have been acting unjustly to yourselves, wherefore He has turned to you with mercy and afforded you relief. So you may now go in unto them and seek what Allah has ordained for you; and eat and drink until the white thread becomes distinct to you from the black thread of the dawn. Then complete the fast till nightfall and do not go in unto them while you remain in the Mosques for devotion. These are the limits fixed by Allah, so approach them not. Thus does Allah make His commandments clear to men that they may become secure against evil.” (2:184-188)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
 كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ
 لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ۗ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا
 أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ
 يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا
 فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ
 تَعْلَمُونَ ۗ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ
 هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن
 شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى
 سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا
 يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى
 مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ۗ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي
 عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ
 فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِلِقَائِهِمْ يُرْشِدُونَ ۗ أَجَلٌ
 لَّكُمْ لَيْلَةُ الصِّيَامِ الرِّفْقُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمُ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ
 وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ
 فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنكُمْ فَالَّذِينَ بَاشَرُوا هُنَّ وَأَبْتَغُوا
 مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَسْبُغَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ
 الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتُوا
 الصِّيَامَ إِلَى الْبَيْلِ وَلَا تَبَاشَرُوا هُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَافُونَ لِي
 الْمَسْجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ
 اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ۗ

Commentary

(184) As the preceding verses contain a reference to patience in trials and sacrifices as well as refraining from disputes and temptations, the Quran here fittingly turns to the subject of fasting, which is a most effective means of self-discipline.

The command to fast, whatever its details, is to be found in most religions in one form or another. The early devotions and fasting of Buddha (see *Lalitavistara* and *Buddhacharita*), the fasting of Moses prior to his receiving the Ten Commandments (Exod. 34:28; Deut. 9:9), the fasts of Jesus before his receiving the heavenly Call (Matt. 4:2), all testify to the importance of this institution. In fact, fasting is a form of devotion and self-discipline which has a natural appeal to man. "By the greater number of religions," says the Encyclopedia Britannica, "in the lower, middle and higher cultures alike, fasting is largely prescribed; and when it is not required, it is nevertheless practiced to some extent by individuals in response to the prompts of nature."

The verse under comment, however, does not mean that fasting has been prescribed for the Muslims in the same form in which it was prescribed for the people of earlier faiths. Islam has greatly spiritualized this institution by attaching to it a number of highly useful regulations and restrictions.

The clause, *so that you may become righteous*, explains the deep philosophy underlying the commandment relating to fasting. It is a special characteristic of the Quran that, whenever it gives an important commandment, it does not give it arbitrarily but also explains its usefulness so that the addressee may be convinced of, and satisfied about the wisdom underlying it. The object of fasting has been stated in this verse as the attainment of righteousness.

As explained in 2:3 the word **تقوى** from which the word **تقون** used in the present verse is derived means, to guard oneself against (1) harm and suffering, and (2) evil and sin. Thus the verse points out that the real object of fasting is, first, to be saved from harm and suffering, and secondly, to be saved from sin and evil.

The first object is attained through fasting in two ways: (1) When a man commits evil deeds and becomes deserving of God's punishment on account

of those deeds, but later feels ashamed of them and turns to God in repentance, then fasting serves as an atonement for his sins. (2) Fasting not only makes a man fit and able to bear hardships but also makes him realize the sufferings of his brethren in distress and to feel sympathy for them. Thus fasting goes a long way to remove and minimize the pains and sufferings of humanity.

The second object, viz., that of being saved from sin and evil, is attained through fasting because, while fasting, a person has not only to abandon eating and drinking but also, to a certain extent, to keep himself aloof from worldly connections and to abstain from indulging in his desires, with the result that his thoughts naturally tend towards spiritual things. Spiritual men of all religions unanimously testify, on the basis of personal experience, that a certain degree of severance from physical relations and worldly connections is essential for spiritual advancement and has a powerful purifying effect on the mind. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that to carry such severance too far is sure to weaken the body to such an undesirable extent as to render a person unfit not only to fulfil his social and religious obligations but also to withstand temptations which requires a certain amount of strength.

Islam, therefore, follows the path of the golden mean. While it does prescribe a certain degree of abstention from material pleasures, it does not permit such a weakening of the body as should incapacitate it for performing its normal functions. This is why the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has forbidden continuous fasting, saying, "Your self has a claim upon you and your family has a claim upon you and your guests have a claim upon you" (*Tirmidhi*). On another occasion, he is reported to have said, "Verily, I am the most righteous of you all, yet sometimes I fast and sometimes I abstain from fasting, and so must you do" (*Bukhari*).

Fasting also stands as a symbol for complete sacrifice. One who fasts not only abstains from food and drink, which are the chief means of sustenance and without which one cannot live, but also from going in unto one's wife which is the means of assuring one's future race. Thus he who fasts really

expresses his readiness, if need be, to sacrifice his all for the sake of truth. Fasting indeed affords a wonderful training ground for man.

It must also be noted here that this verse does not actually contain a command to fast, which follows in the verse coming after the succeeding verse. It only prepares Muslims for the coming commandment by saying that (1) the fasting which is going to be prescribed for them is not a new thing but was also prescribed for the people that had gone before, and that (2) it is a most useful thing which is sure to benefit them greatly. It will be seen that very often the Quran does not give a commandment all of a sudden but first prepares the ground for it by making some general remarks. In this connection see also 2:143-145 where a similar process has been adopted.

(185) This verse again refrains from giving the actual commandment regarding fasting but prepares further ground by pointing out that the fasting about to be prescribed is not meant for all days but only for a limited number of days. Again, the commandment to come is not meant to be observed in all circumstances; for those suffering from disease or those on a journey will be exempt from it. In fact, Islam is a practical religion. It does not give any commandment which is impossible of compliance. Hence, while referring to its injunctions about fasting, the Quran makes it clear that whosoever is ill or is on a journey should not fast but should redeem the omission by fasting an equal number of days at some other time when the sickness is gone or the journey is over.

The pronoun, those, in the clause: *those who are able*, refers to believers in general, meaning, those who are able to fast but can fast only with great difficulty.... Such people, who include old men and raw youths and weakly persons and pregnant women and mothers giving suck to their children, may not fast but should make amends for their non-observance of each day's fast by feeding a poor man according to their standard of food

Thus the verse mentions three classes of believers to whom concession is allowed with respect to fasting: (1) the sick; (2) those on a journey; and (3) those neither on a journey nor actually sick but otherwise too weak to fast except with real risk to their health.

Some Commentators do not recognize the last mentioned class as being separate from, and independent of, the first two, but take it as being an exception from them. In this case the verse would mean that such of the sick and of those on a journey as can afford to feed poor men should also do so, besides fasting the same number of days after the sickness or the state of journey is over.

(186) The ground having been suitably prepared in the preceding two verses, this verse gives the awaited commandment about fasting. But even here the actual commandment is preceded by a suitable description of the month of Ramadhan in which fasts were to be observed. The month was not chosen arbitrarily but was selected for the purpose of fasting because it was a sacred month in which the Quran was revealed. And the Quran is not an ordinary book. It is a Book full of the right guidance and of bright Signs and of things that help to differentiate between truth and falsehood. This sublime foreword placed before the commandment about fasting contains an implied question to the effect: Will you not now fast when fasting is a tried thing, when it is so useful, when it is to be observed only for a few days, when even in these few days suitable facilities have been provided, and lastly when these few days correspond with a month which is full of blessings?

As hinted above, this verse mentions the reason for which the month of Ramadhan was selected for the purpose of fasting. It was in this month that the Quran was revealed. The revelation of the Quran in the month of Ramadhan may mean two things: (1) that the revelation of the Holy Book commenced in the month of Ramadhan, for it is on record that it was on the 24th of Ramadhan that the Holy Prophet received his first revelation (*Musnad and Jarir*); (2) that the revelation of the Quran was repeated to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) every year in the month of Ramadhan, for it is also on record that the angel Gabriel rehearsed every year to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) the whole of the revealed portion of the Quran during this month and this he continued to do till the very year of the Prophet's death. (*Bukhari*, ch. on *Manaqib*). Thus in a way even the whole of the Quran may be said to have been sent down in Ramadhan.

The words, *clear proofs of guidance and*

discrimination, point out that the Quran is a Book which is not content with making mere assertions. It supports every assertion it makes with necessary reasons and arguments which are both clear and convincing, and it also adduces heavenly Signs which go to discriminate right from wrong with such clearness that they leave no room for doubt. This excellence belongs exclusively to the Quran. Indeed, other scriptures, too have been spoken of as "a light and guidance," but about none of them has it been said that they supply reasons, arguments and Signs in support of their assertions.

Although former Prophets also were given Signs that people might accept them as divine Messengers, yet the scriptures they brought contained nothing that might bear testimony to their truth. It is only the Quran that contains all kinds of evidence – rational, scriptural and heavenly – to demonstrate the truth of its teachings so that it might itself furnish necessary evidence of its truth, and that, unlike other scriptures, tales and stories of the past might not form its sole support.

The clause, *let him fast therein*, signifies that it is necessary to fast all the days of the month of Ramadhan; it will not do to fast only for a few days. Thus out of every twelve months in the year one at least – that of Ramadhan – must be so devoted to the worship of God.

The clause, *whoso is sick or is on a journey, he shall fast the same number of other days*, at first appears to be an unnecessary repetition of what has already been said in the preceding verse in identical words, but really it is not so; for whereas in the previous verse this clause formed part of a verse that was meant to prepare the ground for the commandment to fast, in this verse it forms part of the actual commandment. The clause signifies that if in the month of Ramadhan one happens to be sick or is on a journey, one should not fast, owing to the extra hardship entailed, but should fast the same number of other days when one has recovered from sickness or when the journey is over. The Quran, however, wisely refrains from defining the terms "sickness" and "journey", leaving them to be defined by the common usage of the people.

The clause, *He desires not hardship for you*,

points to the very important principle that divine commands are not meant to cause trouble or inconvenience but to afford ease and facility. In this connection it may well be noted that St. Paul looks upon the Law as an entanglement with "the yoke of bondage" if not as an actual curse (Gal. ch. 3 and 5). But he forgets that true freedom, and for that matter, true happiness lie only in willing obedience to a good and righteous legislation. The Islamic law, even "in meats and drinks and divers washings, and carnal ordinances," is a real help and guidance rather than a hindrance and a bondage. The clause, *so that you may complete the number*, indicates that God's purpose in prescribing a fixed number of days is that believers may be able to complete the number which, in His sight, is essential for their spiritual welfare. A fixed number was essential; for, otherwise, some people might have failed to fast even the minimum number, while others would have unduly suffered for doubt as to their having completed the necessary number even after they had long exceeded it.

The clause, *that you may exalt Allah for His having guided you*, points to yet another object underlying the commandment. All such expressions in which the offering of a particular praise to God is enjoined signify two things: (1) that man being God's creation should continuously offer praise to Him, invoking the particular divine attribute that may suit the occasion; (2) that he should also try to reflect in his person the self-same attribute of God. "Exalting God" would therefore mean not only God's glorification but the uplift and exaltation of the devotee himself. In fact God stands in need of no praise. He is what He is whether we praise Him or not. So truly speaking, everything is for the benefit of man himself, and the benefit underlying fasting is the exaltation of man, morally and spiritually and in a sense physically as well.

The final clause, *that you may be grateful*, is also full of deep meaning. God is not cruel or unkind; He has due regard for our weaknesses and He does not put us to unnecessary trouble; and whatever seeming trouble He puts us to is for our own good. This kind and loving attitude of God towards us ought to give rise to a corresponding feeling of love for Him in our hearts and we ought to feel grateful to Him for His

love and kindness.

To a superficial observer the language of the Quran as used in this verse might appear to be rather unconnected, forming independent clauses. But a closer study reveals a beautiful arrangement between them. In fact the four clauses in the concluding portion of this verse furnish reasons for the four commandments contained in the first portion of the verse, the succeeding reasons following the reversed order of the preceding commandments in a most natural manner. The first reason given by the verse is contained in the clause, *Allah desires to give you facility and He desires not hardship for you*. Though the apparent wording of the clause is different from the wordings of the succeeding clauses, actually it is also one of those that supply a reason for in reality the clause stands like this, "that you be afforded facility, etc." Corresponding to this clause we have the last commandment of the verse *i.e., whoso is sick or is on a journey, etc.* The second clause supplying a reason is, *that you may complete the number*, corresponding to which we have the commandment, *whosoever of you is present at home in this month, let him fast therein*, hinting that God means the Muslims to fast the whole month. The third clause supplying a reason is, *that you may exalt Allah for His having guided you*. Corresponding to this we have the words, *a guidance for mankind, etc.* Finally comes the clause, *that you may be grateful*, corresponding to which we have the clause, *the month of Ramadhan is that in which the Quran was sent down*, hinting that the wise God has chosen the most sacred and the most blessed part of the year for fasting so that you may be doubly benefitted by it...

(187) When the Faithful came to know of the blessings of the month of Ramadhan and of fasting therein, they naturally became eager to derive as much benefit from it as possible and asked the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) as to the particular attitude of God in this month, *i.e.*, whether He came nearer to His servants in respect of grace and mercy, and whether He accepted more prayers in Ramadhan and so on. The verse provides an answer to this question.

The words, *My servants*, do not obviously refer to all people but to only such men as believe in God and are willing to obey Him, particularly Muslims who

follow His commandments regarding Prayers, Fasting, etc. In fact atheists or, for that matter rebellious people are never spoken of as "My servants" in the Quran.

The clause, *I am near*, does not, and indeed cannot, refer to bodily nearness. The preceding verses told us that the command to fast was given with a view to purifying us, and that in giving it God desired our own welfare and meant no torture. The conception of such a loving God naturally creates the desire in the minds of all men to attain spiritual nearness to Him. Hence the present verse contains the glad tidings that access to God is not beyond human power nor is His nearness the monopoly of any particular people. The attainment of union with Him is within the reach of every man and woman, and the door of His mercy and grace is also open to all.

The words, *I answer the prayers of the supplicant*, point to the fact that it is not only the true believers and the righteous who have their prayers accepted by God but that God hears and accepts the prayers of all. As a matter of fact, the acceptance of prayer is an expression of God's grace and mercy which encompass Muslims as well as non-Muslims. It would be unjust to think that God, Who is "the Lord of the worlds", accepts the prayers of Muslims alone. It is natural, however, that He should show greater favor to those who obey Him and hold fast to truth and act righteously. He therefore listens more to their prayers than to those of others, and He certainly rejects such prayers as are offered against His beloved ones. Nor does He accept such prayers as may lead to results that are detrimental to the cause of truth. But He is the Lord of all and listens to all.

The clause, *so they should hearken to Me*, means that they should believe in God (for without believing there can be no hearkening, and no response to His calls) and obey Him. God promises acceptance of prayers to "His servants" but He also expects that His creatures should believe in Him and obey His commandments. This will make their prayers all the more entitled to acceptance.

The words, *and believe in Me*, do not here refer to a belief in the existence of God; for this idea is included in the preceding clause, *they should hearken*

to Me, is being impossible that one should hearken to God and obey His commandments without believing in His existence. The words, *believe in Me*, therefore refer here to belief in the power of God to accept prayers and belief in the fact that if appealed to, He will certainly come to our help.

The final clause, *that they may follow the right way*, means that if men would act upon the guidance contained in this commandment they would (1) attain God's nearness, and (2) find God inclined to accept their prayers more and more.

But as with all other things, there are limitations and conditions attached to the acceptance of prayers; also, to some of which the verse under comment refers. They may be briefly stated as follows:

(1) One should be a servant of God, accepting His dominion over him and worshiping Him alone, as the words, *My servants*, indicate.

(2) One should call on God alone for help and turn to no other being or thing opposed to Him, as the words, *when he prays to Me*, show. There are indeed many who, while seemingly praying to God, put their real trust in other things or sometimes even turn to false deities for help. Such men cannot expect their prayers to be accepted.

(3) One should hearken to God's call, *i.e.*, not only believe in Him but also obey His commandments, accepting His Messengers and acting righteously in accordance with His Law, as the words, *hearken to Me*, point out.

(4) One should have firm belief in the fact that God not only has the power to accept one's prayers but would actually accept them if one could only persist in asking, as the words *believe in Me*, signify. There are indeed many who pray for a time and then get tired of it. They really do not believe; for if they had believed, they would willingly have waited. Says the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.): "God would accept one's prayer if only one did not show impatience, by saying, 'I have prayed and I have not been answered'" (*Muslim*).

(5) The prayers of those who are rebellious against God, rejecting His commandments and opposing His will, are not accepted, particularly such

prayers in which something against His will or something likely to injure the cause of His beloved ones is solicited. Says God: "*The prayer of the rebellious ones is nothing but wasted*" (40:51).

A saying of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) very beautifully explains the philosophy of prayer. He is reported to have said: "Every Muslim who prays to God and whose prayer does not consist in anything which is a sin, *i.e.*, anything against God's will or against His commandments or against His way, or anything which involves an injustice or unkindness to a relative, will have his prayer accepted. But the acceptance of prayer may take three forms: (a) either God will grant to the supplicant his request in this very life; or (b) He will store the thing for him in the next; or (c) He will ward off a like evil from him" (*Bukhari*).

The Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement says: "God treats His servants like friends. A friend would sometimes accept the request of his friend and would sometimes expect him to accept his will. So does God. But even when God seemingly rejects the prayer of a believer, He is very often acting in his interest" (*Haqiqat*, p. 19).

(188) It was a custom among the Israelites to abstain from all kinds of food from one evening to the other on the occasion of the fast of the Atonement Day, the only fast prescribed by Moses for his people. When fasts were first prescribed for Muslims, and details had not yet been revealed, they thought that, like the Jews they too would have to fast for 24 hours with a slight intervening breakfast. Hence, following their own judgement, they concluded that it was lawful for them to eat and drink and to go in unto their wives only as long as they did not go to bed, and that after they had gone to sleep, they were not allowed to partake of any food or drink or to go in unto their wives until the next evening. *Bukhari* gives the following tradition on the authority of *Bara'*: "When the command to fast was revealed, if anybody kept a fast and then went to sleep in the evening, he abstained from eating, drinking and sexual intercourse until the time for breaking the fast the following day" (*Bukhari* ch. on *Saum*). This tradition and others of the same import show that it was not in obedience to any command from God or the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)

that his Companions abstained from sexual intercourse after going to bed at night, but it was owing to their own imitation of similar customs among the People of the Book that they had imposed these restrictions on themselves. As, however, these restrictions were against the will of God, a revelation was soon sent down allowing the Faithful to eat and drink and approach their wives as they liked during the night; only they were forbidden to do so while fasting during the day.

Some Commentators have inferred from the words, *you have been acting unjustly to yourselves*, that the Companions of the Holy Prophet were unable to act upon the commandment to abstain from intercourse with their wives during the nights of fasts and frequently broke it. But this is evidently wrong, for the good reason that there was no such commandment to be broken. Moreover, the words of the Quran *i.e.*, *you may now go in*, also belie this interpretation, for the use of the word "now" clearly indicates that the Companions of the Holy Prophet were erring not on the side of indulgence but on that of abstinence. The Quran could not obviously say, *you may now go in*, to a people who were already going in unto their wives.

The clause, *they are a garment for you and you are a garment for them*, very beautifully describes the object of marriage. The verse points out that the object of marriage is not the gratification of carnal passions. The real object is the comfort, protection and embellishment of the parties, for such are the uses of a garment as explained in 7:27 and 16:82. Thus in a very few words, the Quran has described the true relationship that should exist between husband and wife, a description which has hardly a parallel in any other scripture.

The clause, *the white thread becomes distinct from the black thread of the dawn*, does not refer to the thread made of yarn but to the streak of light that appears along the eastern horizon at the time of dawn. The verse enjoins that from dawn till sunset Muslims should abstain from food and drink and intercourse while fasting. But they are free to have recourse to these things between sunset and dawn. At places where days and/or nights are unusually long *i.e.*,

nearer the poles, calculation should be made for the purpose of fasting on the basis of average conditions *i.e.*, in such a case day and night would each be supposed to be of twelve hours' duration. (*Muslim*, ch. on *Ashrat-al-Sa'at*).

The clause, *while you remain in the Mosques for devotion*, refers to the practice of *I'tiqaf* (إتيقاف) which is observed by remaining in the Mosque, night and day, during the last ten days of Ramadhan. During these days, the devotee who decides to observe (*I'tiqaf*) is not to leave the Mosque except from human necessity, *i.e.*, to answer a call of nature, etc. He enters the Mosque on the morning of the 20th of Ramadhan and abides therein till the end of the month, fasting from daybreak to sunset and occupying himself in prayer or recitation of the Quran or other religious study or meditation. During (*I'tiqaf*), which is, as it were, the consummation of the spirit of fasting, intercourse with wives and preliminaries thereto are not allowed even at night time.

The clause, *these are the limits fixed by Allah, so approach them not*, points to the very important principle that a man can attain true piety only if he refrains from even "approaching" the things that have been forbidden by God. "Some acts," says the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) "are of doubtful character, one not knowing whether they are right or wrong. It is always better to avoid these. The forbidden things are like a pasture land which the Wise God prohibits to the people. If you make your beasts graze on the borders of such land, *i.e.*, allow your beasts to approach near them, there is danger of their trespassing upon the prohibited area" (*Bukhari*, ch. on *Iman*). This is an extremely wise injunction which cuts at the root of all trespass. Only those can protect themselves against sin who give all unlawful things a wide berth.

The final clause, *that they may become secure against evil*, repeats the idea contained in 2:184 in which the subject of fasting was first introduced. In both verses the underlying object of fasting has been stated to be the attainment of piety, righteousness and protection against evil, which are all different forms of divine blessings. The reader may, with advantage, compare this idea with the belief of the Christians that the Law is a curse (Gal. 3:10,13).

SO SAID THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD

(Peace and blessings of God be upon him)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Allah, the Lord of honor and glory says: All other deeds of man are for himself, but his fasting is purely for Me and I shall reward him for it. The fast is a shield. When any of you is fasting he should eschew loose talk and noisy exchanges. Should anyone revile him or seek to pick a quarrel with him, he should respond with: I am observing a fast. By Him in Whose hands is the life of Muhammad, the breath of one who is fasting is purer in the sight of Allah than the fragrance of musk. One who fasts experiences two joys: he is joyful when he breaks his fast, and he is joyful by virtue of his fast when he meets his Lord" (*Bokhari and Muslim*). Bokhari adds: Allah says: "He abstains from food and drink and from indulging his passion for My sake. A fast is undertaken for My sake and I shall bestow the reward for it. Other good works are rewarded only ten times." Muslim's version adds: A man's good works carry a multiple reward, from ten times to seven hundred times. Allah says: "A fast is an exception, for it is observed for My sake and I shall bestow the reward for it. He who observes a fast gives up his passion and his food for My sake. For such a one there are two joys; a joy when he breaks his fast and a joy when he meets his Lord. His breath is purer in the estimation of Allah than the fragrance of musk."

Sa'ad ibn Sahl relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "There is a gate of Paradise called *Rayyan* through which only those will enter on the Day of Judgment who are regular in observing the fast and no one else. A call will go forth: Where are those who observed the fast regularly? And they will step forth and no one beside them will enter through that gate. After they shall have entered, the gate will be closed and no one else will enter thereby" (*Bokhari and Muslim*)

Abu Sa'id Khudri relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "When a servant of Allah observes the fast for a day for the sake of Allah, He thereby repels the Fire from him a distance of seventy years of journeying" (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "He who observes the fast during Ramadhan out of sincerity of faith and in hope of earning merit will have his past sins forgiven him" (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "When *Ramadhan* arrives the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of hell are locked up and satans are put in chains" (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Start the fast with observing the new moon and terminate it with observing it. If you are unable to observe it by reason of the sky being overcast, postpone the fast by a day (*Bokhari and Muslim*). Muslim adds: If you are unable to observe the new moon at the end of Ramadhan, observe the fast for the thirtieth day."

Ibn Abbas relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was the most generous of men and he was at his most bountiful during *Ramadhan* when Gabriel visited him every night and recited the Quran to him. During this period the bounty of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) waxed faster than the rain-bearing breeze (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

Anas relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Take breakfast before the fast begins; there is blessing in breakfast" (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

Zaid ibn Thabit relates: We ate breakfast during *Ramadhan* with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and then stood up for Prayer. He was asked what was the interval of time between the two. He said: "The time required for the recital of fifty verses" (*Bokhari and Muslim*)

Amr ibn 'As relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "The difference between our observance of the fast and that of the People of the Book is the eating of breakfast" (*Muslim*).

SUMMARY OF FRIDAY SERMON

(Delivered by Syenda Hazrat Khalifa-tul Masih IV, at the Fazal Mosque London, on December 25, 1998)

After *Tashahud*, *Ta'kwuz* and *Alfatiha*, Huzoor recited verse 186 of chapter *Albaqarah* (Chapter 2) and translated it. Thereafter Huzoor explained the significance and blessings of fasting in the light of some '*Ahadith*' of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) And advised the Jama'at to observe the prescribed fasting in letter and spirit.

Huzoor referred to the Hadith narrated by Abu Saeed Khudri, which tells that he who observes fasting properly, (fulfilling all spiritual and ethical requirements), the fasting atones his previous sins. In other words the discipline of fasting purifies him thoroughly. Huzoor cited another Hadith which reads:

"Allah has prescribed fasting on you and I have practically demonstrated how it is to be observed. He who makes a sincere effort to protect the spirit of fasting from degenerating, becomes sinless like a newborn baby."

With reference to another Hadith, recorded in the collection of *Tirmizi*, about chaining of satans in Ramadhan, Huzoor remarked that Christmas is celebrated in the name of Jesus but practically Satan is at liberty to do havoc. However, there are thousands of Christians who send gifts to poor children living in Christian countries. Huzoor wished that countries like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which are sitting over mountains of petrodollars should spend a fraction of their wealth on gifts for poor Muslims living in Islamic countries.

Huzoor reminded the Jama'at that Ramadhan was a month of generosity and thanksgiving, and believers are expected to spend generously in the cause of Allah to win His pleasure. Huzoor said that Allah's pleasure also manifests in the form of specially blessed earning and spending capacities. It is a fact that the sacrifices of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) have been blessed in such a way that these

blessings continue to multiply the wealth of his followers, generation after generation. Huzoor wished that our Jama'at should benefit from this aspect of Ramadhan by spending generously and cheerfully. Huzoor quoted a tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) which states that the amount spent in the cause of Allah is multiplied up to seven hundred folds. Huzoor said that the Hadith under review shows that such results are conditioned with the observance of daily prayers and remembrance of Allah. Elaborating this point, Huzoor further said that the Promised Messiah (a.s.) spent all his resources for the sake of Islam, resulting in Allah's ever multiplying blessings. Huzoor reminded that one aspect is the Jama'at's budget of income and expenditures, which is in millions and billions!

Huzoor also referred to the blessing of M.T.A. which is dedicated to the preaching of Islam and the Holy Quran all over the world, while many rich and resourceful Muslim governments were unable to make such an attempt.

Huzoor explained another Hadith which conveys that believers who fast, enjoy two pleasures, firstly when they break the fast at sunset, and secondly the pleasure of meeting with Allah in the hereafter when His Mercy would encompass them.

Huzoor referred to a tradition narrated by Anas bin Malik (r.a.) which commands:

"Take breakfast before the fast begins, there is a blessing in (this) breakfast"

Huzoor advised that Ahmadi children should also partake that blessed meal because that would help them to develop an association with Ramadhan and its blessings. Huzoor suggested that moms prepare a sweet dish or a favorite food for them in order to enhance their pleasure of eating a meal at the time of keeping fast.

Huzoor also explained another Hadith which deals with “*Tarawih*” prayer. The Hadith reveals that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to offer eleven *rakats* including three *rakats* for “*vitr*”. Huzoor rejected the assertions of some Muslim clerics who give the number of *Tarawih rakats* as twenty, fifty or five hundred. Huzoor further said that the Promised Messiah (a.s.), in accordance with the

practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), used to offer eleven *rakats*.

Huzoor concluded the sermon with the prayers for the Jama’at to observe the Ramadhan fasting in a befitting manner. Ameen!

Translated from Al-Fazl International February 12, 1999. into English by L. R. Mahmood.)

TAHAJJUD: REAL BLESSINGS OF RAMADHAN

RAMADHAN HAS A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH TAHAJJUD PRAYER

Huzoor (a.b.a.) said: “Hazrat Abdur Rahman bin Auf (r.a.) narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) talked about the month of Ramadhan and declared it to be the best of all the months and said: “a believer who worships Allah for the sake of earning blessings and with true sincerity, is purified of all his sins like a new born babe. Thus every Ramadhan brings the good news of our new birth.”

If we fulfill all the conditions prescribed by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) during the Month of Ramadhan, we can have a new spiritual birth every year and be cleansed of all the past sins.

Another Hadith is taken from *Bukhari (Book of Fasting)*, from the Chapter about the Blessings of Ramadhan: ‘Hazrat Abu Huraira (r.a.) narrated that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: A person who gets up at night for Prayer and fulfills all requirements of his faith with an intention of receiving blessing during the Month of Ramadhan, is forgiven all his past sins.”

Both Ahadith convey the same message with a slight variation. In the first Hadith, worship is mentioned in general terms. Any person, who prays and fulfills all the conditions of faith with sincerity, he is spiritually reborn. In the second Hadith, *Tahajjud* prayer is particularly mentioned. A person who gets up at night during Ramadhan for Prayer, all his past sins are forgiven. Therefore, Ramadhan

has a special link with *Tahajjud* Prayer or it could be said that *Tahajjud* prayers have a special significance during Ramadhan although these are also offered during the other months of the year.

Fasting during Ramadhan also opens a way to *Tahajjud* Prayer for people because it may be hard for some during other months. When you are getting up for *Sahri*, (meal for fasting) why not include also some spiritual nourishment. You should make this your regular routine and even the children who get up for *Sahri*, should be encouraged to offer two *rakat* of supererogatory prayer before eating. If the children have reached the age for fasting, they **must** be reminded to pay attention to optional prayer, *i.e. nawafal*. It is not appropriate that as soon as they wake up they should go straight to the dining table rubbing their eyes! This is against the spirit of Ramadhan. As the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has advised us the true blessings lie in *Tahajjud* Prayer. I hope this will become a common practice among the young as well as old.

(Refer to *Al-Fazl International, Khutba Juma’a*, January 26, 1998, reported also by *Monthly Khalid*, Rabwah, Pakistan, January 1999. Translated from Urdu text by Dr. Rasheed Azam, NC.)

ISLAMIC INJUNCTIONS ABOUT FASTING

Who is Obligated to Fast?

Fasting is obligatory for every adult, fit, healthy, stationed (not traveling) Muslim man and woman. Traveler and sick is given the concession to make up for lost fasts in other days. Those who have chronic illness who are unlikely to regain health or someone who is so weak and incapacitated that it is unlikely for him to make up for these fasts even in other days should pay *Fidyah*. Similarly pregnant women and nursing mothers should also pay *Fidyah*.

Age of Fasting

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II (Allah be pleased with him) writes, "There are quite a few who force young children to keep fast. One might realize that for every obligatory worship there are separate prescribed limits and times. In my view certain injunctions start at age 4 and certain others which start between ages 7 to 12 and some start at ages 15 to 17. I am of the opinion that fasting becomes obligatory at age 15 to 18 and this is also the age of maturity. From age 15 one should start keeping fast and at age 18 it becomes obligatory. I remember that when we were young we were almost fond of keeping fasts but Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.) would not allow us to keep fast. Instead of persuading us to keep fast, he used to prohibit us from fasting. When they attain their strength and reach age 15 they should be gradually asked to fast. Allow them to keep as many fasts in the first year as they want, increase the number in the second year and a few more the third year. In this way they gradually develop the practice of fasting." (*Al-Fazal*, 11 April 1925)

Traveler and Sick Should not Fast

Almighty Allah enjoins in The Holy Quran, "*whoso among you is sick or is on a journey shall fast the same number of other days; and for those who are able to fast only with great difficulty is an expiation – the feeding of a poor man.*" (2:185)

Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.) was asked about fasting during travel. He replied, "From the Holy Quran it is evident that those who are sick or are traveling should not fast, and this is an injunction.

Allah has not said that you are given an option not to fast. In my opinion a traveler should not fast. Many people keep fast as a routine, there is nothing wrong with it. But still one should be careful about the injunction, "make up for these fast in other days". It is as if, one who keeps fast during travel while enduring hardships, is trying to appease Allah by a show of his strength. He does not seek pleasure of Allah by obedience. Such a person is misled. True faith requires obedience of commandments and prohibitions of Allah." (*Al Hakam*, January 26, 1899)

On another occasion, the Promised Messiah (a.s.) said, "If one is traveling by train and there is no hardship then one can fast, otherwise he should take advantage of God's permission." (*Al Hakam*, December 24, 1900)

The Promised Messiah (a.s.) said, "If someone fasts in the month of *Ramadhan* while traveling or being sick, such a person is being disobedient of a clear commandment of Allah. Almighty Allah has clearly revealed that the traveler and sick should not fast. One should fast after recovering from illness and finishing the journey. One should obey this command of Allah as deliverance is by grace of Allah and one can not attain deliverance on the strength of his deeds. Allah did not reveal that sickness should be mild or severe or journey should be short or long. Instead, this injunction is all encompassing and one should follow it. If a sick person or a traveler fast then he must be decreed as disobedient." (*Al Badr*, October 17, 1907)

"There are certain illnesses in which the sick continues with his/her daily chores. Such a person is not considered sick. Similarly, if one travels routinely because of his/her occupation then he/she can not be considered as a traveler. There are certain illnesses in which a person keeps on performing routine duties. For example, if some soldiers develop diarrhea for a few days, they don't quit working forever. Therefore, if one can find time and strength to engage in other activities, why can such a person not fast? These excuses are used by people because in reality they are against fasting. No doubt this is a Quranic injunction that during travel and while sick, one should not fast and we insist on this so that we should not be

disrespectful to Quranic command. But if someone uses this injunction as an excuse for not fasting while he can fast, or if some fasts are missed and if they had tried hard enough they might have been able to keep those fasts, then they are just as guilty as one who does not keep fast even without any reason. Therefore, every Ahmadi who did not fast because of negligence or without any valid reason, should make it up later" (*Al-Fazal*, August 16, 1948).

Therefore, anyone who travels in the course of his duty, for example, railway guard, driver, pilot, travel agent, would be considered as stationed and would fast.

Travel and Fasting

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II states, "Although some religious jurists may differ, my opinion and belief regarding travel is that the journey that starts after *Sehri* and finishes before sunset should not be considered as a journey as far as fasting is concerned. *Sharia* prohibits from fasting during travel not traveling during fast." (*Al-Fazal*, December 25, 1942)

There could be 4 possibilities regarding fasting during travel:

1. If travel is in progress, on foot or on any mode of transportation, then one should not fast.
2. If one is going to stay overnight and the entire next day and facilities are available then its optional to fast.
3. If travel is to start after *Sehri* and there is a possibility of returning home before *Aftari* then it is permissible to fast or not to fast.
4. If during travel there is going to be a stay for 15 days or more then one should make arrangements for *Sehri* and fast.

Definition of Travel

In this regard the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) said, "It is my belief that one should not create too many hardships for himself. Whatever is commonly known as travel even if it involves only a few miles, during such travel one should follow the injunctions specified for travel. *Inna Mal Aamaal-o-Bin Niyyat*, i.e., deeds are judged by intentions. Some

times we go for a walk for 2-3 miles with our friends and nobody considers it as travel. But when somebody packs up luggage and set out with the intention of travel then such a person is considered as a traveler. *Sharia* is not based on hardship. Whatever is commonly conceived as travel is travel concerning religion. One should follow the leaves granted by Allah as one follows the commandments. Commandments are from Allah as are the allowances." (*Al Hakam*, Volume 5, February 17, 1901, p. 13)

Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.) wrote to Hazrat Sahibzada Pir Siraj-ul-Haq (r.a.a.) in a letter, "*man kana minkum mareezen au alaa safarin fa iddatun min ayyamin ukhar*, that is, "if you are sick or on a journey (short or long) then fast the same number of days at another time". Allah has not set any limit for the journey neither does one finds any limit in Ahadeeth. Rather, whatever distance is ordinarily called a journey should be considered as a journey. Any distance which is less than that can not be called a journey." (*Maktoobat*, Volume 5, p. 81)

Laborer and Fast

Some laborers find it difficult to fast while doing manual labor. Are they allowed not to fast on this basis? The Holy Quran has not mentioned any exception about this, neither do we find any mention of this in Ahadeeth, although people used to perform manual labor even in those days. Of course if someone is very weak and fasting is unbearable, then such a person should be considered as sick and fasting is not allowed in sickness.

When this question was presented before Hazrat Promised Messiah (peace be on him) that some times *Ramadhan* falls in such a weather that farmers have to perform hard manual labor like sowing the seeds or harvesting the crop and it becomes impossible for them to fast. What should they do? Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.) replied, "*Inna mal Aamaal-o-Bin Niyyat*." (actions are judged according to intention). These people keep their condition secret. Everyone should evaluate his/her condition with piety and fear of God. One should hire a laborer if one can afford, otherwise such a person is to be regarded as sick and should fast when the situation eases up." (*Al Badr*,

September 26, 1907)

Women and Fasting

A woman having periods is not allowed to fast. In this regard Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) narrates that when we did not fast during the time of our periods, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) told us to fast in other days. (*Ibn-e-Maja*)

The same injunction applies to women after delivering a baby. But once they are clean, they must make up for these lost fasts.

It is narrated in hadith, regarding nursing mothers and pregnant woman. "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said that Allah has forgiven half of *Salat* (prayer) for the traveler, and a nursing mother and a pregnant woman is given leave from fasting." (*Tirmizi*)

Hazrat Anas (r.a.a.) narrates, "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has given leave to pregnant women and nursing mothers from fasting." (*Ibn-e-Maja*) It means that these women should complete the number of fasts after their condition has changed (*i.e.*, they are no longer pregnant or nursing mothers). They should also pay *Fidyah* if they have the capacity, otherwise making up for the lost fasts should suffice as expiation.

If a woman is continuously facing a situation in which she is either pregnant or nursing mother then she does not have to fast and paying *Fidyah* is enough. Same is the case of one who is extremely old or chronically ill and it is not possible to fast from the point of view of health then it suffices for such a person to pay *Fidyah* only.

Student and Fasting

A student who is preparing for examination should consider the following regarding fasting. We are not allowed to quit routine activities. If fasting becomes unbearable for one because of routine daily activities then such a person is to be considered sick. But in such a case such a person is totally responsible for his decision and Allah will treat such a person according to his motives and condition. In other words a person is his or herself the judge in deciding about his or her personal situation.

If someone becomes ill by fasting then such a person is excused from fasting. And if such a person

is always in such condition then fasting never becomes obligatory. If the weather is contributing to his/her illness then fasts should be kept when the weather changes. However, one should be very cautious and fear Allah before making this decision that it be a true reason and not just an excuse. (*Al Fazal*, May 22, 1922)

Some people go to extremes. Some people would not fast even without any valid reason and some people expect the very ill, old, pregnant and nursing mothers to fast. Both of these practices are wrong. There is no coercion in Islamic injunctions and one should also take advantage of the leaves granted by Allah. Islam has laid down some conditions for some of the commandments. For fasting this is one of the conditions, that one is not allowed to fast if such a person is sick, or if fasting would definitely make such a person sick, or would increase the illness like being pregnant or a nursing mother, or if someone is so old that fasting would incapacitate such a person. One should avoid extreme conduct. One should neither quit fasting on the basis of a minor complaints of feeling weak nor should one insist on fasting in the presence of true and valid reasons.

Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.) has given very valuable advice on this issue. He said, "If Allah had so willed he would not have set limits for this *Ummah* as He did not set any limits in other *Ummahs* (religions). He did so for our own benefit. As I understand the truth is this that when a person supplicates to Allah in true humility, truth and sincerity not to be kept from the blessings of this month, then Allah does not prevent such a person from getting the blessings of this month. In this condition (of heart) if a person becomes ill during the month of *Ramadhan* then this illness becomes a blessing in such person's favor.

This is because the outcome of every deed depends upon the motive behind it. A believer should prove his/her courage in the way of Allah by his/her acts. If someone is prevented from fasting because of sickness but had sincere desire to fast and the heart is full of grief because of this loss then angels would fast for such a person. If such a person is not trying to find an excuse then Allah will certainly not deprive such a person of the reward. (*Fatawa Ahmadiyya*)

Fidya

The general teaching is that one should fast and if he has the capacity then pay *Fidya* as well. Fasting is obligatory and paying *Fidya* is practice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and a way of showing one's gratitude that Allah has given the strength to fast and enables such a person to get greater reward from Allah.

Fasting is not obligatory for such a person who could not fast for a few days because of sickness. However such a person can pay *Fidya* with the intention that Allah may enable him/her to make up for these fasts later and should not deprive him of the reward of the fasts lost.

Fidya is mandatory only for persons who have the capacity to pay and are unlikely to make up for the lost fasts because of long term illness, extreme old age, being pregnant or a wet nurse.

If the condition preventing from fasting is temporary then one must fast after that condition is removed regardless of *Fidya* payment.

Once a person asked Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.) that he never kept any fast in his life, what should he pay for *Fidya*? He replied, "Allah does not burden anybody beyond his capacity. Pay *Fidya* according to your capacity and make covenant that you will keep every fast in future." (*Al Badr*, Vol. 1, No. 12, January 16, 1903, p. 91)

Determining the Amount of *Fidya*

While determining *Fidya*, this is the principal mentioned in the Holy Quran, "*Min Ausata ma tut'amoona ahleekum*" -What you on average feed your family; meaning that you should feed somebody according to your average standard. Hazrat Imam Abu Haneefa has determined it to be equal to nearly 3.5 lbs. of wheat. This will be the *Fidya* for a lost fast which will suffice for two meals.

Who Should Be Given *Fidya*

It is not necessary to give *Fidya* only to a poor person who is fasting. The idea is to feed any deserving poor person regardless whether such a person is fasting or not. On the other hand *Fidya* is mandatory only if such a person can afford it. While a person who cannot afford it, remorse, seeking

forgiveness, prayer and remembrance of Allah would suffice.

Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.) said, "Those travelers and sick people who do not have the hope of fasting any time in the future, for example, a very old weak person or weak pregnant woman who knows that after delivering the baby she would be incapacitated because of suckling the baby and the year will pass in this condition, for such people it is allowed that they should not fast because they are incapable of fasting and pay *Fidya*. *Fidya* alone is allowed for extremely old person or some one who would never have the strength to fast. But for the rest it is not allowed that just by paying *Fidya* only they would be excused from fasting. To allow only *Fidya* to those people who regain strength to fast after recovering from illness, would mean opening the door of mischief." (*Fatawa Ahmadiyya*, p. 183)

***Fidya* Enables Us to Fast**

Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.) said, "Once I thought why Allah has prescribed *Fidya*? I was given the knowledge that it enables one to fast. Allah alone gives strength and capacity to do anything and one should beseech only Allah for every need. He is Omnipotent. If He so wills He can grant the strength to fast to even a person suffering from tuberculosis. Therefore, it is appropriate that if a person sees that he is being deprived of the fast, then such a person should supplicate that O Allah! this is your blessed month and I could not benefit from its blessings and I do not know whether I shall be alive next year or not or I would be able to complete the fasts that I am unable to keep now. If he seeks the power and strength from Allah then I am certain that Allah will bestow strength on such a soul." (*Malfoozat*, Vol 4, p. 288)

***Niyat* (Intention) is Essential for Fasting**

If a person decides to keep fast he must have the intention to fast. Hazrat Hafsa (r.a.t.a.) narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "If one does not make intention before dawn (*Fajar*) his fast is not counted." (*Tirmizi, Book of Fasting*)

In Islam, as the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, deeds are judged by motives. Therefore sincerity and

righteous intention is a prerequisite before every Islamic worship. The same condition is laid down for fasting as well. It is better that one should make determination to keep fast the next day before going to sleep at night.

It is not necessary to say any specific prayer to make this intention. In fact intention is that determination by heart and soul that one is going to give up eating and drinking for the sake of Allah and this should be done before dawn. But if somebody has a genuine excuse, for example one did not know that the month *Ramadhan* is starting or did not wake up in time or if there is any other excuse of this kind then such a person can make the intention of fasting before noon as long as he/she had not taken any food or water since dawn.

It is recorded in a Hadith that once the report of sighting of new moon of *Ramadhan* in a suburb of Medina was received before noon the next day On hearing this the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) declared, "Whoever has not taken any food or drink since dawn should make the intention and keep fast and if anybody has taken any food or drink he should make up this fast after *Ramadhan*. (*Abu Daud, Book of Fasting*)

In case of voluntary fasting one can make the intention of fasting before noon if one has not taken anything by mouth since dawn. It is narrated in a hadith, "Sometimes the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) would come to his home and ask for food. If no food was available then he would say I would keep fast today." (*Saheeh Muslim, Book of Fasting*)

It is evident from this Hadith that if someone had no reason to have an intention to keep fast before dawn then one can do this during the day although these were voluntary fasts of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)

Once a person asked from the Promised Messiah (a.s.) that he was sitting inside the house and believed that there still was time before dawn so he ate some food with the intention to keep fast. Later on he found out that it was already after dawn when he ate, What should he do now? The Promised Messiah (a.s.) said, "In this particular situation his fast was counted and he need not make up for this fast because he had thought that he has taken proper precaution and his

intention was correct." (*Al Badr, February 14, 1907*)

Etiquette of *Sehri* (Meal before dawn)

Hazrat Anas Bin Malik narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "O Muslims! eat *Sehri* because there is blessing in *Sehri* meal" (*Bukhari, Book of Fasting, Chapter; Blessing of Sehri*)

Sehri is an Arabic word meaning the food that is eaten early in the morning before dawn. The Jews were not prescribed *Sehri* whereas Muslims were ordered it. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), noting the difference, said, "Having *Sehri* is one of the differences between ours and Jewish fasts." (*Sunan Al Daari, Book of Fasting*)

The timing of *Sehri* starts after midnight and continues till dawn. However, eating *Sehri* at midnight was not the practice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). The True blessing is in following the practice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and he used to eat a little just before dawn. The companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to follow the same practice. It is narrated, "there used to be very little gap between eating of *Sehri* meal and *Fajr* prayer." (*Tirmizi, Book of Fasting*)

Hazrat Anas said that Hazrat Zaid Bin Thabit narrated, "Once we had *Sehri* meal with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and then we started *Fajr* prayer. Hazrat Anas asked about the time difference between *Sehri* and *Fajr* prayer to which Hazrat Zaid replied that it would be equal to time needed to recite fifty verses of the Holy Quran." (*Bukhari, Book of Fasting*)

Hazrat Sohail Bin Saad narrates, "After finishing my *Sehri* meal I had to hurry to the Mosque to join the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) in *Fajr* prayer." (*Bukhari, Book of Timings of Prayers*)

While insisting on having *Sehri* meal, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) also explained the wisdom of it. Hazrat Ibn-e-Abbas narrates, "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: Have *Sehri* meal in order to ease the hardship of fasting during the day, and make it easier for you to say prayer during the night by taking a small nap." (*Ibn-e-Maja, Book of Fasting*)

On another occasion, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)

mentioned that "Eat this blessed meal of morning in the last part of night." (*Al Jaame Al Sagheer, Part I, Hadith # 2392*) The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) also said, "Eat *Sehri* even if it is only a sip of water." (*Al Jaame Al Sagheer, Part I, Hadeeth # 3293*)

Sehri of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)

Hazrat Arbaz Bin Saaria narrates, "In *Ramadhan* I heard the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) calling his companions for *Sehri* and saying that they should come for this blessed meal." (*Sunan Nisai, Book of fasting*)

Another companion narrated that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was having *Sehri* meal and said, "This is a blessing that Allah has given you, so never give it up." (*Nisai, Book of Fasting*)

Hazrat Anas said that once at the time of *Sehri* the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "O Anas! I am going to fast today, bring me something to eat." Hazrat Anas stated that he brought some dates and water. By that time Hazrat Bilal had already called first *Azan*. Huzoor (s.a.w.) said, "Anas! find out if there is anyone (in the Mosque) who would join me in *Sehri*." Hazrat Anas asked Hazrat Zaid to come. He said I have already started my fast after eating *Sehri*. Huzoor (s.a.w.) said that we are also going to keep fast. Thereafter Hazrat Zaid Bin Thabit ate *Sehri* with Huzoor (s.a.w.). (*Nisai, Book of Fasting*)

This shows that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) did not like any formalities and would start his fast by eating whatever is available, so much so that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said that dates are such wholesome *Sehri* for a believer.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) had arranged, for the convenience of Muslims, to call out two *Azans* before *Fajr*. Hazrat Bilal used to call first *Azan* before the break of dawn to indicate that the time for *Sehri* is about to finish so that if somebody is saying *Tahajjud* prayer or still sleeping, he should eat *Sehri*. Hazrat Ibn-e-Maktoom used to call the *Azan* the second time after break of dawn indicating that the time for *Sehri* is finished. Therefore, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said that when Bilal calls *Azan* keep on eating and when Ibn-e-Maktoom calls *Azan* quit eating. (*Bukhari, Book of Fasting*)

Hazrat Abu Huraira narrated that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "If anyone of you hears the *Azan* while still eating then one should not stop eating until the meal is finished according to the need." (*Abu Daood, Book of Fasting*)

It is Essential to Eat Sehri?

Keeping a fast without eating *Sehri* is not blessed but if someone wakes up after daybreak and time for *Sehri* is finished then it is allowed to keep fast without eating *Sehri* but it should not be a routine practice.

It is extremely important to observe the limits set by Allah. Every righteous deed could be considered righteous only as long as the limits set by Allah and the practices of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) are followed. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) did not like the practice of keeping fast without eating *Sehri*. Rather, he said, "Eat *Sehri* as there is blessing in eating *Sehri*."

Etiquette of Aftaari (Breaking the Fast)

Hazrat Umar narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "When the day is passed and night starts and the sun is set, one should break the fast." (*Bukhari, Book of Fasting*)

Hazrat Sohail Bin Saad narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "As long as people would keep on hastening to break the fast they will keep on getting blessings and favors of Allah." (*Bukhari*)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "As long as people will hasten to break their fast, Islam will remain strong because Jews and Christians used to delay the breaking of their fasts." (*Abu Daood*)

Hazrat Abu Huraira narrated that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "Allah has revealed that of all his servants the dearest to him are those who are quickest to break their fasts." (*Tirmizi*)

Another companion of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) narrates that once he was in the company of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) in one of his journeys. After sunset the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked someone to bring *Aftaari* (Food to break the Fast). He replied: Huzoor let it get a little dark. Again, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: Bring *Aftaari*. He again said that Huzoor (s.a.w.) there is still too much light. Huzoor (s.a.w.) again

said: Bring *Aftaari*. He brought *Aftaari*. After breaking the fast Hazoor (s.a.w.) pointed towards the east and said that when you witness darkness on the eastern horizon after sunset you should break your fast. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

An incident is reported after the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). Two disciples of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), Hazrats Masrooq and Abu Attiya came to Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) and asked, "O Mother of the faithful! Among the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) there are two, none of the two is negligent in acts of piety and righteousness. But one of them is quick in breaking the fast (after the time of fast is up) and quick in saying his prayers (says every prayer at its earliest time) and the other companion is slow both in breaking his fast and saying prayers." Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) asked, "Of the two, who is the one quick in breaking fast and saying prayers?" When she was told that it is Hazrat Abdullah Bin Masood, she said, "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to do the same." (*Minan Al Tirmizi*)

Talking about the time of *Aftaari*, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "At every time of *Aftaari* Allah frees some persons from fire. This act is repeated every evening."

The time of breaking the fast (*Aftaari*) is a very blessed moment. It is narrated in a hadith that the one who fasts is promised two occasions of happiness. He/She is given first happiness when fast is broken (completed) and second happiness will be given when he/she will be granted audience with Allah because of fasting. (*Ibn-e-Maja*)

Therefore one should not waste the most blessed moments of *Aftaari*. One should make special supplication during these moments of acceptance of prayers. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to say the following prayer at the time of *Aftaari*,

"O Allah! I kept fast for your sake only and I am breaking it with the food that only You provided." (*Abu Daood*)

Then he used to thank Allah after breaking his fast and would say this prayer, "My thirst is removed and strength is restored and if Allah so wills the reward is

established." (*Abu Daood*)

The *Aftaari* of The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) did not use any formalities in his *Aftaari* either. Hazrat Anas narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to break his fast with a few dates just before *Maghrib* prayer. And if dates were not available he would break the fast with a few sips of water. (*Abu Daood*)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) enjoined upon his *Ummah* (followers) the same simple *Aftaari*. He (s.a.w.) said, "When any one of you breaks a fast then he should eat a date as it has a lot of blessings and benefits in it. And if a date is not available then break the fast with water as it is purest." (*Tirmizi*)

Hazrat Imam Maalik narrates that once a poor woman asked from Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) (for some food). On that day Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) was fasting and except for a loaf of bread there was nothing to eat. She (r.a.a.) told her mistress to give that loaf to the woman. Her mistress said there is nothing else for you, what are you going to break your fast with? Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) asked her to give away that loaf regardless. In the evening some one sent goat meat as a gift. Hazrat Ayesha called her mistress and said, "Here, eat this, it is much better than that loaf of bread."

The Reward of Providing *Aftaari*

Hazrat Zaid bin Khalid (r.a.a.) narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "If someone provides for *Aftaari* so that one can break the fast then that person will be given the same reward as the one who kept the fast. But no reward will be taken away from the person who kept the fast." (*Tirmizi*) Therefore, in the time of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) the companions used to provide food for breaking the fast of others.

On one occasion the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) went to the house of Hazrat Saad Bin Maaz (r.a.a.) for *Aftaari*. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) broke his fast and said, "Your food was eaten by pious people and angles prayed for you." (*Ibn-e-Maja*)

(Translated from *Al-Fazl International* by Abdul Majid Tahir, Additional Wakilut Tabsheer)

IMPORTANCE OF THE HOLY MONTH OF RAMADHAN

in the light of sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

Spring is arriving in the garden of spirituality. The doors of heaven are opening and the rain of Allah's blessings has started. Pious changes are apparent in everyone. Everyone, young and old alike is spending their days and nights in the worship of Allah. The Holy Quran is being recited abundantly. This is all happening because the month of Ramadhan has started.

Just as spring time is one of the physical seasons so is the month of Ramadhan the spiritual spring time. We are so fortunate to witness this spiritual spring time once again.

Let me tell you some things about this blessed month. This month carries the blessings and mercy of Allah. We are thankful to Allah for providing physical forms of divine worship such as prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage to improve our moral and spiritual condition. Fasting is the fourth pillar of Islam. The word "*Saum*" (meaning to stop or abstain) is used in Arabic for fasting. A fast then means that one refrains from eating, drinking and other physical things (all those things that are otherwise allowed) from dawn to sunset. This month comes every year to spread the blessings and mercy of Allah. In one way this month holds the status of a collective training period because everywhere, at the exact same time, arrangements are made for *Sehri* (food taken at dawn) and *Aftari* (food taken at sunset). People enhance their spirituality and are seen gathering Allah's blessings and mercy by worshipping Him.

Welcoming the Month of Ramadhan:

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said:

"The month of Ramadhan comes to you. This is a blessed month" (*Kitab-ul-Saum*).

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has declared this month as the "month of Allah" because one abandons all otherwise "lawful" things in the way of Allah. He has also

declared this month as the "Chief of the months." Worship during this month gains more blessings so one should fast with sincere intentions and worship should be performed to win Allah's pleasure.

Opening the doors to heaven:

Hazrat Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) has narrated that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "When the month of Ramadhan starts, the doors of heaven are opened, the doors of the hell are closed, and Satan is put into chains" (*Sahih Muslim Kitab-ul-Saum*). In this saying the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has promised a high place in heaven for one who keeps the fast because a believer is enjoined to perform such deeds that please Allah and stay away from bad things.

Rewards of Fasting:

Every act of goodness is rewarded. Rewards are given based on the sincerity of the intention. Fasting is the only worship about which Allah has said that He Himself is the reward for it. This means that one develops such a close relationship with Allah that Allah Himself becomes the helper.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) has narrated that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Allah says that each act of a son of Adam is for himself except fasting, because fasting is for Me, and I am the reward for it" (*Sahih Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Saum*).

Requirements of Ramadhan:

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has given guidance to the Muslims for each and every thing. He has given detailed instructions on when to start the month of Ramadhan and how to spend time during this month.

Hazrat Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) has narrated that: "I heard the Holy Prophet

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying that you should start fasting when you see the moon for the month of Ramadhan and stop fasting when you see the new moon" (*Sahih Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Saum*).

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said: "if some mistakenly eats while fasting he should complete his fast till the evening because surely Allah made him eat and drink" (*Sahih Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Saum*).

Etiquettes of Sehri (food taken at dawn):

Sehri is a blessed meal. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said: "This is truly a blessing. One strengthens in oneself the habit of getting up early in the morning and to worship Allah and one can offer humble prayers to Him." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also said: "Eat *Sehri* as there are blessings in eating *Sehri*" (*Sahih Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Saum*).

Opening the Fast:

There are some times during the day that are more helpful and assist in prayers being answered. Allah accepts more prayers when the fast is opened. In one saying the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has reported to have said: "No prayer is rejected at the time of the opening of the fast that is offered by someone who has been fasting" (*Sunan Ibn Maja, Al-Abwab Al-Dawat*).

Prayer:

Allah forgives all previous sins of a person who sincerely worships Allah during the month of Ramadhan. During this month Allah's mercy and blessings are at their peak.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said that during Ramadhan: "Allah says: 'Is there anyone who calls on me so that I can accept his prayers? Is there anyone who asks for anything so that I can fulfill his desires? Is there anyone who asks for forgiveness so that I can forgive'" (*Sahih Bukhari - Kitab-ul-Tauheed*).

Ramadhan - Anniversary of the Holy Quran:

Ramadhan is that blessed month in which the Holy Quran was first revealed to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). In this regard this month celebrates the birthday of the Holy Quran. To render our dues we should recite the Holy Quran as much as possible. During this month, at night, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) use to recite the Holy Quran in its entirety with the Angel Gabriel (Jibraeel).

Last Ten days of Ramadhan:

Hazrat Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates that, during the month of Ramadhan, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to develop a new vigor, staying awake all night and also waking members of his family for worship" (*Sahih Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Saum*).

During the month of Ramadhan worship reaches its peak in the form of "*Itikaaf*" (retirement for Allah's worship). The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to retire to the Mosque in the last ten days of the Ramadhan. He would go to a corner in the "*Masjid-e-Nabwee*" (Prophet's Mosque) to worship Allah in seclusion.

Ramadhan and Lailatul Qadr (Night of Decrees):

Hazrat Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "O Allah's Prophet, if I know which night is the *Lailatul Qadr* then what should I pray? He replied: 'you should pray:

'O Allah, you are very forgiving and love those who forgive others. So bestow your blessings on me and forgive me'" (*Jamiah Tirmidhi, Kitab-Al-Dawat*).

Lailatul Qadr is such a night that the Holy Quran has declared it to be better than a thousand other nights. May Allah enable us to be the recipients of *Lailatul Qadr* that we truly benefit from the coming month of Ramadhan. May Allah accept our prayers. *Ameen*.

THE PROMISED MESSIAH (a.s.) ON EXPIATION (*FIDYA*)

The Promised Messiah (a.s.) Says:

“Once I pondered over the rationale of expiation. It dawned on me that expiation subsequently enables a man to observe fasting. In reality it is Allah who enables people to honor the obligation of fasting. Allah, the Almighty has power over everything. He is the one who should be besought for all needs. He has the power to enable a very weak and sickly person to observe fasting. If somebody feels that he might not be able to honor Ramadhan by observing fasting, let him humbly supplicate to Allah:

‘My Lord! Your blessed month has dawned on me but I am unable to fast. I really do not know whether I would be alive at the time of the next Ramadhan or perhaps I may not be chanced to compensate by fasting an equal number of omitted fasts later. Therefore, my Lord, I beg You to empower me to fast in Ramadhan.’

I know, with certainty, that Allah will enable him to observe fasting. Had Allah willed so, like the people of earlier dispensations, He would have not imposed restrictions on this Umma. But it pleased Him to impose restrictions on us for our benefit. The fact is that when a person supplicates to Allah with sincerity and Humility, to enable him to derive blessings from Ramadhan, his wish is granted. If he falls sick during Ramadhan, his sickness becomes a blessing for him. It is the intention that is the pivot of every acceptable deed. A believer should always endeavor to prove his faith and courage in the path of Allah. He who cries with a sad heart over his inability to fast, angels in the heaven observe fasting on his behalf, and he is rewarded for that. It is required that he should not take refuge in lame excuses. This is a sublime truth. Imagine a man who considers himself disabled and fears that fasting would precipitate such and such diseases and would expose him to many other consequences. Since he himself shuts the window of divine mercy on him, he can not be enveloped in His grace. But he who is glad at the advent of the blessed Ramadhan and anxiously awaits its coming so that he could observe fasting but fails to fast on account of sickness, is counted in heaven

among those who sincerely observe fasting.

Alas the world is filled with those who are fond of taking refuge in excuses. These people think that since they have outwitted humans, they can deceive Allah too. But no one can deceive Allah. One can easily frame thousands of excuses. It is possible that one may offer prayers always in sitting posture and may not observe the prescribed fasting throughout his life but Allah is aware of his intention and endeavor. He who is sincere and faithful, Allah is fully aware of his pain down deep in his heart and rewards him because his pain is indeed of great value in His sight.”
(*Fatawa Ahmadiyya*, p. 175)

“If somebody is actually sick or is in a condition that fasting can affect him adversely (*i.e.* pregnant lady or a nursing mother, or an aged man whose vitality is on the decline, or a child who is passing through the process of vital growth) should not observe fasting. He should feed a poor or needy person, if he can afford. If he cannot afford to provide food to a poor or a needy person, then his intention to observe fasting would substitute feeding.

If this hindrance to fasting proves to be temporary, then he should fast for the lost days, even if he has effected the payment of expiation. The expiation does not absolve the obligation to fast in Ramadhan. This is only the compensation for failing to join the other Muslims in the observance of the prescribed fasting. Expiation made by a man who is fasting, is a token of gratitude that Allah enabled him to observe fasting. Such a person is blessed with more reward and divine pleasure. He who is unable to fast on account of a valid permanent excuse, his expiation serves as a sort of atonement.

The hindrance to observe fasting can be of temporary or of permanent nature. One has to effect expiation in both cases. One should start observing fasting after the hindrance is eliminated. Whenever his health is restored (it could take even two or three years) he should thankfully resume fasting. But if the health again deteriorates and despite cherished intention, he fails to fast, his expiation would suffice.”
(*The Alfazl* – August 10, 1945)

Question: Who is obligated to pay expiation of the fasting? What is the prescribed amount payable for expiation?

Answer: The general instruction is that the people should fast in Ramadhan and also pay the expiation, if they can afford. Observance of fasting is an obligation but the paying of expiation is the *sunnah* (practice) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.). The paying of expiation for the Ramadhan fasting is not applicable to a person who has omitted a few days of fasting as a result of a temporary sickness. But if he passes away before restitution ("*Qada*") of the lost days, his legal inheritors are required to pay either expiation or fast for the lost days on behalf of the deceased.

Paying of expiation is mandatory for those who have funds but do not hope to be able to observe fasting for the compensation of the omitted days. The aged, the incurably sick, pregnant women, and nursing mothers – belong to this class.

As far as the amount payable for expiation is concerned, the following verse of the Holy Quran states the principle:

"Such average food as you feed your families with" (5:90)

Imam Abu Hanifa has estimated it as half a "*Sa'a*"¹ of wheat which is approximately equal to two kilograms. This quantity is expiation for one omitted or lost fast. This quantity is sufficient for two meals in a day.

It is not necessary that expiation should be paid to only that poor or needy person who observes fasting. The real aim is the feeding of a poor or a needy person not necessarily his observance of fasting. Maybe the deserving person is not capable of fasting on account of a valid excuse. Payment of expiation is compulsory for those who can afford to pay it. The expiation of a man belonging to subsistence level is his repentance, absorption in supplications, remembrance of Allah

¹"Sa'a" was a popular measure of grain and fluid food, in the early period of Islam. One Sa'a equals to 2.173 Kilograms of grain and 2.75 Liters of oil or liquid food.

and steadfastness in the service of Islam."

EXPIATION OF PERMANENT TRAVELERS AND INCURABLY SICK INDIVIDUALS:

The Promised Messiah (a.s.) has addressed this issue in the following words:

"The incurably sick and the travelers who have no hope to observe fasting in future, are exempted from fasting. Such people should pay expiation.

Expiation is actually for the aged and the infirm who are not fit to observe fasting. Other people who are capable of fasting cannot claim exemption from fasting simply by paying expiation." (*Fatawa Ahmadiyya*, p. 183)

Question: Somebody wanted to pay expiation to a poor man but he discovered that someone else has already paid him some money so that he should fast on his behalf. What does Islam teach about this situation?

Answer: It is wrong to hire a poor person for fasting on behalf of another person for payment of expiation. The correct interpretation of expiation is that if someone is unable to observe fasting for a genuine excuse, he should feed twice a day a poor person for every lost or omitted fast. He can pay the poor person in cash or kind. It is not incumbent on the recipient of the expiation to fast on behalf of the donor. If the recipient himself is sick, or an aged person or a minor, how can he fast for another person? If the deserving recipient of the expiation also observes fasting, then it is an additional act of piety for which the recipient would be rewarded. Observing of fasting is not a prerequisite for disposal of expiation.

DELIBERATE BREAKING OF A FAST

He who breaks a fast deliberately, commits a serious sin which must be atoned by "*Kaffara*". He has to observe fasting for two consecutive months or has to feed sixty poor or the needy people according to his standard of living or has to pay the price of food (equivalent to at least two Kg. of wheat)

If the offender himself is a poor or a needy person, then he has to rely on repentance in order to attract Allah's mercy. The following hadith serves as a ray of

hope for such people:

“A man came to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and started lamenting – ‘Prophet of Allah! I have ruined by soul!’ In reply to the Holy Prophet’s query, he replied: “I am guilty of coition with ‘my wife, while I was fasting’. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) enquired, “can you set a slave free?”. He replied in the negative. Thereafter the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) advised him to fast for sixty days. He said that it was too difficult for him to undergo that exercise for the reason that he would not be able to suppress his passion otherwise he would have not committed that offense. Then the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) suggested to him to feed sixty poor people. He added that his poverty would not allow him to do that. On hearing this the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) cautioned him to sit and wait. In the meanwhile a man brought a basket of dates. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) commanded him to take the basket and feed the poor people with dates. After having taken possession of the basket, he begged, “who is poorer than me in the township of Medina?”. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) laughed heartily and concluded: “Go and feed your household/family.”

Question: A man who was not observing fasting, had coitus with his wife who was fasting and she made him aware of that fact. What does Islam teach about this situation?

Answer: The wife’s fast has been nullified. If she did not voluntarily submit to her husband’s wish, then she will fast for one day only as restitution- (“*Qada*”), but if she participated willingly, then in addition to restitution she will have to fast for sixty consecutive days as atonement (*Kaffara*).

Her husband is guilty of committing a grave sin. He should humbly repent and atone this sin. Moreover, he should make a firm pledge to rigorously avoid all forms of illegal coition.

Question: In an extreme limit of thirst a man broke his fast. What is the penalty for him?

Answer: Since this man did it apparently for fear of his life, he would be required to fast for a day as restitution but atonement (sixty fasts) would not be

needed. However, if somebody breaks the fast intentionally and without acceptable excuse, he has to observe fasting for two consecutive months. If he cannot fast for sixty days, then as an alternative, he should feed sixty poor people.

Question: I mistook the last day of Ramadhan for the day of *Eid-ul-Fitr* and after having breakfast proceeded for *Eid* prayer and discovered that I have missed a fast. Immediately I made the intention for fasting and completed it. What is the status of my fast?

Answer: Since it is necessary for fasting that one should refrain from eating and drinking, from dawn to dusk, your partial fast cannot be regarded as a day of fasting. Likewise no sin has resulted from your honest mistake. However, you have to fast for a day as restitution.

Question: What types of injections are forbidden in fasting? Are the Government-sponsored mandatory injections exempted?

Answer: Allah, the Almighty, has exempted the sick from the prescribed fasting. The sick person who is in need of injection, if advised to benefit from the leave granted by Allah. An injection is either administered for treatment or for purpose of prevention. Same applies to Government-sponsored immunization drives. One should not fast on the day he is scheduled to receive injection because a fast is certainly invalidated by intra-muscular as well as intra-venous injections.

EATING AND DRINKING IN FORGETFULNESS OF THE FAST:

A fast is not vitiated if somebody eats or drinks forgetting that he is fasting. His fast would remain intact. It is affirmed that the people who happen to be around, should not remind him because for him the spell of forgetfulness is a favor from Allah. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) is reported to have assented:

“Should any of you eat or drink in forgetfulness of the fast, he should continue his fast till the end, for Allah fed him given him to drink.” (*Dar Qutni*, p. 237)

But if somebody breaks the fast knowingly for making a wrong judgement (*i.e.*, he thought that the sun had set but the fact was that it did not.), his fast would be nullified and he has to observe a day's fasting as restitution. There is no need to atone by fasting for two months.

Question: Somebody donated blood so that it could be transfused to a victim of a traffic accident. What is the status of the donor's fast?

Answer: His fast remains intact. A fast is not invalidated for blood donation. Since it is likely to cause weakness, it is advisable that the donor should break his fast and observe it on another day. As restitution. One should not hesitate from donating blood on the excuse of fasting, because it can be transfused to save a life, which is a meritorious deed in the sight of Allah.

Question: Is it necessary that the "*Qada*" (restitution) of the omitted days of Ramadhan should be observed without a break?

Answer: It is not necessary that fasting for compensation for the lost days of fasting on account of sickness or traveling should be essentially continuous. The "*Qada*" fasting can be observed with gaps, even each fast after a gap. However, it is important that the required number must be completed.

DURATION OF FASTING IN POLAR REGIONS

The Director of Foreign Missions (Wakil-Ut-Tabshir) forwarded the following letter of Hazrat Khalifa-Tul-Masih, II, (r.a.), to the Missionary In-charge of Scandinavian countries:

"People living in a country belonging to polar regions (North and South Poles) would observe fast for twelve hours. Their fasting does not depend upon sunrise or sunset. They should fix the time for the start or end of the fast accordingly. Same principle would govern the observance of the five daily prayers. This explanation is based on the instructions given by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.)" (Letter No. 2960, dated August 27, 1957)

More explanation is found in another passage. Huzoor writes:

"Muslims all over the world, irrespective of their place of residence, have been commanded by Allah to observe fasting in the month of Ramadhan. The duration of the fast is from dawn to dusk. This applies to all those countries where the day is less than twenty four hours and the day and night alternate in twenty four hours – at different timings. The principle of "dawn to dusk" will apply to people living in these countries. But in the countries where the duration of the day and night is longer than 24 hours, the principle of adjustment, based on approximation, would be implemented." (*Deebacha Tafseer-ul Quran*, p. 455)

RETREAT – ("I'TIKAF")

"*I'tikaf*" literally means "seclusion" or "withdrawal" from others to a secluded place. In Islamic terminology, *I'tikaf* means retracting to a Mosque with an intention to devote maximum time to worship and devotion.

Like fasting, the practice of retreat can be traced to earlier denomination. The Holy Quran, refers to a command binding Prophets Ibrahim (a.s.) and Ishmael (a.s.) for the cleaning of K'aba for the comfort of worshippers:

"*And we commanded Abraham and Ishmael saying, 'purify my house for those who perform the circuit and for those who remain therein for devotion and for those who bow down and fall prostrate in prayer.'*" (Al-Baqarah:126)

The Holy Quran tells us about the *I'tikaf* observed by Hazrat Maryam (Mary, the mother of Jesus):

"*And relate the story of Mary as mentioned in the Book, when she withdrew from her people to an eastern places and screened herself off from them.*" (Maryam:17,18)

A few years prior to his call, the Holy Prophet Muhammad's (s.a.w.) seclusion in cave Hira for the purpose of devotion and meditation, was a sort of *I'tikaf*.

One can go into retreat at anytime but its observance in the month of Ramadhan is the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.)

Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.) reports:

“The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to go into retreat in the Mosque during the last ten days of Ramadhan till Allah caused his death. Thereafter his wives used to go into retreat.” (*Bokhari*—p. 271, *Muslim*—p. 497)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) is reported to have commanded:

“I have been told that the *Laila-Tul-Qadr* (the night of decree) falls in the last ten nights of Ramadhan. He who wishes to go into retreat, should do it in the last ten days of Ramadhan.”

This Hadith confirms that every year many companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) joined him in the *I’ Tikaf*.

In another Hadith, narrated by Hazrat Abu said Khudri (r.a.), the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) referring to a dream, about the *Laila-Tul-Qadr*, said that he saw himself prostrating in mud and water on the blessed night. (It conveys that raining is one for the attendant signs of the *Laila-Tul-Qadr*.²) (*Bokhari*—p. 272)

According to the practice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) one should go into retreat for a minimum of ten days. A retreat for a lesser period is also permitted. The following Hadith narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurairah (r.a.) affirms that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) went into retreat for twenty days in the last year of his life. The Hadith reads:

“The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) went into retreat for last ten days in the month of Ramadhan but in the year in which he died he went into retreat for twenty days.” (*Bokhari*—p. 274)

One should go into retreat on the 20th of Ramadhan after *Fajr* prayer so that the requirement of ten days in retreat could be satisfied. Hazrat Aeysha

(r.a.) confirms:

“The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) always went into retreat on the 20th Ramadhan, after offering the *Fajr* prayer.” (*Bokhari*—p. 273)

Mosques are the most suitable places for retreat. The Holy Quran refers to it in the following verse:

“Do not go in unto them (wives) while you remain in the Mosques for devotion. These are limits set by Allah, so approach them not.” (*Al-Baqarah*:188)

The ideal station for the retreat is the central Mosque (The Mosque where Friday prayer is conducted). In unavoidable circumstances one can go into retreat in some other suitable place apart from a Mosque. Hazrat Khelifa-Tul-Masih, II (r.a.) approves:

“One is allowed to go into retreat in a place other than a Mosque but the reward would not be equal to observance of *I’ tikaf* in a Mosque.” (*The Alfazl*, March 6, 1962)

A female is allowed to go into retreat in a Mosque but it is better for her to arrange it in her home, in a room or a corner which has been reserved for the purpose of worship and supplications.

A retreator (“*M’utakif*” – one who goes into retreat) can leave the Mosque to attend to unavoidable needs *i.e.*, answering the call of nature, ablution, bath for ritual purity, etc.

A female retreator is required to withdraw immediately from retreat soon after noticing the start of her menstruation. She cannot stay in a Mosque in that condition.

A retreator is expected to devote maximum time and energy to prayers, recital of the Holy Quran, meditation and remembrance of Allah. He should not waste his precious time on gossip or idle talk. The other extreme is also wrong. It does not mean that talking or conversation is prohibited after going into retreat.

SIGNIFICANCE OF GOING INTO RETREAT

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) is reported to have said:

²It also signifies heavy downpour of Allah’s infinite mercy and spiritual blessings.

“The retreaters fall on their knees before Allah and say: O my Lord! I swear by your blessed Majesty that I would not leave this place unless you turn to me with mercy.” (*Durr-E-Manthur*, Vol. 1—p. 202)

The following two sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) enlighten us about the high rank of this form of devotion:

- i. “He who goes into retreat for Allah’s sake, even for a single day, Allah separates him from hell with three trenches across, each having a width more than the distance between the East and the West.” (*Durr-E-Manthur*, Vol. I, p. 203)
- ii. “A retreaters is freed from the bondage of sins. He is rewarded for the good deeds which he has been able to perform prior to going into retreat and continues to be rewarded (after the termination of the retreat) as if he is still performing those deeds.” (*Ibn-E-Majah* — p. 127)

PRONOUNCEMENTS (FATAWA) REGARDING RETREAT

Question: Is it permissible to go into retreat in a Mosque other than the central Mosque?

Answer: Yes. But it is necessary that one should go into retreat in a Mosque where five daily prayers are regularly observed (*Abu Daud* — p. 335)

Question: I live in a town where there is no Mosque. Can I go into retreat in my own residence?

Answer: In a place where Ahmadis do not have a Mosque and they gather together in an Ahmadi’s home for prayers, one is allowed to go into retreat in his home, in a room set aside for worship and devotion. Allah, who is aware of all difficulties and limitations of his servants, always treats them according to their intentions.

Question: Can a female go into retreat in her home?

Answer: In a location, without Ahmadiyya Mosque or a Mosque without adequate facilities for ladies, a female is permitted to go into retreat in her home. It is highly desirable that every Ahmadi family should set aside a room to serve as a “Mosque” within their home, where ladies and girls should observe their

daily prayers. Men and boys should offer their semi-obligatory *Sunnah* and voluntary prayers. This is a very good idea. The companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) acted along these lines.

Question: Can an aged person (who is unable to fast) go into retreat in Ramadhan without fasting?

Answer: Fasting is one of the conditions for going into retreat in the blessed month of Ramadhan. Hazrat Aeysha (r.a.) is reported to have affirmed:

“There is no retreat without fasting.”

The message of the following Quranic verse supported the above position:

“Then complete the fast till nightfall and do not go unto them (wives) while you remain in the Mosques for devotion.” (2:188)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) and his companions never went into retreat without fasting. Hazrat Ibn-E-Abbas (r.a.), Hazrat Ibn-E-Umar (r.a.), Imam Malik, Imam Abu Hanifa and the jurists of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat adhere to this point of view. Hazrat Hasan Basri, Imam Shafi, and Imam Ahmad believe that one can go into retreat without observing fast. Their opinion is based on the example of Hazrat Umar (r.a.) who was allowed by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) to go into retreat for one night. (*Bokhari* — p. 274, *Abu Daud* — p. 335)

Since nocturnal fasting does not exist in Islam, these jurists have concluded that such a short term retreat without fasting is permissible.

Question: According to a saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) a retreaters is allowed to leave the Mosque to attend to “unavoidable needs”. What is covered by the term “unavoidable needs”?

Answer: The term “unavoidable needs” primarily refers to call of nature *i.e.*, need to use the bathroom. If the retreaters is retired in a Mosque of his section or locality, then he is allowed to leave the Mosque for Friday prayer, held in the central Mosque. This is also counted as one of the “unavoidable needs”

Jurists differ on other needs and situations like barbering (haircut), participating in funeral prayer, visiting the sick, and going out for eating, etc. The

spirit of retreat requires that the retreator should completely dissociate from the worldly affairs in the last ten days of Ramadhan.

Question: Is it permissible to leave Mosque for teaching in a school or a college while observing *I'tikaf*?

Answer: Allah has not obligated Muslims to go into retreat in Ramadhan. Its observance is optional. If one opts to go into retreat then he should be fully prepared to observe all attendant conditions.

Islam does not approve of a situation in which an individual willingly decides to go into retreat and then embarks upon to mold it according to his wishes instead of obeying Allah's will.

Question: what is the right procedure to go into retreat in accordance with the practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.)?

Answer: Only that retreat can be regarded in accordance with the practice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) which satisfies the following conditions:

- i. It should be observed in the last ten days of Ramadhan.
- ii. It should start on the 20th Ramadhan after *Fajr* prayer.
- iii. The retreator should not leave Mosque except for an unavoidable need.
- iv. Maximum time should be devoted to worship, devotion, recitation of the Holy Quran and remembrance of Allah.

If one is unable to go into retreat with all these conditions, he may observe a lesser retreat by reducing the number of days to suit his availability. For example; he can go into retreat for five, four or three days instead of ten days. He can observe it in the Mosque of his locality. He can devote his time to devotion, meditation and supplications without keeping fast. He who is unable to go into retreat for a whole day, can do so for a few hours. Islamic jurists have discussed these concessions at length and have encouraged Muslims to benefit from the blessings of retreat.

Question: Is a retreator allowed to leave the Mosque

with view to attending Jama'at meetings or functions?

Answer: Strictly speaking a retreator is not allowed to leave Mosque for any other reason except for the unavoidable needs. Such meetings and functions do not fall in the category of unavoidable needs.

Question: Is it lawful to have a haircut in the Mosque after going into retreat?

Answer: Hairdressing/Barbering during retreat is not unlawful. It should not be done in the Mosque. Being an act of disrespect to a place of worship, it negates the sanctity of the Mosque. Hazrat Imam Malik says:

“Barbering of hair in a Mosque is undesirable. This prohibition is not on account of retreat but for the dignity of the Mosque.”

Question: What is the exact time for witnessing of the “Night of Decree”. (*Laila-Tul Qadr*)?

Answer: The following remarks of Hazrat Khalifa-Tul-Masih, II (r.a.) constitute a comprehensive answer:

“One goes to retreat in the morning of the 20th day of Ramadhan. In this way the duration of the retreat would be either ten or eleven days....

Once the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) emerged from his quarters in order to enlighten his companions about the exact time of the Night of Decree but he found two men disputing publically. Allah made him to forget the exact time. He told the people to search the Night of Decree in the last ten nights of Ramadhan. Islamic mystics (“sufis”) have noted that apart from the last ten nights of Ramadhan, similar blessed moments of acceptance of supplications can be experienced in other days and nights as well, but the last ten nights of Ramadhan provide the best time for acceptance of supplications.

The Promised Messiah (a.s.), in the light of his experience, has confided that the *Laila-Tul-Qadr* falls on the 27th night of Ramadhan. (*The Al-Fazl* – Nov. 3, 1914)

(Translated from Fiqua Ahmadiyya by L. R. Mahmood)

AT WHAT AGE SHOULD CHILDREN FAST?

AN IMPORTANT DIRECTIVE ABOUT CHILDREN'S FASTING FROM SYEDNA HAZRAT MUSLEH MAOOD (r.a.) KHALIFATUL MASSIH II

Hazrat Aqdas said: "Some time earlier I had emphasized that young children need not fast at an early age. This directive of mine has been misinterpreted and the definition of a child has been over stretched to exclude fasting from their life."

A child of seventeen and eighteen years of age, some say, can not fast because he is still a child and too young for fasting. However, the fact is that the time for fasting may begin as early as nine years of age. In the beginning a child should observe only one or two days of fasting and then should continue to increase the number of days with age. Usually a child of fourteen or fifteen becomes strong enough and is definitely able to fast.

However, some children could be weak even at

this age and for them a doctor can certify that they should not observe fasting. In any case, a child of fifteen to sixteen years of age is able to observe most days of the fasting or possibly the whole month of Ramadhan. He is considered fully grown up at his age of eighteen to nineteen and there is hardly any excuse for him not to complete fasting for the whole month. If a person of this age falls short in this respect or shows some other weakness by saying that many healthy people are not observing fast because dysentery is caused by fasting, he is making a lame excuse. The fact is that they have no intention of fasting."

(*Daily Al-Fazl*, July 10, 1949. Translated by Dr. Rasheed Azam, NC.)

DO NOT FORGET 20 MILLION AFTER HAVING REACHED 10 MILLION

In his Friday sermon on August 7, 1998, delivered after the Jalsa Salana UK 1998, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV advised the Jama'at to maintain a Red Book containing lessons for the coming Jalsa. He also said:

Now that we are moving from thousands into hundreds of thousands and from hundreds of thousands into tens of millions, remember that we will not stop at 5 million. I hope, and I have discussed specific plans with the heads of the Jama'ats all over the world, that Allah will grant us 10 million next year. When we attain ten million, as I hope we will next year, our steps will not stop at that level. In such a case do not forget the twenty million for the following year. If this process marches forward in this manner, the world will be under the feet

of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in a few years.

This plan is not based on empty hope. It is based on the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. When we make a plan accordingly and strive and pray for it, the plans comes into the hands of Allah Ta'ala. It is my experience that He has never disappointed us.

The situation in Pakistan is getting serious. It is feared that the situation will deteriorate rapidly. But I remind you that even if the circumstances take an adverse turn, the end result Insha Allah will be better for the Jamaat. I have absolutely no doubt about it. The end result will be favorable for the Jamaat and unfavorable for our enemy.

Huzoor's Address at the UK Jalsa Salana 1999 (continued)

This year, Ahmadiyyat reached 3,361 new places around the world

1,524 Mosques were added to the number of Ahmadiyya Mosques

231 Ethnic groups from 104 countries gave us over 10,820,000 new Ahmadies

Tahrik Waqf-i-Nau now has 19,143 children

Regular and special donations total £22,572,000 (over \$36 million) this year

(Summary of Huzoor's Address on July 31, 1999, the second day of the U.K. Ahmadiyya Annual Convention. This summary is the English translation of the last installment of the address which was published in the *Al Fazl International*, October 1, 1999.)

Huzoor gave an account of activities in various countries.

KENYA

This year, Ahmadiyyat reached 113 new places in Kenya. Jama'at has been regularly organized in 52 of these places. 27 Mosques were added, 21 new mosques were built and 6 already built mosques joined Ahmadiyyat. Three new Tablighi centers were established, making a total of 27 such centers in the country. Plots were purchased in 8 places for new mosques and centers. Kenya has been marching forward with exceeding speed in the last few years.

There were 1,000,388 new Ahmadies in Kenya this year. This is a first in Kenya history for Ahmadiyyat. We did not have this many Ahmadies in the last one hundred years. Last year, there were 2,003,000 new Ahmadies in Kenya. There has been rapid progress in areas bordered with Tanzania.

The Ameer of Kenya relates that there is a town about 80 KM from Nairobi called Qadian. A Jama'at was established there just last year. From a very few, now we have nearly 30,000 Ahmadies in the area and we have a missionary, four teachers and ten volunteers for Tabligh. An attractive mosque has been built in Qadian, in spite of opposition from some Christian missionaries.

The province of Coast has given us hundreds of thousands of new Ahmadies this year. Wherever an Ahmadi vehicle passes, there usually are exclamations of *Allaho Akbar*.

Faiz Ahmad Zahid writes that in Magomani area there was great opposition to Ahmadiyyat. Last year

a teacher from there became Ahmadi and began Tabligh. One day a non Ahmadi teacher came to Faiz Sahib and invited him to Magomani on behalf of influential people there. When he went there he was surprised to find so many there who had come to welcome him. On that occasion more than five thousand persons joined Ahmadiyyat.

In Zombu which is about 18KM from the nearest paved road and is not accessible by car. They began building a mosque mostly with volunteer labor who had to carry material like blocks from a distance, but they succeeded in completing the mosque.

TANZANIA

Ahmadiyyat reached 54 new places and 28 of them have organized Jama'ats. So far, more than half a million have joined Ahmadiyyat in this country. There were nearly 80,000 new Ahmadies in Kibeti region this year.

Taremay is the last town on the way to Kenya. It has produced more than 100,000 Ahmadies so far. In the Azazi area we reached in June 1999 for the first time. With the help of a generator, MTA was introduced there. Question/answer sessions were held. All the local inhabitants along with the local Imam joined Ahmadiyyat, generating 3,010 new Bai'ats.

SIERRA LEONE

Because of the adverse conditions in that country, tabligh was possible for only two months. Even then, 43 new Jamaats were established. There are now a total of 2,871 Jamaats there.

Makini was captured by rebel forces and our

missionary had to seek refuge 20 miles away. Even that area was attacked and ransacked by the rebels and he had to return to Makini. For the next five months, things were terrible and food was very scarce. By now the Jama'at has taken care of all their needs.

Our teacher was captured along with many others in Bangora and was taken to Mashaka on foot. Mashaka is 40 miles from Freetown. The rebels made all the captives stand in a line. They asked 40 of them to come forward. Our Ahmadi teacher was number 41. The 40 who were asked to come forward were all shot to death. The rebel leader asked who among these people can lead *Juma* prayers. Our teacher told them he was an Ahmadi Missionary and will be able to lead the *Juma* prayers. The next day he gave the Friday sermon on the subject of peace and brotherhood. The rebel chief was moved by the sermon and gave our missionary twenty thousands in local currency. Our missionary was able to leave in a few days and walked to Freetown in 9 days.

A similar event happened in the case of an Ahmadi university student. He was captured by the rebels and made to stand in a line along with other civilians. They began to cut the hands of the captives. Eight persons lost their hands in this way. The Ahmadi student was number 9. Just at that instant someone called and said that the commander says do not cut the hands. The Ahmadi and all those after him in the line were spared. These two incidents are not mere chances. They show the special hand of God protecting the Ahmadies.

There is a local Ahmadi teacher, Alpha Kroma from Mashaka. His whole village was burnt. He did not think he would live, but he managed to escape but was captured by the government forces who thought he was a rebel. He said he was an Ahmadi teacher. They asked for proof. He had none, except an receipt book for Ahmadiyya donations. They let him go at that.

SENEGAL

Ahmadiyyat reached 162 new places this year, 127 of them have now established Ahmadi Jama'ats. 15 new mosques were constructed and 28 already built mosques joined Ahmadiyyat, giving us a total of 43 new mosques.

Special emphasis has been placed to educate the Imams. 37 refresher courses and classes were held which were attended by 245 Imams and teachers. This year, there have been more than 560,000 new Ahmadies in this country.

In the region of Luga there were no Ahmadies. One of the teachers from Luga came for a visit to Fisl. There he saw an Ahmadi teacher teaching children. The teacher from Luga asked what Jamaat he belonged to. He told him he was an Ahmadi. The teacher from Luga stayed for a few days and learned a lot about Ahmadiyyat. He joined Ahmadiyyat before his return to Luga and invited Ahmadies to come to Luga and preach. This has finally resulted in 50 villages joining Ahmadiyyat.

Huzoor said he was naming towns and places because the non-Ahmadi Mullas will tell others we are lying and none of these places actually exist. He is telling all these names so the Mullas can go there themselves and find out the truth.

There was a region covering over 200KM with no Ahmadies. During Ramadhan, our missionaries reached a town called Daro Bambara. A local teacher came to them and asked them who were they. When he was told we are Ahmadies, he said he is also an Ahmadi. He said he joined in the town of Chako. He requested for Ahmadi teachers for the area. Two teachers were sent and in a short time, more than 150 villages joined Ahmadiyyat.

The Amir of Senegal also writes that a few years ago, he went on a Tablighi mission to Kisanar. There was an uncle of a local Ahmadi who lived nearby. This person, when preached, said that he had seen in a dream that he will join Islam at the hand of a foreigner. So he joined Ahmadiyya that day. Eventually his whole village embraced Ahmadiyyat.

This year our missionary was sent to that region to arrange for two conventions. This new Ahmadi insisted that the first such gathering be held in his village. He even brought a cow for the guests of the convention and requested our missionary that no one should know who gave that cow.

A religious leader, Umar Bilaley, was educated overseas and served as an agent for the opponents of Ahmadiyyat. He had given many talks on the local radio against the Founder of Ahmadiyyat and told

people that Ahmadies do not face Mecca but England. The Jama'at has constructed five mosques in this area and people have seen that our Kibla is the same as is for other Muslims. People have dubbed Umar Bilaley a liar and the whole region has embraced Ahmadiyyat by now.

BENIN

Benin is a small country and in the past a few hundred new Ahmadies joined every year. They were given a target of 5000 and they got busy. They made many mosques and this year the initial good news was that they were able to get 35,000 new Ahmadies early in the year. By the grace of God, there have been a total of 154,365 Bai'ats this year.

The Amir of Benin says that when he made a program to travel north for Tabligh, he was asked not to go because the opponents had said that if anyone went there for Tabligh, he would not return alive. The Amir went anyway saying that if he was killed he would be a martyr. He went and talked with the opponent who had threatened to kill him and explained to him why he had come to preach the Islam religion brought by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.).

After listening to us, that person went to the Imam at 11 p.m. and told him to let us do Tabligh. So the tables were turned and those who were threatening to kill us, became our hosts to feed us and listen to us. The result of this *Tablighi* program was 25,000 new Ahmadies there.

TOGO

It is under Benin rule. The original target given to them was 15,000. They reached that and were told to double the target. They reached that also and finally they were asked to try to get a hundred thousand. *Alhamdo Lillah*, they have reached 110,657 new Ahmadies this year.

BANGLA DESH

There has been a great awakening there this year. People by the bus load come to our mission, participate in question/answer sessions and a majority of them accept Ahmadiyyat before returning home.

At the time of *Eidul Azhia*, we distributed meat among the poor. A local maulvi became Ahmadi just to witness this distribution. Mr. Angoorus Zaman says

that he became Ahmadi early in 1998. His only son had died and for the last 12 years or so he had no children. He prayed to God to grant him a son and in February, 1999, he had a son.

INDONESIA

Ahmadiyyat has been established at 15 new places this year. Eight new mosques were built and two already built mosques joined Ahmadiyyat. Four new centers have been set up, giving us a total of 103 such centers in the country. Tabligh has also accelerated and this year 23,312 new Ahmadies joined us. They have set up 96 dish antennas for MTA and have produced many programs for MTA so far.

NIGERIA

We went to the Ishtako region for Tabligh. This region was suffering a drought. Both the Muslims and Christians had prayed for rain collectively but to no avail. The local people told us they will listen to us only if we pray for rain and it rains. It was around 2 p.m. The Ahmadiyya delegation raised their hands for prayer.

In the afternoon, suddenly clouds appeared and it began to rain hard. It kept on raining most of the night. Witnessing this sign, a large number of local people joined without any further Tabligh from us. People are still joining Ahmadiyyat there.

PAKISTAN

Huzoor said many things are happening in Pakistan and he will give a few accounts as an example. In district Narowal, a girl saw in a dream that a person in a white robe came to her and asked her what was her religion. She said she was a Muslim. The person said she should become Ahmadi Muslim and should recite: *La Ilaha Illa Anta Subhanaka Inni Kunto Minal-Zalimeen*. (O God, there is none worthy of worship except Thee, I was surely among the transgressors). Others in your house will also become Ahmadies. Then the girl woke up.

A few days later, some Ahmadies went to that town. That girl told them her dream. They showed her pictures of the Promised Messiah and the Khulafa (a.s.). She pointed to the picture of Huzoor (Khalifatul Masih IV) and said he had come in her dream. She joined Ahmadiyyat. When her mother and sisters saw her changed condition, they also became Ahmadi.

Thus the dream was fulfilled exactly.

Mr. Hayat Ali Shaheen from Mandi Bahaud Din writes that about a year and a half ago his non-Ahmadi niece had lost her balance of mind. Her parents went around to Pirs for prayers and spent a lot of money on them but to no avail. Mr Shaheen brought her to his house and wrote to Huzoor in March 1998 to pray for her. Miraculously, she began to improve and in a short time became quite well and now she has returned to her in-laws.

A new Ahmadi from Faisalabad writes that when he joined Ahmadiyyat he was expelled from his house and was disinherited. He suffered many things from the opponents but did not falter. Once, his mother met him and said people rebuke her because of him, it would be better if the opponents burnt his house. He told his mother that if he is right, God will show such a sign in his favor and against those who want to burn his house. He was still talking to his mother when smoke rose from the house of his opponent and the house burnt down completely in a few minutes. This was the same person who was planning to burn the house of the Ahmadi.

OVERALL WORLDWIDE VIEW

Huzoor gave a summary of achievements for the past year. Ahmadiyya had reached 3,361 new places and 1,426 of them have been regularly organized as Jama'ats.

The number of Ahmadi mosques increased by 1,524. 223 new mosques were constructed and 1,301 already built mosques joined our fold. Since the 1984 migration, the number of Ahmadiyya Mosques has increased by 7,636. At present, we have 708 centers in 84 countries.

In addition to Pakistan, there are 1,197 missionaries and teachers working in 67 countries. In 1984, this number was only 366.

In Tahrik Waqf-i-Nau, there are now 19,143 children. There are 13,287 boys and 5,856 girls. People are asked to dedicate their child before the child is born. Statistically speaking, there should be as many boys as girls. It is a special favor of God that the boys outnumber girls by a ratio of 2.4 to 1. We needed more boys to train as missionaries.

In addition to increasing the number of Ahmadies

by ten million this year, financial sacrifices by members have also reached new records. Regular subscriptions and donations to special schemes (like Tahrik Jadid, Waqf Jadid, etc.) Amount to £22,572,000.00 (US \$36,120,000 Approx.) this year. Any amounts spent to serve humanity are in addition to this amount. If these temporary donations are included, the total will exceed thirty million pounds sterling (over 48 Million US Dollars).

People from 231 ethnic groups in 104 countries have joined Ahmadiyyat and the total of new Ahmadies this year has been 10,820,000. Jamaats from around the world will be able to participate in the International Bai'at, as usual.

Huzoor mentioned a dream of his which pointed to French Speaking Ahmadies. Since 1994, in the french speaking countries there have been 11,109,306 new Ahmadies.

Huzoor read from the writings of the Promised Messiah (a.s.) where he says:

“At one time I was alone. God gave me glad tidings that I will not remain alone, people will join me in droves. God also told me to write these things and publish them. ‘Your condition of today will change. I will disgrace all those who oppose you and will give you a Jamaat...’ Hindus, Muslims and Christians will all be witness that I told them this at a time when I was alone. God told me that a time will come when you will be opposed but I will increase your number until kings will seek blessings from thy garments...”
(*Malfoozat*, Vol.5, pg.98)

Today, by the grace of God, ten million new voices in only one year are proclaiming that the Messiah is right. God is with you and will remain with you until you make the religion of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) supreme over all others. It will happen so. A beginning has been made now. I cannot say what the Decree of God will make us witness at the end of this century (year 2089) but whatever we witness will be in support of Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.) This much I am sure of.

Finally Huzoor said “*Assalamo Alaikum*” to all present and the session came to a close.

(Translated by Basharat Mirza, Athens, Ohio)

TREAT WOMEN GRACIOUSLY

A man who stands against a woman is a coward and unmanly

Splendid Teachings of Islam relating to the Treatment of women

The Greatest Blessing

Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar related that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "There is no blessing in the world greater than a pious woman". (*ibn Majah*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "The most perfect of believers in the matter of faith is he whose behavior is best; and the best of you are those who behave best towards their wives". (*Tirmidhi*)

The purport of this Hadith is that the criterion of good treatment should not be self-invented. Rather it should follow the way of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), because, through the Grace of Allah, he is the best in his treatment of his wives.

Right of a Wife

Mu'awiah ibn Haidah relates: I asked the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.): "What is the right of a wife against her husband?" He said: "Feed her when you feed yourself; clothe her when you clothe yourself; do not strike her on her face, do not revile her and do not separate yourself from her except inside the house." (*Abu Daud*).

Kind Treatment

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Treat women kindly. Woman has been created from a rib and the most crooked part of the rib is the uppermost. If you try to straighten it you will break it and if you leave it alone it will remain crooked. So treat women kindly." (*Bokhari*).

The Pleasing Qualities

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Let no Muslim man entertain any rancor against a Muslim woman. Should he dislike one quality in her, he would find another which is pleasing". (*Muslim*)

Almighty Allah has ordained in the Holy Qur'an that Muslims should look at the better parts of the behavior. It is possible that you dislike something and Allah turns it into goodness for you.

To Hurt Feelings is a Great Sin

The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) says: 'It is a great sin to break one's heart. The feelings of women are very tender. When parents separate them from themselves and give them to others in marriage, what great expectations they have.' You can imagine that from the verse:

Consort with them graciously

Allah has made us Men

All the weaknesses and ill-behavior of woman, except serious improprieties, should be steadfastly endured. I deem it shameful that a man should fight a woman. God has made us men and we should express our gratitude for this great bounty by behaving kindly and courteously towards women.

On one occasion I addressed my wife in a loud voice and felt that my tone was indicative of displeasure, though I had uttered no harsh word.. Yet thereafter I sought forgiveness of God for a long time and said supererogatory prayers with great humility and also gave alms out of a feeling that my harshness towards my wife must have been occasioned by some secret shortfall in the obedience of God. (*Malfoozat 2:1-2*)

Cowardly Men

I consider the man a coward if he places himself in a competition with a woman. Study the life of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) so you realize how kind-hearted he was.

Fulfil the Covenant

The revelation vouchsafed to me (Urdu):

The leader of the Muslims Abudul Karim may be admonished that this is not a good way;

comprises instructions for the whole of my Community that they should treat their wives with kindness and courtesy. Their wives are not their servants. Marriage is a covenant between the husband and the wife. Try therefore that you should not be false to your covenant. God Almighty has directed in the Holy Quran:

Consort with your wives graciously (4:20) and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said:

“The best of you are those who behave best towards their wives.”

Keep praying for them and avoid divorce. A person stands ill in the estimation of God who inclines towards divorce quickly. Do not hasten towards breaking up like a dirty vessel that which God has joined together. (*Zameemah Tohfah*

Golarviah, Ruhani Khazain, Vol. 17, p. 75 footnote)

The Best Expenditure

Tauban ibn Buhdud relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: “The best dinar is that which a person spends on his wife and children, and the dinar he spends on his horse in the cause of Allah, and the dinar he spends on his companions in the cause of Allah.” (*Muslim*)

INTO THE YEAR 2000

(by Munawar A. Saeed)

The members must have heard a lot about the Y2K problems. Everybody seems to be talking about it and making preparation for it. The issue arises because the computer programs, which started a few decades earlier, showed only two digits for the year. For instance the year 1980 was programmed as year 80. With the year 2000, the two digit system will no longer apply. In other words, the computers will not be able to read 2000.

All members should pray that Almighty Allah may keep all of us under the shadow of His protection during this transition.

Many programs are embedded into all kinds of appliances. Computer programs are obviously heavily vulnerable to Y2K errors. Governments, school systems, businesses are all trying to make

their application compliant with Y2K.

Members should contact their software and hardware vendors for any patches needed for the application/equipments. The following general guidelines may be helpful at a more personal level:

- i. Keep some cash with you after the middle of December in case it becomes difficult to draw money from ATM's or the Banks due to transition.
- ii. Avoid traveling in early January, especially in less developed countries.
- iii. Have Emergency kits at home.
- iv. Make sure the whole family knows what the plans are in case of emergency. Have an agreed point of meeting during emergencies.

BEGINNING OF THE NEW CENTURY

(Translated from *Al Fazl*, Rabwah, October 19, 1999)

In the Western countries, the year 2000 is being dubbed as the beginning of the new century. The Chinese have declared the year 2001 as the beginning of the new century. In this connection, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV has said:

“The Jamaat Ahmadiyya will follow the ancient traditions to declare the new century. Traditionally, a new century begins when the unit digit in the year is ONE. According to this the Chinese stance is correct and we agree with it. Our religious

traditions have also been the same. The same has been followed since the beginning of calendar classifications.

Therefore, the year 1999 is not the last year of this century, It will be the year 2000 which will be the last year of the 20th century. The year 2001 will begin the 21st century.”

All the members of the community please note that the year 2001 will be the beginning of the 21st century.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF TEHRIK-E-JADID NEW YEAR

Our beloved Imam, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV, has announced the commencement of the 66th year of Tehrik-e-Jadid. All the brothers and sisters are requested to participate in this divine and blessed scheme by making a promise (pledge) as soon as possible.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood, may Allah be pleased with him, has said:

“Remember! This Tehrik is from God.. Blessed are those who try their utmost to participate in it to the maximum, because in the history of Islam, their names shall be remembered with respect and honor, and they shall have a special place of honor with Allah, the Almighty.”

(*Five Thousand Mujahideen*, pg. 14)

Please contact your Jamaat President or Secretary Tehrik-e-Jadid for the registration of yours and your family members' pledges.

National Secretary, Tehrik-e-Jadid)

THE IMPORTANCE OF DAROOD SHARIF, (sacred salutations)

Hazrat Khalifatul Massih IV in his Friday sermon of 5 March 1999 elaborated on the grandeur and importance of *Darood Sharif*, where he quoted several traditions. In one Hazrat Khalifatul Massih stated that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said a person who hears his name and does not send *Darood* on him is a very miserly person, and one who sends one *Darood* on him, God Almighty sends ten in return upon him. Huzoor elaborated that the generosity of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) is continued still after his departure. Huzoor said that sending *Darood* upon persons means that God Almighty showers His Grace and Mercy upon such a being.

Quoting a tradition he said that Allah Tala has consoled the person sending *Darood* that his *Darood* and wishes of peace does certainly reach the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)! This is a great, glad tiding for the person who sends *Darood*. In another tradition Gabriel told the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) that Allah Tala has said that one who send *Darood* upon you, I will shower My mercy upon him and

who wishes peace for you I will provide peace for him. In another tradition of it is mentioned that a person while praying praised Allah Tala first and then sent *darood* upon the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). Then he prayed for his own self. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said ask for whatever you wish. It will be granted to you. Then there is a glad tiding of acceptance of prayer.

Huzoor described that the condition of invitation of allegiance, he has included *Darood* into it, and exhorted the followers to be forceful in sending *Darood sharif*, meaning that in whatever state, walking, lying or sitting, any condition one should send *Darood Sharif* upon the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). It's a means of acceptance of prayer that the Promised Messiah (a.s.) has advised, to send *Darood Sharif* first.

(Translated from the Daily Al-Fazl, Rabwah, 3/8/99 by Dr. A. M. Shamim, MD)

RESOLUTION

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in the USA has heard with great pain and sorrow the news that several devoted Ahmadis were martyred and the Mosque was damaged in Khulna Bangladesh.

Inna Lillahi wa Inna Ilaihi Raji'un

The one who has called back is the dearest.

On him O heart be thou a sacrifice.

Jama'at Ahmadiyya USA expresses its deep sorrow to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (A.B.A.), members of the Jamaat Ahmadiyya Bangladesh and the families and loved ones of the deceased brothers.

May Allah grant all the martyrs very high and exalted status in *Jannatul Firdous* in nearness to their loved ones. May Allah be the Protector of all their descendants and loved ones. May Allah enable the Jama'at Ahmadiyya Bangladesh to march ever forward in its progress and devotion. Ameen.

OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENT

(by Dr. Muhammad Abdul Khaliq, President, St. Paul, MN Chapter)

My son Muhammad Abdul Ali who is the grandson of the late Choudhry Muhammad Abdul Ghani (former Amir Jama'at Jhang, Pakistan), and a sophomore at Mankato West High School during the academic year 1998-99. Muhammad entered a project "Training Neural Networks by Modified Taguchi Technique" in the Minnesota South Central Regional Science fair on February 23, 1999. This fair included over 700 contestants in different categories, and Muhammad placed first in the computer science division. He won seven first prizes from different organizations which included a trophy and cash award from Minnesota Academy of Sciences; a gold medal and certificate from the United States Army; a medal, certificate and cash award from Intel Corporation and a cash award from Thin Film Technology.

Muhammad was selected to present his project in the State Science Fair and he was also selected as young scientist of Minnesota. There were only 25 students selected from three regional science fairs as young scientists of Minnesota and they were honored

to present their projects in the State Capitol rotunda on April 26, 1999. Muhammad was awarded a commendation letter from the Governor and was recognized in the presence of the legislators.

At the State Science Fair held in Saint Paul on April 9-11, 1999, Muhammad was awarded a medal, certificate and was among the four contestants chosen to participate in the International Science and Engineering Fair held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on May 1-10, 1999, and was awarded a grand prize from Intel, in the form of an all expenses paid trip to the International Fair. At the International Science and Engineering Fair, there were around 1,000 contestants from 45 countries. Muhammad participated as a finalist, and was awarded a gold medal and a certificate. *Alhamdulillah.*

Please remember my son in your prayers for his success in life and his future career, and remain an active and useful member of Ahmadiyyat. *Amin.*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2000

Dec. 9, 1999	Thursday	First Day of Ramadhan (Fasting)***	
Jan. 2, 2000	Sunday	Programs/Plans by each local Jama'at	Local*
Jan. 8	Saturday	Eidul-Fitr***	
Jan. 22-23	Sat.-Sun	Tablighi Class	Regional
Feb. 20	Sunday	Musleh Maud Day (Historic Feb. 20)	Local
March 5	Sunday	Regional Tarbiyyati Class	Regional
March 17	Friday	Eidul-Adhia***	
March 26	Sunday	Masih Maud Day (Historical March 23)	Local
April 1-2	Sat-Sun	Tablighi Class	Regional
April 19-23	Wed-Sun	National Tarbiyyati Class	National
April 28-30	Fri-Sun	National Majlis-e-Shura at Baitur Rahman	
May 20-21	Sat-Sun	Taleemul Quran Class — East Coast	New Jersey
May 27	Saturday	Khilafat Day (Historical May 27)	Local
June 4	Sunday	Regional Tarbiyyati Class	Regional
June 10-11	Sat-Sun	Tablighi Class	Regional
June 18	Sunday	Jalsa Seeratun-Nabi	Regional
June 23-25	Fri-Sun	Jalsa Salana USA at ...	National
June 30-July 2	Fri-Sun	Jalsa Salana Canada at Toronto	Canada
July 14-16	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Mid-West Lajna	Mid-West
July 28-30	Fri-Sun	Jalsa Salana UK at Islamabad (Expected)	UK
August 4-6	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya	National
August 11-13	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Lajna East Coast	East Coast
August 20	Sunday	Regional Tarbiyyati Class	Regional
August 25-27	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Lajna at Baitul Hameed, Chino, CA	West Coast
Sept. 2-3	Sat-Sun	Taleemul Quran Class — San Jose	West Coast
Sept. 8-10	Fri-Sun	Ijtema and Shura Ansarullah at Baitur-Rahman	National
September 17	Sunday	Seeratun-Nabi Day**	Regional*
October 15	Sunday	Religious Founder's Day	Regional
Oct. 21-22	Sat-Sun	Tablighi Class	Regional
November 12	Sunday	Regional Tarbiyyati Class	Regional
Nov. 24-26	Fri-Sun	Jalsa West Coast at Los Angeles	West Coast
November 27	Monday	First Day of Ramadhan (Fasting)***	
December 27	Wednesday	Eidul-Fitr***	

*Date/Day to be fixed (Mar/Apr)

Remembrance of Fulfillment of Hazrat Masih Maood's Prophecy about Dr. Dowie

4. Tablighi Classes — Regional

- i. - January 22-23
- ii. - April 1-2
- iii. - June 1-11
- iv. - Oct. 21-22

4. Tarbiyyati Classes — Regional

- i. - March 5
- ii. - June 4
- iii. - August 20
- iv. - November 12

2. Teleemul-Quran Classes:

- (1) East Coast ... May 20-21 (New Jersey)
- (2) West Coast ... September 2-3 (San Jose)

3. Lajna Ijtemas:

- (1) Mid-West... July 14-16
- (2) East Coast... Aug 11-3
- (3) West Coast... Aug 25-27