

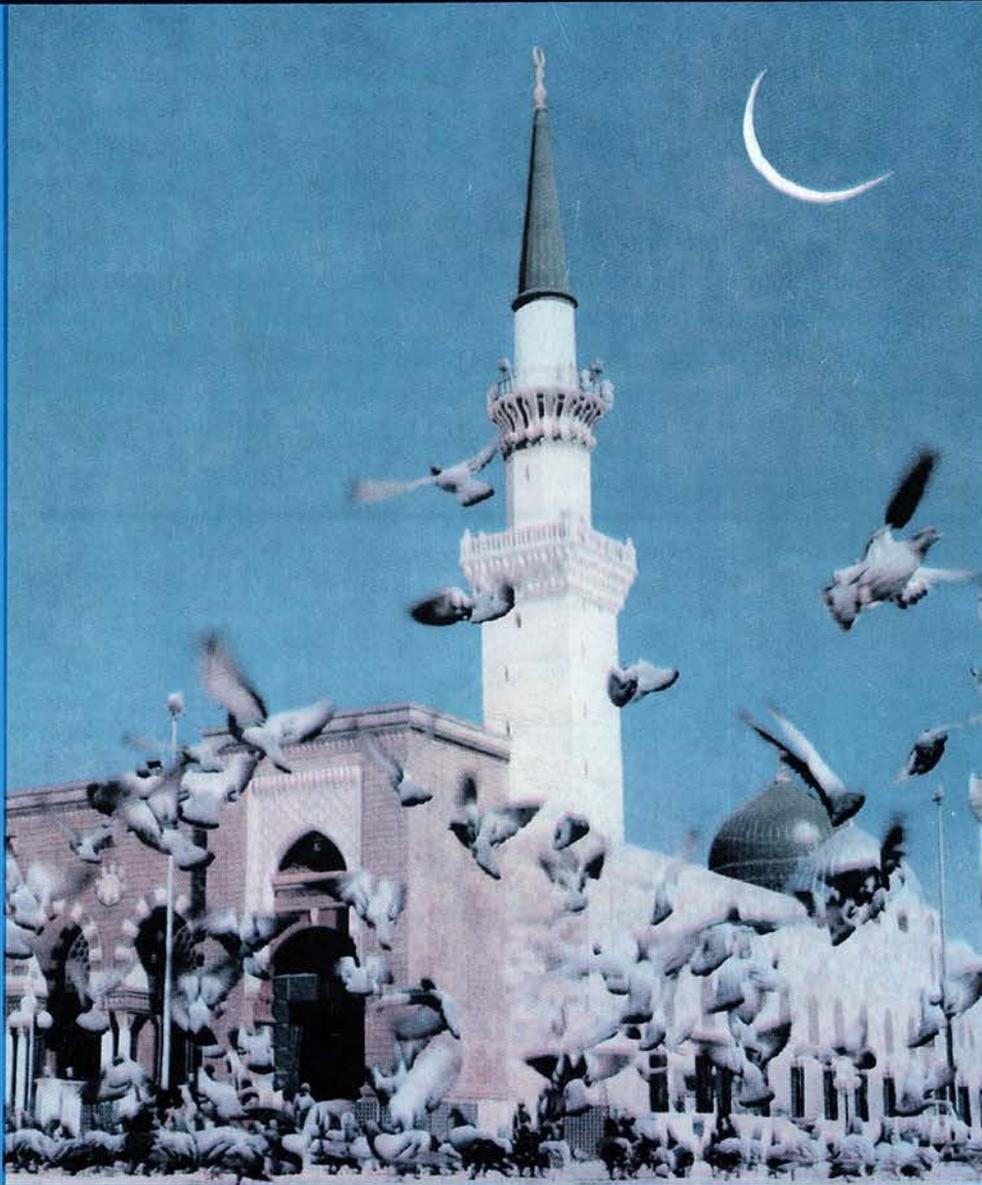


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إِنِّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

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Talha ibn Ubaidullah relates that on seeing a new moon, the Holy Prophet would supplicate: Allah, do Thou cause the appearance of this moon to be a harbinger of peace, faith, security and Islam for us. Thy Lord, O moon, and mine is Allah. May this be a moon presaging guidance and good.

THE MONTH OF RAMADHAN IS THE SAFEST MONTH FOR A BELIEVER

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV, in his Friday Sermon on January 26, 1996, elaborated on the superiority of Fasting, in the light of the Holy Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.). He said that the one person who had the best knowledge of the blessings and advantages of Ramadhan was the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) himself. He related some of the sayings of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and said that a person who fasts with fortitude and sincerity, his sins are forgiven.

Huzoor said that the *Tahajjud* prayers are especially related to Ramadhan. Those who fast, get a way opened up for them for *Tahajjud*. He said that even children should be encouraged to get up at *Sahri* time so they can at least say the *Nawafil* prayers.

With reference to the Hadith, Huzoor said that

when Ramadhan arrives, the gates of heaven are opened up and the gates of hell are closed and Satans are tied up. It does not mean that there is no one who can do bad deeds in Ramadhan. The glad tidings are for those believers who remain within the limits set up by the Quran and he Hadith. For them, Ramadhan brings so many tidings for good deeds and fear of God that it is not possible for them to do any bad thing which may take them towards hell. It is the safest month for the believer because he is ever vigilant to do good and shun evil.

Every person has a Satan attached to him. For a believer that Satan is tied up. Efforts should be made to tie down this Satan permanently. The gates of hell are opened for them who live outside the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Hadith.

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FROM THE HOLY QURAN

“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 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 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 ﴿١٨٤﴾ 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 ﴿١٨٥﴾ شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبْنِي لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾ أَجَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفْعُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنكُمْ فَالَّذِينَ بَاسُوا بِهِنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَىٰ اللَّيْلِ وَلَا تَبَاسُرُوا هُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَافُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ذَٰلِكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لِيَتَّعِبَ لِّلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٩﴾

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SO SAID THE HOLY PROPHET (PEACE AND BLESSINGS OF ALLAH BE ON HIM)

ON FASTING

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet 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...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

Abu Sa'id Khudri relates that the Holy Prophet 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 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 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 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.

On Munificent Charity etc. during Ramadhan

Ibn Abbas relates that the Holy Prophet 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 waxed faster than the rain-bearing breeze (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

On Prohibition of Fasting

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: Do not observe the fast on two days preceding *Ramadhan*, but this does not apply to one who has made a practice of it (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

Ibn Abbas relates that the Holy Prophet said: Do not anticipate *Ramadhan*. Start the fast with observing the new moon and terminate it with observing it. If the sky is overcast let the month run to thirty days (*Tirmidhi*).

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: When the middle of Sha'ban arrives do not observe a fast during the rest of it (*Tirmidhi*).

Ammar ibn Yasir said: He who observes the fast on a doubtful day disobeys the Holy Prophet (*Abu Daud and Tirmidhi*).

On Supplication on Observing the New Moon

Talha ibn Ubaidullah relates that, on seeing a new moon, the Holy Prophet would supplicate: Allah, do Thou cause the appearance of this moon to be a harbinger of peace, faith, security and Islam for us. Thy Lord, O moon, and mine is Allah. May this be a moon presaging guidance and good (*Tirmidhi*).

On Breakfast during Ramadhan

Anas relates that the Holy Prophet 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 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*).

Ibn Umar relates that the Holy Prophet had appointed two *muezzins*. Bilal and Ibn Umm Maktum. He said: Bilal calls the *Azan* while it is still night. So continue your breakfast till Ibu Umm Maktum calls it. There was in fact only a brief interval between the two (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

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

On the Time of Breaking the Fast etc.

Sahl ibn Sa'ad relates that the Holy Prophet said: My people will adhere to good as long as they do not delay the breaking of the fast (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

Abu Atiyyah relates: Masruq and I visited Ayesha and Masruq said to her: There are two of the companions of the Holy Prophet neither of whom holds back from any type of good; one of them goes forward in breaking his fast and offering *Maghrib* Prayer and the other retards both. She asked: Who is the one who goes forward in breaking his fast and offering *Maghrib*? He answered: Abdullah ibn Mas'ud. She observed: The Holy Prophet did the same (*Muslim*).

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: Allah, the Lord of honor and glory says: Of My servants I love most those who are foremost in breaking their fasts (*Tirmidhi*).

Umar ibn Khattab relates that the Holy Prophet said: When the night approaches from the East and the

day retreats in the West and the sun has set, the one observing the fast breaks it (*Bukhari & Muslim*)

Salman ibn 'Amir Dhabi relates that the Holy Prophet said: Break your fast with a date, else with water for it is pure (*Abu Daud and Tirmidhi*).

Anas relates: The Holy Prophet used to break his fast before offering *Maghrib* with fresh dates, failing that with dry dates and failing that he would swallow a few mouthfuls of water (*Abu Daud & Tirmidhi*)

On Safeguarding the Fast

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: If a person does not eschew falsehood and false conduct, Allah has no need that he should abstain from food and drink (*Bokhari*).

On Miscellaneous Matters Concerning the Fast

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: Should any of you eat or drink in forgetfulness of the fast, he should continue his fast till the end, for Allah has fed him and given him to drink (*Bokhari and Muslim*)

Laqit ibn Sabarah relates: I asked the Holy Prophet to inform me about the ablutions. He answered: Carry out the ablutions completely in all respects, and remember that you clean out the base of your fingers and wash out your nose well, but be careful in this last if you should be observing the fast (*Abu Daud and Tirmidhi*).

Ayesha and Umm Salamah relate: Should the Holy Prophet have consorted with a wife he would start and complete his fast as usual (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

On the Excellence of Fasting on the First Six Days of Shawal

Abu Ayub relates that the Holy Prophet said: He who observes the fast throughout *Ramadhan* and then follows it up with observing the fast on the first six days of Shawal is as if he had observed the fast throughout the year (*Muslim*).

On the Desirability of Fasting on Three Days in every Month

Abu Dharr relates that the Holy Prophet said: If you observe fast on three days in a month, then make them the days of the 13th, 14th, and 15th nights of the moon (*Tirmidhi*).

On the Excellence of Providing for the Breaking of the Fast

Zaid ibn Khalid Juhni relates that the Holy Prophet said: He who provides for the breaking of the fast of another earns the same merit as the one who was observing the fast without diminishing in any way the reward of the latter (*Tirmidhi*).

Umm Ammarah relates that the Holy Prophet visited her and she put some food before him. He asked her to eat also. She said: I am fasting. On this he observed: Angels call down blessings on a person who should be fasting when other people eat in his presence till they finish (or till they have eaten their fill) (*Tirmidhi*).

Anas relates that the Holy Prophet came to visit Sa'ad ibn Ubadah who brought bread and olive oil and presented it to him. The Holy Prophet partook of it and said: Those who were fasting have broken their fast with you and the righteous have eaten your food while the angels were calling down blessings on you (*Abu Daud*).

On Retreat

Ibn Umar relates that the Holy Prophet used to go into retreat in the mosque during the last ten days of *Ramadhan* (*Bokhari and Muslim*)

Ayesha relates that the Holy Prophet went into retreat during the last ten days of *Ramadhan* till Allah caused his death. Thereafter his wives used to go into retreat (*Bokhari and Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet went into retreat for ten days in the month of *Ramadhan* but in the year in which he died he went into retreat for twenty days (*Bokhari*).

From the Writings of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him):

THE PURPOSE OF FASTING IS PURIFICATION

I have already spoken of the *Salat*. Next in order is worship in the form of fasting. It is a pity that some who call themselves Muslims at this time desire to modify these forms of worship. They are blind and are not aware of the perfect wisdom of God Almighty. These forms of worship are essential for the purification of the spirit. These people seek to intervene absurdly in a sphere of which they have no knowledge and devise false schemes for the improvement of a territory that they have not visited. Their lives are devoted to worldly affairs; of spiritual matters they have no notion.

To be moderate in eating and drinking and to bear hunger and thirst are necessary for the purification of the spirit and promote the capacity for visions. Man does not live by bread alone. To discard all thoughts of eternal life is to invite Divine wrath. But it should

be remembered that the fast does not mean merely that a person should abstain from food and drink over a certain period. During the fast one should be occupied greatly with the remembrance of God. The Holy Prophet, peace be on him, occupied himself greatly with worship during the month of *Ramadhan*. During that month one should discard one's preoccupation with eating and drinking and cutting asunder from these needs should address oneself wholly towards God.

Unfortunate is the person who is bestowed material bread and pays no attention to spiritual bread. Material bread strengthens the body, and spiritual bread sustains the soul and sharpens the spiritual faculties. Seek the grace of God, as all doors are opened by His grace. (*Malfoozat*, Vol. 9, p. 123)

A MONTH OF GREAT BLESSINGS

Almighty Allah has declared *Ramazan-ul-Mubarak* a very important and blessed month. The revelation of the Holy Quran started in this month. Allah says:

“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.” (2:186).

This is the same blessed month in which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to pray in the cave of Hira before he was commissioned to be a prophet. In this reference *Ibn-e-Ishaq* narrated that every year the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to stay in the cave of Hira for worship in the month of *Ramazan*, until one year when he had gone there as usual for worship. Hazrat Gibrael (Archangel Gabriel) descended on him and he received the first revelation. (*Al Seerah-tul-Nabawiyah*). That is how the revelation of the Quran began in this blessed month and the foundation of religion of Islam was laid.

According to the Islamic calendar, the month of *Shabaan* precedes the month of *Ramazan*. Hazrat Salman Farsi narrates that on the last night of *Shabaan* the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) addressed us and said:

“O people! A month of great glory and prestige is about to dawn on you. Yes a month of blessings in which comes a night which is better than a thousand months. Almighty Allah has made fasting obligatory during day time and worship at nights as *Nafil*.”

He (the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)) said, “this month is the month of patience and reward for this patience is Heaven. This is the month of compassion.”

He also said “This is such a month in which the livelihood of the believers is increased. (*Mishkat al Masaabeeh, First Volume, The Book of Fasting, third*

chapter).

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) had described the greatness of this month on different occasions and had established the significance and importance of this month in the hearts of people. Out of these sayings some are mentioned here,

1. “This is the month, the beginning of which is blessings and the middle of which is forgiveness and the end of which is a time for perfect reward, i.e., deliverance from hell.” (*Mishkat al Masaabeeh, First Volume, The Book of Fasting, third chapter*).
2. “This is the month in which any person who wakes up in the nights of *Ramazan* with the intention of seeking pleasure of Allah and to fulfill the requirement of faith, all the previous sins of that person are forgiven.” (*Bukhari, Book of Fasting*)
3. “In this month anyone who worships with sincerity and seeking pleasure of Allah, such a one is cleansed free of sins as one was the day one was born.” (*Nisai, Book of Fasting*)
4. “This is the month in which the doors of heaven are opened and the doors of hell are closed and Satan is chained.” (*Bukhari, Book of Fasting*).
5. “This is the month in which a caller calls out that O! who is desirous of good, come and move forward and O! who is desirous of evil, stop! And a lot of people are delivered from fire for the sake of Allah and it so happens in every night of *Ramazan*.” (*Ibn-e-Maja, Book of Fasting*)
6. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has declared this month the gateway of worship. He said, “For everything is a gateway and *Ramazan* is a gateway of worship” (*Al-Jame-al-Munir fee Ahadeeth al Nazeer, Part One, Hadeeth #2415*)
7. This is the blessed month in which the Archangel Gabriel used to complete the recitation of the Holy Quran with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and in the last *Ramazan* before the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) he completed it twice.
8. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, “The almsgiving

during this month is the best of all almsgiving.”
(*Sunan Al Tirmizi*)

9. “Anyone who lightens the burden of one’s servant and lessens the workload in this month, Almighty Allah will forgive such a person and will deliver him from fire.” (*Mishkat al Masaabeeh, First Volume, The Book of Fasting, third chapter*).
10. “Anyone who does not quit lying and committing wrong deeds during fasting. Allah does not care for such person’s giving up eating and drinking.” (*Bukhari, Book of Fasting*)
11. On another occasion he said, “Fasting does not mean just quit eating and drinking, rather, giving up all loose talk and stopping from utterance of obscenities is also included in it. Therefore, those who keep fast should be aware that if anyone abuses you or angers you, you just tell him that I am fasting.” (*Bukhari, Book of Fasting*)

If anyone indulges in loose and obscene talk while fasting then his fast would be nothing more than staying hungry and thirsty and would not achieve any reward.

Therefore if one does not take care of these requirements and etiquette of fasting then such a person is not going to get any benefit from it. Fasting is a kind of worship which is done by following and fulfilling all the conditions. A lot of unfortunate people lose the best of the rewards of this worship by not paying proper attention to these conditions.

Hazrat Abu Huraira narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, “There are a lot of people who do not gain anything except hunger and thirst by fasting and there are many who wake up at night to say prayers but do not gain anything except sleeplessness.” (*Ibn-e-Maja, Book of Fasting*)

Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.) said, “One who keeps fast should be careful that fasting does not only means that one should stay hungry but should constantly remember Allah while fasting.”

Then he said, “This month is better than the rest of the months.” (*Speeches At Annual Convention 1906, pp 20-21*)

This is such an important month that safety and

blessings for the rest of the year depend upon completing this month safely (while fulfilling all the conditions).

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, “If *Ramazan* is passed safely then be rest assured that the rest of the year will be safe.” (*Al Jaame-al-Sagheer, Part One, Hadeeth # 675*)

One should be very careful about maintaining the proper honor and observing the etiquettes of the blessed and sacred month of *Ramazan* so that from physical, spiritual, moral, and every other aspect, the rest of the year should become a source of peace and blessings and this month should become an expiation for sins and weaknesses for the rest of the year.

Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.), while describing the importance and significance of the month of *Ramazan*, said, “The importance of the month of *Ramazan* is evident from the verse of the Holy Quran, “*Shahro Ramazan allazi Unzela fee-hil Quran*” (2:186). The divines have written that for enlightenment of the soul this is a very important month. Frequent revelations are received during this month. *Salat* (prayer) results in *Tazkia-e-Nafs* and *Saum* (Fasting) results in *Tajjalli-e-Qalb*.

Tazkia-e-Nafs means that one becomes distant from evils of *Nafs-e-Ammara* (a soul inclined towards evil), and *Tajjalli-e-Qalb* means that the door of revelation is opened so that one attains communion with Allah and witnesses Him.” (*Malfoozat, Volume 4, p. 256*)

If someone is so unfortunate that in addition to the fasts in *Ramazan* he is also deprived of other prayers and blessings of this month then he should say the following prayer as described by Hazrat Promised Messiah (a.s.).

“O Allah! This is your blessed month and I am missing the 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.”

The Promised Messiah (a.s.) added: If he seeks the power and strength from Allah then I am certain that Allah will bestow strength on such a soul. (*Malfoozat, Volume 4, p. 288*)

FASTING IN ISLAM

(An abridged version of the translation (originally published in the Ahmadiyya Gazette, December 1998) from *Fiqah-e-Ahmadiyya*, the authoritative compilation on Islamic jurisprudence according to Ahmadiyya interpretation.

Fasting is an important pillar of Islam. This act of devotion suppresses temptations, cultivates patience and instills zeal to obey Allah.

The Promised Messiah (A.S.) has said:

“A religion without hardship and trials is devoid of potential for accomplishing reformation.” (*Fatawa Ahmadiyya*, p.183)

Fasting literally means Abstention. In Islamic terminology *Saum* (fasting) means abstention from eating, drinking and sexual intercourse from dawn to dusk, with an intention of religious devotion. Allah, the Almighty, says in the Holy Quran:

“*And eat and drink until the white thread becomes distinct to you from the black thread of the dawn. Then complete the fast until the nightfall.*” (2:188)

Abstention from eating, drinking and conjugal relations, in obedience to divine command, symbolically stands for warning to guard us from impulses of all kinds of vices and evil tendencies. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s. a. w.) is reported to have said:

“He who does not abandon falsehood and false actions in state of fast, Allah has no need that he should abandon his food and drink.” (*Bokhari*)

This hadith simply conveys that if the real purpose of fasting is eclipsed, mere hunger and thirst cannot be beneficial. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), remarked at another occasion:

“Fasting not only implies abstaining from eating and drinking but also from all type of gossip and obscene talk. Should anyone revile or seek to pick a quarrel with a fasting person, he should suppress his anger and respond: ‘I am observing fast’. If anyone utters abusive and insulting words, despite fasting, his hunger and thirst would go in vain.” (*Daarmy* with reference to *Mishkat*, p. 177)

FASTING AMONG EARLIER PEOPLE

Fasting as an act of divine worship, can be traced in ancient religions. Allah, the Almighty, has referred

to it in the Holy Quran:

“*O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you so that you may guard against evil.*” (2:184)

Although Islamic fasting differs in form from the fasting practiced by followers of earlier religions, basic elements appear to be common. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) has referred to one such difference:

“A major difference between our fast and the fast of the Jewish people is that we take meal at dawn (*sahoor*) while the Jews do not.” (*Musnad Daarmy*, p. 154)

Hindus are permitted to eat or drink during fasting with the exception of certain types of foods and drinks. Christians, in some kind of fasts, do not eat meat or leaven bread. In some religious denominations, fast continues for twenty four hours without taking meals at the start. Some people fast for four consecutive days. Others refrain from solid food during fast. They are allowed to partake light refreshment like milk or juice. Such food does not invalidate their fast.

PURPOSE OF ISLAMIC FAST

The main purpose of the prescribed fasting is soul-purification through self-denial and self-discipline. In fasting, one abandons all sorts of permissible pleasures, shuns all types of prohibited things and concentrates on good deeds.

The following words of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih, II, (R.A.) emphasize the same aspect:

“The fasting does not aim to torture individuals with pangs of hunger and thirst. If hunger or thirst could have bestowed Paradise on humans, even the worst type of non-believers or hypocrites would have ventured to enter Paradise by abstaining from food and drink till death. It is extremely difficult to bring about a moral and spiritual revolution in one’s life, which is the main objective of the institution of fasting. People are

used to hunger and thirst during strikes in prisons or for pressing their demands. Brahmans (a priestly class in India) have been employing this technique to force their followers to obey them. Experiencing hunger or thirst does not constitute a supreme sacrifice. Hence it is not the real purpose of fasting.

The real purpose of fasting in Ramadhan is that the believers should be fully prepared to abandon everything for the sake of Allah. The discipline of hunger and thirst is merely symbolic. A believer is prepared to abstain from eating, drinking and sexual gratification for Allah's sake. When he can easily and willingly surrender what is lawful and permitted, he would not be tempted to violate Allah's prohibitions. Ramadhan comes to remind us that the blessed time has come that we should abandon even our lawful rights for Allah's sake." (*Alfazl*, March 30, 1926, p. 5)

Hazrat Khalifatul-Mashi, I (R. A.) once remarked:

"He who leaves his own possessions, whose use is neither legally nor morally prohibited, for Allah's sake, would never cast a glance at the things which belong to others. Naturally he would never harbor the desire of using things which have been declared unlawful by Allah." (*Alfazl*, December 17, 1966, p. 8)

Religiously speaking, fasting not only purifies the soul but also illumines the heart to experience spiritual enlightenment. Fasting bestows many important physical, moral and social advantages. It equips us with an ever increasing energy to penetrate in the spiritual realm. Fasting is a kind of spiritual food. Material food nourishes and sustains our body. This spiritual food (fasting) purifies and fortifies our soul. The Quranic verse "*And the fasting is good for you, if you only knew*" (2:185) refers to it.

The Holy Quran presents fasting as a time-honored confirmed prescription for attainment of self-purification and righteousness:

"O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those who were before you, so that you may guard against evil." (2:184)

There are four things which are sources of all rebellious tendencies: (1) Eating (2) Consumption of beverages (3) Lust (4) Wish to avoid hard work and

exertion.

All other actions and situations are the off-shoots of the above culprits. Since all other rebellious acts sprout from the above mentioned four things, Islam has sought to harness them by prescribing obligatory fasting. Imagine a man who does not wish to work hard, to earn lawful income, rather he prefers to have money by hook or by crook. If he fasts, it would become practically difficult for him to pursue that course of action. He has to devote a major part of night in worship. Moreover he has to get up early for taking meal for fasting (*sahoor*) and has to refrain from idle talk and obscene language and other bad deeds during fasting. Moreover he is exposed to this rigorous discipline throughout Ramadhan and becomes used to it. Naturally a great change is silently wrought in his thinking. Likewise he has to abandon eating, drinking and coition in state of fast, from dawn to sunset. Practically he is liberated from the bondage of those powerful impulses which generally lead to sin." (*Alfazl*, December 17, 1966)

Fasting has physical advantages too. It bestows on a practicing believer a great deal of patience and fortitude to face tribulations and difficulties. At times, certain food restrictions are imposed as medical necessity. If the principle of moderation is followed, it ensures good health. In other words, fasting is a source of righteousness from spiritual point of view and at the same time ensures good health, inculcates excellent morals, preserves chastity, honesty, integrity, virtuous conduct, patience and courage. It generates sympathy in the heart by creating a soft corner for the poor and less fortunate segments of society. That is how fasting helps to promote economic and social harmony.

HIGH RANK AND REWARD FOR FASTING

A well known Hadith reads:

"Allah says that man undertakes many things for his own sake but observes fast for My sake and I shall bestow the reward for it. He undertakes fast, gives up his food, drink and desire for My sake. (*Bokhari*, p. 255)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) remarked:

"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." (*Bokhari*)

“He who observes midnight prayer and fasts in Ramadhan, with intention of satisfying all the requirements of faith, his/her previous sins are pardoned.” (Bokhari, p. 260)

KINDS OF FASTS

The Holy Quran and Hadith refer to different kinds of fasts which can be divided into two classes:

1. Obligatory fasts
2. Voluntary fasts

OBLIGATORY FASTS

1. Prescribed fasts in the month of Ramadhan,
2. Omitted fasts of Ramadhan which must be undertaken,
3. Fast for atoning “Zihar”.*
4. Fast for atoning unintentional murder
5. Sixty consecutive fasts as penalty for breaking a prescribed fast intentionally
6. Atonement fast for breaking an oath.
7. Fasting to honor a voluntary pledge to fast
8. Fasts associated with *Hajj-e-Tammatu*** and *Hajj-e-Qiran****
9. Penalty fasts for hunting in state of *Ihram*
10. Penalty fasts for shaving head in state of *Ihram*.

VOLUNTARY FASTS

1. Six fasts in the month of *Shawal*
2. Fast on the day of *Ashura*
3. Fasts observed by Prophet Daud (David) – i.e. fasting on alternate days.
4. Fasting on the day of *Arafa* (i.e. 9th *Zil-Hajj*)
5. Fasting on 13th, 14th and 15th day of every lunar month of Islamic calendar.

PROHIBITED DAYS

It may please be noted that fasting is prohibited on the following days/occasions:

1. *Eid-ul-fitr* (1st *Shawal*)
2. *Eid-ul-adhia* (10th *Zil Hajj*)
3. *Tashriq* days (11th, 12th and 13th *Zil-Hajj*)
4. Fasting on every day of the year (365 days consecutively)
5. Fasting on “*Nerose*” and “*Mehrgan*”*

(*Fatawa Alamgeeri* and *Durr-e-Mukhtar* with reference to *Bahar-e-Shariat* Vol. 5, p. 98)

FASTING IN RAMADHAN

The Holy Quran refers to Ramadhan as a blessed month. The revelation of the Holy Quran ensued in the

month of Ramadhan.

“The month of Ramadhan is that in which the Quran was revealed as a guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and judgement (between right and wrong). (2:186)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is reported to have said about the month of Ramadhan:

“When Ramadhan arrives, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are locked up and Satans are put in chains.” (Bokhari - p. 255)

Ramadhan is the month of divine blessings and mercy. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) used to devote a lot of time, energy and money in supplications and charity.

OBLIGATION TO FAST

Every adult, sane and capable (healthy) Muslim male and female is bound to fast in the month of Ramadhan. Travelers and sick persons are exempted with the condition that they should complete the omitted days of fasting later on (before the advent of next Ramadhan). The following categories of people are excused from fasting on the condition that they should pay expiation (*Fidya*) by feeding a poor man for each omitted fast.

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

The Holy Quran says:

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

BEGINNING OF THE FASTING SESSION

The following Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) deals with this issue:

“Do not start fasting without observing the crescent (of Ramadhan)” (Bokhari, p. 255)

It has two aspects:

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

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

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

INTENTION (NIYYA) FOR FASTING

It is necessary that one should intend to keep fast as a religious obligation. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is reported to have said:

“He who fasts without having an intention for observing fast, prior to Fajr, is without a fast.” (Tirmidhi, p. 87)

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

TIME TO START AND END THE FAST

The Holy Quran says:

“*And eat and drink until the white thread becomes distinct to you from the black thread of dawn. Then complete the fast till nightfall.*” (2: 188)

The following Hadith of The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) deals with the same subject:

“When the night approaches and the day retreats and the sun has set, the one observing the fast breaks it.” (Tirmidhi, p. 88)

Keeping fast with some food around midnight or

without taking meals at dawn is not in accordance with the practice of The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.). The showering of divine blessings is associated with following the practice of The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), which is partaking of meals before breaking of dawn, known as "*sahoor*". The Holy Prophet (s.a.w) advised his companions with the following words:

“Take breakfast before the fast begins, there is blessing in breakfast.” (Bokhari, p. 257)

Now-a-days we can easily estimate the time for breaking of dawn (time to stop eating) with reference to time of sunrise. It is an hour and twenty two minutes before the sunrise. Next activity is the *Fajr* prayer. The time between the two (end of *Sahoor* and start of *Fajr* prayer) is roughly equal to the time spent on the recitation of fifty verses of The Holy Quran.

END OF THE FAST

Soon after the sunset, one should hasten to break the fast. Unnecessary delay in breaking the fast is not a correct attitude. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is reported to have said:

“My people will adhere to good as long as they do not delay in breaking the fast.” (Bokhari, p. 263)

Another Hadith gives some interesting details:

“We were with The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) in the course of a journey, when he was observing a voluntary fast. When the sun set he said to someone: so and so, dismount and prepare the food for us. He answered: Messenger of Allah if you would let it be dark. He repeated: Dismount and prepare the *Aftari* (food) for us. The man said: there is daylight still. The Holy Prophet said a third time: Dismount and prepare the *Aftari* for us. On this the man dismounted and brought him the *Aftari*. The Holy Prophet ate of it and pointing to the East said: When you perceive the night approaching from that direction let the one observing the fast break it.” (Muslim, p. 456)

Breaking of fast with dates, milk or water is the practice (*Sunnah*) of The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

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

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

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

“Thirst has been quenched, arteries have been refreshed and the reward for fasting would be granted by the grace of Allah.” (Abu Daud)

According to a saying of The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), he who makes arrangement for breaking of the fast of another believer, is granted the reward of observing a fast, without diminishing the reward of the other.

INFRACTIONS OF FASTING

The following factors invalidate the fast:

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

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

There is “*Qada*” (restitution) as well as “*Kaffara*” (atonement) for breaking a fast deliberately. “*Qada*” consists of fasting one day for each invalidated fast. “*Kaffara*” is the penalty for the same offence and consist of two months of consecutive fasting or feeding of sixty poor or needy people. Sixty poor persons can be fed collectively on a single day – or one poor man can be given provisions or cash to cover food expenses for sixty days.

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

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

WHAT DOES NOT INVALIDATE A FAST

The following do not vitiate fasting:

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

into throat or food pipe. Same applies to droplets of water while gargling or swallowing of one’s saliva.

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

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) has prohibited men from using eye cosmetic while fasting (*Musnad Darrmy*, p. 157)

In answer to a similar question, the Promised Messiah (A.S.) said:

“There is no express need for use of eye cosmetic during the day in Ramadhan. Let him apply it at night.” (*Badr*, February 7, 1907)

DISRESPECT FOR RAMADHAN

Failure to observe fasting in the month of Ramadhan, without valid reason or for minor excuses is a wrong and unfortunate development. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is reported to have said:

“If someone neglect a single fast in Ramadhan, without an acceptable excuse, he cannot make amends for the omission even by fasting for the rest of his life.” (*Musnad Daarhy*, p. 156)

The following remarks of Hazrat Khalifatul-Mashi, II, emphasize the importance of fasting:

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

cannot be justified.” (*Al-Fazl*, April 11, 1925)

PRONOUNCEMENTS (FATAWA)

FASTING AND INTENTION (NIYYA)

Question: Is declaration of intention necessary for fasting?

Answer: Hadhrat Khalifatul-Mashi II (R.A.) said:

“Intention is necessary for fasting. No reward is credited without intention. Intention is the determination of heart and mind.” (*The Alfazl*, July 28, 1914)

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

Question: A person did not intend to fast at the time of ‘*Sahoor*’ but made an intention to do so around 10 or 11 o’clock. Is this type of “fast” a valid fast?

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

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) remarked:

“Only that man’s fast is valid who made a firm intention for fasting on that day before *Fajr*.” (*Tirmidhi*, p. 91)

Another Hadith shows that there is some flexibility in case of voluntary fasting. The Hadith reveals that at times The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) would come home in the morning and ask for some food for breakfast. On finding that no food was available, he would opt to observe fasting.” (*Muslim*, p. 481)

Another Hadith refers to a particular situation when, before noon, the news reached Medina that the Ramadhan crescent had been sighted in Suburbia. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) decreed:

“He who has not eaten anything from dawn should intend to complete fast but those who have taken meals should fast on another day as restitution

(‘*Qada*’)” (*Abu Daud*, p. 320)

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

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

It may be noted that it is an important *Sunnah* of The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

“Take food for fasting because such a food is blessed.” (*Bokhari*, p. 257)

Another Hadith conveys that angels invoke blessings on a person who takes meals for observing fast. (*Sharah Muatta Imam Malik*, Vol. 3, p. 15)

Question: The following question was presented to the Promised Messiah (A.S.) for guidance:

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

Answer: The Promised Messiah (A.S.) replied:

“His fast is valid. There is no need to keep a substitute fast as retribution (“*Qada*”) because he has observed precaution and has made intention for the fasting.” (*The Badr*, February 4, 1907)

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

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

Answer: According to Arabic lexicon the word “*lail*” (night) refers to the time from sunset to sunrise – but in accordance with the Holy Prophet’s (S.A.W.) *sunnah*, the Qur’anic usage of the term refers to the beginning of night, i.e., the time of sunset.

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

“When you perceive the night approaching from the East and sun setting in the West, let the one observing the fast break it.” (*Bokhari*, p. 262; *Muslim*, p. 456)

FASTING AND TRAVELING

i. The Promised Messiah (A.S.) regarded fasting

during journey or sickness as a violation of Divine commandment contained in the Holy Quran.

“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.” (2:185)

- ii. Considering the physical displacement, a journey terminating in the Jama'at Headquarters, is still a journey. Since the Holy Quran exempts travelers from fasting, the travelers who reached Qadian before sunset, were told to break their fast on the instruction of the Promised Messiah (A.S.)
- iii. The people who are obliged to travel as part of their professional duties i.e., railway guards, drivers, pilots postal workers, etc., would not be regarded as travelers. They are required to fast during Ramadhan. (*Fiqah-e-Ahmadiyya*, p. 288)

The Promised Messiah (A.S.) has elaborated this issue from another angle:

“If someone travels by rail and does not experience any difficulty, he may fast, otherwise he is entitled to benefit from the leave granted by Allah.” (*The Al-Hakam*, December 24, 1900)

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

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

FASTING WHILE TRAVELING

Hadhrat Khalifa-Tul-Mashi II, (R.A.) once gave the following remarks on the issue:

“My belief about traveling is that the journey which is undertaken after ‘*Sahoor*’ and which ends before sunset – is not a journey from point of view of fasting. Maybe some jurists have a dissident opinion on this point but I think that Islamic *Sharia* stops from fasting while traveling but does not ban traveling while fasting. Therefore a journey which starts after ‘*Sahoor*’ and ends before sunset is not a journey for the purpose of fasting. One can travel

in state of fast but cannot fast when traveling.” (*The Alfazl*, Sept. 25, 1942)

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

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

SUMMARY OF THE ABOVE DISCUSSION

Traveling can take the following four forms:

1. Continuous journey on foot or by a vehicle and the traveler is constantly covering distance. He should not fast in this situation.
2. If he breaks his journey and has to pass the night and the following day at a place where he can keep fast by using the available facilities. In such a case he may or may not fast.
3. He takes meals at *Sahoor* and then embarks upon journey and anticipates to return home before sunset. In this situation he may fast.
4. Suppose he has to stay at another location for fifteen days or more and can make arrangement for meals at *Sahoor*. In this particular situation he should fast regularly.

The Promised Messiah (A.S.) says about travelers and the sick:

“Any sick person or a traveler who fasts in the month of Ramadhan, violates Divine law. Allah, the Almighty has explicitly exempted the sick and the travelers from the obligation to fast. They should fast for the same number of omitted days after recovering from illness or after returning from the journey... Salvation cannot be achieved forcibly by dint of virtuous deeds. It comes as a manifestation of Divine grace. Allah has not differentiated between major or minor illness or long or short journey. The command deals with illness or journey without specification. The travelers and the sick who insist on observing fasting, actually become guilty of violating a

Divine command.” (*The Badr*, Oct. 17, 1907)

THE AGE FOR FASTING

Hadhrat Khalifa-Tul-Mashi II, (R.A.) has dealt with this issue in the following words:

“Some parents force their children to fast in Ramadhan. That is a wrong attitude. The fact is that there is a certain age for observance of different commandments. Some commands are to be obeyed at the age of four, some when kids are seven years old and others at fifteen or eighteen years. I think that fasting should be observed at the age of fifteen to eighteen – because this is the age of puberty or maturity. Boys and girls at fifteen, should be told to develop a taste for observing fast in Ramadhan, and should fast regularly as an obligation at eighteen. In our childhood we were eager to observe fasting but the Promised Messiah (A.S.) did not allow us to fast. Childhood is that phase of age when children need environment and facilities to grow and gain strength for future demands. At the age of fifteen, they should start fasting. Next year the number of days for fasting, should be increased. More days should be added in the third year. In this way, gradually they would be prepared to fully honor the institution of fasting.” (*The Alfazl*, April 11, 1925)

“For an aged and infirm person, whose strength and physiology are declining, observing of fasting cannot be regarded as an act of piety, as it is likely to worsen his condition. Likewise for a growing child, who is in the process of storing energy for the demands of forthcoming five or six decades, fasting cannot be counted as a virtuous deed. But if a capable and healthy adult, who is the right person invited in the Quranic verses to observe fasting in Ramadhan, fails to do so, it is sinful in the sight of Allah.” (*The Alfazl*, February 2, 1933)

NURSING MOTHERS, EXPECTANT LADIES, MINORS AND STUDENTS

The Holy Quran exempts from fasting the sick and the travelers. Such exemption does not exist in the Holy Quran for nursing mothers and pregnant ladies but the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) has placed them in the category of “the sick”. Likewise kids, who are in need of rich nourishment for growth, can be

placed in the same category. Same applies to the students, with weak build-up, who prepare for examination and are exposed to extreme mental stress. At times such students fall sick physically or mentally. One should evaluate this situation with utmost care. What is the benefit of fasting for a few days, in such circumstances and becoming deprived of the blessing of fasting for the rest of the life. (*The Alfazl*, Vol. 18, No. 88, 1930-31)

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

Answer: Islam does not teach us to make fasting an excuse to run away from our day-to-day normal activities. If the work schedule of a person makes fasting practically unbearable, then he can be placed in the category of “the sick”. In that case, he himself is solely responsible for this decision or choice. Allah would treat him in the light of his intention and the existing situation. In such circumstances, a man himself is the best judge of his heart and mind.

A person who always falls sick on account of observance of fasting, is exempted from this exercise. If it is a kind of permanent condition, then he is permanently exempted. But if this condition is the result of a particular weather or season then he should fast same number of days at some other time of the year. The situation must be handled with a high degree of righteousness. His excuse of being “sick” must be valid and genuine. (*The Alfazl*, May 22, 1922)

Question: Periodically Ramadhan comes in a season when, for instance, farm-workers have to do a lot of labor in the fields. What is the Islamic teaching in respect of the affected people?

Answer: The following remarks of the Promised Messiah (A.S.) shed light on the subject:

“The Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) teaches that actions would be judged in the light of intentions. The affected people know the true nature of their situation. Every individual should decide in the spirit of high degree of righteousness and piety. (*The Badr*, September 26, 1907)

JUMA OF FAREWELL OR JUMA OF WELCOME

(Friday Sermon of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV, delivered on February 7, 1997. And published in Al Fazl International, March 28, 1997. A stimulating guidance provided for those who come to the Mosque only once a year to perform Juma 'a tul wida (the Juma of Farewell) and have forgotten the true significance and importance of Salat (Prayer) in Islam. Slightly abridged from the English translation printed in the Ahmadiyya Gazette, January, 2000)

Huzoor (a.b.a.) said:

“*Juma 'a tul wida* (the last Friday of Ramadhan) is regarded most sacred but I am not certain when this concept was introduced in Islam. It appears to have deep historical significance among Muslims of India and Pakistan and elsewhere in the world. Many stories are in vogue about this sacred concept. For this reason I asked the scholars of the Jamaat for investigation of this concept from the *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) so that I could present it to you as a special gift at the time of the *Juma 'a tul Wida* of this Ramadhan. The blessings of *Juma 'a* Prayer are often mentioned in the Holy Quran and in many *Ahadith* but there is no mention of '*Juma 'a tul wida*'. There is nowhere to be found in the *Ahadith* or *Sunnah* (practice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)) any evidence of Muslims impatiently waiting to seek blessings from the last Friday of Ramadhan.

True, the blessings related to the last ten days of Ramadhan are mentioned very often. Blessings of *Juma 'a* Prayer, wherever and whenever it comes during the year, are mentioned. I want to impress this fact upon the memory of all Muslim brothers, (whether they belong to this Jama'at or not) who unfortunately are not regular in offering their obligatory Prayer and are gathered together in the Mosques in search of that sacred day and, who will hear my voice today because only God knows whether they will be able to return to the Mosques again. I want to make use of this occasion to convey to them that there is no special mention of *Juma 'a tul Wida* and its sanctity in the Holy Quran, *Ahadith* or *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) or in the practice of his companions. The kind of day you were waiting for has turned out to be different from your concept of it.

However, *Juma 'a tul Mubarak* is a sacred and blessed day for all Muslims according to the Holy Quran and the *Ahadith*. And this Friday comes every week. Besides, the Holy Quran repeatedly emphasizes

the importance and the sanctity of *Salat* (Prayer) in the life of every believer and it comes five times every day. The Holy Quran repeatedly mentions about this blessing that is available to all Muslims five times every day. *Salat* is a treasure of goodness and full of blessings. No other act of worship is mentioned as often in the Holy Quran as the obligatory Prayer (*Salat*). It is strange that people turn away from this obligation and blessed worship and keep waiting for one Friday for their salvation.

The importance of *Juma 'a tul Wida* is not mentioned anywhere in the Holy Quran or *Ahadith*. But people can at least learn and earn this blessing from this Friday, *Juma 'a tul wida*, if they realize that all goodness of this world and in the hereafter are linked to Allah's worship and every believer is afforded an opportunity to receive them five times a day by performing the obligatory Prayers.

You pass by big Mosques everyday. It may appear to you that those big Mosques are built without any purpose. But you will be amazed to see those big Mosques are overflowing with worshipers today, the day of *Juma 'a tul wida*. Streets are sometimes closed to traffic to make space for people who come for prayer in big cities. Many streets outside the Mosques are closed and sometimes special tents are erected to make space for people who come for *Juma 'a tul Wida*'s Prayer!

In fact, (according to Allah's command) these worshipers are expected to come to the Mosque (where available) five times a day for their obligatory Prayer. You can easily perceive the difference between the misconceived idea of worship of the worldly people who consider *Juma 'a tul wida* as a means to salvation and forget the true concept of worship that pleases Allah and wins His mercy and blessings, and is in accordance with the instructions in the Holy Quran and *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

True salvation lies in the obedience to Allah and

this obedience is best shown through His worship. Worship is the first door to His obedience and entry through this door leads to obedience in all respects. One who closes this door has no access to Allah.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has put great emphasis on Prayer, especially the Prayer in congregation. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) is reported to have said to his companions after one morning's congregational Prayer, 'some people are sleeping in their homes and if I were permitted by Allah I would take these worshipers with me with loads of firewood and would burn their homes with them. But I am not permitted to do that because God has not made me responsible for their actions.'

You can not imagine a person with greater love for mankind than the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). He was so kind that even a small suffering of other human beings grieved him. He was kind and forgiving particularly towards the believers. The above quoted words uttered by the mouth of the most loving and caring Prophet conveys a message that people who sleep at the time they should be present in the Mosque for Prayer are the fuel of fire. It would be better for them to be burnt in this life so that they might be spared the punishment of hell-fire in the life hereafter.

The true import of this sermon is that man is created to worship Allah. Salvation is dependent upon worship. So my message today is for all the people who can hear my voice, having come in large numbers to the Mosque in search of blessings for their salvation and some of them are praying outside in the streets for lack of space inside the Mosques, that our real worship is our Five Daily Prayers. It is the duty of every believer to respond to the call of Prayer. They should leave their homes and business and proceed to the House of God for Prayer every time they hear 'come to the Prayer, come to the *Salat*; come to the salvation, come to success'. This call is heard five times a day then why do they not respond to it and go for success and salvation?

Those who are not able to join the congregational Prayer because of illness or some other reason, then they are responsible for their actions and their case rests with God. Every person knows best his own situation and has to give his own account to God.

If a person can not go the Mosque five times a day for congregational Prayer, he should make 'a mosque' wherever he can. He should try to make his friends and family members to join him in Prayer and he should lead the congregational Prayer for the benefit of all. A person, who is anxious to offer all his Prayers in congregation but is not able to do so, is given this glad tidings that all his Prayers would be counted congregational if he calls 'AZAN' and begins to offer his Prayer as if he were leading a congregation. Then God Almighty shall make the Angels descend and join with him in a Prayer in congregation.

This blessing greets you five times everyday. Those who turn away from it and run after *Juma'a tul wida*, that comes once a year, to seek forgiveness for their sins do not know whether they are going to die just after the *Juma'a* Prayer when their sins have been forgiven (although there is no mention of the promise of Allah's forgiveness attached to *Juma'a tul wida*!) Only Allah knows when the angel of death will visit you, it could be any day of the year. That is why you have an opportunity, five times a day, for Prayer and asking Allah's forgiveness and to be prepared for departure from this world as a purified being.

I, therefore, draw the attention of our Jama'at (and advise all other Muslims who are increasingly joining our *Khutba Juma'a* through Muslim Television Ahmadiyya, MTA), that five daily Prayers should be punctually offered in congregation where possible. This is the soul of the message of the Holy Quran and it should be conveyed to all believers. If all the Muslims fulfil this obligation, then with Allah's blessing a comprehensive system of reformation will be established to bring back the lost glory and greatness of Islam in this world. The outward glory and greatness are interconnected with the inner spiritual glory and greatness. Nothing can be achieved when all efforts are wasted in pursuit of outward glory and greatness and inner spiritual greatness and glory is not restored.

Therefore, you should seek inner greatness and try to develop your inner self first. May God grant you that greatness for which He Himself says: '*the most honorable and the greatest of all persons among you is the one who is the most righteous, the most God fearing.*' This '*Taqwa*' (righteousness) can not be

achieved without fulfilling your obligation of worshiping God Almighty. I am hopeful that with Allah's help you will pursue this objective in life, *Insha Allah*.

I shall now present a Hadith narrating the blessings related to the day of Friday. This Hadith is taken from *Sunnan Ibne Maja*, and is narrated by Abu Lababa son of Abdul Manzar.

'The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said that Friday is the chief of all days and it is greatly ranked in blessing by Allah. Its sanctity is greater than the day of *Al-Adha* and day of *Alfitr*.'

The fact is that the two *Eids* and *Juma'a tul wida* are all highly sacred days but every Friday is declared to be the more sacred day by Allah than both the *Eids* and it has five prayers.

On Friday God grants His servants all their prayers provided they do not ask anything prohibited. There is a special moment on every Friday when God does not refuse any legitimate request made by His obedient servants. This is a message for those who come to *Juma'a* Prayer regularly, they should specially pray for every goodness for this life and for the next life. They should recognize the importance of *Juma'a* Prayer and should keep praying to Allah for making it easy for those who are not able to come for *Juma'a* Prayer.

There is no mention of *Juma'a tul wida* to be found anywhere that one should keep waiting for or to be the last *Juma'a* when one can ask for anything from God once every year. Strangely enough this concept has become now a custom in the entire '*Umma*' and even those people who never say any Prayer throughout the year come to the Mosques with great zeal on '*Juma'a tul wida*'. Mosques begin to overflow with worshipers and many are accommodated under tents in the streets, which are temporarily closed to traffic. One may feel affected by the great scene presented by such huge gatherings of worshipers who apparently have come to seek Allah's blessings through worship. But the most painful aspect of this custom is that they have come to bid farewell not only to the last Friday of Ramadhan but also to all the Fridays that will follow! They have now to take leave not only of Friday Prayer, but also of all Prayers. The

following Friday you will see not only the streets are empty, the Mosques are empty too.

One wonders where those people had come from and where have they gone? Their claim was that they were gathered like moths around a candle. Moths come every night when the candle is lit and their love is proven by the fact that they sacrifice their life for the candlelight. They burn to death but the candle of their love remains alight.

But what kind of love for Ramadhan and *Juma'a tul wida* is this that they come and go in a manner that shows that no relationship was ever established between them and Ramadhan. This seems to be an impulsive act and apparently very impressive. It was a great Friday, even all the streets were overcrowded. But think of the next Friday too when Mosques will be empty. Only a few worshipers who used to come before *Juma'a tul wida* will come or the number of worshipers may even be smaller as some may think that they have worked hard for a full month and they can rest for a few Fridays!

The Holy Quran and *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), as I have said before, make no special mention of *Juma'a tul Wida*. Special emphasis is placed upon the whole of Ramadhan and worship during the night.

Today is *Juma'a tul wida* (farewell *Juma*) but I want to make it a *Juma'a tul istiqlal* (*Juma* of welcome): I must clarify the difference between these two terms. I wait for the whole year to welcome this Friday. But there are many, or at least a large number, who also wait for this Friday but come to bid it farewell. They would like to take leave of all the future Fridays and all goodness. They bid farewell to Friday to take leave of Ramadhan and remembrance of Allah. Most people or at least a large number who attend this Friday with this intention are those who seldom offer their five daily Prayers or *Juma'a Salat*. They never have time for *Juma'a* or other Prayers, they never have time to remember Allah, they never like to sit in the company of the righteous nor do they ever listen to talks related to goodness in life. They keep the company of their own kind where they feel relaxed and do not come under any pressure of those who call others to goodness. They continue wandering with their group, away from Allah.

Only on *Juma'a tul Wida* they are forced by their innate goodness to join the righteous. They are among the righteous today listening to good things but their hope is that after all this is just one Friday and it will pass away. It is *Juma'a tul wida* and they have come to bid it farewell just as children say 'ta ta' to the departing guest.

On the contrary, I have been waiting for this Friday to welcome them because this is a welcome Friday for me. I welcome those people and from this point of view it is a welcome Friday for me. I wait for the whole year for them to come and listen to good things and open their eyes to other realities in life. There is no contradiction in these two concepts of farewell and welcome, it is the way you look at things. For them it is an occasion for farewell and for me it is an occasion to welcome.

WRONG CONCEPT OF JUMA'A TUL WIDA

If a person truly believes in the existence of God and considers Him to be the Greatest of all, then how can he turn away from God when he can not behave like this towards those whom he thinks to be great in this world. Lost in the worldly pursuits, how can one keep one's faith in God Almighty and turn away from Him when the time for daily Prayers comes? This will be a lie and a life of deceit. One must pay attention to this fact that ultimately our return is to Him. God Almighty has created us and has sent us in this world and all the blessings we have received are given to us by Allah, the Creator of the entire Universe. Being ungrateful for all His rewards is indeed a very undesirable kind of life.

You continue to stay at the door of an important person in this world when you think he can bestow something on you. Often he does not. How many politicians are there who have given anything to their followers? It is just a feeling of false pride of being important because of your connection with a highly placed person, although he does not actually give you anything.

Why are you not ever so grateful to God Almighty who is the Creator and Sustainer of all the worlds and has provided you with everything you need in life? His obedience you think is a heavy burden and his worship you consider a calamity! You think you can please

God by attending one *Juma'a* Prayer once every year and remain a friend with little effort or sacrifice!

As a matter of fact, many so called Muslim leaders and scholars tend to mislead people. They say that God is Merciful and Kind. So there is no need to undergo any hardship for His sake or to find Him. If you come to *Juma'a tul wida* and pray till *Asr* (afternoon) Prayer, you will be forgiven all your sins not only of that year but also of your entire life. Thus they narrate (and dwell on) the blessings and greatness of *Juma'a tul wida* to the ignorant masses and whatever good sense they may have is further depleted. They talk in total contradiction to the teachings of the Holy Quran.

You must remember that it is stated in the Holy Quran that if you come to God just for a short time, He will listen to your prayer. However, it may mean absolutely nothing if you do not establish a permanent relationship with Allah. Your selfish motive would not benefit you as you came and left and did not establish that lasting bond with God. God will certainly inform you when you finally appear before Him what you used to do on earth. As a consequence of your sinful life here, you will be nothing but a fuel for hell fire in the hereafter.

However, the deceitful mullahs are telling you that you do not need to worry about anything if you just say with your tongue that you love the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), then you are permitted to do anything. And those of your sins which God can not forgive, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) would get those forgiven! The people who are given such concept of religion lose everything, their *DEEN* and their *DUNYA* i.e., their life on earth is wasted and consequently they will suffer in the hereafter.

"Therefore, wake up Ahmadi Muslims! If you have not been punctual in your Prayers, let this Friday welcome you and help you to undergo a complete change and you begin to be nearer to God. Giving yourself completely to God is a tall claim but you can not be His unless you start on this journey. You should move in His direction a few steps then He will guide you and take care of you by coming closer to you. It is not that hard to get closer to God. You should begin praying for yourself on this Friday. You should set your goals with a plan on how you are going to

continue to receive the blessings of this Friday through the rest of the year.

MOVE TOWARDS THE CITY OF GOODNESS

You should try to understand the message carefully and make a decision that this year you will depart from the city of evils and begin moving towards the city of goodness. If you do so, you have then the assurance of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) that you will meet a noble end in the sight of Allah wherever you give your life in your journey towards Allah. You must move towards goodness, even if you have to crawl.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has given the example of a person who is near death, who has little strength left in his body but continues his struggle to move forward on his knees and elbows to give his life amidst the righteous people of God. It is impossible that God will not forgive after observing this scene. When you experience this kind of change in you, then *Juma 'a tul wida* will have a different meaning for you. It will be a farewell to all evils while its blessings will continue. You will continue to have blessings of other Fridays too (*Insha Allah*).

THE LAST TEN DAYS (ASHRA) OF RAMADHAN

(Translated by Dr. A. M. Shamim from *Monthly Khalid*, Rabwah)

Many bounties have been associated with the last of the Ramadhan. Come let us see the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.) Sunnat on how we should spend these last days of Ramadhan.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV has said:

“Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) (God be pleased with her) has related: “In the last *Ashara* of Ramadhan the Holy Prophet would strive to increase the time spent in worship to far exceed that spent thus in ordinary days.”

The accounts which we have from Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) by the ordinary practice of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be on him, is such that it inspires wonder and awe that a human being could spend so much time and energy in the worship of God. He would sometimes spend the whole night in supplication before his Lord. He would become so involved in his supplication that it would seem as if there were only empty garments thrown on the ground, not clothing anyone. Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) would at times find the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) absent and suspect that he had gone to another wife's home.

She would hurry out to look for him and find him engrossed in prayer. She would hear him praying so fervently that he sounded like the furious bubbling of a kettle. When she found the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) thus and returned home, what could be her state? What had she suspected? And what had she actually found?

These occasions that I have presented are an

account of his ordinary habits. During the last ten days, Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) relates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) would come home at unprecedented late hours from prayer and his state was indescribable by any person, she could not describe it, nor could anyone else. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) has himself described his condition, somewhat. He has attempted to explain his experiences and his state during these days. I will present this Hadith before you but I would like to make some clarification. I do not agree with the translation and commentary commonly ascribed to this Hadith. The familiar translation has been abridged but I will elaborate it to its full meaning:

The last part of the Hadith is usually misrepresented. It's this part to which I wish to draw your attention. Ordinarily the word “*ajud*” is taken to mean that he freely spent on the poor, and “*kher*” is translated as worldly wealth (goods). And it is said the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) gave so generously, the way a high wind increases in intensity until it becomes a storm. This is a very pleasing interpretation but on this occasion it does not apply.

Gabriel used to descend to earth every night and find the Prophet (s.a.w.) there thus, alone. On this occasion to imply that Gabriel used to find Muhammad (s.a.w.) busy giving to the poor is wrong, this time of night is not appropriate to go out and look

for the poor and assist them. These nights were devoted between God and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). How is it possible that on this night when Gabriel came with the Holy Quran that he would find Muhammad (s.a.w.) employed in almsgiving. This is impossible. The meaning of "*ajud*" given in scholarly dictionary as Imam Raghīb's, and the meaning of "*kher*" according to these is different. It contains other meanings also.

"*Ajud*" is employed for a person who exceeds all others in righteousness. And "*kher*" means good deeds, not only charity. Every good thing, which a believer expects and prays to God for, is termed "*kher*". When we examine this Hadith with these meanings then a new scenario will emerge. Whenever Gabriel used to find the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) on these nights he found him engaged in this work exceeding all others. So much so that the ordinary man cannot conceive to what height he had reached.

In these nights he was "*ajud*". In that, he completely lost himself in *zikare-ilahi* and he was so far gone in all aspects of "*kher*" apart from wealth that it was as if a storm was blowing. These are the true meanings and by the dictionaries. This is not the time to go into details about these dictionaries but you can be rest assured that I am presenting this commentary after exhaustive research, that whenever Gabriel saw Muhammad (s.a.w.) he was engaged thus. He was engulfed in *zikare-ilahi*, and he completely annihilated himself in the Oneness of God.

So from this angle follow the actions of the Holy

Prophet (s.a.w.) and discover how difficult and essential that devotion is. This is difficult because it is a lengthy process. For an ordinary person it is improbable that he will even be able to imagine the final steps of *Suena* journey. But there are few days when God Himself comes nearer to us. These are the days when following of the Prophet of Allah is made easy. Just take advantage of these days and welcome them properly. Do not work to hasten these last days but spend the whole of Ramadhan preparing for them. Open your hearts and minds to the blessings of Ramadhan and open your minds as if to receive the dawn. (*Khutha Juma* of 1/23/98, ref. *Al-Fazl International London* 3/13/98)

He also said concerning another Hadith from *Masnad Ahmad bin Humble* (v. 2 pg. 75 printed in Beirut) has mentioned that Hazrat Ibn Umar (*razi-alla-anho*) states, "the Prophet of Allah said "as far as observance is concerned, these 10 days are the most high and beloved in the sight of Allah. As far as observance is concerned, these days contain the most blessing". Just be glad that some of these days are before us still, and have not completely passed us by. Welcome them and they might stay in your homes and this is the true measure of righteousness. The piety, which comes and stays with us is true piety. In these days particularly the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has emphasized the remembrance of *Allah (la-illa-ha-illala)* and *takbir (Allah-Akbar, Allah-Akbar)* and *tahmid (Alhamdo-lillah, Alhamdo-lillah)*. These are 3 simple phrases that anyone can easily recite in daily life, so we should lay emphasis on these.

AETEKAF (SACRED SOLITUDE)

The Honor of the Universe the pride of the worlds his reflection upon the *Aetekaf*.

In the last ten days of the Ramadhan, which is signaled by the happening of the *Aetekaf* (sacred solitude). How the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to observe these days has been described by Huzoor in his Friday Sermon. He says: I present one tradition which has been narrated in *Masnad Ahmad bin Hamble* Volume 2 page 67, printed in Beirut. In the

tradition which has been narrated by the son of Hazrat Omar. How the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to sit for *Aetekaf* and what kind of environment used to be in those days. When Ramadhan was at its peak he used to get *AJUD*: which means the environment we see in that kind of situation. In *Aetekaf* some people want to recite the Quran slightly loud in the Mosque creating a kind of hum, this was very pleasing to the heart but this also caused some disturbance in the solitude of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). His solitude was solitude

between him and his Creator, which was disturbed.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) did observe *Aetekaf* in the last ten days of Ramadhan. For him a small hut of dried leaves of dates was made. You should also remember about the capacity of the Mosque for the purpose of *Aetekaf*. People ask me about the capacity saying that there is enough capacity in the Mosque. Which is not true. The Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.) made for the purpose of *Aetekaf*, there was a tent around it also, which occupied some space, there was some space to isolate him to give him some solitude, this should be kept in mind also.

We emphasize in filling the space but the real enjoyment is in as much privacy and solitude as possible to fully supplicate with Allah. This time there was some demand from women for more space, we could not allow for special reasons, which is all in accordance with the practice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). There was plenty of space in the *Masjide Nabwi* for it was not pack full. A night fell when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) went out and looked and found the worshipers busy in their prayers quietly, so you should not recite so loudly that it may disturb the solitude of others. The worshiper should contain his voice so that it does not go out of his cabin. So much so that even the recitation of the Holy Quran should

also not be audible to the other worshipers, though the worship and recitation of the Holy Quran is one and the same thing but this also has its limitations and constraints.

What the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said has been narrated by Biasi, which has been recorded in *Masnad Ahmad bin Humble*. He narrates that, he came walking out of his cabin, now there must be distance between the cabins that is why he walked out, the people who were busy in worshipping their voices were loud at which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said that the worshiper is busy in his secret communication with his Lord which must not be disturbed.

.These were the secret communications between the person and his Lord, this is evident. What was its pleasure? This is clear from other traditions, I could not bring these traditions but the subject matter is clear in my conception, that is, the worshiper is so much engrossed deep in his worship that all the veils in between were lifted and you attained such a bliss and pleasure that it is impossible to describe it. Any ordinary person when attains pleasure in worship he cannot describe in clear words, the deep contemplation of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has been explained already, one should be mindful of others around him, lest we disturb their supplication and solitude.

LAILATUL-QADR

(Translated by Dr. A. M. Shamim, Maryland Jamaat)

About *Lailatur-Qadr* Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV says:

Now I present a tradition from *Bukhari* which has been narrated by Hazrat Ibne Umar. *Lailatul Qadr* was shown to some of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) in a dream in the last seven days, which meant that the special revelation of the night on selected person was to be on one of the seven last days of Ramadhan. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said that if you all have seen such a dream, then look for it in the last seven days of Ramadhan. Now at this time, only six days are left, and in the light of this tradition, this happening can occur repeatedly, meaning that the days can be switched. Sometimes it may happen to occur on

the 21st -and sometimes on the thirtieth. But usually this happens on the 21st, 23rd, 25th or 29th nights. So we have some days left to hope for its occurrence. Its not impossible that this will happen at the end of the month this time. So for the persons who have wasted the last Ramadhan, there is glad tiding for them. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said that all of you are agreed on the last seven days in your dreams, so look for it in the last week of Ramadhan. This was the practice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) that he used to wake at night, that it was a blessed awakening, that with each awakening new attributes used to unfold upon him, which was ever increasing with each occasion. This was ever increasing experience as the beneficence of God is limitless so is the

comprehension associated infinite.

Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) says that when Ramadhan arrived the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) would gird up his loins. He used to wake up at night and he used to awaken his family, so I have used the same words of awakening that Hazrat Ayesha (r.a.a.) used for him.

There was not a single night, which was lifeless in his life, but especially in Ramadhan. He used to make alive the night, even more because he used to bring his family to life also.

Here to wake up the family was a physical act which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to perform this also, and to forced upon us, that we should draw the attentions of our family toward getting up at night in order to worship Allah.

But when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to waken his family, then I think that he must be granting new treasures in regard to Ramadhan. From this angle, the way that the Messenger of Allah used to revitalize his nights he would also inspire his family. Hazrat Aysha (r.a.a.) stated that I once asked, 'Oh Messenger of Allah, if I am sure that I am experiencing *Lailatul Qadr*. What should I pray at this?' He replied ".....O my Lord, you are the most forgiving, you love forgiveness, therefore forgive me."

It is remarkable that he did not advise a prayer concerning material gain. It is apparent that only a negative aspect has been asked for, all old transgression should be forgiven but he also did not say what you should ask for after this fundamental prayer. It is a fact as I have said before, the effect of *Lailatul Qadr* is such, that if you are forgiven then dawn will appear and this is a positive happening which will never transform into darkness. This means that the rest of his life, the person will be enlightened,

this is the subject of *Istighfar*, and this is what the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was teaching us.

It is said; "if you have firm faith in *Lailatul Qadr* then that is enough, and you should ask for forgiveness and be satisfied. If Allah erases all your past sin and draws the veil of forgiveness over them then you need nothing else in order to be completely forgiven. Just this is necessary to give emphasis in the asking of forgiveness from God except to pray. It is not probable that you pray for forgiveness and yet insist on committing sins. So this negative aspect of insistence of sinning is hidden in one's minds, conscientiously or unconsciously. People know what type of sins they have committed all year round, what follies they have indulged in; even then, people ask for forgiveness, this means that in their minds they cling to this idea that they can continue to commit sins and God will continue to forgive them. These are only sentimental which have no relationship with reality.

If such people are forgiven, their life after Ramadhan will tell whether they have been forgiven or not. If God has forgiven them, there should be a great revolution in their lives. The life following Ramadhan will be testament to this one night of Ramadhan.

However, as far as Jamaat Ahmadiyya is concerned, we are passing through another *Lailatul Qadr*. Hazrat Masih Mau'ood's (a.s.) age, as is proven from the Quran is one in which the great believers of the former times are joined with the believers of the latter age. If Muhammad's (s.a.w.) character would not have enlightened Hazrat Masih Mau'ood (a.s.), it is impossible for this to occur. Just keep in mind that the time of *Lailatul Qadr* is ongoing for you. In this *Lailatul Qadr* it is possible that the promise in the Holy Quran is fulfilled in your favor.

RAMADHAN AND TRUE EID

True happiness is found in a relationship with God. This is the philosophy of *Eid*. This is the lesson we learn from Ramadhan that is followed by *Eid-ul-Fitr*. We abstain from all lawfully allowed things for the pleasure of Allah and we remember Him much day and night.

As a result of this devotional worship, Allah declares that He is the reward for the devotee who observes fast. The day of *Eid* is an expression of happiness for believers. True *Eid* is for those who belong to Allah and not for those who run after the world.

Believers discover true happiness by helping the poor, praising and glorifying Allah aloud. They offer *Eid* Prayer in congregation demonstrating love and brotherhood with one another. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) lays great emphasis on the congregational *Eid* Prayer.

“Hazrat Umme Attiya (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to tell us that everybody should join in both the *Eids*, including children and women. Even the women who were not well enough to join the Prayer were directed to come to listen to *Eid* Sermon and participate in the collective prayer.” (*Sahi Bukhari, Kitabul Eidain*)

Let us now review how the *Eid* was celebrated during the time of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)

DRESSING UP NICELY ON *EID* DAY

The *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) support wearing of a good dress and use of fragrance on *Eid* Day. It is reported that Hazrat Umar (r.a.) sent a beautiful *Jubba* (dress) for the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) for wearing on the *Eid* Day.

RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS ON *EID* DAY

“Hazrat Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) came to her house on *Eid* Day at a time when two young girls were singing songs. He did not stop them. Hazrat Bakr (r.a.) rebuked them but the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) told him to leave them alone. Also, on that day, the people from Habsha displayed their traditional games and skills at arms for entertainment. Huzoor (s.a.w.) asked me if I would like to see their performance. I said, ‘yes’, Hazrat Aisha (r.a.) stood behind the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and watched the games. After a while, he asked if she was tired. She said, ‘yes’, and was let go.” (*Sahi Bukhari, Kirabul Eidain*)

HOW TO OFFER *EID* PRAYER

It is narrated by Hazrat Ans bin Malik (r.a.) that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to eat a few dates before leaving for *Eidul Fitr*.

Hazrat Abu Saeed (r.a.) narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) on the days of *Eidul Fitr* and *Eidul*

Adhya used to start with *Eid* Prayer at the *Eid Gah* (special site designated for *Eid* Prayer). He would then stand up before the people to deliver the sermon containing admonition and advice. (*Sahi Bukhari, Kitabul Eidain*)

AN IMPORTANT TEHRİK ON THE DAY OF HAPPINESS

Eid is one of the greatest days of happiness for the believers when most of them are gathered together. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), therefore, used to initiate appropriate projects according to the need of times.

It is mentioned in the Hadith that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) after the sermon visited the women’s side. Hazrat Bilal (r.a.) went along with him. Huzoor (s.a.w.) urged the ladies for *Sadqa* (financial sacrifice in the way of Allah). The ladies showed an unparalleled example of compliance by offering whatever they had. Hazrat Bilal (r.a.) collected the contributions in his cloth, including the ornaments donated by many women. (*Sahi Bukhari, Kitabul Eidain*)

After the moon was sighted, all believers recited *Takbira 'at* in a loud voice on the way to and from *Eid* Prayer.

Allaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar, La Ilaha Illallah, Wallaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar Wa Lillah Hil Hamd:

Allah Is the Greatest, Allah Is the Greatest; There Is No God but Allah, and Allah Is the Greatest; Allah Is the Greatest and All Praise Belong to Allah.

They used to embrace and wished each other ‘*Eid Mubarak*’. They used to return home by a different route from the one they used for going for *Eid* Prayer. The Day of *Eid* passed in joy and happiness.

Therefore, we must fill the Mosques, the houses of God, to enjoy the true happiness of *Eid*. We should also try to fill the houses of the poor with happiness to obtain the pleasure and acceptance of Allah. May Allah enable us to do so. *Ameen*.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF EID

LET US KNOCK AT THE DOOR OF A POOR FAMILY TO SAY EID MUBARAK AND SHARE OUR JOYS WITH THEM

(An important directive about Eid from Hazrat Khalifatul Massih IV (a.b.a.). Translated from Urdu text in *Tash-heet-ul Azhan*, Jan. 1999 by Dr. Rasheed S. Azam)

Huzoor (a.b.a.) said:

“I advise you that today the rich should visit their poor brethren and share their gifts with them. Those who are comparatively well off in life should take some gifts and sweets to the poor and their children. Gather all the chocolates and toffees you had collected for your children. Tell your children that you are going to knock at the doors of some of the poor to say ‘*Eid Mubarak*’ and share your good fortunes with them.”

If you visit the poor and learn how they live, as I

have suggested, I assure you that some of you will feel so happy that all other joys of life will appear trivial in comparison to it. Some will return with tears in their eyes asking Allah’s forgiveness for their ingratitude because they had not realized how the poor live on. They will experience greatest joy in their tears, much more than to all other enjoyments and pleasures. They will gain unlimited and everlasting joy. This is the *Eid* of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). In fact, this is the *Eid* of a true religion.” (From Friday Sermon of Hazrat Khalifatul Massih IV (a.b.a.), *Al-Fazl*, July 26, 1983).

THE NIGHT BEFORE EID (A Child's Perspective)

(by Fauzia Asad, Maryland Jamaat)

It’s the night before Eid
I don’t think I can wait
I’m going to ask my parents
If I can stay up late

The house is all clean
It’s been mopped and swept
All the toys are put away
In the places they are kept

We painted our hands
My sister and I
With green henna paste
That took too long to dry

Now I gather my clothes
And my jewelry too
And I am so happy
Because my clothes are all new

I think about tomorrow
How as soon as I awake
I’ll shout “Eid Mubarik”
Before the dawn breaks

Then I’ll say my Fajr Prayers
And I’ll read the Quran
And I’ll eat a big breakfast
Before it is all gone

Mom makes special treats
We eat them each year
With sugar and sweets
Our plates will soon be clear!

Next I’ll take a warm bath
Dress in my clothes so new
And when we’re all ready
There’s one thing left to do

We’ll go to the Mosque
To say Eid Prayers together
We’ll greet all our friends
And our families will gather

But that’s not till tomorrow
And now it is late
I go to bed thinking
Isn’t Eid time great!

FAREWELL ADDRESS OF THE PROPHET MOHAMMAD (peace be upon him) AT MECCA

(From *Life of Mohammad* by Hazrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmood Ahmad Khalifatul Masih II)

In the ninth year of the Hijra the Prophet went on a pilgrimage to Mecca. On the day of the Pilgrimage, he received the revelation containing the famed verse of the Quran which says:

This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor upon you and have chosen for you Islam as religion (5:4).

This verse said in effect that the Message which the Holy Prophet had brought from God and which by word and deed he had been expounding all these years, had been completed. Every part of this Message was a blessing. The Message now completed embodied the highest blessings which man could receive from God. The Message is epitomized in the name '*al-Islam*', which means submission. Submission was to be the religion of Muslims, the religion of mankind.

The Holy Prophet recited this verse in the valley of Muzdalifa, where the pilgrims had assembled. Returning from Muzdalifa, the Prophet stopped at Mina. It was the eleventh day of the month of *Dhu 'l-Hijja*. The Prophet stood before a large gathering of Muslims and delivered an address, famed in history as the farewell address of the Prophet. In the course of this address he said:

O men, lend me an attentive ear. For I know not whether I will stand before you again in this valley and address you as I address you now. Your lives and your possessions have been made immune by God to attacks by one another until the Day of Judgement. God has appointed for every one a share in the inheritance. No 'will' shall now be admitted which is prejudicial to the interests of a rightful heir. A child born in any house will be regarded as the child of the father in that house. Whoever contests the parentage of this child will be liable to punishment under the Law of Islam. Anyone who attributes his birth to some one else's father, or falsely claims someone to be his master, God, His angels and the whole of mankind will curse him.

O men, you have some rights against your wives, but your wives also have some rights against you. Your right against them is that they should live chaste lives, and not adopt ways which may bring disgrace to the husband in the sight of his people. If your wives do not live up to this, then you have the right to punish them. You can punish them after due inquiry has been made by a competent authority, and your right to punish has been established. Even so, punishment in such a case must not be very severe. But if your wives do no such thing, and their behavior is not such as would bring disgrace to their husbands, then your duty is to provide for them food and garments and shelter, according to your own standard of living.

Remember you must always treat your wives well. Woman is weak and cannot protect her own rights. When you married, God appointed you the trustees of those rights. You brought your wives to your homes under the Law of God. You must not, therefore, insult the trust which God has place in your hands.

O men, you still have in your possession some prisoners of war. I advise you, therefore, to feed them and to clothe them in the same way and style as you feed and clothe yourselves. If they do anything wrong which you are unable to forgive, then pass them on to someone else. They are part of God's creation. To give them pain or trouble can never be right.

O men, what I say to you, you must hear and remember. All Muslims are as brethren to one another. All of you are equal. All men, whatever nation or tribe they may belong to, and whatever station in life they may hold, are equal.

While he was saying this the Prophet raised his hands and joined the fingers of the one hand with the fingers of the other and then said:

Even as the fingers of the two hands are equal,

so are human beings equal to one another. No one has any right, any superiority to claim over another. You are as brothers.

Proceeding, the Prophet said:

Do you know what month this is? What territory we are in? What day of the year it is today?

The Muslims said in reply, they knew it was the sacred month, the sacred land and the day of the Hajj. Then the Prophet said:

Even as this month is sacred, this land inviolate, and this day holy, so has God made the lives, property and honor of every man sacred. To take nay man's life or his property, or attack his honor, is as unjust and wrong as to violate the sacredness of this day, this month, and this territory. What I command you today is not meant only for today. It is meant for all time. You are expected to remember it and to act upon it until you leave this world and go to the next to meet your Maker.

In conclusion, he said:

What I have said to you, you should communicate to the ends of the earth. Maybe those who have not heard me may benefit by it more than those who have heard (*Sihah Sitta, Tabari, Hisham and Khamis*).

The Prophet's address is an epitome of the entire teaching and spirit of Islam. It shows how deep was the Prophet's concern for the welfare of man and the peace of the world; also how deep was his regard for the rights of women and other weak creatures. The Prophet knew his end was near. He had had hints from God about his death.

Among the cares and anxieties to which he gave expression were his care and anxiety about the treatment women received at the hands of men. He took care that he should not pass away from this world to the next without assuring to women the status which was theirs by right. Since the birth of man, woman had been regarded as the slave and handmaid of man.

This was the Prophet's one care. His other care

was for prisoners of war. They were wrongly looked on and treated as slaves and were subjected to cruelties and excesses of all kinds. The Prophet felt he should not leave this world without assuring to prisoners of war the rights which were theirs in the sight of God. Inequality between man and man also oppressed the Prophet. Occasionally differences were stressed to a degree which could not be endured. Some men were raised to the skies and others were degraded to the depths. The conditions which made for this inequality were conditions which made for antagonism and war between nation and nation and country and country. The Prophet thought of these difficulties also. Unless the spirit of inequality was killed and conditions which induced one people to usurp the rights of another and to attack their lives and their possessions—unless these conditions which become rampant at times of moral decay were removed, the peace and progress of the world could not be assured.

He taught that human life and human possessions had the same sacredness which belonged to sacred days, sacred months and sacred places. No man ever showed such concern and such care for the welfare of women, the rights of the weak, and for peace between nations as did the Prophet of Islam. No man ever did as much as the Prophet to promote equality among mankind. No man pined as much as he for the good of man. No wonder, Islam has ever upheld the right of women to hold and to inherit property. European nations did not conceive of this right until about one thousand three hundred years after the advent of Islam. Every person who enters Islam becomes the equal of everyone else, no matter how low the society from which he comes. Freedom and equality are characteristic contributions of Islam to the culture of the world. The conceptions which other religions hold of freedom and equality are far behind those which Islam has preached and practiced. In a Muslim mosque, a king, a religious leader and a common man have the same status; there is no difference between them. In the places of worship of other religions and other nations these differences exist to this day, although those religions and nations claim to have done more than Islam for freedom and equality.

HAZRAT SAHIBZADA MIRZA BASHIR AHMAD

(Translated from *Alfazl International*, November 3, 2000, by Basharat Munir Mirza, Athens, Ohio)

Hazrat Sahibzada Mirza Bashir Ahmad Sahib, may God be pleased with him, was born on April 20, 1893. He states: "The truth is that, from my childhood to now, no ungodly sheen or any worldly power has ever put me in awe. I have full confidence and trust that the truth will prevail eventually."

Some anecdotes from his life were printed in the *Daily Alfazl*, Rabwah of October 16 and 18, 1999, written by Hafiz Muhammad Nasrullah. Even before that, light had been thrown on different aspects of his life in columns of *Alfazl International* issues dated December 29, 1995, November 1, 1996, February 28, 1997, and February 12, 1999.

Foremost for him was the pleasure of Allah. For any of the books written by him, he never asked for any kind of royalty from whomsoever published them. He even bought a copy of his books for his use and would not even accept a free copy from the publisher, saying that it was tantamount to a charge for his writings and he did not want to dilute his reward from Allah with this action.

His love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) can be gauged from the following writing of his: "Once a poor Muslim came to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). There was no apparent mark on his face of his supplications and prayers but a spark of the love for the Prophet (s.a.w.) had lit a pious lamp in his heart. He had a longing of being ever near the Prophet and with hesitancy he asked the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) when would come the Day of Judgment. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: 'You ask about the Day of Judgment, have you done any preparation for it?' With a pounding heart and trembling lips he said: 'Prayers and fasting may not be enough preparation, but I have true love for Allah and His Prophet.' The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) looked at him with kindness and said: 'A person is in the company of one he loves,' meaning that he should be assured that Allah will not keep a lover away from his beloved.

Hazrat Sahibzada Sahib said that he had read this Hadith in his childhood but as he is now old, the words of his Master guide him like a shining star and he has

felt as if he himself had asked this question from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and was given this answer by the Holy prophet (s.a.w.) himself.

A short while before he passed away, he said to Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad, a worker in his office, in a tender voice: You be a witness that I am professing in your presence that the love of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has always filled my heart since I became of age. The Hadith says that a person is in the company of the one he loves. On account of this I am certain that Allah will put me near the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) in the hereafter."

Hazrat Khali'atful Masih IV relates that once someone was mentioned in the house who had conveyed something about someone to Ammu Sahib (Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad) in a wrong manner. That had hurt Ammu Sahib. He learned the truth in a short time and consequently he mentioned to me (Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV) that some people do mischief sometimes. At this, his wife said to him that she had told him about the unreliability of this person but he still had a relationship with him. At this, Hazrat Ammu Jan stopped and said with a firm voice: "See, you should not say this to me. If Allah would look at the shortcomings of his servants, He would not have any relationship with anyone. Allah sees a good point in a person to relate to him. I will not break with this person." Then he said in a lower tone: You know he had some good points also. Then he mentioned a couple of his good points.

Regarding love for children, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV relates: "Once Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II sent us young brothers to Dilhousie, it was near the end of the mango season. Hazrat Mian Bashir Ahmad had a basket of mangoes prepared for us and admonished us that when we ate them, we should make sure that these mangoes are neither under-ripe or over-ripe. I acted on this advice and would inspect mangoes every day while Khalifa Munirud Din and Mirza Anwar Ahmad would eat even the under-ripened mangoes. Most of the mangoes were already gone before I discovered this. When Ammu Jan asked

me how were the mangoes, I had to tell him about the behavior of others. Later on, whenever he would meet Khalifa Munirud Din, he would ask him how were the mangoes on the hill station.

Not only the children but even the elders of the family were treated like children by him. Whenever a fruit of a season arrived, young persons were found aplenty in his room. In spite of being extremely busy, he would not ask them to leave. Once, bananas arrived in Qadian. A girl came in and said *salam* to him. He replied: *Wa Alaikum Assalam*, but the bananas are not ripe yet...

Sheikh Abdul Qadir writes: "Once in December, 1959, I arrived by bus in Rabwah at 8 p.m. Hazrat Sahibzada Sahib's residence was close by. I felt like meeting him right then and knocked at his door. On his asking I told him who I was. I had come from Lahore and wished to see him. He said he was very busy and if I must see him, I can come in for a minute. I said if he had only one minute now, I would come back tomorrow. He said if I would come tomorrow then I might as well come in now. I entered his house and found him busy in preparing his lecture for the Jalsa Salana. After a few minutes, I asked his leave and left. Just a few days later, on my return to Lahore, I got a letter from him with his regrets that he could not talk to me in any detail due to being so busy in work.

Maulvi Muhammad Munawar writes: "When I went to Pakistan on leave in November 1952, I met him in Masjid Mubarak. I told him I had returned after four years of Tabligh in East Africa. On hearing this, he embraced me. Perhaps he did not know me personally, but just knowing that I had done preaching in Africa for four years, he embraced me to encourage me. In August 1960, after 8 years of Tabligh, I went back to Pakistan, I went to see him. An attendant told me that he was not feeling well and could not see me. I had just started to go back when another attendant came running and said that Hazrat Mian Sahib wants to see me. I went in and found him lying in bed, his face looking pale and tired. He motioned me to sit with him on his bed and said: 'Last night my wife was hurt and because of it I could not sleep. Now I feel weak.' He did this just to please me. I would have tried ten times until he would get well so I could see him."

Mr Shahid Ahmad writes: "Once my father

became critically ill. I came to Hazrat Mian Sahib to request for prayers. He said my father was among old friends and he will pray for him. Allah will show His grace. When I returned, my father felt much better by the evening. When he wrote the book "*Silsila Ahmadiyya*, his father-in-law had not yet done Bai'at with the Khalifa. Hazrat Mian Sahib prayed very fervently for his father-in-law and within a month of that, his father-in-law came to Qadian and did Bai'at at the hands of the Khalifatul Masih.

Hazrat Mian Sahib was very particular about the monetary position of the Jamaat. He never put office stationery at his personal use. He would tell other workers also that sometimes they might even unintentionally use public things for their personal use so they should occasionally put some money in the central treasury. For this he had opened an account at the Sadr Anjuman treasury.

Mr. Muhammad Abdullah relates that Hazrat Mian Sahib was of a very meek temperament. Once an old cleaning lady came to pay her respects to him. She attempted to sit on the floor, but he insisted that she sit in a chair and asked a servant to bring tea for her. Then he talked with her for some time.

Mr. Khan Sa'adullah Khan relates that he was a guest of Hazrat Mian Sahib for about a fortnight, while he was a student in 1917-1918. "When I would wake up in the morning, I would find on a table near me a jug of water, another vessel of water for my Wudhu and a towel. I did not know where it came from. One morning, I was half awake at Azan time and I saw Hazrat Mian Sahib leaving these things near me on his way to the mosque. He did that all through my stay with him."

Mrs. Mubaraka Qamar relates that when their family migrated to Rabwah and bought a plot for a house. To raise money for the house, they tried to sell their farm. They made a deal and received a thousand rupees as earnest money. "I came to see Hazrat Mian Sahib to request for prayer. He said I must not sell my farm. I said now the deal has been made. He still repeated that we should not sell our farm. Allah will make provisions for the house. It is a miracle that his words came true.

"The deal for the farm fell though and we returned the earnest money also. We borrowed three thousand

rupees from the Anjuman to begin the house. As long as the house was under construction, money seemed to appear. We had good fortune even with the produce from the farm and the house got completed.”

A relative of Malik Habibur Rahman received some punishment from the Jamaat. The Malik Sahib related all the details to Hazrat Mian Sahib and asked him to investigate as the President of the Nigran Board. His answer was that since the punishment was from the Khalifatul Masih, he must request an unconditional pardon before anything can be investigated.

Mr. Basharat Ahmad relates that the Khalifatul Masih was not pleased with the person who was responsible for the poling for the assembly elections in Qadian. One day, I said in a meeting where Hazrat Mian Sahib was present, that this person’s neglect resulted in losses. Hazrat Mian Sahib said with some anger: If you were there in his place, would you have done all what Huzoor wanted. The Khalifatul Masih has the right to admonish but others should think only what they have done.

Hazrat Sahibzada M. M. Ahmad relates that once

the Khalifatul Masih was unhappy with an old friend of Hazrat Mian Sahib. This person sent a request to Hazrat Mian Sahib that he wished to see him. His answer was that Huzoor was unhappy with him. First he must ask pardon from the Khalifatul Masih before he can see him.

Mr. Faizul Haq Khan Sahib relates that the Quetta Jamaat sent an application to Hazrat Musleh Mau’ood about some matters and to assure its transmittal to Huzoor, it was sent through Hazrat Mian Sahib. He returned that letter with a note that to send a letter to Huzoor through someone else is not respectful.

Syed Mir Daud Ahmad relates that in 1947 he spoke to Hazrat Mian Sahib about some procedural defects. He said that a person should think carefully. Procedural things are in the hands of the Imam and all such things are done with his instructions. Even if they apparently seem defective but the help of Allah is with the Imam and his decision is always proper for good results in the long run. Others should put emphasis in his obedience rather than devise suggestions on their own.

AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM USA

15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905

Phone: 301-879-0110

Fax: 301-879-0115

Change Of Address Form

Member Code :

Effective Date:
Month Day Year

Member Name:
Last First Middle

New Address:

City: State: Zip:

Home Phone:

Home Fax:

Busi. Phone: Ext.

Busi. Fax:

Other Phone:

Other Fax:

New Branch (Jamaat):

New Halqa:

Do the above change apply to the entire family? Yes No

Any Remarks / Instructions: _____

Old Address: _____

Signature _____

Old Phone: _____ Old Branch (Jamaat): _____

Today's Date _____

FIVE MORE AHMADIS MURDERED IN THEIR MOSQUE MOB ATTACKED THE MOSQUE, DAMAGED IT AND SET IT ON FIRE

Takht Hazara, Sargodha. A violent mob attacked the Ahmadiyya Mosque at Takht Hazara in District Sargodha, Punjab, killed five Ahmadis present there, ransacked the mosque and set it on fire in the early hours of the night on Friday, November 10, 2000.

For more than a year, the anti-Ahmadiyya faction has been busy in Takht Hazara in generating communal unrest and tension. A mulla, Athar Shah, protégé of the notorious Mulla Akram Toofani of Sargodha, had been posted in the village, with the only object of spreading sectarian hatred. Last year, he damaged and desecrated graves at the Ahmadiyya graveyard on 5 September. He would gather street urchins and move around in bands chanting anti-Ahmadiyya provocative slogans. Ahmadis approached the authorities who advised them to remain calm and bear up with the hardship. This mulla also initiated litigation to deprive Ahmadis of their mosque and the Center. The court decided in the Ahmadis' favor.

Athar Shah reportedly is a drug addict and drug peddler. He was quite successful at maintaining communal tension at high level. On November 10, he led a group of miscreants armed with sticks, axes and firearms, and marched through the streets of the village shouting slander and insults. Ahmadis maintained calm and refused to react. These agents provocateurs then came to the Ahmadiyya Mosque. As the situation was getting serious, Ahmadis telephoned the police and asked them to intervene.

Athar Shah and his gang continued with their provocation and made another aggressive visit to the Ahmadiyya Mosque. It seems they had a plan and were intent upon a serious clash. They precipitated an altercation at the Ahmadiyya Mosque, in which Athar Shah was hurt. This was promptly followed by a call on loudspeakers of all the village mosques to head for the Ahmadiyya Mosque. Soon a violent mob assembled and raided its target. A few Ahmadis who were present in the mosque bolted the door from inside. The mob broke open the door, demolished the outer wall and rushed in. The armed miscreants overwhelmed the few defenders. Four Ahmadis were murdered on the spot, including the President of the local Ahmadiyya Community. The fifth, a youth of 14 years, died later in the hospital. They hit the faces of

the deceased repeatedly with their axes and even cut their throats. It was not easy to recognize them when their dead bodies were handed back to their kin.

The police arrived when all was over, although Ahmadis had informed them and requested their intervention well before the situation had taken an ugly turn. The vernacular press is presenting the incident as a sectarian clash, although it was a preplanned one-sided aggression. The mere fact that all the casualties occurred at the Ahmadiyya Mosque is ample proof against the story propagated by these newspapers. Their report that two non-Ahmadiyyas were also killed is baseless, and is a deliberate effort to mislead their readers. Even Mulla Athar Shah is alive.

In less than a fortnight, 10 Ahmadis have been murdered in their mosques in the province of Punjab. Both the locations selected for the attack are those where Ahmadiyya population is considerable. It seems the conspirators plan to provoke Ahmadis, as that would suit their nefarious designs. [The news that the central leadership of the International Khatme Nabuwwat has called an All Parties Conference for 15 November 2000 (*The Daily Jang*, Lahore; Nov. 12, 2000) is a pointer to their designs.] Authorities, as usual, despite plenty of early warning, decided not to take any preventive action. At Takht Hazara, in addition to the complaint made early on the day of the incident, a formal application had been submitted to the Senior Superintendent of Police Sargodha last year and another one in the recent past. The bloody riot of November 10th, speaks volumes on the inadequacy and ineffectiveness of the official action on Ahmadiyya requests.

Following are the names of the Ahmadi dead:

1. Mr. Muhammad Arif, age 30, married, two small children.
2. Mr. Muhammad Nazir, age 60, married, six children
3. Mr. Nasir Ahmad, age 39, President of the local Ahmadiyya Community, married, two small children
4. Mr. Mubarak Ahmad, age 15
5. Mr. Mudassar Ahmad, age 14, schoolboy

AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM
15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905

EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP/LOAN FUNDS

The current budget of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA includes an amount of **\$80,000** for the award of Educational Scholarships and Loans to the youth of the community for College education.

From these funds, the following will be awarded:

A) TALENT AND NEED BASED SCHOLARSHIPS: \$56,000

1. The talent scholarships, which are called:
 - i. Fazl-e-Omar Scholarship
 - ii. Professor Dr. Abdus Salam Scholarship
2. Need based scholarships

B) EDUCATIONAL LOANS (QARZA HASANA): \$24,000

Interested Ahmadi students are requested to submit the attached application by **April 1, 2001** to:

Dr. Karimullah Zirvi
National Secretary Ta'leem

14-21 Saddle River Road
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

Tel. & Fax: (201) 794-8122

AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM, USA
15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905

APPLICATION FOR EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP/LOAN

Please fill out the application form for scholarship/loan to the best of your abilities. You may attach any additional information that may be relevant to consideration of the application.

Applicant Information *Please provide the following personal information:*

Name of Applicant: _____ Age: _____

Name of Father/Guardian/Spouse (Please circle one): _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number (If available) _____

Jama'at: _____ Jama'at Membership Code: _____

Educational History *Please provide the following information on your educational background:*

Last Educational Level Completed: _____

Educational Institution Attended: _____

Date of Completion: _____ Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) _____

Please provide most recent semester's GPA and official transcript for the last two years of your education showing CGPA (cumulative grade point average) and GPA in the major (i.e. major GPA).

Proposed Course of Education *Please provide the following information:*

Educational Level in **September, 2001** _____

Educational Institution to be Attended: _____

Degree/Educational Program to be Pursued: _____

Length of Course: _____

Please, describe briefly your objective for pursuing this degree: _____

Financial Information

Tuition Cost: _____ Books Cost: _____

Room & Board (If Institution is in a town other than hometown, give full details): _____

Other Costs (Please list by Item): _____

Total Annual Cost: _____

Annual Household Income (including parents/guardians and personal income) _____

Other Financing Sources (resulting from family contribution and from efforts to seek Federal/State Grants/Loan: _____

How much money will you be able to earn during the course of your education: _____

How much of your educational expenses will be financed by your own work: _____

Total Shortfall in Educational Expenses: _____

Additional Information Please write a brief statement explaining how your educational plans, and the courses you are taking will help you to achieve your educational goals. Furthermore, write how the financial assistance will help you to achieve your future goals. Please, also mention extracurricular activities, honors, and awards, etc.

I would like to be considered for: Talent Scholarships, Need Based Scholarships, Both Talent and Need Based Scholarships, Loans, Both Scholarships and Loans - **Please circle one of the choices.**

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Certification by the President

This is to certify that _____ s/o, d/o _____

Is a born Ahmadi/converted to Ahmadiyyat since: _____

Any Jamaat/Auxiliary office Held: _____

He/She is very regular / somewhat regular / Irregular in attending Juma and meetings of the Jamaat.

He/She is the category A/B/C/D in paying Chanda subscriptions: _____

President's Name: _____

President's Signatures: _____

Date: _____

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2001

Jan. 7	Sunday	Review of Last years activities and Future Plans	Local*
Jan. 20-21	Sat-Sun	Tablighi Class 1	Regional
Feb. 18	Sunday	Musleh Maud Day (Historic Feb. 20)	Local/Regional
March 6	Tuesday	Eidul-Adhia***	
March 18	Sunday	Regional Tarbiyyati Class 1	Regional
March 25	Sunday	Masih Maud Day (Historical March 23)	Local
April 1	Sunday	Second Coming of Messiah to be Celebrated	4 Regions
April 7-8	Sat-Sun	Tasblighi Class 2	Regional
April 11-15	Wed-Sun	National Tarbiyyati Train the Trainer Class	National
April 27-29	Fri-Sun	National Majlis-e-Shura at Baitur Rahman	
May 19-20	Sat-Sun	Taleemul Quran Class 1	East Coast
May 27	Sunday	Khilafat Day (Historical May 27)	Local/Regional
June 9-10	Sat-Sun	Tablighi Class 3	Regional
June 17	Sunday	Regional Tarbiyyati Class 2	Regional
June 22-24	Fri-Sun	Jalsa Salana USA	National
June 29-July 1	Fri-Sun	Jalsa Salana Canada at Toronto (Expected)	Canada
July 13-15	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Lajna Regional 1	
July 27-29	Fri-Sun	Jalsa Salana UK at Islamabad (Expected)	UK
August 3-5	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya	National
August 10-12	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Lajna Regional 2	
August 17-19	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Lajna Regional 3	
September 1-2	Sat-Sun	Taleemul Quran Class 2	West Coast
September 16	Sunday	Regional Tarbiyyati Class 3	Regional
September 23	Sunday	Seeratun-Nabi Day**	Regional*
October 14	Sunday	Religious Founder's Day	Regional
Oct. 20-21	Sat-Sun	Tablighi Class 4	Regional
Nov. 9-11	Fri-Sun	Ijtema and Shura Ansarullah	National
November 17	Saturday	First Day of Ramadhan (Fasting)***	
December 16	Sunday	Eidul-Fitr***	
December 23	Sunday	Regional Tarbiyyati Class 4	Regional
	Fri-Sun	Jalsa West Coast at Los Angeles	West Coast

*Dates for Local/Regional events can be changed for Local/Regional needs. Reports should be sent to the Headquarters.

**Additional Seeratun Nabi Days should be arranged. In addition to Local/Regional level functions, small-scale functions for Seeratun Nabi should be arranged at Halqa level at Ahmadi homes

***The dates for events based on appearance of moon have been calculated on rational basis with great care. If there are Local/Regional Ahmadi eyewitnesses of the moon at an earlier date, then the event should be celebrated according to the eyewitnesses.

PERSECUTION OF AHMADIES IN PAKISTAN

From the Leading Newspapers in Pakistan

(Provided by Mr. Khalil M. Minhas, Maryland Jamaat)

The Dawn, Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2000

Five Die in Sialkot Sectarian Attack

(by Dawn Correspondent)

SIALKOT, Oct. 30; Five people were killed and nine wounded when four armed assailants opened fire on worshipers offering their Fajr prayers at Baitul Zikr, a place of worship in Pasrur belonging to the Qadiani Community, some 52 km from here, on Monday morning.

The killings took place in the Ghutialiyan Village situated on the Narowal-Muridke Road.

The assailants reached the village in a wagon at 4:45 am. Two of them stood outside the building and the other two entered the hall and opened fire on the worshipers.

Two worshipers died on the spot and 12 were wounded. Later, two more died at a hospital in Narowal and the fifth wounded person died in Lahore.

Narowal AC Muneer Mubarak Khan identified the dead as Shehzad, Iftikhar, Abbas, Atta and Ghulam Mohammad.

A press note issued by the Sialkot District Magistrate confirmed that the victims were the Qadianis. It described the condition of all the wounded as serious but did not give their names. It did not tell how many were driven to Lahore and Narowal

The village where the killings took place was sealed off and the Qadianis were taken to "safer places" by the administration.

Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf and Punjab Governor Mohammad Safdar who visited Gujranwala on Monday expressed concern over the killings and directed the Sialkot District administration to arrest the terrorists at the earliest.

Simply Unpardonable

On Monday morning when the Ahmadis gathered together at a place which they could not any longer call

a mosque, to offer their prayers in a village in Sialkot, a couple of over-zealous 'Muslims' opened fire on them, killing five people and grievously injuring twice as many. A press note issued by the District Magistrate, Sialkot, said blandly that the victims were 'Qadianis' and that all the wounded in the assault were in precarious condition. They had been moved to a 'safer place' by the District Administration, the press note added. This is not the first instance when the Ahmadis have been subjected to inhuman treatment by a majority which thinks that, for whatever reasons it considers are plausible, the Ahmadis are outside the pale of Islam and that they must, therefore, be put to the sword.

The Ahmadis were anyhow declared a non-Muslim minority by a constitutional amendment under the late Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in the seventies. He claimed privately that he had taken this step to 'save' the Ahmadis from being massacred en masse. How has this helped? Nearly 25 years have passed and intolerance against the minorities has gone on with unabated malevolence.

It is not the Ahmadis alone who have been at the receiving end of the majority's 'largesse'. The Christians, too, have had a bitter taste of 'tolerance' to which the majority is committed by the very faith it professes. We find no words strong enough to condemn the unpardonable crime that has been committed against the hapless Ahmadis in a remote village in Sialkot District. It is time the government woke up to protest and preserve the constitutionally-guaranteed rights of the minorities to profess their faiths in whatever manner they deem fit. The right to religious freedom is not negotiable in any civilized society. Nor can it be abridged among the defenders of basic rights guaranteed by Islam and also by the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Dawn, Friday, Nov. 3, 2000

Killings in the Name of Religion

The sectarian strife continues to take its toll. The senseless orgy of murder and killing resulting from sustained indoctrination of obscurantism, intolerance and bigotry seems unstoppable. Unfortunately these remorseful acts are being committed in the name of a religion which abhors violence even against the worst of its enemies.

The Monday morning killing of five Ahmadi worshipers near Sialkot highlights the depth to which we as a nation have plunged. Sacred human life has been reduced to a morsel for the blood-thirsty sectarian hounds programmed to kill in the name of religion and nurtured in the numerous Maderasahs run by Mullahs of morbid inclinations. The freedom and lust for killing so blatantly exercised and exhibited by these extremists has not spurted up overnight. The support and encouragement provided to these extremists by the short sighted and self serving rulers to facilitate and prolong their stay at the seat of power has been instrumental in the spread of violence and lawlessness all over the country.

The negative role played by the religious leaders in this entire drama has been deplorable. Instead of using their influence to contain the situation and bring some sanity in this religious muddle they have instead been instrumental in promoting and justifying the cold blooded killings in the name of religion. Since independence they have spared no effort to divide the nation into religious, sectarian, ethnic and linguistic groupings. The results have been disastrous in terms of the level of hatred and passion for destruction and killing they have spread among the masses.

My heart bleeds at this senseless orgy of murder and killing. This extermination must stop now. We must bring love and affection back to our streets lest we forget the very meaning of these expressions. Let us once again live together with nothing but peace and harmony around us. Let us once again cry in unison, love for all, hatred for none.

Before we destroy ourselves and fill the streets of Islamic Republic with blood of our fellow citizens, all in the name of our great religion of peace, the saner elements and the silent majority should come forward and assert themselves forcefully. We have already spent over 50 years of our post independence era in showing the world how incapable a breed we are of

justifying the hope and aspirations of the founder of the nation. We must not allow this sickening spectacle of murder and killing to go unpunished. We must unite and join the forces fighting tyranny and ruthlessness.

Let us act now lest our survival as a civilized entity among the comity of nations becomes unsustainable and we are relegated to the darkness of the bygone days.

Masood A. Bhatti, Karachi

Simply Unpardonable

Dawn's editorial, "Simply unpardonable" (Nov. 1) is a rare piece of honest journalism hardly seen now-a-days. Please accept appreciation from the silent majority (read minority in quotes). You have said it right that "nearly 25 years have passed and intolerance has gone on with unabated intolerance" and that the other minorities "too have had a bitter taste of 'tolerance' to which the majority is committed by the very faith it professes".

If we look back over the years, the fact remains that the time some politicians started quoting religion in their press statements and speeches, they initiated a kind of religious fever which has only harmed the country. It has created more divisions in the ranks, more religious groups have emerged giving rise to more religious intolerance. Can there be a more tragic situation when any namazi of any religious persuasion is unsafe in his own mosque, what kind of religion our religious leaders are talking about and preaching? Is it the same religion which the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, professed or taught?

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), it is said in one of his traditions, that on seeing a funeral, stood up in reverence. On being informed that the funeral belonged to a Jew, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) posed a question in his reply wasn't he a human being who had died?

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was such a mercy for all peoples. (*Rehmatu-lil-Aalamin*) to follow his *uswa-i-husna* is incumbent on every Muslim. Do our Uelma have mercy for the people belonging to the other sects?

Dr. Munawwar Ahmed, Lahore

<p>محترم سید میر داؤد احمد صاحب بیان فرماتے ہیں کہ ۱۹۴۷ء میں ایک دن میں نے حضرت میاں صاحب کی خدمت میں بعض انتظامی نقائص کا ذکر کیا تو آپ نے فرمایا کہ آدمی کو سوچ کر بات کرنی چاہئے۔ اصل کام انتظام کا امام کے ہاتھ میں ہوتا ہے اور اسی کی ہدایات کے ماتحت تدابیر اختیار کی جاتی ہیں جو بعض دفعہ بظاہر غلط نظر آتی ہیں۔ لیکن اللہ تعالیٰ کی مدد امام کو حاصل ہوتی ہے اور وہی درست ہوتا ہے اور انجام کے لحاظ سے وہی بہتر ہوتا ہے جو امام فیصلہ کرتا ہے۔ باقی لوگوں کو چاہئے کہ زور اس کی اطاعت پر دیں، نہ کہ خود اپنی طرف سے تجویزیں تیار کریں۔</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❁ ❁ ❁</p>	<p>دوست سے ایک مرتبہ حضرت مصلح موعودؑ ناراض ہو گئے تو انہوں نے کسی ذریعہ سے حضرت میاں صاحب کو پیغام بھجوایا کہ ملنا چاہتا ہوں۔ آپ نے فرمایا: حضرت صاحب اُس سے ناراض ہیں، پہلے حضرت صاحب سے معافی لے، پھر ملوں گا۔</p> <p>مکرم فیض الحق خان صاحب بیان کرتے ہیں کہ جماعت کوئٹہ نے بعض معاملات کے متعلق حضرت مصلح موعودؑ کی خدمت میں ایک عریضہ بھیجا اور اس خیال سے کہ یقینی طور پر حضورؑ کی خدمت میں پیش ہو جاوے، حضرت میاں صاحب کی معرفت ارسال کر دیا۔ لیکن آپ نے وہ خط جماعت کو واپس کرتے ہوئے فرمایا کہ حضرت صاحب کا خط کسی کی معرفت ارسال کرنا خلاف ادب ہے۔</p>	<p>سلسلہ میں پولنگ کا انتظام جس کارکن کے سپرد تھا، حضرت خلیفۃ المسیح الثانیؑ اُن کی مساعی پر خوش نہ ہوئے۔ اگلے روز ایک مجلس میں خاکسار نے حضرت میاں صاحب کی موجودگی میں کہا کہ فلاں صاحب کی سستی کی وجہ سے کافی نقصان ہوا ہے۔ یہ سن کر حضرت میاں صاحب کا چہرہ سرخ ہو گیا اور فرمایا: ان کی جگہ اگر آپ ہوتے تو کیا وہ سب کچھ کر لیتے جو حضور چاہتے ہیں؟ خلیفہ وقت کا حق ہوتا ہے کہ وہ ہماری سستی و غفلت پر تنبیہ کرے لیکن ہر کس و ناکس کا حق نہیں کہ وہ حرف گیری کرے بلکہ اپنی فکر کرنی چاہئے کہ میں نے کیا کیا ہے؟!۔</p> <p>محترم صاحبزادہ مرزا مظفر احمد صاحب کا بیان ہے کہ حضرت میاں صاحب کے ایک دیرینہ</p>
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Growing Intolerance

Violence and intolerance has infiltrated into the very essence of our society. The brutal killing of five Ahmadis offering their morning prayers near Sialkot in the early hours on Oct. 30, is absolutely deplorable. Murder in the name of religion is the most horrendous crime imaginable, and must be condemned in outright terms.

But ours is an apathetic nation that does not bat an eyelid. Let us not forget though, that this indifference is tantamount to condoning a heinous injustice, if not tacit complicity with the perpetrators of the same.

The Press, by and large has failed to highlight this gross brutality, and give a rap to our collective consciences. At this point, I would like to commend *Dawn* for its thought-provoking editorial relevant to this issue. At the same time, however, comes the sad realization that the rot has really set in, because now flagrant crime is generally failing to inspire the horror

that it deserves.

Dr. Shahida Bashir, Karachi

Growing Intolerance

We, the following teachers of the University of Karachi, condemn the growing incidence of violence against religious minorities in various parts of the country.

Such acts are increasingly becoming a norm. We demand that the government provide security to the minorities and their constitutional rights be protected. Failing to do so will further damage our national unity, alienate our nation from the world and deprive us of the much needed foreign investment to help us come out of looming economic catastrophe.

Dr. Riaz Ahmed & Four Other Teachers, Karachi