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USA

إِنِّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

FEBRUARY, 2002

TABLIGH, 1381



Hazrat Mirza Bashirud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II, Al-Musleh Mau'ood who led the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community from 1914 to 1965

Right:

Mrs. Katherine Kennedy, Lt. Governor of Maryland, visited Muslim Community Center on December 19, 2001. Here she is being presented a copy of the Ahmadiyya Gazette and a brochure of Masjid Baitul Rahman by Missionary Shamshad Nasir



Below:

Khuddam volunteers from Brooklyn Majlis at the Red Cross Ground Zero respite Center. (Right to Left) Naveed Ahmad; Mudassir Chaudhry and Muhammad Shahid



FROM THE HOLY QURAN

“And of men there is he whose talk on this life would please thee, and he would call Allah to witness as to that which is in his heart, and yet he is the most contentious of quarrelers

“And when he is in authority, he runs about in the land to create disorder in it and destroy the crops and the progeny of man; and Allah loves not disorder.

“And when it is said to him, ‘Fear Allah,’ pride incites him to further sin. So hell shall be his sufficient reward; and surely, it is an evil place of rest.

“And of men there is he who would sell himself to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is compassionate to His servants.

“O ye who believe! Come into submission wholly and follow not the footsteps of Satan; surely, he is your open enemy.

“But if you slip after the clear Signs that have come to you, then know that Allah is Mighty, Wise. (2:205-210)

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجْعَلُ
قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ
وَهُوَ لَكَ الْغَصَامُ ۗ وَإِذِ اتَّوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ
فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَاسِقَ ۗ
وَإِذِ اقْبَلْ لَهُ اتِّقَ اللَّهُ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ الْعِزَّةَ بِالْإِثْمِ فَحَسْبُ
جَهَنَّمَ ۗ وَلَيْسَ الْمَهَادُ ۗ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُشْرِي
نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ رَعُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ۗ
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآثَةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا
مُطَّوِّبَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ۗ فَإِن زَلَلْتُمْ
مِّن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْكُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ

HADITH

Hadhrat Abdullah bin Umar narrates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: When Eisa, son of Mary, descends upon the earth, he will marry and will have children.

In explaining this Hadith, the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) says: “The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) made a prophecy

on the basis of revelation from Almighty Allah that the Promised Messiah will marry and he will have children. This indicates that Almighty Allah will grant him a son who will be similar to his father in goodness, and will not differ from him. And he will be among the righteous servants of Allah.”

(Ayena Kamalati Islam, p. 578)

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THE DIVINE REVELATION CONCERNING THE MUSLEH MAUOOD

(Given below is an English translation by Sir Zafrulla Khan of the prophecy regarding the Musleh Mauood. Taken from the book Tadhkirah, an English language version of the prophecies, revelations, and dreams of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him.)

In the announcement of February 20, 1886, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, says:

"God the Merciful, the Noble, the High, the Exalted, Who has power to do all that He wills (glory be to Him and exalted be His name), has vouchsafed to me the following revelation:

"I confer upon thee a Sign of My mercy according to thy supplications. I have heard thy entreaties and have honored thy prayers with My acceptance through My mercy and have blessed this thy journey. A sign of power, mercy, nearness to me is bestowed on thee. A Sign of grace and beneficence is awarded to thee and thou art granted the key of success and victory. Peace on thee, O victorious one. Thus does God speak so that those who desire life may be rescued from the grip of death and those who are buried in the graves may emerge therefrom and so that the superiority of Islam and the dignity of God's word may become manifest unto the people and so that truth may arrive with all its blessings and falsehood may depart with all its ills, and so that people may understand that I am the Lord of Power, I do whatever I will, and so that they may believe that I am with thee, and so that those who do not believe in God and deny and reject His religion and His Book and His Holy Messenger Muhammad, the chosen one (on whom be peace) may be confronted with a clear sign and the way of the guilty ones may become manifest.

"Rejoice, therefore, that a handsome and pure boy will be bestowed on thee. Thou wilt receive a bright youth who will be of thy seed and will be

of thy progeny. A handsome and pure boy will come as your guest. His name is Emmanuel and Bashir. He has been invested with a holy spirit and he will be free from all impurity. He is the light of Allah. Blessed is he who comes from heaven. He will be accompanied by grace which shall arrive with him. He will be characterized with grandeur, greatness and wealth. He will come into the world and will heal many of their disorder through his Messianic qualities and through the blessings of the Holy Spirit. He is the Word of Allah for Allah's mercy and honor have equipped him with the Word of Majesty.

"He will be extremely intelligent and understanding and will be meek of heart and will be filled with secular and spiritual knowledge. He will convert three into four (of this the meaning is not clear). It is Monday, a blessed Monday. Son, delight of heart, high ranking, noble; a manifestation of the First and the Last, a manifestation of the True and the High; as if Allah has descended from heaven. His advent will be greatly blessed and will be a source of manifestation of Divine Majesty. Behold, a light cometh, a light anointed by God with the perfume of His pleasure. We shall pour Our spirit into him and he will be sheltered under the shadow of God. He will grow rapidly in stature and will be the means of procuring the release of those held in bondage. His fame will spread to the ends of the earth and peoples will be blessed through him. He will then be raised to his spiritual station in heaven. This is a matter decreed."

THE CLAIM OF HADHRAT MUSLEH AL-MAU'OOD IN HIS OWN WORDS

Syedna Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) was demanded a special sign of the truth of the religion of Islam by the Hindus of Qadian. Under divine guidance he went to Hoshiarpur (a town a few miles east of Qadian) for this purpose and prayed to God for forty days. At the end of this period, he was granted the glad tidings of an illustrious son to be born within nine years. A part of this magnificent prophecy is being reproduced on page 4.

Huzoor published this prophecy in his *Ishtihar* (leaflet) dated 20th February 1886. The son was born in 1889 and was named Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad. He was to become *Musleh al-Mau'ood*. He was elected in 1914 as the second Khalifa of the Jama'at Ahmadiyya.

In 1944, God manifestly revealed to the Khalifatul Masih II that he was the Musleh Mauood. At that time he openly declared that he was the same promised illustrious son of the Promised Messiah mentioned in the prophecy. Huzoor made this announcement on 20th February 1944 at Hoshiarpur before a large gathering in the following words:

"Under the divine command, I swear by God

and announce that He has nominated me as the Promised Son according to the prophecy, who is to convey his (Promised Messiah) name to the corners of the earth. I do not say that I am the only Promised one and no other Promised one will come till Doomsday. From the prophecy, it seems that some other Promised ones will also come. Some of them may come even after centuries. Rather God has intimated me that He will send me again to this world in some later age and I shall come again in times of polytheism. This means that my spirit shall be given to some other person who will be possessing faculties like me. He will do the job of reformation of the world by following in my footsteps. Therefore, those who are to come will come according to the divine promises in their own times. What I say is that the prophecy has been fulfilled in my person that was given to the Promised Messiah in the house in front of me in this city of Hoshiarpur which he announced in this very town and about whom he said that he will be born within nine years. Now there will be no one else to claim truthfully the fulfillment of this prophecy." (*Al-Fazl*, 19th February 1960)

EIDUL AZHIA THIS YEAR FALLS ON FEBRUARY 23, 2002

We convey to all the readers of the Ahmadiyya Gazette EID MUBARIK on the occasion of the Eidul Azhia which will be celebrated on February 23, 2002.

Please note that the date previously published date of February 22, 2002 for Eidul Azhia in our Annual Calendar of events was incorrect.

Please make a note of it that the Eid this year will be celebrated on February 23, 2002

CLARIFICATION ABOUT THE SABZ ISHTIHAR (THE GREEN LEAFLET)

by Ataul Mujeeb Rashed (Imam London Mosque)

It is very often mentioned in written articles and speeches on the occasion of Musleh-e-Mau'ood Day that the prophecy regarding Musleh-e-Maood, pronounced on 20th February 1886, was printed on green papers. This is not exactly like that and it needs some clarification.

The prophecy was no doubt published on 20th February 1886 but it was not printed on green papers. It was printed in the form of a leaflet on ordinary papers. Later on, the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) printed another leaflet on March 22, 1886 in which he mentioned, on the basis of Divine revelation, that the promised son will be born within a period of nine years.

What happened afterwards was that instead of a son, the first child born after the prophecy was a daughter. Ignorant people ridiculed this. Later, a son was born on August 17, 1887 but he died on November 4, 1888. At the death of this son once again the opponents raised a lot of hue and cry and strongly criticized the truth of this prophecy and rejected it all together.

At this point Hazrat Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) wrote a small leaflet on December

1, 1888 in which he explained the true meaning of the prophecy and declared very emphatically that come what may, the promised son will be born within the stipulated period of nine years from the date of its first pronouncement *i.e.* February 20, 1886.

This leaflet, which reiterated the glad tidings of the birth of the promised son, was printed on green papers and was most appropriately named and is generally known as 'SABZ ISHTIHAR' (green leaflet).

According to the original prophecy, by the grace of Allah, the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) was blessed with a son on the 12th of January 1889 about whom he was told by Allah that this was the promised son. The prophecy was fulfilled most magnificently and there is not a shadow of doubt about it.

The following are the significant dates with regard to this prophecy:

February 20, 1886	Pronouncement of the prophecy regarding Musleh-e-Mau'ood, who was to be born within nine years
April 15, 1886	Birth of a daughter, Ismat, who died in 1891.
August 7, 1887	Birth of a son who was named as Basheer (Awwal), who died on November 4, 1888.
December 1, 1888	Publication of a leaflet on green papers and hence generally known as <i>SABZ ISHTEHAR</i> .
January 12, 1889	Birth of a son, named Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad about whom the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) was told that this is the son through whom the prophecy is going to be fulfilled.

THE MUSLEH MAU'OOD PROPHECY AND ITS BACKGROUND

(Basharat Munir Mirza, Ph.D., Athens, Ohio)

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was born in Qadian, India in 1835. By the time he attained to his adulthood, the Muslim political power in India was for all practical purposes a thing of the past. In the 1860's, the British rule in India had brought with it a strong Christian Church. The Muslims were disorganized and weak. The Church was on the offensive against Islam. The attacks from Hinduism, spearheaded by the Arya Samaj, were designed to eliminate Islam from India. Islam was being attacked from all sides.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad took up the challenge in defense of Islam against Christian and Hindu attacks. He spent all his time in a forceful defense of Islam. He first started with articles written for newspapers, but by 1881, he had published his monumental works in the form of '*Braheen Ahmadiyya*' giving solid arguments in defense of Islam. By 1884, four volumes of *Braheen Ahmadiyya* had been published. He gave in these books many revelations he had received from God.

In addition to the sound reasoning to support the thesis that Islam was a living religion, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad invited any seekers of truth to come to Qadian and stay with him for some time so they could witness first hand the signs from God.

Foremost among the Arya Samaj was Pundit Lekh Ram Peshawari. He had gone far beyond all norms of civility in using foul language against Islam and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) of Islam. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad invited Pundit Lekh Ram to come to Qadian to witness signs of God.

Some Aryas of Qadian wrote to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in September, 1885, to show them some sign within one year. He agreed to comply. The details of this correspondence are given in *Majmu'a Ishtiharat*, (Vol. 1, pp. 92-96).

Early in 1886, undertook a trip to Hoshiarpur for the purpose of spending forty days of solitary sojourn to spend in worship and prayers.

THE MUSLEH MAU'OOD PROPHECY

At the end of this 40 day period, he published a handbill on February 20, 1886, giving the revelations from God regarding an illustrious son within nine years of that date. This has come to be known as the prophecy regarding **the Musleh Mau'ood**. *Majmu'a Ishtiharat*, (Vol. 1, pp. 97-103) gives the text of what was published in the newspaper *Riaz-i-Hind*, Amritsar, on March 1, 1886. The prophecy stated:

"... Rejoice, therefore, that a handsome and pure boy will be bestowed on thee. Thou wilt receive an intelligent youth who will be of thy seed and will be of thy progeny. A handsome and pure boy will come as your guest. His name is Emmanuel and Bashir. He has been invested with a holy spirit. (this part was fulfilled at the birth of Bashir I in 1887).... He will be accompanied by FAZAL (grace) which shall arrive with him. He will be characterized with grandeur, greatness and wealth. He will come into the world and heal many of their ills through his Messianic qualities and through the blessings of the Holy Spirit... He will be extremely intelligent and understanding and will be meek of heart. (This part fulfilled at the birth of Hazrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmood Ahmad in 1889)..... I will cause a great increase in thy progeny and will bless it; but some of them will die in early age...." (*Ahmadiyyat, the Renaissance of Islam*, p. 36. A complete text of the prophecy is given elsewhere).

As the prophecy indicated, this was not to be an ordinary son. He was to be given deep insight in the meanings of the Quran. He was to have worldwide fame. He was to be bestowed with deep knowledge of physical as well as spiritual realms. Many more characteristics of Musleh Mau'ood were given in the revelation published on February 20, 1886. In short, this son was to be one in millions, nay, one in

billions. If it came out true, it would furnish a shining Sign of the existence of God, the truth of Islam and the truth of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

Generally, this prophecy was received with skepticism and scorn. The Arya Samaj leaders intensified their attacks on Islam and on Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was still in Hoshiarpur when the Arya Samaj leader of that area, Lala Murlidhar, challenged him for a debate. The challenge was accepted and March 11 and 14, 1886 were chosen as the days of the debate. The rules of the debate were agreed upon. The parties were to write down their answers for the benefit of the public.

The debate ensued but Lala Murlidhar began to renege on his commitments to the rules and on both occasions walked away without finishing the debate.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote a book *Surma Chishm Arya*, giving his arguments on the topics of the debate. In this book he invited the leaders of Arya Samaj for a *Mubahala* (prayer duel).

The answer to this publication was a spate of leaflets and letters, many of them unsigned, using very foul language and going as far as giving threats to kill Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Finally, the Aryas of Qadian, with help from Pundit Lekh Ram, came up with a publication in the magazine *Chashma Noor, Amritsar*, in refutation of the book mentioned above.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was quick to publish a refutation to the article published by the Qadian Aryas. This came out in the form of a book: *Shahna-i-Haq*.

The prophecy of February 20, 1886, was regarding a son to be born at a future date. Some of the opponents of Hazrat Ahmad began a malicious propaganda that he, in fact, had a son born to him just before he made this prophecy, although this was not the case at all.

Hazrat Ahmad, therefore, published another

leaflet on March 22, 1886, setting the record straight that he did not have a son born already some six weeks ago, as wrongly alleged by his opponents. He stated that according to the prophecy, he will have a son within NINE YEARS of the original announcement on February 20, 1886.

Again, some people had the criticism that nine years is a long time. This resulted in yet another announcement by Hazrat Ahmad on April 8, 1886, emphasizing that the importance of the prophecy is in the birth of a son with specified special qualities rather than the length of the period within which the prophesied son will be born. The good news of the future birth of a special son was due to the acceptance of his prayers. It was not just a prophecy but a grand heavenly sign.

On August 7, 1887, a son was born to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and was named Bashir. He has come to be known as Bashir I. He lived for only 16 months and passed away on November 4, 1888. So he fulfilled the part of the prophecy regarding "the guest". However, the opponents of Hazrat Ahmad created a great commotion that the son promised to him did not live.

This necessitated another leaflet by Hazrat Ahmad which was published on December 1, 1888. It was entitled "The Truth at the Demise of Bashir". It was printed on green paper and has come to be known as "*Sabz Ishtihar*" (The Green Leaflet). In this announcement, he explained that the prophecy of February 20, 1886 was in fact regarding two sons. One was to come as a guest and was clearly among those children who were to die in early age as given in the prophecy.

God bestowed another son to Hazrat Ahmad on January 12, 1889. He was named Mahmood. In the announcement of 1886, the Promised Son was predicted to be born within NINE YEARS. He was in fact born within THREE YEARS, thus nullifying any criticism by Ahmad's opponents that nine years was too long a time. The full name of the son was Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmood Ahmad.

It is interesting to note that all these events took place before Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad laid the

foundations of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community; before he took a *Bai 'at* (initiation) of even the first devotee. The first *Bai 'at* was taken on March 23, 1889 when Hazrat Mirza Mahmood Ahmad was already a few weeks old.

COUNTER PROPHECIES

While all this was going on, Pundit Lekh Ram gave his own predictions. First, he published his *Takzeeb Braheen Ahmadiyya*, in which he prophesied (pages 307 and 311) that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad will die of Cholera within three years and no one will be left of his progeny (*Qulliyat Arya Musafir*, p. 501)

As a reply to the Musleh Mau'ood, prophecy, Lekh Ram made his own counter prophecy. Every positive point in the prophecy published by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was countered by a negative statement by Lekh Ram who attributed his statements as revelations from God.

Lekh Ram's publication of his prophecy was full of abusive language. Anyone interested can read it in *Qulliyat Arya Musafir*, (Vol. 3, pp. 496-98). Some details can be seen in *Savaneh Fazl-i-Umar* by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (1975, pp. 59-63).

We give here only a few examples of the words used in the two prophecies:

Hazrat Ahmad's prophecy	Prophecy of Lekh Ram
You are given a sign of Mercy	you are given a sign of wrath.
He will be exceedingly intelligent	He will be exceedingly thick-headed.
He will attain fame to the comers of the earth	Many even in Qadian will not know him
Your progeny will not be cut off	Your progeny will be cut off within three years

As can be seen from the above, Lekh Ram had gone quite far in his so called prophecy. He predicted the end of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad within three years with no heirs to propagate his name; and predicted that after his death, no one

even in his own village will remember him

On January 12, 1889, a son was born to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. This was the son who grew up to fulfill all the predictions regarding the Musleh Mau'ood published on February 20, 1886.

The foundations of a new Community were laid on March 23, 1889, when Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad took the first *Bai 'at* (covenant of initiation). This was predicted by Lekh Ram to be the end of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Far from being the end, it was now the beginning of a new era, the era of the Promised Messiah.

HAZRAT MIRZA BASHEERUD DIN MAHMOOD AHMAD

Hazrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmood Ahmad was of frail health in his early age and had a severe problem with his eyes. Because of this problem, he did not make much progress in his schooling and was unable to complete his high school. He was asked by his father, the Promised Messiah (a.s.), to learn the Quran and Hadith from Hazrat Maulana Noorud Din, the devotee who was the first to take the oath of initiation on March 23, 1889.

On the demise of the Promised Messiah (a.s.) on May 26, 1908, Hazrat Maulana Noorud Din was elected as the Khalifatul Masih I. Hazrat Mirza Mahmood Ahmad was 19 years old at that time. He took an ever increasing role in the affairs of the Community but he was always intensely loyal to the Khalifatul Masih I.

The Promised Messiah, in his lifetime, had set up the Anjuman Ahmadiyya and Maulana Muhammad Ali was in charge of the Anjuman Ahmadiyya during the time of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I. The argument put forth by Maulana Muhammad Ali at the demise of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I was that the question of a successor should be shelved for some time and the Anjuman should carry on with the affairs of the Jamaat.

A large number of Ahmadies came to Qadian on hearing of the demise of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I. The general consensus was to elect a successor immediately and they unanimously elected Hazrat

Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmood Ahmad as the Khalifatul Masih II and took *Bai 'at* at his hand.

At this juncture, Maulana Muhammad Ali, with his friends, left Qadian with the prediction that the Qadian faction will face utter ruin. He set up a rival organization in Lahore. The group is known as the Lahori Group but over the period of time, it has remained stagnant and even today cannot claim more than just a couple of thousand members.

THE MUSLEH MAU'OOD

The main group, under the brilliant leadership of Hazrat Mirza Mahmood Ahmad, the Khalifatul Masih II, grew rapidly into many millions, to be found in most parts of the world.

The high school dropout who was elected as the Head of Ahmadiyya Community, turned out to be a man full of wisdom and knowledge. He fulfilled all the predictions in the prophecy of the Promised Son made in 1886. His writings are treasures of knowledge. More notable, however, are his lectures, sermons and other discourses.

The Promised Messiah (a.s.) wrote so many books in his lifetime that he became the KING OF THE PEN. The Khalifatul Masih II, the Promised Son, gave so many speeches, frequently several hours long, and all full of knowledge, that he became the KING OF ORATION.

From a small community primarily found in India, the Ahmadiyya Movement grew, under his able leadership, and was established in many countries around the world. For this endeavor of international propagation, he initiated a new scheme in 1934, the Tahrik-i-Jadid. This exhorts members to live a simple life, shun luxuries, and contribute in a special fund earmarked for the spread of Ahmadiyyat around the world.

When the Tahrik-i-Jadid was initiated, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II had asked for a small fund of about thirty thousand rupees. The community responded with pledges of more than a hundred thousand rupees. The Tahrik-i-Jadid is now 68 years old and has an annual budget running into many millions of dollars.

Most Ahmadies were of the opinion that the Khalifatul Masih II was the Promised Son predicted in the announcement of the Promised Messiah on February 20, 1886. But Huzoor never felt the necessity of making such a claim for a long time. In 1940, he said in a Friday sermon:

“People have tried that I should claim that I am the Promised Son, but I have never considered it necessary. It is said that my followers affirm that I am the Promised Reformer and yet I have not made any such claim...” (*Ahmadiyyat, the Renaissance of Islam*, p. 289)

Early in 1944, it was revealed to him in a dream that he was the Promised Reformer. On January 28, 1944, he related his dream in detail in his Friday sermon, beginning in the following manner:

“I wish to state something today which I find it difficult to set forth having regard to my temperament, but as some prophethoods and Divine decrees are involved in making this exposition. I cannot refrain from making it despite my reluctance...” (*Ahmadiyyat, the Renaissance of Islam*, p. 290)

Subsequently, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih made this announcement in meetings called for this purpose in Hoshiarpur, Lahore, Ludhiana and Delhi. The meeting in Hoshiarpur was held on February 20, 1944, in commemoration of the original announcement which was made from the same town on February 20, 1886. The meeting in Lahore was arranged on March 12, 1944. The meetings in Ludhiana and Delhi were held on March 23, 1944 and April 16, 1944, respectively.

The Promised Son led the Community from 1914 to 1965 and made it into a dynamic world wide organization. Tremendous obstacles were put in the path of this progress. If God was not with him, the Ahmadiyya Movement would have dwindled into nothing. What more proof is needed by a seeker after truth? The growth of Ahmadiyyat, despite heavy persecution, which is present even today, is a sure proof that this is a Community established by God and it is being constantly helped by God. *Allaho Akbar!*

EID-UL-AZHA

(Reprinted from *The Review of Religions*, July 1990)

Eid-ul-Azha marks the completion of the pilgrimage to Mecca by Muslims from multifarious nations of the world on the tenth day of the Islamic month *Zul Haj*. It is obligatory to bring the pilgrimage to a successful termination with the sacrifice of an animal. Like prayer and fasting, the performance of pilgrimage is a mode of worship seeking the spiritual, social and economic upliftment of Muslims.

Pilgrimage accustoms a person to leave home and, for the sake of God, to undergo separation from friends and relatives. It also serves as a symbol of respect for the holy places of God frequented by the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). When visiting these sacred places the pilgrim experiences spiritual elation. The universal bond of Islamic brotherhood is also strengthened as pilgrims of worldwide nationalities gather together in a spirit of unity and harmony.

The pilgrim offers the sacrifice of an animal at the end of the pilgrimage which is also done by Muslims all over the world. This is done in remembrance of Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son Ishmael (not Isaac as recorded in the Bible) who, in turn, resigned to being sacrificed under the belief that it was the Will of God. We read in the Holy Quran:

And when he (Ishmael) was old enough to run along with him (Abraham), he said, 'O my dear son, I have seen in a dream that I offer thee in sacrifice. So consider what thou thinkest of it!' He replied, 'O my father, do as thou art commanded; thou wilt find me, if Allah please steadfast in my faith.'

And when they both submitted to the Will of

God, and Abraham had thrown him down on his forehead, We called to him 'O Abraham thou hast indeed fulfilled the dream.' Thus indeed do We reward those who do good.' (37:103-105)

The Holy Quran succinctly describes the significance of animal sacrifice:

Verily the most honourable among you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most righteous among you. (49:40)

Those who do good and act righteously shall have a great reward. (4:173)

Verily he truly prospers who purifies himself, and remembers the name of his Lord and offers prayers. (87:15)

The act of sacrifice is in no way an atonement for the sins of the person making the sacrifice. Islam emphasizes that no creature or person can atone for the sins of anyone else and, therefore, rejects the Christian Doctrine of Atonement which declares that Jesus atoned for the sins of mankind by shedding his blood on the cross.

Eid-ul-Azha is an occasion on which Muslims everywhere are encouraged to make every kind of sacrifice for the spiritual, moral, social, and economic uplift of mankind and especially their own. If they make it a common cause and strive to manifest in themselves the attributes of God in accordance with the teachings and guidance of the Holy Quran and teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) then, indeed, the message of *Eid-ul-Azha* would have borne fruit.

EID MUBARAK!

EID SERMON OF THE HOLY PROPHET (Peace And Blessings of Allah Be Upon Him)

(Translated from the *Daily Al-Fazl*, Rabwah, December 27, 2001,
by Munawar A. Saeed, Maryland Jamaat)

Hazrat Jabir (r.a.) relates: I was present in an *Eid* prayer led by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He first led the prayer without any *Adhan* or *Iqamat*. Then he stood up, leaning against Hazrat Bilal (r.a.). He admonished us to adopt righteousness (fear of Allah) and to obey his commandments. Then he went to the side of the women. He admonished them and drew their attention to the paying of *sadaquat* (charity). (*Muslim Kitab-u-Eidain*)

A brief summary of the explanation of this hadith, as given by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (a.b.a.), which is taken from *The Daily Al-Fazl Rabwah* 27 December 2001, is the following:

It seems that this hadith narrates about an *Eid* during the last period in the life of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), because he used to take support after he had been injured in Uhad and he had been poisoned.

He emphasized *Taqwa* (righteousness). This is the real spirit of *Eid*. When *Eid* is celebrated with *Taqwa*, it becomes beautiful, whether the clothes are expensive or simple.

The real beauty of *Taqwa* lies in obedience. The

Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said that if you obey me your *Taqwa* will shine forth.

He admonished the women to give charity and to refrain from being ungrateful to their husbands. It is narrated that when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said that, the women companions started taking off their jewelry and gave them immediately in charity.

In today's world, Ahmadi women have given a new life to that noble tradition. Today Ahmadi women are presenting the spectacle which the women companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had presented.

In another Hadith narrated by Hazrat Abu Saeed Khurzri, it is reported that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to offer prayers first on *Eid* day, then he used to address the gathering. The people stayed in their places. He admonished them to do good deeds. If an expedition was planned, he informed them about it. If he had issued any directives, he generally repeated them on that day and then he returned home.

SO SAID HAZRAT KHALIFATUL MASSIH IV (a.b.)

(Friday Sermon, February 16, 1996, published in *The Al-Fazl International*,
April 15, 1996. Translation by Khaled Ahmad Ata)

“And remember that message of mine during the future *Eid* also that your true *Eid* will only be when you will share your *Eid* with the poor; *when you* will share their sorrows; *when you* will reach their homes *and* look into their conditions. Your eyes may

mercifully shed some tears over their miseries. It is not far from assumption that the same tears of mercy may become a source of correction of your life for good. You may not have known poverty before this, and there you may learn, and a great revolution may then occur within you.”

A UNIQUE EID CARD OF HAZRAT MUSLEH MAU'OOD (r.a.)

(By Dr. Mohammad Ahmad Sahib son of Hazrat Dr. Hashmatullah Khan Sahib, Rabwah. Translation by Khaled Ahmad Ata)

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II (r.a.) traveled to Dalhousie during the summer of 1920 AC. During the itinerary fell the day of *Eidul Adha*. Huzoor (r.a.) said, 'after the *Zuhr* prayers we shall go out of the town.' Later, accompanied by some members of the entourage Huzoor (r.a.) left for the nearby Bakrota hills. In a secluded place Huzoor led *Nawaafil* (voluntary prayers), two Raka'ats each with *Qira'at Bil-Jah'r* (loud recitation of the Quranic verses), lasting approximately one and a half hour.

Huzoor (r.a.) then stood up and said, 'people had sent some *Eid* cards worth the money. We have also sent *Eid* cards today, and that is by invoking multitudes of *Durood* (blessings) on the Holy Prophet (*sallalaho alehe wa salla'm*) praying that he (s.a.w.), his Calips, and all holy men of the Ummah, and all the previous Prophets may be conveyed the present of *Eid* (from Huzoor (r.a.), and followers in the *Nawaafil* prayers including Hazrat Dr. Hashmatullah Khan Sahib, Hazrat Syed Waliullah Shah Sahib, Mr. Khalifa Taqiuddin Sahib,

Mr. Syed Mahmoodullah Shah Sahib, Mr. Naik Mohammad Sahib, Mr. Abdul Ahad Sahib, Mr. Abdul Qadir Sahib and Hazrat Maulvi Abdur Rahim Dard Sahib, and also from friends (*members of the entourage*) who had stayed behind in the lodge). And the present of *Eid* be that which Allah Almighty deems best."

Huzoor (r.a.) then said, 'this prayer too had to be very brief since it was already getting very late.'" Huzoor then asked us to 'find a private place.' Nevertheless despite much effort no such place could be spotted. Upon this Huzoor (r.a.) said, 'alright, we shall then pray on our way back to the lodge.' Hence, while walking back Huzoor (r.a.) was praying, all along.

My father Hazrat Dr. Hashmatullah Khan Sahib oft narrated that 'this prayer of *Nawaafil* was so long that some weaker ones even lapsed into drowsiness.' Nevertheless Huzoor (r.a.), despite frailness, did full justice to the prayers with great determination, he added further.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER ABOUT ZAKA'AT

Zakat is one of the five Pillars of Islam. It is obligatory on every Ahmadi Muslim whose value of assets exceed a minimum threshold even if the Ahmadi pays the *Chanda Aam* or *Chanda Wasiyat*. *Chanda* is not in lieu of *Zakat*. *Chanda Aam* or *Chanda Wasiyat* are based on one's earnings or income irrespective of the source.

A person becomes eligible to pay *Zakat* if the gold, silver or cash in his or her possession exceed the minimum threshold (the equivalent value of 52.5 tolas of silver, or 612.36 grams of silver).

Zakat is payable on the relevant asset or one's bank balance on the excess above this threshold.

Zakat is only payable on gold or silver ornaments not in regular usage. It is also preferable

to pay *Zakat* on ornaments even if they are in regular usage but are never loaned to the poor. However, *Zakat* need not be paid on ornaments which are in common use and which are sometimes loaned to the less well off.

Zakat is paid at the rate of one-fortieth (*i.e.* @ 2.5%) per annum on the excess as set out above.

Note: If the ornaments are made up of gold and some stones or other metal, the approximate value or weight of the stone or metal may be excluded effectively leaving the gold assessable.

Please remind the Jamaat about this obligation so that those who are eligible to pay can discharge their obligation.

M.A. Zafar, Addtnl. Wakil-ul-mal

THE INSTITUTION OF HAJJ

(by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad,
The Promised Messiah, peace be upon him)

Another form of worship is the Pilgrimage; which does not mean that a person should carry out the formality of the Pilgrimage by providing for his journey across the ocean with money lawfully or unlawfully acquired, and having repeated the prayers and formulas according to the directions of the servitors of the Ka'ba, should come back and boast that he has performed the Pilgrimage. The purpose that God Almighty has appointed for the Pilgrimage is not achieved in this manner. The truth is that the last stage of the seeker's journey is that withdrawing himself altogether from the demands and desires of self, he should be completely engulfed by the love of God and complete devotion to Him.

A true lover sacrifices his soul and heart; and the circuit of the House of Allah is a visible sign of such a sacrifice. As there is a House of Allah here below on the earth, so there is one in heaven. Until a person performs the circuit of the House above, his circuit of the House below is not truly performed. One who performs the circuit of the House below puts aside all garments, retaining only one of them to cover his body, but he who performs the circuit of the House above discards all garments altogether and becomes naked for the sake of God. The circuit is a sign of the lovers of God. They go round the Ka'ba as if they have no will of their own left and they are devoted wholly to Him.

HAJJ - THE PILGRIMAGE

(From *An Elementary Study of Islam*, pages 37-39 by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV)

Another example, which demonstrates the universality of Islamic injunctions regarding the practice of religion, is the instance of *Hajj* – the pilgrimage. Once again one finds the institution of pilgrimage in all religions of the world, but the sites for pilgrimage are scattered at different places in one or more countries. One does not find a single central place which all the followers of a religion must visit at least once in their lifetime. Amazingly in Islam we find exactly such a place in Mecca, where Muslims from all over the world are expected to gather and spend about ten days entirely dedicated to the memory of God. The pilgrims come from all countries, all nations, all races and in all ages. Men, women and children, they all gather once a year for a fantastic rally, sometimes running into the millions. This grand display of universality is seen nowhere else in any other religion. Hence all these fingers which were raised in different areas of Islamic teaching, point to the same message of unification of man on earth under the Unity of God.

The institution of pilgrimage can be traced back to the time of Abraham, peace be upon him. But there are very clear statements in the Quran describing it as an ancient institution, starting from times immemorial when the first House of God was built in Mecca. In the olden times, Mecca was pronounced Baka, so the Holy Quran refers to the first house as being built not in Mecca but in Baka. It is also called *Bait-ul-Ateeq*, or the most ancient house. Abraham raised it from the ruins, which he discovered under Divine guidance, and about which he was commissioned by God to rebuild with the help of his son Ishmael. It is the same place where he had left his wife Hagar and infant son Ishmael, again under Divine instruction. But work on the House of God awaited attention until Ishmael grew to an age where he could be of some help. So, both of them worked together to rebuild the house and restart the institution of pilgrimage.

Many rites performed during pilgrimage are rooted in those early days of the reconstruction of the House of God, and some even go beyond that. For instance, the running between Safa and Marwah, two small hillocks close to the House of God, is done in memory of Hagar's search for some sign of human presence to help her and her child in their dire hour of need. The child is described as having become extremely restive with the agony of thirst, striking the earth with his heels in desperation. There, it is said, sprouted a fountain which still exists today in some form, and water in the well which was created later on around that spot, is considered to be a blessed water. Most of the pilgrims who perform the *Hajj* try to bring some water from there by way of blessing for their relatives and friends.

There are other rites and traditions which should be briefly explained. In *Hajj*, the pilgrims do not wear any sewn garments; rather, they dress in two loose sheets. This is further indicative of the tradition being most ancient. It indicates that the institution of *Hajj* began when man had not learnt to wear sewn clothes. They had only started to cover themselves. As such, it seems that it is in memory of those ancient people who used to circuit the first house built for the worship of God in that preliminary dress that the pilgrims are required to do the same. Again, the shaving of the head is an important feature which is also universally found as a symbol of dedication among monks, priests, hermits and vishnus. This further adds to the universality of its character. Women are exempt from shaving, but they have to symbolically cut their hair as a token. Also, in the places where Hazrat Abraham (a.s.) is known to have remembered God in the style of an intoxicated lover, and extolled his glory with loud chanting, the pilgrims are required to do the same at the same places.

REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH

(Taken from the book Remembrance of Allah (Zikri-Ilahi), based on a speech delivered by Hazrat Musleh Mau'ood, Khalifatul Masih II on December 28, 1916)

I wish to address the following matters:

- What is *Zikri-Ilahi*, or remembrance of Allah?
- Why is *Zikri-Ilahi* necessary?
- The various forms of *Zikri-Ilahi*
- Precautions to be taken in performing *Zikri-Ilahi*
- Common misconceptions about *Zikri-Ilahi*.
- Methods of eradicating satanic influences and maintaining concentration in Prayer.

This subject is of universal importance. It concerns all human beings – the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the young and the old. When you practice the ideas I plan to give today, the beneficial results of *Zikri-Ilahi* will become obvious.

WHAT IS ZIKRI-ILAH, OR REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH?

Zikr, an Arabic word, means remembrance. When used for Allah, it refers to the ways of remembering Allah: keeping His attributes in mind, reciting them again and again, affirming them with eagerness and sincerity, and reflecting upon His Omnipotence and Power.

IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT

How important is *Zikri-Ilahi*? To put it briefly is vital and of great importance. I do not call it great simply as a manner of speech, but because Allah Himself has called it so. Allah says:

... Remembrance of Allah indeed is the greatest virtue... (29:46)

i.e., Remembrance of Allah is higher in status than all other acts of worship. The statement that this subject is vital and important is therefore not mine; it is a pronouncement of Allah Himself.

WHY IS ZIKRI-ILAH NECESSARY?

If the subject is of such great importance, Islam would obviously place constant emphasis upon it. This is indeed the case. We find frequent reminders about it in the Holy Qur'an, e.g.,

Remember the name of thy Lord during the morning as well as the evening. (76:26)

Similarly there is a Hadith in which the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, says, *When people gather together for the remembrance of Allah they are surrounded by angels and are covered by mercy from their Lord.*

This is why I have selected this subject for the Annual Conference. Thousands of you have come from great distances to attend this gathering. When I speak on this subject, the angels will shower Allah's blessings upon all of you. When you return home and repeat what you have heard, your listeners will receive the blessing. Thus the blessings will be widely shared by the whole Community.

The Hadith which I mentioned earlier shows that remembrance of Allah in a gathering is a blessed event. It attracts angels who bring with them the blessings and mercy of Allah. The importance of *Zikr* should, therefore, be evident. Obviously the angels will honor a person who, by performing *Zikr*, attracts their company often; he will be constantly reminded to perform good deeds.

The existence of angels is not a fabrication of human imagination; it is a reality. I myself have seen angels. I once conversed with them in a very informal manner. Through their frequent visits, the angels cultivate friendship and affinity with those who remember Allah. God Almighty says:

O, ye who believe, let not your wealth and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah... (63:10)

O ye who believe, remember Allah much. And glorify Him morning and evening. (33:42-43)

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has stressed the importance of *Zikr* in his Ahadith. Hazrat Abu Musa Ash'ari relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, *The comparison between a person who remember his Lord is like that of the living and*

the dead. He who remember Allah is alive; he who does not, is dead.

Hazrat Abi Darda'a relates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, *Shall! tell you about your best action and the noblest deed even for the kings, which raises your status, is better for you than spending gold and silver, and better for you than that you meet your enemy and cut off their necks, or you yourselves attain martyrdom?* The Companions said, *Certainly, please tell us.* The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, *It is the remembrance of Allah.*

According to another Hadith the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, *Remembrance of Allah has a great reward.* The Companion asked, *O Prophet of Allah, is it higher in reward than striving in the cause of Allah?* He said, *Yes, because it is the remembrance of Allah which encourages you to undertake the striving.*

NEED OF GREATER ATTENTION TO ZIKR IN OUR COMMUNITY

Such is the importance of *Zikr*. Yet, in some respects, many members of our Community do not pay due attention to it. God Almighty has naturally inclined me to reflect and ponder. I have pondered over this matter ever since my adolescence and I am equally concerned now as I was then. Any laxity in the remembrance of Allah which exists in our Community must be removed.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) has laid great emphasis on Prayer. By the Grace of God, our Community is very mindful of this obligation. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) has also stressed the importance of remembrance of Allah, but the Community has not yet given it the required attention.

Laxity in the remembrance of Allah results, in part, from the influence of Western education. Many people think that there is no point in sitting alone and saying *La Ilaha Ilallah* (*There is none worthy of worship except Allah*) or reciting the attributes of God like *Quddoos* (the Holy), *Aleem* (the All Knowing), *Khabeer* (the All Aware), *Qadir* (the All

Powerful), or *Khaliq* (the Creator). Many of our members, who have been exposed to Western education, have been influenced by these ideas.

Farmers constitute another large group in our Community. In the past they have not been well-informed about the concept of *Zikr* and its benefit. Hence, they also lack the habit of *Zikr*. Unless the farming community is adequately informed and properly instructed, it cannot be expected to pay sufficient regard to the remembrance of Allah.

Salat (performance of the five prescribed Prayers during the day) is also remembrance of Allah. By the Grace of Allah our Community is very regular in observing *Salat*. However, there are important methods of remembering Allah other than *Salat*. Though they are not totally lacking in the Community, adequate attention is not being paid to them.

Some members totally lack the habit of remembering Allah in addition to *Salat*; this is a major flaw. If someone is exceptionally handsome but has deformed eyes, ears or nose, will he be called handsome? Not at all. Everybody will say that he is repulsive. In other words, a member who does not employ some methods of remembering Allah is like a person who is wearing a very expensive coat, shirt, jacket and trousers, but lacks shoes or head dress. Despite his well-tailored clothes, his missing shoes or head dress makes his appearance defective. Absence of the habit of remembering Allah is a defect, and people with good taste dislike any personal defect.

I will demonstrate that in addition to *Salat*, ways of remembering Allah have been prescribed by Allah and His Messenger. Whether one fully comprehends the philosophy of these commandments or not, it is essential to follow them to attain spiritual excellence.

Some members of our Community imagine that by performing obligatory worship they have done their duty and there is no need for *Nawafil*, the voluntary Prayers. This is a misconception. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, says that God Almighty told him that, *By offering Nawafil My servant gets so close to Me that*

I become the Ears with which he hears, the Eyes with which he sees, the Hands with which he holds, and the Feet with which he walks.

This Hadith reveals the value given to *Nawafil* by Allah, and the high status of the person who performs them. Allah elevates him so high that he begins to absorb His attributes. *Nawafil* are not an ordinary matter; therefore, lack of attention to their performance is a cause for great concern.

Man is prone to laxity and indolence. He wishes to cope with the minimum of hardship and discipline. God Almighty, who knows the weaknesses of His creatures, has, by His Grace, appointed some acts of worship as obligatory and others as voluntary. The obligatory worship sets the acceptable standard. Anyone who meets it fully will be above reproach.

It is narrated that a person came to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and asked about Islam. He responded, *Five Prayers during the day and night*. He asked, *Any Prayer other than these?* The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said *None, unless you yourself desire*. Then the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, continued, *Fasting during the month of Ramadhan*. Again the man asked, *Any fasts other than these?* The Holy Prophet, peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, responded, *None, unless you yourself desire*. Then the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, told him about *Zakat*, the financial obligation of the Muslims. He repeated the same question and received a similar reply. The man left saying, *I promise in the name of Allah that I shall not add anything to these, nor shall I miss any of them*. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, *if he speaks the truth, he has attained success*.

In short, obligatory worship, performed perfectly, assures success. But the careful and the wise do not restrict themselves to obligatory worship. They enter the field of *Nawafil* to make up for possible shortcomings in their observance of obligatory worship. For instance, five daily Prayers have been prescribed. However, a lapse or omission

may have occurred during some of them, rendering them useless. There will be an obligation owed on the Day of Judgement for all such shortcomings in Prayers. *Nawafil* will compensate for such an obligation

It is narrated that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, once saw one of his Companions observing Prayer. He asked him to repeat his Prayer, which he did. But the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, asked him to repeat it for a second, and then for a third time. The companion pleaded, *O Prophet of Allah, I do not know how to pray better; please teach me*. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, responded, *you were rushing with your Prayer and therefore it is not worthy of acceptance by Allah. Pray slowly and it will be accepted*.

Let me illustrate this point. Suppose a student takes an examination in which he requires fifty marks to pass. If he answers questions worth only fifty marks, he cannot be sure of his success. He may fail because one of the questions may have been answered wrong. Or imagine a traveler about to undertake a long journey. He may estimate the money required during his journey, but during the travel he may be faced with an emergency requiring additional funds. *Nawafil* are like the extra funds for emergencies. They are important and should receive particular attention.

MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT ZIKR

There is a common misunderstanding about *Zikr* in our Community. Since it appears to result in neglect of *Zikr*, I want to remove this misunderstanding. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) criticized the *Sufis* (the so-called devotees) of his time who had introduced many innovations in Islam. He pointed out that their repeating, parrot-fashion, of different phrases of *Zikr* was useless; it was time to defend Islam from the attacks of the enemies. The Promised Messiah (a.s.) criticized them – and this they indeed deserved – but some Ahmadis have misunderstood him. The conclusion that sitting at a place in remembrance of Allah has no merit is absolutely wrong.

All forms of *Zikr* are meant to praise Allah and to glorify His Name. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) criticized those who verbalized the Glory of God in the privacy of their homes, but did not challenge the enemies heaping affronts upon His Holy name. He admonished them because they were indolent. They were not performing their duty of calling people towards goodness and forbidding them from evil. Their actions amounted to hypocrisy. Had they been sincere in their glorification of God, why did they not counter the attacks of the enemies? Why did they not glorify Allah on the public platform as they did in the quiet corners of their homes?

Moreover, the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) criticized them because they defaced the concept of *Zikr*. Their practices had no trace of the concept of remembrance of God in its pristine purity.

MISGUIDED FORMS OF ZIKR

Several misguided forms of *Zikr* are found among the *Sufis*. They utter a cry from their hearts and take it to their heads and shout so loudly that nobody in the vicinity can sleep or concentrate on worship. This is called *penetrating the heart* – as if *La Ilaha Ilallah* would enter their hearts only if it was hammered in! Although they say that they are gathering for *Zikr*, they only delude themselves with empty sounds of *Allah, Allah*.

There are many practices:

- Some simply have a good time with songs, choruses and dancing by call girls; they call it a meeting of *Zikr* because the sound of Allah is frequently made.
- Some *penetrate their hearts*.
- Some *utter a cry from their soul*
- Some *raise Zikr from their hearts and it returns after performing a prostration at Arsh - the Throne of Allah*
- Some *utter cries of Allah from every particle of their body*.
- Some dance to the sound of the verses of the

Holy Qur'an with others hopping around and reciting poetry. They feign intoxication and unconsciousness. Someone then jumps into the middle of the gathering with shrill shrieks of *Allah, Allah*. In short, many eccentric and occult practices have been introduced into the concept of *Zikr*; none of them has anything to do with the true teachings of Islam. We condemn these innovations, but we cannot forsake *Zikr* because of them.

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has said, *Every innovation takes one away from the right path and all of them lead to fire*. That is why such *Zikr* does not lead these people closer to Allah; instead, it moves them away from Him. Ever since this type of *Zikr* has been introduced, Muslims have drifted away from Allah. This is not surprising: practices contrary to the directions of Allah and His apostle were bound to weaken spirituality.

All innovations introduced into *Zikr* have an element of pleasure, but the pleasure is artificial. The man who succumbs to it at the cost of real pleasure is ruined. He is like someone who suffers from stomach ache and, rather than seeking proper treatment, goes to sleep with a dose of opium. The narcotic effect provides a temporary relief, but in fact he is killing himself. A time will soon come when his disease will do its damage.

ZIKR VS. MESMERISM

What is called *Zikr* by these people is actually mesmerism and hypnotism. It has nothing to do with spirituality; rather, it is related to concentration of thoughts.

God Almighty has vested the human mind with the power to produce a very strong aftereffect by focused thoughts. Feelings of pleasure – similar to those derived from opium, cocaine, or marijuana – can be derived from such concentration. These sensations are not real pleasure, but a state of numbness. Such people fool themselves into believing that they receive pleasure by reciting the name of Allah. Actually, even if they said *Ram* at that time their feelings would be no different.

It is narrated that a respected Muslim was traveling in a boat. He started his *Zikr* with full concentration. Others, mainly Hindus in the boat, joined him in saying *Allah, Allah*. However a Hindu ascetic was not influenced. The Muslim focused his thoughts upon the ascetic, who, in turn, started focusing upon the Muslim with greater force. Instead of influencing the ascetic, the Muslim was influenced himself. Quite involuntarily, he started saying *Ram, Ram*. The Muslim was astonished and realized that performing *Zikr* in this manner was futile. He repented and stopped this practice. He recognized that the result was merely produced by the exercise of a skill, and not remembrance of Allah. If the blessing of saying Allah was the source of his comfort, uttering *Ram* could not have created the same feelings.

Those who perform such rituals are like a traveler famishing in a desert. Finding a bag filled with pebbles, he imagines it to contain food. A person performing meaningless rituals believes he is attaining the nearness of Allah, but he is actually in a state of delusion. His senses have been numbed. He thinks that he has reached a high spiritual status, but the condition of his heart remains unclean.

PLEASURE FROM *ZIKR*

A sincere Ahmadi once said to me that great pleasure is derived from such practices. I told him the pleasure is similar to that derived from opium and cocaine. The conclusive proof is that such *Zikr* does not produce spiritual purity. He agreed and told me that he knew someone who had mastered all the rituals, but begged for food in the streets. The Ahmadi added that he used to wonder: if this man has reached the high status which he claims, why does he need to beg?

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) has narrated a story about a *pir* (saint) who claimed that he had achieved a high spiritual status. Once while visiting a follower during a famine, he demanded, *Bring my homage*. The follower, who could find nothing to offer, begged to be excused, but the *pir* kept insisting. In the end, the follower was forced to sell some of his household effects to satisfy the *pir's* demands.

In short many weaknesses and impurities of heart are found in people who make pompous claims about the misguided forms of *Zikr*.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN *ZIKR* AND MERE INFLUENCE OF THOUGHTS

God Almighty has vested the human voice and thoughts with a special power. If a person keeps thinking that something has happened, his mind will be inclined accordingly. Similarly, if someone starts imagining that his heart is emitting the sound of *Allah*, he begins to perceive that sound. The question arises: If the heart really produces that sound, why is it not purified?

There is an important difference between those who truly love God and those who play tricks. The difference is simple, but failure to recognize it makes a man careless about his reformation. He may believe that he has reached Allah, whereas actually he has not. Like a man who has arrived at a wrong destination but believes that he has arrived at his goal, he will sit there and suffer the loss. Those who indulge in the misguided practices imagine that they have reached their true objective but actually they are miles away from it. Like an addict of opium, they are in a state of frenzied intoxication and senselessness.

The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) urged his followers to stay away from wrong forms of *Zikr*. He criticized those who practiced them: *How can these practices be called remembrance of Allah in a true sense when even the Hindus and Christians can practice them?*

RECITING *ZIKR* ALOUD

What about reciting *Zikr* aloud or listening to songs and music? As I mentioned earlier, the human nervous system has been granted the power to influence as well as to be influenced. The ears provide one of the paths to the nervous system. They respond to pleasing sounds. This applies not only to human beings, but also to other creatures. Play a flute to a snake, and it starts dancing. Can you say it is under spiritual influence. Not at all. Similarly, if someone starts dancing to the tune of a song, it cannot be said that he has accepted a spiritual

influence; only that his feelings have been influenced. Anyone who believes that singing has a spiritual effect is mistaken. Just as a snake dances to the tune of a flute, the *Sufis* of today respond to songs and music. Moreover, it is an innovation in the faith of Islam to perform *Zikr* loudly.

Once the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was traveling with his companions. He heard them say '*Allaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar*' loudly. Hazrat Abu Musa narrates that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, advised them, *Have mercy on your selves. Why do you not speak softly? The One Whom you are calling is not deaf or absent; He is with you, and hears you well.*

The *Sufis* of today go against the directions of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. When they hold a meeting of *Zikr*, the whole vicinity is filled with noise. They deem it an act of goodness; whereas, in fact, they are going against the *Sharia* (Islamic law). Their practices—dancing, shouting, falling, and moving their heads around—do not accord with the teachings of Islam.

POETRY AS ZIKR?

It is said that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, listened to poetry, but nobody can prove that he heard poetry as remembrance of Allah.

Sometimes Hazrat Hassan came to him saying, *O Prophet of Allah, an opponent has composed couplets against you and I have prepared this reply.* He listened to the reply. Similarly once a person, against whom he had issued a death sentence, presented himself and after receiving permission, recited a few couplets begging forgiveness. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, spread his mantle over him to indicate forgiveness. Later the man said, *I was not afraid of death, but I had recognized the truth of Islam and did not want to die as a disbeliever.* At another occasion, a Companion wrote a poem during a war in which he said, *This day we will be victorious or will accept death; but we will not retreat.*

None of these show that remembrance of Allah took the form of rapturous songs or recital of poetry, nor does it prove that the Companions danced or got intoxicated. All these practices are innovations. The behavior which is incited by these poems is vulgar and un-Islamic. Islam does not condone it at all.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TRUE ZIKR ACCORDING TO ISLAMIC TEACHINGS

What Allah says about *Zikr-Ilahi* is the following:

True believers are only those whose hearts tremble when the name of Allah is mentioned... (8:3)

... at which do creep the skins of those who fear their Lord; then their skins and their hearts soften to the remembrance of Allah. (39:24)

.... When the signs of the Gracious God are recited unto them, they fall down, prostrating themselves before God, weeping. (19:59)

According to these verses the attitude of those who truly remember Allah is the following:

1. Their hearts are filled with the fear of Allah because they are reminded of the status and the Glory of their God.
2. Their skins creep, *i.e.*, the hair on their bodies rise due to their state of fear.
3. Their bodies are softened, their hearts become tender.
4. They prostrate, *i.e.*, they start worshiping God.
5. They cry or weep.

These are the five effects mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. If dancing, jumping, falling unconscious, or shouting were appropriate conditions for *Zikr*, God Almighty would surely have spoken of them too. He does not mention any of them; hence, they have nothing to do with the remembrance of Allah.

TRUE ZIKR RULES OUT DANCING AND SHOUTING

Nobody can ever claim that the current practices

are legitimate additions to those specified by Allah, because the words used by Allah rule them out completely. The words used are: *wajl*, *iqshirar*, *ta'leen*, and *jlood*.

One of the meanings of *wajl* is softness and erosion. That calls for a state of rest. But the *Sufis* of today move around in a state of frenzy, which contradicts this concept. Similarly, *iqshirar* occurs when the skin creeps due to fear. That too requires a state of rest, because in a state of fear one is stunned and movement is restricted. The words *taleen* and *jlood* similarly require a state of rest.

The proper word in Arabic to indicate movement is *turb*. It is used for chanting and jumping with joy. This word has not been used in the Holy Qur'an for remembrance of Allah. The lexicons say the state of *turb* is the opposite of the state of humbleness and submission, which, according to the Holy Qur'an, result from remembrance of Allah. Hence jumping and moving cannot result from true remembrance of Allah. They would constitute *turb* which is the opposite of humbleness and submission, the appropriate result of the remembrance of Allah.

Islam teaches rationality, wisdom, and the importance of following the straight path—not insanity and foolishness which leads to jumping, hopping and shouting. The latter cannot be the teaching of Islam.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS NOT A PROPER RESULT OF ZIKR

Falling unconscious is also not a proper Islamic response to extreme emotion. A Muslim experiencing a tragic death is permitted to shed tears in Sorrow, but not to express loud and public wailing nor to fall unconscious. Once the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, passed by a woman showing uncontrollable grief at the grave of her child. He advised her to be patient. She said, If your child had died, you would have realized how difficult it is to show patience. (She said it out of ignorance. The truth is that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, suffered the death of several children.) In short,

wailing and falling unconscious are caused by impatience and lack of hope.

Sometimes impatience arises from weakness of the heart; even then, it is not desirable. During the times of Hazrat Junaid, there was an aged scholar who used to fall unconscious on hearing the remembrance of Allah. When his students asked him about it, he replied, *I am old and therefore I fall unconscious*. Note that he did not ascribe his unconsciousness to a higher spiritual status but only to his physical weakness.

As for falling unconscious due to despair and lack of hope, Allah says:

.... and despair not of the mercy of Allah; for none despairs of Allah's mercy save the unbelieving people. (12:88)

Anyone who falls unconscious for lack of hope commits an act of disbelief. If he does so due to a weakness of the heart, he is sick. There is no wisdom involved in either case.

The matter of unconsciousness was discussed during the time of the Companions of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Hazrat Abdullah bin Zubair asked Hazrat Asm'aa about unconsciousness. She replied, *I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the accursed*. The son of Hazrat Abdullah bin Zubair narrated that he saw people falling unconscious upon hearing the recitation of the Holy Qur'an. Hazrat Asm 'aa, the daughter of Hazrat Abu Bakr and herself a Companion, responded, *If you saw this you witnessed a satanic act*.

Ibn Sirin, author of the well-known book on *The Interpretation of Dreams*, was the son-in-law of Hazrat Abu Huraira. He was once told about someone who fell unconscious upon hearing a verse of the Holy Qur'an. He replied, *put him on a high wall and then read to him the whole Qur' an, not just one verse. If he falls unconscious, I will agree that he is influenced by the recitation of the Qur' an*.

Even now those who feign unconscious carefully avoid injury. Except by mistake, they do not fall from the roof or to a place where they might get hurt. Generally, they fall upon other people in the

crowd.

In short, all the innovations introduced into *Zikr* are wrong and forbidden. They deserve to be condemned because they destroy spirituality. They degrade men to the status of monkeys and bears. Islam wants to raise man beyond the status of angels and considers these practices to be vain and useless.

FOUR KINDS OF ZIKR ENJOINED BY ISLAM

Zikr, as enjoined by the Holy Quran, is of four types. All of these should be observed diligently; missing any of them will deprive one of a great blessing. The four types are the following:

1. The prescribed Prayers;
2. Recitation of the Holy Qur'an;
3. Reciting the attributes of Allah, acknowledging their truthfulness, and verbalizing their details; and
4. Publicly proclaiming the attributes of Allah.

The importance of these four types of *Zikr* is well established in the Holy Qur'an. They are important, indeed vital, for attaining spiritual progress.

Now I will prove that these four types of *Zikr* are enjoined by the Holy Qur'an. God Almighty says about Prayer:

Verily, I am Allah; there is no god besides Me. So serve Me, and observe Prayer for My remembrance. (20:15)

This verse shows that when Allah says, *Remember Me*, He means observe the Prayer (*Salat*). Then Allah says:

If you are in a state of fear, then say your Prayers on foot or riding; but when you are safe, remember Allah as He has taught you that which you did not know. (2:240)

In this verse the observance of *Salat* has been called remembrance of Allah.

There are many other verses, but these two will suffice for now. The second *Zikr* is recitation of the

Holy Qur'an Allah says:

Verily We Our self have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We will be its Guardian. (15:10)

In this verse the revelation of the Holy Qur'an has been called the descent of the Exhortation – *Zikr* in the Arabic text. Hence, when Allah says remember Allah, He also means recite the Holy Qur'an. Then Allah says:

And this is the blessed Reminder that We have sent down; will you then reject it? (21:51)

This verse presents the Holy Qur'an as a reminder; the Arabic word used here too is *Zikr*.

The third form of *Zikr* consists of reciting the attributes of Allah, and acknowledging their truthfulness. Some people believe that it is sufficient to recite the attributes of Allah during *Salat*. This is wrong. Remembrance of Allah—in addition to *Salat*—is clearly enjoined by the Holy Qur'an. Allah says:

(And) when you have finished the Prayer, remember Allah while standing, and sitting, and lying on your sides. (4:104)

Clearly, the *Zikr* mentioned here is in addition to *Salat*. Then He says:

By men, whom neither merchandise nor traffic diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the observance of Prayer, and the giving of Zakat. They fear a day in which hearts and eyes will be agitated. (24:38)

Here again remembrance of Allah is distinct from the *Salat*.

The fourth kind of *Zikr* is the public proclamation of the attributes of Allah. He says:

O Thou that has wrapped thyself with the mantle! Arise and warn. And thy Lord do thou magnify. And thy heart do thou purify. And uncleanness do thou shun. And bestow not favours seeking to get more in return. And for the sake of thy Lord do thou endure patiently. (74:2-8)

BENEFITS OF DUA'A (PRAYER)

(In the light of sayings of Hazrat Musleh Mau'ood (r.a.). Translated by Khaled Ahmad Ata)

The Real Objective and Purpose of *Dua'a*

“In reality the true purpose of *Dua'a* is not what is generally understood *i.e.* all that is asked for must be granted. Instead the real objective of *Dua'a* is to induce Faith (*Iman*) and purification of soul (*Tazkiya-e-Nafs*). The purport of *Dua'a* is that man may gain Faith in Almighty Allah and obtain cleanliness and purity of heart (*Anwaarul-Uloom*, Vol. 9, p. 432)

In his insightful address of December 26, 1926 AC, Hazrat Musleh Mau'ood, Khalifatul Masih II (r.a.), mentioned the following benefits of *Dua'a*.

Dua'a and Attainment Of Faith in the Attributes of Almighty Allah

First benefit: “*Dua'a* makes the servant accept the special Decree of Almighty Allah, and causes a trust in the attributes of Almighty God inasmuch as when man prays he believes Almighty Allah Powerful *enough* to remove his affliction as well as fulfilling his need. Hence man attains Faith in the special Decree of God Almighty, and even if only one of his prayers is granted it convinces his heart that his is a God Who can even alter His law for his sake.”

Attainment Of Almighty Allah's Nearness Through *Dua'a*

Second benefit: “Man, when praying, affirms that Allah is close to him, and listening to him. The real objective of *Dua'a* is not merely the fulfillment of momentary needs. One of its objectives is rather to draw man towards Allah to attain His nearness. Man should be convinced, and pronounce it too, that Allah is close to him. In the Holy Quran Allah describes this objective as, ‘*when My servant prays to me I get close to him, and listen to him.*’ Therefore one of the objectives of *Dua'a* is that man should secure a station of nearness in God's attendance, and God should take him in His lap.”

Preparation to Receive Rewards Through

Dua'a

Third benefit: “One of the objectives of *Dua'a* is that during his lifetime *in this world* man may acquire the ability to work in the Hereafter as well. Prayers, even if unaccepted in this world, get registered in the virtues' ledger of the next world. Therefore yet another advantage of *Dua'a* is that it prepares man for more rewards.”

Dua'a and Attainment of Trust (*Tawakkal*)

Fourth benefit: “*Dua'a* symbolizes trust in Allah Almighty since man, during *Dua'a*, admits his humbleness. In the attendance of Allah he *also* affirms that, ‘He alone is the most Powerful and the most Mighty.’ We can never hope to receive God's grace unless we affirm that, ‘Thou are Powerful and we are weak.’ This is a station of Trust (*Tawakkal*) that can not be achieved without *Dua'a*.”

Seeking Manifestations of Allah Almighty's Powerfulness Through *Dua'a*

Fifth benefit: “As a result of *Dua'a* we witness sure manifestations of Allah's Powerfulness. How can we refute the effects of prayers' acceptance that we observe in everyday life?”

Induction of Strength and Vigor In Heart Through *Dua'a*

Sixth benefit: “*Dua'a* induces strength and vigor in the heart and takes away cowardice. The latter results from despair. A supplicant never despairs, however. One who prays with conviction that ‘there is a God who can help and provide for me’ gets comfort of heart. This saves him from squabbling, and also enables him to work for other provisions.”

Dua'a and the Coming Of Allah's Mercy

Seventh benefit: “At times non-acceptance of a *Dua'a* is acceptance instead. Many a thing that man deems good are actually harmful. Non-

acceptance of prayer, at times, is therefore an act of mercy in disguise.”

Worldly Troubles and The Effects of *Dua'a*

Eighth benefit: “*Dua'a* works where *human* scheme fails. *Dua'a* shows its effect when schemes and physical provisions become obviously ineffective.”

Dua'a and Proof of God Almighty's Existence

Ninth benefit: “*Dua'a* is a proof of God's existence. The result brought about by the acceptance of prayer is a stronger proof of God's existence than if something had happened of its own.” (*Anwaarul Uloom*, Vol. 9, p. 433-5)

“Let it be clearly understood that if you slacken

in beseeching, and humility and meekness then God would care the least for you. Man can do with God but not the vice versa. Man needs God but not the vice versa. We are beggars but God is Independent. It is therefore necessary that we knock at His door rather than He awakening us with His blessings and mercy, and yet we beg nothing of Him. Give up, therefore, laziness and inculcate the habit of supplicating. Beg Allah day and night. Make supplications while sitting or standing, resting or walking, sleeping or awake; in short supplications should be on the tip of your tongue, all times.” (*Khutabaat-e-Mahmood*, Vol. 5, p. 166; *Al Fazl*, July 15, 1916)

UNDERSTANDING ISLAM TODAY

Colesville Presbyterian Church, Silver Springs, Maryland

Sunday, December 9, 2001

(Report by Kalim Khan)

In the light of the new challenges faced by the society in the present circumstances a Forum was arranged to discuss, express and share the views on “Understanding Islam Today”, by pastor Dr. Ted Durr of Colesville Presbyterian Church, on Sunday, December 9, 2001.

He invited two Muslim Scholars, namely:

- i. Maulana Shamshad Ahmad Nasir Sahib (Baitur Rahman Mosque)
- ii. Mr. Sabir Rahman (Muslim Community Center)

Dr. Ted Durr (who had attended a few of our functions at Baitur Rahman) acted as a moderator.

Some eight Ahmadi members accompanied Imam Shamshad Sahib, and were greeted by the pastor and his courteous staff at the church.

Imam Sahib, in his discourse, introduced Islam in very simple terms by explaining first the

meaning, then the creed, articles of faith and the pillars of Islam. He also touched upon the need and philosophy of the daily five prayers, and few other things to make the non-Muslims understand Islam in a nutshell.

Mr. Sabir Rahman, also explained different aspects including Jihad and terrorism etc.

After about one and a half hour discourse, the moderator opened the floor for discussion, comments and questions. Few questions, like: segregation of sexes, hijab, Taliban and Islam, terrorism etc., were asked from the group which comprised of about 30 eager and interested individuals. The learned speakers appropriately answered all the questions.

Maulana Shamshad Sahib presented the Holy Quran and Salat chart to the pastor. Everybody discussed few other things then dispersed.

BROOKLYN MAJLIS KHUDDAM VOLUNTEERS AT GROUND ZERO

Following the September 11th terrorist attacks, the American Red Cross set up an extensive operation to assist in relief efforts at Ground Zero, the site where the Twin Towers once stood. Khadim Naved Ahmed who had lost friends in the World Trade Center, had been volunteering at Ground Zero for several weeks following the attacks. Initiating contact with Red Cross officials, he spearheaded the effort, stating that the Ahmadiyya Jamaat was ready to offer their services. Under the direction of Qaid Basharat Hameed, the Brooklyn Majlis mobilized several Khuddam who attended a two-hour registration and orientation session in order to assist at the Ground Zero location.

Two teams of 4 Khuddam each volunteered on Saturday, November 24th and Sunday, November 25th. After arriving at the Red Cross command center at 6:30 AM, Khuddam boarded a bus that transported them to the Respite Center at Ground Zero. The Khuddam spent the day preparing and serving food, washing dishes, and offering general support for the rescue workers who were hard at work at the site. The first team consisted of Qaid Basharat Hameed, Dr. Mehdi Ali Chaudhry, Nasir Patel and Rafi Chaudhry. The second team consisted of Naved Ahmed, Samee Ahmed, Mohammed Shahid, and Mudassir Chaudhry. Asif Nadeem and Massod Kamboh also volunteered in

the month of December. In a noble effort, Massod Kamboh volunteered every weekend for six consecutive weeks and is continuing to do so to the end of January. By the grace of Allah these Khuddam contributed over 20 man-hours to the relief effort.

Dr. Mehdi Ali and Qaid Basharat Hameed had the opportunity of having a detailed discussion with a Red Cross staff Member about Islam and Ahmadiyyat. She looked very satisfied with the answers and explanations to her questions. She was interested in keeping contact with us and was given MKA Brooklyn's business card with all the contact details.

After volunteering in eight hour shifts the Khuddam were exhausted but felt a sense of accomplishment. Khadim Samee stated, "*Alhamdulillah*, I was grateful for the opportunity to represent the spirit of service in Islam and Ahmadiyyat". Similarly Asif Nadeem stated: "We are just thankful to Allah for giving us the ability to serve humanity." The Red Cross kitchen manager Al Boulin and many other staff members stated that the Brooklyn Khuddam were "excellent, and a very hard working group of people."

Please remember these Khuddam in your prayers that may Allah bless their efforts.

PLEASE NOTE

If you move and/or change your address, please do not write to the distributors at Chauncey, but please **inform the HQ** of your new address immediately, at the following address:

Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam
15000 Good Hope Road
SILVER SPRING, MD 20905

If you must write to the distributors at the Chauncey, Ohio address, please **do include your old address** as well as the new address. Just writing your new address only does not help the distributors of the Gazette. They can only trace you by knowing your old address and your old ZIP Code.

16th JALSA SALAANA (ANNUAL CONVENTION) WEST COAST USA CONCLUDES - ALHAMDOLILLAH

685 DELEGATES ATTEND THE GATHERING

(by Waseem A. Sayed, Afsar Jalsa Salaana)

It was by the sheer Grace and Mercy of Allah that this year again our West Coast USA Jamaat Jalsa was a great success – *Alhamdulillah*.

The foundation of this blessed event was laid over 100 years earlier by the Promised Messiah (a.s.) when in 1891 he initiated the holding of these purely spiritual annual gatherings. Today such gatherings are held all over the world and this was our 16th such gathering on the West Coast of the United States of America.

This year 685 delegates joined and came from all over the US and the world. We were also blessed by the presence among us of a number of National Majlis Aamla members who reside on the East Coast: Dr. Masood Malik Sahib the National General Secretary, Mr. Mubarik Malik Sahib the National Secretary, Hafiz Samiullah Sahib, National *Waqf-e-Nau* (Finance) Secretary, and Zinda Mahmood Bjwa Sahib the National Public Relations Secretary. Dr. Shahnaz Butt Sahiba, President USA Lajna and Salma Ghani Sahiba, National Lajna Tabligh Secretary and former President Lajna USA also graced this Jalsa with their participation.

The Jalsa was held at the Baitul Hameed Mosque in Chino, California from the 28th of December to the 30th of December 2001. During the entire Jalsa *Tahajjud* prayer and the five daily prayers were offered in congregation at the Baitul Hameed Mosque. The Jalsa Gahs (both Lajna and the Men's) were very beautifully decorated with numerous banners bearing the Kalima, the sayings of the Holy Prophet and the Prophecies and revelations of the Promised Messiah (peace be on them all).

A team of some 50 workers from all the usual Jalsa offices spent a lot of time and effort in making

the preparations for the Jalsa. Registration, Transport, Accommodation, Office, Langar Khana, Ziafat, Audio, Video, Electricity, *Istiqbal* (Welcome), Lajna Co-Ordination, First-Aid, Parking, Facilities, Child Care, Bookstall, Decoration, and *Nizafat* (cleanliness) departments were created early on and all worked very hard to get everything in order before the inauguration that took place after the *Jumma* Prayers on Friday December 28th, 2001.

First Day-Friday, December 28, 2001

FIRST SESSION

The first regular session of the Jalsa started was presided over by Dr. Masood Malik Sahib, National General Secretary, Jamaat USA, assisted by Maulana Irshad Malhi Sahib, Missionary NW Region.

Dr. Hamid-ur-Rahman Sahib, President of the host Jamaat delivered a Welcome Address which was followed by the Inaugural Address of D. Masoud Malik Sahib. He reminded the audience of the blessed beginnings and objectives of the Jalsa Salaana and that we were all the guests of the Promised Messiah (a.s.). He also exhorted all present to try their best to maximally benefit from the spiritual blessings associated with this Jalsa. A speech then followed on the topic of Love of Allah by Dr. Waseem A. Sayed Sahib and the First session came to an end with an address by Maulana Irshad Malhi Sahib on the subject of Overwhelming Benevolence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) Towards All Mankind.

SECOND SESSION

This was a lively Question and Answer Session that was very well attended and lasted much longer than planned. Mr. Abdur Raqeeb Wali Sahib, President Merced Jamaat, presided over this

session and was assisted by Mr. Moeenuddin Sirajee Sahib, President San Diego Jamaat. A wide variety of questions were asked and answered. The Panel consisted of Maulana Irshad Malhi Sahib, Maulana Inamul Haq Kauser Sahib, Mr. Anwar Mahmood Khan Sahib and Dr. Waseem A. Sayed Sahib. Sahibzada Rashed Lateef Rashedi Sahib acted as the moderator of the function.

Second Day – Saturday, December 29, 2001 THIRD SESSION

This session was presided over by Jalaud Din Ahmed Sahib, President LA West Jamaat, assisted by Abdul Baqi Shams Sahib, President San Francisco Jamaat. The Session began as usual with *Tilawat*

A speech was then delivered by a recent convert to Islam-Ahmadiyya Mr. Abdulah Osher Sahib on the topic of Some Distinctive Features of Islam. Dr. M. Rafi Sahib then delivered an address on Islam and Science. This was followed by a poem and translation. Anis Sheikh Sahib then delivered a speech on Amazing Fulfilment of the Prophecies of the Promised Messiah (a.s.). The concluding address was delivered by Dr. Kaleem Malik Sahib on the topic of the Signs of the advent of Imam Mahdi.

LAJNA SESSION:

The Ladies Session was presided over by Dr. Shahnaz Butt Sahiba, Sadar Lajna USA, and was assisted by Waheeda Malik Sahiba, Lajna President South West Region, and Rifat A. Wali Sahiba, Lajna President North West Region. The session began with the melodious recitation of the Holy Quran by Nuzhat Tahir Sahiba, followed by translation by Sadaf Ajaz Sahiba. Amtul Wadood Khan Sahiba then recited a beautiful poem, and translation was given by Aleem Wali Sahiba. Waheeda Malik Sahiba delivered the Opening Address, thanking all members who attended both on Friday and Saturday, and reminded all guests that she and her duty holders were ready to take care of any needs they might have. This was followed by a speech titled, The Holy Quran – the Greatest Source of *Tabligh*, by Shazia Sohail

Sahiba. She expounded on techniques to introduce Christians and even Muslims of other sects to the gems of the Holy Quran. Attia Rehman Sahiba followed this with an informative speech on the Blessed Daughters of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), and their sacrifices for the cause of Islam. They truly were models for us all. Soon after, Amatul H. Bukhari Sahiba recited a stirring poem, with translation by Sadia Malik Sahiba. A speech on The Status of Women in Islam was delivered next by Tehmina Luqman Sahiba. Subsequently, Dr. Aziza Rahman Sahiba gave a speech on Islamic Teachings on Matrimonial Relations, reminding us all of the respect and patience required in marriage. Dr. Badar Khalid Sahiba then recited a poem, and translation was given by Ann Wilcox Sahiba. An Urdu speech came next by Mubarka Rajpoot Sahiba on A Mother's Role in Today's Society. Dawn A. Morgan Sahiba then told us of her conversion to Islam, in a short speech titled, Islam, a Turning Point in My Life. The Nasirat of LA East then sang a group poem and presented its translation. Lastly, Dr. Shahnaz Butt Sahiba, Sadar Lajna USA delivered the closing address, thanking all who came, and retelling of the fruitful Lajna sessions during the National Convention in June.

FOURTH SESSION

This function was Presided over by Dr. Hamid ur Rahman Sahib, President LA East Jamaat and Anwer Mahmood Khan Sahib acted as the Moderator for the entire function. Many dignitaries and guests were invited to participate in this function. The Mayor of Chino Hills, the President of the Chino Rotary Club, the Police Chief of Chino and many other distinguished members of the local community attended.

After the usual *Tilawat* and translation a welcome address was delivered by Dr. Hamidur Rahman Sahib thanking all the guests for their attendance and their support throughout the previous many years. This was followed by an address by Professor Rashed Lateef Rashedi Sahib on the subject of Introduction to Islam. The guests were then invited to address the members of the

audience and all came and thanked and wished well to the Community and praised the Community members for their excellent contributions to the local community. The President of the Rotary club invited members - nay urged - members to join their club.

The session concluded with an address of Maulana I. H. Kauser Sahib in which he emphasized that Islam means peace love and respect.

A very brief Question and Answer Session followed and then all were served an excellent dinner during which no doubt numerous discussions ensued.

In the evening the members of the National Aamla made very useful and informative presentations to the members of the Majalais-e-Aamla of the West Coast Jama'ats.

On both Friday and Saturday evening the Lajna also held similar functions at which the National, Regional and Local Aamla members discussed many important issues concerning their various duties.

FINAL SESSION

This was presided over by Wasim Malik Sahib, President San Jose Jamaat and assisted by Dr. Mirza M. Luqman Sahib, President Portland Jamaat.

Tilawat was recited by Hafiz Samrullah Sahib. Translation by George Wilcox Sahib. Urdu Poem by Mazharul Haq Sahib. Translation by Bashir Mahmood Sahib. A speech on the concept of Salvation in Islam by Ibrahim Naeem Sahib. The future of Mankind by Anwer Mahmood Khan Sahib. Then a very moving and emotional speech was delivered by Sahibzada Rashed Lateef Rashedi Sahib on the subject of the Great Sacrifice of Sahibzada Abdul Lateef Shaheed (r.a.). This was followed by a recitation of a Persian poem of the Promised Messiah (a.s.) by Sahibzada Arshad M. Rashedi Sahib.

The closing address was delivered by Dr. Hamidur Rahman Sahib in which he thanked all those who had worked to make the Jalsa a great success.

PERSECUTION OF AHMADIS IN LOMBOK ISLAND, INDONESIA

(doc.MTA London.)

Friday afternoon, June 22, 2001 at 5:00 PM an anti-Ahmadi mob of 70 to 100 strong, armed with knives, hatchets and axes attacked 2 Ahmadiyya mosques and set them ablaze at Sambu Elen Sub-District, West Lombok. They also razed into the ground nine Ahmadi houses one after the other.

Mr. Papu Hasan, a 65 year old, was stabbed and beaten repeatedly all over his body by the mob, while defending the mosque. He was immediately rushed to the Public Hospital where doctors tried to save his life but he succumbed to his severe injuries in the evening. Papu Hasan was the Tabligh Secretary of Jamaat Sambu Elen. While doing *Tabligh*, his beard used to become the target of

mockeries by the opponent of the Jamaat, nonetheless he had never stopped doing *Tabligh* activities.

Mrs. Rukiyah, the wife of Papu Hasan was also stabbed and beaten severely all over her body while helping her husband defending Ahmadiyya mosques and houses from the attackers. She was also rushed to the Public Hospital and doctors have saved her life. Some arrest were made by the police and later it was found by the police that the mastermind of the attack is the local Ulemas and even it was found that there is a conspiracy between Ulemas and a certain local police officers for the attack.

AHMADIYYA DELEGATE MEETS LT. GOVERNOR OF MARYLAND Honorable Kathleen Kennedy

AT MCC (Muslim Community Center) - Silver Springs, Maryland

Wednesday, December 19, 2001

(Report by Kalim Khan)

The Muslim Community Center (MCC), in Montgomery County, Maryland, invited all the Muslim leaders, prominent scholars and socio-political community representatives for a special meeting to discuss the problems faced by the community members after the September 11, incident.

Mr. Sabir Rahman, President MCC received the chief guest Lt. Governor, Honorable Kathleen Kennedy with open arms by calling her sister Kathleen and thanked her for gracing the gathering. In his opening remarks he gave a brief account of the establishment, progress and contributions of the Muslim Community in the State of Maryland. He proudly mentioned that more than *twelve* Community Center representatives comprise this large gathering. He then highlighted the problems faced by them despite being law-abiding citizens of this country. He pointed out in unequivocal terms that they profess and practice Islam, which is a religion of peace, love and harmony, and condemn any kind of terrorist activity by any individual or group of individuals.

Honorable Kathleen Kennedy addressed the gathering by extending "*Assalamoalaikum*", and "*Eid Mubarak*". She expressed her delight in listening into the verses of the Holy Quran. In God we believe, Who is Just, she remarked, and we all

have to love one another. Muslims have a wonderful tradition of good family life and their contributions are great. It is pain to see them being discriminated against. Islam is a great religion and there is a lot of interest in it. We have to understand each other, for lack of communication has created misunderstanding. We have to work together to promote freedom, liberty and democracy this country represents. Terrorism is an individual, selective act and no religion promotes it. We do have to pay attention on others around the world, she remarked. She expressed her pleasure in discussing with the community members. In closing, she pointed out that a pamphlet has been developed to curb the hate crimes, and provides all the necessary information. A copy of the Holy Quran was then presented to her by Sabir Rahman Sahib, which she accepted with thanks.

At the conclusion an Ahmadiyya delegate of five members, led by Imam Shamshad Ahmad Nasir Sahib met her. After introduction, exchange of thoughts, Imam Sahib presented her a copy of the Ahmadiyya souvenir along with other literature.

This meeting provided an ample opportunity to meet other Muslim leaders of the Community as well as to have contacts with the gubernatorial staff members of the State of Maryland.

NEW YORK JAMAAT'S ACTIVITIES REPORT

TABLIGH

Members brought guests to Baitul Zafar during *Ramadhan*. We appreciate the efforts of Sister Laila Sikder, Brother Mukhtar Ahmed who invited the Imam of a mosque in the Bronx, Mr. and Mrs. Rashid Ahmed, Sultan Sandhu, Fasasi Sunusi, Nasir Bucchus and many others.

Young Lajna and young Khuddam participated in a project to mail out 500 letters to civil and political leaders, local clergy, high schools and colleges, the media, and other institutions.

The mailings consisted of three leaflets which explained true Islam and the meaning of Jihad and invited the recipients to share the material with their colleagues. We offered to provide lectures on Islam, if required, so that the true teachings of Islam are known to all.

Another project initiated by Muballigh Daud Haneef Sahib is underway and consists of sending the message of Islam to neighbors of our Jamaat members.

JAMAAT NY PARTICIPATES IN PEARL HARBOR MEMORIAL SERVICE

by Fatima Mahmud

On the evening of December 7, 2001, Queens Jamaat President, Nazir Ayaz Sahib, along with 15 members of Queens Jamaat (including three Lajna members), were invited to and attended a special memorial service for world harmony on the 50th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The event was sponsored by the NYPD 103rd Precinct Community Council and was held at the Bethesda Missionary Baptist Church in Hollis, Queens, whose pastor conducted the program. National Tabligh Secretary, Brother Ali Murtaza, led the participants in prayer and requested that all interested parties take some of the literature on Islam and Ahmadiyyat provided.

The main speaker for the program was

Congressman Gregory Meeks, who spoke on the topic of Homeland Security and its meaning and importance for the community. During his talk, he welcomed the members of the Ahmadiyya Community who were present.

After the program, Nazir Ayaz Sahib met with the Congressman and invited him to visit Baitul Zafar, to which he kindly responded in the positive. The date of this visit will be arranged in the future.

A VISIT TO THE HOMELESS SHELTER

On December 16th, Khudaams Hassan Bajwa, Imran Ahmad, and Atfaals Asad Bajwa and I, Mohammad Saqib, went to the Salvation Army Shelter to distribute cakes. This was arranged by Nazim Khidmate-Khalq, Asad Bajwa. While we were there, we had the opportunity to ask a few questions about the shelter. We talked to the manager of the Shelter, Mr. Alex Gonzalez.

The shelter can hold up to 410 people. Not just any people, these are the people who served America in the past or in the present. This shelter is only allowed to house people from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard. The people that come here to live or stay for a short time, just don't only have a place to live, some of them have drug problems, problems with their families, abuse, alcohol, or sometimes don't have enough money to own or rent a house.

In this shelter, they have different sections for such problems. The men have their own sections, the women have their own, and families have their own. Every day, these 410 people go to counseling for their problems until they can get back on their feet and start functioning on their own. The people in the shelter get three catered meals a day.

All in all, this was a very good experience to see their way of life. If you want to help with serving food or giving out clothes, you can write them a letter. They are located on 21-06 Braddock Avenue in Queens.

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful

AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905

**APPLICATION FORM
AHMADIYYA EDUCATIONAL
SCHOLARSHIPS/GRANTS/LOANS FOR 2002-2003**

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, USA, offers the members of the community financial assistance towards pursuit of higher education. The financial assistance is awarded through academic scholarships, need based grants, and loans. Applicants can apply for all three categories of financial assistance but will be awarded in only one category.

The talent scholarships are awarded on the basis of excellent scholastic achievements as well as overall display of excellence. While judging the need based grants and loans (Qarza Hasna), major consideration is given to financial need. However, qualities of academic merit and excellence in other areas are also taken into consideration. The applications are evaluated by an Educational Financial Assistance Award Committee appointed by Amir Sahib, USA.

The current budget of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA, includes an amount of **\$100,000** for the award of Educational Scholarships/Grants/Loans to the youth of the community for College education. The awards are as follows:

A) TALENT AND NEED BASED SCHOLARSHIPS: \$70,000

The Following talent scholarships will be awarded:

- i. Fazl-i-Omar Scholarship
- ii. Professor Dr. Abdus Salam Scholarship
- iii. Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad Scholarship

B) EDUCATIONAL LOANS (QARZA HASANA): \$30,000

Interested Ahmadi students are requested to submit the attached application by **April 1, 2002** 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/GRANT/LOAN
(2002-2003)**

I. Applicant 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: _____

II. Educational History

Last Educational Level Completed: _____ Date of Completion: _____

Educational Institution (Last level completed at): _____

Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA): _____ Grade Point Average in your Major: _____

III. Proposed Course of Education

Educational Level in **September, 2002** _____

Educational Institution to be Attended (*Give Address of the Institution*): _____

Degree/Educational Program to be Pursued: _____

Length of Course (*No. of years*): _____ Anticipated Graduation Date: _____

IV. Financial Information

Tuition Cost: _____ Books Cost: _____

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

Total Annual Cost: _____

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

Income from other Sources (From family contributions and from Federal/State Grants/Loans):

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

Total Income from All Sources: _____

Shortfall in Educational Expenses (Cost minus Income): _____

If you feel there are any other factors that are relevant to your financial situation that are necessary to be brought to the evaluation committee's attention. You may tell us this information on a separate paper.

V. Additional Information

- A) *Please list your involvement in the following categories on a separate sheet of paper:
a) Extra curricular activities b) Community service c) Honors, and awards, etc.*
- B) *Provide 1-2 letters of recommendations from former or current teachers/professors.*
- C) *Please write one page essay explaining what the pursuit of higher education means to you. Further explain how your educational plans and courses you are taking will help you to achieve your educational goals. The essay should not exceed 1,000 words.*

VI. Jama'at Activities Involvement

- A. *Please tell us on a separate sheet of paper about your participation in Jama'at activities.*
- B. *Please have the application signed by the President of your Jama'at. (Lajna members may have the application signed by the Lajna President).*

I would like to be considered for: **Talent Scholarships, Need Based Grants, Loans, Scholarships/Grants/Loans - Please circle the choice(s).**

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

VII. Certification by the President

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

Is a born Ahmadi/converted to Ahmadiyyat since: _____

Any Jama'at/Auxiliary office Held: _____

He/She is very regular / somewhat regular / Irregular in attending Jum'uah and Jama'at meetings.

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

(President: If you feel the need to provide us with more information on the applicant, please do so on a separate sheet and mail it under separate cover, Thank you.)

President's Name: _____

President's Signature: _____ Date _____

Eligibility Rules and Regulations

1. Applicant must be a member of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. The applicant must be registered with the Tajneed Department of the Local Jama'at and have been assigned a 5-digit member code. Applications without a member code will not be considered.
2. Applicant must be a High School senior planning to attend college in the academic year starting in the Fall of 2002 **OR** a student already enrolled in college working towards an undergraduate or graduate degree during the Fall 2002-Spring 2003. Applicant must be registered as a **full-time student** for the Fall 2002-Spring 2003 academic year.
3. Applicants applying for the Talent Scholarships must have a minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale in college studies.
4. No two members of a family may be awarded Talent Scholarship during a year.

Application Requirements

1. The completed application must reach the *Ta'leem Secretary by April 1, 2002.*
2. The required material to be submitted includes:
 - i. The completed application form
 - ii. An official transcript (from the Registrar's office in a sealed envelope) for the most recent year showing CGPA and GPA in the major, and most recent semester's GPA.
 - iii. Information relating to activities and achievements (**Part V-A**).
 - iv. Letters of recommendations (**Part V-B**).
 - v. One page essay (**Part V-C**).
 - vi. Description of Jama'at activities and President's certification required (**Part VI A and B**).