



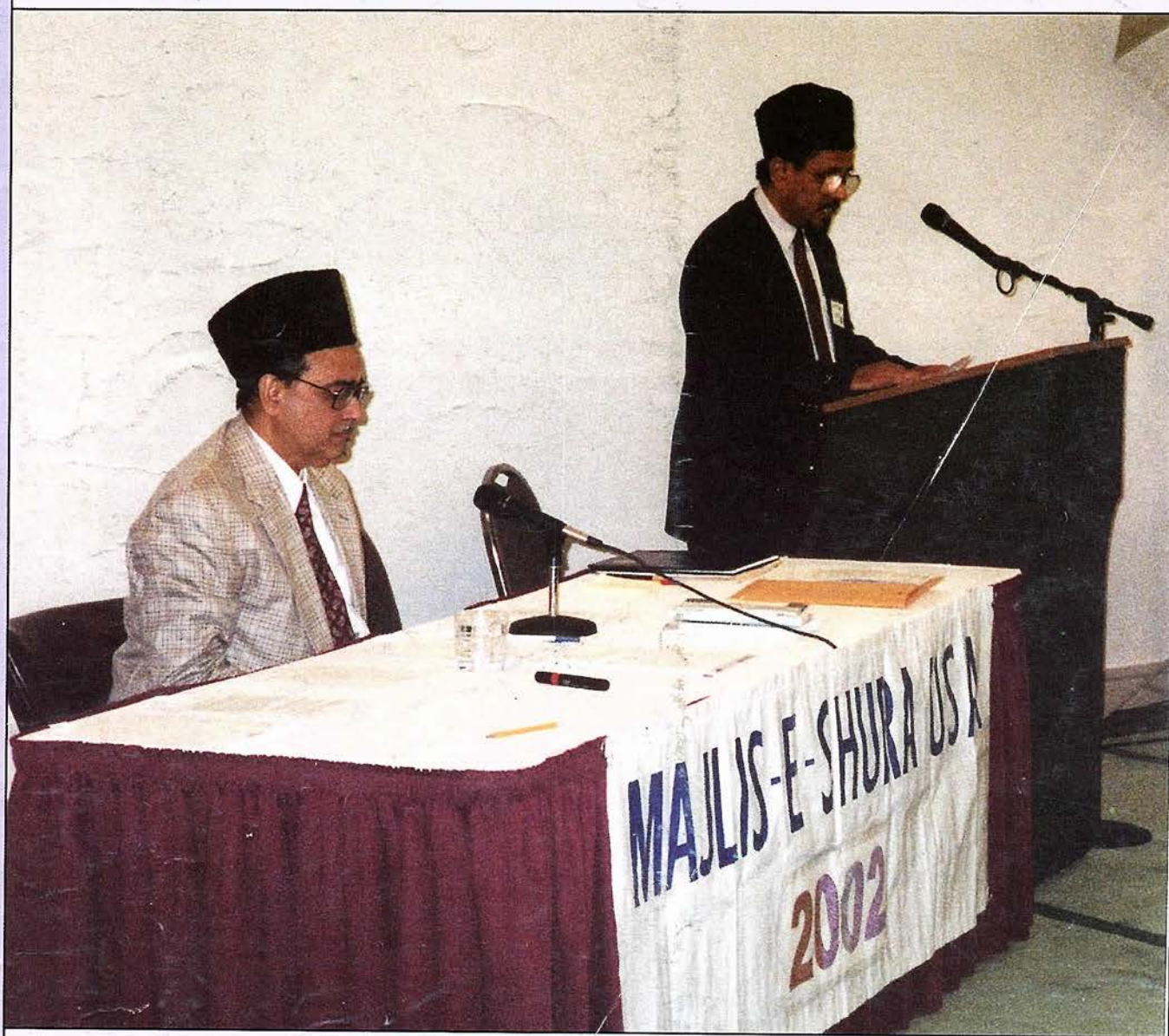
ان الدين عند الله الاسلام

THE Ahmadiyya Gazette

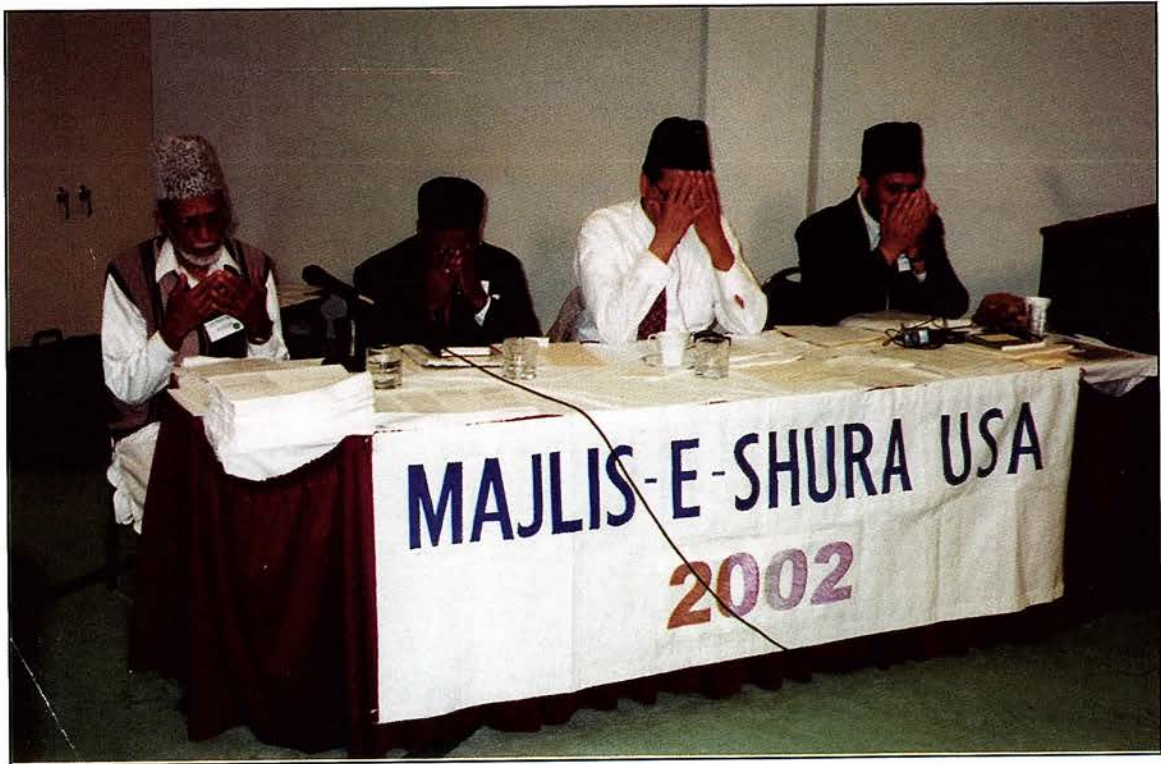
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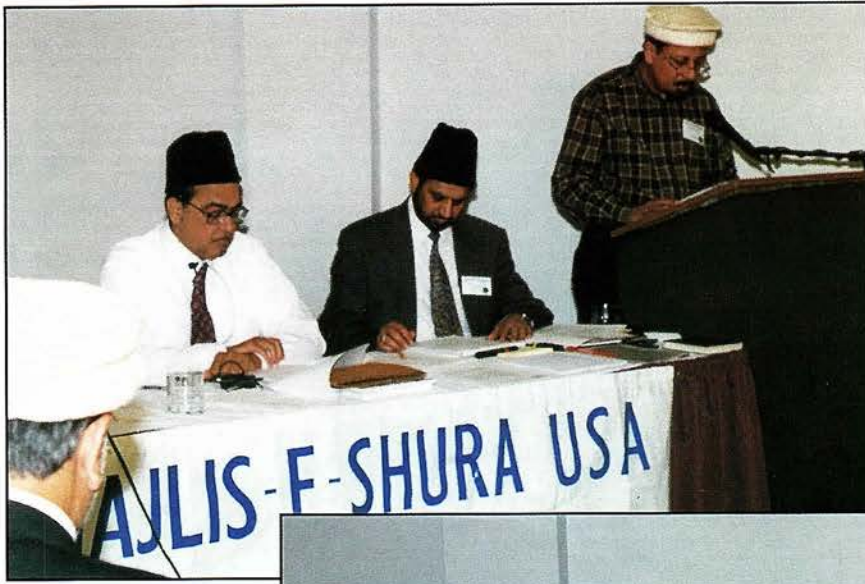
Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar, Acting Ameer, USA Jamaat, presiding over a session of Majlis-i-Shoora, 2002



Silent Prayer at the conclusion of the 2002 Majlis-i-Shura, April 28, 2002



MAJLIS-I- SHOORA 2002 OF JAMAAT AHMADIYYA, USA



Speakers at the Podium



Delegates to the 2002 Majlis-i-Shura, USA, during a session



FROM THE HOLY QUR'AN

“Verily, We have granted thee a clear victory. That Allah may cover up for thee thy shortcomings, past and future, and that He may complete His favor upon thee, and may guide thee on a right path; And that Allah may help thee with a mighty help. He it is Who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers that they might add faith to their faith—and to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is All-Knowing, Wise—That He may make the believing men and the believing women enter the Gardens beneath which streams flow, wherein they will abide, and that He may remove their evils from them—and that in the sight of Allah, is the supreme triumph...” (48:2-6)

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا ۗ لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ
وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيَكَ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ۖ
وَيَنْصُرَكَ اللَّهُ نَصْرًا عَظِيمًا ۗ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَرُدَّادُوا إِلَىٰ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَرَلَهُ جُنُودَ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۖ لِيُدْخِلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ قُرْآنًا عَظِيمًا ۖ

SO SAID THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD ^{SAW}

Bra'a ibn 'Azib relates: The Messenger of Allah enjoined seven things upon us and forbade us seven. He commanded us to visit the sick; to follow funerals, to call down Allah's mercy on one who sneezes, to fulfil vows, to help the wronged, to accept an invitation and to multiply the greeting of

peace. He forbade us wearing gold rings, drinking from silver vessels, sitting on red silk cushions, and wearing stuff made from silk and cotton mixed, pure silk, heavy silk and brocade (Bokhari and Muslim). One version substitutes in the first seven recovery of that which is lost in place of fulfillment of vows.

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Announcement of the Promised Messiah (a.s.) regarding the importance of attending the Jalsa Salana (Annual Conference)

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

To all sincere friends,

Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahe Wa Barakatohu

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

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

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

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

JALSA SALANA AND ITS AIMS AND OBJECTS

(by Chaudhry Hameedullah, Vakil-i-Aala, Tehrik Jadid)

(Reprinted from the *Ahmadiyya Gazette Canada*, August-November 2000)

Although the *Jalsa* is a well-established institution of the Jamaat and there would hardly be an Ahmadi who would not know about it, yet the members of the Community, especially the newcomers and the younger generation, needs to be constantly reminded of its historical background, of its objectives, of its benefits – educational, moral and spiritual – and of how it is planned and conducted – they need to be reminded of all this, lest an Ahmadi participating in a *Jalsa* should be deprived of the blessings of this sacred occasion.

But let me begin with the beginning and briefly narrate some historical facts about the early days of the Ahmadiyya Movement, for the history of *Jalsa* and the history of The Movement are closely linked.

The Promised Messiah (a.s.) Is Commissioned

We start with the year 1882 when the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) received the first revelation that he had been commissioned. This was the year when the first two parts of his famous book, *Braheen-I-Ahmadiyya* had been published. Right from his youth, the Promised Messiah started receiving revelations from God, but in March 1882, he received the historical revelation which was the basis of his being appointed by God to reform mankind. God said to him:

Allah bless thee, O Ahmad. It was not thou who didst let loose but it was Allah Who let loose. The Most Gracious one has taught the Quran so that thou should warn the people whose ancestors have not been warned and that the way of the guilty ones might become manifest. Proclaim: 'I have been commissioned and I am the first of the believers'.

This was not his first revelation, but it was the first to reveal that he had been commissioned by God. With this revelation commenced a new period in his life. However, he was not yet commanded to take *Bai 'at* (initiation), so he continued serving the

cause of Islam for some time and did not lay the foundation of any regular Jamaat. Of course, he informed people of his claim of being commissioned to be a *Mujaddid* (reformer) by Allah. This he did through an announcement that was published and distributed in different parts of India and its English translation was sent abroad. The copies of the handbill were sent to the kings, ministers and religious leaders throughout the world. Through this announcement he invited the followers of all religions for holding discussion with him regarding the truth of Islam, the prophethood of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), the existence and unity of God, divine revelation, etc., if they had any doubts about these matters. They, he said, could hold a discussion either through correspondence or by meeting him in person. By his claim of being *Mujaddid*, he meant that he was the *Mujaddid* who appeared at the head of the 14th century to serve Islam and to have been given the necessary knowledge and virtues to combat evils of the present age, in accordance with the prophecy of the Holy Prophet that at the head of each century a *Mujaddid* would appear in the Ummah to reform those who had gone astray. Reformers (*Mujaddids*) had accordingly been appearing before him at the head of the past centuries.

Besides the above revelation, I deem it necessary to mention three more revelations. These three were also revealed during the year 1882. I would mention them here as they are related to *Jalsa Salana*. They are:

People will come to thee by every distant track, the help will come to thee from every distant track, until the paths of Qadian will be deepened due to their tremendous usage.

At that time nobody thought of visiting Qadian, as it was a remote village unknown to people. But in the very life time of the Promised Messiah (peace

be upon him) people witnessed the fulfillment of this revelation, and it continues to be fulfilled with all its grandeur.

The second prophecy is

And do not turn away from people in scorn and be not averse to men.

And after that came the third revelation:

And extend your house.

Explaining these prophecies further, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) says:

In this prophecy Allah categorically says that a day is bound to come when people desirous of meeting you will flock around you in their multitude. They will come to you in such great number that it will be difficult for each and everyone of them to meet you personally. So when the day comes, don't show any sign of grief and boredom and don't get tired of meeting people. Praise be to Allah, how glorious is the prophecy! It was made seventeen years ago when I used to have perhaps not more than two or three persons in my company – and that only occasionally. How manifestly this proves that Allah is the Knower of the unseen. (*Siraj-e-Munir* pp. 63-64)

In the year 1889, under the command of Allah, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) started taking *Bai'at* (the initiation) and thus laid the foundation of the Jamaat.

At the end of the year 1890, Allah revealed to him that Jesus (Eisa – peace be upon him) whom both Christians and Muslims believe to be alive in heaven and who await his second advent in the last days, had in fact already died. The notion of his going to heaven and remaining there physically alive is but unfounded and contrary to facts.

He was told that the Second Advent of Jesus was to be fulfilled in the person of someone who would resemble him, and that the prophecy was in fact fulfilled in the person of the Promised Messiah Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be upon him) the recipient of the revelation. This Revelation

reads as follows:

Messiah son of Mary, Prophet of Allah, has already died, and you have come in his spirit according to the promise. And promise of Allah is bound to be fulfilled. (Tazkira p. 186-187)

Early in 1891, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) published his book *Fateh-Islam* in which he put forward his claim to be the PROMISED MESSIAH.

He was severely opposed because of this claim. The Maulvis, Mian Nazir Hussain of Delhi and Maulvi Muhammad Hussain of Batala being in the forefront, prepared *fatwas* (edicts) of *kufr* against him. They traveled throughout India to get those *fatwas* signed by other maulvis. In short, these *fatwas* caused serious opposition against the Promised Messiah (a.s.) throughout India.

In response to these *fatwas* and the opposition, the Promised Messiah (a.s.) wrote in December 1891 his book *Aasmani Faislah* (The Heavenly Decision) in which he challenged his opponents as follows:

In the Holy Quran, the righteous and perfect believers have been promised four types of heavenly signs, which are the perfect criteria for the identification of a perfect believer. These are:

- a. A perfect believer is very often given glad tidings, *i.e.*, he is foretold good news concerning his aims and objects and those of his friends.
- b. A perfect believer is informed of such unseen matters which not only are concerned with himself or with his acquaintances, but also he is often told in advance of the divine decrees to be manifested on the earth and about upheavals in the lives of some prominent persons of the world.
- c. Most of the supplications of a perfect believer are accepted and very frequently he is informed of this in advance.
- d. Very deep and new interpretations of the Holy Quran, and its rare qualities and divine secrets

contained in it are disclosed to a perfect believer more than anybody else.

He invited Mian Nazir Hussain of Delhi, Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi and those maulvis who shared their views as well as Soofis, saints and the successors of saints to come forward and contest with him on the basis of these four criteria. He also proposed to form an association in Lahore, the capital of the Punjab, to make this contest decisive.

Inception of *Jalsa Salana*

The first *Jalsa Salana* was held in 1891 for the purpose of religious consultations. Seventy-two people attended it. This *Jalsa* was held on 27th December 1891 in *Masjid Aqsa*, Qadian. In it Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Kareem (peace be on him) read out to the audience the Promised Messiah's (a.s.) paper, entitled *Aasmani Faislah* wherein Maulvis who opposed the Promised Messiah (a.s.) had been invited for the spiritual contest according to the four criteria mentioned above. After this a proposal was tabled to appoint the members of the association which had been proposed to be formed for the final decision of the contest. It was unanimously decided that for the time being the booklet *Aasmani Faislah* should be published and, after knowing the views of the opponents, the members of the Association be appointed with mutual consent. Thus the *Jalsa* ended and at its conclusion the Promised Messiah (a.s.) shook hands with all those who were present. As far as the challenge given by the Promised Messiah (a.s.) is concerned, none of the maulvis dared accept the challenge to the spiritual contest.

Regular Inception Of *Jalsa Salana*

Immediately after the said *Jalsa* of 1891 concerning the religious consultation, the booklet *Aasmani Faislah* was published in the same year. Moreover, on 30th December, 1891, the Promised Messiah (a.s.) informed the entire Jamaat through a printed announcement that in the future *Jalsa Salana* of the Jamaat would be held regularly every year in the last week of December on 27-28-29th.

In this announcement, he mentioned the aims

and objects of the *Jalsa* and its blessings and related twelve points about *Jalsa* which I would like to draw your attention to:

- i. All the devout followers who have been initiated (into the Jamaat) at my hand should know that the object of *Bai'at* (initiation) is that the love of the world dies away and the love of our Gracious Lord and that of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) conquers and overwhelms our hearts and that we become so devoted to God that we are not averse to taking the journey to the Hereafter.
- ii. To achieve this object it is necessary to remain in my company and to spend a large portion of your lives in this cause, so that, God willing, one may witness some irrefutable proof and consequently one's failings, weaknesses and sloth are removed and one attains the state of certainty out of which a craving, a longing, a love full of passion are born. Hence one should always be worrying about whether God has granted one the opportunity to attain this state. Moreover, as long as this opportunity is not granted to you, you must occasionally visit me. For if, after being initiated into the Jamaat, you don't care to visit me, your *Bai'at* remains devoid of all blessings and is only *Bai'at* in name.
- iii. Because for reasons of weakness of nature, inadequate means and long distances, it is not possible for everyone to come here to stay with me or even to endure hardships of a journey and visit me for a few times during a year (because in most hearts such burning zeal and passion is not yet born as would make them bear great hardships and huge losses for the sake of meeting me), it seems desirable that once a year a *Jalsa* should be held for three days, for which, God willing, all my devoted followers should come here on the appointed dates, provided their health permits, they are free and there are no insurmountable obstacles in their way to stop them from coming over here.
- iv. In my view it is preferable that from 27th to 29th

December, the said dates of *Jalsa* should be fixed. That is, after this day of 30th December 1891, if the day of 27th December dawns upon us in our lives, all (my) friends, should try, to the utmost of their ability, to come here only for the sake of God to listen to His words and to participate in supplications.

- v. Such truth and words of wisdom shall be heard during this meeting as are essential for the increase of faith, conviction and knowledge. Such friends will also be entitled to special prayers and special attention. Effort will be made before the most Merciful Lord that He may draw them towards Himself and accept them and grant them a change for the better.
- vi. An incidental advantage of such *Jalsas* will be that every year the new comers into the Jamaat will come here on the appointed dates and will be able to see the faces of their brothers who preceded them in faith and this personal acquaintance will continually develop into closer friendship and love.
- vii Prayers will be offered for the forgiveness of such brothers in faith who pass away during the year.
- viii An effort will be made through prayers to create a bond of spiritual union between all and remove barriers of estrangement, aloofness and hypocrisy from among them.
- ix There will also be several other spiritual gains and benefits in this spiritual Institution (of *Jalsa*) which will go on manifesting themselves from time to time.
- x It will be appropriate for the members whose means are limited, that they remain concerned about attending the *Jalsa* and should plan for it in advance. If they regularly, on daily or monthly basis, save some money and set it aside for the purposes of *Jalsa*, then, without feeling any pinch, they will be able to accumulate enough funds for the expenses of the journey and, in a manner of speaking, they will get free traveling.
- xi It will be desirable that those members who accept this proposal should immediately send me an exclusive letter informing me that they have promised themselves that for the remainder of their lives they will try to the best of their ability, to come here for the *Jalsa* on the appointed dates; and will (I hope), with all their heart and soul, and with firm determination, come here for the *Jalsa* – except when they are in a situation in which they face such obstacles as render their journey impossible to make. The names of all these members will be entered in a separate list.
- xii As for those who came here for the sake of Allah, enduring the difficulties of the journey, to attend the *Jalsa* which was held on 27th December, 1891 for religious consultations, may Allah grant them the best reward, and may they be rewarded for each step of theirs which they took for the sake of Allah.

When the days of next *Jalsa* drew near, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) published again an announcement on 7th December 1892, in which he said;

- A *Jalsa* of my beloved and sincere followers will be held at Qadian on 27th December 1892. Its main aim is that every sincere member may have the opportunity of getting, directly from me, religious benefits, and he becomes well informed, and he further progresses in his spiritual knowledge by the grace and help of God.
- And then there is a further benefit of *Jalsa*, viz., brothers in faith will, by meeting each other, increase their knowledge of each other and consequently brotherhood of the Community will be strengthened.
- One of the objects of this *Jalsa* is that useful proposals will be made and discussed with regard to the religious and spiritual welfare of Europe and America, for, it is now an established fact that good natured people of Europe and America are getting ready to accept

Islam, and they (that is those who are ready to accept Islam) feel terrified because Muslims are suffering from religious dissension and division.

- So it is mandatory for everyone who can afford the expenses of the journey to attend the *Jalsa* which consists of several blessed advantages. Do not care about minor worries or losses in the way of Allah and that of His Prophet. Allah rewards the sincere ones for every step they take in His way; no effort or hardship in His way is wasted.
- Do not think that this *Jalsa* (of ours) is like ordinary human gatherings. The institution of *Jalsa* is exclusively founded on defending the Truth and establishing the supremacy of the Word of Islam and making it (Islam) prevail over all other religions and ideologies. God Himself has laid down the foundation stone of this Community with His own Hand. He has prepared nations for it that will soon join it, for this is the Work of the All-Powerful for Whom nothing is impossible to achieve.
- Shortly the time will come, nay, it is well nigh, when no sign of naturalism will remain in this religion or that of its opponents who discard nature absolutely and are devoted to superstitions. Nor will remain those who reject miracles, nor those who contaminate (Islam) with traditions, which are absurd, baseless and contrary to the Quran. And Allah will establish for this Ummat-e-Wusta a middle way on earth – the same way which the Quran brought, the same way which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) taught his *Sahaba*, the same guidance which the Siddique, Shaheed and Salih had been getting right from the beginning. This will happen. Definitely this will happen. Those who have ears to hear should hear. Blessed are those who are shown the right path.
- At the end of this announcement he wrote: “I conclude with prayers that may Allah be with those who would take up the journey for the *Jalsa*, held for the sake of Allah. May Allah

grant them tremendous reward, have mercy on them, relieve them of difficulties and anxiety, and remove their grief and sorrows. May He release them from their troubles and open for them the way to obtain their aims, and resurrect them on the Last Day among His servants who are blessed with His favor and mercy, and may He be their Khalifa after them till the end of their journey (That is may God look after their homes in their absence). O God the Praiseworthy, the Bounteous, the Merciful and the remover of all difficulties, accept all these supplications and grant us dominance over our opponents with clear signs, for, all power and strength lies with You. *Ameen*.

Therefore, in the light of the sayings of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) our *Jalsa* is a means of mutual introduction; a means to enhancing mutual love; a means of increasing the knowledge of the participants through the learned discourses they will listen to in the *Jalsa*. This will widen their religious knowledge. This is an occasion of supplications for the betterment of Humanity, which is facing many dangers – physical as well as spiritual. Physical annihilation is looming large. Deviation from the right path, transgressions of all types and excesses have destroyed the soul. Man and Humanity need our prayers the most. Prayers are needed as well for the dead and for the living. It is an occasion to pray for our people, and an occasion to pray for the betterment and guidance of other nations. It is an occasion to pray for our personal needs and national necessities.

Every participant will get his share out of the Promised Messiah’s (peace be upon him) supplications that he offered for the participants of this *Jalsa* – which I have already read out to you. And, as the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) said, there are even more spiritual benefits of this *Jalsa*, which could not be visualized at the time of its foundation, but which will go on emerging from time to time. I would like to repeat the following words of the Promised Messiah (a.s.):

Do not think that this *Jalsa* (of ours) is like

ordinary human gatherings. The institution of *Jalsa* is exclusively founded on defending the Truth and establishing the supremacy of the World of Islam and making it (Islam) prevail over all other religions and ideologies. God Himself has laid down the foundation stone of this Community with His own Hand. He has prepared nations for it that will soon join it, for this is the Work of the All-Powerful for Whom nothing is impossible to achieve.

The question is where are the nations whom God has prepared for the Community and who will join it soon? Which nations are meant here? Are, or are not nations living in Canada included in the statement of the Promised Messiah (a.s.)? If they are, as they must be, then are we not duty-bound to identify those nations and see to it that they join the Community? Is it not, then, the duty of the Jamaat Canada to take the message of Islam to them? When will the day arrive when we shall be able to witness these nations in our *Jalsa*? According to the saying of the Promised Messiah (a.s.), these nations will shortly join the Jamaat. How can that hour be brought closer? Are all these promises going to be fulfilled while we sit idle?

Allah says in the Holy Quran: "*Man will have nothing but what he strives for!*" He who tries, achieves. He who knocks, the door will be opened for him. To make the requisite effort for, and to give required time to, doing a task, whether the worldly or religious, are two necessary conditions without which no task can be accomplished. Our *Jalsa* demands that we support the Truth. Our *Jalsa* demands that we exalt the name of Islam. Our *Jalsa* demands full-fledged *Dawat ilallah* from us. When different nations accept Ahmadiyyat and participate in this *Jalsa* and we witness them in this *Jalsa*, then and only then, will we be in a position to claim that we have met this demand. By the grace of Allah, we have viewed such success in the *Jalsas* of some other countries. They succeeded within a few years by supplications and tremendous efforts to win Allah's grace. God favored them with sweet fruits in abundance.

It seems appropriate now to say a few words about our duties concerning *Da'wat ilallah*.

Addressing the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) Allah says in the Holy Quran:

O Messenger, convey to the people what has been revealed to thee from thy Lord; and if thou do it not, thou hast not conveyed His message. Moreover, Allah will protect thee from men. Surely, Allah guides not the disbelieving people. (5:86)

What was obligatory upon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is obligatory upon us. Referring to this verse, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV says:

Preaching is not like a voluntary subscription. It is not a supererogatory act that even without its performance your spiritual personality will be complete. *Da'wat ilallah* is an obligation. And Allah commands to fulfill it so emphatically that addressing the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be on him) He says: "*If you don't call people to Allah, you will let the prophethood go to waste.*" His Ummat is also accountable for it. Every one of us is accountable.

Again he says:

We can dispel our suffering only through *Da'wat ilallah*. This is not like voluntary *chanda* (subscription) which even if it is not paid, it matters little. Nay, it is obligatory. Its execution is a must. Merely saying that we are influencing people through out good conduct and not participating in *Da'wat ilallah* is not in order. This is an excuse for cowardice and a way to evade. (*Friday Sermon, 17th July 1985*)

The example of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is before us. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) preached to his friends, relatives, tribes and kings. He preached in his town and in other towns as well. When he went to Taif, the citizens set hooligans on him and as a result he was soaked with

his own blood. Going to Khyber, he said to Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him):

By God, if Allah guides even a single person through you, this is better for you than to have red camels.

Preaching needs patience. You know that very few people accepted Islam during thirteen years of Meccan period. Nevertheless, during this period the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) faced maximum difficulties. However, these difficulties bore fruit at Medina.

About *Da'wat ilallah*, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) says:

If I could, I would go from door to door like beggars so as to spread the true religion of Allah and thus save people from *shirk* (polytheism and idolatry) and *kufr* (unbelief) which are destroying them and which are rampant throughout the world – and would finish my life in preaching even if I were killed in this cause. (*Malfoozat Vol. 3, p. 39*)

Again he says:

Although the matter will be decided through supplications, yet it does not mean that the arguments should be abandoned. (*Malfoozat Vol. 6*)

For religious arguments, religious knowledge is a must. Therefore, if you want to become a true *Dai ilallah*, you must increase your religious knowledge. Read the Holy Quran and study the books of the Promised Messiah (a.s.). The purpose of the speeches at *Jalsa Salana*, too, is to increase your religious knowledge. Listen to them carefully and remember the main points. Continue to increase your religious knowledge when you go back home, so that you may be armed with arguments and be able to talk with confidence to those whom you want to preach.

Religious knowledge is one of the things, which the Promised Messiah (a.s.) regarded as necessary for the victory of Ahmadiyyat. He says:

The weapons for our dominance are: asking

forgiveness from God, repentance, religious knowledge, having regard for the glory of God and praying five times daily. Prayer (*Salat*) is a key to acceptance of supplications. When you pray, do not neglect to supplicate therein. Shun every evil with respect to rights of God and rights of men. (*Malfoozat Vol. 5, p. 303*)

Some friends seem to suffer from confusion when they complain that because their knowledge is meager, they cannot preach. However, the concern of theirs is misplaced. If they have some knowledge, however little it may be, they can always increase it but this should not stop them from preaching. There is no one in the world who can justifiably claim to have complete knowledge of a thing. However, I assure you that if you start *Da'wat Ilallah* and you put your trust in Allah, you are sure to get Allah's help. When your knowledge fails you, God's help will come to assist you.

The least that the Khulafa of the Jamaat have been demanding from an Ahmadi is that every Ahmadi should make at least one Ahmadi a year.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II (peace be upon him) said;

Every Ahmadi should pledge that he will make at least one new Ahmadi in one year thus Jamaat will swell to two fold within a year (*Al-Fazl*, 15 Feb. 1929)

Speaking on the subject, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV said in one of his Friday sermons:

Rapid changes are going to take place in the whole world and we have not been able to make the required preparations for it. Every Ahmadi whom my words reach, he should become his own supervisor and pledge before Allah that he will bring one new convert to the Jamaat every year. (*Al-Fazl*, June 5, 1985)

By the grace of Allah, most of the Jama'ats in the world have responded positively to the guidance of Khalifatul Masih that every Ahmadi should every year bring at least one new Ahmadi to join the Jamaat and these Jama'ats have been successful in achieving twofold *Bai'ats* every year. Every year an

announcement is made about it at the U.K. *Jalsa Salana*. I hope, *Insha Allah*, this year too you will hear such glad news on the eve of *Jalsa Salana*. O Allah grant us more, and yet more.

Indifference to *Da'wat ilallah*, moreover, makes us suffer for a great loss. Warning about this, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV said:

It is a fact that a Jamaat which forgets the obligation of making others to join it through preaching, it loses even its children who it previously had, and its standard of excellence starts falling in every respect. (*Friday Sermon*, 25 July 1987)

Five Branches Of The Task Of Propagation Of Islam

In 1891, when the Founder of Ahmadiyya Jamaat claimed to be the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him), he published his claim in his work, *Fateh Islam* and gave the Muslim Ummah glad tidings of the victory of Islam. He said:

Islam will witness again the day of the freshness and light which it had witnessed in the past. And the Sun will rise in full glory even as it had risen before. (*Fateh Islam*)

Then he wrote that the task of supporting truth and spreading Islam entrusted to him by Allah had five branches:

1. Publication of books
2. Issuing announcements (Hand bills)
3. Boarding and lodging arrangements for visitors coming to him in search of Truth and for other purposes.
4. Arrangements for writing letters, which are sent to the seekers after Truth and the opponents.
5. Arrangements for those who initiate into the Jamaat, *i.e.* the setup of the Jamaat.

He said that Allah had established this fifth branch *i.e.* the Jamaat through His special Revelation. Allah said: He, who swears allegiance to you, indeed swears allegiance to Allah and not to

you.

Having mentioned these five branches, he said:

This is a set up of five types which Allah has established by His own Hand. Although a cursory observer will think the category of publishing books to be indispensable and other categories unimportant and needless, yet in the sight of Allah all these are indispensable. The reformation He has intended to bring about cannot be achieved without applying all these five ways. (*Fateh Islam*)

Third Branch

The third branch of this heavenly system is concerned with the visitors and those traveling in search of truth and those arriving for various other purposes. The arrangements for the guests arriving during the year and on the eve of *Jalsa Salana* are related to this third branch. This branch has the same importance as the remaining four branches. This branch has also made the Jamaat well knit. This is the basis of Jamaat's life. Those Ahmadi who cannot participate in the *Jalsa* feel that there is something deficient, something missing in their lives. By attending the *Jalsa Salana* they feel to get a new life. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

O ye who believe! Respond to Allah and His Messenger when he calls you that He may give you life. (8:25)

Hence, we participate in our *Jalsa Salana* to listen to what Allah and His Messenger say and to get a new spiritual life. We should fully benefit from the *Jalsa*. When after *Jalsa* we leave for our homes a new determination to do good should have been born in ourselves and our spiritual level should have been higher than it was at our arrival for *Jalsa*.

Arrangement For Boarding and Lodging of Guests

As has earlier been mentioned the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) received the first revelation of his commission in 1882 and shortly after that it was revealed to him: "*Extend your houses*", which hinted that very soon guests would

start arriving for whom the then existing arrangements for their lodging would be insufficient, so he should build an extension to his house. Hazrat Mian Abdullah Sanauri (peace be upon him), an old *Sahabi*, narrates:

When Huzoor got the revelation: “*extend your house*”, Huzoor said to me, ‘We do not have money to build houses. We comply with this command of Allah by building two or three huts’. So Huzoor advised me to go to Hakeem Muhammad Shareef at Amritsar who was Huzoor’s old friend and Huzoor used to stay at his place. I was instructed to bring material for huts through Hakim Sahib. So I went and brought the material for the huts through him, and Huzoor got constructed three huts in his house. These huts remained there for several years then broke down to pieces. (*Seeratul Mahdi Vol. 1*)

Initially the guests used to stay at Huzoor’s house and he himself used to entertain them. Receiving guests, providing them with lodging, arranging bedding for them, bringing food and taking care of their other needs was all done by him personally. When in 1884 he married Hazrat Amma Jan (peace be upon her), she joined him in all these arrangements of entertaining the guests. She became his great helper and nicely bore the major part of the burden of the responsibilities concerning the entertainment of the guests. In the early days, the guests used to be very few. But after the revelation guests started arriving regularly and in increasing numbers. Extension of the house started with the huts, later mud houses were built which were followed by those made of baked bricks and ultimately big buildings have taken their place. Initially the guests used to stay at the Promised Messiah’s (peace be upon him) house. Then a separate guesthouse was built. However, this putting up of buildings started very late after his claim to be the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him). Before that Huzoor’s house was the guesthouse.

He received the revelation of his commission in

1882, and claimed to be the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) at the turn of 1890. About this period he says in his work “*Fateh Islam*”:

Accordingly more than sixty thousand guests might have come in seven years.

It means that an average number of guests who visited Qadian during that period was about 20 to 25 a day. Moreover, the necessities of life were scarce in the small village of Qadian; to get them one had to go to big cities. Entertaining such a big number of guests was not an easy job.

Hazrat Sahibzada Mirza Bashir Ahmad Sahib (peace be upon him), writing in his book; “*Silsilah Ahmadiya*” about the Promised Messiah’s (peace be upon him) entertaining of guests, says:

Hazrat Masih Mau’ood (peace be upon him) was very hospitable by nature. Those who arrived at Qadian on *Jalsa*, or other occasions, may be Ahmadis or non-Ahmadis, but they enjoyed full share of his hospitality. He was very keen for their comfort. He did not believe in formalities. He met every guest as one of his dear and near ones and was pleased to serve and entertain him. Those who joined the Community in the beginning, narrate that when a guest arrived, he met him with a smiling face, shook hands with him, asked about his welfare, respectfully asked him to be seated. If it was summer, he served him with cold drinks, and in winter brought tea for him; arranged for his lodging and called the workers of the guesthouse and advised them that the guest should not face any inconvenience. One old *Sahabi* who was of low status in worldly terms, narrated to me, (the writer of the book), ‘When I came to Qadian in the beginning, it was summer season. The Promised Messiah, as was his nature, met me with great love and affection, and prepared sherbet for me with his own hands. Then he called the manager of the Guest House and advised him take care of my comfort. He also asked me repeatedly that I should demand frankly, whatever I needed. My next visit was in winter. Reaching Qadian, I said

prayer, took meals and went to bed for sleeping in a room of the Guest House. When the greater of the night had passed, somebody gently knocked at my door. I got up and opened the door and found the Promised Messiah standing there holding a hurricane lamp in one hand and a bowl in the other. He looked at me and said smiling, "Just now I got some milk from somewhere. I decided to bring it to you, for, I thought perhaps you are used to taking milk at night. That *Sahabi* says that he felt highly embarrassed, but the Promised Messiah said, "Excuse me for giving you the trouble to wake you up at this late hour". By this ordinary incident, you can guess to some extent his excellent sense of hospitality.

Jalsa Set Up

I do not at the moment intend to describe or elaborate on the setup of *Jalsa*. I would only like to say that, as far as I understand the setup of *Jalsa* is concerned, the Promised Messiah's (peace be upon him) three revelations encompass this setup and include the entire *Jalsa* and its exigencies. The first revelation is:

Extend your house

In this revelation, every Jamaat, for all times to come, has been instructed to go on extending the housing capacity. The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) was the first one to implement it. Now the Jama'ats of the entire world are continuously implementing it. Moreover, in every country, the Jamaat has noticed that you may extend the housing capacity to any extent, it will ultimately prove to be insufficient, and more extension will be required. The second very important and basic revelation of the Promised Messiah (a.s.) that was received by him in the early days concerning *Jalsa Salana* is:

Turn not away from Allah's creatures and be not averse to men.

This was also revealed in 1882. In *Braheen-I-Ahmadiyya*, this revelation has found its place along with the revelation of his commission. At the time when perhaps two or three person were found in his

audience, Allah, addressing the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him), said:

Be not averse to men seeing them arriving in great numbers and be not tired of them. receive them courteously with a smiling face.

After writing this prophecy in his work *Siraj-e-Muneer*, (1899) the Promised Messiah (a.s.) says:

In this prophecy Allah categorically says that a day is bound to come when people desirous of meeting you will flock around you in their multitude. They will come to you in such great numbers that it will be difficult for each and everyone of them to meet you personally. So when the day comes do not show any sign of grief and boredom and do not get tired of meeting people. Praise belongs to Allah, how glorious is the prophecy! It was made seventeen years ago when I used to have perhaps not more than two or three persons in my company – and that only occasionally. How manifestly this proves that Allah is the Knower of the unseen.

In this revelation, there is a great guidance for the entire Jamaat and organizers of the *Jalsa* that a large number of guests will come. You will have to meet them, receive them, ask them about their welfare, and provide them with boarding, lodging, and all their needs. Do not lose courage to face the multitude, nor be averse to them; do not be tired of them. Face every one of them cheerfully, politely and treat him nicely, for he is Allah's guest, the Promised Messiah's guest, who has responded to the call of Allah and the Promised Messiah (a.s.) and provide him with maximum comfort within your reach. You will surely be rewarded for this.

To elaborate on the point and to enhance the faith, I would like to relate two incidents of the time of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him). These two incidents guide us regarding how we should serve our guests.

1. Hazrat Munshi Zafar Ahmad (peace be upon him) narrates:

Once two persons from Manipur, Assam, came

to Qadian. Arriving at the guesthouse, they asked the servants to offload their bedding from the cart, bring them the baggage and provide them with the bedstead. The servants replied, 'off-load the luggage yourselves; the bedsteads you will be getting.' Both the guests were annoyed at that and immediately boarded the horse-cart and left. I mentioned this to Maulvi Abdul Kareem who remarked, 'Let these hasty people go!'

When Huzoor happened to know this, he, in a great hurry – until wearing shoes became inconvenient – followed them with rapid strides. A few servants were also with him; I was also accompanying him. Huzoor caught the cart near the canal. When they saw Huzoor coming, they came down from the cart. Huzoor asked them to come back. He expressed to them his deep grief for their going away. So they returned. Huzoor asked them to be seated in the cart and said, "I will walk by the cart". However they felt embarrassed and did not ride. When they reached the Guest House, Huzoor stretched his hands to pick their bedding, but the servants off-loaded them. Immediately Huzoor ordered for two '*Nawari Palangs*' i.e. two comfortable wide bedsteads. Mattresses were put on them and the beds were made ready. Then he asked them what they would like to have for meals. Then he suggested rice, as that was their main food. At night, he asked them if they would like to have milk. In short, he provided them with all their needs. He remained there until the food was brought. After that Huzoor said, 'A person who comes from afar, put up with troubles and difficulties of the journey and on reaching here he thinks that he has arrived at the destination. If having reached here he faces the same trouble, it will discourage him. Our friends should take care of this. It was his practice that during their stay he daily sat with them for an hour or two and spoke to them *etc.* In the morning when the time of their departure came, Huzoor ordered for two tumblers of milk for them and asked them to drink. Then he went

along with them up to the canal to see them off. Repeatedly, on the way he asked them to ride in the cart as they were the travelers, but they did not ride. On reaching the Canal, he made them seated in the cart and came back (*Al-Hakam* 21 April, 1934)

2. Hazrat Munshi Zafar Ahmad (peace be upon him) has also narrated a second incident. He says:

Once at *Jalsa Salana*, several persons came without any winter rugs. Somebody, namely Nabi Bakhsh, the Lambardar of Batala, started bringing quilts and mattresses from inside Huzoor's house and distributed them among the guests. When I went to Huzoor after Isha prayer, I found him sitting with his hands pressed in the armpits. One of his sons – I think it was Khalifatul-Masih II, was lying by him covered with a garment made of camel skin. I came to know that he gave for the guests even his own mattress and quilt on demand. I said to Huzoor, "No rug has been left with you; and it is too cold!" Huzoor said, "Guests must not face any difficulty. As for me, well, the night will ultimately pass." I came down and scolded Nabi Bakhsh the Lambardar for taking away even Huzoor's bedding. He felt ashamed and said, "But how can I get it back from the person whom I have already given it? Then I personally asked Mufti Fazl-ur-Rehman or someone else – I do not remember now who – for the bedding and took it upstairs. However, Huzoor advised me to give it to someone else saying, "I too often, am unable to sleep". I urged a lot but he did not accept and said, 'Give it to some guest'. So I brought it back'.

These two incidents do not need any elaboration. The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) had been commanded by Allah to receive guests wholeheartedly without feeling tired of them, to fulfill their needs without feeling averse to them, to respect them, to encourage them. These two incidents amply show how Huzoor responded to Allah's command concerning the guests.

He received the third revelation about *Jalsa* and its management, in 1907 during the days of *Jalsa*. This was the last *Jalsa* held in his lifetime. This revelation is related to an incident. It so happened that one evening some guests could not get food and they went to sleep without meals. Before midnight it was revealed to the Promised Messiah (a.s.):

O Prophet, feed the hungry and the distressed.

Consequently, Huzoor roused the workers of the Guest-House from sleep and advised them to prepare food. He sent men to all the places where guests were staying to locate those who had not got food, and fed them all at about midnight. It appears from the narration that at the most 4 or 5 guests had not taken their meals. In this way, Allah has established three basic principles through His revelations, for the management of the *Jalsa* and looking after the guests:

1. Go on expanding lodging capacity.
2. Be not tired of the guests, seeing them arriving in great numbers. Meet them whole-heartedly and serve them smilingly.
3. None should remain hungry.

These three principles actually contain all the guidance required for the management of *Jalsa*. There is no need to mention all the departments of the organization of *Jalsa* separately. You are seeing these departments actually working before you.

***Jalsa Salana*, A Means Of Establishing One Ummah (One Community)**

The aim of the Promised Messiah's (a.s.) advent was to turn the entire world into one community, have one God, one Prophet, one faith and one norm of practice – a Community whose members are bound together by an unbreakable chain of brotherhood, love and selflessness. In shaping this International Brotherhood and building it up, our *Jalsa Salana* is playing a basic role. To elaborate further on this aspect of *Jalsa*, I quote two excerpts from Hazrat Khalifatul Masih's opening speeches of *Jalsa Salana* of 1994 and 1995;

7. Holding of *Jalsa* is a must for strengthening the International Brotherhood, and setting up and establishing international standard of morality. The Jamaat, in the capacity of Jamaat Ahmadiyya, upholds Islamic conduct. Moreover, this very conduct in fact is making your identity and would continue to make it. This is the very conduct by making prominent the identity of which you will create International Brotherhood. Without this conduct, International Brotherhood remains an impossibility. In building up this conduct and making its identity prominent, *Jalsa Salanas* of International Jamaat Ahmadiyya play a very crucial role. And as *Majlis Shura* in its own area becomes the representative and helper of *Khilafat*, so these *Jalsas* prove helpful in establishing and strengthening *Khilafat* and making its benefits prevail in general. (*Al-Fazl*, London, 12-18 Aug. 1994, pp. 7-8)

2. The International Organization, called United Nations, is a collection of the split hearts tied together artificially – and nothing more. Not a single nation of this organization is adorned with feelings of selflessness and there is not a single nation that has joined this International Organization with the intention of selfless service to mankind.... If you join in the name of Allah, it is you who will create a United Nation – a United Nation belonging to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and Allah – which will dominate the world. It will tie all the hearts together and unite all as a single entity. All the nations will drink out of this single spring to their satisfaction. May those days dawn upon us soon. We have to make preparations for that. We have been assigned to do this job. Recognize your worth. Give attention to what is expected of you. No one else will come to the World to fulfill these expectation.” (*Excerpt from Opening Speech, Jalsa Salana U.K. 1995 28th July 1995*)

In the end, I would in the words of the Promised Messiah (a.s.), like to remind you once again that “Do not think that this *Jalsa* (of ours) is

like ordinary human gatherings.” This *Jalsa* is an occasion of increasing your knowledge. This *Jalsa* is an occasion of getting more training. This *Jalsa* is an occasion of sharing the benefits of the Promised Messiah’s (a.s.) supplications that he offered to Allah for the sake of the participants of the *Jalsa* and which I have already quoted to you in the beginning. What else is needed after this supplication of his: “All those who arrived at this *Jalsa* taking the trouble for the sake of Allah, may Allah give them the best reward, and give them reward for each and every step of theirs. *Ameen thumma Ameen.*”

More than anything else, this *Jalsa* is an occasion of supplications.

- For the world, for humanity, for the Muslim Umma, for the oppressed Muslims, for the guidance of mankind, for accomplishing the tremendous task of making Islam prevail over all other religions and beliefs.
- For the Imam of the Jamaat, for the martyrs of Ahmadiyyat and their relatives whom they have

left behind.

- For the release of the *Aseeran-I-Rah-I-Maula*, who without any fault of theirs, out of injustice, are suffering misery of being jailed for Allah’s pleasure, for the sake of the Jamaat only because they believed in the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him).
- For the needy, for the indisposed, for the poverty-stricken and for all those who face problems and difficulties in their lives.
- For the success of the 24th *Jalsa Salana* of the Canada Jamaat.
- Your greatest prayer should however, be that may Allah accept the supplications of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and those of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him); and that may He as well accept the supplications of all the prophets, righteous persons, and saints who have been appearing in different times and places. *Ameen.*

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL PRAYERS FOR HAZRAT SAHIBZADA MIRZA MUZAFFAR AHMAD AMEER, JAMAAT AHMADIYYA, USA

As members are aware, Hazrat Ameer Sahib was hospitalized on Friday, May 31, 2002. He has been suffering from fluid overload in the lungs, dehydration and infection.

He remained in the Intensive Care Unit for seven days. Alhamdo Lillah, he has recovered from the above mentioned condition and has been shifted to a regular room. He is expected to return home in a few days, Insha Allah.

Please continue to pray for his complete and early recovery, Jazakumullah

Zahir M. Ahmad

June 8, 2002

HOW TO ATTAIN INNER PEACE

by Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV

(Transcribed by Amatul-Hadi Ahmad. Reprinted from The Review of religions, February 1997)

Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the Fourth Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, on various occasions, offers people from different faiths and beliefs the opportunity to put to him any questions or issues of interest to them. Presented below is the answer given by Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad to a question which was raised at a session held in Cologne, Germany, August 21, 1996.

Questioner: There are many people who have no inner peace. What does Islam say about this?

Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad: The idea of 'inner peace' is something which is not properly defined. Unless it is well defined, you cannot attempt to attain it. Peace is a concept which differs among the different schools of philosophies.

For instance, the Yogic peace has a different meaning. It only means that by exercise or by delving deeper into one's soul, a person finds himself to be without any agitation. So, the absence of agitation in man's desires is called peace.

A similar concept of peace is found in Buddhism as well as in some other Chinese religions. For instance, in Taoism, peace means delving deeper into one's own soul until one strikes the fountain-head of truth. So what is called Buddha in Buddhism is called Tao in Taoism, which means truth that is found in every nature. So when you reach truth, you reach peace.

This is a different view about peace which is found in various oriental religions. However, in the major divinely revealed religions of the world, which are Judaism, Christianity and, at the end, Islam, peace is not just one dimensional or individual concept.

Peace is, first, to be at rest with one's own desires and ambitions and having a balance, which is an internal affair, and then, secondly, to have peace with the world around and to assure everyone that one poses no threat of danger to them - 'no danger will emanate from me in the

other's direction'.

It is this wider concept of peace which you find in major religions. In this concept of peace, no one can be at peace with himself until he is also at peace with his neighbors and with others. This is also the concept of peace in Islam.

In Islam the concept of peace is two-fold. Firstly, to be at peace with God and then, secondly, to be at peace with oneself and with the rest of the world.

The concept of peace in Islam is the most comprehensive of all the religions and philosophies that I have just mentioned and the key to it lies in the fact that in Islam the word 'peace' does not only mean to be at rest or to have a compromise of a perfect understanding with the rest of the world. It also means submission. The meaning of this one single word has two aspects.

One is peace as ordinarily understood and the other is peace in the sense of submission. So, according to the Qur'anic concept of peace, no peace on earth can ever be conceived, not to mention established, by human effort. It cannot even be conceived theoretically without man finding God, the Creator, without recognizing the hand of the Creator universally at work in nature.

So, once man recognizes his Creator then the second step is to be at peace with him and this peace has this dual meaning: Firstly, you are not to do anything which creates a distance between you and the Creator, and secondly, submission. So, both these meanings join hands at this stage.

Submission to the will of God is the only means of attaining peace with God and this is a declaration which is proven by human experience. It has a profound wisdom which is universally experienced by man.

If children are at peace with their parents, it is impossible for them to defy their orders and wishes and yet be at peace. Hence, if you delve deeper into the meaning of peace you will realize that ultimately the meaning of peace is submission.

If you submit to the authority or the will or the desire of someone so completely that nothing in you is at war with the desire, will, or the way of life or the style of someone whom you love, (you will be at peace with that person).

Unless you do this, you can't get peace. So in Islam the journey to peace begins with the attainment of peace with your Lord the Creator and for this you must understand his attributes.

We must know what He is and this in Islam cannot be achieved through delving deeper into yourself because you can make many mistakes. If there is a God, He has to be an external reality.

If He is an external reality, then He must introduce himself to man and that is what actually happened in all the divine religions – it was God who revealed himself to mankind. It was never man or woman who by his/her own efforts reached God, without help from God. First this much should be understood. I will then come to the latter part of the concept of peace, peace within a person and peace between people.

The questioner has asked a very profound question and to give a brief answer is extremely difficult. So I am trying to build the answer little by little, in different sections.

I hope you will bear with me and understand that your question needs to be answered logically, in detail, with regard to its various aspects. First of all, I return to the idea of finding peace with God.

Why is this essential? Why is it that no peace

can be established without returning to God? God is the ultimate reality who has created human beings according to His own attributes and peace means a complete balance between man's attributes and the attributes of God.

When there is no friction in any aspect of human behavior caused by being at variance with God's attributes, this then is the ultimate peace. No other definition of peace can hold good but this one which can be explained and demonstrated at length but I am trying to make the answer brief and that is why I have just claimed it.

If you think deeper on this question, I am sure you will agree with this claim that man's attributes can only find peace when they find themselves at one with God's attributes. Whenever the two join, they become alive and there is peace.

Whenever they are at war, there is friction, and there is disturbance, psychological as well as otherwise. It is the disturbance which is created within humans which causes all the disturbances in human relationships with each other and in the international relationships between people and between states.

I can explain this by demonstrating to you how man's attributes can become at one with God's attributes. But what do I mean by that? Everybody knows that in almost all religions, God is defined alike in his attributes, alike in almost all religions.

They differ with each other in other things, but the concept of God is expressed as perfect goodness. No flaw can be attributed to God's attribute or behavioral conduct, in the concept of God in any religion. All tell universally that God is true.

All claim universally that God is just. All claim, without variance, that God is compassionate, merciful, forgiving. Now, these are the attributes that I had in mind when I said human attributes must come at one with God's attributes and there you can never be mistaken about peace. Let's begin with truth.

TO REVEREND GRAHAM WITH DEFERENCE

(by Lutfur Rahman Mahmood)

Despite being the second largest faith in the world, Islam remains to be a misunderstood religion in Christendom. Prior to Crusades, ignorance was the main obstacle; during Crusade centuries the demon of hatred possessed the peoples minds and thereafter the West developed a condition of observing Islam with mistrust.

Main points of anti-Islamic literature, produced by biased orientalist, who deliberately tried to tarnish the image of Islam, were faithfully repeated by succeeding generations. Here and there we hear voices of some honest individuals, in the wilderness but they are an insignificant minority. Now the world has become a global village and inter-faith exchange of views is no longer a difficult process. Therefore advocates of different religions should verify the facts before injecting them into the veins of ever-expanding media.

I am saddened to learn that Rev. Franklin Graham (son of Rev. Billy Graham) who dwelled upon an oft-repeated theme, in his interview with NBC News, reported in the *Weekly Pakistan Link* dated November 30, 2001. The Reverend is reported to have said:

“The God of Islam is not the same God of the Christians or Judeo-Christian faith. It is a different God and I believe it is a very evil and wicked religion.”

“They instruct their followers to kill Christian infidels.”

“They instruct followers of Islam to beat their wives.”

“They want Islamic law. They don’t want democracy. They don’t want personal freedoms. So, you have to read The Quran.”

With due deference, I would like to analyze the above observations, for the benefit of my learned friend, and for all others who have been influenced by his criticism of Islam and The Quran.

Quranic Concept of God

Rev. Graham has given the impression that Muslims do not worship Universal, Living and True God. Their “Allah” is a different God. Many Christian writers, from Samuel Zwemer to Robert Morey, believe that Allah is the “moon-god”, the god carved in the form of a crescent, which according to them was worshiped by pre-Islamic Arabs. Robert Morey has the guts to write:

“Allah is merely a revamped and magnified Arabian pagan moon deity.” (*Islamic Invasion*, Harvest House Publishers, Ed. 1992, p. 58)

The most powerful argument which the critics put forward in support of their thesis, is that minarets and domes of Islamic mosques are decorated with crescents in honor of the moon-god. It is further said that crescent is an essential part of flags and emblems of Islamic countries. These allegations are being repeated by Christian scholars, almost in chorus, after September 11th tragedy, in a virulent campaign of Muslim profiling.

The fact is that God preached by the Quran, is neither a racial or tribal God, as presented by the Old Testament, nor is a God split in unintelligible trinity as taught by St. Paul in the New Testament. God presented by the Holy Quran, is certainly not that ancient pagan deity, which lurks in the minds of our critics. It may be noted that “Allah”, is the proper name of the divine being and has never been used for any god or goddess, in Arabic literature or folk lore. The belief in oneness of a Universal God, Allah, is the pivot of Islam. The Quran declares that God is without a wife, sons or daughters. Idols and false gods and goddesses of earlier people, including Al-Lat, Al-Uzza and Manat are mentioned in the Quran, not for recognition but for rejection and condemnation. According to the Quran, all divine messengers, including the Biblical prophets and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) preached the same One and True Universal God. Islam,

which is the climax of spiritual evolution of Abrahamic faith, presents unity of God in as perfect terms. Prophet Abraham (a.s.), in Quranic verses, condemns the worship of stars, sun and moon. (Al-Quran 6:77-79). Muslims, who do not worship, even the Kaba, the house of God on earth, and the Hajar-Al-Aswad (The Black Stone), cannot think of worshipping Moon or Sun. The status of moon has been clarified in the following verse of the Holy Quran:

“They ask thee (Prophet Muhammad) about the new moons. Say they are means for measuring time for the general good of mankind and for pilgrimage.” (Al-Quran 2:190)

The Bible also refers to moon in the same sense. (Pg. 104:19, Isa. 66:23). The Israelites used Lunar calendar and lunar months. Moon, according to the Quranic description, is not more than a night luminary and a time indicator.

Neither the Quran, nor the Sunnah (The Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.) practice) requires from Muslims to install crescents on minarets or domes of their mosques. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) built his first mosque in Madina, which is the second holiest shrine in Islam, next to the mosque around the Ka’ba. Throughout his life-time it was without a minaret or a dome or a crescent symbol. It was enlarged and renovated by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs (his successors). They too, did not decorate it with a crescent. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), at the time of historic conquest of Mecca, personally supervised the destruction of all idols and shrines, in and around the Ka’ba. He commanded Bilal, the first “Muazzin” in Islam, to climb to the roof-top of the Ka’ba, not to install a crescent over there, but to proclaim oneness of Allah, so impressively stated in Adhan, the Islamic call for prescribed daily prayers. There are thousands of mosques all over the world, in all continents and different countries. How many mosques do have crescents blazing on their domes? Some mosques in Turkey, Egypt, West Africa and Europe might have crescent signs, but it is not a religious requirement. It may be the

innovation of some individuals and that too is certainly not linked to the worship of the so-called “moon-god”.

Let me make it clear that the moon-worship was not the invention of the Meccan Arabs. It was universally practiced prior to the rebuilding of the Ka’ba by Prophet Abraham (a.s.), several thousand years before the birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.). Moon-worship was rampant in Babylonia. Sin was the moon-god of the city of Ur, where Abraham’s father Terah was its zealous votary. Ancient Egyptians called their moon-god Thoth, and the Greeks named it Hermes Trismegistus. Moon-worshippers had existed in Mexico and Central America. Anglo-Saxons worshiped moon-god. “Monday” has been actually “moon-day”. The Quranic concept of “*Tawheed*” (oneness of Universal God) was so powerful that it wiped out all forms of polytheism from Arabia, including the trace of moon-worship, if it ever existed. But the Holy Bible could not achieve that. The Israelites, who returned to calf-worship in the temporary absence of Prophet Moses (a.s.), openly indulged in moon-worship when their kings married foreign wives, and it reached its peak during the reign of King Ahab and his queen Jezebel.

As far as the flags of Islamic countries are concerned, the crescent is found on the flags of only twelve countries, out of fifty five, and that too, in many cases, is not a religious symbol as the *World Book Encyclopedia* rightly states:

“The crescent and star in the flags of Muslim countries are symbols of peace and life.” (Vol. 7, Ed. 2002, P. 183)

Saudi Arabia is the birth place of Islam but its flag is without crescent. The same applies to the countries of the Mideast, which have been the cradle of Islam since its beginning. Moreover, crescent is not the monopoly of the Islamic countries. Nepal, the only Hindu state in the world, has a moon on its national flag. The national flag of Singapore is another example. Some paintings on the theme of the Crusades, show Christian troops with a Cross on their uniforms and flags and

Muslim soldiers holding a green flag, bearing a crescent. It may be the painter's imagination, because Salah-ud-Din Ayyubi (saladin), the most famous hero of Islamic resistance to European Crusaders, used the flag of the Quraish (the flag with a hawk). It is reported that the official emblem of modern Libya is the hawk of the Quraish (the tribe of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.))

It may be noted that the Arabic version of the Holy Bible, refers to the divine being as "Allah". Should we assume that Arabic speaking Christians of Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, and Palestine and other Arab countries, address their prayers and entreaties to the moon-god whenever they utter the word "Allah"?

Authentic Urdu literature, published and circulated by Christians in Pakistan and India, refers to Jesus Christ as "Ibn ullah" (literally "son of Allah"). If Allah means "moon-god", then Jesus would be the "son of moon-god". In that case the mighty castle of Christian doctrine automatically collapses!

Many earlier prophets referred to God as "Eloh". That is the same Quranic "Allah" and not moon-god. The Hebrew "El" which stands for God, is perhaps the abbreviated form of Eloh or Allah. "Elohim", in plural form is used to express reverence, otherwise grammatically it is used as singular. Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Aramaic were spoken and understood in Jesus's Palestine. The editors of *Insight On The Scriptures* quoted Professor Right "that Jesus regularly used either Aramaic or highly Aramaized popular Hebrew". (Vol. 1, Publishers: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Ed. 1998, P. 145)

Aramaic is still spoken in some villages in Syria. We come across the following words which Jesus uttered in Aramaic:

"Eli, Eli lama sabachatani? That is my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
(Matthew 27:46)

I believe that these words were addressed to Living

and Only True God, Eloh or Allah and not to a dead, cold piece of stone, carved in the shape of a crescent. Jesus himself, like all other Divine messengers invited people to worship One God. It was St. Paul who hijacked true Christianity and changed it into Cross-trinity.

The Holy Quran and the Infidels

Rev. Graham asserts that the Holy Quran demands from Muslims to slaughter infidels. By "infidels," he means Christians. Orientalist overstretch the Quranic teachings regarding Jihad to cast blame on Muslims. Wrong interpretations of Jihadist Mullahs and cheap commentators associated with dynastic courts, lend some support to the misguided orientalist. There is a need to interpret Jihad correctly, in the light of the Quran and the Holy Prophet's sunnah. The term "Holy War" is a befitting substitute of "Crusade" but it is not the correct translation of the Quranic word "Jihad", which means effort, struggle and striving. The Quran and the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.) Sunnah refer to the following three kinds of Jihad:

- a) **Jihad-e-Kabir** – preaching of the Quranic message, preaching of Islam. This has been called the great Jihad.
- b) **Jihad-e-Akbar** – conquest of one's self, Jihad against temptations and evil inclinations, struggle for reformation of society at large. This is known as the greatest Jihad.
- c) **Jihad-e-Asghar** – the fighting in defense, when force is used to destroy Islam. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), himself has called it the minor of the lesser Jihad. Hence fighting in self-defense is just one aspect of Jihad. It is one of the colors that make the beautiful spectrum of Jihad, which unfortunately appears to orientalist red like Mars.

The revelation of the Holy Quran is spread over twenty three years. The chapters revealed in the first thirteen years, when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was residing in Mecca, are known as the Meccan chapters. The revelations received after the Holy

Prophet's (s.a.w.) migration to Madina, are termed as the Madinite chapters. There is not a single verse about fighting in the Meccan chapters. In the first thirteen years, Muslims were told to bear all hardship and persecution, without any retaliation. Muslims were persecuted, ejected from their homes and some were murdered in cold blood, for the crime of believing in oneness of supreme God, Allah. This blood-curdling persecution was not for professing faith in the imaginary moon-god! The Meccas hatched a conspiracy to kill the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), and he left Mecca for Madina, on the very night which was fixed for his murder. The Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.) miraculous escape to Medina was not the end of the story. The Meccas wrote a threatening letter to the Madina Chief, Abdullah bin Ubayy – 'Either expel Muhammad or else we shall attack you with all our might and put your men to the sword and make ourselves masters of your women.' Moreover, the Meccas invested all their capital in trade so that the profit could be used to wage a war on Muslims. That is how the Meccan pagans planned an attack on Madina with view to annihilating Islam. This is the background of the first verse of "Jihad" (defensive fighting) which reads:

"Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged – and Allah indeed has the power to help them." (Al-Quran 22:40)

What is wrong in self-defense? The next verse gives the rationale for the fighting in defense:

"Those who have been driven out from their homes unjustly only because they said, 'our Lord is Allah' – and if Allah did not repel some men by means of others, there would surely have been PULLED down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, where in the name of Allah is oft-commemorated. And Allah will surely help one who helps Him. Allah is indeed Powerful and Mighty." (Al-Quran 22:41)

It is evident that the underlying reason for military Jihad is multi-pronged:

- a. Resistance to aggression
- b. Freedom of belief and creed
- c. Freedom to worship God
- d. Respect for property and rights

Bloodshed is not the purpose

The Meccan aggression continued, with increased intensity and Muslims had to fight in self defense, until the conquest of Mecca. It is noteworthy that all the verses about fighting are found in the Madinite chapters *i.e.* Al-Baqara, Al-Nisa, Al-Anfal, Al-Taubah.

Although Rev. Graham has not quoted Quranic verses in support of his allegation, but other Christian critics refer to the verses from the above chapters but the trick is that they virtually lift a verse or a part of it, out of context, to accommodate their own interpretation. Readers are requested to study the Jihad verses along with the adjoining verses.

Take the case of verse (192) of the second chapter, Al-Baqara. Seekers after truth should study verses 191 to 194 for the right message. The translation of the above verses is given below:

"And fight in the cause of Allah against those who fight against you, but do not transgress. Surely, Allah loves not the transgressors. (2:191)

And kill them wherever you meet them and drive them out from where they have driven you out; for persecution is worst than killing. And fight them not in, and near the Sacred Mosque, until they fight you therein. But if they fight you, then fight them: such is the requital for the disbelievers (2:192)

But if they desist, then surely Allah is Most Forgiving. (2:193)

And fight them until there is no persecution, and religion is freely professed for Allah. But if they desist then remember that no hostility is allowed except against the aggressors. (2:194)

Our critics give only the underlined parts and deduce that Muslims are being instructed to kill Christians and Jews wherever they find them. The fact is that these verses refer to Meccan persecutors, who wanted to kill Muslims even in the Sacred Mosque of Kaba, where traditionally fighting and bloodshed were prohibited. Is there any justification for this intellectual dishonesty?

The fifth verse of chapter Al-Taubah (chapter 9) is also very popular with the orientalist. It deals with Meccan and Arab idolaters, who were guilty of war crimes, but were not prepared to negotiate a peace treaty with Muslims but were bent upon fighting and acts of sabotage.

No where are Jews or Christians mentioned in this verse, but the anti-Quran critics insist that this verse (9:5) authorizes the murder and apprehension of Christians and Jews. Now read the translation of both verses and point out if "the People of the Book" are mentioned even remotely.

"Excepting those of idolaters with whom you entered into treaty and who have not fallen short of their obligations to you nor aided anyone against you. So fulfil to these the treaty you have made with them till their term. Surely, Allah loves those who are righteous. (9:4)

"And when the consecrated months have passed, kill the idolaters wherever you find them and take them prisoners, and beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they repent and observe prayer and pay the Zakat, then leave their way free. Surely, Allah is Most Forgiving and Merciful." (9:5)

Maintenance of law and order and public safety is the duty of every responsible government. The forgiving element which is enshrined in this verse has not been appreciated. Repentance and a change of heart, can result in an amnesty despite all previous crimes. Hind, who had chewed the liver of the Prophet's uncle, Hamza, A martyr in the Battle of Uhad, and had put on a garland made up of the severed noses, ears and lips of the Muslim dead in

the same encounter, was forgiven by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) after her repentance. (Hind's husband, Abu Sufian, the Commander-in-Chief of the Meccan Army, was also forgiven on his repentance). The Holy Quran gives a special status to Jews and Christians by bestowing on them the title of "The People of the Book", the followers of earlier scriptures. Islam allows a Muslim to marry a Jewish or Christian girl/woman and permits him to eat the flesh of a lawful animal slaughtered by them (The People of the Book), a privilege denied to idolaters. Moreover, we read the following verse in the Holy Quran:

"Surely, the Believers, and the Jews, and the Christians and the Sabians, whichever party from among these truly believes in Allah and does good deeds – shall have their reward with their Lord, and no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve." (Al-Quran 2:63)

The Holy Quran teaches us that the true religion with Allah is Islam (Al-Quran 3:20). We would like to win the hearts of all non-Muslims through preaching and peaceful persuasion. We are taught by the same Quran that there should be no compulsion or coercion in religion. (2:257) No one can be forced to accept Islam. Islam is the most tolerant of all religions. Our history abounds with such examples. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) himself granted full religious freedom to Jews in the "Constitution of Madina". The same was, later on, extended to the Christians of Najram (Southern Arabia). Hazrat Umar, the second caliph, himself traveled to Jerusalem to declare full religious freedom to Christians and Jews of the region. Hazrat Ali, the fourth caliph, decreed that the Zorostrains living in Islamic empire should be treated as the People of the Book. In Muslim Spain, Christians, Muslims and Jews lived peacefully and rose to higher ranks. But the Christians could not reciprocate the goodwill after the re-conquest of Spain in 1492. Thousands of Muslims and Jews were put to death. Others were forcibly converted to Christianity. The Cordoba Mosque too was converted to serve as a cathedral.

Righteous Christians are ashamed of the horrible accounts of general slaughter of Muslims by the crusaders.

Anthony L. Biel gives the following description of the Crusaders entry into Jerusalem in July 1099:

“The Crusaders killed every Muslim and Jewish man, woman, and child they found in the city. Blood flowed through the streets of Jerusalem. According to Raymond of Aguilers, ‘the slaughter was terrible; the blood of the conquered ran down the streets, until men splashed in blood as they rode.’ (*The Crusades*, Publisher – Lancet Books, Ed. 1995, P. 66)

Muslims were the real targets but the Jews were not spared even in their place of worship. Anthony Bridge writes:

“The Jews, who were herded into their chief synagogue and then burnt alive as the building was set on fire.” (*The Crusades*, Publishers – Franklin Watts, New York, Ed. 1982, P. 111)

Perhaps they acted upon the military law of the Holy Bible concerning conquered land:

“*And when the Lord your God delivers them to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them.*” (Deut. 7:2 – New King James version)

Wife-Beating and The Holy Quran

Rev. Graham’s third allegation deals with domestic violence. He alleges that the Holy Quran encourages Muslim husbands to beat their wives. This allegation is repeated by Christian critics to prove that Islam is a cruel and barbaric religion. Their harsh criticism is based on the following verse of the chapter Al-Nisa, which is sarcastically dubbed as “The Beating Verse”:

“Men are guardians over women because Allah has made some of them excel others, and because men spend on them of their wealth. So virtuous women are obedient and guard the secrets of their husbands with Allah’s

protection. And for those on whose part you fear disobedience, admonish them and keep away from them in their beds and chastise them. Then if they obey you, seek not a way against them. Surely Allah is High and Great.” (Al-Quran 4:35)

Through this ve.se (4:35) the Holy Quran, actually sought to remedy the condition of wife-beating which was rampant in Pre-Islamic Arabia, by channelizing the husband’s anger. It should be noted that the Holy Quran was revealed in the seventh century (610-632 CE). For a better understanding of the Quranic message, we have to analyze the religious and socio-economic conditions of the Arabs and other people of the time when the Quran was being revealed.

The Arabs of that time treated women as chattel and personal property. There was no limit on the number of wives and there were no rights granted to them. They could be divorced and replaced at will. At the death of a husband, the widowed wives were distributed among the sons like other items of movable and immovable property. With that low status, merciless beatings, even for minor offences, was a common spectacle.

Islam addressed all these issues and redressed all aspects of injustice by granting the down trodden women equal rights. The so-called “Beating Verse” (4:35) enlists the following characteristics of Muslim wives:

1. Righteousness (Fear of God)
2. Obedience (Absence of Rebellion)
3. Trustworthiness (Dependability which leads to loyalty and fidelity)

A wife endowed with the above attributes, cannot be guilty of “*Nushooz*”, translated as “disobedience” in the verse. The Arabic word “*Nushooz*” means flagrant disobedience, fighting, disrespect, disloyalty, ill-conduct, oral impropriety, arrogance, rebellion, open lewdness and infidelity. An Arab husband of Pre-Islamic Era, had only one prescription for treatment of “*Nushooz*” – merciless

beating followed by ejection and divorce, if not murder. However, the above verse (4:35) suggests the following three steps:

- i. Admonition – (advice, persuasion). If advice falls flat on deaf ears then,
- ii. Cessation of conjugal relations. This period is not limitless. According to the Holy Quran, it cannot exceed four months (2:227). A wife cannot be left like a suspended thing (4:130). If this emotional pressure also fails, then,
- iii. Light physical chastisement is allowed but it is not merciless beating. It is expected that it should not leave a mark on her body. Likewise head and face must be spared. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) has compared women with crystal (delicate like glass). He instructed Muslim soldiers not to attack enemy women and children even in the thick of battle.

A Muslim husband, who beats his wife for minor offences or mishaps, or in case of *Nushooz* beats her, without taking first two steps (admonition and cessation of coitus) violates the spirit of the Quranic teaching. During the Medinite period, on receiving the reports that some husbands had beaten their wives, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), expressed his displeasure and said:

“These are not your best people”. (Abu Daud, An-Nasai)

Hazrat Aisha (r.a.), the Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.) wife, reports in a Hadith, that he never beat any of his wives or a servant throughout his life.

The verse 36 of the same chapter deals with the effort to reconcile the couple whose marriage is at stake. It reads:

“And if you fear a breach between them, then appoint an arbiter from his folks and an arbiter from her folks. If they (the arbiters) desire reconciliation, Allah will effect it between them. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.”
(Al-Quran 4:36)

In a situation of an irreconcilable dispute, Islam permits divorce, which has been described by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), as the most hateful of all lawful things in the sight of Allah. In such a case a Muslim husband has been told by the Quran to be kind and generous to the departing wife in financial transactions with respect to the execution of divorce. In case of *Khulu*, the dissolution of marriage sought by wife, she can initiate the procedure on the following grounds:

1. Husband’s failure to provide food, clothing and shelter etc.,
2. Incompatibility
3. Inability to satisfy her sexual needs.
4. Cruelty
5. Apostasy
6. Disappearance of husband, (of whom no information or news is forthcoming).

A repeated practice of severe beating, which falls under cruelty, is a reason for a wife to initiate a procedure for divorce. It is inconceivable to believe that the Quran can prescribe wife-beating as a means for cementing and strengthening of marriage ties.

“Battered wife”, “wife-batterer”, “spousal abuse”, “abusive husband”, “battered wife syndrome” and other similar terms, which are frequently used in electronic and print media, reveal that Christian husbands too beat and chastise their wives.

Richard Gelles, has this to say about marriage vows:

“We are still convinced that in most cases a marriage license also functions as a hitting license.” (*The Violent Home*, Ed. 1981, p. 53)

The editors, Landers, Siegel and Foster, in their book *“Domestic Violence – No Longer Behind The Curtains”* (Ed. 1997, Publishers – Information Plus, Wylie, Texas), write about wife-beating in England (the traditional source of American law):

“Not until 1829, in England, was the husband’s right to chastise his wife taken out of the statutes, although, in practice, wife abuse has remained a reality to the present day.” (P. 106)

They admit that wife-beating continued in colonial America and write about the current situation:

“Although husbands can no longer legally beat their wives, and although wives can legally sue their husbands for damages, wife beating has not disappeared. It has remained a reality for too many women, who, despite the legal changes, feel trapped with nowhere to go for help and with little likelihood of support from existing legal institutions.” (P. 107)

Elizabeth M. Schneider gives the following alarming figures:

“Nearly 1.9 million women are physically battered in the United States each year. The federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that almost fourteen hundred women, about 9 percent of all murders, were killed by their spouses or partners alone. The statistics are numbing.” (P. 12)

She further writes:

“In the fifteenth century, the Catholic Church endorsed the Rules of Marriage, which permitted a husband to be the judge of his wife and to beat her with a stick if she committed an offence. To the church, wife beating showed the husband’s concern for the wife’s soul.” (*Battered Women and Feminist Lawmaking*, Publisher: Yale University Press, Ed. 2000, P. 13)

It may please be noted that these Marriage Rules were enforced eight centuries after the revelation of the so-called “Beating Verse”!

There is no ambiguity in the Biblical verses

where husbands have been called masters and rulers of their wives. The founding fathers of the Christian philosophy have been unkind while referring to woman as “Door of Hell”, “Devil’s Gateway” and “Mother of All Human Ills”.

Tertullian (160-230 CE) refers to all females as “Eve’s descendants” and blames them for being “responsible for the Son of God having had to die”. (*Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, Vol. 1, Garland Publishing, Inc., New York, Ed. 1997, P. 407)

No wonder, that Europe, with the blessing of the church, killed hundreds of thousands of women during the notorious witch-hunt. Many of them were burnt alive. The blood-drenched claws of the Spanish Inquisition did not spare poor women. Some contemporary painters have artistically preserved these repulsive scenes. A painting shows a naked woman stretched on a stock for torture, surrounded by clergy in regalia. The presence of priests, as agents of God, in all such paintings appears to be an integral part of the theme.

Social, political and economic rights which women have won in Europe and America are not the gift of the church. These achievements are the outcome of the untiring feminine struggle against heavy odds. The Biblical teachings expect women to remain silent in the church:

“Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says.” (1 Corinthians 14:34)

I would like to conclude this letter with a favorite verse from the New Testament:

“And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye?” (Luke 6:14)

NATIONAL MOSQUE SCHEME

As you know, the Chicago Mosque is under construction at this time. The Chicago Jamaat would like to extend this opportunity to the USA Jamaat to share in this Blessed event to build one of the largest Mosques in America. This is one of the Mosques under the National Mosque Scheme that our beloved Huzoor, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, started. This is also the only Regional Mosque under that scheme.

Please take this opportunity to participate in getting the blessings for building the house of Allah. No matter how big or small your donation, please contribute today. Please help us build the House of Allah.

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(by Dr. Nasim Rehmatullah, Cleveland, Ohio)

The official Jamaat Website Alislam.org has been in operation since January 2001. Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih IV (a.b.a.) has assigned this responsibility the USA Jamaat. The Amir USA Jamaat supervises this project and reports directly to Huzoor. The Amir USA has assigned this responsibility to Dr. Nasim Rehmatullah of USA who manages this site along with a team of dedicated workers worldwide.

The object of creating Alislam.org is to provide the world with the true teachings of Islam and Ahmadiyyat and provide Jamaat members tools for *Tabligh* and *Taleem-Tarbiyyat*. By the grace of Allah, from March 20, 2002 till April 25, 2002, our site experienced 2.3 million hits. It is no coincidence that the site is called Alislam or The Islam. Because Ahmadiyyat or The True Islam is the most documented religion on earth today and because of the blessings of the Institution of Khilafat the material on Alislam.org is unsurpassed and unmatched in quantity and quality.

The site consists of several sections. An audio-video section which carries MTA live 24/7 and also an archive of Huzoor's Friday sermons. Askislam is a section that has a good collection of Q&A with Huzoor. Currently we are working on improving this site to make it more user friendly and to improve the archive of Friday Sermons so that they can be accessed by topics etc. In addition an archive of Liqa Ma'al Arab is going to be expanded. A catalogue of Friday Sermons, Liqa Ma'al Arab and Q&A will be available online soon. The site also provides information on satellites used by MTA global coverage. The MTA weekly schedule is also available online. Because of the increased

number of people logging in on Fridays and the weekends, people may find it difficult to access MTA live on these days. We are looking at expanding our capacity in this respect.

A Multimedia section provides information and Q&A on important topics of Death of Jesus Christ and Khatame-Nubbuwat.

There is a languages section. The main site is in English. We have sections in Arabic, Urdu, Chinese, French, Spanish and Swahili. These sections provide text information about Islam and Ahmadiyyat. The arabic section has Al-Taqwa online in addition to other books. The Urdu section has Al-Fazal International online containing Huzoor's Friday Sermons and an Al-Fazal Digest containing important articles on various topics. A book *Libas-ul-Taqwa* contains valuable information about Taleem-Tarbiyyat with references from The Holy Quran, the Hadith and the *Writings of the Promised Messiah (a.s.)*. The French section also contains *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam* in French. We are constantly looking to expand our languages sections and welcome material in different languages. All material submitted should be through the local Amir.

The English section is the most extensive. In this there are sections on Allah, The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), The Holy Quran, The Promised Messiah (a.s.) and Khilafat. There is an Alislam Library of books and articles. Some books online are: *Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*, *Jesus in India*, *Way of the Seekers*, *Christianity: A Journey from facts to Fiction*, *An Elementary Study of Islam*, *Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues*, *Murder in The Name of*

Allah, Garden of the Righteous and much much more.

The section on The Holy Quran contains selected verses of the Holy Quran with English translation and commentary. An *Introduction to the Quranic Script* teaches the reader in a step by step manner on how to read the Quranic script. An English translation of The Holy Quran is available online. Soon the 2002 edition of (one volume) The Holy Quran with English Translation and Short Commentary - Edited by Malik Ghulam Farid will be available online with a search engine. Surah Fateha with translation in over thirty languages will also be available.

In the important personalities section there are articles on Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, Professor Doctor Muhammad Abdus Salam and a list of Ahmadi martyrs with their photographs.

Alislam Online Bookstore has been in operation since October 2001 and is doing well. It has received order from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, France, Greece, Indonesia, India, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Sweden, Singapore, Turkey, UAE, UK and the USA. The CDs of Roohani Khazain, Malfoozat and Ishtaharat are a big hit. The Holy Quran with translation in different languages is also being sought out.

Review of Religions is also available online. We are trying to get the back issues to have a resourceful archive for the benefit of our readers.

What I have provided is an outline of our site. This is an effort to encourage our readers to visit our site and benefit from it. Ahmadis are welcome to critique it and send us their valuable

suggestions and comments as many of them are already doing.

There is a lot more material in the pipeline. The process is slow and methodical with input and guidance provided by the Amir USA, Syed Naeer Ahmad (Chairman, MTA International, London), Naseer Ahmad Qamar (Additional Vakil Ishaat, London), Munir-ud-din Shams (Additional Vakil Tasneef, London).

The report is presented to Huzoor periodically for Huzoor's guidance and final approval.

I take this opportunity to request prayers for the team that makes it happen. We have a lot of people working on this team a few names need special recognition. Peer Habib, my assistant, who tirelessly keeps the team working. Mureed Nazir is the system administrator, who ensures security and keeps the equipment working. He spends long hours uploading material onto the site. Masood Nasir maintains the Urdu site updated and also helps with the online bookstore. Nazir Ayaz runs the Alislam Online Bookstore and is a great resource of manpower. Abdul Hakeem Nasar provides valuable audio material. Salman Saqid is our web designer and maintains the Askislam section also. Waseem Malik and Munim Naeem provides great audio-video help and manpower. Mirza Ghulam Farrukh in Rabwah provides valuable help and advice. The MTA team in London including Munir Odeh and Ibada are a tremendous asset. Tanveer Khokhar provides the Review of Religions for Online use. All the missionaries who provide advice and guidance. A lot of people behind the scenes including men and women who do scanning and proofreading of the text that goes on the site.

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful
54th JALSA SALANA (ANNUAL CONVENTION)
OF THE AHMADIYYA MUSLIM JAMAAT USA
JUNE 28-30, 2002

AT THE BAITUR RAHMAN MOSQUE,
15000 Good Hope Road, SILVER SPRING, MD 20905

Phone # (301) 879-0110; Fax (301) 879-0115; Website; www.alislam.org

P R O G R A M

FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 2002

2:30 PM *Salat-ul-Juma and Salat-ul-Asr*

OPENING SESSION

(Combined for men and women)

Presided over by Ahsanullah Zafar Acting Ameer Jamaat Ahmadiyya USA

- 4:30 PM *Tilawat-ul-Quran* – Dr. Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad (Kansas)
Translation – Ahmad Kusi (Queens)
- 4:45 PM *Poem* – Tahir Ahmad Khokhar (Rochester)
Translation – Yasin Sharif (York/Harrisburg)
- 5:00 PM *Opening Address* – Acting Ameer, USA
- 5:30 PM **As-Salam, The Source of Peace, (An Attribute of Allah)**
– Dr. Khalil Mahmood Malik (Philadelphia)
- 5:55 PM **Domestic Harmony for Muslims** – Falahuddin Shams (Chicago)
- 6:20 PM *Poem* – Syed Saadat Ahmad (Maryland)
- 6:35 PM **Islam the Religion of Tolerance** – Hasan Hakim (Zion)
- 7:00 PM *Announcements*
- 7:30 PM *Dinner*
- 8:45 PM *Salat-ul-Maghrib and Isha*

SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 2002

- 3:45 AM *Tahajjud* Maulana Irshad A. Malhi
 4:15 AM *Salat-ul-Fajr*
 4:30 AM *Dars-ul-Quran* Maulana Irshad A. Malhi
 8:30 AM *Breakfast*

SATURDAY MORNING SESSION**Presided over by Dr. Hameed-ur-Rahman**

- 10:00 AM *Tilawat-ul-Quran* – Hafiz Samiullah Chaudhary (North Jersey)
 10:15 AM *Poem* – Mazharul Haq (LA West)
 Translation – Ahmad Qawi (Zion)
 10:30 AM **The Great Jihad** – Muhammad Abdul Ali (St. Paul)
 11:00 AM **Promised Messiah, the Noah of the Age** – Ali Murtaza (Brooklyn)
 11:30 AM *Poem* – Laeeq Ahmad Butt (Detroit)
 Translation – Rafiq Ahmad Lake (Boston)
 11:45 AM **Ahmadiyyat the Revival of Islam** – Maulana Daud Hanif (NY)
 12:15 PM *Announcements*
 1:00 PM *Lunch*
 2:30 PM *Salat-ul-Zuhar and Asr*

AFTERNOON SESSION**Presided over by Munir Hamid Naib Ameer, USA**

- 3:00 PM *Tilawat-ul-Quran* – Naeem Ahmad (Queens)
 Translation – Ismail t. Kamara (Maryland)
 3:15 PM *Poem* – Mubarak Ahmad (Brooklyn)
 Translation – Bilal Abdus Salam (Baltimore)
 3:30 PM *Guest Recognition*
 4:30 PM **Contribution of Ch. Muhammad Zafarulla Khan Towards Peace**
 – Ismail Nayyar (Queens)
 5:00 PM *Poem* – Pervaiz Aslam Chaudhary (Maryland)
 Translation – Bilal Abdus Salam (Baltimore)
 5:15 PM **The Holy Prophet as the Prince of Peace** – Ibrahim Naeem (LA West)
 5:45 PM *Announcements*

- 6:00 PM *Auxiliaries/Professional/Associations Meetings*
- 6:30 PM **Program I : Tabligh Session in VIP Marquee**
Coordinator – Ali Mrtaza, National Sec. Tabligh
- 6:30 PM **Program II: Waqfeen-e-Nau with Acting Ameer Jamaat Ahmadiyya USA**
- 7:30 PM *Dinner*
- 8:45 PM *Salat-ul-Maghrib and Isha*
-

LADIES SESSION (LAJNAH IMAILLAH)

SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 2002

MORNING SESSION

Presided over by Dr. Shanaz Butt, Sadr Lajnah Imaillah USA

- 10:00 AM *Tilawat-ul-Quran* – Najmi Azam (Res. Triangle NC)
Translation – Nasira Razaa (Zion)
Poem – Bushra Jameel (Houston)
Translation – Haleema Naseer (Houston)
- 10:45 AM *Welcome Address* – Dr. Shanaz Butt
- 11:00 AM **Hazrat Ayesha – A Fountain of Knowledge for Women of All Times**
– Aatifa Khan (Maryland)
- 11:15 AM **Hazrat Chottee Appa – A Model of Dedication for Lajna Imaillah**
– Attiya Khan (LA West)
- 11:30 AM *Poem* – Fatima Mahmood (Queens)
- 11:45 AM **How Islam Elevated my Status as a Muslim Woman**
– Laeeqa Ahmad (Zion)
- 12:00 PM **Demonstrating our Love for Humanity** – Sakeena Bonsu (Ghana)
- 12:15 PM *Poem* – Zarina Malik (Philadelphia)
Translation – Aleem Wali (Fresno)
- 12:30 PM **Training the Youth of Today to Become the Leaders of Tomorrow**
– Rukhi Khandan Mirza (Central Jersey)
- 12:55 PM *Poem* – By a group of Waqfeen-e-Nau
- 1:00 PM **Concluding Dua and Lunch**

2:30 PM *Salat-ul-Zuhar and Asar*

AFTERNOON SESSION (Ladies)

- 3:00 PM *Tilawat-ul-Quran* – Amatul Karim Nusrat (San Jose)
Translation – Hajja Nusrat Al-Hadith (Washington DC)
Poem – Kamal, Mahwish and Sundas Munir (Virginia)
Translation – Haleema Aina (Baltimore)
- 3:45 PM **Jihad-e-Akbar (The Greatest Striving in the cause of Allah)**
 – Saliha Malik (Boston)
- 4:00 PM **Role of Women in Promoting Matrimonial Harmony**
 – Dr. Aziza Rahman (LA East)
- 4:15 PM *Poem* – A group with Saffiya Darr (Zion)
- 4:30 PM **Journeying Towards Islam**
 – Aeman Bashir (York/Harrisburg)
- 4:45 PM **Contributions of Lajna Imaillah, USA: Eight Decades of Progress**
 – Salma Ghani (Philadelphia)
- 5:00 PM *Poem* – A group of Nasirat
- 5:15 PM *Annual Prize Distribution*
- 6:00 PM **Concluding Dua**
- 7:30 PM **Dinner**
- 8:45 PM *Salat-ul-Maghrib and Isha*

SATURDAY EVENING SESSION

- 9:00 PM *Welcome to the New Ahmadis*
 – **Coordinator:** Nasir Mahmud Malik, National Secretary Tarbiyyat
- 10:00 PM *End of the Evening Session*

SUNDAY, JUNE 30, 2002

- 3:45 AM *Tahajjud* Maulana Muhammad Zafrullah Hanjra
 4:15 AM *Salat-ul-Fajr*
 4:30 AM *Dars-ul-Quran* Maulana Muhammad Zafrullah Hanjra
 8:30 AM *Breakfast*

FINAL SESSION (Combined for men and women)**Presided over by Acting Ameer Jamaat Ahmadiyya USA**

- 10:00 AM *Tilawat-ul-Quran* – Hafiz Mubarak Ahmad Kukoyi (Chicago)
Translation – Ismail Ahmad (Virginia)
- 10:15 AM *Poem* – Rashid Ahmad Bhatti (Philadelphia)
Translation – Ali Shakir (Atlanta)
- 10:30 AM **Waqf-e-Zindigi and Opening of Jamia Ahmadiyya in Canada**
 – Maulana Mubarak A. Nazir (Canada)
- 11:00 AM **The Holy Quran An Ultimate Charter for Mankind**
 – Dr. Kaleem Malik (Chicago)
- 11:30 AM *Poem* – Maulana Zafar Ahmad Sarwar (Houston)
Translation – Azim Aziz (St.Louis)
- 11:45 AM **Khilafat the Dynamic Leadership for Unification of Mankind**
 – Maulana Azhar Haneef (Philadelphia)
- 12:15 PM *Concluding Address and Dua; Acting Ameer Jamaat Ahmadiyya USA*
- 1:30 PM **Lunch**
- 2:30 PM *Salat-ul-Zuhar and Asr*

CONCLUSION OF JALSA SALANA 2002

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful

AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905

BOARD OF EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH

PROGRAM FOR ASSISTANCE OF AHMADI AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS AND ENTREPRENEURS

The Board of Education and Economic Advancement of African American Youth (BEEAAAY) has been established upon the direction of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (aba) to foster the educational and economic advancement of the African American youth of Jama'at Ahmadiyya, USA. The primary objective of the Educational and Economic Advancement Program is to provide serious and promising students financial assistance towards obtaining accredited educational degree/certificate. The secondary objective is to provide financial assistance towards realistic and well-planned entrepreneurial endeavors. The Board will also provide guidance towards achieving educational and economic goals when appropriate.

EDUCATIONAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Educational financial assistance will be provided in the form of scholarships/grants/loans. The applicants should apply using Jama'at's Department of Talim's Scholarship application form.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TOWARDS ENTERPRENEURIAL ENDEAVORS

The purpose of economic assistance is to aid a profitable enterprise. Economic assistance will only be provided in the form of interest-free loans. Economic assistance is to be used only for the specifically approved business enterprise. Please use the attached application form to apply.

Application Review Process:

The Board is chartered to review submitted applications and make recommendations concerning each applicant. The Board may request additional information from the applicant prior to completing its review. The Board's recommendations are submitted the Amir Jama'at, USA for review. The Amir Jama'at submits his recommendations to the Markaz (Center) for final approval to release funds. All questions concerning applications under review should be directed either to Chairman or Co-Chairman of the Board.

*Munir Hamid
Na'ib Amir and Chairman, BEEAAAY
1109 Winghocking Street
Philadelphia, PA
Tel: (215) 455-0812*

*Dr. Karimullah Zirvi
Co-Chairman, BEEAAAY
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

**BOARD OF EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT OF
AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH**

APPLICATION FOR BUSINESS LOAN

I. Applicant Information

Name of Applicant: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: (Home) _____ (Work) _____ Fax _____

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

Name of Father/Spouse/Guardian (Please Circle) _____

II. Employment History

Current Employer/Employment: _____

Annual Gross Salary in Current Employment/Business: _____

Number of years in Current Employment/Business: _____

Previous Employment/Business _____

Annual Gross Salary in Previous Employment: _____

III. Educational History

Highest level of Education and Date Completed: _____

Educational Institution Attended: _____

Degree/Educational Program to be Pursued: _____

IV. Proposed Business Enterprise

Nature of your proposed business: _____

Explain your experience in the business area being proposes: _____

V. Financial Information

Total amount of personal funds (after all living expenses) you are able to contribute towards your business: _____

Please list all other sources of funding and the mounts available to your business (Banks, local, state, federal programs): _____

Have you explored other funding sources, please explain: _____

VI. Loan Request

Explain specifically what you are requesting a financial loan to accomplish. Please provide an itemized list of how you will use the requested funds:

Total Amount of Loan and the Date Funds are Required: _____

Proposed Re-payment Plan: _____

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

VII. Certification by the Jama'at 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: _____

Please provide brief comments concerning the applicant and their ability to be successful in his/her proposed business venture:

President's Name: _____

President's Signature: _____ Date _____

(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.)

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- i. Be an African American, in good standing, of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam.
- ii. Be an U.S. citizen or have an acceptable visa status.
- iii. For financial assistance towards entrepreneurial endeavors must present a sound business plan.
- iv. Upon approval of loan for entrepreneurial endeavor, a written statement must be provided from a guarantor (a member of the Jama'at in good standing and financial security) affirming that he/she will be responsible for full payment of the loan in case of the applicant's default.