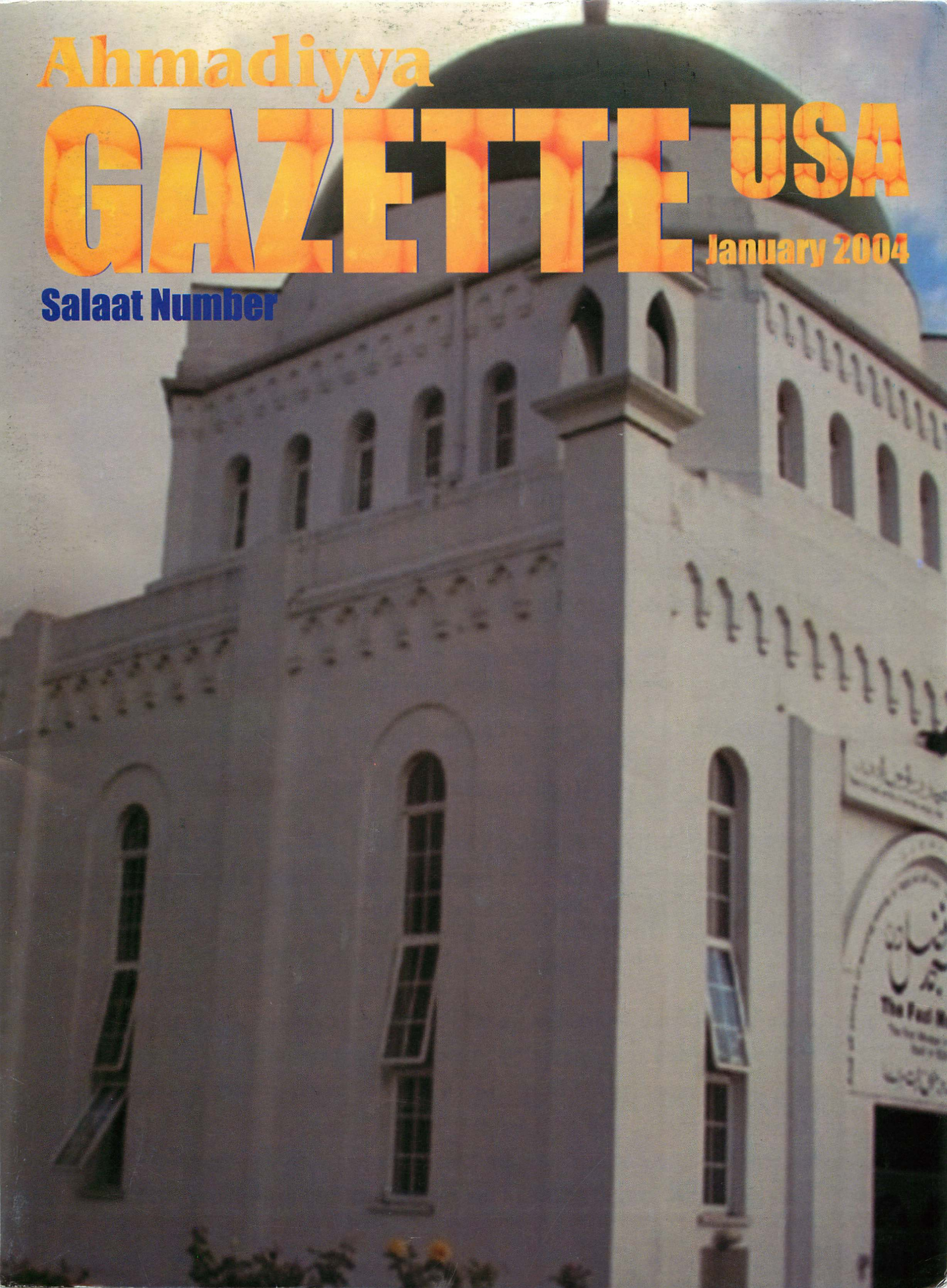


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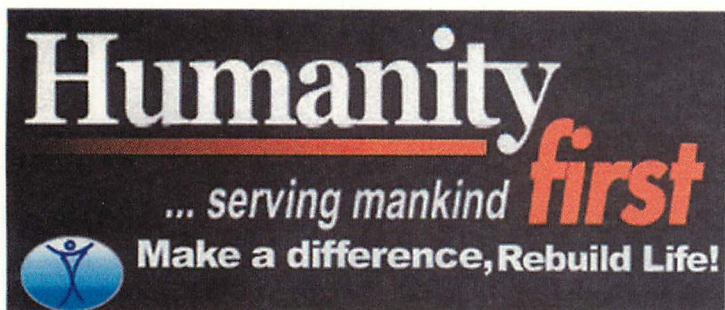
# GAZETTE USA

January 2004

Salaat Number







## **Humanity First • USA** **Fund For Iran** **Earthquake Victims** **2003**



The relief supplies are part of **Humanity First USA's** emergency response to the powerful earthquake, which is believed to have killed 30,000 people and left tens of thousands more injured and homeless. Towns and villages in the region have been flattened as well. Most survivors are spending nights outdoors in cold temperatures.

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Funds raised will provide immediate relief and basic assistance to earthquake victims. The relief effort is being coordinated by Humanity First International, UK. Humanity First is sending eight consignments from UK, which includes warm clothes, blankets and other items requested by the Iranian government. For more information, Jama'at presidents or designated representatives should contact Munum Naeem, Chairman Executive Committee, **Humanity First USA, 832.265.3774 or by email: Munumnaem@hotmail.com.**

# Ahmadiyya Gazette USA

January 2004

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# From The Holy Quran

Prayer is the second of the five pillars of Islam, the first being belief in the Unity of God. Prayer is the most potent means of establishing and strengthening one's communion with one's Maker and of drawing near to Him. It is a dynamic phenomenon, God hears and responds to prayer. The Islamic concept of prayer is a direct and uninhibited pouring forth of the soul by the supplicant before the Divine Majesty in certainty of Allah's grace, mercy, and power. In worship there is no need of an intermediary between man and his Maker. Allah *Subhanahu wa T'ala* Says in the Holy Quran:

And they were not commanded but to serve Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience, and being upright, and to observe Prayer and pay the Zakat. And that is the right religion. (98:6)

And I have not created the jinn and the men but that they may worship Me. (51:57)

Observe Prayer from the declining and paling of the sun till the darkness of the night, and recite the Qur'an at dawn. Verily, the recitation of the Qur'an at dawn is specially acceptable to Allah. (17:79)

And during a part of the night wake up for its recitation - a supererogatory service for thee. It may be that thy Lord will raise thee to an exalted station. (17:80)

Watch over prayers, and particularly the middle Prayer, and stand before Allah submissively. (2:239)



# Hadith on Daily Prayers

Abu Ayub Ansari relates that a man said: Messenger of Allah, tell me that which will cause me to be admitted to Paradise and will keep me away from the Fire. He answered: Worship Allah and do not associate anything with Him, observe Prayer, pay the

Zakat and join the ties of kinship. (*Bukhari, Kitabul Adab*)

Jabir relates that the Holy Prophet (saw) said: Giving up Prayers is tantamount to disbelief and paganism. (*Muslim*)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (saw) said: The

first item in respect of which a person would be called to account on the Day of Judgment will be Prayer. If that is found in order he would be successful and prosper, but if that is not in order he would be ruined and lost. In case of a shortcoming in his obligations the Lord of honor and glory will say: Look, if among the voluntary acts of My servant there is anything that would make up his shortcoming in respect of his obligations. All his obligations would be checked up in that manner. ❧

# The Philosophy of Islamic Prayer

(*Malfoozat, Hazrat Promised Messiah*)

Acceptance of prayer is proved by valid instances as part of the law of nature and God sets up living models in every age. That is why He has taught the prayer: Guide us along the straight path, the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy favors. This is the design and law of God and no one can alter it. Guide us along the straight path is a supplication for perfection in conduct. In form this is a direction to seek guidance to the straight path, but it is preceded by: We worship Thee alone

and beg Thy help. This indicates that we must use our natural capacities for treading along the straight path and seek Divine help in the process. Therefore, appropriate available means must be employed. One who neglects this is guilty of ingratitude in respect of God's bounties.

Consider, if the tongue that God the Sublime has bestowed on us, made up of nerves and muscles, was not equipped with its capacities, we would not have been capable of speech. He

granted us a tongue that can express the thoughts and designs of the mind for the purposes of prayer. If we do not employ the tongue for supplication, it would be our great misfortune. There are so many ailments any of which could instantly stop its functioning.

Similarly, He has equipped the mind with the qualities of humility and lowliness and the faculties of contemplation and reflection. Be mindful, then, that if we fail to use these powers and faculties, our prayer is vain. If we do not use the gifts we possess, how can we supplicate for more? That is why: We worship Thee alone, precedes: Guide us along the straight path. This is an affirmation that we have not left unemployed and stultified the gifts and faculties that Allah has granted us. (*Al-Hakam*, Dec. 10, 1901) ❧

# The Prayer

## Islamic Mode of Worship

*(From The Elementary Study of Islam)*

Worship is common to all religions. What differs is only the manner and style of worship. What is unique to the Islamic mode of worship is that it contains features from the mode of prayers found in other religions. Some people pray to God in a standing posture and some in a sitting posture. In some religions people remember God by kneeling to Him, while others bow down to Him. Some stand before Him with folded arms and others with arms hanging at their sides. In short, there is no single mode of worship common to all religions as a whole. It is fascinating to note, however, that Islam instructs its followers concerning the manner of prayer so comprehensively that all the postures of worship found in other religions are symbolically represented in the mode of Muslim prayer. Indeed, the mode of prayer in Islam is a powerful sign of its universality.

The institution of Islamic prayer is a most highly developed system covering every hu-

man requirement. It should be remembered at the outset that the purpose of worship is not just bowing to a superior being and paying homage to His greatness, as if God created man only for satiating His egotistic desire of being praised. All the purposes mentioned in relation to the philosophy of worship and the manner in which a Muslim is required to conduct his prayer make it manifestly clear that the benefit of prayer is drawn by the worshipper himself and in no way can it be taken as a favor to God. The Holy Quran declares that God does not stand in need of man's praises. He is so great in His nobility and so sublime in His character that the praises of His creatures do not add anything to His magnanimity and majesty. The Holy Prophet of Islam once mentioned that if the entire mankind had turned away from God and committed the worst possible sins, one and all, they would not diminish His universal grandeur even as much as when someone dips a sharp nee-

dle into a vast ocean, the water one finds adhered to the surface of the needle would be far more than the sins of the entire mankind could take away from the glory of God.

So, worship in the Holy Quran is only prescribed for the sake of the worshipper himself. It is a vast subject, and here we can only illustrate a few points in relation to this as mentioned in the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet of Islam.

Remembrance of God and pondering over His attributes during the prayer help man to refine his spirit, bringing it more into harmony with the nature of God. This is central to the Islamic prayer. Man was made in the image of his creator, and he must ever strive to gain closeness to Him. This is an ultimate lesson in nobility. Those who train themselves to think like God and to act like Him within the limitations of the human sphere constantly improve in their relation to all other human beings and even other forms of life.

In human terms this can be better understood with respect to a mother's attitude towards her child. For the one who truly gains nearness to a mother, all that is dear to the mother will naturally become dear to him as

well. Acquiring the attitude of the creator is like acquiring the attitude of an artist to his works of art. It is impossible for one to be near to God and to distance himself from His creation. Again, the term used for worship in the Quran is derived from a word significant and different from terms used in other religions. *Ain, Be, Dael* ('A', 'B', 'D') are the three root letters which have the basic meaning of "slavery." Like a slave who loses everything to his master and follows him in all respects, the worshipper in Islam must do the same in his relation to God. The infinitive used for worship has the connotation of following in the footsteps of someone. That is the ultimate in the imitation of God's attributes. The Quran also says:

*"Verily, Prayer prevents the worshipper from indulging in anything that is undignified or indecent." Surah Al-Ankabut (Ch. 29:46).*

This verse has both positive and negative connotations, both highly essential for cultivating ideal human conduct. In its negative connotation, it helps the worshipper by liberating him from sins of all types. In its positive connotation it educates man, refines his character, and cultivates his qualities to such sublime heights that he becomes worthy of communion with

God.

Another important area in this respect is the role worship plays in developing one's soul. According to Islam, each human soul in relation to the carnal human body can be likened unto a child in the uterus of the mother. Giving birth to a healthy child requires many influences that are

the people consider worthy of this task is chosen as the 'Imam'. The assembly is required to be arrayed behind the Imam in perfectly straight lines, each worshipper standing close to the other, shoulder to shoulder, without any distance between the two worshippers. They follow the Imam perfectly in every-

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**Whoever reaches the mosque ahead of others has the prior option to sit wherever he pleases. None has the right to remove others from the place that they occupy...**

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constantly transferred from the mother to the embryo and the child at a later stage. If the mother's influences on the embryo are unhealthy, the child is born as congenitally ill; if they are healthy, then the child is born enjoying perfect health. Of all the influences that work towards the making and modification of the human soul, prayer is the most important single factor.

Islam advocates both congregational and individual prayer. The congregational prayers are held in an amazingly well-organized and meaningful manner. There is one leader who leads the congregation in all such prayers. That leader is not an ordained priest—anyone whom

thing that he does. As he bows they bow, as he stands they stand; as he prostrates they prostrate. Even if the Imam commits a mistake and does not correct it even after a reminder, all followers must repeat the same. To question the Imam during the prayer is not permitted. All face the same direction without exception, facing the first house of worship ever built for the benefit of mankind. No one is permitted to reserve any special place behind the Imam. In this regard the rich and poor are treated with absolute equality, so also the old and the young. Whoever reaches the mosque ahead of others has the prior option to sit wherever he pleases. None has



the right to remove others from the place that they occupy, except for reasons of security etc., in which case it becomes an administrative measure. Thus the Islamic system of prayer is rich not only in spiritual instruction, but also in communal and organizational instruction.

All mosques are frequented five times a day, a task which appears to be over-bearing to a casual observer. This aspect should be further elaborated to build a more comprehensive picture of the role of congregational prayers in the Muslims' way of life. Of course in an ideal Muslim society, where mosques are provided within reach of almost every citizen, the five time congregational prayers become a routine way of life for all Muslims. The midday prayer, which ordinarily is more problematic, is performed in Muslim societies during the midday break from work. Thus it is not only a lunch break, but is slightly extended to accommodate the performance of prayer as well. The next prayer after the midday prayer is the afternoon prayer, which is performed almost immediately after return from an ordinary day's work. Then no prayer is permitted until after sunset. The time between the two is spent in outdoor activities like sports, shopping, walks, visits to friends

and relatives, etc. It is a period of relaxation in which prayers are practically forbidden, except for the quiet remembrance of God which becomes a constant feature with some believers. At sunset, the night of the believer begins with the sunset prayer, after which there is again a time for relaxation, dining, and so on.

spent in normal day to day activities.

Looking at the institution of prayer in Islam from another angle, it is intriguing to note how well organized, disciplined, and comprehensive it is. There are certain prayers of congregation in which recitation of the Quran is done in a loud, audible voice,

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### ***The Muslims are encouraged to acquire a habit of early to bed and early to rise.***

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The night is capped before retirement with the last prayer which is called *Isha*. It is discouraged to stay awake after *Isha* in wasteful occupations of gossip and vain talk etc.

The Muslims are encouraged to acquire a habit of early to bed and early to rise. The day, next morning, begins routinely in the small hours before dawn. The prayer which is performed at the end of the night is called *Tabajjud*. It is not obligatory, but is a very highly emphasized optional prayer. The dawn ushers in the time for morning prayer, which is called *Al-Fajar*. Optional prayers are not recommended between *Fajar* and sunrise for obvious reasons. Then until *Zuhar*, the midday prayer, only two optional prayers are mentioned; otherwise the pre-*Zuhar* period is expected to be

in a semi-singing tone, which does not exactly conform to the concept of singing, but which has a rhythmical, deeply penetrating tone. The Holy Prophet of Islam also advised that there should be a shadow of sadness in the tone in which the Quran is recited; this makes it more touching, with the meaning of the verses sinking deeper into the recesses of the heart. In some prayers, particularly the two afternoon prayers, there is no loud chanting; this goes well with the general mood of the time. Even the birds cease to sing during the early parts of the afternoon, and there is a general air of silence covering the hubbub of normal work. The morning Prayer, the prayer after sunset, and the prayer after the fall of night all include periods where chanting of verses is the

routine practice.

The prayer can be further divided into two categories. In addition to congregational prayers, optional prayers are also highly emphasized. In congregational prayers, society pays homage to God collectively and openly. In optional prayers, emphasis is laid on privacy, and there should be no effort to display such prayers to anyone. Similarly the late night prayer is performed in perfect privacy. Members of the same house try to find their own niches, and even husband and wife try to say their prayers separately so that communion with God becomes a highly personal affair.

It has been observed that the institution of the five time congregational prayer has worked very well, for over fourteen hundred years or so, for the protection and preservation of this holy institution. The mosques have been the mainstay in keeping this noble institution alive. They also serve as education centers for young and old, and throughout history they have played the most prominent role in religious teachings and instruction.

The places of worship in Islam, whether congregational or private, are kept meticulously clean. Everyone is expected to take his or her shoes off before

entering such places. Although in every prayer the worshipper has to touch the floor with his forehead, sometimes briefly and sometimes for longer periods, it is surprising that no skin diseases have been transferred from forehead to forehead in the Muslim society. Some may attribute this to the high standard of cleanli-

ness and some to the blessings of God, but this is a well observed fact.

one's own language, in which one is free to beg as he or she pleases. This second category is controversial in the sense that many a school of jurisprudence disallow such practices and insist on the recitation of only the prescribed form, irrespective of whether the worshipper understands that or not. They do ap-

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***In optional prayers, emphasis is laid on privacy, and there should be no effort to display such prayers to anyone.***

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ness and some to the blessings of God, but this is a well observed fact.

As far as the contents of the prayer go, they are of two types:

1. A formal routine recitation of verses of the Quran and other prayers which are done essentially in the language of the Quran, which is Arabic. All worshippers are expected to know the meaning of what they are reciting; otherwise they will deprive themselves of the immense benefit which they may draw from the meaningful recitation. It will make this discussion too lengthy if we were to go into the details of the contents, but such readers as are interested in further study can always consult the relevant literature.

2. To the second category belong the individual prayers in

precise the need for private and personal prayers, however, so they suggest praying in one's own language after the formal prayer has ended and not during its course. We, as part of the Ahmadiyya tradition of Islam, recommend and practice the former option of praying to God in one's own language as one pleases during the formal prayer.

As we have amply demonstrated above, the institution of Islamic prayer is a highly developed one where the individual is required to pray five times a day, both individually and in congregation with others. Islamic prayer thus plays an important role in the life of a Muslim, and in the spiritual and moral upbringing of the individual. ❧



# *In getting ready for the next century the most important [task] is the preparation of waqfeen-e-nau children*

*Friday Sermon delivered by Hazrat Khalifa-tul-Massih IV (rah)*

*on February 10, 1989 at Bait-ul-Fazal London*

*(Translated by Sadiqa Hafeez Mian)*

*Translation Revised by Shamim Akhtar Azam and Shahida Ahmad)*

After the recitation of *Ta-sha'bud*, *Ta'awaz* and *tilawat* of *Surah Al-Fatimah* Hazur <sup>ra</sup> said:

"In getting ready for the next century the most important [task] is the preparation of waqfeen-e-nau children. It has been reported that by the Grace of Allah, more than twelve hundred children have been born that had been offered for the Waqf-e-Nau scheme launched by me. These children were born as the result of fervent prayers to Allah with the vow that they would be offered for Waqf-e-Nau scheme and Allah with His blessings led to their birth. These little babies are the waqfeen-e-nau of the next century. Many more letters are still coming in.

In this connection, there are two kinds of preparation that are under my consideration, but before I talk about these I want to tell you that the [present] num-

ber of waqfeen-e-nau children is far short of the expected number. In fact, it is not even a small fraction of what was expected.

As far as I have looked in to this matter, the people responsible for conveying the message [to the common Ahmadies] are to blame for it. In several countries they did not convey the message to all of the Ahmadies. When this scheme was initiated, the system of cassettes was extremely inadequate as compared to the system current today. In African countries and in others besides them, where Urdu is not understood and there are some areas where even English is not understood, there was no arrangement for preparing cassettes of the translated version of the Urdu cassettes [of *khutbaat*] for distribution in the Jama'ats there. Consequently, Ahmadies of many places were deprived of the deep impact that a direct

message would have made on them. Then, it was the responsibility of the executive members of the Jama'at to convey this message in an effective manner. But it was done in some places and in others, either it was not done at all or it was done half-heartedly. Just conveying the message does not suffice. Acceptance of a message greatly depends on the zeal, the effort, the hard work, and sincerity with which it is conveyed.

Various Prophets came to this world. Fundamentally they had the same message - the message of Allah to His people; but no one was able to convey this message in the splendid manner in which the Holy Prophet Muhammad <sup>saw</sup> did. Consequently, in the history of Prophets, the message by no other Prophet was accepted so splendidly, and with such great reverence and spirit of sacrifice as his was.

Therefore, it does not suffice to just convey the message. How the message is conveyed, with what enthusiasm, sincerity, love and prayers, determines whether it will be accepted or rejected. It was my desire that we should dedicate at least five thousand children as new waqfeen for the next century. It will be long before this target is achieved. Some

Ahmadies have written to me that they were under the impression that only the children born before the next century will be accepted in Waqf-e-Nau scheme (maybe what I said in my earlier sermon gave this impression)

and entry to the scheme was closed for others. It is evident from their letters that they want to participate and are concerned that they cannot do so because time has run out. For their sake and also for the sake of those Jama'ats where the message has not been delivered yet, I am announcing that the time limit for participation in Waqf-e-Nau is extended to the next two years. At present, the extension is for two years so that those who desire to participate in the first scheme of [Waqf-e-Nau] may be able to do so; otherwise the Jama'at will be called upon for waqf time and again in the future too. But the joining period for this particular historic scheme [to dedicate children for waqf

before their birth] under which we are preparing the first army of waqfeen children for the next century, is being extended to two years more. During this period, all the Jama'ats should try their level best to make this army [of waqfeen-e-nau] five thousand strong but it would be better to exceed this target.

a trifling matter. Remember that the people, who offer sacrifices with love and sincerity, adorn their offerings in proportion to their love.

Sacrifices are like gifts. When you go to the market for shopping and you purchase ordinary household items, these are not given to you in wrapping

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**...before these children are old enough to be put under the supervision of the Jama'at, it is the great responsibility of their parents to groom and adorn them in a befitting manner.**

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Many parents are writing to me to ask what they should be doing [to raise these children appropriately]. As I said before, there are two parts of it. First, what does the Jama'at administration (*intazamia*) have to do and second what do parents of these children have to do. As far as the Jama'at administration is concerned, I have been giving them instructions periodically and whatever new ideas come to my mind or whatever suggestions I receive from Ahmadies, these are also incorporated in this planning. But, today I want to talk about the responsibility of the parents.

Dedicating children to Allah is a very serious matter. It is not

paper or decorated with ribbons. But when you tell the shopkeeper that this is a gift, the shopkeeper takes care to wrap it beautifully for you. Sacrifices are like gifts and, must be adorned accordingly. You must have seen that people decorate goats and sheep and some put jewelry on them before taking them to the place of slaughter. Some put garlands of flowers on them and adorn them in diverse ways. The ornamentation for human 'sacrifice' is of a different kind. The human soul is embellished with Taqwa (love and awe of Allah). It is love of God that embellishes and adorns the human soul. Therefore, before these children are old enough to be

put under the supervision of the Jama'at, it is the great responsibility of their parents to groom and adorn them in a befitting manner. So that the wishes of their heart of offering an extraordinary 'sacrifice' to Allah in an appropriately magnificent manner may be realized.

Keeping in mind the history of volunteers for waqf of different periods, I think that there were several types of them. Some were those who dedicated themselves at a mature age. Fortunately they had been raised so well [in righteousness] that even if they had not dedicated themselves they had the spirit of waqf in them. These were either the progeny of the companions of the Promised Messiah <sup>as</sup> or of *Awwal Tabieen* [the successors of his companions]. They were brought up in a good environment and by the Grace of Allah they had good habits. This group of waqfeen was extremely successful in every walk of life in all respects.

Then came a time when children began to be dedicated, when the parents desired to dedicate their children. In this period we had different kinds of waqfeen children. There were many whose parents believed that when they would give their children in the custody of the Jama'at, the Jama'at would take

care of [their moral and spiritual training] and they did not supervise them at all while they were under their care. When these children entered Jamia Ahmadiyya, they were like a raw material that has impurities of different kinds. It is difficult to eliminate such impurities and molding them in accordance with the spirit of waqf is difficult, in fact, impossible in certain cases. The Jama'at could not have imagined some of the bad habits that they brought with them. It is a fact that in the Jamia, some had to be discharged from waqf due to stealing and some due to lying. These habits are unacceptable even in an ordinary virtuous Ahmadi, let alone the waqfeen. It seems that though the parents had offered them as waqfeen to the Jama'at, they did not attend to their moral training, or they decided to dedicate them at a time when it was too late for moral training. There were still other parents who actually admitted that they had dedicated their child upon realizing that he had very bad habits. They had despaired of him and had dedicated him believing that the Jama'at would be able to induce him to mend his ways.

In the old days, if a child was bad the parents used to say, "Alright we will make him a '*thanidar*' (officer in charge of a

police station)." Since the Jama'at has the spirit of piety, they did not think of '*thanidari*' (rank of *thanidar*) instead they thought of waqf-e- zindagee. Albeit, such children can have an affinity with '*thanidari*' but they have absolutely none with waqf. These people [parents] think of extremely remote probabilities. "Make a bad child a *thanidar*" is famous as a joke, but it would be the greatest tragedy of life if you chose the worst child of yours to dedicate to Allah. The child who grew up with such bad habits that you could not reform him!

We have, by the grace of Allah, ample time for this new stock of waqfeen children. If we neglect their upbringing and moral training we will be held accountable for it before God. Now it cannot be said that these are accidental instances. Therefore, first of all the parents should watch their children closely. And, as I will explain, they should pay special attention to certain aspects of moral training. God forbid, if they think that because of his bent of mind their child is not worthy of waqf then they should fear God and inform the Jama'at honestly that they had honest intention of presenting a gift to God. Unfortunately the child has these bad habits. If the Jama'at is still willing to accept him in spite of



these habits they are ready, otherwise the waqf should be annulled. Thus, in future, we have to train the waqfeen-e-nau along these lines in a very serious manner.

As far as high morals are concerned, waqfeen should not only possess all the qualities that should be present in all the members of the Jama'at but they should excel in those qualities. In various Khutbaat I have been presenting different programs about morals or high morals. Keep those in mind particularly while training these children. Briefly, every child in Waqf-e-Nau should love truthfulness and hate lying. It should be as if he was nurtured on hatred [for falsehood] in his infancy. As radiation penetrates an object entirely so, truthfulness should radiate from the loving arms of the father and penetrate the heart of the child. This means that parents will have to be more truthful than before because parents of all waqfeen-e-nau might not be at that high level of truthfulness that is required of the true believers (momineen). So, before training these children they will have to attend to their own training. They will have to be more cautious and careful in speech in their homes and avoid lying even in gossip or jesting. They have a sacred *amanat* [waqf child] of Al-

lah in their homes. This trust entails some responsibilities that they have to fulfill. So, from the point of view of truthfulness, the atmosphere in the homes of these children should be immaculately clean and holy.

I said that contentment has a profound relationship with the waqfeen. They should be tutored in contentment and aversion to avarice right from their childhood. It would not be difficult to do so if the parents would exercise wisdom and sensibility in training their children from the very beginning. To sum up, it is necessary to help these children attain the highest standard of honesty and trust-worthiness.

These children should also be taught to be jovial and pleasant. Acrimony cannot go hand in hand with waqf. Ill-tempered waqfeen-e-zindagi always create problems in the Jama'at and sometimes even dangerous mischief. Therefore, good-humor and forbearance, that is, the ability to tolerate what someone says [a different opinion or criticism] are the two qualities that are very essential for waqfeen children.

Humor is good but it should be pious humor. There are several ways in which piety can be maintained in humor but at the moment I have particularly two in mind. Firstly, one should not be in the habit of entertaining

oneself or others by telling dirty jokes. Secondly, humor should have refinement ('*latafat*'). In Urdu, the word

'*latafat*' (refinement) is also used to mean humor and pleasantry. We call a joke '*lateefa*'. *Lateefa* means some thing that is refined. Curtness and crudity are related to grossness ('*kasafat*') rather than refinement ('*latafat*'). In Indian civilization, in the highly civilized families with good traditions, when a child related an unrefined joke, he was told it was not a '*lateefa*' but a '*kaseefa*' and buffoonery. There is a great difference between good humor and buffoonery. That is why, whatever [incidents of] humor we find in the lives of Hazrat Muhammad <sup>saw</sup> and his companions, (most of the humorous incidents are not available now), is a humor that is qualified with piety. We find humor in the lives of the Promised Messiah <sup>as</sup> and his companion's also. Hazrat Khalifa-tul-Masih II <sup>ra</sup> had great sense of humor but his humor had piety of both kinds- refinement and decency. I know some people who believe that they could indulge in humor for some time because it is permissible but they failed to realize that humor should be coupled with piety. They continued to narrate dirty and boorish jokes in their gatherings and this led some people to

think that it did not matter though it does matter a great deal, indeed. Have good humor in your homes but instill in the hearts of your children hatred and repugnance for bad humor. This seems to be a minor point and I have spent a lot of time on it but I know that in human life, especially a life of hardships and responsibilities and mental tensions of various kinds, humor plays a very important role and safeguards the human mind and psyche.

I have already explained *ghana*, that after contentment is the stage of indifference (*ghana*) to worldly riches and luxuries. This prevents jealousy of the rich on the one hand and creates kindness towards the poor on the other. '*Ghana*' (indifference) does not mean that one should be indifferent to the needs of the poor. It means that one should become indifferent to one's own needs in order to fulfill the needs of the poor. This is a distinctive aspect of Islamic '*ghana*' and it should not be ignored. We need such Waqfeen children who would not be indifferent to the suffering of the poor but would be indifferent to the riches of the wealthy; to whom prosperity of someone would not cause pain but suffering of any one certainly would.

As far as their education is

concerned, teaching them in the Jamia would come later, but from the beginning these children should be taught to be serious about learning the Holy Quran. Insha Allah, the Jama'at will also devise some programs for this purpose. In any case, the parents should keep in touch with the Jama'at [in this regard]. When children reach the age where they can read the Holy Quran and receive religious education, they (parents) should contact their local Jama'at or write directly to the center (Markaz) and ask how these children can be taught excellent recitation and meanings of the Holy Quran. There are two types of '*qa'ree*' [one who recites the *Holy Quran*]. Those who recite well, their voices have charm and phonetically they have correct pronunciation. But a charming voice alone cannot put life in the recitation. If those who are reciting do not know the meaning of the Holy Quran then, so to speak, they can erect a statue of recitation but they cannot breathe life into it. Those who recite the Holy Quran with comprehension, with their hearts melting at the message of the verses being recited and filled with the love of Allah, they have the true spirit of recitation. In the homes of waqfeen-e-nauf, this aspect of tilawat should be

highly stressed upon. Even if you teach less, do so with translation and explain the meanings. Inculcate in your child the habit of reciting with comprehension. To make him used to doing the daily recitation in the morning, you may have to teach him just the reading [of the Arabic text] of the Holy Quran for a long period of time. But along with it you should continue to stress upon him the need to learn its translation and meanings.

The Jamia is not the place to learn to be regular in salat or other requisites related to salat. Children should learn all this at home under the supervision of their parents.

Parents should see to it that their children have broad knowledge. One way of attaining broad religious knowledge is to read the newspaper and magazines brought out by the head quarter (*markaz*). Unfortunately, at present, there are certain countries where there are no local (Jama'at) newspapers and there are certain languages in which there are no local newspapers. But we still have time. By the Grace of Allah, in the past few years the Jama'ats have shown an increased trend of publishing their own local newspapers. So, officials of all the Jama'ats should keep in mind that in the next two to three or four to five

years, when these children will be able to read and understand, their magazines and newspapers should have some regular programs and features for these children on what is Waqf-e-Nau? What do we expect from them? And instead of giving the whole program at once, which would soon be forgotten, the newspapers should present the moral training program in small fragments. When one has been implemented then they should concentrate on the next and so on.

Waqfeen children should have vast knowledge. Generally, religious scholars have this shortcoming in common. They have extensive and in-depth knowledge of religion but about other spheres of knowledge outside the sphere of religion they are totally ignorant. This lack of knowledge has seriously harmed Islam. Of all the reasons that lead to the decline of a religion this is the most important. Jama'at Ahmadiyya should learn from this. We should encourage and popularize religious learning founded on broad-based knowledge. That is, first of all the foundation should be a broad knowledge of secular subjects to which should then be grafted religious learning so that it grows into a very beautiful, blessed and holy tree. From this point of view, these children should be

encouraged to increase their general knowledge right from childhood. If the parents would pay attention to this matter, their (children's) knowledge will increase automatically. So the parents should pay attention to it and subscribe to magazines and newspapers for their children. They should instill in them the habit of reading such books as would increase their knowledge; and, when they go to school parents should choose for them subjects that would introduce them to science. These children should have some knowledge of all the diverse subjects of arts such as economics, philosophy, psychology, mathematics, and commerce etc. Make them used to reading. One does not have much choice in the schools. A child can take five, six or seven subjects; some even take ten but they cannot go beyond this. Therefore, it is essential that these children should get into the habit of reading other than their prescribed syllabi.

Now, these things are beyond the comprehension of parents of some waqfeen children. I know that there are many in Africa, Asia and Europe who are not capable of implementing these programs. Therefore, the concerned section of Tehreek-e-Jadeed should note them down. All the points that have been

mentioned in this *khubta* should be conveyed to all the parents in such a way that lack of knowledge and lack of ability on the part of parents does not hinder the children from getting the best kind of education. In certain places the Jama'at will have to arrange for the training of these children right from the beginning. In certain places help can be taken from the auxiliaries of the Jama'at. But these are issues to be discussed later. Right now, I am just explaining to you a few ideas that are in my mind regarding the type of children we want for Waqf-e-Nau.

We want waqfeen who are in the habit of suppressing anger right from early childhood, who are not contemptuous of those who have less knowledge and have the patience to listen to an opposite opinion and evince tolerance. Patience also requires that when they are asked something they should not immediately open their mouth in response. Instead, they should think a while before replying. If these manners and morals are taught in childhood, they become part and parcel of nature. Otherwise even the most learned person, some times remains devoid of these ordinary good manners in spite of his great knowledge. It is a common observation that when some one is



asked a question he gives a reply immediately even if he does not know the answer. Often, when some one is asked whether a certain thing has been done, the answer is; 'Yes, it's been done', though the person answering only knows that it was going to be done and does not know if it actually is. Waqfeen with this habit can create serious problems. In my experience as an administrator, I know that this kind of misinformation can cause serious harm. For example, I was in charge of the Langar Khana and called someone there to ask if —so many thousand *roties* (*breads*) were ready? I was told that they were and I was satisfied. When I got there I found that there was a shortage of several thousands. I asked the person why he had lied and given incorrect information and that it had caused serious loss. His explanation was that he knew that half an hour before my call a certain number of breads had been made already, so he had surmised that the required quantity would be definitely ready in the next half an hour. His formula was correct. But in this eventful world such formulas do not work. What actually happened in this case was that they had some trouble. There had been a fight among the laborers, and the cooking gas supply had been dis-

rupted. Several other problems of this sort usually do crop up. Actually, the half an hour time in which, according to his calculation, several thousand breads should have been made, no work had been done at all. This is a common habit. In my vast experience I have observed that this habit is very common, particularly among the Asians. They state their surmise about something as actual fact and waqfeen-e-zindagee also have the habit of doing so. Some times their reports have such mistakes and cause harm to the Jama'at. Therefore, this habit of stating what is known to be a fact as a fact and what is a surmise as a surmise should be formed in childhood, otherwise, it would be very difficult to develop this habit as adults. Such acts are involuntary because habit means that the mouth utters something automatically. Some times this carelessness leads to lying and creates very difficult situations. Often, when such people are asked the reason for doing so, instead of simply admitting that they had made a mistake and that they had surmised, they tell another lie to cover up their first mistake and offer an excuse that is far from the truth. When their false excuse is apprehended then they tell another lie. This causes them much embarrassment and

shame but while the whole world is laughing at them they go on telling lie after lie to save face. These [bad] habits are formed in childhood. When very young children are caught for saying that some thing has happened when actually it has not, they behave in a similar way [try to cover one lie by telling another] and parents pay no attention to it. This results in spoiling their temperament and sometimes it is spoiled so badly that it cannot be reformed. It becomes their habit: they do not lie, but as a habit they present their conjectures and assumptions as facts. If the people [waqfeen] who come to the Jamia' are of this type, then the Jamia' does not have any magic to instantly reform [their] chronic bad habits. Only an exceptional inner transformation can effect this change. And that is a separate subject. We cannot rule out the possibility of such a transformation, but that is not the general rule. We do not base plans of our life on rules that are an exception; we plan according to the general rules. So, it is very important that these children should be trained thoroughly in this respect.

To give them broad-based general knowledge, those who can learn typing should be taught typing. They should be taught how to keep an account, and as I

have said before there should be great emphasis on honesty. Dishonesty in monetary matters in waqfeen is terrible and sometimes bears dreadful consequences. Honesty is exceptionally important for a Jama'at that is running wholly and solely on voluntary *chandajaat* (donations). In other words, honesty is important for the protection and safeguard of our jugular vein. The financial system of the Jama'at is functioning on the basis of trust and honesty. If, God forbid, the members of the Jama'at were to perceive dishonesty in waqfeen-e-zindagee and those employed in the Finance Department, the ability they are granted to give chanda will be strangled and they will not be able to give chanda even if they would wish to do so. Therefore the waqfeen should be particularly good in their financial dealings. This is closely related with Accountancy. Those who cannot maintain an account sometimes make mistakes in financial matters and the on lookers think they have been dishonest. Sometimes, those who do not know how to keep accounts act dishonestly due to these financial mistakes, and the concerned official is held responsible for it. By the Grace of Allah, the people responsible for the management of the finances of the Ja-

ma'at have such an exceptionally high standard of honesty as is not paralleled by any other organization. Even then we can see certain shortcomings. Instances of intentional dishonesty are extremely rare but there are many (in comparison to the former) cases where someone did not know how to keep accounts. Or someone did not know what would be his responsibility when he puts his signature [on some document]. Or, what he should look at (before signing). Acts of dishonesty often occur under the supervision of a person who is not good at even elementary arithmetic and later on, the poor man has to bear the blame. Sometimes after the investigation he is acquitted but often the matter remains unresolved and it can not be determined whether he was dishonest or not. Therefore, all the waqfeen children should know accounting from the very beginning. That is why I had mentioned arithmetic. They should be good at arithmetic and should be taught how the account of money should be maintained. This training can be given through every day grocery shopping. They [waqfeen children] can be made perfect in honesty, if they are asked to purchase groceries from time to time. For example, when children are asked to buy groceries, often

they do not return to the parents the few surplus small coins that are left with them. They are not being dishonest, it is their parent's money and they do not see why they need to return it. This is the time for their moral training. They should be told that when they are asked to do shopping they should return the balance, even if it is only one penny. After that they may ask for ten dollars, there is no harm in that, but to pocket the one penny left after the purchase, sows the seeds of future [acts of] dishonesty and carelessness. The rise and fall of nations begins at home. Parents erect the great future [of the nation] in their homes when they take care of minute matters in training their children. That is to say - great nations are made in their homes. Negligence in small matters [in childhood] often leads to big and serious consequences. Therefore, teach waqfeen children the refinements of taqwa (righteousness) in financial matters because, whatever I have been saying is, in fact, related to 'taqwa'. The obvious kind of taqwa is for the common people, the waqfeen children should be taught the most refined forms of taqwa in the minutest details in all matters.

In addition, from childhood, the waqfeen should also be made

tough and diehard and obedient to the discipline and order of the Jama'at. It is very important to affiliate them with Atfalul-Ahmadiyya, Nasiratul-Ahmadiyya and Khuddamul-Ahmadiyya. The responsibility of Ansar comes later. If you [parents] could take good care of them up to the age of fifteen and as Khuddam, then rarely would the Ansar have any need to train them. When a bullet is fired with a gun that has a long barrel, it goes straight for a long distance. If the barrel of Tarbiyyat' [training by parents] would extend to the age of Khuddam, then the child will remain on the right path till his death, except for what Allah wills. It is very essential to teach children to respect the administrative set up of the Jama'at. Do not say any thing about the set up of the Jama'at in your homes that sounds derogatory or complain about an official of the Jama'at. Never complain about a Jama'at official in front of your children even if your complaint is valid. It will harm your children. You can protect your faith in spite of complaining but [the faith of] your children will be seriously damaged. Because in such a case, usually, the person involved suffers less injury but the one who is watching near by receives deeper wounds. The children of

those people, who criticize the Jama'at executive thoughtlessly, are, more or less, definitely harmed and some are lost forever. This point should be explained to the waqfeen children and it should be emphasized that no matter what complaint they have against a Jama'at official, no matter how high were their expectations of him, they should not ruin their soul as a result of it. People usually have many expectations from the president of their Jama'at and if a certain expectation is not met with, then it should be explained to the waqfeen-e-zindagee, their soul should not be allowed to perish because of it. This is again a harm similar to the one I have mentioned earlier. It is the official who stumbles but it is the onlooker who falls into the pit. The one who stumbles can still save his faith. He can repent and reform himself and very often he does not perish, unless his mistakes are of a particular kind, but those who have a tendency to stumble, are perished due to these mistakes. They become averse to religion and spread the germs [of their disease] among others. They narrate at their gatherings what a certain person did and thus they cause the ruin of a whole nation. So, first of all protect your children from this evil. When they are a little older

then explain to them that love is really for Allah and His religion. So they should never say anything that can harm the Jama'at of Allah. If someone hurts them, or inflicts a loss upon them, they have no right to spoil their environment and damage the faith of their friends and their children. They should be patient and keep their grievance to themselves and seek redress through the ways prescribed by Allah but avoid talking about it in public.

Even today, such things are happening in the Jama'at and several incidents are being brought to my attention. For example, a certain person was hurt and he narrated the whole incident to some devout people. Although, he spoke the truth but he did not take into consideration the fact that it could do great harm to their faith. Some waqfeen-e-zindagee also behaved in a similar manner. They had some complaints against the Jama'at executive or Tabsheer. In order to win sympathies of the new foreign Ahmadiis, who had been devoted to the Jama'at all their life, they started relating their tales to them. Afterwards they saved their souls and returned home but left many injured souls behind. Who will be held accountable for it? It has not been determined yet whether the officials were at fault or not.



As far as I have looked into the matter, they were not at fault. The whole affair began with a suspicion. But, even if the officials were at fault, no one had the right to damage the faith of other people because of his own suffering. The truly loyal look after the interest of the Jama'at, and its well being is their foremost concern. True evidence of love is the one proposed by Hazrat Suleman<sup>as</sup> (Solomon) and none is more reliable. You have heard about it from me and from others as well. Once, two women were brought to the court of Hazrat Suleman<sup>as</sup>. They had one child with them and each claimed the child was hers. Each one of them would drag the child to herself and cry and scream that the child was hers. None of the wise men could figure out how to solve this problem. When the case was presented before Hazrat Suleman<sup>as</sup> he said; "It is difficult to establish whom the child belongs to. It would be highly unjust if we give the child to the wrong woman. Therefore, let us cut the child into two halves and give one half to each, so that we may not be unjust." He called the executioner and told him to cut the child in two equal halves and give one to each woman. At this, the real mothers threw herself over the child and said that she

should be cut into two halves instead and pleaded that the child should be given to the other woman but he should not be harmed for Gods sake. At this, Hazrat Suleman<sup>as</sup> gave his verdict that the child belonged to her. It is impossible that any one, who loves the Jama'at for Gods sake, would ever let the Jama'at split up into fragments (groups), or tolerate things that would damage the faith of other people. He would subject himself to all kinds of suffering and would not make it the means of hurting other souls. And this would be the proof of his faithfulness. It is extremely important to train waqfeen along these lines because such an incidence has not occurred once or twice but several times and has, some times, created serious dissension. Someone thinks that he has been very clever and has revenged himself. Tehreek-e-Jadeed did this (wrong) to him and he retaliated in this way and now he has the support of a large group of people. He does not realize that those people are not behind him, they are behind Satan. Instead of being the leader of the righteous he has become the leader of the hypocrites, that he has not killed himself only but also all those who followed him. These are trifling matters but they produce serious consequences. You

should explain all these things to your waqfeen-e-nau in their childhood and train them with love and affectionate care so that they would deserve to be the great leaders of the next century.

One of the important things that I want to say in the end is teach your waqfeen children to be loyal. There is a very deep relationship between Waqf-e-zindagee and loyalty. When a waqf-e-zindagee does not adhere to his waqf to the last breath of his life and withdraws (whether the Jama'at punishes him or not), it leaves a scar of unfaithfulness on his soul. It is a big scar. Your decision to present your child for waqf is a very big decision. As a result of this decision either these children will become great saints or they will not be able to attain even the ordinary status of piety and it is also possible that they might be seriously harmed. The greater the height, the greater is the risk of falling down. Therefore, train them with great caution and give them lessons in fidelity, and do so repeatedly. Some times, the waqfeen who give up waqf think they have made a smart move and that they are free and beyond the jurisdiction of the Jama'at and can not be called to account. This is chicanery, no doubt, but it is not wisdom. They only harm themselves with

their chicanery. A short time ago, the case of a waqf-e-zindagee was brought before me. He had been appointed in a country where, if he lived for a certain period of time, he was entitled to get its nationality. Because of several reasons I decided to transfer him from there. When I transferred him, he had to live there six or seven months more to get the nationality. He started writing letters to me full of love, sincerity and requested that he be allowed to stay there for some time more. I permitted him to do so. Some wise men thought that he had tricked me. They wrote to me that he had fooled me, and that he wanted to complete the required time period for nationality and then he would quit, and care no more. I told them or wrote to them: "I know it all. Do you think that I do not know what he is doing? But he is not fooling me, he is fooling his own self. He is one of those people about whom the Holy Quran says:

*"Yukhadioon-Allaha wallazeena amano wa ma yakhdooona illa unfosahum..."*

Therefore, I am giving him the benefit of doubt. Maybe what you and I suspect is merely suspicion. If he really is what you believe him to be and what I too think about him, then he is not

worthy of being a waqf. So, instead of trying to reform him and save him we should give him another chance." He (the waqf-e-zindagee) was surprised that I had permitted him to stay on. Then he said that if he could stay longer he would get so much money. I allowed him to take that (money) as well. Then he went back [on his waqf] and what was bound to happen followed. This is cleverness of the stupid. An apparently wise measure that is devoid of taqwa is generally called cleverness by the world. Protect your children from such shallow cleverness.

Some children are saucy and play tricks to out-reach others and it becomes a habit. They use the same sauciness and tricks in religious matters too, and at times they are harmed by the acrimony of their own insolence. Explain to the waqfeen children that waqf is a solemn matter; that it is a vow that you made with Allah. You were highly sincere in making this vow, but if they (the children) cannot keep it they have permission to withdraw. There will come another point when these children are approaching maturity, when the Jama'at will ask them whether they want to keep their waqf or not.

Once I had the chance of vis-

iting Disney Land in America. There was a ride that had extremely dangerous turns and a very fast speed. It took sudden turns that could be dangerous for individuals with weak hearts. So they had posted warnings saying that you can go back at this point and in the end there was a warning in red that said; "This is the end. Now you can not go back." So, there is going to be a 'gate' when the children who have been dedicated for waqf now, will be told, "This is the last door after this you cannot go back. If you have courage to bargain your life, if you can offer everything to Allah irrevocably, only then come forward otherwise go back immediately." So, make them ready to pass through this gate now. True waqf is the one to which a person adheres faithfully to his last breath and drags himself forward on this path in spite of all his wounds, and never turns back. Prepare your future generations for this kind of waqf. May Allah be with you. May Allah enable us to prepare an army of Waqfeen, which is equipped with all the weapons that are necessary for striving (doing jihad) in the cause of Allah and has perfect skill in their use. Ameen. " ❧

# Repentance and Seeking Forgiveness

(Excerpts from the writings of Hazrat Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>)

It is obvious that man is very weak by nature and has been charged with hundreds of Divine commandments. On account of his weakness, he falls short in carrying out some Divine commandments and sometimes he is overcome by the desires of the self that incite to evil. On account of his weak nature, he deserves that at the time of any slipping, if he should repent and seek forgiveness, God's mercy should save him from being ruined. It is a certainty that if God had not been the Acceptor of repentance, man would not have been charged with these hundreds of commandments. This proves that God turns towards man with mercy and is Most Forgiving. Repentance means that a person should discard a vice with the resolve that thereafter, even if he is thrown into the fire, he would not commit that vice. When man turns towards God Almighty with sincerity and firm resolve, God, who is Benevolent and Merciful,

forgives him the particular sin. It is one of the high Divine attributes that God accepts repentance and saves a sinner from ruin. If man had not the hope of his repentance being accepted, he would not be able to refrain

that they are safeguarded against sinning (*Chashmai Ma'arafat*, now published in *Roohani Khazain Vol. 23. p. 181, 1984*).

To reject repentance and forgiveness is to shut the door of human progress. It is obvious to

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**The repentance of the followers of every faith can be accepted leaving out only the sin of denying the Book of God and His Messenger.**

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from sinning. The Christians also believe in repentance, but on condition that the person who repents should be a Christian. Islam lays down no condition for repentance. The repentance of the followers of every faith can be accepted leaving out only the sin of denying the Book of God and His Messenger. It is impossible that a person should attain salvation only through his conduct. It is the Benevolence of God that He accepts the repentance of some and bestows by His grace such powers on others

everyone that man is not perfect in himself, but is in need of perfection. As after his birth he gradually widens his knowledge and is not born learned and well-informed, in the same way, when after his birth he begins to be sensible of his surroundings, his moral condition is at a very low ebb. Observation of the condition of small children would show that most children are inclined to beat others on the slightest provocation and many of them are given to telling lies and abusing other children.



Some steal and carry tales and are envious and miserly. When they grow up they fall into the grip of the self that incites to vice and are guilty of diverse types of evil and wickedness.

Thus for most people the first stage of life is impure, but when a fortunate person emerges from the fierce flood of youth, he turns towards God and withdraws from undesirable activities through sincere repentance and occupies himself with purifying the garment of his nature. These are stages of human life which a person has commonly to traverse. This shows that were it true that repentance is not accepted, it would mean that God does not desire to bestow salvation on anyone (*Chashmai Ma'arifat reprinted in Roohani Khazain, Vol. 23. p. 184, 1984*).

### ***Repentance Washes Out The Stains of Sin***

Though God Almighty has announced that the seed of the Unity of God is present in every soul, He has also expounded that that seed is not in equal strength in everyone and that the natures of some are overcome to such a degree by their passions that that light almost disappears. It is obvious, therefore, that the natural animal faculties are not inconsistent with the natural sense of the Unity of God. However much a

person may be given to following his desires, and however much he might yield to his evil-directing self, he possesses to some degree a natural light. For instance, if under the impact of passion or anger a person commits theft, or murder, or adultery then though this act of his is a demand of his nature, yet the light of well-doing which is invested in his nature rebukes him at the very time when he indulges in any of these improper activities. This is referred to in the verse: "He revealed to it the right and wrong of everything" (Ch. 91:9). This means that God bestows a type of revelation upon every person which is called the light of the heart and which is the faculty of distinguishing between good and evil. When a thief commits theft, or a murderer commits murder, God puts it in his heart at the same time that he has done ill and not good, but he pays no attention to it for the light of his heart and his reason are weak and are overcome by his animal faculties and his ego is insistent. The turmoil of the ego of such people cannot be reduced, for that which God has imposed cannot be removed by anyone else.

Yet God has provided a remedy: seeking repentance, seeking forgiveness, and feeling remorse.

This means that if man does evil in conformity with the demands of his ego, or an evil thought arises in his mind and he seeks a remedy through repentance and seeking forgiveness, God forgives him. If man stumbles repeatedly and is remorseful each time and repents, the remorse and repentance wash out the stain of his sin. This is the true atonement that is the remedy of a natural sin. This is referred to in the verse: "Whoso does evil or wrongs his soul, and then asks forgiveness of Allah, will find Allah Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful" (Ch. 4:111). This means that as stumbling and sinning are the characteristics of defective souls, which are manifested by them, there are corresponding to them the eternal attributes of God which are mercy and forgiveness, and He is inherently Forgiving and Merciful. His forgiveness is not casual, but is His eternal attribute which He loves and which He desires to exercise on deserving people. Whenever a person turns to God in remorse and repentance at the time of stumbling or sinning, he becomes deserving that God should turn to him with mercy and forgiveness. This is not limited to once or twice, but is the eternal attribute of God Almighty that He turns towards a remorseful and repentant servant

whenever the latter turns to Him. Thus it is not God's natural law that a weak person should not stumble or that the nature of those who are overcome by their animal faculties should be changed, but His eternal law is that those who commit sin should be forgiven through repentance and seeking forgiveness (*Braheeni Ahmadiyyah Part II reprinted in Roohani Khazain, Vol. 1, pp. 175-177, footnote 11, 1984*).

### ***Man Turns To God With Remorse And God Turns To Man With Mercy***

In Arabic idiom *Taubah* (repentance) means "returning," and that is why in the Holy Quran God's name is also *Tawab*, that is to say, "He Who is Oft-Returning." This means that when a person discarding sin turns to God with a sincere heart, God Almighty turns even more to him. This is altogether in accord with the law of nature. God Almighty has made in part of human nature that when a person turns to another with a sincere heart, the latter's heart is also softened for him. Then how can reason accept that when a servant turns towards God Almighty with a true heart God should not turn to him? Indeed God, Who is Benevolent and Merciful, turns even more towards His servant. That is why in the Holy Quran, God's name,

as we have just mentioned, is also *Tawab*, meaning "Oft-Returning." *Man's turning to God* is through remorse and humility and meekness, and God's turning to man is with mercy and forgiveness. If mercy were not one of the attributes of God Almighty, no one would be delivered. It is a pity that these people do not ponder over the attributes of God Almighty and depend entirely upon their own actions. But can it be the attitude of God, Who without any action proceeding from man, has created thousands of bounties for him upon the earth that when a weak man being warned of his heedlessness should turn to Him, a turning which is like death, and should put off his old garment and should be consumed in the fire of His love, God should not turn to him with mercy? Is this the law of nature? (*Chashmai Ma'arifat reprinted in Ruhani Khazain, Vol. 23. p. 125-126, 1984*).

### ***Three Conditions For Repentance***

It should be borne in mind that there are three conditions for repentance, without fulfillment of which true repentance is not achieved. The first condition is to get rid of wicked fancies that arouse evil propensities.

Fancies have great influence. Every action is preceded by a

fancy. Thus the first condition for repentance is that evil thoughts and fancies should be discarded. For instance, if a person has an illicit relationship with a woman and desires to repent, it is necessary that he should conceive of her as ugly and should call to mind all her low qualities. As I have just said fancies exercise a powerful influence. I have read that some Sufis carried their fancies to such a length that they saw a person in the form of an ape or pig. Thus the first condition of repentance is that all thoughts which give rise to evil pleasures should be discarded altogether.

The second condition is remorse. Everyone's conscience admonishes him over every evil, but an unfortunate person leaves his conscience suspended. So a sinner should express remorse over his sin and evil action and should reflect that the pleasure to be derived from them is temporary. He should also consider that every time there is a decline in that pleasure and that in the end, in old age when his faculties are weakened, he will per force have to give up all these pleasures. Then why indulge in that which in the end has to be given up anyhow? Most fortunate is the person who turns in repentance and becomes determined to discard all corrupt thoughts

and vile fancies. When he gets rid of this impurity, he should be remorseful.

The third condition is a firm resolve that he will not revert to those vices. If he adheres to this resolve, God will bestow upon him the strength for true repentance and he will be rid altogether of his vices which will be replaced by good morals and praiseworthy actions. This is a moral victory. It is for God Almighty to bestow the power and strength for it for He is the Master of all power and all strength, as He has said: "All power belongs to Allah" (Ch.2:166) (*Malfoozat*, Vol. I, pp.132-134).

### ***The Meaning of Istighfar***

The true meaning of *istighfar* is to supplicate to God that no human weakness should be manifested and that God might support nature with His strength and might enclose it in the circle of His help and protection. The root of *istighfar* is *ghafar*, which means "to cover up." Thus the meaning of *istighfar* is that God should cover up the natural weakness of the supplicant with His power. This meaning is then enlarged to include the covering up of a sin that has been committed, but the true meaning is that God should safeguard the supplicant against his natural weakness and should bestow upon him power from His

power, and knowledge from His knowledge, and light from His light. Having created man, God has not become separated from him, but as He is man's Creator and the Creator of all his external and internal faculties, He is also All-Sustaining; that is to say, He safeguards with His support everything that He has created. It is, therefore, necessary for man that as he has been created by God, he should seek to safeguard the features of his creation through the All-Sustaining attribute of the Divine...

Thus this is a natural need of man for which he has been directed to carry out *istighfar*. This is referred to in the verse: "Allah is He, save Whom none is worthy of worship, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining" (Ch.2:256). He is both Creator and All-Sustaining. When man was created, the function of creation was completed, but the function of sustaining is for ever and that is why *istighfar* is needed all the time. Every attribute of God possesses a grace and *istighfar* is needed for winning the grace of the All-Sustaining. This is indicated in the verse of Surah Fatihah: "Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help." This means that "we worship Thee alone and implore Thee alone for help" (Ch.1: 5).

Thy attributes of Providence and All-Sustaining should help us and should safeguard us against stumbling lest our weakness may become manifest and we should fall short of worshipping Thee.

It is thus obvious that the true meaning of *istighfar* is not that a default has occurred, but that no default should occur. Human nature finding itself weak naturally seeks strength from God, as a child seeks milk from its mother. As God has bestowed upon man from the beginning tongue and eyes and heart and ears, etc., so too He has bestowed upon him from the beginning the desire for *istighfar* and has made him feel that he is dependent upon God for help. This is indicated in the verse: "Seek the suppression of thy weakness and that of the believers, men and women" (47: 20). This means that the Holy Prophet of Islam was directed to supplicate that his nature should be safeguarded against human weakness and should be so strengthened that that weakness should not become manifest. He was also directed to supplicate by way of intercession on behalf of the men and women who believed in him that they should be safeguarded against the punishment for the defaults that might have been committed by them and that during the rest of their

lives they should be safeguarded against sin. This verse comprises a very high philosophy of protection against sin and intercession. It also indicates that a person can achieve a high stage of protection against sin and win intercession if he prays constantly for the suppression of his own weakness and for delivering others from the poison of sin and draws himself strength from God through his supplication and desires that those who are related to him through faith should also partake of that strength. A sinless person needs to supplicate God for strength inasmuch as human nature possesses no excellence of its own, but receives excellence every moment from God, and has no strength of its own but receives strength every moment from God, and has no perfect light of its own but receives light from God. A perfect nature is bestowed an attraction so that it might draw to itself strength from above, but the treasure of strength is the Being of God. Angels draw strength for themselves from this treasure and so also perfect man draws the strength of sinlessness and grace from this Fountainhead of strength through the pipe of servitude. Thus from amongst men, he alone is perfectly innocent

who draws Divine strength to himself through *istighfar* and occupies himself throughout with humble supplication so that light should continue to descend upon him....

Then what is *istighfar*? It is an instrument through which strength is obtained. The whole secret of Divine Unity is that the quality of innocence should not be regarded as a permanent possession of man, but God should be taken as the Fountainhead for acquiring it. God Almighty metaphorically resembles the heart which has a store of pure blood, and the *istighfar* of a perfect man is like the veins and arteries which are connected with the heart and draw pure blood from it and convey it to the limbs that need it (*Review of Religions—Urdu, Vol. I, pp. 192-195*).

### ***Repentance Should Be Followed Up With Istighfar***

*Istighfar* and repentance are two separate matters. From one point of view, *istighfar* has priority over repentance, inasmuch as *istighfar* is the help and strength which are obtained from God and repentance means standing on one's own feet. It is the way of God that when a person seeks help from Him, He bestows strength and with that strength the supplicant stands on his own feet and thus possesses the fac-

ulty to do good. This means turning to God and this is the natural sequence of it. It is appointed for seekers that they should seek help from God in every condition. Until a seeker obtains strength from God, he can do nothing. The strength for repentance is acquired after *istighfar*. If there is no *istighfar*, the faculty of repentance dies. If you will thus follow up *istighfar* with repentance, the result will be as set out in the verse: "He will make for you a goodly provision till an appointed term" (Ch. 11: 4). This is the way of God, that those who follow up *istighfar* with repentance will achieve high grades. Every sense has a circle within which it achieves its high grades. Not everyone can be a Prophet or a Messenger or a Siddiq or a Martyr (*Malfoozat, Vol. II, pp. 68-69*).

### ***Istighfar Is A Spiritual Exercise***

The Muslims have been bestowed two things: one for obtaining strength and the other for the practical demonstration of the strength that has been obtained. *Istighfar* is for obtaining strength. It is also called seeking help. The Sufis have said that as physical strength and power is fostered through exercise, in the same way, *istighfar* is spiritual exercise. Through it the soul ob-

tains strength and the heart achieves steadfastness. He who desires strength should do *istighfar* (*Malfoozat, Vol. II, p. 67*).

The gates of the grace and benevolence of God Almighty are never closed. If a person turns to Him with a true heart and in sincerity, then He is Forgiving and Merciful and accepts repentance. It is a great impertinence and disrespect to speculate how many sinners God Almighty will forgive. The treasures of His mercy are unlimited. He lacks nothing and His doors are not shut upon any. All those who arrive before God shall attain high ranks. This is a sure promise. The one who despairs of God Almighty, and his last moment arrives in a state of heedlessness, is most unfortunate and ill-starred because at that time the door is closed (*Malfoozat, Vol. III, p. 296-297*).

There are some people who are aware of sin and there are others who are not even aware of it. That is why God Almighty has prescribed *istighfar* in all circumstances so that man should occupy himself with *istighfar* with regard to all sins, whether external or internal, and whether he has knowledge of them or not. A person should seek forgiveness for every type of sin whether of the hands, or of feet, or of

tongue, or of nose, or of ears, or of eyes. In these days we should supplicate like Adam: "Our Lord we have wronged ourselves, and if Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, we shall surely be of the losers" (Ch.7:24). This prayer has already been accepted. Do not live heedlessly. He who is not heedless would not be involved in any calamity that is beyond his strength. No misfortune arrives without Divine command. That is why I have been taught the prayer: "Lord, everything serves Thee; then Lord protect me and help me and have mercy on me" (*Malfoozat, Vol. IV, p. 275*).

Heedlessness arises from unknown causes. Sometimes without a person knowing it, his heart is suddenly afflicted with rust and darkness. *Istighfar* means that one should not suffer from that rust and darkness. The Christians foolishly argue that *istighfar* shows that the supplicant has been sinful. The true meaning of *istighfar* is that no sin should be committed. If *istighfar* means forgiveness of sins committed, then what is the phrase for suppressing sins in future? All Prophets needed *istighfar*. The more a person supplicates by way of *istighfar* the more innocent he is. Its true meaning is that God might save him from

sin (*Malfoozat, Vol. IV, p. 255*).

### ***It Is The Grace Of Allah That Saves And Not Deeds***

Then arise and repent and win the pleasure of God through good works. Remember that the punishment of wrong beliefs is after death. Being a Hindu or a Christian or a Muslim will be determined on the Day of Judgment. But a person who goes beyond the limit in wrong-doing and transgression and disobedience and vice is punished in this life. Such a one cannot escape God's chastisement. So hasten to win God's pleasure and before the dreadful day arrives namely the day of intensity of the plague of which the Prophets have warned, make your peace with God. He is very Benevolent. Through the repentance that melts the heart for a moment, He can forgive the sins spread over seventy years. Do not say that repentance is not accepted. Remember that you cannot be saved by your deeds. It is grace that saves and not deeds. Benevolent and Merciful Lord, bestow Thy grace upon all of us. We are Thy servants and have fallen down upon Thy threshold. Ameen. (*Lecture Lahore reprinted in Roohani Khazain, Vol. 20, p. 39, 1984*). ❧



# Synopsis of Istighfar

(Professor Abdul Jaleel)

*Istighfar* means to cover up, protect or suppress. The primary connotation of *Istighfar* is to supplicate for the suppression of human tendency, to fall into error so as to be safeguarded against error or sin. Its secondary connotation is to supplicate for suppression of consequences of error. Thus *Istighfar* might connote suppression of a person's tendency towards falling into sin or error, or his protection against the consequences of such errors or sin, or of the errors and sins of others.

On account of the lack of knowledge of Arabic, the true significance of *Istighfar* has been lost to many. This word is derived from *Ghafr*, the other infinitive forms being *Maghfirat*, *Ghufran* etc. As given in all Arabic dictionaries, the word *Ghafr* means to cover or to protect. Therefore the primary meaning of *Istighfar* means seeking protection or a prayer of protection and support. All other meanings usually given to this word are derived or secondary.

To whom is the above prayer addressed and from what is the

protection sought? Since we are discussing this subject from the Islamic point of view, the obvious answer to the first question is to none other than the One God, Allah. The common form of this prayer is *Astaghfirullah*, i.e., *I seek the protection of Allah* or *I pray to Allah for His Protection*. This makes it conclusive that the *Istighfar* is addressed to the One God alone.

The answer to the second question is the most important point to be settled and is the main subject of this discussion. Is the protection sought simply from the punishment of evil which a man has wrought or is it sought primarily from the evil itself and only secondarily from its consequences if the evil has been done? For the correct answer, one has to go to the fundamental question of the relation between God and His creatures. The God of Islam is not only the Creator, but also the Supporter as well. Whatever has been made by the Divine hand is also supported by it. If, therefore, man needs the creating hand of God to come into existence, it is

equally true that he needs His supporting hand to be saved from corruption. The Divine attribute of creation required that man should be created in the image of God and the requirement of the Divine attribute of support was that what had been created in the Divine image should not be given up to corruption and everlasting destruction. It is to denote these two Divine attributes that the adjectives *Al-Hayyi* and *Al-Qayyum* are used in the Holy Quran regarding Allah, which means, the One who brings into existence and supports that which He has created.

By nature, man needs support for his existence. This is testified in the Holy Quran by the verse: "man has been created weak." He is a creature and as such is dependent upon his Creator, resembling an infant that needs the assistance of its mother in every step. Thus we have in God a supporter, and in man somebody who requires support.

Almighty God gives support to man in all matters in abundance without his asking. Yet as

an intelligent being he must exercise his own will to avail himself of some gifts. Man is feeble in nature and as such is powerless to resist evil tendencies. If he, therefore, does not use his faculties to ask for aid from the Supporter against evil tendencies, he rejects the gift which he could have claimed by asking, and this leads him into evil. The Holy Quran teaches man how to ask for God's help in the opening chapter of the Book: "O God! Thee alone do we seek assistance that Thy support may hold us against the weakness of the flesh and protect us from stumbling and falling" (Ch.1:5) The more a man feels the weakness of his nature, the more he will ask for Divine strength and to a greater extent he will consequently be protected from evil.

This is the real significance of *Istighfar*: seeking protection of God from evil. Hence the necessity of *Istighfar* by every person is obvious without any consideration of actual commission of sin by him. In short, existence of sin is not a prerequisite for *Istighfar*. There is a craving in the very nature of man to attain perfection. To satisfy this craving, he is guided to say *Istighfar* and this makes up the deficiency of human nature by imploring strength from God.

*Istighfar* is also needed for

protection from the punishment of the evil that has been done. Hence it is of secondary significance, the primary one being the protection from the evil itself, whether a sin has been committed or not. This leads us to the role of prophets who have been raised from time to time among various people. The primary object of their appearance is to deliver men from evil, not to pardon them from the sin they go on committing. In this respect Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) has an eminence not reached by any other prophet. He was raised at a time when darkness prevailed on the face of the earth and people had gone astray in doctrine and practice. The Arabs whom he addressed directly had sunk deep into vice. From this depth of degradation he raised them to the highest pinnacles of civilization. But how did he bring about this revolution? Since God alone can support man against the forces of evil, it is obvious that the Prophet must have taught them to pray to God for this protection. And it is *Istighfar* that he taught.

*Istighfar*, as seen in the Holy Quran, is the true and only means of drawing strength and support of God, the only course for attaining nearness of God and the only path by walking on

man may attain to sinlessness and salvation. The Holy Quran speaks of it as the highest accomplishment of good men. In the chapter "The Scattering," we read: "Verily the righteous shall dwell amid gardens and fountains with the blessings which their Lord has given them. This is a reward to them, for, before this they were the greatest doers of good, passed greater part of the night in devotion to God and when morning came, they retorted to *Istighfar*, i.e., they sought the Divine strength and support" (51:16-19). As clearly read here, *Istighfar* is described as a deed of righteousness and the effect of which is not that they were saved from the torment of hell fire, but Divine blessings and favours were showered upon them in abundance. The Arabic word *Mohsin* translated as good man in the fore-quoted Quranic verse has been defined by the Holy Prophet as one who worships God so sincerely as if he actually sees Him or at least the one who deems himself in the presence of God Who sees him. It should be noted that when a person reaches this stage, he cannot sin. Hence, his *Istighfar* is not for the protection from the punishment of hell, but is a part of his goodness. Such a man keeps himself in the presence of God during night, praying for

Divine protection and support in the morning to keep him firm in His path and not to let him slip. He feels that without the strength and support in the morning to keep him firm in His path and not to let him slip. He feels that without the strength and support of God, he would not be able to overcome the frailties of his nature and, therefore, prays constantly that he might not be deprived of heavenly bliss due to the weakness of his flesh.

Another Quranic verse that shows *Istighfar* as a highly commendable deed for righteousness reads as follows: "...the patient, the truthful, and the lowly and charitable and those who resort to *Istighfar* at morning times" (Ch.3:17). In this verse, *Istighfar* is deemed as a necessity for good together with patience, truth, lowliness and charity. Here *Istighfar* clearly is indicated not only for saving from punishment but also for drawing blessings and favours of God.

Not only is *Istighfar* described as leading to virtuous deeds, but also *Maghfirat* is promised as a gift of God to those who lead a virtuous course of life. We read in the Chapter Hud thus: "Those who stick to virtue and shun vice and work righteousness, to them shall be granted

'*Maghfirat*' and a great reward" (Ch.11:12). Here *Maghfirat* is promised as a reward to those who do righteous deeds and does not mean pardon of sins because the persons to whom it is promised are plainly described as being those who have been doing righteous deeds. In fact man always stands in need of *Maghfirat*, and *Maghfirat* of God shall continue even in paradise. The Holy Quran attests to this in the words: "They will have all kinds of fruits therein (the paradise) and '*Maghfirat*' from their Lord" (Ch. 47:16). Here, *Maghfirat* is plainly described as a reward which shall be granted to the good in paradise. In Chapter Al-Tahrim of the Holy Book we read: "Those (who enter paradise) will pray: 'Lord, perfect our light for us and grant us '*maghfirat*'" (Ch.66:9). This unceasing desire for perfection and *Maghfirat* shows clearly that progress in paradise will be endless.

From these two verses, it is plain that even after entry into paradise which will only be possible after obtaining God's pardon to those who have committed sins, the faithful will still have a continuous desire for *Maghfirat*, or in another words, they will resort to *Istighfar*, though they shall have been

saved from punishment.

What does *Maghfirat* in paradise mean? As mentioned earlier, *Istighfar* is a requirement of the nature of man as a creature and of the attribute of God as the Creator and Supporter. The attribute of support of the Creator must remain constantly at work as long as there are creatures. Notwithstanding continual progress in heaven, men will still be creatures and still be dependent upon God. Any degree of perfection they may attain in this world or the next cannot be equivalent to the perfection of the Creator. In paradise, the righteous will ever be ascending upwards and will regard every state as defective in comparison with the higher one to which he will aspire and will, therefore, pray to God for *Maghfirat*. Since progress is endless, the desire for *Maghfirat* will never cease. In spite of the fact that God has granted *Maghfirat* to the Holy Prophet for short comings, past and future (Ch.48:2), he has been advised to 'resort to *Istighfar*' and seek *Maghfirat* from God (Ch.110:4) even after assurance of God (Ch.48:2).

In short, *Istighfar* is the closest form of communion with God, the highest flight of the spirit of man towards the Divine Being. The man who resorts to *Istighfar* humiliates himself be-

fore God, admitting the weakness of his nature and dreads the Power and Glory of the Creator. His whole delight, his very paradise, is in this fact that he should fly to that rock of strength, without whose shelter he cannot live. His own self is annihilated and God is all in all to him. The man who constantly recurs to *Istighfar*

feels his own dependency and turns to God for help and aid and thus gives evidence that he was overcome the weakness of flesh and resisted the evil tendency because the strength of God is with him and His light descending upon him, has suppressed every infirmity of nature which could have led to sin.

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Reprinted from *Review of Religions*, December 1993



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# Advice To A Missionary

## By Hazrat Musleh Maud<sup>ra</sup>

*These directions were given in writing by Hadhrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad<sup>ra</sup> to Maulana Q. Abdullah B.A., B.T., on the occasion of his departure to England as a missionary. The date is not mentioned but is likely in the mid thirties or forties.*

"I seek refuge with Allah against Satan the Rejected. I begin with the name of God the Beneficent, the Merciful. We praise and glorify Him and invoke blessings on His revered Prophet (PBUH).

I commit you to God who is one and who has neither wife nor son. May He be your guardian, helper, guide, teacher and leader. Ameen. The task with which you have been entrusted is an onerous one, I should say it is beyond the power of man. It cannot be accomplished but with His help. The heart of man is in His hands. Regeneration and purification of heart are then, His work. You should, therefore, repose complete trust in Him. Never entertain even for a moment the idea that you are capable of doing anything. Your heart should ever be full of Di-

vine love and you should steer clear of pride and boasting. Humiliate yourself before God whenever you meet an opponent. Banish the idea from your mind that you will answer him - nay, even assure yourself that you do not know anything. Forget all that you know; yet at the same time have a firm faith that God is with you and He will instruct you in all things. Pray to God and do not even for a moment entertain the idea that your adversary will get the better of you. Rest assured that you will be victorious. But at the same time keep in view the Divine independence (ghina) and bear in mind that He does not stand in need of human help. He, who is proud of his knowledge is brought low even though he is working for the Divine cause. At the same time Divine help is not extended to him who is overawed by his enemy. So there should be neither pride nor boasting nor fear nor perturbation of mind. Bear yourself with all humility and faith and face the enemy resolutely. None will

overcome you. Even if your opponent asks of you what you do not know, the angels of God will come to your help and your tongue will flow with truth, and Divine inspiration will instruct you in all that you require. It is the truth. Do not doubt it. The opponent whom you are going to confront is not to be regarded as an ordinary one. For three hundred years, rather more, the Muslim missionaries have in vain tried to win him over. He has baffled their attempts at every step. Yet there is no cause for despair, because Deen-e-Haq that has hitherto fought him was not the real and living Deen-e-Haq. It was only a lifeless skeleton. Who can dispute the fact that even a child can overthrow a skeleton. Attack him with the weapons of the real and living Deen-e-Haq and he will of himself run away.

Europe is now steeped in materialism. She is the mine of all sciences. She is proud of her knowledge. She is puffed up with the thought that what she thinks to be civilization is the



real civilization, and that all else is barbarism. People finding her so far advanced in science are overawed by her extravagant claims, while as a matter of fact the sciences of Europe can not be put in the balance against the knowledge contained in the Quran. Here theories are subject to constant change, while the Quranic truths are eternal and unchangeable. Hence he who believes in the Holy Quran cannot for a second be cowed down before her. If he studies her civilization in the light of the Holy Quran, it will appear to him anything but civilization and its bright pearls will appear no more than mere oyster shells. Therefore, never be dismayed by the theories of Europe. If they ever begin to vitiate your mind, take to the study of the Holy Quran and the works of the Holy Founder of Ahmadiyya Jamaat and you will find such knowledge therein as will counteract their unhealthy influence. Bear in mind that you are going to conquer Europe and not be conquered by it. Do not be afraid of her pretensions for they are utterly baseless. Do not yield to the irreligious influences of Europe. But try to bring Europe round to the civilization of Deen-e-Haq, remembering at the same time the injunction of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) –

‘Convey glad tidings to the people and do not scare them away’. Speak gently. I do not mean to say that you should keep back the truth, because that will mean the ruining of your mission. Speak the truth boldly. What I mean to say is that Europe is suffering from certain maladies. It would not help to refuse admission into the fold of Deen-e-Haq to a person who accepts all the fundamental principles of it, but is unable to give up all his weaknesses at once. If he is willing to slowly give up his errors and mend his ways, we should not be uncompromising in our demands. Do not narrow the bounds of the Divine Kingdom, yet you should never hesitate to speak out the truth and never shrink from the expression of true beliefs. Convey the truth to others and do not for a moment think of others' rejection of it. Let them disbelieve if they choose to do so, but why should you make yourself guilty in the sight of God by concealing the truth? He is a fool indeed who, in order to prevent his comrade from taking poison, himself takes a large quantity of it. Your own self has a prior right to your care. So if people reject the truth, you should not be tempted to so interpret the Word of God as to make it palatable to your audience. Deen-e-Haq does not

stand in need of such preaching. This would be a victory for Christianity and not for Deen-e-Haq. Do not swerve even a hair's breadth from the point where Deen-e-Haq has made you stand. Stand your ground firmly and you will find people flocking to you in large numbers. Even an enemy will hate the underhand policy of relinquishing the truth for the sake of making converts. Observe decent economy in food and dress. It is true that people do not like to see things against their etiquette. But if they once come to realize the fear of God and not a desire to offend their cherished tastes or feeling, they will come to love and revere you. It is not lawful to eat the flesh of an animal that has been killed from the back side of the neck or suffocated to death. The Quran forbids it and the Holy Founder, on inquiry from the intending passengers for England, also forbade it. But if the Jews or Christians slaughter a clean animal by the throat (whether they recite the name of God or not), it is lawful for you to eat its flesh. Begin eating it with the name of God. I hear that the Jews are very careful about the matter of slaughtering animals for eating. You may eat that flesh without any misgiving. As the Christians slaughter animals from the backside of the

neck or kill them by suffocation you should be careful about the flesh procurable at their shops or hotels. It is lawful for you to eat food cooked by them. Flesh of fish as well as that of a clean animal shot with a gun is also allowed. There is no harm in eating of the same plate with a Christian, for it is not man that is unclean, it is the unclean thing that makes him unclean. You are not allowed to shake hands with women, try to explain beforehand in the best possible way. A lady came to see the Holy Founder. He informed her that the Holy Prophet (May the blessings of God be upon him) did not take the hands of ladies in his hand, as it was usual for him to do in the case of men while performing the initiatory ceremony. This involves no derogation of women, for just as a man is not allowed to shake hands with a woman other than his near relative, similarly, a woman is not allowed to shake hands with a stranger. To remove sin, Deen-e-Haq strikes at the very root. Such precautions are safeguards against evil. Always speak gently and thoughtfully. Never be in haste. Do not give your answer in a hurried manner, never try to evade the question. Try to make others understand with a sincerity rooted in love. Be gentle even when opposed by harshness. Try

to be good to every body, no matter what creed he professes, so that he may appreciate the beauty and holy character of Deen-e-Haq. Look after those that may (with God's grace) be enabled to accept Deen-e-Haq through you. Take care of them as a shepherd does of his flock. Help them in their religious and worldly difficulties to the best of your power. Share all their troubles in a brotherly way. Pray to God for the strengthening of their faith.

Pay special attention to the study of the English language. Maintain a respectful and obedient attitude to Chaudhri Fateh Mohammad. As long as he is there, try to act according to his instructions, consistently with the teachings of Deen-e-Haq. Cooperate with him with love and affection and be not in any way a hindrance in his way. Be an active partner in his labors. Your relations should be governed by such mutual regard and love as may elicit wonder and admiration from the people there.

Study the Holy Quran and the traditions and have a perfect acquaintance with the writings of the Holy Founder. Study the Christian literature and Christian theology thoroughly. It would be an advantage to make a constant study of some of the books on

the exposition of the Law because you shall have to enlighten people there on the minute practical details of the Deen-e-Haq Law. Let the people see and feel the unity of the Ahmadiyya Movement and the need for it. There should be no mincing of matters about the fact that Deen-e-Haq and Ahmadiyya Movement are not two different things. They are but two names for the same thing. Try to efface from the minds of the people the idea that the Ahmadiyya Movement is only the name of a Society. Teach them the tenets of Ahmadiyyat, which means Deen-e-Haq - to give up one's desires and resign oneself to the will of God. The people of Europe do not even hesitate to question the existence of God. They wish to have religion according to their own way of thinking. With all their legitimate liberty and freedom in worldly concerns, they must be made to recognize the necessity for submitting to Divine Law. Do not be over anxious about the number of converts but be particularly solicitous for true converts. From words try to lead them on to actions. You have seldom come across a horse, but you are now going to bestride a lion. There are many who tried to do so, but instead of getting on its back they were gulped down into

its stomach. Pray to God that this lion may tamely submit to you. Pray to God whenever you are in any difficulty. If your need is immediate and urgent, and the time is too short for a reply from me, then post a letter to me and pray to God fervently. It is possible that you may meet with a solution of your difficulty even before the receipt of a reply from me. The ways of God are wonderful and past finding out. He is Omniscient and All-Powerful. Try to imbibe Sufi ideas. Moderation in food, speech and sleep is a good remedy. Tahajjud (praying in the latter part of the night) is a good weapon against the materialistic influences of Europe, because there people retire to bed late in the night to wake up when the sun is high

up. Go to bed immediately after you have said the Isha prayers. It would, of course, interfere a little with your missionary work but have trust in God, he will make good your loss in another way. People will be drawn towards you themselves. Visit the rural population and preach to the poor, the peasants and the labor classes. These people would readily listen to the word of God and develop spirituality more rapidly and effectively than the well-to-do classes, because the former are comparatively simpler and quicker to grasp the truth than the latter. For a month or two, stay near London at some little hamlet and begin your work with a trust in God and then wait for the result. It is true that they are sometimes harsh and

even rude on account of their harshness. A patient never takes a medicine joyfully. Consult me before you undertake an important task. God be with you and persevere. When they will realize the truth it will not be a half-hearted affair. Do not lose heart against every evil influence and give your strength and power to do good deeds. May your words be inspiring. Bear in mind that England is a land of freedom and liberty. There may be some evil-minded men intriguing against the British Government. See to it, that you not only guard yourself against the evil influence of such men, but try to save others from falling victims to the same influence".

(Reproduced from the *Review of Religions*) ❧

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# Concept Of Purdah In Islam

(Fauzia Q. Shah - St. Paul Chapter, USA Jamaat)

It is worth noting that the great historical women of different religions - even prior to Islam - observed purdah and modesty in some form. Muslim women are unique in continuing this tradition of holy women such as Hazrat Maryam, and therefore markedly differ from women of any other persuasion in the world today. Muslim women's perseverance in observing purdah harkens back to the women of the Holy Prophet's time who practiced purdah as fully as possible. Their observance was remarkable as they did it despite the state of undress that preceded their generation as well as the exotic climate they lived in.

The Holy Quran teaches us:

*And say to the believing women that they restrain their eyes and guard their private parts and that they disclose not their natural and artificial beauty except that which is apparent thereof, and that they draw their head coverings over their bosoms, and that they disclose not their beauty save to their husbands, or to their fathers, or*

*the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or the sons of their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, or their women, or what their right hands possess, or such of male attendants as have no sexual appetite, or young children who have no knowledge of the hidden parts of women, and they strike not their feet so that what they hide of their ornaments may become known.*  
*O believers that you may succeed.*

(Holy Quran-24:32)

The Holy Prophet (saw) also teaches us that:

*Modesty is an element of faith.*  
(Bokhari & Muslim)

Islam is a religion of high philosophy, yet it retains a practical essence. The concepts of purdah and modesty are both philosophically bound as well as being an essential part of a Muslim woman's practical life. The primary reason for purdah is quintessentially Islamic - one of submitting to Allah's will as laid out in the Quran and Hadith. Superfluous to this are the social goals of purdah, for example to protect women and also to

achieve public and personal harmony.

Against this though, opponents of Islam accuse it of treating women as inferior beings. They base this accusation on Islamic purdah and modesty, claiming that Islam enforces purdah upon women, whilst men are allowed to roam around as they wish. This criticism is not only unjustified, it is starkly opposed to the harmony and balance that Islam expounds between men and women.

Firstly, this criticism refuses to recognize the safety afforded to Muslim women. They are free to choose their lifestyle. The Promised Messiah (as)'s son, Sahibzada Mirza Bashir Ahmad (ra), refuted claims that Muslim women are imprisoned in their homes. He explained that women are free to leave their homes for any necessary matter such as study, work or a trip of their choice. Islam allows all of this as long as it is practiced with purdah and modesty, because these values have been prescribed for women's safety. As the Holy Quran tells us:

*O Prophet! Tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw close to them portions of their loose outer coverings. That is nearer that they may thus be distinguished and not molested. And Allah is most forgiving, merciful.*

(Holy Quran-33:60)

Sahibzada Mirza Bashir Ahmad (ra) also explained the philosophy behind purdah and modesty. All things have a body and a spirit. Therefore, he advised that women should not spoil the morality of their spirit by exploiting the natural beauty of their body for strange men. After all, our bodies are for us and our children, and our beauty is for us and our husbands. We are not commodities for public visual display.

As well as being against true Islamic practice, the accusations against Islam are also unfounded in the light of Islamic philosophy. This is because Islam prescribes purdah and modesty for both genders - men and women. The reason for the difference in practice by each gender is only due to the difference in the divinely decreed roles of each gender. Due to different social roles, purdah and modesty apply slightly differently to each gender, but they do indeed apply to both men and women.

Whilst this article will concentrate on how purdah and modesty apply to women, it is also therefore relevant to make a few points on its application for men also. First of all from the Holy Quran:

*Say to the believing men that they restrain their eyes and guard their pri-*

*vate parts. That is purer for them. Surely Allah is well aware of what they do. (Holy Quran-24:31)*

Secondly from hadith:

*Abu Huraira relates that the Holy Prophet (saw) said a part of adultery is man's portion which he achieves anyhow. The adultery of the eyes is looking at that which is forbidden. The adultery of the ears is listening to that which is forbidden. The adultery of the tongue is uttering that which is forbidden. The adultery of the hand is grasping that which is forbidden. The adultery of the feet is walking to that which is forbidden. And the heart yearns and desires and the genitals confirm it I give it the lie. (Bokhari & Muslim)*

Ahmadiyyat came to bring about the renaissance of Islam, the true philosophical and practical Islam. Another example of how purdah and modesty apply to men is taken from Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I (ra)'s *Ghaz-e-Bassar*. This further elucidates on a similar topic to the aforementioned Hadith regarding men's use of their visual sense. *Ghaz-e-Bassar* incorporates both Islamic philosophy and practicality. In advising a man who happens to see another person coming by, he is instructed that it is of course permissible for him to have a first glance at that person through his eyes. This is because the first glance is occasionally involuntary and even when it is

not, it should merely be for the purposes of recognition. However, Hazrat Khalifatul I (ra) warned that if that first glance registered that other person as a woman, a man should not allow the second glance to take place, because that would be through devilish eyes i.e. the look of the devil.

Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) states in *Zikr-e-Illahi* that the Holy Prophet (saw) identified the sense of vision as the most dominant sense. Islam's exhortations for men to practice purdah and modesty are therefore primarily targeted towards their sense of vision, as this sense has the most power to corrupt. Therefore, practicing purdah and modesty helps to shield men from corruption.

Now to return to how purdah and modesty apply to women. In a 1928 edition of the *Al-Fazl* newspaper, Hazrat Musleh Maud described two ideals in purdah for women: maximum and minimum. We will briefly outline both of these.

Maximum – this is the type of purdah that applies to the wives of the Holy Prophet, women who have received the benefit of an Islamic religious upbringing, and women who have belonged to the fold of Islam for many years. This form of purdah is when a woman: can wear make-



up, fine clothes and heavy adornments – as long as such things are covered up in front of men; wears loose-fitting clothes so as not to over reveal her beauty; covers her head, face and full body.

Minimum – this type of purdah applies to women whose work requires a lesser grade of purdah (e.g. women who work in the fields) as well as newly converted women. It should be mentioned that women who come to Islam from a society of minimal modesty have been advised by Hazur Aqdas that they can gradually step-up their purdah. Firstly by learning to cover their legs in public, then by covering their head and so on until they reach an ideal form of purdah. The minimum form of purdah is when a woman: does not wear any make-up, fine clothes or adornments; wears loose-fitting simple clothes so as not to overly reveal her figure; covers her hair but leaves her hands and face uncovered.

For women who are confused as to which of these applies to them, the Promised Messiah <sup>(as)</sup> set out a general standard for all Muslim women to follow, in normal everyday circumstances. He advised that the body, forehead, lips and chin should be covered. He further advised that women may leave uncovered

anything, the covering of which is contrary to health or security. For example, some women with asthma may need to leave their nose and mouths open to facilitate breathing. Furthermore, security and reputation sometimes require that we have to show our faces in order to be identified.

For example, the Holy Prophet (saw) once advised his wife Hazrat Safia (ra), whilst they were outside together at night, to show her face to two other men who were passing by. This was to prove who she was and to clear away any doubts if the men had any. Some people may comment that whilst this safeguarded the reputations of a husband and his wife, it eludes to the triviality of purdah. This is far from accurate as is shown in the following Hadith where the Holy Prophet (saw) emphasized purdah to such a degree that:

*Umm Salamah (ra) relates that she was with the Holy Prophet (saw) and Maimuna (ra) was also there when Ibn Umm Maktum arrived.*

*This was after women had been commanded to veil themselves. The Holy Prophet (saw) asked them to observe purdah from him. They said: Messenger of Allah, he is blind. He cannot see us and does not recognize us. Whereupon the Holy Prophet said: But are you blind and cannot see him? (Abu Daud & Tirmidhi)*

Besides the two ideals of purdah outlined by Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra), there are different stages of purdah relevant to a woman's personal stage in her life. For example prior to puberty, the female form is shapeless and not maturely attractive. At this stage in our life, we are not required to observe formal purdah in public, unless it is observed out of respect e.g. in prayer or in front of a respected person. During the years of puberty and thereafter, purdah eventually becomes incumbent upon practicing Muslim women.

However, after the menopause women are no longer required to observe formal purdah. Nevertheless, the following Quran advises us not to forget our modesty at this stage of life:

*As to elderly women, who have no desire for marriage – there is no blame on them if they lay aside their outer clothing without displaying their beauty. But to abstain from that even is better for them. And Allah is all hearing, all knowing. (Holy Quran-24:61)*

As mentioned earlier, Islam is a religion of harmony and balance. Purdah and modesty are individually practiced values which have great social implications. The practice of purdah and modesty by both men and women serves to bring about social harmony through balance

between both genders. Through this balance of purdah and modesty, Muslim men and women are better able to protect one another from social evils. The Holy Quran supports this mutual protection with the following verse:

*They are a cloak for you and you are a cloak for them. (Holy Quran-2:188)*

This covering of each other is necessary because no one wishes to display their dirty linen in public (i.e. bad things about themselves). Hazoor Aqdas (atba) has explained that just as good things in a person's heart often shine from that person's face, bad things in a person's heart also come to be written on that person's face. Furthermore, he adds that evils in society such as fighting, are encouraged by a lack of modesty. The Holy

Prophet (saw) warned that excessive shamelessness gives rise to ill repute, notoriety and ugliness. He further explained that modesty actually gives rise to the opposite by producing dignity, respectability and beauty.

In describing contemporary society, Hazoor Aqdas (atba) has commented that unfortunately there is currently no modesty and neither is there any limit to how filthy society is becoming. He added that it is sad that this lack of modesty is particularly flagrant in Europe and America. Hazoor Aqdas (atba) therefore raises the Islamic proposition of purdah and modesty. He does this not just as a remedy for social evils, rather he advises that even on an individual level true personal satisfaction comes from modesty. Hazoor Aqdas (atba) also points out that Allah is al-

ways watching us, then why are we not modest in Allah's eyes?

Whilst I have shown purdah and modesty to be basic Islamic values, Islam of course does not force anyone into practicing it. The Holy Quran clearly states:

*There should be no compulsion in religion. Surely right has become distinct from wrong (Holy Quran-2:257)*

This means that whilst religion does not force us into anything, it does guide us away from wrong and towards what is right. Allah has blessed humans with the unique privilege of free will, so that we are able to choose between right and wrong. As intelligent beings we should choose wisely. Islam emphasizes the need for purdah and modesty. Let us pray that we become exemplary purdah practicing Muslims. Ameen.



## *Hofstra Students Visit Baitul Zafar*

Professor Dan Varisco and his students from Hofstra University studying Cultural Anthropology visited Baitul Zafar on November 10th. Imam Daud Hanif Sahib and Naeem Ahmad Sahib received the guests and introduced them to Islam and Ahmadiyyat. The students are visiting numerous houses of

worship and their prior visit was to a Hindu Temple in Long Island.

Naeem Ahmad Sahib encouraged them to look around the mosque, and see how simple it was with no symbols. The mosque provided worship to the one God, Allah, in the direction of Mecca. He introduced Islam

to the students by way of the Holy Quran, and its opening Chapter, Surah Al Fatiha. This laid the foundation for Naeem Ahmad Sahib to speak about the 5 pillars of Islam.

Imam Daud Hanif Sahib, in a very effective and endearing manner, continued the introduction with a translation of Surah Al Fatiha, and its importance in every prayer. He then proceeded to introduce Ahmadiyyat, the

true Islam, and its need in the present day. He enlightened the students with the truth of the Holy Quran and its validity in the present day. Imam Sahib explained that the Promised Messiah was the Messiah for all, as each religion is waiting for one. Imam Sahib also educated the guests on how the Promised Messiah had defined Jihad, just like the Holy Prophet had. This,

he explained, was one of the major differences between Ahmadi Muslims and non-Ahmadi Muslims. Imam Sahib also pointed out that Ahmadies are still persecuted, but respond with Jihad through prayer and patience.

The floor was opened to questions, and the students actively participated. The discussion centered on Ahmadiyyat, and how it was different from

the other sects. Imam Sahib provided comprehensive answers. Before leaving, the guests observed the Jama'at offering Isha prayers.

One other non-Muslim guest attended. Drinks and food were provided which everybody enjoyed. May Allah continue to help us attract people to the true Islam. Ameen.

*(Reported by: Muneeb Khan)*

## *World Peace and Jihad'* *Lecture at York College, New York*

On November 17, the History and Philosophy Club and the History Department at York College invited Imam Daud Hanif Sahib to give a lecture on Jihad.

In his address, Imam Sahib described in detail the three forms of Jihad: first, to strive to better oneself; second, to spread the message of Islam; and third, to defend by force when attacked. He described how, at the inception of Islam, the Meccans persecuted the Holy Prophet (saw) and his followers. The Holy Prophet and his followers bore this treatment until it could no longer be tolerated, and then the Muslims were commanded by Allah to immigrate to Medina.

When the Meccans and their allies attacked Medina, the Holy Prophet (saw) was given the revelation to defend Islam from those who wanted to destroy it. Imam Sahib described the clauses in the treaty of Huddai-bia, which many Muslims felt to be one-sided and favoring the Meccans. The Holy Prophet, nevertheless, honored this treaty. Imam Sahib explained that other Arabian tribes that aided the Meccans to attack the Muslims did not sign any peace treaties with the Muslims. The Muslims were, therefore, left with no choice but to fight and defeat these tribes who wanted to destroy Islam. He very convincingly portrayed the fluid situation

at this stage in Islamic history. He explained the coming of the Imam Mehdi and told the audience that the Mehdi had come in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Imam Sahib quoted the true concept of Jihad from the Promised Messiah's writings, accompanied by corresponding verses from the Holy Quran.

Imam Sahib's address was followed by a question and answer session. The audience was riveted by this lecture. The feedback I received from those in attendance was very positive. The book *World Peace and Jihad* was made available to the audience along with other literature. There were 38 people in attendance and approximately 10 of those were professors from the History and Philosophy Department.

*(Reported by: Nasir Bajwa)*

# Atrocities Against Ahmadies In Bangladesh

According to reports in the Bangladesh news media including The Independent, The Daily Star, Bangladesh Today, News from Bangladesh and the BBC Bangla Service, some fanatic members of the Jamaat-e-Islami led by their Imam and Madrassa students attacked the Ahmadiyya mosque in the village of Raghunathpurbag on October 31, 2003. They ransacked the mosque and inflicted grave injuries to seventeen members of our Jamaat. The president and Imam of the mosque, Mohammad Shah Alam succumbed to his injuries, while being transported to the hospital. The Jamaat-e-Islami is notorious for launching similar attacks. Currently, there is complete pandemonium in the village, as many members of the Jamaat were forced to flee from their village and take refuge with relatives in other neighboring villages.

On November 21, 2003 during the month of Ramazan, the Majlis Khatme- Nabuwat took out a procession of about 500

people and attacked the Ahmadi mosque in Nakhhalpara. The police foiled the bid to capture the mosque. On Jumatul Wida, the procession again attacked the mosque and declared that since Ahmadies are not Muslims, they do not have a right to build a mosque, and thus forcibly tried to occupy the mosque again. They attacked the policemen guarding the mosque and injured at least 50 people, including 18 law enforcers.

In December 2003, the anti-Ahmadiyya zealots demonstrated against the Jamaat again and gave the government a one-week ultimatum to declare the Ahmadies non-Muslims. This time, several thousand were present at the hate-filled rally in Tejgaon in which the demonstrators threatened to either burn down or take over the Ahmadiyya mosque in Nakhhalpara and vowed to bring the country to a standstill if their demands are not met.

Earlier, in 1992 Ahmadi mosques in Khulna, Dhaka and Rajshahi were also attacked.

Again in 1998, three Ahmadi mosques in Rangotia village in Sherpur, Gaibandha and Mongla in Khulna were targeted. Yet again in 1999, a mosque in Khulna was attacked, leaving seven people dead and twenty-eight injured. The recent incidents are not solitary incidents but are part of a regular, sinister pattern of intimidation and atrocities against members of Jamaat Ahmadiyya. Bangladesh has been a peaceful and tolerant country but a handful of *Mullahs* are bent upon tarnishing the good image of Bangladesh in the world.

The State Minister for Religious Affairs, Mr Mosharef Hosain Shajahan rejected the demand of the fanatic elements for declaring the Ahmadies as non-Muslims.

Mr Tareq Mobasser, a spokesman for Jamaat Ahmadiyya Bangladesh, has said that the Ahmadies are grateful to the government for the protection it gave them but police protection is not a permanent solution. The problem should be resolved to

the core. He has requested the government to identify the instigators of violence, otherwise the situation will spiral out of control.

By preaching hatred for Ahmadies, the fanatic elements in Bangladesh are following a blueprint carried out to deadly effect in Pakistan since 1974. A similar situation in Pakistan, instigated by the same fanatic elements, resulted in Ahmadies being declared non-Muslims by the government of Zulfiqar Ali

Bhutto in 1974. This constitutional amendment led to unparalleled violence and atrocities against Jamaat Ahmadiyya in Pakistan. In 1984, the laws of Pakistan were changed to make the actual practice of the Ahmadi faith criminal. To date, Ahmadies in Pakistan are being subjected to the worst form of state sponsored persecution. If the anti-Ahmadiyya groups are allowed to continue their agitations and threats, Bangladesh will soon slide down the treach-

erous path that Pakistan took three decades ago.

Members of the Jamaat are requested to kindly remember their Ahmadi brothers in

Bangladesh in special prayers, that may Allah protect and safeguard them from the grave atrocities been committed against them. Let us pray that the government of Bangladesh is able to counter these attacks on Ahmadis and suppress the evil intentions of the religious bigots. Ameen. ❧

## Achievements

*Editors, Ahmadiyya Gazette and Alnoor USA offer their warmest congratulations to the following members of USA Jamaat for their respective achievements. May Allah bless their good deeds and may these achievements encourage others to excel in good works as well. Amin.*

**Dr. Nusrat Sharif** of Queens, New York Jamaat has received the Kirkland Research Award for Lupus (an autoimmune disease), in the Hospital for Special Surgery. Researchers from three institutions entered the competition and three out of a total of twenty researchers were to receive the award. By the Grace of Allah, she was the only one from her institution to win this award.

**Ms. Tahira Tayyab**, the

Daughter of Faheem Ahmad & Farhat Jahan of Virginia Jamaat, has finished the first reading of the Holy Quran at the age of five and a half. May Allah make this a blessing for her and also for others. Tahira is a Waqf-Nau and has started her kindergarten this year.

**Ms. Adeela Nasreen**, a Nasirah, of Washington DC Jamaat won NAHMA's (National Affordable Housing Management Association) 2003 Drug Free Kid Calendar Contest. Out of

over 100 local winners nationwide, Adeela's poster was chosen for NAHMA's 2004 Drug Free Calendar! Adeela was awarded \$1000 worth of U.S. Saving Bonds as educational scholarship. It is worth mentioning that the message of Adeela's poster was "Love for All, Hatred for None"

**Ms. Tahira Ammar** the daughter of Mr. Ammar Bin Abbas of Baltimore Jamaat finished the first reading of the Holy Quran during Ramadanul Mubarak last year. Tahira is seven years old. It is worth noting that she started and finished the reading in a record 4 months time. Maulana Mukhtar Cheema Sahib conducted the Ameen Ceremony at the Baltimore Mission House. ❧



## AHMADIYYA MUSLIM JAMA'AT, USA 2004 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 4	Sunday	Review of Last year activities and Future Plans	Local*
Jan. 17-18	Sat-Sun	Tabligh Class 1 (Southeast)	Regional
Jan. 17-18	Sat-Sun	Ansarullah Leadership Conference	National
February: The whole month is established as the special month for Tabligh.			
February 1	Sunday	<b>Eidul-Adhia***</b>	
February 7	Saturday	1 <sup>st</sup> National Aamla Meeting at Baitur Rahman	National
Feb. 22	Sunday	Musleh Mau'ood Day (Historical Feb. 20)	Local/Regional
March 21	Sunday	Masih-e-Mau'ood Day (Historical March 23)	Local/Regional
March 27	Saturday	2 <sup>nd</sup> National Aamla Meeting at Baitur Rahman	National
April 3	Saturday	Ahmadiyya Conference for Entrepreneurs MKA	
April 3-4	Sat-Sun	Tabligh Class 2 (Northeast)	Regional
April 9-11	Fri-Sun	Tarbiyyati Train the Trainer Class at Queens (NY)	National
April 23-25	Fri-Sun	National Majlis-i-Shura at Baitur Rahman	
May 15	Saturday	Taleemul Quran Class 1 at Old Bridge, NJ	East Coast
May 16	Sunday	Taleemul Quran Class 2 at Queens, NY	East Coast
May 22	Saturday	3 <sup>rd</sup> National Aamla Meeting at Baitur Rahman	National
May 30	Sunday	Khilafat Day (Historical May 27)	Local/Regional
June 5-6	Sat-Sun	Tabligh Class 3 (Head Quarters)	Regional
June 25-27	Fri-Sun	<b>Jalsa Salana, USA</b>	National
July 2-4	Fri-Sun	<b>Jalsa Salana Canada</b> at Toronto (expected)	Canada
July 9-23	Fri-Fri	Tabligh and Tarbiyyati Class at Baitur Rahman	National

July 30/ Aug. 1	Fri-Sun	Jalsa Salana UK (expected)	UK
July 30/ Aug 5	Fri-Thurs	Special Regional Atfaal Camp at Baitur Rahman	MD
Aug 6-8	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Khuddamul Ahmadiyya	National
Aug 13-15	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Lajna & Nasirat at Baitur Rahman, MD	East Coast
Aug 20-22	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Lajna & Nasirat at Baitul Jamaay, Chicago	Midwest
Aug. 28	Saturday	Taleemul Quran Class 3 at Bay Point, Pittsburgh, CA	N. West Coast
Aug. 29	Sunday	Taleemul Quran Class 4 at Chino, California	S. West Coast
Sept.3-5	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Lajna & Nasirat at Baitul Hameed, LA	West Coast
Sept. 3-5	Fri-Sun	Ijtema Lajna & Nasirat at Baitus Samee, Houston	South Region
Sept. 4	Saturday	4 <sup>th</sup> National Aamla Meeting at Baitur Rahman	National
Sept 4-6	Sat-Mon	Local Jama'ats' Officials Conference at NHQ	National
Sept. 12	Sunday	Seeratun-Nabi Day**	Regional*
Sept. 26	Sunday	Taleemul Quran Class 5	Local
Oct. 1-3	Fri-Sun	Lajna National Majlis-e-Aamila & Local Presidents' Meeting	
Oct. 8-10	Fri-Sun	Ansarullah Ijtema & Shura at Baitur Rahman	National
Oct. 16	Saturday	<b>First Day of Ramadanul Mubarak</b> (Fasting)***	
Oct. 30-31	Sat-Sun	Tabligh Class 4 (Southwest)	Regional
Nov. 14	Sunday	<b>EIDUL FITR***</b>	
Nov. 20	Saturday	5 <sup>th</sup> National Aamla Meeting at Baitur Rahman	National
Nov. 28	Sunday	Religious Founders' Day	Regional
Dec. 11-12	Sat-Sun	Taleemul Quran Class 6 at Houston, TX	South
Dec. 24-26	Fri-Sun	Jalsa West Coast at Los Angeles	West-Coast

**4 Tabligh Classes - Regional**

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| (1) Southeast | January 17-18 |
| (2) Northeast | April 3-4     |
| (3) NHQ       | June 5-6      |
| (4) Southwest | October 30-31 |

**Regional Tarbiyyati Classes**

- Dates to be announced in consultation with host Jama'ats.
- Train the Trainer Class      April 9-11

**6 Taleemul Quran Classes - Regional**

- |                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| (1) East Coast (New Jersey)   | May 15         |
| (2) East Coast (New York)     | May 16         |
| (3) N. West Coast (Pittsburg) | August 28      |
| (4) S. West Coast (Chino)     | August 29      |
| (5) Local                     | Sept. 26       |
| (6) South (Houston)           | December 11-12 |

**4 Lajna Ijtemas - Regional**

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| (1) East Coast | August 13-15  |
| (2) Midwest    | August 20-22  |
| (3) West Coast | September 3-5 |
| (4) South      | September 3-5 |

\* Dates for Local/Regional events can be changed for Local/Regional needs. As a routine, Local functions can be held on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month while Regional functions can be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. Reports should be sent to the Headquarters,

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

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

*Bismillah-hir-Raman-nir-Raheem*

## **Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat, USA, College Scholarship**

(Including Talent-based scholarship, need-based scholarship, educational loan)

A limited number of scholarships/loans are available for Ahmadi students of US Jama'ats to support college education. The goals of this scholarship are as follows:

1. Recognize educational talent amongst Ahmadi students.
2. Encourage and promote pursuit of education among Ahmadi youth, especially amongst whom pursuit of education may be perceived as prohibitively expensive.
3. Make a valid attempt to ensure that an Ahmadi is not kept from achieving his/her laudable educational and career goals due to financial hardship.
4. To encourage more challenging educational endeavors amongst Ahmadi youth that they would normally not consider due to financial constraints.

Kindly send the completed application, through the local President or Regional Missionary, along with the required documents to:

Secretary Scholarship Committee, Bait-ur-Rahman, 15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Springs, MD 20905.

Email: scholarship\_committee@yahoo.com (all inquiries are also to be directed to this address).

### **Dates and Deadlines**

Deadline for **receipt** of the application is May 31, 2004 (no exceptions please). Please allow adequate time for mail. It will be appreciated and is strongly recommended to send the application earlier.

The application will be acknowledged within two weeks of its receipt by email or regular mail. If the applicant has not received any acknowledgment kindly contact us by mail or email.

Kindly follow all instructions and consult the checklist to ensure that all required documents are included. Incomplete information may result in your application not being considered for the current year.

Candidates will be notified between July 15 and August 1 of the decision.

### **Scholarship amount and period.**

Scholarships will be awarded for one year for a maximum amount of \$5000 (\$2500 per semester). This will be paid in two installments of \$2500 for each semester. If the applicant is attending only one semester this year then the maximum amount of scholarship will be \$2500. The maximum amount of scholarship will not exceed the expenses itemized in the application or \$5000 whichever is lower.

### **Scholarship Review Process**

Applications will be scored anonymously on merit, financial need and the personal statement. Talent based scholarships will be solely awarded on merit. 50% of the remaining will be distributed as educational grants and the rest as interest free educational loan (*qarz-e-hasana*), payable upon successful employment. Candidate must contact scholarship committee at the start of employment to set up a schedule for repayment. This is important since this amount is subsequently recycled in the form of scholarships or loans.

### **Scholarship award process**

The amount for fall semester will be sent after August 1, and that for spring semester will be mailed after January 1. To receive the amount for the spring semester, following need to be received by Dec. 1:

1. Itemized statement of (with copies of receipts) as to where the previous semester's amount was spent.
2. Accumulative grade point average (GPA) for the fall semester or a letter from the academic advisor/supervisor attesting to the student's good standing.
3. Confirmation of acceptance in the spring semester.

If the scholarship is for a summer semester, one can only apply a year in advance and please communicate with us clearly that you are requesting the amount for summer semester.

*Bismillah-hir-Raman-nir-Raheem***APPLICATION FOR AHMADIYYA SCHOLARSHIP***Assalamo Alaikum.*

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to be of service to you. Kindly complete each section. **Please Print clearly.** Carefully follow all instructions included with each section. Incomplete or illegible application will result in delay that could lead to rejection of your application. Kindly help us by providing complete information by May 31, 2004. You are encouraged to send the application early.

Applicants applying only for Talent based scholarships, need not answer the questions on income and dependents in Section C. However, by filling this section, their application will automatically be considered for need-based scholarships or loans also.

Please check here if you are applying for Talent based scholarships only ☐

**Section A: Your details**

1. Your name .....
2. Your membership code ..... 3. Your Social Security No. ....
4. Your Father's/Parent's name .....
5. Your Address: .....  
City..... State ..... Zip Code .....
- 6 Your email address ..... 7. Your Phone No. ....
8. Name and address of Educational Institution. ....  
City ..... State ..... Zip Code .....
9. Name of Degree/diploma..... 10. Duration of degree .....

**Instructions for Section A.**

- Line 1. Please print, first, middle and last name.
- Line 2. Please write your US Jama'at member code. If not available, please apply for one immediately and obtain before May 31. However, do not wait to get the code before sending application.
- Line 3. Please write your social security number. If not available please write N.A.
- Line 4. Please write the name of the parent who is head of your household. If you live on your own, simply write the name of your father.
- Line 5. Please write your address where the check is to be mailed. Please notify us of any changes.
- Line 6. Please write your email address where we can communicate with you.
- Line 7. Please write your telephone no. where we can reach you. Please notify us of any changes.
- Line 8. Please write the name of the college you are planning to attend. If this is pending, then write PENDING. However, this information will be needed before the scholarship can be paid to you.
- Line 9. Please write the name of the degree/diploma you are admitted to. If this is pending then write PENDING. However, this information will be needed before the scholarship can be paid to you.
- Line 10. Please write the expected duration of the degree/diploma in months starting from the current year.

**Section B: Your (candidate's) Attestation and Signature**

I attest I am an Ahmadi Muslim. All information in this application is true to the best of my knowledge

Signature .....

Date .....

**Section C: President or Regional Missionary's Recommendation**

Please have this section completed by your local Jamaat President. If you do not live in a chapter, please have the Regional Missionary fill this section out.

1. Is the applicant an Ahmadi with a member Code YES..... NO ..... Code pending .....
2. Applicant is in good standing with Jamaat, YES ..... NO .....
3. Member has reasonable participation in Jamaat activities YES ..... NO .....
4. Applicant is reasonably needy YES ..... NO .....
5. Recommended YES ..... NO .....
6. Comments .....

.....  
 .....

President/Regional Missionary's Signature .....

President/Regional Missionary's Name .....

Name of Chapter/Region ..... Date .....

**Instructions for Section C (For President/Regional Missionary).**

- Line 1. Please check yes or no in the appropriate column. If the member code is not available then please immediately apply for one and check pending. Membership code will be needed before May 31 for the application to be considered, however the application should be sent to the committee anyway.
- Line 2. Please check yes or no in the appropriate column.
- Line 3. Presidents/Missionaries are strongly urged to seek input of local Qaid/Lajna President and, if applicable, the chanda paying status of the applicant. However, lack of any one of these alone should not result in the disapproval of the application.
- Line 4. Please check yes or no per your reasonable overview of the applicants financial status. This is only applicable if the application is for need-based scholarship/loan. Checking 'No' does not disqualify the applicant from Talent based scholarship.
- Line 5. Please check whether you are recommending or not recommending the application.
- Line 6. Please write comments explaining any item you have answered as 'NO'.

Presidents/Missionaries are requested to send the application directly to the scholarship committee after completing their section

**Section D: Financial Need**

1. Amount of scholarship applied for (Max. \$5000/yr./\$2500 per semester) \$.....
2. Itemized estimated need:
  - a) Tuition/fees \$ .....
  - b) Books and supplies \$ .....
  - c) Lodging and transportation \$ .....
  - d) Health Insurance \$ ..... TOTAL \$ .....
3. Amount expected from alternate sources (please do not include loans)
  - a) Personal funds \$ .....
  - b) Other scholarships \$ .....
  - c) Other grants \$ ..... TOTAL \$ .....
4. Are you dependent on your parents? YES ..... NO ..... Partially .....
5. Are you currently working? YES ..... NO .....
6. What is your/your household income bracket for the last tax year?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$25000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25001 to \$36000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$36001 to \$48000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$48001 to \$61000
<input type="checkbox"/> (\$61000 to \$74000)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$74001 to \$86000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$86001 to \$99000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$99001 to \$111000
<input type="checkbox"/> More than \$111000.			
- 7 Total number of persons dependent on this income .....
8. Total number of persons in this household, who are supported by this income who will be college students for this year. ....

**Instructions for Section D**

- Line 1. Please write the amount of scholarship/loan you are applying for (max. as noted before).
- Line 2. Please delineate to the best of your knowledge an estimate of these expenses. These are the valid categories of educational expenses for which you can use the scholarship amount.
- Line 3. Please list other sources you have explored and are available to you. Please do not list any loans. Please do not answer questions on line 4 through 8 if you are applying for a talent-based scholarship only. If you fill in this information you will automatically be considered for a need-based scholarship/loan.
- Line 4. Please check yes/no whether you are financially dependent on your parents. If you do not live with your parents but receive some financial assistance from them, then check 'partially' (living away simply to attend college is excluded and counted as living with parents).
- Line 5. Please check if you are currently working to support yourself.
- Line 6. Please check the appropriate box for income. This figure should be the same as filed in the household's Federal Tax Form 1040 as the total gross income. You are not required to attach the tax form. Include your income if you are still financially dependent on your parents and working. Do not include your parents' income if you are only partially dependent on them, but only include the estimated financial assistance you receive from them plus your personal income.
- Line 7. Please write the total number of dependents for the income listed in line 6.
- Line 8. Please put in the number of people whose college education is wholly or partially supported by the income in 6. If a dependent's college education is totally supported by other scholarships or grants, please do not include them here.



**Section E: Personal Statement**

Please write a personal statement of up to 150 words addressing the following items (you may write it on a separate piece of paper).

1. Your educational and career goals?
2. The reasons for your choice of your educational and career goals?
3. The way the current course will help you achieve your educational and career goal?
4. The alternate sources of funding (other than loans) you explored and the result of your efforts?

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**Section F: Your Educational Achievements**

Please attach supporting documents for each item. Please send original sealed transcripts for GPA scores. Xerox copies are acceptable for other items. Items 1 and 2 apply to all applicants. Item 3 is only for Talent based scholarships.

1. What was your GPA for the last semester? .....
2. What was your SAT score? .....
3. On a separate page please list all outstanding achievements, prizes, merit scholarships. Attach all supporting documents. (Only if you wish to be considered for talent based scholarship).

**Section G: Checklist**

- ☐ All sections have been filled appropriately and completely
- ☐ Section B has been signed and dated.
- ☐ Recommendation has been obtained in Section C.
- ☐ Letter/proof of acceptance to an educational institution has been attached.
- ☐ Previous GPA has been sent.
- ☐ SAT score has been sent.
- ☐ You have made a copy of the completed application for your own records.
- ☐ You have written to Huzoor (Ata) requesting prayers.

Congratulations! You have successfully completed the application. You can now give it to your President/Missionary to be mailed to the following address. *Jazakumullah*. May Allah bless you with success in your educational and career goals!

Secretary, Scholarship Committee  
Ahmadiyya Muslim Community  
Bait-ur-Rahman Mosque  
15000 Good Hope Road  
Silver Springs, MD 20905