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The Ahmadiyya

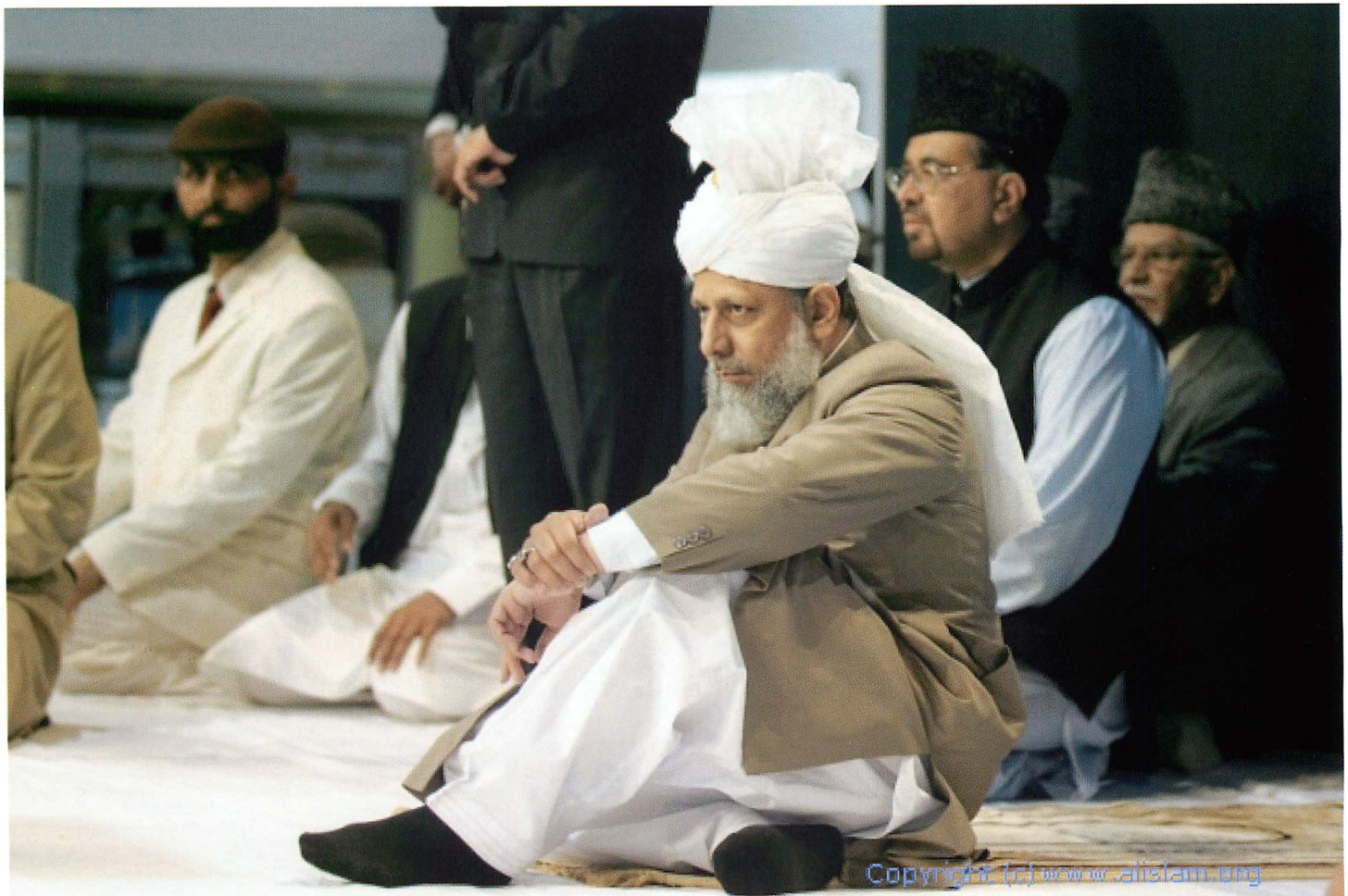
July 2005

Gazette

USA



Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^(aba)



Canada 2005- A few scenes from the visit of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba)

An educational and spiritual monthly publication

Ahmadiyya Gazette USA

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July 2005

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Ahmadiyya Gazette USA

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Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

saw:	sallallahu alaihi wasallam (Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him)
as:	alahissalam (Peace be upon him)
ra:	radhi allah hu 'anhu (May Allah be pleased with him/her)
rh:	rahimahullahu ta'ala (May Allah shower mercy on him/her)
aba:	ayyada hullah ta'ala binasrihil aziz (May Allah strengthen him with His mighty help)
swt:	subhana wa ta'ala (Holy and Exalted)

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Al-Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an describes the righteous Muslims as:

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ۝
 وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۗ وَ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ
 يُوقِنُونَ ۝

Who believe in the unseen and observe Prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them; And who believe in that which has been revealed to thee, and that which was revealed before thee, and they have firm faith in what is *yet* to come. (2:4-5)

Al-Hadith

The Holy Prophet ^ﷺ says:

مَنْ صَلَّى صَلَاتِنَا وَاسْتَقْبَلَ قِبْلَتَنَا وَ أَكَلَ ذَبِيحَتَنَا فَذَلِكَ الْمُسْلِمُ الَّذِي
 لَهُ ذِمَّةُ اللَّهِ وَ ذِمَّةُ رَسُولِهِ فَلَا تُخْفِرُوا اللَّهَ فِي ذِمَّتِهِ -

Whoever offers his Prayers as we do, and turns his face to the *Qibla* to which we turn our faces and partakes of our *Dhabeeha* is surely a Muslim who is under the protection of Allah and His Messenger; Therefore, violate not the guarantee granted by Allāh.

(Bukhari, Vol. 1, Bab Fadl Istiqbalul Qiblati)

Imam Abu Hanifa says:

"Whoever intends to enter the fold of Islam, let him solemnly declare and believe that there is none worthy of worship but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger. If he does this, he is surely a Muslim even if he is unaware of the fundamental injunctions of Islam."

(Commentary of the *Fiqh-e-Akbar* by Imam Abu Mansur Muhammad Bin Muhammad Hanifa, p 34)

Sayings of the Promised Messiah^{as}

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi^{as} writes:

"Without a doubt the causes of *Jihad* do not exist in this country (India) in these days. Therefore, the Muslims of this country are today forbidden to fight in the name of religion and to slaughter those who reject the Islamic Law. God Almighty has clearly forbidden *Jihad* by sword in a time of peace and security."

(*Tohfah Golarviyyah*, p 82)

"Striving in the cause of Allah, which is designated *Jihad*, is a doctrine the philosophy of which needs to be clearly understood. Failure of its appreciation has caused many people in the middle centuries of Islam, and in this our own age, to entertain serious misconceptions concerning it, which has rendered the teachings of Islam open to the criticism of its opponents, whereas Islam is a holy religion which is a mirror of the law of nature and manifests the glory of God."

(*British Government and Jihad*, p 1)

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi^{as} said the following in reply to a Christian priest who had accused Islam of being a religion of violence and *Jihad* by the sword:

"We should know that the Holy Qur'an does not command fighting without reason. But commands to fight only those who prevent God's people from accepting faith, and from following God's commandments, and offering worship, and the Qur'an commands to fight with those who fight with Muslims for no reason, turn the faithful out of their homes and countries, convert people with use of force, and want to destroy the religion of Islam, and prevent people from accepting Islam. The wrath of God is on such people, and it is mandatory for the faithful to fight with them if they do not desist."

(*Noorul Haq*, p 63)

**A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE FRIDAY SERMON
OF
HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V^{aba}**

DELIVERED ON JUNE 10, 2005

The Beauty of a Mosque Lies in its Worshippers

*Every Ahmadi should be Full of Love for Allah, Averse to
Shirk, and Regular in His Worship*

On 10th June 2005, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} delivered the Friday Sermon at Vancouver, Canada.

After reciting verses 128-129 of *Surah Al-Baqarah*, Hazoor said: Tomorrow, *Insha Allah*, the foundation of your mosque shall be laid, which has been planned for a long time, but there were some obstacles in the way. By the grace of Allah, these obstacles have now been removed.

Hazoor said: The true beauty of our mosques lies in the worshippers. The prayers and supplications offered by Hadhrat Ibrahim^{as} and Hadhrat Isma'il^{as} while building the House of Allah, are the same supplications that form the foundation of our mosques. These have been mentioned in the verses that I have recited, and are translated as follows:

"And *remember the time* when Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House, *praying*, 'Our Lord, accept *this* from us; for Thou art the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing; (2:128)

'Our Lord, make both of us submissive to Thee and *make* of our offspring a people submissive to Thee. And show us our ways of worship and turn to us with mercy; for Thou art Oft-Returning *with compassion*, and Merciful." (2:129)

Likewise we pray: O Allah, accept this meager offering on our part and accept the prayers of Hadhrat Ibrahim^{as} and Hadhrat Isma'il^{as} in our favor. O Allah, let our future generations also be full of people who worship Thee, and enable us and our progeny always to repent of our sins

and turn to Thee. O Allah, let us always worship Thee and let us always hold on to Thy gift of Khilafat.

Hazoor said: When all Ahmadies take part in the construction of mosques with these prayers and with pure hearts, and when every Ahmadi adorns these mosques with his worship and righteous deeds, Allah shall continue to reward them abundantly, as He has promised,

Hazoor said: We are indeed fortunate that Allah has enabled us to accept the Promised Messiah^{as}. But if we do not bring about a pure change in ourselves and do not bring our Prayers up to the standards, which have been set by our predecessors, our faith will be of no avail to us. Remember, faith demands complete submission to the teachings of the Prophets, for salvation cannot come about by mere words.

Hazoor said: The Promised Messiah^{as} wants to see every Ahmadi at the level where his heart is full of love for Allah and repulsion for every kind of *Shirk*, He should be one who acts upon all Divine injunctions, tries to reach the highest level of worship and suppresses all egotistic tendencies. Only when we have attained this standard, can we truly become the flourishing branches of the tree, which springs from the person of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Hazoor said: Each of us should enter a mosque with the sole purpose of worshipping One Allah and to learn good things and to act upon what we have learned and spread these teachings to others. When we do this we shall inherit Divine blessings.

In the end Hazoor prayed: May Allah enable us to attain the heights at which the Promised Messiah^{as} wants to see us, and may He enable us to carry the Promised Messiah's^{as} mission further and further. May we never do anything for which he has expressed repulsion. May our every word and deed make us heirs to the prayers of the Promised Messiah^{as}. *Ameen*

Ch. Hameedullah
Wakil A'la,
Tahrik -e-Jadid Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan,
Rabwah.

**A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE FRIDAY SERMON
OF
HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V^{aba}**

DELIVERED ON JUNE 17, 2005

**Mosques are a Symbol of the Divine Unity: They should
be founded on *Taqwa***

***Taqwa* means to act upon Allah's commandments with
His love and fear in one's heart**

On 17th June 2005, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} delivered the Friday Sermon at Calgary, Canada.

After reciting verse 19 of *Surah Al-Jinn*, which is translated as follows:

And *all* places of worship belong to Allah; so call not on anyone beside Allah.

Hazoor said: It is in accordance with this teaching that Jama'at Ahmadiyya builds mosques and worships in them. Our mosques are, and should be, the symbol of Divine Unity (*Tauhid*). After a long time Allah has enabled you in Calgary to build a mosque whose foundation will be laid tomorrow—*Insha' Allah*. Those who have promised to help in its construction should quickly redeem their pledges.

Hazoor said: Mosques should be built on the basis of *Taqwa*, and we should live our lives while remaining steadfast upon *Taqwa*. Our mosques should teach us to obey Allah's commandments. Our aim in building mosques should be to receive Allah's pleasure and approbation, and also to receive the gift mentioned in the *Hadith* in which the Holy Prophet^{saw} says:

"Whoever builds a mosque seeking the pleasure of Allah, Allah shall likewise build for him a house in paradise."

The aim, which every Ahmadi should have in mind, should be to seek Allah's pleasure and to excel one another in virtue. We should show the same examples of excelling in virtue and piety as were shown by those before us. When it comes to building the house of Allah, we have to base it on *Taqwa* and make sacrifices for it. Allah has greatly favored Jama'at

Ahmadiyya with hearts that are steadfast upon *Taqwa* and are imbibed with the spirit of sacrifice and seeking the pleasure of Allah.

Hazoor said: An Ahmadi should always remember that if we continue to fulfill our obligations to Allah and to our fellow creatures, He shall be pleased with us and we shall inherit the heavenly paradise.

Hazoor said: Mosques are the gardens of paradise. You are fortunate to be planting such a garden in your midst. While this garden should benefit you with all its joys and its fruit, it should also be a source of attraction for other people.

Hazoor said: Only such mosques are worthy of being called 'places of worship' as are built on *Taqwa*. *Taqwa* means to obey Allah's commandments while loving Him and fearing Him. Allah's commandments relate to His worship as well as to our obligations to our fellow creatures. Therefore, while every Ahmadi tries to raise his standard of worship and to fulfill his obligations to his Creator, he must also give due consideration to his obligations to society. Only then can we claim that we truly adhere to *Taqwa*. If you exhibit the higher morals and progress in worship, you will become of those whom Allah loves.

Hazoor went on to read some extracts from the Promised Messiah^{as} and prayed that may Allah enable us to tread the paths of *Taqwa* in the light of these teachings. May we keep raising our standards of worship and continue to make progress in righteousness. May the pleasure of Allah always be our aim and objective. May it be so. *Ameen*

(Iflikhar Ali Qureshi)

Acting Wakil A'la,

Tahrik-e- Jadid Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan, Rabwah.

**The 57th Jalsa Salana USA will Insha-Allah be Held from
September 2 to September 4, 2005
at the Dulles Expo Center.**

**4368 Chantilly Center
Chantilly, VA 20153**

<http://www.dullesexpo.com/>

**A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE FRIDAY SERMON
OF
HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V^{aba}**

DELIVERED ON JUNE 24, 2005

**Bring About a Pure Change in Yourselves and Become an
Example for Others to Follow**

**Set High Standards in *Taqwa*, Human Sympathy, Kindness,
Mutual love and in the Higher Morals**

On 24th June 2005, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} delivered the Friday Sermon in Toronto, Canada.

Hazoor said: By the grace of Allah, the Jalsa Salana of Jama'at Ahmadiyya Canada begins today with this Friday Sermon. The Promised Messiah^{as} says that the true purpose of these Jalsas is that the members of our Jama'at should bring about such a change in themselves that their hearts should become completely inclined towards the hereafter, they should fear Allah and should become exemplars for other people because of their piety, *Taqwa*, kindness, mutual love and brotherhood; they should be endowed with the qualities of humility, modesty and righteousness, and they should embark upon their spiritual mission with a renewed zeal.

Hazoor said: We should all analyze ourselves to see if we have truly brought about these changes in ourselves or are even trying to do so. Are the standards of our mutual love and brotherhood such as the Promised Messiah^{as} expects from us? Are we doing our best to preach the Unity of Allah?

Hazoor said: How is it possible that a person should claim to love Allah and yet he should be negligent of his Prayers! It has been made incumbent upon us that we must offer our Prayers at their appointed time, and every Ahmadi should safeguard his Prayers in this regard. If you claim to believe in the Unity of Allah, you have to raise the levels of your worship and attend to your Prayers. If you want to protect your sons and daughters from the pollution of the society around you, you have to make them regular in their Prayers. The *Satan* is there to hinder you at every step and you have to make a *Jihad* against him by supplicating to Allah and by being vigilant with regard to your Prayers.

The Promised Messiah^{as} has said that we should become an example for other people by our kindness, mutual love and brotherhood. Today everyone should make a determination that he is going to bring about these pure changes in himself. Embrace those with whom you are angry and let bygones be bygones. Forget each other's excesses, so that your worship becomes acceptable to Allah. Make a pledge, therefore, that you are going to set great examples of righteousness that you are going to forgive the wrongs of others and are going to do away with all detestations and bitterness for the sake of Allah.

Hazoor said: In reverence to the wishes of the Promised Messiah^{as}, you should become a Jama'at which worships Allah and fulfils its obligations to His creatures. The Promised Messiah^{as} says: Let it be known to all those who have entered into the *Bai'at* of allegiance with me, that the purpose of *Bai'at* is to chill the love of the world and that the love of our Gracious Lord and that of the Holy Prophet^{saw} should assume dominance over one's heart, and that one should become so estranged (from worldly desires) that the prospect of the journey to the Hereafter should not seem at all abhorrent.

Hazoor said: Each and every one of us can be considered part of the Jama'at of the Promised Messiah^{as} only when we love Allah, adopt the higher morals and fulfill our obligations to His creatures; and while we try to scale the heights of *Taqwa*, we should also do our best to shun the evils that we have been warned against.

Hazoor said: Let this Jalsa become a sign of the pious changes you have brought about in yourselves, and prove to the world that you are the servants of the same *Imam* who was destined to bring about a holy transformation in the world and to set examples of virtue and piety. Make a pledge today that, *Insha Allah* you shall not allow these changes to die away. May Allah enable all of us to do so. *Ameen*

(Ch. Hameedullah)

Wakil A'la,

Tahrik-e- Jadid Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan, Rabwah.

وَجَاهِدْهُمْ بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا ۝

And strive against them with it (*The Qur'an*) a great striving (25:53)

HADHRAT ABU SUFYAN^{ra} IN THE COURT OF HERACLES, THE ROMAN EMPEROR

Hadhrat Ibn 'Abbas^{ra} relates that Hadhrat Abu Sufyan^{ra} stated this to him: "During the days that the *Hudaibiyyah* treaty was signed between us and the Holy Prophet^{saw}, I went to Syria on a business trip. I was still in Syria when a letter from the Holy Prophet^{saw} reached Heracles, the Roman Emperor. The letter was brought by Dahyatul Kalbi who sent it to Heracles through the ruler of Basra. When the letter reached Heracles, he asked his people, 'Is there anyone here from the people of the Arab who claims to be a Prophet?' They said, 'Yes.' Thus, along with the party of Quraish, I was also called to see Heracles. When we arrived in the royal court of Heracles, we were made to sit facing Heracles. Heracles asked: 'Is anyone here a near-relative of the Arab who claims to be a Prophet?' Hadhrat Abu Sufyan^{ra} says that he responded, 'I am his near-relative.' Thus, the organizers seated me right in front of Heracles, while the rest of the members of the group were seated behind me. Heracles called an interpreter and told him to tell the people sitting behind me that he will ask Abu Sufyan^{ra} about the Arab who has claimed to be a Prophet. If he tells a lie, you let me know through a gesture that he is telling a lie. Abu Sufyan^{ra} said, 'By God! If I was not scared that the people, sitting behind me would let Heracles know that I am telling a lie, I definitely would have told lies. Anyway, Heracles asked through his interpreter, 'What is the lineage of your Messenger?' Hadhrat Abu Sufyan^{ra} says that he responded, 'He belongs to a very noble family.' Then Heracles asked, 'Has there been any king in his forefathers?' I told him, 'No.' Then he asked, 'Did you ever notice him telling a lie before claiming to be a Messenger?' I replied, 'No.' Then he asked, 'Did the rich and the powerful accept his claim or the poor?' I replied, 'The poor and the weak have accepted his claim.' Then he asked, 'Are his followers increasing or decreasing in number?' I replied, 'They are increasing.' Then he asked, 'Did anyone renounce after becoming a Muslim considering it a bad religion?' I replied, 'No.' Then he asked, 'Did you ever fight a battle with him? I told him, 'Yes.' He asked, 'What was the result of the battle?' I responded, 'Sometimes they had the upper hand and the other times we had the upper hand. Sometimes we were successful while other times they were successful.' Then he asked, 'Did he ever break an agreement or deal treacherously?' I said, 'Until now he has neither broken an agreement nor has dealt treacherously. However, we have just entered in a treaty with him, and I don't know how he will behave regarding the treaty.' Hadhrat Abu Sufyan^{ra} said, 'By God! Throughout the conversation, except this last statement, I did not get any chance to say anything against the Holy Prophet^{saw}. Then he asked, 'Did anyone else make such a claim before him in his people?' I replied, 'No.'

The king told his interpreter to tell me the following: 'When I asked you about the lineage of the claimant of the Prophethood, you stated that he belongs to a very noble family. Messengers always belong to noble families. I asked you if there has been a king in his forefathers? You responded no. From this, I concluded that had there been a king in

his forefathers, he might be desirous of regaining the kingdom of his forefathers. I asked you about his followers, whether they are rich and powerful? You replied they are weak and poor. In the beginning, always the poor and weak accept the Messengers. I asked you, Did you ever blame him for telling a lie before he claimed to be a Prophet? You said, 'No.' I was convinced that the one who does not tell a lie to the people how can he tell a lie about God? Then I asked you, Did any one of his followers apostatize after accepting Islam due to disliking Islam? You said, 'No.' This is the case with a true faith. When someone accepts a faith with clarity of mind, it is very difficult for him to turn away from that faith. I asked you, Whether they are increasing or decreasing in number? You said, 'They are increasing in number and also in steadfastness.' This is always the case with true faiths. I asked you, Did you ever fight a battle with him? You said, 'We have fought several battles. Sometimes they had the upper hand in the battle and other times we had the upper hand. Sometimes we were successful while the other times they were successful.' This is the case with the Messengers of God. In the beginning, they went through many trials but ultimately they were triumphant. I asked you, did he ever break an agreement or deal treacherously? You said, 'No.' Such is the high status of the Prophets. They never break an agreement. Then I asked, Did anyone among your people claim to be a Prophet before him? You said, 'No.' From this, I concluded that since there had not been a Prophet in his people he is not imitating anyone. Hadhrat Abu Sufyan^{ra} said that then, Heracles asked him, 'What did he (i.e. the Holy Prophet^{saw}) command you to do?' I said, 'He commanded us to observe Prayer, pay Zakat, strengthen the ties of kinship, tell the truth, be pious and chaste.' Hearing this Heracles said, 'If everything you have told is true, then definitely he is a Prophet. I was expecting the coming of a Prophet. However, I did not know that the Prophet would be commissioned in your people. Had the circumstances permitted me, I certainly would have gone to see this Prophet. Had I visited him, I would have washed his feet. The Kingdom of this Prophet will reach the land where I stand.' Hadhrat Abu Sufyan^{ra} said, 'Heracles asked for the letter of the Holy Prophet^{saw} in which the following was written: "I begin with the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. This letter is from the Prophet of Allah, Muhammad^{saw}, to the King of Rome, Heracles. Peace be upon him who follows the true guidance. I invite you to accept Islam. Accept Islam to be at peace. If you accept Islam you will have double the reward from God. However, if you reject it and do not accept me then you will bear the sins of all the inhabitants of Rome." In the letter the following was also written:

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ
 بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ - إِلَى
 فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ

'O People of the Book! come to a word equal between us and you --- that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partner with Him, and that some of us take no others for Lords besides Allah.' But if they turn away, then say, 'Bear witness that we have submitted to God.' (3:65)

When Heracles finished reading the letter, the people in the court became very agitated and started to speculate widely. Therefore, the King ordered us to leave the court and we were made to leave the court. After coming out of the court I said to my companions, 'Ibn Abi Kabsha (i.e. the Holy Prophet^{saw}) has excelled drastically in status. What a high status he has that even King of Rome fears him.' So I was convinced that the Holy Prophet^{saw} would definitely succeed. At last, God Almighty made me also accept Isla-m.

Hadhrat Imam Zahri^{ra}, the narrator of this tradition relates: "When Heracles received the letter of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, he made thorough inquiry about the situation, and then called his cabinet to the court and said, 'O Leaders of the Nation! If you wish to be successful and rightly guided, and you wish that your government remains established, then you should accept this Prophet.' After hearing this, the courtiers rushed toward the doors like wild asses run when they are scared. However, the doors were closed. Heracles asked them to come back and said, 'I was testing the firmness of your belief in your religion. Now I know how firmly you are attached to your religious beliefs.' Hearing this, all the court members prostrated to the king and became happy with the king."

(Bukhari kitabut Tafsir surah Ali Imran qul ya ahlal kitabi ta' alau ila kalimah)

(Hadiqatussalihin, pp 52 - 60)

(Translated by Karimullah Zirvi)

RELIGION

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi^{as} has defined religion as follows:

"The religion of a man is the way of life he adopts for himself. Everybody must have a religion. Even the person who does not believe in the existence of God has to adopt a way of life and that way is his religion. But of course, what one should ponder over is whether the way he has adopted is the one that gives him sincere steadfastness, eternal joy and unending contentment.

Behold! Religion is a very common word. Literally, it means a walkway or a path. The word 'Religion' does not necessarily connote religion. The experts in various branches of knowledge - sciences, arts, archeology, chemistry and astrology - have a religion of their own. None can be without it. It is a must for man; one can not be without religion. Just as the soul of a man stands in need of a body and the interpretations need words and a mode of talking, the same way, man is in need of religion.

I do not want to go into a discussion of what people say to the one they worship: Whether they say Allah or God or Premeshar. Give Him any name you like, but let me know what do you think of Him? What are His attributes in your mind? It is the 'attributes of God' which matter the most, and these are what one should ponder over."

(Malfoozat Vol. II, p 236)

THE HOLY PROPHET'S^{saw} KIND TREATMENT OF HIS WIVES

Bilal Atkinson

(Speech delivered by Mr. Bilal Atkinson, Regional Ameer, North East Region, U.K. on July 30, 2005 at the UK Convention.)

The topic I shall attempt to address concerns the Holy Prophet Muhammad's^{saw} domestic life with special reference to the character of his relationship with all his wives, and the kindness he displayed towards all of them. However, before I embark on this wondrous journey depicting love kindness and respect, I should spend a little time explaining some of the background and historical points in relation to the Holy Prophet's^{saw} marriages. The Holy Qur'an says:

O Prophet! We have made lawful to thee thy wives whom thou hast paid their dowries, and those whom thy right hand pos-

sesses from among those whom Allah has given thee as gains of war, and the daughters of thy paternal uncle, and the daughters of thy paternal aunts, and the daughters of thy maternal uncle, and the daughters of thy maternal aunts who have emigrated with thee and any other believing woman if she offers herself (for marriage) to the Prophet provided the Prophet desires to marry her: this (provision) is only for thee, as against (other) believers – We have already made known what We have enjoined on them concerning their wives and those whom their right hands possess – in order that there may be no difficulty for thee (in the discharge of thy work). And Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful. (33:51)

This verse of the Holy Qur'an refers to three kinds of women whom the Holy

Prophet^{saw} could marry in addition to his already wedded wives:

Women who were taken prisoner in wars against Islam; women who had migrated to Medina with the Holy Prophet^{saw}, and women who offered themselves willingly for marriage to him. These special allowances clearly demonstrate that the Holy Prophet's^{saw} marriages were motivated by pure considerations other than the sensual gratification that his ignorant and mischievous critics try to depict. Those who had left their homes for the sake of Islam and those widows whose husbands had been killed in wars fighting in defence of or even against Islam had special claim on the Holy Prophet's^{saw} generosity, kindness and consideration. It is in view of these considerations that he married most of his wives.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} was twenty-five years old when he married Khadijah^{ra}, who was forty years old and had been twice widowed, and had her own children. In making his own decision Muhammad^{saw} must have been principally influenced by the kindly treatment Khadijah^{ra} had accorded him while he worked for her, and the good impression her other qualities had made upon him. It is true Khadijah^{ra} willingly placed all her resources at her husband's disposal, such was her respect, affection and trust for her husband and he in turn distributed the greater part of her goods and property among the poor, the needy and the afflicted. He also freed all her slaves.

He thus voluntarily chose a life of poverty for himself and his wife, and this speaks highly of Khadijah's^{ra} deep affection for her husband and of her lofty character that she accepted his choice cheerfully.

The marriage, despite the disparity in age and affluence, proved a very happy one. Khadijah^{ra} bore Muhammad^{saw} several children: of these, the sons died in in-

fancy, but the daughters grew to womanhood and in due course married. When at home Muhammad^{saw} occupied himself, as was his practice, in helping with the household tasks and taking care of his wife and children.

Muhammad^{saw} was a loving and affectionate husband, showing tender regard and consideration for Khadijah^{ra}; she, on her part, was so devoted a wife that when, fifteen years after their marriage, her husband received the Divine Call, she responded to it immediately and was a constant source of comfort and support to him throughout the remaining ten years of their life together. Many years later Muhammad^{saw} used to look back to this period of his life with fond remembrance.

For twenty-five years, and in the prime of his life, the Holy Prophet^{saw} had observed strict monogamy in his marriage with Hadhrat Khadijah^{ra} and for twenty-five years he was her faithful, loving husband. Only when she died, after twenty five years of marriage, when he was already more than fifty years old and now

with the enormous task of spreading God's word to mankind did he marry again and more than once. During the latter part of his life after the death of his beloved wife Hadhrat Khadijah^{ra}, the Holy Prophet^{saw} married eleven times intermittently.

After Hadhrat Khadijah's^{ra} death he married Hadhrat Saudah^{ra}, a pious widow of advanced age. He married all his other wives, between 2 and 7 years after migration. A critical period when he was constantly engaged in active fighting and his life was perpetually endangered and the fate of Islam itself hung in the balance.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} also married Hadhrat Aisha^{ra}, the daughter of his closest friend, Hadhrat Abu Bakr^{ra}. Her youthfulness and intelligence ensured that the Holy Prophet's^{saw} demonstration of Islam and traditions were accurately reflected long after his death and from close quarters as an example for all mankind.

He married Hadhrat Hafsa^{ra} whose husband was killed in the Battle of Badr and Hadhrat Zainab

bint Khuzaimah^{ra} whose husband was killed in the Battle of Uhad. He married Hadhrat Ummi Salamah^{ra}, the widow of one of his beloved Companions, who had been left with several children to look after. It is worthy of note that Muslims liberated a hundred families of the Bani Mustaliq when the Holy Prophet^{saw} married Hadhrat Juwairiyah^{ra}. He married Hadhrat Zainab bint Jahsh^{ra}, the divorced wife of Zaid^{ra} 5 years after migration, as he wished to soothe her wounded feelings as the respected lady had felt deeply humiliated at being divorced by Zaid^{ra}. He also married Hadhrat Ummi Habibah^{ra}, daughter of Hadhrat Abu Sufyan^{ra}, who was widowed (in exile in Abyssinia). He married another widow, Hadhrat Safiyya^{ra}, seeking union with and pacification of her tribe.

It is recorded that another widowed lady by the name of Maimunah^{ra}, proposed herself to be taken in marriage by the Holy Prophet^{saw}, which he accepted gracefully in the interest of the education and training of Muslim women.

Lastly, he married Hadhrat Mariah^{ra} 7 years after migration and thus by raising a freed slave girl to the highly eminent spiritual status of the 'Mother of the Faithful', he gave a deathblow to slavery. These were the pious and righteous motives of this noble Prophet^{saw} in marrying widows and divorced women - who were by no means noted for their youth or beauty.

After this point the Holy Prophet^{saw} lived for about three years as virtual ruler of the whole of Arabia when all the comforts and amenities of life were at his disposal and yet he entered into no further marriage. Does not this fact alone establish the honesty and sincerity of the Holy Prophet's^{saw} motives in marrying his wives? Each of these marriages had a social, merciful or political reason, for he wanted through the women he married to honour pious women, or to establish marriage relations with other clans and tribes for the purpose of opening the way for the propagation of Islam. With the sole exception of

Hadhra Aisha^{ra}, he married women who were neither virgins nor young.

The words from the verse I have quoted earlier - '*if she offers herself (in marriage) to the Prophet*' - have been taken as specially referring to Hadhrat Maimunah^{ra} who is reported to have offered herself to be taken into marriage by the Holy Prophet^{saw}. The clause, '*This (provision) is only for thee as against other believers,*' means that it was a special privilege of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and was due to the special nature of his duties as a Divine Prophet. The clause may also refer to the special permission granted to the Holy Prophet^{saw} to retain all his wives, after the commandment was revealed limiting to four the number of wives allowed to Muslims at one time. It states:

And if you fear that you, (the society), may fail to do justice in matters concerning orphans (in the aftermath of war) then marry women of your choice, two or three or four. And if you fear you will

not deal justly, then (marry only) one or what your right hands possess. That is the nearest way for you to avoid injustice. (4:4)

In Islam the purpose of marriage is that the parties concerned may be enabled to lead their lives at the highest level of righteousness. Islam does not permit self-indulgence in marriage and forbids unchaste behaviour. A Muslim who fails to uphold that standard in marriage, whether monogamous or polygamous, falls short of that which is required of him. As regards treatment of wives the Holy Qur'an states:

And consort with them in kindness; and if you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing wherein Allah has placed much good. (4:20)

These words of the Holy Qur'an are brief, but contain every detail of how to make married life a success in every way. The stress has been laid on men's duty to be kind to

their wives and it signifies that the husband's treatment of his wife should not only be extremely kind and affectionate, but also of a type that is liked and respected by everyone concerned.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} emphasizes that a husband should make it his habit to overlook the trivial faults of his wife and not to fuss over any minor mistakes on her part.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} has also said, *'No believer should ever bear a grudge against his wife because of an imperfection of hers, for if she has an imperfection, she has some lovable virtues also which please him.'* (Muslim – Book of Marriages)

There is a Tradition of the Holy Prophet^{saw} to the effect that nothing pleases Satan more than a husband and wife quarrelling with each other. He further said on one occasion that there were some people who exhibited great eagerness for getting married, but when they brought their wives to their homes, they neither cared to provide for their sustenance nor for their comfort. He said that it was the duty of the husband to

look after the needs of his wife and to be kind to her.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} has laid so great a stress on the importance of cordial relations between man and his wife that once he said: *'If a believer puts a morsel in the mouth of his wife out of love, Allah will reward him for it, because it is an act which will please his wife who would feel that her husband loved her dearly.'* (Bukhari & Muslim)

The Holy Prophet^{saw} attached great importance to a husband's kind treatment of his wife. He observed, that after belief in God and in His Prophet and in His Faith, the deeds of a man in respect of his treatment of God's servants shall be subject to Divine scrutiny. The kind treatment of a wife holds a place of high priority, so much so that in the eyes of God the best of Muslims is the one who is best in the treatment of his wife. The Holy Prophet's^{saw} advice on this point is an excellent illustration of this fact. He said:

'The best among you is he who is the best in his treatment of his wife and I am the best of you in the

treatment of my family.' (Tirmirdhi)

The Holy Prophet^{saw}, as is true of every aspect of his life, is incomparable in his treatment of his wives. Under Divine guidance, he has shown us how to promote and preserve happy and cordial relations between man and wife. He has laid down golden rules, which, if followed, would serve as principles against all forms of marital discord.

Unfortunately the Western criticism of Islamic marriage values is based upon a total misconception of the spirit of kindness and fairness that Islam tries to inculcate and which did the Holy Prophet^{saw} demonstrate.

Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan^{ra} writes in response to these criticisms:

"..there are unfortunately many among the Muslims (nowadays) who fall short of the standard that Islam prescribes (and the Holy Prophet^{saw} exemplified) in this respect (of marriage). .. It is unfair to ascribe the (marital) shortcomings of such Muslims to Islam, as it would be

(equally unfair) to ascribe the vicious immorality that is unfortunately so prevalent in the West today to Christianity.

"..Islam insists upon chastity and the upholding of moral and spiritual values (within marriage) as against the Western preference for nominal monogamy and unchecked promiscuity." (Muhammad – Seal of the Prophets p.61)

No man has ever been as kind and courteous to his wives as the Holy Prophet^{saw}. He used to help his wives in their household chores such as kneading flour for bread, fetching water, kindling the fire for cooking, patching his own clothes and cobbling his own shoes. He would milk his own goats and would tie his camel and look after it personally. No work was too low for him. In person he would do shopping, not only for his own household but also for his neighbours and the helpless. He never despised any form of work, however humble it may have been.

Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} narrates that the Holy Prophet^{saw}

helped her in the daily household chores, all this over and above his duties to the whole of mankind as a Prophet of God. He mended his own clothes and shoes, went himself to fetch water for his use and would never seek help in these matters. This aspect of his character impressed his companions immensely.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} is reported to have said:

'The most perfect in faith amongst you is he who is most courteous, and the best among you is he who is best in the treatment of his wife, the more a man is good to his wife the greater shall be his value before Allah.' (Tirmidhi – Book of Marriages)

It was a habit of the Holy Prophet^{saw} to joke and laugh with his wives within the bounds of decency. Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} has reported that once when the Holy Prophet^{saw} returned from the battle of Tabuk or Hunain, he observed a curtain that hung over a niche in the wall. A gust of wind removed the curtain from

over the niche and exposed her dolls placed inside. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said 'Whose are these dolls?' She replied that they were hers. Among them was a two-winged horse about which he said, 'Do horses ever have wings?' And she replied 'Well! I thought you knew Solomon's horses were winged ones.' At this the Holy Prophet^{saw} burst into a hearty laugh. (Abu Daud Book 41 No.4914)

Again, Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} has also reported, 'I once accompanied the Holy Prophet^{saw} on one of his journeys. On the way we stopped and in a jovial mood we both competed in a short race which I won. But a few years later when I had gained weight, the Holy Prophet^{saw} had a race with me again and easily beat me, and then said, 'This settles the debt I owed you!' (Abu Daud)

The Holy Prophet^{saw} was so careful concerning the sentiments of women that on one occasion when he was leading the prayers he heard the cry of a child and concluded the service quickly, explaining thereafter that as he had heard the cry of the child he imagined

that the child's mother would be distressed. He therefore concluded the service quickly so that the mother could attend to the child.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} was so careful with regard to the kind treatment of women that those around him who had not previously been accustomed to consulting with women over important matters found it difficult to improve themselves to the standards that the Prophet^{saw} was anxious to see established and maintained.

Hadhrat Umar^{ra} relates: 'My wife occasionally sought to intervene in my affairs with her counsel and I would rebuke her, saying that the Arabs had never permitted their women to intervene in their affairs. She would retort: 'That is all past. The Holy Prophet^{saw} lets his wives counsel him in his affairs and he does not stop them. Why don't you follow his example?' (Bukhari)

The Holy Prophet^{saw} not only consulted his Companions in most matters, but was keen for them to also seek the advice of their women, as

he was aware that Almighty God had not limited knowledge and wisdom to men only. For example, during the negotiations of the Treaty of Hudaibya the Holy Prophet^{saw} made the point of consulting his wife Hadhrat Ummi Salama^{ra}, who gave her opinion, fully aware that the Prophet^{saw} did not need her advice. He thus illustrated his equal regard for the opinion of men and women. In doing this he taught us an important social lesson in that we should learn that there is nothing wrong in exchanging ideas with our wives on such important matters.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} was so conscious of the feelings and sentiments of women that he always exhorted those men who had to go upon a journey to finish their errands quickly and return home as soon as possible so that their wives and children should not suffer separation longer than was necessary. Whenever he returned from a journey he always came home during the daytime. If he found night time approaching towards the end of his journey, he would camp outside

Medina for the night and enter it next morning. He also told his Companions that when they returned from a journey they should not come home suddenly without giving notice of their return (*Bukhari & Muslim*).

Once Hadhrat Safiyah^{ra}, a wife of the Holy Prophet^{saw} was travelling with the Holy Prophet^{saw}. She used to wrap herself in a sheet and sit behind him on the camel's back. Whenever she had to mount the camel, the Holy Prophet^{saw} offered his knee for her to step on.

Once the camel on which the Holy Prophet^{saw} and Hadhrat Safiyah^{ra} were riding, slipped and they both fell down. A Companion, Hadhrat Abu Talha^{ra}, ran towards the Holy Prophet^{saw} to offer assistance but the Prophet^{saw} of God directed him to go to the aid of the lady first. (*Bukhari – Book of Jihad*)

On one occasion the Holy Prophet^{saw} was on a journey when women, including some of his wives,

were also in the party. At one stage the camel drivers, fearing they were late, began to drive the camels fast. The Prophet^{saw} admonished them: *'Mind the crystal'* meaning that they should have due regard to the comfort of the women. (*Muslim – Book of Excellences*)

His reference to the women as 'crystal' implied that women are precious and delicate. On another occasion he explained that a woman is by her nature like a rib. You can straighten it out with persistent gentleness, but if you try to straighten it out suddenly, you are likely to break it. (*Muslim – Book of Prophets*)

Continuing with this analogy, the actual curve of the rib provides the greatest protection for the heart and lungs contained within and to straighten them would be detrimental.

It is narrated that once Hadhrat Safiyah^{ra} (one of the wives of the Holy Prophet^{saw}) was found weeping and the Holy Prophet^{saw} enquired of the cause of her weeping. She said:

'Hafsah said to me that I was a daughter of a Jew'. (Tirmidhi - Book of Traditions)

On this, the Holy Prophet^{saw} asked Hadhrat Hafsah^{ra} to fear Allah and then said to Hadhrat Safiyah^{ra}: *'You are the daughter of a Prophet; Your uncle was also a Prophet. You are the wife of a Prophet. What excellence can Hafsah have over you?'* (*Tirmidhi - Book of Excellences*)

Once Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} and Hadhrat Hafsah^{ra} together addressed Hadhrat Safiyah^{ra}: *'We are occupying a position of superior dignity with the Holy Prophet^{saw} because we are not only his wives but also his cousins'*. Hadhrat Safiyah^{ra} resented this and complained to the Holy Prophet^{saw} who remarked: *'Why did you not say your relationship was with three Prophets of God. Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw} was my husband, Prophet Aaron^{as} was my father and Prophet Moses^{as} was my uncle'* (*Tirmidhi – Book of Excellences*)

Although there are reports of Hadhrat Aisha^{ra}

and some of his other wives losing their temper with him, never once has it been recorded that the Holy Prophet^{saw} reacted in the same way. He was never known to have addressed them harshly as other men are prone to do. He was extremely kind and fair towards his wives. If on occasion any one of them failed to comport herself with due deference towards him he merely smiled and passed the matter over.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} said to Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} one day: *'Aisha, whenever you are upset with me I always get to know it.'* Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} enquired: *'How is that?'* He^{saw} said: *'I have noticed that when you are pleased with me in the course of conversation you have to refer to God, you refer to Him as the Lord of Muhammad. But if you are not pleased with me, you refer to Him as the Lord of Ibrahim.'* (Bukhari V.7 Book 62 No.155)

Hadhrat Muawiya al-Qushairi^{ra} relates:

'I enquired of the Holy

Prophet^{saw} what claim my wife had upon me? He replied: 'Feed her with that which God bestows upon you in the way of food, and clothe her with that which God bestows upon you in the way of clothes and do not chastise her nor abuse her nor put her out of your house.' (Abu Daud – Book of Marriages)

There were certain special directions for the wives of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, which set forth the ideal of good behaviour and should be emulated by all believing women. As regards the standard of life prescribed in the Holy Qur'an for the wives of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. He was commanded:

O Prophet! Say to thy wives: 'If you desire the life of this world and its adornment, come then, I will provide for you and send you away in a handsome manner.

But if you desire Allah and His Messenger and the Home of the Hereafter, then truly Allah has prepared for those of you who do good a great reward. (33:29-30)

Thus the standard of marital status of a Muslim

man and woman is set up so high that on one hand the husband's treatment of his wife is declared to be a measure of his moral excellence in the eyes of God and on the other hand the fulfilment of a wife's duty to her husband is declared to be mandatory to win the pleasure of God.

It is to this high standard of the sacrifice of material benefits and of an affluent lifestyle, to which these verses of the Holy Qur'an refer. The companionship of the Holy Prophet^{saw} demanded this sacrifice, and his wives had to make a choice between a comfortable life or his companionship, and it should be said to their credit that they chose his companionship rather than considering individual material gains

If any one of them had elected to part company with him, it would have entailed no displeasure of God, on the contrary she would have been handsomely provided materially.

The Prophet^{saw} treated his wives with equality and

kindness; he had no jewelery or fancy clothes to please his wives, but he had a most tender and loving heart. The treatment of his wives and their respect for him shows conclusively that the object of his marriages was anything but self-indulgence. Even as master of Arabia he led an abstemious life. But for all his sobriety in regard to worldly goods, he was ever anxious to raise the status of women in his community and society.

Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} has reported that her great husband^{saw} had remarked many a time that *'The best of you is he who is good to his wife, and women are like pleasing roses.'* According to a report from Abdullah bin Umar^{ra}, the Holy Prophet^{saw} had declared: *'the whole world is a thing to be made use of and the best thing in the world is a virtuous wife.'* (Ibni Maja – Book of Marriages)

In this regard Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} also relates:

'Once while I was plying the spinning wheel and the Holy Prophet^{saw} was sit-

ting near me mending his shoes. I noticed that his forehead was covered with drops of sweat, which appeared to be emitting a light whose lustre increased as I watched them. I was greatly amazed and the Holy Prophet^{saw} looked up. He looked at me and enquired. 'Oh Aisha! What has amazed you?' and I replied, 'O Prophet of Allah! In the drops of perspiration on your forehead I am noticing a lovely and sparkling light. By Allah! If Abu Kabeer Hazli had seen you, his verses would fit you admirably.' The Holy Prophet^{saw} said, *'Do you remember the verses?' I said, 'Yes' and recited the following couplet:*

'He is untainted with the defilement of childbirth and suckling; and if you look at his resplendent face you will witness a radiant, luminous flash of lightning playing thereon.'

Hearing this the Holy Prophet^{saw} dropped what he was holding in his hand, stepped forward and kissed her forehead and said, *'The pleasure you gave me by what you have said has, I believe, far exceeded the ecstasy of delight which the*

sight of the drops of my sweat have given you.' (Rahmatul-lil-'Alameen: Vol.2, p153).

There are many illustrations of the profound love and devotion of the Holy Prophet's^{saw} wives.

One incident relates to his wife Hadhrat Maimunah^{ra}. 'She met the Prophet^{saw} for the first time in a tent in the desert. If their marital relations had been coarse, if the Prophet^{saw} had preferred some wives to others because of their physical charms, Hadhrat Maimunah^{ra} would not have cherished her first meeting with the Holy Prophet^{saw} as a great memory. If her marriage with the Prophet^{saw} had been associated with unpleasant or indifferent memories, she would have forgotten everything about it. Hadhrat Maimunah^{ra} lived long after the Prophet's^{saw} death. She died full of years but could not forget what her marriage with the Prophet^{saw} had meant for her.

On the eve of her death at the age of eighty years,

when the delights of the flesh are forgotten, when things only of lasting value and virtue move the heart, she asked to be buried at one day's journey from Mecca at the very same spot where the Prophet^{saw} had camped on his return to Medina, and where she had first met him. The world knows of many stories of love both real and fiction, but few which are as wholesomely moving as this.' (Taken from the five volume English commentary of the Holy Qur'an by Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Uddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra}, Volume 1 page clxiv-clxv)

Even in the final days of the Holy Prophet's^{saw} life, he was ever mindful of his kindness to his wives and their sensibilities. With the consent of his other wives, he decided to remain in Hadhrat Aisha's^{ra} room during his final illness as he had no strength to visit them individually in each of their rooms. All his wives agreed and the Messenger spent his last days in Hadhrat Aisha's^{ra} room.

He respected and honored the rights of his wives even under the most severe

conditions. This was the Messenger of God..

Because of his generosity and kindness each of his wives thought that she was his most beloved. The idea that any man could show absolute equality and complete fairness in his relationship with nine women seems impossible. For this reason, the Holy Prophet^{saw} asked God's forgiveness for any unintentional favoritism he may have committed. He would pray:

'I may have unintentionally shown more love to one of them than the others and this would have been injustice. So, O Lord, I take refuge in Your grace for those things which are beyond my power.' Tirmidhi 'Nikah' 41/4 Bukhari 'Adab'68)

The Holy Prophet^{saw} treated members of his family with utmost kindness. However, He never forgot his first wife, Hadhrat Khadijah^{ra}, who was also the first to accept him as Prophet. He was a loving father and a loving husband. But above all, he was a servant of God. All his

love was for God. His entire household followed his example faithfully. They denied themselves the pleasures of this world and shared all the hardships of the Prophet's^{saw} life. Upon his demise he left no property, no gold, nor cash for his family, but he did leave a priceless key.... a set of Islamic teachings to help unlock the gates of Paradise for all mankind.

The Holy Prophet's^{saw} kindness to his wives is an invaluable example and tradition perfectly demonstrated for all men to follow, and proves that the emancipation of women came not in the twentieth century but at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and the religion of Islam, as bestowed by Almighty God.

All verses and translations of the Holy Qur'an have been taken from the English translation of the Holy Qur'an by the late Maulawi Sher Ali^{ra} published with alternative translation of, and footnotes to some of the verses by Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmadth Fourth successor of the Promised Messiah^{as} and under the auspices of Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba}, Fifth Successor of the Promised Messiah (as) and Supreme Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. – (Islam International Publications Ltd. 2004)

WASIYYAT

“It is my ardent desire that in year 2008 on the centenary of the establishment of Khilafat in Jama’at Ahmadiyya (Insha Allah), there should be at least 50% of the subscribers (Chanda paying) from among the earning member of every Jama’at of every country of the World who would have joined in this grand system of Hadhrat Promised Messiah^{as} and would have arisen to such high standards of spirituality and sacrifices. This would be a modest offer to Allah the Almighty in thankfulness, which Jama’at would be offering on the occasion of the centenary of Khilafat.”

*Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih
V^{aba}*

Annoucement

Rishta Naata (Matrimonial Affairs)

The department of Rishta Naata requires two pieces of information from families to assist in identifying/facilitating a good match. These are:

- 1) Profile of an Applicant
- 2) One page resume of an Applicant

Those who are interested and need help with regards to rishta naata are encouraged to contact:

Abdul Shukoor Ahmed
Rishta Naata (Matrimonial Affairs)
Secretary

301-219-0923
rndepartment@yahoo.com
240 465 0396 fax

The department will either e-mail/fax/mail required forms.

Association Ahmadiyya Muslim Scientists, USA

Respected Ameer Sahib has approved holding election of the office holders of the Association Ahmadiyya Muslim Scientists, USA (AAMS-USA) at the time of Jalsa Salana 2005. This election will be held immediately after the conclusion of the Jalsa program on Friday, September 2, 2005. Location will be announced during the Jalsa session.

**To obtain further information please send e-mail to undersigned at:
president@aams-usa.org.**

Dr. Wajeeh Bajwa
President
AAMS-USA

UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN IN THE WESTERN SOCIETY

Lutf ur Rehman. Nashville, TN

The upbringing and care of the next generation is a biological instinct that exists in most animals and human beings. But it is the human child who requires the most care and nurturing for the longest period of time to become a useful and productive member of society. All parents try to discharge this duty at least to some extent. Even when parents themselves are less than perfect they have a strong desire for their children to do better. Not only do they want their children to succeed in materialistic terms but also in their faith. Unfortunately this desire does not always become a reality.

Let me define the problem in more detail. Becoming a well-trained successful adult can mean different things to different people. Any child who goes through his or her childhood without any major incident and does reasonably well in school, is able to get a job in their adult life, and is able to support themselves and their family can

be considered a success. In fact this is what most people in this country would consider success. We see that the system is geared to produce large masses of average students many of whom do not go to college. They train for certain skills and find a job, a spouse and begin to settle in their lives. From the stand point of this system a success has occurred. Whether that person has achieved his full potential, or where he stands morally and spiritually is none of their concern. Whether he has any connection with his parents, siblings or family is a non-issue. As long as he causes no disruption in society, then all is well.

The children of most immigrants, especially those from Asia do exceedingly well in their education and are well suited for high quality jobs in this country. This is not what concerns me. There is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of our children will become educated, respectable and productive members of so-

ciety. The problem seems to be that our next generation is at a high risk of drifting away from us in this sea of irreligion and materialism. They are at a risk of breaking ties with our family and friends. They form irreversible bonds with this society and in a matter of time are drowned and are lost forever. In my mind this is the real problem. If we think that this is not a problem, then that is the problem.

In Islamic ideology, every child is born innocent and has a clean slate. It is the parents and society who make this child into whatever he becomes. Once again I stress two factors that shape the future of the child: parents and society. For us as a small Muslim minority, society is of no help. In fact it is a negative force. Therefore our task as parents becomes much more difficult. Not only do we have to do our part, but we also have to work against the constant negative pressure of society. Only if we are able to

shield our children from the negative messages of this social set up will there be some hope.

We are all familiar with computers to some extent. A computer is like a child. It has a clean slate. Then we put an operating system on this computer. We are very careful in choosing the operating system, as we know that this will determine what sort of software this computer can accept in the future. Then we load the computer with desirable software. We go to great lengths to check the authenticity of this software and refuse to expose the computer to untested and uncertified programs. After all this we still want to protect it more. As soon as we expose our computer to the outside world with an Internet connection, we install a virus protection program and a firewall to protect our computer from the bad influences out there. We all know that even after all this, sometimes the computer will crash. But this does not stop us from trying our best to protect it. If only we made this much effort with our children!

When our children are born we celebrate the arrival of this new "computer", but most of us forget that

we need to install an operating system before it will run useful software. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} said that children should not be exposed to the influences of the outside world for the first six or seven years of their life. This is the time when we are installing an operating system on this clean slate. Any outside interference will corrupt the operating system and cause system malfunction. But what really happens? Parents are very busy. It is difficult to tend to a child constantly. An easy way out is television. I have seen many two or three year olds sitting in front of the TV for hours at a time. Television in this country is a pipeline dumping filth in our homes, and we gladly put our children right in its way. Far more Ahmadies have cable TV or Satellite Channels in their homes than MTA. Most don't even realize the value of MTA and others make excuses. Well, it is the question of our children's future! Maybe we are the ones who don't want to watch MTA and are more interested in other programs. Some say that their children don't understand Urdu. If both parents (those who speak Urdu) would communicate in Urdu in their homes their children would understand.

No child is born with skills in the English language. They all learn it. And they all will learn it. This is the medium of communication in this country. We don't have to worry about it. Often it is fathers, who for some inferiority complex of their own start talking to their one and two year olds in English. Let us look into our own souls. Maybe we are not convinced that the Urdu language has any benefits. Let me draw your attention to the fact that this is the language of the Messiah and the Prophet of this age. All his writings and all his teachings are in this language. We may not like it, but it is a fact. So if we are eliminating this language from the programming of our children, we can be sure that they will run on second-rate programs in the future. It may be a lifetime before complete translations of the works of the Promised Messiah^{as} will become available. That is why it is so important for all of us whether Urdu-speaking or not to try and learn Urdu and teach our children. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah says that the believers know the "Book" i.e. Holy Qur'an as well as they know their sons. So what are we doing to equip our children to know the writings and teachings of the Promised

Messiah^{as}?

There are many instances where children are enrolled in a "Pre-Kindergarten" at the age of three or four. The ubiquitous institution of Pre-Kindergarten in this country is not the result of some scientific advancement in the upbringing of children. It is basically a sophisticated baby-sitting service for the children of working, and many times single mothers. If our mothers are not working, they should consider spending time with their children in their homes. There is no merit in underage school. They should work only in case of extreme necessity. This critical time in the programming of their children should not be squandered outside the home working for others. Work for your own children instead of working for others. Fathers should work harder to meet the needs of their families. Needs should be better defined and separated from luxuries. A two-bedroom house will meet the need of a family of four, five or more, but will need a smaller mortgage payment. A second-hand car can do the same job as an expensive SUV.

Another curse in this so-

ciety is the lack of respect shown to elders. This damage is done early with the help of television cartoons. There are entire channels dedicated to this destruction. We can prevent this by not exposing them to television. Remember, television is an instrument of indoctrination of this society. Do something about it. Teach your children to respect their parents, teachers, elders, Prophets and religious leaders. Unfortunately it is all too common to see a three or four year old, slapping their parents in rage with no rebuke. This is no way of programming the computer. Why would he not learn this behavior and use it in the future? Let us tell our children that this life is given to us by God to serve others. The dictum of this society that "it is my life" is wrong. We should lead by example and spend our lives in the service of others such as our parents, relatives and the Jama'at.

Someone asked the Promised Messiah^{as} about his views regarding the education of females. This is how he replied to this question:

"In the traditions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} it is said that to seek knowledge is incumbent upon every Mus-

lim man and woman." I will first talk about men. To indulge in an effort to acquire the knowledge of contemporary sciences before developing an understanding of the principals of Islam and its attributes is exceedingly dangerous. If young children are not made aware of their Faith and are taught the school courses then this teaching will become a part of their being. The result could only be that they would walk away from Islam. Only a few will convert to Christianity as their doctrine of Trinity, Atonement and belief in a man as God is so absurd that no intelligent person can accept it. But Atheism is a real possibility. Therefore it is incumbent that religious philosophy must be taught from day one. Modern teachings have not done any good to men in terms of their Faith, so what can we expect from women? I am not against educating women. In fact I run a school for this purpose. But I deem it necessary to first secure the citadel of Faith to protect against the false persuasions."

Around six or seven years of age another critical period starts in the life of the child. Now is the time to provide software for this computer. As with a critical

matter, enroll your child in the best possible school that you can afford. This does not have to be a private school, but each day we as parents have to interact with our child and see what he is learning in school. We should constantly monitor the new software which is being installed in our child by the school. Since we live in a society whose values are very different from ours, this is also the time for inculcating our Islamic values and way of life into our child. Allah has provided guidance for this training. First and foremost is *Salat*. We must establish *Salat* in our lives. The only way to do this is by way of example. Lectures and speeches have no effect on children. They have not been programmed yet to understand them, but they will readily follow an example. Therefore, *Salat* in congregation, led by the father is the only sure way to instill this habit in children. Special importance should be given to Friday Prayers. The Friday sermons of Hazoor should become an important and regular event in our lives. The entire family should sit together and very carefully listen to the sermon and then discuss the main features among themselves. The Friday sermon of Hazoor is telecast on

MTA at least six times on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. It is constantly available on the Internet. Yes, this takes effort, but would we rather have our child indoctrinated by others? There are customs and rituals which are commonplace in this society which we as Muslims find objectionable for our children. They start receiving invitations for birthday parties' right from the beginning of the school year. They are exciting. Children love Chucky Cheese and other such places. Take them to these places, but not on birthdays. Talk to them. Tell them that we are different from most people around us in terms of our values and practices. We do not celebrate birthdays. We don't want to be willing participants in their indoctrination rituals. We should keep our eyes wide open. There will be many more ditches coming our way. The curse of the sleep-over is designed to gradually get children out of their houses. Never let your child sleep over. There is no value in this. If children can spare this much time, bring them to Jama'at activities such as *Ijlas* and meetings. Unfortunately there are many who spend far more time and effort in socializing and interacting with non-Muslims and non-

Ahmadies than they spend on Jama'at activities. Remember your computer will perform only on the basis of installed programs. If Faith and Family is not installed the computer will never recognize those commands!!

An empty mind is the devil's workshop. Keep children busy with constructive activities. Reading is good, but be aware of what your child is reading. Schools push indecent novels as part of their reading programs. If a child is learning a foreign language in school, surely he can learn Urdu at home. Use his free time for such instruction.

Choose your child's friends. Do not let him near the "bad apples". Know his interests. Encourage him to play individual sports. Peer pressure can be a problem in team sports. Do not send children to overnight school trips. If you have to, then accompany them on the trip. Stay with them. It is your child. So take care of him. Would anyone leave his or her money out on the street?

During this time, i.e. from age six to twelve, also start religious education at home. A reading of the

Holy Qur'an should be the first step. Other information about the basic tenets of Islam should also be taught. Programming of the human computer is a slow and tedious process, but by the age of twelve it is almost complete. Amazingly, by this age most children don't show any signs of going astray. It is from this time that the fruits of our efforts will start to come to light gradually. Unfortunately, it is also during these teen years when the first symptoms of trouble appear, and then parents really get alarmed. They start trying aggressive methods of quick programming of this old computer. But as experience has shown, hitting or cursing does not solve the operating system problems and software problems of a computer. Unlike our desktops, children, once programmed are irreversible. We cannot reboot them. The results of our twelve years of programming will be laid out right before our eyes. And in the light of Qur'anic teaching we should work hard and pray that these results will be soothing for our eyes.

As with our desktops, children also need virus protection and it can only be provided with prayer. Despite our best efforts, our

children will come across situations that may lead to disaster. Wailing and crying before God in the middle of the night will protect our children from these dangers. There is no better virus protection program available out there.

All of this effort should not be done as dry, hard work, which keeps us from the enjoying our lives. An abundance of love should be given to the child each day, and his trust should be earned. Expensive toys, excessive material possessions, comforts, and tasty meals do not do it; otherwise the children of the poor would never do well. Often it is the children who were raised in scarcity who tend to turn out better.

Many of us try very hard in the early years of our children to conform to the norms of this society. By doing this we are allowing our children to be programmed and indoctrinated by this materialistic and selfish society. When these children in their teen years start showing signs of rebellion, then we get worried. But it is too late. The child has already been programmed. Therefore all our efforts right from the start should be to differentiate them from this society.

Unless we are convinced of this in our minds we will continue to lose our children in this wilderness. Jama'at Ahmadiyya has been in this country for more than fifty years and anywhere we look around we can see our lost children. Some would say that even if we do all of this, what is the guarantee that we will end up in the right place? My answer is that I know the result of walking on this beaten path. I wish to try a different route. If I still end up where everyone else is going, then at least I will have tried.

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THE CONCEPT OF REVELATION

Fouzan Pal, Wahab Mirza, Naemuddin Tahir, Basharat Ahmad

Aside from the actual act of creation -- which brought life into existence -- revelation is perhaps the most important facet relating to human life. When we speak of revelation, we speak in terms of direct guidance that the Creator -- God Almighty -- bestows upon His creation. As such, revelation has played a crucial role in the development of human beings in particular and all creation in general -- for it is through revelation that the creation has come to know, recognize, and appreciate the Creator. If we build on the premise that there is a Creator, there is a God who is All Powerful and All Encompassing, and then it must be acknowledged that communication that emanates from Him towards His creation is of a higher value, a higher stature, than communication, which takes place amongst the creation or stems from the creation itself. And such communication, which descends from the One Supreme God, must be held far superior to that which originates from the inferior creation or from the powers or traits pos-

essed by the creation, namely reason, rationality, logic etc. So herein lies the first point of discussion, the relationship or comparison between phenomenon of revelation and the attribute of reason. Hadhrat Masih-Mau'ood^{as} explains this relationship in great detail. He states that the very creation of God Almighty is such that it establishes, by its very existence, the need for revelation. He states:

'God Almighty has divided His wonderful universe into three parts.

- (1) The world, which is, manifest and can be felt through the eyes and the ears and other physical senses and through ordinary instruments.
- (2) The world which is hidden and which can be understood through reason and conjecture.
- (3) The world, which is hidden beyond hidden, which is so imperceptible that few are aware of it. That world is entirely unseen; reason has not been granted the

ability to reach it, except through mere conjecture. This world is disclosed only through visions, revelation, inspiration, and not by any other means.

As is well established, it is the way of Allah that for the discovery of the first two worlds that we have mentioned He has bestowed upon man different types of faculties and powers. In the same way, the Absolute Bounteous has appointed a means for man for the discovery of the third world; and that means is revelation, inspiration and visions. This means is not allowed to be wholly suspended at any time; indeed, those who comply with the conditions for achieving it have, throughout, been its recipients and will continue to be such.'

[Surmah Chashm Arya, Roothani Khaza'in, vol. 2, pp. 175-181, footnote]

So we find that God has created certain means to understand the physical realm -- reason, observation, logic etc. -- and certain means to understand the

spiritual realm -- namely revelation, visions. This is not to say that the spiritual realm contains in it no elements of reason or logic but that the ultimate and absolute truth in the spiritual realm can only be attained through revelation.

Elaborating further on the place of reason in the development of life in the universe, Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} states:

'It is true that reason is also a lamp which God has furnished to man, the light of which draws man towards truth and saves him from a variety of doubts and suspicions and sets aside different types of baseless ideas and improper conjectures. It is very useful, very necessary and is a great bounty. Yet, despite all this it suffers from the shortcoming that it alone cannot lead to full certainty in the matter of the understanding of the reality of things. The stage of perfect certainty is that man should believe that the reality of things exists as it in fact does exist. Reason alone cannot lead to this high degree of certainty. At the outside, it proves the need of the existence of something, but does not prove that in fact it exists. This degree of certainty that a

person's knowledge should proceed from the stage of 'should be' to the stage of 'is', is acquired only when reason is joined by a companion which, confirming its conjecture, converts it into fact, that is to say, regarding a matter concerning which reason says it 'should be' that companion informs that in fact it 'is'.'

[*Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 1, pp. 78-80, footnote 4*]

The second point that I wish to put forth for you relates to Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}'s presentation about the universality of revelation.

One of the greatest contributions of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} was the eradication of the idea that had developed amongst the Muslims and non-Muslims regarding the cessation of revelation altogether. There is no doubt that such erroneous beliefs had led to the decline of Muslims in particular and humanity in general over the past centuries. To counter this false notion, Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} writes:

'It is obvious that all human beings are alike in their nature and what is possible for one man is pos-

sible for all, and the closeness to the Divine and His understanding, which is permissible in the case of one human being, is permissible in the case of all, for they all have the same nature. It is true that there is diversity in respect of the degrees of excellence, but no one is shut out from the kind of excellence, which is open to others. ... In short, there can be a difference in capacities, but there cannot be a total absence of capacity.'

[*Surmah Chashm Arya, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 2, pp. 239-240*]

Herein lies a very important argument for the reality of revelation. Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} states that even though there are differences in the capacities of different human beings to receive revelation, the inherent ability to receive revelation is present in all humans; it is only that those who practice and fine-tune that ability by striving in the path of God are bestowed that special honor of converse with God Almighty. So as a result of not striving in the cause of Allah and not following the guidelines that God Almighty has laid out for attaining communion with Him, for these so-called

scholars and philosophers to conclude that revelation has altogether ceased to exist, is a grave injustice.

The next question that comes to mind is that if indeed all humans are capable of receiving revelation, how does one distinguish between true revelation, and thoughts which are a product of one's own psyche. As one who was bestowed with an abundant converse with the One God Almighty, Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} was intimately familiar with the sublime realities of revelation. Addressing this important differentiation between true revelation and egoistic thoughts, he writes:

'Although poets and thinkers, etc., also receive suggestions on reflection, there is no relationship between revelation and such suggestion, for that suggestion is a consequence of thinking and reflection and is received within the limits of humanness in the full possession of one's senses. But revelation is received when the recipient comes under the full control of God Almighty with all his being, and his own senses and reflection do not intervene in any way. It appears as if one's tongue is not one's own and is being used

by some other strong power. This should make clear the distinction between natural capacity and that which descends from heaven.'

[Barakat-ud-Du'a, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 6, pp. 22-23, footnote]

There are a number of fascinating details and truths, which Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} has unraveled regarding the phenomenon of divine revelation. However, time does not permit a detailed review of these gems of great value. Suffice it to say that in his writings, Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} goes on to describe in great detail the experiences of one who receives revelation and what awesome majesty such communication holds within it. He further spells out for the common man the exact requirements which constitute true revelation and as if with great concern for the human beings at large, he takes great pain to carefully guide and nurture the reader along a path to the recognition of true revelation as compared to thoughts which arise in one's mind as a result of the evil influence of Satan. So much so that the reader gets the feeling that Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} has discovered a hidden treasure, a

hidden treasure, a great truth which lay hidden from the world for centuries, which he is anxious to reveal to humanity at large, picking his words so carefully so as to not lose the impact of the original message.

Those who question the need of the Imam of the time are in a state of grave ignorance. Why must we accept a reformer in this day and age? What is the need for a Prophet in these latter days? Aren't Muslims capable of being guided on the right path without the need for a "Prophet"? Such are the questions raised by the Muslims of this day and age. Even if we put aside the prophecies of the Holy Founder of Islam, Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafah^{saw} and the declarations of the Qur'an regarding the coming of the Prophet in the latter days, the unbiased mind is forced to admit that the sad state of the Muslims of today is akin to a people who have gone so far astray that they have lost all hope in God. In their unjust and vile pursuits, they have ignored the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafah^{saw}. Slowly but surely they treaded along the path of ignorance, arrogance, and deceit, with the end result being that

they became, as Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth described, like zombies -- with bodies but no soul. They lost all hope in communion with God Almighty to the extent that they openly began to declare that God no longer speaks to his people and that revelation has ceased to exist after the advent of Islam. That converse with God, revelation from the Lord, and communion with the Creator were things of the past. It was under these circumstances that a Reformer, a *Mahdi*, a Prophet was raised who declared to the world that God hears as He heard before and speaks as He spoke before. Through personal experience, he demonstrated the reality of the one thing the lack of belief in which had perhaps single-handedly lead to the decay of humanity at large and Muslims in particular and re-established that link which had seemingly been broken over time. And after all that, they ask why must we accept him as a messenger of God and a recipient of divine revelation? Alas, the declaration of the Holy Qur'an:

Then We sent Our Messengers one after the other. Every time there came to a people their Messenger, they treated him as

a liar... (23:45)

indeed once more has come true.

I will end with the following excerpt from Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood's^{as} writings regarding the reality of revelation, the water that gives life to the human spirit:

'Consider well that without revelation it is not possible to arrive at complete certainty, or to escape error, or to base oneself on the true Unity of God, or to overcome one's passions. It is revelation through which we are able to affirm that God 'is' and the whole world calls on Him because He 'is'. It is revelation, which from the beginning has inspired the hearts with the assurance that God 'is'. It is through revelation that worshippers find delight in worship and the faithful are satisfied with regard to the existence of God and life after death. It is revelation, which has enabled millions of the righteous to leave this transient world with great steadfastness and with the eagerness of the love of the Divine. It is revelation the truth of which has been attested by the blood of thousands of martyrs. It is revelation through whose power of attraction kings

thousands of martyrs. It is revelation through whose power of attraction kings put on the garment of beggars and many wealthy people preferred poverty to riches, and by its blessings millions of unlearned old women departed this world with eager faith. It is the one vessel, which has so often carried numberless people through the whirlpool of creature-worship and doubt to the safety of the Unity of God and perfect certainty. It is revelation that is the friend of last moments and is the helper in serious conditions.'

We hope and pray that God provides us all the opportunity to read and learn from the writings of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} who, under the guidance of the Holy Qur'an and in the footsteps of our Holy Master Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafah^{saw} and through revelation from the Lord of All the Worlds, provided us with much needed guidance in this day and age, Ameen.

(North Virginia Writers' Team)

Other teams of writers are urged to write articles for Ahmadiyya Gazette.

Editor

The True Meaning of Jihad

**Ismael Hashim, Luqman Mahmood, Khalid Mahmood,
Nuruddin al Hadith**

What is Jihad today? Is it moving about, place to place, with some sort of weapon in hand with the desire to convert people to Islam by force? Is it a country demanding another country to believe in Islam lest they attack them? Is it even arguing with other people based on their differences with faith, with the hopes that one's own lines of reasoning will totally annihilate and shame the person they are speaking to? No, this is not the Jihad that is to be practiced today. In fact, the Jihad of today is wholly different, for the Jihad of today requires a completely different mindset than that which one is accustomed to hearing from the mouths of so-called Muslim divines and the Western press nowadays, it is a Jihad of the spread of the message of the Holy Qur'an which must be practiced today.

Firstly, one should know the denotative meaning of Jihad. Jihad literally means to "strive." If one is to look at Jihad in light of its actual meaning, many

veils would be cast aside and the reality of the Jihad that is the obligation of every Muslim would then become apparent. The Jihad of today requires that one should desire that the unity of Allah be spread all over this Earth. It is the duty of every truthful person that they spread truth, in the best way possible. The duty does not require coercion, though. For in the Holy Qur'an it states:

"There is no compulsion in religion." The duty of a Muslim means to spread the message of Islam through peaceful means. Critics today argue that the truth of Islam lies in its brandished sword; a strange proposition if one pays an even cursory glance to the verses of the Holy Qur'an.

Again, in the Holy Qur'an, we read: "There is no compulsion in religion. Surely, the right way has become distinct from error" (2:256); what more does one need as a rejoinder to those who ask whether or not the physical Jihad at the time of the Holy Prophet^{saw}

was defensive in nature? The Holy Qur'an further declares: "Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Verily, falsehood is bound to vanish." When someone is confronted with truth, if they are truthful, they are bound to accept it. It is only arrogant people who continually question the veracity of patent and established truths. From these two verses it becomes patently evident that there was no reason to spread the religion of Allah by force; its luster held its own inherent attraction towards the righteous and truthful people of the time.

We Muslims believe that the Holy Qur'an is the actual word of God. No one can claim to be a true lover of Islam unless they love the word of God. Now if Muslims believe the Holy Qur'an to be the word of God, would we be so naïve as to think that the word of God has no power to compel hearts? When the Holy Qur'an speaks of Jihad as a means to spread religion, it is not talking about using physical measures. It

speaks of a Jihad that enables Muslims to become models to one another. It speaks of waging a war against one's own evil inclinations and desires, a war that is not won until the person has completely humbled him or herself to a dust particle and is totally absorbed in the love of God. With the love of God comes the love of His creation. How can one love the painter if he or she hates the paintings?

The Holy Prophet^{saw} of Islam spent his life supplicating to his Allah to guide his people. He used to climb a treacherous trail to reach a cave so as to be alone, and in that cave he would supplicate to his Lord in such a way that his eyes would swell with tears and his chest would heave with sobs. All that he prayed for was that Allah would guide His creatures, and as Allah is so kind and compassionate, He told the Holy Prophet^{saw} that: "Did He not find thee an orphan and take thee under His care, and found thee lost in love for thy people and provided thee with guidance for them" (93:7-8). This is Islam. Islam is not about fighting wars of conquest or ambitions; Islam is about sympathy for humanity.

The Jihad that the Holy Prophet^{saw} fought was not for any reason other than for the defense of his own faith. The idolaters of Mecca left no stone unturned in wiping out the religion of Islam. They even resorted to asking the Holy Prophet^{saw} if he would like any worldly treasures, women, or kingships, they would be more than happy to provide them if only he would stop trying to spread the message of Islam. In answer to this, the Holy Prophet^{saw} said that if they were to offer him the sun on his right hand and the moon on his other, he would still decline. Because the Holy Prophet^{saw} was a commissioned Messenger of God, nothing would prevent him from spreading the truth because he knew that God was with him every step of the way and would never let him fail.

With this, the Holy Prophet^{saw} went about waging a war of arguments and divine signs in support of his faith. He did not resort to the sword to spread Islam. The wars that he fought were due to his being attacked, as he never raised the sword first. It is an absolutely proven and established truth that no critic of Islam can claim

that the Holy Prophet^{saw} began a single offensive war. Elsewhere, the Holy Qur'an states: "Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made because they have been wronged. Those who have been driven out from their homes unjustly only because they said, 'Our Lord is Allah' - And if Allah did not repel some men by means of others, there would surely have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft commemorated. And Allah will surely help one who helps Him." How much clearer of a directive is needed for any seeker of truth? No war can be called religious in nature unless it is defensive and unless religion is being suppressed. Is this the case today for any government? The only Jihad of Islam that is applicable today is the Jihad that involves the spread of the message of Islam through the Holy Qur'an. The Jihad that is acceptable today in Islam is the Jihad for which a person takes a hard look at all his weaknesses and strives to eliminate them. This is the true Jihad, and the Jihad, which the Holy Prophet^{saw} called the greater Jihad. Unfortunately, ignorant critics unjustifiably make this Jihad the lesser

one.

To think that anyone could *force* another to pray five times a day, fast thirty days once ever lunar year, and love God and His Holy Prophet^{saw} to such a degree that his or her mind is wrought with emotion with their remembrance is the most maddening thing about this whole debate. Countless souls have shaped their lives by following his example and have become so enamored with the Holy Prophet^{saw} that it cannot be but a genuine expression of love- a love of the Holy Prophet^{saw} that comes with the realization that through following his blessed deeds and actions, one can attain true faith and certainty in regards to their Creator. And this love of God's Holy Prophet^{saw} is to such a degree that even the most minute of the actions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} his lovers would be bent upon following, only because by so doing they think that God will be pleased with them. Is this the result of any compulsion?

Has the world become so encumbered with religious wars that it has forgotten that pens can also be used in place of the sword? How can a person accept

the religion of peace without being at peace with it himself or herself? This is common sense, but it seems that there is a lack of it even amongst so-called Muslim divines these days. The Promised Messiah^{as}, in relation to this, has said:

'There is not the least truth in the assertion that it is time for resorting to the sword and gun for spreading the true religion and righteousness. The sword, far from revealing the beauties and excellence of truth, makes them dubious and throws them into the background. Those who hold such views are not the friends of Islam but its deadly foes. They have low motives, mean natures, poor spirits, narrow minds, dull brains and short sight. It is they who open the way to an objection against Islam, the validity of which cannot be questioned. They hold that Islam needs the sword for their advancement, thus brand its purity and cast a slur upon its holy name. The religion that can easily establish its truth and superiority by sound intellectual arguments, heavenly signs or other reliable testimony, does not need the sword to threaten men and force a confession of its truth

from them. Religion is worth the name only so long as it is in consonance with reason. If it fails to satisfy that requisite, if it has to make up for its discomfiture in argument by handling the sword, it needs no other argument for its falsification. The sword it wields cuts its own throat before reaching others.'

Islam literally means peace and obedience, and when speaking of obedience, it is obedience to God. The God of Islam is perfect and capable of forgiving the transgressions of His weak creation, just as long as they turn to Him with sincere remorse. The God of Islam does not require that Muslims go about killing those of his Creation that are not Muslim, because it is only God who knows when and if they shall be led towards Islam. The duty of a Muslim when speaking in relation to Jihad is not to introduce Islam with a clenched fist, but with an open heart, good deeds, and sincere kindness.

(Washington, DC Writers' Team)

Other teams of writers are urged to write articles for Ahmadiyya Gazette.

Editor

MTA USA

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

MTA International was started in 1992 from London. It now provides transmission around the world and around the clock. This means that a lot of programming needs be prepared and presented. We all know that all MTA programming is made by the volunteers of Jama'at Ahmadiyya all over the world. The USA Jama'at has been lagging behind in this category of sacrifice. MTA USA is now preparing to live up to this responsibility. Volunteers are needed to make programs for MTA. Programs in the following categories are needed:

- 1) All programs must be in the English language.
- 2) Subject of the program should be :
 - a) See America (Visits to various places of interests such as parks, museums, monuments, cities etc.)
 - b) Children's programs
 - c) Health and medical sciences
 - d) Other disciplines such as home improvement, building, sports etc
 - e) Programs based on local Jama'at functions and events are not accepted
 - f) All programs should be in a documentary format.

We realize that most people are not familiar with the process of film making. Therefore training will be provided to willing participants. The most important need is for volunteers to go out and video tape the material. All Jama'at members are invited to participate, young and old, men and women.

If you are interested please call the 24 hour help line:

(615) 390- 6775

Suggestions are welcome but workers are really appreciated.

Lutf ur Rehman
Incharge Programming USA

WAQFE ARZI SCHEME

Spiritual Correction and Advice is the Responsibility of Every Ahmadi

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IIIrd States:

“There is a great need for a Waqfe Arzi (*Short term or temporary devotion*). The fact is that a section of the Jama’at has forgotten that the members of the Jama’at are also the Mu-rabbis or Missionaries, themselves, and the little increase in the number of Missionaries is not sufficient. The Jama’at conceives that the responsibility for guidance and advice rests with the missionaries. In fact, every Ahmadi must discharge the duty of guidance and correction diligently. I have introduced the scheme of Waqfe Arzi for the purpose of drawing the attention of the Jama’at towards this duty, and to develop a desire for Islah-o-Irshad. In this are both spiritual as well as physical benefits.”

(Report of Majlise Mushawarat, Al-Fazl: November 3, 1966)

Every Ahmadi Should Join the Waqfe Arzi Scheme

“The Missionaries, the office-bearers, in fact every Ahmadi should join the Waqfe Arzi Scheme and should encourage his brother to do so, as well. Undoubtedly, this is a path of sacrifice. In fact it is a very narrow path. Also, it is also a fact that we cannot seek the pleasure of Allah without walking on the path of sacrifice.”

(Al-Fazl: August 27, 1969)

A Source of Self-correction

“The second major benefit of the Waqfe Arzi Scheme is that those who wish to join this scheme will have to examine their own souls in certain aspects. Before they embark on this scheme, their attention is directed towards their own weaknesses. Thus, they are immediately inclined towards prayers. This implies that one of the important preparations for those joining this scheme is their devotion for prayers. They should start increasing their religious knowledge. And they should take some books along when they start off for the scheme. They should think and ponder over their weaknesses. They should have a desire that when they go to a new place they should set a good example and should not be source of defect. That is why the Waqfe Arzi groups have benefited from the blessings of prayers.

(Al-Fazl: February 12, 1977)

All those, who are interested in serving the cause of Islam and Ahmadiyyat under the banner of the blessed scheme of Waqfe Arzi, should contact: **Dr. Zaheer Ahmad Bajwa, Naib Amir:**

**2141 Leroy Place, N.W.
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**INVOCATIONS
OF
THE HOLY PROPHET OF ISLAM,**

**HADHRAT
MUHAMMAD MUSTAFA**

(Peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)

FOREWORD

Just as man is created to glorify Allah by praising Him, beseeching Allah for His mercy and help is also an integral part of the glorification. After the Holy Qur'an, the invocations of the Holy Prophet^{saw} are the most authoritative, most comprehensive, and most effective way of glorifying Allah.

Dr. Karimullah Zirvi has compiled these prayers, with English translation and transliteration, in order to satisfy an additional need of non-Arabic reading Muslims.

I hope and pray that this will find full use with those who read it.

Ahsanullah Zafar
Amir Jama'at, USA

**Even Enemies
Should not be
Excluded from
du'a (prayer)**

The Promised Messiah^{as} says:

“I have said that physical and financial sympathy has limitations but that is not the case with the prayer. My own way of thinking is that so far as the prayer is concerned, even the enemies should not be excluded from it. The more extensive the prayer is, the greater is the benefit derived by the one who prays. The more a person is niggardly in the matter of his prayers, the farther he moves away from God. The fact is that the man who limits the bounty of God - which is very extensive - has a very weak faith.”

Malfoozat, Vol. 2, p
73, London Edition,
1984
