



AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY
United States of America

May 2010

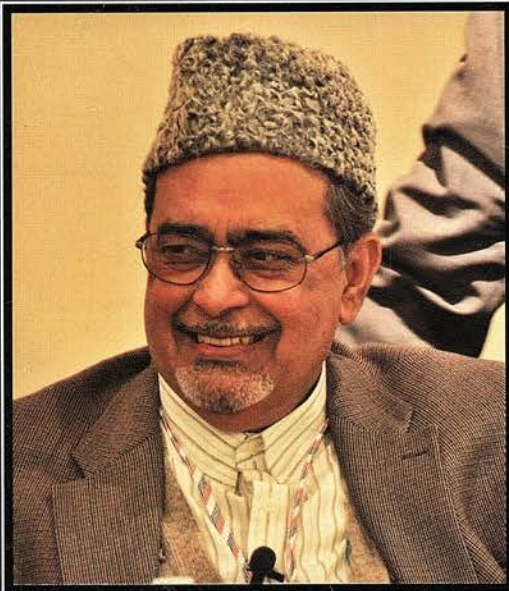
Khilafat Edition

The Ahmadiyya

GAZETTE

USA

An informational, literary, educational, and training magazine of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA



Scenes from 2010 National Majlis-e-Shura USA



Ahmadi Youth Leadership

Tarbiyyat Camp 2010

An opportunity for Ahmadi Youth

(middle school through college) to grow spiritually, bond with other Ahmadis, and obtain a deeper understanding of Islam.

Character Building ♦ Moral Training ♦ Etiquette

Discipline ♦ Communication Skills ♦ Sports

Field Trips ♦ Social Service Activities

~ limited space, register early ~

Experienced & Learned Teachers & Mentors,
including Murrabian & Jamia Students

Curriculum

- ♦ The Holy Quran (reciting, memorizing, understanding)
- ♦ Sunnat and Ahadith in Practice
- ♦ History of Islam from Khilafat-e-Rashida to Present
- ♦ Writings of Promised Messiah (as)
- ♦ Effective Methods in Tabligh
- ♦ Basics of Urdu & Arabic
- ♦ Tarbiyyat in today's Technological Age
- ♦ Nizam-e-Jamaat & Leadership and more...

Where: Baitul Naseer, Miami, FL

When: July 20th - July 27, 2010
(Opening ceremony afternoon of July 20th)

For more information & registration packet, email:
ahmadiyouthcamp@gmail.com

For general questions call:
Usman Jamil: 301-938-4364 or
Anser Ahmad: 717-554-2580

For airport drop-off/pick up call:
Munawar Chaudry: 786-301-2717

**This year, students are required to cover transportation costs; financial assistance for travel provided on an as-needed basis. (For lowest airfare, book tickets early.)



An educational and spiritual monthly publication

Ahmadiyya Gazette USA

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE AHMADIYYA
MOVEMENT IN ISLAM, USA

May 2010



Table of Contents

Patron	Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar Ameer Jama'at USA
Editor-in-Chief	Dr. Naseer Ahmad
Editor	Dr. Karimullah Zirvi
Editorial Advisor	Muhammad Zafrullah Hanjra
Cover: <i>Latif Ahmed</i>	Photos: <i>Kalim Bhatti</i>

Ahmadiyya Gazette USA

Masjid Baitur Rehman
15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905
Phone: 301-879-0110 Fax: 301-879-0115

Editor: karimzirvi@yahoo.com
Tel. and Fax: 201-794-8122

www.ahmadiyya.us

www.alislam.org

Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

saw:	sallallahu alaihi wasallam (Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him)
as:	alaihissalam (Peace be upon him)
ra:	radhi allahu '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)

The Ahmadiyya Gazette USA is published by the Ahmadiyya Movement
in Islam, Inc., at the local address:

Fazl-i-Umar Press
P.O. Box 226, Chauncey, OH 45719

Periodicals Postage Paid at Chauncey, Ohio
Postmaster: Send address changes to
The Ahmadiyya Gazette
P.O. Box 226, Chauncey, OH 45719-0226

2	Al-Qur'an
3	Al-Hadith
4	Sayings of the Promised Messiah ^{as}
6	Synopsis of the Friday Sermon Delivered by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V ^{aba} on March 5, 2010 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London
11	Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V's ^{aba} Closing Address at the Annual <i>Ijtima</i> of Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, UK
19	Incidents of Great Sacrifices for the Institution of Khilafat, During the Khilafat-e-Raashidah and Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya: Maulana I. H. Kauser
27	Khilafat—A Divine Institution: Mansura Bashir Minhas, Miami, FL
30	Hadhrat Hakeem Noorud Deen's Election as First Caliph
33	An Overview of France's Partial <i>Burqa</i> Ban: Syeda Aziza Khan
35	Learn to Succeed: Sazzad Khandakar and Dabir Khan
37	Musleh Mau'ood Day Celebrated: Northern Virginia Jama'at: Ghulam Hussain Qamar Baloch
38	How an Ahmadi Muslim Girl Can Modestly Conduct Herself in School: Najia Humayun, Atlanta, GA
39	Interfaith symposium Highlights (St. Paul, Minnesota Jama'at): Abdul Naseer M. Kakkada
41	Understanding Islam: Facts and Fallacies: Interfaith Event at the Pasadena City College, CA: Lubna R. Malik
42	Al Islam eGazette
45	5th Waqfe Nau Boys Trip to Jamia Ahmadiyya Canada: Haneef Mahmood
47	The Holy Pen: Majlis Sultanul Qalm, USA

Al-Qur'an

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
 لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَسَوْ
 لَيُمْكِنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينُهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ
 خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ
 ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ 0

Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors *from among* those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security *and peace* after their fear; They will worship Me, *and* they will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be the rebellious. (24:56)

Commentary:

Because it serves as a prelude to the introduction of the subject of *Khilafat* emphasis is repeatedly laid in verses 52-55 on obedience to Allah and His Messenger. This emphasis implies a hint to the status and position of a *Khalifa* in Islam. The verse embodies a promise that Muslims will be vouchsafed both spiritual and temporal leadership. The promise is made to the whole Muslim nation but the institution of *Khilafat* will take a palpable form in the person of certain individuals who will be the Holy Prophet's Successors and the representatives of the whole nation. The promise of the establishment of *Khilafat* is clear and unmistakable. as the Holy Prophet is now humanity's sole guide for all times, his *Khilafat* will continue to exist in one form or another in the world till the end of time, all other *Khilafats* having ceased to exist. This is, among many others, the Holy Prophet's distinctive superiority over all other Prophets and Messengers of God. Our age has witnessed his greatest spiritual *Khalifa* in the person of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

Al-Hadith

مَا مِنْ نُبُوَّةٍ قَطُّ إِلَّا تَبِعْتَهَا خِلَافَةٌ -

The Holy Prophet^{saw} once said: "There has been no Prophet who has not been followed by *Khilāfat*."

(Kanzul 'ammāl, p 109/6)

عَنْ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: لَا خِلَافَةَ إِلَّا عَنْ مَشُورَةٍ -

Hadhrat 'Umar^{ra} relates: "*Khilāfat* is established through consultation."

(Kanzul 'ammāl kitāb al-khilāfah ma'al amārah, p 139/3)

عَنْ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! الْأَمْرُ
يُنزَلُ بِنَا بَعْدَكَ لَمْ يَنْزَلْ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ وَ لَمْ يُسْمَعْ مِنْكَ فِيهِ
شَيْءٌ ، قَالَ: أَجْمِعُوا لَهُ الْعَابِدِينَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي وَ اجْعَلُوهُ
بَيْنَكُمْ سُورَى وَ لَا تَقْضُوا بِرَأْيِ وَاحِدٍ -

Hadhrat 'Ali^{ra} relates that he said to the Holy Prophet^{saw}: "O Messenger^{saw} of Allah! What should we do if in your absence, we come across a matter that is neither explained in the Holy Qur'an nor found in your explanation?" The Holy Prophet^{saw} said: 'Gather the righteous people amongst my followers who should deliberate among themselves. Do not decide based on one (person's) opinion.' "

(Durri Manthur, p 10/6, i'lamul muqi'in, p 54/1 libini Qayyim)

SAYINGS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

One of the authorities that show that the Promised Messiah^{as} will appear from among the Muslims, is this verse of the Holy Qur'an:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

This means: [O Muslims] You are the best of people who have been raised to benefit mankind and to repel the mischief of all *Dajjals* and of the Antichrist...

Every religious community is called upon to a particular service and has to contend against a particular enemy. It has been decreed that the Muslims would have to fight against the Antichrist. In a *Hadith* related by Nāfe' bin 'Utbah, which is set out in *Muslim*, it is stated that the Muslims will fight the Antichrist and will be victorious over him. The Companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} did not fight the Antichrist, but, according to the connotation of the verse 'And from amongst others...' the Promised Messiah and his *Jama'at* were declared Companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. It is also worth observing that in this *Hadith*, the Holy Prophet^{saw} specified that his Companions are those who would fight the Antichrist and he did not say that the Hebrew Messiah would fight him. The word 'descent' is used for respect and honor and indicates in this context that as in that age of turmoil faith will ascend to the Pleiades and all Spiritual leadership, learning, and instruction will fall into decline the God of heaven will send someone whom He will have trained Himself without the intervention of earthly means, just as rain descends from heaven without the intervention of any human agency.

Another authority which indicates that the Promised Messiah will appear from among this same *Ummah* of Muhammad^{saw}:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا
اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ

which means, Allah has promised those people who believe and act righteously that He will make them Successors in the earth as He made those Successors who were before them.

The previous successors referred to in this verse are the successors from the people of Moses^{as} whom God had sent one after the other to establish and maintain the Law of Moses^{as}.

No century was allowed to go by without the appearance of such a successor who came to revive the religion of Moses^{as}. The Holy Qur'an indicates that there were twelve such successors and that the thirteenth was Jesus^{as}, who was the Promised Messiah under the Mosaic law. In view of the resemblance which is established by the use of the word *kama* [just as] in this verse, it is essential that there should be a resemblance between the successors of Muhammad^{saw} and the successors of Moses^{as}. To prove and firmly establish this resemblance, the Holy Qur'an mentions twelve Mosaic successors, each of whom was from the people of Moses^{as} and the thirteenth was Jesus^{as}, who was the *Khatamul Anbiya* among the people of Moses^{as}, but did not actually belong to them. Then, pointing out the resemblance between the successors of the Mosaic dispensation and the successors of the Islamic dispensation, God clearly indicated that at the end of the Islamic dispensation there would be a Messiah and twelve successors in between so that figure of 'fourteen' should also correspond. Similarly, the Promised Messiah of the Islamic dispensation appeared at the beginning of the fourteenth century, just as the Promised Messiah of the Mosaic dispensation had appeared in the fourteenth century of the Mosaic dispensation. Thus, the distance of the two Messiahs from the Founders of their respective religions is the same.

If the second Messiah who was to come was to be the same Jesus^{as}, this would contradict the Holy Qur'an, inasmuch as the Qur'an declares the Successors of the two dispensations to be distinct personalities, as is evident from the word *kama* [just as]. This distinction provides a clear authority which cannot be rejected even if the whole world were to combine against it. If the same person who was the last Successor of the first dispensation was to come back, the distinction between the two dispensations would disappear and the import of the word *kama* would be falsified. Such a thing would be contradictory to the Holy Qur'an and is, therefore, false.

و هذا باطلٌ وكل ما يستلزم الباطل
فهو باطلٌ

This is false, and everything that leads to a false conclusion is false

It is worth remembering that in the verse:

كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ

The same *kama* has been used which is employed in the verse:

كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا

(Tohfa Golarviyyah, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 17, pp. 120-127)

Synopsis of Friday Sermon Delivered by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}, on March 5, 2010 at Masjid Baitul Futuh London

Shermeen Butt

People of Divine communities have the same responsibilities as the Prophets of God who establish them, i.e. summon people to God and having pointed out misleading thoughts and practices that get set in with the passage of time, show them the way of truth. History of religion tells us that each time followers of a Prophet of God did this they received overwhelming opposition, especially at the time when they were small in number. Pharaoh-like people tried their best to obliterate Prophets of God and their followers. This happened with each religion as long as they stayed firm on the original message. Likewise, the Holy Prophet^{saw} was treated in a similar manner although he was the most beloved of God. The troubles, difficulties, wars etc. that he had to endure were indeed more than the earlier Prophets. However, his steadfastness was resolute and he inculcated this spirit in his Companions as well. Lack of numbers and weapons etc. did not ever shake the resoluteness of his Companions. The Holy Qur'an states: **'As to those who answered the call of Allah and the Messenger after they had received an injury — such of them as do good and act righteously shall have a great reward; (3:173)**

Those to whom men said, 'People have mustered against you, therefore fear them,' but this *only* increased their faith, and they said, 'Sufficient for us is Allah, and an excellent Guardian is He.' (3:174). This strength of faith and spirit to sacrifice one's life in the cause of God can be seen in the account of the Battle of *Uhad*. Due to the error of a small group of Muslims, a battle that had been clearly won was turned around and the pagans of Mecca attacked once again incurring heavy loss on the Muslim side. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) lost his blessed tooth but the Companions gathered around him in a manner that no force could move them and each attack of the enemy met with failure. The pagans of Mecca appeared to have the upper hand, although not in the militarily. The Arabs taunted them that they had imagined to retaliate for *Badr*, but what sort of a victory was this where there was neither any bounty of war nor any prisoners. This incited the pagan to return to the battlefield and attack the battle-weary and injured Muslims. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) got wind of this. He gathered the Companions and prepared to chase the pagans but said that only those would participate who had been to *Uhad*. Imagine the weary and the injured Companions, 250 of them set out with the passion of a victorious army. When they encamped, the Holy Prophet^{saw} ordered that fire be lit in 500 spots. It was a most impressive sight from a distance. The pagans of Mecca thought it better to go back. The Muslims too returned after a stay of two or three days, God's awe having struck the pagans. It is significant to note that on return from *Uhad*, Abu Sufyan had declared and challenged that they would fight the Muslims at *Badr* one more time. The Prophet^{saw} accepted this challenge. In 4 *Hijra* the Muslims prepared an army of 1500 while Abu Sufyan prepared an army of

2000. His spies had informed him about the numbers of Muslims and he was secretly perturbed that their number was not large enough. He sent a man to Medina to scare the Muslims into believing that a very large Meccan army was on its way. However, God states such propaganda by the enemy actually enhances Muslims in faith. Their reply was and always is: **'Sufficient for us is Allah, and an excellent Guardian is He.'** The 1500 Muslims reached *Badr* but the pagans of Mecca went back from a little outside Mecca. They said it had been a famine year and their preparation was not adequate, they would come the year after. Death had scared the pagans off whereas it enhances believers in faith.

Hazoor^{aba} said the history of Islam is full of incidents where the scare-mongering of the enemy did not work. Today, the believers should respond in the very same manner. Today the followers of the Promised Messiah respond in the same vein when efforts are made to scare them. True believers are not frightened of the scare-mongering of any group, any legislative body or any organization. They are always steadfast and firm on faith. They are beaten up, abused and their lives are taken, but they are never in awe of anyone save God, their response is always: **'Sufficient for us is Allah, and an excellent Guardian is He.'** The more the enemy tries the more they turn to their Lord.

Hazoor^{aba} said today there is great opposition towards our community in some countries. This, in fact is a testimony of its truthfulness. In their opposition all the 72 sects of Islam have tried their utmost in Pakistan but have not been able to harm Ahmadis, indeed, they cannot harm them. Apparent loss is nothing for a true believer, the real thing is faith. Hazoor^{aba} said he receives letters from parents and families of the martyred Ahmadis expressing a greater and enhanced spirit of faith and sincerity. Now, opposition is growing in parts of India as well and the situation in Bangladesh too continues to be adverse at any given opportunity. In some Arab countries, be it Syria or Egypt, situation is similar as is in Bulgaria and some ex-Soviet states where the *Muftis* pressurize our community. Opposition to the community of the Promised Messiah^{as} in different parts of the world confirms its global significance. Those who appreciate and understand the Divine attribute of *Al-Hasib* will always respond that no matter how much opposition there is, their reply is: **'Sufficient for us is Allah, and an excellent Guardian is He.'** This is what we have learned from the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

The Promised Messiah^{as} said, 'These verses illustrate that true courage derives from steadfastness. To be steadfast against every personal passion or against any calamity that attacks like an enemy and not to run away out of cowardice is true courage.' (The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam' p. 77).

Hazoor^{aba} explained that the Promised Messiah^{as} unfolds a different perspective for us here, that aside from the apparent enemy, passions of the self can also be aggressive like an enemy. To overcome passions of the self also enables one to contend with the apparent enemy. Therefore one has to submit oneself completely to God and it is then that one experiences the manifestations of the Divine attribute of *Al-Hasib* beyond one's imagination.

The Promised Messiah^{as} also said that joining his Community entailed following it's teachings in the face of all opposition. He said that the Holy Prophet^{saw} and his Companions faced bitter persecution for thirteen years but eventually all the enemies were obliterated. God has willed that this community too will spread in the world and when it will gain in numbers, the opponents will be silenced. God wills to give training of patience through these circumstances. He wrote that many who used to be abusive repented and took *Bai'at*. Patience is also a kind of worship and has countless blessings. Pain strengthens faith.

Hazoor^{aba} said he has chosen two subjects with reference to the Divine attribute of *Al-Hasib* for today's Sermon. One was to elucidate that the strength of true believers' faith and their steadfastness enables them to face opposition. It is a source of attaining nearness to God and gives them an insight and

perception that God is Sufficient for them. Next Hazoor^{aba} cited verses 41 and 42 of *Surah Al Rad* and explained that the objectives of Prophets of God and their followers is to take the message of truth to people whether people accept it or not. The consequences of them not accepting is in God's hands, Who is *Al-Hasib* (the Reckoner). Verse 41 states: **'And whether We make thee see the fulfillment of some of the things with which We threaten them or whether We make thee die, it makes little difference, for on thee lies only the delivery of the Message, and on Us the reckoning. (13:41)**

Do they not see that We are visiting the land, reducing it from its outlying borders? And Allah judges; there is none to reverse His judgment. And He is swift at reckoning. (13:42).

Hazoor^{aba} explained that God has His own way of chastisement and knows well when to punish whom. It is not essential for Him to implement prompt chastisement. Chastisement can be a sign and its objective is reformation. It is in God's knowledge who will desist in their opposition of Prophet of God and will be reformed and who will reform after slight punishment and who will never desist. It is these people who are chastised.

Hazoor^{aba} explained that some enemies of Prophets of God are brought to account during the lifetime of the Prophet while others are not. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) accurately foretold the exact locations where some of the enemies would lose their lives in the Battle of Badr. There were indeed some among the enemy who later accepted Islam and were saved in the various battles. The real objective of a Prophet and his followers is to spread the message, punishment is not their aim, rather, it is to make people worship God. As a matter of principle those who have been warned will be chastised, whether in this world or the next. That only God knows. Accountability is with God.

Hazoor^{aba} said some people object that this prophecy or that prophecy has not been fulfilled. It will all be evident in the presence of God. Ahmadis are witness to the fact that many prophecies have indeed come to pass, others are coming to pass and each new day makes the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah^{as} evident. In verse 42 of *Surah Al-Rad*, God states that can the opponents of truth not see that God is 'reducing earth from its outlying borders'?

Hazoor^{aba} said Islam spread rapidly in its early years and numerous came in the sphere of its safety and security. When God decreed, He also punished. It is God's verdict that either great numbers accepting Islam reduce the earth for enemies of Islam or natural disasters reduce land for them. This happened in the past, is currently happening and will happen in the future. When God is with His Prophet then who is it that can come in the way? There is none who can reverse God's decree. Therein God has given hope and courage to true believers that as long as they continue to be true servants of God, they will have no fear. God is swift in reckoning.

Verse 45 of *Surah Al Anbiya* states the same subject: **'Nay, We provided those and their fathers with the good things of this world till life grew long for them. Do they not see that We are visiting the land, reducing it from its outlying borders? Can they even then be victors? (21:45).**

Hazoor^{aba} said if a nation has been in power for a long period of time and feels superior about it, certainly such situations are not permanent. In fact God states that He generously provides generations upon generations of a nation but it should always be kept in view that great nations were diminished in the past. In the recent past the European nations lost much of their power. They had colonized huge parts of the world and now they are diminished. Russia too had spread over a vast area but many of its nations have gained independence. This very destiny will one day be repeated in America. Smaller countries too may not have any presumptions, they too can diminish. However, there are glad-tidings for

Islam, there are glad-tidings for the followers of the Promised Messiah^{as} that Islam will be triumphant. Our *Tabligh* efforts are humble, our task is to spread the message with love. However, we see glimpses of what Divine decree can do in the form of earthquakes and other calamities. If only the Muslims too would abandon their opposition and become a part of the destiny that will come to pass through the Promised Messiah^{as}. Hazoor^{aba} said the current-day calamities and disasters are also a sign of support for the Promised Messiah^{as}. Many people ask that the opposition is from the false *Imams*, why then are the poor and disadvantaged being killed in these disasters.

Explaining this, the Promised Messiah^{as} said that it is the way of God that when all limits are exceeded in accusing the truthful people of God of falsehood and they are persecuted, all kinds of calamities occur in the world. All Books of God state this as does the Holy Qur'an. Just as at the time when Moses^{as} was accused of falsehood all kinds of calamities befell Egypt. Although the far-a-field people of Egypt had not even heard of Moses^{as} and therefore had not sinned. While the Pharaoh was saved, the unaware were killed. Again, in the time of Jesus (on whom be peace) those who wanted to kill him through crucifixion remained unharmed. However, forty years later thousands of Jews were killed and there was an outbreak of plague. The Qur'an proves that this was due to Jesus^{as}. Similarly in the times of the Holy Prophet^{saw} a seven year famine took place and most of the poor died whereas the majority of the evil-doers were saved for a long period. In short it is the way of God that when someone comes from Him and is accused of falsehood, all kinds of calamities come to pass. However, people who have nothing to do with the accusation of falsehood are caught up in the calamities. Gradually the false *Imams* are seized and the time of the wickedest comes to an end. The natural calamities that follow accusation of falsehood on God's appointed people are general and not specific.

Hazoor^{aba} said a few days ago a huge earthquake struck Chile. Two months ago an earthquake had struck Haiti. The Chilean earthquake was 64 times stronger than the Haitian quake. Hazoor^{aba} said these are signs in support of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Hundreds of thousands of homes have been damaged. It is being said that the Chilean earthquake is the seventh most dreadful earthquake since records began. The earthquake has taken off 1.26 milliseconds from Earth day, which is now this much shorter. Scientists have also recorded that the powerful quake shifted the Earth's figure axis by three inches. Hazoor^{aba} explained this is the axis about which the Earth's mass is balanced. Thus a situation is arisen to 'reduce the earth on its outlying borders'.

The Promised Messiah^{as} indeed foretold earthquakes as one of his signs. A quake struck Chile in 1906 which the Promised Messiah^{as} had called as a sign in his support. From 1570 to 1835 five earthquakes struck Chile. The next one struck in 1868 and then the 1906 one. Since then Chile has been struck with eighteen powerful earthquakes. The Promised Messiah^{as} wrote at the time of the Chilean earthquake of 1906 that he had had his prophecies about strong earthquakes striking the world published many times so much so that the earth would disintegrate. He wrote that the earthquakes of San Francisco and Formosa that came in accordance to his prophecy were known to all, but recently, on 16 August 1906 an earthquake had struck Chile which was no less powerful. It destroyed fifteen towns, thousands lost their lives and hundreds of thousands were made homeless. Some could ask how could this be a sign, as these earthquakes did not strike Punjab. They did not realize that God is the God of the entire world not just of the Punjab and He had informed the Promised Messiah^{as} about the whole world. It was unfortunate that accusations of falsehood were levied in the Punjab. The Promised Messiah^{as} warned that just as earthquakes had struck according to prophecies in America and Europe, they would strike in Asia, some of which would be a picture of

Day of Judgment, obliterating life en masse. So much so that those with wisdom will find this extraordinary and no worldly knowledge will be able to explain the phenomenon. This is when mankind will get anxious and many will be given salvation while many will be destroyed. This will come to pass in the not too distant future and many other dreadful calamities will take place. Some occurring from the skies, others on the earth. This will be because mankind has stopped worshipping God and all attention is focused on the world. The Promised Messiah^{as} said had he not come, these calamities may have been slightly delayed, but with his coming the hidden will of God had been made evident, just as God has declared: ‘...**We never punish until We have sent a Messenger.**’ (17:16). Those who repent will be granted refuge.

A famous quote of the Promised Messiah^{as} in this regard states: ‘O’ Europe, you too are not in peace and O’ Asia, you too are not safe, and O’ dwellers of the islands no false god will help you. I see cities being demolished and find populated areas desolated. The One and Only God remained silent for a long time while repulsive things were done in front of Him and He said nothing. But now He will manifest His countenance with awe. Those who have ears to hear may listen that the time is not far. I tried to gather everyone under the refuge of God, but it was certain for what was destined to be fulfilled. I say most truthfully that the turn of this country is also approaching. You will witness the time of Noah and you will see the incident of Lot. But God is lenient in chastisement. Repent, so that you may be given mercy. A person who leaves God is a worm not a man and a person who does not fear Him is dead not alive.’ Hazoor^{aba} added that this warning is specifically for the region of India and Pakistan.

Hazoor^{aba} prayed that may God give sense and understanding to the world to recognize one sent from God and is thus spared God’s chastisement. May He also enable us to take the true message of Islam to others and may each difficulty and trouble in this cause strengthen our faith and may we not abandon our task out of fear. May God enable us so.

Ahmadis in America

C. Naseer Ahmad

I am trying to collect the narratives of Ahmadis in America. It will be a collection of stories about Ahmadis from different walks of life. This collection will help document how the Ahmadis individually and collectively have contributed to the fabric of American society and how Ahmadis are fitting in the big picture.

In the past, I have written about “Muslims in Cleveland”. I have also written about some African Americans.

If you or someone you know has an interesting story to share about yourself and/or your family; including those notable Ahmadis, who have passed away please contact me at cnaseerahmad@yahoo.com or 703-282-4575. Thank you.

HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V'S^{aba} CLOSING ADDRESS DELIVERED ON SEP- TEMBER 27th, 2009 AT THE TIME OF THE SALANA IJTIMAH OF MAJLIS KHUDDAMUL AHMADIYYA, UK.

Translated by: Belal Khalid

In the Name of Allah, the
Gracious, the Merciful

**The continuation of
Khilafat until now is a
proof of the unity of
God as He has gathered
hearts at one heart.**

**This turning around of
hearts, keeping them
under control, and pro-
ducing the true senti-
ments of obedience is a
proof of the godliness of
Allah, the Exalted.**

After reciting *Tasha-
hud*, *Ta'awwaz*, and *Surah
al-Fatiha*, Hazoor^{aba} said:

All praise for Allah, the
Exalted, today is the last day
of our Annual Gathering
(*Salana Ijtimah*) of *Khudda-
mul Ahmadiyya*, UK. By the
grace of God, the attendance,
as reported by *Sadr Sahib*

was about 350 more than
the last year. This is a proof
of the fact that with every
step we are moving for-
ward, and it should be such,
as it is a sign of the pro-
gressing nations. Therefore,
we should always remem-
ber that our next year's at-
tendance should be more
than this year's attendance
(God willing). If we employ
efforts and prayers, Allah,
the Exalted, will continue
blessing every aspect of our
work.

This year, by the
Grace of God, *Khuddamul
Ahmadiyya* has also proven
that whoever is appointed
their *Sadr*, they fully coop-
erate with him, try to follow
his programs, and move
forward his agenda. This is
also because of the special
support of God to the *Ja-
ma'at-e-Ahmdiyya*. When
last year, *Sadr Sahib* was
appointed, and I approved
him, he was worried, but at

that time he did not know
that the work assigned to him
was not a worldly task. Only
a divine *Jama'at* possesses
this attribute that their mem-
bers fully cooperate when
someone is appointed as their
leader and *Imam*, and they
continue advancing his agen-
da because this is not some-
one's personal agenda, and
our *Jama'at* does not idolize
people. All *Jama'ats* and
their members work to please
Allah, the Exalted. His con-
cern was due to his in experi-
ence, and time has proved
that his concerns were
wrong, and Allah, the Ex-
alted, removed all his con-
cerns, and this year, *Khudda-
mul Ahmadiyya* has shown
improvement in execution of
its programs compared to the
previous years. This is the
beauty of the *Jama'at* of the
Promised Messiah^{as}. This is a
proof of the fact that the
Promised Messiah^{as} was sent
by God with his special sup-
port and assistance. Allah has

been continuously fulfilling the promises that He made to the Promised Messiah^{as}. Further, I want to tell you that the Promised Messiah^{as} explained why Allah's support was with him, "There is only one religious *Jama'at* in the world that has an *Imam*. All other *Jama'ats* have no leader. They are an example of

قُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّى

Their hearts are divided

(*Al-Hashr* 59:15)"

(Malfoozat, volume 5, p.220, published in Rabwah).

Though, outwardly they claim that they are united but their hearts are divided, and we could observe it everywhere.

After the Promised Messiah^{as}, God, the Exalted, also produced the same beauty in *Khilafat*. This is a great proof of the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah^{as} and of the fact that the Promised Messiah^{as} was sent by God. Moreover, we also tell other opponent Muslims that the progress and unity of the *Jama'at* proves that the Promised Messiah^{as} was sent by God for the reformation of mankind in this age. Further, this is also a proof of the existence and presence of God. Atheists say, "What is the proof of the existence of

God?" For an Ahmadi, this is a great proof that Allah, the Exalted, turned around the hearts and gathered them on one hand.

During the time of the Promised Messiah^{as} people used to say that his tongue had magical powers, and his speeches had a mesmerizing effect, and he could cast a spell by talking. God proved after his death that the magic given to him was from God, and it continued forever even afterwards. Afterwards, *Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya* started with the blessings of God, and fear was replaced with peace.

The establishment of *Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya* in the times of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}, and then in the times of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}, and its continuation until now is a proof of the unity of God as God has gathered hearts on one hand. Bodies could be bought but hearts cannot be bought, and especially sacrificing hearts. This is a big thing. This is not only a great proof in favor of *Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya*, it is also a great proof of the existence of God. Because it is God who has kept the *Jama'at* united, and God also blesses the decisions of the *Khalifa*. As I said, every member of the *Jama'at* has a sense of obedience be-

cause of his desire to please Allah, the Exalted. They also obey all the lower auxiliaries of the *Jama'at* because of their obedience to the system of *Khilafat*. This turning around of hearts, keeping them under control, and the development of the sense of obedience is a proof of the godliness of Allah, the Exalted. Always remember that every youth and child should carefully consider the subject of obedience in all matters; keep in mind that it is relevant not only for insignificant matters, rather it is critical in all matters.

If *Khuddamul Ahmadiyya* endeavored to increase attendance for the *Ijtimah*, it cannot be considered obedience. If they attend meetings, it is not obedience. If they offer financial sacrifice because of a short-lived passion, it cannot be considered obedience. If they offer *salat* for a few days while celebrating the 10 Day Training Program, it cannot be considered obedience. Obedience is a continuous subject that needs to be established in every Ahmadi. You should not be obedient only because a long time ago your parents performed the *Bai'at* and entered into this *Jama'at*, and you feel obligated because of their pledge; and since you became part of

this society therefore now you have no choice but to obey. Further, since the others (outside the *Jama'at*) are also not ready to accept you, therefore you have no choice but to obey. Obedience may also be necessitated because of family relations, or as I said, one feels obligated to obey in certain matters as there are *Jama'at's* auxiliaries and sometimes one is forced to obey against his will. Sometimes, one feels obligated to follow as one does not want to be in violation of the auxiliaries. These things should not be found in an Ahmadi. When a sincere Ahmadi obeys a lower officer or the *Khalifa* of the times, his goal should be to achieve the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. When this kind of obedience is established, it will raise one's level of *taqwa* (righteousness). Or when *taqwa* will be developed, the standard of obedience will be raised to the level where a man does everything for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

Allah the Exalted says,

إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا
وَاطَعْنَا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ٥

And whoso obeys Allah and His Messenger, and

fears Allah, and takes Him as a shield *for protection*, it is they who will be successful. (24:52)

That when they are called towards God and His Messenger so he could judge between them, they say that they listened and accepted it. These are the people who succeed and this status is achieved only by those who desire God's pleasure. Their every task, every action should be for achieving God's pleasure, and it should not be because of the pressure of the society, it should not be to save them from the violation of the *Jama'at*, rather it should be in obedience of God's instructions to obey God and His Messenger, and to abide by his decisions. Everyone should consider that there shouldn't be any weakness when one starts to do any task or when following someone's instructions. It should be done because God is watching and that one does not want to upset God by not performing a task. This is perfect obedience and these are the people who succeed. Then

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَ يَخْشَ
اللَّهَ وَيَتَّقْهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ٥

Allah the Exalted says,

And the people who obey Allah and His Mes-

senger and fear Allah, and observe His *taqwa*, they are the ones who are successful. (24:53)

They achieve the extreme heights of success. They achieve the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. Thus success is not achieved by merely repeating from the tongue that one is obedient, it will be achieved when you follow with sincere sentiments of obedience, and not because of the fear of society, but because of the fear of Allah, the Exalted, and obey while observing *taqwa*.

How can one achieve *taqwa* of Allah, the Exalted? This could be achieved by acting upon Allah, the Exalted's commandments. Allah, the Exalted, has given us numerous commandments in the Holy Qur'an. Every child and adult should always remember that Allah, the Exalted, is watching him. He can hide things from his parents, from the officials of the *Jama'at*, but he cannot hide anything from Allah, the Exalted. And that he has pledged to do every single thing of his life for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. Every *Khadim* and *Tifl* should develop this sense. He should abstain from every bad deed in order to avoid the displeasure

of Allah, the Exalted. When one obtains this level, he becomes the recipient of Allah, the Exalted's nearness. Everyone should assess oneself. Everyone should look into his own consciousness and try to assess their level of obedience. Allah, the Exalted's real *taqwa* will be developed only when one is doing this assessment. This assessment, when done, will produce revolutionary changes. And this assessment will be real if you recognize the true purpose of being an Ahmadi. This is a very important thing. Why are we Ahmadi? What is the purpose of us being Ahmadi? Why do we need to be called names by the world? Why do we need to be harmed by the world? Why do we need to be made fun of in certain things? Unless you understand these things, you would not get to the bottom of it.

Tens of millions of people claim to be Muslims, and they claim to observe *taqwa*. But we should always remember that the true definition of *taqwa* is the one that is described by Allah, the Exalted, and His Messenger, or the one that has been further explained by the Promised Messiah^{as} in this age. Thus the claim of tens of millions of Mus-

lim to observe *taqwa* is useless, worthless, and vain. The people committing suicidal attacks - in their minds - carry them out to achieve the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. When the people who incite these innocent people to waste their lives in suicidal attacks in order to please Allah, the Exalted, are asked about it, they claim to be doing these things for the sake of achieving *taqwa*, and they say that they are throwing children in it also for the sake of *taqwa*. They take children of 10, 12, or 13 years of age, or even younger from their parents for the sake of teaching them religion. They are taken for the sake of achieving the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted or for gaining the gardens of the Heavens. But this is not *taqwa*. Playing with the lives of innocent people or wasting someone's life is not pleasing to God. This is not the commandment of God. So their definition of *taqwa* is based on self-concocted teachings.

Allah and His Messenger have instructed to do *Jihad*, and to do *Jihad* when those conditions exist that are mandatory for it. If those conditions do not exist, wasting of lives without any purpose is not *taqwa*. This is not obedience of Al-

lah, the Exalted, and His Messenger. Allah, the Exalted says that if war is imposed upon you, you do have the right to do *Jihad* in order to defend yourself, your mosques and places of worship, but wasting innocent lives, children, and women in suicidal attacks is not *Jihad*. This is a clear disobedience of God, the Exalted's commandments. So, the claims of *taqwa* of these people are totally false. Today, only an Ahmadi can tell what real *taqwa* is. Allah, the Exalted, and His Messenger instructed us to accept the *Imam* of the age. The Holy Qur'an also instructs us to accept the *Imam* of the latter days when he comes. The *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet^{saw} also tell us the same thing. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said to accept the Messiah and *Mahdi*. Since they are not obeying these commandments, therefore they are outside the *taqwa* as the *Imam Mahdi* was supposed to guide them to the right path, and he had to tell them when and where to do *Jihad*. So any *Jihad* that is carried out without his guidance cannot be considered *Jihad*, and actually would be counted as a wrongdoing. So all the dissensions produced by the outsiders are because the *Imam* of the time has not been recognized. We are fortunate that

after recognizing the Promised Messiah^{as} we have saved ourselves from all absurdities, immoralities, injustices, and violence. So today, only an Ahmadi could understand the real *taqwa* since he has recognized the *Imam* of the age. Today, the obedience of Allah and His Messenger is associated with the obedience to the Promised Messiah^{as}, and one cannot obey Allah and His Messenger while being disobedient to the Promised Messiah^{as}.

The promise of *Khilafat* is mentioned further ahead in the same verses that I recited. So *Khilafat* also has the support of Allah, the Exalted, and His Messenger. Therefore, it gathers the *Jama'at* on one hand. Ahmadi gather on one hand only because of the support of Allah and His Messenger otherwise none of the *Khulafa* has any worldly powers to gather people of different nations, colors, and races on one hand. So, while recognizing the blessings of Allah, and repeating them again and again, continue searching for the goals that advance *taqwa*, that advance obedience, and the progress of *taqwa* will make you successful. One will become the recipient of that goodness about which the Qur'an has said that its re-

cipients are successful. In this age, as I said, the Promised Messiah^{as} has pointed towards the ways that lead to *taqwa*. I will mention a few things from the sayings of the Promised Messiah^{as} in this regard:

“The reality of *Bai'at* is that the one who enters the covenant produces a true transformation and *taqwa* in his heart and after recognizing the true purpose turns his life into a perfect model.”

(Malfoozat, vol.5, p.605, Rabwah).

What is the real purpose of the *Bai'at* mentioned by the Promised Messiah^{as}? It is the establishment of the true unity of God, and fulfilling the rights of His creation. In fact, if the true unity of God is understood, the rights of the creation start to establish themselves automatically. This leads to the observance of all the commandments of Allah, the Exalted and His Messenger.

The youth among us - and I see that most of the people sitting in front of me are either passing through the age of youth, or are youths - have a number of issues and disputes. For example, in the age of youth, they may get excited even if someone jokingly says

something to them and it can lead to such actions that lead to disputes. Further, there is no attention towards fulfilling the rights of wives. Minor incidents lead to quarrels and dissensions in the houses. Though, the commandment of God is to make your house a model of Heavens. This is perfect obedience. Then, is the issue of not fulfilling the rights of relatives, though they have been prescribed too. Allah, the Exalted, and His Messenger have instructed to fulfill these rights. This is obedience as it is done for the sake of seeking the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. Some people are great from the perspective of the *Jama'at*, they are carrying out huge services, they spend hours and hours for *Jama'at*, but their houses are all the time full of dissensions. This happens because of the lack of perfect belief in Allah, the Exalted. An Ahmadi should develop this perfect belief. When one tries to develop this perfect belief, he becomes wary of the Satan, who incites sitting in various paths, and makes us forget the true purpose of life. So, it would spare human beings from the clutches of Satan and Satan would not be able to mislead, deceive, and delude them.

What sketch of the unity was drawn by the Promised Messiah^{as}? It is the

establishment of unity that leads to the advancements of other things. He says,

“I say with full conviction that if a man recognizing the truth of the blessed creed (*kalma tayyiba*) practically adheres to it, he could progress tremendously. He could witness the strange powers of Allah, the Exalted.” He also said,

“I know, there are a number of people in my *Jama'at* who profess to accept unity, but I regretfully say that they do not believe in it. I do not believe that the one who wrongs his brother, or violates trusts, or does not disassociate himself from other evils is a believer of unity, because the belief in unity is such a blessing that immediately produces a strange transformation when it is achieved.” This is such a marked transformation which is unique. He said about those who establish true unity in their heart, “The idols of malice, grudge, and jealousy, are removed from them, and they are near to God.” He also says, “One becomes a true believer in one God when internal idols of pride, egotism, deception, malice, enmity, jealousy, greed, dissension, and betrayal are removed. As long as these idols are present inside one, how could one be truthful in repeating the creed:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

(Malfoozat, vol.5, pp.91,
Rabwah)

Look, though we do believe in the creed,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

but how many among us have the level of belief that is explained by the Promised Messiah^{as} Are our hearts completely free of pride? Do little things related to our pride and honor anger us and we exhibit arrogance? Are our hearts free of ego or do we give priority and preference to ourselves over others? Do we always desire to be praised and projected? If we are not commended, does it hurt our feelings? This hurting of feelings further promotes egotism and the desire of the heart. Are our hearts free of malice and enmity? Do we develop malice in our heart over insignificant things further promoting ill feelings? Are we free of jealousy? Does seeing another progress incite jealousy in our heart instead of admiring them, and do we try to harm them? Are we free of miserliness, or do we fall short when offering sacrifice for the sake of Allah? Do we fulfill our personal desires but stop short when sacrificing for the sake of Allah? By the blessings of God, there are many in the *Ja-*

ma'at who do not show any kind of miserliness and have a big heart and continue sacrificing. But there are those who need to assess themselves. Are our hearts free of dissensions? Or we have something else in our hearts and we show something different? The heart of an Ahmadi should not only be pure from dissensions in matters of the *Jama'at* but also in personal matters. He should always speak straight and the truth, and also be wary of other people's sentiments. Dissension exists when the heart has some ill feelings but outward depiction is different. These ill feelings give further rise to the feelings of jealousy one continues harming others. It also harms oneself. Do we fulfill all of our pledges? Or have we fulfilled some pledges but not the others? Did we endeavor to establish unity in our hearts? Then, are we safeguarding our *salat*? Safeguarding *salat* for men is achieved by trying to establish congregational *salat*. We should remember that creed,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

is also a pledge that there is none worthy of worship except Allah. So the one worthy of worship should be worshiped. Allah, the Exalted, taught us this form of worship too. Similarly there is the pledge to fulfill the rights of other human beings. We have taken this pledge in this age by performing the *Bai'at* of Hadhrat

Promised Messiah^{as}. So if we believe in the creed,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

then it is obligated upon us to fulfill this pledge.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says about the offering of *salat*,

“The Holy Qur’an has again and again reminded us about the observation of *salat*.” He then said, “*Salat* in fact is a pleading to Allah, the Exalted to save oneself from all evils and sins. Man has been suffering from pain and detachment and desires nearness to Allah, the Exalted. It is imperative to endeavor for this.” *Salat* purifies and bridges the distance between the self which is full of sins, and is detached to God’s enlightenment and nearness and God. It is a means to remove those evils and develop pure sentiments.”

(Malfoozat, vol.5. pp.92-93, Rabwah)

How should the *salat* be offered that brings one near to Allah, the Exalted, removes evils, and perfects our belief in the creed,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

He said, “The meanings of the word of *salat* tell us that merely words and prayers are not enough, they should be ac-

companied by grief, earnest pleading, and pain.”

This is the kind of *salat* that an Ahmadi should try to offer. If we grasp this essence and principle in our youth, (God willing), our relationship of nearness to God, the Exalted will continue progressing.

Today, when this world is writing absurd things, books, and essays about the existence of God, and God’s existence is negated by means of various absurdities and media, a large section of people in spite of not outwardly denying the existence of God and religion has practically gone far away from religion and God. The world has erected lots of associates of God. Muslims are also practically negating the creed

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ

in the name of Islam. They are professing it from their tongues, but practically, they negate it since the creed

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

teaches to fulfill the rights of human beings.

مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ

presents its practical picture to us.

In the Holy Qur’an, Allah, the Exalted taught us

to be obedient by means of

أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ

Why? As I said,

أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ

teaches us to act upon the commandments of Allah, the Exalted, and

أَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ

teaches us to follow the excellent example of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. Each Ahmadi should strive hard to present a lofty picture of this creed

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ

When we adorn our knowledge with the instructions of Allah, the Exalted, and jump in the field of preaching while professing belief in preaching, then we become the ones who convey the message of truth to the world proving its superiority over other religions that world has forgotten. By coloring our deeds in the color of the excellent example of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, our excellent practice we will prove to the world that the survival of humanity is associated with this practice. Thus, it is imperative to adopt these paths in order to expand preaching. We would have to understand the meanings of:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

and the meanings of

مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ

and we would have to focus towards reading and understanding the books of the Promised Messiah^{as} that explain the Qur'an and *Ahadiith*. So, it is imperative to increase ones knowledge in order to step ahead in good deeds, and to achieve nearness to Allah, the Exalted. It is important to increase one's knowledge and it is also necessary to focus towards one's actions. These fields of preaching will expand by the blessings of Allah, the Exalted.

Come and pledge to do your utmost effort to achieve nearness to Allah, the Exalted. We have to adorn our *salat*, increase our knowledge, polish our actions, and further, have to convey the message of Allah, the Exalted to the entire world. The new century of Ahmadiyyat cannot be merely adorned with our slogans; it has to be adorned with our prayers and actions as well.

Sadr Sahib also said to me before the beginning of the *Ijtema* to separately address *Tifl* in their marquee. I said that usually it is the same topic for *Khuddam* and those *Atfal* who are old enough to understand. Allah, the Exalted has prescribed *salat* at the age of 10 years. People should take care of their *salat* and never be negligent in it. Laziness cannot be an excuse for the 10 years old since *salat* has been prescribed. Offering *salat* is mandatory for everyone. Also read the Holy

Qur'an. Many *Atfal* memorize Qur'an when they are 10 to 12 years old. In this age, they should also study the translation. By the blessings of God, these methods of increasing faith would mature very soon in the minds of these *Tifl*, and they do start to develop understanding if they have a will. When the Holy Qur'an is read with translation, one gains knowledge about the commandments of Allah, the Exalted as well. For example, there is a commandment to respect parents. Thus, parents will also be respected, and children would listen to them. Allah, the Exalted, will also be pleased with you since you are following your parents for the sake of pleasing Allah, the Exalted. Do not copy the local kids. The kids who live in Europe, and the non-Ahmadis, or non-Muslims, as I said in the beginning, have no one to explain to them, they have no *Imam*. You are different from them, you do not have to copy them; they have to copy you.

As I mentioned in my sermon, now the question is being raised on TV about the limits of being polite or strict with children in order to explain to them. Even this is mentioned that if a child touches a hot thing and parents gently smack him to stop him, and the child started crying and

screaming, police and other organizations for the safety of children might take away the child from their parents. Now this thing has gone so far that it has made children disrespectful to their parents. They do not respect parents or anyone else. Similarly, there are children in school who break discipline. It has been said that there should be limits there too. They should not go beyond a limit. If they exceed the limit, they will be punished. The organizations for the safety of children will not interfere up to a limit. The organizations for the safety of children will not interfere up to a limit. Islam has already explained these things according to human nature by advising to respect parents and grownups. Reading of the Holy Qur'an will guide elders and the children to a number of good things and they will find out about them. May Allah enable *Khuddam* and *Atfal* to understand their responsibilities because of being Ahmadi. It has been mentioned in the incident of *Ashab-e-Kahaf* that youth offered sacrifices to protect and establish unity. Today, youth have to play an important role to establish the unity which is propagated by the Muhammadi Messiah. It is the responsibility of Ahmadis to spread the message of Islam and unity in the world and as I said, youth have to play a tremendous role in it. May Allah enable all of you to do so. *Ameen*. Let's pray now.

INCIDENTS OF GREAT SACRIFICES FOR THE INSTITUTION OF KHILAFAT, DURING THE KHILAFAT-E-RASHIDAH AND KHILAFAT-e-AHMADIYYA

Khilafat-e Ahmadiyya

Maulana I. H. Kauser

The Role of the *Sahabah* (Companions) of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and of the Promised Messiah^{as} in regard to safeguarding the institution of *Khilafat*, their great sacrifices by words and deeds are to follow these Heavenly Stars.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} said,

“My Sahabas are like the stars, you may follow any of them you will be rightly guided.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} was the sun in the spiritual heaven and his *Sahabah* were the Stars who had taken the *Noor* (Light) from the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}.

Our Beloved the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} being a perfect Guide for all mankind, exhorted his followers to follow them. As stars shine in the night guiding people, so actually we were told that the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} will be

guiding you in the dark ages.

Sahabah were very obedient and loyal to the *Khilafat*. They left their worldly affairs, adopted a very simple life, made humility their life style, put their lives in danger, left their kith and kin for the sake of Islam, sacrificed their desires and wishes adopting the company of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. They had no desire of the world. They followed all commandments given to them by God, the Holy Prophet^{saw} and the *Khalifas*. No doubt, the *Sahabah* of the Holy Prophet^{saw} presented Great Sacrifices to Safeguard the *Khilafat* all their lives.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} under the Divine guidance trained them and educated them very well in 23 years time creating a *Jama'at* of thousands of *Sahabah* whose thinking, sayings and actions became 100% Islamic.

Incidents from Khilafat-e-Rashidah

At the time of the very sad and sudden death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} the *Sahabah* were shocked and they felt a danger that the enemy might take the advantage of this, so they suggested to Hadhrat Abu Bakr^{ra} that sending of the army of Hadhrat Osama^{ra} may be postponed.

Hadhrat Abu Bakr^{ra} said:-

“It is not possible for Ibn-e-Abi Qahaafah (Abu Bakr) to stop the army which was sent by The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him).

Then they recommended that at least we should appoint an elderly person to command the forces other than a sixteen year old boy.

Hadhrat Abu Bakr^{ra} replied:

“Though the wild dogs and beasts of Medina will be dragging our dead bodies, even then, I am not going to change the commander who had been appointed by The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}.”

During the time of the first *Khilafat-e-Rashidah* some hypocrites targeted the *Khilafat* to degrade it through spreading rumors and suspicions in the minds of people.

Hadhrat Hanzalah Al-Kaatib^{ra} a Great *Sahabi* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} was astonished and perturbed on the situation. As he was a poet he said some couplets. Which mean;

- 1) *“I wonder on those who are reproaching and taunting the Khilafat, so it may be demolished.”*
- 2) *“If Khilafat does not remain, no goodness will remain in them. They would be led astray like the Jews and the Christians.”*

History is a witness to the fact that when they did not care for this advice, they were disgraced everywhere.

Hadhrat Bilal^{ra} never called “*Adhan*” after the demise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. Once he traveled from Medina to Syria and from Syria to Damascus, Muslims of that area requested to him to call *Adhan*, but he denied and said:-

“I am not going to call Adhan, because for the sake of a person, I used to call Adhan is no more in this world. I am afraid if I called Adhan, it will remind me my separation from my Beloved Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and I will not be able to bear it.”

Fortunately, in those days Hadhrat Umar^{ra} was also visiting Damascus, so they approached him and requested him. On their behalf Hadhrat Umar^{ra} requested Hadhrat Bilal^{ra} to call *Adhan*.

He said: -

“Now the Khalifah has asked me to call Adhan, I can’t deny.”

So he called *Adhan*. As soon as he started the *Adhan*, people thought that the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} has arrived. Men, women, children and elders were running towards the mosque. Hadhrat Bilal^{ra} kept calling *Adhan*, with tears and in a very emotional tone. As soon as he

completed his *Adhan*, he fell down on the ground, passed away and met his Beloved.

“Innaa Lillahe wa Inna ilaihie Raajeon.”

Thus he proved his love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and that he will not be able to bear his separation from the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. But he couldn’t say “No” to the request of the *Khalifa* being very obedient to the *Khilafat*.

One day Hadhrat Umar^{ra} was delivering his Friday sermon. Suddenly during his sermon he said:

*“Yaa Saariyat-al Jabal!
Yaa Sariyat-al Jabal!
Yaa Sariyat-al Jabal”*

Which means,

“Proceed to the mountain, proceed to the mountain proceed to the mountain.”

After the prayer *Sahabah* asked him what was the matter? He told them that during his sermon he had a vision in which he was shown the scene of the battle in Syria. Seeing it he came to the conclusion that if our army moves towards the mountain, they will win the war. So he directed

them immediately to move towards the mountain.

On the other side, the commander of the army heard the voice of Hadhrat Umar^{ra}, commanding him to move his army towards the mountain. He immediately ordered his army to move towards the mountain. This way their defeat was changed into victory.

Now, see the Muslim army was hundreds of miles away from Medina and they had no worldly way of communication, but when the Commander heard the voice, he understood that this order is from Hadhrat Umar^{ra}, so he immediately obeyed his orders.

Once a call was made by Hadhrat Umar^{ra} for sacrifices of lives at the battle of *Qadisiya*. Hadhrat Khansaa^{ra} had four sons. She sent them all and told them that she doesn't want them to come back without victory. All four sons were martyred in that battle. This is an illustrious example of great sacrifices presented by a Muslim women responding to the call of the *Khalifa* of the time.

Once a lady was performing the *Hajj* during the time of Hadhrat Umar^{ra}. Hadhrat Umar^{ra} found her with a disease which was contagious (Leprosy). He ad-

vised her to go home and not to perform *Hajj* so the others should not be affected. She accepted his advice and went home without completing her *Hajj*.

After the demise of Hadhrat Umar^{ra} somebody suggested her that as Hadhrat Umar^{ra} has passed away, now she should perform her *Hajj*. She replied:

"I am not such a person who was obedient during his life time but after his demise ignores his commandments."

That lady never performed *Hajj* during her life time in obedience and respect for the *Khalifa*.

Hadhrat Umar^{ra} removed Hadhrat Khalid bin Waleed^{ra} from his post and appointed Abu Ubaidah Jarrah^{ra} to be the commander of the army during a battle. Hadhrat Khalid Bin Waleed^{ra} accepted it whole heartedly and never complained. Rather he presented his services as an ordinary soldier in all battles afterwards.

One day Hadhrat Umar^{ra} was sitting among some chiefs of Arabia. Some *Sahabah* of early Islam arrived; Hadhrat Umar^{ra} permitted them to sit closer to him, so the chiefs moved

back. Then another group of *Sahabah* came and were given the front seats, again another group of early *Sahabah* came and they were given a closer place to him and the chiefs moved all the way in the back seats.

The chiefs felt very embarrassing and disgraced. They said to Hadhrat Umar^{ra}, we do understand that those who are sitting in the front seats made many sacrifices in the early age of Islam, while we were against Islam. But what is the solution now?

Hadhrat Umar^{ra} became very emotional, wept, cried and could not utter a single word from his mouth but made a sign towards Syria, which meant, go and participate in the battle in Syria. They all left immediately for Syria and were martyred there. They were Hadhrat Ikramah^{ra}, Hadhrat Harith^{ra} and Hadhrat Suhail^{ra}

Look! How they sacrificed their lives on a single sign of a *Khalifa*.

It is also quoted about them that they were seriously injured in the battlefield and were about to die, that one of them asked for water. A person goes near to them but the same time another person asked for water, he directed him to go to

the other person when he reaches there, that person hears that another person is asking for water, so he signals that he should go to him. When he reaches there, he found him dead. He comes back to the other person, he found him dead too. Then he rushes to the first but he found him dead also.

This way they left great examples for us in the history.

Hadhrat Umar^{ra} (when he was very seriously sick because of the attack) called upon Hadhrat Abu Talha^{ra} and directed him that he should guard the house where the election will take place.

There is another narration that a committee of seven members was formed by Hadhrat Umar^{ra} and Abu Talah Ansari^{ra} was directed to guard the members of *Shura* with 50 armed members of his tribe and that he should not let any body go in and that "*within three days they should elect their Khalifa*".

Hadhrat Umar^{ra} prayed with the following words,

O Allah! You will be watching over them on my behalf."

Another incident of showing love and respect for the *Khalifa*. When the time of demise of Hadhrat Umar^{ra} approached, he sent a *Sahabi* to Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} requesting her to give him the place of burial next to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} which she had reserved for herself.

Advising the *Sahabi*, not to use the word "*Ameerul Momineen*" before her (to influence her), rather you should say, "*Umar*" is requesting for it.

Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} regardless of her strong desire for it permitted Hadhrat Umar^{ra} to be buried there. What a Great sacrifice she made for the *Khalifa* of the time!

When Hadhrat Abu Musa Asha'ri^{ra} was appointed to be the Governor of "Kufaa" he addressed the people and said I am not going to lead your prayers until and unless you promise that you will be fully obedient to Hadhrat Usman^{ra} and will follow his commandments. So people promised that they will be fully obedient to his commandments.

This way he made them understand that all blessings are attached with the *Khilafat*.

Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Masud^{ra} after taking *Bai'at* on the hand of Hadhrat Usman^{ra} said,

"We had Bai'at on the hand of a person who was the best. And we showed no slackness in this regard." (Al-Isaaba Vol.4 page 223)

During Hadhrat Ali's^{ra} *Khilafat*, the Caesar of Rome thought of attacking Muslims because of his perception of their weakness. When this news reached Hadhrat Muaviyah^{ra}, he sent Caesar a letter, advising him not to attack Muslims, because if he did so, Hadhrat Muaviyah^{ra} would join Hadhrat Ali's^{ra} forces as an ordinary soldier, to fight against Caesar. After receiving this message Caesar changed his mind.

Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya

At the election of the first *Khalifa*, Hadhrat Maulana Hakim Nooruddin^{ra} said that we should get permission from "*Amman Jaan*^{ra}" to have the election. After she granted the permission they had the election.

When Hadhrat *Amman Jaan*^{ra} heard that Hadhrat Maulavi Hakim Nooruddin Sahib^{ra} had been elected as *Khalifa*, she said,

"From now on I am your slave."

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} mentioned that Hadhrat Amman Jaan^{ra} had so much respect for him that many a time she had said that *"I am your slave."*

Hadhrat Mir Nasir Nawaab^{ra} who was father-in-law to Hadhrat Masih-e Mau'ood^{as} and father of Hadhrat Amman Jaan^{ra}, whose name had been proposed for *Khilafat* by Hadhrat Maulvi Hakim Nooruddin Sahib, counting Allah's favors on him, mentioned:

"After the demise of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}

"I took the Bai'at on the hand of a person who is unique in knowledge, genealogy and especially in understanding of the Holy Quran and Hadith."

What a respect he had for Khalifatul Masih!

Once Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sahib (a companion of the Promised Messiah^{as}) arrived from *"Sar-had"* (The frontier area of Pakistan) and sat down on the floor.

Hadhrat Mian Sharif Ahmad Sahib^{ra} took notice of it and urged him to sit down on a chair, but he insisted that because of an incident which impressed him a lot,

he prefers to sit on the floor. Hadhrat Mian Sharif Ahmad Sahib^{ra} asked him to tell the incident which impressed him a lot. He mentioned that "during the time of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} whenever he visited him, he found an elderly person with all his humility, sitting on the floor, next to him, at his shoes. When Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} passed away, we rushed to Qadian. And when we reached there we were told that the new Imam is taking Bai'at at a place close to *"Bahishti Maqbarah"*. When we reached that place, we were astonished to see that the person who used to sit at his feet, is taking the *"Bai'at."*

"Glory be to God! The person who used to sit at his feet was chosen to be the Khalifa."

He said,

"So every blessing is sitting at the feet, that's why I prefer to sit at the feet,"

This was the humbleness of a *Sahaabi* of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Maulvi Abdul Baqi of Bihar has stated that, "After the death of the First Successor to the Promised Messiah, some people approached Mian Abdul

Hayee Sahib (the eldest son of the Hadhrat Maulavi Hakim Nooruddin Sahib^{ra}) and said that they would have certainly obeyed him if he had been the Caliph.

Mian Abdul Hayee said,

"You are either deceiving your own selves or are telling a lie. Obedience is not a joke. I tell you that if I had been the Caliph, You will never obey me either. Even if I were to give you an order now, I am sure you will not obey me."

At this one of them said,

"Why not Sir? You just try, giving us an order now and you shall see how promptly we obey it."

Mian Abdul Hayee said, "Are you serious about what you say? They replied, yes!"

On this Mian Abdul Hayee Sahib said,

"All right, Then I command you to take the pledge of allegiance on the hands of Mirza Mahmood Ahmad Sahib."

At this, they were all astounded and tamely replied.

"This, Sir, is a thing which we cannot do."

Another great example of a Great *Sahabi* of the Promised Messiah^{as} who had the opportunity to take *Bai'at* on the hands of four *Khulafa-e-Ahmadiyyat* was Ch. Zafarullah Khan Sahib^{ra}. Allah blessed him with a very high status in Ahmadiyyat as well as in the world. His devotion to the *Khilafat* was extraordinary.

Once Chaudhry Sahib was asked:

"Sir, throughout your life you have been very successful, would you please tell us why?"

He replied:

"Whatever I have gained is because of the Khilafat. I have always been very close to the Khalifas seeking their advices at every stage and every moment and followed their directions. I had unconditional obedience to them. That is the secret of my success."

One day before the election, Hadhrat Ch. Zafrulla Khan^{ra} met Hadhrat Mian Tahir Ahmad Sahib^{rh} and said; *Mian Sahib!* Today we are friends to each other but from tomorrow this relationship is going to be changed into a Master and a slave. (Because he knew that he is going to be elected as *Khalifa*).

After the demise of

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} Mirza Rasool Baig Sahib; who was the younger brother of Dr. Mirza Yaqoob Baig was receiving many letters from his brother to join the *Lahori Jama'at* and was also receiving letters from Qadian to have *Bai'at* on the hand of Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}.

On this he made an "*Istikharah* Prayer". That night he saw in his dream that a Rope has been dropped from the heaven. He wanted to check whether it is strong enough to hold the weight. He heard a voice coming from heaven,

"Hold fast to this Rope, as it is the Rope of Mian Mahmood Ahmad."

Next day he wrote a letter of *Bai'at* to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}. On the next *Jalsa Salana* he attended *Jalsa Salana* along with his son. As he was the younger brother of Dr. Mirza Yaqoob Baig who was a leader of the *Lahori Jama'at*, everybody thought that he must have joined the *Lahori Jama'at*. So at his arrival in Qadian some body met him on the way and asked, "Where are you Sir?" He replied, "I am no where but in Qadian."

After a while another of his friends met him and asked surprisingly:

"O, Are you are in Qadian?" He said, "Yes, I am." His friend said, "But your Brother is the leader of the *Lahori Jama'at*."

This time he was offended. He said;

"Do you think I am doing business with my faith? I don't care where Dr. Sahib (his brother) is heading and what he is doing?"

What a strong faith he presented for the institution of *Khilafat*. He didn't care whether his brother is a leader of the *Lahori Jama'at* but he said "*Labbaik*" to the call of Almighty God.

Once Mirza Rasool Baig was passing by in *Ahmadiyya Chawk* of Qadian with his son, when he met Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}. Hazoor showing his love for his son touched his chin and in a very affectionate way and said, "O, you recognized me?" Tears came out of the eyes of Mirza Rasool Baig. He answered his question in following words:

"Hazoor! "You have been recognized by the whole world, how come we don't recognize you."

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} mentioned:

"If suicide would have been permitted in Islam, I

could have ordered 200 youths of my Jama'at to jump in to the blazing fire, they would have jumped in it at once. This way I would have shown to the world what a great respect the members of the Jama'at have for their Khalifa.

Unconditional Obedience

Once, Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} made an appeal in a Friday sermon to the Ahmadi Muslim youth to join the (Furqan Force) an army; fighting for the freedom of Kashmir. In those days, it was almost like a death sentence. She brought her only son and presented to Hazoor to join Furqan Force. Hazoor was so much impressed by her great sacrifice that he prayed to Allah and said,

"O my Lord, this widow is presenting her only son for the protection of your religion and a Muslim country. I pray to you while pleading to your majesty, that if a human life is needed, then instead of her son, one of my son's life should be taken first."

That was the only son she had, but she brought him for sacrifice.

What a Great spirit of sacrifice on a call of the Khalifa!

Another Incident

Dr. Syed Ghulam Mujtaba Sahib (Late) an Ahmadi Doctor who had been in Ghana for many years, came back to Pakistan and built a Private Hospital in Karachi, One day while Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IIIth was visiting Karachi, Dr. Ghulam Mujtaba Sahib requested him in a *Mulaqat* to visit his Hospital for the opening ceremony. Hazoor said, "Yes. I will be doing it tomorrow but you will be leaving for Africa next day to work in a hospital." He replied, "yes Hazoor, Without any delay. Hazoorth attended the opening ceremony and Dr. Sahib went to Africa soon after, although he had spent millions of Rupees, building a hospital to fulfill his dream.

Once Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IIIth mentioned that a person came to him for *Mulaqat* with him and told him a personal story. He said, "I always hated you for some reasons. On the day when the election of *Khilafat* was taking place, Hazoor entered into Mubarak Mosque of Rabwah, I had some room next to me, I wished to invite you but you sat down on the shoes near the door. I said to myself (because of the hatred I had for you) *Yes! You deserve shoes.*

He said after a while, when you were elected as a *Khalifa*, there was a great change in my thoughts and behavior that soon after, I wished to have room in your shoes."

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth concluded his *Jalsa Salana* speech with the following wordings,

"O You, who are the flowers of the Garden of Ahmad!

O You, who are the fresh shoots in the garden of the Promised Messiah!

The freshness and flowering which have been bestowed upon you is because of the blessings of the Khilafat-e-Muhammadiyya.

This reward is yours today after thirteen centuries of deprivation and prayers. Now gather this reward to your breast, treat it with utmost respect, and keep it dearer to your heart than your children, your wives, your parents, your other dear ones. Your everlasting life is linked now to the Khilafat, the great highway linking you to that doorstep which is called the Khilafat-e-Rashidah Muhammadiyya. Guard this Khilafat with your life, and beseech each Khalifa in the language of the Ansar, saying "O Khalifa of the Prophet. We will fight in front of you, we will fight behind you, we will fight to the

right of you, we will fight to the left of you and by God, and by God, and no enemy will dare cast an evil look till doomsday toward the Khilafat of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him)."

O devotees of Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya!

O devotees of Khilafat-e-Muhammadiyya!

O! You, who have gathered around the bright light of Ahmadiyyat,

O! You fortunate souls! Who are the participants in this great spiritual gathering and who have assembled from the corners of the earth in this center of the Khilafat.

Today, our security, safety, mutual love, success, progress, a relationship with the Living God is all because of Khilafat.

Our Beloved Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} said,

"Remember! Our God is always true in His promises. He has put His hand (of mercy and security) on this lovely Jama'at Ahmadiyya. He will never forsake us. He will never forsake us. Again I say that He will never forsake us. He is continuously fulfilling His promises ex-

actly as He was doing them before. He is blessing us with his countless favors as He was doing before. And Insha'Allah he will continue them always.

(Khutba Jumu'ah May 21st, 2004)

Points to Ponder

There are millions of Ahmadiis all over the world who prayed to God, seeking His guidance, were informed with countless dreams and visions about all five *Khilafas* of Ahmadiyyat (before and after the election) in the last 100 years. This is a clear sign that the *Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya* is a true *Khilafat* and supported by Allah.

No doubt, our security, safety, mutual love, success, progress and relationship with the Living God is attached with the *Khilafat*.

**HOLD FAST
TO THE ROPE OF ALLAH;
THE KHILAFAT**

HELP

HUMANITY

FIRST

HADITH

Hadhrat Mu'adh^{ra} relates: "The Holy Prophet^{saw} appointed me to a Governorship and said: "Sometime, you will come across the people of the Book. Invite them to bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and that I am His Messenger. When they accept this, inform them that Alla-h has appointed for them five Prayers in a day (twenty four hours). When they accept this also, tell them that Alla-h has made obligatory upon them giving alms which will be collected from the rich amongst them and will be given to the poor. When they submit to this, be mindful not to take their best belongings for this purpose. Guard yourself against the plaint of a wronged one, for between that and Allah there is no barrier. "

(Bukhari kitabuzzakat bab la- tu- khadh kara-'im amwa-linna-s fis±s±adqah)

Hadhrat Abu Wa'il^{ra} relates: "Ibn Mas'ud used to admonish us every Thursday. A man said to him, 'O Abu-Abdur Rahman! I wish you would admonish us every day.' He said: 'What stops me from doing so is the fear lest you get fed up with it. Therefore, I admonish you after an interval as the Holy Prophet^{saw} used to admonish us after intervals.' "

(Muslim kitab sifatul qiyamah bab al- iqtisad fil mau'izah)

KHILAFAT - A DIVINE INSTITUTION

Mansura Bashir Minhas - Miami, FL

The *Khalifa* is Allah's vicegerent on this earth- a guide and leader who helps ordinary human beings interpret and understand Allah's commands. He guides them through Divine help and acts as a fountainhead of wisdom. He acts as a direct link to the Almighty, a source of infinite spiritual enlightenment for the common man.

The Ahmadiyya *Khilafat* is the only guided institution whose foundations lie on similar grounds as the *Khilafat-e-Rashida*. It is the only Divinely Guided *Khilafat* since then; one based on the precept of a Prophet (*Khilafat ala-minhaj-e-nabuwwat*).

The need for *Khilafat* is stated in the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ
مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۗ وَ لِيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي
ارْتَضَوْا لَهُمْ وَلِيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا
يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا ۗ وَمَن كَفَرَ

بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ۝

"Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and He will surely give them in exchange security (and peace) after their fear: They will worship Me alone, and they will not associate anything with Me. Then who so is ungrateful after that, they will be rebellious". (Sura Al-Nur: Vs 56)

After the passing of a Prophet, *Khilafat* is needed so that the message of Allah can be carried forward in the world in a sustained fashion. The *Khalifa* interprets Allah's commands, and is effective in the spiritual purification and moral training of his followers. He imparts wisdom and guides his followers with common-sense solutions and remedies to the challenges they confront.

At the end of the *Khilafat-e-Rashidah*, Mus-

lims were lead by monarchs and leaders who were devoid of spirituality and piety. These rulers were self-appointed and their influence was restricted solely to the political realm. *Khilafat ala minhaj-e-nabuwwat* (*Khilafat* on the precept of the Prophet) had indeed ended with Hadhrat Ali^{ra}.

True *Khilafat* (one on the precept of the Prophet) was revived after the passing of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}- the Promised Messiah and Reformer of the Age. He had revived the true spirit of Islam and restored its past glory. After his passing, his *Khulafa* have guided his followers and have defended Islam.

Every Ahmadi can testify to the numerous blessings that they have received as a result of adhering to the institution of *Khilafat*. When confronted with dilemmas on the moral, spiritual and religious fronts, they have the solace to turn to their *Khalifa* (the Guided One) for suggestions and guidance. Just listening to the Friday Sermon of Hazoor^{aba} is an enlightening experience for every Ahmadi. Ahmadis feel blessed

to have this unique connection with Allah's Divinely Guided. This bonding is a source of comfort and solace, and they are assured of Divine guidance through their *Khalifa* in all aspects of life, so much so that each member feels that his/her bond with the *Khalifa* is unique and special, and simply unparalleled.

The Muslim *Ummah* is confronted with serious challenges today. A lack of unity and harmony is prevalent amongst its ranks. The majority of ordinary Muslims find themselves at a stressful crossroad; they seek to distance themselves from the violent, militant factions within the community, while they haplessly yearn for a unified leadership from within their ranks who can give voice to and solve their concerns. Even when some amongst them strive on an individual level, their opinions are not taken seriously, and are dismissed as lacking credibility and authority. This leadership 'vacuum' has provided fertile ground for self-appointed 'spiritual gurus' who try to impart their 'shallow' wisdom. They occasionally succeed in misguiding certain gullible factions of the Muslim populace who are running from pillar to post like a decapitated chicken in a vain search for solutions to the myriad challenges that the *Ummah* faces - by populariz-

ing conspiracy theories, but not really finding a meaningful solution out of this abyss.

Such radical Muslims are thus posing a grave threat to world peace through their combative stance. These irrational leaders are inciting ignorant Muslims to wage a "*Jihad*" against the "infidel" (as they chose to call them) regimes of the world. They are urging the ignorant masses to take up the 'sword' as the sole guarantee to Islam's supremacy in the world. They fail to realize that Islam never spread through the 'sword'. Rather, it prevailed in times of peace and the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} never initiated wars. He was the ultimate peace-maker and negotiator and engaged in wars solely for self-defense; only after all efforts of reconciliation and peace had been exhausted.

Ahmadis, in true deference to their Beloved Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, listen to their *Khalifa* who guides them to refrain from such violence and bloodshed. They are extremely fortunate to be guided by a central authority who is Divinely Guided. Contrary to the militant ideology, they are urged to spread the true message of Islam and

propagate peace. They are guided by their *Khalifa* as they lead their lives in peace and harmony. They are taught to retaliate to curses with prayers, a beautiful ideology indeed, true to the spirit of true Islam, even as they are victimized, their properties vandalized, and their lives taken away. What a prototype for the rest of the Muslims to follow, the wisdom of which is evident in this very world, as Ahmadis continue to flourish and thrive all the more, as efforts to subjugate them are made!

Moderate voices from within the Muslim ranks lack a unified voice to counter the propaganda of the fanatics. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}, the Divinely Guided *Khalifa* of Ahmadiyyat is the sole, credible spokesperson of Islam, who offers a clear and authentic stance based on the teachings and examples of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. He is repeatedly urging the fanatic Muslims to shed their violent disposition and adopt a course of peaceful coexistence.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} also counters Western allegations and propaganda against Islam. In the last few months, certain European governments have antagonized their Muslim populations by imposing restrictions and limiting their

religious freedom. Switzerland's ban on minarets and the French *Burqa* ban are the two hot-button issues that are a source of contention between the Muslim world and the West, which perceives these symbols as grave threats to its secular foundations.

Jama'at Ahmadiyya has substantial credibility worldwide as a peace-loving community. It remains obedient to its *Khalifa* and Imam while respecting the laws of the land in which its adherents reside. Whenever confronted with such contentious issues, *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya has adopted a conciliatory course and managed to portray a convincing image of Islam. It seeks to resolve such conflicts with dialogue and negotiation. This is only possible because its followers stay faithful to their *Khalifa* and seek his guidance and follow the strategy outlined by him, whenever confronted with such contentious issues.

Unlike other Muslims, who seek revenge and retaliate against such restrictions, Ahmadis seek the blessings and guidance of their *Khalifa*. Guidelines for them are clear in this regard. They would never take up a hostile stance against the country where they reside. They remain faithful to that country and follow its laws and regu-

lations, even if they appear to be in contradiction to Islamic laws.

When Major Nadal Hasan gunned down his fellow American soldiers at Cape Hood, Texas in November, 2009, he disregarded this basic Islamic principle. He was supposedly distraught at the plight of the Palestinian Muslims and angry with the United States over its Middle East policies. Being a Muslim of Palestinian origin, he sought revenge for the sufferings of the Palestinian Muslims. But in the course of doing so, he violated a sacred trust and betrayed his country - the United States. Similarly he failed as a Muslim. He violated his oath as a US Army major which entailed defending the US. It is alleged that Major Hasan was lured by a Muslim cleric over the internet who instigated him to undertake this heinous act.

Major Hasan's violent thoughts were fostered in an atmosphere of hopelessness and helplessness, with an inconceivable solution festering in his troubled mind, nurtured by radical and misguided "leadership". This case illustrates the gruesome repercussions of a lack of guidance that prevails in the Muslim

world. This is not an isolated case, rather one of numerous that highlights the epidemic of misguided philosophy that plagues the Muslim world. Had Major Hasan been under the umbrella and guidance of a true *Khalifa*, he could never even have entertained such a violent thought.

In the modern world, *Khilafat* has been re-established under the banner of Ahmadiyyat. Adherence and obedience to this central, universal authority is the sole guarantor of peace in the world. *Khilafat* is an evergreen blessing bestowed on the Ahmadi Muslims, and the only institution with the hope of salvation for Muslims in general. Only a Divinely Guided *Khalifa* can unite the Muslim world which is suffering from disintegration. He is the sole beacon of hope in these dismal times. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} is spiritually blessed and under his esteemed leadership, Muslims can learn to peacefully co-exist with their fellow human beings. Adhering to his *Khilafat* will lead them on a path of moral and spiritual development. May Allah enable us to remain steadfast to the institution of *Khilafat* and reap its benefits to the fullest. *Ameen*.

HADHRAT HAKEEM NOOR-UD-DEEN'S^{ra} ELECTION AS FIRST CALIPH

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} died at 10:30 a.m. on May 26, 1908 and his body was brought to Qadian the next day. Everybody was in a state of shock: "What will happen now?"

"The whole world was a body without a soul - the soul having left with the demise of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}," mused Hakeem Sahib.

The first and foremost thing that occupied the attention of the *Jama'at* was the election of a successor to Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}. Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's^{as} family and elders of the *Jama'at* were naturally inclined to the election of Hakeem Sahib as his successor. Every heart, after the demise of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} was deeply moved. It was obvious that among all the members of the *Jama'at* there was no one better suited than the outstanding personality of Hakeem Sahib, but every one was submerged with sadness and sorrow, and the most saddened was Hakeem Sahib.

Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din, secretary, *Anjuman-i-Ahm-adiyya*, stood up and made a passionate plea for calm and courage, and the style and tenor of his speech was such that every one there was full of tears. He made the plea that the entire *Jama'at* should stand behind the *Khilafat*. Maulvi Mu-

hammad Ali was consulted and it was suggested that Hakeem Sahib should be elected the Caliph. Hakeem Sahib was a great personality and in every way suited to the spiritual leadership. Khawaja Kamalud Din made an open suggestion that every Ahmadi should take a *Bai'at* at the hand of Hakeem Sahib. Thereupon, Maulvi Muhammad Mi said it was not necessary to suggest that the people who were already part of the *Jama'at* remained part of the *Jama'at*. Then Khawaja Sahib pointed out, "this is the crucial time in the life of the *Jama'at*, and that there might arise later differences of opinion." It was, therefore, necessary that people gather and take a fresh *Bai'at* at the hand of Hakeem Sahib.

After consulting Maulvi Muhammad Ali, Khawaja Kamalud-Din took other members of the *Anjuman* including Sheikh Rahmatullah, Dr Syed Muhammad Hussain Shah, Dr Mirza Yaqoob Beig and also Maulvi Muhammad Ali to the house of Nawab Muhammad Ali, and there they sent for Sheikh Yaqoob Ali, also known as Yaqoob Ali Ir-fani - the Editor of *Al-*

Hakam. Maulvi Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi and Sahibzada Hadhrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmud Ahmad (eldest son of Hadhrat Sahib), and everyone agreed that there could not be a better choice than Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen. The father-in-law of Hadhrat Sahib, Mir Nasir Nawab, also endorsed this. Once these consultations were over, Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din went to Hakeem Sahib and conveyed the decision of the *Jama'at*. Maulana Sahib hesitated a little and then said, "Let me pray and after the prayer, I will respond." Thereafter, Hadhrat Maulana Sahib did the ablution and offered two *rak'at*, and then he prayed to invoke Divine guidance.

Later he said, "Let us move to the place where the body of our master is lying, and where our other brethren are waiting." Then he arrived at the garden where the *Janaza* (the body ready for burial) was lying.

At the gathering of the Ahmadi, Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq^{ra}, editor of the *Al-Badr*, held a petition in his hand which he read (Quotes from the Issue of June 8, 1908):

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious and Ever Merciful. We, the Ahmadi, whose signatures are appended below, have unanimously agreed that

the first of *Muhajireen*, Hadhrat Hakeem Haji Maulvi Nooru Deen, who is the most pious among us and enjoys the highest status and was a close friend of our dear *Imam* and whose personality is clearly reflected in the following couplet: "What a thing of happiness it may be if everyone of the *Ummat* becomes a *Noorud Deen* (light of religion), and if every heart is full of truth, then the goal of success is achieved."

We Ahmadis, at the hand of Hakeem Sahib, take a fresh *Bai'at* in the name of Ahmad and follow him and show him the same obedience to his commands as shown to the ones by Hadhrat Aqdas (a reference to the *Promised Messiah*).

This petition carried a large number of signatures and the correct number of people who signed it could not be verified. The names included those who were already engaged in this move.

First Address as Caliph

After having heard the petition of the members of the *Jama'at*, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} advanced and spoke. After reciting the *Kalima Shahadat*, he recited the following verse from chapter three, Surah *Al-Imran*, verse 105:

And let there (always) be among you a body of men who should invite to goodness and enjoin virtue and forbid

evil. And it is they who shall prosper.

And then Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} said:

"I glorify Allah, Who is ever Eternal. Every Prophet, who comes to the world, has a mission, which once completed, God calls him back. Have a look at my past life; I never desired to be an *Imam*. When Abdul Kareem Sahib became an *Imam-us-Salat* (one who leads the prayer), I felt a sigh of relief. I know myself fully well and my God knows me even better than myself. The only desire that I have is that my God should be happy with me and, in order to achieve this happiness, I keep myself busy with constant prayers seeking His pleasure. In Qadian, I have spent quite a time in ruminating over the fact as to what would happen after Hadhrat Sahib. From among the relations of Hadhrat Sahib, three of them are present here (Sahibzada Hadhrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra}, Hadhrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra} and Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan^{ra}) and, in order to maintain unity, you do *Bai'at* at the hand of any of them, and I would be with you." (*Al-Badr*, June 2, 1908, p. 6).

Continuing his address, he reminded them again:

"I am an old man, a sick man and my temperament is not suited to it, this is a very heavy load. I swear in the name of Allah that you do your *Bai'at* at the hand of any one of the three that I mentioned and I am with you, but if you want to do *Bai'at* at my hand, be very clear what *Bai'at* means. *Bai'at* means to "sell your selves." A man eschews everything and that is why Allah has called his man "*Abd*" (one who worships). So, whatever feelings and inclinations you have, you have to follow what I say, and if you accept these conditions, then in the name of Allah, I accept these responsibilities."

After hearing this clarion call, every one of the 1200, who were present there, said with one voice: "Please accept the responsibility of being our Amir, because we believe you are the only person, who can discharge this heavy responsibility."

First, men took the *Bai'at* and then the ladies, and among the ladies the family of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} were the first. Once the *Bai'at* was over, Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din, as secretary of *Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya*, took upon himself the duty of informing the outside *Jama'ats*, of the decision taken at Qadian and the following statement later appeared in the papers, *AlHakam* and *Al-Badr* (May 28, 1908):

In accordance with the Will of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} as recorded in the "*Al-Wasiyyat*" booklet and after consultation

with the President and members of *Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya*, members of the family of Hadhrat Sahib and over twelve hundred Ahmadi, who were present in Qadian at the time of the burial of Hadhrat Sahib, Hadhrat *Haji Alharamain Janaab* Hakeem Noorud Deen Sahib was elected unanimously the Caliph and everyone present took *Bai'at* at his hand. Some of the prominent people who took *Bai'at* included Maulvi Syed Muhammad Ahsan, Sahibzada Hadhrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmud Ahmad, Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan, Sheikh Rahmatullah Sahib, Maulavi Muhammad Ali, Dr. Mirza Yaqoob Baig, Dr. Syed Muhammad Hussein and the writer.

The statement was signed by Khawaja Kamalud Din.

A letter containing this statement was sent to all members of the *Jama'at* asking them to take *Bai'at* either in person or in writing at the hand of *Hakeemul Ummat* Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}, Maulvi Noorud Deen.

Burial

After the *Bai'at* at the hand of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}, he led the "*Jana-za Prayer*" (funeral prayer). It was a most moving scene; every eye was full of tears. These Ahmadi were parting with their master, the *Promised Messiah*, who led them through a period of spiritual elevation and purification. By six in the evening, the

body was lowered in the grave of "*Bahishti Maqbarah*."

Testimony

A large number of people wrote about this eventful day. Hadhrat Muhammad Zafrulla Khan^{ra} in his book, *Hadhrat Maulvi Noorud Deen, Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}* (p. 107), says:

"As soon as he finished speaking, all present, who arrived from far and near and who numbered about 1200, urged him with one voice: "We offer you our pledge. We shall obey your orders. You are our *Ameer* and successor to our Messiah."

Others who wrote about this historic event included Sheikh Mahmood Ahmad (author of *Markiz Ahmadiyya, Mauj-i-Kausar* by Sheikh Muhammad Ikram, Urdu Encyclopedia, published by Feroze sons), Maulana Abul Hasan Nadvi, Abdur Raheem Dard, author of the *Life of Ahmad*, Abdul Qasim Rafiq, author of *Rais-i-Qadian* and Maulana Abul Ata Jalandhari.

Institution of *Khilafat* and Its Importance

"And thy Lord said to the angels, I am about to place a vicegerent in the Earth." It is the Divine tra-

dition that the Prophet's mission is carried on by one who was chosen to continue the mission. Hadhrat Syed Muhammad Ismael Sahib Shaheed laid a great deal of emphasis on the institution of *Khilafat*.

Allama Iqbal also spoke of the need of the *Khilafat* in one of his poems (*Baang-i-Dara*, p. 302).

The Tanzeem weekly of *Ahle Hadith* wrote about the necessity of the *Khilafat* saying, "Even if once in a lifetime one has the Divine blessings of *Khilafat*, the *Ummat Islamia* can be united once again."

The aims and objects of the importance of the Institution of *Khilafat* have been explained in very clear terms in *Surah Al-Nur*, Chapter 24, verse 56:

Allah has promised to those among you, who believe, and do good works that He will surely make them the Successors in the earth, as He made successors (from among) those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security (and peace) after their fear: They will worship Me, (and) they will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be rebellious.

(Source: *The Ways of the Righteous* by Syed Hasanat Ahmad)

AN OVERVIEW OF FRANCE'S PARTIAL *BURQA* BAN

Syeda Aziza Khan

A few hundred years ago France set the stage for a new way of thinking. The French Revolution was born. A new Republic came into being, bringing freedom to those imprisoned minds which could not speak up against the Monarchy. It was this revolution which would inspire nations in subsequent times to overthrow the yoke of tyrannical rule. Egalitarian movements from Asia to the Americas were inspired by the free thinkers of France. Yet ironically, the lawmakers of this proud and unique nation have taken upon themselves the responsibility of "freeing" Muslim women from the chains of subjugation by preventing them from wearing the *burqa* in the public arena. The French are not talking about the Afghani *burqa* which covers the eyes with a grille; they are talking about the *niqab*, a covering from the head downwards which leaves a narrow slit for viewing. This type of *burqa* is mostly favored in the Gulf, and sometimes in Pakistan as well as in Afghanistan.

In total, France's population is about 64 million people, of which 6 percent are Muslims. Now, out of

those 6 per cent less than 2000 are women who are *burqa* wearers. Clearly, what are the French afraid of? The reasons they have taken up this cause is two-fold. On the one hand they are opposed to a "closed" society which to them the *burqa* represents, since they believe themselves to be part of an "open" society, since the French consider themselves as an open people with nothing to hide. On the other hand the French lawmakers argue that underneath the *burqa* resides the hidden message of subjugation; that women are forced to wear it to appease their spouses, brothers and fathers. They see it as symbolic, representing slavery.

President Nicolas Sarkozy of France states: "... the *burqa* is an affront to human and civil rights in a modern secular society." The *burqa* ban will oblige Muslim women to not only show their faces in all public areas, health facilities and government offices, but to keep their faces uncovered all the time that they are there, otherwise no services, not even in an hospital emergency room.

France's goal is integration, even if these *burqa* prone women go into integration kicking and screaming. Again, Sarkozy says the *burqa* "... goes against what we in France understand by the dignity of women." It is highly likely that Nicolas Sarkozy has not ever sat down and spoken with *niqab/burqa* wearing women who are French citizens. For if he had he never would have stated "...the *burqa* is not a religious sign (but) a sign of subservience, of debasement."

In 2004 France declared a law against Muslim girls wearing head scarves in public schools, against much Muslim protest. Again, in 2008 a Moroccan woman was denied the right to naturalization by the highest court in France, on the grounds that she was wearing a *burqa*. In 2005, Dutch lawmakers had voted in favor of a ban on the *burqa*, but the Parliament was closed down before any such legislation could be passed. Meanwhile, Geert Wilders, a Dutch lawmaker, has proposed a tax for women who wear the head scarf. The Swiss have voted

to ban minarets at mosques. The rate of increase in the Muslim population in Europe is growing, and with it the fear of losing a culturally homogeneous society. The minaret ban in Switzerland was mainly supported by the conservative right wing. Not only was this a dark day for the Muslims there, but for democracy itself. The Austrians are also considering a *burqa* ban.

To many Westerners the *burqa* represents the fundamental component of Islam, giving rise to images of terrorism. These Westerners, being ill at ease with another's garment, transfer that discomfort into law, climbing the slippery slope towards government authorized discrimination.

Yes, specific Muslim countries have important problems to rectify regarding the status of women in their communities. This, though, is not subjugation or oppression upon a religious basis. Rather it is a cultural issue. By European societies not recognizing that the *burqa* is not oppression of women by men, women's right to practice their faith is oppressed.

Modesty, to which-

ever extent a woman chooses to practice it (since there is no compulsion in the matter of religion), plays a major role in the Muslim faith. Modesty is also to be practiced by men, by lowering their gaze when they come across women. As a matter of fact, this latter directive is given first in the Holy Qur'an, before the woman's directive. The vast majority of the Muslim women I have come across practice modesty because they believe that they are upholding a Qura'nic directive by doing so. Thus, it is very close to their hearts. By doing so they feel free; free not to be judged by their appearance. Those who choose to wear the *burqa/niqab* do so for the love of their faith.

What France needs to do is to address why the French converts and Muslim immigrants are rejecting certain aspects of Western identity. This ban is not the means to do so. The real roots of the problems of integration are with employment policies which are discriminatory, encouraging young Muslim boys to enter the world of crime, hanging around street corners and finally ending up in jail. Interestingly enough the *burqa* ban does not coincide with the European

Convention on Human Rights Article 8 and 9, where an individual's rights to a private life, personal identity and freedom to manifest one's religion is flatly stated.

In severe contrast to the stance of France's President Nicolas Sarkozy, President Obama of the USA, has stated: "It is imperative for Western Countries to avoid impeding Muslim citizens from practicing religion as they see fit- for instance, by dictating what clothes a Muslim woman should wear." These same Western countries tolerate a Catholic Nun's habit, as well as a woman's right to wear a mini skirt or bikini and beyond, yet in France, and increasingly in other parts of Europe, they want Muslim women to take off their *burqa's* and scarves in order to receive any kind of social service—from public education, public transportation to health care. The last French colonies ended decades ago. But are they now attempting to colonize faith?

PAY ZAKAT

LEARN TO SUCCEED

He

A Seminar Organized Central Jersey Jama'at At Baitul Wahid Mosque, Old Bridge, NJ

Sazzad Khandakar and Dabir Khan

On March 6, 2010, Central Jersey *Jama'at* hosted a seminar "Learn to Succeed" at Baitul Hadi *Masjid*. Under the directions of the National *Ta'lim* Department, this seminar was organized by the Local *Ta'lim* Secretary and Principal of Tahir Class, respected Sajid A. Khan Sahib for the benefit of all the students. The seminar's main focus was to discuss issues faced by students and how to improve secular knowledge and work on a solid foundation for a successful professional career. The seminar was chaired by respected Dr. Khalil Malik Sahib, National *Ta'lim* Secretary; Dr. Imtiaz Chaudhry Sahib, President CEJ; and Yahya Muhammad Sahib of the Philadelphia *Jama'at*.

The seminar started with the recitation of the Holy Qur'an by Dabir Khan Sahib of the Central Jersey *Jama'at*. Next, Sajid Sahib provided an overview of the agenda. In his introduction he identified the three basic foundation of success. He focused on Health: Diet, Exercise, Cleanliness; Religious Education: Qur'an, *Hadith*, Righteousness; Secular Education: Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic. He emphasized that with a strong foundation,

students can better help their family, *Jama'at* and society at large. Sajid Khan Sahib also mentioned the importance of family support and a role model. He emphasized the need for being close to *Jama'at* and to be active in *Jama'at* activities which promote leadership and soft skills which are much needed in professional life.

Mahmood Hanif Sahib of Central Jersey *Jama'at* shared his thoughts on how to succeed in a career. He focused on the topic of 'What I Wish I Knew When I Was 15.' Some of the highlights he mentioned included the ability to identify problems with opportunity, being able to learn from failure, hard work and preparation, taking initiatives, prioritization and focus and team work.

Following, Yahya Muhammad Sahib of the Philadelphia *Jama'at*, who is the current Vice Principal of a school in Philadelphia shared his thoughts. Yahya Sahib has been in the educational field for 25 years.

shared his experience as a teacher at the inner city schools and the problems that students face today. He emphasized the need for planning, regularity, time management as key components of a good student. For parents, he mentioned that it is critical for parents to check the quality of the schools, districts and teachers, course offerings, etc. so that the children are in a most competitive and well performing environment. He advised the students to opt for AP and IB classes to challenge themselves and be better prepared for higher education after high school. Finally, Yahya Sahib recognized the reality of bullying, and how to communicate with parents and school administration in resolving these unfortunate matters.

Next, we had three stellar students share their thoughts and ideas on how they achieved success in school. Among them were Ali Khurram, Ali Syed, and Qamar Khan of Central Jersey *Jama'at*. These students shared secrets of their personal success in schools, good work habits, learning techniques, etc.

Following the student presentations, Muzaffar Khurram Sahib of Central Jersey *Jama'at* who is a successful engineer and

also a teacher at Tahir Class, shared his background and his recipe for a successful professional career. He highlighted the need for continuous striving to gain more knowledge, and more importantly how to apply knowledge in real life.

Respected Dr. Imtiaz Chaudhry Sahib is a very dedicated member of our community. He is currently serving as the President of the Central Jersey *Jama'at* and volunteered as a doctor in Africa for quite some time many years ago. He briefly mentioned his educational background, his struggles and triumphs of becoming a medical doctor from very humble means. He mentioned that it was the prayers of his parents that provided the foundation for his becoming a medical doctor.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Khalil Malik Sahib, the National *Ta'lim* Secretary. He shared his thoughts with the forum. He mentioned that the Holy Qur'an and Islam acknowledge the gift of knowledge and its importance for every believer. He mentioned that the Promised Messiah^{as} foretold that this community will excel in wisdom and learning. Dr. Khalil Malik Sahib also reminded us that Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih

^{Vatba} mentioned in an address to all youth that they should all study and increase in knowledge as if we are all competing for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Following Dr. Khalil Malik Sahib's key note address, there was a Q/A session moderated by Sajid A. Khan Sahib with the three students as panelists. Both students as well as parents asked many intriguing questions which provided a very engaging discussion. Sajid A. Khan Sahib closed the panel discussion by saying that "Allah has given you the ability to solve any problem, overcome any obstacles, and achieve any goal that you set for yourself. What you can do and achieve in the future is only limited by your imagination and your desire."

The seminar was concluded by silent prayers, dinner, and *Maghrib* and *Isha* Prayers which were led by Dr. Khalil Malik Sahib.

The seminar received positive feedback from the attendees. One *Tifl*, Ibshar Khandakar from Central Jersey *Jama'at* said, "I really enjoyed the presentations, especially 'What I Wish I Knew When I Was 15.'"

HADITH

Hadhrat Anas bin Malik^{ra} relates that they were accompanying the Holy Prophet^{saw} when he returned from the Battle of 'Ufan. Hadhrat Safiyyah^{ra} daughter of Huyayyi was riding the camel with the Holy Prophet^{saw}. When the camel stumbled both of them fell off the camel. Hadhrat Abu Talha^{ra} rushed to support the Holy Prophet^{sa} and said, "May I be sacrificed for you. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said: 'Take care of the woman.' Hadhrat Abu Talha^{ra}, covering his face, came to Hadhrat S±afiyyah^{ra} and covered her with a piece of cloth. Then he fixed their ride. Both mounted their ride. ' "

(*Bukhari kitabul jihad walsair bab ma yaqul idha raja'a minal ghazw*)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said: "Allah will have mercy on a man who gets up at night for his voluntary Prayer and awakens his wife for the same purpose and if she hesitates he sprinkles water over her face to wake her up; and Allah will have mercy on a woman who gets up at night to offer voluntary Prayer and awakens her husband for the same purpose and if he hesitates sprinkles water over his face to make him get up."

(*Abu Dawud kitabussalat bab qiya-mullail*)

MUSLEH MAU'OOD DAY CELEBRATED

Northern Virginia Jama'at

Ghulam-Hussain Qamar Baloch

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} was truly a Promised Reformer in essence as foretold by God Almighty to Hadhrat Promised Messiah^{as}. Although Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} had no formal education, but the Promised Reformer humbled adversaries of Islam with his par excellence religious, economic, and secular knowledge by writing thousands of books and delivering lectures the world over. Thus, Godly prophecies were authenticated in letter and spirit.

The Promised Reformer challenged the adversaries of Islam that if you dare attack Islam and the Holy Qur'an, I would stand up as a shield in defense of Islam. I would answer your every question. God Almighty in His revelation told Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}: Your son would be known all over the world. It is My (Allah's) decree that an illiterate would have all religious and scientific knowledge in him. If you don't accept him, you won't survive and would be cut-off. If you accept him, then you would surely survive and prosper.

Maulana Naseem Mahdi, Missionary In-charge and *Na'ib Ameer* of Ahmadiyya Jama'at USA, was explaining the meaning of the word "Musleh Mau'ood" and his coming in this world to mark the Musleh

Mau'ood Day in a befitting manner here in USA, the other day.

Maulana Naseem Mahdi quoted from *Surah Hajj* (Chapter 17) equating meaning with Hadhrat Adam^{as} and his progeny, Hadhrat Ibrahim and his progeny, Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw} and his most loved Lieutenant Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} and his progeny. He spelled out the numerical value of word "Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani" to 1300. With a masterly touch, Maulana Naseem Mahdi then equated the meaning of *Al-Badr* with Mecca and Medina, and Qadian. He also equated Arabic words the "*Shahid*" and "*Mashhud*" by meaning one is Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and the other is Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}.

It may be mentioned that a general meeting of Northern Virginia Jama'at was held at the Senior Citizen Center here to mark Musleh Mau'ood Day simultaneously. Maulana Naseem Mahdi, new Ahmadiyya Missionary In-charge presided.

Maulana Naseem Mahdi led *Zuhr* and *Asr*

prayers before the start of the function. Mr. Jalal Malik recited verses from the Holy Qur'an rendering its meaning in English, while, Mr. Fauzan Pal read out a famous poem of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra}. Addressing Ahmadiyya Youth, the Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} has given them heart moving prescriptions how to be successful and spiritual leaders of the new Ahmadiyya generations to come.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Sher Ali Khan Basharat, President of Northern Virginia Jama'at quoted prophecies from sayings of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}. The President said that God foretold to Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{ra}: I would multiply your natural and spiritual progenies while bestowing upon them pinnacles of glory and successes. I would cause thy message with blessings to reach every nook and corner of the world. Your adversaries would be faced with sheer failure and I would increase your pure spiritual followers tremendously. Your true followers would always surpass their adversaries. It is my pledge, a sign of grace, a key of victory for you, my beloved Masih Mau'ood^{as}. Oh Victor! Truth would always prevail and falsehood would vanish away. He who ever dare deny Faith [*Din*], he would perish while seeing a sign of falsification. A highly intelligent and beautiful son comes to you from Heaven. His name is

“Emmanuel”. His other name is “Bashir”. He would be full of understanding. He would be of great fame. He would cure many souls, diseases, and his followers would grow at high speed all over the world.

Mr. Zahir Mustafa Ahmad spoke as first speaker on the occasion. Mr. Zahir said that when Hadhrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmood Ahmad^{ra} took over as Khalifatul Masih Second, he was a just nineteen years old. He remained loyal to Hadhrat Maulana Noorud-Din, Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}. He was a dynamic personality. He challenged Muslim adversaries with his amazing secular, scientific and spiritual knowledge, though he didn't have an academic education. As per Godly revelations, God did take care of his divine education. God blessed him (Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}) with a high standard of knowledge about education, economics; general, and present day world affairs. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} wrote hundreds of books delivering lectures in the service of Islam. Admonishing the youth, Hadhrat Khalifatul Massiah II^{ra} advised them that serving the *Jama'at* is the basic character in the cause of religion Islam.

Later, the *Na'ib Ameer Sahib* had a meeting with members of *Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya*, Northern Virginia. During a Question-Answer Session, he acquainted himself and had a photo-group with *Khuddam*.

How an Ahmadi Muslim Girl Can Modestly Conduct Herself in School

Najia Humayun, Atlanta, GA

Here we are, living in 2010. The world has changed considerably since the time of the Holy Prophet. These changes have made conducting myself as an Ahmadi Muslim girl difficult, if not even a challenge. But, I believe that even in this ever changing world, the teachings of Islam remain as much of an obligation to us today as they were fourteen centuries ago, And, that I myself, as well as my fellow *Nasirat* members can conduct ourselves as Ahmadi Muslim girls. This is especially important in school.

Our beloved Khalifa, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba}, says that in order to overcome pressures and conduct ourselves modestly, we should put our faith completely in Allah, and have *Tawakkul* in Allah. So as the Hazoor^{aba} advises, with *Tawaqkkul* in Allah, we should not be afraid of peer pressure, and what other people think about us. Allah says, in the Holy Qur'an, Chapter 14 verse 13, 'So in Allah let those who trust put their trust'.

For one example, my school has a uniform. It is a short dress, that ends above the knee. My school is an all girl's school, but I still chose to wear slacks underneath my uniform. Why? Because I have respect for my religion and myself, and wanted to conduct myself as an Ahmadi Muslim girl at school. All Muslim girls should dress respectfully at school, and present themselves in an Islamic way.

Also, Ahmadi Muslim girls should refrain from unnecessary interaction with boys. Obviously, at most schools, interaction with boys is unavoidable. But, we should refrain from going to their school dances and parties.

At my school, we have coordinate events with an all boys school. I do not participate in these dances and parties. But my friends who do are always asking me why I do not go these events. I used to try to avoid these questions, and nonchalantly answer 'I don't know..' But the relief that comes with them saying 'ok..' is only temporary, and this question comes again and again, with more trouble each time avoiding it. So, one day, I simply answered, 'I'm Muslim, and in my religion, you aren't supposed to date and go to coordinate events' After I say this, some girls just give me an understanding nod, and few go to interrogate further, but I know just how to answer them.

INTERFAITH SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS

Abdul Naseer M. Kakkada St. Paul Chapter, Minnesota

The Minnesota Interfaith Open Forum (MIOF) held its second symposium on 31st January 2010 at Hennepin County Library, Minneapolis (MN). The MIOF is a collaboration between Hindu, Jewish, Christian and Islamic communities in Minnesota where the Muslims are represented by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, St Paul Chapter. The formation of MIOF is a result of a series of Interfaith Symposiums organized by Ahmadiyya Muslim community on yearly basis. Various regular speakers from different faiths in those symposiums were invited to form an alliance by Ahmadiyya Muslim community to do the interfaith symposiums more often than on yearly basis. MIOF plans to hold a series of interfaith symposiums on various topics every 3-4 months. The first of these symposiums was hosted on October 4th by the Trinity United Methodist Church on the topic of "Extremism in the Name of Religion". The second symposium was hosted by AMC Saint Paul Chapter on Jan. 31st and the next symposium is scheduled to take place on July 25th and will be hosted by the Hindu Temple.

The interfaith dialogue held on Jan 31st was centered on the topic of wealth / poverty and the teachings of different faith traditions towards tackling the enormous challenges that confront the world today with regard to this issue. Hindu, Jewish, Christian and Muslim faiths were represented at the symposium by Dr. Prasanna Kumar, Rabbi Shavit Lonstein, Rev. Elizabeth McCauley and Dr. Atif Mian respectively. The symposium was hosted by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community – St Paul chapter and was attended by about 70 individuals representing various faith traditions.

Dr. Prasanna Kumar initiated the dialogue by relating the story of a wealthy man who was asked what his net worth was? In reply, the wealthy man noted that he is worth what he has given as charity. Presenting such an attitude as an example of the Hindu view of wealth, Dr. Kumar went on to briefly present the basic responsibilities of every human being according to

Hindu principles which comprises of Dharma (Duty), Artha (Wealth), Moksha (Liberation) and Karma (Deed). Emphasizing on one's responsibilities with regard to Artha (Wealth), Dr. Kumar noted that acquiring wealth in a moral and ethical way is of prime importance from a Hindu viewpoint. He went on to say that it is a duty of every Hindu to support themselves and their families while contributing to the general well being of the society while avoiding greed in all its forms.

The next speaker, Rabbi Lonstein, introduced Judaism by stating that being holy is the essential message of Judaism as presented in Mitzvot which are the basic rules of life that a Jew must follow. He pointed out that from early Jewish history, Jews were commanded to leave a part of their harvest from the land for the sake of those who are needy. Moreover, the Hebrew word '*sadakah*' from the root '*sadak*' literally meaning charity which can also be interpreted as righteous behavior forms a basic commandment of Jewish life and is not meant to be a response to the occasional call of the heart to

give. Presenting on the teachings of the Jewish scholar Maimonides who established the 8 ladders (increasing levels) of charity, Rabbi Lonstein pointed out that facilitating others to be self-reliant forms the highest level of giving that any human can attain within the Jewish faith tradition.

Representing Christianity, Rev. Elizabeth McCauley, presented the Cross which is the fundamental symbol of the Christian faith as also representing an ultimate sacrifice – a sacrifice by a being for the sake of other human beings. Drawing on such a teaching, she mentioned that freedom from oppression (poverty being a form of oppression) and charity formed the foundational message of Jesus (as) while emphasizing that Jesus was always kind towards other who were at the margins of the society. On the issue of continuing poverty in the world today, she noted that the main challenge facing human society is the tendency of humans to forget the power of change – the change that every individual is capable of in their own lives and in the lives of others.

Professor Mian, representing Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, started by quoting verses 5-20 of Chapter 90 (*Surah Al-Balad*). He went on to interpret the verses by pointing out that God created man to face hardships i.e. tri-

als and tribulations that challenge human beings in their day to day lives form an essential part of human lives and serves as a test that distinguishes successful humans from others. Based on the quoted Qur'anic verses, Dr. Mian, explained that God clearly points out two ways – a way of ascent and a way of descent – as a response to the trials and tribulations in life wherein the way of betterment (ascent) includes feeding of hungry, freeing of slaves, taking care of orphans and looking after the helpless. He concluded by noting that even as poverty is part of the fabric of every society, it is not to be viewed as a curse but as a means whereby more fortunate individuals can improve their own selves by following the commandments of faith.

The presentations by the four speakers above were followed by a question & answer session where a variety of interesting questions were posed by the members of the audience including young, old, men and women alike. The lively gathering concluded as guests were treated to a variety of refreshments while also having an opportunity to establish new friendships and learn from different faith perspectives.

HADITH

Hadhrat Hudhaifah^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said: "A person, who is bestowed wealth by God Almighty will be presented to God Almighty. God Almighty will ask him: 'What deeds did you perform in the world? No one will be able to hide anything from God Almighty.' The person will say: 'O My Lord! You gave me wealth which I used to trade with the people and it was my habit to treat the people kindly and to forgive them. I made things easy and convenient for both the rich and the poor and gave extra time to the poor to payback the loans.' Allah the Exalted will say: 'I have greater right to forgive and to show this person of Mine great love.'"

Hadhrat 'Uqbah bin 'Amir^{ra} and Hadhrat Abu Mas'ud Ansari^{ra} relate that they heard this directly from the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

(Muslim kitabal buyu' fadl anzar alma'sar)

HELP

**HUMANITY
FIRST**

UUNDERSTANDING ISLAM: FACTS AND FALLACIES INTER-FAITH EVENT AT THE PASADENA CITY COLLEGE, CALIFORNIA

Lubna R Malik

On March 23, 2010 – the same day as the establishment of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in 1889 – more than 65 non-Muslims gathered in Pasadena, California to gain a true understanding of Islam through open dialogue. The two-hour event took place at the Pasadena City College and was organized by the City of Pasadena Public Library, Pasadena City College Library, and Ibrahim Naeem Sahib, Manager of the Pasadena City College Community Education Center and a member of the LA-West Jama'at.

All three speakers on the panel were active and respected members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and spoke for about 15 minutes each:

- Arshad Mahmood Khan Sahib (LA-West), Chairman of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Scientists Asso-

ciation and a neuroscience research professor at the University of Southern California, spoke on "The Tenets of Islam." Khan Sahib focused on the 5 Pillars of Islam and gave an overview of Islam's most basic teachings.

- Nasir Mahmood Malik Sahib (LA-West), the National Tarbiyat Secretary, spoke on "Who was Prophet Muhammad^{saw}?" Malik Sahib focused on the objective historical and biographical data regarding Prophet Muhammad.
- Imam Shamshad Nasir Sahib, Missionary of the Southwest Region, spoke on "Does Islam Promote Violence?" Imam Sahib clearly rejected any notions that Islam promotes violence and emphasized Islam's true peaceful nature.

The hour of above presentations was followed by a vibrant hour of thoughtful, respectful, and intelligent questions from the audience. The diverse audience was comprised of college-going students, middle-aged parents, and the elderly from a vast array of ethnicities including African Americans, Caucasians, East Asians, Eastern Europeans, Hispanics, and South Americans. The questions touched upon topics such as Heaven, *Hijab* in Islam, men's and women's rights, prayer rituals, separation of Islam and the state, and the *Sunni/Shi'a* divide.

The program was followed by South Asian snacks, courtesy of the LA-West *Jama'at*, interviews by the local news media, and informal Q&A with the speakers. A small table was also set up with introductory literature on Islam.

Al Islam E-Gazette

Christians use the Islamic concept of God in day to day life: Imitation is the best form of flattery

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani^{as} (1835-1908)

Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, The Promised Messiah and Imam Mahdi

Given the complexity and convolutions of the concept of Trinity in day to day life, Christians use the Islamic concept of God.

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, describes the Qur'anic teaching of unity of God, by mentioning that even the non-Muslims especially the Christians have borrowed it from Islam. This reminds us of the saying, 'imitation is the best form of flattery.' He writes:

"The Holy Qur'an is replete with wisdom and insights and does not contain any portion of babble or frivolous. It explains every necessary detail and provides for all human needs. It is a miracle from every aspect. I am ever ready to demonstrate the miracle and beauty of the Holy Qur'an to anyone who denies it. These days, concept of God and genuine understanding of monotheism are under fire. The Christians have written a lot about God, but, whatever genuine account they have given is about the true and the living God of Islam and not about a dead, crucified and a humble god. I can declare it with fullest confidence that whoever, will attempt to write about the attributes of God, his or her hand will be forced to come to the God of Islam. This is because each and every particle of our universe gives testimony of this God and the imprint of the God of Islam is also in every human heart and conscience. So, whenever humans endeavor to find God, they are lead to the concepts of Islam. This also is indeed an amazing miracle."

(Malfoozat volume I/V page 52.)

<http://www.alislam.org/urdu/pdf/Malfoozat-v1.pdf>

To learn more about Trinity go to:

<http://knol.google.com/k/zia-shah/the-council-of-nicaea-and-the-three/1qhnnhcumbuy/76#>

<http://knol.google.com/k/zia-shah/the-concept-of-trinity-has-no-legs-to/1qhnnhcumbuy/38#>

A Response to the Pope's Remarks about Islam

By Khalifatul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba}

He said, "During a lecture at a university in Germany, the Pope spoke with reference to another writer about certain Islamic teachings, the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), which do not have the remotest connection with true Islam."

He added, "Such is the stature of the Pope that no matter with what reference he spoke, it was not appropriate for him to have made these observations." For details go to the following link to read his Friday sermon of September 15, 2006 in different languages:

<http://www.alislam.org/archives/year-2006.html>

Christianity: A Journey from Facts to Fiction

By Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^{rh}

He examines the doctrines of Christianity in light of reason and logic. He puts his conclusion on the back cover of his page in the words of a Christian theologian, Søren Aabye Kierkegaard:

"It is not the business of any Christian writer or preacher to dilute Christianity to suit the general educated public. The doctrine of the incarnation was to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, and so will it always be, for the doctrine not only transcends reason; it the paradox par excellence; and it can be affirmed only by faith, with passionate inwardness and interest. The substitution of reason for faith means the death of Christianity."

What Kierkegaard could not foresee is the information age with millions of websites. It will be hard to hide behind the veil of 'faith' and run away from reason and rationality. It is self evident that faith cannot be divorced from reason. If man needed faith alone, any cult would be as good as any religion and all human affairs will completely collapse. To read the book go to:

http://www.alislam.org/library/books/christianity_facts_to_fiction/index.html

To see a list of video clips, by Ahmad, covering topics of Jesus Christ, may peace be on him and Christianity, go to:

<http://knol.google.com/k/zia-shah/hadhrat-miraza-tahir-ahmad-explaining/1qhnnhcumbuyp/175#>

If Jesus did not die upon the cross: A study in evidence

By Ernest Brougham Docker

This is a small booklet with a very descriptive title, written by an Australian Judge, in 1920. He became a judge of the District Court and chairman of Quarter Sessions for the north-western district in 1881. He retired in 1918 after the passage of the Judges Retirement Act. The booklet has 79 pages and if the Christian readers spend a few hours reading this they will be rewarded with wisdom, God willing! Here is the link:

<http://knol.google.com/k/zia-shah/if-jesus-did-not-die-upon-the-cross-a/1qhnnhcumbuyp/173#>

Where is the Injil: the Q document or 'Q?'

By Zia H Shah

The word *Injil* occurs several times in the Qur'an (3:4, 3:49, 3:66, 5:47, 5:67, 5:69, 5:111; 7:158; 9:111; 48:30; 57:28) and refers to the revelation to Isa (Jesus, may peace be on him). Muslims do not believe that the *Injil* in the Qur'an refers to the four Gospels or the New Testament. In Qur'an, the *Injil* is instruction for the righteous. According to the Holy Qur'an:

"And We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow in their footsteps, fulfilling that which was revealed before him in the Torah; and We gave him the Gospel which contained guidance and light, fulfilling that which was revealed before it in the Torah, and a guidance and an admonition for the God-fearing." (Al Qur'an 5:47)

What is the present day equivalent of what the Holy Qur'an describes as *Injil*? Could it be the Q document? Q is sometimes called the Synoptic Sayings Source. What gave me this idea was a comment by one of the experts in the four hour PBS documentary *From Jesus to Christ: the early Christians*. Elaine Pagels says in the documentary, "Whoever collected the sayings of 'Q' wasn't interested in the death of Jesus, wasn't interested in the resurrection of Jesus, thought the importance of Jesus was what he said, what he preached." This description parallels what the Holy Qur'an has to say about *Injil*.

<http://knol.google.com/k/zia-shah/where-is-the-injil-the-q-document-or-q/1qhnnhcumbuy/145#>

The Gospel According to Thomas

By Zia H Shah

There are several parallels between the Gospel of Thomas and the Q document, so one should read about both together. The manuscript of the Coptic text, of the Gospel of Thomas was found in 1945, at Nag Hammadi. It was first published in a photographic edition in 1956. Three years later, in 1959, this was followed by the first critical edition (with English translation). In 1977 the James M. Robinson translation was first published, as part of The Nag Hammadi Library in English, containing all of the texts found at Nag Hammadi. The Gospel of Thomas has since then been translated and annotated in many languages.

Here is a ten minute clip from a BBC documentary about the Gospel of Thomas:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l9ocv9AJI88&feature=related>

The Holy Qur'an states about revelations to Jesus:

"Allah has sent down to thee (Muhammad) the Book containing the truth and fulfilling that which precedes it; and He sent down the Torah and the Gospel." (Al Qur'an 3:4)

To learn more about the Gospel of Thomas go to:

<http://knol.google.com/k/zia-shah/the-gospel-according-to-thomas/1qhnnhcumbuy/146#>

5th ANNUAL WAQFE NAU BOYS TRIP TO JAMIA AHMADIYYA CANADA

Haneef Mahmood

The National *Waqfe Nau* Department USA held its 5th annual trip to *Jamia Ahmadiyya* Canada on Friday April 2nd to Sunday April 4th. Thirty-four *Waqfe Nau* boys from 11 States participated in the trip accompanied by 17 adults. The purpose of this trip which, *Alhamdulillah* has been held every year since 2005, is to give *Waqifeene Nau* a chance to sample the classes and atmosphere of *Jamia*, meet with *Jamia* students and teachers and, *Insha Allah*, be motivated to choose a career as a missionary. The majority of the *Waqifeen* arrived in Toronto by minivan on Thursday evening and were accommodated in various private houses in the Peace Village. After attending *Fajr* prayers that morning, the boys were able to watch the *Jumu'ah Khutba* of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} live on MTA. The three-day program began officially after Juma prayers at Masjid Baitul Islam with a welcome address by National Secretary *Waqfe Nau* USA, Hafiz Samiullah Chaudhary sahib, followed by an orientation-talk giving important information about the program over the following days. Each *Waqfe Nau* boy introduced himself to the group and stated which *Jama'at* he was from as well as his father's name. The assistant national secretaries and regional secretaries then also introduced themselves. Every member of the party was provided with a *Waqfe Nau* USA nametag and baseball-style cap for easy identification. The *Waqifeen* then took advantage of the warm weather to play volleyball and basketball outside with some of the *Jamia* students. After *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers, the *Waqfe Nau* boys and accompanying adults were treated to a delicious meal with *Ameer Sahib* Canada and the Canadian National *Amila* in the garden of the *Majlis Ansarullah* offices.

The *Waqfe Nau* boys left early on Saturday morning for *Jamia Ahmadiyya* Canada in Mississauga, where they attended the morning roll call for the *Jamia* students, after which they were warmly welcomed to the *Jamia* by the Principal of *Jamia Ahmadiyya* Canada, Muhammad Saleem Akhtar Sahib. Principal sahib said that he welcomed the US *Waqifeene Nau* as guests of *Jamia Ahmadiyya*, but only used the word "guests" for want of a better term, as in fact this institution was their institution and their home also. While the *Jamia* students then went off to attend their various classes, the US *Waqifeen*, along with a number of first year *Jamia* students, participated in a special Arabic class taught by Al Hasan Hasan Ahmad, one of the *Jamia* teachers. This class provided the *Waqifeen* with a taste of classroom instruction at the *Jamia*. The word-by-word translation of some Qur'anic verses was demonstrated to the *Waqifeen* and they practiced some simple conversation Arabic phrases. The experience was greatly enjoyed by all. Two current first-year *Jamia* students and two prospective *Jamia* students from among the US *Waqifeene Nau* gave short presentations on why they chose to apply to the *Jamia*. *Alhamdulillah*, three US *Waqifeene Nau* are applying to *Jamia Ahmadiyya* Canada this year: Ahsaan Umer Nayyer from North New Jersey, Faheem Arshad from Southern Virginia and Musawar Ahmad from Central New Jersey. In addition, as a result of this trip another four US *Waqifeene Nau* have indicated their desire to apply to *Jamia* in future years.

After a tour of the *Jamia* and being treated to a wonderful lunch, the boys were shown a video presentation about *Jamia* created by the *Jamia* students. In the final session of the program at the *Jamia*, Maulana Mukhtar Cheema sahib spoke about how he had entered life as a Missionary. Maulana sahib was followed by Principal *Jamia Ahmadiyya* Canada, Muhammad Saleem Akhtar sahib, who spoke about the continual improvements being made to *Jamia Ahmadiyya* Canada and about the forthcoming move of the campus to the Peace Village close to Masjid Baitul Islam. National Secretaries *Waqfe Nau* of Canada and USA then addressed the audience. National Secretary *Waqfe Nau* USA, Hafiz Samiullah Chaudhary Sahib, thanked the *Jamia* staff, the Canadian *Waqfe Nau* department and Canadian *Jama'at* in general as well as the organizers within the US *Waqfe Nau* department for their dedicated hard work in making this trip such a success.

In closing, Hafiz sahib advised the *Waqifeen* to simply understand their priorities in life and act accordingly. After a combined *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers, the *Waqifeen* departed to visit *Hadeeqa-e-Ahmad*, a 250-acre piece of land that the Canadian Jama'at had purchased and that had been visited by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} on his last trip to Canada. They had some refreshments and toured the property and were then given the opportunity to relax by playing basketball and football. After an enjoyable stay at *Hadeeqa-e-Ahmad*, the party returned to Masjid Baitul Islam for *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers.

The final session of the three-day trip was a combined session of US and Canadian *Waqifeene Nau* at Masjid Baitul Islam on Sunday morning. Mirza Naseer sahib, National Secretary Waqfe Nau Canada gave the opening address - referring to Chap. 4 verse 70 of the Holy Qur'an, he said that the 4 blessings promised to the believers are all possible today. By joining *Jamia*, the US *Waqifeene Nau* are actually fulfilling the mission of the Promised Messiah^{as}. The trip of the US *Waqifeene Nau* to *Jamia* Canada also provided an opportunity for the *Waqfe Nau* Canada team to provide service to the community of the Promised Messiah^{as}. He said that he and his team members had a sitting with Hafiz Samiullah Sahib and his team to understand how the *Waqfe Nau* department was organized in the US and he appreciated this information sharing and learning experience.

National Secretary *Waqfe Nau* USA, Hafiz Samiullah Chaudhary Sahib began his speech by introducing the 3 *Waqifeene Nau* who will be applying for admission to *Jamia* this year to respected *Ameer Sahib* Canada. *Ameer Sahib* shook hands with the three *Waqifeene Nau*. In his remarks, Hafiz sahib drew the attention of the Canadian *Waqifeene Nau* present in the audience towards the US *Waqfe Nau*. *Waqfe Nau* department website and the online classes are openly available resources to everyone around the world. Hafiz sahib thanked respected *Ameer Sahib* Canada, Sec. *Waqfe Nau* Canada and Principal *Jamia* Canada for their hospitality.

Addressing the US *Waqifeene Nau*, Maulana Mubarak Nazir Sahib, Missionary In-charge Canada, said that you hail from the most powerful and affluent country of the world. There are many universities and institutions of higher education in the US and the country is full of opportunities. He said to the US *Waqifeene Nau* that your parents have invested many sacrifices in your upbringing. The *Waqifeene Nau* are the hopes of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. He said that the *Jama'at* needed scholars and leaders and the US *Waqifeene Nau* should acquire the best education and adopt the ideals of Ahmadiyyat. He advised the *Waqifeene Nau* not to settle for the menial jobs and lowly fruits of this world. He reiterated that high hopes of the *Jama'at* were placed on the *Waqifeene Nau* and they could not disappoint the *Jama'at*. He challenged the *Waqifeene Nau* to throw themselves at the threshold of *Khilafat* and come to the *Jamia* to serve the *Jama'at*. Principal Sahib, *Jamia* Canada, then addressed the audience, saying that he spoke to all the US *Waqifeene Nau* during the *Jamia* trip and he found them all to be fully committed. He congratulated Hafiz Sahib on the first anniversary of the *Waqfe Nau* online classes organized by the US *Waqfe Nau* department. He also thanked all the members of the US entourage for their comments and suggestions. The final speaker was Respected *Ameer Sahib*, Canada. *Ameer Sahib* began by distributing gifts to all the *Waqifeene Nau*, parents and the US *Waqfe Nau* team. He recalled the desire of the late M. M. Ahmad Sahib to hold combined *Amila* meetings of the Canadian and the US *Jama'ats*. He said that combined meetings similar to the present meeting where US and Canadian *Waqifeene Nau* were coming together were a fulfillment of that desire in a small way. He said that all the blessings mentioned in the Holy Qur'an for the believers were especially there for the *Waqifeene Nau*. He said that the special prayers for the *Waqifeene Nau* will *Insha Allah* make them successful.

The meeting concluded with silent prayer led by Respected *Ameer Sahib*, Canada. After the meeting, there was a group photo of the US *Waqifeene Nau*, parents and *Waqfe Nau* team members with Respected *Ameer Sahib*, Canada and the Canadian *Waqfe Nau* and *Jamia* teams.

THE HOLY PEN

A FORTNIGHTLY PUBLICATION BY MAJLIS SULTAN-UL-QALAM, USA



"THE WORK OF THE
SWORD WE HAVE
PERFORMED WITH
OUR PEN."
HADHRAT MIRZA
GHULAM AHMAD OF
QADIAN^{AS}

VOL 2, ISSUE 3 · APRIL 18, 2009

LARS VILKS CARTOON

SARDAR ANEES AHMAD - RICHMOND, VA

PRINTED IN STOCKHOLM NEWS

MARCH 13, 2009

In 1755, Dr. Samuel Johnson completed the first great English dictionary. A group of respectable women were among the various delegations who personally congratulated Johnson. The women expressed pleasure on discovering that Johnson's dictionary contained no inappropriate words. Johnson quipped that it was interesting that the women had been searching for these words in the first place!

Individuals will always exist who, like the women visiting Johnson, consciously seek out offensive material. Cautiousness must, therefore, be observed when restricting free expression. The debate over the recent publication of Lars Vilks' cartoon, depicting Prophet Muhammad with the body of a dog, is a fitting example.

Extremists will react as, perhaps more, criminally as they did during the 2006 Danish cartoon controversy. Vilks emphasizes that extremists will not bully anyone into silence. Reliance on intimidation, however, is not as peculiar a trait as is extremists' hypocritical nature. Oftentimes raising hell when a Westerner is involved, extremists behave strikingly different when the perpetrator is a Muslim. Suicide attacks between Sunni and Shia factions, misogynist behavior, desecration of Islamic holy sites, persecution of religious minorities, etc. all fail to raise any extremists' eyebrow. Furthermore, which of these same extremists who believe Jesus is a prophet opposed the abhorrent Ecce Homo and Piss Christ exhibitions?

Criticism, even mockery, of what extremists hold dear would then seem justified. The problem is that Vilks' cartoon erroneously conflates extremists' beliefs with that of Muhammad's.

Unlike extremists, Muhammad declared that intentionally killing oneself is tantamount to damnation [Bukhari]; insisted Christians offer their prayer services in his mosque and protected other houses of worship [Seerat]; declared that each person, irrespective of religious or philosophical view, can obtain salvation if they are righteous [Kanzul Ummal];

prohibited abusing women, never even so much as tapping his wives (Riyadh); made education of every male and female mandatory [Baihiqi]; permitted no punishment for apostasy, even allowing a Quranic scribe to change his faith [Fathul Bari]; and observed a strict separation of church and state [Medina Charter]. Lastly, Muhammad protected the freedom of speech. While Medina's ruler, Muhammad repeatedly tolerated the excesses of his opponents including Abdullah Ubay bin Salul, the same man who falsely alleged Muhammad's wife was an adulterer, and also led his funeral prayer [Bukhari].

But if Muhammad believed in these values, why do today's clerics espouse the opposite? Muhammad himself referred to the Latter Days' clerics as "the worst creatures under the firmament of heaven" [Mishkat]. In fact, extremism stems not only from unruly clerics, but also from a belief in unrestricted expression.

Vilks, in the name of free expression, wanted to hurt Muhammad's followers, not discredit extremists. But would free expression advocates such as Milton, Paine, and Mill agree? If so, then free expression is inherently vulgar and meaningless. Free expression should foster creativity, individuality, and brotherhood. Aside from fostering mistrust, inevitably leading to the restriction of rights, what truth has this cartoon unveiled? Jean-Pierre Olov Schori, former Swedish Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister, argues that Vilks' cartoon inhibits, rather than helps, free speech activists in Muslim countries. For what leverage do they possess if extremists can cite Vilks' cartoon as the fruits of free expression? Thus, observing some restraint can marginalize extremism, instead of, as some argue, afford Muslims any special privilege. Vilks' actions are even more deplorable than anti-Semitic Muslims who, when drawing abusive cartoons of Jews, restrict their pens to Jews, never targeting any Israelite prophet. Such behavior, while repulsive, is still more civil than the anti-extremist cartoonists'!

Continued on page 2

THE HOLY PEN

CHAIRMAN, MSQ USA: SARDAR ANEES AHMAD

EDITOR: AHMAD NAWAZ CHAUDHRY

MSQ@MKAUSA.ORG



MKA★USA

THE HOLY PEN IS A FORTNIGHTLY NEWSLETTER OF MSQ USA. IT AIMS TO GENERATE AWARENESS OF THE LATEST MEDIA COVERAGE OF ISLAM IN THE AMERICAN PRESS.

INTERESTING READS

[Non-Muslims in an Islamic afterlife](#)

[Obama walks the talk in new Muslim outreach](#)

[Will White House Tone Down Terror Terminology?](#)

LARS VILKS CARTOON (CONT.)

SARDAR ANEES AHMAD - RICHMOND, VA

PRINTED IN STOCKHOLM NEWS

MARCH 13, 2009

Moreover, values govern speech in our daily lives – one behaves differently with one's friend as opposed to the friend's parents. Censorship, in the name of morality, need not jeopardize individuality or engender dogma. As the first people in the modern era to legally prohibit censorship and guarantee a free press, censorship to many Swedes is itself offensive. But Sweden has also repeatedly acknowledged that free expression is not altogether free. The Swedish Constitution (Ch.5, Art. 2), while recognizing a free press, requires that, "A periodical shall have a responsible editor". Art has been censored – such as a poster in Linköping



showing Satan defecating on Jesus [the poster's publication resulted in the newspapers' editor receiving death threats]. The Statens biografbyrå prohibits theatres from showing any film "contrary to law or morality" or that which can brutalize or inflict mental harm on certain age groups.

Still, one may argue tolerance of Muslim sentiment requires that Muslim communities condemn extremism. As an example, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community [Ahmadiyyat] has, since its inception in the 1800s, represented Islam's inherently moderate philosophy and the compatibility of jihad with the larger world. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat's founder, drew support from the Qur'an and Muhammad's sayings to condemn extremism and emphasize a jihad of the pen. He reasoned, "We should go forth with the kind of weapons with which they [Islam's critics] have come forth. That weapon is the pen." Ahmadiyyat, under the leadership of its present Caliph, Mirza Masroor Ahmad, disapproved of the 2006 Danish cartoons through writing while creating no societal unrest. This is one international Muslim community, numbering in the tens of millions across 190+ countries [including Gothenburg, Sweden] that answers the oft-asked, but not so often-answered question – where are the moderate Muslims?

So, I urge the reader to critique Muhammad's teachings on its own merits, thereby preserving free expression while avoiding measures that only benefit an extremist.

TERRORISM DIDN'T CAUSE THESE TWISTED ACTS

QASIM RASHID - RICHMOND, VA

PRINTED IN THE NORTHWESTERN

MARCH 30, 2009

Editor, Times-Dispatch In response to my Correspondent of the Day letter, "This Airplane Wasn't a Terror Attack," at least two letters have been printed telling me I am wrong. I cannot express my joy at reading these letters, for they struck at the underlying issue I sought to address. The fact is, I hope I am wrong.

When Fox News, Time, and Vanity Fair labeled Major Nidal Hasan a terrorist while Joseph Stack received a "True American Hero" Facebook group, I admit I was perturbed. After all, both Stack and Hasan acted alone in a twisted and violent approach to resolve their issues. Yet, the former received outright condemnation, and rightfully so, while the latter sacrificed for all of us [as some held]. However, to see a pronounced response from my fellow citizens telling me the two are one and the same provides reassurance that our nation does not equate Islam with terrorism.

As Linda J. Staples so eloquently concluded her letter, "Muslim or non-Muslim is not the issue." She could not be more right. Few people recall that convicted domestic terrorist Timothy McVeigh, a Catholic, requested a Catholic priest to read him his last rites upon execution. Correctly, no one ascribes McVeigh's actions to Christian teachings. The terrorist actions of the KKK, a group composed entirely of Christians, have never once been considered justified as Christian teachings, thankfully. Likewise, the 9/11 attackers were vile terrorists and nothing more. To ascribe their actions to Islam promotes only misunderstanding, discord, and is flat out wrong.

I encourage Staples and those like her to continue to clarify the difference between Islam and terrorism for such clarifications truly benefit our great nation. After all, she is certainly correct. Muslim or non-Muslim is not the issue. [Read original article here](#)

SEND YOUR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS TO MSQ@MKAUSA.ORG

ISLAM AND MUSLIMS SHOULD NOT SCARE YOU

AMJAD MAHMOOD KHAN - LOS ANGELES, CA

PRINTED IN THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

MARCH 23, 2009

The image of American Muslims is in serious disrepair. A January 2010 Gallup poll found that almost half of Americans hold an unfavorable view of Islam. About the same number of Americans harbor personal prejudice toward Muslims, according to the poll.

These numbers become especially troubling when we consider that two-thirds of the Americans polled admit to knowing little to nothing about Islam.

Why are many Americans distrustful of a religion and people they know very little about?

People tend to fear what they do not understand. Americans, for the most part, have been brought up in a Christian society. They might not agree with it, but they are familiar with it and thus tend not to feel threatened by it.

Because Islam is still a minority religion in America and has had little positive public exposure, Americans have built up a strong distrust of it.

Islam deserves a media makeover. At a time when the United States is mired in two wars in locations where the majority of the people practice Islam, the future of American-Islamic relations is at stake.

The behavior of some radical self-proclaimed "Muslims" does not help public perception. Each time a terrorist commits a suicide bombing in a hospital, or a religious cleric issues a fatwa against Mickey Mouse, or Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad denies the Holocaust after 9/11, another American grows weary of Islam and Muslims.

Those familiar with Islam understand that these acts are not representative of the religion and shouldn't be associated with mainstream Islam. The rest of the US does not.

Reporting the acts of a handful of radical Muslims as if they are accurate portrayals of Islam would be akin to intimating that every priest involved in a scandal accurately represented Roman Catholicism.

The behavior of ideologues who capitalize on ratings or attention from fueling the fire against Islam does not help US public perception, either.

Each time Pat Robertson refers to Muslims as "fascists," or Ann Coulter calls Islam "a car-burning cult," it may get ratings but, more than anything, it damages America's perspective on Islam and Muslims.

Then there is the behavior of media pundits beholden to the 24-hour news cycle. Each time CNN runs a story on the self-proclaimed "Jihad Jane" or Fox News sounds off about Saudi women who can't drive, without including an expert interview from someone who can clearly explain cultural context, another American grows weary of Islam and Muslims.

Again and again it plays out: An extremist commits an atrocity in Islam's name; a non-Muslim ideologue typecasts the act as representative of Islam; and a media pundit cements the stereotype.

This vicious cycle must end if attitudes toward Islam and Muslims are to improve. Of course, it begins within Muslim communities and countering extremists with education, but education in the US is also required.

Americans deserve to hear a more accurate portrayal of a religion and people that account for a fifth of the world's population.

Thousands of American Muslims are fighting gallantly to defend America in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The West (even the Vatican) praise the ethical principles behind Islamic banking services. There is a thriving literary and artistic tradition within Islam. For example, American Muslims have made remarkable contributions to such diverse fields as jazz (Yusuf Lateef), photojournalism (Adrees Latif) and miniature art (Saira Wasim).

Islam is host to moderate and vibrant minority communities. For example, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community – a dynamic, fast-growing international revivalist movement within Islam – is America's first Muslim organization [founded in 1920] and has vociferously denounced violent "jihad" as a grave sin.

American Muslims collaborate with individuals of all faiths and traditions to improve their local communities on a regular basis. Here in Los Angeles, the Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement at the University of Southern California has been at the forefront of promoting mutual understanding.

Yet all of this gets lost in a wave of negative headlines.

Extreme personalities have painted Islam with broad strokes, and much – though not all – of the media have allowed them to. This must change.

Whose burden is that? The news media bear the primary responsibility. Isn't one of the main purposes of the media to empower citizens to make informed decisions concerning their democracy? Sensationalizing or even mischaracterizing incidents can greatly influence how citizens treat one another; it can also influence US policy.

By leaving out the full picture, the news media can ultimately inflame public outrage to such an extent as to facilitate ill-conceived legislation or engender popular vigilantism against American Muslims.

To be sure, it is a difficult time in the US for journalism. In the 24/7 news and Internet age, newspapers and TV news stations fight for their survival by becoming as attractive to viewers as possible. But that doesn't have to mean accuracy should suffer.

The solution is rather simple: The news media should make a concerted effort to get comments from American Muslims to help give context when reporting on Islam and the multitude of voices and movements within the religion. That way Americans will understand that most American Muslims are as aghast as they are every time there is a "jihad" against America.

There are plenty of American Muslim journalists and commentators willing to help put the news in perspective. In order to repair the image of American Muslims and fix the misperception problem, the media must work harder to help make the unfamiliar feel familiar.

UNITE THROUGH COMMON ANCESTRY

SARDAR ANEES AHMAD - WATERLOO, NY

PRINTED IN THE FINGERLAKES TIMES

MARCH 12, 2009

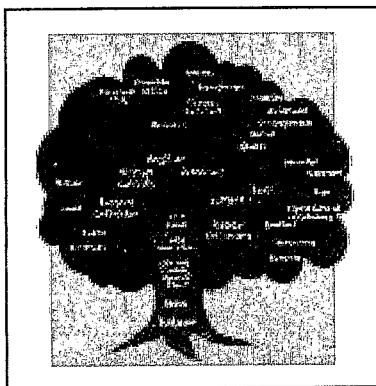
Our age seems to be the most religiously, and de facto culturally, polarized time in history. Samuel Huntington's Clash of Civilizations echoes a widespread belief that religio-cultural identities will be the primary source of conflict in the post-Cold War world. The three power players – the Jewish, Christian and Muslim worlds – hold the cards in this scenario. Despite all the differences, the three communities share one powerful commonality – love for their patriarch, Abraham.

Like a father, Abraham exercised a tremendous level of steadfastness, which ultimately resulted in the cementing of his legacy. (Genesis 17) describes the covenant God established with Abraham, promising him the office of Father of Nations through his two illustrious sons, Ishmael and Isaac. And if not for his undying faith in God, Abraham would have never left his wife and Ishmael in the wilderness. From this single act, the child grew into to a man, later a prophet, and ultimately became the leader of a nation.

Like a father, his progeny has preserved and emulated many of his habits. Belief in the Unity and Decree of God, angels, heaven and hell, and nearly all of the same prophets and holy books indicates the profound effect Abraham has left upon his spiritual progeny. Moreover, all three faiths not only promote the institution of prayer, but even the manner in which prayer is to be offered is the same. Joshua (Joshua 5:14), Aaron & Moses (Numbers 20:6), Elijah (I Kings 18:42), Jesus (Mathew 26:39), Muhammad (Qur'an 22:78) all prostrated themselves before God – just like Abraham (Genesis 17:3).

And lastly, and most unfortunately, like a father – his children are often found quarrelling with one another. The Old

Testament reminds us, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psalms 133:1)! Yet the seemingly petty differences between these three religious communities have cast a daunting shadow over the far more abundant commonalities. Prior to the Crusades, all three communities lived in peace in Jerusalem. For nearly 700 years, Moorish Spain was the center of learning in Europe and a symbol of brotherhood as the children of Abraham lived and worked amicably with one another. If accomplished in the Jerusalem and Spain of old, why can this scenario not manifest itself today, especially when all three communities still recognize one magnanimous father?



To Jews, Abraham is a strict monotheist, brilliant debater, and grandfather of the promised Israelite community. To Christians, Abraham is a paragon of virtue and the forefather of Christ. To Muslims, all this, as well as the renovator of the Kaaba, and one who finds mention in every daily prayer. More than 50% of the world recognizes Abraham as 'father.' Neither Jew nor Christian, yet Abraham has achieved a monumental feat – three of the world's major faiths love and revere him. Born in Ur (Genesis 17:5), present day Al-Muqayyar, Iraq, his surroundings offered a fitting metaphor for his life – hardship, however seemingly insurmountable, can be overcome.

Recognition of this common ancestry can, therefore, significantly contribute to change an inevitable clash of civilizations into a concordance of civilizations.

UNITE THROUGH COMMON ANCESTRY

SARDAR ANEES AHMAD - WATERLOO, NY

PRINTED IN THE FINGERLAKES TIMES

MARCH 1, 2009

Does the banning of minarets alone warrant jihad? Islam says no. In fact, the Quran prohibits warfare except in defense (22:40) or upholding religious freedom (2:194). Minarets themselves are not mandatory mosque structures. During the lifetime of Muhammad, mosques were built without minarets. Switzerland is the home of 400,000 Muslims and nearly 200 mosques. On what grounds, then, can Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi wage jihad against Switzerland while his own country exudes evidence of religious intolerance? The U.S. State Department reports that Libya severely restricts the religious freedoms of non-Muslim religious communities. As a leader, Gaddafi should call for interfaith understanding in Libya before waging war against a country much more conscious of religious freedom than his own.