



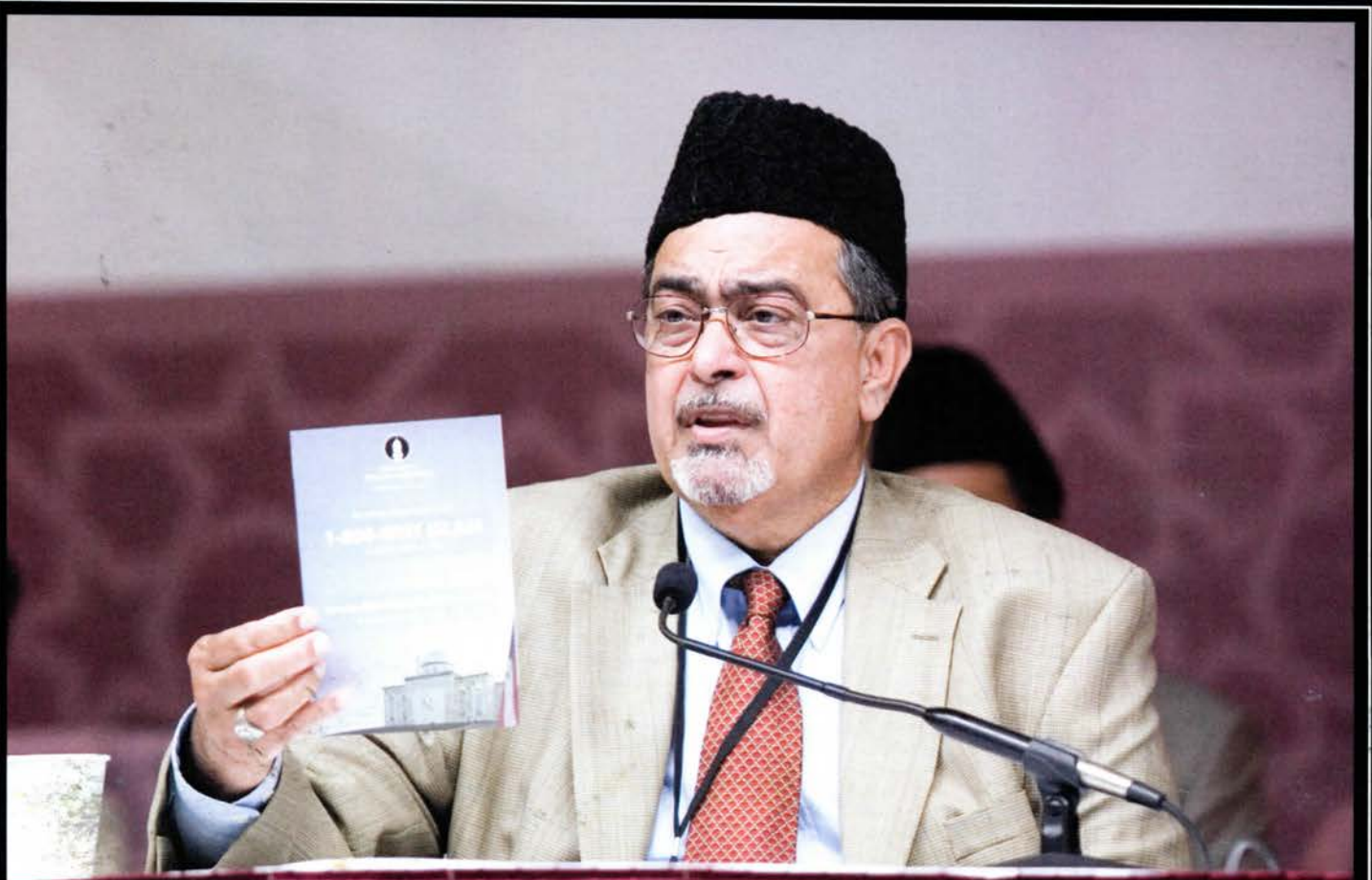
AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY
United States of America

October-Novemberr 2010

The Ahmadiyya GAZETTE USA

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

USA Jalsa Salana Edition



Scenes from 2010 USA Jalsa Salana

میں تیری تبلیغ کو زمین کے کناروں تک پہنچاؤں گا

I SHALL CAUSE THY MESSAGE TO REACH THE CORNERS OF THE EARTH

PAKISTAN

INDIA

GHANA TANZANIA

INDONESIA ISRAEL

NETHERLANDS ICELAND

BANGLADESH SYRIA

AUSTRALIA CHINA

CANADA NIGERIA

FIJI AFGHANISTAN

GERMANY UK

RUSSIA ALBANIA

BURKINA FASO USA

ITALY NORWAY

FRANCE BENIN

UGANDA SPAIN

SWEDEN KENIA

MAURITIUS

DENMARK

NEW ZEALAND

THE MUSLIM TIMES

MUSLIM NEWS - AHMADIYYA NEWS - SECULAR NEWS

<http://www.themuslimtimes.org/>



Appeal from National Secretary Waqf-e-Jadid

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah says: *The similitude of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like the similitude of a grain of corn which grows seven ears, in each ear a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies it further for whomsoever He pleases and Allah is Bountiful, All-Knowing. (2:262)*

Although I am talking of something that happened long ago, yet I recall clearly, as if it was yesterday, being in the London Mosque, sitting, listening to a *Khutba* by a Companion of the Promised Messiah^{as} - yes I, my very self...and such immense Grace of Allah...He be praised for such an honor!

The Companion was in advanced age and he was saying, "look, you all know me and how aged I am and it is not certain I will last long, yet if I ask any of you to lend me some money, each of you will be eager to do so, not knowing I will be there to give you back your money. But look at Allah. He tells us He would in abundance reward those who spend in His way. So why do you hesitate?"

The words are mine, but the essence of what this Companion of the Promised Messiah^{as} said was what I just wrote. Do you know who that Companion of the Promised Messiah^{as} was? It was Hadhrat Chaudhry Muhammad Zafrulla Khan^{ra} who exemplified such immense spending in Allah's way that signs of it are to be found all over the world.

With these words, may I urge all members of the US Ahmadiyya Muslim Community to make huge sacrifices towards the Blessed Waqf-e-Jadid Scheme - so that the US Jama'at lives up to the expectations of Hazoor^{aba} that he expressed early in January 2010 when he asked US to do a lot more.

I ask also for your prayers.

Was-salam,

Waseem A. Sayed, PhD

National Secretary Waqf-e-Jadid

An educational and spiritual monthly publication

Ahmadiyya Gazette USA

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE AHMADIYYA
MOVEMENT IN ISLAM, USA

October - November 2010

Patron **Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar**
Ameer Jama'at USA

Editor-in-Chief **Dr. Naseer Ahmad**

Editor **Dr. Karimullah Zirvi**

Editorial Advisor **Muhammad Zafrullah
Hanjra**

Cover: *Latif Ahmed* Photos: *Kalim Bhatti*

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



Table of Contents

2	Al-Qur'an
3	Al-Hadith
4	Sayings of the Promised Messiah ^{as}
5	Synopsis of the Friday Sermon Delivered by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V ^{aba} on July 23, 2010 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London
9	The Message of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V ^{aba}
11	62 nd Jalsa Salana USA Held at Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, VA (July 16-18, 2010): Habibullah S. Bajwa
21	Opening Address: Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar, Ameer Jama'at USA
23	Bai'at—The Guardian of Our Identity in the West: Dr. Faheem Younus Qureshi
27	Trials—Sources of Divine Favors and Wrath: Maulana Azhar Haneef
33	Islam Beyond Culture and Ethnicity: Bilal Abdus Salam
36	Religious Freedom in America: Amjad Khan, Esq.
41	Calling Nations Towards God: Ali Murtaza
45	Modern Challenges to Core Beliefs: Yasin sharif
50	Islam and Loyalty to the Homeland: Maulana Naseem Mahdi, Missionary in-Charge and Na'ib Ameer
54	One True Jama'at—"Those Like My Companions and Me": Maulana Syed Shamshad Ahmad Nasir
62	Martyrdom in Lahore: Our Reaction and Response: Maulana Naseem Mahdi, Missionary in-Charge and Na'ib Ameer
66	Zikre Habib: Forbearance and Forgiveness of Enemies: Dr. Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad
70	Concluding Address: Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar, Ameer Jama'at USA
73	62 nd Jalsa Salana USA: A Report from <i>Lajna Imaillah</i> USA: Shahina Bashir
77	The Holy Qur'an—A Guide to the Right Path: Roohul Ameen
82	The Holy Prophet ^{swm} —His Life was the Holy Qur'an: Khaula Shah
85	Allah is the Friend of the Believers : Attiya Salik
88	The Best Provision is Taqwa (Righteousness): Sameea Safi
91	Understanding Our True Purpose in Life: Mehdi Sana Rahman
94	Accounts of Personal Experiences: Laila Isack
97	Distinct Qualities of the Maid Servants of Allah: Dr. Shanaz Butt
100	Curbing Domestic Violence Through Motherhood: Arsila Faheem
103	Color of a Rainbow: Profile of a Muslim Husband: Zahir Ahmad
106	An Open Letter to Muslims Worldwide: Professor K. A. Malik
109	Sad Demise of Mahmood Khan Sahib: Dr. Ahmed Khan
110	Sad Demise of Masood Ahmad Khurshid Sanori Sahib: Hamdah Farooqi
113	Letter: Kay Bailey Hutchison, United States Senator
114	Letter: Rick Perry, Governor of Texas

Al-Qur'an

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ
 تَنْفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا ۝ قُلْ إِنَّمَا بَشَرٌ
 مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ اللَّهُ وَاحِدٌ ۚ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا
 لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَ لَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا ۝

Say, 'If the ocean became ink for the words of my Lord, surely, the ocean would be exhausted before the words of my Lord came to an end, even though We brought the like thereof as *further* help.' Say, 'I am only a man like yourselves; *but* I have received the revelation that your God is only One God, So let him who hopes to meet his Lord do good deeds, and let him join no one in the worship of his Lord.' (18:110-111)

Commentary:

Christian nations of the West boast of their great inventions and scientific discoveries and seem to labor under the misconception that they have succeeded in fathoming the secrets of creation itself. This is but a vain boast. God's secrets are inexhaustible and unfathomable and what these people have discovered and what they will discover hereafter by all their striving will not be even like a drop in the ocean. The Holy Prophet^{saw} is reported to have said that the recitation of the first and last ten verses of this *Surah* (*Surah Al-Kahf*) makes one secure against the spiritual onslaughts of the *Dajjal*. This shows that the *Dajjal* and Gog and Magog are one and the same people - Christian nations and the West-the *Dajjal* representing their pernicious religious propaganda against Islam, and Gog and Magog their material and political power and predominance.

Al-Hadith

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: يَخْرُجُ فِي آخِرِ الزَّمَانِ دَجَالٌ يَخْتَلُونَ الدُّنْيَا بِالدِّينِ يَلْبَسُونَ لِلنَّاسِ جُلُودَ الضَّانِ مِنَ الدِّينِ أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ أَحْلَى مِنَ الْعَسَلِ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ قُلُوبُ الذِّيَابِ يَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: أَبِي يَغْتَرُونَ أُمَّ عَلِيٍّ يَجْتَرُونَ حَتَّى حَلَفْتُ لَا بَعَثَنَّ عَلِيٌّ أَوْلِيكَ مِنْهُمْ فِتْنَةً تَدْعُ الْحَلِيمَ مِنْهُمْ حَيْرَانَ -

Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said: "In the Last Days, certain Antichrists will appear who will spread religion through power and money. They will appear in the world clad in sheep's skin and their talk will be sweeter than honey. However, their hearts will be like hearts of the wolves. Allāh says: 'Did they misunderstand Me or have they (intentionally) challenged Me to the extent that (now) I Swear that I will raise amongst them and from within them such mischief-makers that the wise people will be astonished and amazed.' "

(Kanzul 'Ummal kitabul qiymah minal qismul awwal, p 174/7 matbu'a Haidrabad Daccan)

SAYINGS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

Purpose of Religion

The true purpose of adopting a faith is that one should acquire such certainty concerning God, Who is the fountainhead of salvation, as if one can see Him with one's eyes. The wicked spirit of sin seeks to destroy a man and a person cannot escape the fatal poison of sin till he believes with full certainty in the Perfect and Living God and till he knows for certain that God exists, Who punishes the offender and bestows upon the righteous every lasting joy. It is a common experience that when one believes in the fatal effects of anything one does not have recourse to it. For instance, no one swallows poison consciously. No one deliberately stands in front of a wild tiger. No one deliberately thrusts his hand into the hole of a serpent. Then why does a person commit sin deliberately? The reason is that he has not that certainty in this matter as he has in other matters of the kind that we have mentioned. The first duty of a person, therefore, is to acquire certainty with regard to the existence of God, and to adopt a religion through which this certainty can be acquired so that he should fear God and shun sin. How can such certainty be acquired? It cannot be acquired through mere stories. It cannot be acquired through mere arguments. The only way of acquiring certainty is to experience God repeatedly through converse with Him or through witnessing his extraordinary signs, or by keeping company with someone who has that experience.

[Naseem-e-Da'wat, Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 19, pp. 447-448]

The purpose of religion is that man should obtain deliverance from his passions and should develop personal love for God Almighty through certain faith in His existence and His perfect attributes. Such love of God is the paradise, which will appear in diverse shapes in the Hereafter. To be unaware of the true God, to keep away from Him, and not to have any love for Him, is the hell which will appear in diverse shapes in the Hereafter. Thus, the true purpose is to have full faith in Him. Now the question is which religion and which book can fulfil this need. The Bible tells us that the door of converse with God is closed and that the ways of obtaining certainty are sealed. Whatever was to happen, happened in the past and there is nothing in the future. ... Of what use then is a religion that is dead? What benefit can we derive from a book that is dead? What grace can be bestowed by a god who is dead?

[Chashmai Masihi, Roohani Khazai'n, Vol. 20, pp. 352-353]

The purpose of accepting a religion is that God, Who is Self-Sufficient and is in no need of His creation or its worship, may be pleased with us, and that we should experience such grace and mercy as should wipe out our inner stains and rusts so that our breasts may be filled with certainty and understanding. This is not possible for a man to achieve through his own devices. Therefore, God the Glorious, keeping hidden mainly His own Being and the wonders of His creation, for instance, souls and bodies, angels, heaven, hell, resurrection and Messengership etc. and yet disclosing them partially through reason, appointed his servants to believe in all these mysteries.

[Preface to Surmah Chashm Arya, Roohani Khaza'in, Volume 2, p. 81]

Synopsis of Friday Sermon Delivered by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}, on July 23, 2010 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, Morden, UK

Shermeen Butt

Hazoor^{aba} gave a discourse on hospitality at Jalsa Salana in his Friday Sermon today. Hazoor^{aba} said with the grace of God, the UK *Jalsa Salana* commences from next Friday. He said the first thing he wished to mention in this regard was that *Jama'at* in general and UK *Jama'at* in particular should pay a lot of stress on prayers and sadqa for the *Jalsa* to be held successfully and for it to be blessed in every sense. May God protect us from all mischief and evil of the enemy and may the *Jalsa* begin and conclude amidst countless blessings.

As is customary with the Friday Sermon preceding *Jalsa*, Hazoor^{aba} drew attention of the duty-holding men, women and children to their obligations and responsibilities. Hazoor^{aba} said with the grace of God now the men and women are quite well-trained for *Jalsa* duty with workers of each department having a good knowledge of their specific work. However, in order to further improve the work and to enhance the sense of responsibility reminding is important as it is also a Qur'anic commandment: 'And keep on exhorting; for verily, exhortation benefits those who would believe.' (51:56). Hazoor^{aba} said it is also important to impart the significance of *Jalsa* duty to children as well as youth who are perhaps doing duty for the first time or who do not fully realize its significance. Hazoor^{aba} said *Jalsa* duty is not an ordinary duty. The old and the young present themselves for the service of the *Jalsa* guests who come to the *Jalsa* in compliance of the Promised Messiah's^{as} call for their spiritual nourishment. There may a few who simply come to pass time but this should not deflect us from our duties.

Hazoor^{aba} said there are many kinds of guests at *Jalsa*. There are those who are from the UK and stay over at the *Jalsa* site either in their private tents or in accommodation provided by the *Jama'at*. They have dealings with almost all departments of *Jalsa* during their three-day stay. Workers of each department should present a model of extreme courtesy to them. Any existing resentment with a guest should be forgotten and should not come in the way of serving them; if it is so, it would be a betrayal of one's duty. If a worker feels that he/she cannot honour the dues of hospitality towards a certain guest then they should ask their co-worker to do it on their behalf. The other kind of guests is of those who are also from the UK and daily travel to the site. They eat once or twice at the *Jalsa* site under the auspices of the *Ziafat* department. It is the responsibility of this department to look after them. In the last few years complaints were received that not only food was not served, the attitude of the workers was also not good. On investigation it was found that this was not due to workers' fault, perhaps food was not to be served at the particular spot where the demand was made. However, even if food is not to be served at an area, this should be explained to the guests most politely. Car parking, traffic control and security workers should also display courtesy and civility when speaking with the guests. Hazoor^{aba} explained that complaints are not the norm, rather only the odd complaint is received, but it can upset the entire administration. Generally speaking the workers tolerate excesses of the guests. The third kind of guests is of those who come from Europe, some are accommodated by the *Jama'at* while others stay privately. However, due to being outside of the UK, their expectations are somewhat high. A few among them make undue demands but workers should try their very best not to give anyone a reason to complain. Another type of guests is of those who come from Pakistan, India and Africa. African and American guests are looked after by the *Tabsheer* Department to a large extent. However, they also have to deal with the general departments, so

their needs must also be looked after. In spite of their disadvantaged position, guests from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh come to quench their thirst for *Khilafat*. In particular the state of the Ahmadi of Pakistan has reached a critical point in victimhood. Extreme courtesy and politeness is needed with such guests. Some have language problems, whatever their need may be, men and women workers should be ever ready to serve them. If a guest makes a request which is not the duty of the department of the person asked, rather than give them a blunt response, the person should guide them to the right place. Generally the guests from Pakistan are helped by their relatives, but those without any relatives [living in the UK] can at times get anxious. Hazoor^{aba} said for the past two to three years the accommodation and hospitality of the guests who stay longer than three days has been good, but as he mentioned earlier, reminding is important. Hazoor^{aba} said those who have visiting relatives from Pakistan should realize that it is not just the task of the *Jalsa* management to look after the guests. Rather, they too should offer their hospitality to their relatives. Another kind of guests is of those who are non-Muslims and are invited by the *Jama'at*. However, they often take note of how the *Jalsa* workers operate. Usually, each year, they are very impressed by the courtesy of the men and women workers.

Hazoor^{aba} said now many outside guests also come to the *Jalsa* in Germany and are also impressed by the services provided there. This year many expressed such views to Hazoor^{aba}. This indeed is the standard of Ahmadi workers everywhere that even if they are not directly involved with guests, the way in which they work, their eagerness and diligence impresses the guests. It is as if the workers, apart from performing their respective duties are also acting as 'silent missionaries' and thus earning double reward. Firstly by serving the guests of the Promised Messiah^{as} and secondly by portraying a true picture of Ahmadiyyat, the true Islam to others through which some pious-natured people identify the Truth. *Jalsa* duty is a means of earning God's pleasure for every man and woman worker at *Jalsa*. May God enable everyone to fulfill it in an excellent manner.

Hazoor^{aba} said this year he wishes to draw special attention to the department of security. This department has improved and grown a lot since last year, however, this year even the slightest of doubt should not be overlooked and every procedure should be carried out to the letter. The [ID] cards issued by the *Jama'at* should be completely verified through the scanning system that is in place. Each person's card, even if they are known to you, should be processed. Slight and brief annoyance of a guest should be tolerated but no compromise should be made in this duty. This year Germany had very good security arrangement and no problems were faced as they had arranged for several entrances. All the details of each card would appear [on the screen] upon scanning. This year apart from the good arrangements at *Jalsa* Germany, their security system was extremely commendable. May God reward all the young Ahmadi men and further enhance their capabilities who worked most diligently in devising this system. Hazoor^{aba} said usually he mentions the services of the German *Jama'at* at their *Jalsa* but as the opportunity did not present itself this year he thus briefly mentioned it.

During *Jalsa* as well as the Friday Prayers, the checking at entrances as well as the security here too needs to be carried out with great alertness. Young people should not be given duties on their own. In fact, at each point they should be accompanied by their mature *Nai'bs* and officers. Above all it should be remembered, as mentioned earlier, that our real reliance is only in God, therefore no moment should pass without prayers. In regards to security of the temporary accommodation areas in *Hadiqatul Mahdi* or Islamabad and *Baitul Futuh* as well as the private tents an odd case of theft can sometimes take place. Therefore their protection should be ensured. If theft can take place, other harm can also be perpetrated. Although people are urged to take their valuables with them, which they do, the security of these areas should be carried out with due vigilance. The security workers should always be confident and must never panic.

Though with God's grace it does not happen often but if there is a delay in the serving of food, because during *Jalsa* food is not cooked on-site, the guests should be assured in a calm manner. Similarly, at times there is overcrowding on the transport provided. Workers should remain calm and also calm the guests about the temporary inconvenience, assuring them gently. Due to the hot weather there can be shortcomings in the service of the Water department. As we now get high temperatures here as well, this department has gained

significance. Water supply to the washrooms is also needed. In spite of the experienced workers these departments are such that due to the impatience of the guests it can get chaotic. Therefore, while the workers need to stay calm they also have to guide the guests with patience and in a calm manner.

Hospitality is a distinction of a believer. Moreover, guests who come specifically for religious motives and who have been called by the Imam of the age as 'his guests' should be looked after with that much more care. Their religious motives are to seek maximum knowledge of the faith that was revealed to the Holy Prophet^{saw} and bring about pure changes in themselves and in the process try and gain Divine nearness.

Next Hazoor^{aba} cited examples of the most excellent hospitality of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. When a guest arrived he would send message to all his wives to arrange for food for the guest. Each household would reply that they only had water to serve [and no food]. Hazoor^{aba} said this also illustrates the steadfastness of his blessed wives, who, by virtue of his power of holiness did not ever even slightly protest at the lack of food. In fact the situation of no food in the household was only found out because of the arrival of a guest. In one such instance a Companion takes the guest to his house where although some food is available, it is only enough for the children. So, the children are made to go to sleep and the parents extinguish the lamp when serving food to the guest so that the guest may eat satisfactorily unaware of the scarcity of food. God is so pleased at this act that He informs the Holy Prophet^{saw} of this incident and says that the act of the believing man and believing woman made Him laugh. Hazoor^{aba} said whoever's act makes God happy has indeed attained the blessings of both worlds.

Then there is the incident where a guest left the bedding soiled and the Holy Prophet^{saw} insisted on washing it himself, telling his Companions that as he was his guest he must wash the bedding.

Hadhrat Abu Huraira^{ra} narrates that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said that a believer who believes in God and the Day of Judgement has three attributes: Firstly, he has fine morals, always says what is good and does not injure anyone's feelings for discourtesy tarnishes faith. This gains God's pleasure and strengthens faith as well as guarantees peace in society. Secondly, respect your neighbor. Hazoor^{aba} said God has given very clear commandments with regards the neighbor and the Holy Prophet^{saw} also said that such was the stress laid on the rights of the neighbor that he wondered if God would command to include the neighbor in inheritance. Hazoor^{aba} said the term neighbor also connotes temporary neighbors, like those who we are together with for short periods of times. They too have rights over us, whereas this [with reference to *Jalsa*] is about our brothers in faith. Thirdly, honour your guests. Hazoor^{aba} said hospitality strengthens faith and it is important to express it. It is a source of attaining nearness to God. Whereas here, [at *Jalsa*] we only have to sacrifice our time and emotions.

Hazoor^{aba} explained that the true and ardent devotee of the Holy Prophet^{saw} also followed this blessed example. The hospitality of the Promised Messiah^{as} was not for a few. Rather it was a permanent state of affairs and was extensive. Although he honoured all his guests most excellently, God revealed to him: 'Be not arrogant towards God's creatures and be not tired of receiving visitors' (*Tadhkirah*, page 73, 2007 edition). Hazoor^{aba} explained that God repeatedly drew the Promised Messiah's (on whom be peace) attention to this matter because the numbers of his guests were going to grow and grow and after him the *Khalifa* of the time and the administration of the *Jama'at* was to keep this in view and never forget the significant task of hospitality. Hazoor^{aba} said this is an important attribute that each one of us who presents him or herself to serve the guests of the Messiah^{as} has to adopt.

Writing about the hospitality of the Promised Messiah^{as} Yaqub Ali Irfani Sahib^{ra} says he would be delighted at the arrival of guests and would instruct the workers at the *Langer Khana* to make every possible effort to make them comfortable. He would take special care about the dietary requirement of the guests in view of the region they came from. He would say if their health was not right how would they learn

about faith. He would also say that guests should candidly express their requirements. Maulvi Abdul Kareem Sahib^{ra} relates that once in the heat of June he happened to be in a newly built house of the Promised Messiah^{as} while his family was away. Hazoor^{aba} said there are many facilities here but those who have lived in the subcontinent would know and appreciate the cool aspect of a newly built house in the intense summer heat. There was a simple bed in the house on which Maulvi Sahib laid down as the Promised Messiah^{as} took a stroll. Maulvi Sahib fell asleep. When he woke up he was startled to see that the Promised Messiah^{as} laid on the floor next to the bed. He smiled and explained that he was in fact looking out for his guest, stopping some boys from making noise so that his sleep was not interrupted.

Hazoor^{aba} said such was the Promised Messiah's^{as} hospitality. While these lofty standards only belong to Prophets of God, we, who are appointed to the task of serving *Jalsa* guests should try and partake some measure of it.

Hazoor^{aba} said although the Promised Messiah^{as} kept the status of his guest in consideration, generally his hospitality was the same for everyone. Hazoor^{aba} said at *Jalsa* we give special care and attention to some guests from outside. Indeed, the Holy Prophet^{saw} said that leaders of nations should be honored according to their status. However, we should have moderation in this regard at *Jalsa*. Management unnecessarily further categorizes these guests, entailing extra expenses; this should be managed properly. Hazoor^{aba} is informed that at times some marquees remain vacant. In places wrong use of VIP arrangements has started. Management should pay attention to this. Indeed, make special arrangements for special guests, but it should be in one place and should be implemented with moderation.

Apart from serving his guests, the Promised Messiah^{as} had two objectives of his hospitality; their *Tarbiyyat* and *Tabligh*. Likewise, the relevant departments should pay attention to this at *Jalsa*. Indeed, the Promised Messiah^{as} did not make any difference in his hospitality even when his opponents came as guests. He instructed the *Khuddam* to serve them, if they were intemperate, give no response. Hazoor^{aba} prayed that may God enable us to follow the Promised Messiah^{as} who had adopted his ways by following the Holy Prophet^{saw}. While paying the dues of our guests, Hazoor^{aba} said he wished to say again that we should be vigilant, keeping an eye on the surroundings. Hazoor^{aba} said today enmity and opposition of the *Jama'at* has made the mischievous elements devoid of any moral limitations and any kind of mischief can be expected from them. May God enable all of us to fulfil our responsibilities in an excellent manner and keep us safe from all evil.

Next Hazoor^{aba} announced the passing away of Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, wife of Sufi Nazir Ahmad Sahib. She passed away on 14 July at the age of 99 after brief illness in Germany. She was a very prayerful, steadfast and grateful person who experienced visions. She was extremely devoted to *Khilafat* and even during her brief illness before passing away she asked after Hazoor^{aba} not caring about her own illness. She was a beneficent person for every one and had a great sense of sacrifice. Once she was asked for prayers she would continue to pray. She had a very content nature and gave her jewellery in *Maryam Shadi Fund*. She had some savings which, before passing away, she said should be given to *Sayyidna Bilal Fund*. After the wives of her two brothers passed away, in spite of her own limited resources, she looked after the education and training of their children. She leaves behind two daughters and four sons. Two of her sons are life devotees (*Waqfe Zindagi*), Jalal Shams sahib, in charge of the Turkish desk and Munir Javed Sahib, the Private Secretary to Hazoor^{aba}. One of her daughters is married to Hanif Mahmood Sahib, Nazir Islah O Irshad and in this sense Hazoor^{aba} said may be counted as a life devotee, for wives of life devotees are also the same. May God forgive and elevate the status of the deceased. Hazoor^{aba} announced leading her funeral Prayer in absentia after *Jum'uah*.

THE MESSAGE OF HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V^{aba}

Dear Members of American Jama'at,

Assalam-o-Alaikum wa Rahmatullahe wa Barkatuhu

Alhamdulillah, the Annual Convention of the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* of America is starting on July 16th. May Allah the Exalted make this convention a source of blessings and grace in every respect, and those who are attending this *Jalsa* may benefit fully from its spiritual and intellectual blessings. For this *Jalsa*, my message for all of you is that you should all introduce Ahmadiyyat to your country. This is an obligation in which every Ahmadi should be fully involved. A large number of people are unaware of Ahmadiyyat, and those who know about it, know it through our opponents who give baseless information. They do not know the correct beliefs of the *Jama'at*. Therefore, you have to do this Jihad, so that the message of Ahmadiyyat is communicated to maximum numbers of people. You should introduce Islam-Ahmadiyyat to the full. It was a strong desire of the Promised Messiah^{as} that his message should reach maximum numbers.

He^{as} says:

“Though I have conveyed a portion of my obligation through writings, but still a very large part remains to be communicated to the common people. The message of Allah Almighty should reach the common people because a great many of them are such who are without any bias and arrogance. What they hear from their Maulvis they remain deprived of receiving the truth. Whatever the Maulvis tell them, they just accept it without questioning. They are totally unaware of what we say, what our claims are and what our testimonial arguments are. Therefore, I intend to go to large towns and make speeches, and complete my obligation as for as common people are concerned, so that they may be informed about the objective of my appointment by God, and what are the supportive proofs.”

(Malfoozat, Vol. 6, pp. 312-313)

Therefore, to implement the intentions of the Promised Messiah^{as}, it is the first and foremost duty of every Ahmadi that he or she should preach Ahmadiyyat, the true Islam, to everyone around to start with your relatives, then go to your next door neighbors, and then enhance your contacts with those who are living in close localities. Inform them about Ahmadiyyat. Tell them that the Promised One who was being awaited by followers of all religions, has arrived, and that he has presented the real and true face of Islam to the world. His teachings are that Islam is a peace loving religion, and all other faith-traditions and their founders need to be respected. In this manner, please, inform the people. I have instructed the *Ameers* all over the world that they should prepare a beautiful two-page flyer, and distribute it extensively in their countries. In this way the message of Ahmadiyyat can be communicated to the majority of people in the world. I hope you are already engaged in this task. However, it needs to be expedited. Promote this work intelligently and wisely. May Allah grant you the ability to do so!

After doing full justice to the task of *Tabligh*, the next thing for you to do is to pray for the guidance of the people. The hearts are with Allah the Exalted as He fully controls the hearts, and nothing happens without His grace. To attract Allah's grace there is nothing more powerful than prayer. We also need prayers

because the enemy of the *Jama'at* has now come out openly, and his intentions are extremely dangerous. To have an overwhelming victory over them, prayer is a heavenly weapon. We cannot win either with the use of the sword, or with any other force. Our weapon is prayer only.

Our master, Hadhrat Promised Messiah^{as} said “I see that time has arrived when justice and honesty are not prevalent. Very few take advantage of reasoning; no one cares for seasoned arguments, and the pen does not help much... Therefore, my understanding is that the final victory will come through prayer. This was the way of the Prophets (May peace be on them). When logic, reasoning and testimonial proofs did not work, then their last weapon was prayer. As it is said:

“They prayed for victory and every haughty enemy came to naught”

That is, when such a time comes that people do not listen to the Prophets and Messengers, then they concentrate on prayer. In consequence, their arrogant and haughty foes remain utterly unsuccessful and disappointed. In the same manner, it is said about the Promised Messiah^{as} that “When the trumpet shall be blown and we shall gather them all together”: This also indicates that “Coming down from heaven” means that no one can challenge the work which takes birth in heaven. In the Latter Days, the progeny of Satan will assemble together in a great numbers because that would be Satan’s last battle. However, the prayers of the Promised Messiah^{as} shall over power them.”

(Malfoozat, Vol. 6, pp. 323-324).

Moreover, he^{as} says:

“To conquer this period of time, I have been given the weapon of prayer from heaven. Therefore, O my friends! You will never succeed without this weapon. From the very beginning to the end, all Prophets have informed about this weapon -- that the Promised Messiah shall gain victory through prayer and crying out his heart in front of Allah the Exalted.”

(Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 20, p. 82, translated from Arabic)

Therefore, along with *Tabligh*, put full emphasis on prayers. Pray during prostrations in *Salat!* Pray while moving around! The prayers that I suggested at Jubilee, offer them in full earnest! Then, the prayer “*Rubbe-kullo shayin khadimoka, Rubbe fa fazni wan surni*” (O. our Lord! everything is in Your control; grant us Your protection and Your help. (It is called as the “*Ism-e-A'zam*” - Greatest weapon—most powerful tool by the Promised Messiah^{as} .

May Allah the Exalted be with you! May He bestow on you His help and support! May Allah enable you all to perform your duties in righteousness! May He keep you in His protection! May Allah grant you the ability to wave the banner of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} all over the world! *Ameen! Thumma Ameen!*

Wassalam
Khaksar,

Mirza Masroor Ahmad
Khalifatul Masih V.

62nd JALSA SALANA, USA

Held at Dulles Expo Center Chantilly, VA on July 16-18, 2010

Report by: Habibullah S. Bajwa

Jalsa Site Preparation

Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar Sahib, Ameer Jama'at Ahmadiyya USA, appointed Wasim Haider *Afsar Jalsa Salana*, Shahid Saeed Malik *Afsar Jalsa Gah* and Dr. Faheem Younus Qureshi *Afsar Khidmat-e-Khalq* well in advance. They set up teams of *Naib Afsran*, *Nazimeen* and *Muavineen* for the preparation of *Jalsa* and discharging the responsibilities of various *Nizamats*. The designated area of Expo & Conference Center was covered with colorful banners and flags for beautifying the landscape, reception, transportation, accommodation, security and *Langar Khana* areas. Quotations of the Promised Messiah's^{as} were displayed on beautiful banners.

Jalsa Salana Program

A program committee comprising Dr. Zaheer Bajwa, Maulana Azhar Haneef and Mirza Naseer Ehsan Ahmad under the chairmanship of Ameer USA, deliberated and chalked out a program for the *Jalsa*. The topics and speakers were carefully selected and approved. *Ameer Sahib* approved a program for *Lajna Jalsa* proceedings. A beautiful brochure with names of speakers and topics of speeches was printed.

Registration

All members of the *Jama'at*

were required to register on line for *Jalsa* using Internet. Identity Cards with a barcode and magnetic strip with appropriate information was set up to be scanned. It helped with the security checks. Registration booths were set up on both men and ladies sides.

Jalsa Gah

This year *Jalsa* arrangements were made at Dulles Expo & Conference Center Chantilly, VA. Hotels required for accommodating guests were at convenience location from the *Jalsa Gah*. The *Jalsa* facility, with its prime location and central air conditioning, offered two big halls and a few conference rooms. The venue for the main *Jalsa Gah*, both for men and women, was in the big halls situated a walking distance apart. Arrangements for direct TV transmission of *Jalsa* proceedings for the combined session were in place via MTA.

Physical Arrangements

The physical arrangements for *Jalsa Gah* started much earlier. Colored curtains were set up and offices,

stalls were built for smooth running of the *Jalsa* event. For the convenience offices for Registration, Information, Reception Accommodation, Media & Press and *Hazri Nigrani* were at *Jalsa* Site. Similarly desks for Transportation and Humanity First and stalls and offices for Exhibition, Books, *Langar Khana*, *Rishta Nata*, *MKA*, *Khidmate Khalq*, *Tehrike Jadid*, First Aid/ Homeopathy were inside the main *Jalsa Gah*. A booth of red-cross was also set up for blood donation.

MTA set up its studio at the back of the stage. The stage and background was decorated with red color screen. The stage exhibited oval shaped *Minaratul Masih* and *Kalima* with English translation along with logo of *Jama'at* "Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA". The rostrum had the same logo.

Examining Jalsa Site

On July 15, 2010 evening Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar *Ameer Jama'at* USA visited *Jalsa* Site. He met with *Afsaran*, *Naib Afsaran*, *Nazimeen* and *Muavineen Jalsa* to examine the final preparations. His visit encouraged and motivated volunteers. In his address, *Ameer Sahib* mentioned the background of our *Jalsa Salana* and its beginning at the time of the Promised Messiah^{as}. He said, "It started with a small number but now in various countries the attendance surpassed thousands." He instructed to show patience during *Jalsa* and treat all guests of the Promised Messiah^{as} equally with love and Islamic brotherhood.

Flag Hoisting Ceremony

Following tradition *Ameer Sahib* performed Flag Hoisting ceremony on Friday July 16, 2010 at 1:45 PM and led silent prayer.

Jumu'ah and Asr Prayers

Lunch was served after Jumu'ah and Asr prayers. Naseem Mahdi Sahib, Missionary In-Charge and *Na'ib Ameer* delivered Friday Sermon and led *Jumu'ah* and *Asr* prayer.

After *Sura Al-Fatiha* he recited two verses of *Sura Al-Rad* (13:29-30) and three verses of *Sura Al-Ahzab* (33:42-45). Elaborating the meanings of the verses he said that it is only the remembrance of Allah that provides satisfaction and tranquility of hearts. The topic has been discussed in the Holy Qur'an, *Ahadith*, books of the Promised Messiah^{as} and by the *Khulafa-e-Ahmadiyyat*, he said. People have various aspects of remembering Allah. Some have misconception that for remembering Allah there is no need of regular prayers. Hadhrat *Musleh Mau'ood^{ra}* in a speech on *Zikr-Ilahi* elaborating insight of *Zikr* told that keeping Allah in our thoughts and never forgetting Him is *Zikr*. Remembering His bounties helps in developing highest level of gratitude that attracts His blessings as well. Performing five daily prayers regularly and improving the quality of prayer is needed. We should seek means to please Him and always remain busy in praying, he added.

For establishing unity of God we must ponder on deeper meanings of *La Ilaha Illallah*. The art of supplication should be learned from the Holy Prophet^{saw} and the best source is *Durood Shreef*. Allah and His angles send *Durood* on him and we have been commanded to follow them. The

speaker quoted an incident that how a passerby who stayed in the company of saints was rewarded and blessed along with them. He advised to be busy in remembrance of Allah during *Jalsa*. He referred to the message of Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} asking every Ahmadi to convey message of peace to the whole world with a particular reference to the USA.

Exhibition

Col. Fazal Ahmad, *Nazim* exhibition, arranged the exhibition that attracted a large number of guests. At the beginning of the exhibition photographs of the *Ka'aba*, graphics summarization of our beliefs in the Holy Prophet^{saw}, photos of the Promised Messiah^{as}, his Successors and Companions were displayed. In another section a brief pictorial history of community's activities, the *Ameers* of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (AMC), Missionaries and the National *Aamila* were presented. The centerpiece of the exhibition was the graphic coverage of martyrdoms in Lahore on May 28, 2010. A special section of the exhibition consisted of pictures of the martyrs and presentation of their biographies. Words cannot fully express the feelings of the visitors who were deeply touched by the tremendous sacrifices of the martyrs. Worldwide media coverage of the persecution of the AMC through the years and tragic incident of

Lahore were also presented. A pictorial coverage of our mosques throughout the world and visits of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} to different countries was displayed. A special feature of the exhibition was the display of the teachings of the Promised Messiah^{as} forbidding violent jihad as an admonishment of the Holy Prophet^{saw} for the latter days. A video projection displayed these timely and timeless messages. The exhibition generated plenty of discussions on the main theme i.e. Loyalty to the Homeland, justice, love and sacrifices for the great values of Islam and world peace.

Announcement Booth

An Announcement Booth was set up at the stage. Dr. Khalid Ata and his team announced schedules of important events from time to time.

Accommodation

Jama'at reserved hotels close to *Jalsa* site. Many Ahmadi stayed in these hotels. *Nizamat* Accommodation also arranged rooms for non-Ahmadi guests.

Bookstall

Khawas Ahmad Bhatti with his team set up bookstall and made necessary arrangements. A pamphlet was available for ordering books online.

Special Events

Auxiliaries of *Jama'at* held their meetings. Ahmadiyya Medical Association, Lawyers Association, Scientists Association and Engineers and Architects Association held their professional meetings to discuss their achievements and future planning. Humanity First USA held its meeting at a lunch on Saturday. On the same evening a reception for guests was

arranged by National *Tabligh* department.

Khidmat-e-Khalq Report

As always, the planning started well in advance. The first step was Volunteer recruitment. The planning phase and volunteer recruitment went well. About 150 *Khuddam* and 120 *Atfal* signed up and performed various duties. The department was responsible for security, parking and traffic control, rapid response, luggage storage and volunteer refreshment. Various aspects of tasks requiring collaboration with *Jalsa Gah* and *Jalsa Salana* departments, as well as *Lajna*, were accomplished via in-person meetings and teleconferences.

The *Khidmat-e-khalq daftar* operated from 9AM-10PM on Friday/Saturday, and 9AM - 4PM on Sunday. The *daftar* provided "All Access" and "Stage Access" passes to authorized persons, following a pre-determined protocol. Luggage desk provided storage for personal belongings of guests (particularly larger items that cannot be taken through the security checkpoint).

Traffic duty began at 10:00AM Friday, and ended after the departure of the bulk of the guests on Sunday afternoon. Security teams provided Stage and backstage security, Men's and Ladies Perimeter Security, as well as secured *Liwa-e-Ahmadiyyat*. Volunteers were always on alert, aware of suspicious activities, and kept main entrances clear. Metal detectors were used randomly at the main entrance.

Waqfe Nau Program

The National *Waqfe Nau* Department set up information booth for

Waqfeen and their parents. Volunteers were available to help. The Booth was to update information of *Waqfeen*. Rededication forms were also available. The department arranged following two programs:

a) **Program for Waqfeen-e-Nau under 12:** On July 16, 2010 Friday evening (6:30 PM -7:30) a program for *Waqfeen-e-Nau* under 12 was held at main hall of men's *Jalsa Gah*. Ameer Sahib presided the meeting. The principal *Jamia Ahmadiyya* Canada Salim Akhtar was also sitting with *Ameer Sahib*. 175 *Waqfeen*, 20 *Waqfat* and 150 parents participated. More than 100 *Waqfat* along with their parents attended the program from ladies *Jalsa Gah*. *Waqfeen* and *Waqfat* presented speeches. After each speech the National Secretary Hafiz Samiullah Sahib asked the audience questions regarding the speech. On correct answer Prizes were given at the spot. At that occasion *Ameer Sahib* awarded caps and pens to *Waqfeen* and scarfs and pens to *Waqfat*.

b) **Program for Waqfeen-e-Nau Over 15:** On July 17, 2010 Saturday a career building program was set up at noon for *Waqfeen* and *Waqfat* over 15. It was held in a conference room closer to Ladies *Jalsa Gah*. Saleem Akhtar Sahib Principal *Jamia Ahmadiyya*

ya Canada presided the meeting. Boys and Girls expressed their views. A boy presented the significance of MTA. 64 *Waqfeen* and *Waqfat* who rededicated their *Waqf* were awarded certificates.

The attendance was: Boys and Girls=70; Parents=40

The National Secretary *Waqfe-Nau* briefly expressed the achievement of *Waqfe-Nau*. He discussed the importance of career building. The principal in his address removed the misunderstanding that *Jamia* Canada is not just only for Canada but for the whole North American countries. He explained the importance and benefits of rededication. He suggested that besides adopting the field of personal interest they should consider joining *Jamia Ahmadiyya* as well.

Dinner for Guests

In the evening of July 17, 2010 a *Tablighi* dinner was arranged by National *Tabligh* Department. All guests who attended *Jalsa* and Ahmadi dignitaries from USA and outside were invitees. After dinner a Q/A session was held. 150 Guests were in attendance.

Mushaira

After dinner and *Isha* Prayer a *Mushaira* organized by MAALA (Mid-Atlantic Association for Literature Appreciation) with the collaboration of *Jalsa* organizers was held on Saturday in the same hall. 16 well-known poets of North America participated and presented their poems. Two of them were non-Ahmadi guests who arrived from Chicago and New York. 220 gents and more than 100 ladies attended this function.

Tahajjud and Salat Arrangements

Congregational *Salatul Tahajjud* on

Saturday and Sunday and daily Prayers were offered at *Jalsa Gah*. The attendance at *Tahajjud* and *Fajr* time was around 200 (men and women) on both days. On Saturday Maulana Irshad Malhi led *Tahajjud* and *Fajr* prayers and delivered *Darsul Qur'an* and Maulana Zafarullah Hanjra led prayers and delivered *Darsul Hadith* on Sunday.

Opening Session (July 16, 2010) Presided by Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar, Ameer Jama'at USA

The session started with recitation from the Holy Qur'an by Hafiz Samiullah Chaudhry followed by its English translation by Haji Yaqub. Asadullah Choudhery recited a poem of the Promised Messiah^{as}. The English translation was read out by Rodney Basyir. *Ameer Sahib* welcomed all guests and referred to the first *Jalsa Salana* at the time of the Promised Messiah^{as}. He briefly described the significance of our *Jalsa*. He mentioned great sacrifice offered as martyrdom in two mosques where 84 blessed souls were lifted to heaven. Before formal proceeding of the session *Ameer Sahib* invited Mayer of Herndon to express his views.

Mr. Steve DeBenedittis, Mayor of Herndon welcomed the audience and said that Herndon is linked to various ethnic and religious groups who have good understanding of each other. He wished that they would continue good relation and understanding. The Mayor appreciated our slogan of "Love for All Hatred for None". He wished that such a wonderful gathering should continue here.

After Mayor's address *Ameer Sahib* asked Ahmad Mubarik Sahib to read a message of Hadhrat Khalifatul

Masih V^{aba} sent for the *Jalsa*. The message was in Urdu and its English translation was scrolled on the screen side by side. Hazoor^{aba} prayed for the success of *Jalsa* and asked every Ahmadi living in USA to convey the message of Ahmadiyyat to everyone in USA. He referred to the writings of the Promised Messiah^{as} who expressed deep desire to convey the message of Islam to each individual of the world. Hazoor^{aba} advised to pray for the guidance of people after conveying the message. Hazoor^{aba} added that we could achieve the victory of Islam through our prayers as that is a weapon given to the Promised Messiah^{as} for the victory of Islam. Hazoor^{aba} emphasized on reciting of "Jubilee Prayers" regularly.

Ameer Sahib briefly elaborated Hazoor's^{aba} message and appreciated Naseem Mahdi Sahib's activities in *Tabligh*. He acknowledged New York *Jama'at* for literature distribution and urged others for distributing the *Tablighi* Pamphlets with the same spirit.

Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar himself was the first speaker of the session. The topic of his speech was "**Allah, the Great Forgiver**". *Ameer Sahib* recited the verse of *Surah Taha* (20:83) and said that the theme of his speech is

Ghaffar, the Forgiver an attribute of Allah. That was the first attribute taught to Hadhrat Adam^{as}. When he made a mistake, Allah taught him a prayer to forgive. Four main attributes of Allah mentioned in the Holy Qur'an govern other attributes. He referred to a sermon of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth delivered in 1984 in which he elaborated the attribute of *Ghaffar*. He mentioned three stages of that attribute. The person doing *Istaghfar* should believe in Allah's signs, beg forgiveness and wait for Allah's decision. The Holy Prophet^{saw} always did *Istaghfar*. The Holy Prophet^{saw} prayed and did *Istaghfar* for his bitter enemies so that Allah might change their hearts for Islam. Allah accepted his prayers. The attribute of forgiveness and Allah's mercy dominate everything. We always seek His mercy as our survival depends on His Grace and Mercy. Following the footsteps of our Prophet^{saw} we should also pray for those who hurt us during recent Lahore incident of martyrdoms. May Allah change their hearts. They should understand that we the members of *Jama'at Ahmadiyya* stand for the establishing nobility of the Holy Prophet^{saw} in the world.

Dr. Faheem Younus Qureshi was the second speaker. The topic of his speech was "**Bai'at, the Guardian of our Identity in the West**". He recited verse (18:95) of *Surah Al-Kahf*. He said that living in a jungle one should identify as a lion for the survival. That identity is differently judged in the West and the East. In the horrific incident of Lahore, many Ahmadi lost their lives in the broad day light. The incident reflected lack of religious freedom, common in most countries and the Muslim world, by judging people with variable criteria. The USA offers such a freedom of

religion and expression that no other country offers. The non-Muslims ask that what contribution the Muslims had who are branded with terrorism. Such questions disturb our children and youth. Many children and youth are reluctant to exhibit their identity. They are adopting habits of others and are hesitant to express their own identity as an Ahmadi Muslim. Mostly people struggle hard for resources and lose their religion in achieving worldly pursuits.

He quoted the Promised Messiah^{as} who allowed worldly achievements but admonished to copy other nations blindly. He mentioned a reputed musician Howard Scott who converted to Islam and exhibited his own identity as a true Ahmadi Muslim. Howard became Muhammad Sadiq and gave up the profession, he loved. He took *Bai'at* and maintained it in words and spirit for his identity. He had a link of bondage with Khalifatul Masih IVth and wrote him regularly. At the old age when he lost his eyesight and could not write he sent audio-tapes to Hazoorth for prayers. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth once called him an angle. The bondage of *Bai'at* maintained by Muhammad Sadiq leaves a message for Ahmadi youth that *Bai'at* can not be inherited but has to be earned and maintained.

The speaker quoted early history of Islam when a boy accepted Holy Prophet's^{saw} invitation and all elders rejected him. That boy was Ali^{ra} who was latter entitled as *Asadullah*, a lion of Allah. The speaker also quoted example of Hdahrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} who at the age of 11 determined to find the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah^{as}. He searched and found it. Latter, he became Khalifatul Masih, a model to follow. The parents must attach

their children with *Khialfat* and should develop bondage with Khalifatul Masih^{aba}. We should be proud of being an Ahmadi that is for our identity and survival, he concluded.

Maulana Azhar Haneef was the third speaker. His topic was "**Trials-Sources of Divine Favor and Wrath**". The speaker referred to the incident of Lahore that has touched the heart of every Ahmadi. He referred to the early history of Islam when Hadhrat Khalid Bin Waleed^{ra}, who had the desire of martyrdom, was crying on his death bed. In replying a query Hadhrat Khalid^{ra} said that he fought many battles and his body was full of scars. He desired to be martyred. The Holy Prophet^{saw} entitled him, Sword of Allah. That was his reward. He referred to the writing of the Promised Messiah^{as} who said, "Never think that God will let you go waste. Do not fear the intervening trials and remain steadfast to your pledge of *Bai'at*". Hazoor forecasted glad tiding of the victory of Islam. The speaker recited verse (2:215) of the Holy Qur'an that trials are for enhancing faith of the believers. The steadfast in trials receives His favor. The life of the Holy Prophet^{saw} was full of trials but he remained steadfast and prayed for his enemies as well. Allah's wrath falls on those who persecute the believers. The speaker quoted

incidents of trials and the wrath of Allah. The incident of Mong Rasool and a powerful earthquake, the incidents of Khulna mosque and Sunderban of Bangladesh followed by cyclones are eye opener. The opponents wanted to wipe out Ahmadis but God's wrath wiped them out. God miraculously changed the hearts of the people. Recently, when some opponents wanted to attack Ahmadi their brethren became shield against them to protect Ahmadi. The speaker pointed out that 35th *Jalsa Salana* held in a park when a few days before *Jalsa* Dr. Muzzafar Ahmad martyred and authority of a hotel cancelled the contract. The same assailant wanted to blast our mosque but God wrath burnt him. In his concluding words the speaker referred to an address of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IIIth of 1974 who prayed for whole mankind that they should recognize their Lord.

Ameer Sahib in his concluding remarks thanked speakers and said that our youth are good and they are future of Ahmadiyyat. The parents should train children as directed by the Promised Messiah^{as} who always prayed for his children in every prayer.

Saturday (July 17, 2010)

**Morning Session: Presided by
Naseem Mahdi Sahib
Missionary In-charge
and Na'ib Ameer**

The session started with the recitation of the Holy Qur'an by Muhammad Asadullah and Abdul Karim read English translation. Muhammad Zafarulla Khan recited a Persian poem and Nasirullah Ahmad read its English translation.

Bilal Abdus Salam was the first speaker of the session. His topic was "**Islam beyond Culture and Ethnicity**". The speaker said that the topic

touched to understand the essence of true righteousness. Islam is a universal religion and Ahmadiyyat is true Islam. There is no racism, nationalism and cultureism in Islam. All men are equal in the sight of Allah. The speaker quoted an incident at the time of the Holy Prophet^{saw} when he was sitting with some non-Arab Muslims. People mocked that he had poor slaves who accepted him. The Holy Prophet^{saw} did not care for the mockery and kept them attached with him. Islam teaches purity of heart and righteousness. As a Muslim we have to live according to the will of our Creator. Our life must be spent with righteousness so that we should be recipient of Allah's pleasure. The speaker narrated a quotation of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} who advised to enjoy real life that is to please our Lord. We have been created on attributes of Allah that we must exhibit throughout our life, he added. A verse of the Holy Qur'an (49:14) states that: "Verily the most righteous is the most honorable." The speaker said that we are lucky that we have *Khilafat*. It is our duty to respond and obey Khalifaul Masih^{aba} and develop bondage of love with him. We belong to different color, culture and race but are living together like a bunch of flower. The speaker referred to the writing of the Promised Messiah^{as} who advised to pass life with righteousness and become like a real brother. The Promised Messiah^{as} allowed to achieve worldly goals but forbade imitating other nations blindly. He admonished not to pass a sinful life that takes us away from our Creator. The Promised Messiah^{as} advised to follow the Holy Prophet^{saw} for a real life. The speaker narrated a revelation of the Promised Messiah^{as} that Islam would be spread to the far corners of globe and said that he exhibited himself as a living sign of the revelation.

Amjad Mahmood Khan was the second speaker who spoke on "**Religious Freedom in America**". He started his speech with the recitation of a verse of *Sura Al-Baqarah* (2:257) that means no compulsion in religion. There is freedom of religion in America and we are proud of being American Muslims. Comparing with European countries America is much better, he said. Building Minarets and wearing head scarf have been banned in some countries. President Obama addressing Muslims at Cairo said, "In America freedom of religion is indivisible from the freedom to practice." In 2004 when the State of Oklahoma banned head scarf in Public Schools the Federal Court intervened, stopped and declared it unconstitutional. Our Constitution provides freedom of religion. For elaborating his point of view the speaker divided his speech under 4 sub-headings:

- a) Religious Freedom in America
- b) Religious Freedom in Islam
- c) Religious Freedom in Muslim world
- d) our responsibility as American Muslims

a) Religious Freedom in America: Most immigrants arrived here to seek Religious Freedom. Freedom was provided for the believers of every faith to practice according to their

faith. Amendments were made in the constitution for this purpose.

b) Religious Freedom in Islam: There is no compulsion in Islam and the faith is individual commitment. The believing Muslims have no right to force others to believe. The Holy Prophet^{saw} actively promoted peace, tolerance and compassion for all non-Muslims living in Arabia. He wrote letters to churches and religious leaders for the establishment of peace and freedom of religion. The historic Charter of Madina and a letter written to Christian Monks of Sinai are internationally accepted important documents

c) Religious Freedom in Muslim World: Unfortunately, the Muslim world lacks Religious Freedom. They deviated from the path of the Holy Prophet^{saw} in providing such freedom. On contrary, they misused Islam and allowed killing and torturing of others. Pakistan is at the top where believers of other faiths and sects are officially targeted.

d) Our Responsibility as American Muslims: Our responsibility is to protect Islamic principles of Religious Freedom that the Holy Prophet^{saw} provided in the form of Charter of Madina and the ways he practiced them.

Ali Murtaza was the third speaker. His topic of speech was "**Calling Nations towards God**". The speaker said that calling mankind to God has been a Mercy on man from God in raising prophets. Messengers were sent to all nations (Holy Qur'an 35:25). He referred to a prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{saw}

about advent of the Promised Messiah^{as}. He said that a time would come when nothing about faith and teaching of Qur'an would remain in the world. At that time a man would appear to restore the lost glory of Islam. The Holy Prophet^{saw} named that person Messiah. That Messiah was destined to bring peace and religious freedom. The Promised Messiah arrived in the form of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}. His advent was for:

- a) Ending religious wars
- b) Condemning bloodshed
- c) Establishing peace and justice.

UNO set up in 1945 to stop wars between countries and establishing peace. But wars occurred and UNO failed to stop them. The Promised Messiah^{as} divested Islam of fanatical beliefs and practices. He recognized the noble teachings of the religious founders. He had many revelations for the victory of Islam. One of them states, "I shall cause thy message to reach the corners of earth." The speaker said that revelations fulfilled at different occasions. There are 239 countries in the world and *Jama'at Ahmadiyya* has been established in 189 countries exhibiting the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah^{as}. The speaker provided the figures of *Jama'at* in different countries. Continuing his speech he said, "We can become the ambassadors of the Promised Messiah^{as} by conveying the message of Islam and establishing peace. This can be done if we change ourselves and raise the standard of our worship and serving humanity". We should plan according to the ways of country we live in, he added. Similarly by following the instruction of Khalifatul Masih^{aba} we can progress in our *Tabligh* efforts. Hazoor instructed to convey the message of Islam in 2 % of US citizens. If our

effort is right, the rest God will bring forth, he concluded.

In his remarks Naseem Mahdi Sahib said that for 50 million Spanish Speaking citizens of US *Tabligh* activities have been arranged. He announced a meeting at 1:40 PM and invited all Spanish speaking and interested Ahmadiis willing to do *Tabligh* in Spanish speaking people.

Talimul Qur'an Ceremony

Dr Zaheeruddin Mansoor National Secretary *Talimul-Qur'an* mentioned that National *Talimul-Qur'an* department arranged a *Hifzul Qur'an* class at Baitur Rahman Mosque from June 25-July 15, 2010. Qari Nawab Ahmad Sahib was invited from Qadian for the class. Syed Fazal Ahmad was *Nazime-A'la* of the class. 36 Boys and 28 girls participated and learned some portion of the Holy Qur'an. Syed Fazal Ahmad announced names of the participants and *Ameer Sahib* awarded the certificates.

Alme-Inami and Talent Awards

On the basis of overall activities of a *Majlis Khud-damul Ahmadiyya Alme-Inami* is awarded to the best *Majlis*. This year *Alme-Inami* was awarded to Dallas *Majlis* Awards were

also given to *Majalis* who achieved second and third positions. Similarly *Majlis Atfalul Ahmadiyya* was awarded *Alme Inami*. The best *Majlis* in *Atfalul Ahmadiyya* was Queens *Majlis*. Gold medals and talent awards were also granted to the students and individuals who fulfilled the required criteria.

Ameen Ceremony

Jalsa Salana served as a platform to recognize the *Ameen* of 21 *Atfal* ranging from ages 4 to 12.

Atfal Volunteering at the Jalsa

Atfal passionately offered their services in a wide variety of tasks. 71 *Atfal* volunteered who were engaged in many duties. *Atfal* were helpful in registration and scanning ID at entrance of *Jalsa Gah*. They helped food service, and offered services in cleaning up the *Jalsa* site.

Atfal Welcome Packages

This year 13 boys were initiated into *Atfalul Ahmadiyya*. They were awarded welcome packages containing a Prayers mat, prayers cap, MKA Scarf, and a welcome letter.

Saturday, (July 17, 2010)

Afternoon

**Session Presided by
Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar,
Ameer Jama'at USA**

The session started with recitation from the Holy Qur'an by Hafiz Mubarik Kokui and English translation was read by Bashir Asad. Kaleem Bhatti recited a poem of the Promised Messiah^{as} and Ahmad Nooruddin read its English translation. After that *Ameer Sahib* introduced Amjad Mahmood Khan who is a lawyer and director of PR of *Jama'at Ahmadiyya*

USA and asked him to introduce guest speakers. Mr. Khan introduced **Sharon Bulova, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Fairfax County** and invited her to address. She welcomed all guests and said that in the Fairfax County people of hundred languages live together in harmony. She appreciated work of AMC and congratulated on a successful convention.

The next speaker scheduled was **US Senator Kay Hutchinson**. Amjad Khan introduced her. As she could not attend, her message read by Amjad Khan. She appreciated the efforts of AMC in promoting peace, condemning violence, firm stand against terrorism and supporting freedom. She supported lifting of bias laws against Ahmadis in Pakistan.

Yasin Sharif was the first speaker of the session. His topic was “**Modern Challenges to Core Beliefs**”. *Ameer Sahib* after brief introduction invited him to speak on the subject. The speaker recited a verse (2:63) of the Holy Quran meaning that Believers, Jews, Christians and Sabians- who-ever believes in Allah and the Last day and does good deeds shall have reward from his Lord. Man has urge to worship some type of powerful being. The religion has gone through evolution. The speaker referred to a quotation of the Promised Messiah^{as} expressing that Man passes through three stages-from Natural to Moral and from Moral to Spiritual. Man has choice to adopt good or evil. Holy Prophet ^{saww} said that reward of good deed would be multiple and punishment of the evil would be one time only, he added.

Anxiety, suffering and pain are mostly judged according to per-

sonal pain and feelings. The speaker referred to a saying of the Holy Prophet^{as} about advent of the Promised Messiah^{as} who arrived in the form of *Hadhraat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}*. He abandoned *Jihad* of the Sword and introduced *Jihad* of the Pen. The speaker invited for studying and learning about the Promised Messiah^{as} and the *Khalifa* of the time. He concluded that our efforts with prayers would be rewarded.

After that *Ameer Sahib* said that we have delegates from different countries attending our Jalsa. He invited Amjad Khan to resume some introduction. Mr. Khan said that we have guests from Pakistan, India, Europe, Canada, Africa and Latin American countries. He introduced Ambassador of Mozambique and then invited two guests from Guatemala who addressed in Spanish and Dr. Waseem Sayed translated in English:

Sergio Lenornel Celis Navasa, Congressman: The congressman greeted and thanked for inviting him. He conveyed the greeting of people of Guatemala.

Marvin Francisco Barrios de Leon, Governor of Sacatepeque: After greeting he said that belief in one God transcends all borders and languages. He expressed his anxiety about spiritual poverty of his own country. After listening speeches and talking with people, he thinks that Ahmadiyya Faith is characterized with purity and establishing peace. He was also impressed

with the idea of living in peace as a citizen of a country where they live.

Naseem Mahdi Sahib Naib Ameer & Missionari In-charge was the second speaker. His topic of speech was “**Islam and Loyalty to the Homeland**”.

The speaker made presentation by slides exhibited at the screen. He recited a verse (4:60) of *Surah Al-Nisa* in which the believers have been ordained to obey government of the time. Many Americans are in doubts of Muslims' loyalty. Some Muslim countries are depriving rights of others through *Shariah* Laws. Some non-Muslim countries create problems for Muslims. Islam promotes secular system and treats all citizens equally. Justice and secular system has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. All Muslims living in non-Muslim countries are loyal to the government. The US government provides freedom of choice and freedom of religion. According to the Holy Qur'an the grateful are rewarded and ungrateful have punishment from Allah. Living in USA we have to follow the rules and be obedient. The Promised Messiah^{as} advised us to be sincere and pray for the country, he added. AMC firmly believes in separating state from mosques. He invited all Muslims to join us to represent true picture of Islam. Islam prohibits terrorism and we can not live in a country by being hypocrites, he concluded.

After that *Ameer Sahib* invited Amjad Khan to resume introduction of guests. Amjad Khan introduced **Gerry Conolly Congressman of 11th district of VA** and invited him to address. The Congressman greeted and appreciated our tradition of tolerance and separating

mosque and state. He mentioned the incident of Lahore where religious values were not respected.

Mr. Khan introduced **Her Excellency Edith Hazel Deputy Ambassador of Ghana** and asked her to address. She greeted and appreciated efforts of AMC and its contribution in Ghana. "Love for all Hatred for None" is a wonderful slogan, she added.

Colonel Norvell Coots from Walter Reed Hospital was the next speaker who also appreciated our motto. Helping others, serving, are deeds of selflessness and goodness that AMC is conducting. Charity is an essence of love, he said.

Thomas Davis House Delegate of 86th District of VA was next speaker who said that we have so much common that can be shared. He said that Religious freedom was born in VA. He appreciated our motto of "Love for all Hatred for None".

Patrick Herrity Member of Fairfax County Board of Supervisor was the next speaker. He welcomed all and appreciated holding convention in VA. He said that his doors are open for all Muslims.

Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee D-Texas was the last guest speaker. She could not attend but sent a video-tape that was displayed. She said that AMC is strong supporter of education for all and education for women and women rights. She congratulated on the convention.

Names of some guests who travelled for the convention were announced. *Ameer Sahib* thanked all the guests and speakers and in-

vited them for a *Tablighi* dinner.

**Sunday July 18, 2010
(Morning Session)
Presided by
Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar,
Ameer Jama'at USA**

The session started with recitation of the Holy Quran by Mubasher Hafeez and Hamza Ilyas offered its English translation. An Urdu poem of the Promised Messiah^{as} was recited by Mansoor Rafiq and the English translation was done by Jalaluddin Latif.

Maulana Syed Shamshad Ahmad Nasir was the first speaker. His topic was "**Those like me and my Companions**". The speaker said that the topic has been taken from a *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet^{saw} who said, "My *ummat* will be divided into 73 sects but only one will be saved". The companions of the Promised Messiah^{as} would be like his own companions, the Holy Prophet^{saw} prophesized. The opponents of the Promised Messiah^{as} would follow the pattern of the opponents of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. The speaker mentioned some barbaric incidents at the time of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and the Promised Messiah^{as}. Opposition appeared at different time and the opponents tried to destroy Ahmadiyyat but failed in their planning. Support of Allah always descended from heaven, the speaker concluded.

After the speech Bilal Raja recited an Urdu poem of Musleh Mau'ood^{ra}. The English translation was presented by Omar Shaheed.

Maulana Naseem Mahdi Missionary In-charge was the second speaker. His topic was "**Martyrdom in Lahore: Our Reaction and Response**." The speaker recited a verse of *Surah Al-Ahzab* (23:24) meaning that some fulfilled pledge and some are waiting. Hadhrat Khalifitul Masih V^{aba} highlighted incident of Lahore and described each *Shaheed*. In the horrific incident at the mosques Ahmadi exhibited a patient and exemplary reaction. Where as in another attack at Data Darbar people were in panic and trampled many under their feet.

During the life time of the Holy Prophet^{saw} incidents happened. He and his companions were brutally treated. Many of them were tortured and some were martyred. The Holy Prophet^{saw} and his companions were resigned to the will of Allah. Every Ahmadi living in 190 countries felt the pain of his brethren as his own. Ahmadi followed the instructions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and adopted his pattern. They resigned themselves to the Will of Allah. After Lahore incident we should not hesitate to offer sacrifice of our lives as sacrificing nations will never be destroyed. We pledge to fulfill our pledge of *Bai'at* by not a lip service but from the core of our hearts. We should be steadfast and should have no doubts about victory of Ahmadiyyat. We must use the weapon of prayer and with prayer everything is done, he concluded.

Dr. Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad was the last speaker of the session. The topic of his speech was: "**Zikre Habib -Forbearance and Forgiveness of Enemies**". The Promised Messiah^{as} followed his Master in displaying his character. Lala Malawa Mal and Lala Sharampat Rai who were his neighbor and witnessed his glaring truth, never spared any moment of opposition. Once Lala Sharampat Rai was sick and

Hazoor^{as} visited and appointed a doctor for his treatment. The Promised Messiah^{as} prayed for all opponents at least for 2 or 3 times. Once in the court when his attorney asked personal questions from Maulvi Muhammad Husain, Hazoor^{as} immediately stopped him. Mirza Nizam Din always opposed him but Hazoor^{as} always visited and asked about his treatment. Hazoor^{as} set a model of highest moral character. Through his own example he wanted to bring a change in our lives, the speaker concluded.

Concluding Address of Ameer Sahib: *Ameer Sahib* in his concluding remarks said that our *Jalsa Salana* followed the tradition of the Promised Messiah^{as}. At this occasion we recognize those who passed away especially martyrs of Lahore. He said that the incident of Lahore highlights that life and death are in the hands of Allah. He thanked many non-Ahmadis who expressed sympathy with us on that incident. He requested to pray for those who are in need and those who passed away.

Ameer Sahib announced that overall attendance of *Jalsa* was **6131**. He read the names of 21 dignitaries who arrived from different countries of the world to attend our *Jalsa*. He said that Hazoor^{aba} sent a message to convey the message of Islam to all Americans and pray for opponents as well. In accordance with Hazoor's^{aba} instruction USA *Jama'at* has prepared pamphlets that needed to be distributed in masses throughout USA. *Ameer Sahib* recognized and appreciated all members of USA *Jama'at* who supported *Jalsa* event and spent considerable time and energy in smooth running of *Jalsa* activities. He prayed for the safe return of all participants of *Jalsa*. The *Jalsa Salana* concluded with silent prayer at 1:27 PM. *Alhamdulillah*.

Ahmadi Students Promote Peace, Create Awareness

Saira Bhatti

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Student Association (AMSA) at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, has been promoting the *Jamaat's* campaign "Muslims for Peace" throughout its campus. For several weeks the students have sat at a kiosk to hand out the campaign's flyer to students and faculty. They also had a table at a local university event. Around 300-400 flyers were passed out. Many interested students and professors came by and appreciated the message of peace. The students received many questions asking which group they were from. AMSA member Shumaila Ahmad felt a strong sense of unity with her fellow Ahmadi students "It was surprising, yet fascinating to see how many people were interested in our campaign and what we had to say," said Ahmad.

Moderate Muslims Encourage Peace, Gain Appreciation

Saira Bhatti

Tabligh secretaries from Northern and Central Virginia promoted the Muslims For Peace Campaign by participating in the 34th annual Fall Festival in Fairfax, Virginia on October 9. Northern Virginia's *Tabligh* secretary Jalal Malik Sahib and Central Virginia's Usman Choudhary Sahib passed out approximately 700 flyers at the event. One woman said "Oh, I see 'Ahmadiyya'...Yes, I was going to write down Ahmadiyya and look it up, now I have it in my hand." "She was very appreciative," said Choudhary. Malik found that many people reacted positively to their message and how they were being the voice of moderate Muslims. "Many criticize and say that the moderate Muslims aren't loud enough, so here we are trying to be loud," said Malik to attendees at the event. Choudhary explained that people referenced ABC's 20/20 program on Islam, and Diane Sawyer's open question asking "Where are the moderate Muslims?" "People were appreciative that we, as moderate Muslims, were addressing this void," said Choudhary. He also noted how people responded positively to their representation of the *Jama'at's* motto "Love for all, hatred for none," and the flyer's anti-terrorism message. Both secretaries noted that if there were more people to help pass out flyers, then perhaps "We could have spent more time speaking to people individually, as many people seemed quite willing to talk."

OPENING ADDRESS BY DR. AHSANULLAH ZAFAR, AMEER JAMA'AT USA AT THE 62ND ANNUAL CONVENTION USA

Transcribed by: Mansura Bashir Minhas

"But surely I am Ghaffar to those who repent and believe and do good deeds, and then stick to guidance." (20: 83)

The meaning of the name 'Ghaffar' is he who protects us from committing sin and passes over our sins and faults. We cannot talk about 'Ghaffar' unless we put it in the background of the names of Allah- the attributes of Allah. This started, as we understand it from Hadhrat Adam^{as} when He created him and taught him names. It is not illustrated beyond that but the best understandings are that the names mentioned are the attributes of Allah- the names of Allah. And in the Qur'an it is illustrated that the four names of Allah- the attributes of Allah which govern everything in life and which are the basis of the universe as we understand it is are: *Rab, Rahman, Raheem* and *Malik-e-youmiddin*.

Now with Hadhrat Adam^{as}, no such names are mentioned in the Quran as to which particular names were taught to him nor is it mentioned in the Bible. However, when we look at the description of Hadhrat Adam^{as}, something stands out. The first

thing is that he made a mistake and Allah taught him a prayer and then He forgave him. So it would seem that the first name that was taught by Allah to Hadhrat Adam^{as} was that of 'Ghaffar', because when he made a mistake, he repented, he prayed to Allah and Allah forgave him. And that is what 'Ghaffar' all stands for. So it is a very, very important attribute. It also ties in with the four attributes mentioned in the Qur'an - *Rab, Rahman, Raheem, Malik-e-youmiddin*.

Nothing in life is possible without Allah's mercy. That dominates everything. Nothing would exist without Allah's mercy. So Allah's grace (*Rahman*), and mercy (*Raheem*) is inherent in life as we know it and understand it. Now there is an interesting aspect of reciting the names. And it is that when one recites the name which is when one prays to Allah, something has to come down with it. And although Allah is '*Latif*', which is one of his attributes, and we

cannot with our normal senses feel Him or sense Him. He can reach our eyes, but our eyes cannot reach Him. He can reach our senses but our senses cannot reach Him. But in ways, if we look at the episode of Hadhrat Adam^{as}, when he did *Istighfar*, Allah improved his understanding. He understood the consequences of right and wrong, he understood what to do if you end up making a mistake, which is to do *Istighfar*. And if we look at a later narrative, again in the Bible or in the Qur'an, it is the narrative of feeling that he is exposed and he covers himself with leaves of the garden. Again he has learnt that when he feels exposed, and he has fallen short on certain things, that he does *Istighfar* and prays to Allah. So that is Allah's way of responding and enhancing and teaching man so that he progresses in ways which take him forward.

In the granting of *Istighfar*, the subject becomes quite vast because we all live and we all survive because of Allah's grace and mercy and we are constantly in the need of his *Istighfar*. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth, in a sermon he delivered in 1984,

which is in Pakistan, he mentions that there were three states, that he brought up. I don't think that it necessarily means that there are no other states, but he mentions three states where *Istighfar* when *Ghaffar* is in play.

He says belief in Allah's signs and then if one commit's a mistake and repents, Allah's attribute of *Ghaffar* shines on the man. This is also the verse that I read in the very beginning from the Qur'an. Then, Hazoor has mentioned that there are others who ask for it and then they wait for it. They want Allah to decide when and whether they will be forgiven. So the forgiveness is not immediate but it is hoped for by the individual who stands there. And then there is a case of those who have done good and who have done bad and it is likely that Allah will grant them forgiveness or *Istighfar*.

He then goes on to illustrate the issue of *Istighfar* by the Prophets and especially by *Rasulallah^{saw}*. He illustrates that the Prophets ask for *Istighfar* for those who torture them, for those who reject them, those who oppose them in every other way. The Prophets do *Istighfar* for them, so that Allah will then change them in return of their *Istighfar*. And the best illustration is where *Rasulallah^{saw}* spent his nights in *Istighfar* and his prayers to Allah and Allah changed the disbelievers of that time. They either believed and they became strong effective Muslims, worthy of Allah's rewards and Allah's blessings upon them or where they didn't, they ended up in such awe of the

Holy Prophet^{saw} that he remarked in a Hadith that God had granted him a dominion or a fear and respect over six days of riding from wherever he was. His presence was felt by people a hundred miles or more, by the criteria of traveling at that time. Of course in this day and age, you can pretty much go to the moon and come back and on the same day. But this is the way he described it in his time.

There is also the aspect that because of his *Istighfar*, there is an illustration that *Jibraeel^{as}* appeared to the Holy Prophet^{saw} and this is a narrative which is well established in *Hadith*. And he was, he filled the space between the heavens and earth, from horizon to horizon in his manifestations to him. And that is an enormous exhibition of Allah's presence to the Prophet^{saw} compared to the other situations, for example where *Jibraeel^{as}* appeared as a dove and the like or smaller manifestations.

This week, as we are together and we are celebrating the blessings of *Jalasa Salana*, we should pray also for those who hurt us in Lahore and they inflicted and they have been inflicting such pain upon our community in Pakistan. So that Allah will then bring His Mercy upon them in such a

way, that they will realize their mistakes and not to continue with the harassment that they have been carrying out and we pray that Allah change their hearts and they understand that the message of *Masih Mau'ood^{as}* is true, that *Masih Mau'ood^{as}* is talking about Islam and not about a new religion, that *Masih Mau'ood^{as}* and we as Ahmadi, we stand for the nobility of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, his sanctity, his high stature. And when we say that *Masih Mau'ood^{as}* came as a Prophet, we are indeed enhancing the stature of *Khatam-e-Nabuwat*, we are not minimizing it and we are not taking away anything from it.

May they understand that and come to terms with it. And if there are such who do not see it that way, at least they will not have such strength in their minds as to hurt our people, to harm our people and to harm the country in the way they are doing at the moment. *Ameen*.

Allah, the Great Forgiver

HELP

HUMANITY

FIRST

***BAI'AT*—THE GUARDIAN OF OUR IDENTITY IN THE WEST**

Dr. Faheem Younus Quraishi

Transcribed by: Ahmad Saeed Bhatti

If life were a jungle, which animal would you choose to be? Most people would say, "I want to be a lion." This question has deep relevance to *Bai'at* being our identity's guardian in the West.

Our identity is challenged very differently in the East, where scores of Ahmadi Muslims lost their lives in broad daylight on May 28, 2010. Their families watched the horror unfold in front of them on TV. We all felt shocked and sorrowful. We were crying here on the other side of the world. I even forgot to pay my mortgage payment that month, something that I never missed before.

But if you thought that the identity of Islam and Ahmadiyyat is safe in the West, think again. Don't get me wrong, there is, by the grace of God, no attack on us in the West. This country observes freedom of religion and freedom of expression like no other country, so be very thankful of that. When it comes to our American identity, we are as solid as any Muslim community can be.

If you go to the foundation of this country, you will see the words,

"We hold these truths to be

self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

That is what America stands for. But it is the pursuit of happiness where we as Muslims and Ahmadis, sometimes, do not know how to carry ourselves. Along the way, we become very uncomfortable, we become embarrassed and ashamed of declaring who we are.

That is the topic of the discussion. In my opinion, America stands for such freedoms that no one, no matter the individual's beliefs, should be ashamed of their faith. My respect increases for a Jewish colleague when he wears a yarmulke or when a Christian colleague wears a cross.

But you do not have to be a rocket scientist to understand why a Muslim youth would feel hesitant and not be as proud of being a Muslim. Look at what

Islam is being associated with. Where are the educated Muslims? What are Muslims contributing to science and knowledge? Where are the moderate and peaceful Muslims? We are branded as terrorists and extremists. They ask, where is the spiritual leadership? These are the questions the world is asking.

I will tell you a very simple example. A mother goes to pick up her child from the bus stop. The child gets off the bus and the mother says, '*Assalamu Alaikum*', and the child mutters in response, embarrassed to answer because his/her friends are there and he does not want to verbalize '*Wa alaikumus Salaam*'. The same child, boy or girl, ten or fifteen years later, now living in a college dorm, is very embarrassed to take out his Prayer rug in front of their roommates at the time of prayers. If that child is a girl, then she has to make one of the toughest decisions of her life, which is whether or not she should wear her hijab, and whether she is going to wear a coat or not. How much will she stick out? How different will she look? What color hijab should she wear? These are deep issues for our children.

What is even more disturbing is how parents are dealing with

these issues. Not all parents, not all children; but something where even one is too many. Some parents tell their children, regardless of a child's age, to only focus on their studies than to worry about Friday prayers. Even though, Friday prayers are prescribed as mandatory in the Holy Qur'an for all Muslim men. Some parents tell their children not to worry about 'outwardly acts' of offering *Salat* and observing *Purdah* and to only focus on being good at heart. They say that being good at heart is all that matters. Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}, in *Kashti-e-Nooh*, addresses that issue. Nobody preaches isolation, rather, we strongly believe in integration. Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} says, "I do not wish to stop you from worldly good, but you should not follow the ways of those who think that this world is everything. Do not ape other nations...What is that we seek from those who are of this earth? Those are who are not satisfied in their own minds, how can they give you satisfaction?" (Our Teaching, pages 13-15)

Earlier, if you answered you wanted to be a lion, know that a lion does not worry about fitting in. A lion takes pride in looking different in the jungle.

The story of Howard Scott makes this all the more clearer. Howard Scott was a very successful African-American jazz musician. He would play the trombone in the Billy Epstein's

band in the 1940s and would come home every night with pockets filled with money, until a day came when he came across the book, *Life of Muhammad*^{saw}. The book completely changed Howard Scott. He gave up his career and accepted Islam and Ahmadiyyat. His friends told him that he could still be a musician as a Muslim. He responded by saying that he feared that he would not be able to do justice to both. Howard Scott changed his name to Muhammad Sadiq. He changed his appearance by growing a beard. To pay his mortgage, he became an ordinary painter. He would drive thirty miles one-way from New Jersey to New York to attend Friday Prayers. He would take his family with him. Sometimes, they would be the only ones at the mosque and they would offer their prayers and drive back home. He did this for years and years. Howard Scott had a choice to go to college. He started engineering, but eventually decided to study Arabic and learn the Holy Qur'an. In 1973 he went to Rabwah. Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad^{rh}, the third *Khalifa* of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, asked him to recite the Holy Qur'an. When Muhammad Sadiq recited long verses of the Qur'an in Arabic, the non-

Ahmadi guests' jaws dropped. They could not believe that an African-American from the other side of the world could recite the Qur'an so well.

After a few years, Muhammad Sadiq Sahib lost his eyesight to cataracts. But he never lessened his roar to become a follower. He was a leader and a lion. Why did Muhammad Sadiq care so much about his appearance? Was he not good at heart? Was being good at heart not enough for him? The Promised Messiah^{as} has said that if you drink water from a canal and it is bitter and murky water, then your conclusion would be that the source is also polluted. Hazoor^{rh} said that our world choices and actions are a reflection of our hearts. Impure outwardly acts could be an indication of an impure heart. Muhammad Sadiq gave up music because of the wealth and fame associated with it. The Promised Messiah^{as} has said in *Our Teachings*, "In imminent danger of destruction are people who are enamored with material philosophies." Albert Einstein discovered relativity and won the Nobel Prize, but he lost his God in the process. What good is the Nobel Prize if one loses his belief in God in the process?

So what did Muhammad Sadiq gain? I wish I knew, but I do know that Allah has something special for him. In the early 1990's, Muhammad Sadiq traveled to London and during a speech being given by Hadhrat

Mirza Tahir Ahmadth, the fourth successor of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Muhammad Sadiq could not control his emotions and proclaimed loudly, 'Naara'ay Takbeer!' At that moment, Hazoor stopped his speech and said that he just heard the voice of an angel. Hazoorth pointed to Muhammad Sadiq and asked him to stand up. Muhammad Sadiq, absolutely trembling that Hazoorth had pointed him out, stood up. And then, Hazoorth praised him in front of the whole world. The money and fame Muhammad Sadiq would have made as a musician does not even compare to that single moment in his life. How many among you follow Billy Epstein as their role model? On the other hand, how many among you have the fourth *Khalifa* as your role model? The lesson is clear. A lion does not simply follow any animal in the jungle. A lion follows a lion.

My message to the youth is: *Bai'at* cannot be inherited. You must earn your *Bai'at*. Ahmadiyyat is way more precious than a birth accident. Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra}, at the age of eleven, came home one day in anger. He stated he would investigate the Promised Messiah's^{as} claim and not accept him just because the Promised Messiah^{as} was his father. If his claim is false, he stated he would leave the house. After investigating, see what happened to him? He ended up becoming the second *Khalifa* and the Promised Reformer^{ra}.

Many people born as an Ahmadi take Ahmadiyyat for grant-

ed. Once you develop the commitment and the conviction of a true Ahmadi, only then do you have a true identity as an Ahmadi Muslim and only then can you become a lion. You cannot wear the mask of a lion, go into a jungle, and truly be accepted as a lion. You cannot just hang onto a label; you have to be the lion.

My appeal to the parents is: Bind your children to the *Khalifa*. Teach them the value of their *Bai'at*, otherwise it will be diluted with each generation. We take pride in the sacrifices offered by our grandparents for the cause of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. But that's not the issue anymore. The real question is whether our grandchildren will make similar sacrifices or not? Hazoor^{aba} has said that, "If you will not pay heed to the sayings of *Khalifa* of the time, not only will you become distant from the blessings of God, but you will also weaken the faith of your next generation."

Lions have interesting behavioral patterns, they have gender roles. It is the role of the lioness, to integrate the cub in the jungle and teach him the ways of living like a lion. Let us ensure we do not lose the glorious institution of motherhood. I always tell my children that in matters of faith,

if my approach ever differs from Khalifatul Masih's approach, then you should follow Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih.

As office holders, we do Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih's cause no good when we think as though the *Khalifa's* sermons are for someone else and not for us. Regardless of where we are in our life or whichever office we hold, we must remember that we as individuals are the addressee of those sermons.

How does the *Bai'at* help us keep our identity? Allah says in the Holy Qur'an, "O *Dhu'l Qarnain*, verily, Gog and Magog are creating disorder in the earth; shall we then pay thee tribute on condition that thou set up a barrier between us and them?" (18:95). Masih Mau'ood^{as} is also *Dhu'l Qarnain* and his teaching creates a barrier between good and bad.

Parenting and raising children is a very sensitive issue. I apologize for any offense taken. I am not claiming that I love your children more than you or that this is the only way to do it. See when we breach contracts, there are consequences; when I missed the mortgage payments, there were consequences no matter what I was going through. So if we breach this *Bai'at*, there will be consequences for our children.

I understand that we are few as a *Jama'at* and that our youth do not want to look different from the rest of society. In the fourth year of prophethood, the Holy Prophet^{saw} invited forty chiefs of

the *Quraish* and preached the message of Islam to them. After the meal, he asked them with all his mercy to join him in Islam. While all the chiefs mocked and insulted him, a weak, trembling, thirteen year old boy stood up and announced, "I know I am the youngest and that I am the weakest, but I will join you, O Muhammad." No surprise that boy grew up to receive the title '*Asadullah*', meaning, 'the lion of Allah'. His name was Hadhrat Ali^{ra}.

This simile of us being a lion was not coined by me. The literature of Islam and Ahmadiyyat is replete with such passages where *Khulafa* have urged us to be like lions. I can quote you just one example from the writings of Promised Messiah^{as} where he said, 'It is not a good idea to challenge someone who is from God. Dare not attack these lions, oh you lifeless fox'.

At the beginning, I asked you what animal you would choose to be if you were in a jungle. I had no way of knowing your answer. But many of you said you would choose to be a lion because through the prayers of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} and his *Khulafa* that spiritual makeup is now in your blood. We 'are' spiritual lions. And guess what: Life is a jungle, and the only way to survive is to be a lion and to follow the *Khalifa*.

For a second, let's stop mourning the martyrs of Lahore

for they are alive. Allah says about martyrs in the Holy Qur'an that they are alive but you perceive not. Hadhrat Khalifatul-Masih V^{aba} has said, "Blessed are the Ahmadi of Lahore". Instead worry about our diluted identity here in the West. For if we failed to live like lions we may die in oblivion.

Think of the *Ameer* of the Lahore *Jama'at*. He would go to work every day and openly tell people that he is an Ahmadi Muslim. He was a lion of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. Think of the mother who told her son to go to the mosque and pray in the same spot his father was martyred the week prior. She is a lioness of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. Take pride in who you are.

We are that which America seeks. When America asks, 'where are the educated Muslims' you should feel proud about being the community that hails the first ever Nobel prize in the history of Islam and many more in the making *Insha Allah*. When America asks, 'where are the peaceful Muslims' you should feel proud for Ahmadiyyat is the only Muslim community which has demonstrated peace for the past 120 years, even under state sponsored persecution

and extreme oppression. We are no post-9/11 peace bandwagon. When America asks, 'where is the spiritual leadership of Muslims' you should feel great because we are united at the hand of that spiritual leadership, that *Khilafat*, which the Muslim world craves today.

Another important characteristic of lions: they protect their pride (tribe). They protect their identity. A lion does not worry about fitting in; A lion does not worry about being outnumbered by other animals in the jungle. Just like lions, we must protect our identity and not worry about the numbers.

This coming Monday, the realities of life will face us again. The school bus will come in the neighborhood. The Ahmadi youth will have to face their roommates in their dorms. Ahmadi mothers and daughters will have to decide about the degree of their commitments to hijab. Parents will face the same dilemmas. We will have a choice to make. We could try to fit in like Abu Jahal, Abu Lahab, and the chiefs of the *Quraish*, or we could try to declare our identity with pride, like Hadhrat Ali^{ra}.

May Allah grant us the wisdom and courage to make the right choice.

TRIALS — SOURCES OF DIVINE FAVORS AND WRATH

Maulana Azhah Haneef

Transcribed by: Hammad Malik

*Assalamu alaikum wa
rahmatullah.
Tashahud, ta'awwuz, tasmia.*

Respected Ameer Sahib, distinguished guests of this blessed *Jalsa*, brothers and sisters in faith – the topic of my speech today is one in which all of us, in some form or some fashion, are living and bearing witness to in our personal lives. It is one which was assigned to me in response to all of the things that we are well aware of occurring in the country of Pakistan, that have touched the hearts of every single Ahmadi throughout the world. And as I prepared for this speech, I was recalling the life history of one great companion of the Holy Prophet^{saw}; his name is Khalid bin Waleed^{ra}. After joining Islam, he became one of the greatest generals of the faith. He participated in many battles but when he was on his deathbed, he was weeping uncontrollably, his body was shaking and observers were surprised to see this because this was the man known as the Sword of Allah; this was the man who would plunge himself in the thickest parts of the battle where the weak of faith and the faint of heart dared not go; and on this occasion they were surprised that perhaps he has finally given into human weakness and succumbed to a sense of fear – in this case, the fear

of death. But Khalid bin Waleed^{ra} responded to this and said:

“I fought in so many battles seeking martyrdom that there is no place on my body but that has a stabbing scar by a spear or a sword or a dagger and yet here I am dying on my bed like an old camel dies.”

Khalid bin Waleed^{ra}, from the first day he was assigned as a general in the army of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, had seen three great companions fall before his eyes. He had picked up the flag of Islam and marched forward a small band of Muslims and fought against enormous odds on that occasion. Finally, he beat a retreat back to Medina and as they entered the city, he never forgot the words he heard; they did not embrace him and greet him with “Victory! You have saved our troops, you have saved our army, you have saved our lives.” They said, “You coward! How have you returned back to the city? You should have gone and given your life and be-

come a *Shaheed* and earned the great distinction of those who have gone before you.” Imagine this man, a powerful general, a great soldier, he couldn’t bear these words, he hung his head in shame and went to the mosque of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} to beg his forgiveness. The Holy Prophet^{saw} assured him, “Khalid, you are not a coward. You did not beat a retreat out of fear of the enemy; you did it out of wisdom and out of understanding the principles of warfare. And here, I give you this sword and you shall be known as the Sword of Allah and you shall win battle after battle after battle.” Indeed, he fought in over 100 battles small and great; and yet as I say, his greatest desire was always to enter into battle and earn the honor of martyrdom and be written amongst the golden lettered stars who have become the “*Shuhadae Islam*” (martyrs of Islam). And yet he kept coming back a victor upon victor upon victor.

We can conclude from this that the way to God’s pleasure and the way to paradise is not by strapping a bomb around your body and detonating it, it is not by inflicting wounds upon others – it is a small and torturous death my friends, my brothers and sisters;

on the contrary, it is by embracing what the weak and faint of heart would not even go near, it is by being Khalid bin Waleed^{ra} and opening your shirt to those around you and showing them all the marks over every single part of your body and saying "I died my death in Islam over and over again" and Allah^{swt} I am sure would reward such sacrifices.

We, the Ahmadi Muslims, often talk about being buried in the *Bahishti Maqbara*, the Heavenly Graveyard. We want to be *Moosiyaaan*; we want to be those who are recognized for our faith and here we have a great symbol in this companion to remember and to recall. Shortly before he was to pass away, in his book *Al-Wasiyyat*, Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} the Promised Messiah gave us this bitter sweet message; it is a message that is epitomized in the lives of Khalid bin Waleed^{ra} and all those great saints and devout followers who came before and after him. It is a message of how ultimately we are going to get into heaven. Not just be buried in one part of land but be accepted by Allah, be blessed by Allah and take on the rank of those who are His nearest and dearest ones. Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} mentions that everyone is rushing after the world but here is an opportunity for us – who wishes to rush and earn paradise? Who wishes to rush to God's pleasure and God's nearness and God's grace and mercy – for them and for generation upon generation to come? He said that this field is wide open. He said "Never think that God will let you go to waste. You are indeed a seed planted by

the hand of God in the soil. Thus declares God, this seed will sprout and grow and will branch out in every direction and will turn into a mighty tree. So blessed be he who has trust in the word of God and doesn't fear the intervening trials. Remember that it is essential for trials to come so thereby Allah may distinguish which of you is true in his covenant of *Bai'at* and which of you is false."

When I came back and read these words again, thinking about what happened in Lahore, thinking about those sacrifices, the blessings that they earned, these words, they jumped off the page and said to me that this is what Masih Mau'ood^{as} was talking on his death bed, reminding us that this is the process to earn God's pleasure, this is the way to enter heaven, this is the way to fulfill the purpose of our life.

These words of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} are a blessing to the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at*, not just back in those days when he was alive but for all times to come and he is saying to us that we must go through this process. Again in one of his writings he explains, "the trials which initially confront the prophets and saints and make them appear dishonored despite their being loved and ac-

cepted by God do not come to disgrace them or destroy them or wipe their names off the face of this earth, nor can this be their purpose. For how can God become the enemy of those who love him and bring disgrace upon them? These trials will appear with the ferocity of a roaring lion and cause darkness to descend all around God's chosen servants in order to raise them to the highest levels of acceptance and to open for them the finer dimensions of divine knowledge." He says, "It is necessary for the messengers of God to face great trials and for their followers and the generations after them to be tried and tested so that God may distinguish between the honest and the insincere, the steadfast and the wavering. By God's grace and mercy, I am sure there are many amongst us who are into the fold of *Al-Wasiyyat*, but now on this day and this occasion, I draw your attention towards these words of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} as to what is the real goal of *Al-Wasiyyat*, it is not to give 10% of our wealth or to give 1/3rd of our wealth and property; on the contrary, it is to earn this blessing, to have our names written alongside Khalid bin Waleed^{ra} and all those great companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and the names of those 90 plus people who have now given their names in the history of *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya in Lahore.

We too can be witnesses, *Shuhada* of Islam, even while we are alive just like Khalid bin Waleed^{ra}. This was never to be an easy process and the Holy Qur'an confirms this. In the Holy Qur'an,

Chap. 2 verse 215, it says "Do you think you will enter into paradise while there has not come over you the condition of those who have passed before you. They were afflicted with poverty and difficulties and they were violently shaken until the messengers and those who believe along with them say 'When will the help of Allah come?'"

And Allah in the very same verse gives the message "Aye, for sure," believe this, if you have endured all these tortures, all these trials, all these tribulations for the sake of Allah, then know that God is with you. He is in front of you, He is behind you, to your left and right, He is around you, He is your shield, He is your protector, He is your guide and you shall then enter heaven because God will bring you to heaven through all these trials and ordeals.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, being the greatest of all messengers who lived on this earth, too had to endure everything that is described in the Qur'an and which is being mentioned by Hadhrat Ahmad^{as}. We know the Holy Prophet's^{saw} life was not a life of ease and luxury. This was not a simple way to heaven for this great man and messenger. He endured great hardship and difficulties and all the things that Qur'an mentioned here up to the very end of his life; yet, you would find in his own words a humble man praying to Allah in these words "My Lord, I complain to You of my weakness and confess my weakness on Your threshold; my humble state is known to You; I am ready to bear

every hardship until You are pleased with me; and I have no strength other than You." These are the prayers and words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} when he was leaving Ta'if having been driven out of that town by the children set upon him with stones and finally when he was bleeding and reached a spot where he could get some rest under a shady tree, this is what he offered as his mind and heart in front of Allah, his plea to forgive him for his weakness and shortcomings, not to complain about the trial and tribulations he had to endure. Thus, the main point of what I had to share with you today is mentioned in the words of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} in the words of the Qur'an and in the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. But it is only half of what I had to say today – not half in terms of time because my time is almost up but in terms of the message that these trials bring favors upon those who are righteous while Allah's wrath descends upon those who are the persecutors and the opponents. And I think that all of us have witnessed that this is true. In these past few decades alone, we have seen that God has just not allowed the opponents to do what they wished and let them go free; God is always watching, He is always aware and He slowly

moves as our Amir sahib mentioned, He is merciful and forgiving, He is giving opportunities for people to change. He doesn't punish right away but when He does punish, those are dreadful signs, those are powerful manifestations, those are experiences that none of us want to be a part of. In October 7, 2005, anti-Ahmadiyya militants entered a village during the holy month of *Ramadhan* and fired upon the worshippers in our mosque and killed 8 of our members and caused injury to 27 of our brothers and sisters. A day later, one of the largest and most powerful earthquakes shook the nation of Pakistan. Hundreds of thousands of people suffered during this, losing their lives, losing their homes and Pakistan is still trying to recover from that.

One comment out of Pakistan in those days was from *Mufti Qadri* who wrote that the earthquake was an admonitory sign for the masses and the rulers – for the masses because although they profess *shahada* their deeds are in bad repute; it was a moment of concern for the religious scholars in light of the current sectarian violence which has reached an extent that people of some sects are killing the people of the other sects." They themselves bore witness to this fact, it was not just a simple earthquake, it was a result of man's deeds or misdeeds particularly against this community although he doesn't mention it. But we know that within 24 hours, Allah gave His response and His warning and His displeasure. Likewise, we saw in the nation of Bangladesh, where by God's Grace I had the opportunity

this year in February to attend their *Jalsa* and during those days when I attended the *Jalsa* in Dhaka, they took us to a small *Jalsa* in what's called Sundarban which is the coastal region of Bangladesh, the national mangrove forest is there and this is the home of the Bengal tiger. This is the place where the people go to see the wonders of the nation and there is a small *Jama`at* there but what is unfortunate that again the *Khatame Nabuwwat* of Bangladesh attacked our community mosque and the houses in Sundarban leaving 50 of our members injured including women and children. This was a horrific attack, the women were beaten with bamboo sticks with nails in them. They didn't care until the women were falling unconscious with their bodies bleeding. As our *Sadr Khuddam* mentioned, we are lions; no, we are not just lions, we are tigers because when I was leaving Dhaka they asked me if I wanted to see the tigers of Bangladesh and I said yes. They said go to Sundarban and you'll see them there. I didn't know what was meant by that but when I came back I said that I have seen the tigers of Bangladesh. I was asked if I understood now and I said yes, the tigers of Bangladesh are the Amir of Sundarban and his family and the women and the children who stood in front of those Maulvis and blocked the road with their bodies and fought them back with bamboo sticks and the women beat the mullahs until they had to retreat from the village and by God's grace that earned some of them the distinction of being *shahheed*. Again, Allah^{swt} did not turn a blind eye to the condition in Bang-

ladesh which has been going on for years and this was just one of the most recent events. Years earlier, in the city of Khulna, they attacked our mosque during a Friday prayer service and they planted a bomb in front of the first row of the mosque which blew up during the service and many of our brothers lost their lives and many were wounded. But after the events of Sundarban, a few years ago back in 2007, one of the greatest and most powerful cyclones of this century struck the nation of Bangladesh. And where did it strike? In the Sundarban forest!

I repeat to you the account of what they say. Up to 15000 people were killed, up to 90% of the homes and 95% of the rice crops and the shrimp farms were obliterated by the winds which generated a 20 foot tidal surge that swept everything from its path. Those mullahs were coming to the Ahmadiyya village to wipe them out and not leave a trace of them in the village and to take control of the mosque. In response, Allah sent this cyclone and it destroyed that part of the country and they say it will be 40 years before it recovers from the damage of that wind alone. Brothers and sisters, as I recount these incidents of God's wrath, although my voice may dis-

play the emotion and the passion of being there, having met them, having seen and having told them that the story of Bangladesh, your suffering, your sacrifice and the blessings that you have earned, needs to be told worldwide. That is the Muslim nation now where they are supporting the *Jama`at* Ahmadiyya, where God has turned the hearts and minds of that nation in an amazing way towards our *Jama`at*. They became a human shield for our mosque and the same *mullahs* who attempted to march on our mosque in Dhaka and the Taliban of Bangladesh, they didn't have guns and bullets and bombs to destroy us this time, instead they blocked the road leading to our mosque and said you will destroy the Ahmadis on our dead bodies! That is how Allah has changed the hearts of the Bengalis towards this *Jama`at* and blessed the *Jama`at* because of the sacrifices of its members. But herein I want to remind you that there is no pleasure, there is no joy in seeing the suffering of humanity and the punishment they earned because of what they have done.

Although Allah again is Merciful and we want to see Allah's mercy upon them but sometimes they bring it upon themselves. And as the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} after the battle of Badr said when the pit was dug for all those great leaders of Mecca who would fall in the pit; and he stood over them and looked at them and he said "I have found the promises of my Lord to be true, have you ... found the promises of your Lord also to be true?" This was a clear reference to the destruction that

would be the opponents' lot if they oppose the Holy Prophet^{saw} and his community.

It is in this sense that I want to end today with a reminder for us of a blessing that happened in our nation. The 35th *Jalsa Salana* was held, not in a mosque, not in a hall, not in a university or conference center; it was held out in open air in a small park. It was held for 1 day and 1 day only because the authorities had not given us permission to hold our *Jalsa* in the university we had made a contract with. Why they had done this? Because we don't have to look across the oceans into other continents to see how God's mercy is upon a nation who gives the greatest sacrifices and to learn the lesson that this a sacrifice that we must keep giving and we will be demanded to keep giving. In 1983, a few days before the conference I was very young man, I was about to prepare myself to go to Rabwah to join the *Jamia* Ahmadiyya but I never forget the journey we took on that day because everyone was so geared up, so fired up; the whole *Jama'at* was given a new life, a new spirit. What had happened a few nights earlier?

Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad, who had invited a man into his home a while earlier for *Tabligh*, had a knock on his door. He opened the door, it was the same man he had been preaching to 2 days earlier and the man said I left my cap here, can you please give it back to me. The good doctor said yes wait here, went and brought the cap but the man pulled out a gun and fired 5 shots at Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad, 2 of them were fatal and he dropped and he died a martyr, a *Shaheed*

before they could reach the hospital. It is in this sense that the whole *Jama'at* USA was about to witness and experience something which we had only read about, heard about and thought about that what would it be like for all the companions to be giving their lives. After the martyrdom of Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad, some of the Ahmadis were in such state of loss and fear and grief and anxiety that they said we should cancel our *Jalsa*. But the missionary at that time, Maulana Ataullah Kaleem said no we will not cancel this *Jalsa*, we will march forward and we will hold it even in the broad daylight and everyone should come. And by God's Grace, those who are sitting here who were there, they know they came from far and wide, from Canada and from all parts of USA and they came with their chests sticking out and their heads held high, not fearing anything but their Creator and Creator alone.

It is there, they had the session for 1 day out in this park and then all of the Ahmadis gave their pledge to Maulana Ataullah Kaleem Sahib when he reminded us of the 5 mosques we had to build in America.

After this assailant left the house of Dr. Muzaffar, he went to another member's house and he fire-bombed the home. By God's Grace, the fire bomb

did not detonate and the home was saved. But then from there the attackers went to our mosque and they went inside the mosque, threw gasoline around and lit the mosque on fire burning the Qur'ans, and the mosque down totally. But look at the hand of God, I mention the earthquake of Pakistan, the cyclone in Bangladesh but right then and there we witnessed the hand of God, the favor and blessing upon us and the wrath upon them Those two men couldn't get out the front door because it was on fire and when they ran to the back door to run and get out, there was no door knob. They could not open the door, so where did they run? They rushed into the bathroom, and there they died of asphyxiation. God forbid, they say Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} perished in that manner; here God is saying no, you are the opponents of Islam, that is where you will die, that is where you will remain dead while Dr. Muzaffar will always remain alive. Wherever we go in our nation, you go to LA, you go to Chicago, you come here to Silver Spring or you go to Detroit and see those beautiful mosques, remember, it was on this day in 1983 when we stood as a *Jama'at* and said we will give our pledge to build these 5 mosques in honor of this *Shaheed* and honor our pledge to *Jama'at* and honor that Islam Ahmadiyyat will never be destroyed by these things but we will stand in front of these trials that will come to all of us and march forward, remembering the spiritual message of what we should respond with when we see all these things and how we can benefit and earn blessings for ourselves even though we may have to give our lives – earn blessings for ourselves, our

nation, our generations to come. In 1974, in the opening address of the *Jalsa Salana* the third *Khalifa*^{rh} offered a very beautiful prayer, I end with it. At Rabwah, Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad^{rh} – Khalifatul Masih III – prayed:

“May God Almighty provide for the welfare of mankind, may He provide for the spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical joy and happiness of mankind. May He provide for the removal of the spite and rancor which inspires the hearts of some men against others. Man is turning away from his greatest benefactor, Muhammad^{saw}, the chosen one. May Allah Almighty show a day when man returns to his allegiance to the Holy Prophet, on whom be peace, and should begin to recognize God. May God Almighty safeguard the members of the community against all harm and convert every bitterness into joy and delight and enable them to discharge successfully their responsibility that has been placed upon their shoulders in this age. May Allah show a day that we may begin to witness in our own lives the fulfillment of the good tidings conveyed to us through the Promised Messiah^{as} of the supremacy of the faith of Muhammad^{saw}, the chosen one. Insha`Allah.”

Ameen. Allahuma Ameen. Wa akhuru da`wana anil hamdu lillahi rabbil alameen.

ANN ARBOR, MI TABLIGH REPORT

Asif Rohela

This year over 450,000 people attended the fair. Over 100,000 people glanced at our booth, every year. We have the only Muslim booth in the fair. This was a really successful year for our message since by the grace of Allah people are starting to know about us and appreciate our efforts. The total brochures distributed in Ann Arbor on India day, *Masjid Mahmood* neighbor are 1500. Imam Irshad Mahli Sahib gave us the instructions for distribution of, “Muslim for Peace”. 500 brochures were given to us for distribution. A booth was installed. As soon as the booth was installed two people came to us, recognized our community and talked about the May 28th incident.

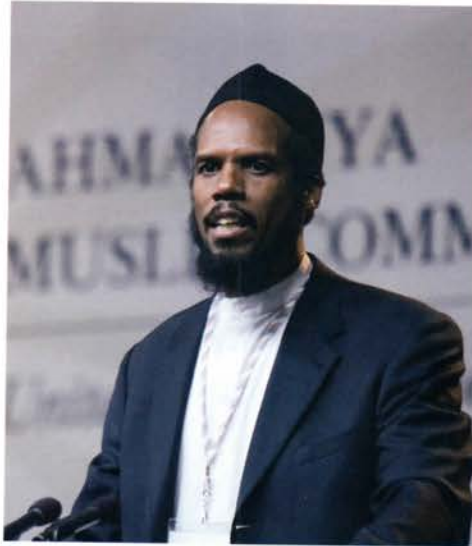
Team Leader: Asif Ahmed Rohela. Volunteers: Umar Ahmed, Bashir, Rohela, Usman Mangla. Brochures distributed as instructed, 200. People stopped and asked questions, 70; People who took literature, 300; People looked at the booth and spent some time to get familiar with our name, about 10,000. Ten people took interest in our community and had in-depth conversations with us. Team leader: Asif Ahmed Rohela. Volunteers: Bashir Rohela, Umar Ahmed, Visit by *Imam Irshad Mehli Sahib*, and Nadeem Ahmad Khan, Usman Magla. Brochures distributed as instructed, 150. 50 people stopped and asked questions; 20 people took literature; About 1,000 people, who looked at the booth, were attracted by our message and asked questions, and spent some time to get familiar with our name. Ten people took interest in our community and had in-depth conversation. Team leader: Muhammad Ahmad. Volunteers: Khalid Sahib, Fahim Rana, Khalid Ahmad, Hamid Malik, Raza Ahmad. Brochures distributed as instructed, 200. People who stopped and asked questions 20; People who took literature, 300; People, who looked at the booth, were attracted by our message and asked questions, and spent some time to get familiar with our name, about 10000.; People who came and took interest in our community and had in-depth conversations with us, 10. Team leader: Hamid Ahmad. Volunteers: BK Ahmad, Hamid Malik, Tahir Ahmad, Usman Mangla. Brochures distributed: 350, 20 people asked questions. 100 people took literature. People, who were attracted by our message, and asked questions were about 10000. People who had in-depth conversations with us, 15. **Joint effort from Masjid Mahmood:** 36 member participated. Visited 250 home

India Day 2010 Report: “Muslims for Peace” flyers were distributed. Booth was setup with the Promised Messiah’s^{as} photo and photos of the *Khulafa*. Secretary of State Candidate, Jocelyn Benson (D) visited the stall after Br. Asif Rohela talked to the Indian Democratic Caucus. A few radio stations had been contacted. This was our third time participation. 750 Muslim for peace flyers were distributed. 20 copies of Muslim Sunrise were given to peoples. Arya Samaj of Pundit Di-anand visited our booth.

Speakers at the 2010 USA Jalsa Salana



Dr. Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad



Maulana Azhar Hanif



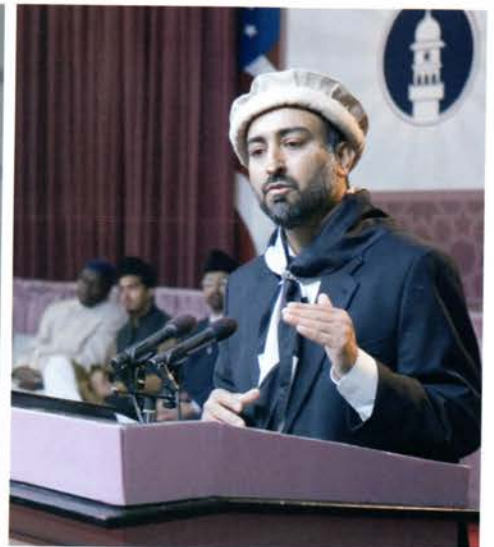
Maulana Naseem Mahdi



Ali Murtaza



Maulana Syed Shmshad A Nasir



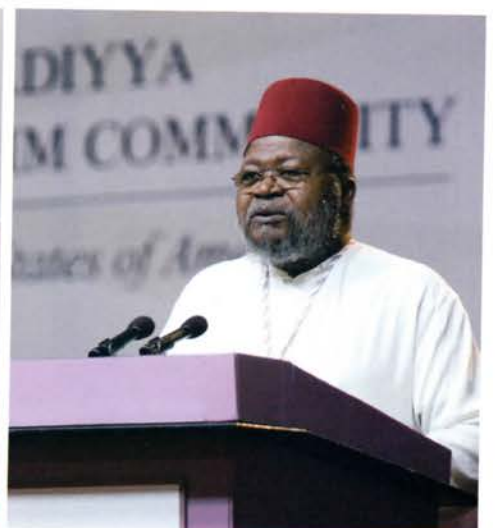
Dr. Faheem Younus Qureshi



Amjad Mahmood Khan



Yasin Sharif



Bilal Abdus Salam

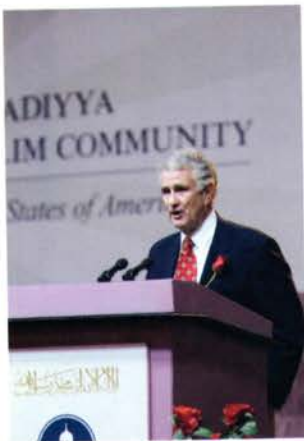
Scenes from the 2010 USA Jalsa Salana



Scenes from the 2010 USA Jalsa Salana



Scenes from the 2010 USA Jalsa Salana



ISLAM BEYOND CULTURE AND ETHNICITY

Bilal Abdus Salam

Transcribed by: Parisa Jaffari

After reciting *Durood Sharif* and *Surah Al-Fatiha*, Brother Bilal Abdus Salam started his speech:

As we know, Islam is a universal religion and Ahmadiyat is the true Islam. And in it there is no racism, nationalism or culturism there is not one thing more pleasing to the heart than Islam. Let me relate an incident from the time of the Holy Prophet of Islam^{saw}. One day he was sitting with a few ex-slaves from different places and a group of other Muslims, when a group of non-Muslims passed by and said, "Have you chosen these people from among your people, do you want us to follow you along the side of them, has Allah put his favors on them that they have believed and not us? You better remove them from around you if you do so than perhaps we will follow you." The Holy Prophet^{saw} did not agree to their demands and Allah sent down this verse in respect to that scenario chapter 6, verse 53-55 the Qur'an says:

"And drive not away those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, seeking His countenance. Thou art not at all accountable for them nor are they at all accountable for thee, that thou shouldst drive them away and be of the unjust. And in like manner have We tried some of them by others, that they may say, 'Is it these whom Allah has favored from among us?' Does not Allah know best those who are grateful? And when those who believe in Our Signs

come to thee, say: 'Peace be unto you! Your Lord has taken it upon Himself to show mercy'".

When Allah revealed these verses, the ex-slaves said that the Holy Prophet^{saw} called them closer to him and said to them, "The Lord has ordained mercy on him, it has already been pointed out that according to Islam man's only badge of merit with God is righteousness. God does not care to what color or race one may belong, what wealth they may possess he cares for those who have beauty in the heart. It is up to all of us to search our souls, not to be biased, we must find a solution that will work for us and that solution is the fear of Allah. *Taqwa*, righteousness, signify that on one hand we shall have firm conviction that if we are remised, God will visit our sins with his punishment and on the other hand we should also have a firm faith in his mercy and forgiveness. In the verse I quote God said do not let death overtake you unless you are in a state of submission, this means we shall be resigned to the will of God so when death over

takes us it shall find us obedient and resigned to his will. When we are not perfectly resigned to him what can we say about what went wrong with our understanding of the essence of Islam.

Let's look back at the ways of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. He was one of the greatest figures of history. No one indeed can withhold admiration for one beginning as a simple preacher in Mecca.

I will quote you some words of the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah^{as}, "Hear all men and women we have been created by god so we may absorb his attributes in our own person and become manifestation of his glory so long as we do not obtain this object we cannot claim to have achieved success and what value is our material progress? It is nothing but a passed time. Real life is that which knows no end, real pleasure is that which is always on the increase, therefore, turn to the real life everlasting for joy and real knowledge so that you may enjoy peace both here and the hereafter, and may succeed in pleasing God and achieving your objective of existence" and God says in the Holy Qur'an in chapter 49, vs14:

O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes that you may recognize one another. Verily, the most honorable among you, in the sight of Allah,

is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-knowing, All-Aware.

Human beings have been declared equal in the sight of God. The work of a man is not to be judged by the pigmentation of his skin, or by the wealth he possesses or by his rank and social status but by his moral greatness and by the way he discharged his obligation to God and man. The whole human race is but one family divided into nations of tribes and race is a means to give them a better knowledge of one another and benefit from one another, with respect to national characteristics and good qualities. Allah has given to us in this century the *Khalifa* who holds us all together as One under God. And we shall follow him in everything good that he tells us. From the *Bai'at* we declare that he or she shall enter into a bond of brotherhood with this humble servant of God pledging obedience to him in everything good for the sake of Allah and remain faithful to it till the day of his/her death. That she/he shall exhibit such a high devotion in the observance of this bond as it is not to be found in any other worldly relationship. During 1920-1925 there were over 1,000 Ahmadis in the United States and in the year of 1940 there were 10,000 Ahmadis in America. Let us find those 10,000, even if we cannot find the person let us find their families. Let us search our hearts and try to elevate this beautiful religion and this beautiful organization, which is for the soul purpose of bringing mankind together. Letting mankind know that we are one family. And we can understand that in this society that we are in today that if we become as one, we can show mankind

how to live together. We are like the flowers we see on this stage, flowers of different colors. When they assembled together they bring out something beautiful. We have that beauty within ourselves and we can bring it out and show this society and show mankind how man and women can live together without arguments and become lovers of each other and respect one another.

We want to know what happened to the love we have for the Promised Messiah^{as}? How can we show to mankind that this religion we have found is for them? Can we be respectful to one another? Can we listen to one another? This is the only way that we can have that unity. May Almighty Allah be with us.

Let me quote a few things from the promised messiah, lets listen to his words. He said, "Beware! Do not ape others nations having seen other nations; how they have attained a considerable measure of success in their worldly plans, you should not begin to wish to follow in their footsteps. Listen carefully and take heed that they are aliens to and unmindful of that God Who calls you all to Himself. What is their god but a frail human being, this being the reason why they have been left in

such a complacent error. I do not wish to stop you from striving for worldly good, but you should not follow the ways of those who think this present world is all in all.

In everything you do, whether it pertains to things of this world or of the next, you should seek help and succor from God alone, and this should remain the guiding principle of your life forever and ever. But this seeking of help should not be from your lips alone: it should be your conviction deep down to the bottom of your being that every blessing comes only from heaven."

Then he goes on to say, "Heaven explains all things I repeat once more that you must not become satisfied merely because in outward form you have taken *Bai'at* at my hand. The outward form means nothing: God sees what lies inside your hearts, and He would deal with you on the basis of what He sees there. Lo and behold! I herein discharge my duty unto you, by making it plain that sin is a poison. Do not take it. Disobedience to God is a dirty death which you should avoid. Turn to prayer that you should get the strength. At the time of prayer, if a man does not firmly believe that Allah has power over everything, except what may be contained in a previous promise; such a one is not of my community.

He who is caught in a tangle of worldly greed, and never even raises his eyes to things which pertain to the next life, is not of my community. Whosoever does not wholly and completely keep away from every sin and every evil action, like wine, gambling, looking lustfully at women, dishonesty,

bribes, and from every kind of illegal gratification, he is not of my community. Whoever is not constantly turning to prayer, and does not remember Him in absolute humility of spirit, he is not of my community.

Whosoever does not give up association with a bad companion, who exercises an unhealthy influence over him, he is not of my community. Whosoever does not respect his parents, whosoever does not render obedience to them in things which do not run counter to the Holy Qur'an, and whosoever is neglectful in rendering to them the service to which, they are undoubtedly entitled, he is not of my community. Whosoever does not live with his wife and her relations with gentleness, goodness, and magnanimity, he is not of my community. Every man or woman who is dishonest towards his or her spouse is not of my community."

These are the words of the Promised Messiah^{as}, showing us the way, guiding us towards the true light in the direction of the Holy Prophet^{saw} has taken us. This is what we should bring into our hearts when we spread this beautiful message. Forget about where we come from, whether we are Pakistani or African, or we are white or black, we need to bring unity and think about the *Taqwa*, the righteousness that we want to bring into our hearts. Racism is something that can tear a society apart let's not bring it here. Let's let people know about the true essence of Islam, that this Islam is for all of mankind and each mankind is part of it the only thing he has to do is accept it. And our beloved *Khalifa* is guiding us in the right direction. He has answers

for us each and every time we feel down all we have to do is call on the almighty Allah. These are the days and we know these are the last days, we are all sitting here know we have a job to do and that job is to spread that message. Didn't Allah tell the Promised Messiah^{as} that he would cause his message to spread to the four corners of the universe and I am one of the recipients of the spread of the message to the 4 corners of the universe. Many of us sitting here are one of those recipients. Many of us sitting here come from many different countries received that blessing in that light through the promised messiah who shined it into us. He has been given the same message that was given to the Holy Prophet^{saw}. Brothers and sisters let us spread this message to everyone. Let people know that we do not fear. As we know what happened last week in Pakistan. It hurts me as well as it hurts you. I felt the same pain as which all of the brothers felt. These are my brothers, these are the ones whom I accept. I accept all of this because it's a part of me. If one part of my thumb is hurting my whole body aches. So one part of my thumb has been hurt in Pakistan, so my whole body aches. And I know your aches because you are from that country but I know you are beautiful brothers. I have been there, I have seen the

love and devotion they have for the Promised Messiah^{as} and Islam. I have seen all of this and I want you to see that you are in a country that if you follow what they are doing, in anyway they are doing things, they will take you completely out of here. I know I was born and raised here. I have seen some things that if you see it now, it will turn your stomach. When I was a kid that I saw many things happened to us, as I was a part of this country. We didn't ask to come here. Our ancestors were brought here by force and so we are here. One thing always stuck in my mind when I heard the 4th *Khalifa*^h say, don't think you have come here by chance, there are reasons for that my brothers. I have noticed that between each and every one of you there is always one who has accepted Islam. May Allah bless us and may we continue this journey to show mankind the true essence in the guidance of Islam.

**DONATE MONEY
TO
HUMANITY
FIRST
TOWARD
PAKISTAN
FLOOD RELIEF
EFFORTS**

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN AMERICA

Amjad Mahmood Khan
Los Angeles, California USA

"There should be no compulsion in religion. Surely, the right way has become distinct from error."

--Chapter 2, Verse 257

Respected Chairman and Honored Guests of the *Jalsa Salana*:

Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakatohu.

A few weeks ago, America celebrated its 234th year as a nation. As members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, we proudly joined in this celebration. For some Americans, a showing of loyalty by American Muslims might come as a bit of a surprise. With America mired in two wars with Muslim majority nations (Iraq and Afghanistan), and recent Gallup polls showing an unprecedented level of discrimination against American Muslims, it would appear difficult for American Muslims to take pride in the country they live in.

Yet despite all of the polls and negative media attention paid to Islam in America, there probably isn't a better time in our history to be proud to be an American Muslim. This may sound like a tall claim, but some international perspective might help. Consider for a moment the state of religious freedom for Muslims in Europe over the past few months.

Last November, 57.5% of all

voters in Switzerland supported a constitutional amendment banning the construction of any new minarets (an Islam symbol found on Mosques).

Last month in the Netherlands, the anti-Islam Freedom Party of MP Geert Wilders won 23 seats in Parliament. Wilders has publicly demanded that the Qur'an be outlawed and that Muslim women who wear head scarves be taxed.

Last week, the French parliament approved a ban of the *burqa* (or full Islamic veil) by a vote of 336 to 1. Support for a ban on the *burqa* is now widespread across Europe, with strong majority votes in Spain, Britain and Germany.

For American Muslims, these European headlines come as a bit of a shock. Compared to European Muslims, American Muslims appear to be progressing much better.

U.S. President Barack Obama recognized this very fact in his speech last year to the Muslim world in Cairo. He said:

"Freedom in America is indivisible from the free-

dom to practice one's religion. That is why there is a mosque in every state of our union, and over 1,200 mosques within our borders. That is why the U.S. government has gone to court to protect the right of women and girls to wear the hijab, and to punish those who would deny it."

No state in America has laws that ban minarets, headscarves, or any other kind of Islamic custom or practice of the kind Switzerland, France, Switzerland and other European nations seek to implement. In 2004, Oklahoma passed a law seeking to ban the wearing of headscarves in public schools, but a federal court quickly struck down the law as unconstitutional. This past April, Oregon ended an 87-year-old ban on teachers wearing headscarves in schools.

What is it about America that enables American Muslims to exercise their faith more freely than anywhere else in the world? My speech this morning tackles this very important question in four parts. *First*, I will discuss the concept of religious freedom in America. *Second*, I will discuss the concept of religious freedom in Islam. In so doing, I will underscore the striking similarities between the two concepts. *Third*, I will discuss how the modern Muslim world has deviated from the true Islamic concept

of religious freedom in profound and tragic ways. *Finally*, I will discuss some of our responsibilities as American Muslims to champion the cause of religious freedom.

Let me begin by discussing the origins of religious freedom in America.

America's early founding reflects a deep commitment to religious freedom. Most of the European settlers who came to North America in the Seventeenth Century fled Europe to seek religious freedom. The early immigrants to America – the Puritans – sought desperately to practice their own brand of Christianity. They founded Massachusetts as the “new Israel” – a new commonwealth based on a covenant between God and his people.

But the Puritanical vision of a “holy society” was quickly met with resistance. The first and most famous dissenter, Roger Williams, himself a Puritan minister, disagreed with the state interfering with religion. He put forth the first American case for freedom of conscience for all. He founded Rhode Island – the first American colony to grant the freedom of conscience to people of all faiths.

The Rhode Island experiment slowly grew strength and momentum in the rest of early America. For example, William Penn, a Quaker, famously founded the colony of Pennsylvania in the Eighteenth Century as a “holy experiment” to preserve religious liberty for all.

In 1776, the Declaration of Independence established America as a nation and declared emphatically the principle of equality for all people. But even the Declaration of Independence didn't explicitly refer to religious liberty or religious tolerance.

For the next eleven years, America's founding fathers wrestled with the idea of religious liberty and its inclusion in the U.S. Constitution. James Madison, in particular set forth a powerful defense of religious freedom as an inalienable right. His ideas formed the basis for the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1791.

It is rather fitting to be speaking about religious freedom here in Virginia. If you drive south from here about 2 hours, you will hit Chesterfield County – home to 318,000 people. 225 years ago, the citizens of Chesterfield County did something remarkable. On November 14, 1785, they signed an unprecedented and path-breaking petition for religious freedom, which they submitted to the Virginia State Assembly. The Library of Congress has preserved this petition in its archives and it reads:

Let Jews, Mehometans and Christians of every denomination enjoy religious

liberty... .. It is men's labor in our Manufactories, their services by sea and land that aggrandize our Country and not their creeds. Chain your citizens to the state by their Interest. Let Jews, Mehometans, and Christians of every denomination find their advantage in living under your laws.”

These sentiments ultimately found their way to the Bill of Rights just a few years later. The first words of the Bill of Rights consist of the two religion clauses of the First Amendment: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...” Taken together, these two clauses safeguard religious liberty by protecting religious beliefs from government interference or control.

220 years later, the religion clauses of the First Amendment remain intact and continue to safeguard religious beliefs from government interference or unlawful restrictions.

The concept of religious freedom in America has a rich history. But the essential ingredients of this concept are definitely not new. They are inspired in large part by the famous political writings of John Locke and Jean-Jacque Rousseau. And they strongly resonate with the Islamic concept of religious freedom. In fact, Islam advanced the concept of religious freedom over 1,000 years before America was founded.

Let me now turn to the Islamic concept of religious freedom.

The starting point for this analysis must begin with the verse I recited at the beginning of my speech:

"There should be no compulsion in religion. Surely, the right way has become distinct from error." (2:257).

Among all other revealed texts, only the Qur'an stresses religious freedom in such unambiguous terms. In Islam, compulsion is incompatible with religion. Faith is an individual concern and commitment; it is a voluntary act born out of conviction and freedom. Believing Muslims should not compel another to believe in Islam because they have earned no such right. All people must be permitted to find the truth through their own path.

Elsewhere, in Chapter 10, Verse 100 of the Qur'an, we read:

"And if your Lord had enforced His will, surely, all who are on the earth would have believed together. Will you, then, force men to become believers?"

This verse demonstrates that religious freedom is part of Allah's design in Islam. Indeed, Allah admonishes Muslims not to use force in matters of faith. Forced faith is no faith at all.

Finally, an entire chapter of the Qur'an, *Sura Al-Kafirun* (109), specifies the prescribed conduct of Muslims with non-believers. Allah demands that believers declare emphatically that they will not force another to believe: *"For you your religion,*

for me my religion." Again, this is a strong and unambiguous proof of religious tolerance in Islam.

These Qur'anic verses are not just theoretical pronouncements. They form the basis for true Islamic governance and protection of religious freedom. Indeed, the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad^{saw}, cherished these Qur'anic pronouncements and practically enforced them throughout his life.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} actively promoted peace, tolerance and compassion for all non-Muslim minorities living in Arabia. He did not simply demand religious tolerance of his followers; his *sunnah* (or example) was to provide legal and constitutional protections for religious minorities.

This is perhaps best illustrated by two historic documents prepared by the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}.

The first document is the Charter of Medina written in 622 A.D. – a formal agreement between the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and all of the significant tribes and families of Medina, including Muslims, Jews and non-Muslim Arabs. Many scholars refer to this document as the first ever written constitution of

a nation-state. The Charter of Medina pre-dated the English Magna Carta by almost six centuries. It was executed and implemented for 10 years (622-632 A.D.) and applied to 10,000 citizens living in Medina at that time. Remarkably 45% of the total population in Medina consisted of non-Muslim Arabs, 40% consisted of Jews, and only 15% consisted of Muslims. These numbers were recorded by the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} himself through a census that he commissioned. In other words, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} penned the Charter of Medina as a minority sovereign. His express goal was to govern a multi-religious pluralistic society.

The Charter consists of 47 clauses which set forth the formation of a sovereign nation-state with a common citizenship for all communities. The Charter protects fundamental human rights for all citizens, including equality, cooperation, freedom of conscience and freedom of religion. Clause 25 specifically states that Jews and non-Muslim Arabs are entitled to practice their own faith without any restrictions. In short, the Charter of Medina was the first document in history to establish religious freedom as a fundamental constitutional right.

But the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}'s commitment to religious freedom did not just stop with the Charter of Medina.

With Islam's rising influence in Arabia by 626 A.D., Jewish and Christian tribes endured severe struggles with certain

Muslim forces near Medina. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} sent a series of letters to various kings and public officials surrounding the Arab peninsula declaring his intention for peace and cooperation. One such letter was written to the monks of the St. Catherine Monastery of Mt. Sinai in 628 A.D. and known today as the "Charter of Privileges."

The letter reads:

"This is a message from Muhammad, son of Abdullah, as a covenant to those who adopt Christianity, near and far, we are with them. Verily I, the servants, the helpers, and my followers defend them, because Christians are my citizens; and by Allah! I hold out against anything that displeases them. No compulsion is to be on them. Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries. No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or to carry anything from it to the Muslims' houses. Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God's covenant and disobey His Prophet. Verily, they are my allies and have my secure charter against all that they hate. No one is to force them to travel or to oblige them to fight. The Muslims are to fight for them. If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, it is not to take place without her approval. She is not to be prevented from visiting her church to pray. Their churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants. No one of the nation of (Muslims) is to disobey the covenant till the Last Day (end of the world)."

Western Islamic scholar, Marmaduke Pickthall, comments on this letter as follows:

"The Charter which Muhammad^{saw} granted to the Christian monks of Sinai is a living document. If you read it, you will see that it breathes not only goodwill, but also actual love. He gave to the Jews of Medina, so long as they were faithful to him, precisely the same treatment as to any Muslims. He never was aggressive against any man or class of men . . . The story of his reception of Christian and Zoroastrian visitors is on record. There is not a trace of religious intolerance in any of this."

The St. Catherine Monastery at Mt. Sinai, which is now in present day Egypt, has been designated by UNESCO as a "World Heritage Site" and is considered to be the oldest active Christian monastery in the world. In fact, the official website of the St. Catherine Monastery at Mt. Sinai proudly commemorates The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} letter of protection. The original version of the letter can be found at the royal treasury in Constantinople in Turkey. A copy is preserved on display at Mt. Sinai – a discovery mentioned by our beloved fourth Khalifa^{rh} in his various writings about the

Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. To this date, the St. Catherine monks continue to practice their faith without restriction based on the protections granted to them by the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} over 1,400 years ago. And the entire world stands as a witness to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}'s sublime act of religious tolerance!

America and Islam share a remarkably similar approach to religious freedom. It is an approach grounded in absolute freedom of conscience and belief, the free exercise of religion for all people, freedom from state control of religion and mutual respect, cooperation and peace.

Let me now turn to part three of my speech. It is a tragic irony that much of the Islamic world has lost sight of Islam's true and essential teachings concerning religious freedom. Countries such as Indonesia, Egypt and Pakistan all currently have laws that suffocate the rights of religious minorities.

A dramatic example of this is one that hits very close to home. Six weeks ago in Lahore, the world witnessed a brutal crime against humanity when armed gunmen massacred 86 members of our minority Community and injured hundreds more. But this wasn't a random act of religious violence in Pakistan. This was a direct byproduct of decades of state-sponsored institutionalized persecution of religious minorities. Pakistan is the only Muslim country to explicitly define who is or who is not a "Muslim" for purposes of the law. It is the only Muslim country to have a constitutional amendment that denies the right of a minority Muslim community to call itself "Muslim." It is

the only Muslim country to criminalize fundamental religious practices by punishment of death. It is the only Muslim country to require its passport applicants to declare a minority community to be non-Muslim.

How would the Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad^{saw} react to this state of affairs? Would he even recognize Pakistan as an Islamic nation? What would he say to the so-called Muslims who sent teenagers to Lahore to bomb hundreds of worshipers during Friday Prayers? To the so-called Muslims who burned alive eleven Christians in Gojra last year? To the so-called Muslims who bombed a Sufi religious shrine in Lahore last month? The same Prophet Muhammad^{saw} whose life was spent in vigorous defense of the oppressed, the orphans and the minorities. The same Prophet Muhammad^{saw} who gave refuge to a Christian delegation from Najran at his own mosque in Medina. The same Prophet Muhammad^{saw} who championed the constitutional rights of Jews and non-Muslim Arabs. The same Prophet Muhammad^{saw} who said that differences of opinion are a blessing for society. When will Pakistan heed the example of the founder of Islam?

Finally, let me speak briefly about our obligations as American Ahmadi Muslims. My dear brothers and sisters, we are proud to be American. We cherish and enjoy freedom of religion more than any other nation on earth. Our constitution, the U.S. Constitution, is more Islamic than the constitutions of most Islamic countries. We are wit-

nessing the erosion of religious freedom in the world. We witnessed our fellow Ahmadi Muslims massacred for practicing their faith. But Allah will never let the sacrifices of the Ahmadi martyrs go to waste. Their memories are alive in all of us. We must step forward and safeguard the original teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. We are the Muslims who believe in the messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as}, who came to rescue Islam from the clutches of militancy.

We must proclaim loudly that we are the protectors of Islam's original teachings. We believe in religious freedom for all people. We mustn't rest until the Islamic world rids itself of the laws that embolden those who kill the innocent and vulnerable. To my fellow American Ahmadi Muslim youth in attendance here today, we have a special responsibility thrust upon us. As second generation immigrants, most of us have grown up in peace without any restriction on our Ahmadi beliefs and practices. We enjoy freedoms that others do not. We must not sit idle and watch atrocities such as the Lahore attacks to continue unabated. We must heed the words of our beloved *Khalifa* and carry the torch of religious freedom to our leaders and lawmakers

and demand a change in the Islamic world.

I conclude with the exhortations of our beloved Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth to the Ahmadiis of North America. In his closing address at the Annual Convention in 1992, he said:

"Ay Amrika or Canada kay Ahmadio. Thum kub tak bhairon ki labas may zindagee busur karo gay. Uto, or in laybaso ko chaak kurtho. Thum khuday kay shair ho. Or shairo ki thura dundana-thay huay or gurujthay ho ay junglo per fatahyaab ho. Bhus, khuda thumaray sath ho. Khuda thumaray sath ho. Khuda thumaray sath ho."

"O Ahmadiis of America and Canada, for how long will you remain in sheep's clothing? Wake up! Discard that clothing. You are the lions of Allah! And like lions, with might and tenacity, you must conquer the jungles ahead of you. May God be with you. May God be with you. May God be with you."

May Allah give us lion-like courage to fight for religious freedom all over the world. *Ameen.*

PAY ZAKAT

CALLING MANKIND TO GOD

Ali Murtaza

Calling mankind to God has always been a Mercy bestowed on man from God in His raising Prophets in the world when mankind starts to worship other so called God's other than the One true God or forgets God all together and when the world becomes submerged in immorality and evil as a result. According to one saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} the number of prophets who were chosen to convey the message of God to mankind is 124,000.

What does the Holy Qur'an say?

"There are no people (in the world) to whom We have not sent a Warner." (35:25)

So what about this time? The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} prophesied that:

"A time will come when nothing will remain of faith except rituals and nothing shall remain of the Qur'an except its words..." "that even if faith leaves the world altogether and ascends to the Pleiades, a man, or some men, from among the Persians would bring it back to earth."

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} claimed to be that man. Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} claimed, in 1889 that he was the same Messiah and *Mahdi* whose advent had been

prophesied for the latter days not only in Islam but also in other faiths.

Why do we need to call nations to God? The main reasons are:

- To end religious wars,
- Condemn bloodshed
- Reestablish morality
- Justice and peace.

The question may arise "Is man capable of solving these problems without God?" and is there an example of man trying to solve these problems. An Example of *man* trying to unite nations under peace and harmony is shown through the example of the United Nations. "The United Nations Organization (UNO) or simply United Nations (UN) is an international organization whose stated aims are facilitating cooperation in international law, international security, economic development, social progress, human rights, and the achieving of world peace. The UN was founded in 1945 after World War II to replace the League of Nations, to stop wars between countries, and to provide a platform for dialogue. It contains multiple subsidiary organizations to carry out its missions." In

reference to this declaration what has been the results. Since the development of the United Nations here is a short list of just the wars that have occurred:

The Korean War; The Vietnam War; Israeli War of independence; The Six Day War; The Soviet Afghanistan War; Civil War in Sudan; Civil War in Congo; The Bosnian War; India Pakistani War; The Gulf War; The War in Iraq (war on terror); and the War in Afghanistan (war on terror). Therefore suffice it to say that man can't resolve these problems without God's guidance.

The main point which distinguishes the Ahmadi Muslims from the rest of mankind is that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is the only Islamic organization to believe that the long-awaited Messiah has come in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} (1835-1908) of Qadian. Ahmad^{as} claimed to be the metaphorical second coming of Jesus^{as} of Nazareth and the divine guide, whose advent was foretold by the Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad^{saw}. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community believes that God sent Ahmad^{as}, like Jesus^{as}, to end religious wars, condemn bloodshed and reinstitute morality, justice and peace. Ahmad^{as}'s advent has brought about an unprecedented era of Islamic revival. He divested Islam of fanatical beliefs and practices by vigorously championing Islam's

true and essential teachings. He also recognized the noble teachings of the great religious founders and saints, including Zoroaster^{as}, Abraham^{as}, Moses^{as}, Jesus^{as}, Krishna^{as}, Buddha^{as}, Confucius^{as}, Lao Tzu and Guru Nanak, and explained how such teachings converged into the one true Islam.

Calling Nations to God – A prophesy that was given to Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} from God is quoted as follows” "I shall cause thy message to reach the corners of the earth."

And the Holy Qur'an has preserved the spiritual mission of God's messengers when it says "He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over every *other* religion, even though the idolaters may dislike it. (9:33)

The Institution of *Khilafat* of the Messiah has been established since 1908 and each year we witness the gathering of nations under the spiritual banner of the Promised Messiah, the Messiah of this age, the Messiah prophesized by all the revealed scriptures, the Messiah prophesied by the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} his *Khilafat* now in it's fifth successorship under Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih Al-Khamis^{aba} shows the signs of nations accepting the call of God through the mission of His Messiah^{as} when we witness the annual International *Ba'iat*. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih Al-Khamis^{aba} has said:

"Slowly all the lands in the world are going to gather in the fold of Ahmadiyyat." Ahmadi

should be and are distinguished by their prayers"

The world is an Island, and a new Island is being carved within it, and that is known as Ahmadiyyat the True Islam.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is Calling Nations to God Under Spirituality.

A sample of the results up to now of how this call is being accepted and how nations are joining the community of the Promised Messiah^{as} is as follows: There are 239 countries and territories in the world. By the Grace of Allah, Ahmadiyyat is now present in 185 countries to-date. Since 1984, the *Jama'at* has been established in 194 countries. *Alhumdolillah*. This year four more countries have been added on the Ahmadiyya map. They are: Estonia, Antigua, Bermuda and Bolivia. 945 new *Jama'ats* were established at 589 places Ahmadiyyat was planted for the first time. In the total of 1534 areas, the *Jama'at* has been expanded. In India, 186 new *Jama'ats* were established. In Ghana, 313 villages, contacts were reestablished with 207,000 Ahmadis. In Burkina Faso, 16,000 contacts were rejuvenated in villages. In Nigeria, 124,000 contacts were rejuvenated. Qureshi Qamarul Haq of Guatemala, through the

guidance from one of his visions, was able to meet with a family who had lost contact with the Mission for sometime. Efforts were made to rejuvenate contacts with the members who accepted Ahmadiyyat in the past in Benin, Ivory Coast, Mali, Tanzania, and Ethiopia. In total there are tens of millions of followers of this community of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Hazoor^{aba} says we should become ambassadors of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}. "We who have taken the *Ba'ait* at the hand of the Imam of this age, promising that we want to join such people, and are joining such people and also promising that we will instill such a positive change in ourselves that will bring us closer to Allah. We also promise that we will progress towards true righteousness so that we can show the world the way to the One and True God who is the Master of this earth and the heavens, who is the Master of the whole universe, and whose true worship is the only means of salvation of this world. In order to fulfill these promises, we must keep reminding ourselves of our goals. As long as we do not keep this goal in front of us, or we desire a life of ease, or we indulge in worldly pursuits, or we look at others wealth with jealousy, or we do not follow the commandments of our Lord, or we look at others wealth and do not wish that if we had that much it would enable us to offer financial sacrifices in the way of Allah, we can not be faithful to our oath of *Bai'at*. We can not bring about that change in ourselves, in our progeny, or in our surroundings for which the Promised Messiah^{as} was sent in this world. We have taken an oath to be his servants. Today,

we can become the ambassadors of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood's^{as} *Jama'at*. We can fulfill our obligation of conveying his message and re-establishing the lost love of God only if we are able to bring about an extraordinary positive change in ourselves, if we will raise our standards of worship, and if we will safeguard our *Salat*. We should always remember that *Salat* is the essence of worship. If this is missing, then all else is meaningless."

Mark the words of the Promised Messiah^{as} when he says:

".. God has granted me such fervor in this field of *Waqf* (devotion) that even if I were told that there is no reward or benefit in this work other than grief and suffering, even then I cannot hold myself back from this service to Islam. I am therefore duty-bound to convey this message and leave this as a 'Will' for my Community. After this, everyone has the choice of paying heed to my advice or not. Whoso aspires for salvation and a sacred or perpetual existence must sacrifice his life for the cause of Allah."

(*Malfoozat*, vol. 2, p. 100, 1984)

Call of the 'Caller' Become an Ambassadors of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih Al-Khamis^{aba} has said:

"Our task is to plan according to the ways of the country we live in. Hazoor^{aba} said, "An extensive and courageous plan-

ning is needed. Targets need to be determined that we will introduce Ahmadiyyat to at least two percent of the population in one year. Hazoor^{aba} said, "Countries where such efforts are being made have had good results. For this task the entire *Jama'at*, missionaries and the auxiliaries need to work side by side. God had entrusted this very task to His Prophets. God states: 'But if they turn away, We have not sent thee as a guardian over them. Thy duty is only to convey *the Message...*' (42:49)."

Thus is the responsibility of each Ahmadi in this country. Hazoor^{aba} said, "There is no need to distribute big books. One page introductory leaflets should be printed. Those who are interested will contact us themselves. Brief literature should be produced for them in different attractive designs. Some may not accept it, others may throw it away after a while but many will read it. Our task is to fulfill our responsibility. God has never said that *Tabligh* will always have a great response. God states: 'Surely thou wilt not be able to guide *all* whom thou lovest; but Allah guides whomsoever He pleases...' (28:57) "

So what has been

the response to our beloved *Khalifa's* call in America. The oldest Muslim organization in America announced Thursday (July 8, 2010) the launch of its nationwide "*Muslims for Peace*" ad campaign. With so many acts of violence perpetrated in the name of Islam across the world, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community aims to debunk the myth that Muslims do not practically stand for peace and justice. Delivering this message on buses and other transit media displays, the "*Muslims for Peace*" campaign will raise awareness that there is a community of Muslims who actively preach – and practice – this universal message of peace.

The campaign was launched at a press conference in Times Square by Missionary in Charge and *Na'ib Ameer*, Naseem Mahdi Sahib of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA .

The Call of the Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} has also been directed toward small towns...

Hazoor^{aba} said, "Introductions to Ahmadiyyat should be carried in smaller towns and villages, topics should be chosen and other faiths should be invited to inter-faith seminars etc. "Some may say that even these efforts will not change the world on it's present course... So what does our *Khalifa* say. He says, "our task is to make efforts and pray. How can we possibly say that every effort of ours will definitely bear fruit? We have to try our very best and pray. May God cover our faults, overlook our mistakes and accept our endeavors. If

our effort is right, the rest God will bring forth.

So we must take this message from door to door to invite people to the community of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Mark the words of the Promised Messiah^{as} when he states: "If it was within my power, I would have desired to go from door to door like beggars and propagate the True Religion of Allah and thereby rescue humanity from polytheism (*shirk*) and disbelief (*kufir*).

If Allah would grant me the knowledge of the English language, I would personally embark on preaching (*Tabligh*) expeditions and spend my entire life in this pursuit even if I were to die in this cause."

(*Malfoozat, Vol. 3, page 291-292, 1984*)

To answer the call of our *Imam* and bring about these changes under his guidance and to make our efforts correct in calling nations to Allah we need to attain nearness to Allah.

The Holy Qur'an says, "Allah changes not the condition of a people until they change that which is in their hearts. (13:12)

Hazoor^{aba} says,

"You should always remember that revolution is only possible through Allah's blessings. And to attract His blessings it is necessary to pay attention to that basic purpose for which He has created man. And if you are able to attain that goal, you will find yourselves in such a surrounding

that will protect you from the filth of this world, specially in these countries where the line between good and evil has almost disappeared, and whose inhabitants are arrogant due to their technological development or that they are the most powerful nation in this world. Your salvation and that of your future generation's salvation lies in attaining nearness to Allah. It lies in holding fast to the Unity of Allah. And when, God willing, you will surround yourselves in this shelter, you will be able to call others to this safe haven. Then you will be able to convey this message to the world that true happiness does not lie in worldly pursuits, or liquor, or gambling.

The contentment in life does not come from spending time in a casino, or from being jealous of those who waste their wealth on worldly pleasures. Be sure that real contentment in life comes from the worship of Allah who has proclaimed that "It is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort." (13:29)

He is the Lord of all the worlds, He has created you all, and He provides sustenance for you. Come and recognize your Lord. When you will make an effort to call the world to this

safe haven with sincerity and prayers then you will be the recipients of ever increasing blessings of Allah. Allah loves those very much; He truly appreciates the efforts of those, and showers His love on those who call His creatures towards Him and save them from the clutches of Satan, so that they may be saved from the wrath of Allah, so that they may become the recipients of Allah's blessings. Allah says about such people, "And who is better in speech than he who invites men to Allah and does righteous deeds and says, 'I am, surely, of those who submit?'" (41:34)

Always remember this exhortation. Convey this message at every opportunity and at every occasion. Make every effort to convey, to every American, the teachings that have been given to the Holy Prophet^{saw}."

Allahumma salli 'ala Muhammadin wa 'ala ali Muhammadin, kama sallaita 'ala Ibrahima wa 'ala ali Ibrahima innaka Hamidum-Majid. Allahuma barik 'ala Muhammadin wa 'ala ali Muhammadin kama barakta 'ala Ibrahima wa 'ala ali Ibrahima innaka Hamidum-Majid.

May Allah be our Guardian and Protector! *Ameen!*

**PAY
ZAKAT**

MODERN CHALLENGES TO CORE BELIEFS

Yasin Sharif

Transcribed by: Athar Bashir Malik

In the name of Allah, the Gracious,
the Merciful.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا
وَالنَّصْرَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَن آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ
أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ وَلَا خَوْفٌ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ 0

Surely the Believers and the Jews and the Christians and the Sabiens whichever party from among these truly believe in Allah and the last day and do good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord and no fear shall come upon them and nor shall they grieve. (2:63)

Ameer Sahib, respected guests, brothers and sisters and all the youngsters and kids that are here today, *Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rehmat-ullahe wa Barakatohu*.

Since the beginning of creation, on this earth there has been an evolution of all living things from microscopic organisms to the most recent rendition of mankind. We've spent countless resources studying the history of creation and of humankind and each new discovery leads us to believe with certainty what has happened even thousands of years ago. Through out this recorded history, we see trends from the beginning of the creation that exist in a very refined form, even today. Scientific evolu-

tionary trends are man's innate desire to prosper to reproduce and to avoid pain. This is in agreement with most scholars of thought and clearly evident in recorded history. But man has demonstrated and added since, that all other creations have not and that is the desire to understand, to question, to strive for relationship not just created from physical attraction and he has shown innate desire to worship some type of powerful being. This desire has evolved in tandem with the rest of man's development until his spiritual senses were realized.

Religion or the worship of God has been used to explain origin of civilizations throughout history. Other civilizations may vary a little on their explanation and continue their existence based on that but wars have been started and entire civilizations have been annihilated in order to ensure their beliefs that are protected. This continues to this moment today.

In the Essence of Islam, Volume 1, written by the founder of Ahmadiyyat, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, he explains to us and

I quote, "To reform the natural conditions of man and raise him step by step to higher spiritual levels, God desires to teach man the elementary rules of behavior and culture and thus change him from wild condition of animals and bestow on him the elementary moral conditions which can be described as culture of civilization. He then trains him and raises him from the elementary moral conditions to the conditions of a high moral stage. All this in truth is one stage which is the reform of natural conditions and the only difference is one of degree. The All wise one has presented the moral system in such a way whereby man should be able to move from low moral state to a higher moral state. The third stage is that man should be devoted to winning the true love of his creator and that his whole being should be devoted to God."

There is no doubt, that humans demonstrate special characteristics, they show courage, devotion, intelligence and endless line of characteristics that are innate and can be further developed through human effort. However, these types are traits that are not unlike animals that we observe. We've often observed unique traits in animals like our own pets. In our family we have a cat. He is an outdoor cat and it was a furious hunter in his day.

He will usually bring back the largest prey of all sorts through our front door for a gift. Blackberry is

his name, had an uncanny ability to sense when someone in our family was ill and he would sit and sleep by the side until they were feeling well again. One of my sons was spared a life threatening illness by the Grace of God and he was put on bed rest for over a year in his early adolescent. During that time that cat spend every day by his room or by his bed only leaving for food and to go out and hunt for occasional gift to bring him back. When my son was well enough though he went back the business of being a cat, cleaning himself, hunting and laying in the sun. All of this in the family desired deep inside to attach human characteristic to this cat, but indeed it was a phenomenon of this particular cat, it was a phenomenon of nature, but it was nothing to do with this cat's moral decision. He could not make that decision based on reaction to his believes to action to do with future rewards or dealing with hardships and ultimately dealing with right or wrong. My point is directed mostly to the youth and the kids in the room, that if you look around you at the wonder of this world, you are the special creation of God. Man has created you with the desire to understand what drives you what was in the past, what is in the future, where did we come from? The general body of man, has ability to choose good and evil unlike blackberry, we are not destined to live our lives from basic instincts alone. Man has the ability and in fact he must choose his actions based on a perception of the outcome but without definitive know-ledge thereof. This does immediately demonstrate a measure of faith required for man's existence. It also begins to define good and define evil choices that man makes.

Abdulla Bin Abass^{ra}, a companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} recorded that the Holy Prophet^{saw} re-

peated God's affirmation and define good and evil and expounded their ingratiation. In this saying the prophet also expresses the benevolence of Allah towards his creation, mankind. "He therefore who makes up his mind to do a good deed is rewarded by Allah in one full measure. If he then proceeds to carry out that deed, Allah will reward him ten to seven hundred times and even more than that. He who is inclined to an evil deed but does not carry it out, Allah will reward him for a full measure of a good deed. Should he carry it out he is indebted only one evil deed." As our world grow smaller, it becomes increasing easier to know of the evil deed in human suffering of all kinds and it becomes even easier to condemn it. Many question the purpose for our existence and deny the majesty of a compassionate creator who gave humans this opportunity to choose.

Man has the ability to both unleash kindness and unleash evil on others. He has the ability to do so on behalf of others but also on behalf of himself and to the destruction of others. And indeed now man holds the key to the annihilation of the entire race in his hands. This is the nature of free choice. This is the responsibility bestowed on man. This is man's constant challenge. Allah has been kind enough to bring people into our life that are exceptional. People who posses artistic ability,

political leadership, intellectual intelligence, scientific and biological intelligence. Men who relieve pain and suffering in the medical field. Men and women who are extremely successful in business or who most of all are exceptional parents. Indeed, humans are like snowflakes. Allah has created none of them exactly the same. The risk however for those who have exceptional talents, is that it can push them to the very edge of destruction. The struggle for those who possess these traits is greater than most. In *Surah Al-Baqra* in the Holy Qur'an, Allah tells us, 'And everyone has a goal which dominates him. Vie then with one another in good works. Wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together. Surely, Allah has the power to do all that he wills.' It is ultimately up to God to determine all people's intentions. However, statistics show that the higher the IQ, the more financially well off, the more tendency has become in the lack of believe in the creator. Seventy two percent of the national academy of science have expressed personal disbelief and another twenty percent claim doubt or agnostic. Those who become disgusted and openly atheist are increasing in numbers at a higher rate then ever. We must understand that those who are professed atheist particular scientists and intellectuals are also the same people that are responsible for bringing them out much positive and revolutionary change that benefits all of us.

It is God who has given them to us as benefactors and at the same time it is their struggle to remain humble, it is their struggle to win God's pleasure. In fact some scholars today believe that the whole of creation was an accident. There are many who become stronger as they

uncover the world's beauties and creations.

Sir Francis Bacon has quoted it so well when he said, a little philosophy inclined man to atheism but in-depth philosophy brings man's mind around to religion.

I have been amazed reading more and more arguments for and against the existence of God. It is for instance astonishing to some, that we can have a gracious God and still see and feel so much suffering in this lifetime. There are humans among us who sense other suffering more than most but we judge suffering only from a perspective of our own environment and our own existence. Some people suffer as much with chronic pain as those who suffer financial loss. There are those who with loss of health or loss of loved ones. Yet looking at you young folks there are many suffer that come with fright or fight with friends, anxiety over their appearance. Failure in school and off course racial and religious prejudice. How we to judge the pain of another but only are based on our own pain. The suffering that occurs in this life is challenging but is particularly challenging for those who doubt in the existence of Allah and a creator. The longest running arguments begin with the traditional concept of God. If God does indeed exist, he knows suffering. He is able to prevent it and he wants to and suffering is evil then if he allows it, there must be no God. The fourth leader or *Khalifa* of our Ahmadiyya Movement, Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmadth has written an excellent book, *Revelation, Rationality, Knowledge and Truth*. In his book and I quote, "The sensory provisions for the recognition of suffering and happiness are indispensable

to each other. It is quite likely that if the level to which suffering can be experienced is reduced, its opposite number the capacity to feel pleasure and happiness will also be lowered to propelling the wheel of evolution. Both possess equal significance. One cannot be done away alone without the other, thus nullifying the entire creative plan of evolution. We understand from the Holy Qur'an that God did not create suffering independently on its own, but as indispensable counter part of pleasure and comfort. The absence of happiness is suffering which is like its shadow, just as darkness is cast by the absence of light. If there is life then there must be death, both are situated at the extreme polls of the same plain.

In the Holy Qur'an we read, "Blessed it is he whose hand is in the kingdom and He has power over all things, and He it is who has created death and life that he might try you for which of is best indeed and He is mighty and most forgiving." In the Bible and Hebrews 11:16, the Bible quotes, "And without faith it is impossible to please God. Anyone that comes to him must be a believer. He rewards those who earnestly seek Him."

One of the most common trials in the pursuit of God now is dealing with

rigidity found in dogmatic organized religious communities not to mention the extremist that are found in our faiths. Man finds it difficult again to understand how God could allow His name to use to be perpetuated for so much evil. How many times in history has religion been used as shield to satiate for one man's desire for wealth, sexual fulfillment, power? How much does it exist around the world today? It is devastating. What about our own Country? What about our trends and believes?

We have a country of amazing freedoms, education, infrastructure, military protection, opportunity and the real opportunity to practice our faith, yet we are country of fears and prejudice, suffering and poverty and moral corruption. Our youth suffer from depression, abandonment and they attribute love to physical attraction. Material gain is our measure of success and the family unit has been torn apart. There is panic now borne out of a growing level of a lack of security and disorganization and social behavior and it's due to the trends to let go of religious and ethical codes. There is volume of research now showing the tendency in America to abandon faith. The number of people in our country in some areas who have lost their faith in religion and in God has doubled in the last decade.

Berry Kosmin is the director for the Institute for the study of secularism at Trinity at Hartford; he calls it a piety gap. Sixty nine percent of Americans only believe in a personal God. And to make it pretty simple, there is a young lady Diane Mueller of Austin. She grew up a Methodist and she says, "I totally disengage from the Church and the Bible too. Sunday morning means playing in

the park not praying in a pew.”

Morality in our country is as much Christian in character as the moral behavior as Muslims in a Muslim countries in the world. The same, unfortunately, is the state of social and moral behavior elsewhere in the world. There are so many Buddhists, so many Confucius so many Hindus in the world today. But how little of Buddhism, of Confucianism, of Hinduism can we observe? When religious code of ethics are wanting in society, morality may lose all relevance and certainly may even more in the next generations.

The Holy Qur'an obviously speaking of such an age declares, "We bring witness that the age when many as a whole would be in a state of loss except for those few who believe and do good deeds and exhort one another with truth and accept truth and admonish others with patience"

The Middle East is the birth place of the major monotheistic faiths and we all know the constant barrage of unrest. Jerusalem as the holy city for all three monotheistic religions yet where there should be peace and safety in places in this world as far from the code of conduct prescribed by each of these major faiths. It's devastating that the Middle East is so filled with the gifts of God and now it's a place that is destined to be a place of Godliness and total lack of peace that our world so much craves. What would it feel like if man would reconsider the very foundation of their spiritual beliefs based upon the original essence of their religion?

In Tim Wallace Murphy's book, *What Did Islam do for us?*, he writes and I quote, "Islam was from its in-

ception a bastion of tolerance of social justice and of piety. While Europe was being crushed and brutalized by the dark ages, Islam bloomed because the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} enjoined followers to study and to revere wisdom. Many great scientists were protected and investigated by Muslims scholars. Perhaps more tellingly than that, under Islamic rule at the height of the Moorish empire, the three great monotheistic religions coexisted in relative harmony, enjoying a high degree of religious tolerance in a flourishing intellectual and artistic environment. Can our world even conceive of Islam this way? Can the above description take place even today? I believe it can, because God has through all the dark ages brought special men, Prophets, even during the darkest times it was always the pious man given revelation and an iron will and iron believe in God. Men who went out to practice the word of reform who preach morality, patience, caring for neighbors and caring for the poor. These prophets prayed, they prayed for help and deliverance from suffering for the people of their time and they preached reward for the goodness in humans.

They offered salvation, Adam, Abraham, Noah, Moses, Jesus and Buddha. These prophets and reformers were not sent in a grandeur fashion. They attracted others through a special aura, their undenia-

ble devotion and courage and a living example of the message they bring. There must be a solution for the suffering today. Desecration of the name of the religion, basic fear in the common man's life should not be accepted and all of this cries out for a spiritual leader of today. History is in the books, the future is to be contemplated. The question is what about now? The time of unprecedented danger. We owe it to ourselves and our friends and neighbors to invite a search for the Messiah. Through history the smallest few had the courage and faith in the moment and in the time.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, He preached that there would become a time when the mosque would be full of Muslims, the Qur'an will only exist in scripts, religious scholars would be the worst creatures and the evil plots that they set would return to them. Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, the reformer of our age, does not claim to bring a new book but to reform us to remind us of the simple beauties of Islam.

This founder of Ahmadiyyat was born in the small town of Qadian and in the time of incredible science, financial advancements, the revelation of Qur'an, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} was all that he possessed and unwavering belief. He came with no armies, with no power. He came with the new message and that is the *Jihad* of the Pen not the *Jihad* of the Sword. The fight of triumph of good over evil within ourselves. For the followers of the Messiah^{as} how do we preserve the moral values of our heritage. How do we begin to save the world from itself. We've many means but the answer is one person at a time. It has never been easy for the man to be saved. We must have the courage to step up with certainty those who can save it they

have accepted the true path that they have the courage to step up now. It is not up to us to condemn or judge those but its up to us to share what we believe to ease their suffering and to show empathy through example.

In conclusion, as I must wrap up now, I invite you to study and learn about the Promised Messiah and the *Khalifa* of our time. But I feel compelled to stand before you as a common man. I've no spiritual status but at the times that were most challenging, at the desperate moments in my life, I've come to Allah, I've prayed. I have asked forgiveness and I've not been abandon and I've not been felt alone.

I look out and I see the next generation in front of me and I can't imagine what you will have to go through in your lifetime, what more dilemmas what you will face, but I promise to you, that if you do not abandon Allah, He will not abandon you. The example we take from the Prophets, is the example we need to show today and *Insha Allah* as in history, the prayers and the efforts of a few will relieve the pain of the many.

I just want to conclude with the verse from the Holy Qur'an and Allah says, "Hold fast all together by the rope of Allah and be not divided and remember the favor of God which he bestowed upon you when you were enemies and He united your hearts in love so that by His Grace you all became as brothers and you were on the brink of a pit of fire but He saved you from it. Thus does Allah explains to you His commands that you maybe rightly guided." *Alhamdollilahe Rabilalameen.*

TABLIGH ACTIVITIES REPORT

Ali Murtaza, National Secretary Tabligh

During the blessed month of Ramadhan, we received several non-Ahmadi guests at the mosque. They were given an introduction to Ahmadiyyat. This month we also visited 4 churches. We conveyed the message of Ahmadiyyat along with the Peace brochure. We also approached two local newspaper regarding our Peace brochures which we distributed in the last month. Ghulam Rabbi Sahib (*Qaid Majlis*) has done a tremendous job by distributing 22,000 Peace flyers all over Queens. In East Queens, Ishaq Rassouji and Ata-al Hassan have worked very hard to distributed flyers. Tabligh is part of our faith and obligatory on every Ahmadi. If you need any books or material for spreading the message of Islam please contact President Sahib or Secretary *Tabligh*.

By the Grace of Allah we were blessed with one *Bai'at* this month. Mr. Bushawn McMillan-El was a second Imam in the Rikers Island county prison, who has converted by the grace of Allah to Ahmadiyyat. We all welcome him to our *Jama'at*. May Allah grant him a great heart and mind to send our message to the many unfortunate lives he is around and to follow the true message of Islam.

With Allah's grace, the month of September was a good month for *Tabligh* activities. Because it was the month of *Ramadan*, we had an average of 4-5 visitors a day, especially at *Iftar* time. It was the best time for them to come and see how and what Ahmadiyyat was, during our holy month. There was no pressure or any force of issue in terms of giving them information, which was best of all. Most of the guests were brought by Fasasi Sanusi Sahib, Respected Atia Farhat Sahiba, Shafiq Cheema Sahib, Nasir Baccus Sahib, and Ata ul Hassan Sahib, along with a few other members. We gave out five copies of "The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam" in English, and one copy in Arabic.

Jama'at President arranged for two television interviews. One was with respected Imam Daud Hanif Sahib, and the other was with Ahmad Mubarak Sahib. These interviews were played on a Local Programming Channel (Time Warner Cable Channel 96), which has 1.2 million viewers in the New York Tri-State area. On the same channel, two small girls went to an event and recited the *Qaseedah*, which was also widely enjoyed. Our local newspaper, The Queens Tribune, came and observed our *Eid* Ceremony. They wrote a beautiful article regarding how we conduct our services, the month of *Ramadan*, and most importantly, our message of peace. Zareef Ahmad Sahib is the distributor of *Tabligh* literature. During the month of *Ramadan*, we had five very solid contacts. We are sending them the appropriate literature in their desired languages.

ISLAM AND LOYALTY TO THE HOMELAND

Maulana Naseem Mahdi
Missionary In Charge And Na'ib Ameer

Transcribed by: Mansura Bashir Minhas

The topic which has been given to me is "Islam and Loyalty to the Homeland".

I will be making a power point presentation and I hope everybody can see the slides. The first point which does not need much elaboration is the state of affair in the world and the perception of Islam and Muslims. This is very unfortunate that many, many Americans do not trust Muslims. There have been many polls, there have been many discussions and you ask people and they say gradually the confidence is eroding and the level of fear is increasing. People start doubting the loyalty of the Muslims. They have been saying, we do not see Muslim clerics speaking about loyalty forcefully. They keep quiet on issues like this.

And when in the world, a government- a so-called Islamic Government says we have to introduce the *Sharia* Law, there is a fear that now if the *Sharia* Law is enacted, the women are going to lose all basic rights. Then there will be harsh punishments. The non-Muslim minorities will be treated as second class citizens etc. And the perception in the whole world today is that under the Islamic law- the *Sharia* Law,

there are no basic human rights guaranteed. If you go to the Muslim countries, there are a lot of people - very learned and educated and say that if this is the *Sharia* Law where there are no human rights, where women are not treated right, when there are punishments and the legal system is also perhaps corrupted, lots of people are saying now and this is very unfortunate that if this is Islam, we are better off that we are not Muslims.

And then there are very big minorities of Muslims in the non Muslim countries like France, Germany, Norway, Netherlands and many others like United States of America, Canada and there the governments are thinking and this morning the comparison was made between the freedom we enjoy in the United States of America and other countries. It was proven that in that comparison, United States is number one. But what has happened in France, Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland -

a tiny country which is my second home, I have served there fore many, many years and I never thought at that time that there will enact a law that Muslims cannot build minarets in the mosques. So this is what is going on in the world, that those governments are feeling threatened that these minorities are increasing and we cannot trust them. We don't know whether they are loyal citizens or not.

Let me give you two verses of the Holy Qur'an. The first verse which is Chapter 4, verse 59 and I understand here a secular system of government is mentioned. God says:

"Verily, Allah commands you to give over the trusts to those entitled to them, and that, when you judge between men, you judge with justice. And surely excellent is that with which Allah admonishes you. Allah is All Hearing, All Seeing."

And the next verse is:

"O ye who believe, obey God and obey the Prophet and obey those in authority from among you." (Chapter 4: Verse 60)

Now Ahmadiyya Muslim Community which believes in the Messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as}, very strongly

believes that Islam promotes a secular system- a system where there will be no crisis- where there are first class citizens, where there are the Muslims and then there are second and third class who are non Muslims. We believe that if you go through the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Qur'an teaches us the equality of all citizens and in the first verse as I said, it does not say that you vote, give your trust -that is a vote in a government, you see who is more entitled - the Christian or Jew or non Muslim or an atheist. It really does not matter, but the matter is that when the government is established, they should deliver justice.

The second verse says, God after His obedience, talks of obedience of the Prophet- Prophet Muhammad^{saw} who received the law, who delivered the law, who not only delivered the law but enacted the law, practiced the law. See how he did it. This is a very interesting story and I will not do this because this is an entirely different subject. And He says, obey those who are in authority among you- that is the government, the State. So as you obey God, obey Prophet, you obey in the same spirit- the government. And many Muslim scholars, they say that don't you see "from among you", means that you should only obey Muslim governments.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community very strongly says that this is not the intent of this verse and if Muslims are living in the United States, they are part of this society, they are getting all the benefits of this society, they are doing businesses, they are paying taxes, they are getting citizenship and how

can they say that this is not our government and they have also voted for that government. We say that this verse says, any government, wherever you are, you should obey them.

Sometime people misunderstand obedience and they think obedience, means that whether it is good or bad, you have to agree with the government, you have no right of dissent, you cannot say no to them, this is wrong. The beauty of this country and many other countries where democracy is established, we know that the first step of democracy is dissent, opposition. You have the poll, that how many people are in favor of the Iraq war and how many people are against the Iraq war, how many people are in favor of Afghanistan war and how many are opposed to it. This is the freedom which is part of this society. So we don't say 'obedience' means that you don't have the right to dissent, you cannot disagree with the government.

Another point which is discussed in the holy Qur'an in many and perhaps dozens of verses and that is in no circumstances it is allowed for the Muslims to create disorder. And disorder of any sort. I give you one verse here:

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

So a Muslim cannot do anything which is not loved by Allah. So for all the Muslims, this is a law. You cannot create disorder, you cannot be part of any disorder, you cannot commit treason, you cannot do anything which might disturb the lives of other people.

Another point which is also part of this discussion- that is the issue of gratitude. There is a verse in the Qur'an:

"The reward of goodness is nothing but goodness".

There is another verse. God says::

"Remember also the time when your Lord declared, 'If you are grateful, I will surely bestow more favors on you. But if you are ungrateful, then know that my punishment is severe indeed'."

If you see both these verses, God says somebody has done good to you. The greatest good the United States has done to us is that this United States gives us freedom of choice, freedom of conscience, freedom of religion and many Americans normally take it for granted. But we who have seen this, in our own countries, I'm a Pakistani by origin and I see that I don't have that freedom in my country- Pakistan. I know many Egyptians, would say this is not guaranteed in their country. There are many others where this freedom is not given. If

this goodness has been done to me, how on earth I can say, 'OK, I can't be loyal and I do not agree with this'. We have to be grateful and the Holy Qur'an says that if you are grateful, you will have a much heavier shower of Allah's grace on you, and if you are ungrateful, you should know that Allah says my punishment is severe.

So what is happening in the world, where the governments are restricting the rights of Muslims, this is because of their ungratefulness. I remember the Prime Minister of Australia has been saying in the last many months, he says I'm telling Muslims- you have come to us, we have given you refuge, we have given you everything, but you have no right to challenge our system. You don't have any right to tell us what to do and what not to do. And if you don't like this, go home. And he has spoken that we will perhaps revoke your citizenship, if you don't like this country, go home. So this is something, that why this is happening more and more, because people are feeling threatened and people are saying we cannot trust these people and they are also not grateful of what is given to them. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} said:

"He who does not thank people, cannot be thankful to God".

So this saying of Prophet Muhammad^{saw} speaks volumes. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said in another saying "Love of your homeland – the word is '*watan* (place of residence) is part of faith".

So the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} expects from us more than

loyalty, and more than obedience. He said love your homeland. If you have adopted United States of America as your homeland, this is not a political statement. This is your religious responsibility that you love this country and you love it from the bottom of your hearts. This is what the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} has taught us.

The founder of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as}, the Messiah, he says, "So it should be the duty of every Muslim to render true and sincere obedience".

I want to highlight 'true and sincere obedience' because a lot of time, people will pay the lip service that we are obedient servants, we are loyal citizens of this country. He says, "No, God is watching, this is your religious responsibility". He says render 'true and sincere' obedience to this government. He was talking of the British government, he was a subject of British government in British India. He said, offer heartfelt gratitude. It's not just by saying "Oh, we are very thankful". It should come from your heart, and you are answerable to God and He knows what is in your heart. Heartfelt gratitude to such an authority and pray for their welfare. It is not that you can say

that we are loyal, we are obedient. He says you have to be sincere and truly obedient and loyal from the bottom of your heart. You should be grateful and not only that, you should pray for your country.

This is what we want to preach in this great country and this is what we are preaching to the Muslims, that you should come forward and join hands with us and this message should be clear to all 7 million plus Muslims in the United States of America, that this is our religious responsibility. This is not a political experience. This is our religious responsibility that we should be loyal and obedient and grateful to the country we are living in—United States of America. And this is our religious responsibility that we should pray from the bottom of our hearts for this great country.

The issue of divided loyalties is centuries old. It has been an issue among the Christians, it has been the issue faced by the Catholic Christians in France in the time of Napoleon Bonaparte. This has been an issue which President Kennedy faced. This is the issue when the discussion was the separation between the church and the state. So Ahmadiyya Muslim Community very strongly believes that there must be a separation between mosque and the state. And this is something only Ahmadiyya Muslim Community says among the Muslims. All other Muslims say there cannot be separation of mosque and the state.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has a system of leadership, we have a *Khalifa*, who is appointed

by election, this office is for life. Now we have the fifth successor to the Promised Messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as}. We say that this is Divinely guided leadership and that *Khalifa* tells us and I quote from Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}. He once wrote,

“It is the belief of our Community that according to Islam, a person must remain loyal to the country of his residence. Loyalty to the government is an injunction of the Holy Quran and the Holy Quran is the book of God. A *Khalifa* does not have the right to change this injunction because the *Khalifa* is not a dictator“. So this is from the Divinely guided leadership of Ahmadiyya Muslim community, which teaches us that you should be loyal and which has a very strong message to us that we should be grateful to the country we live in.

Now, if there are conflicts between the religion and State, for example, how should we protest? This question has been raised by some youth and they say and I tell them that loyalty does not mean that you don't have the right of dissent. Then they say, Ok, can we partake in civil disobedience. Can we participate in violent uprising? Can we commit treason? Can we take legal recourse? Can we migrate from the country if we don't like it? The Holy Quran says

“They will reply ‘we were treated as weak in the land’, they will say (the angels will say), ‘was not Allah's earth vast enough for you to immigrate therein?’”

The discussion between those who were the weaker and with the angels is a metaphor. God says the land of Allah is vast, you could have migrated from there. The answer to this is and I will not be able to elaborate because of shortage of time that Ahmadiyya Muslim Community says that you cannot be a part of a civil disobedience if you want to protest against a government. You can't be the part of violent uprising because this will create disorder. You cannot commit treason because this is against the loyalty and loyalty has been established from the Holy Quran and from the commandments of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. Yes, you can have a legal recourse or you can migrate from that country.

If a person, if a Muslim lives in the United States of America, he cannot create disorder, he cannot be part of any organization which is related to any kind of violent or terror activities. This is our religious responsibility. We cannot commit treason as I said. We cannot be hypocrites, we cannot live a life of hypocrisy that we say something but in our heart we have a different feeling. A real believer cannot be a hypocrite. That is why the founder of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community says, from the bottom of your hearts, you should have a true and

sincere obedience and loyalty and you should pray for that country.

Now in the end I say that the flag of Muslims and Islam has been hijacked by some clerics, by a very small minority. And if someone from our family, from our loved one is hijacked, we don't sit idle. So we have to take back that flag from them, we have to teach and tell people that they are not the defenders of the faith, they are the exploiters of Faith.

We invite all Muslims to join in this campaign. Silence is not an option. We cannot live in this country as hypocrites. We must be grateful to the people of this great country and the government because the Prophet says you cannot be grateful to God if you are not grateful to the people. And we cannot create disorder. This is our religious duty, pure and simple. So my brothers and sisters, this is the message of Islam, this is the message of the Holy Qur'an. This is the message of Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and this is the message of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani^{as} - the Messiah, the founder of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. Wherever you are, you should be loyal to your country. May God bless us all. Thank you very much for your patience.

“Love for All Hatred for None”

ONE TRUE JAMA'AT— “THOSE LIKE ME AND MYCOMPANIONS”

Maulana Syed Shamshad A. Nasir

Dear members of the *Jama'at*, and honored guests:

My topic is taken from the famous *Hadith* of *Sayedna wa Maulana* Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa^{saw} in which he predicted the division that would befall his *Ummah*. He said:

“My people will be divided into 73 sects; all of them are hell-bound, except one.” The companions inquired: Who will be that one? The Holy Prophet^{saw} then revealed a very important sign which will make that *Jama'at* easily recognizable:

“That *Jama'at* will follow me and my companions in true meaning and spirit.”

In *Sahih Bukhari*, the Holy Prophet^{saw} described another important sign of that one true community: that they would be unified under one leader, a spiritual *Imam*.

When the Holy Prophet^{saw} mentioned the trials to be faced in the latter days, one of his famous companions Hadhrat Huzifah^{ra} said,

“O Messenger of Allah, at that time, what will be your guidance for us?”

The Holy Prophet^{saw} replied,

“You should be among that community that has one *Imam*. And if there is no community of one *Imam*, then you should keep away from all sects, even though you survive by eating the roots of trees until death comes to you.”

In another book of *Hadith*, *Musnad Ahmad*, there is another clear guidance we get from the Holy Prophet^{saw} in which he said,

“At that time of trouble, if you see any *Khalifa* of God, simply embrace him, even if you are killed or all your possessions are taken away from you.”

In the light of all these *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet^{saw} the subject is crystal clear. Here, another important point that should be remembered is that the Holy Prophet^{saw} informed his people of the trial of the Latter Days by saying:

“The time will come on my people when nothing will remain of Islam except its name; the Holy Qur'an will remain only in its writings; Muslims will build big and beautiful mosques

but they will be devoid of guidance; and the greatest trial of the *Ummah* will be that the scholars and *Ulema* will be the worst creatures under heaven and they will be the source of all kinds of trials and spiritual sicknesses.”

Fortunately for all seekers of guidance, the Holy Prophet^{saw} did not report only the future spiritual sickness of the *Ummah*, but also at the same time, he gave the glad tidings that when these upheavals would be at their peak, then the Gracious God would send the *Imam Mahdi* and Promised Messiah to re-establish the lost glory of Islam and the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

In Islam today, the only people who have recognized and accepted the Reformer of the Age in the person of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} are the blessed and fortunate members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Blessed are you who have placed your hand in the hand of the Promised Messiah^{as}, with the pledge that you will make all kinds of sacrifices willingly and give preference to your faith over all worldly affairs.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} also gave another glad tidings that with

the coming of the Messiah and Mahdi, there would come back into the world the rightly-guided *Khilafat* on the pattern of prophet-hood.

It becomes easy to recognize this unified ummah which will faithfully follow the Holy Prophet^{saw} and his companions, in light of verses 3 and 4 in *Surah Al-Jumu'ah* with English translation by Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan^{ra}:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمَمِينَ رَسُولًا
مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ قَ وَ إِنْ
كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝ وَ
آخِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ ط وَهُوَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

He it is Who has raised among the unlettered *people*, and will raise among others from among them who have not yet joined them, a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and fosters their welfare, and teaches them the Book and wisdom, though before this they had been in manifest error. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (62:3-4)

Now we would see a deep and moving similarity of the later group, companions of the Promised Messiah^{as} with the earlier one, companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

To understand the parallels of the later group with the earlier group, we have to recount some of

the incidents from both periods. On one hand, there are heart-warming examples of faith, certainty of the acceptance of truth, of cheerful sacrifice of possessions and lives, and the zeal which enlightens and increases the faith of true believers.

On the other hand, when it comes to the character, techniques, and cruelties of the unbelievers and opponents of early Islam, we observe an uncanny similarity with the people of the latter days. We see the same cruelties: abusive language, stopping the faithful from worshipping, calling them offensive names, killing them, stoning them, torturing them with fire, and threatening them with death if they don't denounce their faith.

The similarities are crystal-clear. The companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and the followers of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} suffered the same persecution.

The companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} learned steadfastness, patience, and forbearance from their master, the chief of the prophets, Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa^{saw}.

In that early period, the opponents of Islam changed the Holy Pro-

phet's^{saw} name from 'Muhammad^{saw}', which means 'the praiseworthy', to 'Muzzamam' which means 'the disgraced one'. The followers of the Holy Prophet^{saw} are called 'Muslims' -- those who submit to God -- but they were called by the Meccans 'sabis' meaning those who change their faith.

The same treatment is meted out to us, the followers of the Promised Messiah^{as} in the present day. We are called Kafir instead of Muslims. We are called 'Qadianis' or 'Mirzais' instead of 'Ahmadis.'

In his Ordinance 20, former dictator of Pakistan Gen. Zia imposed restrictions on Ahmadi Muslims, forbidding them from using Islamic terminology -- even saying 'Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem.' Pakistani Ahmadis cannot recite the *Kalima*, cannot worship freely, cannot greet each other by saying 'Assalamo Alaikum'...

They cannot call their places of worship "mosques", and they are prevented from performing 'Hajj' or 'Umrah.' And if they dare do that, they will be thrown in jail for three years. In brief, they cannot present themselves as Muslims in any way.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} and his followers were treated in the same manner by their opponents. For instance, when the treaty of Hudaibiyah was written, the enemies of Islam at that time did not allow the Holy Prophet^{saw} to write 'Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem' either. They did not allow them to perform Hajj and *Umrah*. They did

not allow them to worship openly and freely. They physically prevented the Muslims from worshipping the One God, and that is the reason the Muslims had to offer their prayers in hiding in *Dar-e-Arqam*. The same is happening to the *Akhireen*, the followers of the Promised Messiah^{as} – they cannot pray in public!

Now I would like to present some examples of those who sacrificed their lives according to their pledge of allegiance to the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

Listening to these accounts of persecution and cruelty against the companions of our beloved the Holy Prophet^{saw} makes one's skin crawl, and the mind recoil with revulsion.

Once, those cruel opponents took a piece of cloth and wrapped it around the Holy Prophet's^{saw} neck and started twisting it, and almost choked him to death.

The enemies of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} dragged him into court under false charges of murder.

The opponents of Islam in Mecca in their national assembly which was called *Darun Nadwa* conspired against the early Muslims and adopted resolutions to prevent them from practicing their faith. Likewise in 1974 the National Assembly of Pakistan unanimously ratified the 2nd amendment to the Constitution, which effectively declared Ahmadis to be non-Muslims. But

they didn't realize that all these 72 sects of Islam had united to declare one sect – Ahmadiyyat – as non-Muslim, thus fulfilling the prophecy I have already placed before you by the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

By their declaring Ahmadis non-Muslim, the truly prophetic vision of the Holy Prophet^{saw} becomes apparent for all to see.

In addition, all other good attributes of the early believers in the Holy Prophet^{saw} can be found in the followers of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}. Globally today, only the Community of the Promised Messiah^{as} is seen to be following the *Sunnat* and example of the companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, offering sacrifices of their property, honor, and lives, only for the sake of Allah and their beloved the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}.

Now the one sect mentioned by the Holy Prophet^{saw} is the Ahmadiyyat Muslim *Jama'at*, which is prevented from saying the '*Kalima*', calling the '*Adhan*', performing *Hajj* and propagating its tenets – just as the Holy Prophet^{saw} and his companions were prevented from doing the same.

This is the *Jama'at* that is persecuted in this civilized 21st century! But

in response, the members of the *Jama'at* have adopted the examples of patience and fortitude shown by the companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw}: they have one *Imam* which they follow; whatever instruction is given to them, they are obedient to it. Whenever the *Imam* speaks, they respond immediately to his call. You cannot find the likes of this *Jama'at* anywhere else in the world!

Now I will present some examples of persecution and cruelty carried out on the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. Although this story of persecution has been repeated 124,000 times throughout the history of all the prophets, the persecution reached its peak during the time of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and his companions.

Most of the Muslims knew the *Muezzin-e-Rasoolullah*, *Syedna Bilal*^{ra}. He would receive brutal treatment by his cruel-hearted master Ummayah. To force him to denounce the Oneness of God, he used to drag Bilal along rocky land, sometimes with heavy stones on his chest, but Bilal always declared "*Ahad, Ahad*," and showed his iron-clad steadfastness in his belief in the unity of God. Similar inhuman treatment was given to other slaves.

Hadhrat Khubab bin Urt belonged to a very noble tribe of Mecca, but unfortunately he was enslaved and sold to someone. As a slave he was made to work as a blacksmith. After he accepted Islam, the disbelievers used to pull out burning charcoal from his own oven and place him on

those burning coals so that he would renounce Islam and the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

But he remained steadfast. Due to such cruel treatment time and time again, eventually his entire back became white from the trauma of being in contact with hot coals. None of these persecutions shook his faith or made him recant his belief.

On the request of Banu Qara and Banu Lahyan ten *Qaris* were sent for their training but they killed seven of them mercilessly and made three of them hostages. Hadhrat Abdullah bin Tariq^{ra} tried to free himself from these cruel people but they stoned him to death in a very inhuman manner. This was the first stoning-to-death incident in Islam.

Another hostage, Khubab bin Aadi^{ra}, was asked by the non-believers, "If instead of you, would you wish that Muhammad were in your place?"

He replied: "I cannot bear that even a small thorn pierce the feet of the Holy Prophet^{saw}!" Finally, when all else failed, they shot and killed him with arrows.

Another companion, Hadhrat Haram bin Malham, was shot in the back with an arrow and when the blood gushed out from his body, he took the blood in his hands and washed his face and body with it, proclaiming,

"By God, I am successful. By God of *Ka'ba*, I am successful."

Another maltreatment shared by the early followers of Muham-

mad^{saw} and the Promised Messiah^{as} is the use of the boycott against them. During the time of the Holy Prophet^{saw} he and the Muslims suffered for three difficult years because the Meccans ordered a boycott against them.

Likewise, boycotts against Ahmadis are called for regularly by the opponents of Ahmadiyyat. In many instances, the businesses of Ahmadis are looted or destroyed to prevent the Ahmadis from making a living.

The non-believers of Mecca and their allies went on the war-path against the Holy Prophet and his companions many times: at the battles of Badr, Uhud, the Battle of the Ditch at Medina, the conflicts of Hunain and Tabuk, and so on. In each such battle, the companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} were ready to sacrifice everything to protect the Holy Prophet and the young faith.

During that terrible battle, Hadhrat Talha bin Ubeidallah^{ra}, Hadhrat Zubair bin Awam^{ra}, and Hadhrat Sa'd bin Waqqas^{ra} had an extraordinary opportunity to guard the Holy Prophet^{saw}. The enemy attacked the position of the Holy Prophet^{saw} relentlessly. Hadhrat Talha^{ra} stood in front of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and blocked the on-coming arrows with his bare hands. Arrows pierced his palms, swords cut his fingers and arms, but he

did not move from his defense of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. It was found that he received 70 severe injuries in this battle. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said about Talha, that he had attained martyrdom in his very life.

In one gathering, his companions solemnly assured the Holy Prophet^{saw} that they were not like the companions of Moses^{as} who had said to Moses:

"Go with your God and fight them – we will wait here."

They continued:

But we will fight in front of you, we will fight at your back, we will fight on your left and we will fight on your right. The enemy will not reach you unless they step over our dead bodies.

And history witnessed how faithfully they kept their word!

Another young companion of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, Hadhrat Amar^{ra} was brutally persecuted. The opponents would place him on burning coals and then put him in water. Once when they were torturing him with hot coals, the Holy Prophet^{saw} passed by. He observed the condition of Hadhrat Amar^{ra} and said,

"O fire, be cool on Amar as you became cool on Abraham."

Despite all these persecutions, the cruel people could not shake the faith of the believers.

The mother of Hadhrat Amar^{ra} was also horribly attacked by none other than Abu Jahl, who pierced her private parts with a spear, martyring her. The persecution continued but

could not shake the faith of any of the early Muslims.

All of us know that Allah, the Almighty, commissioned the Promised Messiah^{as} in our age for the revival of Islam and for the strengthening of Islamic Shariah.

The prophecy of the Qur'anic verse: "*Wa Aakhareen na min hum lamma yalhaqoo bay him.*"

has been fulfilled in his person, and through his followers. According to an authentic *Hadith*, the Holy Prophet^{saw}, while placing his blessed hand on the shoulder of Salman Farsi^{ra} (Salman, the Persian), pointed out the advent of "A Man or Men of the Persian Race."

The idea of the resemblance with the "*Sahaba*" is of great significance. From one angle it bestows a great honor and conveys glad tidings. From another point of view, the mighty prophecy reminds us of the great responsibility we have to emulate the characteristics of the *Sahaba*, regarding Faith and the sacrifices that are part of one's faith. By Allah's grace, as the result of the Promised Messiah's^{as} un-tiring efforts, his companions were filled with the zeal to make similar sacrifices.

The sacrifice of one's life is rightly termed as "the supreme sacrifice." I would like to refer to such sacrifices of the Promised Messiah's companions, and by some members belonging to succeeding generation of devout Ahmadiis.

From the beginning, members of *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya have been awarded the verdict of death. In 1884 the Promised Messiah^{as} was given the verdict of blasphemy for declaring himself the *Mujaddid* of the century. In 1892, 175 scholars of Islam pronounced a verdict of blasphemy against him, a pronouncement that totaled 277 pages.

[*Al Fazl*, June 2, 2010]

These verdicts had the effect of agitating not only Muslims of the country, but also Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, and even the English government against the founder of the community, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, with many now eager to destroy him.

The hatred fomented by the opponents caused people to try to kill the Promised Messiah^{as}. That was not all. Many false cases were filed against him in which a verdict of 'guilty' could have caused the death penalty *to be applied*.

Allah Ta'ala saved him from all these evil attempts of his opponents to bring about his ruin, imprisonment or demise.

The first miracle of Jesus^{as} recorded in the Bible was when he changed water into wine at a wedding, the only result being physical drunkenness. But the Prom-

ised Messiah^{as} changed the polluted spiritual water of the people who accepted him into the spiritual wine that intoxicated them with the love of God, the Holy Prophet^{saw}, the Holy Qur'an and the religion of Islam.

Now I present the sacrifices offered by the companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}, in the same manner offered by the companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

During the lifetime of the Promised Messiah^{as}, there were two companions who were martyred in Afghanistan. Maulvi Abdur Rahman Sahib, was strangled to death, in the Royal Prison. Later on, Hadhrat Sahibzada Syed Abdul Latif^{ra}, was stoned to death in a brutal manner. Sahibzada Sahib was a man of great honor and prestige. He was highly respected across the length and breadth of Afghanistan for his extraordinary knowledge, piety, and his nobility -- he was a descendant of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. From a worldly point of view, he was respected like a prince, for his vast estates and large number of followers.

The *Mullahs*, after their defeat in the field of arguments, decided to subdue him by "*Fatwa*" - - religions decree -- but Sahibzada Sahib remained firm, like a rock, with reference to his wife, young children, and worldly possessions. He even ignored the last-minute Royal persuasion, and bravely and cheerfully accepted death, like Hadhrat Khubaib Bin Adi^{ra} and companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

Two decades later, in 1924, another Ahmadi missionary, Maulvi Nematullah, was stoned to death in Afghanistan. He too, remained steadfast. In fact the road of *Jama'at's* history is lit by the milestones of martyrdom!

Slowly but surely, these efforts of the enemies converged into big campaigns, and in 1934, the *Ahrar* group announced that "We will destroy Ahmadis in Qadian and nobody will be able to recognize the grave of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}. And nobody will know what Ahmadiyyat is, not even in the areas surrounding Qadian."

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} at that point advised the *Jama'at* to show patience and forbearance, and in one of his Friday sermons he said,

"I am thankful to my friends and I am happy with their actions, that they showed patience and forbearance despite the fact that agitations were raised against them...."

For the betterment of the *Jama'at* I asked you not to speak up. I tied your hands, even though I know that your hearts are full of sincerity and full of love which you have for the Promised Messiah^{as} and his community."

Then he said: "Can anybody tell what crime we have committed? For what are we being persecuted? The Government should know that, although we are people of patience and forbearance, but still, we have

hearts. And our hearts feel the pain.

And if they be hurt without any reason, from these hearts a prayer shall go forth which will shake the earth and the heavens, as a result of which God's throne will be shaken. And when the throne of God is shaken, the earth will bear the calamities."

At that point, Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} initiated the program of *Tahrik-e-Jadid*. And he asked members to incline towards Allah with supplication and bring about remarkable change in themselves that will divert the storms of opposition against the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} said: "The *Ahrar* began to oppose us in 1934. At that time I announced in one of my Friday sermons that we should not be worried about the *Ahrar* campaign.

God will give victory to me and to my *Jama'at*; and I can see the earth moving under the feet of our enemies, and I can see their defeat approaching. And no matter how many plans they make, how many slogans they raise, I can see their death."

This is a prophecy as well, that whenever an opponent will try to attack Ahmadiyyat, he will lose

ground and he will always be defeated.

Allah Ta'ala did not fulfill the desire of our enemies; rather, He hoisted the flag of Ahmadiyyat in 195 countries.

Lootnay Niklay thay.....

My dear Brothers!

All the major cities and important towns of the four provinces of Pakistan have witnessed the martyrdom of brave Ahmadi men and women. I would like to mention the sacrifice of Sahibzada Mirza Ghulam Qadir, a great-grandson of the Promised Messiah^{as}. After successfully completing his degree work in computer-science, he returned to Rabwah (The *Jama'at* Headquarters) as a "Devotee" and took charge of the computer department.

An extremist organization, "Lashkar Jhangvi", hatched a conspiracy to kidnap Mirza Ghulam Qadir and put him in their car, which was loaded with guns, ammunition and "*Burqas*" etc. They wanted to present Mirza Ghulam Qadir and the loaded car as proof of the *Jama'at's* involvement in terrorism, which was rampant at that time.

If their plan was successful, the whole of Pakistan would rise up against Ahmadis. It would have claimed thousands of Ahmadi lives. Sahibzada Sahib was firm and resisted, and as a result of that he was killed in his own car. The terrorists failed to transfer his body to their car, as the passengers of a bus saw the killing and called the

police. The cowardly culprits fled the site but were chased and killed by the police in a counter-attack at Lalian. Thus Mirza Ghulam Qadir gave his blood to avert a painful tragedy. May Allah bless his soul.

Ahmadis have laid down their lives in other countries like India, Bangladesh, etc. I would like to relate the martyrdom of an Ahmadi in the United States, Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad of Detroit, who was assassinated in cold blood at the door of his home by fanatic terrorists. America is truly a land of the free. People converge on the U.S. for religious freedom, peace and opportunity. Unfortunately, some religious extremists have also landed here.

And this killing of Ahmadis in the name of Allah is still continuing. In two Ahmadi mosques in Lahore, terrorists attacked and killed 86 of our members on May 28th. More than 100 were injured. The members of the *Jama'at* do not despair – part of their soul cries and the other one smiles. These two feelings of happiness and pain go hand-in-hand, and we have full trust in our Lord.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih al-Khamis^{aba} said in his Friday sermon on June 4th, 2010:

I telephoned the family members of the martyrs and offered my condolences and tried to console them, and in each house children, wives, brothers, mothers, and fathers, were at peace with the decree of Allah. And this was expressed by each and every person, that this sacrifice which we offered is nothing. We are ready to sacri-

fice everything, even though if we have to offer our last drop of blood for the community of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Hazoor^{aba} said that these great members of the community gave their lives in the way of Allah while praying and while reciting *Durood Shareef* – two of the things forbidden for them to do by the laws and constitution of Pakistan. .

He continued to say, blessed are the members of the Ahmadiyya community in Lahore who showed this kind of steadfastness. There is a revelation of the Promised Messiah^{as} concerning the members of Lahore that says:

There are our holy members in Lahore and our pious lovers are in Lahore.

Therefore, this is a great honor and status which is given to you, and you have to safeguard this honor. Therefore, O Ahmadi mothers, let not these holy and faith-increasing sentiments and thoughts fade away and die; as long as these sentiments remain in you with full spiritual power, no enemy can harm this *Jama'at* at all.

No doubt these martyrs were the symbols of righteousness like the companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

They did offer their lives for the honor, glory and majesty of Allah, Islam and the Holy Prophet^{saw} and earned the accolade *Razi Allah Anho....*"

You drank the glass of martyrdom with a smile on your lips

How beautifully this worship was accepted in the heavens

In one leap you joined the early companions

you taught a great lesson of bravery to the world

This honor you gained was a miracle of the Messiah

When your blood will bring color, the world will see how the madness of the Cruel will vanish, the terrible condition of the Mullah will be witnessed by the world

the world will see how enemies will bow in defeat

And peace will descend from heaven, the world will see

O innocent martyrs of Islam I salute you with flowing tears

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} praised the sacrifice of life of Abdul Lateef. Upon his martyrdom, the Promised Messiah^{as} said,

O Abdul Lateef, thousands of blessings be upon you, and during my lifetime you have shown the example of the perfect truth. I do not know what the people of my *Jama'at* will do after my death.

This statement of the Promised Messiah^{as} is enough to jolt us awake and to remind us of our responsibilities. The 86 sincere members of the

Jama'at in Lahore, following in the footsteps of the companions of the Holy Prophets^{aw}, have rekindled the spirit of true sacrifice for the faith. In the holy procession of martyrs there was a 91-year-old retired general and a 17-year-old college student. In a respectful practical reply to the "*Tazkara-Tush-Shahada-Tain*" question, every drop of the blood shed in the two mosques of Lahore, resonates:

Our beloved master!

We are in a state of readiness to lay down our lives.

Our beloved master!

We are in a state of readiness to accomplish martyrdom.

Our beloved master!

We are in a state of readiness to offer the supreme sacrifice.

Allow me to say that whenever the demand of greater and greater sacrifice will be made of the sincere servants of the Promised Messiah^{as}, keeping in mind the examples of the companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, the same voice of cheerful submission will be raised by each and every one, from the east, west, north and south,

"*Labbak ya sayedi, labbak ya sayedi, labbak ya sayedi!*"

In the end, I implore all of us present today to evaluate ourselves and see if we live our lives as a fulfillment of this prophecy of *Rasoole Karim*^{saw} and identify through our actions that we have the qualities of the *Akhireen*.

We need to remember the admonition of Promised Messiah^{as} when he said,

"Though I am grateful to God Almighty for such good friends, yet it is a part of my faith that even if there remains not a single person with me and all of them go their way leaving me alone, I would still have no fear. I know that God Almighty is with me.

Even if I am trampled underfoot and crushed and become less than a particle, and I experience persecution and abuse and curses from every direction, still I shall ultimately be victorious. No one knows me, but He is with me. I cannot be destroyed.

Vain are the efforts of my enemies and useless are the designs of the envious ones. O ye foolish and blind ones! was there ever a righteous one before me who was ruined so that I should be ruined?

Was there ever a truly faithful one who was destroyed by God in humiliation, so that He should destroy me?

Listen carefully and remember that my soul is not liable to destruction and that my nature is not prone to failure. I have been bestowed such courage and veracity against which mountains are as nothing. I am not afraid of anyone.

My enemies will be humiliated and those envious of me will be put to shame, and God will bestow victory upon

His servant in every field. I am with Him and He is with me. Nothing can break our relationship.

I swear by His honor and glory that I hold nothing dearer in this world and in the hereafter, than that the greatness of His religion may be manifested, His glory may shine forth and His Word may be exalted.

By His grace, I am not afraid of any trial, even if I am confronted not with one but with ten million trials. I have been bestowed strength in the field of trials and in the jungle of agonizing persecutions."

[Anwarul Islam, Roohani Khaza'in]

Thus, brothers and sisters, I have presented to you, the beautiful fragrance of blossoms of *Masih-e-Muhammadi's* flower garden. Mere mention of their sacrifices, loyalty, love and devotion overwhelms us and tears roll down our eyes and our hearts naturally invoke *Darood Sharif* on Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw}.

Yes, the same beloved upon whom *Durood* was being invoked when those devotees of Lahore mosques offered their lives. What an unmatched beloved he is! That much-loved one, who after 1400 years, is uniting the latter ones with the earlier ones, and all have traversed this thousand years' distance in a few moments and turned the barren ground into a garden of blossoming flowers. Truly, every blessing is due to our beloved Muhammad Mustafa^{saw}.

MARTYRDOM IN LAHORE: OUR REACTION AND RESPONSE

Maulana Naseem Mahdi
Missionary In Charge and Na'ib Ameer USA

Transcribed by: Mansura Bashir Minhas

*Recitation of the Holy Qur'an:
Sura Al-Fatiha*

The incident of Lahore is very well known to all the members of the *Jama'at*. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} has discussed the details of every *Shahadat* in his Friday sermons. This incident highlights the courage of the members of the *Jama'at*. It highlights their discipline, their sense of sacrifice and their sense of giving precedence to others. Just recently, in another attack in Lahore, on a shrine or tomb of Hadhrat Data Ganj Bakhshth has shown a different picture. Lot of people died in stampede after that attack. But in *Darul Zikr* and the mosque in Model Town, there was no stampede. People knew they are being attacked and nobody ran. Amir Sahib, Lahore was told to leave that place and go to a shelter and he said 'How can I leave my community and go and take shelter when people are being attacked?' And when he was wounded, he had a microphone in his hands and he was just telling people, 'you please remember Allah and say *Durood Sharif*'. There were people who had lost loved ones right there and they were not worried about them and they were worried about all and how could they get out and help them. This kind of incident, we have not seen in the history of *Jama'at* and everybody (in 190 countries) have

felt the pain of this loss, everybody's heart was touched, whether they were in Africa or Asia or Europe or North America, they did present that '*Uswa*' of Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw}, whenever he was pained, he said, "Our eyes are shedding tears, our hearts are grieved, but we are resigned to the will of Allah. And we are satisfied with the decree of Allah".

In the life of Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw}, may incidents have happened where his beloved *Sahaba* were martyred. One incident was right after the Battle of Uhud and from the tribes of *Raal* and *Zaklam* and *Banu Lahyan*, they came to the Holy Prophet^{saw} and said we are interested in the study of Islam, please send some people to teach us. And this was a deception. Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw} sent 70 *Sahaba* and all of them were *Huffaz*, they had memorized the Holy Qur'an and they went there and they were martyred one by one. Whenever an attacker came to them and they said, "Look here, we are

not here to fight, we are here to teach the Holy Qur'an". But one by one, they were butchered. And this was something which has already grieved community, those who have lost 70 *Sahaba* in the Battle of *Uhud*. And when Hazoor^{saw} himself was wounded, so this was another trial. And they took it as a trial and remained resigned to the will of Allah.

I will be highlighting five points- what should be our reaction and response to this incident.

The first one is mentioned in this verse which I just have recited in the very beginning. And that says that there are people who have already fulfilled their vow, their pledge and there is a queue of people behind them and they are ready to do the same.

Allah says, "Among the believers are men who have been true to the Covenant they made with Allah. There are some of them, who have fulfilled their vows and some who still wait and they have not changed their condition in the least".

The first reaction of ours should be that we have all made that Covenant and we have all made that pledge of *Bai'at* and some of them have gone ahead of us and offered their lives and if time comes, and if it is required from us to offer our

lives, we will not hesitate and we will say 'Here we are, *Labbaik, Allahuma Labbaik*- Here I am, O my lord! If my life is needed, I am ready to offer'.

Remember, you cannot find a more courageous person than a person who is ready to die. Remember also a nation who is ready to sacrifice everything and most importantly their lives, nobody can kill that community, nobody can eliminate that community, nobody can harm that community. So by the grace of Allah, we are the community of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}, we are the community of Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw} and we are here to offer everything for the sake of Allah. When I talk about offering everything for the sake of Allah, this reminds me the pledge of *Bai'at* and pledge of *Bai'at* is my second point.

It is mentioned in Chapter 9, verse 111, *Surah Tauba*. Allah says:

"Surely, Allah has purchased of the believers their persons and their property in return for the Paradise they shall have; they fight in the cause of Allah, and they slay and are slain- a promise that He has made incumbent on Himself in the Torah, and the Gospel, and the Quran. And who is more faithful to this promise than Allah? Rejoice, then, in your bargain which you have made with Him; and that it is which is the supreme triumph".

The word 'bargain' is translated in Arabic, the word is *Bai'at*. You have made a bargain. Allah says I have made a bargain, I have purchased from the believers their lives and their properties and in return I will give them the paradise of my pleasure. So our response should be,

we analyze ourselves. We should be worried whether our *Bai'at* is just a lip service or this is a *Bai'at* in the real sense of the word.

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} says,

"Let me make it clear that to affirm the covenant of *Bai'at* with the tongue alone amounts to nothing, unless it is practiced with full resolve."

So our response should be, we should analyze ourselves, that the covenant of *bai'at* we have made, where do we stand, are we fulfilling it or not? Or are we ready to fulfill it in the sense that we are ready to sacrifice our life and property.

Now Allah has used the word 'a deal', 'a bargain'. What is that deal, what is that bargain? That you offer your life, you offer your property. Now Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw} who was the beautiful model for us, he once said:

"My strongest desire is that I may be martyred in the way of Allah. And then revived again and then I am martyred again in the way of Allah and then I am revived and I give my life for the sake of Allah, etc. etc".

Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw} set this example by very clearly mentioning his desire. But Allah could not fulfill this desire because

this is against a law of Allah mentioned in the Holy Qur'an that He would not let people to kill the Prophets to create a confusion about their truth and also He would not go against His promise which was given to him- "That Allah will save you from the harm of people".

But he showed his desire, but this does not mean that he did not go through these trials. Once he was sitting among the *Sahaba* and the narrator says that I can still (after so many years), see the face of Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw}, so it means that there was an extraordinary expression on that face. I could see as if he is talking to me, to the *Sahaba* right now. And what he was saying, he said "Should I not tell you the story of a Prophet, when his people were throwing stones on him and his body was bleeding and he was wiping blood from his face and he was saying 'Oh Allah! Guide my people because they don't know what they are doing'. Do you know who that Prophet was? He did not mention the name of that Prophet. That Prophet was Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa^{saw} himself. But he didn't want to mention to his own *Sahaba*, that look what I have offered for the sake of Islam. He said, 'Should I not tell you the story of a prophet?' When he went to *Ta'if*, it happened to him and he just prayed for them that, 'Oh Allah! They don't know what they are doing'.

When we talk of the sacrifice of our wealth, our properties mentioned in this verse. All his life, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} sacrificed everything in the sake of Allah. Everything means everything. He did not eat anything in his house and distributed among the poor and needy. *Sahaba* of Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw} set

this very beautiful example. And in this time and age, the practice is revived by Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} and his *Sahaba*. And we all know, by the grace of Allah, our *Jama'at* in the United States of America is also offering great financial sacrifices for the sake of Allah. These sacrifices are a revival of what has happened 1400 hundred years ago and what has happened 100 years ago. A continuous tradition in the *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya, that we revive what has been done in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and his *Sahaba*. So my brothers and sisters, Allah says 'Either you give your life or give your property'. So let us see how we can improve the sacrifices for the sake of Allah.

The third point which I would like to make is mentioned in the verse of *Surah Sajdah*:

"Verily those who say our Lord is Allah and then remain steadfast, angels descend on them and they say we are with you in this life and Hereafter".

This is a very long subject mentioned in those verses.

So our third reaction is, we should ask the question, I should ask this question to me. Everybody should ask this question. Can I say, not just the lip service, in the real sense of the word, from the bottom of my heart, with conviction, 'Rabbunallah'- my Lord is Allah. Can we have that relationship which is needed with Him and not only that, are we steadfast on this statement. Because we say something and then we don't practice it. We say something and then we forget about it. We are not consistent in our effort. So my brothers and sisters, we

should remember that Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} has written and I have so many quotations but I will not be reading them. I will give you the gist. On many occasions, he has said that I do not want you to get involved in lame discussions, I don't want to improve your dry logic because I have not come to teach you logic, how to attack on the enemy with arguments, I have come to develop personal relationship with Allah and *Taqwa* and righteousness. So we should improve our *Taqwa* and righteousness and our personal relationship with Allah in response to what has happened in Lahore.

The fourth reaction is which is mentioned about Hadhrat Lut^{as} in Chapter 11, verse 81. Hadhrat Lut^{as} said,

"Would that I have power to deal with you or I should betake myself to a mighty support". *Rukn-e-Sahdeed* is the word of Allah. It means that I have not worldly power. I have only one option and that option is that I go to Allah and supplicate. And this is what Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} has said:

"We have not been given to armament, we have not been given the worldly cannon and worldly fire power. We have been given only one weapon and that is the weapon of *Dua*, suppli-

cation and prayer. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih Khamis^{aba} has been saying this, almost in every sermon since his *Khilafat* started that you should pray and pray and pray because everything should be done through prayer.

The fifth point and the last point is that there shouldn't be any loss of hope or any doubt about the victory of hamadryad. Because I have seen many people, they come and they say we don't know what is going to happen in Pakistan and the Mullahs are very powerful and they have so much arms and so much money. Let us not lose hope and our faith in our victory should not be shaky. And this has been promised in the Holy Quran and this has been promised in the revelation of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}.

This also includes that we should have firm faith that Allah is going to seize all the enemies of Ahmadiyyat as he has done in the past 125 years. And then for this victory, we should, for this victory (which is going to happen and there is no doubt about it, no body can change it). We have to see how we can be the part of that victory by offering our lives, by offering our properties, by offering our time and honor and we should plan that may Allah make this country - United States of America, that should become number one in that victory. And this will happen with prayers and with sacrifice.

Let me give you in the end, a quotation of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} and his firm faith about his victory and about his success. First in Urdu, in the original word. Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} writes and this shows and highlights his strong

belief that Allah is with him and Allah is going to make sure that he is victorious in the end. He writes (English translation is as follows):

“Though I am grateful to Allah for such good friends, yet it is a part of my faith that even if there remains not a single person with me, and all of them go their way, leaving me alone, I would still have no fear. I know that God Almighty is with me, even if I’m trampled under foot and crushed and become less than a particle and experience persecution, and abuse and curses from every direction, still I shall ultimately be victorious. No one knows me, but He is with me, I cannot be destroyed. Vain are the efforts of my enemies and useless are the designs of the envious ones. O ye foolish and blind ones! Was there ever a righteous one before me who was ruined so that I should be ruined? Was there ever a truly faithful one, who was destroyed by God in humiliation so that He should destroy me. Listen carefully and remember that my soul is not liable to destruction and that my nature is not prone to failure. I have been bestowed such courage, honor and glory that I hold nothing dearer in this world and in the Hereafter than that the greatness of His religion may be manifested. His glory may shine and His word may be exalted by His Grace. I am not afraid of my trials, even if I am confronted with not one, but with ten million trials. I have been bestowed strength in the field of trials, in the jungle of agonizing persecution.”

FAMILY PEACE FESTIVAL

**Rizwan Sindhoo, Tabligh Secretary,
Richmond, VA.**

An interfaith event is an important part of the Family Peace Festival. It includes members of the Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh communities. The festive day also includes arts & crafts and games for the children, and a variety of ethnic and international food, as well as arts and crafts vendors. This extends a great opportunity for the groups to engage in interfaith dialogue and share their beliefs and practices. For the Ahmadiya Muslim Community such opportunities open new doors and horizons to convey the message of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

CONTRIBUTION OF AHMADIYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Ahmadiya Muslim Community, Richmond VA, shares the space for Friday and *Fajar* Prayers and monthly meetings, renting from Unitarian Universalist Community Church, of Glen Allen VA. We joined hand with UCC and took part in the Family Peace Festival and had adjacent booths. From Ahmadiya Muslim Community 5 *Lajna*, 5 *Khudam* and 3 *Ansar* took part from start to finish. Event started at 11.00 am, but we reached at 10.00 to set up our booth. *Jama'at* members were also able to come and attend the festival. *Lajna* and *Khudam* were able to visit all the participating vendor booths and distributed our “Muslim for Peace” flyer and invited them to the booth. We distributed about 250 Muslims For Peace flyers, and about 100 other flyers regarding Jihad, and Ahmadiya Muslim Community. We also had several *Jama'at's* books and Holy Qur'an on display. We had a guest register for the guest to sign and provide their comments if they are interested in further contact and literature of the *Jama'at*. 66 people signed the register. Our *Lajna* provided *Henna* Tattoos free of cost to girls and women of all ages. It was the most popular activity of the festival and generated plenty of interest. We also had cookies, candies and chocolates to offer our visitors.

President of Richmond Brother Muhammad Owusu along with his family was able to join us towards the latter half of the festival, as he had just arrived from Ghana a few hours ago. It was an excellent exposure for the *Jama'at* to share its message with the masses. All the people who came to Ahmadiya Muslim Community booth showed great interest in learning about Islam and its concept of *Jihad*. By the grace of Allah Almighty it was a successful event from the *Jama'at's* perspective to share Islam's message for peace across very diverse audience, and the members of *Jama'at* took part with great sincerity and vigor. *Lajna* did splendid job in making this a success. May Allah *Kareem* bless every one for their efforts and enable them to be the true recipients of the prayers of Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}.

ZIKR-E-HABIB: FORGIVENESS AND FORBEARANCE

Dr. Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad

Transcribed by: Hammad Malik

Tashahud, Ta'awuz, Tasmia.

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} said that prophethood is divided into two parts – one is marked by difficulties and hardship and the other is marked by victory and triumph. There is a divine wisdom behind this arrangement so that prophets may manifest excellence of their morals in both phases of prophethood. On another occasion Hazoor^{as} said,

“Prophets are very courageous and brave people who face immeasurable challenges and suffering in carrying out their mission. Nobody else, however strong or brave, can endure such hardships.” The same is true of the Promised Messiah who submitted completely and absolutely to his beloved master Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw} in all aspects of character and morals. Hazoor^{as} manifested forbearance for the ignorant and the arrogant and forgiveness for his enemies, even under extreme adversity. He called on us to adhere to the same high morals that he himself practiced. The Promised Messiah stated in one of his speeches, “What have our opponents done to us? They have spared no effort to harm us and hurt us but we are still ready to forgive all of their transgressions; so you, who associate with me, remember that you must sympathize with everybody regardless of one's religion and be kind irrespective of one's ethnicity and creed.”

In the early days of the Promised

Messiah^{as}, the majority of the population of Qadian consisted of Hindus and Sikhs. Two of these Hindus, Lala Malawamal and Lala Sharampat, are well known in the history of Ahmadiyyat. Both of these gentlemen witnessed the fulfillment of many of the Promised Messiah's prophecies, a few of which directly related to them. Many of these revelations were from well before the time when Hazoor^{as} founded the *Jama'at* and started taking *Bai'at*. In spite of the fact that these gentlemen witnessed the glaring truth concerning the future foretold by the Promised Messiah^{as}, they rarely missed an opportunity to oppose him. When the *Minaratul Masih* was being built, the Hindus from Qadian complained to the deputy commissioner that the interior space of their homes would be exposed to anyone who stood at the top of the minaret and thus compromise the privacy within their homes. And in view of that, they claimed the construction should be immediately stopped. The deputy commissioner came to Qadian and inquired from the

Promised Messiah^{as} about this objection. Hazoor^{as} explained the reason for the construction of the minaret. He then turned to Hindus who had accompanied the deputy commissioner and said “Ask Lala Badamal who is sitting here whether there was ever a time when they needed any help and I refrained from providing it to them and also ask them that whenever they had an opportunity to harm me, did they not avail it?” Hadhrat Hafiz Roshan Ali^{ra} sahib stated that Lala Badamal was visibly ashamed and did not have the courage to look towards Hazoor^{as}, much less respond to his comments.

Pundit Lekhram, a religious scholar who was a staunch enemy of Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, arrived in Qadian and was aided and supported by these same Hindus of Qadian in his effort to abuse the Promised Messiah^{as}. They fed him all kinds of lies about Hazoor^{as} which made him more abusive and disrespectful towards the Promised Messiah^{as} and the Holy Prophet^{saw}. Eventually, Pundit Lekhram was killed in response to the prayers and prophecy of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}. Hindus and *Arya Samaj*, including Lala Shrampat, accused the Promised Messiah^{as} of masterminding the murder of Pundit Lekhram and wanted the government to prosecute Hazoor^{as}. And yet, while on one hand Lala Shrampat laid slander upon Promised Messiah's^{as} name, on the other hand he asked for help

from the Promised Messiah^{as} at the same time. During this whole episode, Lala Shrampat became sick and he came to Hazoor^{as} for medicine. Hazoor^{as} gave him the medicine and asked him if he truly considered Hazoor^{as} the enemy responsible for the murder of Lekhram. If so, Hazoor^{as} asked, did he then think it was appropriate to take Hazoor's^{as} medicine. Lala Shrampat replied: "We trust you. Please give us the medicine."

The same Lala Shrampat, who had joined other Arya Hindus in accusing the Promised Messiah^{as} for the murder of Lekhram, once fell ill due to an infection in his abdomen and believed he was going to die. When Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} found out about his illness, he visited his home located in a dark and narrow alley. The Promised Messiah^{as} appointed his own personal doctor, Muhammad Abdullah, to treat Lala Shrampat – he was the only doctor in Qadian at the time. Hazoor^{as} visited him daily. During his illness, Lala Shrampat would request Hazoor^{as} "Hadhrat Jee, pray for me!" Hazoor^{as} comforted him and prayed for him till he recovered. This is the character of a man so great that his heart overflowed with genuine goodwill for even the worst of his enemies.

In 1882, the Promised Messiah^{as} received this revelation:

"Ya Ahmadu, faazatir rahmatu alaa shafataika" –

Mercy flows from thy lips, O Ahmad!

The Promised Messiah's^{as} whole life is a testimony of this divine statement. After the death of Lekhram, three of the Arya Hindus in Qadian started a newspaper which was devoted to attacking the Promised Messiah^{as} and the *Jama'at* with the most abusive, filthy and slanderous language. The

Promised Messiah^{as} wrote a booklet entitled "*Qadian kay Arya aur hum*" (The Aryas of Qadian and us) and asked them to refrain from their malicious statements but they continued in their venomous behavior. During this time, the plague epidemic began to spread in Qadian. The Promised Messiah^{as} declared that the members of his *Jama'at* would not be infected with the plague after being revealed by Allah that "I shall safeguard all those who dwell in this house." When the manager of this *Arya* newspaper heard the Promised Messiah's^{as} pronouncement, he mocked it and claimed that he would also be saved from the plague. A few days later, he and his friend contracted the disease and died. The editor of the paper, who also contracted the disease but was still alive, called an Ahmadi *hakeem* (herbal doctor), a Maulvi Abaidullah, and requested treatment. *Maulvi Sahib* asked the Promised Messiah^{as} what to do. Hazoor^{as} said, "you must treat him because human compassion requires it but I will tell you that he will not survive." The man died the next day despite the treatment.

Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} commented on this incident saying "It shows a remarkable expression of concern by the Promised Messiah^{as} for his sworn enemy by asking his follower

to treat Mr. Samraj." But it also indicates the Promised Messiah's^{as} unshakable belief in the divine word. He was certain in his belief that those Hindus who had ridiculed and taunted his prophecy would not escape.

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} wrote in his book *Arba'een*, "I would like to say explicitly to all Muslims, Christians and Hindus that I do not consider anybody my enemy in this world. I love mankind more than a caring mother loves her children. I am only the enemy of those false beliefs which belie the truth. Compassion for human beings is my obligation; repudiation of falsehood, idolatry, oppression and every kind of misdeed, injustice and immorality is my creed." Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} repeatedly expressed his love and sympathy for all humans as part of his faith and purpose of his advent. Even those who devoted their lives to prosecute him shared his grace. The Promised Messiah^{as} said, "I am thankful that I have prayed for every single one of my enemies at least two or three times."

And what did the Promised Messiah^{as} receive in return? Opponents of the Promised Messiah^{as}, whether Muslims, Christians or Hindus were relentless in their efforts to stop him and destroy him, by whatever means possible. Dr. Martin Clark, a Christian missionary, filed a suit in court in 1897 charging the Promised Messiah^{as} with conspiracy to murder him. He produced a Muslim youth, Abdul Hameed, who stated under oath that Hazoor^{as} had instructed him to assassinate Mr. Clark. Initially, an arrest warrant was issued for the Promised Messiah^{as}, but later he was issued a notice to appear in the court. After a few days of judicial proceeding, it was evident that there was a discrepancy in the testimony of the star witness. Eventually,

Mr. Abdul Hameed admitted that he was coerced by some of the Christian missionaries to take a false oath and admitted that Mirza Sahib never asked him to kill Dr. Clark. Captain Douglas, the magistrate hearing the case, honorably discharged Hazoor^{as} after concluding that charges against him were false and baseless. After his verdict, he turned to Promised Messiah^{as} and stated that if Mirza Sahib desired to prosecute Dr. Clark for false charges, the district magistrate would allow him to do so. Hazoor^{as} replied that he had no desire to prosecute Dr. Clark before an earthly court, his complaint was pending before the Highest Judge. On a footnote, Dr. Clark died two years later. The Promised Messiah^{as} forgave the enemy who wanted him shackled and thrown into a prison cell; the courtroom was packed with *maulvis*, Christian missionaries and Hindu pundits, all gleeful and anticipating that Promised Messiah^{as} would receive the severest punishment. Maulvi Muhammad Husain, an arch-opponent of the Promised Messiah^{as}, was one of the prosecution witnesses in this case. He travelled all over India to collect edicts from foremost Muslim religious leaders declaring Hazoor^{as} an infidel and a *kafir*. He regularly used the most defamatory and abusive and incendiary language in his publications against Promised Messiah^{as}. Maulvi Fazal Din was the attorney representing Hazoor^{as}, he was not an Ahmadi. He sought the Promised Messiah's^{as} permission to ask Maulvi Muhammad Hussain questions regarding his parentage to damage the character of the witness and weaken the prosecution's case.

Hazoor^{as} forbade him from asking such personal questions and said,

"God forbids unseemly speech." Maulvi Fazal Din recalled years later, "Here I was, defending him in a case of

conspiracy to murder and he forbids my questioning, lest it brings shame upon a witness who hated him!"

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} received a revelation in 1883,

"wa ma arsalnaaka illa rah-matal lil alameen"

I have sent thee as a mercy for all people.

There were many occasions when this virtue was manifested for all kinds of people – friends and foe. He writes in *Tadhkiratu Shahadatain*, in the Arabic part, about his opponents, "I prayed so often for them in the darkness of blessed nights that may they be shown mercy." He also prayed for his enemies in these words, "O Allah, do not punish those who express enmity towards me; they do not see and do not recognize me. O Allah, have mercy on them and may they join the guided ones."

Mirza Imam Deen and Mirza Nizam Deen were the Promised Messiah's^{as} cousins, they also shared ancestral properties with Hazoor^{as}. Both brothers, especially Mirza Imam Deen, held deep animosity and ill will towards the Promised Messiah^{as} and the *Jama`at* and missed no opportunity to cause trouble. On one occasion, they built a wall to block the street to Masjid Mubarak, shutting off the direct access to the mosque for the prayer-goers. Hadhrat Yaqub Ali Irfani^{ra},

author of *Seerat Masih Mau'ood* writes,

"Those days were very difficult for Ahmadis. We had to walk a long distance to reach the mosque. Whenever it rained, the streets would become muddy and slippery. Many of the elderly and weak and many of the blind members of the *Jama`at* would fall and their clothes would get soiled just for going to the prayers. On top of that, these men restricted the water supply to the Ahmadis. The Promised Messiah^{as} was extremely anguished over this matter and sent a few of his companions to Mirza Imam Deen and his brother to persuade them to stop this hostility. In return, they received an abusive and threatening response. The *Jama`at* approached the appropriate government authorities to stop this persecution but were turned down.

Eventually, the Promised Messiah^{as} decided to file a complaint in the court. The judge decided against the offending party and ordered the wall to be demolished. The judge also ordered the brothers to pay for all the expenses incurred and offer compensation for this illegal act. Hazoor^{as} did not approve of the financial part of the decision but unbeknownst to Hazoor^{as}, the attorney issued a formal notice to Mirza Nizam Deen to pay all of his court sanctioned obligations. Upon receiving this notice, Mirza Nizam Deen wrote a letter to Hazoor^{as}. He said that his financial resources were meager and he would not be able to pay by lump sum. He admitted that he was obligated and would pay in installments but asked if Hazoor^{as} would have mercy upon him and forgive him his payments. He also admitted to have wronged Hazoor^{as} and admitted that he and his brother had caused *Jama`at* trouble in the past.

Hazoor^{as} was upset upon receiving the letter and inquired why he was not contacted before the notice had been sent to Mirza Nizam Deen.

He said, "We must not be involved in litigations like worldly people. If he had done this to hurt us, we must not retort. God has not sent me for this purpose."

He wrote a letter to Mirza Nizam Deen sympathizing with him concerning the whole matter, forgiving him and his financial obligations. He dispatched a person to immediately deliver this letter, as he was away from Qadian and wished to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. Hadhrat Yaqub Ali^{fa} writes,

"This is just one example of forbearance and forgiveness of his enemies by the Promised Messiah^{as}, which should be a lesson to his followers."

Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad Sahib^{fa} writes, "This is the same Mirza Nizam Deen who brought many false and malicious suits of litigation against Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} and his followers. His behavior with some poor Ahmadis was so vile that a decent person cannot even mention it. And yet, at one point when Mirza Nizam Deen fell ill and almost became delirious, the Promised Messiah^{as} went to visit him and prescribed treatment."

Our beloved Messiah, our most forgiving Mahdi, arrived at the door of a sworn enemy to treat hatred with compassion and to fight hostility with generosity. It was the Promised Messiah's greatest desire that his followers set the highest moral standards and this wish is aptly illustrated by a narration in *Seeratul Mahdi*. Once, two companions of the Promised Messiah, Hadhrat Mir Nasir Nawab

Sahib^{fa} and Maulvi Muhammad Ali Sahib had a disagreement. Mir Sahib reported the matter to Hazoor^{as} and Maulvi Sahib, finding out that he had been reported, came to Hazoor^{as} to clarify the matter. The Promised Messiah^{as} said, "Yes, Mir Sahib told me something but I was so preoccupied with an issue that I swear that I do not remember what he said or did not say."

The Promised Messiah^{as} went on to say,

"Lately, a thought has completely taken over me and I have become oblivious of other matters. Whether I am outside in the company or at home, I am now overwhelmed with this one thought which is continuing to build in my mind. And that concern is that the real reason for my coming is to establish a *Jama`at* of true believers with real connection with God and complete faith in Him, who practice the Islamic teachings and follow the character of the Prophet^{saw}, walk on the path towards righteousness and guidance and set an example of the highest moral conduct so that through such a *Jama`at*, the world learns guidance and the will of God is achieved. If our purpose is not realized but we defeat our enemies through reasoning and arguments, then our victory is no victory. For if the real reason for our advent is not fulfilled, then all of our work will have gone to waste. I see signs of victory as a result of reasoning and arguments and even our enemies

are now sensing their weakness but there is still a real lack of awareness concerning the true purpose of our advent. There is a great need of attention within our *Jama`at*; thus, this is the thought that eats at me these days and it is of such great magnitude that it does not leave me even for one moment." [*Seeratul Mahdi*]

This overwhelming concern which erased all other thoughts from the Promised Messiah's^{as} mind is the same concern which should consume his followers as well. Our Master expects us to guide the world not through logic and reasoning but through the way we carry ourselves and the way we sacrifice our lives for God. We are being asked to shoulder an awesome responsibility. The Promised Messiah^{as} lived a life conforming to the highest moral standards set by Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa^{saw}. The Promised Messiah^{as} has exhorted and challenged us to bring about the real change within ourselves to set ourselves apart from the rest of the world.

A few weeks ago, scores of Ahmadis laid down their lives in two mosques in Pakistan for the sake of their faith. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}, extolling their qualities, has reminded us of our obligation to Allah and His Messiah. The best tribute that I can offer to those martyrs who spilled their blood that fateful day is to bring upon a profound change within myself. Sacrificing my lowly desires and reviving the highest morals within me and I cannot think of a better retribution for those enemies than conforming to the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}. So the *Zikr* of my beloved is not mere lip service but the love for my Master entwines with every fiber of my very being. *Allahumma salli ala Muhammadawiwa ala aali Muhammadawiwa ala abdikal Masihil Maud wa barik wa sallim innaka Hameedum Majeed.*

CONCLUDING ADDRESS OF DR. AHSANULLAH ZAFAR, AMEER JAMA'AT USA AT THE 62nd JALSA SALANA USA

Transcribed by: Mansura Bashir Minhas

We are coming to the conclusion of the *Jalsa*- the 62nd Annual *Jalsa* of the USA Jamaat and we are celebrating it in the tradition of Hadhat Masih Mau'ood^{as}, the way he started it and the way he asked his followers to do at that time in India. And since then through the *Khulafa* throughout the world. We recognize all those who are here today as participants in the *Jalsa*, in our prayers and we would recognize those who have passed away also when we do the concluding prayers and that would include the *Shuhada* of Lahore especially. Firstly, the attendance by the scanning tags for this *Jalsa* is 6,131 for all three days. The peak attendance though was yesterday, which was around 5,500.

The number of international *Jama'ats* which are represented here, I am told are 21, where we have visitors from these *Jama'ats*. But in particular, I would like to recognize from Qadian, Burhan Ahmad Zafar Sahib, who is Nazir-e-Isha'at, Qadian, Qari Nawab Sahib, who is *Sadar Ansarullah*, Baharat, I believe he has also helped us with our Quran classes at Baitur Rahman. From Rabwah, Mansoor Ahmad Khan Sahib, who is dear to a lot of people over here -a wonderful man, he is the *Wakeel-ul-*

Tabsheer and Mirza Fazal Ahmad Sahib, who is the *Wakeelul Maal*, and we are guided by him very much. From Canada, we have especially, Malik Lal Khan Sahib, who is the *Ameer Jama'at*, we are happy and thrilled that he is here. Also Mubarak Nazir Sahib, who is the Missionary In charge in Canada, and Salim Akhtar Sahib, who is the Principal of *Jamia Ahmadiyya*, Canada. From Germany, we have Ilyas Munir Sahib, from Guatemala, Abdus Sattar Khan Sahib, who is the Ameer and Missionary In charge in Guatemala. From Japan, we have Asmatullah Sahib and others and Asmatullah Sahib is the same gentleman who thrills us with his recitations of the poems of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

One cannot help talking about the happenings in Lahore and what it means to us and how we should reflect on it. I am grateful that Shamshad Nasir Sahib and Naseem Mahdi Sahib have illustrated the subject very well. There is the issue

of Khalil Solangi Sahib who was from America and you wonder that he went all the way to the other side of the globe and on that particular day, he had to be in that particular mosque and meet his *Shahadat*.

In a way it is glorious. But in a way, it highlights the fact that life and death are in God's hands. And being killed, especially killed thus would particularly qualify for the Qur'anic verse which is quoted here, and I'll come to this later on:

“Whosoever killed a person, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind”.

This is a very dramatic analysis of the death of one human being, and we have 85 of them who died in Lahore in one single episode, not one blast, there were few of them. Masih Mau'ood^{as} has very emphatically stated that not a leaf on any tree moves without the 'Izn' of Allah. And that there are angels who guide the movement of every particle in the universe. That is a very mighty statement, but if we reflect on it, we can understand what the magnitude of what happened in Lahore really comes down to. And what an enormous occurrence it was. These people, although they acted by their own

free will (who did these heinous acts), could not have done that unless Allah Himself allowed it.

It brings a meaning that Allah has a purpose to that. He does not allow things without a purpose; we all understand that. But it is for us to figure it out and it is not an easy task. But certainly the reflections which were made earlier by our Missionaries, and in a different way by Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad Sahib, they illustrate the complexity of the subject and bring the reflection that we have to be guided by what Masih Mau'ood^{as} has said is the purpose of the Jamaat. These things could not have happened unless the purposes of the *Jama'at* which are so codified in the statements of Hadhrat Mash Mau'ood^{as}, unless those purposes were to be strengthened and fulfilled and enhanced in some way. Now there are ways in which we do see some changes. There are most ways in which we don't see changes and after every thing is said and done, there is a pain that goes with it. And we have to figure out how we are going to use that pain to enhance the promises of Allah to Masih Mau'ood^{as} about *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya.

One thing which I wonder a lot about and I think there are many members here who do the same thing I'm sure, is that you know when such a thing happens, how does Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih Khamis^{aba} feel about it. And I could not help thinking when earlier in the

speech, the episodes of how Hadhrat Bilal^{ra} and other companions of *Rasulallah*^{saw} in the early days, how they were manhandled and mishandled in Mecca and *Rasulallah*^{saw} had to be aware of that. And you wonder how he felt and how he dealt with it. I don't think the way Hadhrat Sahib is dealing with these things is any different. It causes a lot of pain and I'm sure he turns towards prayers and he has in his own way, narrated that by going through the brief summary of the lives and perhaps how they died, for each of the *Shuhada* in Lahore over the last many, many *Khutbas*. As a matter of fact, the entire *Khutba* is devoted to that description and that tells you how much he regards them and how he considers them. But then he sent us a message which was read at the beginning and he has moved now to a phase and that is where we need to focus and that is where we need to take our analysis of Allah's purposes and what he is saying is first he prayed for us- the Ahmadi Muslims who are here in the USA and then he told us to convey the message to the masses at large, who are not understanding what we

stand for. And the interesting thing to me is, he talked about praying for them towards the end of his message and the way I would interpret that is that you start with prayers but then you have to convey the message to a large number of people and then pray again and that is how Allah's blessings would come and *Insha Allah* they will.

In this context, there are efforts under way and the media team along with help from Naseem Mehdi Sahib and others, there is a whole number of people who are involved. They have developed this one brochure- Muslims for Peace. Now there are other brochures as well and I'm not saying that this has to be done exclusively, but they have this brochure and in the back they have the phone number and there is a web page which is linked to it and the different *Jama'ats* and Missionaries can choose to modify it as they like. But there is a need to convey the message to our neighbors, to our local communities, to local press and we have a very good illustration. I believe the links are widely available to download and view for anybody where Mahdi Sahib and others have gone to the television, to the media and propounded what we stand for as Ahmadi Muslims. And the message has resonated very well especially in the background of the attempted terrorism in New York City by an unfortunate Pakistani Muslim, who I don't need to go into the detail. But that is what in the background has

sensitized everyone and our message with the grace of Allah is getting across as to what we stand for. And although we had been saying the same things before but it is being said in a better way and it is being said in that background. I would encourage our members to promote that with the structure of the organization and besides Mahdi Sahib, Wasim Malik Sahib from San Jose and Dr. Nasim Rehmatullah Sahib from Cleveland, they are very actively involved in it, and I'm sure they will help you in any guidance you need or any support you need.

There is one other aspect again in the same context. A significant number of non-Ahmadi Muslims, who were blinded to us, to an extent they are still blinded to us over the years, they have some sympathy for our existence at least, if not our views. And there is no reason why we should not reach out and connect with them and other Muslims. After all, we are Muslims and here in the United States we have no difficulty in stating that. And just share the common beliefs that we have. This is what the Qur'anic teaching is as well. Talk about those things on which we agree, and there is just about everything that we agree on, it's only really relatively minor things, which are important, but that is where the disagreement is. And we can connect with them on things where we do agree.

As we close with the final prayers, I would like to recognize all the

workers and all the participants. The preparations and the conduct of the *Jama'at* is done with enormous enthusiasm by a lot of people, young and old. And every effort is made so things proceed smoothly and by and large they do. But circumstances arise where some difficulties are faced by workers as well as by the guests. To the workers, my encouragement is, be patient and may Allah reward you for your work and your patience. For the guests, I also request you to be patient and may Allah reward you for your patience. To an extent these things cannot be helped.

I understand yesterday in the afternoon we had a very nice session where outside guests- non Ahmadis, non Muslim guests were invited, and there was a group of about 150 of them who came. And this was a dinner meeting and the *Lajna* nursery was displaced and the meeting had to be conducted over there, which caused a lot of grief and especially by mothers who had little babies. And I heard a comment that perhaps they should ask the fathers to come and take care of the babies, so that there is no inhibition at the

meeting. Now I don't think that is practical but I do wish to extend my sympathy for what happened and *Insha Allah* next year we will have to plan for it. But whatever the difficulties there were, may Allah bring His rewards down on everybody who suffered the difficulty and even those who caused the difficulty.

Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad Sahib illustrated the example of the Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}, how he prayed for even those who opposed him in a very serious way. And this is nothing near that, whatever happened to any given individual. So let's pray for everyone, and let's pray for a peaceful and a safe return of all participants to their homes and their safety and welfare throughout, after that as well. So please join me in silent prayer.

Hadhrat Abu Dharr^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said: "Each and every part of your body can be a part of good works and charity. Each Glorification of Allah is charity, every utterance of praise of Him is charity, every profession of His Oneness is charity, saying Allah is the Greatest is charity, enjoining good is charity, forbidding evil is also charity. To offer two *rak'at* Prayer at the time of forenoon is equal to all the above good deeds combined."

(Muslim kitabus salat bab istihbab salatudduha... alkh)

62nd Jalsa Salana USA, 2010

A Report from Lajna Imaillah, USA

Shahina Bashir

The 62nd *Jalsa Salana* of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA was held at the Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, VA from July 16-18. Alhamdulillah, the *Jalsa* was a great success and was attended by 6,131 members, of which, about 3000 were women. The *Jalsa* attendees not only came from all over the USA, but also from Canada, Europe, and Asia- a total of 21 countries were represented. The Promised Messiah^{as} had said that the purpose of this convention is *"to enable every sincere individual to personally experience religious benefits."* He further said, *"Among its secondary benefits is that this congregational meeting together will promote mutual introduction among all brothers, and it will strengthen the fraternal ties with this Community."* Just as the Promised Messiah^{as} had said, there was indeed an atmosphere of sisterhood which prevailed throughout the *Jalsa*. Friends and family met each other. Some saw each other after a year.

In keeping with the Qur'anic injunction of separation of genders, the *Lajna* had their own hall throughout the *Jalsa*. The volunteers contributed many hours in preparation of the *Jalsa* site as well as maintaining the general discipline during the *Jalsa*. The following is an overview of the different areas of the Ladies Hall.

Registration

There were two registration areas which were set up for the convenience of the members. The "Blue Entrance" was for the general attendees, while the "Red Entrance" was designated for those who had children under the age of 7. To help in the smooth flow of the registration/entry process, volunteers were posted outside the hall to direct the ladies to the registration areas. Those who had registered online were ushered to enter through one area while those who had to register on site were asked to use a separate entrance. As many members had registered online, the process of entrance was easy and enabled a smooth flow of traffic. It is notable to mention that the registration booth was closed 5 minutes prior to the *Jumu'ah* Prayer. Tarp was provided near the registration area for ladies to sit and listen to the sermon as well as to offer the *salat*. This process resulted in the observance of complete silence and discipline during the sermon which is part of the *Jumu'ah* Prayer.

Security

In light of the recent attacks on the Ahmadiyya mosques in Lahore, a tighter security system was adopted to ensure the safety of the guests. Besides the mandatory bag checks, members were also subjected to scanning by metal detectors. There were two volunteers posted at each entrance who conducted the scans. Each gate had 3 to 4 volunteers for bag checks. This number helped in maintaining a steady flow of guests. Card scanners were available in two areas in the main *Jalsa* area and one in the Children's area.

Discipline

Discipline of the Ladies Hall was impeccably monitored thanks to the dedicated volunteers. The team was divided into two-one for the *Jalsa Gah* and one for the corridor. The *Jalsa Gah* had five gates and 2-3 volunteers were posted at each of the gates. The discipline was very good in the main *Jalsa* area as was in the corridors.

Children's Area

Mothers with children younger than 7 years of age were given a separate area. Four conference rooms were used for mothers with young children with complete audio/visual feed. A projection screen was used between two rooms and separate TV monitors were provided in the second two rooms. The children's area

was also equipped with refrigerator and microwave. Snacks were made available for the children and they were given coloring books and crayons to keep themselves occupied.

Ziafat

This year meals were divided into two shifts to lessen the crowd impact in the dining hall. A separate area was provided for guests but the food was the same as for the rest of the attendees. To reduce wastage, food was pre-packed in small boxes. This system also allowed the quick movement of people through the dining hall. An overflow area was used for elderly ladies as well as mothers with young children. This area was available as a rest area for the elderly and food was allowed during meal times.

Booths

As in the past several booths were set up at the Ladies Hall during the *Jalsa*. The following is a brief overview of the booths.

Bookstall

The bookstall had a variety of collection of books and magazines for sale. There were both books in English and in Urdu.

Exhibition

As always, the exhibition stall has been a popular stall to visit. Our *Lajna* members have been generous in donating clothing, jewelry and other items for this stall.

Hospitality

The Hospitality team has been busy catering to the needs of the non-Ahmadi/non-Muslim guests at the

Jalsa. All guests were asked to visit the Hospitality booth where they were given gift bags containing Muslim Sunrise and Ayesha magazines and the book, "Faith Affirmed". The guests had a separate seating area in the *Jalsa Gah*. Hospitality team members sat with the guests and also accompanied them to the dining area during meal times. This year there were 50 guests who attended the *Jalsa*.

Fundraising

The fundraising stall is always a success, particularly with children. Pizza, *samosas*, *chana chat*, drinks, and ice cream were some of the items which were sold at the stall. Apart from the food fundraising, tote bags were sold for \$1 a bag. The proceeds from the sale of the bags went directly to *Syedena Bilal Fund*.

Youth

This was the second year that there was a stall for the youth (15-25 yrs). The main purpose of this booth was to let everyone be aware about the activities in which the youth are involved. Posters displayed pictures of the *Lajna* taken at the various youth camps. The booth also sold T-shirts. This year the youth took part in a social event on Friday evening. There were about 200 young *La-*

jna from all over the country who participated in this special event. Sadr *Lajna* USA, Dr. Shanaz Butt Sahiba, attended this function along with the Youth In-Charge, Sister Ruqaiya Asad. The purpose of this social gathering was to encourage the young members of the *Lajna* to get to know each other and develop a bond of friendship. They were also encouraged to ask questions and speak their mind.

Lajna Media Watch (LMW)

The purpose of this booth was to encourage *Lajna* members to sign up to become members of the *Lajna* Media Watch team. A slide presentation about LMW was displayed which gave an overview of what LMW is. Several new members signed up to join LMW.

Other Booths

Humanity First, Homeopathy, First Aid, Transportation/Accommodation, and *Rishta/Nata* were other stalls in the Ladies *Jalsa* Hall.

Jalsa Program

The *Jalsa* session commenced on Friday afternoon with speeches, from the men's session being transmitted via MTA. *Lajna* had an all day program on Saturday which included spiritually inspiring speeches, poems, and award ceremonies. The theme of the speeches during the *Lajna* session was *taqwa* (righteousness). The morning session was presided by Sadr *Lajna Imaillah*, USA Dr. Shanaz Butt, and Qanta Zafar Sahiba, wife of our Respected *Ameer Jama'at* USA, Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar Sahib. The afternoon session was presided by Respected Sahibzadi Amtul

Rasheed Ahmad Sahiba and *Sadr Sahiba*.

The first speech was delivered by Sister Roohul Ameen of Orlando. The topic of her speech was, "The Holy Qur'an: A guide to the right path." She explained in great details the clear guidance set forth in the last book of Allah which is the ultimate manual for treading on the straight path- a path which leads one directly to Him.

Sister Khaula Shah of Syracuse gave a speech on the topic of "The Holy Prophet^{saws}: His Life was the Holy Qur'an". She expounded on the beautiful character of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and how his life was a reflection of the Qur'an. She quoted a *Hadith* narrated by Hadhrat Ayesha^{ra} in which she says that someone asked her about the life and character of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. She simply replied, "**His life was the Qur'an**".

The next speech was by Sister Attiya Salik of Northern Virginia and she spoke on the topic of "Allah is the Friend of the Believers." In her speech she reminded the audience about the importance of trusting Allah and taking Him as a true Friend and not being swayed by the material world. The verse she quoted in the beginning of her speech, "Allah is the friend of those who believe: He brings them out of every *kind* of darkness into light. And those who disbelieve, their friends are the transgressors who bring them out of light into every *kind* of darkness. These are the inmates of the Fire; therein shall they abide," [2:258] was an instant reminder that it is Allah alone who is a sincere Friend of the believers

and it is only in Him that one should place his/her trust.

Amtul Hai Ahmad Sahiba, *Na'ib Sadr, Lajna Imaillah*, USA delivered a speech on *taqwa* or righteousness. The title of her speech was, "The best provision is *taqwa* (righteousness)". In explaining the meaning of *taqwa* she said, "In the Arabic language, *taqwa* literally means to "safeguard" and to "abstain" but conventionally it is a condition of the heart which avidly stimulates towards goodness and simultaneously creates disgust and aversion towards evil. Without this fundamental feeling, a pure and living relationship with Almighty God is simply unattainable." She spoke about the characteristics of a righteous person.

Sister Sana Rahman of Pittsburgh gave a speech titled, "Understanding Our True Purpose in Life". She spoke about how in today's world many people understand the purpose of life from a materialistic perspective and are in a rat race competing with each other in worldly gains. Sister Sana Rahman laid down the eight means of achieving the purpose of life as explained by the Promised Messiah^{as}.

The final and keynote

speech was delivered by *Sadr Lajna Imaillah*, USA, Dr. Shanaz Butt Sahiba. The title of her speech was, "Distinct Qualities of the Maid Servants of Allah". Sadr Sahiba reminded the *Lajna* what the true meaning of calling oneself *Lajna Imaillah* or Maid Servants of Allah, is. She emphasized the importance of being truthful in every aspect of one's life. In her speech she quoted Khalifatul Masih IV^{ra} who advised the ladies in these words: "Live a balanced life and walk carefully, with cautious steps on the tight rope: taking care of one's relationship with God on one hand, and taking care of one's relationship with human beings on the other, in perfect balance and order – this is the true meaning of '*taqwa*.'"

Apart from the speeches mentioned above, two new Ahmadi sisters also gave their own testimonies of how they accepted Ahmadiyyat. The speakers were Sister Leila El-Khalil of Detroit and Sister Laila Isack of Phoenix.

Awards and Recognitions

As in each year, the *Nasirat* who completed their first reading of the Holy Qur'an were recognized at the *Jalsa*, Ladies session on Saturday. Fifty-eight *Nasirat* participated in this ceremony. They received a copy of Holy Qur'an with English translation by Maulvi Sher Ali Sahib and had the opportunity to meet with Sahibzadi Amtul Rasheed Ahmad Sahiba. This was indeed an honor for the girls since it was she who made the suggestion to Hadhrat Musleh Mau-'ood^{ra} that an auxiliary for young girls be established.

Lajna who had received distinctions in their academic achievements were also recognized. This year 19 Holy Qur'an teachers were awarded certificates for their achievements. Forty *Lajna* and older *Nasirat* were given certificates of achievement for successfully completing the *Hifz-e-Qur'an* program.

As always, our new Ahmadi sisters were recognized during the Saturday program. This year 12 new Ahmadi sisters came to the stage and met Sahibzadi Amtul Rasheed Sahiba and received gift bags.

Jalsa Conclusion

The 62nd *Jalsa Salana* concluded on Sunday, the 18th of July with an address by Respected *Ameer Sahib*. With reference to the brutal attacks in Lahore on the Ahmadiyya mosques, he said that since nothing happens without the will of Allah, that there is a specific purpose behind this incidence. He reminded us that the message of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih^{aba}, read out in the opening session, was very clear and that it is the duty of every Ahmadi to convey the message of Islam to the mass at large. At the end of his speech he led the audience in silent prayers.

May Allah bless the volunteers and the attendees of the *Jalsa* and make them the flag bearers of the message of true Islam, Ahmadiyyat. *Ameen*.

A TRIBUTE TO THE MARTYRS OF LAHORE (AND THEIR LOVED ONES)

Waseem Ahmad, Greenwood, Indiana

This is to every mother, every daughter, every wife
Who paid the highest price of love, in this very life

This is to their heads still held so bravely high
This is to every tear that did not leave their eye

This is to the youths too young to fathom why
In Allah's own house, their fathers had to die

This is to the daughter waking in dark to quietly cry
I wish it wasn't him; I wish it was I – I wish it was I

This is to the pallid lips that praised the Lord
With every last breath – with every last sigh

This is to those who heard and answered the call
Those who had hate for none, and had love for all

This is to those who stood firm, and stood so tall
When the bullets went on flying among them all

This is to every drop of innocent blood on the floor
Of each one of those two noble Mosques in Lahore

I smell their sweet fragrance reaching the sky
These blossoms will bring fruit as time goes by

But as for every bullet and every cursed sword
That is aimed at those who only love their Lord:

Their fate is dust and rust, after the battle cry
Come see: Allah's flag will keep soaring high

Doomed is every dark heart and every blind eye
Our love is bound to win, no matter what they try

As day surely follows night, so does this law apply
Those who give Allah their all, they never really die

This is from my heart - to the Martyrs of Lahore
This is my tribute to you - this is not a good-bye

THE HOLY QUR'AN: A GUIDE TO THE RIGHT PATH

Roohul Ameen

As I was gathering my thoughts on the subject of: "The Holy Qur'an - A Guide to the Right Path," I recalled a TV commercial for a financial investment company. In the ad, a man signs a contract with a particular firm. As the investment agent walks him out of the office, she points outside and reminds him to simply follow the green arrow along the ground. As long as he stays on the green path, and follows the conditions set in his contract, he will be financially secure. However, if he decides to give into impulse and steps out of the boundaries of the path, his financial future will be in at risk and, most importantly, the company will not be responsible to cover for any loss. He is protected as long as he stays on the green path, and only then will his wealth grow and only then will he enjoy the financial rewards.

My dear sisters, we are insured by Allah Almighty. We need not wander aimlessly through life because the green path which we have to follow for success is one that is far, far more powerful and extends its affect in the life of this world to the life of the hereafter. There is no fine print involved in our contract, our coverage is not limited by the amount of premium that we can afford to pay, and there is none other than we who are the full beneficiaries of the profits.

Our spiritual and secular future and security depend on our ability to follow that right path to attain salva-

tion. We have our guidance from Almighty Allah, our Creator, who is *Al-Muhaymin*: The Care-Taker, *Al-Wakil*: The Trustee, and *Al-Waliyy*: The Protector and Support. Everyone who submits to Him, every man and every woman, whether young or old, healthy or weak, is eligible for His Guidance and His Rewards. Our Lord is such that even if we falter or stray from the path but then re-seek His Grace, He is *Al-Ghaffar*, the Forgiver and we will be secure with Him. The doors are always open for repentance.

There is only one condition: that we resign ourselves to His Power. Only then will we receive His Care, His Protection, His Trust, His Protection and His Support.

The actions we take and the decisions we make here on earth, will not only affect our quality of life in this world but will also determine our fate in our life after death. Thus, if we realize the temporality of life on earth and deem it important what happens to our soul after our passing, it is imperative that we seek out and adhere to that path which will ultimately lead

us closer to *Allah Ta'ala*, in a place guaranteed to His Prophets and the Rightly Guided.

Now the question arises: What is this path, where does it lead, and most importantly, where can we get the roadmap?

Allah Ta'ala has the answers to all of these questions and He has laid them out for us in His Words in the Holy Qur'an.

In *Surah Al-Baqrah*, *Allah Ta'ala* introduces Himself:

اَللّٰهُ

Alif laam meem - I am Allah, the All-Knowing, the Wise.

Next, He introduces His Scripture:

ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ

Zaa likal kitaabu laa raiba feeh - This is a perfect book, there is no doubt in it.

And in the very next verse:

هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ

Hudallil muttaqeen - It is a guidance for the righteous.

Our Creator, Allah Almighty has provided us with the '*Khatam-ul-Qur'an*,' the last, the perfect, and the matchless book of guidance for all mankind. Not only that, He has made

clear that He Himself will be responsible for its safeguard:

“Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We will be its Guardians.” (15:10)

Our Promised Messiah^{as} explains, “The Holy Qur’an is so glorious that none other can excel in its glory. It is *Hakam*, that is, the one whose judgment is ultimate; and it is *Muhaimin*, that is, the compendium of all guidance. Therein is found every argument one may require.” (*Khutba-e-Ilhamiya p. 103*)

Let us, for a moment, turn to the Holy Qur’an to seek an answer to a question asked by each one of us at one time or another: what is the purpose of our creation? In the Holy Qur’an, *Allah Ta’ala* informs mankind that they have been granted special distinction, above all the rest of creation. Chapter 45, verse 13 reads: “And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all from Himself.” (45:13) If all other creation has been made subservient to mankind, then we must have been created with a greater purpose. Human intellect tells us that that purpose goes beyond the pursuit of worldly possessions.

We now know that the universe took billions of years to assemble for the arrival of mankind. Was this only so that we could just eat, drink, get married, have kids, and make some worldly progress? Although these are all essential components of life, our intellect says that we were not created only to perform a few bodily functions and fade into the dust. We cannot limit ourselves to worldly goals and ambitions, can we? No.

Allah Ta’ala lays it out precisely:

“I have created men and jinn so that they may know Me and worship Me.” (51:57)

When, as *Allah Ta’ala* says, man does not come into the world on his accord, nor will he depart there from of his own will, then how can man be in a position to appoint the purpose of his own life? The Holy Qur’an establishes that from the very beginning, the very purpose of the creation of man is to establish communion and communication with God Almighty. Despite ones best and most sincere efforts, one cannot succeed without Allah’s grace, mercy, and help. If we hearken Him and believe in Him, we will follow the right way and attain peace in this world and in the hereafter.

The methods and guidelines with which to worship *Allah Ta’ala* and thereby gain His pleasure are set forth in the Holy Quran regardless of gender. It is made clear that God has given equality to both men and women.

“I shall not lose sight of the labor of any of you who labors in My way, be it man or woman; each of you is equal to the other.” (3:195)

How beautifully balanced the Holy Qur’an is

with matters of gender!

Let me now turn my attention to us, the women of *Lajna Ima’illah*, the Maidservants of Allah. My sisters, we occupy a vast number of roles and responsibilities. We are daughters, sisters, wives, daughters-in-law, mothers, and mothers-in-law. We are students, we are professionals, and we are homemakers. Seeing this list, it seems most necessary that a woman be brought into this world with a guidebook to life. As Muslim women, we have that guidebook in the form of the glorious Holy Qur’an.

Allah Ta’ala has given us rights equal to those of men. This is a source of great honor, given to us only by the religion of our Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. Thus, we must always continue to strive to perfect our being because our future generations depend on us exercising our God-given responsibilities to the fullest.

As Ahmadi Muslims, we pledge to abide by the 6th condition of *Bai’at*: that we shall completely submit ourselves to the authority of the Holy Qur’an and make it the guiding principle in every walk of our lives.

At the inductions of *Lajna Ima’illah* as an auxiliary of the *Jama’at*, Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} explained his reasoning:

“Reflection will show that most women do not realize if there is any work to be done other than the daily chores.”

Here, almost 90 years have passed since the beginning of *Lajna Ima’illah*. As Maidservants of Allah, we need to self-reflect in all honesty. Once we recognize the extraordinary

role we play in society, we realize the importance of being led by a code of life that encompasses guidance to all our roles and extends its benefits from us, to our families, to our future generations, and to our souls. Let us make a concerted effort to represent ourselves as the living picture of the Holy Qur'an, to our families and to the world.

The Holy Qur'an is such a compass, that no matter which stage of life we find ourselves in right now, it will always be a living source of guidance for comfort and peace. The wisdom and guidance laid therein is as applicable to us today as it was to the women of Arabia almost 1500 years ago at its revelation. The Holy Quran itself states: "Therein are lasting commandments." (98:4) It is for us a great honor that the first teacher of this Holy Book, after Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, is his wife, Hadhrat Ayesha^{ra}. Her knowledge and practice of the Holy Qur'an was such that Muhammad^{saw} said to his apostles: "Learn half of the Qur'an from Ayesha."

There are over 700 commands contained in the Holy Qur'an, so for your benefit and mind, let me share a few of those precious principles. First and foremost, we must be diligent in our worship of *Allah Ta'ala*, as He says in Surah Ankabut:

"Recite that which has been revealed to thee of the Book, and observe Prayer. Surely Prayer restrains one from indecency and manifest evil, and remembrance of Allah indeed, is the greatest virtue." (29:46)

The Holy Prophet^{saw} said: 'Next to faith in Allah, the best quality is kindness towards people.' The Holy Qur'an states:

"Verily, Allah enjoins justice, and the doing of good to others and giving like kinders; and manifest evil, and wrongful transgression." (16:91)

To avoid such wrongful transgressions, we must seek to live by the highest levels of truthfulness, as *Allah Ta'ala* commands:

"Fear Allah and say the right word." (33:71)

To protect ourselves and live in the manner of the wives of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, we must maintain our modesty:

"Say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their chastity." (24:21)

This is the wisdom of *Allah Ta'ala*, that even before we open our mouth to speak, our dress and demeanor portray Islam to a T.

Our speech, both in public and in private, should reflect the way of the righteous. And we must not stop there. Our actions should speak louder than our words. Allah says in *Surah Al-Imran*:

"Never shall you attain to righteousness unless you spend out of what you love." (3:93)

At every stage of our lives, our decisions should model those of our beloved

Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, who was described by his wife as the "True Picture of the Qur'an." Thus, we must enjoin good and forbid evil. *Surah Al-Maida* states:

"Help one another in righteousness and piety; but help not one another in sin and transgression." (5:3)

Every part of us, from our words (spoken or unspoken) to our actions (even the most discrete) should reflect the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. In the words of the Promised Messiah^{as}, a believer should "make his manners and character so excellent that they became contagious."

A high level of humbleness can only be achieved when one possesses a personal love of God and complete submission to Him. We must occupy ourselves in *Zikr*- the Remembrance of Allah, as it is our life's purpose to worship and glorify Him. Chapter 13, verse 29 reads:

"Aye! It is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort." (13:29)

This is the most important element of *Jihad* for a woman: to possess and maintain such characteristics as were the staple of those upon whom God's favors descended. We must always keep a firm focus on ourselves and on our futures and play an active part in our homes to practice and preach the Holy Qur'an in obedience to the command:

"O ye who believe, save yourselves and your family from fire." (66:7)

I was 2 or 3 years old when my *Ammi Jan* taught me the *nazm* by Dr.

Mir Muhammad Ismael Sahib^{ra}.



Qur'an is the best of all, Qur'an is the most dear

Qur'an is the strength of the heart,
Qur'an is the support

At the time, all my attention was on trying to follow the sweet melody of my *Ammi Jan's* voice.

It is a letter from Allah, which has come in my name
Dear teacher, teach me quickly its recitation

I did not have the sense then to understand the meaning of the poem, but my *Ammi Jan* knew her responsibility as a mother to plant the seed of the love of the Holy Qur'an in my heart. Over time, I would look back on that moment, and think what a beautiful message to inculcate into the conscience of a child.

Truly, the holy book is a letter, from none other than Allah Almighty Himself, the sole creator of the heavens and the earth and everything that exists therein. What could be more profound than finding a letter from Allah in our name?

The sudden and tragic events of Lahore and the martyrdom of almost a hundred of our men and boys have again shifted great responsibility to the women. The ultimate sacrifice, and the resolve of our mothers and sisters to remain steadfast on the path of righteousness has never been stronger. Our brothers, fathers, un-

cles, husbands, fathers-in-law have given the ultimate sacrifice and the burden is on us to ensure that we continue to nurture our future generations by cultivating in them the Words of our *Allah Ta'ala*.

We are witness to this that no matter what size thorns are placed in our path, our *Khalifa* of the time has always returned our attention to *Allah Ta'ala* and his worship in the manner of the Holy Qur'an. I quote from *Surah Al-Imran*:

“Be steadfast and strive to excel in steadfastness and be on your guard..” (3:201)

The urgency of steering ourselves in the right direction becomes apparent if we realize the temporality of life on earth. Our life here is only a drop of water compared to the waters of the vast oceans.

Here let me share with you a recent personal story which is an example of the great comfort and guidance received from the words of *Allah Ta'ala* during a time of hardship. My younger sister was expecting her first child and due to complications, delivered a still-born son after 9 months.

This was a time of deep sorrow for the entire family and we all tried to comfort her in our own ways. Yet the grief was

such that we felt we could not find the right words to console her.

My daughter called me from back home and during our talk, she mentioned these verses which she was assigned to cover for our *Lajna* meeting:

We will try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and fruits; but give glad tidings to the patient, who, when misfortune overtakes them, say ‘Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.’ (2:156-157)

After pondering over the message, and re-reading the verse, we were overcome with comfort and a sense of peace. Although we had read this section of the Holy Qur'an many, many times before, the depth of the message was felt in our hearts for the first time. No words of ours could match the power of *Allah Ta'ala's* decree. We were reminded that whatever the trial, we must be patient and submit ourselves wholly to the will of Allah.

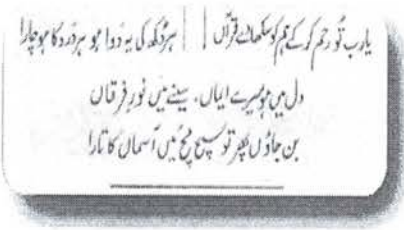
Promised Messiah^{as} writes, “The meaning of the Holy Qur'an are unfolded as demand is created according to the changing times and stand guard like well-armed soldiers against the insinuations and aspersion cast in every age.” (Izala-e-Auham Part 1 pg. 255)

It is true that the Holy Qur'an is a Living Book: every recitation uncovers a new jewel, a new vision made clear to us based on our situation, our experiences, our level of spiritual development.

So, my dear sisters, as I conclude, let us keep in our minds that green path, the ultimate path shown to us by none other than Allah Almighty. And the guidance of *Allah Ta'ala* is preserved in the perfect book, the Holy

Qur'an. It is a treasure trove of knowledge and wisdom. It contains for us our rights, responsibilities, and the means with which to seek the guidance of our Creator and with which to seek His Mercy. It is a compass of righteousness like none other.

Here I would like to add a few verses of the same poem my dear *Am-mi Jan* taught me in my early years and use this as a prayer for us all:



Ya Rab tu rahm kar kay, humko
sikhaday Qur'an

Har dukh ki yay dawa ho, har dard ka
ho chara

Dil main ho meray iman, seenay main
noor-e-furqan

Banjaoon phir to sach much, main
aasman ka tara

O Lord, with your mercy, teach us the
Qur'an

May it be the remedy for every sor-
row, a cure for every pain

In my heart may there be faith, in my
chest the splendor of the Qur'an

Then may I truly become, a star in the
sky

And I end with the words of the
Promised Messiah^{as}:

“My heart yearns every moment to
kiss Thy Book;

And to perform circuits around the
Qur'an, for this is my Ka'bah.”

دل میں یہی ہے ہر دم تیرا صحیفہ پڑھوں
قرآن کے گرد گھوموں کعبہ مرا یہی ہے

AN INTERFAITH EVENT HELD IN PORTLAND, OR

Harris Zafar, Tabligh Secretary

An incredibly successful Interfaith Event was held in Portland. This was by far the largest attendance we ever had at any of our events. About 450 guests came to our Masjid for this Interfaith program. We had setup every chair we had in the Masjid and rented 200 additional chairs, but these proved to be insufficient. After seating everyone upstairs (the meeting site) we arranged additional seating downstairs with a live video feed. After that filled up, we sat everyone at the courtyard next to the *Masjid*. Once that filled up, then we sat people in our lower parking lot, When chairs ran out many people stood up.

To plan this event, I spoke with about 20 different religious organizations and, subsequently, lined up 11 guest speakers who were leaders from their respective organizations. We had leaders from not only three interfaith organizations but also four Christian denominations, two different Jewish communities and two different Buddhist communities. And the President of our Jama'at asked me to speak on behalf of the Islamic community. We were overwhelmed with other Christian communities wanting their leaders or senior ministers to speak. I had to respectfully decline their requests for speaking after we got the speaker list up to 12.

All three major TV news stations (ABC, NBC and CBS) came to cover the event, and stayed for the entire hour-and-a-half program, which included speeches and prayers. None of the three stations have put the video on their website yet, but I recorded them last night, and they did a great job covering our program.

The response from those who attended the Interfaith Event was nothing but positive. Not only were people shocked that we were able to pull this off in just one week but they were touched and appreciative of our willingness to reach out and work with others to make this event a possibility. People were looking for ways to express their feelings about the Qur'an Burning story, and they found this event to be the perfect reaction to it. The event itself was successful because of the tremendous display of teamwork from the *Jama'at*. Whether they were *Khuddam*, *Lajna*, *Ansar* or *Atfal*, everyone chipped in and worked incredibly hard that I am humbled at their dedication of service. Please pray for everyone in this Portland *Jama'at*. For a *Jama'at* as small of us to execute this event so well is truly an amazing feat.

This event has proven to us what happens when one says "*Labaik*" to the call from the *Khalifa*. If Hazaar^{aba} had not given us the guidance of doing something about the Qur'an burning story, we would not have even thought that we could hold such an incredibly successful event in just 7 days. But in these 7 days, not only did we gain the attention, acceptance and excitement of all religious communities in Portland, we were the premier Muslim group to capture the attention of the media for *Eid* and 9/11. May Allah continue to bless Portland with great success. May He continue to keep our relationship strong with *Khilafat*. And may He accept our humble efforts to work in His cause. *Ameen*.

THE HOLY PROPHET^{saw}: HIS LIFE WAS THE HOLY QUR'AN

Dr. Khaula Rehman Shah (Vestal NY)

Before the birth of the Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, Arabs were drowning in all sorts of moral depravities and their society was declining fast. The poor and the needy were ignored. Women had no rights or say. Birth of a daughter was considered a stigma and in many instances the female infants were buried alive. Rich people had slaves and treated them harshly and unfairly. The rich and the powerful lived lavishly and the poor and the weak lived in the service of those warlords. It was in such a society that God sent the Holy Prophet^{saw} with a message of change. The Holy Prophet^{saw} not only delivered the message, he became a living manifestation of this message.

Once, someone asked Hadhrat Ayesha^{ra} about the life and character of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. She simply replied, "His life was the Qur'an". In this short answer lies the truth about the life of the greatest of the Prophets. He lived according to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. He was the perfect follower of his own teachings. To know him is to know the Qur'an and to know the Qur'an is to know him.

This article will highlight his personality as a man, as a simple servant of God and as a humble person who lived all his life among his followers and enemies as a true man. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} was a great benefactor of mankind, and throughout his life he helped the poor and the needy to his utmost ability. He was the most kind and compassionate person who ever appeared in the history. The Qur'an bears witness to this

fact. It says,

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝

'You surely possess the highest moral excellences' (68:5).

Before his ministry, Muhammad was trusted, respected and liked by the people of Mecca. Once he declared his Prophethood, all Meccans turned against him. They considered him an enemy of their elders and their traditions. They tried every trick to persuade him to give up his mission. They offered him wealth and women but he was steadfast. This angered them even more. They isolated him and deprived him of basic human needs such as food and shelter. While walking in the streets of Mecca, women would dump garbage on him and children would throw stones at him. But he was never angry. Once he passed in front of a home and no one threw garbage on him. He went inside to ask about the woman, if she was alright. That woman used to throw garbage on him regularly, but on that day she was sick and he was there to console her. Such was the degree of his patience and benevolence.

As Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ۝

'O ye who believe, seek help with patience and Prayer, surely, Allah is with the steadfast' (2:154).

One day he went to an adjacent town of Ta'if to deliver the message of God. The people of that town were very mischievous. They threw stones at him and injured him. Blood was dripping from his wounds and was collecting in his shoes. The sun was hot and there was no shelter. The merciless people ran him out of town. He found a tree and sat under its shade to take a breath. In that moment an angel appeared to him and offered to punish those dark hearted people by crushing them between two mountains surrounding the city. But Muhammad^{saw} refused. He prayed for those people and said that I have faith that many of these people will accept the message of Islam. In the Holy Qur'an Allah says to the Holy Prophet^{saw},

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ۝

'We have sent you as a mercy and blessing for mankind'(21:108).

and this was a reflection of that mercy.

In the Holy Qur'an one attribute of the believers is their devotion and worship of God.

وَالَّذِينَ يَبِينُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا ۝

And who sends the night before their

Lord, prostate and standing. (28:65)

The Holy Prophet^{saw} used to spend most of his nights standing in prayer before God, so much so that his feet would swell. One day his wife Ayesha^{ra} asked him, why he spent so much time crying before God when his salvation was already guaranteed. He replied, Ayesha, "Should I not thank God for His immense blessings upon me."

The opposition of Meccans kept getting worse. They eventually decided to kill him. God revealed their plan to the Prophet, and he was directed to migrate to Medina, a city 300 miles away from Mecca.

In Medina, life changed. There were many more Muslims in that city. In just a few months, the people of Medina, Muslims and non Muslims together, chose him as their leader. This was an important turn of events. Muhammad had now become the ruler. His actions from this position of strength show another facet of his character. To run the affairs of the city smoothly, he wrote down an agreement which was accepted by all parties, Muslims and non Muslims. This is the first written governing document in the history of mankind. It is also a testament to the fair nature of the Prophet. He guaranteed the rights of all people in this document. He wanted to establish peace among the people so they could live comfortably and not spill each other's blood.

On the other hand the Meccans were boiling with anger. They could not bear the thought of Muhammad^{saw} flourishing in Medina. During the next five years, they attacked the city of Medina three different times. They wanted to wipe out the Muslims. Muhammad^{saw} had fewer peo-

ple with him, who were not warriors and who did not have many weapons. Here he proved himself a commander of the highest caliber. He organized his limited resources and fought the Meccans with such bravery that almost every time they were defeated.

As Muhammad^{saw} was a man of peace at his heart. He wanted to establish peace with the armies of the Meccans. The treaty of Huddabiyya was a marvelous document and has no parallel in the history of mankind. What happened at that time shows his truthfulness and justice. Soon after the treaty was signed, between the Muslims and the Meccans, Abu Jandal, son of a Meccans ambassador, staggered into the Muslim camp. He was in handcuffs and chains and was wounded and exhausted, tortured by his father because of his faith. Muslim brothers unsheathed their swords and seemed determined to die or save him, but the Holy Prophet^{saw} although very distressed by his plight did not go back on his words. He said "O my dear Abu Jandal, have patience and trust in Allah, He will provide a way out for you and other victims." (*Tirmidhi*)

Such was the high level of integrity of the Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. He did not go back on his promises, and did not even cheat his worst enemies! He was true to the Qura'nic injunction which says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ
شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاَنُ قَوْمٍ
عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۖ ادْعُوا إِلَىٰ عَدْلٍ ۖ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ
وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

'O ye who believe, be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely, Allah is aware of what you do'. (5:9)

In the eyes of his enemies this treaty was a sign of weakness. But the wisdom of this man of God was immense. This treaty gave Muslims several political advantages.

After eight years of fighting and blood shed the city of Mecca fell to Muslims and the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} entered the city in glory and victory. Meccans were running scared of their lives. As was the tradition in those days, the victorious armies would kill their opponents and take their women and wealth. This great Prophet^{saw} of God on the other hand entered the fallen city riding on the back of a camel, his head bent so low that it was touching the seat. He was reciting the praise of God. Meccans were anxiously awaiting their fate. Muhammad^{saw} spoke to the people of Mecca, the same people who persecuted him for years, who killed many of his friends, who beat him and abused him, who wanted to kill him, because of whom he had to leave the city of his birth. On that day, if Muhammad^{saw} wanted he could have settled all those scores. He had the power of life and death over them. But this Prophet^{saw} of God spoke to those people and said, "This day, there is no fear upon you. Everyone's life and property is protected.

Those who would not fight will be given shelter.” He honored their leaders and the city of Mecca was taken without any blood shed, or any killing. No revenge or punishment was imposed. The world had never seen this type of graciousness before. No wonder that within days, the entire Arabia submitted before the will of God, and accepted Islam. The Prophet^{saw} surely was a mercy for mankind.

Even as life took him from an unknown orphan child to the King of Arabia, The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} was a humble man who lived his life in a very simple manner.

He was born in a culture where women were treated as objects and property of men, but he respected women. He asked council from his wives. He would stand to greet them. He took them with him on journeys and wars. He protected their rights and fixed a share for them in inheritance. His wives worked side by side with men in wars to help the wounded.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} said: The best among you is the one who treats his spouse well and in that respect I am better than all of you.

In his early days, Prophet^{saw} was a man of limited means. After he married Hadhrat Khadija^{ra}, he was relatively well off. Due to his charitable nature, he gave away most of this wealth to the poor and the needy. After migrating to Medina, more wealth came in. Victory in wars also brought in substantial spoils. But the Holy Prophet^{saw} was very particular in giving away all of this. There were many times when he had to borrow money for his own needs. Once, the Holy Prophet^{saw} came in possession of ten *dirham*. He bought a shirt for himself costing four *dirham*. A man was passing by and asked for this shirt. The

Holy Prophet^{saw} immediately gave him that shirt. He bought a second shirt for another four *dirham* and now had only two *dirham* left. In the street he saw a little slave girl who was crying. The Holy Prophet^{saw} asked her, what made her cry? She replied, “My master sent me to buy food for two *dirham* and I have lost that money.” The Holy Prophet^{saw} promptly gave her the last two *dirham*. The girl still kept crying. “Now what?” The Holy Prophet^{saw} asked. She said, I am afraid, it is too late and my master would beat me. The Holy Prophet^{saw} accompanied the girl to her master’s home. The man saw the Holy Prophet^{saw} and was joyful to see him. In the honor of the Holy Prophet^{saw} he freed the slave girl.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} was the King of Arabia. He lived in a small hut built with tree branches. He used to sleep on the floor on a mat made out of leaves. When he passed away, there was not a penny found in his possession as he had given away all of it to the poor. In the Holy Qur’an, Allah describes the attributes of the believers. They tread the earth lightly and are humble. They stand before God in prayers. They spend in moderation. They do not make associates with God. They are chaste. They do not hide testimony. They react politely to rudeness. All of these were prominent attributes of the life and character of the Holy Prophet^{saw}.

The Promised Messiah^{as} describing the character of the Holy Prophet^{saw} says:

“I always wonder how high was the status of this Arabian Prophet, whose name was Muhammad, thousands of blessings be upon him. One cannot reach the limit of his high status... It is a pity that his rank has not been recognized as it should have been. He was the champion who restored to the world the Unity of God which had disappeared from the world; he loved God in the extreme and his soul melted out of sympathy for mankind. Therefore, God Who knew the secret of his heart, exalted him above all the Prophets and all the first ones and the last ones and bestowed upon him in his lifetime all that he desired. He is the fountainhead of every grace and a person who claims any superiority without acknowledging his grace is not a man but is the spawn of Satan, because the Holy Prophet^{saw} has been bestowed the key to every exaltation and he has been given the treasury of every understanding.” (Haqiqarul Wahi, Roohani Khaza’in)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is the only prophet whose life is very well documented. His wives and companions described his living in every circumstance in great detail. He was born an orphan and grew up without his mother. He did not have formal education and belonged to a family of limited means. At the age of forty when he began his ministry he faced serious persecution. He was beaten, mocked and ridiculed. He was threatened with murder and had to leave his home. The times changed and he became the king of his people. He was victorious over his enemies. In weakness or in power the man Muhammad^{saw} never changed. He was always the humble, caring and loving person whose first love was worship of God.

ALLAH IS THE FRIEND OF THE BELIEVERS

Attiya Salik

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ
الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
أُولَئِكَمُ الطَّاغُوتُ لَا يُخْرِجُونَهُمْ
مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَئِكَ
أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ٥

Allah is the friend of those who believe: He brings them out of every *kind of* darkness into light. And those who disbelieve, their friends are the transgressors who bring them out of light into every *kind of* darkness. These are the inmates of the Fire; therein shall they abide. [2:258]

As Ahmadiis we witness or experience real life scenarios of absolute faith in Allah and Allah's divine help and support in return for those who believe in him. For instance when some of us earn an honest living and spend out of it in the way of Allah, Allah multiplies their prosperity 10 times or more, and when some raise their children to the best of their abilities so that they can serve the cause of Allah, Allah grants them success in everything they do, while some of us remain healthy and strong as they spend some of their time and energies for the cause of faith, and

for some secret of their happiness is loving others for the sake of Allah.

However in the world that we are living today, not everyone around us has experienced or tasted true sweetness of faith. Societies are in search of philosopher stones for success, and potions of happiness; and are seeking answers about life and faith. Our environments offer us various viewpoints and answers to these questions.

Firstly are the people when asked about their faith and belief in God, give the trendy reply "I am spiritual but not religious" which sounds very appealing and fashionable at first especially to those who associate religion these days, with violence and corruption only, but when one sees this "I am spiritual but not religious" community up close, we see them to be victims of complacency and self centeredness. This segment of the society have little or no understanding of personal sacrifice in their daily lives and generally lack personal responsibility or accountability; and it seems that their lives are

only driven by gadgets and tweets and face book accounts.

Then there are those who sell peace of mind and happiness in small packages, from sham wow towels, to Cymbalata, to Jeanie Craig's weight loss programs, Dummies books on almost everything in book stores, to some eager friends living in our television sets, from Oprah to Suze Orman to Martha Stewart to reality TV stars, to soul mates on match.com there is always something or someone to help fix and fill lives. Yet we see dejected people around us, as these supports are too temporary and only require credit card numbers in return.

Women by nature have greater need for friends for emotional and amity support to meet the responsibilities of life, at times when they feel rejected, defeated, abandoned and when they are delighted, fortunate and blissful, they need friends to rely upon and share it all. Our friends come in different sizes and shapes, and we all have our share of drama queens, the attention addicts, the relentless pessimists, and the exploiter.

But then there is a friend Who does not judge us, a Friend who always covers our inadequacies and weaknesses, one does not need to have coach

handbags or *Parada* shoes to be accepted by Him or have Botox every other month to be part of the club of His Chosen Friends. We don't need an 800 number to call now to get double the offer but one can call Him anytime, anywhere, His lines are never busy and when one calls Him, He not only doubles but quadruples the offer, and no matter how low our credit scores are with Him we still get something. In order to get His attention one needs to cry in front of Him and seek His attention like a baby and when one confesses of her/his failings and wrongdoings, and like a mother He Covers them, and not only forgives but also forgets.

In order to find this Friend one does not need to look too far or Google anything, all we have to do is to look around us. We are surrounded by people in shape of our parents, grandparents and others whose faith in Ahmadiyyat is unshakeable and their hearts are governed by faith in Allah and it is not too hard to find their secret of happiness and wisdom i.e.,

"*Alais Allahu Bekafin Abdahu*"

(Is God not sufficient for His servant)

on their finger rings and engraved on their hearts.

If we look out of our immediate circles of life, at the history of religions and faith, we see Allah always remained a true friend of believers, but He also tried and tested them with adversity

and hardships. Be it Moses^{as}, Joseph^{as} or Jesus^{as}, Allah tried them all. They were persecuted and attacked by the wealthy and mighty of their times, but He granted these shepherds, carpenters and stone cutters eternal light and granted their followers permanence to date.

But above all is the belief of Mohammad^{saw} for whom heavens and earth were created, Allah in return for this highest order of belief, turned a small town of poets and ignorant traders in the deserts of Arabia, a beacon of light for eternity and the seat for His chosen faith. Allah removed their indulgences and transgressions from them and blessed them with virtue, He converted their sufferings and despair into pleasures and joys and made them victorious over their opponents as He was their ally.

Today when the memories of Lahore Attack are still fresh in our minds, we can shout out and claim to be that small party who are the carriers of the same traditions and bearers of the same flag. Those who rejected the message of true Islam and call us infidels are the ones who are considered to be ignorant, ones who are still living in dark ages, their orthodox practic-

es have no relevance to the common man in today's societies.

Over the last 120 years the enemies of Islam and Ahmadiyyat have attempted all they could to extinguish the flame of true Islam but Allah again and again humiliated them and they failed despite having their bombs and guns. When they attack two of our mosques Allah blesses us with 1000 in return, when they martyred one of our brothers, Allah opens doors to thousands as our brothers in faith. Our Lord is the same Lord who revealed to the Holy Prophet^{saw} when he with his friend Abu Baker was in a dark cave taking refuge at the time of his exodus from Makkah,

لَا تَحْزَنُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا ۖ

Grieve not for I am with you" He is the same Lord who answered the prayers of the Holy Prophet Mohammad^{saw} when he said that God if you do not help us there will be none left to take your name and Allah sent his angels in the battle ground of Badar. Our continuity and growth is not a random event in the history of mankind, it is a proof of our truth and protection granted to us by Allah.

So we get our answers from these signs of Allah, from guidance of the *Khalifa* and sacrifices of our brothers, be they in Lahore, or Bangladesh, or Indonesia. The answer to all the complex questions of our lives as Ahmadi is simple and straight forward; Allah is a faithful Friend to those

who believe in Him. He is the one Who grants eternal light is the One and triumph, and protects one from catastrophic failures, be it at the macro level community or societal level or at individual level. The source of all wisdom, knowledge, happiness and success is Belief and faith in Allah. But one cannot close the matter by just verbally stating that they believe in Allah so Allah should be their friend and take care of their matters; true belief demands sacrifice and patience in all aspects of one's life. Fear of Allah, being thankful to Him and humility is what differentiates ordinary believers from those who attain the status of his friendship.

As Allah himself declares in the Holy Qur'an

إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرُوا بِهَا
خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَ
هُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ٥

Only they believe in Our Signs who, when they are reminded of them, fall down prostrate and celebrate the praises of their Lord, and they are not proud. (32:16)

Hadhart Anas^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet once said; "There are three qualities which, when possessed by someone, will enable him to discover true sweetness of faith: That Allah and His Messenger are dearer to him than anything else ; that He loves someone purely for the sake of Allah; and that after Allah the Almighty has saved him

from his disbelief , he loathes returning to disbelief as much as he abhors being hurled into fire. (Bukhari)

[Selected Sayings of the Holy Prophet, Page 9]

The Promised Messiah^{as} interpreted these guidelines beautifully. He defined believers as those who are bestowed a pure love of the Divine. Whose hearts are governed by fear of Allah and are bestowed with extraordinary steadfastness. They are freed from all arrogance, pride, meanness, conceit, hypocrisy, envy, miserliness and narrowmindedness. Their trust in Allah is of highest order, they love and sympathize with God's creatures without expectations of reward, and they are ready to sacrifice their whole beings in the way of Allah.

(Essence of Islam, Volume IV Page 54-58).

In return of this belief Allah rewards his servants with light hearts and enlightened minds in today's crowded and cluttered world. So one does not need Cymabalata, Sozy Orman or others to fix their financial or personal woes. As He takes care of His servants and opens doors for them from unknown means. All He asks for is that one put their trust in

Him and be Truthful to Not only Him but themselves too, All our actions should be driven by nothing else than the will to please our this beloved. Promised Messiah^{as} once said that only those are friends of Allah, for whom even slightest movement of their hands, feet, even eyes is for the sake of Allah

(Malfoozat, Vol 5, Page 128)

which is the highest status of submission and not all of us can claim it but we as Ahmadi women at least can try to follow the example of the the friend that Hadhrat Khadija^{ra} was for Mohammad^{saw}, the daughter Hadhrat Fatima^{ra} was for the Holy Prophet Mohammad^{saw}, the Sister Zainab^{ra} was for Imam Hussain^{ra} and the mother Hadhart Amma Jan^{ra} was for the Masih Mau'ood^{as} of this time.

رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ
أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا ۗ رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا
ذُنُوبَنَا وَ كَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَ تَوَفَّنَا مَعَ
الْأَبْرَارِ ٥

"Our Lord, we have heard a Crier calling us unto faith, 'Believe ye in your Lord,' and we have believed. Our Lord, forgive us, therefore, our errors and remove from us our evils, and in death number us with the righteous.(3:194)

(Ameen)

THE BEST PROVISION IS *TAQWA* (RIGHTEOUSNESS)

Sameea Safi

*Ash'hado alla ilaha illallaho
wahdahu la sharika lahu wa
ash'hado anna Muhammadan
abdohu wa rasuluh*

*Amma baadu fa aauzu billahi mi-
nashaita nir rajeem
Bismillah hir rehman nirraheem*

My Dear Sisters:

*Assalamo alaikum wa rahmat-
ullahe wa barakatuhu*

Mankind, whom Almighty Allah created solely for His worship, is in a continuous state of journey whose provision is *taqwa* (righteousness). In the Holy Quran, Almighty Allah says,

‘Surely, the best provision is righteousness.’ (Ch 2, V 198)

And this is the subject that I want to talk about in the next few minutes.

The basic purpose of human life is to worship Allah and the pinnacle of all worships and good deeds is to attain pleasure of the Most High God. Each good deed should be rooted to earn Allah’s love, while abstaining from all evils should be to avoid Allah’s displeasure. Every believing man and woman must always keep these two facts in mind, for this is defined as *Taqwa* or righteousness.

The subject of *Taqwa* is too

vast to discuss. Nevertheless I shall try to shed light on some of its aspects in this presentation.

In the Arabic language, *Taqwa* literally means to ‘safeguard’ and to ‘abstain’ but conventionally it is a condition of the heart which avidly stimulates towards goodness and simultaneously creates disgust and aversion towards evil. This is such a fundamental thing that without which a pure and living relationship with Almighty God is simply unattainable. The Promised Messiah^{as} states, ‘*Taqwa* is not something trivial. It is the means of combating evils which dominate man’s inner strengths and powers. All of these forces, in the state of *Nafs-e-Ammarah* or the self that incites to evil, are satanic within a human being. If left unchecked, they will enslave him completely.’

(*Malfoozat, Vol 1, p 21, New Edition*).

The fact of the matter is that when attainment of God’s love becomes the sole purpose of one’s life, then one grows indifferent to the fear of even the highest of world-ly powers. The following example from the life of

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} is worth noting in this respect.

Before Promised Messiah’s^{as} claim and his *Bai’at*, Hadhrat Maulvi Nuruddin Sahib^{ra} was in the service of *Maharaja* of Kashmir as royal physician. Once he accompanied the *Maharaja* on a boating trip. The *Maharaja’s Pandit*, the priest who led him in rituals and worship, was also with them. When the time of *Salat* approached, Maulvi Sahib^{ra} started offering prayers. The *Pandit* repeatedly pointed out to the *Maharaja* that Maulvi Sahib^{ra} had not sought his permission to offer *Salat*. The *Maharaja* did not respond. After his *Salat* was over, the *Maharaja* inquired of Hadhrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra} thrice about what the *Pandit* had said to him. Each time Hazoor^{ra} responded negatively. The *Maharaja* grew angry with the *Pandit* and cursed him, and then said, ‘Maulvi Sahib knows no fear of us. Had that been the case, he would have first sought permission and then said his *Salat*. But since his *Salat* was for God, he was afraid of Him alone, not of us.’

(*As’haab-e-Ahmad, Vol 3, P 106-107*)

Now let us briefly explore how we, as women, can better bring up our future generations by adopting the highest standards of *Taqwa*.

Haya i.e., modesty and chastity are among high moral values of Islam. The word *Haya* literally means to refrain from something. The Holy Prophet^{saw} has said,

'Al haya o- khairun kulluhu'

'Modesty is a human virtue that is all good'

In the today's materialistic and irreligious world, immodesty is reaching its limits, resulting in painful incidents in homes, destroying peace of family life. *Purdah* is both a commandments of Almighty Allah and a high moral and social value. By abandoning this noble virtue, womenfolk, today, have increasingly become insecure and vulnerable both in the East and the West. In a bid to look more informal or seek modernity, prescribed *purdah* with *non-mahram* relatives is generally given up in the beginning, which ultimately transcends all boundaries of immodesty and shamelessness.

Purdah is a part of woman's attire. Whereas Allah taught mankind to clothe themselves to cover their evident weaknesses, which also safeguards their physical bodies, in a likewise manner He prescribed for them the garment of *Taqwa* to cover their inner weaknesses. Thus, in the Holy Qur'an, Almighty Allah says,

'O children of Adam! We have indeed sent down to you raiment to cover your shame, and to be an elegant dress; but the raiment of righteousness - that is the best. That is one of the Signs of

Allah that they may remember.'

(*Surah Al-Araaf*, Verse 27)

Thus modesty and *Taqwa* are deeply connected because both contain similarities as regards safeguarding. Both are about moral, spiritual, and physical protection. If one is let go of, the other is sure to be lost.

Underscoring the importance of *purdah*, *Syedna* Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih al-Khamis^{aba} said, '*Purdah* is meant to uphold a woman's honor. It is part of woman's nature that she desires respect. She has personal dignity which she wishes to maintain. Islam is the greatest standard bearer of woman's respect, honor and rights. It is no coercion, therefore, that a woman is required to observe *purdah* or wear a *hijab*; rather it is an attempt to give woman her rightful place and establish her individuality'.

(Friday Sermon, April 23, 2010)

My Dear Sisters:

Each new family begins with marriage. The Qur'anic verses recited during a *Nikah* sermon repeatedly mention *Taqwa*. Thus from the very start of the new journey, the new couple is admonished that their new journey should com-

mence with *Taqwa*. And if they want to be successful both in this life and the Hereafter, they would still require the same provision.

Therefore, be it a matter of relationship between a husband and wife or their in-laws, or a question of mutual treatment of the two families, or a concern for the proper upbringing of future generation, happiness will be their lot as long as *Taqwa* is the basis of every deed. But if the mutual treatment is such that it severs even the maternal ties, then such people would be bereft of Allah's mercy since a mother's womb is tied to Allah's mercy. And one, who is cut off from God's mercy will have the doors of acceptance of prayers also shut upon him.

Every married couple has a natural desire for children. This indeed is necessary for the continuance of the humankind too. Nevertheless Almighty Allah has taught the believers the following prayer. 'Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of our eyes, and make us model for the righteous.' (*Surah Al-Furqan*, Verse 75). Implying thereby that we leave behind a righteous progeny. Now the question arises, how will the progeny become 'righteous'? The prerequisite for this is that the parents should inculcate love of God and Faith in their hearts. They should not dedicate their lives to mere materialistic pursuits, but should live their lives in a manner that would leave a good impact on their children.

In the world at large, nearly every society has some common

evils that affect people from every religion and faith. These include tale-bearing, back biting, jealousy, mistrust of others, complaining, finding faults with others and publicizing them, looking down upon poorer fellow human beings with scorn and contempt, etc. If we refrain from these ills in our daily lives, then the atmosphere of our homes will become conducive to good upbringing of our children, and we shall leave behind a progeny enriched with *Taqwa*. And the best heritage a mother can leave behind for her child is *Taqwa*.

On one occasion Hadrat Khalifatul Masih IVth, while addressing the *Lajna*, said, 'Women are the factories of future generations. They are factories in the physical as well as spiritual and moral sense. They can produce and vouchsafe any type of progeny that they desire for the future. This is the reason why the Holy Prophet ^{saw} did not say that paradise lies under the feet of fathers. Rather he said that Paradise is under the feet of mothers. The Holy Prophet ^{saw} did not pronounce that Paradise lies under the feet of every mother. It implies that those pious women who are from the *Ummah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ^{saw} and are his servants, and who practice Islam with honesty and righteousness, they alone have Paradise under their feet as the future generations will be born to them with heavenly attributes and raised with heavenly attributes in their pious laps.'

(Address to *Lajna Ima'illah*
Germany, Sep 08, 1990)

Thus in the light of this in-

struction from Hazoor^{rh}, we need to inculcate Allah's love in our hearts. If we succeed in this, then our hearts will forsake the love of this world, and life will become simple. Our children will also refrain from evil as they will be conscious that there is no contradiction in the words and deeds of their parents.

My Dear Sisters:

Let us now look at some of the distinguishing characteristics of the righteous people. A righteous person is one who believes in the Unseen, establishes *Salat* and spends in the way of Allah out of that which He has bestowed upon him. He spends his life in utmost humility and meekness.

A righteous person is never arrogant. He speaks in a manner in which a lowly person talks to an exalted person. He does not consider anyone inferior to him, does not give people bad names, rather treats others with respect, and shows steadfastness during hardships. Allah makes friends with such righteous people. He fulfills their needs, saves them from every calamity, provides sustenance for them which includes spiritual sustenance as well. Allah says that 'I befriend the righteous person to the extent that I become his

hands with which he works, his feet with which he walks, and his tongue with which he speaks.

In the world at large, people are smitten with various difficulties and problems but Allah spares the righteous. Not only this, even those who come to the righteous are also saved from afflictions. The Promised Messiah^{as} says, 'Thus it is a blessing that the righteous people see God's angels. Life in the Hereafter is merely an article of faith, however, a righteous person is shown that life right here in this world. They receive God in this very life, He manifests to them, and speaks to them.'

(Malfoozat, Vol 1, P 12)

Dear Sisters:

If we act upon these injunctions, our lives will also transform likewise, *Insha Allah*. Let us all join in prayer that Allah grant us *Taqwa*, and bestow upon us the Light that will illuminate our paths. May our minds be filled with that Light. May our eyes and ears, and tongues, and our actions and rest be anointed with that Light. May we spend our lives in that Light, and may our generations also be blessed with similar rewards.

Ameen, Ya Rabbul Aalameen!

UNDERSTANDING OUR TRUE PURPOSE IN LIFE

Mehdia Sana Rahman

What is the purpose of life? Sometimes we find ourselves lost in a society where the purpose of life is fulfilled by how successful we are in our careers or in our family life. The amount in our bank defines success. Many times people find their purpose in life in doing what they love the most but how long does that achievement last or how deep is a purpose that is only for the sake of our happiness. All these things like career and family life are important but are they enough to be the purpose of our lives. Will a life that is driven by only these reasons be so fulfilling?

Allah Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ۝

I have created jinn and men so that they should recognize and worship Me. (51; 57)

We are Allah's creation so it only makes sense that we ourselves would not choose our purpose in life. We are unable to decide when we come into this world or when we will leave then how can we resolve our purpose in life. As Allah bestowed upon us higher facilities than His other creations and wit tat He gave us a purpose.

According to this verse the purpose of our lives is the worship and understanding of Allah Almighty. Indeed this was a blessing bestowed on man by Allah.

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا
وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ ۝

Verily, We offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and were afraid of it. But man bore it. Indeed, he is capable of being unjust to, and neglectful of, himself. (33:73)

Explaining this verse the Promised Messiah^{as} wrote:

"This means that the Divine Trust, by which is meant the love of God and complete obedience to Him even in the face of hardship, was offered to the angels and the whole of creation and the mountains, all apparently full of strength, but they all refused to undertake it, being afraid of its grandeur. But man un-

dertook it for he possessed two qualities that he could force himself in the cause of God Almighty and could advance so far in love of Him as to forget altogether everything else."

The Promised Messiah^{as} explained 8 means for fulfilling the purpose in life that Allah blesses His people with:

The first means is the correct reorganization of and faith in the true God. Not to put faith in worldly achievements and means or to set up other idols. In a materialistic society we find ourselves many times relying on worldly objects so much so that we lose faith in Allah. We must remember that they will not answer as Allah answers. Let us not be like those who stretch forth their hands towards water and as it to enter their mouth. But will it come do so? Not at all. We must put full faith in the true God.

The second means of achieving the true purpose of life is to become aware of the perfect beauty of God Almighty, for beauty is something which naturally attracts the hearts and generates love. We find ourselves in awe when we see beauty around us in the mountains, in the oceans, and in sky. But realize this is only a

glimpse of the grandeur of Allah's beauty. He is the Source of grace for everything and receives no grace from anything. Every particle derives life from Him. When we are aware of His Beauty we will find ourselves lost in His love. Such is the attraction of Allah Almighty.

The third means of achieving the purpose of life is to become aware of the benevolence of God Almighty, for love is generated by beauty and benevolence. The benevolent attributes of God Almighty are set forth briefly in *Surah Al-Fatihah*, where it is said:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ الرَّحْمَنُ
الرَّحِيمُ ۝ مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds. The Gracious, the Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgment.

As we think about our lives, we were created from nothing and thereafter Allah Almighty's Providence was bestowed upon us. What could be more benevolent than the Creator who has manifested all types of His mercy for His servants. The glass of water we drink so easily, not thinking of how big a blessing it is, or the air we breathe, how important it is to us. We did not ask for this air, it was already given to us. We only need to ponder over the providence of Allah to see how magnificent His benevolence is.

The fourth means of achieving the true purpose of life is Prayer. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said,

“Giving up Prayers is akin to disbelief and paganism”

There is a repeated urge towards Prayer, so that man should achieve his purpose not through his own power, but through God's power. With so many distractions in this society that can easily steer us away from our purpose in life, prayer is the one thing that will help us stay firm and not fall pray to temporary beauty of this society. When we are watching our favorite show or we plan to go to the theatre to watch our favorite movie we are so much devoured by this temporary enjoyment that we leave behind our prayers.

In the Holy Qur'an it says,

“Know that the life of this world is only a sport and a pastime, and an adornment, and a source of boasting among yourselves, and of rivalry in multiplying riches and children. This life is like the rain the vegetation produced whereby rejoices the tillers. Then it dries up and thou seest it turn yellow; then it becomes broken pieces of straw. And in the Hereafter there is severe punishment, and also forgiveness from Allah, and His pleasure. And the life of this world is nothing but temporary en-

joyment of deceitful things. (57:21).”

In the big picture we all know prayer is much more important but when the time comes sometimes even in these littler matters we leave behind our true purpose in life. We must become those who pray amidst bullets and bombs with no fear of death, never leaving behind our true purpose.

The fifth means of achieving the purpose of life is striving in the cause of Allah with one's property and one's faculties and one's life and one's reason. As *Lajna* we pledge:

I affirm that I shall always be ready to devote my life, property, time and children for the cause of faith and the community. I shall always adhere to truth and shall always be prepared to make every sacrifice for the perpetuation of the Ahmadiyya Khilafat.

It is this very pledge we make as the handmaidens of Allah that will lead us to path that fulfills our purpose. Every time we recite this pledge let us remember all the sacrifices *Lajna* are making around the world not only are they sacrifice their time and property but their lives and their family's lives. Let no fear enter our hearts when the time comes for our sacrifices. May we stay steadfast.

The sixth means for achieving the purpose of life is steadfastness; that is to say, that a seeker should not become tired and should not be daunted by trials.

The Promised Messiah^{as} so beautifully explains the true meaning of steadfastness:

"It is true that steadfastness is more than a miracle. Perfect steadfastness is that one should find oneself surrounded on all sides by calamities and one should find one's life and honor in danger and nothing comforting should be available, so much so, that God Almighty should stop—by way of trials—the comforting visions and dreams and revelation and should leave one in the midst of terrifying fears, but that at such a time, one should not abandon courage and should not step back like a coward and should not let one's fidelity be weakened. One's sincerity and loyalty should not be shaken, one should be pleased with the humiliation, one should be reconciled to death, one should not await the support of a friend, one should not seek glad tidings from God, because of one's delicate situation, and one should stand up straight despite helplessness and weakness and the lack of every comfort. One should stretch forth one's neck, saying: Whatever is to ver has been determined and one should not be impatient nor complain till the trial is over. This is the steadfastness the reward of which is God. This is the quality by virtue of which the dust of Messengers, Prophets, Siddiqs and Martyrs is still so fragrant."

The seventh means of achieving the purpose of life is keeping company with the righteous and to follow their example.

One of the needs of the advent of Prophets is that man naturally seeks a perfect example, for it fosters eagerness and resolve. He who does not follow a good example becomes slothful and goes astray.

The eighth means of achieving the purpose of life are visions and true dreams and revelation. As the path that leads to God Almighty is a difficult one and is studded with misfortunes and hardships and it is possible that a person might begin to despair and stop going forward, the mercy of God desires to keep comforting him and encouraging him and augmenting his zeal and eagerness. So it is His way that from time to time He comforts such people with His word and His revelation and makes it manifest to them that He is with them.

The means explained by the Promised Messiah^{as} I mentioned are to not only guide one towards achieving nearness to Allah but it helps in understanding the purpose of life. To better understand this blessing, this purpose Allah bestowed upon we must understand what it means to worship Allah. It not only entails our five daily prayers and praising the Gracious the Merciful, but it is every action we make in complete obedience to Al-

lah. Every decision must be made in essence of complete obedience to Allah. As Muslim women we can fulfill our purpose in many ways. As daughters, wives, mothers, students, career women and *Lajna Imaillah* we have so many opportunities to fulfill our purpose as long we as submit ourselves to Allah.

In the history of Islam never have the Muslim women been blessed with being given the title of *Lajna Imaillah* the handmaiden of Allah. It's in the time of Ahmadiyyat that we were blessed. As Hadhrat Khadijah^{ra} and Hadhrat Fatima^{ra} sacrificed themselves in the way of Allah let us keep their purpose alive today which was to worship Allah to understand His Beauty and Love. Today people have raised their fist against Allah's people saying that we are outside the realm of Islam. So to every *Lajna*, to the youth, I say we must strive to be the embodiment of a true Muslim. So that a glance at us would leave no doubt that we are the handmaidens of Allah not only in the way we dress but in our actions the spring of bounties of Almighty the beneficent Allah gushes forth. May Allah give us the strength to achieve the true purpose of life, may Allah give us the strength and ability to become true *Lajna Imaillah*.

ACCOUNTS OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Laila Isack, Phoenix, AZ

My name is Laila Isack and although I was raised Muslim, I wanted to address the subject of conversion because I have thought about it many times in my life, especially since my teenage years. My mom is a convert of Islam, born to Catholic parents, and after many years of searching for honesty in the portrayal of God, she found Islam, and converted before I was born. During my very young and adolescent years, I grew up in Sunni mosques and always found myself filled with love when reading *Salat*. When I was a little girl, my mom made another conversion from being Sunni Muslim to accepting Ahmadiyyat Islam, and I followed in her footsteps on this journey to a new found truth because that is what children do; they follow the ways of their mothers and fathers; they mimic what they see and what they hear.

As I was becoming an adult in an Ahmadi household and living in the material world of the United States, I had to make decisions over and over again. Decisions that either confirmed my faith that I was brought up with, or confirmed the material and Godless world I was being tempted into on a daily basis. When I got older, I had to establish my faith as my own, and decide if Islam was going to be the base of my belief system. When children are growing up they usually believe what they are told, and at one point, I believe we all had to decide or we will have to decide, if we are going to practice our religion on our own. It was here in these trying years of being a youth in America

that I began to realize it was ultimately I, not my parents, who had to choose the right path for me. I would have to be the one to make good choices along the way and that each one of these right choices would actually be the building blocks of my own form of conversion.

A woman at my *Masjid* said for the longest time she was Ahmadi because she was born Ahmadi and that was all she had ever known. When she grew up she researched religion and found Islam, not only did she find Islam, but also the belief in the Promised Messiah^{as} to be the true teachings of God. I relate her discovery because it is the same discovery I came about when I had matured enough to choose my religious destiny. It was recently that I made my own personal conversion from being raised Muslim to becoming a Muslim. It was recently that I established myself as a convert of Islam; and I believe we are all converts of Islam.

The word convert has many different definitions. I wanted to review the many forms, and one of which is chemistry: to cause (a substance) to undergo a chemical change. For example, like combining Hydrogen and Oxygen, and converting it into H₂O, water. Hydrogen is

a highly dangerous and explosive element, but when combined with Oxygen, an element that provides us with life, *Allah Ta'ala* makes water; another element that we are dependent on to live. This is a perfect example of how we can add positive teachings to any negative aspects in our lives and we can, *Insha Allah*, result with souls as pure as water.

The next definition is, in my opinion, one of the most important forms of conversion, and that is to change in character; cause to turn from an evil life to a righteous one. For instance, to convert a criminal into an honest follower of the law, or to convert weak and sinful practices ingrained in one's character, and change those flaws that they become strong and moral characteristics that *Allah Ta'ala* will be pleased with.

In Holy Qur'an Chapter 33, verse 34, it is stated

"Surely, Allah desires to remove from you all uncleanness, O Members of the Household, and purify you completely."

There is not a negative characteristic in the world that *Allah Ta'ala* is not willing to cure. We must first make the intention through prayers implying we want to change; we want to convert to a better form of ourselves.

There is a *Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, "Seek the guidance of thy soul! Seek the guidance of thy soul! Seek the guidance of thy soul! The virtuous deed is one whereby thy soul is restful and thy heart contented, and sinful act is one

which rankles in thy soul and which contracts thy heart even though the other people endorse it as lawful." Narrated by Hadrat Wabisa bin Ma'bad^{ra}.

There are no better ways to follow than the ways of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. We should all let the true beauty of our souls guide us, and convert all our actions into ways of the righteous. I know a quote by an unknown author but his words can be seen during the rise of Islam, the quote goes, "The battlefield is so wide and there are many ways to win a war. Surely there has to be a peaceful means, and probably one of them is to convert enemies into friends." When the Holy Prophet^{saw} conquered Mecca with *Allah Ta'ala* as his Best Friend, the Holy Prophet^{saw} converted his worst enemies into his friends, and they accepted Islam at his feet. Therefore using the history of our religion as an example, we can, *Insha Allah*, convert even our enemies to believers of Islam.

With Islam, we can convert dry and weak land located in unstable areas, into Mosques with strong stable walls that echo with the Glory of *Allah Ta'ala*, reaching the streets of the slums, where love can cure the inner cities of Chicago and Milwaukee; and Islam can cover the sins of Fremont Street in Las Vegas with a veil of purity and innocence. With the words of *Allah Ta'ala*, we can alter violence found in the Southside of Tucson, Arizona and the dark streets of Detroit; and our words can be like green bullets made of peace, stopping fists and guns of rage. We can, *Insha Allah*, clear the pollution in Los Angeles and New York City with a rain drenched in the pure teachings of the Prophets (*Allah Ta'ala* have mercy on them), a way

of life that will reign over the Corporations and Politics governed by greed and corrupted by the desperation of accumulating wealth in this world. The words of the Holy Qur'an can blow like the dust of the outskirts of Texas, causing an intelligent sand storm that does no harm, but instead lifts ignorance from the minds of so many, sweeping it off the map. Even the most disgraced streets of our home towns can see a change. Even here, Baltimore, Maryland can change like the seasons, and Autumn can bring a fall to any corruption, and the wind can blow with Qur'anic verses; and fruit trees filled with honesty can grow in place of sin. And indeed these places have changed. Where there is a *Masjid*, believing people move in and change the aura of the streets. Following the ways of Islam, we can see a holy change in our ghettos locally-- nationally and internationally. Following the ways of Islam, we can see a change in ourselves. Following the ways of Islam, we can be that change; *Alhamdulillah*.

We must remember when we convert old ways into new traits of righteousness, our works do not go unnoticed, not by man, and more importantly not by *Allah Ta'ala*. The people of the world are influenced by their surroundings, and if surrounded by humility and

loving characteristics, we will, *Insha Allah*, see a new epidemic spreading like the speed of light. We are the leaders of our time, and to lead, and to convert the world, we must improve ourselves. Convert ourselves into the best of mankind, and therefore man will have living examples to become the best of their kind, just as our beloved Hazoor^{aba} does for us.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American poet, is quoted having said, "Speech is power: speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel." *Allah Ta'ala* gave us a voice to teach what we know, "to persuade, to convert, to compel."

Chapter 28 of the Holy Quran, verse 26 says,

"Most surely He Who had made the teaching of Qur'an binding on thee will bring these back to thy place of return."

When we make the words of the Holy Qur'an binding on ourselves, we will be more knowledgeable to grow spiritually, and we are more knowledgeable when we are equipped with truthful words when teaching Islam to the people of the world. If we stay regular in our recitation of the Holy Quran and remember to constantly convert negative ways into positive ways, we are, *Insha Allah*, on the right path.

The Promised Messiah^{as} said,

"The real and perfect paths of salvation have been opened only by the Holy Qur'an; all others were only its shadows. Therefore you should study this Holy Scripture with the utmost attention and deepest thought; and you should love it as you have never loved anything else. For indeed, as God has conveyed to

me, "All the good lies in the Qur'an."

The last definition and one of the most common definitions known for the word convert is to cause to adopt a different religion, political doctrine, opinion, etc. For example, to convert the Atheist, or to convert the Christian, or to convert the Mormon, or to convert the Sunni to Ahmadiyyat Islam. Chapter 8 of the Holy Qura'n, verse 158 reads,

"And their saying, 'We did kill the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah;' whereas they slew him not, nor crucified him, but he was made to appear to them like one crucified; and those who differ therein are certainly in a state of doubt about it; they have no definite knowledge thereof, but only follow a conjecture; and they did not convert this conjecture into a certainty;"

The Jews and the Christians, all People of the Book, but unfortunately people who did not convert their teachings to their full potential. The Jews only acknowledging the Torah and not converting to the belief in later Prophets; and negating Hadhrat Jesus^{as}, as a righteous Messenger of God. And the Christians, if they had converted their assumptions, it may be that they would not have taken a man of God as their God, and would see that Hadhrat Jesus^{as}, had foretold the coming of the Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. And even many Muslims believing in so many righteous Messengers of Allah Ta'ala, but penalizing their ability to convert their belief into the highest form of truth by not believing in the Promised Messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Gulham Ahmad^{as}.

As we see, the word convert takes many forms and can be seen in many ways. We are all converts of Islam, and through Allah Ta'ala we can, *Insha Allah*, convert our tears into smiles and joyous laughter, our long frustrating hardships into patient, steadfast, and faithful triumphs. Convert our enemies into our friends. Convert our flaws into pure actions of the righteous. Convert our laziness into active hard work for the cause of Islam. Convert our animosity into love for all. Convert our loose and destructive speech into a pleasant and eloquent tongue. Convert our abrupt and speeding step into a moderate and graceful walk.

And how do we convert the world to the true peaceful religion of Islam?

By converting our ways into the peaceful ways of Islam, the ways of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, the ways of the Promised Messiah^{as}; we lead by example. We convert ourselves and the world follows in our footsteps. Because how do we learn if not from our neighbors? And with Allah Ta'ala's guidance, we can all, *Insha Allah*, be exemplary models of the righteous. I pray for you all. *JazakAllah Khairan and Assalamu Alaikum* (May peace be upon you).

HADITH

Hadhrat Aswad^{ra} relates that Hadhrat 'Umar bin Al-Khattab^{ra} visited the Holy Prophet^{saw}. The Holy Prophet^{saw} was ill and was lying on a *Qutwani* bed-sheet and his pillow was of leather which was filled with *Adhkhar* grass. (Seeing this) Hadhrat 'Umar bin Al-Khattab^{ra} said: "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! Caesar and Chosroes rest on silky mattresses (and you are in such a condition). Hearing this, the Holy Prophet^{saw} said: 'O 'Umar! Would you not be happy that you get these comforts in the Hereafter, whereas worldly people have these in this world?' Then Hadhrat 'Umar bin Al-Khattab^{ra} touched the body of the Holy Prophet^{saw} and noticed that he had a very high fever. At this, Hadhrat 'Umar bin Al-Khattab^{ra} said: '(Hazoor!) You are a Messenger of Allah, yet you have such a high fever.' The Holy Prophet^{saw} said: 'In this *Ummah*, it is the Prophet who is tried the most, after that, rank-wise, the virtuous people. This has been the case with other Prophets and peoples who passed before me.' "

(Msunadul Imamul A'zam kitabur-riqa-q, p 217)

Hadhrat Abu Musa Al-Ash-^{'ari}^{ra} relates: "Hadhrat 'A'isha^{ra} showed us a sheet and a thick loin-cloth and told us that the Holy Prophet^{saw} was wearing them when he died."

(Bukhari kitabullibas babul aksiyah, Muslim kitabullibas babuttawadi' fillibas ... alkh)

DISTINCT QUALITIES OF THE MAID SERVANTS OF ALLAH

Dr. Shanaz Butt, Sadr Lajna Imaillah-USA

“They are the ones who turn to God in repentance, who worship Him, who praise Him, who go about in the land serving Him, who bow down to God, who prostrate themselves in prayer, who enjoin good and forbid evil, and who watch the limits set by Allah.” (9:112)

Did you know that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world today? Just in the USA, ~ 20,000 Americans are accepting Islam each year and yet, it is hard for any average American to understand how Islam could be called a peaceful religion. Not only are the words terrorism and Islam almost always mentioned together, but now add to it the increasing anti-Islamic sentiments and restrictions put on Muslims around the world—for example; the cartoon depictions of our beloved Master Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, the banning of minarets on mosques in Switzerland, the banning of headscarves in French schools, the recent banning of veils in Belgium, the tragic killing that took place on May 28th in Lahore, Pakistan where Muslim brothers killed other Muslim brothers. So how should an average American react to Islam? However, a more important Q would be: How should an average Ahmadi Muslim react to these happenings around the world? What should our response be? How do we defend Islam when Muslims are being attacked, ridiculed & imprisoned and when 100s of lives are laid down by our members, who are not even allowed to call themselves Muslims or practice their religion openly?

We live in a country where religion can be practiced freely, and yet, how many of us freely practice the tenets of Islam without any restraint? Because, it is not sufficient to write a few articles in the newspaper expounding on the beauties of Islam if we do not believe in our hearts that Islam is a beautiful religion. It is not enough to stand up at Inter-faith symposiums and proclaim loudly that Islam is a peaceful religion when we do not experience this peace within ourselves or within our homes or within our own community. It is not good enough to say that the freedom to practice our religion is a constitutional right-but then not practice it ourselves.

In 1991, when Hazoor (Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth) spoke to *Lajna USA*, he said: if you defend Islam by mere words, your voices will not be heard, and even if it is heard, it will not impress anyone. But if you defend Islam with your good deeds and good conduct, then people will become interested in your good words. If an Ahmadi lady conducts herself in the manner which the Holy Quran has instructed her to do, then the charm and fragrance of her '*Taqwa*' will influence those who come in contact with her. This, my dear sisters, is the

surest way by which we can ALL defend Islam. And this is the essence of my speech entitled:

Distinct Qualities of the Maid Servants of Allah

Even though we all know the best way to defend Islam is through the practice of its beautiful, logical & practical teachings, we have great difficulty in demonstrating the teachings through our righteous behaviors and righteous conduct. On January 15th 2010, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} said that in order to fulfill our obligations to Islam, we need to cast off the shackles of this world. We need to be mindful that we are the followers of that Prophet^{saw} who taught us what is permissible and what is forbidden. The Promised Messiah^{as} was sent by Allah to provide us with additional guidance that would liberate us from these shackles. Unfortunately, many of us are not able to abandon these shackles and cannot free ourselves from the bondage and many of us have even forgotten the true purpose for which Allah entitled us as Ahmadi Muslims.

So let me take a few minutes to talk about those shackles that are interconnected and so difficult to shake off. For example, take Falsehood and telling lies. Telling lies has become most common-place. Nations tell lies, governments tell lies, office holders tell lies to suit their needs. Slowly our whole mode of living seems to have become one big lie. We may seem very polished and

sophisticated on the outside but from inside we are nothing if we lack honesty and integrity. Falsehood causes cracks not only in human relationships but also prevents us from developing a relationship with Allah and several verses in the Holy Qur'an remind us.....

بِأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَ قُولُوا
قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ٥

Falsehood cannot exist with truthfulness; the practice of falsehood cannot exist with the practice of *Taqwa*! Because falsehood stunts our spiritual growth while *Taqwa* elevates our spiritual development. Wherever you see falsehood, you will find that it keeps company with other immoral qualities such as bad intentions, deception, dishonesty, cheating, fraud, hypocrisy, exaggeration and so on. The Promised Messiah^{as} has said:

“Adhere to the truth and shun falsehood. Falsehood is nothing less than Shirk or idol worship.”

When in trouble, instead of seeking help from Allah, we seek help from lies and dishonesty. We would rather tell a lie than admit our weakness. We will tell a lie because we fear not the displeasure of Allah but the displeasure of another human being.

Falsehood and lying is a breeding ground for greed and discontent: The more we have, the more we want. This lack of contentment, this restlessness to compete with others, the desire to look younger than we are, fairer than we are, taller than we are, thinner than we truly are, make us slaves to false advertisements and clever marketing on TV, radio & internet, make us desire

the vain pleasures and perceptions of reality that are sold by Bollywood and Hollywood. And we begin to tell more lies because we need to either show off or need to hide our weaknesses. We spend too much money or take out a loan just to show others how well off we are. We equate monetary and material possessions with power, family status, titles, high offices, love and a sense of belonging in special friendship circles. When we have this false need, this hunger, this desire to show others that we are better than them, what happens? We begin to lose our self-respect, our dignity, our humility & replace it with immodest and shameless behaviors.

In the sermon delivered on September 25, 2009, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} said:

“The lavish spending on weddings, *walima*, *mehndi* receptions, pre-and post-wedding celebrations is an example of increasing show and pomp. The money spent on these lavish receptions could be used to support orphans and many other good causes which are practical demonstration of the true servants of the Gracious God. The true servants of the Gracious God do not engage in vain and frivolous pastimes, nor do they spend their hours glued to their internets or TV screens, and this includes young girls and

boys going to clubs and concerts and socializing in mixed groups.

In 1991, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth made an important comparison. Hazoorth said that living in the North Pole without protective warm clothing is similar to living in this society without the clothes of '*Taqwa*' wrapped around you. Hazoor said that if you dress only to please people, then the whole style of your life will be governed by that domineering factor. You will gradually be led away into a materialistic pursuit of vain pleasures. But if you are attired in the dress of '*Taqwa*,' then whatever you wear, whether beautiful or not, whether fashionable or not, it will distinguish you from the ordinary society. My dear sisters, if you think about it, most of our expenses, our clothes, fashions, social pastimes, and our vain and frivolous behaviors serve to only satisfy our low self-esteem, our false egos, false sense of worth and an inferiority complex. We prefer to wear the shackles of a wealthy and so called modern, advanced and sophisticated society. Thus, in a sense we are our own worst enemies because rather than defend the beautiful teaching of Islam, we are serving to attack it even further.

When you consider the relationship between a servant and Master, how does a servant behave? A servant is faithful, respectful, loyal, obedient, and works hard to please the Master. Consider how much more distinct will be the relationship between a true servant and her Gracious God? My dear sisters, you are not ordinary women. You are *Lajna Imaillah* – which is translated as the Maid servants of Allah. A great title that comes with a great responsibility. As *Lajna Imaillah*, we have a lot to think about, reflect upon and be concerned about - because we are the bearers, fashioners

and designers of the future generations. Allah has given us the ability to produce and then design whatever kind of progeny we desire for the future. Hazoor said when *Lajna Imaillah* becomes steadfast and firm, then the future generations will also follow in their footsteps because the foul smells of vulgarity, indecency, dishonesty or hypocrisy and falsehood cannot stand up against the sweet fragrance of *Haya*, justice, love and truth.

So how can we, how do we break the shackles that we have knowingly tied around our necks, hands and feet? We need to be absolutely certain that Islam is a divine religion that when followed and practiced will bring us closer to Allah and make us better people on this earth. Armed with this conviction, we need to take firm and steady steps towards Allah. Because when we start moving in Allah's direction, Almighty Allah promises us that: Whoever moves towards me by the span of an open hand, I move towards him by half an arm's length. And whoever moves towards me by half an arm's length, I move towards him by the length of an arm. When he comes walking towards me, I run to meet him. In this regard, the Holy Prophet^{saw} has said: If a servant of God submits himself wholly to the will of Allah and commits the whole direction of his life to it, he gradually achieves a condition in which God becomes the eyes with which he sees, the ears with which he hears, the hands with which he toils and the feet with which he walks.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth said to *Lajna Imaillah* USA:

“The most potent advice that I can give you is to become Godly in your conduct and to become con-

sistent and true in your words and actions. The energy you draw from the love of God is inexhaustible. If you truly become Godly, a charisma will be built around you which will gravitate to all that come within the sphere of your orbit. You will exert a powerful influence over your families and especially your children because children take their parents seriously when they are convinced that their parents are true and honest and have no inconsistencies.”

Hazoorth further said: Live a balanced life and walk carefully, with cautious steps on the tight rope: taking care of one's relationship with God on one hand, and taking care of one's relationship with human beings on the other, in perfect balance and order – this is the true meaning of '*Taqwa*.'

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} on January 15, 2010 said:

Who else but Ahmadis have pledged that they will give up idle rituals and greediness? Who else but Ahmadis have pledged that they will totally accept the kingdom of the Holy Qur'an? Who else but Ahmadis have pledged that they will make the Word of God and the word of Prophet Mohammad^{saw} their modulus operandi? Always remember that progress is not measured through worldly

pleasures. Rather, it lies in the approval and blessings of Allah the Almighty.

So my Dear Sisters, let us reflect on the handcuffs that we have fastened to our wrists and feet. The key to unlocking these handcuffs is to establish a firm link with Allah the Almighty. Let us step forward to achieve this goal because this is the key that will save us and our children, and help us protect and defend Islam with our good conduct and righteous behaviors. If we claim to be *Lajna Imaillah*- The Maid Servants of Allah, then it is incumbent upon us to recognize the shackles that imprison us to this world, to make every effort to move towards Allah by improving in piety and *Taqwa*, honoring our pledges, serving others with patience and contentment, preserving our chastity and raising the standards of modesty in ourselves, our homes and the community we live in.

So let us turn to God. Let us become Godly. Let us become God Fearing. Let us Love Allah and make Allah our best friend over all other relationships. Once we are equipped with the fragrance of Godliness, we will find it much easier to clothe ourselves in the most beautiful garments of '*Taqwa*'. And when we adorn ourselves in the garments of *Taqwa*, we will display those distinct qualities that a true maid servant of Allah should display, *Insha Allah*. And when we are armed with *Libaasut Taqwa*, we will find it very easy to defend Islam in the best manner. In closing, let us evaluate ourselves and see how we measure up to the description given in verse 112 from Chapter 9:

“*They are the ones who turn to God in repentance, who worship Him, who praise Him, who go about in the land serving Him, who bow down to God, who prostrate themselves in prayer, who enjoin good and forbid evil, and who watch the limits set by Allah.*”

CURBING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE THROUGH MOTHERHOOD

Arsila Faheem, Baltimore, MD

As my husband and I watched the evening news, my 3 year old son ran towards us. He tripped over the carpet and fell. Without acknowledging his father's presence, he extended his arms for my embrace. I hugged him, kissed his invisible booboo and everything was ok. As he wobbled out of the room, I looked at my husband and smiled. "Do you know why he did not come to me?" My husband asked. "It's because you kissed and hugged him whereas I would have just told him to walk it off." "No," I smiled, "Motherhood, I think----"

As we ponder over the unfortunate cases of Domestic violence, images of adults and spouses abusing and fighting emerge in our minds. Recently National *Lajna* has been very involved in developing a task force and chalking out helpful resources. Domestic violence however is like terrorism. In order to abolish it, we must identify its root cause. Take for instance, the recent heart breaking martyrdom of Ahmadis in Pakistan. This act of heinous crime can be condemned through media outreach programs, the *Khuddam* on security duty, in Pakistani mosques, could be armed with weapons to make Ahmadis safe, but will these steps inhibit a new string of terrorists from being bred for *Jihad* against Ahmadis? No, this will not happen till the Blasphemy Laws of 1974 are repealed and the hate-breeding madrassas are shut down for good. Terrorism has its roots in these laws. Likewise domestic violence cannot be blamed on a single individual.

Unless we pinpoint the root cause for domestic violence, we will not be able to curb it. We could call 911 or the Domestic violence hotlines, and seek help from *Jama'at* officials, but this is only a last link in the chain. It is merely an attempt to bandage the wounds. This will not retard the number of mentally unstable individuals who contribute to domestic violence. Where then should we look for the root cause of domestic violence? Motherhood, when not done right, is one of the biggest contributing factors to domestic violence.

So how and when does a cute and cuddly baby turn into an abusive monster? Trace it back to the time when a woman finds out that she is carrying a baby. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth, said,

"As mothers you should talk to your children about Allah's love in the very beginning. If you neglect this in the start and want to catch up to it later on, you'll find out that this is an impossible task. It is so unfeasible that sometimes the mothers destroy themselves in pathos, but are unable to do anything. So you should embark on this mission, at the very

start when you find out that you are carrying a baby, and continue it till the child reaches maturity and becomes an independent individual. During this period you can generate immense changes in him. However I will reiterate this point again, that the changes you want to instill in him, you have to inculcate in your personality first and foremost. Without altering yourself, your progeny will not transform. As long as your personalities are not filled with the light of Allah's Being, the hearts of your children will not be filled with it either."

There are scores amongst us, educated or uneducated who instead of praying for a righteous child, wish for a son, only so that he could be a care taker in their old age. About this Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} said:

"The sole purpose of having children should be that they grow up to be true servants of religion as is mentioned in Ch. 25:75. But there are very few who pray that their progeny should be a champion of faith. There are many who don't even know why they attempt to have children while there are others who only want an heir, lest upon their death, a relative or stranger should take possession of their property. But be mindful that with this attitude, your faith is completely destroyed. Any other reason to have children besides the one that it should serve the cause of faith is not acceptable."

Thus when a mother raises her son with the sole intention of him being the care taker, she unintentionally

imparts preferential treatment upon him. He would be given a better share at the meal, and his sisters will be expected to clean up behind him because he is the prince of the house and is too busy studying. This discriminatory behavior will lead to stubbornness in the boy and resentment in his sisters. Hazdhat Khalifatul Masih IVth said,

“At times mothers have trained their boys in such a manner that they have made them gods. They raise them to be arrogant and haughty, and favor them over girls. Slowly they make them boastful and crazy. Later on their wives have to face the consequences of this wrong upbringing of such mothers. As so, in the final form, it is a woman who is causing hardship upon another woman. It is commonly seen that in households, where sons are taken as gods, preferred over daughters, raised as boastful individuals and given all sorts of liberties, when these boys grow up into men, they are always a source of nuisance for other women.”

When such mothers become mothers-in-law, they create havoc for their daughters-in-law. A very common form of emotional abuse by the mothers-in-law is to silently or vocally pressurize the young couple into having sons. If they have only daughters, then instead of paying heed to the following hadith of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, they pressurize their sons into getting married again so that he could bear sons and their progeny could continue. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said:

“He who brings up two girls through their childhood will appear on the Day of Judgment attached to me like two fingers of a hand.”

Little do these mothers know

that it has been biologically proven that the gender of the child is determined by the sperm that comes from the man and not from the ovum of the woman. Thus if the mother sets her goals straight and from the very beginning raises her son so that instead of a means of her livelihood in old age, he would become ‘*sadaqa jaariah*’ for her, she could teach him many virtues. The lap of motherhood is the first school for a child. By practicing them, a mother could teach them patience, tolerance, compassion, respect and all other merits to lead a productive life. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said:

“Paradise lies under the feet of a mother.”

Meaning thereby that by being a model of good values, a mother can train her children so that they can tread upon the paths that lead to paradise.

An important aspect that leads to physical abuse by grown up adults is if they have faced similar abuse in the young age. About the practice of spanking, Hadhrat Masih Mau’ood^{as} has said:

“For me, spanking a child is entered in polytheism as if an ill tempered person himself wants to partake in direction and providence. Direction and training is purely an act of God. Strictly following a

child, much insistence to do a particular thing and thereby restraining them from every small thing, proves as we alone are the masters of guidance and we could bring the child to the right path as per our desires. This is a form of imperceptible disbelief. Our community should abstain from it. As the parents endeavor to hit a child, I wish they would strive in prayers and make it a portion of their compassionate prayers. It is so because the prayers of parents for their children have been given a special acceptance.”

Spanking a child will raise a boy who will hit his sisters, a classmate who will bully his fellows and a husband who will be physically violent towards his wife. Because this is what motherhood taught him---- a quick fix to all problems. Instead if the mother would have done as Hadhrat Masih Mau’ood^{as} has said, she would have ensured to raise a child who is ready to forgive, instead of being abusive and also become a strong believer in the power of prayer. Also instructing the wives in this regard, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth, said,

“If a battered woman, to gain the sympathies of her children, exaggerates to them as to how she is tortured and tells them that their father is a cruel man, then she herself has destroyed her progeny. Instead of protecting them, she has allowed the malice of her husband to reach them. If she sacrifices and intervenes between her kids and the brutality of her husband, bears all the unkindness upon her heart but prevents it from reaching her children, then she is likened to a hen. A hen is a weak animal save for, when the vulture attacks her children. She then protects them under her wings. No matter how many hardships, it faces, but she does not let it reach her chicks lest the vulture

would harm them, after her death. This is a true mother that we see in an animal.”

Likewise children raised under the watchful eyes of their mother resort to truth instead of lying. If they make a mistake, we should try to forgive, exercise patience and not reprimand them for admitting their mistake...

The Holy Qur'an states:

“Let them forgive and forbear. Do you not desire that Allah should forgive you?” (24:23)

If the mother uses kind form of speech and polite mannerisms, there is a very slim chance that the child would not follow suit. In some households it is a norm to abuse and curse the child and foul mouth it. One should not be surprised when these boys and girls grow up to adopt a similar harsh language. The Holy Prophet^{saw} said:

“Abuse of a Muslim is sin and his murder is disbelief.”

Napoleon once said,

“The hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world.”

As so mothers should take pride in motherhood. Do not think of it as a burden but only a sweet responsibility for which one has been chosen by Allah. As mothers we all realize that at times, motherhood is frustrating, exhausting and for many, perhaps less rewarding (in terms of appreciation). But the fruit that it bears is a sight for sore eyes. During the process, the mother has to kill her ego, make compromises and remain steadfast with prayers. Demands of motherhood can only be met if the mother realizes that it is a task that Allah entrusted upon them and all that they tolerate in its

course; will be rewarded by Allah alone. Any other intentions will only meet with failure.

Over the years, a very interesting phenomenon of motherhood has emerged. This is the concept of absent motherhood. Many might take offense to it but outsourcing motherhood? I often ask women who have a quest to become alpha-women, if they would outsource a multimillion dollar job? Won't they strive for every penny of this job? Why then denounce motherhood and leave it for nannies, day care centers or even export it to grandmothers in South Asia? How then in this world and in the hereafter can we expect the rewards of motherhood without the sacrifice? It is like the multimillion job, without a paycheck every month, but with everlasting rewards and far reaching outcomes. There are many things happening in a child's life that only a mother's keen eyes can keep an account for. Also substituting motherhood with WII and I pads will only raise aloof and distant kids. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} has said:

“My heart is filled with the prayers of Almighty Allah when I see well educated women with professional skills sometimes do not work just because their children need their attention. These wom-

en are neither selfish nor follow their own desires. But their sole purpose is to protect their next generation. --- Seeing these children the heart is filled with gratitude for Almighty Allah that despite living in this environment and in this age, such wonderful boys and girls have been granted to the Promised Messiah^{as} by Allah the Almighty.”

While following in the footsteps of the women in the west, Ahmadi mothers should be mindful of the dire results in the form of divorces, suicides and drug abuse in children. As builders of a heavenly society, we are expected to show a model to our kids that they could adopt it in their own lives as well. There is no worldly organization that would only allow us to enjoy our share of rights without first fulfilling our duties. The essence of recognizing our duties of motherhood and thereby curbing domestic violence in its roots can be epitomized in the following quote of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}. He has said:

“Women can express their gratitude for the favors bestowed upon them by Allah the Exalted and His Prophet (saw) when they recognize their obligations. An Ahmadi woman needs to do so more particularly since she carries twice the weight of this debt. This is because she has also pledged allegiance to the Promised Messiah (as) the true devotee of the Holy Prophet (saw) who once again established women's rights in the light of the Holy Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.”

Bibliography

(Gardens of Righteous Malfoozat Daughters of Eve Address of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}, to Lajna, at the occasion of *Jalsa Salana* USA, 2008.

COLORS OF A RAINBOW: PROFILE OF A MUSLIM HUSBAND

Zahir M. Ahmad

Surah Al-Fatihah is often referred to as the key to understanding the Holy Qur'an, therefore, it is not surprising to find verses therein that are the key to finding success in this life and the hereafter.

Verses 5, 6 and 7 of the *Surah Al-Fatihah* state:

“Thee (Allah) alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help. Guide us in the right path.

The path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings, those who have not incurred Thy displeasure and those who have not gone astray”.

So, the message is as clear as it is simple. Conduct yourself in a manner that is consistent with those who have succeeded and avoid the path of those who have gone astray and you will have Allah's blessings and all the success that accompanies it.

The subject of marriage and the roles of the spouses are also governed by the above mentioned laws of nature. In this article, I will try to depict the profile of a Muslim husband using the criteria set forth in the first *Surah* of the Holy Qur'an and practiced by those who were sent to set an example.

First of all, in order to be a good Muslim husband, one has to be a good Muslim. This journey begins with the responsibilities of the parents even before the birth of the child. The Holy Qur'an emphasizes the importance of prayers even for the unborn child when it states in chapter 3 verse 40:

“There and then did Zachariah pray to his Lord, ‘My Lord, grant me from Thyself pure offspring, surely Thou art the Hearer of prayers’ ”.

Again in chapter 25 Verse 75 while speaking of those who would be accorded a high place in paradise the Holy Qur'an Says:

“And those who say, our Lord grant us of our wives and children the delight of our eyes and make us a model for the righteous”.

It is clearly established by the Holy Qur'an that praying for and working diligently for the spiritual and physical health of a child is the responsibility of both, the parents and the child. And the most important time of a child's life is before the birth and very

early life.

The Holy Prophet of Islam^{saw} was always interested in the spiritual and mental education of children, and he provided them with guidance for their material and spiritual happiness. It can be seen that Hadhat Muhammad Mustafa^{saw} focused much on prayer in guiding his children. Hadhrat Anas^{ra} narrates that when the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} set out for *Fajr*, he would go to Fatima's door and call the people in the house to join him. He would knock on their door to get them out for *Isha* as well.

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} also stressed the importance of the upbringing of the children and the responsibilities of the parents in this regard. In *Malfoozat* Volume II, page 4, he states;

“They should make it a part and parcel of their duties that they pray for the children fervently; the prayers of the parents for their children are particularly accepted by God.”

This responsibility must be discharged with the highest level of *Taqwa* keeping in mind the basic principles of love, respect and understanding and should be embedded in the child's mind while he or she is very young. Talking about moral training of a child Hadhrat Khalifatul Mash IVth in his *Khutba Jumu'ah* gave an example of Hadhrat Sahibzada Mirza Muzaffar Ahmad Sahib and

his wife Hadhrat Sahibzadi Amatul Qayyum Sahiba. Hazoorth stated,

“Here in the USA your *Ameer* M.M. Ahmad Sahib and his wife, my sister, Amatul Qayyum Sahiba are good models to follow. Muhammad Ahmad the son of my nephew, Battu, is very dear to them and they create an impression that as if Muhammad Ahmad can lead them by their noses and what ever he desires will be done. I mean that is an impression that they create to the cursory observer. But I know better than that, within his small world of freedom he is never permitted to cross the boundaries of principles.

In fact, he is taught to be absolutely true, to respect elders, to love God and the Holy Prophet^{saw} and his servants, all Godly people and it is incumbent upon him to respect the Holy Qur’an and listen to it in silence when it is recited.

All of this is done in a manner that the child continues to retain a sense of freedom and follows the instructions by appropriating them as these values belong to him and he himself is the guardian over all these good qualities”.

As it is clear from Hazoor’sth statement, it is the parents who transfer “good values” to the child and the child then becomes the guardian of those values. So, parents must not under estimate the influence they have on creating the “Muslim child, brother, sister, and husband and wife.

Islamic values regarding a husband and a wife are very clear. The relationship has to be based on the values of “*Taqwa*” and that nec-

essarily means, in letter and spirit, i.e., “*Qaulan Sadida*”. No relationship can work if it is not based on trust. Trust is a tool that glues together any relationship, the quality of trust makes anything possible. And yet, trust cannot be demanded. It is something that is built and earned over time by indulging in practice of *Taqwa* and *Qaulan Sadida*, always telling the truth.

The Holy Qur’an in chapter 2 verse 188 tells us that husbands are garments for their wives and the wives are garments for their husband, highlighting the value of trust in a relationship. Trust in a relationship then gives way to comfort which leads to harmony. The Holy Qur’an tells us that the relationship should be one that is a source of comfort to each other. In chapter 7, verse 190 Allah states:

“He, it is Who has created you from a single soul and made there from its mate, that he might find comfort in her”.

Another basic staple of building trust is treating one’s wife in the best way possible. Treating her in a manner that the husband would like to be treated himself or even better. The Holy Prophet of Islam^{saw}, while talking about virtuous

men said:

“*Khairokum Khairokum Li-Ahlihee,*”

that, “the best among you is he who is best in dealings with his wife”.

Hadhrat Masih Mau’ood^{as} wrote,

“You should not take your wives as something to be taken for granted or of no importance. He, who does not treat his wife in a good manner; cannot be called a righteous person. One can do good to others only if one can do good to his wife. He, who quarrels with his wife, scolds her or even beats her, can certainly be of no good to others.

(*Malfoozat Vol. II p 147*)

Contrary to what some believe, the Holy Qur’an is full of injunctions that make it very clear that the relationship between a husband and a wife is based on equality.

“So their Lord answered their prayers, saying, I will allow not the work of any worker from among you, whether male or female, to be lost. You are from one another.” Ch 3. V. 196

Allah has enjoined upon husbands to be “guardians” over their wives. The meaning of being a guardian must be clearly understood. Too often men take the word to mean that they are the superior in the relationship, whereas, being a guardian is a tremendous responsibility and must be understood in its entirety.

The concept of being a guardian of one's wife has in it an inherent responsibility for her welfare. So one must act in a manner that is consistent with the values that constitute welfare. All the actions we undertake must take into account the welfare of our wives and this concept should not be misconstrued to mean a position of superiority over her.

We must take the time to understand our wives, we must try and understand the whole person that is, the body, the mind, the heart and the soul.

Our beloved Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa^{saw} once said to Hadhrat Aisha^{ra},

"Whenever you are upset with me I get to know it". She replied by asking, "How?". Hazoor^{saw} said,

"I have noticed that when you are pleased with me and in the course of conversation you refer to God as the Lord of Muhammad and if you are not pleased with me, you refer to God as the Lord of Ibrahim". Hadhrat Aisha^{ra} laughed and said that he was right.

(Bukhari Kitabun Nikah)

With reference to Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}, Hadhrat Amma Jan^{ra} narrates that when she first came to Qadian as a new bride, she was used to sleeping with a dim light on. However, Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} slept in pitch dark. Upon learning that the new bride was used to a light on Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} would wait until she went to sleep before turning the lights off. If Hadhrat Amma Jan^{ra} woke up during the night Hadhrat

Masih Mau'ood^{as} would quickly turn the light on. We have to remember that this was not a time when turning the light on simply meant to flip on a switch. A kerosene oil lamp had to be lit. Later, as she would be afraid if she woke up in the middle of the night, he started to leave the light on throughout the night.

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} got in the habit of sleeping with the lights on to a degree that he started keeping dim lights on throughout the house. Hadhrat Amma Jan^{ra} used to tease him about it and he would just smile and agree.

The tenderness of the relationship is felt ever so strongly in the following exchange between Hazoor^{as} and Hadhrat Amma Jan^{ra}. She once said to Hazoor^{as},

"Do you know that I always pray to Allah that I may never have to go through the pain of your demise and that He may give me death before calling you".

To that our beloved Hazoor^{as} replied.

"And I always pray that you live after me in good health for many years".

We all know that Hadhrat Amma Jan^{ra} lived for forty four years after the passing of Hazoor^{as}.

As we discussed the teachings of Islam regarding a good Muslim husband and ob-

served the behavior of the models that Allah has provided for us we have learned a few virtues that should be in the profile of a Muslim husband. They are:

Love of Allah, love of the Holy Qur'an and the love of Allah's messengers

To seek Allah's help, to seek Allah's refuge from the whisper's of Satan and to remain steadfast

Shun disorder and work for peace and to invite her to join in good deeds

Understand the whole person, the body, the heart, the mind and the soul

Treat her with equality, dignity, humility, respect, , love, look out for her welfare and comfort and finally, trust her and earn her trust

In summary, to be a good Muslim husband is to be a good Muslim by practicing the values that are consistent with the values of Allah.

When a beam of light is passed through a crystal prism the component colors that appear as it passes through are red, blue, yellow, violet, orange and all the other colors are colors of the rainbow.

When the same beam of light is passed through the prism of a good Muslim husband, the colors that appear on the other side are the virtues of equality, dignity, humility, patience, trust and above all, love.

Among these virtues, the greatest one is love, for where there is love, there is Allah.

AN OPEN LETTER TO MUSLIMS WORLDWIDE

Professor K. A. Malik, Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin

Every religion and particularly Islam advocates tolerance of others' views. This Islamic principle has been adopted by the Western world and this may be behind its advancement, strength and vigor. Yet the Muslims in the world at large are moving in the opposite direction as is seen by the ever increasing killings of Shias, Sunnis and Ahmadis. This is happening not only in Pakistan, but in a number of other Muslim countries as well. It is saddening and alarming to witness the plight of the Muslims around the globe. There is hardly a Muslim country which enjoys stability. The Muslim world is besieged with strife and conflict. Muslim nations are fighting amongst themselves. It is no wonder that the Western world can unilaterally dictate its will upon them. God Almighty in His infinite benevolence has bestowed countless bounties upon the Muslim world by endowing them with untold resources. Yet, Muslim nations are amongst the most backward. Should this not be of concern to the Muslims around the globe and cause them to "wake-up"?

Where are the *Ulema* of the present time? Should they not be devoting all their time and making every effort to create an awakening in the minds of the *Ummah* and lead the *Ummah* to an enlightened thinking of acceptance and tolerance. The *Ulema* of this time have an immeasurable responsibility to guide the *Ummah* at this very critical period. To whom much is given much is expected. On the Day of Judgment how will the *Ulema* stand before God, the Giver

of all Life when they will be questioned about forsaking their responsibilities, not sharing their wisdom and not spreading knowledge amongst the masses? Why else has God, the All-Knowing given them knowledge if they are not to share it with others? Selfish amongst us are those that keep God's gifts to themselves. What greater "*sadaqah*" can there be than to share knowledge with others, the same way God commands us to share one's riches with the poor?

Where does it say in the Qur'an that Muslims have the right to murder based on minor differences in reconcilable religious views? The latest example of this is the recent killings of scores of Ahmadi Muslims who had gathered to bow their heads in front of the Forgiving God and were praying and pleading to God for Forgiveness and seeking His Divine Guidance. Please! I beg to ask the question: Is this such a crime that an innocent person prostrating before His Creator should be murdered? Can someone please show an ignorant person like me where it says in the Holy Qur'an that such a murderous act is permissible in the eyes of God? Only the Almighty and All-Knowing God, the Giver of life, can take life.

What crime have the Ahmadi committed that warrants their murder? They believe and follow to the letter and in spirit all the five pillars of Islam. The following is an example of how their beliefs have been misconstrued and misunderstood:

In the manifesto published on 2nd October 1891 C.E. Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement wrote and which was read out by him personally in the *Jamia Masjid* (Central Mosque) of Delhi:

"I have heard that some of the leading Ulema of this city are giving publicity to false charges against me that I lay claim to prophethood, or do not believe in angels, or in heaven and hell, or in the existence of Gabriel, or in Lailatul Qadr or in miracles and the miraj of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. So to make the truth known to all and sundry, I do hereby publicly declare that all this is complete fabrication. I am not a claimant to prophethood, neither a denier of miracles, angels, Lailatul Qadr, etc. On the other hand, I confess belief in all those matters which are in the Islamic principles of faith, and, in accordance with the belief of Ahle Sunnah wal Jam'aah. I believe in those things which were established by the Qur'an and Hadith, and consider that after our Master Muhammad Mustafa^{saw}, the Last of the messengers, any claimant to prophethood and messengership is a liar and an unbeliever. It is my conviction that apostolic revelation began with Adam, the chosen

one of God, and come to close with the Messenger of God, Muhammad *Mustafa*^{saw}”.

There was the time that upon the completion of the English Commentary of the Holy Qur'an by the Ahmadiyya movement a copy of the Qur'an was personally hand carried to General Ayub Khan, who was then the President of Pakistan, who accepted it with grace and dignity and felt a great honor in receiving it. There was a time when members of the Ahmadiyya movement were amongst the highly revered. The leading civil servants including Deputy Chairman of Pakistan's Planning Commission, Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistani Air Force, judges of the high court, military generals, the chief diplomat of Pakistan and leading scientists in the country were largely members of the Ahmadiyya movement. Ahmadis raised the stature of Pakistan and its respect in the international community by its members receiving the Nobel Prize, serving as the President of the United Nations General Assembly, the Chief Justice of the International Court of Justice in Hague and holding senior positions worldwide in academia, medicine and global institutions and organizations. As a result Ahmadis were the most highly respected citizens of the nation.

What Hadhrat Mirza Sahib^{as} said in his speech is the belief of every Muslim around the globe. What greater evidence needs to be produced to clear the misunderstanding about Ahmadis?

Then why the extremist Muslims are killing the Ahmadi Muslims begs the question --- How can one have so much hatred in one's

heart that one is prepared to kill another human being simply because of perceived differences in religious views?

Please show me where it says in the Holy Qur'an, the Holiest of Books, the word of Almighty God, that any person has the right to tell another that he or she is not a Muslim. Is this question of whether a person is a Muslim or not a political question to be settled in the parliament? Should this not be left to the Creator? Do we know what is in a person's heart? Only God has that knowledge. Are we not then playing God? We should beg God for forgiveness for indulging in "*shirk*": the greatest of all sins. It says in the Qur'an "To you your religion and for me my religion" (*Surah Al-Kafirun*). At another place it is clearly mentioned "there is no compulsion in religion" (*Surah Al-Baqarah*). Should we not ask ourselves the question whether we are following what God Almighty has commanded?

I beg Muslims around the globe to seek God's forgiveness and to begin leading a life of tolerance and acceptance. I pray to the Almighty, Creator of the Universe and Master of the Day of Judgment, our One and Only God that He in His Infinite mercy forgive us for our sins and show us the path of enlightenment and with His grace lead the Muslim world out of its dark age. *Ameen*.

FITCHBURG JAMA'AT ACTIVITIES

Masood Ashraf

- 1) The Fitchburg City local access television station is playing tapes provided by the Fitchburg *Jama'at* twice a week. Each week different tapes are being provided which consist of sermons of Hazoor^{aba} in English language translation and Q&A session with Khalifatul Masih IVth.
- 2) The Fitchburg *Jama'at* members participated in the 4th of July parade held by city. Members walked the mile and a half route of the parade holding huge banner, "**Love for all Hatred for None**" waving and greeting thousands of people. All the participants of the parade were met and greeted by Fitchburg City Mayor (Lisa Wong) at the city hall at the end of parade.
- 3) The Fitchburg *Jama'at* members are actively distributing flyers as per the instruction of our beloved Hazoor^{aba}. Flyers were distributed in front of the Mosque on Main street and also the small town of Ashby was visited and flyers were distributed to several homes. Flyers are also being distributed door to door in different neighborhoods in the city and *Alhumdolillah* the response has been great.
- 4) Fitchburg City Mayor (Lisa Wong) sent her representative to join us for *Eid Prayer on Eidul Fitr* Day and later she also paid a visit to *Masjid Baitul-Zikr* and met members and held discussion with president Bashirudin Mehmud Sahib.
- 5) The Sentinel and Enterprise newspapers interviewed Fitchburg *Sadr*, Bashir-uddin Mehmud Sahib and published a large article about the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

IJTEMA

Richard James Law

I am a recent convert to Islam, and a member of the Ahmadiyya Community; my pledge took place a little less than a year ago.

The 2009 *Ijtema* had left a lasting impression on me.

Our carpooling took a little over ten hours, seeming all the while like a breeze. As we arrived everyone was being greeted with an overly-hospitable meal.

The ride combined with the incredible meal had done little justice to the event in its entirety.

The only downside for me in observing the event was a sense of culture shock. The ambivalence was solely based on the foreignness of the surrounding people and the thorough discussions on Islam, at this point I was overly familiar with my family's Christianity, which greatly frowned upon Islam, in particular.

I partook in the *Ijtema* at a greater distance than most of those who had attended.

The theme of last year's *Ijtema* was on the seeking of forgiveness from God.

The claim for God's mercy was laid out in the light of the Holy Qur'an; the main message being, 'The One God is always oft-returning with His Grace and Mercy, towards all those that turn to Him when a fault is committed, and ever-strive in accordance to Him, to improve their conduct.'

In addition to speeches given on the theme, there was also an abundance of brotherhood building activities, such as a blood drive, sporting events, and historically based trivia games.

The 2010 *Ijtema* approaches in a little over a month. I must say that I am excited, free of the former ambivalence.

All that I had tensely observed last year, culminated to a promising realization:

'A dominating sense of unity ran all throughout, and this had been accompanied by the participants self-less conduct to lend their attention to anybody.'

This remembrance has stuck with me; I am now, justifiably excited.

SAD DEMISE OF MAHMOOD KHAN SAHIB

May 2nd 1966 – September 24th 2010

Dr. Ahmed Khan

A great loss occurred to *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya USA on September 24th 2010 with the unexpected death of Mahmood Khan Sahib of Houston, Texas *Jama'at*. While on a business trip in Atlanta, Georgia, Mahmood Khan Sahib suffered a sudden cardiac event, which led to his tragically fatal drowning, *inna nilla he wa inna ille he ra jeoon*.

Mahmood Sahib was born on May 2nd 1966 in Hyderabad-Sindh, Pakistan to Abdul Sami Khan, a longstanding and active member of the Los Angeles *Jama'at*. His mother, Shafqat Sultana Khan, has been serving the *Jama'at* in Los Angeles as the Secretary of *Ziafat* for more than twenty years. His family background is deeply seeded within the Ahmadiyya community, dating back to its origin. His paternal grandfather, Mohammad Zahoor Khan Sahib, and his brother, Dr. Hashmatulla Khan Sahib, planted this love through their direct relationship to the Promised Messiah^{as}. Mahmood Sahib always lived up to that bond with the *Jama'at* and graciously served in numerous facets.

He came to the United States at the young age of sixteen and obtained his education in the greater Los Angeles area in Aeronautical Engineering from Azusa Pacific University. His fascination with the marvel of flight, led him to an occupation as a pilot and Senior QA Specialist for Continental Airlines. For the past sixteen years, Mahmood Sahib resided in the greater Houston area and was an active and prominent member of the Houston *Jama'at*, living in near proximity to *Baitus Samee*. He served as National *Mo'tamid* for *Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya* from 1994 to 1999, under the *Sadarat* of his first cousin Munam Naeem Sahib. In remembering him, loved ones describe him as a courteous, charitable, kind, professional, well-organized person, who loved to travel. No one can seem to forget his boisterous smile, as well as his love for making others laugh with his jokes.

His life's work of service to the *Jama'at* is remembered by many as evidenced by numerous testimonies. Tariq Bhatti Sahib of the Houston *Jama'at* recalls a touching memory. "For me, one particular memory of Mahmood Bhai stands out over the others. Although it is a seemingly small and subtle incident, I think it speaks volumes about his character. It was during the ground breaking (foundation stone) ceremony for *Baitus Samee* mosque in July 1998. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV^{rh} was in Houston to lay the foundation stone. As the cement for the foundation stone began to be shoveled into the ground, a few tiny drops of cement sprinkled onto Hazoor's^{rh} shoes and 'shalwar'. There was a large and tightly knit crowd of people around the foundation site and Hazoor^{rh} did not have sufficient room to step back and avoid the cement drops. Upon seeing this Mahmood Bhai instinctively kneeled down in front of Hazoor^{rh} and wiped Hazoor's^{rh} shoes with a handkerchief and remained kneeled in front of Hazoor^{rh} to shield Hazoor^{rh} from the cement drops."

Mahmood Khan Sahib is survived by his wife, Shazia Khan Sahiba, and his two year old son, Ehan Mahmood Khan. He is also survived by five siblings and his parents, whom currently reside in Los Angeles, California. May Allah give his family the strength to bear this burden and they find peace, *Ameen*. May Allah rest his soul and give him higher rankings in the hereafter, *Ameen*. May there be many sprouts of new Mahmood's to serve the *Jama'at* in the way that he did, *Ameen*.

REQUEST FOR PRAYERS AT THE SAD DEMISE OF MASOOD AHMAD KHURSHID SANORI SAHIB

Hamdah Farooqi, UK

At 4 am on Thursday 23rd Sep. 2010 M. A Khurshid Sanori Sahib passed away from this transient world to meet his Lord and Master in the eternal World of the hereafter. *Innalillah e wa Inna Ilahey Rajeoon.*

He was born on first *Ramadhanul Mubarak*, 18th April, 1923 in the town of Sanor, district Patiala. Both his parents, Maulvi Qudratullah Sanori^{ra} and Raheeman Bibi Sahiba (D/O of Karim Baksh Sahib^{ra}) were companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

After initial schooling in Sanor, he received his education in Qadian and had the great blessing of working under the directives of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}, in his office as a trainee accountant, later working as an accountant on Hazoor's^{ra} farms in Sindh, after which he lived in Baluchistan, Lahore and Karachi, where he had the Blessing of active services for the *Jama'at*

Khurshid Sanori Sahib was absolutely devoted to *Khalifatul Masih* in every call of the *Khalifa*. In 1991 he moved to the U.S.A with his wife, Nasirah Begum Sahiba. For most of the time they lived in the States of Florida and Georgia. Members of the *Jama'at* in both these states benefitted greatly from his untiring service in fields of *Tal'eem*, *Tarbiyyat*, *Tabligh* and financial sacrifice. Where ever he lived he would offer his house to be used by members of the *Jama'at* for *Jumu'ah* Prayers and for holding of *Ta'leem* and *Tarbiyyat* meetings. Throughout his life he served in various offices in the *Jama'at* but he would not limit himself and worked tirelessly and selflessly in all departments with exceptional zeal and vigor. He always used the guidance he received from Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} in all aspects of life and organization.

In the U.S he received many awards over the years for his outstanding *Ansar* work and was able to increase the participation of *Jama'at* members in activities and in financial sacrifice. He worked towards creating a strong bond of affection and brotherhood amongst members.

On Friday 24th Sep. his body was taken to the Atlanta Mosque, Baitul Baqi. (He had personally assisted in acquiring this Mosque). After the *Jumu'ah* Prayers, President Georgia Jamaat, Hazeem Pudhiapura Sahib led the funeral prayers, where a number of the *nau Muba'een* whom he had so lovingly nurtured and cared for had gathered together with the *Jama'at* members. The body was then taken on the journey to Maryland for burial. On Saturday 25th of Sep. the body arrived at Masjid Baitur Rehman, Silver Spring, MD and after the *Zuhar* Prayers the funeral prayers were led by Maulana Naseem Mahdi Sahib, Missionary in-charge and *Na'ib Ameer* USA. The burial took place at the Ahmadiyya cemetery, "Maqbaratus Salam. Moosian section" at Sykesville. Maryland Lakeview Gardens. At the completion of the burial Maulana Naseem Mahdi Sahib led the silent prayers.

Khurshid Sanori Sahib is survived by his four sons and four daughters and 44 grand and great grand children. His sons and daughters are:

- Hameed Ahmad Anwer Sahib, UK.
- Munir Ahmad Khurshid Sahib, Brampton, Canada.
- Karim Ahmad Sahib, Portland, Oregon. U.S.A
- Majeed Ahmad Sanori Sahib, Virginia. U.S.A
- Sadqa Karamat Sahiba, wife of Hameed Karamat Sahib, U.K
- Mubarikah Waseem Sahiba, Wife of Muhammad Waseem Sahib, Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A
- Hamdah Sanori Farooqi, wife of Shajar Ahmad Farooqi Sahib, U.K
- Naseerah Qamar Sahiba, wife of Qamar Ahmad Sahib, Karachi, Pakistan.

With the Grace of Allah the Almighty all the children were able to be present for the funeral except for the daughter in Pakistan who was unable to get the visa.

In his last few days Sanori Sahib instructed his family to convey his salaam to Hadhrat Ameerul Momineen^{aba} and all brothers and sisters of the Jama'at and request prayers for his maghfirat, and to request Hazoor's permission to be buried at an Ahmadiyya cemetery's plot designated for Moosis in U.S.A.

All members of the *Jama'at* are requested most humbly to pray for Sanori Sahib that May Allah the Gracious and Merciful receive the departed soul in His eternal Mercy and grant him forgiveness and elevate his status to include him amongst his chosen servants. *Ameen*. Also kindly pray for the children and future generations of Sanori Sahib to be granted the strength and steadfastness to bear this loss with fortitude and to continue with the dedication to worship of Allah the Almighty and the service to the aims of the Promised Messiah^{as} and be humble servants of the *Khalifa* and the *Jama'at*, so the Light of Love and Dedication and vigorous service Lives on in the future generations.

SAD DEMISE

It is reported with great sadness that my elder brother Karimullah Khan Nasir (son of late Professor Habibullah Khan of T.I. College, Rabwah) passed away on October 23, 2010 in Karachi. He had a breathing problem for few years. He was admitted in a hospital where he breathed his last after few hours. He was 74. *Inna Lillahe wa Inna Alahe Rajeoon*. My Allah elevate his ranks in paradise and give strength to the be-
reaved family to bear this loss. *Kalimullah Khan, Laurel, Maryland*

MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Mr. and Mrs. Latif and Rubina Nazir Khalil of Silver Spring, Maryland *Jama'at* arranged the marriage ceremony of their daughter Afshan Nazir Khalil with John Hanyok son of Mr. & Mrs. John and Kathleen Hanyok at Baitur Rahman Mosque on Friday, October 1, 2010. Men were seated at *Ansarullah Hall*, and ladies were upstairs in *Lajna Hall* after *Maghrib/Isha* Prayers. After recitation of the Holy Qur'an and *Nazam*, Latif Khalil Nazir introduced both the families. Then Maulana Naseem Mahdi Sahib conducted the *Nikah* and shed some light on the dedicated services of Maulana Nazir Ahmad Ali Sahib in Africa for Ahmadiyyat where he laid down his life. He hoped and prayed that this couple becomes an exemplary couple. At the end Respected Ameer Sahib highlighted that the dowry amount is agreed upon in following the tradition of the Holy Prophet^{saw} of Islam and nothing else. He extended congratulations and best wishes to both families and led in silent *Dua*. After that a reception dinner was served.

AMEEN CEREMONY

At the successful conclusion of 29th National *Ijtema Ansarullah* on Sunday, October 10, 2010, an *Ameen* ceremony was held at Baitur Rahman after *Zuhar/Asr* Prayers. Respected Ameer Sahib asked Syeda Mehrunisa Sabahat (age 6) daughter of Syed Saadat Ahmad (*Mohtamim Muqami*) son of Maulana Syed Shamshad Ahmad Nasir (Missionary Southwest) son of Syed Shauket Ali (MTA operator, Earth Station) to recite a few verses of the Holy Qur'an, which she did very clearly. A large number of members were present who joined in the collective silent *Dua*.

A TABLIGH EVENT ORGANIZED BY COLUMBUS, OH JAMA'AT

Mirza Mahmood Ahmad, Secretary Tabligh

On Eid ul Fiter day we had a program in which 7 pastors came from different churches of a small town Lithopolos, Ohio with a population of only 2000, to condemn the burning of the Holy Qur'an by a pastor of a small church in Florida. After the prayer from a Christian pastor, *Sura Al-Fatiha* with translation was recited by Shaib Awan a *Tifl* of our *Jama'at*. Then Pastor Ben Foulk a spokesperson from Christian pastors spoke for a few minutes. He represented all the other churches and showed a great concern about sanctity of all the scriptures. He talked about the respect of all the Muslims and especially the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community being our neighbor next to our Groveport Village.

After him our spokesperson, Dr. Abdus Salaam, President of our community, Columbus, Ohio spoke about the respect and peace and harmony amongst different religions. He welcomed the representatives of different churches who came in the mosque as our neighbors to support us and wished that this may continue in the future as well. This humble servant of *Jama'at* being an organizer thanked all the pastors and the media reporters who came at a very short notice. Br. Naseer Waseem was stage secretary who also introduced the guests. Total attendance was nearly 200, being 50 non Muslim and non Ahmadi guests. The major news paper Columbus Dispatch, and four TV news channels came to cover the story. Lunch was served after the event. *Alhamdulillah* all liked the event and Allah blessed us abundantly. Some links are as follows

Local ministers group condemns Florida pastor's plans

Friday, September 10, 2010 12:21 PM
By Meredith Heagney, The Columbus Dispatch

A local ministerial group today condemned a Florida pastor's plan to burn the Quran on Saturday, but said the attention drawn to it was a blessing in disguise. The Rev. Terry Jones drew international criticism when he announced plans to burn the Quran on Saturday, the ninth anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. President Barack Obama urged him to reconsider, and Defense Secretary Robert Gates contacted him personally. Yesterday, Jones canceled his plans. But later, he said he might reconsider, saying that he had been promised that in exchange, plans for a Mosque near Ground Zero would be changed. The imam in charge of those plans has said he has never talked to Jones. Four pastors representing the Canal Winchester-Lithopolis Ministerial Association came to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community mosque in Groveport to say the group condemns the kind of disrespect that is threatened in Florida. "We can take what is evil and turn it to good through interfaith dialogue," said the Rev. Ben Foulk, pastor of Lithopolis United Methodist Church. Just as terrorists don't represent all of Islam, Jones doesn't represent Christianity, he said. Foulk said that just a few weeks ago he didn't know the Groveport mosque existed. Then its leaders reached out to him. That's why the Florida threat was a blessing in disguise, said Abdus Salam Malik, mosque president. He said it's building understanding. "It was so heartwarming, so beautiful, our Christian neighbors supporting us," he said.



KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON
UNITED STATES SENATOR
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510-4304

July 17, 2010

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA
1333 Spears Road
Houston, Texas 77067

Dear Friends:

Thank you for inviting me to participate in your 62nd annual convention through this message of appreciation.

I applaud the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA for your work to promote peace – and for being an important voice against violence and extremism. It is important that we take a firm stand against terrorism and support freedom. Religious freedom is a right that should not and must not be infringed upon.

Thank you for taking a stand in the face of harsh legal restrictions and officially-sanctioned discrimination that is ongoing in Pakistan. I am proud that the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom has recognized the Ahmadi Minority and supports the lifting of the discriminatory laws in Pakistan.

With my best wishes for a successful convention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kay Bailey Hutchison".

Kay Bailey Hutchison

KBH/lhp



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

RICK PERRY
GOVERNOR

Greetings:

As Governor of Texas, it is my pleasure to extend greetings to everyone attending the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA's 62nd Annual Convention in Chantilly, Virginia.

Communities of faith have played an invaluable role in building our great nation. Throughout history, in times of plenty, in days of scarcity, in periods of joy and in moments of sorrow, many have turned to prayer, reaching out to a higher being for courage, for guidance, to seek solace and to give thanks.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA members are dedicated to promoting a message of peace among the Muslim population, and for 90 years this group has helped to unite thousands of believers, making it the oldest organization of its kind in North America. Congratulations on all your achievements.

First Lady Anita Perry and I send best wishes for a wonderful convention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Perry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rick Perry
Governor



**AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY**
United States of America

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*Muslims who believe in the Messiah,
Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani:*

AUGUST 18, 2010

**DR. LUTFUR RAHMAN SAHIB
PRESIDENT
AHMADIYYA MUSLIM MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

اسلام عليكم و رحمت لله

Hazrat Khalifatul Masieh Al-Khamis has approved the following officers for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Medical Association:

PRESIDENT: Dr. Lutfur Rahman Sahib
Vice President: Dr. Yunus Ismael Sahib
General Secretary: Dr. Ahsen Khan Sahib
Treasurer: DR. Naeem Lughmani Sahib

I welcome the team, and hope and pray all will be able to serve the purpose of Masieh Mo'oud *as* and the guidance of Khalifatul Masieh Al-Khamis. *Insha'Allah.*

Our outgoing President Dr. Mohammad Ali Mumtaz Sahib has indeed been distinguished not only in his field but also his commitment to the Association.

We all applaud his work, his gentleman's demeanor, and look forward to his involvement in other ways. *Insha'Allah.*

و اسلام و خاکسار

Ahsanullah Zafar
Copy: Dr. Mohammad Ali Mumtaz