

IS_{HALL} LOVE ALL M_{ANKIND}.



The Light

December
2019

International Organ of the Centre for the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam

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The First Lahore-Ahmadiyya Mosque in Ivory Coast



A simple room where no one can dictate to us.



The Call of the Messiah

by **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad**



The Promised Messiah and Mahdi

(Editor's note: Any quotations from the Quran are translated from the author's explanations and are not literal translations of the verse quoted. This extract is from the book *Nuzul-ul-Masih*, taken from the Lahore Ahmadiyya publication 'Essence of Islam', p. 122- 125, where the Promised Messiah puts forward arguments and signs about his claim.)

The way the word of God is communicated is in itself a clear indication of the Divine origin of the word. It often happens that the servant of God prays to Him and immediately receives an answer from Him, and this occurs not once or twice but the process may continue up to 50 times and sometimes a whole day or a whole night passes in this verbal interchange. The answers are always in the most eloquent and sweet words and sometimes in words and languages quite unknown to the supplicant. There is also an outpouring of heavenly signs and miracles, and a profusion of Divine favours and assistance. Is it possible that after all the dialogue and evident signs, doubt should still lurk in the mind as to the Divine origin of that word? Not in the least.

On the other hand, this is the only means by which a person can see God even in this life, and to him the impenetrable mystery of the next world is solved beyond a shadow of doubt. All aspects of a brutish life, in which a person indulges in his passions, vanish away with the glorious entering of the light. In the heart that is illuminated, there grows a strong aversion to the dead gods and ardent love for the Living One. Just as worldly people are madly pursuing the things of this world, he is impatiently yearning to attain nearness of God and a close union with Him.

In short, the word of God which is received by one with full certainty of its Divine origin is the key to certainty and all spiritual blessings which flow from that pure fountain source. When Almighty Allah wishes to draw any one of

His servants to Himself, He sends His word upon him, favouring him with direct dialogue and comforting him with extraordinary heavenly signs and showing him in a variety of ways that it is His word. The word of God revealed in this manner becomes the substitute of actually seeing God. It is then, and not till then, that a person understands that there is a God, for then he hears His sweet and majestic voice declaring, "I am". Before Almighty God reveals Himself by His word, a person's belief in His existence based on an observation of the material universe, does not amount to certainty. The perfect plan and consummate laws of order discovered in the universe only give rise to the idea of the probability of the existence of a Creator. But the certain conclusion that there is a God can never be arrived at, nor can the impure light of sin dragging one lower and lower be shed, except by His word.

It would also appear from this description of Divine communication that the doctrine of salvation of the Christians does not prevent sins. They think that the sacrifice of the son of Mary has brought them to the door of salvation, whereas they know it as a fact that much personal striving is required to remove the doubts and the veil hiding God. Where there is doubt, there can be no salvation, for the pure fountain-head from which salvation flows is certainty. The greatest blessing that man can have is the certainty that there is a God who calls to account the sinners and transgressors and, in His mercy, turns to those who turn to Him. This certainty is the only remedy for all your sins. No other atonement can ever release you from the bondage of sins, no blood can wash the impurities of your heart. Is it not a matter of everyday experience that certainty alone is the true barrier against everything that is harmful? You do not hold out your hand over a flame because you know that it will burn. You do not stand before a furious lion because you are certain that it will tear you. You do not ingest poison, for you are fully conscious that the result will be death. Countless instances have verified the fact that where there is a certainty of loss or destruction resulting from an act, it is never performed and is viewed with horror. Why not apply this established truth in matters spiritual?

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How the Lahore-Ahmadiyya Movement, through the Woking Muslim Mission reformed Muslim thought in Trinidad & Tobago

By *Sohaila Omardeen*



(Note: In August 2019, a conference was organised in Woking with the theme: “How did the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, through the Woking Muslim Mission, reform Muslim thought in my country”. Mrs Sohaila Omardeen from Trinidad & Tobago delivered this speech at the main event on Saturday. We apologise for the delay in publishing it.)

Mr Chairman, Hazrat Ameer Sahib, the executive and members of the AAI (UK)! I wish to thank the organisers AAI (UK) for inviting my husband and me to attend this convention. It makes us feel much honoured, and for asking me to speak, this makes me feel — well mostly nervous.

I wish to acknowledge and express my gratitude to the following persons who made extremely valuable contributions to my presentations here today.

Maulana Kemal Hydal, Imam Iqbal Hydal, Imam Kalamazard Mohammed, Sister Zarina Yusuf Mohammed, my brother, Mr Shamshu Deen (genealogist), my sister Zakeya Hosein, Mr Asrap H. Ali and my husband, Wahid Omardeen.

From 1845 to 1917 the British took approximately 140,000 persons from India to Trinidad as indentured labourers to work on the sugar cane fields. My brother Sham has estimated that among them were about 25,000 Muslims. Our ancestors were in that number. Muslims from Africa had gone to Trinidad before that, the earliest went even before Columbus as explorers. Then in the early 19th century, Africans were taken as slaves. Among them were Muslims.

But it was through the great effort and sacrifice of the Muslims who went from India that

Islam survived in Trinidad.

Wherever there was a group of Muslims, they established a Jamaat and built a Masjid which was a humble shed-like structure with a thatched roof and an earthen floor. Early masjids included the one at Iere Village which is believed to be the first masjid build in Trinidad and which is managed by AAI of Trinidad and Tobago.

Currently, Imam Iqbal Hydal is serving as Imam of that jamaat. But the practice of Islam became adulterated by traditions that may have been borrowed from their Hindu acquaintances. We can cite the following examples:

(i) Some Muslims acted as “medicine men” issuing *taweez* or *tabeej* (amulets) to heal illness.

(ii) Some practised exorcism – “*jharey*” with broomsticks to repel evil spirits.

Islam also came under attack from the Christian Missionaries whose main objectives was to convert the “heathens”, e.g. the Canadian Mission’s sole aim was to convert Indians, Hindus and Muslims. To counteract these more educated and forward-thinking Muslims formed themselves into organisations, e.g. Taqveeyatul Islamic Association, TIA.

A group of Muslims concerned for the future of Islam and Muslims in Trinidad made a request to the Woking Mission for a missionary. In the latter half of 1921, Maulana Fazal Karim Khan Durani was sent to Trinidad from Ahmadiyya Movement Lahore. He held classes, gave public lectures and held public debates with pundits and priests. As a result Muslims became more interested in acquiring knowledge of Islam. One such Muslim was a young man named Ameer Ali. He gained some limited knowledge from available Islamic literature, especially the *Islamic Review* which was a publication of the Woking Mission.

It was very popular in Trinidad. It was mainly from this that boys (my brothers in-

cluded) were given names like Sadrudin, Kamauladin and Murudin. Ahmadi literature continues to have an immense impact on Islam. Maulana Durrani left Trinidad in 1923. So too did Ameer Ali who went to Ahmadiyya Movement institute in Lahore to study Islam. He returned to Trinidad in 1930 as Maulvi Ameer Ali. He joined the TIA. He taught Islam as he had learned in Lahore as an Ahmadi talking about the Founders. Other Muslims believed him to be an Ahmadi.

The ASIA (a Sunni organisation formed in 1935) accused him of preaching heresy. His followers were, for many years, referred to as Qadianis, which came to be synonymous with being a heretic.

Moulvi Ameer Ali was a Trinidadian. His contributions were extremely significant, affecting our marriage laws, denominational schools and adult franchise. I quote from Maulana Hydal's writings: "His untiring persistence in 1935 caused the Immigration Marriage Ordinance to be abolished and replaced by the Muslim Marriage and Divorce Ordinance. In 1936 as the first non-Christian member of the Education Board of T & T, he moved a resolution advocating that the Hindu and Muslim religions should be eligible to receive gov't aid in running schools in the colony. The only religion considered for such a privilege was Christianity (such aid was eventually granted in 1949)."

As a central member of the Indian central Committee, he fought against the controversial "language test" in the exercise of Adult Franchise. The language test was that to be eligible to vote, and the individual must speak English.

From the time of Maulana Durani onwards other missionaries from Lahore AAI came to Trinidad, like Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi who came in 1953. But the one who made the greatest impact and who had the greatest influence in Islam and Muslims in Trinidad was Maulana S.M. Tufail who came from the Working Mission. He first came to Trinidad in April 1964 at the invitation of Mr Aziz Ahmad who had taken the pledge in Lahore. His stay then was for three months. During this time he gave public lectures

and visited the Jamaats that were affiliated with the Ahmadiyya Anjuman. Mrs Zarina Yusul Moh'd wrote that he explained what true Ahmadiyyat was. He taught about the *baiat* (pledge) to hold religion above the world. People who were Ahmadis or supporters or well-wishers felt that he, as a missionary, could give them that feeling of belonging — a new identity. Maulana Hydal reported that it was during that visit in 1964 that Moulvi Ameer Ali took the pledge at the hands of Maulana Tufail. Students and followers of the Moulvi also took the pledge, my father included. I took the pledge at the hands of the Amir Maulana Sadr-ud-Din.

So successful was Mr Tufail's visit in 1964, bringing about a new spiritual awakening among Muslims, that they wanted more. So in 1966 he was assigned to Trinidad for three years. He continued to work along similar lines like Moulvi Ameer Ali. Maybe the greatest impact was on the Ahmadis themselves. Imam Hydal had the view that this was a demonstration that this was truly a movement. This concept was started by Moulvi Ameer Ali, the TML hosting activities at different mosques. In Gasparillo, we held an annual three-day Quranic Reading, bringing together scholars of Islam like Dr M.A. Aziz for many years and Mr Noor Hasanali, who subsequently became the President (Head of state) of Trinidad and Tobago.

Maulana Tufail was a good organiser and a much better motivator. He introduced conventions on a regional and even international basis involving Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname; building lasting relationships including marriages across borders. Delegates came from around the world, e.g. from the USA, Wallace Muhammad, son of Elijah Muhammad, from Fiji Mr Dean, from Indonesia Slauruyuda, and from Kashmir.

He emphasised the reading and explanation of the Quran. At prayer meetings held at the Sunni Homes, e.g. there would be a collective recitation of Quran in Arabic (Quran Kwani) but no explanation or lesson to show how to apply the Quran to our daily lives. Maulana Tufail conducted classes in which the Quranic verses were read and discussed, and the commentary by

Maulana Muhammad Ali was also read. Recently I attended prayer meetings held at Sunni homes, where there were discourses and lessons from the Quran.

Mr Tufail was also very concerned with the proper recitation of the Quran in Arabic. He wrote *The Quran Reader*, which is still used — and not only by our Jamaat. Imam I. Hydal told me that very recently a Sunni Imam contacted him to buy some of the Readers. He found them to be the best for teaching.

Maulana Tufail soon realised that Trinidadians love to sing and songs such as Qasidas and Mauloods were sung. Many of them were in praise of Prophet Muhammad (s) and as he stated, should not be sung. ASJA's Qasida book contained such songs. So our own "Songs of Islam" was compiled by Maulana Tufail and published by the San Fernando Muslim Women's Association. The Book contains songs written by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, English songs and appropriate songs in praise of the Prophet. Several recordings were made. These songs are very popular and are sung not only by Ahmadis but by all Muslims. The ones in praise of the Prophet have helped to bring to an end the practice of *Tazeem*, standing to sing Urdu songs believing that the Holy Prophet appeared physically. Maulana Tufail, like Moulvi Ameerali, condemned the practice of *Tazeem*.

My sister Zakeya reminded me of a joke that was going around when the songs of Islam was first brought out. The ASJA Qasida book had the song *Islam Se Na Bhago*¹ in it. But they did know it was written by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. When they found out some people ripped the pages out of their book. But I am happy to report that in the edition I printed in 2006, it is still there on page 133.

I see the theme ISLAM means **I SHALL LOVE ALL MANKIND** on your program. Maulana Tufail taught us that and put it into practice by Interfaith meetings. Trinidad is a country in which there are people of many different religions, "one God one people" the words of Maulana Tufail. To live in peace and harmony, we

must look for areas of common qualities and build bridges. From 1968 to 1983, nine conventions were held in Trinidad, Guyana, Suriname and one in London. Interfaith meetings were an important feature at these conventions.

According to the Oxford dictionary, the meaning of the word 'reform' is to make changes in something (especially an institution or a practice) to improve it. One area in which there has been very much reform, it may even be argued that it is the greatest area of reform, is the position and role of Muslim women from two viewpoints: how others see it and how we women see it. Moulvi Ameer Ali had laid great emphasis on this.

He encouraged the TIA to allow women to join and to attend Quranic functions and lectures and to participate in religious activities. He set the example. His wife Nuran give a lecture on Muhammad the Exalter of Women on 6-7-1933. These efforts of the Moulvi bore fruit and were continued by Maulana Tufail and Maulana Hydal. Women attend Masjids in Trinidad, and some of these mosques have women among their leaders. The AAITTT have women who are imams and marriage officers. I have given matters we should also consider the effect on how women themselves view their role.

In 2000 The National Muslim Women Organisation was formed. It was the brainchild of Mrs Rose Muhammad, a member of the TMI. To the best of my knowledge Rose is not an Ahmadi. Her main objective and one of the objectives of the organisation itself was to foster good relations among all Muslim women regardless of their Jamaat, Organization or School of thought. Both my sister Zakeya and I have served as President of that organisation. We are both known to be Ahmadis. Imam Amir Aziz of the German Jamaat addressed the Women at one of their friendship meetings at the home of sister Nancy Baksh Muhammad (also an Ahmadi). Zakeya and I have both represented Muslim Women on national basis. During my term,

¹ اسلام سے نہ بھاگو، راہ ہدیٰ یہی ہے

Do not run from Islam for it is the path to Guidance.

I was invited to say the Muslim prayer at Parliament.

From Moulvi F.K. Durani to Moulvi Ameer Ali and from Maulana Tufail to Maulana Hydal the Lahore Ahmadiyya movement, through the Woking Mission, reformed Islamic thought in Trinidad. Much of the knowledge and thinking from literature and personalities have been expanded through publications like *The Call*, lecturers, Khutbas, Radio and Television programs, internet courses and interfaith meetings which have contributed to the religious experience of Muslims in Trinidad.

It has not been an easy journey. Many Muslims still accuse us of being kafirs. Some of our members are still prevented from Hajj. We have been subject to terrorism. At our convention in Trinidad in 1983 we were bombed. Some of us still have physical scars as evidence. But we persevere. I pray that the Almighty ALLAH will continue to help us all. (Return to contents)

A FEW OUTSTANDING QUALITIES OF AHMADIS AS INDIVIDUALS

By Fazal Haq



(Note: In October 2019, the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Ivory Coast held a conference to start its work formally. The conference had the full support of the International Secretariat of this organisation, which sent a special representative Mr Fazal Haq to show its support. He made this speech at the function where new members took an oath of allegiance to their international headquarters.)

Blessed is He Who made the stars in the heavens and made therein a sun and a moon giving light!

And He it is, Who made the night and the day to follow each other, for him who desires to be mindful or desires to be thankful.

And the servants of the Beneficent are they



Hazrat Ameer addressing the conference in Ivory Coast.

who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, Peace!

And they who pass the night prostrating themselves before their Lord and standing.

I have recited verses from the last section of Surah Al-Furqan (the Quran, 25:61–64)

Islam is the last of the great religions of the world. The Holy Quran is the last of the revealed books which contains lessons of morality and ethics, spirituality and godliness that are relevant to all times to come, and no need remains for any new religion. Almighty Allah says in the Quran:

“This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour to you and chosen for you Islam as a religion” (5:3).

Islam is simple profession of faith that: “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad (peace be upon him) is His Messenger.” By making this declaration, a person becomes a Muslim.

Ahmadis also believe in the same basic principles; hence, Islam and Ahmadiyyat are not different from one another in any respect. The firm belief in the oneness of Allah and His revealed book fills an Ahmadi’s heart with praise for his Maker; and he practically goes forward to spread this beautiful religion to the corners of the world and thus brings about peace and establishes a strong universal brotherhood.

The subject that I would deal with today is “Some Outstanding Qualities of Ahmadis as Individuals.”

I Shall Love All Mankind.

The verses that I recited from the Quran bear a great significance in building the characters and moulding the lives of the persons who follow the words of Allah. The great qualities of the servants of Allah as described here can be acquired only with a complete transformation of a society, which is reflected in the lives of the great people of the Jamaat, that would mean the members of Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya Lahore.

Before I touch this subject, it is important to understand the terms 'Hamd' and 'Ahmad'. The word 'Ahmad' contains in itself all the qualities one is required to have 'Hamd', an Arabic word which is very rich in its meaning and is exclusively used for the praise of Allah and signifies that one who praises Allah needs to have a desire to mould his life on Divine line. The heart of Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) was full with praise for Allah, so it was for this very reason that the Prophet (peace be upon him) praised Allah to the extent that no other Prophet had done before him, and he deserved to be the name "Ahmad".

The name "Ahmad" signifies peace and beauty, whereas "Mohammed" signifies grandeur and glory.

The Meccan period of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was a manifestation of the name "Ahmad". The people who accepted Islam were treated with cruelty by the cruel and arrogant Meccan chiefs who trampled the human rights under their feet. They did not have anything against Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and called him "Sadiq" (truthful) and Ameen (honest), but they were afraid of the transformation brought about by the teaching of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and of the society that was being established, where every individual was accepted as equal to the other. They put up a strong opposition as they saw their power being challenged. The Muslims remained humble and peaceful, and the message of peace was spread around.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib faced similar opposition, and his followers had to go through the tortures and hatred of the public, who were strongly influenced by the religious leaders. The religious leaders of the time could see the wave of awareness spreading around which was a threat to their power that they had over Muslim masses, due to their ignorance about the true concepts of Islam. These similarities of the Holy Prophet's Meccan period, with the era, when Hazrat Mirza Sahib was appointed the Reformer (مجدد), led him to choose the name "Ahmadi" for his followers.



Radio broadcast - Presenter, author, Abou Tiene and Ahmet

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad completely transformed his followers, who love Allah and His Prophet above all, as did the companions of the Holy Prophet.

The Ahmadiyya Pledge includes the words:

"I will hold religion above the world."

Along with the profession of faith in the oneness of Allah and in the prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) the Pledge gives an Ahmadi a strength and conviction to hold the banner of Islam and go forth aiming to spread this beautiful religion to all corners of the world. As such, an Ahmadi develops a strong faith and highest standards of religious and moral qualities. I will enumerate only a few of those here.



Recording TV interview –

Shahid Aziz (left) and the author.

I Shall Love All Mankind.

Ibadat or Worship

Worship in Islam signifies a total submission to the Divine Laws as revealed by Allah in the Holy Quran. The Promised Messiah enjoined his followers to follow these laws to the fullest, whether these are commands “to do” or “not to do” something.

The Salah or Prayer

An Ahmadi maintains the spirit of the *Salah* and approaches the “Master of the Day of Judgment” in humility. They stand in perfect peace in their heart which makes their prayers different from the others. There is a grace in their bowing and prostration. Most of the Ahmadis spend their nights in prayers. As verse 64 of Surah Al-Furqan says:

“And they who pass the night prostrating themselves before their Lord and standing”.

An Ahmadi considers congregational prayer important, as these have manifold reward and also provide the opportunity to make social contacts.

Faith that Allah accepts our prayers

As verse 60 of Al-Momin says:

“And your Lord says: Pray to Me, I will answer you. Those who disdain My service will surely enter hell, abased” (40:60).

Ahmadis have a strong bond with Allah. He answers the prayers as He *السميع البصير*. They have faith that Allah will never leave them alone. The Promised Messiah laid great stress on supplication. He said that supplication is our only defence. He also taught the etiquettes for supplication. He instructed his followers to ask from Allah during their *Salah*. After saying the prescribed readings (الذكر), in the *ruku* and the *sajda*, in sitting position and standing after *ruku*,



Baiats - A total of 30 baiats took place.

pray in your language, as it is more emphatic.

These are etiquettes to be observed when you raise your hands for supplication. Begin with Al-Fatiha, followed by Darood Sharif and then supplication in any language, completing it with Ameen. Many of our

Jamaat members attained a level in their *Ibadat* at which they received messages from Allah. (i.e., Allah spoke to them.)

Love for the Holy Quran

An Ahmadi reads the Quran with understanding and moulds his life according to the injunctions of the Quran. Ahmadis have a mission of spreading the light of the Quran to the world. So the system of explaining the Holy Quran was introduced by the Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya. Maulana Muhammad Ali Sahib and Maulana Sadrud-Din Sahib, the first and second Ameer of Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya Lahore respectively, gave explanations of the Holy Quran at Ahmadiyya Buildings, which were well attended and gathering included both Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis. The latter were duly influenced by the wisdom of their interpretation of the Quranic verses.

Dr Basharat Ahmad and Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan Sahib kept up the Holy Quran explaining tradition wherever they got posted during their working lives. They had far-reaching effects on the people who came to attend. We know of the individual families who arrange explanation of the Holy Quran for their families at home if there is no Jamaat facility available.

Education is a priority for every Ahmadi

The religious, as well as modern education, is a priority with an Ahmadi. Well educated Ahmadi men and women are a great support to the Jamaat. They contribute from what they earn and serve the Jamaat in various capacities voluntarily.

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Living a simple life

Ahmadis believe in simple living. They would rather not waste time and money on following unnecessary worldly traditions and values. They would rather save and contribute to Jamaat for the propagation of Islam.

Truthfulness and honesty

Among the qualities of a person who has completely submitted himself to the commands of Allah: As verse 72 of Al-Furqan says:

“And they who witness no falsehood, and when they pass by what is vain, they pass by nobly”.

An Ahmadi abides by truth and stands for what is right in all affairs, is honest in his professional affairs, his duties, to the society and his family. Ahmadis have proved most acceptable as witnesses in court cases. Everyone knows that Hazrat Mirza Sahib appeared in the court as a witness against his father. Another Ahmadi is reported to have been an eyewitness against his son, who was charged for murder. The son was sentenced to death, but on being impressed by the truthfulness of this great man, the family of the deceased agreed to accept Blood Money. He not only paid a large sum to the family but also took them under his care and settled them well. There are several other instances where after the appearance of an Ahmadi as a witness, the magistrate declared that no more witnesses need to be brought in and gave his verdict on his evidence alone.

These are a few of the numerous qualities found in the companions of the Promised Messiah, who were directly influenced and guided



At a mosque in Ivory Coast, with non-Ahmadi brothers and sisters.



The Village in **Guinea** where the **FIRST LAHORI AHMADI JALSA** TOOK PLACE.

by him. Even today Ahmadis do abide by the guidance of their Imam, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as).

In the end, I would like to read out some points of the advice to his Jamaat by the great Reformer in his book entitled *Arbaeen* (أربعين):

(1) The name Ahmadi is given to you after the name of the Holy Prophet (*peace be upon him*). You are a manifestation of this name. So it is obligatory on you to praise Allah day in and day out. Become a practising Ahmadi. It is important that while you praise Allah, also do try to acquire the qualities that are worthy of praise. Overcome all your weaknesses and learn to be kind and compassionate to those who are weaker than yourselves.

(2) You are the ones chosen to represent the Beauty of the name Ahmad, so overcome all unworthy emotions.

(3) Have a clear faith, purify your heart and conduct and do acts that would please Allah.

(4) Guard yourselves against the venom of the environment around you.

(5) Cleanse yourselves from hatred and malevolence.

(6) Keep high standards of morality.

(7) Be benevolent to your fellow beings. Do not mislead or deceive others.

May Allah bless each of us here and grant us patience and strength to carry on the noble cause of service to Islam entrusted to us by the Imam of the present age. Aameen(آمين)

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Finding Fault

By Nazra Ali

(Editor's note: A speech delivered at Dar us Salaam, Wembley, UK, on the Mosque Open Day, 3 November 2019)

I have chosen to talk about Finding Fault in other people. It is a prevalent characteristic in human beings from all walks of life and is seen in politics, the corporate world and most large organizations. Many of us do not think anything of it as it is so rampant. It seems normal to do. In a fast pace moving world where social media forms opinions for us, it encourages fault finding as the primary mechanism to self-preservation. I would like to discuss with you today what the religious scriptures say about this.

Fault-finding is defined as continual criticism, typically concerning trivial things.

Why do we do this to others? What are the dangers of doing this? What do the religious scriptures say about this and are they unanimous about what they say?

As Muslims we are admonished in the Quran in Chapter 49, v 11 about this and calling each other by nick names as well. It says:

“O you who believe, let not people laugh at people, perchance they may be better than they; nor let women (laugh) at women, perchance they may be better than they. Neither find fault with your own people, nor call one another by nicknames. Evil is a bad name after faith; and whoso turns not, these it is that are the iniquitous.” (The Quran, 49:11)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad has said as follows about this in the Hadith. Abu Huraira reported: The Prophet, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, said, “A servant does not cover the faults of another servant in the world but that Allah will cover his faults on the Day of Resurrection.” (Şahih Muslim)

In another Hadith reported in Tirmidhi, the Holy Prophet (s) said: “Each of you is the mirror



Baiats in Guinea.

of his brother, so if he sees any fault in him he should wipe it away.”

One of the common ways through which people deflect their own shortcomings and do not face up to their own faults is to blame others. The holy prophet Jesus is reported to have said: Why do you look at the little speck in your brother's eye and forget the plank in your own eye.

Hazrat Ali said: “The worst of people is the person who searches for faults in others while being blind to his own faults.”

Martin Luther King rightly said: “The highest form of maturity is self-inquiry.”

One of the pillars of perfection of a person's soul and spirit is that he has the ability to examine his own spiritual state, through looking at his own defects and ethical weaknesses.

In general, a believer in Allah and the Last Day would not like their mistakes and faults to be broadcast to others. If we make a mistake or commit a sin, it is better that we keep the matter to ourselves and ask Allah for forgiveness than to tell others about what we have done, perhaps inadvertently encouraging them to do the same.

Since virtually all fault finding is conveyed verbally, we must be careful of the power of the tongue since wise people caution the fact that affliction caused by the tongue causes more harm than caused by the sword.

In relation to this the Holy Prophet was

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once asked: "Who is the most excellent among the Muslims?" He said: "One from whose tongue and hands the other Muslims are secure" (Bukhari and Muslim).

Narrated Abu Huraira: *The Prophet said, "Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of false tales; and do not look for the others' faults and do not spy, and do not be jealous of one another, and do not desert (cut your relation with) one another, and do not hate one another; and O Allah's worshipers! Be brothers (as Allah has ordered you)!"* - Sahih Al Bukhari, Vol. 8, Number 90

What does the Bible say about Finding faults in others?

Matthew ch 7, v 3-5: "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

A very profound message indeed. You are quick to point out deficiencies in others but can't see our own deficiencies.

Matthew 18:15-22 reads: "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over."

Here the Bible tells you how to deal with a fault in someone that could cause harm to them:

James ch 1, v 5: "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."

The Bible says emphatically that God gives to all without finding fault.

The Psychology of Finding Fault in others.

Dr Joseph M Carver, PhD, a psychologist replies to a question he was asked about finding

fault. This is the question and the answer.

Reader's Question

I find flaws with people, and once this happens I do not like being around them, and they irritate me. I am not sure I like people that much. I do not get it, though — because I have a lot of friends and am an extrovert. Why is it that once I find out someone is not perfect, I dislike them?

Psychologist's Reply

This is a personality characteristic that will cause you a lot of heartache over time. Some thoughts:

No person on earth is "perfect" and everyone has flaws. This means that eventually you will find fault with everyone around you and by your own admission, you will then not only dislike them, but dislike being around them. They will irritate you. You will eventually reach a point where you are uncomfortable in any social environment, because someone there will have a flaw. Keep in mind that being imperfect and having a flaw is only by your interpretation.

Those you identify as being imperfect and having flaws cause you emotional distress. You not only dislike (a negative emotional state) being around them but find them irritating. Your mood will be constantly changing — always to the negative — based on those around you. As this happens, your current friends will slowly detach from you, you will interpret that detachment as a flaw, you'll then dislike them, and you'll be lonely. This current personality theme has absolutely no positive impact on your life.

In an ironic twist, your need to find fault with people for failing your personal standards of perfection, then allowing yourself to be emotionally upset by them, is a significant flaw in your personality. Perhaps the biggest irony is that your friends, who probably experience your moods, negativity, and frequent criticism of those around you, accept your flaws and imperfection and remain your friends.

This negativity puts you at higher risk for depression, stress, anxiety, and even job/career loss.

In the future, this is not a good characteristic to have for many reasons. Under stress, our natural personality is amplified. Dependent people become more dependent and aggressive people become more aggressive. Your hyper-critical view of others, when you find yourself under stress, will be amplified, isolating you from those around you and eventually turning on you, becoming self-critical.

Jade Small published an article 8 months ago entitled “the 6 Common Habits Of Highly Miserable, Unhappy People”. It was published in March 6, 2019. In her article she states that these characteristics are as follows.

1. They are the victim
2. They love to complain
3. They fear criticism
4. They love drama
5. They struggle to trust
6. They love to gossip

Unhappy people are unsatisfied with their own lives, so they focus on others' lives and try to find fault in them. Saying negative things about others makes the unhappy person feel a false sense of betterment. Happy people don't have time to talk about other people's lives and downfalls, they are far too focused on the good in their own.

Confucius, the saint whom we consider a prophet of God, said: “Fault finding is the habit of the miserable.” He also said: “The great person calls to attention the good points in others while the miserable person calls to attention the defects and faults in others” (Analects 12:16). Analects is an ancient Chinese book.

Faultfinders normally tell others about someone's faults and rarely have the guts to face people; fitting the description of two-faced which the Prophet Muhammad assigned to troublemakers and hypocrites. Faultfinders also tend to be miserable themselves, lacking self-esteem; and since they focus so much on blaming others, they become resentful; and rather than cherish people, tend to develop a desire to undermine and discredit people. If we see these characteristics in people, we should be aware and careful.

Interestingly the hadith of the Holy Prophet (s), the Quran and the Bible admonish us to “Keep company of the righteous” as reported in Tirmidhi. The Quran states in ch 18, v 28: “And keep the company of the righteous, those who call on their Lord morning and evening desiring His goodwill, and let not thine eyes pass from them, desiring the beauties of this world's life”. And finally, the Bible in Proverbs ch 2, v 20: “So you will follow in the ways of good men, and keep to the paths of the righteous.”

The scriptures and prophets are all unanimous, psychologists understand the detrimental effects of such behaviour, how about you? This short talk was meant to highlight a weakness in us all as human beings and offer a solution.

“If you want to move from darkness into light, stop finding fault in others. Finding faults in others means finding fault in God.”

In conclusion, “strong minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, weak minds discuss people.” ([Return to contents](#))



A view of the jalsa in Guinea.

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