



# The Light

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## Editors:

Shahid Aziz  
Mustaq Ali

## Contents:

	Page
The Call of the Messiah	1
The Talking Ant By Ms Bushra Ahmad	4
Shhh, The Ants Are Talking By Carrie Arnold	7

or time or temperament of the people, plague assume different shapes. But in every case, it is invariably accompanied by a severe, burning heat which appears often before the boils or the swelling of the glands, and causes high fever and unconsciousness. In the holy Quran this disease has been called *rijz* (2:59,7:162) which, according to Arabic lexicon, signifies such actions that bring pain and torment in their wake. It obviously points to the fact that this pestilence often comes as a consequence of man's evil actions. Good people, too, sometimes fall a victim to this disease, but through this trouble and torment, they achieve the rank and reward of martyrdom. In brief, the cause and source of this pestilence is Divine wrath and Chastisement.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## The Call of the Messiah

by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad,  
the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*

(Ayyam us Sulah, continued from last month.)

## The Plague

We wish to make some more mention of the disease of plague. This disease, it should be known, makes its appearance either in the vicinity of the ears, or below the armpit or in a corner of the thigh. The glands become swollen in this way, or big sores appear on the body. Tabri, the famous historian, writes in his book that the plague which broke out in Syria in the time of Hazrat Umar (God be pleased with him) came into operation in this way that only a small boil appeared in the palm of the hand, and caused death within a period of few hours. But in the Torah wherever a mention has been made of plague, it has been described and named as sores, showing that the plague which used to break out among the Jews was in this form. It is possible that, according to the race or country

## Prayer and Plan

It is, however, not our intention to indicate by this discourse that scientifically the causes of this disease cannot be created; rather the scientific system i.e. the system of the creation of causes exists by itself whereas the system of the spiritual

intentions of God is a different thing; the one stands not in the way of the other. It is a great foolishness if a man should disregard the real aim and object of



**I Shall Love All Mankind.**

the All-wise and All-Perfect God, and restrict all His work to the limit of science without any plan or purpose. It is evident that He is the Supreme Possessor of all power, will and authority whose all works have in them deep and profound secrets. Cannot both these things come together at one place, that whatever good or evil appears on the stage of this world, it may be in accordance with the laws of natural science, and bound up with known and familiar causes, whereas, at the same time, the All-Wise God might have, by bringing that matter into display, determined, in His knowledge, particular purpose and object? And if it were not accepted in this way, the existence of God will be (God forbid) of no avail and useless, and His works merely frivolous and futile. Hence, the true philosophy and fine wisdom is that all these changes, heavenly as well as earthly, are displayed by Divine hand in the form of scientific systems, but all the same, the bringing into being of these changes as well as their extermination, for the accomplishment of certain desired objects, rests in the hands of God. We cannot, for instance, say that if the real remedy of plague depends on drugs and physical plans, what has repentance and good deeds to do with it, and if, on the other hand, dependence is entirely on repentance and good deeds, medicines and plans are merely useless and absurd; for prayer and plan are not opposed to each other. Whatever plan or medical treatment we can adopt, all the conditions of its effect, too, we cannot create with our own power and will. Like prayer, too, they are in the hands of God; it is human foolishness to look upon and regard them as contrary and opposed to each other. The highest God, from every point of view, is the source of good and grace for us. If we adopt the paths of righteousness and piety, He can, protecting our knowledge and plan from error, and revealing sound and right plans unto us, save us from calamity and distress, and, in case of our disobedience and revolt, can destroy us even with our own hands. A foul, wicked man becomes so much infatuated with the passion for freedom that he want to be independent of God also. But it is impossible for him to do so. It is true that the Most High God has kept all His works each in the form of a system, but in spite of all these systems, the key of each and every-thing is in the hands of God.

## The Root-Cause of Plagues

Reverting to our first discourse, we say that the term *rijz* which has been used in the Holy Quran to denote plague, with the vowel point *fathah* also means a disease which appears in a camel's thigh. It is caused by a germ which takes its birth in the flesh and blood of a camel. The hint, in the adoption of this term, points to the fact that the real cause of the disease of plague is also a germ; and a clear corroboration of this fact is found at one place in the Sahih Muslim, for, plague is called *nighf*, and in the Arabic lexicon *nighf* means a germ which very much resembles the germ that comes out of the nose of a camel or a goat. In the same way, the term *rijz*, in Arabic, is also used to signify impurity and pollution; and it seems to indicate that the real root of plague is also uncleanness and pollution. It is, therefore, as regard for outward causes that during the days of plague, houses, streets, drains, clothes, bedding and bodies should be protected from every kind of pollution and impurity, and all these things should be carefully guarded against fetidness and stench. The Law of Islam which has laid a great stress upon cleanliness, just as stated in the Holy Quran **وَأَلْرَجَزَ فَاهَجْرُ** and uncleanness do shun

(74:6), has given these commandments so that man, having regard for conditions of good health, may save himself from physical afflictions. The Christians object, what sort of these directions are which they understand not that the Quran says: Purify your bodies by taking bath, brush and pick your teeth; and protect you houses from every kind of physical impurity; keep away from foul odour and stink; and eat not dirty things and dead animals. The reply is that the holy Quran, in that age, found the people of Arabia in such a state; and not only from spiritual point of view, they were in a dangerous condition, but from the physical point of view also their health was in a dangerous state. It was, therefore, a great kindness of the Most High God on them as well as on the whole world that he laid down, for our guidance, rules and regulations of good health, and even said **كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا** i.e. eat and drink by all means,

but exceed not the limit nor be recklessly prodigal. The padres, it is regrettable indeed, appreciate not that the man who gives up all regard for physical purity and cleanliness, falls gradually into the state of savageness and becomes deprived of the spiritual purity as well; if you give up picking your teeth for some days, the particles of food that will remain deposited in the teeth, will gibe out a foul smell as that of a decomposing dead body, and the teeth will at last become rotten and bad, and their poisonous matter, entering into the stomach, will impair and vitiate it. Just think for yourself and see that when a fibre of meat or any particle remains unpicked in your teeth, it begins to give, even in a single night, a very offensive smell as that of a dead mouse. What a rank ignorance it is, therefore, to take an exception to the outward, physical purity, and teach, on the other hand, that physical purity should not be taken care of, nor the teeth be picked and brushed, and the body washed clean, neither perform any ablution after stools or evacuating the bowels, and that spiritual purity only is quite sufficient and enough. But our own experiences tell us that just as we stand in need of spiritual cleanliness for our spiritual health, in the same way, for our physical health we stand in need of and require physical cleanliness. Rather the fact of the matter is that our physical purity has much to do with our spiritual cleanliness; for, when we, giving up physical cleanliness, suffer from its bad consequences of dangerous diseases, a harmful impediment is also caused in the discharge of our religious obligations; and having fallen ill, we become so useless that we cannot discharge or perform any religious service, having suffered pain for some days, pass away from this world; and rather than render some useful service to human kind, we, on account of our physical uncleanness and abandonment of rules of good health, become ourselves a burden for others; and at last the store of these impurities which we have accumulated with our own hands, flaring up in the form of an epidemic, eats up and devours the whole country, and of all this calamity and distress we are obviously the cause, for the reason that we have no regard for the principles of outward, physical purity.

### **Gehenna of this World**

Behold, therefore, what painful and distressing

calamities befall and afflict human beings in consequence of their forsaking Quranic principles and direction; and what dangerous effects are caused by the immoderation of such careless people who keep not away from dirtiness and filth, and remove not foul odours from their houses, streets, clothes and mouths; and how deadly epidemics break out of a sudden and cause immense death and destruction, and the uproar and tumults of the Doomsday is created so that people, having been seized with the terror of the disease, leave their houses, wealth and property which they collected with much toil and trouble, and run away to other countries, and mothers are separated from their children, and children from their mothers. Is this calamity any the less painful and torturous than the fire of hell? Inquire from the doctors, and ask the physicians whether or not such a carelessness and neglect committed in the case of physical cleanliness and purity is conducive and helpful to the spread of epidemic? What harm has, therefore, the Holy Quran done if it had, by laying stress on the cleanliness of bodies, clothes and Houses, tried to save human beings, in the first instance, from this gehenna which, in this very world, falls suddenly and smites like paralysis, and lasts till the extinction of life. Then, in order to be safe from the second gehenna, the holy Quran pointed out and directed our attention to that straight path which is just in conformity with the demand of human nature, and just in consonance with the great Law of Nature, and tells us of such a path of salvation that has no offensive odour of any false or fabricated plan. Can we, throwing aside the ancient law of God, which had been revealed unto all the nations of the world, and relying merely upon a fictitious fable, concocted after thousands of years, and accepting a mortal man as God, and then killing him by the damned death, cherish the fond hope that such an artificial method will fetch us salvation, and that can such a man be our Saviour who could not save his ownself from the hands of his enemies, and the enemies did not leave him until they put an end to his life. We are really very unfortunate if such a weak, feeble and a powerless being be our God who could not save himself from defeat and disgrace, discomfiture and distress. And when such is the specimen of his affairs in this world, how can we entertain the hope that he might have been after death, endowed with some



new power or strength. How can a man who could not save his ownself, save others? How absurd it is to say that God could not grant us deliverance until He had condemned and cast off an innocent one from His presence, and become disgusted and displeased with him, and turned his enemy, and hardened his heart, and deprived him of His own love and knowledge; that is to say, until he had made him denounced, damned and accursed, and entered him in the list of evil-doers and criminals. Such an imaginary God every one should keep away from and avoid, who had such an affair with His own son. Tell the truth, can any intellect in the world acknowledge and accept that one who is himself condemned and accursed, can stand for and recommend any one else before the Most High God?,

## *The Talking Ant*

By

**Ms Bushra Ahmad**

(Talk delivered at Dar us Salaam, UK on Sunday 4 October.)

There are unfortunately too few programs or even TV Channels devoted to Islamic issues and education. But one day we stumbled upon a channel peace TV 813 Sky and at 10.30am on Monday morning appropriately named Distilled Wisdom. A gentleman called Yassir Fazaga was leading this program. He takes a few lines of the Quran and explains in depth exactly what is being taught.

I would like to take this opportunity to take one of his features and forward his talk and message to you. He took two lines of Surah 27 entitled Al Naml or The Ant verses 18 to 20 and it goes : "Till, when they came to the Valley of Ants one of the Ants said "O Ants! Enter your dwellings lest Suleiman and his hosts crush you, while they perceive it not."

Mr Fazaga's commentary, firstly mentioned that the Quraish used to criticise these Surahs which were based on little insects, such as the

spiders or even animals such as The Elephants, saying that Allah delves with minor or unimportant things. But only a wise person will tell you that even a tiny thing such as an ant can teach us things of magnificent proportions. Allah has created even the smallest of insects for a purpose. And this is becoming more apparent through today's scientific advancement in the study of small insects as well as animals.

Secondly he touches on the point that living creatures normally learn by imitation. But ants are exclusive in their ability to learn by instruction. Now how do they do that without language? Well we have other ways of communication such as facial expression or body language



Scientists are using computer tracking on ants to determine which ants carry out what kind of work. They've learned that workers fall into three roles: nursing the queen and young, cleaning the colony, and foraging for food. Beyond their roles, researchers have been able to understand social interactions between groups and strengths that some groups have over others.

so ants use a way of expressing themselves to each other through the release of chemicals known as pheromones. Their glands release it and as another ant detects it, the scent gives way to an instruction such as the whereabouts of food. The important thing is that they learn by instruction. Maybe God is telling us to listen to all His instructions and follow His commandments as is written letter for letter in the Quran.

Ants also possess the quality of persistence and perseverance. Napoleon was once standing up and resting on his pole contemplating mili-

tary details, when he spotted an ant on his stick he shook it and it fell off. A little later the ant was at it again. Several times later, Napoleon too deep in thought realized that the ant had climbed to the top. So ants are very persistent. May be we should be as steadfast in our prayer and persistent in the way of Allah like these ants. Being persistent is one thing but being persistent in the way of Allah is the best way of following Him.

Another characteristic of ants is that they possess selflessness or altruism. Allah instructed the female ant to go back to its colony and inform other ants of impending danger of Suleiman's army. The ant could have just saved herself but she went back and saved her colony instead. Also I have watched nature programmes which have informed me of ants killing themselves to save their home and other colleagues. This is what many followers did in the Islamic wars during our Prophets era, they were tortured yet still had strong faith in Allah and His messenger. Some obviously died in the way of Allah. We should not forget their plight.

Lastly the Ant illustrates how one should behave socially or militarily. One should always defend rather than attack. The last line where Allah says "they perceive it not" means they would not deliberately hurt them thus they should defend themselves not attack. Likewise a man was once sitting down with his head on his hand and his children were screaming. Someone suddenly got up and said "why don't you control your children?" the man replied that his wife had just died. So instead of adopting an attack mode you should be more polite and understand that there might be something that one has not understood and in the above example the man's question should have been more polite and less reprimanding such as "Are you alright, what's wrong?" or "is there any way in which I can help you."

So to conclude children (and I know some adults do too!), if you see an ant, instead of squashing it, let it go by and do its business to help the world run forward and never think that it is small and insignificant because it is anything but that!

## Comments

Dr Zahid Aziz

Bushra Ahmed's talk on Sunday mentioned ant communication in connection with verses 27:18, 19 of the Quran:

"And his forces of the jinn and the men and the birds were gathered to Solomon, and they were formed into groups. Until when they came to the valley of the ants, an ant said: O ants, enter your houses, (so that) Solomon and his forces may not crush you, while they do not know." (27:17, 18)

There was an item in The One Show on BBC1 this evening (6th October) about ant communication by means of pheromones for various purposes. There are different types of pheromones which ants secrete and other ants smell and acts on them. One type are "alarm pheromones" by which an ant warns other ants of a danger. The programme said that one ant starts the alert by alerting all ants it meets, and they propagate it further, and it spreads very rapidly to the whole ant community.

After the programme, I looked up some information on this, and found this:

"Pheromones maintain the cohesiveness and organization of the complex ant communities. Certain types, such as alarm pheromones, produce a "releaser effect", which induces a quick response and may be used to tell other ants to evacuate a dangerous area such as an approaching lawnmower. *For example, when a spider approaches an ant will release alarm pheromones that alert all the other ants.*" (see: [https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Animal\\_Behavior/Pheromones\\_in\\_ants\\_and\\_bees](https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Animal_Behavior/Pheromones_in_ants_and_bees))

I have highlighted the last words because they mention one ant alerting all other ants, which is what the Quran says: "an ant said: O ants, enter your houses, (so that) Solomon and his forces may not crush you,..."

Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi has also written about the amazing behaviour of ants.

## Dr Mir Faisal

This is a very interesting discussion on the speech of ants. I have found the following explanation really interesting.

"At length, when they came to a (lowly) valley of ants, one of the ants said: "O ye ants, get into your habitations, lest Solomon and his hosts break you (under foot) without knowing it." (The Noble Quran, 27:18)

In the above mentioned verses, the ant reported the imminent danger facing them through four successive stages as follow:

1- "O ye ants" this is the first alarm given by the ant to draw the attention of the other ants quickly. On receiving this alarm, the other ants stand alert to receive the other signals that the same speaker ant will give.

2- "get into your habitations" here the speaker ant follows her words up with another signal, ordering the ants to do what they ought to do. We will see this relation in the light of what science has found out (concerning the communication between ants) in the other half of the scientific analysis in this essay.

3- "lest Solomon and his hosts break you" in these word, the speaker ant shows the reason for this danger to her fellow ants and this is what we will prove in the light of what the scientific analysis gives.

4- "without knowing it." The ants, as a reaction to the previous alarms, will make a certain kind of defense, in these last few words, the ant shows her fellows that they don't have to attack the source of danger, because the source of danger is not from a real enemy. He did not intend to attack the kingdom of ants. Solomon and his soldiers didn't know of the ants on their way. So the ants didn't consider them real enemies.

The substances that an ant gives out of her body in a situation like this are divided into four kinds of substances, every substance has a certain language and code. The successive stages

of the reaction of the ants:

1- aldéhyde hexanal is the first chemical substance that an ant emits if it feels something dangerous, and this can be regarded as a siren (of danger), on receiving this substance, ants begin to centralize in one point and then remain alert and ready to receive the rest of signals and this identifies with the first phrase uttered by the ant in the holy verse "O ye ants".

2- Then the ant emits the second chemical substance "hexanol". On receiving this substance, ants begin to run in all directions to determine the source of this substance. The ant that emits the chemical substance should determine the way lest all the rest



of ants should go away and this what the ant of prophet Solomon did when it asked the other ants to enter their habitations saying "get into your habitations," and this is an instruction from the speaker ant to her fellows to go in the direction of the habitations. So it must have determined the way and this is the same as directing the movement of ants in general.

3- Undécane is the third substance that the ant emits. This substance shows the cause of the danger, and that what the ant did when it said in the third phrase "lest Solomon and his hosts break you (under foot)." Do you see how much the correspondence and the consistency is? In this stage, in which the ants receive this substance, ants become ready to face the impending danger. So what about the fourth substance?

4- In the fourth stage, the speaker ant emits a special chemical substance, this substance is bu-



tylocténal. By this substance, the speaker ant gives an order of defence and determines the kind of defence. It said "without knowing it". By so doing the ant prevented the other ants from entering the stage of attack that would lead to death. Prophet Solomon smiled tenderly and mercifully as if he had calmed these ants down and as if he would like to have said that they needn't have worried as he saw them and he was kind to them and would not allow any harm.

And now let me summarize what I have already said:

"At length, when they came to a (lowly) valley of ants, one of the ants said: "O ye ants, get into your habitations, lest Solomon and his hosts break you (under foot) without knowing it." (27:18)

"O ye ants" Hexanal "get into your habitations" Hexanol "lest Solomon and his hosts crush you" Undécane "without knowing it." Butylocténal

The source of the article is [http://www.answering-christianity.com/mahir/ants\\_communication\\_miracle.htm](http://www.answering-christianity.com/mahir/ants_communication_miracle.htm)

This also brings us to another point. See how difficult and different it is to covert ant communication into human speech, even though both are from this world. So, why should we take the description of hereafter so literally.

## Shhh, the Ants Are Talking

By

**Carrie Arnold**

(Published in Science 7 February 2013 <http://news.sciencemag.org/2013/02/shhh-ants-are-talking>)

If you want to survive as an ant, you'd better get ready to make some noise. A new study shows that even ant pupae—a stage between larvae and adult—can communicate via sound, and that this communication can be crucial to their survival.

"What's very cool about this paper is that researchers have shown for the first time that pupae do, in fact, make some sort of a sound," says Phil DeVries, an entomologist at the University of New Orleans in Louisiana who was not involved in the study. "This was a very clever piece of natural history and science."

Scientists have known for decades that ants use a variety of small chemicals known as pheromones to communicate. Perhaps the most classic example is the trail of pheromones the insects place as they walk.

Those behind them follow this trail, leading to long lines of ants marching one by one. However, the insects also use pheromones to identify which nest an ant is from and

its social status in that nest. Because this chemical communication is so prevalent and complex, researchers long believed that this was the primary way ants shared information.

However, several years ago, researchers began to notice that adults in some ant genres, such as *Myrmica*, which contains more than 200 diverse species found across Europe and Asia, made noise. These types of ants have a specialized spike along their abdomen that they stroke with one of their hind legs, similar to dragging the teeth of a comb along the edge of a table. Preliminary studies seemed to indicate that this noise served primarily as an emergency beacon, allowing the ants to shout for help when being threatened by a predator.

Larvae and young pupae have soft outer skeletons, which means their specialized spikes haven't yet formed and they can't make noise. However, as the pupae mature, their covering



hardens into a tough exoskeleton like that found in adult ants. These older pupae do have fully functional spikes but were generally thought to be silent.

Karsten Schönrogge, an entomologist at the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Wallingford, in the United Kingdom, thought it odd that mature pupae would have the capability to produce sound but remain silent. So he and his colleagues listened in to a group of *Myrmica scabrinodis* ants. These 4- to 5-millimeter-long, reddish-brown ants are commonly found in northern Europe, in low-lying areas like peat bogs.

Using an extra-sensitive microphone that would pick up on the faint acoustic signals, the researchers measured the sounds produced by 10 different *M. scabrinodis* larvae, six immature pupae, and six mature pupae. Whereas the larvae and immature pupae were completely silent, the mature pupae produced brief pulses of sound (see audio files), the team reports online today in *Current Biology*.

Further analysis of this noise showed that it



was a simplified version of the more complex adult sound. It was as if the mature pupae were saying, "Help!" while the adults were saying "Hey, I'm over here! Please come help! It's your friend!"

To test the function of these noises in the mature pupae, the research-

ers first played back the sounds made by either the mature pupae or adult *M. scabrinodis*. Adult worker ants responded the same way to both recordings, such as walking over to the speaker, rubbing their antennae against it, and guarding it. They didn't show these responses when Schönrogge and colleagues played white noise. These behaviors, which represent a worker ant's attempts to protect its nestmates, indicate that acoustic communication served to bring assistance in both mature pupae and adult ants.

To see how the ants used this acoustic communication, the team removed the abdominal spike from some of the mature pupae in a nest. The researchers then disturbed the nest, spilling out larvae, pupae, and adult workers into an experimental arena. Normally, the adult ants rescue their nestmates in a specific order: mature pupae, immature pupae, and, finally, the larvae. In the experiments by Schönrogge and colleagues, the adult workers indeed rescued the unmuted mature pupae first. However, the adult ants completely ignored the muted ants. It was as if the mute mature pupae simply didn't exist.

"The sounds they make rescue them by signaling their social status," Schönrogge says. "There is complex information in these signals," that combine with chemical signals to provide an array of information about the individual. Researchers have yet to decode everything the ants are communicating by sound and how the ants interpret these signals. Acoustic communication may be especially important in mature pupae because they don't yet produce the full array of adult pheromones, but they also don't smell and behave like larvae, either.

DeVries cautions that the discovery doesn't mean that chemical communication in ants is less important. "Ants live in these enormously sophisticated societies," he says. "Acoustic signaling adds another gorgeous piece to what we know about how insect societies communicate."

## Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam

Founders of the first Islamic Mission in the UK, established 1913 as the Woking Muslim Mission.

Dar-us-Salaam, 15 Stanley Avenue, Wembley, UK, HA0 4JQ

Centre: 020 8903 2689 President: 01793 740670 Secretary: 07737240777 Treasurer: 01932 348283

E-mail: [info@aail.uk](mailto:info@aail.uk)

Websites: [www.aail.org/uk](http://www.aail.org/uk) | [www.ahmadiyya.org](http://www.ahmadiyya.org) | [www.virtualmosque.co.uk](http://www.virtualmosque.co.uk)

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