

“Call to the path of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation,
and argue with people in the best manner.” (The Holy Quran 16:125)

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Exponent of
Islam and
the Lahore
Ahmadiyya
Movement
for over
seventy-five
years
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The Light

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Presents
Islam as:
PEACEFUL
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احمدیہ انجمن اشاعت اسلام لاہور

◆ Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore Inc., U.S.A. ◆
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The Light was founded in 1921 as the organ of the AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHA'AT ISLAM (Ahmadiyya Association for the propagation of Islam) of Lahore, Pakistan. *The Islamic Review* was published in England from 1913 for over 50 years, and in the U.S.A. from 1980 to 1991. The present periodical represents the beliefs of the world-wide branches of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, Lahore.

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Beliefs and aims

The main object of the A.A.I.I.L. is to present the true, original message of Islam to the whole world — Islam as it is found in the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, obscured today by grave misconceptions and wrong popular notions.

Islam seeks to attract *the hearts and minds* of people towards the truth, by means of reasoning, good moral example, and the natural beauty of its principles. It neither aspires to gain political power, nor allows the use of force in support of the faith.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), our Founder, arose to remind the world that Islam is:

International: It recognizes prophets being raised among all nations and requires Muslims to believe in them all. Truth and goodness can be found in all religions. God treats all human beings equally justly, regardless of race, nationality or religion.

Peaceful: Allows use of force only in unavoidable self-defence. Teaches Muslims to live peacefully under any rule which accords them freedom of religion.

Tolerant: Gives full freedom to everyone to hold and practise any creed or religion. Requires us to tolerate differences of belief and opinion.

Rational: In all matters, it urges use of human reason and knowledge. Blind following is condemned and independence of thought is granted.

Inspiring: Worship is not a ritual, but provides living contact with a Living God, Who answers prayers and speaks to His righteous servants even today as in the past.

Non-sectarian: Every person professing Islam by the words *Lā ilāha ill-Allāh, Muḥammad-ur rasūl-ullāh* (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) is a Muslim. A Muslim cannot be expelled from Islam by anyone.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad taught that *no* prophet, old or new, is to arise after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. However, *Mujaddids* will be raised by God to revive and rekindle the light of Islam.

About ourselves

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore has branches in the following countries:

U.S.A.	Australia
U.K.	Canada
Holland	Fiji
Indonesia	Germany
Suriname	India
Trinidad	Poland
Guyana	South Africa

The Movement has members and supporters in many other countries as well. In Berlin, it has a large historical mosque constructed in the mid-1920s.

Achievements:

The Anjuman has produced extensive literature on Islam, originally in English and Urdu, including translations of the Holy Quran with commentaries. These books are being translated into other languages, such as French, German, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Dutch and Polish.

The Anjuman has run several Muslim missions around the world, including the first ever in Western Europe.

The Movement's unique contribution to Islamic thought is summed up on the left.

History:

1889: Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founded the Ahmadiyya Movement.

1901: Movement given name *Ahmadiyya* after Holy Prophet Muhammad's other famous name *Ahmad*.

1905: Hazrat Mirza appoints central body (Anjuman) to manage the Movement.

1908: Death of Hazrat Mirza. Succeeded by Maulana Nur-ud-Din as Head.

1914: Death of Maulana Nur-ud-Din. Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam founded at Lahore as continuation of the original Anjuman. Maulana Muhammad Ali elected as Head.

1951: Death of Maulana Muhammad Ali after fifty years of glorious service to the cause of Islam. Maulana Sadr-ud-Din (d. 1981) becomes Head.

1981–1996: Dr. Saeed Ahmad Khan, an eminent medical doctor and religious scholar, led the Movement, at a time of intense persecution.

1996: Prof. Dr. Asghar Hameed, a distinguished retired University Professor of Mathematics, and learned Islamic scholar, elected Head.

Need of Imam of the age – 2

From the book Darūrat-ul-Imām

ضرورت الامام

by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

Translated by Kalamazad Mohammad

(with some revision by the Editor *The Light*)

It is my observation that in order that they may be of benefit to and shower their grace on mankind, Imams must possess the following capabilities:

Firstly, moral strength. As Imams have to come into contact with all kinds of bad, vulgar and foul-mouthed people, it is imperative that they possess within them a high level of moral fortitude so that the heat of anger and mad fury may not arise in them and people may not be deprived of their bounties. It will be an occasion for great shame if a man, who is regarded as a friend of God, should fall prey to base morals and be unable to show patience of the slightest degree to coarse language. If a person is called the Imam of the Age and he is a man of such immature disposition that he froths at the mouth at the least provocation and his eyes blaze in hot rage, then he can never be the true Imam of the Age, for the verse, “You indeed possess the most sublime morals” (68:4) must be truly fulfilled in him.

Secondly, the Authority of *Imamat*, by reason of which the name Imam has been bestowed on him. That is, he should possess a great urge to make advancement in good words, righteous deeds and all knowledge of Allah and love for Him; that is to say, his soul must not be happy with any deficiency nor should it be content with any defective state, and he should feel pain and grief if his spiritual progress is impeded. This is an innate power of the Imam, and if perchance people do not seek his knowledge or wisdom nor walk in his light, even then, by virtue of his inborn power, he is still Imam. In short, it is important to remember this subtle insight that *Imamat* is a power placed in the very nature of the person whom the Divine will has chosen for this work. If the word *Imamat* is to be translated, it can be called ‘the power to excel’. In fact, this is not just some temporary position which is conferred at some later stage in life, but just as there exist faculties for seeing, hearing and understanding, so this is the faculty for

advancing and excelling all in Divine matters. And the word *Imamat* points to these meanings.

The third power is extensive knowledge which is essential and obligatory for the position of Imam. As the meaning of *Imamat* incorporates advancement in the desire to supercede all others as regards knowledge of profound truths, and in wisdom, and all the requisites of love, sincerity and faithfulness, therefore he puts all his other abilities in these pursuits and is every moment making this supplication: “My Lord, increase me in knowledge” [the Quran, 20:114]. And from the very beginning his deep perception and refined senses have capability in these matters. This is why, by the grace of God, he is granted vastness of Divine knowledge, and in his age there is no other who is his equal in knowledge of Quranic insights, power of benefiting others, and presenting arguments to perfection.

His sound judgment corrects the knowledge of others people. And if in the elucidation of religious truths another’s opinion is opposed to his, he is proven to be true because in acquiring the knowledge of truth he is aided by the light of spiritual insight, while others are not granted the resplendent rays of that light — “That is Allah’s grace; He grants it to whom He pleases” (62:4). Just as a hen takes her eggs under her wings and causes them to hatch, and then by taking the chicks under her wings she infuses her own nature into them, in the same way this man keeps colouring the knowledge of those persons who keep his company with the colour of his own profound spiritual knowledge and steadily increases them in faith and insight. But this kind of extensive knowledge is not required for other inspired and devout personalities because the task of educating mankind is not entrusted to them. So, if there is any deficiency or lack of knowledge in these pious seers of visions, this is no ground for criticism because they are not captains of a ship but are themselves in need of a captain. However, they should not fall into the silly error of thinking that they are above need of a spiritual captain of ship, considering themselves to be fully capable. Instead, they should remember that they certainly need such a person, as a woman needs a man.

God has created every person for a particular task. Therefore, if a man was not created for the work of *imamat* but makes this claim, he will only invite the ridicule of others on himself just as a certain naïve saint had caused people to laugh at him in the presence of the king. The story goes that in a town there was a devout man who was righteous and God-fearing but he was bereft of knowledge. The king had

faith in him but the king's minister was not his follower because of his ignorance. Once both the king and the minister went to visit him and he purposelessly broached the topic of Islamic history, telling the king that Alexander of Greece too was a great king of the Muslims. Then the minister, finding a good opportunity for scoring a point, immediately interjected with the sarcastic rejoinder: "Look, sir, the mystic, apart from his excellences of sainthood, is also an expert in Islamic history".

So the Imam of the Age, when confronting objectors and questioners in general, is more in need of the power of knowledge than of revelations. For, in regard to the *Sharī'ah* there exists every kind of objector: those who object from the point of view of medical sciences, astronomy, the natural sciences, geography, and the accepted books of Islam, objecting on the grounds of logic and on the grounds of knowledge. The Imam of the Age is called the protector of the egg of Islam, and is appointed by God the Most High as caretaker of the garden of Islam. It is his duty to refute every objection and to silence every critic. Moreover, it is not only imperative for him to triumph over criticisms, but also to manifest to the world the perfection and beauty of Islam.

Thus, such a person is highly deserving of honour and he is like the philosopher's stone, because from his being the life of Islam is manifested and he is the pride of Islam and a conclusive evidence from God for all human beings. It is not allowed for anyone to separate himself from him because he is, by the will and order of God, the supervisor of the honour of Islam and the benefactor of all Muslims, and encompasses all religious perfections. In every arena of combat between Islam and unbelief he is the one who is successful and by his holy breath infidelity is destroyed. He is like the whole, while all others are like parts of him.

The fourth power is *'azm* (iron determination) which is of paramount importance for the Imam of the Age. *'Azm* means not to flag, whatever the circumstances, nor to give up hope, nor to become lax in will. Many a time such trials befall prophets and messengers and saints, who are Imams of their age, that they are enmeshed so deep in difficulties that it seems as if God has forsaken them and wishes to visit them with destruction. Sometimes there is a cessation in their receipt of revelations and inspirations and a long period passes without any Divine communication; sometimes some of their prophecies are like a trial, the truth of which does not become clear to the public; sometimes they face much delay in achieving

their goal; often they appear forsaken, humiliated, cursed and rejected in the world, so that every person who curses them thinks that he is earning great reward in heaven. And everyone hates them and looks with aversion upon them, not even wishing to return their greetings. At such times their determination is being tested but they never become despondent because of these trials, nor do they waver in their mission, until the help of Allah comes.

The fifth power is *iqbāl 'al-allāh* (going before Allah), which is an indispensable quality of the Imam of the Age. By *iqbāl 'al-allāh* is meant that, in the time of difficulty and trial, and also such times when an implacable foe has to be faced, and a sign may be demanded or a victory may be needed, or it may be a duty to show sympathy for someone, at such times they incline only to God the Most High. They turn to Him with such submission that their prayers full of truthfulness, sincerity, love, faithfulness and unbreakable resolve cause a tumult among the higher angels; and through their intense absorption in humble supplication, a heart-rending uproar breaks out in the heavens, making the angels restless. Then, just as after the peak of the intensely hot season, at the beginning of the rainy season clouds start to gather in the sky, likewise the severe heat of their *iqbāl 'al-allāh*, that is, the passionate fervour of their intense turning to God, starts to make something new in the heavens so that destinies begin to change and the Divine will takes on a different colouring until the cool refreshing breeze of the decreed fate begins to waft gently. Just as the substance that causes fever originates from God, and then the medicine to expel that substance also works by the decree of the Almighty, so, too, is the effect of these men's turning to Allah.

The *iqbāl 'al-allāh* of the Imam of the Age, that is, his having resort to Allah, is swifter in result and more efficacious than that of all the other saints of Allah. Just as Prophet Moses in his time was the Imam of the Age and Bal'am, too, was a saint in that age who was granted communication with God and his supplications also were answered, but when Moses had to face a conflict with Bal'am that confrontation destroyed Bal'am just as a sharp sword severs the head from the body instantly. The wretched Bal'am had no idea of this rule, that although God may speak to a person and call him His beloved and chosen one, yet if he opposes one who is superior to him in drinking from the fountain of grace, he doubtlessly will be destroyed. And at that time, no revelation of his will be of any avail, nor will it help him that God used to answer his supplications. That was only one

Bal'am, but I know that in the time of our Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, thousands of Bal'ams were destroyed, as the ascetics of the Jews, after the death of the original Christian faith, were mostly of this kind.

The sixth is the phenomenon of visions and revelations which is a necessity for the Imam of the Age, who frequently receives knowledge, truths and deep insights from God by way of revelation. And his revelations cannot be compared to those of others because, in terms of quality and quantity, they are of such an elevated rank which is impossible for man to supercede.

Through this medium, knowledge is disclosed and Quranic insights become known and intricate and complex issues of religion are unraveled and prophecies of a high order, which can strongly influence the opposing religious nations are manifested. In short, the visions and revelations of the Imams of the Age are not limited to their personal concerns; but for the sake of support of religion and the strengthening of faith they come as a blessing and are extremely useful. And God speaks to them with great clarity and He answers their supplications. Sometimes questions and answers form a continuous series so much so that on a particular occasion these questions and answers begin to flow rapidly one after the other in such a sweet, clear and fluent stream that that recipients of the revelation think that they are actually seeing God the Most High.

The Imam of the Age never receives a revelation in the form that it is as if a person has thrown a brick surreptitiously and has run away, and no one knows who he was or where he went. But God the Most High draws very close to him, and to some extent He removes the veil from His holy and brilliant countenance, which is all light. This experience does not fall to the lot of others, but instead they sometimes find [when receiving inspiration] as if someone is mocking at them.

On the other hand, the revealed prophecies of the Imam of the Age possess the quality and power to disclose the Unseen, that is, from every point of view they take control over the Unseen just as a rider takes the reins of a horse in his hands, and their revelations are imbued with this power and disclosure so that their pure inspirations may not be confused with satanic inspirations and that they may constitute a strong proof for others.

Let it be clear that satanic inspirations are a fact, and some raw spiritual wayfarers experience them. So too do they experience 'suggestions of the lower self' (*hadīth-un-nafs*) which is referred to as 'confused dreams' (*adghāth ahlām*, the Holy Quran, 12:44 and 21:5). If a person denies this, he contradicts the Holy Quran; for the Holy Quran itself testifies to the existence of satanic inspirations, and Allah the Most High has warned that until man has thoroughly and perfectly purified his inner self, he is vulnerable to satanic revelations, and he can come under the verse "they (the devils) descend upon every lying one" (the Holy Quran, 26:222).

However, the holy ones are immediately alerted to the whisperings of Satan. It is a pity that some Christian clergymen, in giving an explanation in their books of the incident relating to Prophet Jesus when Satan took him to a mountain, write with such audacity that this was not a physical event that the world could have seen or the Jews could have witnessed but three times Jesus was attacked by satanic revelations which he did not accept. When I hear such interpretations of the Gospels, I shudder to think how the Messiah could have Satanic revelations! Now if we do not accept this satanic conversation as satanic revelation, and believe that Satan had actually taken human form and met Jesus, then the objection arises that if Satan, who is the serpent of old, had in actual fact assumed a physical reality, taking on the external shape of a man, and had gone to that holy temple of the Jews around which hundreds of people lived, then it would have happened that thousands of people would have flocked together to see him. In fact, Jesus ought to have loudly summoned the Jews to show them Satan, whose existence was denied by many Jewish sects. Making them see Satan would have counted as a sign of the Messiah, from which many people would have received guidance and the high officials of the Roman Government, having seen Satan and witnessed his flight, would certainly have become disciples of the Messiah. But that did not happen. This makes it certain that it was a spiritual dialogue which, in other words, can be called 'satanic revelation'.

This idea also comes to my mind that in the Jewish scriptures many wicked people were referred to as Satan. And thus, figuratively speaking, the Messiah, too, had called one of his own senior disciples as Satan, the one to whom the keys of Paradise had been entrusted just a few lines before this present incident was narrated in the Gospel. Therefore it is possible that some Jewish Satan may have approached Jesus to ridicule and mock him. And just

as he gave the name Satan to Peter, he must have called this person Satan, too. The Jews used to commit mischief of this kind, and asking this sort of question was their peculiarity. And it is possible also that all these stories may be fabrications which must have been written down deliberately or as a result of some misconception. For these Gospels are not those of Jesus nor do they bear the stamp of his approval, but the disciples or some others have written them according to their ideas and understanding. This is why they also contain contradictions. Therefore, it can be said that, because of their own ideas, some writers fell into error, just this error was made that some of the Gospel writers thought that Jesus had died on the Cross. It was in the nature of the disciples to make mistakes like these, for the Gospels inform us that they did not possess a sharp intellect. Jesus himself testified to this shortcoming of theirs, that they were weak in understanding and analysis and even in power of action.

In any case, it is a fact that satanic ideas cannot lodge in the hearts of righteous people. If any passing insinuations should float in the vicinity of their hearts, then those satanic whisperings are promptly driven and removed far away and no stain whatsoever tarnishes their pure raiment. In the Holy Quran, such a whispering, which resembles a dull and half-baked idea, is given the name *tā'if*, and in Arabic lexicons it is also called *tā'if*, *ta'uf*, *tayyif* and *taif*. This whispering makes very little impression on the heart, much as it does not exist, or one can say that just as from a distance the shadow of a tree is very weak, so too is this kind of whispering. It is possible that Satan, the accursed, may have desired to project this weak kind of insinuation in the heart of Jesus who, with his prophetic power, repelled the evil thought. ■

In his book *Raz-i Haqiqat*, Hazrat Mirza writes:

“The word *nabi* is exclusive to only two languages, and is not used in any other language of the world. That is, it occurs (1) in Hebrew and (2) in Arabic. Besides these, none of the other languages of the world have any connection with this word. So this word which is spoken about Yuz Asaf testifies, like an inscription on the tomb, that this man is either an Israelite prophet or an Islamic prophet. **But after the ending of prophethood, no further prophet can come in Islam.** Therefore it is settled that he was an Israelite prophet.” (page 16)

The significance of *Salat-un-Nabi* or *Darood*

*Id-ul-Adha Khutba at Darus Salaam,
London, 16 March 2000*

by Dr. Zahid Aziz

“And when his Lord tried Abraham with certain commands he fulfilled them. He said: Surely I will make you a leader of mankind. Abraham said: And of my offspring? My covenant does not include the wrongdoers, said He.” — The Holy Quran, 2:124

“And when Abraham said: My Lord, make this city secure, and save me and my sons from worshipping idols. My Lord, surely they have led many people astray. So whoever follows me, he is surely of me; and whoever disobeys me, Thou surely art Forgiving, Merciful.” — The Holy Quran, 14:36

I will return shortly to an explanation of the verses quoted just now. Before that, let me read the well-known prayer taught to Muslims known in Urdu and Persian as the *Darood* (درود) and in Arabic as *Salat-un-Nabi* (صلاة النبي):

“O Allah, exalt Muhammad and the true followers of Muhammad as Thou didst exalt Abraham and the true followers of Abraham, Thou art the Praised, the Magnified. O Allah, bless Muhammad and the true followers of Muhammad as Thou didst bless Abraham and the true followers of Abraham, Thou art the Praised, the Magnified.”

The words of this prayer in Arabic are recited by Muslims, both within the set daily prayers and at other times, and are believed to be a source of blessing. But unfortunately, Muslims generally are either unaware of what the Arabic words of the prayer mean, or if they do know the meaning they are unaware of what is the “exaltation” and “blessing” that they are asking to be bestowed upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his followers, which were also granted to Abraham and his followers.

The Bible mentions the promises of exaltation and blessing given from God to Abraham and his progeny as follows. God said to Abraham:

“I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you ... and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves.” — Genesis, 12:2–3.

“You shall be the father of a multitude of nations ... I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you.” — Genesis, 17:4, 6.

“I will indeed bless you, and I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore ... and by your descendants shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves.” — Genesis, 22:17–18.

Unfortunately the followers of the Bible, that is to say the Jews and the Christians — the first group being the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, and the second group having arisen out of the Jews — considered this promise to be *unconditional*. Their belief was that no matter how they behaved, well or badly, they would still be great and blessed nations because of being Abraham’s descendants. But the Holy Quran puts this promise in a different way, as in the verse quoted at the beginning of this *khutba*. When Abraham asked God about his progeny, God said: My promise does not include and extend to the wrongdoers.

Also according to another verse in the Holy Quran as quoted above, Abraham prayed to God as follows:

“So whoever follows me, he is surely of me; and whoever disobeys me, Thou surely art Forgiving, Merciful.” — The Holy Quran, 14:36

Two points are made here:

1. It is whoever follows the path of Abraham who is “of him” or his progeny, offspring or issue. The same applies to any other spiritual leader. It is not by mere physical descent but by following in their path that you become their real descendants. This is a great and deep principle revealed by Islam, and if we bear it in mind it can save us from going wrong many a time.
2. As to those who disobey or do not follow Abraham, he prays for their forgiveness. This teaches us to constantly pray to Allah to show

forgiveness and mercy to the rejecters of truth by bringing them into the fold of truth.

After Abraham, in the long course of time, two main religions developed among the followers of the Bible: the Jewish and the Christian religions. But both deviated from, and in fact, went contrary to Abraham’s path, while considering themselves to be the blessed nations springing from him.

The Jewish religion became a religion of rites and rituals only, so that the priests and the masses stuck to the letter of the religious teachings but lost the true spirit. They lost the spirit of sacrifice of one’s desires that Abraham demonstrated, and indeed what he is famous for. So they became a morally corrupt people while sticking most rigidly to the letter of the religion.

The Christian religion invented wrong beliefs about God, making a mortal Jesus into a part of God, going against the Oneness of God which was so dear to Abraham and which he preached so fervently, and coining the doctrine that your sins are forgiven if you believe that Jesus died for your sins. Abraham’s belief was that to have your sins forgiven the only way is to lead a righteous life with belief in One God.

So how could these nations be the blessed heirs of Abraham when they go against his teachings?

That is why God then raised the Holy Prophet Muhammad, from the descendants of Abraham through Ishmael, in order to revive the beliefs taught by Abraham. That is, belief in One God, sacrificing your lower desires in order to reach God, and leading a righteous life.

Apart from reviving Abraham’s beliefs, in the physical and material sense too Islam arose in a place, Makka, whose foundations were laid by Abraham, and Islam made as its religious centre the Ka’ba which had been rebuilt by Abraham from a state of ruin. Further, Islam instituted a remembrance of the incident of Abraham’s act of sacrifice to be done at the Hajj, and by all Muslims throughout the world.

This shows that it is the Muslim nation which is the heir to Abraham, and it is through this nation that the promise of God given to Abraham is fulfilled that “I will make a great nation out of you and will bless those who bless you, and by your descendants shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves”.

The significance of the *Darood* prayer, or *Salat-un-nabi*, is that we pray that the promise of the blessings of God coming to Abraham and his followers be fulfilled through the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his followers.

But we must beware that merely by copying Abraham's example of sacrifice in a symbolic way, or by just going to the Hajj to the place that Abraham is associated with and performing the outward rites, we do not become his heirs and heirs to the promised blessings. This is just like the fact that the Jewish and Christian religions, while arising among Abraham's descendants, are not his spiritual heirs because they have gone against his teachings.

To be Abraham's real heirs, so as to be worthy of inheriting the promised blessings, we have to make sacrifices of our own desires, just as Abraham did, which needs to be done in order to attain a higher goal.

This is why our *Darood* is couched in the form of a prayer: "O Allah, exalt ... O Allah, bless ...", so that we realize that it is a goal for which we have to *work* and *pray*. Muslims are not taught to refer to these blessings as something which is guaranteed to them by God, regardless of their behaviour, even though it is true that the followers of the Prophet Muhammad have been destined to inherit those blessings.

Abraham was promised, in the words of the Holy Quran, that he would be made "a leader of mankind". What does that mean? The word for "leader" is *imam*, which means one who sets an example. He was selected by God as an example because of his willingness to sacrifice what he loved most in the path of God. Similarly, if his heirs are to become leaders of all mankind, they have to set the same example of self-sacrifice. A leader, according to Islam, is not someone who just has power and gives orders. A leader is one who sets the greatest example himself of what he wants and requires others to do, and then people follow his example. That is the kind of leader that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was, one who has left behind his own actions and life as an example. That is the kind of leadership of the nations that Islam wants Muslims to have.

Also, the promise contains mention of making a "great" nation from Abraham. What is a great nation? According to the Quran, it is not one which rules over the most lands, has the biggest empire, possesses the most wealth and resources, or is the most powerful in weapons and armaments, but the greatest nation is the one which upholds truth, goodness and justice more than anyone else.

Note: The *khutba* ends above, but in this written version I deal with a question related to the *Darood* which was once asked by a friend. He asked: Since the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the greatest of all

prophets in rank and status, why do we Muslims pray that Allah may bestow those blessings on him, and on his followers, which had already been bestowed upon Abraham and his followers? Are we saying that Abraham held a higher rank than the Holy Prophet Muhammad and we are praying for the Holy Prophet to reach that same rank and status?

The answer is that the words of the *Darood*, "as Thou didst exalt Abraham and the true followers of Abraham" and "as Thou didst bless Abraham and the true followers of Abraham", *do not* refer to any exaltation or blessings that had actually been attained in full measure by Abraham and his followers *prior to the time of the Holy Prophet*, so that we could be said to be praying for the same now to be given to the Holy Prophet and his followers. Rather, this was a promise made by God to Abraham relating to the future. That promise had been fulfilled only very partially through the Israelite prophets and kings of the Bible who came after Abraham, and by the time the Holy Prophet Muhammad arose the followers of the Bible had lost all those blessings as a result of deviating completely from Abraham's teachings. Therefore the promise to Abraham and to his followers was destined to come true through the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his followers: that there would be great nations in the whole of the world following Abraham's message, blessing him, and through whom his name would be made great. So the *Darood* is the prayer to say that may the promises of God made with Abraham come to fulfilment in the fullest and most complete manner through the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his followers.

***Darood* and the propagation work of our Movement**

On a second point, since we pray in the *Darood* for the Holy Prophet Muhammad to be exalted and blessed, it means that we must also work towards this goal. For the Holy Prophet to be exalted in the world it is absolutely essential to strive hard to present a true picture of his noble life and character, particularly to counteract the false image found in hostile Western writings as well as in certain Muslim books written by foolish friends. Only then will the image of the Holy Prophet, and along with him that of his followers, be raised high or exalted in the world. Only then will people realize what a great blessing for the world he was, and they will send their blessings on him.

Just repeating the *Darood* in words, without any action to bring about the exaltation and blessing which is being prayed for, cannot achieve anything. ■

Scientific and spiritual truths about creation and evolution revealed in the Holy Quran – 4

Compiled and translated by
Dr. Mohammad Ahmad, Columbus, Ohio

from the writings of Maulana Muhammad Ali
and Mr. N.A. Faruqi

Regarding the creation of heaven it is further stated:

“Then He directed Himself to the heaven and it was a vapour (*dukhān*, دخان), so He said to it and to the earth: Come both, willingly or unwillingly. They both said: We come willingly.

“So He ordained them seven heavens in two days (*yaumain*, يومين), and revealed in every heaven its affair. And We adorned the lower heaven with lights, and (made it) to guard. That is the decree of the Mighty, the Knowing.” (41:11-12)

Note that heaven is here plainly spoken of as being originally *dukhān*, smoke, vapour or gaseous matter. The command to creation to come willingly or unwillingly is a reference to the Divine laws working in nature. Everything created, whether in the heavens or the earth, is subject to law. The existence of one law throughout the universe is clear evidence of the existence of One God, the Maker of the law. Just as, about the earth, it is stated that it was created in two stages, we are told here about the heavenly bodies that they, too, were created in two days (*yaumain*) or two stages. The creation of heavenly bodies is thus subject to the same laws. The uniformity of the laws of creation and their understanding have enabled mankind to travel into space. The words that follow — *and revealed in every heaven its affair* — show that everything created in nature serves a purpose. This verse also mentions the number seven (*sab‘a*, سبع) in connection with the creation of heavens.

The Seven Heavens

In the first place, it should be noted that the word *sab‘a* which signifies the number *seven* is also used in a vague manner, as meaning *seven*, or *more*, *several* or *many* (Lane’s Lexicon). According to the *Lisān al-*

‘Arab Dictionary, the Arabic equivalents of the numbers, *seven*, *seventy*, and *seven hundred* are all used to indicate a large number by the Arabs:

“The mention of *seven* and *seventy* and *seven hundred* is frequent in the Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet, and the Arabs used them to signify a large number and multiplicity”.

Similarly al-Azhari the Grammarian explains the word *sab‘in* (‘seventy’) as occurring in 9:80 as being “used to signify a large number and multiplicity, not indicating exactness in number” (*Lisān al-‘Arab*). Hence the seven heavens may signify a large number of heavens. Secondly, the significance of the word *samā’* (سماء) which means only what we see *above* us, should not be lost sight of. Raghīb, in his classical dictionary of the Holy Quran, makes the meaning very clear when he says:

“Every *samā’* i.e., *heaven*, is a heaven in relation to what is beneath it and an earth in relation to what is above it”.

Thirdly, in 65:12 it is affirmed that as there are seven heavens so there is a like number of earths, which corroborates with the conclusion drawn above. Fourthly, the seven heavens are on one occasion called the *seven ways* (23:17), and in this sense the orbit of a planet may be called its *heaven*. In fact, this interpretation makes the significance of 65:12 very clear, for each of the seven earths will thus have a heaven for it. The seven earths together with our earth would thus make up the eight major primary planets of the solar system.¹ Or, the seven heavens may be taken to apply to the whole starry creation, and the reference may in this case be to the seven magnitudes of the stars which may be seen with the naked eye. This division may also be on basis of the light emitted by the stars and their arrangement. The Holy Quran, however, also states:

“And We adorned the lower heaven with lights, and (made it) to guard.”

The lower heaven (*as-samā’ ad-dunyā*) is so called as such not only because of its close association with our earth, but also because it is of a lower standing in comparison with the spiritual heavens which are also divided into seven levels.

The Holy Quran states:

¹ *Editor’s Note:* The status of Pluto as the ninth planet has recently been disputed by some scientists who consider that, although it is a body orbiting the sun, it does not qualify as a proper planet.

“Who made the earth a resting place for you and the heaven a structure, and sends down rain from the clouds then brings forth with it fruits for your sustenance; so do not set up rivals to Allah while you know.” (2:22)

Metaphor of spiritual sustenance

In these verses, Allah has drawn our attention towards the external means He has created for our physical existence, in order to explain the internal and spiritual resources He has provided for our development. This is a distinctive excellence of the Holy Quran that it uses analogies from the extrinsic milieu to illustrate the internal truths for mankind, who possess only the vision capable of observing their external surroundings. Thus we are told to observe how Allah Almighty has spread out the vast earth for us like a carpet, although in fact it is round. Although it is spinning fast on its axis, and also revolving around the sun, He has made it a stable resting place for us. In the last verse of the section from which these verses have been quoted, it is stated:

“He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth.” (2:29)

For the earthly existence and the physical development of mankind, He has made the essential provisions and has bestowed upon him countless blessings beyond the power of his estimation.

Seven realms of spiritual development

Attention is then drawn towards the heavens that they are not a mere scattered collection of stars, but a structure made with order and organization. Today, after fourteen hundred years of Quranic revelation, modern scientific thought has corroborated this, that in fact the starry creation is divided into galaxies and a systematic arrangement exists throughout the universe. Towards the end of this section it is further elaborated that after creating for you in the earth what is above and beyond your imagination:

“He directed Himself to the heaven, so He made them complete seven heavens; and He is Knower of all things.” (2:29)

In the physical universe we do not see the seven heavens, nor does scientific technology shed light on it, however, the Holy Quran and the Hadith both give us knowledge of seven levels of existence in the spiritual realm, or the life Hereafter. The verse under discussion, therefore, gives us a hint that after giving you all the provisions and blessings for this worldly existence, Allah has made for you seven superior

levels of spiritual existence in the life Hereafter. After death, spiritual progress through Divine nurturing (*Rabūbiyyat*) continues within these seven levels of the spiritual heavens. It should be remembered that during the *Mi'rāj* (معراج spiritual ascension), the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, saw people, in fact even the prophets, divided into seven levels of heavenly existence. Glory be to Allah, all praise is His! Glory be to Allah Who is incomparable in greatness! How Great is the Lord, and how magnanimous a Benefactor of mankind He is. In the verse being discussed, the making of the earth as the resting place also indicates that man's abode on the earth is temporary. Using the word 'structure' for the heavens signifies that the earthly mode of existence is the foundation on which the edifice of heavenly life is raised. The way man leads his temporal life fashions his heavenly existence; that is why the Holy Prophet said: “The world is the cultivating ground for the life Hereafter.” Whatsoever you sow in this world, you shall reap its harvest in the life to come.

Once again after drawing attention towards an external phenomenon, an internal spiritual secret is revealed in the Divine words:

“And (Allah) sends down rain from the clouds then brings forth with it fruits for your sustenance.” (14:32)

The flow of heavenly rainwater stimulates the earth to generate its sustenance, and its fruits and flowers bloom. If rain were to stop, the rivers and waterways would dry up, leaving mankind without food or life giving water, ultimately leading to his demise. Likewise in the spiritual realm, if there was no revelation (which has been repeatedly likened to rainwater in the Holy Quran), spiritual sustenance would not be produced, and man would die spiritually. Just as the rain water enlivens the dead earth to produce fruits and flowers responsible for the physical maintenance, and the development of the human species, revelation of the Divine word generates life in the dead souls of men, and provides the sustenance needed for the maintenance of their spiritual life. With it spring out the fruits and flowers which were previously lying dormant. These fruits and flowers are those fine qualities and excellent attributes that evolve in every righteous person who guards against evil, and become such an apparent part of his character, that they are perceived even by those who are of a worldly disposition. Although physical sustenance and produce is created by Allah, man is duty bound to utilize the rainwater, soften and shear the land with the plow,

sow the God given seedling, and put in the sweat and toil so familiar to the farmer. In a like manner, spiritual rainwater (revelation), the soil of man's inner soul, the seedlings of his good deeds, moral and spiritual blessings, and the spiritual exercise in facing trials and tribulations of destiny and heaven, all combine together to evolve a man spiritually, and produce the fragrant flowers, and the fresh fruits within his inner soul.

Revelation, a source of life for the spirit

Just as the rain in the physical world provides the link between the heavens and the earth, revelation is the bond between the earthly and the heavenly life of man. Divine revelation gives all the essential news of the world Hereafter, and improves the worldly life of man in such a manner that it leads to improvement in his life after death. Allah has created such excellent means for nurturing the worldly and heavenly existence of man, that even if he spends every moment of his life in thanksgiving, praise and glorification of his Lord, it will not suffice. Therefore, it is stated, "Do not set up rivals with Allah while you know," i.e., you are commanded not to set up associates with Him, while possessing knowledge that Allah is your sole Creator, and the One Who nourishes you unto perfection. Any worldly idol, be it an effigy of stone, a prophet, or a spiritual, or a worldly leader raised to divinity, did not create man, nor was it responsible for the magnificent nurturing of man's worldly and heavenly existence that I have just briefly touched upon. In fact, like other human beings they too were dependent on Allah for their development. What a gross injustice it is to raise them to divinity, or as partners with God! The Holy Quran further expresses this in the verse:

"Surely ascribing partners to Allah is a gross iniquity." (31:13)

There can be no greater self-inflicted injustice for the human soul, because man thereby deprives himself of the unparalleled worldly, and the everlasting heavenly, source of Divine nurture.

Orbits of heavenly bodies

The flotation of heavenly bodies in orbits is also mentioned in other verses of the Holy Quran which state:

"By the heaven full of paths!" (51:7)

"And He it is Who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon. All float in orbits." (21:33)

"Neither is it for the sun to overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day. And all float on in an orbit." (36:40)

Besides disclosing a scientific fact unknown to mankind 1400 years ago at the time of the revelation of the Holy Quran, this verse also points out that even truth and falsehood have their courses. As night must disappear with the rise of the day, so falsehood must vanish before the light of Truth.

Portion of the heavens coming down

In mentioning the creation of heavens the Holy Quran also mentions the following:

"And those who disbelieve say: Shall we show to you a man who informs you that, when you are scattered the utmost scattering, you will then be in a new creation?

Has he forged a lie against Allah or is there madness in him? Nay, those who believe not in the Hereafter are in torment and in far error.

See they not what is behind them of the heaven and the earth? If We please, We can make them low in the land or bring down upon them a portion of heaven. Surely there is a sign in this for every servant turning (to Allah)." (34:7-9)

"And if they were to see a portion of the heaven coming down, they would say: Piled-up clouds!" (52:44)

These verses bring up an ever recurring argument of the Holy Quran. The disbelievers deny the last Resurrection, the life after death, the sublime principle of the accountability of human actions, which forms the only basis of high morals, and they are told that, as proof of the truth of the Resurrection, they will be brought low in this very life for standing in the way of advancement of Truth. It is compared with the coming of a portion from heaven because they would not be able to avert it.

These verses, however, also draw our attention to the evolutionary history of the heavens and the earth by drawing our attention to it in the words: See they not what is before them and what is behind them of the heaven and the earth? These words invite the modern skeptic to ponder on his own evolutionary background, which provides enough proof for the ongoing process of evolution into the life after death. Coming down of the heaven (52:44) could in that case be taken as the coming down of a celestial body or an

asteroid which would be impossible to avert. The occurrence of such events in our evolutionary history is supported by modern research which also supports the resurgence of some species after such catastrophic events and the continuation of the evolutionary cycle. Analogy is thus drawn from this to convince and warn the modern cynic, that the evolution of man's spiritual life does not end with the event of his physical death, but continues in the life Hereafter.

Living beings in other heavenly bodies

The Holy Quran also speaks of life in the heavens in the following verses:

“And to Allah makes obeisance every living creature that is in the heavens and that is in the earth, and the angels (too) and they are not proud.” (16:49)

“The seven heavens and the earth and those in them declare His glory. And there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise, but you do not understand their glorification. Surely He is Forbearing, Forgiving.” (17:44)

“There is none in the heavens and the earth but come to the Beneficent as a servant.” (19:93)

“And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and what He has spread forth in both of them of living beings. And He is All-powerful to gather them together, when He will.” (42:29)

These verses clearly point out that besides the earth itself, life also exists in the heavens. This is something which the world of science is still trying to discover. The truth of these Quranic statements will, if Allah please, be proven at its appropriate time. ■

Bertrand Russell's uncle was a Muslim

Bertrand Russell (d. 1970) was a world-famous British philosopher. His mother's brother was one Henry Stanley (d. 1903), the 3rd Lord Stanley of Alderley. This Lord Stanley had embraced Islam in his youth. His father, the 2nd Lord Stanley, was a British minister under several prime ministers. Lord Henry Stanley's death was reported by Maulana Muhammad Ali in the *Review of Religions* for February 1904. He was given Islamic funeral rites by an imam from the Turkish Embassy in London, and was buried in the family grounds in Cheshire, England. ■

Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, the successor to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

Annual Gathering of December 1908

translated and compiled by the Editor

In December 1908 there took place the annual gathering (*Jalsa*) of the Ahmadiyya Movement which was the first to be held since the death of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in May 1908. Looking at the summary of the speeches delivered at the gathering, which was published in the Ahmadiyya newspaper *Badr*, dated 24–31 December 1908, we find that three of the speeches make clear mention of the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya as the successor to the Founder of the Movement. These speeches were made in the presence of the *Khalifa* Maulana Nur-ud-Din as well as the most prominent Ahmadis, including Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad and others who later created the Qadiani group. This shows that it was a well known and accepted fact that the Anjuman had been designated by the Founder of the Movement as his successor for running the Movement. These speeches, from which we quote below, were made by Dr. Mirza Yaqub Beg, Maulana Muhammad Ali and Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din, who later became the leading figures of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. This clearly shows the sense in which these men regarded Maulana Nur-ud-Din as *Khalifa*, as a head but who was within the system in which the Anjuman was the supreme executive body. This entirely refutes the Qadiani allegations that, by accepting Maulana Nur-ud-Din as *Khalifa*, the Lahore Ahmadiyya leaders had acknowledged that there should be a personal, autocratic *Khilafat* in the Ahmadiyya Movement, with the *Khalifa* possessing absolute power, like the system created by the Qadianis in 1914.

Speech by Dr. Mirza Yaqub Beg

This was the first speech at the gathering, delivered on 26 December 1908. First he dealt with the question of what constitutes progress for the Ahmadiyya Movement and the ways of making that progress. Then he continued as follows:

“The other important point is that we should fully obey the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him.

We should try to obtain complete knowledge of his life-example and spiritual benefits. Secondly, the Holy Quran is our life. Those who honour the Quran shall receive honour in heaven. That person gains salvation who has full faith in God and believes the Holy Prophet Muhammad to be his leader and example.

Thirdly, we should believe in the Promised Messiah, from whose teachings we found proof of the existence of God. Through his exalted example we saw the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and by following the Messiah we individually gained particular benefit.

Fourthly, the committee is the successor to the *Khalifa* appointed by God. It is essential to obey its rules and regulations.” (page 11)

The words in this speech “the committee is the successor to the *Khalifa* appointed by God” refer to what Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad himself wrote in his Will, *Al-Wasiyyat*, about the relation of the Anjuman to himself, that is:

“The Anjuman is the successor to the *Khalifa* appointed by God”

The “*Khalifa* appointed by God” is Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad himself and the Anjuman created by him is his successor.

Maulana Muhammad Ali’s report

On the following day, Maulana Muhammad Ali presented the report of the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, as Secretary of this body. This is given briefly in the issue of *Badr* referred to above, and at the end of the report it is stated:

“A hand written note of the Promised Messiah was read, the summary of which is that after him all decisions of the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya will be final.” (page 13)

This note which Maulana Muhammad Ali read at the gathering is as follows:

“My view is that when the Anjuman reaches a decision in any matter, doing so by majority of opinion, that must be considered as right, and as absolute and binding. I would, however, like to add that in certain religious matters, which are connected with the particular objects of my advent, I should be kept informed. I am sure that this Anjuman would never act against my wishes, but this is

written only by way of precaution, in case there is a matter in which God Almighty has some special purpose. This proviso applies only during my life. After that, the decision of the Anjuman in any matter shall be final.

Was-salaam. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad,
27 October 1907.”

Thus the position and the powers of the Anjuman, assigned to it by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, were made absolutely plain in front of the annual gathering.

Speech by Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din

Immediately after the report presented by Maulana Muhammad Ali, a speech was delivered by Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din. We translate below more than a half of the report of this speech, starting at the beginning:

“Around 22 December 1905 the Promised Messiah received a revelation that very few days remained [of his life]. Upon this, he immediately wrote and published his Will, and separated himself almost entirely from the management of the Movement, handing over all the work to the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, as if he was ready to meet his Maker at any moment. Then God, in order to belie the predictions of certain false claimants to revelation, granted him life for a further two and a half years. Because of this, he saw in his own life the system working which was to come into effect after him.

From 1882 to 1900 he sowed a crop entirely by his own labour with the help of God. But when the time came to reap the crop and eat the fruit, he gave it not to his offspring nor to his relatives, but to a man who had come from outside [Maulana Nur-ud-Din]. For me there is no greater proof of his truth. The Holy Prophet Muhammad conquered the land but in the end made it unlawful for his own descendants to receive the *zakat* that came. This example of selflessness without personal interest was only again seen in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, peace be upon him.

The late Sir Syed [Ahmad Khan] became the life-secretary of a society. After him he was determined to give this office to his son. A sub-judge challenged him: Come and fight a duel with me in France.

Anyhow, this Imam has appointed this Anjuman as his successor.”

Speech by Mir Hamid Shah of Sialkot

He said in the course of his speech:

“Fifthly, that time has passed when we used to be carefree and unworried, living under the care of the Promised Messiah. Now everyone bears his own responsibility. We must help the work of the *Sadr A'la* (lit. ‘Chief President’) in practical terms, and follow his instructions. I am sure that the coming of the Second Divine Power (*Qudrat Saniyya*) depends on our actions which we perform under the *Sadr A'la*.”

The words *Sadr A'la* might well mean the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya. Even if they refer to an individual, Maulana Nur-ud-Din, the term used is *Sadr*, or ‘President’, and there is no mention here of the Qadiani magic word *Khalifa* and obedience to the *Khalifa*.

Moreover, he says that the coming of the Second Power, i.e. the Divine help which the Promised Messiah had prophesied would come to the Ahmadiyya Movement after he had passed away, depends on our actions in support of the Chief President. Now the Qadiani belief is that the prophecy of the coming of this second Divine Power was fulfilled by the establishment of the *Khilafat* immediately upon the death of Hazrat Mirza and that every member of the Movement accepted this fulfillment. If that is true, then how is it that some seven months after Hazrat Mirza’s death, a very prominent member of the Movement in a speech before the entire Movement is making the coming of the second Divine power dependent on our own actions of the future?

Speech by Dr. Sayyid Muhammad Husain Shah

We are quoting from his speech because it contains many points of guidance still relevant to the progress of the Movement:

“‘Others from among them who have not yet joined them’ [the Holy Quran, 62:3], these words are applied to the community of the Promised Messiah. But when we read the history of the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad we find how the desert of the wilderness became for them a garden and how the burning desert wind and its hot water became for them ice and soda water. The result was that many other similar hearts turned towards them. They were anxious all the time to propagate Islam. People called them crazy but they did their work and passed away.

Likewise, among us the migration of the Maulvi sahib [of Maulana Nur-ud-Din to Qadian] is worthy of note. Even for worldly minded people it was useful. Then Maulvi Abdul Latif [martyred in Afghanistan] showed a great example, then Maulvi Abdul Karim who was given the title ‘leader of the nation’. The lives of these men show them to be imbued with the colour of the Companions of the Holy Prophet. But what can be achieved by the efforts of three or four men? Can these few spread Islam in the whole world, and can their deeds bring us salvation in the least degree? If we do not adopt the example of the Companions, God will fulfil His purpose through some other nation. This task is very heavy, but to accomplish it it is not necessary to lose your life like the Companions; rather, what is required is that you give your life while staying alive.

I present below the proposals that have been passed by the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya. It should be the duty of all of us that in our deeds and words we fully bear in mind the directions given by Allah and His Messenger, and treat others as we treat a special friend, and continually pray for them, and show true concern for their welfare.

Secondly, in every part of the day we should be absorbed with the idea of propagating the word of Allah and His Messenger. We should keep a time in the day which we devote to preaching to an acquaintance. In this way we can create a group of unpaid missionaries.

Thirdly, some persons should come forward who have the capability to become missionaries and can subsist in the world without worry of responsibilities.

Fourthly, through leaflets and magazines we should answer every criticism which appears against us in any newspaper or magazine.

Fifthly, to continue the work of the preaching and propagation of Islam we should prepare a *Jamaat* which is able to do the work after the passing away of the present *Jamaat*. A school or college should be opened in which children are educated according to the example of the Holy Prophet. Arabic should be taught and there should also be resources for the attainment of worldly branches of knowledge and skills. For this, funds are required, and it is also required that children are sent here.” ■

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