Sahibzadah MM Ahmad, Amir USA, is observing while Congressman James Moran, VA, is browsing through the special issue of the Al-Nahl (on the Muslim Physicist Nobel Laureate Dr Abdus Salam) at the Seminar on Muslim Contributions for a Better Society.
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**Articles/Essays for the Al-Nahl**

Literary contributions for publication in the Al-Nahl can be sent to Majeed A. Mian, Editor, Al-Nahl, P.O. Box 651, Mansfield, MA 02048 (e-mail: miankhel@aol.com, phone 781 293 7128). It will be helpful if the contributions are saved onto a diskette in IBM compatible PC readable ASCII text format (text only with line breaks), MS Publisher, or in WinWord (Microsoft Word for Windows) and the diskette is sent, or contents are e-mailed or attached to an e-mail. References to other publications should include as much of the following as can be available: the name of the publication, volume and number, name of the author, the date and place of publication, the name of the publisher, and the page number(s). Please, keep a copy of your submissions. We may not be able to return originals unless arranged with us previously. All items are subject to review and approval by the Sadr Majlis. Majlis Ansârullah does not necessarily agree with the views of the writers. Publications of U.S. Jamâ‘at and its auxiliaries reach the same homes, therefore, make sure that your article appears in only one of them to avoid unnecessary duplication.

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The Holy Quran

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصِلَّحُوا وَبَيِّنَوا فَأَوْلُوا لَنَّهُ أَنْتَوْبُ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَأَنَا الْتَوَابُ الرَّحِيمُ

But they who repent and amend and openly declare the truth, it is these to whom I turn with forgiveness, and I am Oft-Returning with compassion and Merciful.

(2[Al-Baqara]:161)

The Holy Prophet
(sallallāhu 'alaihi wasallam)

Hazrat Anas rādiyallāhu 'anhu relates that he heard the Holy Prophet sallallāhu 'alaihi wasallam say, “Allah the Almighty has said: O son of Adam, so long as you repent and ask of Me, I shall forgive you for what you have done, and I shall not mind. O son of Adam, were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and were you then to ask forgiveness of Me, I would forgive you. O son of Adam, were you to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth and were you then to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me, I would grant you forgiveness nearly as great as that.”

(Tirmidhi, Ahmad Bin Hanbal)

Hazrat Promised Messiah
(’alaihissalām)

When a person truly repents from his heart then God Almighty forgives that person’s previous sins. Such a person is afforded an opportunity for pious deeds. His prayers are accepted. God befriends his friends and becomes an enemy of his enemies. The destiny fixed for him as a result of his bad deeds is changed. There is no need to argue the point, how much one needs in this short life, protection from trials and tribulations that are caused by his own misdeeds. All of this can be achieved through true repentance. One of the benefits of repentance is that Almighty Allah becomes such a person’s protector and guardian. He removes all afflictions and is kept safe from the conspiracies that his enemies hatch against him. This grace and blessing is not discriminatory rather all are Almighty God’s creation. Therefore, whoever moves towards Him and follows His commands and guidance shall also be like the one who preceded him in repentance. He keeps everyone who truly repents safe from misfortunes and loves him.

(Translated from Urdu. Malfūzāt, Vol. 4, Page 120)
Editorial

A Single Nation

Allah says in the Holy Quran:

كان آناس امة وحيدة

All men were a single nation.

(2[Al-Baqarah]:214)

The world is once again witnessing yet another genocide of this century. The dreadful memories of Rwanda and Bosnia are still fresh in our minds. Kosovo was a time bomb that was only waiting to explode. Mankind’s hatred towards each other has once again erupted into a violence of immense magnitude that has left thousands upon thousands of innocent civilians killed, maimed, homeless and made refugees. All of this because one group of people against all established and universally recognized values of humanity decided to expel another group from their homes and to deprive them of their properties that they had owned for thousands of generations. The world is once again appalled at these atrocities. This whole phenomenon proves that when man-made laws are made superior to those of our Creator then the inherent weaknesses of such laws must, at some point, result into such grave consequences. Today, nations are trying to prove their civilization superior to that of others but in doing so are using the same kind of modus operandi that only the savages and ruthless conquerors used in the past. Islam’s idea of civilization is based upon the unification of humanity as a whole. Islam is also undoubtedly the greatest civilizing force. Fourteen hundred years ago it was Islam that saved the humanity from crashing into an abyss of total chaos. It abolished the false perceptions of race, color, nationality and tribal pride. It closed the gap between the rich and the poor by providing to the poor a share in the rich man’s wealth. It established the human dignity by abolishing slavery and by restoring equal rights to women. Islam thus truly created a nation that had no boundaries. A Muslim could go and live anywhere in dārussalām or the Abode of Peace as the Muslim world was then known. This meant that there was to be no fighting among the Muslims for any reason whatsoever. That idea made it a true single civilization of the world thus bringing the humanity back to Allah’s will of creating a single nation on the earth. In a true Islamic civilization, there is no concept of separate nationalities or boundaries that deprive its citizens access to their legitimate rights. Unfortunately, human beings continue to make the same mistakes again and again as they are farther removed from the origins of their religion. Satan overpowers them and instigates them to savagery by exploiting their weaknesses of greed and jealousy.

Over time, the Islamic world itself broke apart into several nationalities which have been constantly waging war against each other for expansion of their borders. Allah, the Merciful, however, has once again provided a remedy by raising the Promised Messiah ‘alaihissalām in this day and age. Hazrat Promised Messiah ‘alaihissalām calls the mankind towards Allah and shuns the idea of several human groups, their nationalities and boundaries based on any other criterion but the pleasure of Allah. In one of his verses, he says:

مفهوم كيا ملكون سے میرا ملك بے سب سے جدا محقق كيا تاج سے میرا تاج بے رضوان يار

I have nothing to do with countries as my country is a unique one and I have no desire to wear a crown for my crown is in the pleasure of Allah.

Based on the revelations received by Hazrat Promised Messiah ‘alaihissalām, we believe that the humanity will one day certainly become one nation. There will then be only one religion, Islam, and only one leader, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam.

☆
Our Teaching

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, peace be on him,
The Mahdi and the Promised Messiah

Let it be absolutely clear that a mere verbal pledge has no value if it is not supported by a genuine and firm resolve to live up to it in every way. Therefore, whoever fully lives up to my teaching, he alone enters that house of mine with reference to which God Almighty has promised, “I shall Myself protect all those who are in this house.” It should not, however, be understood here that this Divine protection is extended only to those living within the compass of my house made of mud and bricks: the pledge also encompasses those who follow my teaching to the fullest extent, and who, therefore, can truly be said to be the inmates of my spiritual home.

Relevant to a proper observance of my teaching it is essential that one should firmly believe that there is an all-Powerful, all-Sustaining Supreme Being, the Creator of everything, Changeless, Everlasting and Eternal. He does not beget, nor was He begotten. He is Holy, so that there is no need or occasion for Him to go on the Cross, or suffer in any way, or be subject to death. He is such that being far removed, He is still very near; and being very near, He is still very far. Although He is One, and absolutely unique, His manifestations are diverse and multifarious. Whenever there occurs in man a new change, for the changed man He becomes a new God, dealing with him on the basis of a fresh manifestation, the man witnessing a change in God in proportion to the change in himself – not that there occurs any change in God, He being Eternal, Changeless and most Perfect in Himself, but with every change in man for the better, God also reveals Himself to him in a fresh and clearer manifestation. With every progressive effort on the part of man God also shows Himself with higher and more powerful manifestation. He displays an extraordinary manifestation of His power and glory only when man shows an extraordinary change in himself—this being the root and the bedrock basis of the marvels and miracles witnessed at the hands of all servants of God. Belief in this God, with these powers, is the foremost essential condition of our Movement. Inculcate this belief in your hearts, giving to its implications and requirements the first and top most priority over all considerations of self, over its comforts and relationships. By means of actions in the field of your daily life, with unflinching courage, show a steadfast loyalty in His way. Others in this world do not give Him preference over material means and the support they hope to get from their friends and relations. But do you give him the first place, so that in heaven you should come to be reckoned His people.

To show signs of grace is the eternal way of God. But you can partake of this blessing only when there remains no difference and no distance between Him and you; only when all your wishes, hopes and desires merge into His will; only when at all times, in success or failure, in hope or disappointment, you remain in humble prostration at His door, so that He should do with you what He will. If you act like this, in you would appear that
God, Who for a long time has kept His face concealed from the world. Is there any among you, then, who would act upon this teaching, seeking only His pleasure, without the slightest sense of dissatisfaction against the way His will works? Even in distress you should put your best foot forward, for this is the secret of your success; and you should strive to the utmost of your power to spread the idea of His singleness and unity all over the earth. Be kind and merciful to humanity, for all are His creatures: do not oppress them with your tongue, or hands, or in any other way. Always work for the good of mankind.

Never unduly assert yourselves with pride over others, even those who are placed under you. Never use abusive language for anyone, even though he abuse you. Be humble in spirit, kind and gentle, and forgiving, sympathetic towards all and wishing them well, so that you should be accepted. There are many who pretend to be kind, gentle and forgiving, but inside they are wolves; there are many on the outside who look pure, but in their hearts they are serpents. You cannot be accepted in the presence of the Lord unless you are pure, both on the outside and inside. If you are big, have mercy for those who are small – not contempt; if you are wise and well versed in learning, serve the ignorant with words of wisdom: never desire to bring disgrace on their ignorance by trying to show off your own learning. If you are rich, instead of treating them with self-centered disdainful pride, you should serve the poor. Beware of the paths of destruction. Fear the Lord, be righteous, do not fall in worship before the creation of God. Turn wholly and solely to Him, so that you lose interest in this world. Become entirely His, living wholly for His will and pleasure, for His sweet sake, hating everything impure and sinful; for indeed He is Holy.

Every morning should be a witness for you that you spent the night with righteousness, and every evening should be a witness for you that you went through the day with the fear of God in your heart.

Do not fear the curses the world might heap on you for they melt in the air like smoke, they cannot turn day into night. What you should be afraid of is the curse that comes from God, which totally uproots from both the worlds, those on whom it falls. You cannot save yourselves with hypocrisy and pretense, because the God Who is your Lord can see to the innermost depths of your being. How, then, can you hope to deceive Him? Therefore strengthen yourself and cleanse yourself to become pure and precious without a particle of dross anywhere in your being, for if there be any such, it will take away your light. And if in any corner of your heart there be pride, empty pretense, hypocrisy, vanity, love of self, or laziness of disposition, you do not amount to anything acceptable in the sight of the Lord. Take care that on the basis of a thing or two, which you think you have accomplished, you do not fall into the delusion that you have done all that is needed to be done; for God desires that your entire life, your whole being, should undergo a deep and thorough revolution. Indeed He demands from you that you accept
a death, after which He would give you another life. Immediately compose all your differences and make peace among yourselves: forgive the transgressions of your brothers for indeed he is evil who is not willing to make peace with his brother. He would be cut off for he tries to create disruption. Leave off vanity and emphasis on self and all mutual resentments, all unpleasantness. Though truthful and justified in your stand, be humble in your demeanor as though you were in the wrong so that you yourself should be treated with forgiveness. Leave off everything which fattens your vanity, for the door you have been invited to enter is not one that would admit a fat person.

How unfortunate is the man who fails to yield belief to things coming from the mouth of God, which I have stated to you. If at all you desire that God in heaven be pleased with you, hasten to become one among yourselves, as though you were brothers born of the same mother. Only he is most honored among you who most forgives the transgressions of his brother; and unfortunate is he who remains obdurate, and does not forgive. He is not part of me and he has no share with me. Remain in great fear of the curse of God, for He is Holy, intensely jealous and particular in His Holiness. An evil-doer cannot win nearness to Him. No one who is proud can win His nearness, nor the oppressor and unjust, nor one who is dishonest, nor anyone who is not jealous for His name. Those who fall on worldly benefits like dogs, or ants, or vultures falling blindly on carrion, those who have only sought comfort in life; they cannot win nearness to Him; Every impure eye remains far removed from Him; every impure heart remains unaware of Him. For Him whoever lives in fire, shall be saved from the flames; he who weeps for His sake shall be made happy, full of laughter and jubilance. He who breaks away from this world for His sake, shall find Him. With the deepest sincerity of heart, with a steadfast strength, become the friends of God, so that He too should become your friend. Show mercy to your subordinates, be kind to your spouses and to your brethren who are poor, so that in heaven you too be received with mercy. You really and truly become His, so that He too should be yours. This world is a place of thousands of evils, tribulations and trials: in all sincerity and steadfastness of heart catch hold of God, so that He keep these evils, tribulations and trials away from you. No evil and no distress takes its birth on this earth without a decree from Heaven to that effect; and no distress is lifted until mercy descend from Heaven. Therefore wisdom on your part ties in this that you take firm hold of the root, without worrying about the branches. It is not forbidden unto you to have recourse to remedies or plan with human endeavor: what is forbidden is that you place your entire reliance on them. In all circumstances it is God’s will that will be done, and for one who has the power to take his stand on this point, the position of faith in and reliance on God is the best of all positions.

Those who do honor to the Holy Qur’ân shall be honored in heaven.

For you another very essential teaching is this that you do not leave the Holy Qur’ân
like a book that has been forsaken, since it is
therein, and nowhere else, that your life lies.
Those who do honor to this Holy Book shall
be honored in heaven.

**Those who will hold the**
**Holy Qur‘ān superior to**
every tradition and every
other saying shall be given
preference in heaven.

For mankind now, all over the surface of
the earth, there is no Book except the Holy
Qur‘ān: for the sons of man there is no
Messenger and no Mediator except
Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of
God be upon him. So strive that you cherish
the purest love for this Prophet of power and
glory, giving no one else any kind of
preference over him, so that you be put down
in heaven as those who have been saved. And
very clearly bear in mind that salvation is not
something that you will experience in the life
after death. The real and true salvation is
only that which shows its light in this very
life. Who is the saved? Only he who
maintains a firm faith that the living God is a
reality, and that Muhammad, peace and the
blessings of God be upon him, is the
Mediator between Him and mankind; that
under the skies there is no one equal to him
in rank and elevation: nor any book to rival
the Holy Qur‘ān: that for no one else did God
wish that he should live for ever, but for this
blessed Prophet He did so wish: that to keep
him alive forever He laid the foundation for
continuing the benefit of his Sharī‘ah and his
spiritual blessings to the day of Resurrection.
And at long last, from the flow of his
spiritual benefits for mankind, he sent the
Promised Messiah to this world whose
advent was indispensable for the completion
of the structure of Islam. For it was necessary
that this world should not come to an end
before the Movement of Muhammad was
given the color of a spiritual Messiah, the
same as was given to the Movement of
Moses. This is what the following verse of
the Holy Qur‘ān points to, namely: “Guide us
in the right path— The path of those on
whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings.”
Moses received the treasure which had been
lost by the earlier ages, and Muhammad
received the treasure which the Movement of
Moses had been unfortunate, enough to lose.
Now the Movement of Muhammad stands in
the place of the Movement of Moses, but
such that in grandeur, the like of Moses,
exceeds him a thousand times, while the like
of the Messiah in the Movement of
Muhammad excels Jesus by a thousand
measures. And not only did the Promised
Messiah of the Muhimmadi Movement
came, in terms of time, exactly in the
fourteenth century after the Holy Prophet, as
Jesus had appeared fourteen centuries after
Moses, he also came at a time when the
condition of the Muslims of the day was
identical with the Jews of the time of Jesus.
Therefore I am that Promised Messiah, and
no one else. Whoever enters into sincere
bai‘at with me and becomes my follower
from the bottom of his heart, as to be
engrossed in his obedience to me as to
forsake all his own personal aims and
intentions, he alone is the one for whom in
these days of great distress my soul shall
desire to intercede.

From Kashti-i-Nūh (The Ark of Noah)
And those who say, ‘Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of our eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.’

— 25[Al-Furqan]:75

The moral training of an Ahmadi family means the moral training of a Muslim family, as Ahmadiyyat is not different from Islam. It is the true Islam, which was introduced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad-ur-Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam. The moral training of a family starts even before the foundation of a family is laid.

It is mentioned in hadith that people marry women for four things:
1. Wealth.
2. Family background.
4. Piety and Righteousness.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad-ur-Rasūlullāh, sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam, advised his followers that the true believers should consider piety and righteousness over everything else as all the other reasons were only secondary in nature. That is why the verses recited at the occasion of Nikah, repeatedly mention the phrase, Ittaqullāh, ittaqullāh, ittaqullāh, that is, Fear Allah, fear Allah, fear Allah. That is the time when the foundation of a family is laid in the true sense. A Persian poet has said:

حشت اول چون نهض معمارکج
نا تبیا می روایت کرک

It means that if the foundation stone of a wall is laid down uneven, that wall will remain crooked even if it was built all the way to the Pleiades. The wall will not become straight itself. That is the first lesson, what the Holy Prophet is pointing to, to select a wife on the basis of piety and righteousness. Once the advice is heeded then we can hope to be the leaders of pious and righteous people. That fact is mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān as quoted in the beginning. That they pray, ‘O our Lord grant us the delight of our life from our spouses and from our children and make us the leaders of the righteous people.’

It is therefore Taqwa or righteousness that is the very first foundation stone laid at the occasion of a marriage. So one must pray to Almighty Allah and render supplications to Almighty God for that cause. The purpose for which one gets married is to raise a family. If that action is based on taqwa, then one can rightly expect that the children that will be born shall receive the right guidance with the help of Allah. With taqwa in hearts, the parents’ responsibility of raising children is made easier. It is really a great responsibility
of the parents to educate and train the children, and to make them realize the purpose of their creation. Almighty Allah says:

فطرت الله أنتى فطر المناس عليه

And follow the nature made by Allah—the nature in which He has created mankind. 30[Al-Rum]:31

Every child is born with true nature, i.e. the nature of piety and righteousness. We do not believe that any child inherits the sins of anybody else. The Holy Prophet says:

ما من مولود إلا يولد على الفطرة فابوه يهوداته أو ينصراته أو يمجساته

That every child is born with a true nature. It is then the parents who make the child whatever they like. They may maintain what Almighty Allah has provided to the child or they may spoil the child by turning him into a Christian or a Jew or for that matter, a pagan. It is the role of the father and the mother to ensure that the child remains upon the true nature of God. A child at the time of birth is pious and pure. Holy Qur’ān provides us the true guidance at every step of life. Similarly, the Holy Prophet advises us and provides the guidelines to educate and bring up our children. The Holy Prophet says, ‘When your child gets to the age of seven then you must advise him about the duty of every Muslim to submit oneself to the will of God.’ The child at this age should start to pray to Almighty Allah, the Creator. This must be done with love and affection. However, when the child reaches the age of ten then you must hold his hand and take him along to the mosque. In this regard, some misunderstanding exists among various groups. The word mentioned in the hadīth is fadribūhum. This word has different meanings at different occasions, for example; to beat, to walk along or to explain properly. We do not believe in beating the children, so the other two meanings are preferably the better meanings, i.e., to educate the children. The emphasis at the age of ten should be that the child should not miss the Prayer, by setting a personal example. That is only possible if the child is in the company of the father. That is why fadribūhum means to hold his hand and to take him along to the mosque. Some parents might criticize that we are being unduly harsh to the child when we ask him to go to the mosque at the time of Prayer. Such thoughts are contrary to their claim that they love their children. True love is that which conforms to the teachings of the Holy Qur’ān and the sayings of the Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam. If such parents’ display of love goes against the teachings of the Qur’ān or the practice of the Holy Prophet, then this kind of conduct will certainly spoil the children. Hazrat Musleh-i-Mauʿūd radiyallāhu ‘anhu says, “Love with the children must remain within limits so that they do not get spoiled, for the love which spoils the children is not love but rather enmity.”

Example of true love can be found in the life of the Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam, who is an excellent exemplar for the mankind. Sometimes the Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam disciplined the children with firmness when the occasion so demanded. At times it even appeared to be harsh but there was always a deep philosophy behind such actions. Once Hazrat Hassan radiyallāhu ‘anhu was playing inside the mosque, while the Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam was busy in other affairs. It
so happened that there was a heap of dates in the mosque brought by the people for the purpose of sadaqa. Hazrat Hassan rādiyallāhu ‘anhu picked up a date and started to chew on it. The Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam happened to notice it. He immediately rushed towards the child, shoved his finger inside his mouth while holding Hazrat Hassan, he pulled out the date from his mouth and said, ‘Sadaqa is not for us (for the prophets and their family members), it is for the poor and the needy.’ That is why it was not proper for Hazrat Hassan to eat out of those dates. It shows that the child must be corrected at the very first step. The Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam repeatedly exhorted to do everything with proper respect and love. The Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam has used very unique words in exhorting us how to treat the children. Such words are found neither in the Torah nor the Gospel, nor in any other Scripture. Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam says:

اكرموا أولا دكم و احسنوا ادبهم

Respect your children and cultivate in them good morals.

The other Scriptures may advise the young to respect their elders but in Islam the elders are being asked to respect their children. If the children are not treated with respect, then respect cannot be expected from them. This is the philosophy behind the saying of the Holy Prophet of Islam sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam, the advice he gave 1400 years ago. Another factor that we have to deal with is the society. The kind of society a child is raised in plays a very important role. It has a great impact on the upbringing of the children. Today’s environment that we live in, not only impacts the children but grown ups as well. However, it has a deeper effect on the children. In different languages of the world there are sayings related to this fact. An old adage in Persian goes like this:

صحت صالح ترا صالح كند
صحت طالح ترا طالح كند

The company of good people will make you good and the company of bad people will make you bad.

A man is known by the company he keeps. In this regard, the Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam says:

المرء على دين خليله فلينظر احدكم من يخالل

That the people tend to adopt the ways of their colleagues and the religion of their colleagues. Friendship, therefore, should be made with great care. The Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam advised us to check the person’s behavior and religion before making him a friend. We must know the kind of company that person keeps. If that person is a pagan and does not believe in one God, then such a person will only poison the child’s mind. In the same way a Christian or a Jew will also poison the mind of a child. It is therefore very important to choose the right kind of colleagues for the children, or at least to guide the children to have a good friend. Those who have good religious values and have good moral upbringing would prove to be better friends and colleagues of the children. The Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam says:

من تشبه بقوم فهو منهم
That, anybody who blindly imitates the other nations, gradually slips into them. Unfortunately, a lot of people imitate blindly the customs of the society. After a few years, such people find out that their children have totally changed. They forget that the Holy Prophet had warned them against this trend in the words quoted above. When someone blindly imitates another nation, he would slip into that nation. The Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam does not forbid from maintaining relations with the other people. He is only warning the believers that they must be alert and watchful about the harmful trends of the society. They can thus constantly advise their children against these dangerous traps.

The Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam has given a very pertinent example that should open our eyes towards our society, our friends and our colleagues. He has defined in one of his traditions the characteristics of a good man or a good companion and also the characteristics of a bad companion. He has said that the example of a good person is like the one who sells musk and that of a bad person is like the one who is working next to an oven. If you have a colleague who sells musk then without buying the musk from him, you will also get that fragrance because of your company with that person. Similarly a person with good moral characteristics will benefit you. On the other hand, if somebody is working next to an oven and you stay close to him then you might have your clothes torched or at least get the bad odor of the oven. In the same way, a person with bad habits can only leave a bad affect on you. By this analogy, the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam has taught us a great lesson.

The Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam further warns that a day would come when you would have to submit your account particularly about your family members. It is not just an advice to the parents but also to every member of the family. The Holy Prophet says:

كلكم راع و كلكم مسؤول عن رعيته

The example of everyone is like a shepherd and therefore they are accountable for it. The father, the mother, the children all have been assigned responsibilities. Whatever responsibility has been assigned to the individual in the family will be called to account for it on the Day of Judgment.

It is true that a great honor and a unique status has been given to the mothers in the words of the Holy Prophet:

الجنة تحت اقدام امهاتكم

Meaning that the paradise lies under the feet of your mothers. However, it is these mothers who are supposed to create paradise under their feet. Only then would the children be able to inherit or acquire that paradise from their mothers. If the mothers cannot give moral character, then they are in fact creating hell under their feet. Such mothers cannot give any paradise to their children. Here the children are also advised to obey their parents, as their reward would come from Almighty Allah leading them to paradise.

The Holy Prophet has also mentioned that the father is one of the best doors to paradise while maintaining that the paradise lies under the feet of the mother. This beautiful piece of advice can save the children from becoming disrespectful and arrogant especially towards the father. If someone implies that he renders his services to the mother and does not care about the father then such a person must remember that he would be closing the door
of paradise with his own hands. This however, equally applies to the father as well. He must prove himself worthy of being the door to the paradise.

In short, every one of us has his responsibilities and these responsibilities cannot be discharged successfully without the help of Almighty Allah. May Almighty Allah be our helper and guide and grant us wisdom and understanding to fulfill our responsibilities successfully. Āmin.

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Razzaq and Farida

A story for children written by Dr Yusef A. Lateef. Published by Majlis Ansarullah, U.S. A. Children and new Muslims, all can read and enjoy this story. It makes a great gift for the children of Ahmadi, Non-Ahmadi and Non-Muslim relatives, friends and acquaintances. Every page of the story is accompanied by a colorful drawing.

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Importance of Congregational Prayers

Maulana Shamshad Ahmad Nasir, Missionary Headquarters
Speech delivered at the 17th Annual Ijtema of Majlis Ansarullah, USA, on September 12, 1998 at Masjid Bait-ur-Rahman, Silver Spring, MD

Who believe in the unseen and observe Prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them.

— The Holy Qur’an, 2[Al-Baqara]:4

The importance of congregational Prayers is not hidden from anybody. Fourteen hundred years ago, the Holy Qur’an enjoined upon the Muslims to observe Prayers in congregation. The example and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam are with us. Hazrat Amirul-Muminin, Khalifatul-Masih IV, ayyadhullahu ta’alã binasrihil-‘azîz, on the 10th of October 1997, gave a target to the Ahmadiyya Jam’ats in USA and Germany. This target was related to the Prayers. In this connection, he also gave a series of Friday sermons.

In the verse of the Holy Qur’an, from Sura Al-Baqara, which I have recited, Allah Ta’âlã has mentioned that one of the qualities of a believer and muttaqi is that he observes Prayer.

First, I would mention the importance of Prayers in the words and example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam and then what Hazrat Masih-i-Mau‘ûd ‘alaihissalâm and his Khulafâ have said about Prayers. I have therefore, collected some of the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam that I will read to you. The first hadîth is taken from Bukhârî Kitâbul-Adab:

Hazrat Ayub Ansârî radyallahu ‘anhu has related that once a man came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam and asked, “O Prophet, tell me something that after acting upon it, would take me to paradise and would keep me away from the Fire.” The Holy Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam advised him to worship Allah and not to associate anything with Him, neither in His person nor in His attributes. The Holy Prophet further advised him to observe Prayers, give Zakât and be kind to his relatives. This is the answer of the Holy Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam that if you worship Allah and observe Prayers then you will enter the paradise by the grace of Allah and will be kept away from the Fire.

Another hadîth has been taken from Abu Da’ûd. Hazrat Umar bin Shu‘âib radyallahu ‘anhu relates that the Holy Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam said, “When your children reach the age of seven, they must know the Prayer and should start to observe the Prayer. However, when they reach the age of ten and you see that they are
not observing the Prayers then be strict with them.” This is the advice of the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam for all of us to follow and to take care of our children.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah radiyallahu ‘anhu narrates that the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam said that on the Day of Judgment, the first thing about which a man will be called to account for is the Prayer. The very first thing which the Almighty Allah Ta‘ālā will ask the believers, the Muslims, is Prayer or salāt; five times daily Prayers. If the answer is accepted then they will enter the paradise. But beware, if he did not observe the Prayer in this world, then he will be a great loser.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah radiyallahu ‘anhu relates that the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam said, “Shall I tell you something whereby Allah would wipe out your sins and raise your status?” Those present said, “Certainly, O Messenger of Allah.” He said, “Performing the ablution carefully even in difficulty.” There are times when the weather is bad and it may be very hard to perform the ablution. The Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam says, “When you find it very difficult to observe the ablution but you perform it anyway, then observe the Prayer, walk to the mosque and wait eagerly for the next salāt after one is done. This is your striving in the cause of Almighty Allah.” The Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam emphasized this repeatedly.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah radiyallahu ‘anhu relates that the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam said that the Prayer of a person with the congregation is twenty seven times more beneficial than in his home or his shop. When someone performs ablution carefully and proceeds to the mosque only with the intention of joining the Prayers, then the reward from Almighty Allah becomes manifold.

It has been mentioned in one of the sermons of Hazrat Amīrul-Mu’mīnīn where he has appreciated the fact that many people by the grace of Allah, sacrifice their time. He says that they come to the mosque with the intention of doing the Jamā‘at work but it would be better if they came to the mosque with the intention to join in the Prayers and then they may do the Jamā‘at work as well. They should come to the mosque wholly solely for the observance of the congregational Prayers and do their Jamā‘at work while they are in the mosque for the Prayers. This is what the Holy Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam is mentioning in the aforesaid hadith that the only thing that should bring one to the mosque should be Prayer. For a person who performs his ablution carefully at home and then proceeds to the mosque, for each of his steps, Allah Ta‘ālā wipes out one of his sins and eventually raises his status in the paradise. A true believer enters the mosque and remains sitting in the mosque for as long as it takes for the Imam to arrive and lead the Prayer. He waits patiently, does not indulge in talking with others, does not waste his time and is not showing impatience of any kind. Sometimes when the Imam is late, it has been seen that people just stand around or indulge in talk. At other times, some people are offering their Prayers while others start talking loudly to each other. Such behavior is not correct according to the hadith of the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam.
Holy Prophet sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam says that when a person is sitting in the mosque waiting for the Imam or waiting for the Prayer to be led, then as long as he is sitting quietly remembering Almighty Allah, the angels of Almighty Allah would be offering prayers for such a person. The angels pray, “O my Allah, O our Lord, have mercy on him and forgive him and accept his repentance.” Almighty Allah accepts the prayers of angels as long as the person is sitting quietly in the mosque waiting for the Prayer and does not harm anybody (Bukhārī).

Hazrat Ibn Umar relates that the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam said, “Prayer with the congregation is twenty seven times more beneficial than Prayer performed by oneself.” The importance of Prayer in congregation is very clear from this hadith.

On the 17th of October 1997, Hazrat Amirul-Mu’mīnīn, Khalīfatul-Masīh IV ayyadayahullāh delivered a very important Friday sermon on the subject of the importance of Morning Prayer. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV ayyadayahullāh said that the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam had clearly indicated that those who did not come for the congregational morning Prayer, he had desired to burn their homes down. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV ayyadayahullāh said that the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam did not actually do this kind of a thing but it was meant for every believer to feel this in his own heart. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV ayyadayahullāh said that if the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam did not take any drastic action, no one else had the right to do anything like that. No one should say that he would burn people’s homes if they did not come to the morning Prayer. The righteous people must feel in their own hearts that we had missed something by not saying the morning Prayer. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV ayyadayahullāh said that it would be better to bear the hardship of coming to the morning Prayer than to face the fire on the Day of Judgment. The hadith of Bukhārī that I have referred to, goes like this:

Abu Hurairah radyallahu ‘anhu relates that the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam said, “By Him, in Whose hand is my life, I have sometimes thought that I would ask for fuel to be collected and adhān be called. I would then appoint someone to lead the Prayer and myself go to those who absent themselves from Prayer and set fire to their houses before their eyes.” (Bukhārī and Muslim)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah radyallahu ‘anhu relates that the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam said, “For him, who proceeds to the mosque morning or evening, Allah prepares an entertainment in paradise every time he proceeds.”

In this world, our friends, relatives and even unknown people invite us to their homes for lunch or dinner or for a social gathering or to know each other better. Whenever such an invitation is received, we accept it with great pleasure. Allah Ta’ālā calls us five times a day with the chants of:


That is, come for Prayer, come for success. If we neglect that call, it means that we are not ready to accept the invitation of Almighty Allah, which has been prepared for us to lead us towards the paradise.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah radyallahu ‘anhu relates that he heard the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam say, “Tell me if one of you had a stream running by his door
and he took a bath in it five times a day, would there be any dirt left on his body?” He was answered that there would be no dirt left on his body. Then the Holy Prophet sallallâhu ‘alaihi wasallam observed, “Similar is the case of the five-times daily Prayers. Allah wipes out all faults as a consequence of them.” (Bukhârî)

Commenting on this hadîth, Hazrat Amir-ul-Mu’minîn has mentioned that the first thing, which should be clearly understood from this hadîth, is that Holy Prophet sallallâhu ‘alaihi wasallam indicated the importance of the five daily Prayers. Holy Prophet sallallâhu ‘alaihi wasallam is referring to the stream outside the door, meaning that going out for the Prayers is better than offering Prayers at home. In short, Holy Prophet sallallâhu ‘alaihi wasallam has mentioned the importance of the five-time daily Prayers in congregation. The stream referred to in this hadîth is in fact, the mosque. The one who proceeds to the mosque five times a day, spiritually speaking, he is taking a bath or a shower. No dirt, no fault or any sin will remain on his body.

Hazrat Promised Messiah ‘alaihissalâm once visited a mosque in Delhi which was a huge building. He noticed that the real beauty of the mosque was not in the building, but it was in the worshipers, the ones who observed Prayers with the utmost sincerity of their hearts. He remarked, “Look at the mosque of the Holy Prophet sallallâhu ‘alaihi wasallam. It was very small. Its roof was made of date palm and when it rained it leaked and yet, how beautiful that mosque was where the Companions came and observed their Prayers in that mosque.” Hazrat Promised Messiah ‘alaihissalâm has exhorted, “Say and observe your five-time daily Prayers regularly as irregular Prayers are not considered real Prayers.”

Hazrat Khalîfatul-Masîh II radiyallâhu ‘ânhu once said that if someone continually observed Prayers for twenty years but missed one Prayer, thinking that missing a single Prayer may not bring any harm, he warned that such a person should know that at that moment, he took himself out of the community, out of the Jamâ‘at and out of Ahmadiyyat and Islam.

Some people observe only one Prayer every day. These people get up early in the morning anyway, as they have to go to work. While they are up at the Prayer time, they feel that they might as well offer their Morning Prayer. But if that is the only Prayer they observe in the whole day then it is like offering no Prayer at all. Hazrat Masih-i-Ma‘ud ‘alaihissalâm says that these people should understand that missing the Prayers is not forgiven or pardoned to anyone at all, even to the prophets of Allah.

During the time of the Holy Prophet sallallâhu ‘alaihi wasallam, some people accepted Islam. As they were new in Islam, they came to the Holy Prophet sallallâhu ‘alaihi wasallam requesting, “Yâ Rasûlullâh, we will follow all the articles of Faith, but Prayer is a very hard chore for us to practice. We are prepared to obey all other commandments of Islam and follow the injunctions of God, but it is very difficult for us to come to the mosque five times a day to offer Prayers. We request that we be exempted from practicing this part of the faith.” The Holy Prophet sallallâhu ‘alaihi wasallam replied, “If Prayer is not part of one’s faith then such a faith cannot be called
to be from God.” He further explained, “The purpose of religion is to establish a strong communication link with God Almighty and this can only be achieved by the worship of God Almighty.

On the 27th of December 1920, addressing the Annual Convention of Jamā’at Ahmadiyya, Hazrat Muslih-i-Mau‘ūd warned that many of us did not make our children Ahmadi. Why would Hazrat Muslih-i-Mau‘ūd radiyallāhu ‘anhu say something like that while we know that we are Ahmadi and our children were born as Ahmadi? Hazrat Muslih-i-Mau‘ūd’s point was that if we did not teach and did not lay emphasis upon our children about the importance of Prayers then of course, we would have failed in making them true Ahmadi. In our love for children we tend to ignore to teach them the importance of offering Prayers. We try to make an excuse by saying that the child is too young to be put through this ordeal. We think that when the child would grow up, he would automatically start observing the Prayers. Hazrat Muslih-i-Mau‘ūd radiyallāhu ‘anhu said that the time for the training of youth is their childhood. If we neglected to train them at that age, then that time would never return. Therefore, Hazrat Muslih-i-Mau‘ūd radiyallāhu ‘anhu said, “Train your children properly. If you ask them to offer their Prayers and finding it difficult they do not offer the Prayers, do not think that nothing happened. This would result in a great loss to us and our next generation. You should train your children in a manner that when you die and depart from this world, you should be very happy that you are leaving behind children who will protect the religion and that they will be a great blessing for the religion.”

Hazrat Amirul-Mu’mīnīn Khalīfatul-Masīh IV in one of his letters stated that an important factor in training and tarbiyyat is Prayer in congregation. A vigorous struggle should be launched in such a manner that every Ahmadi should become regular in congregational Prayer. This struggle should be carried out in a manner that you see to it that your mosque becomes smaller and is packed with the worshippers.” This is another aspect of Prayer in congregation. Sometimes, people offer their Prayer at home and then for some reason come to the mosque. They find out that Prayer in congregation is in progress but they would prefer to sit down, thinking that they had already completed their Prayer and there was no further need to join in the Prayers that was in progress. In a hadīth from Musnad of Imām Ahmad Bin Hanbal kitābus-salāt, the Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam has provided us the answer. Hazrat Jābir bin Aswad narrates that once two people came to the mosque and quietly sat down in a corner as they had already offered their Prayers at home. They had thought that by the time they would get to the mosque, the Prayer in congregation would be over. When they came to the mosque, they found that the Holy Prophet Muhammad sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam was leading the Prayer. They did not join in the Prayers. After the Prayer was over, the Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam called for them and inquired as to why they had not joined in the Prayer. They submitted, “Yā Rasūlullāh, we had already offered the Prayer at home.” The Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam said, “Even if you had offered the Prayer at home, after coming to the mosque, you should have joined the Prayer in congregation, while it was in progress.” You should join the congregation even when you think that the
Importance of Congregational Prayers

Prayer you already offered at home was enough.

In his sermon of 17th October 1997, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV ayydahullah has drawn our attention to another very important issue. A misunderstanding exists in the minds of many people that if food is ready at the time of Prayers then food must be consumed first and Prayers can be offered later. This misunderstanding is based on the following hadith:

Hazrat Ayesha radiyallahu ‘anha has narrated that the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam has said:

"عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت سمعت رسول الله ﷺ يقول:
لا صلة بحضرته ﷺ لطعام ولا هو يدافع إلا خيبان"

This hadith of the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam does not mean that when food is ready at the same time as the Prayers, then we must eat the food and put off the Prayers until the next time. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV ayydahullah ta’älā binasrihil-‘azīz explains, “This is not what the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam has meant. This hadith only means not to fix the food at the same time as that of Prayers. We must make sure that the meal times are different from the Prayer times. That is what is meant by this hadith of the Holy Prophet sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam.”

Before I end this speech, I have two things to mention. One is that Hazrat Musleh-i-Mau’ūd radiyallahu ‘anhu has emphasized the importance of congregational Prayers at many occasions including in his addresses to Ansarullah, Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya and others. At one occasion, on 5th of June 1925, he narrated an incident from his own personal experience. This incident reflects a strong message, therefore, I would like to repeat it here. Hazrat Musleh-i-Mau’ūd states:

“Once Hazrat Masih-i-Mau’ūd ‘alaihissalām was sick and could not come to the mosque for Jumu’a Prayer. I was a very small boy then. I proceeded to the mosque by myself. On the way, I met a man called Muhammad Bakhsh. I asked him whether the Prayer was over. He replied that there was no place in the mosque as the mosque was packed with people. Having received this information, I returned home and offered my Prayer. When Hazrat Masih-i-Mau’ūd ‘alaihissalām saw me in the house, he inquired if I had gone to the mosque for Jumu’ah Prayer. My reply was that I did, but there was no place in the mosque as it was packed with people. I felt that Hazrat Masih-i-Mau’ūd ‘alaihissalām was a bit angry when he was asking me that question. After the Jumu’ah Prayer, Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Kareem Sahib came to visit Hazrat Masih-i-Mau’ūd ‘alaihissalām to inquire about his health. The first question that Hazrat Masih-i-Mau’ūd ‘alaihissalām asked Maulvi Abdul Kareem Sahib was about the number of people in the mosque that day. At that, I became anxious and was worried as in reality I had not seen for myself whether there were in fact many people in the mosque. The news however, turned
out to be true as Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Kareem Sahib replied that in fact there were many people in the mosque. This apparently small incident has left a great impact on my heart, even to this day.”

This incident clearly shows how much Hazrat Masih-i-Mau’ūd ‘alaihissalām was concerned about Prayer in congregation. Hazrat Promised Messiah ‘alaihissalām warns us that if the adults would not observe Prayer in congregation then they are merely hypocrites. Those parents, Hazrat Promised Messiah ‘alaihissalām says, who do not create the habit among their children to observe Prayer in congregation, are in a way, their killers and murderers. Sometimes there are genuine difficulties. For example, the mosque is far from one’s house. In that case, arrangements for congregational Prayers can be made at home to ensure that our family members and our children join in the Prayers. However, every effort must be made to get to the mosque, if not everyday, at least two or three times a week one must try to offer Prayers in the mosque and to get the pleasure of Almighty Allah.

In the end, I will read a passage from Hazrat Musleh-i-Mau’ūd radiyallāhu ‘anhu’s book, Sair-i-Rūhānī (A Spiritual Journey), which, I feel is very much related to Prayer:

With your painful cries, with your bold proclamations of unity of Allah and with your loud affirmation of His existence, Almighty Allah may once again descend from the Heavens to Earth and once again the kingdom of God be established on Earth. For this reason alone I have established Tehrik-i-Jadid and for this reason alone do I invite you to devote your lives. Come and join the ranks of the soldiers of Allah. The throne, which belongs to Muhammad, sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam, has been usurped by Christ. You have to snatch it back from Christ to present it to Muhammad, sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam. Then will Muhammad sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam present it to Allah the Exalted. The kingdom of God will then be established on Earth. So heed my call and follow faithfully as I direct you. Whatever I am saying, is indeed being said by God. It is not my voice. I am conveying to you the voice of God. Abide by what I say. May God be with you, May God be with you, and may God be with you. May you be honored in this world as well as in the hereafter.

Alhamdu lillāhi rabbil-‘alāmīn.

Ansar Chanda Literature

Sadr Ansarullah, U.S.A., has noted that many members of Ansarullah have not paid the Ansarullah Chanda Literature. All the members are reminded that the rate of Chanda Literature, for Ansarullah, has been set at $10.00 per year. Currently the cost of publishing Al-Nahl is being met out of other funds. This creates a burden on our other important activities. Members are therefore urged to please pay their share of the Chanda Literature as soon as possible. May Allah enable us to fulfill our obligations in a timely manner. Āmīn.
How I Accepted Islam

Umar Bilal Ebrahim, New York

My name is Umar Bilal Ebrahim. I am African American and am 56 years old. I was born in Roseboro North Carolina on the 18th of February 1942. I am a professional barber and I work in Harlem New York. I live in both Harlem and Winston-Salem because I have my family living in Winston-Salem. I live in Harlem only for the reason of delivering the Message of Islam, for that reason and for that reason alone. Harlem is the heart for Renaissance Movements among African Americans. And I believe for Ahmadiyat to become rooted in America among African Americans, it will start from Harlem.

How I accepted Ahmadyyat is by Allah's Grace alone, starting with the family, the Mother (Matti Culbreth) and Father (Elvie Culbreth), Allah blessed me with. I was the 8th child of my 9 brothers and 1 sister. My family's background was rooted in religion. My Mother's father (Harry Parker) was a Pentecostal minister, and my Father's grandfather (Isaac Culbreth) was a Pentecostal deacon. In my community you were either a Baptist or a Pentecostal. One almost had to be one or the other. As a young boy I was told to look after my Grandfather Isaac, on account of his age but in truth it was he who was looking after me. He was what you might call my tutor on the rites of passage from my adolescence into manhood. A lot of his way of doing things and explaining things came from my attachment to him. Aside from my father, his example left an indelible mark on me with regards to my character development. These two men were both highly regarded officials in the Christian church and in the community.

My mother was the disciplinarian of the house and my father supported her decisions. The discipline in the house was centered on the teachings of Christianity. That meant if you were a school age child and were playing in church on Sunday or did anything not acceptable, then on Monday you had to hear about it again from the principal of your school. This was the type of reinforcement the Christian teachings had when I was coming along.

Christian preachers in my area were noted for their fiery preaching style and the messages that they delivered in their preaching. One of those messages that stuck with me was about being in the wrong place on Judgment Day. That message never left me and would be a type of discrimination I kept with me through my life's journey.

I left North Carolina around 1961 and went to Philadelphia to pursue an education in classical music. It was, however, short lived as around the same time I had gotten married and needed to find employment to support my family. I studied and learned the trade of barbering and eventually migrated to New York.

During my early years in New York I was affiliated with various movements of the time which included the Black Nationalist Movement where I had briefly met Queen Mother Moore, Stokely Carmichael, and others. I also attended
Nation of Islam Rallies held in Harlem in front of Michaux’s bookstore on 125th street and Lenox and got to see Malcolm X (El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz) and Elijah Muhammad in person. During this time I was having a series of dreams. In one of those dreams I saw that I came in contact with a spiritual person. That person I thought was a Black Rabbi who had interested me in the history of the Black Jews and how Black people were the lost tribe of the Jews, the Black Israelites. As I could relate to this story knowing that my ancestors were slaves, his story appealed to me and gave me a historical identity. I therefore, joined the Judaic faith and thought I had found my ancestral spiritual roots. This attachment however, would be short lived as about the same time, I came in contact with Ahmadiyya literature and started to learn about the teachings of Islam. I compared what the Black Israelites were teaching to that of the teachings of Islam, and Islam prevailed.

Around 1967, being a neighborhood barber I met Uthman Abdus Salaam who managed a local bookstore. Sometimes he would be my customer and sometimes I would be his. During a period when he was ill he sent word to me to make a house call to cut his hair. On this occasion we got into a discussion about Revelation and the Bible. He explained to me how Sura Fatiha was represented in the Book of Revelations in the Bible, and then he asked me, “Do you know that after the Bible revelation continues?” When he said that I wanted to get to the source of this knowledge because this information was powerful and inspiring. He then introduced me to Ahmadiyya literature and I was in agreement with all that I read from the Ahmadiyya perspective. It was plain and clear and kept me looking for more. As I seemed to always get into debates with some of my Judaic brothers, I was excited to find that there was proof to substantiate what my studies had vaguely touched upon. And one of those books was “Where did Jesus Die.” This was significant, as I never accepted the idol of Jesus Christ. And now I was armed with the argument that proved he was not God.

My relationship with brother Uthman Abdus Salaam continued to grow. He would invite me to have dinner with him at his home every Sunday and would give me more books to read on Islam. Abdus Salaam was bringing me to Islam at a slow pace but it was much too slow for my ego as I felt there was still more that he had not shared with me. Around this time, I learned about the Muslim way of praying and the ritual washing before prayer called wudu. Although I had not yet formally accepted Islam, I had already been convinced of its message of truth. So, I started applying what I was learning. At this time I had a spiritual experience through a dream.

I dreamt that in the process of my making wudu a voice from someone next to me said “Come on and join the Prayer.” I saw a number of people dressed in different colors, lined up for Prayer along the ocean front and out over the ocean the leader of the Prayer was a man that was hovering over the ocean as if he was sitting on the clouds and a bright light was glowing where his face was supposed to be.

After this experience, I again pushed the issue onto Abdus Salaam to take me to the source of knowledge that he had been giving me piecemeal so far. That is when he took me.
to meet the Ahmadis, the most beautiful people I ever met. This was at the Archer St. Mission house in Queens. These people looked like what I had imagined righteous people should look like. They reminded me of the righteous people of ancient times. My impression or reaction I felt from them towards me was “Love.” There I met Mustpha Dilleo, Bashir Afzal, Muhammad Sadiq, Daud Ahmad, Hadi Nasir, Yusef Latif, Muhammad Isa Abdul Jamal, Nurrudin Abdul Latif, Abdul Hameed, Mubarak Jamil, and Khalil Ahmed Nasir.

Abdus Salaam had taken me there for the purpose of accepting Ahmadiyyat but Bashir Afzal, the Jamā‘at president, gave me the Bai’at form and said, “take this home and study these conditions for a week,” before allowing me to sign. But I was ready to sign the Bai’at the first day I came to the mosque. I finally signed the Bai’at in 1969 under Khalifatul-Masīh Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad rahimahullah. I did not know until much later that there were many different sects in Islam. When I did come to know of the differences, however, I knew I was among those who practiced the true Islam.

The two people who were really the role models for me and who I tried to learn as much from were the late Bashir Afzal and late Muhammad Sadiq. Bashir Afzal was a key person in the Renaissance of Islam among the African Americans. He sometimes studied with Elijah Muhammad and Noble Drew Ali as he was their contemporary and both Noble Drew and Elijah Muhammad had studied the Ahmadiyya literature. Muhammad Sadiq, from his musical affiliation, knew a host of famous African American musicians. It was always inspiring to hear his stories of his days before he accepted Islam and how he came into the True Islam. They had always impressed me with their steadfastness and the way they manifested the teachings of Ahmadiyyat, from the time they were young men until the sunset of their lives. It was through them that I really saw the meaning of Ahmadiyyat, the religion of Islam in its original purity. Both of them treated me as if I were their own son nourishing me spiritually and guiding me along the way. At that time it would have been very easy for an African American to lose his or her way due to the social and political attractions toward the Afrocentric Movements of that time. But my spiritual quest was to be in the right place on the Judgment Day. Bashir Afzal and Muhammad Sadiq were the role models that kept continued to point the way. Muhammad Sadiq would chide me with a loving smile on his face a little before he passed on by saying, “We rescued you from those Black Jews.”

Now I’ve been an Ahmadi Muslim for about 29 years. I have witnessed the growth of Ahmadiyyat in America. The symbol of that growth is Bait-ur-Rahman, the Central mosque in Silver Spring, Maryland. Through these 29 years, I have been elected to several offices in the Ahmadiyya Movement including Jamā‘at president. However, I do not think that any of these offices was as fulfilling as being a member of Khudamul-Ahmadiyya (the young men’s association for men between the age of 15 and 40 years). This branch in Ahmadiyyat was the answer to all the challenges, cultural
and political, of that time. The Khuddam at that time were bustling with young lions and the activities we were involved in kept us always in new ventures. For example, brother Munir Hamid, Bilal Abdus Salaam, Nurruddin Abdul Latif, Akbar Tshaka, Jalaluddin Abdul Latif, Bilal Sunni Ali, Ahmad Bashir and other members of the Khudam got together to publish a monthly paper called the *The Real Revolution*. This paper was edited by brother Munir Hamid and the title was taken from the book of Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmed radiyallahu ‘anhu, etitled, *Inqilāb-i-Haqīqī* (*The Real Revolution*). This was our way of combating the publications put out by other groups at that time. It created an excitement among the Khuddam and soon became quite a tool for propagation. In this paper, Huzur’s *khutbas*, and verses of the Quran with commentary, Ahadith of the Holy Prophet sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam and writings of Hazrat Promised Messiah ‘alaihissalām were published. The Jamā‘at was indeed growing. The members who were active in Khuddam back then are still active. Some of the members whom we thought were not as active, grew to become active leaders of the Jamā‘at for the purpose of establishing Ahmadiyyat the True Islam in America.

In conclusion all I can say about my acceptance of Islam is *Al-Hamdulillah*. Who would have thought that I would be able to join the Community of Jesus’ Second Coming when he was to appear among the followers of Prophet Muhammad sallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam. Now when I reflect on the preacher’s message of my youth concerning the Judgment Day, I know that I am in the right place. I pray that Allah will Grace more of my people like he has graced me. Āmīn.
Health Corner

Men Over 40 Should be Concerned about their Health

(With thanks, from The Shopper News, December 30, 1998)

Recent studies by the National Institute of Aging verify that men are, in fact, living longer. So, the question becomes why not live younger? It’s a proven fact that overall health and fitness can be improved at any stage of life, but for some reason men 40 and older are less likely to embark on a health maintenance regimen than their female counterparts.

“As a male over 40 concerned with my own fitness issues, the best advice I can offer men in my age is to stop talking about taking better care of yourself and start taking action today,” said Richard Bizzaro, president and CEO of Weider Nutrition Group. “Life really is short. Make the most of it by refusing to ignore your health any longer.”

The following tips are designed to help mature men lead healthier and happier lives. For more information on the use of nutritional supplements to augment a healthy program of diet and exercise, call 1-800-436-3444.

1. Get Physical: You can approach your health in two ways: Ignore it until a minor crisis strikes, or practice preventive health. The AMA (American Medical Association) suggest that men 35 to 50 get a basic physical exam every two to three years and a major physical, including lab work and an EKG, every 5 years. After 50, a basic physical annually and a major one every two to three years is recommended.

2. Keep Moving: Vigorous physical activity can ward off a host of medical problems associated with aging – weight gain, heart disease, decreased stamina and vigor and increased stress. Twenty minutes of exercise three times a week can increase your overall fitness level and combat the elements of time.

3. Start Small and Lose Gradually: In improving your health and fitness, set realistic, attainable goals. Give yourself time to adjust to new programs and keep in mind that long-standing habits won’t change overnight. With initial and periodic successes, you’ll stay motivated.

4. Protect Your Prostate: In 1994, there were approximately 200,000 new diagnoses of prostate cancer and 38,000 deaths. The estimate for 1995 is 240,000 new cases, and 40,000 deaths. Doctors recommend regular exams once a year after age 40 and following a prostate-friendly diet (Low in saturated fats).

5. Take Your Vitamins: The human body needs a regular intake of vitamins and minerals to run smoothly. Some vitamins, such as vitamin E, act as antioxidants and can help to slow the aging process. A balanced intake of vitamins and herbs can promote weight control, increase energy and mental alertness, enhance
virility and aid in prostate care.

6. **Stretch:** Staying limber is one of the easiest ways to remain flexible and injury-free. Stretching is relaxing, feels good, and can be done in minutes.

7. **Train with Weights:** The benefits of weight-training can be enjoyed by healthy men of all ages. Following a trainer supervised weight lifting regimen can result in remarkable gains in muscle strength and bone density as well as help speed up metabolism and assist in excess weight loss.

8. **Shun the Sun:** Guard against sun-related skin damage by avoiding direct, prolonged exposure to the sun between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. when UV rays are most intense. Apply SPF 15 or higher after you have shaved each morning and throughout the day.

9. **Water Down:** Fatigue, headache and lethargy can be signs of dehydration. Keeping a balance of fluid will help you avoid kidney stones (far more common among men than women) and will defend against bad breath and dry skin and hair. Drink at least eight 8-ounce glasses of water daily – and much more when you’re active. Keep in mind that coffee and soft drinks are not a substitution for water.

10. **Think Positive:** Anger causes high blood pressure, stress, and breaks down personal relationship. The next time your blood starts to boil, stop and ask: Why am I upset? Is this situation really worth this? Is getting angry constructive? Clearheaded reason often helps, but in case it doesn’t, take a moment to shift your focus – make a list of everything you’re grateful for or all the reasons you have to be happy.

11. **Exercise Your Brain:** Memory loss is a natural part of aging, but also can occur when we stop engaging our brains. Start a mental fitness program: study a foreign language, memorize phone numbers, do cross-word puzzles or read.

12. **Break Your Fast:** Eating in the morning restores depleted blood-sugar supplies and prepares your brain and body for activity. Breakfast also helps you to stay more alert and to avoid snacking and binge-eating throughout the day.

13. **Eat Power Plants:** The National Cancer Institute recommends eating five servings of fruits and vegetables every day. In addition to the essential vitamins and minerals contained in plant foods, thousands of healthful compounds can be found in fruits and vegetables that may help reduce the risk of cancer.

14. **Take a Break:** Working through the day without allowing yourself short breaks for rest and relaxation will cheat your mind and body of crucial recharge periods. When working at home, schedule ample quiet time into your daily routine. At the office, take a 10-minute breather every few hours.

15. **Read the Instructions:** Exercising can be a great boon to your health, but also has some built-in risks. Take the time to warm up and learn how to exercise properly. A personal trainer or an experienced friend can help you, and don’t be afraid to check out a fitness magazine or buy an exercise handbook. Always check with your doctor before
undertaking an intense program of physical activity.

16. Set Up for the Challenge: Declare a moratorium on all escalator and elevator rides that are less than four floors and take the stairs instead. Researchers at John Hopkins University School of Medicine found that climbing stairs for six minutes a day may add up to two years to your life span.

17. The Low-Down on Low-Fat foods: Low-fat and fat-free snack foods use sugar to compensate for the lack of taste caused by decreased fats and oils. Eating a box of low-fat cookies will provide you with an excess of calories which, unless they are burned off, will be stored in your body as fat.

18. Do Nothing but Eat: When you read, watch TV or mix other activities with eating, you tend to lose track of what and how quickly you consume. Eating becomes just another activity, and you risk taking in extra calories. Concentrate on and enjoy eat bite you take, putting off other activities until you are finished.

19. Hit the Snooze Button: We sleep 20 percent fewer hours than we did at the turn of the century, but the proverbial eight hours of sleep is what most people need. By sticking to a regular sleep schedule, your body has adequate time to recharge.


* * *

Synopsis of Religious Preaching

Christianity and Islam

By Maulana A.U. Kaleem

Previously published in two parts, has been republished by Majlis Ansârullah in one volume.

Part I, Christianity, deals with Unity and Oneness of God, Trinity, Divinity of Jesus, The Universal Religion, Atonement, Death On the Cross, Muhammad In the Bible, The Second Coming of Jesus Christ.


Size 5½ x 8½ in, 160+ pages.

Available at $2/copy from Sajid, 5539 Firethorn, Boise ID 83716 USA.
COLOR SALAT POSTER

Published by Majlis Ansarullah, U.S.A. The poster has the text of salat in Arabic, along with its transliteration and translation in English. Arabic text, English transliteration and English translation are set in different colors for easy identification. Color pictures are included to identify different postures. Children, adults, and new Muslims, all can learn, revise and refresh their knowledge of salat. It makes a great gift for Ahmadi, Non-Ahmadi and Non-Muslim relatives, friends and acquaintances.

The poster is on 18"x24" cardboard paper. It can be framed or displayed as is in mosques, homes, and in public buildings where appropriate. This color salat poster is the third edition of the black and white poster published earlier. The black and white poster was soon all sold out. This color edition has been published to fulfill large demand from all over the States.

Please send $2 per copy to Sajid, 5539 Firethorn, Boise ID 83716 with your mailing address and phone number. Majlis Ansarullah U.S.A. will pay the postage within the continental U.S.
GLOSSARY

Ahādīth: Plural of Hadith.
Aḥmādī (plural: Ahmadis): A follower of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulām Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him.
Ahmadiyyat: Muslim sect believing Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulām Ahmad, peace be on him, to be the Mahdi and the Promised Messiah. ‘alaihissalām: peace be on him
Al-Nahāl (annaḥl): bees
Āmīn, amin, ameen, aameen, aamin: So be it.
Amīr, Ameer: Commander, Head
Anṣār: Members of Majlis Ansarullah.
ayyadhullāhu ta’ālā binaṣrihil-‘azīz, ayyadaholloha ta’ala benasrihilaziz: May Allah support him with His Mighty Help
bait: house
Bukhārī, Bokhari, Bokharee: The most reliable source of the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him.
Hadith: Saying of the Holy Prophet Mohammad, sallallaho alaihe wasallam.
Haḍrat, Hazrat: His Holiness
Ījtima’, Ijtema: Rally.
Inshā’allah, insha-Allah: God willing.
Jamā’at, Jamaat: Community, Organization
Jumu’ah, Jumua: Friday Prayer services, Friday.
Khalīfatul-Masīḥ: Successor to the Promised Messiah, ‘alaihissalām.
Khilāfāt: Succession
khulafā: Plural of khilīfah.
khuṭba, khuṭba: (Friday) sermon.
Majlis: Society, organization.
Majlis Ansārullah (Organization of Helpers of God): The organization of all Ahmadi men over 40 years of age.
Malfūẓāt: sayings of the Promised Messiah, 'alaihissalām.
Masīḥ-i-Mau’ūd, Masih Mau’ood: The Promised Messiah (Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulām Aḥmad, 'alaihissalām)
Muṣliḥ-i-Mau’ūd, Musleh Mau’ood: (The Promised Reformer): Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashīruddin Mahmūd Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih II, raḍiyyallāhu ‘anhu, who fulfilled the prophecies of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, about the advent of a Reformer.
Mustafā: Chosen, Selected.
nikāh: Marriage announcement
raḍiyyallāhu ’anha (razi allah anha, radi allah anha): May Allah be pleased with her.
radiyyallāhu ’anhu (razi allah anho, radi allah anho): May Allah be pleased with him.
radiyyallāhu ’anhum (razi allah anhum, radi allah anhum): May Allah be pleased with them.
rāḥimahullāh: May Allah have mercy on him
Rasūl, Rasool: prophet, messenger
Ṣadaqah: alms
Ṣadr: President.
Ṣaḥibzadah: Son of a respected person, respected gentleman.
ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam: صلى الله عليه وسلم: peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.
Shūra: advisory council
Ta‘ālā: The Most High, The Exalted
taqwā: righteousness
Tirmidhi, Tirmizi: Tirmidhi’s collection of ahadith.
Urdu: A language of Pakistan and adjoining regions comprising mostly of Arabic, Persian and Hindi expressions.
Wuḍū: prescribed ablutions
Zakāt: Prescribed alms.
Majlis Ansarullah, U.S.A.

Majlis Ansarullah, U.S.A., is an auxiliary of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Inc. U.S.A., 15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905, U.S.A. It consists of Ahmadi Muslim men above the age of 40. The Arabic expression anصارالله literally means helpers of God, and is taken from the Holy Quran (61[Al-Saff]:15).

Ansar Pledge

أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له و أشهد أن محمد عبده و رسوله

I solemnly pledge that I shall endeavor throughout my life for the propagation and consolidation of Ahmadiyyat in Islam and shall stand guard in defense of institution of Khilafat. I shall not hesitate to offer any sacrifice in this regard. Moreover, I shall exhort my children to always remain dedicated and devoted to Khilafat. Insha’allah ta‘ālā.

Publications

Al-Nahl: Published quarterly. See page 2 for subscription information.

Ansarullah News: Monthly newsletter. Copy available from the Sadr Ansarullah or Secretary Ishā’at.


Calendar


Annual Ijtema Ansarullah Southern Region, Houston TX, November 6-7, 1999.

Ta‘lim-ul-Qur’ān Class West Coast Region, San Jose CA, October 8-10, 1999.

National Majlis Aamila

Majlis Ansarullah, U.S.A.

1999

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Qā‘id Waqf-i-Jadīd: Imtiyaz Rajayki
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Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad,
Washington, D.C.
Sahibzadah Mirza Waseem Ahmad, Nāzir A‘lā, Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, India, is seated in the center with Dr Karimullah Zirvi, Sadr Majlis Ansarullah, USA, on his left and Mujeebullah Chaudhry to his right, at the 1998 US Ansar Shura/Ijtimā at the Baitur-Rahman Mosque in Silver Spring MD. Standing in the back, from left to right, are Shahid Malik, Saud Khan And Kalimullah Khan while Habibullah Sadiq Bajwa is seated to the left.

Al-Nahl
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