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Udhkurū Mautākum Bil-Khair

Atika Sadeeqa, Los Angeles, CA

Rahmat Jamal, the pioneer member of Los Angeles Jama‘at passed away on 26, February, 2001.

Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi rāji‘ūn. He served the Jama‘at for four decades, with all his capacities.

Rahmat Jamal’s journey from Christianity to Islam was not verbal. His life’s dedication for the cause of Islam can be seen in all decisions of his life. He maintained Islamic peace in all delicate relationships—with his family, with his close friends. When the set of Ruhani Khaza’in was published in Urdu, he purchased this, just for the blessing of it—he could not read Urdu himself. Someone borrowed this set from him, he was sad being without the set and he could not ask for its return as he did not want to disturb his friend. Brother Jamal was a simple, soft spoken and dignified individual. He displayed a deep interest in the lives and activities of Lajna, Atfal and youth of the Jama‘at. His audience in daily life and in tabligh sessions enjoyed his rational analysis and logic with which he would present an argument in favor of Islamic behavior.

The story of his life can be summarized in the following verses of the Holy Quran.

He was one of those who strive the best in the path of Allah for the cause of Islam scarifying the love of their families along with their assets.

“Those who believe and emigrate from their homes for the sake of God and strive in the cause of Allah with their property and their persons.” (9:20)

As his relationship with Jama‘at members continued to grow, he decided to spend every moment of his life within the Mosque.

Br. Jamal migrated from the home of Christianity for the sake of God and strived in the cause of Islam with all his abilities. He was constantly improving his knowledge of Islam. In this struggle he became deeply involved with Jama‘at activities that affected his family life, but he did not care. In the beginning his family was supportive of him to serve all guests belonging to Jama‘at. His daughters and wife used to attend the meetings regularly and participate in all educational programs of the Jama‘at.

On March 2, 2001, over five hundred people attended his Janaza Prayer at Baitul-Hameed Mosque. Every eye, wet and dry, was deeply sad. Some of them were praying through pouring tears, lamenting his loss in a sad elegy. The Prayer Hall was filled with mourners. People were lined up to pay him the tribute of prayers from around the nation. The Jama‘at had lost a devoted Ahmadi, he will be missed by the unprivileged, children, weak and needy people for long time to come.

The condolence letter of Hadrat Khalifatul-Masih IV, received by Ameer USA, was mailed to Rahmat Jamal’s family through Dr. Gulzar Sahib. The Resolutions of Lajna, Khuddamul-Ahmdiyya and Jama‘at were published in the local newsletter.

May Allah bless his soul and raise his rank in paradise. Āmīn.
I can say that in my 25 years of living I have come across a variety of people, but coming across Rahmat Jamal has been more then just an opportunity to learn, it has been a challenge for me to be the best Muslim possible. Jamal continually strived to instill a strong Islamic behavior in all his friends, and this is something all those who knew him can appreciate for as long as they exist. I had the privilege of being Jamal’s close friend and I had the pleasure of being there with him through good times and the not so good times.

I considered Rahmat Jamal to be an influential individual, one who possessed immense knowledge on his belief as a Muslim. Using this knowledge strategically, Jamal significantly reversed the negative impression about the Ahmadiyya community on non-Muslims and non-Ahmadians. I remember inviting Rahmat Jamal to meet my social circle, and in inviting Jamal I displayed tremendous pride since I was introducing Jamal (who I highly revered) to people I come in contact with on a day-to-day basis. The meeting between my peers and Rahmat Jamal turned into a story telling affair, in which everyone in my social circle eagerly implored for more of his time to ask questions, seek advice, and learn about virtue and value and their differences. I remember Rahmat Jamal emphasizing “Intent” as being the single greatest factor of our morals and how we must ethically conduct ourselves.

Rahmat Jamal passed away and on that day I said an obligatory prayer, “inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raj’oon,” and then I said the prayer, may his soul, which was so faithful to Islam and Allah, go to heaven. Rahmat Jamal understood and strongly believed that the after-life is the true life, and that is where he will find peace and richness of Allah’s blessings.

I knew Rahmat Jamal for over 15 years and I can say with certainty that he was my most excellent friend. The time I spent going with Jamal to the workshop in Los Angeles since I was 10 years old, going to the coffee houses, playing pool table, going for propagation at churches, having dinners at a variety of cuisine’s, being there at the mosque to keep him company, and sharing my music with him, made me reflect less on the memory of my father who I lost in my childhood. Rahmat Jamal will always be remembered as a father figure, a mentor, and the closest friend I ever had. To this day I cannot forget Jamal, and whenever I am in the place where I had been with him, it’s like re-living that moment all over again. For a moment I am saddened by the memories because of his energetic personality but I overcome this feeling with a smile because I know he is in peace and Insha’-Allah he will receive high honors in the enchanting Paradise of Allah Almighty.

June 11, 2001
W: Assalamu ‘Alaikum. Peace be with you. My name is Waseem Ahmad Sayed, and it is my great honor and privilege to welcome you all to this beautiful Baitul-Hameed mosque, where we are recording the first historic program of Ahmadiyya Muslim Television Los Angeles. Baitul-Hameed Mosque is situated in Chino, California, about 40 miles east of Los Angeles in the county of San Bernardino, about 1000 yards north of Highway 60 on Ramona Avenue. It is quite appropriate for this first program that we have with us Br. Rahmat Jamâl, the man who has the honor of being the first member of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community of Los Angeles. Br. Jamâl was born into a Baptist Christian family, he was baptized at the age of 11 in the Ohio River in Cincinnati. He embraced Islam a few years later at a very young age and moved to Los Angeles in 1951 and has been at the forefront of our Jama‘at activities ever since. Welcome Br. Jamâl. It is a pleasure and a great honor for us to have this opportunity to sit and talk to you about Islam in the US.

R: Thank you very much, and I would like to say that it is a great pleasure for me to be here in the beautiful Baitul-Hameed Mosque. Every time I visit here I think of the grace of God, or Allah, because this mosque is a product of 7 years of prayers. I happen to know that God answers prayers because this mosque has been one of my prayers on a daily basis. And that prayer came true, and we’re sitting here as a witness to that prayer.

Living in Los Angeles was a turn of fate because when I was in Ohio, after I had become Muslim, I had a choice to make, to either come to Los Angeles or go to New York, and I guess it was the will of Allah that I came to Los Angeles because there were other Ahmadis in New York and the eastern states, but there weren’t any Ahmadis on the west coast, to my knowledge. Allah turned me to come to Los Angeles because my wife at the time had a brother here and he had been here, he found out about Los Angeles because he was in the navy during WWII and he had established himself here after the war, and he had sent for his mother. We said, okay, we’ll go to Los Angeles, we’ll take a look. If we don’t like it, we can go back to New York. I was thinking about leaving the country at the time. At the end of this program you’ll find out why I had inclinations to leave the United States. When you know what the conditions were in the United States, from the 1920s to 50s, you’ll understand why my inclinations were to leave. After I came to Los Angeles and saw what it was like and how the people were here, I liked it and decided to stay and [that is how] why I happened to be the first Ahmadi here in southern California.

W: That’s an extremely interesting way of telling us how you came to Los Angeles. But one of the things I have always wanted to ask you, ever since I met you (which I think was in England in 1967) has been that you were born into a Baptist Christian family, and baptized at the age of 11 and a few years later, at a very young, tender age, you embraced Islam. At that time, in those days, in that age, it was a tremendous decision.
How did you come about deciding to become a Muslim in a society which was fully engulfed as enemies against Islam.

R: Well, I don’t think that in the US there was enmity towards Islam, per say. Christianity had enmity towards Islam from day one, from the birth of Islam Christianity had an obligation to Islam because Islam was a rival, due to the fact that they were both preaching the same thing. But I don’t think Islam was strong enough to cause any kind of reaction. But what I’ve found, you have to understand what was going on in the US at the time that I heard about Islam. There was a lot of discrimination going on, there’s some going on today, but it’s settled, I don’t think it’s been as bad as it was then. Say, you wanted a job. You pick up the newspaper and it would say, “Carpenter wanted. White only.”

W: What year was this?

R: This was in the 30s, 40s, even the 50s. I have seen personally, I have seen on my way to school. You see a flat for rent, “White Only.” And with public transportation, in the south, the Afro-Americans had to sit in the back of the buses. And if the bus was full, you had to give up your seat for the white person. And in the North, they didn’t have that system, but they had to open this thing for you, and many times I have gotten on the public transportation—on the bus or the tram—and you sit down beside a white person, and they just get up go sit somewhere else, they wouldn’t sit beside you. And it was just constantly public humiliation. So this
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was one of the reasons why I found Islam attractive, because it didn’t have that element. It had equality. That God made us all and he didn’t make anybody any better than anybody else. I could not have remained that way. I wasn’t a part of that system anyways. I just had no place to go. I didn’t believe in it. I didn’t like it. And when Islam came along, I found my way out of it. I can put that as one of the forefronts of my accepting Islam because it had that attraction at the beginning. Now let’s get into the truth. How is it possible for a person to have self-esteem when you have a system that teaches you that only European or white Americans had done anything for humanity. We learned about Edison, we learned about Newton, we learned about Einstein, we learned about Beethoven, we learned about Bach, we learned about Mozart, we learned about Alexander Bell, we learned about George Washington, we learned about Martha Washington. We learned about all these big people in the European community. We were taught that they were the only people that had made any achievements. When I started studying about Islam I found out, much to my surprise, that all of the things—that these scientists that Christianity had made themselves so superior with—the Muslims had no such idea of any kind [of] superiority as far as your race or your color is concerned. And that its based upon your abilities and your character and the kind of character you have, that’s where your “superiority” is, and nowhere else.

W: One thing that continues to confound me, having not experienced any of these things firsthand is that if you listen to the message of Christianity today, despite the fact that we know what has happened in South Africa over the many many years in the past, when I here all of this and when I try to share it with what I hear from Christianity today, I find it difficult to believe that almost five centuries in the United States, until the fifties, that people were treated so poorly. How do you square all of that with your experience firsthand with what we see of Christianity today, being delivered all over the world 24 hours a day on many television channels via satellite to every part of the globe. What do you have to say today?

R: Well, it’s ironic that during the Civil Rights Movement, from 1954 or 55 up until 67 or 68, there was very intense civil rights Movements—they call it a business in the United States—that were involved in Civil Rights. The irony of Christianity sometimes is that they didn’t feel that they were doing anything wrong because they believed the Bible said, this is what they were and this is how they would be treated and this is their level of civilization. And let me tell you the criteria they used. The criteria was that Noah had three sons—Ham, Shem and Japheth. His father got drunk. Ham looked up on the nakedness of his father, and God cursed him to be subservient in the world until judgment day. So African Americans happened to be the descendents of Ham. So they said that no matter how they were treated; God punished them.

W: And these are the teachings that you were taught from the very beginning?
R: Yes.
W: By your parents?
R: No. This came from the white community of the time. That’s how they justified the treatment of African Americans in the United States.

W: Coming back to the question, though, what has changed during Christianity to enable it to now offer a different society structure, in which the Blacks need not be treated as God had meant them to be treated, according to the previous beliefs?

R: You can not look to the Church. You have to look at the political system. If you’ll notice, the rights of African Americans in the US came through the political system, it did not come through the Church. This is a very fair commentary on the Church, because when the slaves were emancipated, it came through the political system. It came through Abraham Lincoln. This was the first Republican party. And those people who supported that—the freedom of the slaves—though we know it came from God—these people were just instruments. But the Church was not the instrument, because the pope gave his approval of slavery in the 15th century. Pope Nicholas V, he was presiding over at the time, said, “You can have their bodies if you save their souls.” This is why it is related that throughout the history of slavery that they said that only good people could read the Bible. Only one or two people were taught to read the Bible, and they read the Bible to the other slaves.

W: It really served no part in permitting the Afro-Americans to have all their rights. It was more of the political process.

R: It was a political thing and there were some people who saw slavery as wrong and they supported the abolitionists...

W: ... Many of us who did not experience
these things first hand and have never done so, have a difficult time understanding the basis for those societies who operate on structures of that type. Is it possible, do you think, that a Christian society can slowly evolve, based on Christian principles into one that eliminates these kind of barriers in society that you had to go through and experience? Could they come back if we had, an ultra-nationalist leader in the country for example, or some other circumstances like this?

R: From the Christian belief?
W: In a society where predominantly Christians live?
R: The things I faced could be corrected through Christianity? I don’t know, I don’t think so.
W: Could they be corrected and could they seriously come back?
R: Yes, it could, because, what happened was that they cut the state from the religion. So religions don’t have the power that they used to. Christianity used to have a great deal of power. At one time the Pope had his own army. If you put the power back in the hands of the Church, the power is in the judicial system and the political system, not in the Church. The Church is only a place where people go and pray now—but the Church used to be calling the shots in the Christian Culture. If you bring that force back into play, you will have the same problems again, because Christianity does not deal with those problems, and it was never meant to deal with those problems and it never did deal with those problems. They just let them go until the politicians found political solutions for those problems. And politics, as you know, only works under pressure, and it was the pressure of the Civil Rights Movement that created the Civil Rights legislation, or else we wouldn’t have had that, because in 1926 the Ku Klux Klan was so strong in America that they publicly paraded down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington D.C. When World War II ended, and you had a strong communist force in the world, then the United States and the western countries, they had to look at their racial policies because they were getting pressure from Civil Rights groups and also from the communists that said, You people claim to be this, you claim to be that, look what goes on in your country. You don’t treat your people right, you use segregation. Because during World War II the army was segregated—I don’t know if people knew that or not—but the army and the navy and the marines were all segregated in World War II, and, it was president Truman, and not President Roosevelt, who was the president during World War II, and the military forces were segregated. You had your colored regiments and your white regiments, all done under Christianity.

W: I understand what you are trying to say. I want to just highlight the situation that exists today in the world, where again a predominantly Christian society is massacring a huge number of people simply because they do not have the mechanisms within Christianity to recognize the rights of people who are different from them, whether it is on a racial basis or on a religious basis. And I had in mind, particularly, the situation in Bosnia, for example. And I have yet to
hear a Christian organization stand up and say, and take and promote effective measures to bring that genocide to an end. It can exist at any time.

R: I agree, it can exist. In fact it is already existing now. Because the Serbs are basically Christian. The Pope has not, from my knowledge, spoken out against what is going on in Bosnia to bring this thing to an end, because these people are fighting Muslims and Muslims are a threat to the Christian religion. So therefore if they can find some way to weaken Islam or to weaken the Muslims, they’ll use some excuse to do it. And Saddam Hussein, another point of interest, I would think, in that respect.

W: Before we diverge too far from where we started, I want to come back and discuss again your introduction to and your embracing of Islam. You mentioned that these factors drove you towards an alternative. That before you knew of Islam there was no other alternative that you were aware of. You became aware of this alternative, and you liked what it taught, and therefore you embraced it. But this alternative, why did it become available to you only in the city? Was that something that was linked to an awareness of Islam that was generated by immigrants in this country from the Middle Eastern countries? Or how did this awareness start to be preached in America so that it became common knowledge to many many Afro-Americans, and they embraced Islam in large numbers. Where did this start from?

R: Well, this is historic, from Hadrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib, who was the first missionary to be sent to the United States by the second Khalifa of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Khalifatul-Masih II (radiyallahu ‘anhu). At that particular time, the information had spread from my area but it emanated from him (Hadrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib) and there were other people, in Chicago and New York, who had already accepted Islam in large groups. When the American musicians started accepting Islam—they traveled a lot—and when they came to a town, they were usually honored by the society. These were talented people, and they earned quite a bit of money, and they weren’t in the category of jobs that were usually offered to African Americans—as waiters, and bus boys and porters and these kinds of jobs. I can remember those days when being a taxi driver was “too high” of a job for Afro-Americans. And they come along, very talented people, they made records and all this kinds of business. And
when they started accepting Islam, people thought it was a big thing. At first, I thought it was just a fad. America pulled a fad. You know, the clothes are a fad, the language is a fad, the way they cut their hair is a fad, and America goes through fad after fad after fad. So when I heard about Islam, I thought it was another fad. But after I started investigating, I found out that it wasn’t a fad—it had a lot of substance to it. So I started taking it seriously. At the time Muslims were also out there preaching their wares, and when I heard about them I heard about the other Muslims at the same time. So I went to one of their places. When I went to one of their temples, the first thing they would do then is search you. And I got searched. And my wife was with me at the time, and we went into their place, and we sat down. And we heard this sermon about black supremacy. “The black man is the best man. He was the first man. The white man is the devil, he is from the Yakub, Satan. They didn’t know what Yakub was. He can’t be a Muslim because they are openly people. That he can never be a Muslim.” So black people are better than white people, this is what he taught.

W: Who was the person saying this?
R: I don’t remember who the person was, but he was one of the ministers. They had a temple in Cincinnati at the time and he was one of the ministers. And then they played some military song, “Fight Muslims / Fight for your own / Fight for the nation / Fight for your own.” You want to fight? Fight what? I’m supposed to be in a place of God. I couldn’t accept this. In my bringing up, my family—I am grateful to God for this aspect of them, my family—because they taught us that we were made better than any other people but they also taught us that no other people are any better than us. I went to school. The first school I went to was all African American. And the second neighborhood we moved to was a mixed neighborhood. This is when I began seeing signs like “white only” and all. And I went to a mixed school. I am only using that term. I don’t believe in black and white. I use that term because those are the terms they used in those days. Well, when I went to that school I saw what their schoolwork was like, what their alphabets were like. And I learned that when you grow up in an American school, you had to fight, because if you don’t people would run all over you. You maintained your hierarchy by how well you could handle yourself. And I also had that experience with the so-called white people. And they weren’t superior in that respect either. I also knew what the other side was like, too. I lived in a neighborhood of African Americans. I knew what they were like, too. I knew what they thought, I knew how they talked, I knew what they did, I knew everything about them. There was no way you could tell me that they were superior. I lived with them for twenty years. Now how can this group of people come out of nowhere all of a sudden and call one group of people superior to another? So I couldn’t buy that story and so I never went back there again. I went there one time and when they started saying, These people are superior. These people I’d gone to school with, these people I played music with, these people I’d known for twenty years, they were
superior? I couldn’t buy that either. So therefore I went to the other Islam.

W: How was your introduction to Ahmadiyyat arranged by God? What happened that you came to Ahmadiyyat and joined it so quickly after you had entered into an acceptance fundamentally of Islam and its principles.

R: There were two friends of mine, who had been exposed to people who knew about Islam. Well I hadn’t. So they became Muslim. So they were finding converts. They said, “This is the thing to do. You got to become one. You got to come and find out about Islam. You got to get out of this system that you’ve been in for so long.” But they didn’t know much. So I got interested and went to a couple of meetings in meeting halls that were built by a Dr. Khan, and he was a Pakistani. And he established three mosques, centers. One in Cincinnati, [one in] Dayton and [one] someplace in Philadelphia or Pittsburgh. And this sounded more logical. This was more reasonable, what Islam was like. They had this holy fan up there, that you put money in there and your prayers get answered. I never met Dr. Khan, but I met some of his people. That was more reasonable. But what really made me convinced about the teachings of Islam, were my two friends of mine that said that there’s somebody coming from New York and he’s going to be in Cincinnati over the weekend. He’s a person you have to meet. Now I don’t know whether he met Mufti Sahib or not, he probably didn’t because I don’t think he was that old but he had probably met some of his people that followed Mufti Sahib, he’d probably contacted some of those people. He converted a lot of Afro-Americans to Islam. Kauser Sahib knows him well. He converted a lot of Afro-Americans to Islam.
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W: Kauser Sahib being [Maulana] Inamul-Haq Kauser Sahib?
R: Yes, yes. The Imam here at the Baitul-Hameed Mosque, Imam Kauser Sahib. He knows Talib Da’ud. His name has changed now but his name was at the time, Talib Da’ud.
W: So Talib Da’ud was the man who answered your question.
R: Yes, he answered my question and got me in touch with the Ahmadiyya Movement. He said, ‘You have to get to the real source of the religious information, because the other people, they have information from here, too; so you may as well get the information from the source.’ He gave me the address to the Washington, D.C. or the Chicago center. But I was so impressed with his knowledge and his understanding—how he explained Islam as opposed to Christianity, and the human dignity that Islam recognized in people that Christianity failed to recognize in people because Christianity (as I found out later) could never have all these things because Christianity wasn’t sent to do this job. But Islam was sent to do this particular job—to teach people how to live, to teach people from different nations, different colors, different parts of the world to develop a system and how people can live in that [system], and he was explaining that to me. You’re never going to find that in Christianity, that’s what the problem was.
W: If I can summarize, you’re saying that, essentially, all of the information on Islam began to increase openly and widely subsequent to the arrival in the United States of Hadrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib.
R: Yes, I would say that, that’s correct, that’s correct, yes.
W: You came here in 1921, why is it that although Muslims were here, really nothing was talked about, preached about openly?
R: No, no.
W: ... I now want to turn to what happened after you accepted Islam. It has always intrigued me to ask a person who accepts Islam, who converts to Islam, what happens to his identity, before and after accepting Islam? I have always known you as Br. Rahmat Jamal, what was your name prior to this, what did your friends think about you, what did your parents—how did they deal with this transformation, this identity change, and how did you deal with this?
R: Well, the simplest way to put it is, I think one has to realize that Afro-Americans, by and large, have an identity problem. People were taken from Africa and brought here as slaves. Whatever they were called, or whatever their names were, whatever their family names were, that was all abolished. They took on the names of the people who owned them. And I think that Mr. Alex Huxley, in his book Roots, he wrote, I’m Alex Huxley, and talking to him... That when he was in search of his family, he got taken to a certain plantation, all of a sudden his research seemed to have stopped. At that, he said, Well I came from the head, why is there no record of these people on this particular plantation? And to his surprise, he discovered that his family members were listed among the cows, were listed [with] the
A group photo from a west coast convention held in the early eighties.

chickens and the goats and the pigs and all the other things that the people owned. So those people took the names of their owners. So, **when people ask me what my name was prior to my becoming a Muslim, to think about it, I don’t really know, because the name that I was given by the people who owned my ancestors—that wasn’t my name.** And whatever my name was, it was that of my African ancestors. Because here, they demolished those names completely because they didn’t want any unity among people who they had in slavery because unity made problems. So, therefore, they denied you of your name, and also, they split the families up. Every time they had the opportunity, they would split the family because they did not want that unity because unity meant problems. So, therefore, in my case, or I think in most Afro-Americans’ case who have become Muslims—that part of their life didn’t exist, because they don’t acknowledge that, and we feel—most of the people who are Muslim feel—that the **Afro-American people at large, won’t really feel free until they get rid of that identity, because it gives enmity.** As long as you can accept that, your knowledge has to be limited. I don’t care what position you hold in the world—this is my point of view—I don’t care what position you hold in the world, as long as you have that label on you, your knowledge is limited. You have to recognize what that is and what you’re carrying around. So I think that, the point you are missing about Mr. Turner, I think this is one of the points he was making, when he was saying how he’s sensing Islam was through the [efforts of] Afro-Americans in the 1920s when Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq
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arrived here for teaching Islam—because it builds the Afro-American.

W: I think we are stepping ahead because the remark that we had on that is not recorded. But let’s come to that, right now, I think it’s important.

R: But the other question about you, what happened after that, after you became Muslim. But there was one point, another point I wanted to make is that the difference between Islam and Christianity. See, Christianity had a need to tell people untruth. Because if you tell people the truth, colonialism can not prosper. It can not work. You have to tell people lies in colonialism. You have to tell people things that are not true to make colonialism work. What I found in Islam was that Muslims were more honest, they were more truthful, in the portrayal of themselves and in the portrayal of other people. Muslims never claimed that all the advances in the world were done by them. The Christians they didn’t say that outright, but this was in their system. They never taught any achievements done by other people. Everybody who wears a shoe—the mold of the shoe, and how the shoe was made—that mold was invented by an Afro-American, but they never gave him credit for it, and many other ideas in the American society were invented by Afro-Americans, but they never got any recognition for it. What Islam did—that was so impressive to me, and when I knew that this was the right religion for me—was that it did credit to other people who had made contributions in the human depth. For instance, Islam readily admits that they borrowed things, information, from the Greeks. They readily admitted that they borrowed things from the Romans, and from the Mongols and from the Chinese civilization. There is one hadith—and hadith incidentally are the things that Prophet Muhammad said, we call that hadith—and the hadith said that go to China to seek knowledge if you have to. Which indicates, that there is knowledge in China too, and there have been great Chinese breakthroughs in the past, like gunpowder and paper itself was a Chinese invention. Islam recognizes these things, and this is one of the things that attracted me to Islam.

W: Okay, good enough. So far as the question about identity is concerned, prior to accepting Islam, you had an identity imposed on you—something that you could not necessarily understand the root of, or even if you tried to trace it back, you would go as far amongst inclusion in a list of items belonging to the slaves’ owner, and that would be the best you could do. But accepting Islam gave you an identity, or at least brought you closer to something that was attached to something.

R: Yes, but let me explain Islamic identity: the way it works. When Islam gives you an identity, the first thing it does is it attaches you to the other Muslims, because usually, Muslims pick names, or they choose names for themselves, or parents choose names for their children that are attributes of God. And when you receive one of those names, you have an attribute already attached to yourself. That attribute not only gives you an identity, it also gives you an objective in life. And these things are unheard of in Christianity. So, I feel that the ultimate, or the basic
Among the audience during a west coast convention held in the early eighties.

reason for Islam coming to the United States was the basic reason for it to solve this African American problem.

W: So what is the identity that your name gives you and the objective?

R: Oh, my name depicts me as a merciful person. My name is Rahmat, which means mercy, and my last name is Jamal, which means beauty. Not physical beauty but mercy in a tribute to beauty. As a merciful person, in a sense, that attribute becomes a beautiful thing. And that gives me an objective in my life, that gives me a direction, to stop me from doing certain things because that’s not in accordance with my attribute, that’s not in accordance with my name, and if I do that I would be, so to speak, throwing mud on my name, if I commit certain acts that I can’t commit, with that objective in life.

W: Before I come to dealing with that quote of Prof. Richard Turner, I want to deal with a couple of other questions which handle this theme that we have arrived at, which is, what happened after you accepted Islam. What did you gain by accepting Islam, apart from what you have already discussed on the subject of identity?

R: I think the first thing you realize, you gain a sense of respect, you gain a sense of dignity, you gain a sense of security. Because you can not have either one of these things without the proper knowledge, and, Islam provides you the proper knowledge to gain these things.

W: What do you mean by proper knowledge?

R: You have to know what God is, who He is, and what He does. You have to know what people are, why they were put here and how they’re supposed to treat each other. You have to know what religion is, and what was its purpose for being sent down to mankind. And, when these things are explained to you, you have a sense of security—you know what you have to do, you know what your responsibilities are and
you know what not to do. Christianity also states that the truth will set you free. But apparently they don’t have that truth to set you free because there was slavery for two hundred years and that “proof” that those people had all those years because they had churches, they were allowed to read the Bible, but Christianity contains that the Bible was the truth, but these people were never fed anything until it came to the politicians. That statement only applies to Islam, because the truth does set you free. Until you have the truth, you are in some kind of bondage, some kind of position of servitude to somebody if you don’t understand the truth about life, about the world, about people, about God, about everything. When you learn the truth about that—that’s when you truly are free.

W: So the first thing that you gained from accepting Islam is a knowledge of all these essential things that you talk about, which was consistent, which you understood and could accept as truth and [it] liberated you. What other benefits did you gain?

R: It seems like life got better. I can’t explain what exactly got better, but life as a whole, overall, got better than it was before. When I was back in those days of ignorance, it seemed like you had too many problems—you were making those problems yourself. I think after I became a Muslim, my life actually got better.

W: So today, though, when all these problems—certainly those ones about slavery and being the property of somebody else, and having to face the color barrier, and sit apart from the white, and sitting in the back of the bus—all those problems and all those unfairnesses have disappeared, is there still some relevance for the African Americans in the message of Islam. Is there a need for Islam?

R: Yes. That need is still there.

W: Is it dire? Or is it less dire?

R: I want to point out something to you—those civil rights organizations back in the ’50s and ’60s, they thought they were fighting racism, but they were not fighting racism—they were fighting Jim Crow. Now let me explain what Jim Crow is. Jim Crow is a law that regulates racism. It’s not a law of just this and this, it’s not a law of murder, it’s not a law of robbing a bank. Jim Crow is a law that says that you can’t go in this restroom, you can’t go in this restaurant, you can’t go to the front of this bus, otherwise, you’ll be arrested. What the Civil Rights leaders admitted later was that in a respect, Malcolm X was right—we were not fighting racism, we were fighting Jim Crow. The Jim Crow Laws in the south—that’s what we were fighting. Today, you still have racism. The only problem is, it’s under the ground. But it’s still there because no one has dealt with it yet. And Christianity can not deal with it and the only religion that can deal with it is Islam because Islam deals with these different nationalities, different cultures. Hadrat Muhammad (sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam) has said that the Arab is not better than the Jew, the Jew is not better than the Arab, the non-Arab is not better than the Arab, black is no better than the white. He has pointed out all these things and the Holy Quran backs him up and the hadith and the sunna—the things he said and the things
he did—all back him up. You don’t have racism in Islam because Islam deals with racism. Christianity does not deal with racism because Jesus was not sent to do that business. Jews don’t deal with racism because Judaism was not sent for that purpose. Moses was sent to free the Jews from the Pharaoh, and that’s what he did. Jesus was sent to add some things to the Jewish religion and to compile what was there and to allow them some things that they weren’t allowed before and to put some restrictions on what they already had. That is what Jesus’ mission was and that’s why he was given the Injeel (Gospel). That is why you find racism in all places and countries. They don’t do it publicly anymore, they do it southerly. An African American goes to get a job, but they don’t say “whites only” but they just take the application and say, we’ll give you a call. We have a lot of applications, if we decide to hire you, we’ll call you. But that application goes right into the waste can after you leave. These kinds of things. That’s what they call subtle racism but it still is [racism].

W: I understand. There is still a lot of effort being pulled by legislation or by legislators, by the political forces that exist, into trying true legislation to control and remove and eliminate such abuse—such unfairness. Only recently, I was listening to where other new legal efforts to eliminate unfairness in the labeling policies of banks, for example, to visible minorities. And daily you hear of these efforts. Do you not think that we can’t through legislation eliminate all forms of racism?

R: No, you can’t do that because legislation has no answer for racism. For instance, if you don’t like me, I don’t care how many laws I pass, you still won’t like me. And if you can find any way to get around those laws, you’re going to do it. For example, in 1929, the 20s I’d say, there was Prohibition here. Alcohol in America was
illegal. And if you were caught drinking you could go to jail. But they didn’t stop the drinking. You know why? Because they didn’t give the people a good enough reason. It was an unenforceable law because it was something people wanted to do. They said, you can’t drink because it was a law. They didn’t say, you can’t drink for a reason—this is the reason that you shouldn’t drink, because it does this and that and this other thing. They didn’t do that. They just said it’s illegal. So people think that if they pass laws, [they think] that people are going to abide by them, but they don’t. There’s no way I can legislate you to like somebody. You may not break that law openly, but you’re going to break it in a way that you won’t get caught at it. You’re going to find a way to get around that law just like the people found a way around Prohibition. So, racism is the same thing and it still is. These skinheads prove it.

W: So, in summary, then, the answer to the question I asked—the relevance of Islam for the African Americans is still as dire, still as necessary, today, in your opinion, as it was in the past.

R: Yes, it is still necessary.

W: In the last section, we were discussing the relevance of Islam to the African American community and to the impact that it had on his life, vis a vis, his identity prior to Islam, etc. I now want to quote to you a reference that you had mentioned in your talk last section. This is from Prof. Richard Brent Turner, who is an Assistant Professor at the University of California as he writes in his article, “The Ahmadiyya Mission to Blacks in the United States in the 1920s.” He writes, “The Ahmadiyya Mission among Afro-Americans in the 1920s was far more significant than its number of converts would indicate. Perhaps, the Ahmadiyya Mission could be understood as the beginning of a new, symbolic theme in Afro-American religious history.” I would love to hear your comment on his assessment of the impact of the Ahmadiyya Mission on Afro-Americans in the early 20s.

R: The understanding that I get out of this statement, that prior to Islam we have earlier discussed the condition of America and we also discussed how the Afro-American people were treated, how they were degraded—and Islam came along and offered them hope. Because there was no hope in Christianity, because Christianity allowed those people to be oppressed. One of those things that they learned after becoming Muslims, they learned: do not oppress, and do not be oppressed. And that’s a very powerful statement to the Muslims. You do not oppress other people, but nor do you allow other people to oppress you. You keep that oppression down, whatever the cost. Look what Islam had to offer the Afro-Americans, where they had nothing, as far as their dignity, as far as knowledge, as far as their uplift, identity and things like that—there was nothing offered to them by Christianity. All of these things were offered to them by Islam. And another point of interest, not only Afro-Americans—but the African continent itself is the only continent in the world where the inhabitants are predominantly Muslim—you look at Asia, you look at Europe, you look at South
America, I’m just giving you an example. Africa has about a 70% population of Muslims and about a 30% populations of non-Muslims. It is the only continent in the world that has a plurality of Muslims. So, this alone points out to the fact that for African people, of all the people in the world, Islam was made to order. And Afro-Americans are no exception to that rule. As a matter of fact, it is more applicable to them because their rights, their identity—everything—had been taken away and Islam restored all of that back to them. And I think this is what Mr. Turner is trying to express. This is what I read from his statement.

W: And also, it would not be amiss—when you say that Islam gave all these rights to the Afro-Americans, it’s important to recognize that by so doing and by so assisting in the emancipation of the Afro-Americans, it removed from the American society one major cause of future lack of peace, of future disturbances, so it gave to the whole of society, not only to Afro Americans, but also to the rest of the population, this mercy, that it enables them all to understand how important it is that everybody be given his and her due position in life regardless of color and race so they can live in peace. I feel also that the work that Hadrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib (may Allah be pleased with him) did when he came was in fact propagation of Islam in America proper. Prior to that, all the Muslims that were here were not able seriously, together even, to give any meaningful defense of Islam when it was challenged and abused. But let me now come to an end of this meeting that we have had, a very profitable one I might add, by thanking you for providing us with all this time and being available. There are many other questions, I’m sure, that I can ask, but we will leave that for a future meeting. To conclude, by mentioning that a lot of the issues that we have discussed in this interview impacted on some fundamental problems that American society faced and continues to face. Nothing was stated to be taken in the vein that no good is embodied in Christianity or in America. Islam’s position on the issue of other religions says that all were founded by Prophets of God who were sent by God for the reformation of various people throughout the ages. Islam’s purpose is to establish peace on earth and it teaches that in order to establish peace man has to believe in the unity of God and the unity of mankind and not only to believe in an academic sense but that the practices of his or her religion have to be consistent with the establishment of that unity of mankind. And this, Islam provides an excellent way of doing. All the religions, according to Islam, that came prior to it, were sent by God for specific people for a specific time, this is why God did not arrange for their messages to be preserved and they continue to experience changes and adulterations by man’s hand. It is these errors and these shortcomings which, when man tries to apply it to the age in which we are living today, lead to severe problems and severe likelihood of a cessation of peace. By following Islam man can attain that peace which he has been working so hard to try and attain. May Allah, may God, enable all of us to understand and practice that true teaching of Islam which can lead all of us to live peaceful and enjoyable, prosperous lives here on Earth. May Allah enable us to do this...
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In Fond Remembrance of Brother Rahmat Jamal

Ikram-ul-Haque Jattala

Ahmadiyya literature recorded this fact, that in November 1983 at the Holiday Inn in Georgetown Maulana Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad, then Ameer and Missionary Incharge, U.S.A, bonded local Afro-American Ahmadis in brotherhood, on the same pattern as Muhajirs from Mecca were bonded with Ansar of Medina by the Holy Prophet (may peace be on him).

Ramat Jamal had the fortune to be knit together in bond of brotherhood with Maulana Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad, this sacred bond of infinite value proved true bondage of brotherhood, as we witnessed, that both of these brothers passed away within the period of three months. Both of them were symbol of dedication for the cause of Islam. May Allah Almighty grant them peace and happiness and may he also raise their rank in paradise. Āmīn.

I reached Los Angeles in Feb 1970. I had left Pakistan in a hurry, so I did not know if there was a chapter of Jama‘at Ahmadiyya in Los Angeles area. I wrote to Washington, D.C., and our missionary informed me that there was only one Ahmadi in this area and sent me the address and phone number of Br. Rahmat Jamal. In those days there were a limited number of Pakistanis in this area. I was living with a friend and Br. Rahmat F Jamal used to live in West Los Angeles. Having known my limitations and loneliness, he offered to take me to his home every other weekend. He would pick me up and after spending the weekend with his family, he would drop me back. We enjoyed each other’s company, our only common bond was Ahmadiyyat.

About this bond, relationship and attachment of one Muslim to another, he has stated in his interview that, “When Islam gives you an identity, the first thing it does is it attaches you to the other Muslims, because usually, Muslims pick names, or they choose names for themselves, or parents choose names for their children that are attributes of God. And when you receive one of those names, you have an attribute already attached to yourself. That attribute not only gives you an identity, it also gives you an objective in life.” Further more Jamal explained, that his name depicts him as a merciful person, as Rahmat means mercy and his last name is Jamal, which means beauty, not physical beauty but mercy in a tribute to beauty.

His concern and care filled my heart with gratitude. He would call me to tell when he will be coming to pick me up, and one day, his young daughters presented me a gift of warm overcoat, knowing that my luggage was lost during the journey, and I didn’t have job yet. Our relationship grew and we became like family members for each other, in all occasions.

Any time an Ahmadi was visiting Los Angeles, Rahmat Jamal and his family used to be the host. In 1970, at the time of Eid-ul-Adha, the total number of Ahmadis were, Br. Jamal, his family and myself.

In the month of July of 1978, our Imam, Mirza Tahir Ahmad, our present Khalifatul-Masih IV, along with his family stayed at his
In Fond Remembrance of Br. Jamal

residence. He had the opportunity to serve our missionary incharge, Br. Sharif Ahmad Bajwah, in 1973. Not only this, he welcomed, Hadrat Hafiz Miza Nasir Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih III in 1976. We went to San Francisco to receive him. In those days, there were 25 families of Ahmadiyya Muslims. In early eighties, he, along with Dr. Gulzar, purchased the business of Shaheen Sweets in L.A. area, then onward they were working together and in touch with each other. But come what may, Br. Jamal would attend any one, who contacted him for any need.

He passed away on February 26, 2001 after a long illness. Jamal was a companion of every lonesome child, teen or adult. He was a friend of unprivileged. That was the basic trait of his character.

For four decades he served, as the nucleus for L.A. Jama’at and his loss will be remembered for a long time.

May allah shower his blessing on his soul. Āmīn.

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In the Memory of Brother Rahmat Jamal

Samina Mansoor

I have known Br. Rahmat Jamal since March of 1988. I have a very fond memory of him; At that time he was the president of the Los Angeles Jama'at. Everybody used to address him as President Sahib. He served this Jama'at for 16 years as the President and 13 years as the Vice President.

He was a man of honor and character, and symbol of sacrifice and dedication for Islam/Ahmadiyyat. He had a great and impressive personality, knew when to speak up and how to let others know about how he felt, and took the stand for the right thing at the right time, regardless of how hard and difficult the situation was.

He owned a body shop and many of our Jama'at people took the benefit of his knowledge about cars. You could always see people standing in front of his house with their car hood open, and brother Rahmat Jamal looking for the problem with his flash light in his hand. If he could fix it he would do it himself otherwise he would recommend where to take it. I know few of the young Khuddam of our Jama'at who were his students. He used to let them work on their cars under his supervision.

He was a great influence on the younger generation of our Jama'at. He worked not only as a therapist, but also as a social worker, friend, teacher and mediator for these younger people with their social and emotional problems. He knew the way to address their problems and approach them with a kind and gentle way.

He was very popular among the young Nasirat and Atfal. He was known as candy uncle in the Masjid. Kids looked forward to come to Sunday class so they can have candy after class or any other gathering in the Masjid. To the young Lajna he was a father figure and to the older Lajna he was just like an older brother, who was always there whenever you needed him. In his free time he always worked in the Masjid yard, he used to mow the lawn, and clean the storage room in the back of the Masjid, with always a smile and pride on his face.

Br. Rahmat Jamal was sick for a long time. He was diagnosised with cancer almost ten years ago but by the grace of the Almighty Allah, and the prayers of the Khalifatul-Masih, and homeopathy medicine, he was stable for some time but for the last year and a half his health worsened, and started deteriorating quite rapidly. After long illness and stay in the hospital, he left us on the early morning of February 26th at 3:30 a.m. Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi rāji'ūn.

He was an asset to this jama'at, and his absence is a great loss for all of us. His sacrifice for Islam was unbelievable, and his contribution to this Jama'at is unforgettable. May Allah almighty give us the strength and courage to bear this immense loss, and may Allah grant him a higher rank in paradise. Āmīn.
Remembering Br. Rahmat Jamal

Misbah Rashid

A sky blue kurta shalwar, tan leather shoulder bag, white topi, leaning a little forward, with an inviting smile on his face and the greeting of peace on his lips—that's how I picture Amir Sahib, may Allah give him a high rank in paradise. No words can do justice to his contribution to the Ahmadiyya Community in Los Angeles. His presence was felt not only at every gathering but also in almost every house. A recitation of his endeavors, although impressive, does not capture the essence of the man. Amir Sahib was a learned citizen of the world, who was just as at home in Lahore, Pakistan or Copenhagen, Denmark as he was in Chino, California; and who displayed the same magnetic charm whether he was dealing with children or prisoners.

I always referred to Rahmat Jamal as Amir Sahib, whom I met through my brother. He would take Jamaat kids shooting, hiking and all sorts of fun adventures. Fond of Pakistani dishes and of the best in jazz from Charlie Parker to Miles Davis; he was a good cook and had some gigs in his early days as a drummer at the Troubadour. I always valued time spent with Amir Sahib as he imparted much religious and secular knowledge. I always asked him for prayer after he told me of his trip to Mecca: “This first time I looked at the Ka’aba, I prayed to Allah that he fulfill all of my prayers.”

Amir Sahib was very lively and ready to spread the word of Islam to anyone he could find. For the pursuit of Allah’s pleasure, he was always ready to sacrifice all he had. I learned a lot about Islam and Ahmadiyyat through our talks. He was an avid collector of copies of the Holy Quran and books on Islam and himself a great resource of religious knowledge. He was especially generous, so I often borrowed hard to get books and Quranic commentaries. We often discussed books, movies, music, poetry, and propagation. He loved epics, and stories of the Prophets. He introduced to me movies like The Message, documentaries on Malcolm X and other classics. Outside of school, he was one of the few with whom I could discuss Afro-American literature and history. But all our discussions would somehow come to Islam and the Quran. His love of God and Islam were as contagious as his notable zeal for propagation. Even in his last days, when it had become difficult for him to write, he would dictate letters answering inquiries and mailing out copies of the Holy Quran. One of our last conversations ended with him relating, “Allah says: I am a hidden treasure and I fain to be found.” That simple and beautiful phrase was what Rahmat Jamal lived for and was loved for.

I was fortunate to see him more in his last days. He would call often to eat out and I really liked his company. When he could no longer eat much, we would just sit and talk at his place. Though he had grown pretty quiet, he never ceased to talk passionately about his journey in Islam. One Saturday, we were talking and the name of Hadrat Yusuf came up. He was so excited as he loved “this story
second only to the story of the holy Prophet” that he insisted I watch the movie “Joseph” with him right away. Amir Sahib was so enthusiastic about Islam and the prophets that I wholeheartedly pray he gets to meet every one of them in paradise, Insha’Allah.

The Name Rahmat Jamal and title of Amir Sahib fit him perfectly. He was not Pakistani, yet he managed to learn about the culture and fit right in. He was not born an Ahmadi Muslim, but none can argue that this man understood, adhered and respected the faith with an extraordinary loyalty. I pray that Allah instills the same level of Taqwa and love for Islam in every Muslim. His speech was simple and very intelligent. He went out of his way for children and held an admirable respect for women, and treated both very gently. He was like a father to so many of us. Amir Sahib was a great man. I cannot express what he meant to me but I remain so indebted to him for the religious knowledge and perspective he gave me, that even praying in each sajda for him and his children is not enough. He will be deeply missed, for his contributions, consideration and love for others, knowledge, charismatic presence and ideas. Myself and countless others owe him a great debt of thanks and prayers.

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Rahmat Jamal

Who dedicated the latter years of his life to the youth of Ahmadiyyat,
Passes away at the age of 75 in Los Angeles..

Dr. Ahsan Mahmood Khan

It is with great sadness that we report that the Los Angeles Jama‘at has lost its pioneering member. Rahmat Jamal Sahib passed away on February 26, 2001, after a long battle with cancer, inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi Raji‘ün.

For four decades, Jamal Sahib served as the nucleus for the L.A. Jama‘at.

Born into a Christian family in 1925, Jamal Sahib moved to Los Angeles in his late teens. He served as the drummer on a successful Jazz group that produced some records and toured popular locations in the southern California area, including the famous Troubadour in West Los Angeles. It was during these years when he began having dreams of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He would spend hours in the library studying books on Islam to learn more about this man who would visit him in his dreams. During this time he was approached by an Ahmadi brother from the east coast, and from then on Jamal Sahib developed a growing knowledge base of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. He began seeing visions of Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad ‘alaihissalam. It was truly a blessing of Almighty Allah that the first Muslim to assume an acquaintance with Rahmat Jamal was an Ahmadi. Jamal Sahib remained steadfast and pious amidst the temptations and immoralities of Hollywood, and eventually abandoned the music industry for the sake of Islam. To make a living, he worked for Ford Motor Company and then eventually opened up his own car repair garage, which he operated successfully for nearly 30 years.

As the Los Angeles Jama‘at grew, Jamal Sahib spearheaded its organization. My father observed first-hand the efforts of Jamal Sahib in transforming a jama‘at the size of only a handful of families into an active, dedicated and close-knit organization. Rahmat Jamal served as Jama‘at president from 1974 to 1988 (the first president of L.A. Jama‘at), and vice president thereafter.

He led a caravan of Jama‘at members from Los Angeles to San Francisco in 1979 to visit Hadrat Khalifatul-Masih III (rahimahullah). He was instrumental in the procurement of land for Baitul-Hameed Mosque in Chino, California, and was the first to lay its foundation stone with our beloved Imam, Hadrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, ayyadahullah, in 1987.

Jamal Sahib cited his travel to Mecca for Umra in 1993 as the highlight of his life. He also led a cross-country driving trip with a dozen Khuddam and Atfal from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., for the national Ijtema.
the following year.

Rahmat Jamal was a simple and dignified individual. His fear of God and love for the Qur’an, the Holy Prophet, and the Promised Messiah were readily apparent and overwhelmingly contagious. I would often watch him in Tabligh sessions, and the logic and rationality with which he presented arguments in favor of Ahmadiyyat were consistently impressive.

Countless individuals from all walks of life were introduced to Ahmadiyyat, and eventually took the Bai’at (Oath of Initiation), through his efforts, under the Guidance of Almighty Allah. Rahmat Jamal’s lasting legacy will be his devotion to the youth of Jama’at, and this is what will be missed most. He displayed an affection and interest in the lives and activities of Af Fal and young Khuddam that was unforgettable.

Jamal Sahib often delivered lectures at the mosque directed towards the youth on such topics as respect for parents, racism, drugs and alcohol. He had an uncanny ability to connect to his audience with his words. Indeed, parents would often bring their children to the mosque to associate in his company. Jamal Sahib spent his last decade living on the premises of Baitul-Hameed Mosque in a small house. He maintained an open-door policy for children, teaching us the virtues of hospitality and brotherhood. Jamal Sahib also had a fond interest in hunting, camping and outdoor recreation, and he would often take us on long trips to parks and mountains. He organized several Af Fal Khuddam camping trips, and his knowledge of the outdoors proved to be very convenient.

Rahmat Jamal was diagnosed with cancer in 1990, and was told by doctors at that time that the prognosis was grim. But Almighty God blessed Jamal Sahib with amazing health for over a decade after the initial diagnosis, and during this time he was extremely active in Jama’at work and dedicated his life to the service of Ahmadiyyat. Jamal Sahib’s involvement in the mosque was as consistent as the location of the mosque itself, and when he became seriously ill over the last year, his absence was obvious. Whenever Jama’at members went to visit him, he would only talk about Allah. He would lie in bed with a prayer cap on his head, a Holy Qur’an at the bedside, and the Kalima printed on a sheet of paper tacked to the wall on his room. I had the good fortune of visiting Jamal Sahib at the hospital hours before he eventually passed away, and in his weakness and seriously ill condition, he still made it a point to end the visiting session with Du’a. This simple gesture was a testimony to the piety and humility to God that he possessed.

His Janazah Prayers were held at Baitul-Hameed Mosque on March 2, 2001, and as a reflection of the amount of lives he impacted, the Prayer hall was over-flowing with mourners from around the nation. The Jama’at has lost a dedicated Ahmadi, and Jamal Sahib will truly be missed. He is survived by one son and three daughters.

May Allah bless his soul and raise his rank in heaven, and may Allah enable us all to continue our lives with the same zeal and love for the Jama’at that he exuded for so long. Ameen.

From the Spring 2001 issue of Mujahid,
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Words of Wisdom

Foreword by Sahibzadah M.M. Ahmad, Amir U.S.A.

Words of Wisdom is a collection of sayings and Traditions of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, şallallâhu ʿalaihi wasallam dealing with the daily life. It has been published by Majlis Ansarullah, U.S.A. Arabic text is given with English transliteration and Urdu and English translations. The book includes a discussion of types of ahadith, books of ahadith, and their compilers.

Some important dates and events in the life of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, şallallâhu ʿalaihi wasallam, have also been included.

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Glossary

abu: father of
ahādīth : Plural of ḥadīth.
Aḥmadiyyat : Muslims sect believing Haḍrat Mirzā Ghūlām Aḥmad to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, peace be on him al-nāhl (pronounced annāḥl): the bee
Amlah: a committee of workers
Ansār : Helpers. Members of Majlis Ansarullah
ayyadahullāhu taʿālā binaṣrihil-ʿazīz : May Allah support him with His Mighty Help
Chanda: Monetary contribution, donation.
chanda ijtima: contribution towards ijtima expenses
Hadīth : Saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam.
Haḍrat, Hazrat: حضرت : His Holiness
Haḍīth : Saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam.
Haḍrat, Hazrat: حضرت : His Holiness
Ijtmā : Rally.
Ijtima’ at : plural of Ijtima.
īnshāʾallāh, ان شاء الله : God willing.
Jamāʾ at : Community, Organization
Jumu’ah : جمعه : Friday.
Khalīfah: vicegerent
Khalīfatul-Masih خليفة المسيح : Successor to the Promised Messiah, alaihisalam.
Khilāfat خلافة : Succession
kulafā’ خلفاء Plural of khilafah.
Majlis مجلس : Society, organization.
Majlis Ansarullāh مجلس انصار الله (Organization of Helpers of God): The organization of all Ahmadi men over 40 years of age.
Malfuẓat : sayings of the Promised Messiah, 'alaihisalam.
Masih-i-Mau ’ūd, Masih Mau’ood: The Promised Messiah (Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulam Ahmad, ‘alaihisalam)
Masjid مسجد : mosque
Muhajir مهاجر : immigrant
Musliḥ-i-Mau ’ūd, Musleḥ Mau’ood: (The Promised Reformer): Haḍrat Mirzā Bashiruddin Māḥmud Aḥmad (1889-1965), Khalīfatul-Masih II, raḍiyallahu’ānhu, who fulfilled the prophesy of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, about the advent of a Reformer.
Nāsir: helper. A member of Majlis Ansarullah
raḍiyallahu’ānhu: رضي الله عنه : May Allah be pleased with him
rahimahullāh : رحمه الله : May Allah have mercy on him
Ṣād : صدر : President.
sahāba, sahabah: صحابة : Companions (of the Holy Prophet Mohammad, sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam, and of the Promised Messiah, ‘alaihisalam,)
sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam صلى الله عليه وسلم : peace and blessings of Allah be upon him
Salāt صلوات : Formal Prayer offered according to a prescribed procedure.
Shahid : شهيد : Martyr; also, witness
Shurā شورى : advisory council.
taqwā تقوى : righteousness
Zakat زكوة : Prescribed alms.

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**Ansar Pledge**

Ash-hadu allā ilāha illallāhu wahdahū lā sharīka lahū wa ash-hadu anna muhammadan ‘abdulhu wa rasūluh

I solemnly promise that I shall endeavor, till the end of my life, for the consolidation and propagation of Islam and Ahmadiyyat, and for upholding the institution of Khalifat. I shall also be prepared to offer the greatest sacrifice for this cause. Moreover, I shall urge all my children to remain true to Khalifat-i-Ahmadiyya. Insh allah.

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A group photo of the elders of the community with Hadrat Khalifatul-Masih, ayyadahullah, in front of Baitul-Hameed Mosque in Chino, CA.

West Coast presidents of early 80s with Maulana Munir Chaudhry and Maulana Zafar Sarwar.
Br. Rahmat Jamal in a group photo with Hadrat Khalifatul-Masih IV, ayyadahullahu binasrihil-‘aziz, joined by prominent jama‘at officers and members.