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Summer 1996

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Vol. 7, No 3

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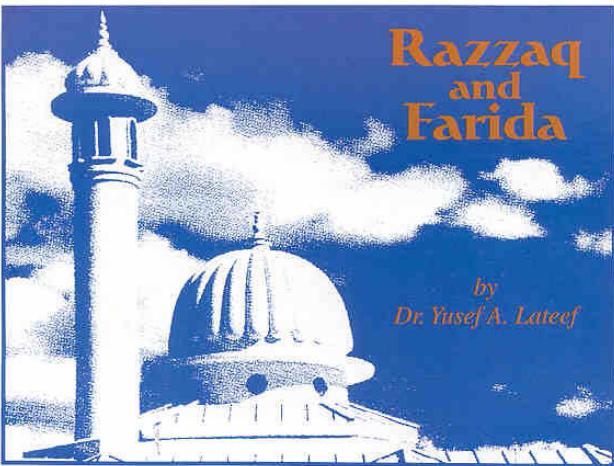
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Razzaq  
and  
Farida

by  
Dr. Yusef A. Lateef



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# A List of Resolutions to Choose From

Hadrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad, radiyallahu ‘anhu

Presented by Syed Sajid Ahmad, Bushra Sultana Ahmad, Yusuf Ahmad, and Samra Ahmad, Boise ID

In the November 5, 1937 issue of the Al-Fazl, Qadian, Hadrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad, radiyallahu ‘anhu, son of the Promised Messiah, ‘alaihissalam, wrote an article in Urdu with the heading, “The month of Ramadan has a special effect in purifying one’s self. Members of the Jama‘at should take its full advantage.” In his article, he enumerated 61 weaknesses and asked members to choose one and strive to get rid of it during the course of the month and be completely free of it by the end of the month. Here we rewrite those 61 weaknesses in English for the benefit of the English-speaking members. The same list can be used for the New Year resolutions.

- 1 Procrastination/laziness in offering obligatory Salat.
- 2 Laziness in offering Salat in congregation.
- 3 Not offering Salat behind an Imam or stopping to offer Salat behind an Imam due to a disagreement with the Imam.
- 4 Being careless with regard to proper cleanliness associated with Salat.
- 5 Laziness in offering Sunnah.
- 6 Laziness in offering Tahajjud.
- 7 Laziness in keeping fast, that is, not keeping fast because of frivolous excuses without any credible reason.
- 8 Laziness in making up or paying Fidya (prescribed alms) in lieu of missed fasts.
- 9 Laziness in paying Zakat despite being obligated to.
- 10 Laziness in searching and finding to confirm the obligation to pay Zakat.
- 11 Laziness in paying the Jama‘at dues according to the prescribed rates.
- 12 Laziness in paying Jama‘at dues regularly and on time.
- 13 Laziness in the promulgation of Wasiyyat (willing at least 1/10th of income and property to community for spending in the cause of Islam) despite being able to.
- 14 Laziness in making proper arrangements for the payment of obligations of Wasiyyat (willing at least 1/10th of income and property to community for spending in the cause of Islam) despite knowing that there can be a dispute after one’s death.
- 15 Laziness in obtaining the higher level of Wasiyyat (willing at least 1/10th of income and property to community for spending in the cause of Islam) despite being able to.
- 16 Laziness in inviting people towards Allah.

- 17 Laziness in paying proper attention towards the training of the members of the family, neighbors, and friends.
- 18 Laziness in initiating, or continuing regularly, the readings of the Holy Qur'an or the readings of the books of the Promised Messiah, 'alaihissalam, in one's home.
- 19 Laziness in making Salat a habit of your children, and laziness in taking them to the Masjid.
- 20 Laziness in taking significant part and interest in local activities of the Jama'at.
- 21 Not paying proper attention to and carelessness in adequate obedience to the local amir or president.
- 22 Laziness in visiting the (worldwide) Center again and again and in taking advantage of the blessings of Khilafat.
- 23 Laziness in prescribing to Jama'at publications such as Al-Fazl and other papers and magazines from Center despite being able to.
- 24 Laziness and carelessness, or showing favor, in reporting the accusations of mischief mongers and hypocrites after hearing them.
- 25 To abstain from giving the true witness due to relationship or friendship.
- 26 To tell a lie.
- 27 To make baseless accusations.
- 28 Being unemployed. That is, despite being able and fit to work, wasting one's time unemployed by not accepting a job considering it lowly in status or wages.
- 29 Despite being able to give services for voluntary work to the community, and despite having time to serve, not presenting your services and wasting your time uselessly.
- 30 Waywardness of eyes.
- 31 Misuse of human energy and resource.
- 32 Breaking the limits of sexual segregation.
- 33 Misdealing. Delaying the payment of debts or delaying the returning of borrowed property. Postponing the payment or return of property with weak and false excuses.
- 34 Swearing. Use of uncultured and immoral language while angry.
- 35 Smoking.
- 36 Other unhealthy uses of tobacco, as an example, eating tobacco as condiment or snorting tobacco.
- 37 Shaving beard against shari'ah under the influence of the contemporary culture.
- 38 To wed against the teachings of the Promised Messiah, 'alaihissalam.
- 39 To wed outside of the community without due permission from the center.
- 40 To offer funeral services against the teachings of the community.
- 41 Laziness in performing Hajj despite having the means and despite fulfilling other prescribed conditions.
- 42 Laziness in service and obedience of the parents.

### A List of Resolutions to Choose From

- 43 Being rude or harsh to the spouse or being lazy in their service.
- 44 Taking bribe.
- 45 Giving bribe.
- 46 Dishonesty or laziness in the discharge of assigned responsibility.
- 47 Drinking or using drugs.
- 48 To take or give interest...
- 49 Misuse or dishonest use of the property of orphans.
- 50 Laziness or carelessness in the upbringing of orphans.
- 51 Unwarranted harshness or cruelty to servants.
- 52 Habit of suing. Suing for superficial reasons. Suing despite having other avenues open.
- 53 Laziness and procrastination. Ignoring and not recognizing the value of time and thus being lazy and sluggish at work.
- 54 Being spendthrift, that is, to spend more than the income.
- 55 Wasting time in useless and damaging games like chess, cards, etc.
- 56 Waste in food and waste of food.
- 57 Unwarranted love of children.
- 58 Mistrust. Searching for bad intentions in every action of others.
- 59 Unnecessary crying or wailing on the death of friends or relatives.
- 60 Spending more than one's resources on weddings.
- 61 Being brave in taking loans and/or taking loans for insignificant and unnecessary expenditures.

### Color Salat Poster

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. This 18"x24" cardboard poster can be framed or displayed in mosques, homes, and in public buildings. Please send \$2 per copy to Chaudhary Mushtaq Ahmad, 15000 Good Hope Rd, Silver Spring, MD 20905 with your mailing address and phone number. Majlis Ansarullah U.S.A. will pay the postage within the continental U.S.

# How many times do I have to tell you this?

*Rasheed Azam*

You have asked me a thousand times or more,

Where is God? The Almighty One,  
Creator of the Universe, billion times more,  
Where did this all begin? Does anyone know?

When would this end? A catastrophic end,  
What is happening to our world?  
Is He watching? What man is doing to man?  
Selfish, greedy, arrogant, very nasty man!  
Not caring for his brother, poor, needy man,  
Neighbor against neighbor, in a fighting mode,

Constant on his cell phone, talking to his brain,

Never helping an old lady, crying tiny soul!  
Our ever-living and loving God, gave you life,

And Liberty, laws for justice; He is  
Watching, listening, talking, caring, and helping.  
Listen, you have life, only one life to live,  
Make it caring, helping and better talking,  
I should tell you this no more.

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ہمیں اس یار سے تھوڑی عطا ہے  
یا رب ہے تیرا احسان  
وہ دیکھتا ہے نوروں سے کیوں دل لگاتے ہو  
وہ کھوڑی آتی ہے جب عیلیٰ پکارس کے مجھے  
ہو خاک میں ملے اسے ملتا ہے آٹھا  
اک بہ اک دن پیش ہو گاتو فنا کے سامنے  
نور فرقاں ہے جو سب نوروں سے اجلی نکلا  
ہے دستِ قلبہ نما لا الہ الا اللہ  
گلشن میں پھولوں بارش میں پھل آپ کے لئے  
بدر گاہ ذی ہلان خیر الانعام  
نوغا نصیب کہ تم قادریاں میں رہتے ہو

### CD 2

دیکھو خدا نے ایک جہاں کو جھکا دیا  
تقویٰ یہی ہے یادو کہ نجوت کو چھوڑ دو  
مرے مولیٰ مری یہ اک دعا ہے  
دشمن کو ظلم کی برچھی سے تم سینہ و دل برمانے دو  
بڑھتی رہے خدا کی محبت خدا کر کے  
دو گھریٰ صبر سے کام لو سا تھیو  
اک رات مفاسد کی وہ تیرہ و تاریٰ  
(اواز: محمود چودھری - لاس انٹریو)

### CD 3

آفتاب احمد بسمل  
نظمیں اور نعمتیں  
تحت اللہ

### CD 6

بڑھتی رہے خدا کی محبت خدا کر کے  
کیا سونت تھی یہ دل نے پیچے ہم خدا کے  
اویح حنبل نے تے گل اس یار دی طے  
کوئا اواز: ریاض چودھری، سان فرانسیسکو

### CD 4

حمد نہ اتی کو جو ذات جادوںی  
نور فرقاں ہے جو سب نوروں سے اجلی نکلا  
ہر طرف فلک کو دوزا کے تھکایا ہے  
اسلام سے نہ بھاگو راہ بدیٰ یکی ہے  
اک نہ اک دن پیش ہو گاتا تو فنا کے سامنے  
نو نیلان جماعت مجھے کہجہ کنا ہے  
آواز: پروین احمد خان، فیضرات

### CD 5

اے خدا اے کار ساز و عیب پوش و کردگار  
خدا کے پاک لوگوں کو خدا سے نصرت آتی ہے  
اسلام سے نہ بھاگو راہ بدیٰ یکی ہے  
جمال و حسن قرآن نور چان ہر مسلمان ہے  
زندگی خوش جام احمد ہے  
(اواز: بخش چودھری، سان فرانسیسکو)

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# Recognition of the Beloved

*Yusef A. Lateef*

Several years ago, at and during Jalsa Salana, an Ahmadi brother suggested that I write a paper concerning music. Shortly after then I had a Mulaqat with our Khalifa Mirza Tahir Ahmad. During the Mulaqat, I informed Hudur of the brother's suggestion. Hudur then suggested that I should base the paper on the Holy Quran.

For years following that meeting with Hudur, I have, from time to time, contemplated writing the paper; however, it was not until sitting in this past I'tikaf did the paper come about, all praise belongs to Allah. My humble efforts are as follows:

In paraphrasing the Promised Messiah: Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be upon him), I venture to say: "A person's love of wealth or offspring or wife or his soul being attracted towards a musical voice or (musical sound) are all indications of his search for the True Beloved" (The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, p. 52).

The Holy Quran says:

"Allah—there is no god save Him; the Living, the Self Subsisting and All-Sustaining. Slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth" (Holy Quran, 2:256).

Therefore it is logical to conclude that when sounds of beauty are emitted or sustained through a human being, the sounds themselves may not be only lifeless vibrations, for the Holy Quran says: "It is He Who brings the dead to life, and that He has power over all things" (Holy Quran, 22:7).

What I am suggesting here is that just as God has the power to make the dead and barren earth vibrate with new life when rain falls upon it, He, also, has the power over things other than this phenomenon of nature.

Therefore, I postulate, in regards to the sounds mentioned above, that it is Al-Mighty God Who has bestowed the beauty which the sounds emit.

The reality here is that man cannot perceive with his physical eyes the Imperceptible Being, Who is latent like perfume in a rose. For example: A man cannot see the perfume within a rose but yet he can perceive the sweetness of the rose, through the God given faculty of smell, which God (Razzaq—The Provider) has provided man with, unless he has lost his God-given ability to distinguish odors. Likewise a man cannot perceive with his physical ears the Imperceptible being Who is latent in the sound of beauty because Allah is (Al-Ghaib) The Unseen (Holy Quran, 2:4).

Also, if man can receive an impress of beauty from the Beloved, so can a musical sound be the recipient of an impress of beauty from the Beloved, that is, be it the will of God. The inherent fact here is that Allah, "He is the Lord of all things" (Holy Quran, 6:165), which includes man's ability to hear the beauty of a musical sound and at the same instance he has the God-given

realization that this hearing-beauty experience denotes an indication of the True Beloved.

However, "... among them are some who give ear to thee; but We have put veils on their hearts, that they should not understand, and deafness in their ears. And even if they see every sign, they would not believe therein" (Holy Quran, 6:26). Moreover, it is not at all odd to ascertain that the beauty inherent in an unseen sound of beauty is an indication of one of the special functions of the True Beloved, for Moses (who upon be peace) said, "Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its proper form and then guided it to its proper function" (Holy Quran, 20:51). And elsewhere the Holy Quran says: "And to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth," (Holy Quran, 16:53).

To be able to perceive this beauty is no doubt a blessing from Al-Rahman (The Gracious), the True Beloved, for He has said: "And whatever blessing you have, it is from Allah" (Holy Quran, 16:54). Consequently, the beauty of the musical sound belongs to the True Beloved, because He has said:

"... All sublime attributes belong to Allah and He is Mighty, the Wise." (Holy Quran, 16:61).

And the ear and heart that understands this beauty of sound is due to be grateful to the True Beloved, for He has said:

"And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers while you knew nothing, and gave you ears and eyes and hearts that you might be grateful." (Holy Quran, 16:79).

It is religiously correct to say that the beauty of a musical sound belongs to the True Beloved, because He has said:

"All grace is in the hand of Allah. He gives it to whomsoever He pleases. And Allah is Bountiful, All Knowing" (Holy Quran, 3:74).

It appears that there are those who hear and those who do not hear the denotation of an indication of the True Beloved within a musical sound, for it is written:

"And be not like those who say: "We hear," but they hear not," (Holy Quran, 8:21). And

"Surely, the worst of beasts in the sight of Allah are the deaf and dumb, who have no sense." (Holy Quran, 8:23)

The anomaly here is that Allah is telling man that he should hasten to listen and respond to the beauty fashioned by The Beloved, because if one delays doing so, unforeseen circumstances may intervene to make one's heart hard or rusty and then one may refuse to listen to beauty of any kind. Therefore it is important for the listener to embrace, as soon as possible, this Godly attribute of beauty provided by Al-Rahman (the Gracious) for this attribute is purely one of the Divine favors from the True Beloved.

"Therein, verily is a reminder for him who has an understanding heart, or gives ear and is attentive." (Holy Quran, 50:38)

The reminder to listen here means to listen with the heart, the soul, the conscience and the mind which signifies the best part of a thing.

"Such is Allah, your Lord, the Creator of all things. There is no god but He. How then are you turned away?" (Holy Quran, 40:63)

And are you aware?

"It is He Who makes people laugh and makes them weep." (Holy Quran, 53:44)

Yes, "And by the soul and its

## Recognition of the Beloved

perfection.” (Holy Quran, 91:8). One meaning of this verse is that all the properties which the great heavenly bodies such as the sun and the moon, etc., devote to the service of God’s creatures, bear witness to man having been endowed with similar qualities in a high degree. In fact, man is a universe in miniature and in him is represented, on a small scale, all that exists in the external universe. For example: While visiting Copenhagen, Denmark, during the early sixties, I had the privilege of hearing the late Ben Webster perform the Beattle’s composition “Yesterdays” on tenor saxophone, for primarily a Danish audience. Like the moon, as he illustriously articulated the composition, he transmitted to those who were in the dark, the light of the Beloved, which he borrowed from the Great Original Source—The Beloved. I say this because before he finished the first chorus approximately 90% of the Danes, having heard the ways of beauty, were quietly weeping and as I have quoted above: “It is He (The Beloved) who makes people laugh and makes them weep.”

I am suggesting that in the above event there was a possibility that the illustrious and pervasive sound coming through Ben Webster’s saxophone was extolling the glory of the Beloved and at the same time the Danes and myself, being affected through listening, became part of the collective evidence that the whole universe bears to the Unity of God. The following verse alludes to this possibility:

“The seven heavens and the earth and those that are therein extol His glory; and

there is not a thing but glorifies Him with His praise, but you understand not their glorification. Verily He is Forbearing, Most Forgiving.” (Holy Quran, 17:45)

The above narrative tells us that man has been created to serve a great purpose to develop and reflect in his person Divine Attributes.

“What did you think that We had created you without purpose” (Holy Quran, 23:116).

“He has been endowed with a Divine personality and is manifestly the central figure in the whole creation or at least that part of the creation which is related to our universe.” (Holy Quran, Commentary 2022, p. 706)

In order to throw more light on the Websterian event that I have previously mentioned, I venture to say that there was another force involved other than Ben Webster’s intelligence. The following explains what I mean by this statement:

“Holy is He Who created all things in pairs, of what the earth grows, and of themselves, and of what they know not” (Holy Quran, 36:37).

COMMENTARY: “The verse reveals truth, viz, that God has created all things in pairs, which was simply inconceivable at the time the Quran was revealed and among the people to whom it was revealed.

Science now has discovered the truth that pairs exist in all things, in vegetable kingdom, and even in inorganic matter. It has yet to unfold this truth in all its various details. Even the so-called elements do not exist by themselves. They depend upon other things for their sustenance. This scientific

truth applies to human intellect also. Until heavenly light descends, man cannot have true knowledge which is born of a combination of Divine revelation and human intelligence” (Holy Quran, Commentary 2337, p. 2196).

And from this commentary I conclude that it was the Beloved, Who bestowed the beauty which the sounds emitted. And further evidence that it was the Beloved Who was responsible for the beauty is that approximately 90% of the audience wept as the result of listening, and, as I have cited previously:

“It is He Who makes people laugh and makes them weep.” (Holy Quran, 40:44)

By the grace of the Beloved I shall, be it the will of the Beloved: venture to interpret the following Quranic verse in its relation to musical sounds.

“And He it is Who has caused the two seas to flow, this palatable and sweet, and that salt and bitter; and between them He has placed a barrier and an insurmountable partition.” (Holy Quran, 25:54)

Taking two waters in the verse to represent first, the sounds that emit beauty bestowed by the Beloved and secondly, lifeless sounds, the verse signifies that both the sounds tempered by the Beloved, and the lifeless and bitter sounds still continue to exist in the world, side by side, the former yielding sweet sound-nectars and quenching the thirst of spiritual listeners and the latter barren and bitter, incapable of producing any good results. The reason being:

“Evil things are a characteristic of bad men, and bad men are inclined towards bad things. And good things are a characteristic of good men, and good men are inclined

towards good things” (Holy Quran, 24:27).

The Arabic word for evil in this verse is *khabīthāt*, meaning evil deeds or obscene words or expressions, the verse purports to say that evil persons do evil deeds or indulge in obscene and foul talk and scandal mongering, while nothing comes out of good and virtuous persons but righteous deeds and pure and noble expressions .

When the sounds bestowed by the Beloved are mixed with the lifeless sounds, the resulting mixture is bitter. As long as these two sounds keep themselves separate, they maintain their respective qualities. Therefore, in order for one to position one’s self as a candidate hoping to produce sounds tempered by the Beloved, I suggest that they continuously strive to become a good and virtuous people. This is suggested in that God has said:

“Whatever of good comes to thee is from Allah, and whatever of evil befalls thee is from thyself” (Holy Quran, 4:80).

And it is gratifying to know,

“We will provide for (you) every facility for good” (Holy Quran, 92:8). And:

“Surely it is for us to guide” (Holy Quran, 92:13).

And Allah says concerning the soul:

“And He revealed to it the ways of evil and the ways of righteousness” (Holy Quran, 91:9).

And it is also gratifying to know that:

“God has implanted in man’s nature a feeling or sense of what is good and bad and has revealed to him that he could achieve spiritual perfection by eschewing what is bad and wrong and adopting what is right and good” (Holy Quran, Commentary 3360, p. 1270).

## Recognition of the Beloved

The purpose of this paper has been to induce in the reader the realization that the beauty of anything is not due to the thing itself. Things only reflect beauty, but themselves are lifeless. It is almighty God the Beloved, Who has bestowed upon them the beauty which they reflect.

"And truly We have set forth for men in this Quran every type of parable." (Holy Quran, 30:59)

### WORKS CITED

The Holy Quran with ENGLISH TRANSLATION and COMMENTARY

Published under the auspices of Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad Fourth successor of the Promised Messiah And Supreme Head of the Worldwide Ahmadiyyah Movement in Islam, 2002

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (of Qadian), The Philosophy of The Teachings of Islam, Translated into English by Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, Islam International Publications Ltd., 1996

### Ansar Chanda Literature:

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.

### Chanda Ansar Hall

In accordance with a 1998 Majlis Ansarullah USA Shura recommendation and subsequent acceptance by Ḥudūr (ayyadahullāhu ta‘āla binasrihil-‘azīz), we are committed to build the Ansār Hall in USA. Our goal is to obtain pledges worth \$500,000 for this noble cause. Then, we wish to collect these funds and build the cherished Hall, a fitting present to our next generation in the new millennium. Insha'-Allah.

Contact your local officials to present your pledge or payment towards the construction of the Ansar Hall in the U.S.

# Tarbiyyat

Dr Khalil Malik, *Qa'id Tarbiyyat*

Allah Ta'ala says that one who strives, strives only for the benefit for his own soul. Allah is totally independent of the all the worlds.

He does not need or benefit from any effort on the part of any human. As one advances in his spiritual growth, he only does it for himself and if he does not, it is only to his own detriment.

## GRADUAL PROGRESS

Have you ever noticed how a child learns to walk? I am sure you have. In the beginning he can not even stand on his own. He stumbles on every step. But after trying over and over he manages to take a few steps and before you know, he is running all over the place. Or when you learnt how to drive. You had to be very deliberate and precise. You had to look at everything and make decisions to follow the signs on the road and at the same time know where your hands were on the steering and your feet in relation to the brakes and gas pedals, etc. But now you can drive hundreds of miles without paying that close an attention and yet you do not make any mistakes. Every move becomes fluent and natural. It is the same with spiritual and moral changes. They are slow and awkward and deliberate in the beginning but then they become your second nature. We have more than 700 dos and don'ts mentioned in the Holy Quran. This work is simplified for us by a kind and elaborate example of the Holy Prophet, sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam, and in this day and age our job is made even easier by the guidance

provided by the Imam of the Age and by the Caliphs that tell us what to do and how to do it. We just need to be prepared to listen to that and follow the best we can. Hadrat Promised Messiah 'alaihissalam said what you need is not 'Mujahedat.' What is needed is 'Ata'at'. It is not fancy rituals and rigorous exercises that is required of you. It is the absolute and complete surrender that is needed. There are times and places where opinions are sought and welcomed but rest of the way it should be doing what is asked for in the best possible manner. When an instruction comes, we should not try to outsmart or outguess it but follow it with all honesty. It does not matter who is the messenger. It could be circle leader or someone appointed temporarily to guide us. He should receive the same serious attention as the Za'eem or the Nazim or the Qa'id or the Sadr. They are all links in a chain that originates from Allah Ta'ala. It is His pleasure we are seeking and it is His pleasure that is promised. We should keep ourselves above any setbacks or rewards. Our goals should be high and our tolerance should be high too.

## OBJECTIVE

It is said that once a saintly person arranged a large dinner inviting a lot of people. His house was decorated elaborately with lots of candles. When the guests arrived, some started grumbling that it was extravagance and wasteful. He just wanted to impress his guests with his riches. Hearing this the host said he had not done anything in

“Riya,” that is, show off. He invited his critics that they had his permission to put out all those candles that they thought were excessive. They went around and tried to put out those candles but despite their best effort, they could not put out even a single one because the saint did not have any impurity in his intentions. Thus something may seem objectionable but if it is done with all honesty to please Allah, it is totally acceptable to Allah. We should keep this principle always in front of us that we want to do everything only so that we could get near to Allah Ta‘ala. It is not easy but Islam invites us to try and try hard and try often. That is why the Holy Prophet, sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, said, “Deeds are judged by motives.” Before we do anything we should ask ourselves why are we doing this. If it is purely to please Allah then we should not be discouraged by even the apparent lack of success of the work. I say apparent because what we do for Allah is never lost. If you come to a meeting or you pay chanda or you help someone or take care of your family, it is all earning reward for you even if the attendance in the program was poor or the boss was angry, etc.

### **CHANGE AND CHALLENGES**

It is said that there was a big man very strong and with even stronger reputation. He wanted to have the shape of a lion tattooed on his shoulder so he could look more fearsome. He told the technician the lion should be big and mean looking. The technician was very skillful and he promised he could do that. However when he started the work, the man could not stand the pain.

After a few pricks of the needle he started screaming and yelling and wanted to know how far along was he in the work. The technician replied that he had just started the drawing of the tail. The man said, “Forget about the tail. Who is going to notice the tail. Draw something else.” So the technician proceeded to make the belly of the lion. The man started screaming with pain and told the tech to move on to something else. When he would try to make the eye, the pain was unbearable as was the drawing of the teeth and so on. Finally the technician gave up and the man left with several bizarre shapes on his shoulder that did not look anything like a lion. Are we like that man or do we really want to shape ourselves into a follower of the Holy Prophet, sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, and the Promised Messiah, ‘alaihissalam? If anyone thinks this is achievable without pain and sacrifice he is only kidding himself. The Promised Messiah ‘alaihissalam says people think there is a magic the saints have that will instantly transform them into a saint. On the contrary Islam teaches the principles that, if followed sincerely, are guaranteed to bring about blessed end.

### **PEER PRESSURE.**

It is reported that once a woman came to Hadrat Ali, radiyallau ‘anhu, crying frantically for help that her young child had gotten on a dangerous old bridge and refused to get off it. She was afraid he would perish to his death. Hadrat Ali told her to get a child of her son’s age play with some toys close to the bridge. When her son saw this he slowly climbed off the bridge to join this child to play. The lesson here is that we are attracted

to those who we share age and interest. Coming to Ansar programs should be a pleasant experience for us. We should feel more at home because there is lot in common between us, i.e., age, experience, expectations, our look on life, problems, concerns, etc. We are thus more likely to learn from each other in a more comfortable atmosphere. It should be our activity, our opportunity to make a difference in our lives and in the life of our jamaats.

### **HOPE AND PROMISE.**

It is reported that during the siege of Khyber, a man named Usar approached the Holy Prophet, sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam. He was out grazing the flock of his Jewish master. He had from his master that the Jews were preparing to fight this man Muhammad who had claimed to be a prophet. He asked what was his claim and then said how could he become a Muslim. The Holy Prophet,

sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam, told him that he had to affirm that there was no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger. Hadrat Usar said that he was very ugly, his body and clothes were stinky and he had no wealth. He had nothing to give to Islam. The Holy Prophet, sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam, told him to join the battle. So he did and in the very first encounter he was killed. The Holy Prophet, sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam, went to him as he laid martyred in the battlefield and said that Allah Ta'ala had granted Usar a beautiful face, a fragrant body and all the bounties of heaven. And Usar had not even bowed his head once in Sajda. He then observed "Umila qalilun, wa ujira kathir," that little were his deeds and immense was the reward. I would like to think that this would be our epitaph too. For our humble and insignificant efforts Allah will accept us in His immense grace.

## *Words of Wisdom*

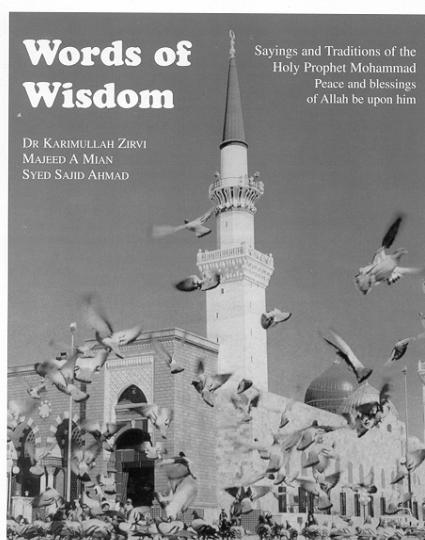
Foreword by Sahibzadah M.M. Ahmad, Amir U.S.A.

Words of Wisdom is a collection of sayings and Traditions of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, sallallāhu 'alaihi 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, sallallāhu 'alaihi wasallam, have also been included.

Outside covers are in color, two colors inside, size 7 in. x 8.5 in. on fine paper, softcover, 320 pages.

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# A Hand to Hold Your Light

*Spiritual Hymnal by Jonathan M.A. Ghaffar*

(Refrain): Let me be a hand to hold Your Light.

Let me be the one to lead Your Fight.

Bless me with the courage to stand for what is right.

Guide me in the darkness to prevail against the night.

Strengthen me in righteousness to clothe me in Your Sight.

And let me be a hand to hold Your Light.

Yes, let me be a hand to hold Your Light.

Let me be a hand to hold Your Light  
through every trial and hardship, always forward, never flight,  
being ever strong and steadfast, every challenge I invite.

Let me be a hand to hold Your Light, ever mindful of Your Majesty,  
in awe of all Your Might, never straying from Your chosen Path  
not in meanness nor in spite.

(Refrain) Let me be a hand to hold Your Light  
that my virtue may be tested by adversity and fright,  
to be purified and lifted up to each successive height.

Let me be a hand to hold Your Light  
that my arrogance be driven low, enchanted so as to smite

a deadly blow—humility—that lets me hold Your Light.

(Refrain) So let me be a hand to hold Your Light

and lift it high for all to see Your Mercy and respite,

for no matter my predicament trust in You will set things right.

O let me be a hand to hold Your Light  
that illumines and protects me from my inner demons' blight—

for in Jihad to win my heart and soul, its outcome clear and bright,  
so long as I hold fast to You, Your Rahman will hold me tight.

(Refrain)

And lastly with my deeds arrayed in shades of black and white  
that, insha'Allah, my scales be weighed far closer to the right,  
though inside of me Shaitan may be ever willing to incite,

I shall none-the-less with all my heart come forward to recite:

“All Praise belongs to You, Allah, my Garden of Delight.”

(Refrain)

# An Outline of Early Islamic History

*Continued from previous issues*

N.R.A.G. Soofi

## OMAR

Iranians were angered at their defeat. Yazdgar collected a very large force. He appointed Rustam its Commander-in-Chief. Rustam set out to conquer back Iraq. He sent agents to every town and village. Iran had long ruled the Iraqi tribes. The Iraqis were much afraid of Iran. They feared Iran might push Arabs back. For, Arabs had been only recently on the scene. So they decided to obey the wishes of their old rulers. There was a general revolt everywhere. Muslim forces in Iran numbered a few thousand only. A good many troops had gone to Syria under Khalid. Muthana, the Muslim commander, sought help from Medina. He personally explained the position to the Khalif Abu Bakr. From his death-bed he advised Omar to send troops to Iraq with all speed. Abu Bakr passed away the same day.

## FIGHT WITH IRAN CONTINUES

The very first thing the new Khalif did was to appeal for volunteers. An army under Abu Obaidah bin Almaslul Saqafi was soon dispatched to Iran. In the encounter that ensued, the Iranian forces amassed at Numariq was put to flight. Another enemy force was defeated at Saqatia. Iranians sent yet another force to meet the Muslims. A bitter fight took place at Maruha. Iranians had brought a large number of elephants. As they were not used to the sight, the horses of Muslim soldiers took fright. In a bitter hand-to-hand fight, many Muslims including Muthana were run over by elephants. Muslim

losses were heavy. They barely escaped and managed with great difficulty to cross the river.

## OMAR'S GENERAL CALL TO ARMS

The Iranians had a pleasant surprise. But Medina was plunged in sorrow. Omar sent a general call to arms. Speakers and poets went round the land. The whole of Arabia was on fire. Thousands of volunteers poured in to Medina. They all carried arms. Even Christian Arabs volunteered to fight the battle of Arabia. A frightful clash took place at Buvaib. Iranians under their chief Mehran were in high spirits. But Muslims gave back hard blows. Muthana was in the thick of the strife. One Christian tribal chief was on his right and another on his left when Muthana's brother Masud fell. He warned Muslims not to lose heart. "For this is how a hero gives his life." The next to fall was Ans bin Hilal, a Christian chief. Muthana at once took him in his lap and placed him gently along with his own dead brother. Iranian commander Mehran was killed by an Arab youth. The Iranian army took to flight. But they were completely surrounded. Only a few escaped with their lives.

## IRAN RESOLVES TO FIGHT TO THE END

Iran, however, had not lost hope. The king and nobles again amassed a huge force. They made a firm resolve to push the Muslims to the desert. There was again widespread revolt in Iraq. But Medina was not quiet. Omar again alerted the whole of Arabia. Volunteers

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poured in from many tribes. A grim struggle lay before the followers of Islam. They knew it was now or never. If they won, Islam would gain from power to power. But if they lost they had a difficult future to look to. They were therefore prepared to fight to the bitter end. They had two, clear alternatives before them. Either they should return home victorious or die in the battlefield. They made their choice.

It was an army of desperate men that marched to Iraq under Saad bin Abi Viqas, an uncle of the Holy Prophet.

### MUSLIM EMBASSY TO IRAN

An embassy of Muslims visited the Iranian king at Madain. The Khalif wanted to avoid war. He directed that peace terms should be offered to Iran. Yazdgar received the envoys in his court. It was a colorful scene. He sat on his throne with his nobles arrayed around him. They wore bright jewels and flashy uniforms and were fully armed. Arabs were a simple and rough party wearing long hoses and long cloaks and held long whips in their hands. The sight cast a chill on the royal court. The envoys invited the Emperor of Iran to accept Islam, or pay tribute or prepare for war. Yazdgar was besides himself with rage. He said, "Do you forget that no people were as low and down as you? Whenever you rebelled, we had only to order our frontier chiefs to straighten you." One of the Muslim envoys, Mughairah bin Zarar, said, "It is true that we were wretched and a lost people. We used to cut one another's throat. We were given to burying our daughters alive. But God raised a prophet among us. He was of the noblest family among us. First we

opposed him. He would speak the truth and we called him a liar. He would come closer and we would not care. But gradually his words had their effect." Then he told the king that if he would embrace Islam, he would be one of them, a brother-in-faith. If he did not, he could pay tribute or fight. The Chosroe lost his temper. He ordered them out and gave them a sack full of earth as his answer. The Muslim envoy who carried the gift on his shoulder, cried out with joy, "Chosroe has given us the land of Iran."

### THE QADISIA VICTORY

A three day long savage battle was fought at Qadisia. Rustam led the Iranian army. It had elephants, archers and an armor corps. Muslims were far less in number, had no elephants and were poorly armed. But they had no fear. Both sides fought hard and with great bravery. Poets chanted verses and speakers recited the Quran. There were single combats, hand-to-hand mass clashes. Like waves of the sea the two armies bounded forward now and fell back again. At last the Muslim forces made one last major push. Rustam was slain. Iranians lost courage and left thousands dead on the field.

Many a fighter achieved fame. Qawa was one, Maadi Karb was another. They dismounted and with drawn swords pounced upon the elephants of the Iranian army. The widowed poetess Khansa sent her four sons to battle. Her parting advice was:

"Sons, you are not a burden on your country. Nor were you visited with famine. Still you brought your old mother here to throw her before Iran. By God, you are begotten of one father even as you are born

of one mother. Go hence and fight to the end."

As they heard their mother's command, they melted away in the thick of the battle and fell fighting bravely.

Omar was passing anxious days and sleepless nights at Medina. Every morning he would go out and wait hoping for news. One day he saw a camel in hot pace. He ran to ask the rider if he had any news from the front. He said that he had—Muslims had won. The rider was driving his mount hard and Omar was running to keep the pace. When on the way, a passer-by addressed Omar as Commander of the Faithful, the messenger then knew that the enquirer was no other than Omar the Khalif. He offered apologies but the Khalif told him to forget it. Then the rider gave him the letter of Saad. Omar hastened to announce the news of victory. In a speech he said:

"O Muslims I am no king and I do not mean to make you my subjects. It is my desire that while you sleep peacefully I should work for you. If it were ever in my mind that you should wait at my door then it would be my greatest misfortune."

A large number of Iranian subjects had fought the Muslims against their will. They were granted free pardon and allowed to stay in their homes peacefully. Muslims moved freely among them.

#### ATTACK ON MADAIN

The Muslim troops next advanced to Madain, the capital of Iran. On the way they reduced several strong-points of the enemy. When they reached the Tigris they found the bridge gone. Saad put his horse in the river. Others followed. The Muslim army swam across the river in battle order. Iranians were

so much frightened at the sight that they took to flight. When Saad reached Madain, he found the capital deserted. His army offered prayers in the palace. They found there great wealth, crowns, jewels, golden swords, a golden horse, a silver camel, rich dresses, and piles of valuables. Whatever a soldier found he took it straight to the commander. When these articles were sent to Medina, Omar felt highly gratified at the honesty of the Muslim army.

#### JALULA REDUCED

Troops under Hashim bin Utba marched on the heels of the Iranian force. A long fight raged at Jalula where Iranians took shelter in a fort. Qa'qa led the attack. In the fierce hand to hand battle 100,000 Iranians were slain. Huge treasures fell into the hands of Muslims. Qa'qa next proceeded to Halwan which he captured easily. Peace was declared. Thousands came with offers of tribute. They were granted freedom and rights of property.

Iraq was now fully conquered. Two new cities Busrah and Kufa were founded. Muslim forces spread out in the country. They easily conquered the rest of the province. Some skirmishes took place at Ahmez, Tastar and Ela. Jazira was also added to Islamic conquests without much fighting.

#### THE NIHAWAND VICTORY

Omar was now anxious for peace. He proposed to leave Iran alone. Iraq was part of Arabia proper. It had been recovered. The quarrel must end, he thought. But Chosroe was not prepared to swallow defeat. Iranian patriots were deeply hurt. They were preparing for revenge. They wanted to win back the lost province and their fallen

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prestige. Soon another Iranian army amassed at Nihawand. A Muslim force under Noman bin Maqrin marched to meet the enemy and laid siege to the fort. After several days Muslims succeeded in drawing the enemy out of their positions. The fight in the open battlefield did not take long. Iranians fled and were pursued by Muslims as far as Havazan.

### **OMAR ORDERS CONQUEST OF IRAN**

The Khalif now ordered his armies to conquer Iran. Forces were dispatched to different provinces under Ahnaf bin Qais, Majashaa bin Masud, Osman bin Abilas, Sariya bin Zainam, Suhail bin Abi, Asim bin Amr, Hakim bin Umair, Abdullah bin Utban, Alqma bin Nazir, I Abdullah bin Umair, Shahab bin al Makhariq, Abdullah bin Utban, Naim bin Maqrin, Utba bin Farqad and Bakr bin Abdullah. These commanders added more victories and larger areas to Muslim conquests.

### **YAZDGAR CHASED OUT OF COUNTRY**

Ahnaf bin Qais chased Yazdgar out of the country. The ex-Emperor took refuge in Balkh. Ahnaf occupied the town. Yazdgar fought a last-ditch battle with the help of Tartar troops. He lost and fled across the Oxus.

### **IRAN UNDER ISLAM**

Iran was now under the flag of Islam. It was the eighteenth year of the Hijra. The poorly-equipped and ill-fed forces of the newborn Muslim state had crushed the experienced armies of a great and old empire in less than four years. Long had Greece fought Iran. It conquered her for a short

while only. Soon; after Alexander's march in 326 B.C., Iran was again on its feet. But after its conquest by Islam, it lived only as a Muslim province or as a Muslim state. It never rebelled against Islam.

Muslims proclaimed peace. People agreed to pay the tax and tribute. The farm owners continued to occupy their lands. They were well-treated by their new rulers. A new era had dawned for them. There was freedom, there was equality and humanity. The days of haughty nobles were gone.

### **FIGHTING IN SYRIA**

Islam was fighting on two fronts at one and the same time. A bitter war was on in Syria when Muslims were engaged in war with Iran. After the Ajnadin battle Muslims marched on Damascus. It was a great centre of trade and the chief town in the area. After a long siege the city was conquered. Khalid learnt one night that citizens of Damascus were dead drunk. Quietly swimming across the moat, he scaled the town-wall. Then he dropped down a rope, for others to climb up. Stealthily, the party slipped into the town. There they caught the guards unawares. The gate was thrown wide open. The waiting forces rushed in. Sudden panic seized the public. They sued for peace.

As a result of the sweeping victories of Islam, Romans were very much alarmed. They collected a big force at Baisan. Muslims camped at Fahl. Both forces faced each other. Maaz went to the Roman camp as envoy. The Roman general asked him, "Why did you come to our country? Abyssinia is much nearer your land, Iran has no male king and is ruled by a woman. Our Emperor is

mighty powerful and we are like stars and sands in numbers.” Maaz answered back, “Whether you be as many as the stars and the sands we fear not. Victory does not depend on numbers. Allah has laid down that: many a small party shall rout a bigger one. You are proud of being the subjects of a king who holds your life and death in his hands. But we have a ruler who does not prefer himself to any of us.” Next the Roman chiefs offered money and in return asked the Muslim troops to leave. Abu Obaidah bin Al-Jarrah felt greatly enraged. He ordered an immediate attack. After a bitter fight Muslims won. Muslim forces next marched to Ems. The city surrendered after a brief clash. In this encounter one Sharjil Humairi alone slew 100 enemy horsemen.

### **BYZANTINE EMPEROR’S LAST BID**

The Byzantine Emperor called a party of his men to Antioch. He wanted to know why his forces were on the run. An old man said, “Arabs have better morals. They pray at night and fast in the day. They oppress none and treat each other as equals. We oppress others.”

### **MUSLIMS WITHDRAW FROM EMS**

The emperor made a desperate effort to raise a big and powerful army. Muslims prepared to meet the foe. They decided to withdraw from Ems. The Commander was of the opinion that they should occupy the town and turn the citizens out. Sharjil bin Hasana said, “O Commander, you cannot do that. We gave them terms of peace in the town. The promise cannot be broken.” Before withdrawing Abu Obaidullah bin al-Jarrah returned all the tax to the townsfolk. He said that the tribute was in return for protection. Since they could not protect them any more

they had therefore no right to have the tax. Christians were so deeply moved that they gave them a send-off with tears in their eyes. “May God bring you back” was their sincere prayer. Jews too swore by the Bible that they would resist Byzantium to the end. The city closed its gates. Abu Obaidah returned the tax-money to the people of the neighboring area also. The whole country was in panic. When people learnt that big Roman armies were on way, they rose in revolt. Priests excited the populace everywhere. The mass of Christians were worked up against the Muslims. Abu Obaidah sought help from Medina. He had withdrawn to Yarmuk. All they could get from the capital. was a one thousand strong unit. The Muhajirs and Ansar offered to go to the front. But it was too late for an army to be in time. Omar left the matter in the hands of God.

### **BATTLE AT YARMUK**

The victory of Yarmuk sealed the fate of Byzantine rule in Syria. Both sides had fought bravely. Many deeds of individual valor were witnessed. One Habash bin Qais fought with splendid courage. His foot was cut off by an enemy blow in the thick of the battle. For quite a time he did not feel the difference. Later he went about in search of his lost limb. Long was the incident remembered by his tribe.

After this victory, the whole country was easily reduced. Muslim forces conquered back Ems and other towns. Khalid occupied all points from Aleppo to Qinsarin and Yazid ibn Sufiyan cleared the territory as far as Beirut. Muslims now held the entire coast of Syria. Antioch fell after a brief battle. Maraash was also taken.

In the year 19 of Hijra, the Byzantines

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made their last great attempt to regain Syria. A battle was fought near Ems, where Romans beat their final retreat.

### **CONQUEST OF PALESTINE**

Abu Bakr had given Amr bin Al-as the command of the Palestine army. He was almost constantly engaged in Syria with other Muslim armies fighting the Byzantine forces. In the fourteenth year of the Hijra, Aqa was conquered. This cut off the land route of Romans to their Palestine army. After the defeat of Romans in Syria, Muslims turned to the conquest of Palestine seriously. Baitul-Muqaddas was a tough point. The townsmen shut themselves up. After a long siege they agreed to make peace. They offered to surrender only to the Khalif of Islam. Omar undertook the journey. He left Ali as his deputy in Medina. Muslim Commanders met the Khalif at Jabia. At Jabia peace was made with the Christians of Palestine. The treaty read as follows:

“This guarantee is given to the people of Palestine by the servant of Allah, Omar, Commander of the Faithful. Their lives, property, churches and crosses shall be protected. The sick, the healthy, and followers of all religions are included in this guarantee. It is promised that their prayer houses will not be taken over nor pulled down. There will be no meddling with their religious affairs and none will be harmed. Allah, His Prophet, His Khalifs and all the faithful are behind this guarantee provided these people pay the tax. Khalid bin Walid, Amr bin Al-as, Abdur Rahman bin Auf and Muawiyah bin Abu Sufiyan are witnesses to this deed.”

Omar entered the town on foot. He wore a simple dress. He was received at the gate by Christian priests. He visited the main church. As it was prayer-time the Chief Priest asked him to worship in the church. Omar declined and prayed outside where now stands the Omar Mosque.

Muslim forces now pushed forth to Qaisariyah. The city resisted firmly. But in the end it was reduced by Muawiya bin Sufiyan.

### **EGYPT**

Egypt was a province of the Byzantine Empire. The Romans were raising a large army there to attack Palestine and Syria. Amr bin Al-as sought Omar’s permission to invade Egypt. It was very important to occupy that land, he argued. Omar gave his consent with great reluctance. He was not in favor of opening a third front at the time. But Amar bin Al-as wanted only 4,000 troops. He accordingly set forth on this daring expedition with this small force. Keeping his movements swift and secret, he attacked Arisha. The town fell into the hands of Muslims without any fighting. Next the Muslim troops occupied Ferma and Ralbis. In the clashes that took place Romans suffered heavily. The whole of Egypt was dazed. The Copts and Jews felt happy. They had long been ill-treated by Romans. Amr bin Al-as next occupied Memphis. Romans advanced to meet Muslims with a big army. Amr bin Al-as proved too smart for them. He was moving fast from place to place and would suddenly turn back. When central Egypt was run over by him, Amr proceeded to Babliyan, a strong Roman fort. He had

received help from Medina. Some 10,000 troops had arrived under Zubair bin al Awam. A long struggle took place. One day Zubair scaled the wall of the fort. He had a small party of Muslims with him. By sheer daring he surprised the Romans, who got panicky. The gate of the fort was thrown open. Peace was made. Maquqas, the Copt governor, told Amr that his people were against war with the Muslims. He was assured that Muslims would treat Copts with great kindness.

#### ALEXANDRIA TAKEN

The neighboring area was quickly occupied by Muslims. People readily offered to pay tribute. They were granted peace and freedom. Amr bin Al-as led his troops to meet the enemy at Alexandria. After a long siege peace was made. The enemy agreed to pay tribute. Muslims assured them freedom of faith, and promised to protect the life and property and honor of their new subjects. When the news reached Medina there was great joy in the capital. The conquest of Egypt was complete. The event took place in December 641 A. D. (21st year of Hijra). Amr bin Al-as conquered Egypt in two years and two months. He started with a force of 4000. He was helped with some more troops. His total force was hardly 1/10 of the army put up by the enemy. The Muslim State now extended from Makran in the East to Alexandria in the west. It covered Azerbaijan in the north end, Hazarmaut in the south. Twenty-one years before the Prophet had to hide in the cave Thaur. He had been forced to leave Mecca. He had only one companion with him, Abu Bakr. In less than twenty years two great empires were humbled. Millions had joined Islam. The face of the

world was changed. Arabs who were kicked about as wild savages, were now feared and respected. They had produced great generals, soldiers, rulers, administrators, statesmen and saints.

#### OMAR PASSES AWAY

One day, Feroz, a Persian prisoner-of-war complained to the Khalif that his master was rather hard on him. Omar asked for details. Feroz said his master charged him six cents a day. Omar asked him what his trade was. Feroz said he was a smith, a carpenter and an engraver. The Khalif said he was certainly not being treated harshly by his master. Feroz was displeased. Next morning when the Khalif was out to lead the prayers, Feroz attacked him with a dagger. He wounded several others who grappled with him. When he saw no way of escape he committed suicide. When Omar learnt that the culprit was a fire-worshipper, he thanked God that his assailant was not a Muslim.

The wound proved fatal. When Omar knew that his end was near, he appointed a committee of six. They were Ali, Uthman, Sad bin Abi Viqas, Abdur Rahman bin Auf, Talha and Zobair. They were to elect one of the group as the next Khalif.

Omar next expressed his wish to be buried beside the Holy Prophet. He sent his son Abdullah to the Prophet's widow, Ayesha, to grant his last wish. He was very happy when she agreed. He next required of his son to arrange for the payment of his debts.

In his parting advice to the next Khalif he enjoined upon him to look after the welfare of Muhajirs, Ansars, Arabs and Zimmis (non-Muslim citizens).

He died after three days. His body was lowered in the grave by Ali, Uthman, Abdur

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Rahman bin Auf, Talha and Saad bin Abi Viqas.

Medina and later the entire Muslim world plunged in deep grief.

Omar was tall, well-built, fair-faced, and bright-eyed. He was an eloquent speaker, a just ruler, strict in matters of discipline, a man of simple habits. He worked hard; planned well, was fearless and kind hearted. He was the first to organize government machinery. He believed that Khilafat was a trust of God and that the Khalif must consult public opinion. Often officials were dismissed on complaints from public. They were also elected by the people. Only efficient and honest men were considered for jobs. He never preferred himself to others. On his own duties and rights he said:

“I have no more right over public money than the guardian of an orphan. If I am well off, I will take nothing. You have some rights over me and you can demand them. The first is that I should not be unjust in collecting tribute and spoils of war. The other is that I should not spend public money improperly. Another is that I should increase your allowances, guard the frontiers and put you in no danger.”

### **DIRECTIVE TO OFFICERS**

All the governors and officers were warned in these wards:

“Remember I have not made you chiefs of the people and tyrants. I have made you leaders so that people may follow your example. Give Muslims their dues. Beat them not

otherwise they will lose self-respect. Do not give them false praise otherwise they will err. Keep your doors open to them so that the strong do not eat up the weak. Do not prefer yourself to them: as that would be injustice.”

Ayaz bin Ghanam, an officer, kept a peon at his door. He was severely reprimanded and forced to tend goats. State officers were well paid so that they could not be purchased. In fixing tribute Omar consulted non-Muslim citizens. The old and the poor were exempted from payment of taxes. Instead they received aid from the treasury. All crown lands in conquered countries were distributed among non-Muslim peasants. Muslims could not buy land in subjugated lands. Roads, bridges, canals and dams were constructed. Thus more land came under the plough. Every year respectable non-Muslims were invited to the capital. They were required to say on oath whether tribute was being realized justly or unjustly.

Omar did not disturb the government machinery in conquered countries. All the clerks and accountants stayed in their jobs. Office work was conducted in the local vernacular languages as before. There were fire-worshippers, Greeks, Jews, and Christians holding government appointments.

Omar believed in the rule of law. Nobody could claim to be better than his brother. Judges were required to be even-handed. “Treat all as equals in justice, so that the weak are not disappointed and the rich are not encouraged.” Once he appeared before a court as a party. The judge showed him great

respect. Omar told him that he had been unfair; that both parties were equal in the eyes of law.

Omar was the first Khalif to appoint a police force.

Close watch was kept on weights, measures and prices. Care was taken that animals were not overloaded.

Omar organized a disciplined fighting force. There was a reserve force and a standing army. Both were paid.

In fixing salaries of Muhajirs and Ansar, Omar gave the servant and the master equal pay.

In Muslim wars, Greeks, Jews, Christians, Magis and Copts used to take part. Among the troops were also some Jats of Sindh. Muslim and non-Muslim troops were all paid equal salaries.

There was good discipline in the ranks. Every little bit was reported to the Khalif. He had a smart intelligence service. Enemy movements were closely watched. Samrah Jews of Jordan and Palestine were engaged as intelligence officers. They were exempt from tribute.

Omar never forced Islam on anyone. His domestic servant was a Christian. Omar would preach Islam to him. The servant. Would answer back that he would remain loyal to his own religion. Omar would remark, "There is no compulsion in faith." It was therefore that he always insisted that non-Muslims should be treated with kindness. His officers knew well his views. They were very careful. Once an official, Umair bin Saad, cursed a non-Muslim. He repented soon and resigned his post. He thought he had used harsh language because of his official position. He therefore decided

to give it up.

Omar insisted on people learning the Holy Quran. Those who learnt the Holy Book by heart were rewarded. Every soldier was expected to read the Holy Book well. He appointed paid Muezzins and Imams (prayer-leaders) in mosques. Men of learning were highly honored by him. Men of piety much more so. He valued truthfulness most. Honesty and common sense ever merited his favor.

Hira was conquered during the period of Abu Bakr, Khalid made a treaty with the non-Muslims there. He agreed that if anyone of them was out of job owing to old age, he would be given pension from the public treasury. Omar fully honored this treaty.

Once Omar saw an old man begging. On enquiring he learnt that he had to pay jiziah tax. Omar wrote off the tax and gave the old man a pension from the state treasury.

Omar was never hard on non-Muslims. Once Christians of Najam prepared for revolt. Omar ordered that they should be removed to Syria. They were paid full value of their property in cash. Officials were ordered to give them every facility on the way. They were further exempted from tax. for two years.

### **EQUALITY BEFORE LAW**

Once Jabila, King of Ghassanides, hit a slave. The slave hit the king back. Jabila was very angry. He complained to Omar. The Khalif said that the slave was right. Jabila gave up Islam and left the country. Once Bilal, the African slave, and Suhaib, the Greek slave, called on Omar. Qureish chiefs also waited on him. The Khalif gave the slaves places nearest to himself. Abu Sufiyan, the Meccan chief, felt deeply hurt.

## An Outline of Early Islamic History

But Omar was unmoved. He said Bilal and Suhaib had entered and served Islam much earlier, and the Qureish chief much later. He felt sorry for them but he could not prefer them to the slaves; they were the close companions of the Prophet and thus would he treat them.

Omar's son Abu Shahma drank wine. He punished him with his own hands in public.

Once Omar was not well. He was prescribed honey. He begged permission to take a little from the treasury. His wife Umme Kalsoom sent some perfume to the Queen of Byzantium. She sent back jewels. Omar turned over the jewels to the treasury. He said the presents were exchanged through Muslim envoys. He gave his wife only what she had actually spent.

Being a family man, he needed expenses to run the house. He asked Muslims how much he could draw from the treasury. Ali proposed that he take only "simple food and simple dress." That was all he received.

### TREATMENT OF NON-MUSLIMS

Once a Christian complained to him that he paid the state tax twice. He, said that an article could be taxed only once. Omar issued orders on the spot. The Christian did not have much hope. But he was surprised to learn that prompt action had been taken by the Khalif.

### CONCERN ABOUT PUBLIC WEAL

Omar would visit the houses of fighting men. He would buy daily needs of the families, write letters for them and deliver their letters to them personally.

Once a caravan came to the town late in the evening. Omar called upon Abdur Rahman bin Auf to come and keep watch

over the camels and goods of the late-comers! Both went and did guard duty.

He used to go about at night to see the condition of the people. Once he saw a woman cooking something. Her small children sat by crying. Omar enquired of her the reason. She said they had no food for several days and that she was boiling plain water just to console the kids. Omar straightway went to the treasury. He brought out a bag of flour, meat, butter and dates. His slave wanted to carry the things. Omar said, "You will not carry my burden on the Day of Judgment." He carried it himself to the woman's tent. Omar made the fire and she cooked the food. After the children had their fill, and started playing, the Khalif felt very happy. The lady thanked him and said, "You should have been the Khalif, instead of Omar."

### HOW OMAR FEARED GOD

Once an Arab called on Qmar. He said, "Omar, the joy is the joy of Paradise. Clothe my girls. By Allah, you will have to do it." Omar answered back, "What then If I do not?" The Arab said, "On the Day of Judgment it would be required of you and you will be stunned. Then you will be led either to hell or to paradise. Omar wept so much that his beard got all wet. Then he sent the man away with a gift.

### MEN ARE BORN FREE

A Copt was beaten by the son of Amr bin Al-as, the governor of Egypt. The victim complained to Omar. The Khalif had the culprit flogged publicly by the aggrieved Copt. Amr bin Al-as watched helplessly. Turning to the father and the son, the Khalif

said, "Since when have people started making men slaves? They were born of their mothers tree."

### A LIFE OF AUSTERITY

Omar handled vast treasures of gold and silver, of jewels and valuables. But his own cloak pf coarse cloth had many patches. His turban was torn and his shoes were rough-shod. Once Rabi bin Zaid said to Omar, "You have greater right than anybody else to enjoy good food, good mounts and good dress." Omar lifted his rod and gave him one. He said he had no more rights than others.

Though stingy to himself, Omar was

generous to others. He could not see anybody in distress. Once he came across an old man who was weeping bitterly. Omar wanted to know the cause of his misery. He said he had been caught drunk. Abu Musa al-Ashari, the governor, had him flogged and then with his face blackened he took him round the city. He also ordered people to boycott him. Omar at once wrote a letter of warning to the governor, and gave the old man 200 dirhems.

From *An Outline of Early Islamic History*,  
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pp. 133-161.

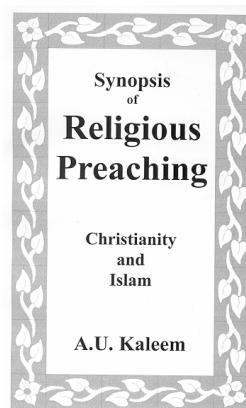
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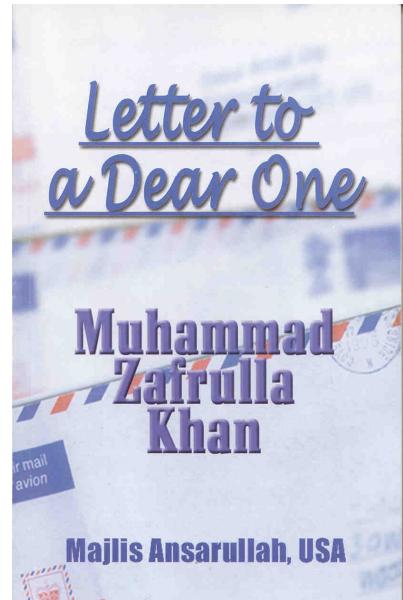
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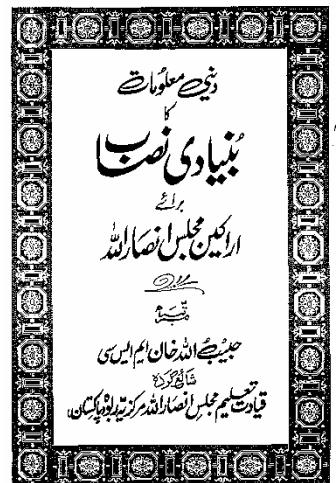
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# Glossary

- abu: father of.
- ahādīth : احادیث : Plural of ḥadīth.
- Aḥmadiyyat : احمدیت : Muslim sect believing Hadrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, peace be on him.
- ‘alaihissalām : عليه السلام : peace be on him.
- al-nahl (pronounced annahl): the bee.
- Āmilah: a committee of workers.
- Ansār : انصار : Helpers. Members of Majlis Ansarullah.
- ayyadahullāhu ta‘āla binaṣrihil-‘azīz : ایده الله تعالیٰ بنصرہ العزیز : May Allah support him with His Mighty Help.
- Chanda: چندہ Monetary contribution, donation.
- chanda ijtima: contribution towards ijtima' expenses.
- Hadith : حدیث : Saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam.
- Haḍrat, Hazrat: حضرت : His Holiness.
- hudūr, huzur : حضور : Your Honor/Holiness, His Honor/Holiness.
- Ijtimā', Ijtemā': اجتماع : Rally.
- Ijtimā'āt : اجتماعات : plural of Ijtima'.
- inshā'allāh, ان شاء الله : God willing.
- Jamā'at : جماعت : Community, Organization.
- Jumu‘ah : جمعة : Friday.
- Khalīfah: vicegerent.
- Khalifatul-Masih : خلیفۃ المسیح : Successor to the Promised Messiah, ‘alaihissalam.
- Khilāfat : خلافت : Succession.
- khulafā: خلفاً: Plural of khalifah.
- Majlis : مجلس : Society, organization.
- Majlis Ansarullāh (Organization of Helpers of God): The organization of all Ahmadi men over 40 years of age.
- Malfūzāt : ملموظات : sayings of the Promised Messiah, 'alaihissalam.
- Masīḥ-i-Mau‘ūd, Masih Mau‘ood: مسیح موعود : The Promised Messiah (Haḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, 'alaihissalam).
- Masjid : مسجد : mosque.
- Muhājir : مهاجر : immigrant.
- Muṣliḥ-i-Mau‘ūd, Musleh Mau‘ood: مصلح موعود (The Promised Reformer): Haḍrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad (1889-1965), Khalifatul-Masih II, raḍiyallāhu 'anhu, who fulfilled the prophecy of the Promised Messiah,
- peace be on him, about the advent of a Reformer.
- Nāṣir: helper. A member of Majlis Ansarullah.
- raḍiyallāhu 'anhu: رضی اللہ عنہ : May Allah be pleased with him.
- raḥīmahullāh : رحمہ اللہ : May Allah have mercy on him.
- Şadr : صدر : President.
- sahāba, sahabah: صحابہ Companions (of the Holy Prophet Mohammad, sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam, and of the Promised Messiah, 'alaihissalam).
- ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wasallam : صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم : peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.
- Salāt : صلوٰۃ : Formal Prayer offered according to a prescribed procedure.
- Shahīd : شہید : Martyr; also, witness.
- Shūrā : شوری : advisory council.
- Sunnah : سنه : practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam.
- taqwā : تقوی : righteousness.
- Zakat : زکوٰۃ : Prescribed alms.

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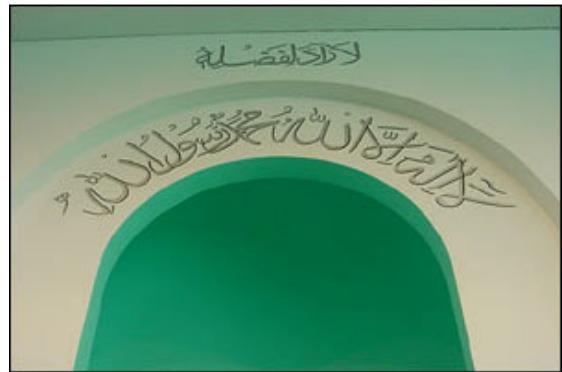
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