

Paigham-E-Haqq

MESSAGE OF TRUTH

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-I-Islam (Lahore) Fiji
(Ahmadiyya * Society for the propagation of Islam)
(* The term Ahmadiyya is derived from the name of the
Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) whose other name was Ahmad)

Our humble plea to the reader is not to let your prejudice cloud your views towards our Movement but to consider these articles in a cool and dispassionate manner.

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

In the spirit of the above-cited verse, this periodical attempts to dispel misunderstandings about the religion of Islam and endeavors to facilitate inter-faith and inter-denomination dialogue based on reason and rationality.

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The main objective of the A.A.I.I.L is to present the true, original message of Islam to the whole world - Islam as it is found in the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, obscured today by great misconceptions and wrong popular notions. Islam seeks to attract the *hearts and minds* of people towards the truth, by means of reasoning and the natural beauty of its principles. *Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad* (d.1908), our Founder, arose to remind the world that Islam is:

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

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

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

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

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

Non-sectarian: Every person professing Islam by the words *La ilaha ill-Allah, Muhammad-ur rasul-ullah* (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) is a Muslim. A Muslim cannot be expelled from Islam by anyone.

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

About Ourselves

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore has branches in many countries including:

USA	Guyana
UK	Australia
Holland	Canada
Indonesia	Germany
Suriname	India
Trinidad	South Africa
	Philippines

Achievements:

The Anjuman has produced extensive literature on Islam, originally in English and Urdu, including translations of the Holy Quran with commentaries. These books are being translated into other languages, including French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Russian, Chinese and Arabic. The Anjuman has run several Muslim missions around the world including the first ever in Western Europe.

History:

- 1889: Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement.
- 1901: Movement given name Ahmadiyya after Holy Prophet Muhammad's other famous name Ahmad
- 1905: Hazrat Mirza appoints central body (Anjuman) to manage the Movement.
- 1908: Death of Hazrat Mirza. Succeeded by Maulana Nur-ud-Din as Head.
- 1914: Death of Maulana Nur-ud-Din. Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam founded Lahore as Continuation of the original Anjuman. Maulana Muhammad Ali elected as Head.
- 1951: Death of Maulana Muhammad Ali after fifty years of glorious service to the cause of Islam. Maulana Sadr-ud-Din (9.1981 becomes Head.
- 1981-1996: Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan, an eminent Medical Doctor and religious scholar, led the Movement, at a time of intense persecution
- 1996 -2002: Prof. Dr Asghar Hameed, a distinguished Retired University Professor of Mathematics, and learned Islamic scholar, served as Head.
- 2002: Prof. Dr Abdul Karim Saeed Pasha elected Head.

THE AHMADIYYA CASE, TWENTY-FIVE YEARS LATER

*Revisiting the South Africa court case in light of contemporary Muslim attitudes By Fazeel S. Khan, Esq.
"Surely We have granted thee a great victory" (48:1)*

An Overview of the Ahmadiyya Case

The term "Ahmadiyya Case" commonly refers to the court case between the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in South Africa and other Islamic organizations and Muslim religious leaders in that country. The central issue in the case was whether members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya group are Muslims. This issue was generated due to the defendants denying members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement the rights granted to members of the Islamic faith, namely, attending mosques for prayer and burying their dead in Muslim graveyards. In addition, the court was petitioned for an order enjoining the defendants from continuing their concerted campaign of defamation against members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement (which the defendants engaged in by way of publishing and distributing material stating members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement were not Muslims).

Despite the support of the powerful international anti-Ahmadiyya lobby and the expertise of numerous "scholars" from Pakistan at the defendants' disposal, on November 20, 1985 the final Judgment from the Court, by the grace of God, was found in favor of the plaintiff(s).

¹ The Plaintiffs courage to challenge the established Islamic institutions, and their faith to be steadfast in this cause, was ultimately rewarded. Indeed, the Ahmadiyya Case was a great civil rights victory; a minority Muslim group that was openly discriminated against could now lawfully avail themselves of the rights all other Muslims in the country enjoyed.

The extent of the victory, however, was not limited to the benefits received by the particular plaintiffs in the case. The victory also came in the form of having the opportunity to compile a comprehensive rebuttal to the widespread false allegations attributed to the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. This rebuttal, derived from the scholarly research presented as evidence by Lahore Ahmadi scholar Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad, was compiled in book form by Dr. Zahid Aziz² and published by the U.S. branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement under the title "The Ahmadiyya Case". The book "The Ahmadiyya Case"³ contains a factual background about the case, the Judgment from the Supreme Court of South Africa, and the detailed evidence from the founder's own writings submitted at trial by the learned Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad. It provides an invaluable resource for anyone interested in understanding the true claims of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and the actual beliefs of Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. In this Commemorative Issue of the Light and Islamic Review we reproduce the Judgment from the Supreme Court of South Africa, authored by Justice D. M. Williamson. The Judgment clearly identifies the issues underlying the case, provides an extensive review of the evidence submitted at trial, and puts forth an analytical assessment of the foregoing that is informative, convincing and enlightening.

Revisiting the Ahmadiyya Case, Twenty-Five Years Later

Revisiting the Ahmadiyya Case, twenty-five years later, offers a valuable occasion for reflection on the changes that have occurred in Muslim thought and circumstances during this past quarter-century period. These changes, in turn, provide the prospect for a renewed assessment of the integrity and value of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, its beliefs, and objectives. For instance, the following points may be considered.

1. Unity and Definition of "Muslim"

In recent times, the Muslim world has acknowledged that disunity within its own fold is probably its greatest obstacle to advancement. It is now widely accepted that the practice of many Muslims scholars and organizations in devoting time and energy to declare other Muslims as "kafir" (i.e. unbeliever) over minor differences of opinion is the single most damaging activity in this regard. As a result, the benefit of "intrafaith" bridge-building has become a major consideration for many Muslims organizations. In order to counter the campaigns by extremists who are bent on creating divisions within the Muslim ummah by their strict/radical interpretations and intolerant perceptions of others, we see concerted efforts being made by Muslim organizations to establish a simple definition of "Muslim". The rationale underlying these efforts is that there is much value in Muslims uniting on common principles and viewing differences on secondary issues as simply part of the diversity within the large camp that Islam encompasses. The most prominent effort in this regard is the "Amman Message"⁴. This endeavor, performed under the auspices of King Abdullah II, is accepted by Muslim entities (both state and private) from just about every region and school of thought. It lays the foundation for unity amongst Muslims by providing a widely endorsed condemnation of the practice of takfir (i.e. Muslims declaring other Muslims as non-Muslims) and providing a broad definition of "Muslim" that focuses on the undisputed fundamental requirements and not interpretations of secondary issues.

Interestingly, the defendants in the Ahmadiyya Case, only twenty-five years earlier, were intent on establishing a narrow and restrictive definition of "Muslim" so as to exclude members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement from the ummah. A major part of the Case dealt with the plaintiffs providing evidence as to the simple definition of "Muslim", as accepted by the most authoritative sources in Islam and now widely endorsed by Islamic entities the world over. The position advanced by the Lahore Ahmadiyya group in the Ahmadiyya Case is now not only being approved as accurate in terms of its authenticity, but absolutely necessary for the advancement of the Muslim world. Most fascinating is the fact that two of the defendants' "experts", Mufti Taqi Uthmani and Prof. Mahmoud Ahmad Ghazi, eventually

endorsed the Amman Message, a liberal proclamation that is inherently incompatible with the extreme positions offered by the defendants during the Ahmadiyya Case.

2. Interpretation of Jihad

It is hard to believe that anyone would disagree with the assertion that since 9/11 the Muslim world has become energized in the way of clarifying what the term jihad means. Numerous fatwas, statements, press releases were issued making clear that the word jihad is not synonymous with the term "holy war". In fact, due to this concerted campaign, many Muslims in the West, especially the younger generation, believe that jihad being interpreted as primarily a "spiritual striving" is something that has always been accepted by all Muslims who are not extremists or terrorists. Unfortunately, this is not true, and the Ahmadiyya Case is a testament to this. Only twentyfive years ago, the defendants and their experts adamantly argued that members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement could not be Muslims because they rejected the interpretation of jihad in the sense that it is a religious duty for Muslims to engage in holy war with unbelievers. This was actually asserted as a "defense" to the plaintiffs' cause of action (i.e. they claimed they were justified in holding members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement as non-Muslims because they did not accept this view of jihad). Certainly, such views, as espoused by the defendants and their scholars, are rejected today by all Islamic organizations and individual scholars who have any credibility whatsoever. Again, the position advanced by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement has now been accepted as correct and the position of the defendants has been unanimously rejected.

3. Islamic law and Secular Courts

Quite recently, attempts at creating anti-sharia legislation in the U.S. have generated extensive opposition by Muslims from all quarters. Various counter-measures to deter such bills from banning the use/application of sharia law in courts are being pursued. It is understood that the anti-sharia bills are merely a manifestation of fear-based politics and that the use of Islamic law in courts is necessary at times, just as the Christian Canon law or Jewish Kashrut law has its place. Singling out Islamic law as a particular form of religious law to be separated from the resources upon which a secular court may consider has mobilized the Muslim populace to defend their religious rights from such disparate treatment.

However, when it became apparent to the defendants in the Ahmadiyya Case that they had no religious ground to stand on in defense of their discriminatory actions, they relied on the assertion that a secular (non-Muslim) court could not decide the issue at hand because only Islamic institutions could consider Islamic laws and apply evidence from Islamic sources. The defendants' (and their scholars') position is obviously diametrically opposed to the policy objectives of the numerous Islamic organizations in the West that are currently striving for the exact opposite. Again, the arguments put forth by the antiahmadiyya lobby during the Ahmadiyya Case are proven meritless and contrary to the interests of Muslims living in Western countries.

4. Acceptance by Premier Islamic Institutions

Inter-connected with the Islamic Law vs. Secular Court dichotomy expressed by the defendants, it was asserted that the first defendant (i.e. the Muslim Judicial Council) and other international bodies of Islamic ecclesiastical opinion to which the MJC was affiliated were more competent to resolve the religious issue at hand. One of the Islamic institutions the defendants referred to was Al-Azhar in Cairo, Egypt. Within the past twenty-five years, though, the premiere Islamic institution of Al-Azhar has maintained a close relationship with Mrs. Samina Malik (Vice-President of the U.S. branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement) and, due to the efforts of Mrs. Samina Malik, the Al-Azhar Research Academy has certified a large number of Lahore Ahmadiyya publications books which provide extensive dissertations on Islamic beliefs and practices. It has also facilitated the acquiring of translators for rendering the Lahore Ahmadiyya literature into the Arabic language. In fact, the late Grand Imam, Sheikh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, the highest religious authority in the Sunni Muslim world, personally coordinated the contacts necessary for the printing of the Lahore Ahmadiyya literature translated in Arabic from Egypt itself. And most ironic is the fact that when the late Sheikh Tantawi was compiling a detailed reply to a controversial comment made by Pope Benedict concerning the Holy Prophet Muhammad, he quoted from Maulana Muhammad Ali's book *The Religion of Islam* when elaborating on the topic of Jihad, the very topic the interpretation of which the defendants in the Ahmadiyya Case cited as a reason for claiming members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement were not Muslims! Once again, the passage of time itself demonstrates the illegitimacy of the defendants' positions.

Conclusion

The Ahmadiyya Case is a historic event that clears Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of the common charges leveled against him and vindicates the beliefs and positions of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. It is indeed a civil rights victory, one that offers hope to all religious minorities who are subjected to prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory actions by dominant faith traditions. The Ahmadiyya Case will always be remembered as an illustration of how devotion to truth and passion for justice can result in changes to prevailing conditions. Regardless of whom the particular parties involved in the Case were, or what their specific positions entailed, the lesson learned from this event is that truth ultimately triumphs and history will bear witness to it. Certainly "victory is only from Allah" (8:10), but the principle individual from whose efforts this victory was achieved was the late Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad, chief expert witness for the plaintiffs. On a personal note, it was the Ahmadiyya Case and the example of Maulana Sher Muhammad's zeal in this noble cause that inspired me to study law and devote my career to civil rights work. May Almighty Allah reward him abundantly for his incomparable sacrifices, for being an inspiration to countless others, and for providing a catalyst for change in modern Muslim thought. Ameen.

¹ The action commenced with two Plaintiffs: 1) the Lahore Ahmadiyya branch of South Africa, and 2) Mr. Ismail Peck (a member of the South African branch

of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement). Although the case continued with Mr. Peck being the sole plaintiff (as explained more fully in the Judgment), the term "plaintiffs" is being utilized since the interests of both parties were aligned and their positions uniform.

- 2 Dr. Zahid Aziz served as interpreter for Hafiz Sher Muhammad and translated much of the evidence from Urdu into English in the case.
- 3 The book can be viewed online at <http://www.muslim.org/sacase/intro.htm>.

org/sacase/intro.htm.

- 4 Can be viewed at: <http://www.ammanmessage.com/>. The Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society (i.e. the U.S. branch of the international Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement) also endorsed the Amman Message; the endorsement letter was accepted by the Jordanian authorities and published on the official Amman Message website at: <http://ammanmessage.com/newEndorse.pdf>.

SIRR-UL-KHILAFAH

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's Vindication of the Prophet's Companions and His Plea for Islamic Unity
By: Prof. Henry Francis B. Espiritu

[This article addresses a long standing issue having deep religious and political implications. The issue of Sunni-Shia partisanship has plagued the Muslim world with not only religious tension but also actual violence and bloodshed. The author, Prof. Henry Francis B. Espiritu, Assistant Professor VII in Philosophy at the University of the Philippines-Cebu College, relays the lessons provided by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, concerning this subject. Focusing on historical facts and the spiritual instructions contained in the Holy Quran and the established traditions all Muslims accept, Hazrat Mirza Sahib seeks to clarify the concern relating to the character of all four successors to the Holy Prophet Muhammad and thereby promote an opportunity for understanding, reconciliation and unity. Prof. Espiritu's survey of Hazrat Mirza Sahib's writings on this topic is methodical and the manner in which he imparts the spirit of these lessons is exceptional.]

And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited. And remember Allah's favor to you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favor you became brethren. And you were in the brink of the pit of fire, then He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes clear to you His messages that you may be guided.—Holy Qur'anⁱⁱ

No one is a true Muslim until he desires for his brothers and sisters what he desires for himself.—Hadith Sharifⁱⁱⁱ
 One must not forget that all the Companions and the Holy Prophet—the Pride of Humanity, worked in complete harmony like the limbs of a living body. Some of them were like the eyes, some like ears, some like hands and still some others like feet. Thus the Companions of Allah's Apostle did all they could in the service of Islam in conformity with their capabilities. In all that they did, they sought the pleasure of Allah...

He who says that the Three Great Companions were kafirs, hypocrites and usurpers, thus tars all others also with the same brush because each one of them swore allegiance to Hazrat Abu Bakr, then to Hazrat Umar, and then to Hazrat Uthman.— Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib^{iv}

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad: A Staunch Upholder of the Classical Ahlus Sunnah View Concerning the Rightly Guided Caliphs and the Companions of the Holy Prophet

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib of Qadian

(circa, A.D. 1836-1908)—the eminent Punjabi Islamic mystic theologian, considered by the worldwide Ahmadiyya movement as the Regenerator (mujaddid) of Islam for this century—devoted a concise yet spiritually profound treatise defending the classical Sunni view on the legitimate spiritual authority of the Rashidun Caliphs^v and the uprightness of the Companions of the Holy Prophet. This booklet written in elegant Hijazi (classical) Arabic and titled, *Sirr-ul-Khilafah* (The Secret of Caliphate), called on Muslims of the world to unite under the banner of the first four Righteous Caliphs (Khulafah Rashida) of Islam by emulating their deep spirituality which authentically mirrors and reflects (zilli wa buruzi) the spiritual effulgence of the Holy Prophet of Islam who was their spiritual preceptor and guide. The said booklet likewise endeavored to show that the sequence of the accession of the Rashidun Caliphate—beginning with Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq to Hazrat Umar Farooq down to Hazrat Uthman Ghani until Hazrat Ali Ibn Abu Talib—was willed by Almighty Allah for the preservation of Islam during the precarious stage of its existence. The treatise proceeded to enumerate the virtues of the first four Caliphs of Islam, particularly Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq whom Hazrat Mirza Sahib considered as "Islam's Second Adam" for defending the integrity of Islam and for strengthening its spiritual, political, administrative, and economic fortifications during the period of apostasy besetting the Arabian Peninsula following the Holy Prophet's demise.^{vi} Hazrat Mirza Sahib contended that following the exemplary deeds of the Holy Prophet as manifested in the manner of life of the Companions is the most important step in achieving Islamic Renaissance so that Muslims will rise up once again to become leaders of righteous society and just civilization throughout the world. While vindicating the integrity and the honor of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and the Holy Prophet's blessed Companions, more importantly, *Sirr-ul-Khilafah* echoes Hazrat Mirza Sahib's passionate call for all Muslims to be united in their Islamic faith and identity by following closely the Tradition (Sunnah) of the Holy Prophet as handed down in posterity by the blessed Companions themselves.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's Declaration of Adherence to the Essential Creeds Subscribed by the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah and His Strong Advocacy for Islamic Unity

This short treatise, *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, proved in no uncertain terms that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib upheld

the classical orthodox understanding of the fundamental creed (aqeedah) agreed upon by the ulama (scholars) of Sunni Islam as Hazrat Mirza Sahib himself testified time and again that he upholds the essential teachings of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah as constituting the normative belief of the Islamic Ummah (community); he even directed the whole Ahmadiyya Jamaat to subscribe to the essential creed reached by authoritative scholarly consensus (ijma) of the mainstream Sunni faith. In the words of Hazrat Mirza Sahib:

In short, it is obligatory [for Ahmadiyya Muslims] to believe in all matters, whether of faith or practice, on which there has been consensus between the past righteous leaders of Islam, and which are considered by consensus among the Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat to constitute Islam. And we call upon the heavens and the earth to bear witness that this is our religion.^{vii} On 2nd October 1892, Hazrat Mirza Sahib personally made a solemn pronouncement before the worshippers in the Jamia Masjid in Delhi to the effect that he himself unequivocally proclaimed his wholehearted adherence to Ahlus Sunnah Islam. Quoting from Hazrat Mirza Sahib; I confess belief in all those matters which constitute the Islamic principles of faith. And in accordance with the belief of the Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat, I believe in those things which are established from the Qur'an and the Hadith.^{viii} In the same breath that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib unreservedly declare himself as adherent to the ijma of the Ahlus Sunnah faith; his treatise, *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, likewise strongly stressed the need for Muslims everywhere to manifest Islamic unity in all their dealings with one another. He exhorted Muslims to pray for, and work towards Islamic fraternity and harmony.

He explained that the proper approach to disagreements among Muslims is for believers to endeavor to bring reconciliation among brethren, to understand the point of view of others, and to always exercise the spirit of humility and magnanimity to forgive each other's failing. In this short treatise, it is very interesting to note the fine balance that Hazrat Mirza Sahib maintained in his adherence to the command for Islamic unity while at the same time firmly adhering to the Sunni aqeedah. This fine balance that Hazrat Mirza Sahib maintained between his staunch commitment to Sunni Islam and his impassioned call for Islamic amity can be clearly seen in his eloquent defense of the Rashidun Caliphs, particularly Hazrat Abu Bakr against the undeserved allegations of some Shi'as—yet he always refers to Shi'as as his "brothers", "fellow Muslims", "fellow believers", etc. He therefore considers Shi'as as believers or Muslims for they too declare the fundamental basis of Islam, which is Allah's Unity (tawhid), and they likewise adhere to the belief in the risalah (messengership) of the Blessed Prophet Muhammad.^{ix} For Hazrat Mirza Sahib, the proper approach to any dispute among believers should be tolerance, kind understanding, and reconciliation. As per Hazrat Mirza Sahib; The Holy Quran has not branded the disputants and those engaged in mutual altercations as Kafirs. Each party is designated Muslim. It ordains that if two factions of True Believers fall out and quarrel with each other, they should be reconciled...^x

The Necessity for Islamic Harmony and Concord: Hazrat Mirza Sahib's Pluralistic and Inclusivist Reply to the Question, "Who is a Muslim?"

Hazrat Mirza Sahib's ardent appeal for Islamic concord is all the more needed in our current times especially when Muslims nowadays seem to forget the very Quranic maxim of unity; "And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited..."^{xi} Let us look at the pathetic contemporary situation of the Muslim Ummah. Islam is now divided into numerous bickering sects that constantly fight each other even in trivial matters.

It is indeed sad how efforts and resources are being wasted in Muslims' fighting each other instead of preaching the magnificence of Islam to the world. What is more heart-rending is when Muslims of different sectarian persuasions physically commit violence against each other just to further their own points of view! May the All-Compassionate Allah have mercy on us, and save us from this deplorable situation besetting the entire Ummah. May Almighty Allah teach us to love one another since our Holy Prophet clearly declares that no person can be a true Muslim until he desires for his brothers and sisters what he desires for himself.^{xii}

One very crucial point that Hazrat Mirza Sahib emphasized in *Sirr-ul-Khilafah* is his inclusive and broad view of Islam. For him, every person who publicly professed that he is an adherent of Islam by subscribing to the Islamic creed (Kalima), "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah", is a Muslim. Only Allah knows the condition of each and everyone's faith (iman) and therefore no one has the right to expel a Muslim outside the fold of Islam if the person publicly professes to believe in the abovementioned creed. Nobody has the right to call a professing Muslim kafir because the state of our iman will only be eventually known in the Day of Reckoning. Commenting on the unfortunate conduct of some Shi'as to call some Companions as kafirs just because these Companions disagreed with Hazrat Ali on some matters, Hazrat Mirza Sahib had this to say:

...When true believer is cursed and is recklessly denounced as Kafir for no fault of his own and is subjected to abuse, he takes on the likeness of the prophets and joins the ranks of the elects of God. He is rewarded as the Prophet is rewarded. He receives compensation as the prophets do.^{xiii}

Subsequently, Hazrat Mirza Sahib warns Muslims not to be suspicious of fellow Muslims, nor spy on them, nor slander them, nor backbite them, as these constitute acts of bad faith towards fellow believers.^{xiv} By exhorting all Muslims not to malign nor accuse fellow believers in an unjust manner, Hazrat Mirza Sahib strongly echoed the hadith sharif of the Holy Prophet: "A true Muslim is he in whom other Muslims are safe from his tongue and from his hands."^{xv} Hazrat Mirza Sahib's entreaty for Islamic unity is therefore amply supported by both the words of Allah and by the admonitions of the Holy Prophet. In his exegesis of the Quranic ayah (Holy Qur-an 4:24): "And do not say to the one who greets you with the Muslim salutation (Assalamu alaykum); You are not a believer"; Hazrat Mirza Sahib wrote:

The Holy Prophet even warns Muslims: Beware! Do not judge with contempt those who recite our Kalima. Do not call them unbelievers. Beware! For he who calls a Muslim kafir is himself nearer to kufr than the one accused". Thus Muslims must heed this solemn warning from Almighty Allah and from the Holy Prophet.^{xvi}

Hazrat Mirza Sahib sternly warned Muslims to desist from calling their fellow Muslims kafir on the basis of petty trifles since this is considered to be one of the gravest sins that a Muslim can commit.^{xvii} The Holy Prophet clearly described the broad basis of Islamic unity and cautioned the Muslims against creating divisiveness. He said: "He who prays as we do, and faces the same Qiblah, and eats animals as slaughtered by us, then he is a Muslim, who has the protection of Allah and his Messenger; so do not betray Allah in His protection."^{xviii} Hazrat Mirza Sahib utilized the tolerant stance of the Qur-an towards disagreements among believers to substantiate his position that Muslims may sometimes err by disputing with each other regarding non-essential aspects of faith, yet these disputes do not make the disputants less of a Muslim. He reasoned:

Someone proclaims a verdict of kufr against True Believers, whereas God has called them True Believers even when they were warring with one another and He has regarded them as brethren among themselves. Even when one group is at war against each other, neither of them is Kafir in the eyes of God... the Holy Quran calls even the warring believers as "party from among the True Believers (firqatun-min-ul-mumineen)"... This guiding hint is enough for you if you are of the God-fearing people.^{xix} Thereafter, Hazrat Mirza Sahib requested both Shi'a and Sunni Muslims to leave aside the unproductive activity of kafir branding and spiteful name-calling against each other; and instead to assiduously labor for harmony, amity, and unity among all Muslims of the world regardless of their sectarian affiliations.^{xx}

Hazrat Mirza Sahib's Exhortation for Shi'a and Sunnis to Maintain Islamic Amity Towards Fellow Muslims

In the next three sub-sections, I will focus my interest on Hazrat Mirza Sahib's impassioned call for Shi'a and Sunni Muslims to love each other in unity and in peace. Hazrat Mirza Sahib singled out Shi'a and Sunni Muslims for his holy advice on unity since they both comprise the majority of the Ummah of the Prophet. It is deeply regrettable that throughout the past centuries, as attested by numerous instances in Islamic history, the rift between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims has done incalculable damage to the Islamic Ummah; such sectarian divisions lead to much animosities and unnecessary violence committed against each other. It behooves both Shi'a and Sunnis to heed the call of Hazrat Mirza Sahib to live in the spirit of Islamic fraternity and amity. Let us now examine what Hazrat Mirza Sahib has to say as to how both Shi'a and Sunni Muslims can manifest this ideal of Islamic unity in their dealings with each other.

Hazrat Mirza Sahib is aware that the issues dividing Shi'as and Sunnis are minor and trivial, and in his estimation, these matters should not be elevated to the point of causing division between them. Furthermore,

he says that the quarrels between them are caused by misunderstandings and extreme partisanship among their respective adherents; rather than legitimate disagreements on the fundamental doctrines of tawhid (divine monotheism) and risalah (prophethood). Shi'as should understand that bonafide Sunnis love the Ahlul-Bayt (the Holy Family of the Prophet) and always prayed for their welfare. Sunnis, especially belonging to the school of tasawwuf (Islamic mysticism) always acknowledged Hazrat Ali as one of the fountainheads of marifat (gnosis).^{xxi} All genuine Sunni Muslims accord great respect to Hazrat Ali and his family by mentioning them in their khutbah (sermons), and by supplicating for the welfare of the Ahlul-Bayt in all their formal prayers. In addition, Sunnis seek to understand and endeavor to sympathize with the Shi'as', at times to appear, excessive love for the Ahlul-Bayt since Shi'as feel that by doing so, they are complying with Rasulallah's request for all true believers to love his immediate family.^{xxii} Hazrat Mirza Sahib—although considering himself a strict adherent of the Ahlus Sunnah school of thought—unequivocally declares that he profoundly respects the sterling virtues and spiritual qualities of Hazrat Ali. He encouraged Muslims, specifically the Shi'as, that their love for Hazrat Ali should not becloud their hearts from refusing to appreciate the merits of the other blessed Companions who, like Hazrat Ali, were also stalwart and self-effacing servants to the cause of Islam.^{xxiii}

Hazrat Mirza Sahib likewise exhorted Muslims in general to continue giving due respect to the Holy Family of the Prophet. However, he warned Muslims to be very careful that they should not engage in exaggerations characterizing extreme partisanship to the Ahlul-Bayt. He asked the Muslims to be people of moderation and prudence, since these virtues promote unity and discourage division. Hazrat Mirza Sahib reminded Shi'a sectarians that extreme heroic-admiration of Hazrat Ali should not lead to disrespect to the other venerable Companions of the Prophet for to accuse the Companions of insincerity is shameful presumption and gross sin since the Holy Quran and the Hadith have already attested to the righteousness of the Companions; thus any disrespect of the first three Righteous Successors to the Holy Prophet can be taken to mean as not believing what the Qur-an and the Hadith tell us about the Companions' nobility and unmatched qualities. Furthermore, according to Hazrat Mirza Sahib, any disrespect to the first three Righteous Caliphs due to excessive love for Hazrat Ali is selfdestructing and self-contradictory since their accusations likewise tarnish the very character of Hazrat Ali who gave his loyal, one-pointed, and sincere obedience to his predecessor Caliphs. Surely Hazrat Ali was not a hypocrite; he wholeheartedly gave himself with no hesitation at all in the service of the first three Caliphs. To say that Hazrat Ali feigned obedience but harbored grudges to the first three Caliphs is to accuse Hazrat Ali of hypocrisy, double-dealings, and inauthenticity-God forbid! In the words of Hazrat Mirza Sahib:

Thus the Companions of Allah's Apostle did all they could in the service of Islam in conformity with their capabilities. In all that they did, they sought the pleasure of Allah... He who says that the Three Great Companions were

Kafirs, hypocrites and usurpers, thus tars all others also with the same brush because each one of them swore allegiance to Hazrat Abu Bakr, then to Hazrat Umar, and then to Hazrat Uthman...If Hazrat Abu Bakr had been a usurper in the eyes of Hazrat Ali, he would not have agreed to owe allegiance to him. He would have followed the example of Hazrat Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and migrated. Hazrat Ali was the soul of sincerity and fidelity. He did not show any resentment.^{xxiv}

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's Request for Shi'as Not to Commit Unjust Accusations and Acts of Dissensions Against the Essential Beliefs Adhered to by the Ahlus Sunnah

Hazrat Mirza Sahib fervently advised those Shi'as who attack and slander the Rightly Guided Caliphs and the Holy Companions to cease such activity because cursing even ordinary believers is un-Islamic and unethical. All the more disgraceful would it be for one to curse the Righteous Caliphs and the Holy Companions who were sincere helpers, supporters, and friends of the Holy Prophet! Prophet Muhammad enjoined believers to be kind to one another, and to forgive one another. Indeed, it is against the beautiful etiquette (adab) of Islam to love Hazrat Ali while at the same time insulting and maligning the holy Companions of the Blessed Prophet.^{xxv}

According to Hazrat Mirza Sahib, a denial of the right of the Righteous Caliphs to rule the Islamic Ummah is also an outright denial of Allah's taqdeer (Divine Plan) since everything comes from the Will of Allah. Therefore, Almighty Allah permits the historical circumstances leading to the accession and succession of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq, Umar Farooq, Uthman Dhun-Nurain, and Ali ibn Abi Talib to the office of the Caliphate. This historical succession of the Righteous Caliphate (Khulafur Rashidin) was due to Allah's Will, since nothing in this world happens without Almighty Allah's expressed permission. Even the burial of the Shaykhayn^{xxvi} in proximity to the blessed grave of the Holy Prophet shows the Shaykhayn Abu Bakr Siddiq and Umar Farooq's preeminent station. Their status as the two stalwart ministers of the Holy Prophet is even more confirmed even after their demise. Hazrat Mirza Sahib beautifully explained the Divine Wisdom hidden in this specific historical circumstance of burying the Shaykhayn side by side the grave of the Holy Prophet. This shows the closeness of the Shaykhayn to the Holy Prophet; and Almighty Allah seals this proof of nearness by situating Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar side by side the Prophet's resting place. In short, it is Almighty Allah's Divine Providence (qadar) and grace (ni'mat) that made the graves of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar to be placed side by side the Holy Prophet's resting place in order to put to silence forever the accusations against them. As Hazrat Mirza Sahib beautifully explained:

It is rare good fortune that these two Great Companions were buried alongside the Holy Prophet's sacred grave. Even Moses and Jesus would have envied this great honor, if they have been alive. But such exaltations do not come by merely longing for them. No one can get them by force. Unless one is destined to get these honors, no one can get them by many endeavors. Only such

people as are chosen by God, and are enveloped by His mercy gets these honors.^{xxvii} Then Hazrat Mirza Sahib opined that to say that the Shaykhayn were usurpers is likewise considered casting aspersion on the holiness of the Prophet Muhammad since, if that is the case (God forbid!) the blessed grave

of the Holy Prophet is situated side by side rebels, traitors, and transgressors (again, God forbid!). To quote Hazrat Mirza Sahib: Hazrat Abu Bakr was buried next to the grave of the sovereign of Prophets and the master of the holy persons. He lived very closely with the Beloved of God. After surviving him for sometime, he joined his company after death. It is a matter of great surprise that in the eyes of denigrators, God allowed the "usurpers and the traitors" to be close to the grave of the Holy Prophet and did not get rid of them even after death. How is it that those who are branded "usurpers" by the denigrators remained with the Prophet in life as well as after death? Our God is Holy and is above and beyond what the fabricators talk of his Prophet. God with his grace and blessing, kept the righteous Companions close to the master of the pious. It is a sign of great significance and is food for thought for those who shoot their tongues at the Great Companions... The sacred grave of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is worthy of the greatest respect and honor. It is sacrilege to say that it lies between the "usurpers" and "defectors".^{xxviii}

In addition, not to acknowledge the Righteous Caliphate's sequence of succession is tantamount to non-acceptance of the Immutable Will of Allah which is always reflected in human history. Even Hazrat Ali himself submitted to the rule of his predecessor Caliphs and he even helped and advised them in whatever way he can in order for their Islamic reign to be successful. Shi'as, who assign to themselves the name, "Alawi" (i.e., partisans of Hazrat Ali) should imitate this magnanimous act of Hazrat Ali towards his predecessor Caliphs. Hazrat Mirza Sahib shared the result of his judicious academic research which shows that even the ulama of the Shi'as were forced to give preeminence to Hazrat Abu Bakr's towering spirituality and his selfless service to Islam. According to Hazrat Mirza Sahib: When we asked the divisionists which of the men of mature age first accepted Islam and parted company with the unbelievers, they have perforce to admit that it was Hazrat Abu Bakr. Again when we ask them to tell us who migrated with the Holy Prophet and turned his back on his nearest and dearest and went where the Holy Prophet led him, they involuntarily exclaim it was Hazrat Abu Bakr. When they are faced with the question about the person who was the First Successor, they have to acknowledge that it was Hazrat Abu Bakr. They also hold that it was Hazrat Abu Bakr who collected the Qur'anic verses in the form of Book for the distribution to the cities. They also know that he was buried next to the Holy Prophet's grave. It is strange that excellences fell to the lot of those whom the denigrators regard as disbelievers. Moreover, the superiorities of Islam manifested themselves in their lives... Every category of nearness to the Holy Prophet was vouchsafed to Hazrat Abu Bakr in full. Still he is the target of vilification, while according to the confessions of these critics no one else received the glory which Hazrat Abu Bakr received.^{xxix}

Therefore, contributing to the amity and harmony of the Muslim Ummah by respecting the Righteous Caliphs will promote Islamic understanding and mutual goodwill. xxx Thus, Hazrat Mirza Sahib advised both Shi'as and Sunnis alike to come to a just and mutual agreement with each other so that they will be of one accord in mind, heart, and spirit; in so doing, this can remove the trivial misunderstandings that fiercely divided each other for centuries.

Concord and Fraternal Amity among Muslims—Whether Sunni or Shia—As Imperatives for the Ascendancy of Islam in the Future

Hazrat Mirza Sahib reminds both Shi'as and Sunnis (and indeed all Muslims) that the purpose why they should always be in harmony with each other is for the realization of the success and victory (fath) of Islam in this present world. Fraternity among all Muslim groups (jamaat) is for the purpose of promoting unity of all the followers of Prophet Muhammad who recite the Kalima which is the sure sign of faith. All Muslims are Ahl-al-Qiblah (people of one direction and perspective); thus, they should manifest this oneness of mind, heart, and spirit at all times.^{xxx} Hazrat Mirza Sahib's treatise, *Sirrul-Khilafah*, plainly states that when the worldwide Islamic Ummah will comply with this call of unity, then signs of heavenly assistance (nusrat) from Almighty Allah will descend from on high, and will make the Muslim Ummah victorious once again. Hazrat Mirza Sahib says:

It is incumbent upon you not to behave in a manner which incurs divine wrath. You should not court ruin by indulging in over haste. You should avoid the company of the transgressors... How does it lie in your mouth to brand the Companions kafir? God the Almighty has said of the Companions of the Holy Prophet: "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and those who are with him are hard against the disbelievers but tender among themselves (48:30)"... Thus, O ye Muslims! Save yourselves from misguidance. If you lean on sheer malice, it will not give you certainty. It will accentuate your suspicions.... He who turns his back on the Holy Quran and takes shelter in hearsay lands himself into the abyss of ruin and joins the ranks of ruined people... Refrain from entertaining doubts against the Companions and do not plunge into the abyss of destruction and disunity. Fear God if you are pious. Undoubtedly, the Companions of the Holy Prophet (Ashab Kiram) and his Scions (Ahlul Bayt) were spiritual people. They had surrendered themselves to God. They lived in pious retirement and isolation from the world. Thus do not give credence to the fiction that they disputed for mundane gains...^{xxxii}

If Sunnis and Shi'as fail to live up to Hazrat Mirza Sahib's spiritual advice to maintain harmony and unity among their ranks, they will self-destruct and will annihilate each other in their divisive quarrellings; and the enemies of Islam—who themselves are the very ones who fanned these sectarian squabbles within the Islamic World—will stand benefited from all these irrelevant wrangling. God forbid that these anti-Islamic and atheistic forces will use one group of Muslims to destroy the other. The Islamic belief in Divine Unity (tawhid) should be carried by all Muslims to its practical and actual manifestations of

unity, goodwill, and fraternity (akhuwwat), in order for the Muslims to thwart and confound the divisive machinations of the external enemies of Islam. It is only by applying the practical dimensions of the unity of Islam (tawhid) in our various dealings with our fellow Muslim brethren that Almighty Allah's help will once again descend on the Muslim Ummah. Therefore it is extremely crucial for both Sunnis and Shi'as to promptly put an end to the pointless, disloyal, unjust, and detrimental disputes against each other. Since all Muslims who profess the Unity of Allah and the final prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad are true believers, it is essential to leave aside trivial distinctions, which necessitate division and to focus instead on the myriad of essential doctrinal similarities, which positively results in harmony, fraternity, and unity among brethren in faith.

Epilogue: Faithful Adherence to the Quran and to the Traditions (Sunnah) of the Holy Prophet and of His Companions as Key Towards Achieving Goodwill and Harmony

For Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib, it is a sure divine sign concerning the truth of Islam that all Muslims, despite their adherence to varying schools-of-thought (in fiqh or jurisprudential rulings) unite in upholding this essence of the Muslim faith when it comes to the fundamental principles that make the person Muslim (i.e., the Kalima, the foundational creed of Almighty Allah's Unity and the final messengership of the Holy Prophet Muhammad). Similarly, according to Hazrat Mirza Sahib, the whole Ummah's universal adherence to the belief that the Holy Qur-an is Almighty Allah's self-disclosure to humankind is a living proof of how Muslims from different backgrounds, nationalities, and sectarian or jurisprudential persuasions are truly in unanimous agreement and are absolutely united in the certainty of their conviction regarding the veracity of the Kalima and the integrity of the Qur'anic texts.^{xxxiii} Therefore, since all Muslims are truly of one accord in upholding all the fundamental truths of the Islamic faith and in the integrity of the contents of the Holy-Qur-an, it is indeed useless and counterproductive for the propagation of Islam if Muslims continuously fight, bicker, and quarrel over superficial and trivial issues.

To end this essay, allow me to offer my sincere naseehat (advice) pursuant to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib's call for all Muslim brethren to dwell together in peace and harmony with each other. We, Muslims, need to be reminded time and again that Almighty Allah's help (nasr/nusrat) can only come if we begin to love our fellow brethren as ourselves. With Allah's nusrat also comes His fath (victory).^{xxxiv} The first step therefore to achieve Islamic re-awakening, reformation, and renewal is for Muslims to live together in peace and unity. Inshallah, if both Shi'as and Ahlus-Sunnah Muslims (and indeed all differing Muslim jamaats) will heed to this spiritual advice of Hazrat Mirza Sahib, Islam will become a great spiritual force in the world and there will occur genuine Islamic Renaissance on the face of the earth. Let us fervently pray and passionately labor to achieve Hazrat Mirza Sahib's dream and vision of universal Muslim concord by faithfully practicing the virtuous ways of the Holy Prophet Muhammad as passed on to us by his blessed

Companions. May the All-Compassionate Allah have mercy on the Ummah of the Holy Prophet, and may all believers in Allah's Oneness manifest unity, amity, and fraternity with each other so that Allah's religion will be victorious in this whole wide world. Ameen, thumma Ameen!

ENDNOTES

i Prof. Henry Francis B. Espiritu is an Assistant Professor VII in Philosophy at the University of the Philippines-Cebu Campus. He is a candidate in PhD-Philosophy at the Ateneo de Manila University. He is a convert to Islam, and a fervent student of the mystical writings of the Punjabi mujaddid (renewer of the faith) saint, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib. His Islamic name is Abdil Ghaffar.

ii Holy Qur-an 3:103; The Holy Qur-an: Translation and Commentary by Maulana Muhammad Ali. Columbus, Ohio: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore, 1998.

iii Hadith Sharif, al-Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Akhuwwat. Cairo, Egypt: Darul Kitab, 1973; p. 17ff.

iv Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib. *Sirr-ul-Khilafah: Secret of Caliphate* (First English Edition). Lahore: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore, 1971; p. 31.

v Rashidun means "Rightly Guided" in the classical Arabic of the Holy Qur-an. This refers to the first four righteous/ Rightly Guided Caliphs (Khulafah Rashidah) who closely followed the Holy Quran and the Sunnah (Holy Traditions) of the Holy Prophet in ruling the Islamic Ummah (Community) immediately after the Holy Prophet's demise. The Rashidun Caliphs according to the order of their reigns and according to the order of their virtuous preeminence were: Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique Akbar, Hazrat Umar al Khattab al Farooq, Hazrat Uthman Ghani Dhun Nurayn, and Hazrat Ali Ibn Abi Talib. The term Khulafah Rashida comes from the Prophetic Hadith, "Hold firmly to my Traditions (Sunnah) and to the Traditions of my Rightly Guided Caliphs" (See Dawood, Kitab-ul-Taraweeh, #8).

vi *Sirr-ul-Khilafah: Secret of Caliphate*, op. cit., p. 19. According to Hazrat Mirza Sahib, Hazrat Abu Bakr's epithet "Second Adam of Islam" can best be understood in the light of the latter's superb leadership and spiritual genius in preserving the unity and the integrity of Islam when the Islamic Ummah was attacked by internal dissensions and apostasy after the Holy Prophet's demise. Hazrat Abu Bakr was victorious against all the attacks that the enemies of Islam raised against the infant Muslim community during that crucial period of Islamic history right after the Holy Prophet's passing away. Throughout the pages of *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, one can also observe the deeply reasoned arguments made by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib showing that the maqamat (spiritual rank) of Hazrat Abu Bakr is second to the spiritual station of the Holy Prophet; and therefore, the excellence of Hazrat Abu Bakr's Khilafat reflected the glories of the just polity and benevolent governance of the Prophet Muhammad (hukumat Muhammadiyyah). See, *Ibid.*, pp. 19-21.

vii From Hazrat Mirza Sahib's book, *Ayyam-us-Sulh*,

published in 1899, p. 87 and quoted in N. A. Faruqi, *Ahmadiyyat in the Service of Islam*. Newark, California: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore, 1983; pp. vii.

viii N. A. Faruqi, *Ibid.*, p. viii.

ix *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, op. cit., pp. 7-11.

x *Ibid.*, p. 7.

xi Holy Qur-an 3: 103.

xii Hadith Sharif, al-Muslim, Kitab-ul-Ummah, Cairo, Egypt: Darul Kitab, 1974; p. 36ff. See also Hadith Sharif, al-Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Akhuwwat. Cairo, Egypt: Darul Kitab, 1973; p. 17ff.

xiii *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, op. cit., p. 4.

xiv *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

xv Bukhari Sharif, Kitab-ul-Iman, Cairo: Egypt: Darul Kitab, 1973; p. 4ff.

xvi *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, op. cit., p. 14.

xvii *Kanz-ul-Ummal*, Volume 2, p. 129; quoted in N. A. Faruqi, *Ahmadiyyat in the Service of Islam*, op. cit., p. 80.

xviii Bukhari, Kitab-us-Salaah 6; quoted in *Ahmadiyyat in the Service of Islam*, op. cit., p. 81.

xix *Ibid.*, p. 8.

xx *Ibid.*, pp. 7-9.

xxi Another personage considered as fountainhead of mystical gnosis according to the Sufis is Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq whom the Naqshbandi order of Sufis regards as their paramount spiritual teacher (murshid-e-mutlaq) next to the Holy Prophet. Naqshbandi Sufism traces the beginnings of its spiritual lineage (silsilah) to Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq.

xxii See Holy Qur-an 42:23.

xxiii *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, op. cit., pp. 43-45.

xxiv *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, op. cit., pp. 31, 43.

xxv *Ibid.*, pp. 39-43.

xxvi *Ash-Shaykhayn* means "the Two Respectable Elders" in the classical Arabic of the Holy Qur-an. This refers to the Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique Akbar and Hazrat Umar Farooq whose rulings are considered by the Ahlus-Sunnah to be part and parcel of the Prophetic Traditions (Sunnah) since they were in close proximity to the Holy Prophet and they advised the Holy Prophet in matters of governing the affairs of the Islamic community in Medina. For the Sufis particularly Hazrat Imam Rabbani Ahmad Farooqi Sirhindi, the title Shaykhayn refers to the preeminence and lofty spiritual station of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar in the Prophet's circle of Companionship. The term Shaykhayn refers to the highly elevated station of the first two Rightly Guided Caliphs next to the Blessed Prophet (See *Maktubat-e-Mujaddid Alf-Thani*. Istanbul: Hakikat Kitabevi Gazetcelik, 1984; Letters 36, 37, 48). Hazrat Imam Rabbani Sirhindi's explanation of the term Shaykhayn is fully corroborated by the hadith sharifs concerning Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar, viz, "The period of prophethood ends with me, if supposing prophethood will continue after I am gone, then Umar would be that Prophet." (*Kanz-ul-Ummal*, Volume 3; p. 283) and in another hadith "What was revealed in my heart by ilham (inspiration); God revealed it thereafter to Abu Bakr's heart. Abu Bakr confirms what was being first revealed in my heart." (*An-Nasai*, *Fazail-e-Abu Bakr Siddiq*, Volume

2; p. 75). In *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, Hazrat Mirza Sahib further corroborated Imam Rabbani Mujaddid Alf-Thani Sirhindi's explanation by providing a mystical explanation of the paramount excellence of the Shaykhayn among the Companions. Hazrat Mirza Sahib said that Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar, by their constant association (suhbat) and service (khidmat) to the Holy Prophet, became perfect mirrors and reflectors (zilli wal buruzi) of the Holy Prophet's virtues and attributes; thus they became completely lost (fanaa'i-Rasul) in the Holy Prophet's blessed personality. According to Hazrat Mirza Sahib, these are the reasons why the Shaykhayn were the "respectable elders" of the whole Muslim

Ummah (See *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, op.cit., pp. 3-4, 13, 16-21, 23-31, 34-40).

^{xxvii} Ibid., pp. 38.

^{xxviii} Ibid., pp. 34-35.

^{xxix} Ibid., pp. 36-37.

^{xxx} Ibid., pp. 41-43.

^{xxxi} Cf. N. A. Faruqi, *Ahmadiyyat in the Service of Islam*, op.cit., pp. 81-82.

^{xxxii} *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, op. cit., pp. 8, 9, 14.

^{xxxiii} See, Dr. Basharat Ahmad, *The Great Muslim Reformer of the Present Age—Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad*. Hayward, California: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore, 2001; pp. 31-32.

^{xxxiv} See, Holy Qur-an, Surah Nasr: ayah, 1-3.

THE COSMOPOLITAN NATURE OF THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

By Ebrahim Mohamed

[This article is a transcript of a speech delivered at a conference titled "Towards a Quranic Society" held in Johannesburg, South Africa in May of 2011. The conference was organized by Al-Burhaan, an Islamic publication group. Mr. Ebrahim Mohamed, President of the Lahore Ahmadiyya branch in South Africa, was invited to speak and also meet with conference organizers who are great admirers of Maulana Muhammad Ali's literary works. The article, which was very well received by the conference participants, provides an excellent outline of the unique aspects of Islam that promote the enhancement of pluralistic worldviews, the lack of which in the world today is causing much chaos and havoc.]

I recently delivered a speech entitled, "The Cosmopolitan Nature of Islam" at a conference organized by an Islamic publication group, Al-Burhaan¹, situated in Johannesburg, South Africa. The conference took place on the 14th and 15th May 2011. The theme of the conference was, "Towards a Quranic Society". I was invited by the head of the group, Mr. Aziz Shaikh who has been in contact with me in the past with regard to obtaining copies of the English translation and the Religion of Islam by Maulana Muhammad Ali. Mr. Shaikh had high praise for Maulana Muhammad Ali, describing his English translation as one of the best and recommended it, together with his Religion of Islam to the audience at the introduction to my speech.

Introduction

The subject of Muslim Cosmopolitanism¹ was recently discussed by Professor Bruce Lawrence of Duke University, USA on a visit to the University of Cape Town. He spoke about the emergence of Muslim cosmopolitanism, more from a cultural cum political perspective and did not dwell much on the cosmopolitan teachings as contained in the Holy Quran. My focus, therefore, is to highlight the cosmopolitan teachings of Islam as contained in the Holy Quran as I believe it is the only reliable testimony of the cosmopolitan nature of Islam, as opposed to inaccurate and biased conclusions drawn from the behavior of

Muslims which are often flawed and do not give a true picture of Islam.

Background

Post 9/11, Muslims have been criticized for their lack of tolerance and for their prejudices towards those who do not share their faith, and, within their own ranks, towards those who do not share their opinions. References are often made to acts of violence and particularly desecration of churches in Egypt, Malaysia Indonesia and Nigeria and mosques in the Indian subcontinent and elsewhere. In the same vein, acts of desecration of mosques in Gaza by extremist Jews and the irreverence shown towards the Holy Quran by Christian fanatics are highlighted and denounced. There, therefore, appears to be a general decay of true leadership, spirituality and guidance across all communities in the world. With the current uprisings in the Arab world, this situation has become more visible.

With regard to the Muslim community, blind patriotism, driven by age-old, national customs and influenced by dogmatic, politically motivated clerics coupled with many years of subjection to despotic rulers, are perhaps the main causes for anti-cosmopolitan behavior by certain sectors. Muslims often tend to see themselves as Arab, Indian, African, European, etc. first before seeing themselves as one 'borderless' Muslim whole. After the golden era of Islam, which lasted for about three centuries after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), illiteracy, superstitions, saint worship, once again reared its ugly head. Adherence to archaic, outdated and often erroneous interpretations of the law by theologians and law makers have stifled progress within a community struggling to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world. This situation has spawned wide spread prejudices, bias and bigotry that has kept communities apart for centuries. It is time Muslims stop thinking along the lines of Sunni, Shia, Wahabi, Bareilvi etc., and unite around the Holy Kalima, "There is no God besides Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah" - if they are

to do justice to the cosmopolitan message of Islam as expounded in the Holy Quran..

It is argued that the same prejudices and lack of tolerance are equally rife within European and American societies, but my approach, in this discourse, has been – let's sweep before our own door first. The expectation is that the Muslims, custodians of these sublime teachings, would set an example to the world by executing and implementing it with true humility and sincerity, as best they can. The Age of Cosmopolitism that we find ourselves in, places the responsibility on all of us to dispose of our nationalistic, racial and religious boundaries and prejudices. There is a great need for all to look beyond, cultural and religious borders and to embrace the world with all its diversity, with an open mind and respect for all. It is time that Muslims substitute, the antagonism and hostilities, so rife in our societies, for the love, compassion, empathy, forgiveness and tolerance that Almighty God in the Holy Quran and His Messenger, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) expect from us. The message is simple - BACK TO THE HOLY QURAN- for therein lie light and guidance much needed in today's societies! If we now examine the Holy Quran, we find a wide range of principles and practical lessons of a cosmopolitan nature. If implemented properly, Muslims should feel at home in a diverse global society.

The cosmopolitan nature of Islam

1. One God for all mankind

Worship is common to most of mankind. The concept of God might differ across religious lines but the existence and acceptance of some higher power is prevalent amongst all societies. In Islam, God is depicted as "Rabbul Alameen" The Creator, Nurturer and Fosterer of all the worlds – that is, the entire creation including all of mankind. "Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds," (1:1). Maulana Muhammad Ali, in his English Translation of the Holy Quran, Chapter 1, page 4, explains, and I quote: "The all-comprehensiveness of the Lordship of Allah in the very first words of the Quran is quite in consonance with the cosmopolitan nature of the religion of Islam,..." – unquote. The cosmopolitan nature or concept of God in Islam is unique. The tribal or national concept of God prevalent in other faiths, which result in people viewing themselves as "chosen" ones, is foreign to Islam. The Holy Quran states: "Nay, whoever submits himself whole-heartedly to Allah and he is the doer of good to others, he is the one who has his reward from his Lord" (2:112)

2. Mankind is 'one single nation'

In one sweeping statement, the Holy Quran erases age-old prejudices that have plagued mankind for centuries, by declaring that mankind is a 'single nation' "Mankind is a single nation...." (2:213) Ethnicity, tribalism, race, nationality, religion, language are of no consequence to Almighty God. Nobility and excellence lie in the degree of righteousness and subservience to God. "O Mankind,

We have created you from a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the noblest of you with Allah is the most dutiful of you. Surely Allah is Knowing, Aware" (49:13)

"And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colours. Surely there are signs in this for the learned. (30:22)

How often has it not been proven that prejudices exist simply because of ignorance of each other's cultures and beliefs etc? Differences within a diverse society are meant to serve as a means of enriching ourselves with the knowledge of others. It was never meant to generate hostility, bigotry and unfair bias against each other.

3. Islam, a universal, not tribal message

Unlike Moses who came to the Israelites and Jesus to the 'lost tribes of Israel', Muhammad (PBUH) brings a message of universal benefit. Referring to the Holy Prophet, the Holy Quran states: "And We have not sent thee but as a mercy to the nations." (21:107)

"The Prophet's advent will prove a mercy not only to the Arabs by making them a foremost nation in the world, but to the whole of humanity. The Prophet's being a mercy to the 'alamin', or all nations of the world, is to show that ultimately all nations will be received into the Divine mercy which was manifested through him. Already the teachings of the Quran have not only benefitted its followers, but even those who will reject its message, for, notwithstanding their rejection of it, they have accepted many of its principles." –MM Ali footnote to 21:107

4. Belief in all Prophets means respect for all people of different Faiths.

Muslims are told to accept all the prophets of God from Adam to the last prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and we are told not to make any distinction between any of them.

"...They all believe in Allah and His angels and His Books and His messengers. We make no difference between any of His messengers. ..." (2:285)

Religious bias is most probably the leading factor that creates division in the human race and therefore those of other faiths may benefit by submitting to the superior cosmopolitan teachings of the Holy Quran as seen here and elsewhere.

5. All places of worship are sacred to Muslims.

Paying lip-service to religious tolerance is not enough. Muslims are expected to be actively engaged in the preservation of all places of worship. "...And if Allah did not repel some people by others, cloisters, and churches, and synagogues, and mosques in which Allah's name is much remembered would have been pulled down. And surely Allah will help him who helps Him..." (22:40)

6. Allah's reward transcends religious boundaries.

As already stated, the concept of a "chosen Race" is foreign to Islam. The Holy Quran declares: "Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good, they have their reward with their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve." (2:62)

7. The Holy Quran teaches "freedom of religion" and peaceful propagation of the truth.

The Holy Quran prescribes complete freedom of religion. Whilst it is against any form of force or compulsion, it teaches how to bring people to the truth in a peaceful manner. This is fundamental to peaceful coexistence in a diverse cosmopolitan society. The Holy Quran clearly states: "There is no compulsion in religion – the right way is indeed clearly distinct from error" (2:256). "And if your Lord had pleased, all those who are in the earth would have believed, all of them. Will you then force people till they are believers?" (10:99) "Call to your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the best manner..." (16:125)

8. Marriage with women of the People of the Book (People of other Faiths such as Christians and Jews etc.) and partaking of their food (except that which is expressly prohibited for Muslims) are permitted.

"This day (all) good things are made lawful for you. And the food of those who have been given the Book is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. And so are the chaste among the believing women and the chaste from among those who have been given the Book before you..." (5:5)

9. The Holy Quran prohibits Muslims from abusing other 'Gods', worshipped by other people.

"And abuse not those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest, exceeding the limits, they abuse Allah through ignorance. Thus to every people have We made their deeds fair-seeming; then to their Lord is their return so He will inform them of what they did." (6:108)

The wisdom of this verse manifested itself a few years ago when Muslims in Afghanistan under the influence of the Taliban, destroyed Buddha statues. At the time this cowardly act, which has no basis in the Holy Quran, caused irreparable harm to an already tainted image of Islam, as the news media capitalized on it and broadcast it internationally.

In fact this injunction of the Holy Quran underpins the far reaching tolerance expected from Muslims and teaches Muslims how to co-exist in a broad cosmopolitan society even with those who worship "gods" besides Allah.

10. The leveling influence of the Pilgrimage

Another unique characteristic of Islam is the fact that it contains practical ordinances that give actuality to the theoretical side of Islam. It is not enough that we 'say' we believe in the oneness of God and the oneness of mankind, with claims of religious, racial, language and color tolerance. Muslims are expected to translate these lofty principles into practice. The pilgrimage is a way of implementing those principles; provide lessons to Muslims on how to live in peace and harmony, on an equal footing with fellow Muslims from other nationalities from across the world.

"And pilgrimage to the House is a duty which men owe to Allah — whoever can find a way to it" (3:97). Maulana Muhammad Ali in his "Religion of Islam" sums it up very aptly and I quote:

"No other institution in the world has the wonderful influence of the hajj in leveling all distinctions of race, colour and rank. Not only do people of all races and all countries meet together before the Holy House of God as His servants, as members of one Divine family, but they are clad in one dress — in two white sheets — and there remains nothing to distinguish the high from the low. There is a vast concourse of human beings, all clad in one dress, all moving in one way, all having but one word to speak, labbaika Allah-umma labbaika, meaning here are we, O Allah! Here are we in Thy Presence. It is hajj alone that brings into the domain of practicality what would otherwise seem impossible, namely, that all people, to whatever class or country they belong, should speak one language and wear one dress. Thus is every Muslim made to pass once in his life through that narrow gate of equality which leads to broad brotherhood.

All men are equal in birth and death; they come into life and pass out of it in the same way, but hajj is the only occasion on which they are taught how to live alike, how to act alike and how to feel alike." - The Religion of Islam, Hajj or Pilgrimage page 387 – unquote

Conclusion

The teachings of Islam are without a doubt sublime - of a truly cosmopolitan nature. A cosmopolitan behavior and attitude by all societies, can pave the way to a peaceful and harmonious co-existence with all of Allah's creation. With the Holy Quran as its guide, Muslims should be able to lead the way in the execution of such behavior thereby spreading the love and compassion sorely needed in the world today.

Footnote:

- ¹ The dictionary meaning of 'cosmopolitanism' within the context of this paper/discussion means "...not bound by local or national habits or prejudices; at home in all countries or places."

THE SOCIETAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S DOCTRINE ON CHARITABLE GIVING

By Prof. Henry Francis B. Espiritu¹

[This article is an expanded version of a conference paper delivered at an academic symposium hosted by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society – Philippines titled “Muhammad: The Final Prophet of Islam” on February 20, 2010. The author, Prof. Henry Francis B. Espiritu, (Assistant Professor VII in Philosophy at the University of Philippines – Cebu College) provides an impressively intuitive exposition on the institutions of charitable giving in Islam. Prof. Espiritu illustrates the underlying significance of charitable giving by explaining the concepts of “sadaqah” and “zakah” and providing examples from the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his early companions. The objective to better society through charitable giving, as Prof. Espiritu demonstrates, is a mere means to spiritual development of the individual.]

Righteous is the one who believes in Allah, and the Last Day and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and gives away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask and to set slaves free and keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate.² And they give food, out of love for Him, to the poor and the orphan and the captive. We feed you for Allah's pleasure only—We desire from you neither reward nor thanks.³

The Cosmos as Almighty Allah's Perpetual Act of Charity

According to Islam, Almighty Allah, the One and Only God, created the whole of creation out of the overflowing of His generosity and merciful love for His creatures.⁴ One of the Blessed Names of Allah Almighty is Al-Wadud, which means, “the Loving Well-wisher of one-and-all”. Almighty Allah's Name, Al-Wadud (The Loving) demonstrates that it is Allah's nature to perpetually manifest compassion and love to the whole ongoing universe; and this divine love flows towards His creation as the means for the preservation of the cosmos.

This divine well-wishing is Almighty Allah's perpetual act of charity and mercy to all his creatures.⁵ As human beings, whose source of origin and dependence of existence come from Almighty Allah's munificence, we should spiritually manifest God's attribute of Al-Wadud by being charitable to everyone and by being a genuine well-wisher to fellow humans, especially to those who are in dire need of our assistance. For this reason, Islam, being a religion of genuine mercy and compassion, greatly stresses the duty of all Muslims to support the poor and the needy in society. All Muslims, with no exceptions, are enjoined to manifest kindness

and charity to the deprived and the distressed fellow humans. In the words of Hazrat Baba Bulleh Shah, a great Sufi saint of Punjab: “No one is so poor that he cannot give something to his fellow humans. No one is so deprived of Allah's provisions that he can turn a blind eye to the cries of the needy”.⁶ In the perspective of Islamic sociology as practiced by the exemplar, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the act of charity as prescribed by the Divine Law (Sharia'h) is a way of bringing societal equity and is an effective means of manifesting justice to one's community. Islam, as a religion that seeks to manifest Divine justice to the world, has elevated charity to the level of sacred obligation to all those who name themselves Muslims. The Muslim Ummah can take great strides in spiritual development towards genuine Islamic Renaissance when believers, purged out of their greed, vanity, and caprice begin to generously and cheerfully spend a portion of their wealth in charity to the destitute for the sole purpose of winning Almighty Allah's pleasure (raza). A genuine believer curbs his animalistic instincts, extravagant passions, and capricious wants by constant acts of charity and by performing meritorious deeds of benevolence to the needy, the unloved, and the impoverished.

Zakah and Sadaqah as Concrete Manifestations of the Islamic Understanding of Charity

Islam establishes two kinds of charities: zakah and sadaqah. Zakah, in Arabic literally means, “to bloom,” “to be wholesome,” “to be pure”, and “to refine something”.⁷ Zakah implies spiritual purification from the entanglements of our material possessions.⁸ Giving up a fragment of our resources which we own in excess of what is needed for our survival, is to “purify” and to make our resources “wholesome” so that it may be cleansed from monetary greed and worldly attachments. Deducing zakah from one's income is a spiritual discipline and a fitting acknowledgment of the fact that the actual giver of bounties is God, from whose benevolence all blessings emanate. Since the Provider of every provision is God, we the recipient of His kindness is duty bound to spend some portion of His provisions for His cause and for His good pleasure.

The distribution of our zakah also signifies that true Muslims can let go of their wealth by utilizing it for the service of humanity. True Muslims are they who prioritize Allah's Laws and service to humanity as topmost precedence in their lives. True Muslims are those who can sacrifice a portion of their wealth on behalf of suffering humanity. The Islamic law governing Zakah is to take from those who have wealth and give

it away to those who do not. This circulation of wealth is a way to balance social inequality and to spiritually promote distributive justice. The Holy Prophet of Islam established the institution of zakah to make concern for the poor a permanent and compulsory duty to those who called themselves Muslims. The commandment of paying charity, in its form as zakah is mentioned in the Qur'an twenty-seven (27) times along with the establishment of the daily formal liturgical prayers (salaah).⁹ This shows the significance that Almighty Allah attached to this pillar of Islamic faith. In Islam, religious injunctions of the Shariah (Divine Law) are divided into two aspects; huquq-ul-Allah (Divine rights) and huquq-ul-ibad (rights of other persons). Zakah is a form of worship since it belongs to the rights of Allah that believers dispense charity. Allah Himself in no uncertain terms commanded the giving of charity. Charity-giving belongs also to the rights of other persons because for Islam the needy in the society have also rights over a portion of our wealth. Therefore, the bestowing of charity to the needy is one of the Islamic pillars that intersect both the rights of Allah and the rights of society. Charity-giving is both a divine worship and a societal duty. This is why the Qur'an juxtaposes the command to give zakah together with the command to keep one's daily prayers. If the believers do not pay his charity, his prayers will not be answered. In the words of the Holy Prophet; If a person prays but does not give his alms-due, his prayers are worthless and valueless in the sight of Allah; and Allah will not listen to his supplications.¹⁰

To emphasize further, zakah in its spiritual dimension is an act of worship while in its external form it is the carrying out of social service (khidmat). It is therefore not just the external payment of a tax as it is apparently understood but is rather an act of deep sacred significance befitting divine worship. Its importance is underlined by the fact that the Qur'an treats it as being equal to salaah (five daily prayers). The Qur'an frequently enjoins the believers "to perform prayers and to pay the zakah." It goes to the extent of saying that one cannot attain righteousness unless one spends out of one's wealth for the love of God: You cannot attain to righteousness, unless you spend out of what you love. And what you spend, Allah surely knows it.¹¹ Therefore, from the aforementioned Qur'anic passage, it is clearly articulated that the test of charity lies not in giving away something we have discarded but the things that we value greatly, something that we cherish. It is unselfishness and sincerity in giving-up what we love and hold dear that please God Almighty.

The Socio-Ethical Significance of the Prophetic Injunction to Dispense Charity to the Needy

The requirement of Islam that all its adherents should spend their wealth freely for the common good of society is not only limited to the payment of the obligatory

collection of zakah. According to a hadith, the Prophet observed: In one's wealth there is a charity due to God and His people, and this is zakah; but over this, one can dispense his wealth generously by way of voluntary alms giving (sadaqah) based on his sincere intention (ikhlas).¹²

Soon after the death of the Prophet, the first Caliph of Islam, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq, strongly emphasized the need to be mindful of the giving of charity as explicitly expressed in the abovementioned hadith to the wayward Arabs who apostatized from Islam by their denying of zakah as one of the pillars of faith. Hazrat Abu Bakr admonished the Arab dissidents in this manner: God has ordained that the rich are to pay out of their wealth to that extent which is sufficient for the needs of the poor; so that if they do not find food and clothing, or any other need remains to be fulfilled, it would be because the rich are not doing their duty; and for this God will take them to task on the Day of Judgment. Consequently, those who give the rights of the poor by paying zakah, Allah's mercy and forgiveness will descend on them with abundance—and the poor will pray for their forgiveness and will bless them.¹³

Aside from zakah, the expenditure of the people in need in an Islamic society is covered by the faithful's freewill and voluntary charity called sadaqah (from Arabic, meaning, "righteousness" from the root sadqa, "to speak the truth", "to be true", "to be truthful", and "to be faithful")—a very wide term used in the Qur'an.¹⁴ According to the great Sufi saint and mystic, Hazrat Muhaiyuddin Ibn Arabi, almsgiving is called sadaqah to indicate the truthfulness (sidq) and sincerity (ikhlas) of the giver's inward faith. Hazrat Ibn Arabi goes on to say that sadaqah is a voluntary act of worship, a choice made out of one's own freewill. If the act of giving sadaqah is something forced-upon or done out of compulsion, it has no religious merit.¹⁵ Hazrat Ibn Arabi says: For if man makes the giving of sadaqah incumbent for himself out of love for Allah; then Allah Almighty likewise makes it incumbent upon Himself to have mercy upon such a person and forgive his transgressions.¹⁶

The only difference between sadaqah and zakah is that sadaqah is the product of humane sensitivity on the part of the donor to give alms voluntarily as befitting his sense of mercifulness towards the needy; whereas zakah is given on the basis of a fixed and obligatory percentage of the giver's property (nisab) as specified in Islamic jurisprudence (Shari'ah). In the case of zakah, there is a system of collection set up under Islamic law and there are persons appointed as collectors and custodians of these dues. The money thus collected is meant for the general welfare of the community. In the case of sadaqah, the bequest is made directly and spontaneously from one individual to another and the

amount given is based on the discretion of the giver depending on the discerned need of the receiver.¹⁷ Thus the spirit of kindness and well wishing is the essence of the Islamic dynamics of charity. The giver is not to expect any reward from the beneficiary, as his only motive is to gain closeness to Allah. Although a true and sincere believer does not yearn to be reciprocated by Allah, yet Almighty Allah Himself promises that there awaits for him an abundant reward coming from His grace—material, moral, and spiritual—what God deems it best to confer on His servant, His servants accept these blessings with gratitude.¹⁸

The hadith clearly states that the reward for giving charity in secrecy is seventy times greater than that of giving it manifestly.¹⁹ The Qur-an warns us against spending “to be seen of men”.²⁰ This attitude of showing-off one’s giving is purely conceit and vain-glory and is not real charity. Almighty Allah gives a very beautiful metaphor to illustrate the true heart of a sincere giver of charity. It is like a field with good soil on a hillside. It catches good showers of rain and the moisture penetrates the soil. The favorable conditions inherent in the field increase the harvest enormously.²¹ Similarly, the bountiful heart of a person of genuine generosity is well pleasing to God Almighty. He invites God’s graces and mercies to come to his life through his charitable giving. Since charity is purely for the sake of God, it has value only if something good and valuable is given. It should be lawfully earned or acquired by the giver. It should include such things as are of use and value to others. Furthermore, the sole intention (niyyah) of the giver is solely to please Almighty Allah and to win His proximity- and not monetary rewards or worldly benefits that may accrue from one’s charitable giving. The Qur’an states that “charity is for the poor and needy”.²² This general principle enjoins us to help people in need, be they good or bad, on the right path or not, Muslims or non-Muslims. We are not to judge the recipient of our charity by the abovementioned considerations.

All who are needy needs our help no matter how different their culture and belief system to our own. The chief ends in charity, as reiterated here, should be God’s pleasure and our own spiritual cultivation of a sensitive heart. It is by now very clear that the charity of the Muslim as sadaqah is not limited to fellow Muslims; it is to be given to the needy irrespective of his creedal and cultural divergences.²³ The sole purpose, therefore, of our charitable giving is to gain our Almighty Allah’s pleasure (raza) and to achieve nearness to Him. In the words of the Holy Qur-an: Their guidance is not thy duty, but Allah guides whom he pleases. And whatever good thing you spend, it is to your good. And you spend not but to seek Allah’s pleasure.²⁴ To further elucidate the abovementioned Qur-anic passage, the hadith likewise emphasized that “charity is like placing a thing of value

in the palm of God”.²⁵ Hence, it is incumbent to dispense charity with this hadith in mind. God is the ultimate Recipient and Goal of our charity—it is for His good pleasure alone that we give alms to the needy in the community. We should therefore give our best alms by calling to mind this spiritual perspective.

Shining Paradigms of Charity as Illustrated in the Life of the Holy Prophet of Islam

The Holy Prophet Muhammad is the perfect exemplar of generous dispensing of charity, as he is the best model of sacrificial giving. If the Holy Prophet had some money at home, he could not sleep until he gave this money to the poor, the orphan, the wayfarer, and the destitute. The Holy Prophet never refused to give charity to someone who asked from him. If there was nothing that he can offer to the person asking for something, he gave a heartwarming smile and a tight hug to bring joy to the needy.²⁶ The Prophet described himself as a custodian of charity while stressing that everything comes only from the generous hand of Almighty Allah. The Holy Prophet oftentimes had a guest during meal times. He often asked his dearly beloved wife Hazrat Aishah, to open the door of their house during dining time so that he can invite the poor and the traveler to dine with him. He always paid out of his own money the outstanding debts of his deceased Companions.²⁷ He described a generous believer in this manner:

A true believer in the provisions of Allah is never stingy. A generous Muslim is one who manifests his proximity to Allah Almighty and is also dear to the heart of the people. A miser is far from Allah’s favor and from the heart of the people.²⁸ Hazrat Abu Dharr Ghaffari, a companion of the Holy Prophet, reported that the Prophet while sitting in the shade by the wall of the Kaabah, said: “They are the losers and Almighty Allah dislikes them.” Abu Dharr enquired, “Who are they, O Messenger of God?” The Prophet replied: “Those who pile up heaps of wealth and do not like to spend them in the way of Allah but continue to hoard them for their own benefit.”²⁹

The Prophet revolutionized the Islamic perspective in as far as possession of wealth is concerned. A Muslim could possess wealth but even in his own wealth, there is also the right of society included in it. The Holy Prophet himself explicitly articulated the abovementioned perspective when he said that besides the performance of one’s prayer, it is also made obligatory for Muslims to give charity to the needy. The Holy Prophet taught that the wealth which a man earned was not entirely his own. The needy has a right to charity from a Muslim’s wealth. The Holy Prophet declared that charity is binding on every believer. Once after hearing the Prophet’s sermon on charitable giving, a Bedouin companion of the Prophet was worried since he cannot give anything due to his extreme poverty. The Prophet then gave him

an advice that he work or do business and lay-in-store some amount for charity. The Bedouin replied that if he cannot do this what should he do as alternative? The Prophet advised him to do active charity by doing actions that are beneficial to society like removing sharp stones along the walkways, drawing water for the thirsty, or by meeting people with a warm and cheerful smile.³⁰

The abovementioned hadith-narrative clearly corroborates what the Punjabi Sufi saint Hazrat Baba Bulleh Shah said: "There is no person so poor that he cannot give something to the needy in the society". The Islamic concept of charity is very broad at best—so that even poor Muslims can likewise dispense charity. The Holy Prophet declared that enjoining the good and forbidding evil are themselves expressions of charity.³¹ To close this section, it is beneficial to quote the words of the Holy Prophet showing how his understanding of charity is very down-to-earth and practical and can be undertaken by rich and poor Muslims alike: On every bone of the fingers, charity is incumbent everyday. One assists a man in riding his beast by lifting his provisions to the back of the animal, this is charity; and a good word is charity... Removal from the way of that which is harmful is charity... Every good deed is charity, and it is good deed that you meet your brother with a cheerful countenance; and it is charity when you pour water from the bucket into the vessel of your brother.³²

Practical Examples of Islamic Charity in the Lives of the Companions of the Holy Prophet

The Prophet was the most generous of men. He used to give the needy with his own property. When asked for anything, he never refused any beggar. If he had nothing to give, he would borrow from one of his Companions and pay him later. His Companions followed the charitable deeds of their Prophet whom they take as their perfect guide and exemplar.

The Prophet's wives were also known for their alms giving. Hazrat Aishah Siddiqah, the youngest wife of the Prophet too was known as the mother of the poor (umm al-masakin) for her regular and profuse alms-giving.³³ Whenever anyone uttered words of blessings and prayers for her, she used to return the same with more beautiful and copious words of blessings. We likewise have shining examples of generosity set by the Khulafah Rashidin or the Rightly Guided Caliphs. Once when the Holy Prophet urged them to give sadaqah, Hazrat Umar al Farooq brought half of what he owned, but only to find that once again, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq had outdone him by giving away all that he had for the sake of Allah. Hazrat Abu Bakr beautifully answered when the Prophet asked him what provisions the latter left for his family: "I left for them Allah and the Prophet as their provisions—and Allah alone suffices for them."³⁴

In the early days of his successorship as the first Caliph of the Prophet, Hazrat Abu Bakr, earned his sustenance by milking the sheep of a Bedouin woman. It was only sometime in the latter part of his Caliphate that he was given a small salary by the State. While on his deathbed, Hazrat Abu Bakr gave a small clay flask to those around him and requested them to give it to the next Caliph after the former's death. Hazrat Umar succeeded him, and when he broke the flask, coins came out together with the letter written by Hazrat Abu Bakr's hand: "I lived my life in the manner of the poorest Bedouin of Medina, and I stored in this flask, my latest salary. After my death, these coins should be given back to the Bayt-ul-Mal (public treasury). I want to bequeath it back to the people". After reading the letter, Hazrat Umar Farooq wept and said: "Oh Abu Bakr, we can never out-do you in charitable giving! Even in death, we cannot out-give your charitable giving"³⁵

There is also a very interesting narrative on the generosity of Hazrat Uthman al-Ghani, the third Caliph of Islam. There was a time when the people in Medina were in great distress due to a long spell of drought. The people supplicated that Almighty Allah will relieve them from this difficulty. Days passed, Hazrat Uthman's caravan arrived in Medina with various food commodities. There were one thousand camels in that caravan, loaded with various edibles from Syria and Lebanon. When the news got around Medina, all the great traders gathered in Hazrat Uthman's house. Upon meeting him, the traders expressed their pressing desire to purchase the foodstuffs so that they could distribute these to the residents of Medina who were in dire need of food. Without hesitating for even a moment, Hazrat Uthman al-Ghani donated all his caravan's foodstuffs to the poor of Medina instead of selling it to the traders. He reasoned that he can get ten times profit for every worth of the goods that he gave freely to the people. Thinking that a philanthropist will reimburse Hazrat Uthman for his expenses, the traders asked him how he can get a tenfold profit for each worth of his goods. Hazrat Uthman recited the verse of the Qur-an (Surah An'am: 160) which says; "whoever brings a good deed will have tenfold like it". He explained to them that before the traders expressed their interest in buying his goods, he already planned to give away in charity all his foodstuffs to the needy people of Medina.³⁶

Practical Examples of the Islamic Understanding of Charity as Manifested in Islamic Societies

Inspired by the verses of the Quran and the exemplary practices of the Holy Prophet and his Blessed Companions, the giving of zakah and sadaqah to individuals or institutions remains prevalent in Muslim societies. In Islamic societies, the spirit of helping others for the sake of gaining the pleasure of Almighty Allah can mostly be observed in matters of education, which

is the dissemination of knowledge to the society. The Prophet is reported to have said that learning something beneficial and teaching it to others is a perpetual form of charity (*sadaqah jariah*) on the part of the giver.³⁷ This hadith elucidates how the Holy Prophet valued universal education. He also acknowledges the importance of the dissemination and transmission of knowledge from one generation to another. This hadith paved the way for the rise and establishment of educational charitable foundations (*waqf*) providing free or affordable education to Muslims. One can read from the annals of Islamic history that various Muslim rulers emphasized the establishment of *madrassah*³⁸ throughout their domains. During the medieval period and even up till now, these *madaris* (plural of *madrassah*) abound throughout the world of Islam. Wealthy Muslims helped in running the *madrassah*, not only through their *zakah*, but also by making endowments of their properties to these *madaris*. The destitute students were given financial allowances or stipends aside from the free board and lodging provided by the *madrassah* to them.³⁹

The reign of the pious Ummayyad Caliph, Hazrat Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, was considered by Islamic historians as the brightest period of Islam second only to the enlightened and righteous reigns of the Shaykhayn (the first two Caliphs of Islam—namely, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq and Hazrat Umar).⁴⁰ During his enlightened reign, the rich were faithfully paying their *zakah* tax and they likewise give their voluntary *sadaqah* in abundant measure to the effect that provincial governors found themselves with surplus funds in their respective *Baytul Mal* (State Treasury). Hence they inquired from the Caliph what to do with the surplus funds. The sagacious Caliph advised them to establish institutions of knowledge such as *madaris*, educational libraries, astronomical observatories, house of scientific research as well as charitable self-sustaining foundations (*waqf*) to assure the perpetuity of these educational activities.⁴¹

Sadaqah in the form of charitable endowments (*waqf*) is known as *sadaqah jariah*, i.e. alms in perpetuity. Giving someone proper education, publishing beneficial books, establishing libraries, helping someone recover from disease by monetary aid, looking after orphans and destitute; giving scholarships to poor but deserving students—all such charitable works, come under the category of *sadaqah jariah* or perpetual charity. This is the reason why many centers of social welfare have continued to function in the Muslim community up to the present times. From the many directives found in both Qur-an and Hadith, and from the practical examples illustrated by the Sunnah of our Holy Prophet and His Righteous Companions, our predecessors in faith established hundreds and thousands of charitable foundations throughout the Islamic world. From soup kitchens, dispensaries, orphanages, educational

institutions, publishing houses, libraries, institutions providing interest-free financial assistance to the needy, hospitals, infirmaries, and mutual assistance societies—these charitable societies abound in the Muslim world even up till now. The presence of these institutions displays the beautiful, merciful, and benevolent face of authentic and Qur-anic Islam as practiced by the Holy Prophet. These charitable institutions practically exhibit the social responsibility that Islam feels towards society. These are perfect manifestations of the merciful nature of the Islamic faith. Likewise, these charitable organizations show the Muslims' unflinching belief that all graces (*ni'mat*) come from Allah Almighty, and we are only given these blessings as *amanat* (trust) for a limited duration in our earthly sojourn; and these provisions should be utilized for the sake of Allah's pleasure and to be used in the way of Allah. Thus, our charitable giving makes us gain Divine proximity and Allah's affection.

Alms given with a willing and generous heart helps create strong bonds of love and sincerity between the rich and the poor. Ever since time immemorial, there has been a continuous conflict between the rich and the poor due to socio-economic inequities. Generally the rich looked upon the poor as a constant burden to the society. On the other hand, the poor maintained a strong stance of resentment and envy toward the rich. This divisive attitude can be seen not just in the poverty-stricken countries but in developed nations as well. Through the institution of charitable giving, Islam enjoined the rich to be merciful to the needy and encouraged the strong to take care of the weak.⁴² If only the rich people pay their obligatory alms in the form of *zakah* and give alms over and above *zakah*, which is called *sadaqah*, the underprivileged masses will be immensely helped.⁴³ Muslims should bear in mind that *zakah* is only a minimum requirement that he should pay, but there is no upper limit to the giving of voluntary charity in the form of *sadaqah* for a Muslim whose heart is teeming with Allah's love and sympathy to the needy world.

The Islamic Practice of Zakah/Sadaqah as Venue for Benevolent Concern and Social Responsibility

There is a great sociological wisdom in the Prophet's doctrine regarding charitable giving. The dispensing of charity, specifically in its forms of *zakah* and *sadaqah* prevent the monopolization of vast riches into the hands of the vested few. If the vast amounts of riches are concentrated in the hands of greedy individuals, it usually results in the oppression of the poor and the marginalized. The Holy Prophet's spiritual "socialism" paved the way for an ethics and praxis of social responsibility for the rich to take care of the poor and for the poor not to have bitter resentment against the rich. Everyone in the society, be they rich or poor, need each other to nurture each other's capacity for humane sensitivity and cooperation leading to societal concord

and harmony.⁴⁴

In its practical dimension, the Islamic instantiations of charity may take on many forms—one's personal efforts, talents, skills, learning, properties, or possessions; all these can be shared to the society as charity. Dispensing charity is for everyone. One does not have to be wealthy to be able to give charity. Charity begins by giving out of what one has. Giving a glassful of water to the thirsty wayfarer is an act of charity—if sincerely given; this act gives immense pleasure to Almighty Allah. The Holy Prophet considers all Muslims as rich in the sense that all Muslims can give something to the needy—in one way or another. The Holy Qur'an and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet show that commanding what is good, advising, helping those who suffer from systemic injustice, the smiling of one's countenance to give joy to another, removing something from the road that might injure passers-by; these are all considered charity in the broadest sense.

The real richness, according to Islam lies in the sincere heart of the giver. People are as rich only as their sincerity. Poverty of the heart is the real wretchedness that eats-up the sensitive feeling to be vulnerable to the needs of suffering humanity. Real riches lie in our spirit; true spiritual riches can be found in our heart. There is no other medicine that can remedy a stingy and miserly person whose life is characterized by selfishness, avarice, and egotism—only the patient, constant, and sincere practice of charitable giving can cure the egotistical and insatiable heart from illiberality and selfishness.

A real Muslim is one whose spirit has been softened to the cries of the helpless "other". A bonafide Muslim is one who weeps with compassion when he sees the woundedness of the world—and he effectively responds to this woundedness by acting accordingly through his sacrificial, heartfelt, and sincere giving. Charity is the perfect demonstration of a believer's merciful and compassionate vulnerability to be available for others. The teachings of the Holy Prophet concerning charity show that Islam did not leave the poor and the needy to the mercy of the oppressors. Islam is interested in the spiritual development of humankind—building a just society and training the hearts and spirit of humanity to manifest in their heart of hearts the all-embracing attributes of Allah as the All-Loving One (Al-Wadud) and the All-Merciful One (Al-Rahman).

May Almighty Allah grant grace and mercy on us so that each one of us will be, Insha'Allah, harbingers and servants of mercy and compassion to a world which is so in need of these divine virtues. May all Muslims exhibit the glorious manifestations of Almighty Allah's names, Al-Wadud (The Most Loving), Ar-Rahman (The Most Compassionate), and Ar-Rahim (Most Merciful), in

their lives by dispensing charitable deeds to the needy in their respective societies. Ameen!

Footnotes:

- ¹ Prof. Henry Francis B. Espiritu is Assistant Professor VII at the University of the Philippines-Cebu College. He obtained his Master of Arts (MA Philosophy) from the University of the Philippines-Diliman and his Bachelor of Arts BA Political Science (Cum Laude) from the University of the Philippines-Cebu. He is a PhD Candidate (Philosophy) at the Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City. He is a board member of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society in the Philippines, and is actively engaged in the promotion of the authentic, peaceful, rational, and egalitarian teachings of Islam as espoused in the works and writings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and Maulana Muhammad Ali of Lahore.
- ² Al-Qur'an, Surah Baqara: 177; Maulana Muhammad Ali Translation (Columbus, Ohio: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore).
- ³ Ibid., Surah Insan: 8, 9.
- ⁴ See, Hazrat Ibn Arabi, Ahkam al-Quran (Lucknow, India: Ishaat Islami Kutabkhana, 1979); pp. 175-176.
- ⁵ Ibid., pp.177-180.
- ⁶ Hazrat Baba Bulleh Shah Qadri, Abyaat-e-Baba Bulleh Shah (Multan: Majliss-e-Baba Bulleh Shah, 1986); p. 54.
- ⁷ Shaykh Nasser al-Hurayni. Qamus-e-Alam 6th abridged edition (Cairo, Egypt: Sayyidah Maimoonah Press, 1963), in the Zakah entry.
- ⁸ Zakah, from the definition of the Islamic Shari'ah,, is an annual contribution of two and a half percent (2.5%) of one's income to public welfare and for the alleviation of the needy and of the less fortunate. (See, al-Hurayni, Ibid.)
- ⁹ Osman Nuri Topbas Effendi, Islam: Spirit and Form (Istanbul: Erkam Publishers, 2003); pp.189-190.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., p.190.
- ¹¹ Al-Qur'an Ahl-Imran: 92.
- ¹² An-Nasaai, As-Siyam 2; Al-Infaq, 6.
- ¹³ Hazrat Maseehullah Khan Deobandi, The Peerless Abu Bakr Siddique Akbar: The Confidant of the Prophet (Azaadville, South Africa: Darool-Uloom Azaadville, 1968), p. 52.
- ¹⁴ Shaykh Nasser al-Hurayni. Qamus-e-Alam 6th abridged edition, op. cit., in the Sadaqah entry.
- ¹⁵ Hazrat Muhaiyuddin Ibn Arabi, Ahkam al-Quran, op., cit.; p.180.
- ¹⁶ Ibid., p. 181.
- ¹⁷ Maulana Muhammad Ali, The Living Thoughts of Prophet Muhammad, op. cit., pp.120-121.
- ¹⁸ See Al-Qur'an, Surah An'am: 160.
- ¹⁹ Al-Baydawi, Anwar al-Tanzil, Volume 2; p. 211.
- ²⁰ Al-Qur'an, Surah Baqarah: 264, 271.
- ²¹ Ibid., Surah Baqarah: 265.

- ²² Surah Baqarah: 272, 273.
- ²³ Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad*, op. cit., pp. 96-97.
- ²⁴ Surah Baqarah: 271-274.
- ²⁵ Quoted in Osman Nuri Topbas Effendi, *Islam: Spirit and Form*, op. cit., p. 189.
- ²⁶ Al Bukhari, *Sahih Bukhari*; *Bad-al Wahy*, 5-6; *An-Nasai*, *Siyam* 2; *Ahmad Hanbali*, *Musnad*, 1, 288, 363.
- ²⁷ Osman Nuri Topbas Effendi, *Muhammad, the Prophet of Mercy: Scenes from His Life* (Istanbul: Erkam Publishers, 2005); pp. 148-150.
- ²⁸ Al Qudai, *Musnad al Shihab*, I: 211, *At-Tirmidhi*, *Birr* 40, 41. See also M. Fethullah Gulen, op. cit., pp. 297.
- ²⁹ *Sharh Bukhari Sharif wal Muslim* (Cairo, Egypt: Maktab Darul Tasneef, 1973); p. 259.
- ³⁰ Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad*, op. cit., pp. 96-97.
- ³¹ *Bukhari, Sahih-al-Bukhari*, 24: 31.
- ³² *Mishkat* 6:6; *Bukhari* 46: 24; quoted from Maulana Muhammad Ali, *Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad*, op.cit., p. 97.
- ³³ *Hazrat Imam Al-Ghazali, Ihya Ulum Ud-Din*, 298
- ³⁴ *Maseehullah Khan Deobandi*, op. cit., p. 46.
- ³⁵ M. Fethullah Gulen, *The Messenger of God, Muhammad: An Analysis of the Prophet's Life* (New Jersey: Light Inc. and Isik Yayainlari, 2006);

- p. 296. For a fuller version of the narratives on the generosity of Hazrat Abu Bakr, see Tabari, *Tarikh-al-Khulafa Rashidun* (with Arabic and English Texts) Volume 1 (Beirut: Darr al Birr, 1965); p. 252.
- ³⁶ *Tabari* Volume 3, *Ibid.*; pp. 38-40.
- ³⁷ *Ahmad, Kitabul Zakah*.
- ³⁸ *Madrassah* is a free boarding school for religious and scientific instructions. These free educational institutions that are endowed by a Muslim State from the collected zakah or from pious endowments (*waqf*) provided free education to the masses.
- ³⁹ Osman Nuri Topbas Effendi, *Islam: Spirit and Form*, op.cit.,p. 221. See also, Ramkrishen Bhatt, *Madrassah and Wakf Endowment during the Mughal Era* (Hyderabad, Deccan India: Vande Mataram Pte. Ltd., 1960); pp.204-208.
- ⁴⁰ Osman Nuri Topbas Effendi, *Islam: Spirit and Form*, op.cit.,pp. 190-191.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴² *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ There are hadiths emphasizing the importance of giving sadaqah during the holy month of Ramadhan. Therefore, during this blessed month of fasting, all those who can afford it, should strive to help the poor and the needy in one way or another through their generous giving.
- ⁴⁴ Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad*, op.cit., pp. 119-124.

TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

A discussion on why distress is necessary for spiritual growth and how this is explained through the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad

By Maulana Muhammad Ali (translated into English by Dr. Mohammed Ahmad)

[This article, originally in Urdu and translated into English by Dr. Mohammed Ahmad, is a transcript of a Jummah Khutba (sermon) delivered by Maulana Muhammad Ali on January 7, 1921. In this khutba, Maulana Muhammad Ali discusses, ever so eloquently, the topic of why people have to suffer trials and tribulations and, in particular, how this is reconciled with God's foremost attributes of Love and Mercy. With wars, famine, natural disasters and political unrest plaguing the world today, the explanations offered in this khutba provide solace to one's heart. Maulana Muhammad Ali sheds light on the often over-looked reality that trials and tribulations generate the development of spiritual qualities within one's self and the complete realization of this concept is made available through the lessons and examples provided by the Holy Prophet Muhammad.] I bear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah. After this I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil. In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful.

O you who believe, seek assistance through patience

and prayer; surely Allah is with the patient. And speak not of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, (they are) alive, but you perceive not. And We shall certainly try you with something of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits. And give good news to the patient. Who, when a misfortune befalls them, say: Surely we are Allah's, and to Him we shall return. Those are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord; and those are the followers of the right course. The safa and the marwah are truly among the signs of Allah; so whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or pays a visit (to it), there is no blame on him if he goes round them. And whoever does good spontaneously — surely Allah is Bountiful in rewarding, Knowing. (2:153-158)

Quranic Philosophy of Trials and Tribulations

In these verses the believers who are addressed in the words "O you who believe," are told in clear words: "And We certainly try you with something of fear," meaning they will be tested through trials. Their hidden strengths will be manifested by facing fear, hunger, loss of property, and lives and fruit. And the words "And give good news to the patient" then offer solace to those who face these

difficulties with patience. Such are those that when they encounter adversity, they say: "Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall return." As a result, "Those are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord; and those are the followers of the right course." The concluding words of this verse, "those are the followers of the right course" always indicate that this goal cannot be achieved without meeting these preconditions; that is, without having to face the trials and tribulations. The Quranic phrase "these it is that are successful," has a similar significance; in this verse the believers are given the good news that only by encountering these adversities, can they successfully follow the right course.

Many people, though, consider suffering and distress only as a form of punishment. They find it hard to understand why the Merciful and Bountiful God would send suffering and distress on His helpless and weak creation? Although, it is also said that the love of a mother for her child is like a candle in comparison with God's love for humanity; his love and compassion for His creation is unlimited. In the Holy Quran, the attributes of Allah – the Beneficent, the Merciful – have altogether been repeated one hundred and fourteen times. The Quran also tells us, "and My mercy encompasses all things" (97:156). We, however, also observe the immense suffering of humanity, seeing what a materialistic person thinks (i.e. why God the most Merciful, the all Powerful subjects His creation to such suffering). These two characteristics (tribulation and mercy) seem mutually incompatible.

The Idea of Reincarnation

The Hindu religion has also considered human suffering only as a form of punishment. As a result of this error, suffering and distress are understood to be the basis of reincarnation. The question is then put forth, since God is free of faults, why would He subject His creation to suffering? Their answer to this is that man is liable to commit sin, as a consequence of which he is reincarnated and therefore suffers a result of his own evil deeds. They question, how can the All Merciful God punish us with distress and suffering without any sin committed by us? One can entertain some doubt about a youthful person (having committed sin), but how can a Merciful and Bountiful God cause a child to suffer without any reason? Therefore, it is argued, that the child must have committed some sin in a previous life for which it now faces distress and affliction. It is quite true, that punishment without commission of a crime is injustice, but punishing someone without informing him about the nature of his crime is also unfair. How wrong can it be that a punishment is meted out and the subject is not informed of his wrongdoing? After all this cannot also be the doing of the Merciful and Bountiful God, that He would chastise anyone without letting him know the nature of his offence.

Suffering a Means of Spiritual Development

In this verse Allah the Most High has addressed this very issue. He states that suffering and distress will undoubtedly come, but do not consider them to be a form of punishment. For these are the very same believers who have sacrificed everything in the way of Allah, they have not even hesitated to lay down their lives for this purpose. Allah praises their deeds in the following words: And they who pass the night prostrating themselves before their Lord and standing. (25:64). And they who, when they spend are neither extravagant nor parsimonious, and the just means is ever between these. (25:67). And they who call not upon another god with Allah and slay not the soul which Allah has forbidden, except in the cause of justice, nor commit fornication ; and he who does this shall meet a requital of sin. (25:68).

The Holy Quran is full of their praise, and does not mention any evil deeds on their part. Those with such a high standard of purity are addressed by Allah the Most High in the words: "And We shall certainly try you with something of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits" (2:155). Indeed, if you follow the commandments of Allah, your lives are free of sin; but, it is also true that one cannot achieve the stage of perfection until and unless he/she is subjected to suffering and distress. And without facing such afflictions one cannot be the "followers of the right course".

Some view the principle that a believer cannot reach the goal of perfection without having to face suffering and distress as unreasonable. The truth of the matter is that afflictions are of two types. One kind is that which man brings upon himself, and the other type is that brought upon him by others. The suffering that a person brings upon himself is not very difficult for him to bear. Those that are levied by others upon him, though, are hard to bear patiently, and frequently results in loss of determination. These are, however, the kind of sufferings whereby one can reach true perfection. There is no doubt that fire is harmful and consumes everything, but it carries with it a lot of benefit. It is able to turn a mould of raw clay into a strong brick. Thus a person cannot become strong without having to face adversity, nor does his/her faith bloom to full fruition. When one of my close relative suffers, it is a time of great trial for me, as I am being challenged to show kindness and compassion towards him. Without suffering and distress, the development of qualities like love and loyalty cannot reach the stage of perfection. One can show love and loyalty to a person who is in good health, but the real test is to manifest these qualities when that person is sick and in distress.

Love of God

The sum and substance of religion is that one should love God, and love His creation for the sake of His love. The proof that one loves God can only be manifested

through the love of His creation. The true worth of this love can only be determined when one remains steadfast in times of affliction. One who has not been subjected to this test cannot provide proof of his love and compassion. True love can only be known during times of suffering and distress. A poet has expressed this thought well: "A true friend indeed is the one who holds the hand of his friend during times of distress and need." The person, who tries to test love and loyalty in good times, makes a mistake. Without encountering suffering and distress, strength and firmness in the development of loyalty is not established. As the Quran states, "Those are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord." For these people, distress and suffering become a source of blessing and mercy.

A Personal Experience

Someone has expressed it very well by stating, "personal experience provides the best lesson for a person." It is useful to present a personal experience that may be of benefit to others. For two years I tended to my ten yearold sick daughter, and had to face many difficulties for her sake. My friends consoled me in this matter and also expressed their feelings in their letters empathizing with the difficulties I was facing. But somebody who knows my inner feelings knows that this protracted period of care-giving was a source of comfort for me. Getting up at night to tend to her needs and crying before the Lord for her; striving during the day to get her medicines and taking her to her doctors, all this brought tranquility to my soul. There is no doubt that her suffering was a source of distress for me, and no one can call this as comforting, but the thought that my loved one is in distress and I was serving and attending to her illness, and Allah the Most High provided me with this opportunity was also a source of serenity for me. Having lost this loved one, that feeling of tranquility has gone. To show compassion towards one's near relative is due to the natural bond that one has with them. Hidden within this compassion is the lesson whereby one learns to be compassionate towards God's creation. Just as one feels love and empathy for the near kindred, one should have the same feelings for the rest of God's creation.

Compassion for God's Creation

Without compassion for God's creation one cannot form a bond with the Creator. As Hazrat Abu Huraira reports: The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him said: Allah the Most High will ask on the Day of Judgment, "O son of Adam, I was sick and you did not tend to me. He will answer, "my Lord you are my Provider, Master of all, how could I have tended to you?" The Lord will state: "Did you not know that one of my servants was ill, and you did not visit him. If you would have done so, you would have found Me near to him." "O son of Adam, I asked you for food, and you did not feed me." He will reply, "O my Lord, How could I have fed

you? You are the Master of all creation." "Don't you know that one of my servants asked you for food, and if you had fed him, you would have found its reward with Me." God will say, "Son of Adam, I asked you for water and you refused." He will say, "why would I have given you water, you are The Master of the universe"? The Lord will say, "my servant asked you for water, and you did not give it to him. If you would have given him a drink, you would have found its return with me." (Sahih Muslim).

Example of The Holy Prophet Muhammad

In the verse under discussion, Allah the Most High has called suffering and distress as a blessing and mercy. This is because they engender feelings of sympathy towards God's creation in the hearts of those who undergo trials and tribulations. The real objective of religion is to generate the fervent desire in ones heart for the service of humanity. Without encountering suffering and distress, man cannot feel empathy towards the rest of God's creation. The prayer mentioned in the Hadith for the funeral of a child (i.e. "O Allah! Make him for us a cause of recompense in the world to come and as one going before and a reward"), also shows the excellence of the Holy Prophet. In fact all of the Holy Prophet's prayers manifest this excellence. They reflect the condition of the heart of the one chosen by Allah, when he is offering these supplications. Those who do not believe in inner revelation (wahy khafiy) to the heart of the Prophet should look at these prayers. They bring a special feeling to one's heart, which could not have been possible without a Divine connection. Let us look at this funeral prayer; even on such an occasion of sorrow and pain over the passing away of a child, we are taught to say, "All praise is for the Lord of the worlds."

On its surface this seems strange that a dear one has left us forever, his bier is in front of us, and we are saying, "All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds." What one may ask is the meaning of this? In fact, if we contemplate, even this great loss is a manifestation of God's nurturing and providence for our souls. The death of a dear child has implicit within it this element of God's nurturing. If this nurturing is not meant for the child, it carries within it the means of our spiritual growth. The death of my friend has a similar effect. It generates feelings of caring and compassion within my soul. This is also an indication that our real Nurturer to perfection (Rabb) is Allah. It happens quite often that a child is left without a parent. It is God who provides the means for his sustenance. In this we learn the lesson that it is not your father or anyone else who is the source of your sustenance. In reality, the Sustainer and Nurturer of this child is the Lord of the Worlds, who is the Nurturer unto perfection of all creation. In the history of the world we find that many great men were raised as orphans. This is to let us know that our Lord also provides us the means of our spiritual sustenance. The greatest example of

this is the person of our Holy Prophet Muhammad. He never saw his father, and his mother also died while he was yet in infancy. From being a helpless orphan he progressed to become the sovereign of a state and the leader of the spiritual world. His life provides the greatest example for a Muslim that he should not despair under any circumstances. Nor should he worry that he has lost the visible means for his progress. He should always find solace in the fact that his God is the One Who bestowed upon an orphan like Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) both a spiritual and worldly kingdom. Thus for a Muslim, there is never a period of despondency. The Holy Prophet taught us this prayer on the death of a child: "O Allah! Make him for us a cause of recompense in the world to come and as one going before and a reward." (B.23:65).

One aspect of this recompense is that the death of a child provides a means of admonition and learning for a person. It in fact generates higher moral values within him. The love of God's creation is evolved. That is why the Holy Prophet has stated in a Hadith reported by Muadh-bin-Jabal: There are no two Muslims, who have had three of their children die, that Allah will make both of them enter paradise. The companions asked and two? To which the Holy Prophet replied or two.

The companions again asked and one? And he answered, or one. He then said I swear by Him in whose hand is my life, that the placenta of a mother who has miscarried will pull her towards paradise, if she manifests patience (Hadith Mishkat). Some people with uncleanness in their heart say that the Holy Prophet only said this to solace his wife Khadija when she lost her child. They do not realize that that particular incidence occurred before the Holy Prophet was given the office of prophethood by Allah. There is no doubt in this that a child who dies certainly becomes an intercessor for his parents. I do not believe there is any kind of intercession which does not manifest itself in some form in this world. The development of high morals in a person is in fact a form of paradise, as is the sympathy towards God's creation. The child's illness and death creates feelings of mercy and compassion for the rest of humanity in a person. Even the most hard hearted become overwhelmed with compassion.

One feels for the pain and suffering of others. In this way that child becomes an intercessor for his parents. I have in recent days suffered great personal loss because of the death of several of my friends. Sheikh Noor Ahmed was a personal friend, but I was also bonded with him because of his genuine compassion for our common cause and his service for Islam. Every individual has near of kin and family, and he is naturally affected by the death of one of them. The loss of a servant of Islam is, however, a source of great sorrow for us. We are not complaining about this. It is certainly our faith that: "All

praise is for Allah the Lord of the worlds."

There is, however a lesson for us in this. It should generate and enhance within us feelings of sympathy and compassion for the rest of humanity. The greatest attribute of God is His quality of nurturing unto perfection (Rabubiyat). Having faith in God means that we should nurture His attributes within us. This is the meaning of the Holy prophet's saying, "create the moral characteristics of Allah within you." Thus, the spirit to nurture others should predominate in you.

The whole world is God's family and He nurtures it; therefore, you should have sympathy for all of His creation. Those who learn this lesson by suffering the loss of someone have reached this high stage of excellence.

The Quran states, "The Safa and the Marwah are truly among the signs of Allah." The Safa and Marwa are both symbolic of such suffering and difficulties. When the names of sites where individuals had to face suffering and hardship remains, certainly the names of individuals who had face these trials cannot be forgotten.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has also described three means of spiritual development. These are: acquisition of knowledge, revelation and Divine inspiration, and, the most perfect means, facing suffering and tribulations with patience and steadfastness. He had such profound and excellent perception; this indeed is the case. When suffering and distress comes upon a person it should be received as a source of tranquility for him.

That which generates such feelings of serenity and enhances one in goodness and virtue, cannot be a chastisement. In fact it is the means by which we evolve spiritually and reach real perfection.

When we observe the example of the Holy Prophet under such circumstances, we are genuinely moved to supplicate for his exaltation. We learn from the Hadith that when the Holy Prophet would be with his companions, he would participate in their joy and sorrow. On the death of his infant son he wept and said, "Surely the eye sheds tears and the heart grieves and we do not say but what the Lord is pleased with; and we, O Ibrahim! are full of grief on account of thy separation" (Bukhari 23:43). His crying and laughing, like we do, also hold a lesson for us. Of what benefit is an exemplar who does not have to face suffering and distress like us? If his heart cannot perceive these very human emotions and he is not able to be a role model in times of suffering and distress? He may otherwise be magnificent, possessor of pomp and grandeur, but of what good is he for us? We need a practical exemplar, whose footsteps we can follow.

THE IDEAL DOME SHOW

By Jonathan Glancey

[This article, first published in "The Guardian" on June 17, 2002, offers a perceptive view on the history of architectural designs of mosques throughout the Muslim world and, in particular, the absence of a continuation of this legacy in Britain. Mr. Glancey provides a glowing tribute to Britain's first mosque, the Shah Jehan mosque at Woking (the headquarters of the Woking Mission founded by Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din, the prominent stalwart of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement), but laments the fact that it "seems little more than an architectural bywater today". Very insightfully, Mr. Glancey offers the explanation of "poverty" among the Muslim immigrant population as the primary reason for the decay in this realm of exquisite mosque construction in Britain. Interestingly, it seems the factors considered by Mr. Glancey also explain the decay in Islamic scholarship in the region at the time as well. The same rigid views of the poorer classes that eschewed the beauty of mosques were also the basis for the abandonment of the splendor of moderation and rationality inherent in the religion Islam and so wonderfully displayed by the Woking Mission.]

Medina, Sammara, Mecca, Delhi, Cordoba, Woking. Woking? Yes, the Surrey commuter town deserves to be ranked with some of the greatest names associated with the Muslim faith. Woking is home to Britain's first mosque: a delightful Moghul, or Indo-Saracenic, pavilion designed by the Victorian architect WL Chambers and dating from 1889. The Shah Jehan mosque, named after the sultan who gave us the Taj Mahal, is very different from the glum, run-of-the-mill mosques we have come to expect in Britain in recent years. A colourful and exotic outpost of Moghul India, and by extension Persia, it can be glimpsed through trees and railings from the trains that wobble in and out of one of Britain's busiest stations.

The mosque was commissioned by Dr GW Leitner - a Budapest-born German linguist and the founder of the University of Punjab, Lahore - as a sporadic place of worship for Muslim students studying at the nearby Oriental Institute in Maybury. The Shah Jehan came into its own as a regular place of worship and study in 1912 when it was adopted as the headquarters of the Woking Muslim Mission, founded by Khawaja Kamalud-Din, a Lahore lawyer. Until the arrival of immigrants from Pakistan in the 1960s, the Woking Mission was the centre of Islam in Britain.

It was from here that Kamal-ud-Din published the influential Islamic Review, together with the first English translation of the Koran in 1917. It was here, too, that the name Pakistan (from pakeesgi, or purity) was coined - and the idea of this Muslim country, detached from

India, was raised and passionately debated between the first and second world wars. In the Muslim section of the nearby Brookwood cemetery are the graves of soldiers of the faith who died as much, perhaps, for the dream of an embryonic Pakistan as for emperor and country. A number of British aristocrats, many of them soldiers who had served in India and Egypt, converted to Islam under the guidance of Kamal-ud-Din. The first was Lord Headley (1855-1935), who became El-Farooq. Prominent Muslims throughout the world descended on Woking; before the 1958 revolution that witnessed the rise of the Ba'athist party in Iraq, King Faisal might be seen here, an exotic figure among the brolly and bowler brigade lined up at Woking station. So why did Woking not become the model for mosques throughout Britain, as Muslim immigrants arrived in large numbers, mostly from Pakistan, and settled in London, Yorkshire and the West Midlands?

Internecine strife and complex rivalries between various Muslim factions are one part of the answer. The other is the great change that appears to have come over the Islamic community in Britain since the 1960s, and the ways in which it chose to express its faith in bricks and mortar.

The Woking Mission had been a meeting of high minds, with great learning and a degree of wealth and culture. From the 1960s, when Britain sought cheap labour to do its dirty work at home, poor Pakistanis, among others, settled here bringing with them a zealous religion that all but eschewed luxury, sensuality and ornamentation. If there was a religious reason for this puritanical zeal, it was underpinned by poverty.

At the beginning of the 21st century, most of Britain's mosques - poor things in terms of architectural design and quality - raise their domes, minarets and crescents over some of the poorest quarters of our oldest cities. No one would doubt the strength of faith of their congregations, but it is sad that, for whatever reason, our mosques fail to shine like our famous parish churches, our handsome non-conformist chapels or even the latest generation of richly decorated Hindu temples. The mosque at Woking, for all its history, seems little more than an architectural bywater today.

Although there is a puritanical strain in Islam that discourages ambitious architecture (just as there is in Christianity and Judaism), there is equally a tradition of sensuality and delight that could yet make British Islamic architecture a source of joy for all - no matter what our faith, or lack of it. The Moghul architecture of India that

married exquisite Persian design with Hindu engineering is one of the world's glories: the fusion of immense strength and solidity with filigree decoration and the subtle play of light and water is at once comforting and mesmerising. This is the architecture of the Taj Mahal, but also of Moghul summer palaces, forts and the noblest mosques.

Perhaps, though, the sensual side of Islamic architecture was most beautifully and convincingly expressed in the design of the exquisite Alhambra palace in Granada. The all-conquering Arab armies had raced across North Africa in the seventh century. Having invaded Spain, they were only finally stopped south of Paris by Charles Martel at the Battle of Poitiers in 732. Pushed back across the Pyrénées, the Arab conquerors took up residence in Spain for the next 700 years. They developed a remarkably high level of civilisation, particularly in Andalus.

The Alhambra was built between 1338 and 1390. A glorious gathering of courtyards, pavilions, pools, fountains and gardens set against a backdrop of snowcapped mountains, its beauty is legendary. It was, perhaps, the most sophisticated representation of a desert oasis ever devised. At its heart lay the folk memory of a warlike yet deeply religious people who had fought their way thousands of miles from their desert homes to found this earthly paradise.

Banned from creating images of god, Mohammed, the prophets, angels or indeed any human likeness, Moslem architects and craftsman turned to geometry, of which they became masters, and beautiful, abstract decorative forms. Their profound meditations on geometry and patterns led to the stunning forms and decoration of buildings as diverse as the sumptuous seventh-century Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, the labyrinthine eighth-century mosque at Cordoba and the great ninth-century spiral minaret of Sammara in northern Iraq. These various strands found their way into the shaded courtyards of the Alhambra. "The Alhambra is not just a high point of Islamic architecture," says Mohsen Mostafavi, the Iranian-born chairman of the Architectural Association school in London and author of the forthcoming London: Post-Colonial City. "It is a pointer to one of the ways forward for architecture in cities worldwide. It reconciles architecture and landscape in a profound and very beautiful way. There is a powerful tradition in Islamic architecture of designing buildings in which outdoor and indoor space are blurred, in which water and light and shade play essential and life-enhancing parts. We are beginning to see this kind of architecture emerging again." One good example is the Said Business School in Oxford, designed by Dixon Jones. Here, lecture theatres open on to cloistered passages giving on to courtyards and terraces.

So why are most British mosques so unlike this, often no more than brick boxes with minarets and domes applied like afterthoughts? Why are the new mosques - of, say, Birmingham, of Northolt, Middlesex, and Ilford, Essex - so determinedly glum? "Aside from the question of poverty," says Mostafavi, "there is the question of cultural transference. It has taken 30 or 40 years for the classic British Indian restaurant to turn its back on kitsch Victorian decor; the latest generation of Indian restaurants include some fine, modern designs. It will take a while, perhaps another 10 or 15 years, for the architecture of British mosques to develop a clear and sophisticated vocabulary of their own. The Alhambra didn't happen overnight.

"It's also a question of confidence. To an extent, mosques in the poorer parts of Britain are exclusive, as if they are keeping the corrupt world around them at bay. Many non-Moslems feel they shouldn't or can't walk into a mosque - they wouldn't feel welcome - whereas anyone can walk into a church."

The implication is that the buildings themselves are self-regarding; what does it matter if non-believers find them ugly or kitsch? But then it might be argued that Islam can be practiced without buildings of any sort. A prayer mat is all that is needed for each day's five prayer sessions. "Not quite," says Mostafavi. "Friday prayers are communal events; so too are the ritual ablutions that precede them. The faithful also gather to listen to the orations of imams, while mosques can also be tombs, places of collective memory as well as gathering." These, then, are early days. It would be good to see the design of British mosques maturing and to see architects - whether Moslem or not - knitting them into the fabric of British cities. Mosques might stand as fine buildings in urban parks, the centrepieces of a new generation of water gardens and places of refuge and meditation. They might, like the central mosque in Paris, welcome believers and non-believers alike with tea rooms and hammams, with bookshops, with festivals of music and other events that would draw them into the wider community.

The serene Paris mosque, behind Jean Nouvel's magnificent Institut du Monde Arab, dates from 1926; its design draws its inspiration quite deliberately from the Alhambra. It has always seemed a welcoming place. Its first imam hid and saved the lives of 200 Jews who sought sanctuary here during the second world war. Today, sitting sipping sweet mint tea under the fig trees of courtyards scented with cedar and myrtle, the attractions of Islamic architecture are as strong as they might be this side of the Alhambra, Sammara or Agra. Or even, on a sunny summer's evening, Woking.

“The main difference of beliefs between the two sections are as follows”; -

Lahore Section

1. Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is khatam al-Nabiyyin, the interpretation of which is that he is the greatest and last of all the prophets.
2. The Holy Quran is the final Shariah (code) for the world.
3. No prophet, whether new or old, shall come after the Holy Prophet Muhammad.
4. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian was not a prophet but a Mujaddid (Reformer) and Promised Messiah and Mahdi in Islam.
5. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad never changed claim, views or definition of prophet hood in in 1901 with the Publication of Ek Ghalati ka Izala.
6. Belief in the advent of Mirza Sahib as a Mujaddid is not essential for becoming Muslim but his acceptance is necessary in the interest of progressive Islam.
7. Any one who profess faith in the Kalima-LA-ilaha illa Ilahu Muhammad ur Rasul Allah (there is only one God and Muhammad is His Apostle) - is a Muslim and not a Kafir.
8. It is permitted to say prayers behind any Muslim Imam provided he is not guilty of dubbing other Muslims.
9. Marriage relations with non-Ahmadis are permitted.
10. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Wahi-e-Nabuwat has ceased, only Wahi-e-Walayath (Saintly revelation) is continued. Hazrat Mirza Sahib's revelation was Wahi-e- Walayath and not Wahi-e-Nabuwat.
11. The Founder of the Lahore Section was Maulana Muhammad Ali, M.A.LL.B. Translator of the Holy Quran into English, a companion and disciple of the Founder of the Movement.
12. The members of this section call themselves Ahmadis, and are generally known also as Ahmadis or Ahmadis of Lahore Movement.

Qadian Section

1. Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is khatam al- Nabiyyin, the interpretation of which is that he is the greatest though not last of all the prophets.
2. The same.
3. Prophets may come after the Holy Prophet Muhammad.
4. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet as well as Promised Messiah and Mahdi in Islam.
5. The first written evidence of the change of the belief with regard to prophet hood was the poster *EK GHALTI KA IZALA*.
6. Belief in the mission of Mirza sahib as a prophet is essential for becoming Muslim.
7. Any one, who does not believe Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian to be a Prophet, is a kafir.
8. It is not permitted to say prayers behind any Imam who does not recognize Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claim.
9. Marriage relations with non-Ahmadis are not permitted.
10. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Wahi-e-Nabuwat is continued. Hazrat Mirza Sahib's revelation was Wahi-e-Nabuwat.
11. The Founder of the Qadian Section was Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, who was the son of the Founder of the Movement and was a youngman in his teens at the time of his noble father's death.
12. The members of this section call themselves Ahmadis, but are generally known as Qadianis.

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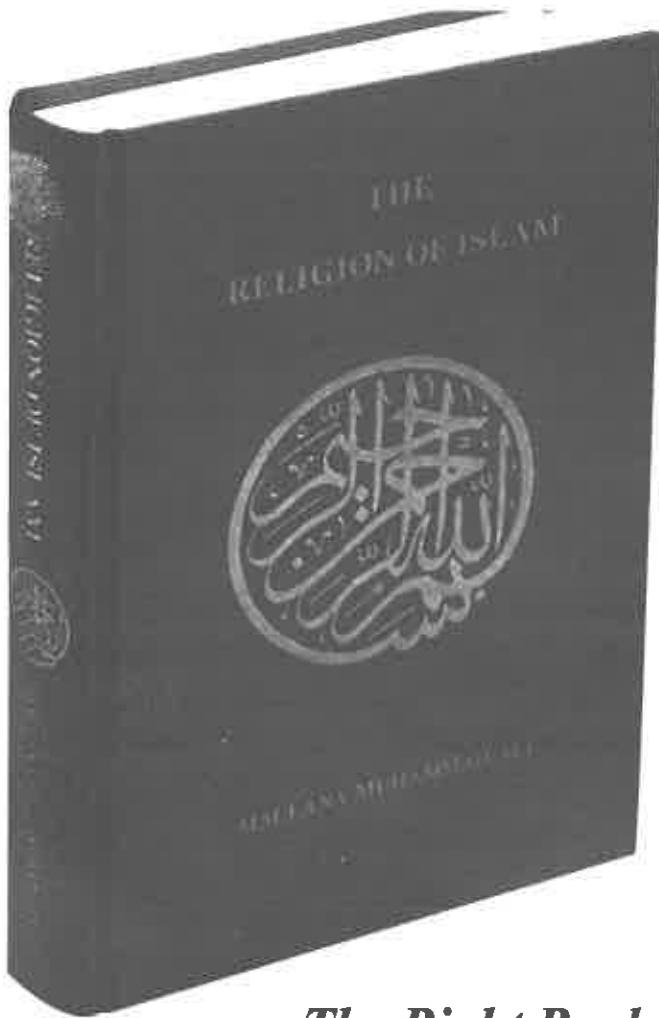
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