

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ

THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

*A Journal of Islamic Renaissance
in America*

In This Issue:

The Promised One For All Nations Has Come

The Islamic Jihad

True Islam

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُكَ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا الْكَرِيمِ
وَعَلَىٰ عَائِلَتِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ

THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

A JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC
RENAISSANCE IN AMERICA

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THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

A JOURNAL OF THE ISLAMIC
RENAISSANCE IN AMERICA

The Muslim Sunrise is a quarterly magazine, founded in 1921 by Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, the first Muslim missionary in the U.S.A. The magazine is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. The Movement was founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India (1835-1908), and is currently headed by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad— fourth successor with Headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan. The Movement aims at presenting to the world the true meaning and teachings of Islam.

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Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad The Promised Messiah

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was born in 1835 in Qadian, a small village in India, lacking all facilities for communication with the rest of the world. He received very little formal education but was richly endowed with knowledge by the Almighty and wrote more than 80 books which are a treasurehouse of knowledge and divine light.

In March, 1889, he laid the foundation of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam when he proclaimed to be the Promised Messiah, the expected Reformer of the age. This Movement was inaugurated to revive faith in God and to collect under one banner all the true lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good will, and true brotherhood.

He passed away in 1908 and the Ahmadiyya Movement has since been guided by his successors chosen by an electoral college. The present Head of the Movement is Sahibzada Mirza Tahir Ahmad. The International Headquarters are located in Rabwah, Pakistan.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

A Passage From the Holy Quran

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ
 تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَلْيٍ حَلْيَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَارَىٰ وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكَارَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ

“O people, fear your Lord; verily the earthquake of the Hour is a tremendous thing.

“The day when you see it, every woman giving suck shall forget her suckling and every pregnant woman shall cast her burden; and thou shalt see men as drunken while they will not be drunken, but severe will indeed be the punishment of Allah.” (22: 2-3)

‘The earthquake of the hour’ refers here to a sudden and terrible calamity to befall the world which will shake the very foundation of civilization. The impact of this calamity will be so severe that people will lose their senses. It will strike such terror that even mothers will abandon their infants, pregnant women will have miscarriages, and men will be so stupified that they will appear to be drunk. People will not be able to cope with the magnitude and suddenness of this terrible happening.

In the context of the present state of affairs, these verses seem to give a graphic description of a sudden nuclear war and the state of mind of the survivors from such a sudden “earthquake”.

Such a catastrophe can be man-made, but is in reality a Divine punishment, as a consequence of the world having rejected the man from God and having abandoned the path of rectitude.

Referring to such an event, the Promised Messiah, the man from God for our age, wrote:

“Behold I have been sent in His name to point out to you the error of your ways and to warn you of the day when the heavens shall be shaken and the earth shall tremble, and that which man’s hands had fashioned and which appeared goodly in his sight and of which he was proud, shall compass his ruin. His own handiwork shall destroy him and the fruits of his labor shall kill him, and that which a man rejoiced in will push him into the grave.

“Repent, therefore, before that hour arrives and accept him of whom you were told by Jesus, the Messiah, in his first advent, and to whom he calls you in his second. If you accept him, I shall testify it of you before the Father and shall declare your righteousness unto Him, and you shall find His pleasure and realize His mercy.”



THE PROMISED ONE FOR ALL NATIONS HAS COME

(In The Light of His Own Writings)

Laiq Ahmad Tahir

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him), the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, was born on Friday, February 13, 1835, in a little known village called Qadian, in India.

This little known person was introduced to the religious and literary circles in 1880 when he published his first book, *The Brahin-i-Ahmadiyya*, in defense of Islam, to articulate the beauties of the faith. He published three more volumes during the next three years. This unique expose on the truth of Islam created such a sensation in religious circles that men of renown could not but exclaim that these volumes were unique in the 1300 year old history of Islam.

He had published in these volumes many of his revelations from God, which stood as a witness to his pure heart and his exalted status in the realm of spirituality.

Humanity was longing for a world reformer. Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jews—all were looking for their Messiah, their Mahdi, their Krishna and their Elijah. All signs for the appearance of the world reformer had been fulfilled. Because of his unique writings, Muslims began to look up to him to accept him as the reformer of the age.

He proclaimed to be the Promised Messiah in 1890. For many generations, the Muslims had come to believe that Jesus Christ will descend bodily from heaven as the Promised Messiah. When they heard the proclamation of Hazrat Mirza

Ghulam Ahmad, they should have pondered over his claims. Instead, they went all out to oppose him.

For Christians, his claim to Messiahship was contrary to their expectations and they realized that the whole structure of Christianity will crumble down if that claim was accepted. They, too, began to get united in opposition to him. Vainly they tried to overturn the verdict of God. But God had promised that the Messiah and Mahdi will bring about the supremacy of Islam over all other religions and all the efforts of his enemies will amount to nothing.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadain says:

“I invite you and all your helpers to pray that Jesus descend from heaven, then wait for him. I say with certainty that if you keep striving hard all your lives and pray so hard that your noses get rubbed off in prostration, no one will descend from the sky. The One who was to come, has already come. (Malfoozat, Vol. 8, p.4)

“I say now without any fear that by the Grace and bounty of God Almighty, I am the expected world reformer and God has converged all signs and provisions in me. (Zarooratul Imam, p.25, from Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 13, p.495)

Then he said:

“I am the one appointed by God in the Beginning of this century to regenerate the faith; to re-establish on earth the faith which has forsaken the earth. I am here to pull the world towards righteousness and truth with God-given strength and with the strength of His hand and to correct their errors in beliefs and actions. (Tazkiratul Shahadatain, from Roohani Khaza'in Vol. 20, p.3)

Here are some more quotes from his writings:

“I say truly that this is the time for which Muslims, according to their belief, and Christians, according to their conviction, were waiting. This was the promised

time. The One awaited has come, whether one believes in him or not. God shows mighty signs in support of His appointed ones and convinces the minds. What was destined for the Promised Messiah has come about. Whether one believes or not. The Promised Messiah has come and I am that person." (Malfoozat, Vol 2, p.285)

"The truth is that Islam is in dire need of help from God. I am the reformer of the age. It is delightful that God did not leave Islam helpless in this state and sent me, according to His law, so I could revitalize it." (Malfoozat, Vol. 9, p.158)

"God has appointed me. He has sent me. People should try to find out whether the person who proclaims to be from God has His Blessings and Support with him. They saw sign after sign and called them untrue." (Malfoozat, Vol. 4, p.437)

"O ye people: I am the Muhammadi Messiah and I am the Ahmad Mahdi: God is really with me from my childhood to my grave." (Khutba Ilhamia, p.17)

In his Arabic poetry, he says:

"I am the Promised Messiah and the appointed Imam who will fill this earth with justice and convert desolate wilderness into fruit-laden trees. Take your share from me as I am indeed your Imam. I remind you of your times and give you glad tidings. (I'jaz-i-Ahmadi, p.60)

Then he says:

"In the end I say again, that you should ponder over these things. Go and ponder over it in the privacy of your home. Do you want Islam to face all these troubles for another hundred years. If nobody has appeared so far at the beginning of this century and twenty two years have already elapsed, then you will have to wait another 100 years. Remember, If you do

not accept me you will never find the Promised One.” (Malfoozat. Vol. 7, p.176)

For those who were hasty in rejecting him and pronounced him an infidel, he said:

“My rejection is really the rejection of God and His Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him). Before anyone brands me with falsehood, he is branding God a liar.” (Malfoozat, Vol. 4, p.14)

In times gone by God used to send His Messengers for certain people for certain periods, but now the Promised Messiah was commissioned by God to bring about the supremacy of Islam in the entire world. It is inconceivable that the reformers of all the different religions would simultaneously appear. Therefore, the Promised Messiah said:

“In the eyes of God, I am not just Jesus, Son of Mary. I have other names also as God said in Braheen Ahmadiyya. I am Adam, I am Noah, I am Ibrahim, I am Jacob, I am Ishmael, I am Moses, and I am David.” (Haqiqatul Wa’hee, pp.184-85, from Roohani Khaza’in, Vol. 22, p.521)

In one of his poems he says:

“Sometimes I am Adam, sometimes Moses, sometimes Jacob. Also I am Abraham and have many progenies.”

He also said:

“God wants to attract toward His Unity all those with righteous disposition from among the inhabitants of this planet, be they in Europe or Asia. He wants to assemble all His chosen ones on one religion. This is design of God for which I have been sent.” (The Will, pp.10-11)

Elaborating upon the expected reformers in Muslims, Christians, and Hindus, he says:

“My coming in this age is not only for the reforma-

tion of Muslims. I am here to reform the Muslims, the Hindus, and the Christians. Just as God has sent me as the Promised Messiah for the Muslims and the Christians, I am also an Avatar for the Hindus... Just as I have come in the power and spirit of Jesus, I have also come in the power and spirit of Krishna who was the Highest among all the Hindu Avatars. The God of heaven and earth has revealed to me many times that I am the Krishna for Hindus and the Promised Messiah for Muslims and Christians... This is a revelation from God and I cannot refrain from expressing it." (Lecture Sialkote, pp.33-34, from Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 20, pp.228-29)

Referring to the Old Testament, he said:

"God has sent me at the same time given in the Book of Daniel for the appearance of the Promised Messiah... It is most striking and I consider it as a sign of God that exactly in the year 1290 Hijra I had attained to a converse with God... Then Daniel mentions 1335 years as the end of the Messiah's time. This is very similar to the revelation from God regarding my age." (Haqiqatul Wa'hee, pp.199-200, from Roohani Khaza'in Vol. 22, pp.207-08)

He again said about his status:

"I have appeared at a time when Muslim beliefs had become full of controversies and no belief was left without controversies. Likewise, very misleading ideas were rampant regarding the coming of the Messiah... All these various ways and sayings required one who could pass judgement on them, and I am that judge... I judge the sayings of Imam Malik and Ibn-i-Hazm and Mo'tazela regarding the death of Jesus to be correct... anyone who does not abide by my judgement now, he does not agree with the Judgement of Him who appointed me" (Zarooratul Imam, p.25, from Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 13, pp.495-96)

For the Promised Reformer of all nations many signs were given in the Quran by God and the Traditions by the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him. Likewise, there were signs for his advent in the older Scriptures. The fulfillment of all these signs testifies to the time for the appearance of the Promised One. The Promised Messiah says:

“The signs fulfilled so far are so numerous that there is no room left for an honest mind to deny them. All the earthly and heavenly signs of the appearance of the Promised Messiah have been manifested in my time. The eclipses of the sun and the moon in the month of Ramadhan happened some time ago; the comet has appeared; earthquakes have occurred; epidemics became rampant; Christianity has forcefully spread in the world and as was written, opposition to me has been very intense. All these signs have been fulfilled.” (Kitabul Bariyya, pp.259-60, from Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 13, pp.297-299)

Then he said:

“This doctrine has now become as bright as the sun and so many people have witnessed the signs that if they were to be assembled together, their number will be more than the army of any monarch.” (Malfoozat, Vol. 5, p.14)

Then he said:

“A host of arguments testify for me. The Quran and the Hadith attest to my truth. The need of the day calls for my person and all those signs manifested at my hand are additional proofs of my truth. Every prophet has put forth these three tests of his truth and I put the same forward; there is no leeway left for anyone to reject me.” (Malfoozat, Vol. 5, pp.87-88)

Talking about the popularity of his claim, he said:

“I see that my claim is received with great interest in Europe and America. Hundreds of newspapers have

published my claims and they have said things in my support which would be very difficult from a Christian writer; so much so that some have said mainly that it appears that I am right in my claim... some have said that this claim of the Promised Messiah is just in the right time; and time is its own justification." (Tazkiratul Shahadatain, p.31, from Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 20, p.33)

Blessed are those who are assembling at the hand of the Promised One. People from diverse nations and faiths are getting together as the green limbs of the Promised Tree and presenting a grand spectacle. A voice emanated from the unknown village of Qadian and those responding to it are now found in all continents—Asia, Europe, America, Africa and Australia. More than a hundred countries in these five continents—and resounding with the Call of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, through his followers. Every new day is bringing his success and supremacy nearer. Righteous souls are flocking to come under his banner.

Our task is to call out in all directions. Those with righteous spirit will come eventually.



The life of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, was a life of grand success. In his high moral qualities, his spiritual power, his high resolve, the excellence and perfection of his teachings, his perfect example and the acceptance of his prayers, in short, in every aspect of his life, he exhibited such bright signs that even a person of low intelligence, provided he is not inspired by unreasonable rancor and enmity, is forced to confess that he was a perfect example of manifestation of Divine qualities and was a perfect man (Al-Hakam, 10 April 1902, p: 5).

THE ISLAMIC JEHAD

By Muhammad Haroon Isa

Jihad is, in American parlance, "to put out the effort" in a big way. Effort which is extra-ordinary in meaning and scope. Jihad is also an Islamic term, and as such it has specific meanings, and there are conditions which must be satisfied.

The Islamic Jihad has three forms, and regardless of which form of Jihad is under consideration, the following pre-conditions must apply:

1. The Jihad must be waged *fi sabeel illah*—in the cause and path of Allah, and not for any worldly cause.

2. The Jihad can only be declared by the *Imam-e-Waqt*, i.e., the Leader of the Age, Allah's vicegerant on earth, the Ameerul Momeneen, The Commander of the Muslims.

We need to understand the role of the Imam-e-Waqt. Once we do, then the entire picture of Jihad and related issues becomes clear. Jihad is Allah's battle, His cause, His struggle, Allah makes His Divine Will known to his vicegerant on earth. It is simply out of the question that a politician, a military general, or a guerilla leader would know of Allah's Will before Allah discloses His Will to the Imam-e-Waqt.

The central issue of Jihad, then, is Imam-e-Waqt. We cannot discuss Jihad or any other aspect of Islam without discussing the Imam-e-Waqt and who he is. According to Hadith, you die the death of an ignorant man if you have not recognized the Imam-e-Waqt. The Imam-e-Waqt of this Age is the Imam Mahdi, about whose coming in these Latter Days the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, prophesied some 1400 years ago. This prophecy was fulfilled in the person of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (1835-1908), who also fulfilled the prophecies concerning the second coming of Christ Jesus, the Messiah.

Ahmad, peace be upon him, is the Imam-e-Waqt for this seven thousandth year. After his passing in 1908, the mantle of leadership was passed on to his legitimate, lawful successors. His fourth successor, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad is the present Imam-e-Waqt, Ameerul Momeneen, the Commander of the Muslims.

The person of the Imam-e-Waqt is central to the institution of Jihad. Without him there can be no Jihad. Only he can determine whether a cause is *fi sabeel illah* or not. Only he can declare Jihad. Only he can determine at what fronts to do battle. His leadership and command is vital every inch of the way. Our role as devout Muslims is to volunteer ourselves, sign up, and obey his every command.

Thus, given that you are performing a Jihad which is lawful (per Sharia), and valid, you should know how Allah rewards you for your sacrifices, every step of the way. Allah gives you rewards of heaven and the earth. Jihad opens the gates of heaven in this life:

It says in the Hadith: In times of peace, if you prepare for Jihad; buy a horse, learn to ride; buy a sword, learn to wield it, and all the while you feed the horse and tend it; waiting for the day of Jihad, you will then earn the rewards and blessings of Jihad as if you have already performed the Jihad.

There are three forms of Jihad, each one aimed at a specific situation confronting the Muslims: Jihad-e-Akbar, the greatest Jihad of all; Jihad-e-Kabeer, the big Jihad; and finally, Jihad-e-Asghar, the minor Jihad.

1. JEHAD-E-AKBAR

In terms of rewards and blessings, this is the highest category of Jihad, and perhaps the most difficult to perform. This is the Jihad against one's self. This is the Jihad of Tazkia-e-Nafs, purification of self.

Tazkia-e-nafs cannot be achieved without guidance and direction of a *Muzzakki Wojood*, a person appointed by Allah to purify mankind. Unless you put your hand in the hand of a

Muzzakki Wojood, you will never achieve self-purification. This putting of your hand in his hand is called *the ba'it*, a covenant of obedience in all matters good, in Allah's books. This Covenant is today's Covenant of Abraham. So profound in implications is this ba'it.

A major front of the battle against self is to make special sacrifices of personal wealth. THE PROMISED MESSIAH HAS DECLARED THAT IN THIS MATERIALISTIC AGE, THE GREATEST JEHAD IS THE JEHAD OF MAAL I.E. WEALTH.

The Imam-e-Waqt has declared many fronts in which you can participate. Some are on-going, such as chanda Aam, the general subscription; Hissa Aamad, monthly portions of your Will. Others are optional exertions such as Tehrik-e-Jadid. Yet others are special drives which must raise funds for a given objective. Tazkia-e-Nafs, and Jihad of Wealth go hand in hand.

The Promised Messiah, and his successors, have established upper limits for individual contribution of wealth. Hazrat Ameerul Momeneen found that some individuals in an extreme expression of the spirit of sacrifice, liquidated themselves and donated their total net capital to the Jamaat. He cautioned that this extreme sacrifice is not required at the present time. What is required is a balance between personal needs and obligations, voluntary reductions in levels of luxury, and the desire to win Allah's pleasure by contributing all. If and when the time comes when extreme sacrifices must be made, Hazrat Ameerul Momeneen said he would let us know.

Jihad-e-Akbar is the most difficult Jihad to perform. And without the Imam of the Age leading you, and guiding you, you do not have a chance. Without him you are lost in the woods, and passions of the self. Without him, Tazkia-e-Nafs is impossible for you.

2. JEHAD-E-KABEER

The next highest category of Jihad is communication and defense of Islam. This is Jihad of the pen and speech. In the

Latter Days, the Dajjal, the Great Deceiver, the Anti-Christ is let loose. The evil of Anti-Christ dominates all media of persuasion. His methods are subtle, very charming, very captivating. Before the victory of the Renaissance of Islam, one final battle has to be fought between truth and falsehood. Two major fronts are open:

A. Charming Presentation of Islam

The "Islamic Jihad" is calculated to present the inherent grace, beauty, and charm of Islam using all media and personal example. Write books, articles, present television programs, speeches before schools and churches. Dajjal, the Anti-Christ, will be vanquished, and the Renaissance of Islam will be inaugurated in full glory and majesty.

B. Monitoring & Tracking

Hazrat Ameerul Momeneen has opened a Jihad front in this area. Reminiscent of the "Battle of Britain", he invites every man, woman, or child to volunteer, sign-up, for "Monitoring and Tracking" instances of attacks against Islam in books, magazines, newspapers, television, and films. These are instances of defamation, distortion, and calculated lies and deceit to injure the character and reputation of Islam, the Holy Prophet, and Islamic history.

As a monitor and tracker, you will assume the responsibility to regularly read certain designated (by yourself) books, magazines, newspapers, television programs, and other media of your choice. If and when you detect an attack on Islam, you copy the offending passage with citations, and send it to Markaz, or the Ameer, U.S.A. At Markaz, a team of scholars will determine and prepare the best response, and take up the matter with the publishers, and if necessary, file suits.

Notice how that Hadith works in this Jihad also. If you go to night school after a full day at work studying English just so you may improve your writing skills, then this constitutes preparation for Jihad. And you win Allah's rewards and

blessings from day one, as if you have already performed the Jihad.

3. THE JEHAD-E-ASGHAR

This is the Jihad of the Sword. In the time of the Holy Prophet, Islam demanded your very life and limb in defense of Islam. For thirteen long years the Holy Prophet and his companions had suffered all manner of cruel and unusual punishments. In this period of persecution when innocent women and children were tortured, and brutally mutilated, the Holy Prophet exercised patience and control.

Then, Allah's word came, to meet the enemy and resist. Thus were fought the battles of Islam. Each one of those battles was in self-defense. To protect the lives of helpless men, women, and children. The Holy Prophet in his 23 year ministry never once committed aggression, or pursued a war in which he was the aggressor.

Islam does not allow wars of aggression. Jihad of the Sword may be waged so long as its pre-conditions are satisfied. If so, the Imam-e-Waqt will declare it.

The Imam-e-Waqt, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, peace be upon him, had declared that in the present age, the Jihad of the Sword is not applicable. When, at some future time, its pre-conditions are satisfied, it may be waged. Until then it is in conditional suspension.

Hazrat Ahmad said that Islam's enemies no longer attack Islam with guns and swords in the present age. The real battle front is to capture the hearts and minds of people with massive media distortion of truth, and attacking Islam in subtle, captivating ways. Our response as Muslims is to meet the challenge in the same arena, in similar media fronts, with words, not bullets.

Hazrat Ameerul Momineen has shown that every day, day in and day out, as a Muslim in these troubled times, we should perform some Jihad, in some manner, and when a new front is opened we must sign-up with *Labbaik! Labbaik!!* on our lips.

Do not feel that on a world-wide basis it is an immense task to win against such a formidable foe. This is a matter decreed by Allah. Islam has to be victorious. The Kingdom of God will be re-established. The Renaissance of Islam will happen. All this is decreed. You and I will get the rewards and blessings for participation.

The Islamic Jihad opens the Gates of Heaven for you, your kith and kin. This is Allah's Jihad. You take one step toward Allah, He takes ten steps toward you. You walk towards Him, He runs towards you. Such is the Jihad of Islam. And Allah's rewards.



Religion does not mean disputes, abuse and harsh words which are indulged in, in the name of religion. In this context, no one pays attention to the suppression of inner vices or the establishment of true relationship with the Beloved. One party attacks another party like dogs and every kind of ill conduct is exhibited in support of religion. Such people do not realize why they came into this world and what is the main purpose of their lives. They continue blind and ill-natured and give their bigoted sentiments the name of religion. They exhibit their bad manners and employ their loose tongues in support of a fictitious god of whose existence they have no proof. Of what use is a religion which does not teach the worship of a Living God? The God that they present is no better than a corpse. He walks with the support of others. When that support is withdrawn, he falls to the ground. The only thing they gain from such a religion is bigotry. They lack altogether true fear of God and true sympathy with mankind which is the best of characteristics (Braheen Ahmadiyyah, Part IV, p. 19).

TRUE ISLAM

by Dr. B. M. Mirza

If you ask a Westerner what he thinks Islam is, you will get a very distorted picture of Islam. The only introduction to the words *Moslem* or *Islam* he may have is Middle Eastern terrorism, petrodollars, war and refugees. The fact is that the above picture no more depicts Islam than warlike activities in Northern Ireland, events in Central America or Terrorist activities in Germany and Spain depict Christianity. We can no longer blame Islam because a person calling himself a Muslim kills an innocent person than we can blame Christianity because a person calling himself a Christian murders an innocent person.

Modern means of transportation and the speed with which news from anywhere travels all around the globe are fast demolishing national barriers. The world is fast becoming one family and it is becoming increasingly important to learn about the views and ideologies of other people for the sake of a better and more friendly atmosphere on an international level.

On a personal level, religion may not be given much importance in the West, but on a national and international level, religion carries a great deal of influence. Some skeptics might say that religion seems to have a negative impact on our society today. A considered analysis of the situation, however, will make it obvious that the real culprit is ignorance of religion. After all, it is human nature to fear the unknown. Ignorance of religion and religious intolerance go hand in hand.

We believe that all religions originated from the same source—God—and there is bound to be a great deal of common ground among them. A proper use of religious knowledge (which most of us sadly lack) may in fact prove to be a unifying

force between the different peoples of the world.

There are close to one billion inhabitants of this planet who profess Islam as their faith. Being the second largest religion in the world, its adherents are found in almost all the countries in the world. For better understanding on an international level it is important to know what Islam really stands for. With this in mind, we wish to define Islam—what it is and what it stands for.

According to the Holy Quran, the revealed Muslim Scriptures, Islam is a culmination of the various previously revealed religions. The following passages will demonstrate the point:

“Say, Allah has spoken the truth: follow, therefore, the religion of Abraham, who was ever inclined to God.” (3:96)

“He has prescribed for you the religion which He enjoined on Noah, and which We have now revealed to thee, and which We enjoined on Abraham, and Moses and Jesus, viz, ‘Establish obedience to Allah in the earth and be not divided therein’ (42:14)

In chapter 2, verses 131-137, of the Holy Quran, we read a detailed account of the religion professed by Abraham (peace be upon him) and his progeny and the religion professed by the followers of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of God be on him:

131: And who will turn away from the religion of Abraham but he who is foolish of mind? Him did We choose in this world,...

132: “When his Lord said to him, ‘Submit,’ he said, ‘I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds.’

133: “The same did Abraham enjoin upon his sons—and so did Jacob—saying: ‘O my sons, truly Allah has chosen this religion for you; so let not death overtake you except when you are ‘Muslim’ (in a state of submission).

134 “Were you present when death came to Jacob,

when he said to his sons, 'What will you worship after me?' They answered, 'We will worship thy God, the God of thy fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, the One God; and to Him we submit ourselves.'

136 *And they say, 'Be ye Jews or Christians that you may be rightly guided.' Say: 'Nay, follow ye the religion of Abraham who was ever inclined to God; he was not of those who set up gods with God.'*

137: *Say ye: 'We believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob and his children, and what was given to Moses and Jesus, and what was given to all other Prophets from their Lord. We make no difference between any of them; and to Him we submit ourselves.'*

In the quotes above, the religion of Abraham, Jacob, and their sons is described as 'Islam'. In verse 134, the sons of Jacob use the words *Nahno La'hoo Muslimoon* (to Him we submit ourselves). The exact same words are used by the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad to describe their religion: *Nahno La'hoo Muslimoon* (to Him we submit ourselves). In other words, Islam had its origin in Abraham, according to the Holy Quran.

If Islam has its origin in the religion of Abraham, so do Judaism and Christianity. Looking from this perspective, it will not be surprising if there is found a great deal of common ground between Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The question naturally arises: Who is a Muslim? Our definition should embrace the Muslims as we know them today as well the earlier prophets and their progenies. Again, we seek from the Quran, the definition of a Muslim.

In the Arabic lexicon, the word Islam has the following literal meanings: to pay the price of something in advance; to entrust your work to someone else; to seek peace; to abandon some contention or enmity.

The conventional meanings of Islam are elaborated in the following verse of the Holy Quran:

“Nay, whoever submits himself completely to Allah, and is the doer of good, shall have his reward with his Lord. No fear will come to them, neither shall they grieve.” (2:113)

Thus Islam means a complete submission to the Will of God. A Muslim is he who dedicates himself for God, to fulfill His Will and to please Him. He becomes a creature of God in his belief and in his actions. He believes that his entire being is made to seek God, to obey Him, to love Him and to seek His approval in everything.

In his actions, an ideal Muslim performs all the righteous acts just for God, using all his God-given abilities and strengths, but with such fervor as if he is seeing the face of God in the mirror of his complete submission.

A person whose deeds emanate from such love and such natural fervor, becomes deserving of a reward from God. Fear and grief do not come near him and he attains to a state of salvation. This state of firm conviction in the Person and attributes of God brings one in complete harmony with God.

In this state, a person's thoughts harmonize with God's designs, his joy and bliss emanates from his complete submission and all his righteous deeds give him deep pleasure rather than appearing as a burden. This is a state synonymous with deliverance, prosperity and liberation. It becomes a foretaste of the state of bliss promised for the hereafter. In other words the taste of heaven for such a person begins right here in this life (and so does a taste of hell begin in this very life for one who does not submit to the Will of God).

We have followed here the line of reasoning put forth by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Reformer of our age, in his book *Aa'ina-i-Kamalat-i-Islam*. (A Mirror of the beauties of Islam). Elaborating on the above verse (2:113) he writes:

“Every intelligent person can infer from this verse that one can be a true Muslim only when his whole being, with all his physical and mental strengths, is dedicated to God in His way. All the faculties endowed to him by God are dedicated back to Him. His thoughts as well as his actions reflect his state of Islam.”

This means that the person professing Islam proves that his hands and his feet, his heart and his brain, his intellect and his understanding, his anger and his compassion, his gentleness and his knowledge, all his intellectual and physical strengths, his honor and his wealth, his leisure and his pleasure, his fears and his passions, and his whole being from the hair on his head to his toenails, all become subservient to God as if they belonged to God. In short, it becomes evident that his steadfastness has progressed to the point that whatever belongs to him does not remain his but becomes the property of God. All his faculties and capabilities are busy in serving God as if they were God's faculties.

The responsibilities of a Muslim pertain to two distinct spheres. His duties towards God and his duties towards his fellow beings. So the dedication of a Muslim has to take two forms—dedication to serve God and dedication to serve humanity. The dedication to God requires the focussing of all the love and worship on One God, no other being can be included in this love and worship. A person must accept all the commandments, limits and destinies willingly and with meekness.

The second aspect of the dedication is to devote one's life in serving humanity and to cultivate a true compassion for one's fellow beings. One must be willing to undergo hardships to provide relief to others and bear distress to give comfort to others. One must strive selflessly to benefit mankind, help those in need and constantly strive for their betterment in this life and the hereafter.

This will come about when one's faculties become God's instruments so that acts of God are carried out by them from

time to time. He is so wholly dedicated that one can say that his hands become God's hands, his eyes become God's eyes and his limbs become God's limbs.

This is the sum total of Islam. An ideal Muslim is he who SUBMITS HIMSELF COMPLETELY TO ALLAH (2:113). In his complete submission he surrenders his total being—his thoughts, his feelings, his aspirations and his actions, all his capabilities and faculties. This is **total annihilation in Allah** and requires a spiritual death of one's self, and of one's negative traits.

This supreme sacrifice requires a great deal of effort and hard work. Once accomplished, however, God bestows a new life to this person. He is **born again** and is endowed with new God-given capabilities and attains to an eternal life as a bounty from God.

The new life is not the only reward for this complete submission. The real reward for his earnestness, his steadfastness, and his belief is a **union with his Maker**. He becomes so certain of the Person of God as if he sees Him. Now a reward from God is not just a conjecture but becomes such a reality as if he has already received it. All his past and present griefs are wiped away and any future fears are evaporated. He has no wants, no griefs and no fears because he has truly found God who becomes his support and protection. He becomes a child of God, under His complete protection.

In this state a person will perform miracles because his actions are not his actions but really the actions of God. This has happened notably in the case of prophets. All prophets have shown miracles. The Holy Prophet Muhammad exhibited greater miracles than any other prophet.

This does not mean that a person in this state of union with God becomes a deity. He still remains a human being but he becomes a special one of God. Jesus Christ showed miracles in the same manner. It is a mistake, however, to elevate him to the rank of a deity. If this was done, then many other prophets who showed greater miracles than Jesus would also have to be elevated to the rank of deities and we will have a confusing

array of gods.

The state of **complete annihilation** in God is attained by a continuous personal struggle and a great deal of sacrifice, but the state of being **born again** and the state of **union with God** are bestowed upon a person after he accepts a death for his desires, his thoughts and his aspirations.

This, in short, is the true meaning of Islam. A true Muslim can only be a source of peace and prosperity for mankind. He can be only wholly beneficial and can in no way harm any human being, unless in self-defense.

It is unfortunate that close to one billion human beings profess to be Muslims but very few can reflect the picture of a Muslim discussed above. In the early days of Islam, the strength of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, (peace and blessings of God be on him) produced a large number of true Muslims and Islam made rapid progress in all walks of life. With the passage of time, the spirit of Islam had disappeared and only a shell remained.

It was the design of God to re-establish this true spirit once more, so He sent His Messenger in our age in the person of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India. He initiated a Movement designed to rejuvenate true faith and conquer the forces of evil.

As death has begun to stare into the face of these forces of evil, they have banded together and are trying tooth and nail to oppose the Movement initiated by Hazrat Ahmad (peace be upon him). Slowly but surely, however, this Movement is gaining strength and is defeating the forces of evil. Today we find followers of Hazrat Ahmad in almost all the countries of the world. In due course, surely, the opposing forces will be routed and Ahmad's call will win over the hearts of people. Blessed are those who answer his call and bring the day of the downfall of Satanic forces nearer.



DIVINE MESSAGE

What is this Divine Message? We may refer to the following passage from the Holy Bible.

If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. (John 14:15,16)

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. (John 16:7)

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. (John 16:12,13)

In the above quotations, where Jesus talks about the Comforter, he uses the pronouns he, his, him, etc., which are pronouns used for persons rather than spirits. The comforter therefore, should be a person, a human being.

The question naturally arises: who is this comforter who was to come after the departure of Jesus? Let us first take up the contention of some theologians that the Comforter is the Holy Ghost. Are we to assume that the Holy Ghost was not present when Jesus was delivering this sermon? Nobody will agree with this observation. We all believe that the Holy Ghost was always present, not only with Jesus, but also with his Disciples.

The function of the Comforter, as explained by Jesus himself, was: (a) He will guide you into **all truth**. (b) He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and (c) He will show you things to come. (John 16:13)

Jesus said that he was not telling everything to his followers because they were not ready for a complete message (John 16:12). If the Comforter is the Holy Ghost, can anyone show any extra teachings written anywhere other than what Jesus said as recorded in the Bible? The Comforter was supposed to bring a complete set of teachings as he was to guide mankind to **all truth**.

The Comforter was supposed to relay the words of God to mankind. He was not supposed to convey any message on his own. Again, we don't have any evidence of the Holy Ghost conveying words of God to mankind.

The Comforter was supposed to prophesy about future events. There is again no evidence of any prophecies conveyed by the Holy Ghost. It is not enough to say that the Holy Ghost put these things in somebody's mind. The teachings from God and forecast of future events have to be commonly available to an average person, otherwise they don't mean anything.

An unbiased mind can easily find that this prophecy of Jesus was fulfilled in the person of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam. Fulfilling the characteristic (a) above, the Holy Quran proclaims: *"This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favors upon you"* (5:4). Fulfilling (b) above, the Quran exclaims: *"Nor does he speak of his own desire. It is nothing but pure revelation from God"* (53:4,5). Regarding point (c) above, the Quran is full of prophecies. For example, it exclaimed: *"Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this exhortation, and most surely We will be its guardian"* (15:10).

It needs no proof to assert that all the ancient scriptures have undergone changes with the passage of time. But the Quran prophesied that it will be safeguarded by God. Even the opponents of Islam agree on this point that the Holy Quran has remained intact for 1400 years and nothing has changed in it. Even the language it was originally written in, is as much alive today as it was 1400 years ago.

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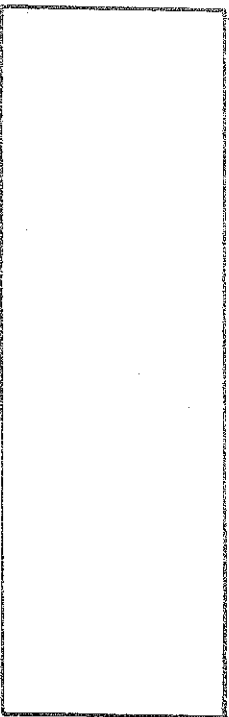
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