



إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

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Distinctive Features of Islam

Objectives and Achievements of the
Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

The Finality of Prophethood

Art and Music in Islam

Surrogate Mothers

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THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the expected world Reformer and the Promised Messiah. The Movement is an embodiment of true and real Islam. It seeks to unite mankind with its Creator and to establish peace throughout the world. The present Supreme Head of the Movement is Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad. The International Center for the Ahmadiyya Movement is at Rabwah, Pakistan. The Ahmadiyya Movement is actively engaged in the propagation of Islam.

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THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

The Muslim Sunrise is the official journal of the American Fazl Mosque. It features articles written by renowned scholars. The magazine is open for discussion on Islam as well as topics relating to other religions. It highlights the role of Islam in a changing environment. It provides a platform for public opinion on current problems confronting humanity and their solution. This within the context of understanding the basic purpose of life here and hereafter. Opinions expressed in this magazine may not necessarily be those of the American Fazl Mosque.

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***Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, The Promised Messiah
Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam (1835-1908)***

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

In March, 1889, Hazrat Ahmad 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, 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.

Hazrat Ahmad 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, elected in 1982, is Sahibzada Mirza Tahir Ahmad. The International Headquarters are located in Rabwah, Pakistan.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF ISLAM

(Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV)

(A discourse given at the University of Canberra, Australia)



No Monopoly on Truth

While speaking on the subject of the distinctive features of Islam, the first and most attractive feature that strikes one, is its most endearing disclaimer that Islam has a monopoly on truth, and that there have been no other true religions. Nor does Islam claim that Arabs alone have been the recipients of God's love. Islam is the only religion that totally rejects the notion that truth is the monopoly of any single

faith, race or people; instead, it professes that Divine guidance is a general bounty that has sustained humanity in all ages. The Quran tells us that there is neither a race nor a people, who have not been blessed with the bounty of Divine guidance; and there is neither a religion of the earth nor a body of people who have not received Prophets and Messengers of God (The Holy Quran, 35:35).

Contrary to this worldwide Islamic view of the manifestation of Allah's Favor upon all peoples of the earth, we are struck by the fact that no Book of any other religion verifies or even mentions the possibility of other peoples and nations having received light and guidance from Allah at any stage in history. In fact, the truth and validity of a local or regional religion is often emphasized so greatly, and the truth of other faiths ignored so totally, it is as if God were the preserve of just one faith, one people and one race alone, to the total exclusion of all other inhabitants of the earth. It is as if the sun of truth had only risen and set upon the limited

horizon of a certain people to the exclusion of the rest of the world, and the other people were left, so to say, abandoned and condemned to eternal darkness.

For instance, the Bible presents only the God of Israel, and it repeatedly says: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel."¹ It does not, even in passing, verify the truth of religious revelations bestowed on other lands and upon other peoples. Thus, the belief of the Jews that all Israelite prophets were sent only to the tribes of Israel is in full conformity with the intent and message of the Bible. Jesus had also declared that his advent was intended for the guidance of the Hebrew tribes alone, and had said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel",² and he admonished his disciples in the words: "Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before swine."³

Similarly, the Hindu religion also addresses its Books only to those of high birth. It is said, "If one of base birth should perchance hear a text of the Vedas, the King should seal his ears with molten wax and lead. And should he recite a portion of the Scripture, his tongue should be severed; and should he succeed in reading the Vedas, his body should be hacked to pieces."⁴

Even if we disregard such drastic injunctions, or offer some less severe explanation of them, the fact remains that the Holy books of the various faiths do not, even by implication, allude to the truth of the religions of other lands and peoples. The basic question that arises here is that if all these faiths were in fact true, then what was the wisdom in presenting the concept of God in such limited and restricted terms?

The Quran readily furnishes a solution of this predicament. It says that even before the revelation of the Quran and the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammed, Divine Messengers had indeed been sent to every nation and every part of the globe, but their sphere was regional and their assignments temporary. This is because human civilization had not yet reached a stage of development which merited the commissioning of a universal Messenger, bearing a universal Message.

A Universal Religion

The very first leaf of the Holy Quran praises the Lord Who is the Sustainer of all the worlds, and its last passage urges us to pray to

the Lord of mankind. Thus, both the first and the last words of the Holy Quran present the concept of the God of the entire universe, and not merely that of a God of the Arabs or the Muslims. Verily, no one before the Holy Prophet of Islam had bekkoned the whole of humanity, and no Book before the Holy Quran had addressed the entire world. The first such claim was made in favor of the Holy Prophet of Islam in these words: *“And we have not sent thee but as a bearer of glad tidings and a Warner to all mankind, but most men know not.”* (34:29). And then: *“Say, ‘O mankind, truly I am a Messenger to you all’.”* (7:159)

When the Quran calls itself *“a Message for all the world”* (81:28), it upholds itself as the guidance with which is linked the true development and advancement of mankind.

The Quran has repeatedly been called the *Verifier* of other Books and Muslims are admonished to believe in all other Prophets in exactly the same manner as they believe in their own Prophet. In our faith, it is forbidden to make a distinction among any of them, much less to believe in some and to reject others. The Quran says:

“All [of us] believe in Allah, and in His angels, and in His Books, and in His Messengers saying, ‘We make no distinction between any of His Messengers’” (2:286).

It may not be without merit to examine, if universality in itself is a desirable feature, why Islam has laid such great stress upon it. Ever since Islam brought the message of the unity of mankind, the pace of the march towards such unity has continued to accelerate in every sphere. An example of this march in our times is the establishment of different international bodies and federations. Indeed, these are but milestones along the long and devious journey towards unity among all mankind. So, the need that is keenly felt by the advanced and civilized man of today, had already been fulfilled by planting the seed of its solution in the message of Islam 1400 years ago. Today, of course, the rapid development of travel and communications has lent a new impetus to the march towards unity among peoples and nations.

Differences Among Faiths—Their Reality

A question naturally arises: if all religions were in fact founded by Messengers from God, then why is there any difference in their teachings? Can the same God send down different teachings? This

question is answered by Islam alone, and this, too, is a distinctive feature of this religion. Islam holds that there are two basic causes of differences between various religions. First, that varying conditions had needed varying dictates and rules, and the All-Knowing and All-Wise God had provided guidance for different ages, regions and peoples in accordance with their respective needs. Secondly, the contents of various faiths faded and wilted under the vicissitudes of time, hence they were not preserved in their original form. In some cases, the followers themselves introduced innovations and variations to suit changing needs, and the originally revealed Books continued to be interpolated for this purpose. Obviously, such adulteration of the Divine Message ultimately mandated fresh guidance from the Original Source. As God has said in the Quran:

“They pervert the words from their proper places and have forgotten a good part of that with which they were exhorted” (5:14).

If we examine the history of differences between various faiths in the light of the principles enunciated by the Quran, we find that the differences tend to diminish as we reach nearer the source itself. For instance, if we limit the comparison of Christianity and Islam only to the life of Jesus and the four books of the Bible, then there will appear only very minor differences between the basic teachings of the Bible and the Quran. But, as we travel further down the road of time, the chasm of these differences becomes wider and wider, till it becomes totally unbridgeable—and all because of human endeavors to revise that which was originally revealed. The history of other faiths also reveals the same basic reality, and we find strong corroboration of the Quranic view, that the direction of human changes and revisions of the Divine Message has always been from the worship of one God to that of several, from reality to fiction, and from humanity to deification of human beings.

The Quran tells us that the surest way to distinguish a true religion, despite its subsequent mutilation, is to examine its origin. If the origin reveals the teaching of the unity of God, worship of none save the One God, and a true and genuine sympathy for all humanity, then such a religion, despite subsequent changes, must be accepted as true. The founders of religions that satisfy these criteria, were indeed righteous and pious beings, and true

Messengers deputed by God, between whom we should make no distinction and in whose truth we must believe fully. They have certain fundamental features common to all regardless of difference in time and place. Thus expounds the Holy Quran:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ ۚ
حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ

“And they were not commanded but to serve Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience, and being upright, and to observe Prayer, and pay the Zakat. And that is the religion of the people of the right path.” (98:6)

An Eternal Religion

Another distinctive feature of Islam is that it not only proclaims its universal character, but also lays claim to being eternal. It then proceeds to fulfil the preconditions of such a claim. For instance, a message can be eternal only if it is complete and perfect in every aspect, and also guaranteed with regard to the verity of its contents. In other words, its revealed Books should bear Divine guarantee against human revision and tampering. As far as the teachings of the Quran are concerned, The Almighty Himself claims in the Quran:

“I have this day perfected your faith for you in every way and, having completed My bounty upon you, have chosen for you Islam as religion.” (5:4)

Safeguarding of the Quran

As I have already said, for a teaching to be eternal, it is not sufficient merely that it should be complete and perfect, but that there should also exist a guarantee for its perpetual preservation in its original form. The Quran amply satisfies this fundamental requirement, and the One Who sent down the Quran has proclaimed it in the clearest terms that:

“We have sent down this Book and verily We shall safeguard it” (15:10).

In other words, God himself will safeguard it and will never allow it to be tampered with. One method for the preservation of the text has been that in accordance with Divine Will, there have always been hundreds of thousands of people in every age who have committed the text of the Quran to memory, and this practice continues to this day. The principal measure of safeguarding the

real import and essence of the Message has been the Divine practice of appointing Guides and Reformers in each century, and to prophesy the advent of a Grand Reformer and Reviver in the latter age. He was to be commissioned as the spiritual head by the Almighty Himself and under Divine guidance, was to settle differences and controversies among the followers of Islam, thus safeguarding the true spirit of the Holy Quran.

Of course, there is the question as to whether the Quranic claim of its preservation is also supported by reliable corroborative evidence. A clue to the answer to this question lies in the fact that there are a very large number of non-Muslim researchers who, despite themselves, have totally failed to show that the text of the Quran has been tampered with in the slightest manner after the passing away of the Holy Prophet of Islam. In fact, there are many non-Muslim researchers who have felt compelled, after their extensive searches in this field, to affirm openly that the Quran has indeed been preserved and safeguarded in its original form. For instance, Sir William Muir in his work, *The Life of Muhammad*, says "We may, upon the strongest presumption, affirm that every verse is the genuine and unaltered composition of Muhammad himself."⁵ Also, "There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that we possess the text which Muhammad himself gave forth and used."⁶ Says Noldeke: "Slight clerical errors there may have been, but the Quran of Uthman contains none but genuine elements, though some times in very strange order. The efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolations in the Quran have failed."⁷

A complete Religion

As regards Islam's distinctive and unique claim that the teachings of the Quran are complete and perfect and fully capable of guiding humanity in all ages, this, too, is fully supported by reason. It is not possible in a brief space of time to deal with this subject in detail, and I must confine myself to a brief reference to some guiding principles and illustrative examples. First, we must consider how Islam succeeds in meeting the demands of changing times, thus forestalling the need for any revision in its teachings. It is indeed fascinating to study Islam's practical guidance in this regard, of which I shall now place a mere example before you:

1. Islam only enunciates fundamental principles and refrains from

stipulating such detail as would need to vary to cope with changing times and situations.

2. Islam is fully mindful of man's intellectual, social and political evolution, and its teachings cater for all possible situations. It not only recognizes the fact that there occur continuous change and development among nations, but also the reality that not all peoples are at par in their state of development at a given point in time. For example, it is possible that the earth may still in part be inhabited by the people of the Stone Age, and some groups and tribes may still be a thousand years behind our age, even though we share the same time. Their intellectual, social and political state may really belong to an age left far behind. I am sure we would all agree that it would be the height of folly to force modern political ideologies upon the original inhabitants of Australia, or the pygmies of the Congo.
3. Islam is a religion that conforms to human nature and fulfils all human needs. No change in its teachings is necessary, unless there also occurs a fundamental change in human nature, a prospect we can dismiss outright.

These were a few facets of the principles of Islamic teachings; I shall now discuss them a little further so that my submission may be understood more fully.

Zakat Vs. Interest

Islam condemns the institution of interest in all its forms and strongly urges its total elimination. The motive force it presents in place of interest, to move the economic wheel, is called *Zakat*. Obviously, I cannot treat this subject in detail in the time available, and will, therefore, just say a few words on the methodology adopted by the Quran to present the essence of its teachings in this important sphere. *Zakat* is a system of taxing capital, realized from the well-to-do. Apart from meeting the demands of the State, this tax is intended to meet the needs of the poor. In other words, this system not only meets the requirements of the government machinery, but also guarantees to fulfil the demands of Social welfare. All that has been done is to lay down the basic principle, leaving it to those with insight and understanding to settle the details in accordance with the conditions prevailing in a particular environment at a given time. The Quran says that in the wealth of those who possess over and beyond their basic needs, is also a share

for those who are unable to meet their basic needs and are considered deprived in their environment. This clearly establishes that it is the right of every person to have certain basic necessities of life provided to him in every land and society, and those made responsible for meeting this obligation are the ones who possess more than their basic needs, leaving it to the State to decide upon the *modus operandi*, which is to ensure that the system is fair, just and equitable and adequately fulfils its basic purpose.

Directions in Political Matters

The other major international question confronting us today is that of the determination of the form of government for a given region or country. Here, too, the guiding principles of Islam are so pertinent, weighty and elastic that their truth and practicability become self evident. No one can deny that a particular form of government is considered suitable or unsuitable only when applied to a specific set of conditions obtaining, and it is idle to imagine that a particular political system can fulfill the needs of every people for all times. This is why Islam does not specify a particular form of government. It neither presents a democratic or socialist form, nor recommends kingship or dictatorship.

Instead of dilating upon the methods of establishing governments, Islam enunciates the principle of conducting political and governmental affairs in a specific manner, and imposes the condition that, no matter what the form, the responsibilities of a government will always be discharged justly and fairly, with sympathy; always fulfilling and upholding basic human rights. Thus, instead of emphasizing the first segment of the commonly accepted definition of democracy, *i.e.*, "government, by the people," Islam emphasizes that, whatever form of the government, it must in all events be "for the people." So when democracy is mentioned among other forms of government, the real stress is laid on its quality. It is emphasized that it should not be a hollow democracy, but that those electing their rulers should be competent people, motivated in all honesty to elect only those who are really fit and equal to the task. This has been made a pre-requisite of any election to office by the Quran. It says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ

“Verily, Allah commands you to give over the trusts to those entitled to them, and that, when you judge between men, you judge with justice.” (4:59)

And then, whatever government may, as a result, be established, it is obliged to govern with justice, without any discrimination of race, color, or creed.

Now I shall briefly summarize the rules that flow from the basic fundamentals given in the Quran about any system of government:

1. A government is duty-bound to protect the honor, life and property of its people.⁸
2. A ruler must always act with justice, between individuals and between peoples.⁹
3. National matters should be settled by consultation.¹⁰
4. Government must arrange to fulfil the basic needs of man; that is to say, provide him food, clothing and shelter.¹¹
5. People should be provided a peaceful and secure environment and their lives, property and honor protected.¹²
6. The economic system should be equitable and orderly.¹²
7. Health care should be organized.¹²
8. There would prevail total religious freedom.¹³
9. A vanquished people must be dealt with justly.¹⁴
10. Prisoners of war should be treated with compassion.¹⁵
11. Treaties and agreements must always be honored.¹⁶
12. Inequitous agreements must not be forced upon the weak.¹⁶
13. Muslim subjects are enjoined to obey the government in authority. The only exception to this rule is a case where the government blatantly opposes and prevents the carrying out of religious duties and obligations.¹⁷
14. If differences should arise with the ruler, then these should be settled in the light of the principles enunciated in the Quran and by the Holy Prophet. In no event should one be swayed by selfish motives.¹⁸
15. People are enjoined to assist the authorities by supporting schemes that aim to promote general well-being and welfare. It is forbidden to launch so-called non-cooperation movements.¹⁹

Similarly, governments are obliged to assist in beneficent undertakings, whether individual or collective, and not to obstruct such endeavors.

16. A powerful country is forbidden from all forms of aggression against another country, recourse to arms is permitted in self defence only.²⁰

Islamic concept of Justice

I shall now cite a few important examples of Islamic principles which perhaps need particular emphasis in the world today. The first concerns Islamic teaching in respect of equity and justice. Other religions do not present a comprehensive direction about the administration of justice and fairplay, and even if they mention this at all, it is in terms that can scarcely be applicable to us today. In fact, some parts of these directions appear to conflict directly with the intellect and sensibilities of our age, and one can not but conclude that these teachings have either become corrupted or were intended only for local and temporary application. As Judaism presents God as only the God of Israel to the exclusion of all other humankind—no wonder then, that it does not even in passing deal with the fundamental question of Human Rights as such.

As for Hinduism, it seems outright hostile not only to the non-Hindu but also to the Hindu of a low caste, hence narrowing further the field of God's mercy to a much smaller section of the human race. Hinduism decrees: "If a Brahmin is unable to return a loan to one of low caste, the other has no right to demand its return. But if one of low caste is unable to return a loan taken from a Brahmin, he is to be made to work as a laborer for Brahmins till such time as he is able to pay back the loan in full."²¹

Again, in Judaism we fail to detect a concept of justice toward one's enemy. It is said: "And when your Lord your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must utterly destroy them; you shall make no covenant with them."²²

I shall now, by way of comparison, cite a few examples of Islamic teachings in the same areas. The Quran enjoins, and I quote:

1. *"And when you judge between people, do so fairly and justly."* (4:59).
2. *"Be strict in observing justice, and be witness for Allah, even*

though it be against yourselves or against your parents or kindred.” (4:136)

3. *“And let not a people’s enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness. (5:9)*
4. *“And fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you but do not transgress. Allah loves not the transgressors.” (2:91)*
5. *“And if they incline towards peace, incline thou also towards it.” (8:62)*

The other example I wish to cite of the eternal teachings of Islam is the one concerning revenge and forgiveness. When we compare Islam’s teachings in this sphere with those of other faiths, we are at once struck by this injunction of the Old Testament:

“Your eye shall not pity; it shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”²³

Doubtless, such emphasis on vengeance causes not mere wonder, but also saddens our heart. However, I am not citing this example to castigate another teaching, but to show that, when viewed in the light of Quranic principles, even such drastic measures may also sometimes be justified. The Quran, thus helps us in following the conflicting teachings of other faiths in a spirit of sympathy and understanding, which, too, is an exclusive feature of Islam.

According to the Quran, the extraction of full vengeance was decreed only to meet the specific needs of a particular period. This was necessary to give heart to the Israelites to make them stand up for their rights after they had remained victimized and enslaved for a prolonged period, and as a result, had become cowardly and developed a deep-seated complex of being an inferior people. Obviously, in such a situation, it would not have been proper to emphasize forgiveness, as it would only have made the Israelites sink deeper into their morass and not given them the confidence and courage to break the shackles of abject bondage. This teaching, therefore, was right and proper in the situation which then obtained, and was indeed given by the All-Wise God. On the other hand, when we consider the New Testament, we find that in contradiction of the previous Scripture, it emphasizes forgiveness to such an extent that it totally deprives the Israelites of the right to extract any

vengeance whatsoever. The real reason for this was that by practicing the previous teaching over a long period of time, the Israelites had become hard-hearted and ferocious, and this could only be remedied by suspending for a certain period their right to extract vengeance. This is why Jesus admonished them:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say to you do not resist one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also, and if anyone would use you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well.’”²⁴

Islam holds these two opposing teachings to be complementary, each suited to the conditions and situation prevailing at the time, and neither, therefore, able to lay claim to being universal or eternal. And this perfectly stands to reason, for man was still progressing through earlier stages of development and had not yet become one comity to which could be vouchsafed a law that would be final and universal. We believe that Islam is that final law and presents a teaching not influenced by place or time. This fact is amply illustrated by its teachings in the matter being considered. The Quran says:

وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِثْلُهَا فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ
عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ *

“Remember that the recompense of an injury is an injury the like thereof; but whoso forgives and thereby brings about a reformation, his reward is with Allah. Surely, Allah loves not wrongdoers” (42:41).

Islam thus combines the best features of both the earlier teachings, with the vital addition that forgiveness is commended provided it is likely to result in an improvement and in the correction of the defaulter, that being the real objective. If not, then punishment is held to be necessary, but not exceeding the degree to which one is wronged. Surely, this guidance is in full conformity with human nature and is as practicable today as when it was revealed fourteen centuries ago.

Some other distinctions

The subject of Islam’s distinctive features is a very vast one, and I have been able to deal with just a few aspects that I had chosen for this presentation. Time will permit no more than a passing

reference for certain other aspects that I would not wish to omit:

1. Islam holds God to be the Creator of the universe and presents His Unity in stark simple terms, comprehensible and appealing both to a rustic and an intellectual. Islam calls God a Perfect Being, the fountainhead of all excellences and free of all blemishes. He is a living God Who manifests Himself everywhere and Who loves His creation and listens to their supplications. None of His attributes have been suspended; He, therefore, communicates with mankind as before, and has not barred the avenues to reach Him directly.
2. Islam holds that there is no contradiction between God's word and His deed. It, thus, frees us from the traditional rivalry between science and religion, and does not require man to believe in anything beyond the laws of nature determined by Him. He urges us to ponder over nature and to put it to beneficent use, for everything has been created for the benefit of humankind.
3. Islam does not make idle claims or compel us to believe what we do not understand. It supports its teachings with reason and explanation, satisfying our intellect and also the depths of our soul.
4. Islam is not based on myths or folklore. It invites everyone to experiment for himself and holds that truth is always verifiable, in one form or another.
5. The revealed Book of Islam is unique, distinguishing it from all other faiths. Despite their collective efforts over centuries, its opponents have not been able to equal even a small portion of this wondrous Book. Its merit lies not only in its unique literary excellence, but also in the simplicity and comprehensiveness of its teachings. The Quran proclaims that it is the best teaching—a claim made by no other revealed Book.
6. The Quran claims that it combines the best features of earlier Scriptures, and all enduring and comprehensive teachings have been placed within its fold. The Quran says:
“Herein are lasting commandments” (98:4) and *“This indeed is what is taught in former Scriptures—The Scriptures of Abraham and Moses.”* (87:19-20)
7. A distinctive feature of Islam is that its revealed Book is in a living language. Is it not curious that the languages of all other revealed Books are either dead or no longer in general use? A

living Book, it seems, had to be in a living and ever-enduring language.

8. Another distinction of Islam is that its Prophet passed through every imaginable stage of human experience, starting from an impoverished and orphaned childhood and ending as the undisputed ruler of his people. His life has been documented in minute detail and reflects unparalleled faith in God and constant sacrifice in His way. He lived a full and eventful life packed with action, and has left behind an example of perfect conduct in every sphere of human endeavor. This is only fitting and proper, as he was a living interpretation of the Quran, and by personal example lighted the way of mankind for all times to come—a role not fulfilled adequately by any other Prophet.
9. Another distinction of Islam is its many prophecies that have been fulfilled over the ages and have reinforced the faith of its followers in the existence of the All-knowing and Living God. This process continues to this day, as witnessed by the recent discovery of the preserved body of the Pharaoh who had driven Moses and his people out of Egypt. Another fresh example of the Quranic Prophecy is about the development of new means of destruction, where fire would be locked in minute particles which would stretch and agitate before exploding with a ferocity that would cause mountains to evaporate.
10. Another feature of Islam is that when it talks of the hereafter and life after death, it also prophesies future events of this world, the fulfilment of which reinforces the faith of its followers in the life after death.
11. Islam is distinct from other faiths in providing a comprehensive code of conduct in individual, collective and international dealings. These directions encompass every imaginable situation and include the relationship between the young and the old, the employer and the employee, among family members, between friends and partners, and even between adversaries. The rules and principles enunciated are truly universal and have already stood the test of time.
12. Islam proclaims complete equality among mankind, irrespective of differences of caste, creed and color. The only criterion of honor it accepts is that of righteousness, not of birth, riches, race or color. The Quran says:

إِنَّ أَدْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَمُ

“Verily, the most honorable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you” (49:14);

and again: وَمَنْ عَمِلْ صَالِحًا قَرْنَ ذَكَرْ أَذُنِي وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ

الْجَنَّةَ يَرْزُقُونَ فِيهَا بغيرِ حِسَابٍ *

“Whoso does good, whether male or female, and is a believer—these will enter the Garden; they will be provided therein without measure.” (40:41)

13. Islam presents a definition of good and evil that distinguishes it from all other faiths. It does not hold natural human desires to be evil; it only calls their inordinate and improper satisfaction to be evil. Islam teaches that our natural inclinations should be regulated and channelized so as to make them constructive and beneficial for the society.
14. Islam has not only made women heirs to property, but has given them equal rights with men, but not in a manner that would disregard the distinctive features of their anatomy and their exclusive responsibilities in the bearing and nursing of children.

A Religion of Peace

In the end, I would give all seekers of peace the glad tidings that Islam alone is the faith that guarantees peace in all spheres and at all levels: individual, social, economic, national and supra-national. Islam alone bears a name, the literal meaning of which is *peace*, and one who becomes a Muslim, not only enters a safe haven himself but also guarantees it for others, and shuns all actions that might lead to inequity and disruption. The Holy Prophet said that a Muslim is he whose word and deed do no harm to others.²⁵ The momentous address of the Holy Prophet delivered shortly before his death, and after the performance of what has come to be called the Farewell Pilgrimage, is an eternal charter of peace for all humankind. Islam enjoins peace not only between men, but also between man and his Maker, so that not only other men remain unharmed from the word and deed of a Muslim, but he himself remains safe from God's wrath and censure, the recompense which is merited as a result of committing transgression. So, a Muslim's peace obtains in this world and also extends to the hereafter.

Islam's teachings, if followed by the nations of the world, are fully capable of saving them from strife and destruction. Islam is a living faith and claims to be able to place the relationship of man with God on the same plane as it was in the days long past. Islam does not consider revelation and communion with God to be a thing of the past. It believes that the avenues of spiritual bliss trodden upon by Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and, above all, the Prophet of Islam, are still open and beckoning to those desirous of close communion with God.

The Ahmadiyya Movement

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam believes that these claims have been fulfilled in our age in the person of its founder, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who was born in 1835 in the remote village of Qadian in India. He was enabled by Divine mercy to tread the path of piety and righteousness, and strictly following the teachings of Islam, was blessed with intimate communion with the Almighty. He received Divine revelation, which also formed the basis of his many prophecies, whose unflinching fulfilment has continued beyond his life.

In accordance with Divine direction, he founded the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam in the year 1889, and, leaving behind a dedicated and vibrant community of disciples numbering several hundred thousands, he departed from this earthly abode in 1908. His mission continues, and the Community has all along been headed by elected successors.

While describing his mission, The founder of our Movement had said:

“I have been sent that I should prove that Islam alone is a living religion. And I have been blessed with spiritual powers that render helpless those of other faiths, and also those from among us who are spiritually blinded. I can demonstrate to every opponent that the Quran is a miracle in its teachings, its enlightened knowledge, its deep and delicate insight, and in its perfect eloquence. It excels the miracles of Moses, and those of Jesus a hundred fold.”²⁶

He goes on to say:

“I am the light in the darkness of this age. He who follows me, will be saved from the pits and ditches dug by the Devil

to ensnare those straying in the dark. He has sent me so that I should lead the world, gently and in peace, to the One True God, and re-establish moral excellences of Islam. And I have been given heavenly signs to satisfy those who seek the truth.’’²⁷

I now end my address with another quotation from the writings of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, which is a call to the whole of humanity:

“The mirror which enables you to behold That Lofty Being, in His communion with man... Let one whose heart yearns for the truth, stand up and search. I tell you in all truth, that if souls search honestly and hearts really thirst for the truth, then men should look for the right method and the right path. But how will this path open, and how will this veil be lifted? I assure all seekers that Islam alone gives the glad tidings of this path, for others have long since placed a seal on God’s revelation. But, be assured that God has not placed this seal; this is a mere excuse conjured up by man in his deprivation. Verily, as it is not possible to see without our eyes, or hear without our ears, in exactly the same way, it is impossible to behold the countenance of That Beloved, without the help of the Quran. I was a young man, and now I am grown old, but I have never found anyone who has drunk of the ultimate spiritual elixir, except from this holy spring.’’²⁸

Doubtless, this call is a life-giving message for every soul that seeks the real truth.

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3. Matthew 7:6
4. Manu Smurti: 12
5. *The Life of Muhammad* by Sir William Muir, Page 28
6. *Ibid*, Page 27

7. *Encyclopedia Brittanica*, 9th Edition, under *Quran*.
8. "Verily, Allah commands you to make over the trust to those entitled to them." The Holy Quran 4:59
9. "And that, when you judge between men, you judge with justice." The Holy Quran 4:59
10. "And whose affairs are decided by mutual consultation." The Holy Quran 42:39
11. "It is provided for thee that thou wilt not hunger therein, nor wilt thou be naked. And that thou wilt not thirst therein, nor wilt thou be exposed to the sun." The Holy Quran
12. "And when he is in authority, he runs about in the land to create disorder in it and destroy the crops and the progeny of man: and Allah loves not disorder." The Holy Quran 2:206
13. "There should be no compulsion in religion." The Holy Quran 2:257
14. "And let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness." The Holy Quran 5:9
15. "It does not behove a Prophet that he should have captives until he engages in regular fighting in the land." The Holy Quran 8:68
16. "Then afterwards either release them as a favour or by taking ransom—until the war lays down its burdens. That is the ordinance." The Holy Quran 47:5
17. "Obey Allah, and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority among you." The Holy Quran 4:60
18. "And if you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger." The Holy Quran 4:60
19. "And help one another in righteousness but help not one another in sin and transgression." The Holy Quran 5:3
20. "And strain not thy eyes after what we have bestowed on some classes of them to enjoy for a short time." The Holy Quran 20:132
21. *Manu Smurti* 10:35
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THE OBJECTIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

(A. F. Umar Khan)

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him), the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, and the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, wrote about his mission:

“The purpose for which God has appointed me is that I should remove the malaise that afflicts the relationship between God and His creatures and should restore the relationship of love and sincerity between them. Through the proclamation of truth I should bring about peace by putting an end to religious wars and should manifest the verities which have become hidden from the eyes of the world. I am called upon to demonstrate in practice that spirituality which has been overlaid by selfish darkness. It is for me to demonstrate in practice, not only in words, the Divine attributes which penetrate into the hearts of people and are manifested through prayer and concentration. Most of all it is my purpose to plant once more in the hearts of people the pure and shining Unity of God which is free from every suspicion of paganism and which has completely disappeared.”
(Lecture Lahore)

Contained in this brief statement are four distinct, but tightly interwoven, elements, or sub-goals, of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. Simply restated, they are:

1. To restore the natural relationship between creation and the Creator;
2. To proclaim forgotten truths;
3. To present a living example of righteousness; and
4. To reassert and re-establish the pre-eminence of the Theology of Unity.

I shall now discuss each of these elements in turn.

To Restore the Natural Relationship Between Creation and the Creator

There is an objective moral law which was injected into creation

by its Creator. This law of balance and proportion can be observed and analyzed through the careful study of nature. It is for this reason that the Holy Quran repeatedly insists that man should study creation as a means of instilling greater faith. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, peace be on him, declared:

“The God of Islam is the same God Who is visible in the mirror of the law of nature and is discernable in the book of nature. Islam has not presented a new God, but has presented Him by the light of man’s heart, by the conscience of man, and by heaven and earth.” (Tableegh-e-Risalat, Vol VI)

Nineteenth and Twentieth Century man has ceased to regard his universe from a God-centered perspective. He has lost sight of any standard of morality beyond that which he can define from his own society’s mores. Hence, we see such grave enormities and aberrations as the popularization of atheistic Communism, the so-called “Death of God Theology”, and more recently, *secular humanism*. Just yesterday I listened to a radio interview with a local Professor of Ethics who is also a medical doctor. He blames the rising incidence of depression, alcoholism, and drug addiction among doctors on their inability to cope with the tragedy in the emotional cry, “Why me?” when they treat the dying, particularly those in the flower of their youth or those still in their infancy. Lacking a religious perspective, complete with examples such as that of the prophet Job, who was visited with every sort of trial to temper his faith, doctors cannot rationalize the apparent injustice of watching another human die in pain. In society at large, this artificial chasm between man and his Creator has led to a rise in stress related illness, general moral degradation (including increased promiscuity—even to the extent where elementary schools feel compelled to offer sex education and birth control counseling), dissolution of the family structure, and rising suicide and divorce rates.

To Proclaim Forgotten Truths

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, explained:

“Arrogance is rife. The divines are caught in the pride of their learning. Those who pretend to be withdrawn from the world have no concern with self-improvement. All the disciplines which they practice are error or innovation; they are words and outer form and have no spiritual reality. They can

not be traced back to the Holy Prophet... The way of the Holy Prophet, which is the means of purification, has become discarded. Thus the purpose of God Almighty in setting up this Community is that the lost understanding might be re-established in the world through this Community.”
(Speeches)

Elsewhere (*Epilogue, Lecture Lahore*), he wrote that God Almighty had revealed to him two peoples who would be most in need of his ministries. In one vision, he saw a people sitting in darkness by a stagnant and foul-smelling pool. These, he said, were the Christians, who had contaminated the refreshing spring of the Messiah, Jesus Son of Mary, peace be on him, with their own error. In a second vision, he saw another people sitting in the bright sun with their skin burning from the sun's intensity. There was no shade or shelter anywhere to be seen. Despite the brightness of the sunlight, these people were unaware of any light. They only felt the burn of its rays. These people, he said, were the Muslims, who having once been illuminated by the light of Divine Unity, had forgotten the True Light and had fallen instead into the misconception that faith is evidenced by heated argument and blind zeal. They had blackened their own hearts through violence in the name of religion.

Hazrat Massih-i-Mauood, peace be on him, saw yet a third people, caught in the vicious struggle between Gog and Magog who would turn to the Promised Messiah for help. These people would include Muslims, Christians, and others who would grow to be of great faith and piety. Embracing Islam, learned at the side of the Promised Messiah, to the full satisfaction of their reason and intellect, they would become so powerful as to be capable of calling a halt to the conflict between Gog and Magog.

To Present a Living Example of Righteousness

There is a Tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be on him, that the age of the Messiah and Mahdi will be marked, among other signs, by the fact that mosques will be beautiful edifices but empty of worshippers, the *mullahs* will be the most vile deviants from the faith, and the words of the Holy Quran will remain but their meaning will be lost. This deplorable state of affairs is illustrated in a short poem by the 19th Century American writer, Ambrose Bierce:

Hassan Bedreddin, clad in rags, ill-shod,
 Sought the great Temple of the living God.
 The worshippers arose and drove him forth,
 And one in power beat him with a rod.
 "Allah", he cried, "Thou seest what I got:
 Thy servants bar me from the sacred spot."
 "Be comforted", the Holy One replies:
 "It is the only place where I am not."

In such times, assuming religious titles or claiming to be righteous is no proof of the truth of either a Messiah or his Community. The only convincing argument for piety is a recognizably righteous life in which every action obviously proceeds from faith. The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, instructed his followers:

"You are His Community whom He has chosen to set an example of goodness. He who does not discard vice, whose lips do not shun falsehood, and whose heart does not exclude impure thoughts, will be cut off from this Community. Servants of God, cleanse your hearts and wash your insides. You may please everyone with hypocrisy and double-dealing, but thereby you will only earn the wrath of God. Have mercy upon yourselves and safeguard your progeny from ruin." (*Raaz-e-Haqeeqat*)

The rewards for leading such an existence of righteousness are manifold. Among such a people, prayer can be seen to be answered and believers can receive true dreams and visions. Such proof drives deep into the soul of man and demands acknowledgement even by one's bitterest detractors. One sign mentioned by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, peace be on him, was that:

"The people of my Community will become so outstanding in their conviction and scholarship that through the true light of their faith and the power of their reason, all other mouths will be silenced." (*Tajalliyyat Ilahiyya*)

To Re-establish the Pre-eminence of the Theology of Unity

It has been said that Christianity is a theological or philosophical religion; while Islam and Judaism are juristic. If this is so, then it must still be said that Islam has one item of theology which

underlies all of its legalism: Unity. The famous Arab scholar, Muhammad Abduh wrote:

“The Theology of Unity (*Tauhid*) is the science that studies the being and attributes of God, the essential and the possible affirmations about Him, as well as the negations that are necessary to make relating to Him. It deals also with the apostles and the authenticity of their message and treats their essential and appropriate qualities and of what is incompatibly associated with them.” (*Risalat at-Tauhid*)

Above all, the Theology of Unity is the decisive termination and refutation of idolatry. Islam is positive and assertive in its concept of Unity—both as regards the Creator and His creation. The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, proclaimed:

“The Unity of God is a light which illuminates the heart after the outer and inner deities are totally negated, and it courses through every particle of man’s being. It cannot be acquired by anyone on his own, but only through God and His Messenger. Man’s function is that he should impose a death upon his ego and should discard the Satanic vanity that he is a learned person. He should deem himself ignorant and should be occupied with supplication. Then the light of Unity would descend upon him from God and would bestow new life upon him.” (*Haqiqatul Wahi*)

Furthermore:

“Our God is One Who is living today as He was living before, and Who speaks today as He spoke before, and Who hears today as He heard before. It is a false notion that in this age He hears but does not speak. Instead, He both hears and speaks. All His attributes are eternal and everlasting. None of His attributes have fallen into disuse. He is the One without associate, Who has no son and no consort.” (*Al-Wasiyyat*)

By the time of the advent of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, peace be on him, every sort of associate had been attributed to Godhead. Even Muslims, once the champions of Unity, had assimilated so many false notions about the attributes of the Divinity that truth and falsehood were indistinguishable. To them, God was silent and the door to prophecy had been forever closed by the passing of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of

God be on him. Understanding of the mission and nature of the prophets had fallen into similar confusion. The Mullah's preaching made the prophet Jesus, peace be on him, appear only slightly less divine than the Christians' mistaken view; they preached that he had been transported bodily into Heaven—a singular, albeit unreasonable honor not even accorded to the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of God be on him, whom they accepted as Christ's master.

Five Areas of Achievement

Having discussed the four prongs of the Ahmadiyya Community's objectives, it is necessary to evaluate the response to them. For as Juliet said to her Father Confessor in the famous play *Romeo and Juliet*: "Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st of this, unless thou tell me how I may prevent it..." Each of mankind's ills that I have mentioned demands remedy, else we achieve nothing.

The distinction between the four elements of the Ahmadiyya Community's objectives grows fuzzy as we begin to look at the ways it has acted to eliminate the problems which brought them about in the first place. A single action may address several of these elements at once. So, while there are four aspects to its objectives, the areas of achievement are five in number, and there is considerable intermingling of purpose and effect. These five areas of achievement are: Spiritual, propogational, intellectual, legal/political, and societal.

Spiritual Achievements

The Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad Mustafa, peace and blessings of God be on him, and his Successors exerted the power of prayer for the benefit of humanity. These prayers brought about the nearly global expansion of Islam. So it has been with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. No moment has been overlooked but that the Community has been moved to both individual and group prayer in the service of humanity in general and Islam in particular.

One documented case where this was of singular import occurred in 1935 when King Saud contracted the aid of the English to explore and drill for oil. The Muslim world turned against the King because of this, warning that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would be abused by the colonialist English and taken advantage of. However, the

Khalifatul Massih II (May God be pleased with him) supplicated on King Saud's behalf and received intimation from God that not only would the King avert the feared loss of sovereignty at the hands of the English, but the oil they would find would be immeasurable. We all know the outcome of that prediction. But what is obvious in 1987 was not so in 1935!

Propogational Achievements

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has built over 700 mosques, most of which are outside of the Muslim world. The most recent and notable constructions include Australia and Spain. In the case of Spain, the Ahmadiyya mosque was the first to be built in that country since the Moors were expelled and the Inquisition established roughly 700 years ago. When traveling to the opening ceremony for that mosque, I had occasion to pass through southern Spain. In this area, hundreds of miles away from the new mosque, I asked a taxi driver for assistance in selecting the best mode of transportation to Cordoba. He asked if I was going to Cordoba or to its environs. I explained that I was actually traveling to Pedro Abad, near Cordoba. Without knowing the purpose of my trip, he asked exuberantly if I knew of the new mosque the "Arabs" had built in Pedro Abad. When I said that I was going to its opening ceremony, he was beside himself with joy. For the remainder of the 40 or so miles to the rail station, he proceeded to detail the reasons why all of Spain was pleased by the thought of the Muslims' return. For, under Muslim rule, Spain had seen a greatness never again achieved by Christian kings or facists.

Through the efforts of the Movement, hundreds of books and pamphlets have been translated into the many languages of the world. A few of the subjects covered are: simple lessons in morality, explanation of basic articles of faith, the role of women in Islam, why Muslims don't eat pork or drink wine, and examples from the lives of saintly Muslims. Special emphasis has been placed on relating forgotten truths such as the death of Jesus in Kashmir, the reasons why the modern usage of the term *jihad* excludes the use of warfare, and that the true meaning of the "Seal of the Prophets" in no way terminates God's communication with man.

Commentaries and translations of the Holy Quran have also been offered in many languages. When Ahmadies produced the first translations, most Muslim leaders declared it an act of heresy. Many

other communities considered to be more main-stream Islam have since followed our lead and published their own translations. Yet, no one has been able to match the quality, fervor, or extent of our small Community's effort to make God's Book available to the millions of people who could not otherwise have come to know its contents, had it remained only in Arabic. Today, the Movement can offer the Quran in French, English, German, Spanish, Dutch, Hindi, Swahili, Italian, and many other languages. Soon we will publish editions in Russian, Japanese and Albanian. We will not rest until everyone is able to read the Holy Quran.

Ahmadiyyat has extended the frontiers of Islam. There are many places in the world where Ahmadies were the first to introduce Islam. In other places (such as Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria) where Ahmadies were not the first, their local historians credit us with being the most effective.

Intellectual Achievements

The list of contributions by Ahmadi scholars is far too long to detail here. As a mere representation, let me briefly list a few of the areas and personalities which are most prominent:

In the area of commentary of the Holy Quran, transmission and study of *Hadith*, and research in Islamic Law, several names are well known throughout the Muslim world. They are Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmoud Ahmad, Maulana Sher Ali Sahib, Malik Ghulam Farid Sahib, Mir Muhammad Is'haq Sahib, Syed Zainul Abideen Wali-Ullah Shah Sahib, and Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib (may God be pleased with them all).

In the area of Comparative Religion, the name of the late Hazrat Chaudhri Muhammad Zafrullah Khan Sahib (May God be pleased with him) is without equal.

Dr. Abdus Salaam was the first Muslim scientist to receive the Nobel Prize—and he is still the only Muslim so honored. He is responsible for extending the work of Newton and Einstein towards a more complete understanding of the forces surrounding the act of creation itself.

In the area of economics, Washington, D.C. has its own shining star in the person of Sahibzada Mian Muzaffar Ahmad Sahib.

In linguistics, Shaikh Muhammad Ahmad Mazhar Sahib is sterling for his life-long research into the origins of human language. He

disclosed the links of 46 languages to Arabic, the mother tongue—a truth revealed to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi.

Legal/Political Achievements

Again, the name of Ch. Muhammad Zafrullah Khan Sahib (May God be pleased with him) stands out. In the field of Law and politics, his contributions can and will fill many books. He was twice elected to the World Court and served as its President. He was President of the General Assembly of the United Nations and first Foreign Minister of Pakistan. He was a Justice of the Supreme Court of India before Partition. His great service to Muslim countries came at a time when they were most vulnerable and he was repeatedly decorated by leaders of the Arab world. He was also influential, if not pivotal, in helping to bring about an independent Pakistan when the plight of Muslims in a soon to be free India was looking perilous.

No less a contribution was made by his spiritual mentor, the late Hazrat Khalifatul Massih II (May God be pleased with him), who mobilized an entire brigade (including women) to serve during the turbulent time of Partition. He was crucial in convincing Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Qaid-i-Azam, to return to India from England and take control of the Muslim League when it looked as if all else would fail. He served in the background of many political decisions both before and after Partition, receiving recognition in the public speeches of Qaid-i-Azam himself.

Societal Achievements

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, peace be on him, emphasized:

“It is our principle to have sympathy for the whole of mankind. If a person sees that a fire has broken out in the house of a Hindu neighbor and does not get up to help in putting it out, I tell you truly he is not of me. If one of my followers sees a Christian being killed and does not go to his assistance to rescue him, then I tell you quite truly he is not of us.” (*Malfoozat*, Vol III)

True to this philosophy, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has ever contributed its money, its skills, and its manpower to the assistance of society's less fortunate. Whenever there has been a flood or an earthquake in Pakistan, the Community has mobilized

to aid in the rescue and relief of the victims. In Africa, many hospitals and schools have been built by the Community and continue to be run (often under conditions of great personal hardship) for the benefit of the society at large. In recent years, there have been discussions as to how best to help the orphans of war-torn Central America. Even where we are oppressed for our beliefs, we strive to use our resources to better the condition of society, both physically and spiritually. As nobly stated by the late Hazrat Khalifatul Massih III (May God be pleased with him) our principle is: "Love for all, hatred for none."

Conclusion

I have endeavored to detail four key areas of concern to the Community in planning its objectives. I have also pointed out five central and specific areas where we have made the most obvious contributions towards the fulfillment of those goals. In conclusion, I refer you to a speech made by the late Hazrat Khalifatul Massih II (May God be pleased with him):

"It should be very clearly borne in mind that two principles are constantly at work in human affairs; principles without which corporate or national life cannot stand on any permanent, lasting basis. From the earliest days of Adam, there has been no movement—religious, secular, rational, intellectual, academic, or practical—that has ever attained any lasting measure of success without operating on the basis of these two principles... The first of these principles is that no movement can really be successful unless it contains a new message—unless it puts before the world something which was not known before. Or, at least, it should comprise something which the people in general had forgotten... The other principle found operating in the world is that reform or reconstruction takes place either through war, or peaceful penetration and replacement." (*Real Revolution*)

In the terms of this criteria, ours is clearly a Community with a message as old as man. It has been taught by every prophet of God. But, it had been forgotten and fallen into disuse. We seek to propagate this message and trigger reform based upon it through the strength of our intellect and the sweat of our brows rather than through violence or force of arms. We are the muazzins of Islam,

not its soldiers! It is our intention to present Islam in such a way as to appeal both to the spiritual and rational aspects of man's being. This is so that he can assimilate its truth, making it personal and therefore genuine. Without such an assimilation process, one can not make faith legitimate. Blind faith obstructs man from becoming fully human. Thus, it is proper that we avoid compulsion in the propagation of our message. In giving this Community its name, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, said:

“The name which is appropriate for this Movement and which we prefer for ourselves is Muslims of the Ahmadiyya sect. We have chosen this name because the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, had two names Muhammad and Ahmad; Muhammad was his name of glory and Ahmad was his name of beauty. In the name of Muhammad was implicit a prophecy that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, would push back with the sword such enemies as would attack Islam with the sword... His name Ahmad indicated that he would spread peace and security in the world.” (Tableegh Risalat, Vol IX)

That we continue to function in the world as we do, despite threats that the voice of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, peace be on him, would not be allowed to extend beyond the limits of the humble village of Qadian, is ample evidence that we are a force to be reckoned with. We are clear in our understanding of our original purpose, and resolute in our determination to achieve our goals with the aid of God Almighty. Nearly a hundred years after our inception, we move from victory to victory in the hearts of reasoning men and women. We grow in numbers and in strength despite oppression and opposition by others who claim greater authority to represent Islam. We prosper in glorious tribute and testimony to the promise of the Holy Quran:

“He sends down water from the sky, so that valleys flow according to their measure, and the flood bears on its surface the swelling foam. And from that which they heat in the fire, seeking to make ornaments or utensils, comes a foam similar to it. Thus does Allah illustrate truth and falsehood. Now as to the foam, it goes away as rubbish, but that which benefits man, it stays on the earth. Thus does Allah set forth parables.” (13:18)

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THE FINALITY OF PROPHETHOOD

(A letter by Dr. Aziz A. Chaudry)

Dear brother in Islam, *Assalamo-Alaikum!*

I hope that you are well.

The purpose of this letter is to clarify a few points you raised in our last meeting while discussing the question of '*Finality of Prophethood*'.

Before we discuss those specific points, I would like to make a few introductory remarks. Most people when they talk or think about prophethood, have in their minds thoughts about a new prophet, a new law (Shariah), a new Book and a new *Kalima*. When we Ahmadi Muslims talk about Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet, we mean none of these things. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and his followers are obedient Muslims whose prophet is the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace and blessings of God be on him) and their holy Book is the Holy Quran. We believe in all articles of faith of Islam. By 'prophethood' of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad we refer to a position of high spiritual status which he attained due to his complete and perfect obedience to and love of the Holy Prophet; and through the great spiritual blessings of the Holy Prophet. He was Muhammad's spiritual son who inherited everything from the great blessings and spiritual excellences of his master, the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace and blessings of God be on him). Far from meaning any dishonor, his personality and spiritual status was an honor from the Holy Prophet. He was a perfect servant of the great Master.

I can use a parable. When the moon is full and shining bright, can we say that it is an insult to the sun? No! Because the moon is a mere reflection of the sun and owes all its light to the sun. Similarly Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has explained that his prophethood is merely a reflection of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace and blessings of God be on him). Hazrat Ahmad says in one of his urdu verse,

I am devoted to That Light (Holy Prophet)
I am from Him
He is, I am nothing
That is the decision.

A lot of the dispute about prophethood is due to the fact that most people are unaware of the meaning of 'prophet'. Hazrat Ahmad has written that most people do not pay attention to literal meaning of 'prophet' which means one to whom God sends revelation frequently and informs him abundantly about unknown future events. It is not necessary that a prophet must bring a new law (Sharia). Hazrat Ahmad was a prophet according to this definition and he attained this spiritual status due to perfect and complete obedience and love of the Holy Prophet. It is a grace of God, He bestows on whomsoever He wishes.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad took great pains that his status of subordinate and a follower prophet may not be misunderstood.

As a result he used many terms for his prophethood to be properly understood. He used the following terms:

1. *Ghair Tashrihi* Prophethood (without a new law or Sharia).
2. *Ummati* Prophethood (one given to a follower of the Holy Prophet).
3. *Zilli or Broozi* Prophethood (one which is a reflection or an image).
4. *Ghair Mustakil* Prophethood (one which is not independent of the Holy Prophet).

By now the meaning and reality of this kind of prophethood should be clear to all thinking persons. The Holy Quran and the Hadees are not against the coming of such a prophet, as we have explained in our article.

Now I come to specific points under discussion. I had given the argument that we Muslims are taught the prayer in Sura Fatiha:

"Guide us along the right path, the path of those on whom thou hast bestowed thy favors." Who are those on whom God has bestowed his favors? The Holy Quran itself gives the answer:

"Whoso obeys Allah and the messenger shall be among those upon whom Allah has bestowed His favors—the prophets, the faithful ones, the martyrs and the righteous; and excellent companions these are. This is Allah's grace and Allah is all-comprehending." (4:70-71)

From this verse it is absolutely clear that those Muslims who obey Allah and His Prophet—the spiritual sons of the Prophet, will

be blessed with spiritual favors by Allah (as in the past) and they will be raised to the spiritual status of prophets, the Faithful, the Martyrs and the righteous. It is clearly stated in this verse that the group *'on whom thou hast bestowed thy favours'* include these four categories of people.

Your objection was that in verse (4:70) the Arabic word which has been translated as 'among' is *'Ma'aa'* which means 'with'. I agree with this that literal meaning of *'Ma'aa'* is 'with' but in the Arabic language it is also used as the definition of *'Min'* meaning 'among'. In fact this is the case in many languages. If we translate the above verse as you assert, it will be:

"Whoso obeys Allah and the messenger shall be with those upon whom Allah has bestowed his favors, the prophets, the faithful ones, the Martyrs and the Righteous."

You mean to say that Muslims who obey Allah and the Messenger shall be with prophets but not be prophets. But you must note that the word 'with' is not attached to prophets but rather to *'those upon whom Allah has bestowed his favors.'* The whole group is meant. This verse does not mean that Muslims will only be with the favored group but can not be the favored ones themselves. This is quite contrary to the meaning. This will also mean that they will be with the faithful, with the martyrs and with the righteous but will not be any of these. On the contrary it is quite clear from the verse that the favored group includes four categories and Muslims will be in such a group, if they follow Allah and the Messenger. That is why we say that *'Ma'aa'* has been used in sense of *'Min'* (among). Such usage is common in Arabic idiom.

Even in English when we say, 'Sen. Christopher Bond is with Republicans', it means that Sen. Christopher Bond is a Republican.

Another example of *'Ma'aa'* in Holy Quran is following (literal translation),

"Our Lord, forgive us, therefore, our sins and remit from us our evils and give us death with the righteous". (3:194)

Here *'Ma'aa'* (with) does not mean: give us death when some other righteous person is going to die. But it means that we should be among the righteous when death overtakes us.

I hope that this point is now clear.

The second point was about a Hadees of the Holy Prophet in which he said, 'there is no prophet after me'.

Concerning Hadith, there is one principle that must be remembered. We Muslims are not bound to accept any Hadees which clearly contradicts the Holy Quran. The Holy Prophet simply could not have contradicted the Holy Quran. There is not a single verse in the Holy Quran which says that there can not be any kind of prophet after the Holy Prophet. The fact is to the contrary as we have discussed and that is, there can be a follower prophet for whom the Holy Prophet is the seal.

As regards this particular Hadith, we accept it but with an interpretation. The correct interpretation of this Hadith, "there is no prophet after me" is as follows.

1. There can not be any prophet after me who may abrogate my Sharia because my Sharia is permanent and there is no Sharia after it.
2. There can not be any prophet after me who may cut short my period of prophethood and start a new period of prophethood. But whomsoever will come will be my branch and will receive his light of prophethood from me. His prophethood will be part of my prophethood and not outside it.

This interpretation of this Hadees has been given by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad M.A. He was a great scholar of Islam.

Hazrat Sheikh Akbar Muhyuddin Ibn Arabi, an eminent authority on Islam (Died 638 AH) is of the view:

"The prophethood that terminated with the person of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, was the law bearing prophethood and not just prophethood itself". (*Futuhate-Makkiya*, Vol. II, p. 73).

He wrote further, "Prophethood will continue to be open to the people till the Day of Judgement, though law-making has terminated; yet law-making is but one element of prophethood". (*Futuhate-Makkiya*, p. 100).

This is what an eminent scholar and authority like Ibne-Arabi understood from the above Hadees and others similar to it.

May Allah guide us all along the right path.

Sincerely,

ART AND MUSIC IN ISLAM

(Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV)

(Verbal Answers given by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV during a question/answer session at the Fazl Mosque, London)

Question: Art and music are very popular these days. There are art schools everywhere which teach different kinds of arts. Libraries and art galleries are full of good pictures and paintings. Some people even invest their best in paintings by famous artists. Similar things could be said in respect to music, as we find almost everywhere records and cassettes for listening. Could Huzoor¹ kindly explain the teachings of Islam regarding art and Music?

Answer:

This question is in fact a question which applies to different situations and the relative answer would differ from situation to situation. The Holy Quran speaks in principle about *Laghv*. The believers, *Ebaadul-Rahman* are mentioned, *Anilaghvi Mo'rizoon*, they keep away from useless, valueless, nonsense things. Now it all depends. It varies from person to person. What is nonsense to one may not be nonsense to another. Also, the acquired tastes differ and the spiritual levels differ. So I am not in favor of declaring something totally wrong for everybody because there are stages of prohibition in Islam, and in some places Islam also leaves a measure of decision to the believers. And there, a sort of freedom of thought and action is given for which no hard and fast rule should be made or declared. Because then life would become very difficult for the whole society. Somehow some people tend to ask questions on such aspects and want such answers as would be very difficult to follow if given according to their own desire.

Again, the Holy Quran tells us in principle not to ask about matters which if answered would make things difficult for you. Don't ask about things which if answered may be heavy on you, may not be liked by you. So there are some regions unattended which are kept unattended by Islam consciously.

The philosophy I have already explained. Various people are found at various levels of development and attitudes and tastes.

¹ *Huzoor* refers to the Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam.

So *Laghv* could be interpreted differently according to different persons.

For instance, take one who is accepting Islam from a Western society. If you immediately declare a *fatwa*² against his interest in art, not only will he not understand, he will be more inclined to lose faith in Islam because it would appear to be so unnatural. So where Islam has not categorically prohibited, it diverts attention to more serious pursuits in life. And as I understand this word, this is the best definition.

And if the pursuits of life are of a higher order and a person who is pursuing a way of life is more serious minded, his *Laghv* would be different from just, say, a child's *Laghv*. A child can play hop scotch for instance. But hop scotch could be *Laghv* for an elder gentleman, for his age and for his respectability and everything, and won't be *Laghv* for this child who has given us the name of this game. It would be, in fact, a very good thing for the child to do.

People are at different levels of spirituality too. Those who have acquired a taste for the recitation of the Holy Quran, or the reading of serious books on religion, if you give them a novel they won't be interested. It would be just *Laghv* for them. And there are certain people who apply their minds with difficulty to such serious pursuits. So if their attention is diverted too much to novel reading, for instance, at the cost of serious pursuits and they don't try to divert their attention from vain to serious, from useless to useful, then this *Laghv* would become prohibited for them. It will interfere with their progress in life and to that extent it should be forbidden for them.

So according to this definition, if the *Laghv* begins to interfere with the serious pursuits of life and creates damage for one in some degree, in certain spheres of activity, to that extent it becomes *Laghv* and it should be avoided.

And *Laghv* has a very wide field of definition. In fact, it can become a very grave sin, one of the serious offenses in Islam. For instance, suppose you are watching television, some light show or a fiction or something, and the time for prayer comes. Now that is *Laghv*. of course, it is not forbidden directly so much that it becomes a crime in the eyes of Allah. But the call for prayer is made and you can reach the mosque. But you are so deeply involved in

² *Fatwa*: an Islamic Judicial judgment.

that play which is being televised that you forget about the prayer and continue pursuing the game or play or whatever it is. That *Laghv* becomes a sin then. It adopts a quality of idolatry, setting up partners with Allah, because a vain pursuit or interest has stood in the way of a very serious and important pursuit in life for which man is created.

So *Laghv* is a very difficult word to define. Although in essence I have defined it, it acquires different importances in different situations. *Laghv* can become a grave sin, and *laghv* can be just ordinary. Even some people who are grown up and have a very strong acquired taste for spirituality, and who are very pious, indulge in some sorts of *laghv*. And those *laghv*, in which they indulge, apparently or superficially they are *laghv*. But because they are serving some type of purpose, they can't be called that type of *laghv* which is to be avoided. So *laghv* in ordinary situations can lose its quality of being *laghv* in another situation.

For instance, when you are on a picnic, your mood is completely different. You are playing with your children and you are doing things which in ordinary life you would not think of doing. That is no longer *laghv* as described by the Holy Quran. That is not the *laghv* which is described because that has become something which serves a purpose and it relaxes you for a while. Not at the cost of other innocent hobby or play. You can even play cards there without gambling. You can play Ludo or anything, or while away your time in some way that relaxes you. The purpose is relaxation. And for that, some means are adopted. Those means in ordinary life may be declared as *laghv*, meaningless, or diverting your attention from serious pursuits. But in those situations, they serve a purpose and they don't become *laghv* anymore. So it's a very wide subject.

With this background, I now come to your question about music. Music as such is not forbidden in the Holy Quran. In some instances we read about our Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, permitting the use of a *Daf* which was a sort of musical instrument played in Arabia in those days. Yet he is also known to have turned away from certain other musical instruments when he heard the voice, he didn't like. So the correct attitude lies somewhere in between. You understand the philosophy in this and then you can truly understand why he did this and why he did not do that. The

fact is that such music as diverts your attention from other important things of life, love of Allah, love of the prayer, and things for which man is made, that type of music should be avoided very strongly. And if it becomes an obsession with you, then it may become a sin. But to casually listen to music as it is played in every corner of the world nowadays, in fact even if you try hard you can't avoid. For that reason I shouldn't declare it for never listening, because that would be coming on too strong. And the Holy Quran has not said it in so many words.

The inference that *Daf*, exactly as it is, is permitted, and other music as it is, is forbidden, that inference I can't agree with. Because it was a style of music found in Arabia. The style of music has changed a lot from that time. And while *Daf* was played, it was played for a purpose. At that time it was serving a purpose. So that definition which I have offered you, fits in very well.

For instance, we hear of *Daf* being played when the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, was entering Medina, and some ladies and young girls were singing a song in his praise and were also striking on the *Daf*. Now that is a special type of musical instrument. On one side it is covered, on the other side it is not covered. Because of this shape of the *Daf*, there are many Ulema who have inferred that only that type of musical instrument is permitted and nothing else. That is stupid because The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, came to give us guidelines and principles and set examples for all times to come. Not for one particular time.

So if you particularize everything which he did instead of drawing general principles which would be applicable for all times to come, then you would remain restricted to a certain age in history and will not be able to proceed a step beyond that. He never rode cars. He never used those modern amenities which are provided to you. So why shouldn't you infer in every respect that only the type of bread which the Holy Prophet Muhammad ate and bread made of that particular grain which he used, that is permitted and the rest is not permitted. That type of dress is permitted and this is not permitted. If you go on making your inferences in this fashion, then the whole life you are leading would become forbidden. Because very little of it is exactly on the pattern of our Hazrat, peace and blessings of God be on him, as he lived in those days. He didn't use

these electrical lights and, in fact, the camera was not invented at that time. So he never had a picture of himself taken. All this picture taking and posing for pictures becomes forbidden by those standards.

So open up your minds. Try to understand the philosophy of Islam. According to the Holy Quran, that which is forbidden is clearly laid down. That which is promoted is very clearly laid down. In between there are no-man's lands on which some light is thrown by way of principles and the borders go on shifting from here to there like quick sand. Those no-man's lands which I am referring to in do's and do-not's, differ from situation to situation which squeeze in one direction and swell in another at another time. This music and painting lies in this region under *laghv*. If this becomes a pursuit of life which interferes with higher values for which you are created, then to that extent it becomes forbidden. If it does not interfere with the seriousness of your life and it only helps a little bit to energize your nerves or relax your nerves for a while, I don't think this could be forbidden, so categorically at least.

There are certain pursuits that become an obsession. For instance, I have known people, in Pakistan as well, who become fond of what we call Hindi *gana*. They sing songs and this becomes their obsession with the result that they neither pay attention to their studies nor to their religious obligations. They don't read the Promised Messiah's (peace be on him) books. They have no time for *Ahadith*, the traditions of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, or even for the Holy Quran. And that becomes a habit for them. A nonsensical song which, as far as the value of the song goes, is just a third rate thing. But because it is sung with music, that interests them so much and so deeply that their whole life is thrilled when they begin to listen to such music and they can't listen to anything else. That is a sort of addiction. In this regard when this happens, then it becomes *haram* because it is interfering with the obligatory spheres of Islam. And it stands in the way of your making spiritual progress.

But if somebody is paying attention to his spiritual progress and for instance he turns on a radio and a song is being played he likes and he listens to it for a while, while he has time and he's not wasting any time at all, to declare suddenly that he should stop it

immediately or he becomes a kafir or something, is stupid. That is not Islam's concept of halal or haraam³.

Similarly, some people could say that painting is totally forbidden because our Master, Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be on him, did not permit pictures, according to them, either to be kept in the house or to be drawn. But they don't understand the fact that those pictures which the Holy Prophet forbade were invariably the pictures of idols. That was a time when (picture taking by camera was out of the question because they were not invented) drawing pictures or painting was entirely devoted to religious purposes for drawing pictures of imaginary gods. In the days of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, we don't find any art in Arabia, not even remotely, in which people were being drawn or realities were being drawn. You will not find dimensions of any scenery being drawn by any artist of that time. You will not find the portrait being drawn by somebody, nor any particular situation of reality being drawn. All that was being drawn was not only fiction but fiction which was against the fundamental principles laid down by Islam. There were pictures of imaginary idols, partners of Allah. They were either drawn or chiselled out in the form of statues.

What our Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, forbade were these things. Because we have no evidence that a real situation in life was ever being drawn in his presence which he forbade, my inference is that what he forbade was that purpose which you understand. To extend it further into a field which was never in his mind is incorrect. Nor could he have spoken against that because that (artistic realism) did not interfere with any religious purpose. Here we can understand the purpose easily. Idol making stands in hostility to the Islamic concept of Oneness of Allah. So whatever promotes idolatry should be forbidden. That's quite understandable. But where nature as such, and realities are being produced somewhere, how could they be forbidden? Neither is it forbidden nor could it be forbidden to my mind. So I don't think this should be declared haram either. But if it becomes an obsession with your girls or boys and it begins to interfere with the serious pursuits of life, then I think it should be stopped to that extent. Then they become laghv. And that laghv is forbidden in the Holy Quran.

³ *Halaal* — Allowed; *Haraam* — Forbidden.

SURROGATE MOTHERS

(Abdul Majid)

*(this was a letter sent to the editor of the daily
Democrat & Chronicle, Rochester, NY)*

Dear Sir:

One of the many dilemmas faced by the Christian world is the question of polygamy and divorce which are forbidden under the teachings of Christianity. In spite of the fact that many of the Prophets of the Bible, particularly the more notable prophets such as Abraham, Jacob, David, and Solomon, practiced polygamy, the main objection to the teachings of Islam by the Christians is against polygamy; and though the Bible (Old Testament) permitted divorce, the New Testament does not. The only ground on which divorce is permissible under the New Testament is adultery (Matt. 19:9). However, besides adultery mental and physical cruelty have also been included and recognized by law in many Christian countries, as a valid ground for divorce, with the result that the incidence of divorces in those countries has gone out of all proportions.

While the doctrine of divorce has been adopted by the Christians, polygamy is still prohibited in Christian countries, so much so that even the followers of other faiths such as Islam, which permits polygamy, cannot have more than one wife.

There can be no denying the fact that situations can arise where second marriage becomes a necessity of life. For instance, suppose a woman is unproductive and incapable of bearing due to some intrinsic defect, for which she cannot be blamed or held responsible. Or suppose she is afflicted with some physical disability so that she is or becomes incapable of performing conjugal obligations. The only course for the husband would be to have a second wife with a view to having children and satisfying biological urges without resorting to immoral and corrupt practices.

As a result of the restrictions on polygamy, the married couples, who do not have children due to the wife's being barren, take recourse to the unnatural method of procuring surrogate mothers. Under this arrangement, another woman—married or un-married,

is hired for a fixed price. She is inseminated with the sperm of the hirer husband through mechanical device, instead of through intercourse which would be an act of adultery, being out of wedlock.

The alarming complications arising out of such an arrangement have been demonstrated by the case of surrogate mother, Mary Beth Whitehead, reported in the Democrat and Chronicle of January 5 and 7, 1987. She was hired by William and Elizabeth Stern on contract for \$10,000 and was inseminated with the sperm of William Stern. But the surrogate mother refused to give up the baby after birth and the matter is being contested in a Superior Court in New Jersey.

Viewed in the context of this situation, the teachings of Islam, which permits polygamy in certain situations, would obviously appear to be quite in the fitness of things to meet the exigencies of practical life. It is indeed a paradox on the part of those who criticize the teachings of Islam in respect of polygamy and divorce, but are forced to practice it in one or the other form. Divorce, which is not permissible in Christianity, save on account of adultery, has been adopted and practiced so frequently that most of the marriages end up in divorces. The undue barriers placed on divorce and polygamy have opened floodgates of adultery which is being tacitly tolerated, if not approved, as stated in The New Encyclopaedia Britannica:

“Rigid monogamy was not unrelated to the common and widely tolerated practice of adultery, which the Roman Catholic Church regarded as more tolerable than divorce.”

(AWAKE - November 8, 1986 page 10)

As to polygamy, which has not been legally adopted, like divorce has, it is nevertheless being practiced in the form of surrogate mothers. This amounts to an admission of the fact that the teachings of Islam in respect of polygamy and divorce, are quite in accord with human nature and a way to meet the practical needs of mankind. The Quran says:

“The disbelievers do often wish [by their conduct] that they were Muslims.” (15:3)

which obviously means that howsoever the disbelievers may object to the teachings of Islam, they would be forced (by circumstances) to follow them.

CONDITIONS OF “BAI’AT” (INITIATION)

- I. The initiate shall solemnly promise that he/she shall abstain from *Shirk* (association of any partner with God) right upto the day of his/her death.
- II. That he/she shall keep away from falsehood, fornication, adultery, tresspasses of the eye, debauchery, dissipation, cruelty, dishonesty, mischief and rebellion; and will never be carried away by passions, however strong they may be.
- III. That he/she shall regularly offer the five daily prayers in accordance with the commandments of God and the Holy Prophet; and shall try his/her best to be regular in offering the *Tahajjud* (pre-dawn supererogatory prayers) and invoking *Darood* (blessings) on the Holy Prophet; that he/she shall make it his/her daily routine to ask forgiveness for his/her sins, to remember the bounties of God and to praise and glorify Him.
- IV. That under the impulse of any passions, he/she shall cause no harm whatsoever to the creatures of Allah in general, and Muslims in particular, neither by his/her tongue nor by his/her hands nor by any other means.
- V. That he/she shall remain faithful to God in all circumstances of life, in sorrow and happiness, adversity and prosperity, in felicity and trials; and shall in all conditions remain resigned to the decree of Allah and keep himself ready to face all kinds of indignities and sufferings in His way and shall never turn away from it at the onslaught of any misfortune; rather, he/she shall always march forward.
- VI. That he/she shall refrain from following un-Islamic customs and lustful inclinations, and shall completely submit himself to the authority of the Holy Quran; and shall make the word of God and the sayings of the Holy Prophet the guiding principles in every walk of life
- VII. That he/she shall entirely give up pride and vanity and shall pass all his/her life in lowliness, humbleness, cheerfulness, forbearance and meekness.
- VIII. That he/she shall hold faith, the honor of faith, and the cause of Islam dearer to him than his life, wealth, honor, children and all other dear ones.
- IX. That he/she shall keep himself occupied in the service of God's creatures, for His sake only; and shall endeavor to benefit mankind to the best of his/her God-given abilities and powers.
- X. That he/she shall enter into a bond of brotherhood with this humble servant of God (the Promised Messiah), pledging obedience to him in everything good, for the sake of Allah, and remain faithful to it till the day of his/her death; that he/she shall exert such a high devotion in the observance of this bond as is not to be found in any other worldly relationship and connections demanding devoted dutifulness.

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the expected world Reformer and the Promised Messiah. The Movement is an embodiment of true and real Islam. It seeks to unite mankind with its Creator and to establish peace throughout the world. The present Head of the Movement is Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad. The Ahmadiyya Movement has its Headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan, and is actively engaged in missionary work at the following centers:

AHMADIYYA MUSLIM MISSIONS

AFRICA

BENIN: P.O. Box 69, Portonova.
GAMBIA: P.O. Box 383 Banjul, Tel. 27608
GHANA: P.O. Box 2327, Accra (OSU New Estates) Tel: 76845
IVORY COAST: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, 03 BP 416, Adjame-Abidjan 03.
KENYA: P.O. Box 40554, Nairobi (Fort Hall Road) Tel: 264226. Telex: c/o 22278.
LIBERIA: P.O. Box 618, Monrovia (9 Lynch Street)
MAURITIUS: P.O. Box 6 (Rose Hill)
NIGERIA: P.O. Box 418 Lagos (45 Idumagbo Avenue) Tel: 633 757
SIERRA LEONE: P.O. Box 353, Freetown, Tel: 40699/22617
SOUTH AFRICA: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, P.O. Box 212, Gatesville 7764, Cape Town (Darut-Tabligh-il Islami)
TANZANIA: P.O. Box 376, Dares Salaam (Libya Street) Tel: 21744
UGANDA: P.O. Box 98, Kampala
ZAMBIA: P.O. Box 32345, Lusaka
ZAIRE: P.O. Box 13-856, Kinshasa 1

AMERICAS

CANADA: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, 10610 Jane St., Maple, Ontario L0J 1E0 416-832-2669 FAX
GUYANA: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, 198 Oronoque and Almond Streets, P.O. Box 736, Georgetown. Tel: 02-67634
SURINAM: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Ephraimszegenweg, 26 P.O. Box 2106, Paramaribo
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO: Ibrahim Bin Yaqub, 126 Eastern Main Road, Tuna Puna 809-665-2708
U.S.A.: 2141 Leroy Place NW, Washington, D.C. 20008 Tel: (202) 232-3737 Cable: ISLAM, Fax: 232-8181

AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, P. O. Box 89 (20 Hollinsworth Road) Riverstone 2765 NSW Sydney

ASIA

BANGLADESH: 4 Baxi Bazar Road, Dacca-1.
BURMA: 191-28th Street, Rangoon
FIJI: P.O. Box 3758, Samabula (82 Kings Road), Suva. Tel: 38221
INDIA: Darul Masih, Qadian, Tel:36
INDONESIA: Jalan Balikpapan 1, No. 10, Djakarta Pusat 1/13. Tel: 36 5342
JAPAN: Ahmadiyya Center, 643-1 Yamanoda, Issha, Idaka-cho, Meito-Ku. Nagoya 465, Tel. 703-1868
PAKISTAN: (Headquarters) Rabwah, Distt. Jhang.
PHILIPPINES: Haji M. Ebbah, Simunal, Bongao, Sulu
SINGAPORE: 111 Onan Rd., Singapore 15
SRI LANKA: Colombo M.E.M. Hasan, 24 San Sebastin Street, Ratnum Road, Colombo 12

EUROPE

BELGIUM: Maulvi S. M. Khan, Brus. Str 3, 1744 Stuuriks-Kapelle 02-466-6856
DENMARK: Eriksminde Alle 2, Hvidovre-Copenhagen. Tel: 753502
GERMANY: Die Moschee, Babenhauser, Landstrasse, 25, Frankfurt. Tel: 681485
HOLLAND: De Moschee, Oostduirland, 79, Den Haag. Tel: (010-3170) 245902 Telex: 33574 Inter NLA 30C FAX 70-242-881
NORWAY: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Frognerveine 53, Oslo-2. Tel. 447188
SPAIN: Mission Ahmadiyya del Islam, Mezquita Basharat, Pedro Abad, near Cordoba, Tel. 160750 Ext. 142
SWEDEN: Nasir Moske Islams Ahmadiyya Forsamling, Tolvskillingsgatan 1. S-41482 Goteborg, Sverige. Tel: 414044
SWITZERLAND: Nahmud Moschee, 323, Forschstrasse 8008, Zurich. Tel: 535570. Telex: 58378 MPTCH Islam 374/XA
UNITED KINGDOM: 16 Gressenhall Road, London SW18 5QL. Tel: 01-870 8517. Telex: 28604 Ref. 1292 FAX 870-1095

WHAT IS ISLAM?

Islam means *peace, surrender*. The significance of the name Islam is the attainment of a life of perfect peace and eternal happiness through complete surrender to the Will of God.

Absolute and uncompromising belief in One God is the central doctrine of Islam. *There is none worthy of worship but the One and Only God (Allah) Who possesses all excellences and Muhammad is His Messenger*. This is the most important doctrine of Islam.

Islam helps us to establish a permanent relationship with God to realize Him during our earthly life as our Helper and Guide in all our affairs.

Islam requires belief in all the prophets and spiritual guides including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Confucius and Zoroaster. Islam represents the completion of the mission of *all the prophets from the dawn of history*. It teaches that *all the prophets of God came with one and the same mission*. Thus Islam establishes peace and unity between all religions.

The Holy Quran—the Muslim Scripture—was revealed to the Master Prophet Muhammad 1400 years ago and has been preserved intact without the slightest change. A large number of Muslims know the whole Book by heart. It is an inexhaustible treasure of spiritual truths capable of satisfying the needs of all people in all countries and all stations of life.

The establishment of true democracy and universal brotherhood without any discrimination of caste, creed, color or country is the unique and unrivalled distinction of Islam. Islam has fulfilled and realized the splendid principles of democracy in the actual life and action of human society.

According to Islam, life after death is a continuation of life on earth. Heaven and Hell begin right in this life. Heaven is eternal and everlasting, while hell is temporary. Hell is a hospital for the treatment of the human soul. As a soul is cured, it goes to Heaven. Heaven is the attainment of a life of everlasting progress and complete joy and happiness through union with God and by the development of the fine spiritual qualities and the unlimited capacities which have been implanted in human beings.

A few of the distinctive features of Islam are:

1. Liberation of women by establishing the equality of both sexes, safeguarding their rights and liberties and raising their status.
1. Absolute veto on all intoxicants.
3. Equitable solution of all economic problems.
4. Furnishing mankind with the noblest practical ethics.
5. Promotion of science and education.

Some of the obligatory duties laid down by Islam are:

1. Five daily Prayers.
2. Fasting in the month of Ramadhan.
3. Paying *Zakat* for the relief of poverty.
4. Pilgrimage to Mecca, once in one's lifetime, if circumstances allow.