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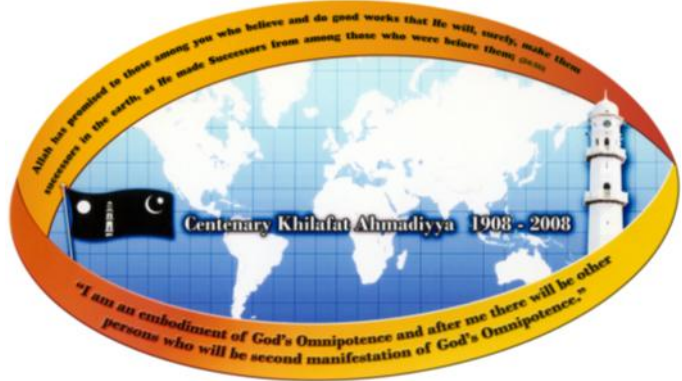
Al-Nahl

Q2/2009 Vol. 20 No. 2



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Celebrating Hundred Years of Aḥmadiyya Khilāfat



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Literary contributions, articles, essays, photographs, etc., for publication in the *Al-Naḥl* can be sent to the editor at his e-mail or mailing address below. Textual contributions can be provided in plain text, MS Publisher, or Microsoft Word.

References should include as much of the following information as available: the name of the publication, volume and number, name of the author, the date and place of publication, the name of the publisher, and the page number(s).

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

وَ اَوْحٰی رَبُّكَ اِلٰی النَّحْلِ اَنْ اتَّخِذِیْ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُیُوتًا وَّ مِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَّ مِمَّا یَعْرِشُوْنَ ﴿٧٠﴾
 ثُمَّ کُلِّیْ مِنْ کُلِّ الثَّمَرٰتِ فَاَسْلُکِیْ سُبُلَ رَبِّکِ ذٰلِکَ لِیَخْرُجَ مِنْ بَطُوْنِهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ اَلْوَانُهٗ
 فِیْهِ شِفَآءٌ لِّلنَّاسِ ۗ اِنَّ فِیْ ذٰلِکَ لَآیَةً لِّقَوْمٍ یَّتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٧١﴾

And thy Lord has inspired the bee, *saying*, ‘Make thou houses in the hills and in the trees and in the trellises which they build, ‘Then eat of every *kind of* fruit, and then pursue submissively the paths prescribed by your Lord.’ There comes forth from their bellies a drink of varying hues. Therein is a cure for men. Surely, in that is a Sign for a people who reflect. (The Holy Qur’an, 16[Al-Nahl]:69-70)

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 Sadr, Majlis Anşārullāh,
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The Discourses

Sayings of the Promised Messiah, 'alaihissalām
Presented in English by Maulana Naseem Saifi

PROPAGATION OF RELIGION

There are now two important things that I have to do. One, the propagation of my message in the Arab lands and providing the conclusive proofs (of the truth of Islam) to the people of Europe. The Arabs have a right over us; a large number of their people, perhaps, do not know anything about me; they do not know that God has established a dispensation; it is my duty to inform them of this fact. If the message does not reach them, it will not be good.

The Europeans also have a right over us; their shortcomings must be pointed out to them. By believing in a human being to be their God, they have gone far away from the real and true God. Europe has inclined to the mundane affairs: akhlada ilal-ard. They are making new inventions everyday. You should not be surprised at their worldly progress. Whenever the heavenly doors are shut, people can think of only earthly matters. There never has been a prophet who made any mechanical inventions, nor a prophet who spent all his time and force for the earthly affairs. (Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 253)

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

God has said it in very plain words that those who love God, fear Him and have hopes in Him, are the people who have an authoritative position. But those who follow their passions are devoid of any authority that may grip the heart strongly.

In short, whatever a man might say or do, unless he has the authority for it, he displays atheism. I should like to propagate my Mission in two ways: God knows—and no

witness is better than He—I do it with great zeal and sincerely. Speaking all this is for the sake of God and it is He that I present to the people. I have not had the opportunity to study the English language. Had I studied this language, I would have never given the trouble to my friends [to write or translate in English language]. But that was the Will of God; He wanted others to join me in this good work. As for me, I never tell others to do for me what I can do myself.

Had the Holy Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, lived a few years more, Ḥaḍrat Abu Bakr, may God be pleased with him, would have died till then. The fact is that the Holy Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, had secured the victory which had been promised to him. He had witnessed the fulfillment of the words yadkhuluna fi dinillahi afwaja (entering the religion of Allah in troops). Al-yauma akmalta lakum had also come to pass. God did not like him (Ḥaḍrat Abu Bakr) to be deprived of the reward; He wanted him also to be blessed. Likewise, God could grant me treasure of wealth and in that case I would not have stood in need of anybody's financial help. But He picks up anyone He likes to be amply rewarded. All these people who are sitting before me are like graves; for everybody has to die one day or the other. This is the time to act in a way that one should deserve the rewards from God. I am telling you all that God has told me and I am doing it in a very simple manner and in very clear words. You should get ready for the rewards. Do not think that if you will spend in the way of God, you will lose something. God will repay you like a heavy rain. Man ya'mal mithqala dharratin khairan yarah. (Whoso does an atom's weight of good will,

see it).

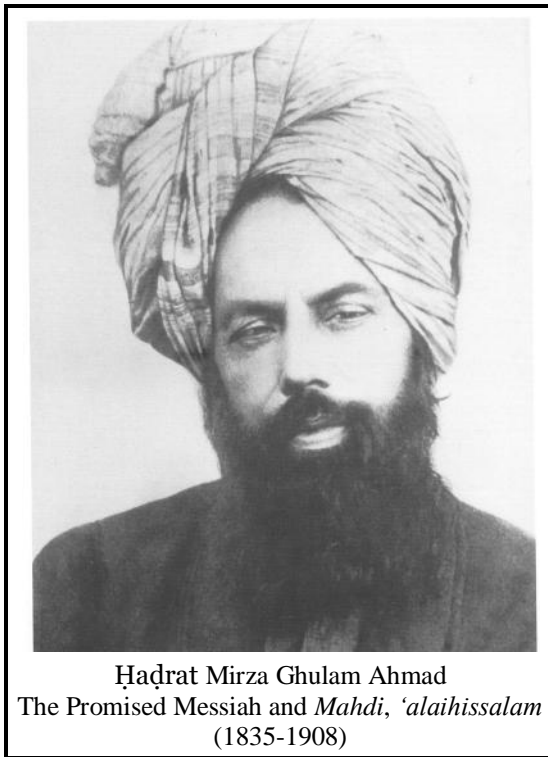
You should also remember that one cannot serve religion without the help of God. He who girds up his loins to serve the Religion with pleasure, is never wasted by God.

In short, I am playing one part, the other is being played by my friends who have studied the English language. (Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 255)

PAY VISITS REPEATEDLY

It is a very important thing, and if the people could understand its significance, it would do them a lot of good: they should visit this place again and again. It will not only benefit them, it will benefit many others, too, for, they will be able to explain things to them. Unless one has got insight and a comprehensive understanding, it is not possible to guide others. At times, it happens that those who do not visit here quite often are asked questions which they cannot answer, for, they have never heard anything of that sort and thus they feel ashamed; these questions are asked by some mischievous people, who know that inability to answer, would put the other side in a bad situation. Those who cannot answer these questions put others also to shame, rather, at times, they become a stumbling block for others. The faith is thus affected adversely and it becomes weak.

When a man is overpowered, he is highly influenced by the other side and quite often it blackens the heart; this is very commonly observed and it can be taken as a principle of behavior. The darkness begins to intensify and if he persists in this very condition and passes away from this world, he makes himself deserving of the Hell. A wise person would thus come to the conclusion that in order to remove all these poisons, one must be in the company of a righteous person. It is in this company that the man would come to know of these fatalistic poisons and try all he



Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
The Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*, 'alaihissalam
(1835-1908)

can to get rid of them. There, he would also come to know of the life-giving elixir which is a source of salvation for him. I have been thinking of testing the Jamā'at, for some time, by giving them a question paper and I have mentioned this desire of mine many a time, though I have not been able to put it into action. I should like to test the members of the Jamā'at to find out how far they have understood what I have been telling them and how far they have grasped the aims and objects of my advent, and as to what are the objections others raise and how to answer them. If I can find forty people who are enlightened and have insight and God-realization, that will be a very good thing.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 257-258).

HAVE YOUR FAITH BACK

God is my witness and who else is a better witness than God, I started studying the Christian literature at the age of sixteen or seventeen; not even for a split moment I have ever been impressed by the objections that they raise (about Islam). This really is the grace of God. More I study those objections, more futility of these writings becomes clear to me, and the more grandeur of the Holy Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, gets established in my heart, and more I advance in the love of this noble Prophet.

I have pondered over this matter and have come to the conclusion that anything to which they object—be it an act of the Holy Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, or a verse of the Holy Qur’an—therein lies a great treasure of Truth and Wisdom. The people with bad nature and impure hearts point accusing fingers to these things.

Listen to me! A man cannot be a perfect believer unless by nature he becomes averse to the objections raised by the opponents. And one cannot reach that stage of faith unless he stays in the company of the righteous person who has been sent to the world to give their faith back to the people. Unless a man has got his faith back, he must stay with this righteous person; to go away from him is to do something unlawful. It is so because this man is like a child in the lap of his mother and he can take only milk that the mother gives; if this child goes away from the mother; he is sure to die within a short time.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 259)

BEAUTIES OF RELIGION

According to me, the best way of spreading the religion is that its beautiful teachings penetrate into the hearts and no external effort is needed to be made for this purpose. There are certain things which are visible because of their own light, the example being

the sun, the moon and the stars. There are other things that cannot be seen without the light of the things that have been mentioned above. They are the animals and the birds; we cannot see them unless there is light. The true religion penetrates into the souls with its light of truthfulness and it gets recognized by itself; it draws the hearts to its own side. That is why I said that the teaching of a religion is a great sign. The signs of a religion which lacks this sign (of Teachings) do not do any good to the people. The teaching that comes from the Heaven has a light with it and it is far above the ways of the human beings. When a man causes death to his life and comes out of the dirty existence, then he receives a life in God and begins to realize the signs of a true religion. But this cannot happen without the grace of God, none can come out from the dirty life and receive a new one unless it is caused by God Himself who has given life to the whole world.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 273)

PREJUDICE HINDERS UNDERSTANDING

A verbal claim by a person that he has attained to salvation or that he has a strong relation with God the Almighty is quite easy (i.e., it is quite easy to make such a claim even though it may not be factual). But God knows quite well, how far a person has abandoned the things that must be abandoned. Of course, it is true that he who seeks, will find what he is seeking after. Those who are sincere in their struggle are granted success and they reach their destination.

If somebody is partially for religion and partially for the worldly affairs, he will ultimately get away from the religion to which he previously adhered, and get himself engrossed in the worldly affairs. If a person seeks after the true religion with a divine sight, it will make easy for him to decide

about the controversies. But what the people do is that they want to stick to their own views (that is, they do not try to understand the point of view of the other side). If two persons have dialogue, each of them wishes to uphold his views and to see that the other one is pulled down. Like an ant, the people are prejudiced, stubborn and defiant, and they are not prepared to think over things with a cool heart. It is only in the power of God to make them understand and accept.

I believe that the God whom I want to show to the people is hidden from their eyes and they are negligent of Him. He has manifested Himself to me; whoever has eyes that can see, let him see this manifestation.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 275)

IT'S GOD'S WORK

If I am asked as to what have I done, my answer would be that I cannot say anything in this respect. The world will know itself as to what has been done by me. Of course I should like to say this much that people come to me and repent for their sins, they become humble and getting away from meanness, they acquire very high morals. They begin to grow like vegetation and they begin to improve their morals and habits. Man does not make all the progress in just one step. The law of nature is that every thing makes progress gradually; there is nothing that is not under this law. Of course, we are full of hope that ultimately the truth will spread and there will be a pious change. This is not my work; this is the work of God. He is determined that piety should be spread. The world has become rotten and a worm is eating it up. It is only the shell that has been left; there is no pith there. But God has now willed it that man should be purified and should have no blemish at all. It is for this, that through His grace, He has established this Dispensation.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 278)

DO YOUR DUTY

If the Ruler is a cruel person, you should not go about talking ill of him; you should try to reform yourselves and make yourselves better in every way. God will remove him or make him a better man. Whatever hardship a man passes through, it is the outcome of his own evil deeds. Otherwise, so far as a believer is concerned, God is with him. God Himself provides him with every thing. My advice to you is that you should become a model of every virtue. You should neither be negligent in doing your duty to God nor you should be negligent in doing your duty to your fellow beings.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 298)

WHOLLY AND SOLELY FOR GOD

God manifests Himself in the person of a Muttaqi (righteous person). Such a person is under the shadow of God. But let it be remembered that Taqwa (righteousness) must be very sincere and it should have nothing for the Satan. God does not like to be associated with anything. If a part of us is for the Satan, then God throws away and says: 'let the whole of it be for Satan.' Any trouble that the chosen ones of God have to face has the Will of God behind it. Otherwise if the whole world joins hands to put them (the dear ones of God) to trouble, it would simply not be possible for them to do so. These dear ones of God are there to set an example for the world, it is imperative that they must pass through difficulties so that aspect of their life also becomes an example for the people. Ordinarily God does not like that His dear ones should suffer (He is very reluctant to cause death to a dear one of His). But it is for specific reasons that they have to pass through hardships. Of course, this makes them deserving of rewards and their passing through hardship becomes virtue on their part.

(Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 301)

Every Nāṣir should have a high standard of faith in Allah, and this high standard of faith is attained only when the love of Allah surpasses all other loves

Address at the concluding session of 24th Ijtima of Majlis Ansarullah UK on Sunday, September 10, 2006

By Ḥaḍrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V, ayyadahullah.

Translation by Dr. Khaled Ata and Dr. Rasheed S. Azam

When the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) proclaimed ‘*Nahnu Ansarullah*’ (we are the helpers of Allah), they sacrificed everything *they had* for the sake of Allah for His Messenger and for their faith. These are the models to be emulated by all Ansarullah today.

Ansarullah have high responsibility to safeguard Khilafat, and Nizam-i-Khilafat requires complete obedience and its continuation is essentially related to their financial sacrifice and devotional prayers.

Seeking Allah’s help in prayer, you should fulfill your duty towards Allah and mankind and instill in your heart—as well as in the hearts of your wives and children—a spirit of complete obedience to Khilafat and continue to work upon enhancing this spirit.

After *Tashahhud*, *Ta’awwudh* and recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V, may Allah be his support, recited the following verses from the Holy Qur’an:

فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي
إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْيَهُودُ الَّذِينَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ أُمَّتًا
بِاللَّهِ وَشَهِدَ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

When Jesus perceived his disciples disbelief, he asked, “Who will be my helper in the cause of Allah?” His disciples answered, ‘We are the helpers of Allah. We believe in

Allah and be thou witness that we are obedient.’ (Surah Āl ‘Imrān, 3:53)

وَالشَّاقِقُونَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ
وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ
وَرَضُوا عَنْهُمْ وَأَمَّا لَهُمْ جَنَّتْ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

As for the foremost among the believers, the first of the emigrants and the helpers, and those who followed them in the best possible manner, Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens, which have flowing streams underneath. They shall abide therein forever. That is the supreme triumph. (Surah Al-Taubah, 9:100)

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُفُؤًا أَنْصَارًا لِلَّهِ كَمَا قَالَ
عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لِلْيَهُودِيِّينَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى
اللَّهِ قَالَ الْيَهُودِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ فَأَمَّا
تَلَامِيذُهُ فَمِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَكَفَرُوا كَمَا يَفْعَلُ
فَأَيَّدْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَىٰ عَدُوِّهِمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا
ظَاهِرِينَ ﴿١٠١﴾

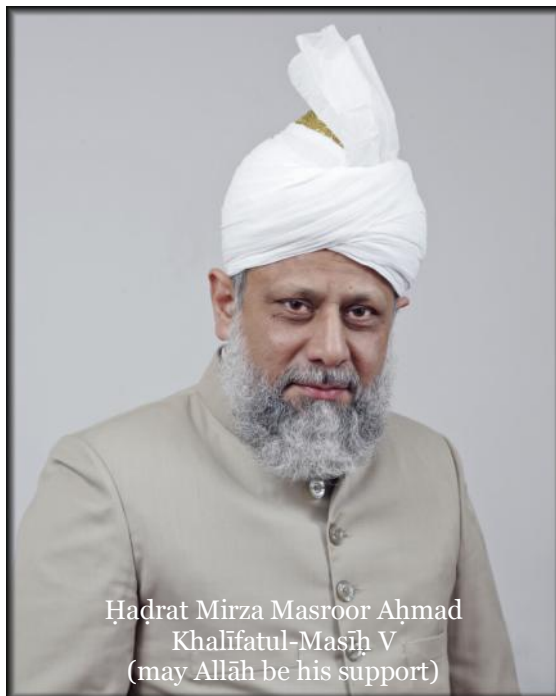
O ye who believe! be helpers of Allah, as said Jesus son of Mary to his disciples, ‘Who are my helpers in the cause of Allah?’ The disciples said, ‘We are the helpers of Allah’. So a party of the children of Israel believed while a party disbelieved. Then we aided

those who believed against their enemy and they became predominant (Surah Al-Saff, 61:15).

Ḥaḍrat Musleh Mau'ood (may Allah be pleased with him), once addressing Ansarullah, drew their attention to and explained that the word 'Ansar' has been used specially for believers on two occasions in the Holy Qur'an, once in regards to the disciples of Jesus (peace be on him), and the other in relation to the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). This is an important point. If Ansar were to delve deep into this, Majlis Ansarullah can become an extremely dynamic part of the Jamā'at. A review of your activities and cognizance of your responsibilities and the extent to which you are carrying them out will make you realize that there is a wide scope for improvement in the future.

In the Holy Qur'an, where Ansar are mentioned in relation to Jesus (peace be on him), the latter having witnessed rejection of his teachings and call to worship, proclaims himself on one occasion with much pain that even as majority defies his instructions and refuses to listen to him, is there one fortunate among them prepared to be his aide and helper to propagate Allah's message and carry out His commandments. On this, the disciples responded, 'We are helpers of Allah's religion, and pronounce ourselves with complete submission and faith in Almighty Allah to be counted among those in the foremost rank.'

At another occasion, while citing disciples of Jesus (peace be on him), Allah, the Almighty, says that similar type of followers asserted 'that they have believed completely and obey and follow the commands of this Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).' Now, similar opportunity is afforded during our times as we claim that we have accepted the Imam of this age and have joined his Jamā'at and follow his teachings



Ḥaḍrat Mirza Masroor Aḥmad
Khalifatul-Masīḥ V
(may Allāh be his support)

completely, it is a similar call to 'become my helpers for propagation and teachings of faith' that was made to the disciples of Jesus (peace be on him). But you cannot accomplish this task until your faith is strong and is followed by action and mere verbal pronouncement 'that we have believed in the Imam of the age' is not enough. Now, if it is referred to the time of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) then his companions had not merely said that 'we have believed you' rather they set up high standards of sacrifices as well. Hence, in this age also it will be of no avail merely to claim that 'we have achieved the purpose of faith by believing in the Imam.'

Allah, the Almighty, citing an example of the A'rab (Bedouins), says that these villagers proclaim *Āmannā* i.e., we have believed. Allah Almighty instructs the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) to tell them that this is merely their claim about faith. At best they can proclaim *Aslammnā*,

that is, we have pledged obedience. The state of *Aslamnā* will transform to *Āmannā* only when nothing is kept for 'self' as everything belongs to Allah and is kept for Allah.

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, says, 'Believers are they whose actions bear testimony to their faith, on whose hearts faith is engraved, who give preference to their Lord and His Will on everything, and adopt the narrow but straight paths of righteousness for God's sake, and are consumed in His love, and move themselves away from everything which, like an idol, hinders from God, be it a moral state, defiant actions, negligence or lethargy. (*Tabligh-i-Risalat*, Vol. 10, p 103; *Tafseer Ḥaḍrat Masih Mau'ood, alaihissalam*, Vol. 4, p 225-226).

Hence, a Nāṣir who is past forty years of age, whose thoughts should have attained maturity, is mindful of his advancing age as well as diminishing life span, who should be more fearful of Allah than before and who, having fully believed in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), has entered the Jamā'at of the Promised Messiah and Mehdi (peace be on him), his standards to become Allah's helper should enhance greatly. It should always be borne in mind that we have to seek Allah's pleasure and tread on narrow paths of righteousness. Though it is a difficult task yet a believer must remain constantly conscious of his obligations and try not to neglect an iota from the commands of Allah. And then, for a person who has pledged to be Ansarullah, Allah's Helper, can achieve this high standard of faith only when Allah's love surpasses all other types of love, be it love for wealth, progeny or anything else. This is the standard that a true believer should attain.

The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) says: "God addressed me and commanded me that I should inform my Jamā'at that those who have believed and whose faith has no worldly impurities and is not tainted by hypocrisy or cowardice and is not bereft of

any level of obedience; such are the favorites of God. And God says that these are the ones whose stance is that of the truth. (*Risala Al-Wasiyyat, Ruhani Khaza'in*, Vol. 20, p 309)

So, this is the criterion of faith. And as I said earlier that when man enters that phase of life whence remainder span of life seems less or begins to appear so, then it becomes important to focus on our claim of "*Nahnu Ansarullah*" purely for Almighty Allah seeking only His pleasure, and our every step on this path should take us closer to Him. We should move every step with sincerity, and truth should radiate from it. Our attention should remain focused on Allah's worship, and be prepared for every sacrifice for the propagation of His message. Our objective should remain that, in every sphere of life, we have to set high moral standards by fulfilling the rights of others. And in all these matters that comprise both rights of Almighty Allah and the rights of mankind, let there be no negligence or lethargy on our part.

When we have developed these qualities, only then we can say that we have honored our pledge and we have tried to follow the footsteps of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) who established brilliantly shining examples in fulfilling their pledge. They were two groups of people, known as *Muhajirs* (emigrants) and *Ansar* (*helpers [Medinite hosts]*). In regards to the question of becoming Ansar like unto disciples of Jesus (peace be on him) as the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) were enjoined *kūnū Anṣārallāh* (be Allah's helpers). Then, everybody whether *Muhajir* or Nāṣir, joined in to win the race for this honor demonstrating such remarkable deeds which are simply amazing. The whole scenario of amazing standards of sacrifice and sudden change in the conduct of their lives that we see in the companions, are due to their extraordinary love for Allah and His Messenger; the love that was the direct

outcome of the elevated faith of the companions. The standard of their worship was sublime to match. Their sacrifices of life, wealth and time for the sake of their faith remain unparalleled. Their measure of mutual love and respect for the rights of one another are amazingly high. They were the people about whom Allah Almighty said, *'And as for the foremost among the believers, the first of the emigrants and the helpers, and those who followed them in the best possible manner, Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens underneath which streams flow. They will abide therein forever. That is the supreme triumph* (Surah Al-Taubah, 9:100).

Hence, these are the people presented to us as exemplars and models, who fulfilled every pledge and came to deserve Almighty Allah's rewards in Paradise. Of them, I want to mention about one group here called Ansar. They, (unlike early Muslims of Mecca who had benefited from the Holy Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) company and thus had advanced in faith) were without this advantage until after the migration to Medina. However, after *Hijrah*, (migration) when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) initiated system of brotherhood, the Ansar, setting up highest standards of *Huqūq-ul-Ibād* (rights of people), gave half of their belongings and earnings to their *Muhajir* brethren, and tried to share everything with them. And when the Holy Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) company and his *Quwwat-i-Qudsiyya* (spiritual power) made impact on *Ansar* then the distinction between *Aslamnā* (we submitted) and *Āmannā* (we believed) unfolded.

What a beautiful response came from a chieftain of the Ansar when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was seeking counsel with everybody at the time of battle of Badr. Each time the Holy Prophet

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked how the encounter should be conducted, *Muhajirīn* (emigrants) would stand up and submit that they would fight on his right and on his left, and in front of him and behind him, but the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) continued to repeat the same question for more counseling. A Leader among the Ansar then stood up and submitted that perhaps his (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) command or directive was addressed to them. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said, Yes. The Ansari Noble then submitted, 'Our response to this is that the first covenant between you and us was before your arrival in Medina which entailed your protection if the enemy attacked you within the precincts of Medina, but the obligation of your protection outside of Medina would not be ours. But now you are already standing in the field of Badr, outside of Medina, and seeking our counsel.' The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said, 'Yes, that is why I am asking.' The Chief of Ansar then submitted: "At the time of our first covenant we were not completely aware of your loving self and your teachings. Truth has now completely unfolded upon us and has enlightened us in all respects. There is no question of previous covenant now, O Messenger of Allah. Now we shall not respond, like the companions of Moses (peace be on him), 'go forth thou and thou Lord and fight, and here we sit.' (*Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse 25*). Nay, our response is the same as of *Muhajirīn* that we shall fight on your right and on your left and in front of you and behind you, and the enemy will not reach you without trampling upon our dead bodies. And if you command us, we shall even jump in the ocean on our horsebacks.' [Since Arabs were desert dwellers, far from ocean, they feared water. They knew it but little, hence the apprehension]. But faith had generated such

courage that they said, ‘If you command, we shall even jump into the ocean on our horsebacks.’ So, this is the example of devotion that Ansar demonstrated after benefiting from the *Quwwat-i-Qudsiyya*, (Spiritual Power) of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

Again, look at the example of Ansar during the battle of Uhad when someone inquired of an Ansari, who was severely wounded and was almost at death point, if he had any last wish or message to convey to his kindred. The Ansari was least worried for his children or wife. His only worry was for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) as he said, ‘tell my kindred that I convey my *Salām* (greeting of peace) to them. And tell them that, even though I am dying, I am leaving behind a sacred trust of Almighty Allah in their care. I guarded this sacred trust as long as I lived caring the least about my own life. I admonish you now, if you have the slightest regard for my last words, to protect this Messenger of Allah even if that entails sacrificing your own lives. In the message to his friends and relations, he expected their hearts to remain drenched with love for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), and they should have least worry for their own lives. Such were the examples of those who excelled in faith. The moment they proclaimed *Nahnu Ansarullah* (we are Allah’s helpers) they showered everything for the sake of Allah and His Messenger and for their faith. So, these are the examples which you, now called Ansarullah, have to demonstrate today.

As I said in the beginning, ponder upon the word ‘Ansarullah’ and the pledge that you repeat in your meetings and Ijtima’at. Today, you are not being asked to use sword, or thrust yourselves into wars, or confront cannons or shells. The only demand is to observe rights owed to Allah and His creations. Attain such standards of worship as would become models for Khuddam and

Atfal, and your wives and daughters. Your financial sacrifices should also be such that others would envy to follow.

The review of certain Jamā’ats in Britain that I presented on Friday, the day before yesterday, should shake you up. The period of good and decent earnings is usually between 40 and 60 years of age. Look at your pledges and commitments. Look deep into your pledge and then review the standard of your sacrifice. According to one Hadith of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), “You save what you spend in the way of Allah and on your essential needs. What you leave behind as ‘savings’ is of no use to you as it is no longer yours. However, you should spend on your own selves with moderation and within acceptable limits.

In the financial review that I presented on Friday, Ahmadis in Pakistan are at the top in their financial sacrifice. Their total increase in contribution, compared with last year, was the highest, and the improvement itself was also much higher than last year. Majority of you sitting before me at the moment have come from that land. Why is it then that while you are there you make sacrifices despite all the odds, but once you are settled here, your thoughts of other needs take precedence? You should pay attention to this important matter. Whatever standard you achieve here in this day and age shall serve as an example for this Jamā’at. You will have to set those high targets that you wish the future generations would be attracted to follow. Hence, in order to draw the attention of future generations towards your sacrifices, you would have to improve your own standards of sacrifice.

It has been noted that there is much room for improvement for participation in Tahrik Jadid. This matter also requires a great deal of attention. In some Jamā’ats more than half of the members did not participate in Tahrik Jadid. Similar situation, perhaps, exists with Waqf Jadid also. Ansar, therefore, should

take up this responsibility in their role to increase the number of participants. Ansarullah should first carefully review that they themselves have hundred percent participation in these two schemes and then try to enroll their wives and children also into these schemes.

When due attention is paid towards these sacrifices, you can raise the slogan of '*Nahnu Ansarullah*'. You also have the responsibility, included in your pledge, to guard the Khilafat. Inculcate in your heart as well as in the hearts of your wives and children, the spirit of complete obedience to Khilafat through supplication and by fulfilling duty towards Almighty Allah. Cultivate this passion. Do not see superficially the promise of reward made to the Jamā'at of believers. Contemplate on the words as to who are the believers promised Khilafat?

The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) has also been given promise for the continuation of this Khilafat, and *Insha'Allah*, it will continue. And certainly it will. As I said in the beginning, raise your standards to the level which a real believer ought to have so that you too remain among the rank and file of those given promise of this bounty. Do not merely concentrate on secular education of your children, rather provide for them religious atmosphere in your homes. Connect your children with mosques and Prayer-centers. Direct their attention towards learning of faith. Persuade them to read the Holy Qur'an. Mothers, somehow, succeed at least once to have their children complete the first reading of the Holy Qur'an with their help. Even the *Aameen* ceremony of the child is celebrated. However, no supervision is exercised after that. Fathers should have the responsibility of their children to draw continuous attention to the Holy Quran.

Again, as boys enter into youth, they spend more time outdoor. At that time they are not under the control of their mothers. Therefore, maintain friendly relationship

with them so that when they are home, they discuss with you things of the outside world. Explain to them the difference between good and bad, and try to make them aware of this difference. If you could save your future generations through such efforts, you will be counted among those believers for whom Khilafat is promised.

Therefore, set good standard of your worship; Khilafat is contingent upon worshippers. You should also pay attention towards your financial sacrifice as this too has a deep connection with Khilafat. And having linked it with Nizam-i-Wasiyyat in this age, the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) has made the relationship even clearer. As Ḥaḍrat Khalifatul-Masīḥ II (may Allah be pleased with him) said about Tahrir Jadid, in its beginning, that it is like a nexus for the Nizam-i-Wasiyyat. Therefore, those who cannot join the Nizam-i-Wasiyyat, should pay attention to this. Those who have already joined it will be attracted, by virtue of their participation, to offer more sacrifices; every member of the Jamā'at, young or old, can thus join it for strengthening Khilafat and for propagation of Islam. Cultivate, therefore, spirit of financial sacrifice both in young and old. This is a responsibility of elders and Ansarullah to build up this spirit and attain high standards of obedience to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). But they must first accomplish for themselves high standards of obedience to Khilafat and Nizam-i-Jamā'at and then make their best effort for achieving the same in their children and wives and other members of their household as obedience is extremely important for the continuation of this system. The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) has also stated that obedience must be sincerely pure.

May Almighty Allah grant strength to everybody to infuse this spirit and passion in our hearts so that we may witness fulfillment of promise of the victory of Islam during our lifetime.

The Story of Ahmad Shareef the First (I)

How I Accepted Islam

I was born on April 13, 1931, to parents Earl Sheffield and Clara Russell, in Whitman, a small coal mining town in Logan County, West Virginia.

My parents were devoted Christians. Back then everybody went to Sunday school and church, and did not have any say in it. We went to Morning Star Baptist Church. Rev. A Richardson was the pastor. He was father of a large family and was devoted to his religion, and also worked as a coal miner. I could never keep my attention. Only thing I remember is singing in choir. Sunday school was rigid. We really had to learn, and it stayed with me until I got to be an adult.

Coming from a small town, education and learning was important. I went to a one-room schoolhouse. Everybody made the honor roll in grades 1 to 5.

The community I lived in blended together almost as one family. My family was large. I did not know the words uncle or cousin; we were one family. If we spent the night together, it would be eight to ten people in one bed. School was the only outlet for the children followed by church. We only knew about Baptist religion.

I went to Holden WV for middle school. We moved after the WW2 started. My father came to Pittsburgh, PA to be a welder. I went to South High school. I have lived in Pittsburgh, PA since then. I played baseball, football, and basketball, and I was a good athlete.

After graduating I joined the Army. I served in Korean War. I came out as sergeant. I was the All Army Boxing Champ. I played baseball on the All Army Team in Korea. I met Korean president. I fought representing army for the Korean boxing championship in 150 pound category. I

fought in the middle weight and heavy weight categories. Every time I won they came up with new contender.

I came home in 1953. I went to Penn Tech Institute for engineering. I played semi-pro football with Pittsburg Cubs and I went to Baltimore to play for the pro team It was not Ravens but Baltimore Colts. I busted my knee and that was the end of it.

I went back to boxing as an amateur. I won the junior, senior and golden glove championships.

I worked for Eat'n Park for fifteen year. I left there since they won't promote me to the manager position and went to work for Sears Roebuck, and worked for five years at Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, as job placement supervisor. After five years at the City of Pittsburgh Housing Authority, I lost one of my legs while helping a fellow worker.

I found out about Islam in 1954. At a roller skating party where I met my wife-to-be. She refused to give me her name. She invited me to come talk to her dad, Akmal Taha, who first introduced me to Islam. I met our present president Umar Shaheed's dad, Ahmad Shaheed, who really pulled me into Islam. I was growing then. I experienced the closeness with the Ahmadi Muslims which I never felt before at the church. Brothers spent so much time visiting me that they were closer to me than my family. Abu Aziz lived closer to me so his weekends were spent sitting on my porch talking about Islam. I got married in 1956. My son, Abdur-Rahman was born in 1957. Second son, Khalil, was born in 1958. Ahmad, present Ansar president (Za'im) was born in 1959. After that I had four more kids, three girls and another boy. I have been blessed. Many of my kids have become doctors, lawyers, professional sports

figures and even teachers.

Brothers spent so much time explaining Islam that Christianity lost its flavor. Islam awoke me and made me question some of the things I had learned and believed. I became disgruntled with the Christian religion.

My parents had given me the name Clarence Sheffield. Missionary Jawad Ali gave me my name Ahmad Shareef. Missionaries who visited were Abdul-Qadir Zaigham and Jawad Ali. Missionary Muti-ur-Rahman Bengali stayed in the mosque in Pittsburgh. His Christian friends were protection for him, and walked with him while he was passing out literature. He published four pages in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette newspaper answering charges put against Islam. The mission was at 2522 Webster Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA. We were at Wyle and Kirkpatrick, and then in the Townsend Street, and then on Bedford Avenue in Pittsburgh, PA. Dr Khan had classes in Braddock, PA.

I have met three Khulafa [plural of Khalifa]. Ḥaḍrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad [Allah's mercy on him] being the closest one who would never let me forget about Islam.

In our hometown, we had Turkish Muslims. We knew the people but we never knew that they were Muslims. They did not have a mosque. They met in someone's house. I learned later in my life that they were Muslims. I am 77 years old. I was nine years old then and had never thought of Islam. Then Missionary Zaigham had been to my town to meet the Turkish people but I came to know that from the Review of Religions much later.

Today I am proud to say that all of my eight children are in the service of Islam.

In 1971, I created the Homewood Brushton Athletic Association, a youth group for children 6-14 where I coach baseball, football and basketball. Today we run a mentoring program, a community service program, a pre-release program, smoke prevention



Ahmad Shareef I

program and diabetes program for children. We get referrals and support from all of the local schools, magistrate's office, the juvenile judges and community organizations, State Legislator, Joe Preston, City Council member, Twanda Carlisle, previous Tobacco Free Allegheny, a smoke prevention program, and personal contributions.

I was acknowledged in People Magazine for the work that I have done for Homewood Brushton Athletics Association in the Pittsburgh area. In 1999, I received the man of the year award from JC Penney. The Pittsburgh Courier newspaper chose my organization along with 100 Black man for Community Involvement. In 1998 I was nominated for Pittsburgh Post Gazette's Community person.

We are located at 800 N Homewood Avenue where there is always plenty of Ahmadiyya Islamic literature on hand. I have co-hosted a TV program called Muslim Sunrise and cosponsored many Muslim events at the Pittsburgh Coliseum. We have had Missionary Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad, Missionary Sufi Bangali, Dr Zafar from Dayton, and Missionary Mubasher Ahmad speak at some of our meetings.

[Date of interview: 4 May 2008.]

One Life, Three Pledges

Imran Hayee, Duluth MN

I finally turned forty last year and became a Nāṣir on January 1, 2009 following the membership rules of Majlis Ansarullah. Some would call me old and some would call me mature but I think I might be a little confused and trying to understand what I really am. As I cruise on the escalator of age, I might be able to get the answer to this question. However, at this time, I would like to express my feelings, after having recited the Ansar pledge for the first time in our first Ansar meeting. I had previously recited the Khuddam pledge so many times that I was almost taking it for granted and had somewhat lost the essence of it. But by reciting the Ansar pledge, which is worded differently, it suddenly drew my attention back to the actual words and underlying messages in both my new (Ansar) pledge and my old (Khuddam) pledge. When I was pondering over these two pledges, I realized that there is a third pledge as well, which I used to recite a long time ago as a Tifl (a young Ahmadi boy up to 15 years of age). The importance of these three pledges in the life of an Ahmadi Muslim is extremely crucial and plays a significant role in shaping up our life at various stages of age. There are certainly some commonalities and some differences between the three according to the need of the age in our life. Each of these three pledges contains a message and a reminder to a promise about the following three aspects of life:

1

The Declaration of Faith

All three pledges start with the declaration of faith of an Ahmadi Muslim stating that there is no God but Allah and that

Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is His Servant and Messenger. The constant reminder of this declaration of faith is fundamentally essential at all ages so it is part of the formal pledge in the life of an Ahmadi Muslim regardless of his age, that is, he being a Tifl (an Ahmadi boy from 7 to 15 years), a Khadim (16 to 40 years old) or a Nāṣir (more than 40 years old).

2

Loyalty to Faith, Nation and Country

All three pledges remind us of our duties beyond declaration of faith and the foremost reminder is to show loyalty to faith, nation and country. Although this is the essential part of all three pledges, the pledged degree of loyalty in the three pledges is different depending upon the need of the age. A Tifl's pledge starts with the promise of service to his faith, nation and country. This service instills respect of faith, nation and country in a young boy's heart. Once, the young boy grows into a Khadim and starts maturing, he is reminded, in his Khadim's pledge, that service is not enough, rather he has to be willing to sacrifice his most dear possessions, namely, life, wealth, time and honor for the sake of his faith, nation and country. The idea of sacrifice can only stem from true love and respect for faith, nation and country, and this is the real message of Ahmadiyyat, the true Islam, which fills a Khadim's heart during periodic recital of his pledge for 25 golden years of his life. And, as an Ahmadi man grows even older turning forty and becoming a Nāṣir, he is reminded that now the responsibility is even bigger. At this stage, he is reminded that he is not only supposed to consolidate or strengthen his own love and

respect for his faith, nation and country, but also, he has a duty to disseminate this love and respect to others in the society by continuing to propagate the message of Ahmadiyyat, the true Islam, to others.

3

The Allegiance to the Institution of Khilafat

The most distinguishing mark of an Ahmadi Muslim is his allegiance to the institution of Khilafat which infuses a pronounced sense of unity and obedience in his heart. Here again, the reminder to this important aspect of life in the three pledges is tailored according to the age. A Tifl is reminded that he shall strive to obey all the commandments of the Khalifatul-Masīh. The lessons of obedience start at a very young age to ensure that greater expectations can be met later in the older age. As a Tifl becomes a Khadim, the reminder also evolves stating that in addition to obedience, he shall be ready to sacrifice anything for guarding the institution of Khilafat. And, when a Khadim further progresses in age and becomes a Nāṣir, he is reminded that indeed obedience and willingness to sacrifice for the guarding of the institution of Khilafat is essential but also he needs to make sure that his children remain devoted to the institution of Khilafat. Such an important task has been put on our shoulders—training of our children—so that they also remain the guardians of the institution of Khilafat generation after generation. The training of our children is a challenging task and a lot of us struggle with this challenge in our everyday lives. If we look at a Tifl's pledge, a very important promise is present reminding him that he shall always speak the truth and will not



Dr Imran Hayee

abuse anybody. This reminder is not present in a Khadim's or Nāṣir's pledge and is only present in a Tifl's pledge in addition to what has been discussed above. It definitely does not mean that a Khadim or a Nāṣir is allowed to do otherwise, but only implies that once these two habits become a part of a child's life, they stay with him for the rest of his life. So, in fact, we, as Ansar, have been given a beautiful guidance in a Tifl's pledge regarding how to train our children. We should try our best that our children develop these two habits from the very childhood that they always speak the truth and do not abuse others.

Being a Nāṣir brings a load of responsibilities with it, therefore, we should earnestly plead in our supplications to Allah, the All Mighty, that He may give us strength and courage to shoulder these responsibilities well and fulfill our extended obligations with due justice. May He be with us, Amin.

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A Precious Memory of Ahmadiyya Khilafat

Dr Muḥammad Zafar Iqbal, Camillus, NY

I mention below an incident which I can never forget, and is truly a precious treasure of my memories.

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ IV was visiting the USA in June 1991. On June 21, 1991, while on my way from Syracuse, NY to JFK airport to pick up my parents, I lost my wife Rashida Zafar in a tragic car accident. She was survived by three sons, ages 14, 11, and 6, and myself.

Around 11-12 o'clock at night the same day, Sardar Rafiq Ahmad, a local Jamā'at member, called Washington, DC and informed the Khalīfatul-Masīḥ of the accident. The Khalīfatul-Masīḥ, Allah' mecry be on him, graciously asked to speak with me personally. As I picked up the phone, he asked me to introduce myself, inquired about the accident, and consoled me for some time. He proceeded to call daily for three consecutive days and comfort this humble servant of his. He asked me to meet him in Cleveland a few days later, at the scheduled time and place of the meeting of my Jama'at (at that time Rochester, NY), and to bring a picture of my late wife.

At the time of our meeting in Cleveland, I had my parents and my sons with me. Out of sheer grace, the Khalīfatul-Masīḥ embraced my father, Ch Muḥammad Din Wainse, my older two boys, Waseet and Awais, and myself. He took my youngest son, Ansar, in his lap, kissed him and was overwhelmed by emotions of grief. His eyes were wet with tears. Subhan-Allah. Such expression of love for an ordinary Ahmadi like me! I can never



Muhammad Zafar Iqbal

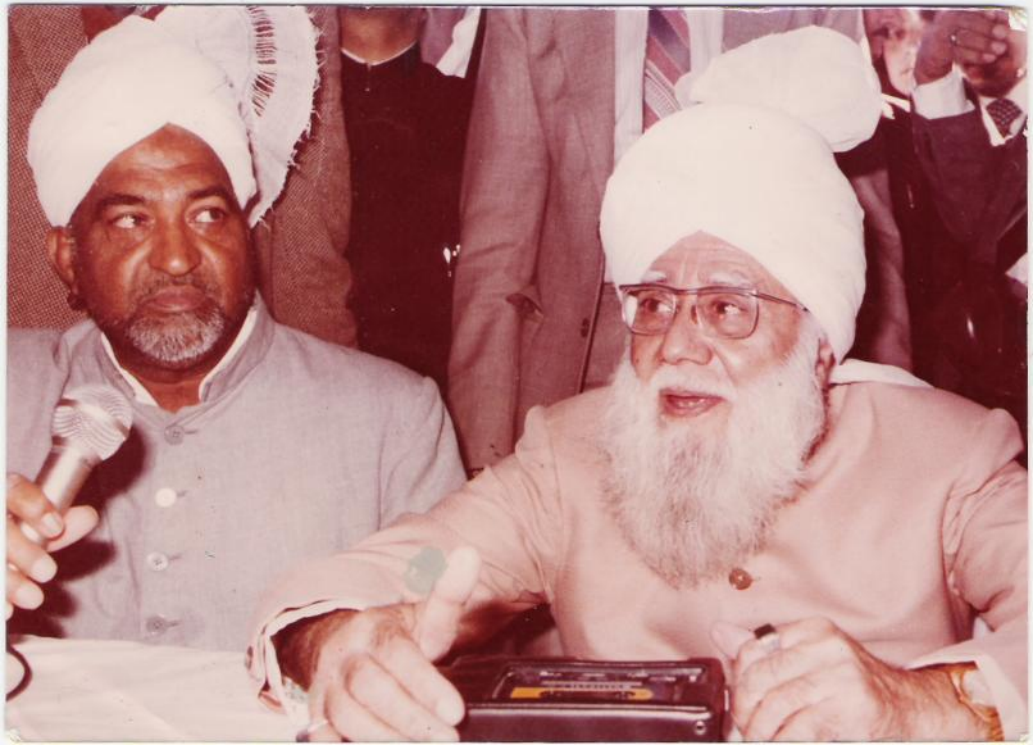
forget that moment. He then autographed the picture of my late wife. With this he remarked that the picture was glossy and that I should mail him a non-glossy picture to London for another autograph, which I subsequently did. In further correspondence, he graced this humble one with advice on how to cope with my personal loss.

I was fortunate enough to have met Ḥaḍrat Muslih Maun'ud, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ III, and Khalīfatul-Masīḥ IV in the past. Yet, this was a unique and incredible experience that left an indelible mark on me about the truthfulness and blessings of Khilafat. To have this level of affection for each of the millions of ordinary Ahmadi is beyond comprehension for an ordinary human being. It is only possible with the special grace of Allah, which He bestows upon His chosen servants. This incident affirmed in me that the Khulafa of Ahmadiyyat are his chosen servants.

May Allah continue blessing the Jama'at with righteous Khulafa till Qiyamah.

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Ḥaḍrat Mirza Nāṣir Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ III (may Allah have mercy on him) in Spain with Imam Karam Ilahi Zafar to his right.

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MY MOTHER

Munir Ahmad Malik, Phoenix, Arizona

My dear mother, Zohra Begum, whom I always called “Amee Jee,” passed away on March 30, 2003 in Lahore, Pakistan, at the age of 90 years. *Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raji'un*. Being a *Musiyyah*, she was buried in *Bahishti Maqbara*, Rabwah, Pakistan. May Allah be pleased with her and grant her the highest status in *Jannatul-Firdaus*, *Āmīn*. Except for me, all my brothers and sisters were present with her in the last few days of her life. I was in the USA, but had the opportunity to visit and meet her with my wife about three months prior to her demise.

The sad news of her death immediately triggered in my mind the recollections of events and incidents spread over a period of more than fifty years. No matter how old one’s parents are, their final departure from this world is very hard to accept. It is always very difficult for anyone to absorb this sudden shock, and I was no exception. I was struck with the thought that my mother, who raised me and made me what I am today, is no more with us, and I and my family and children were deprived of her prayers. Not only did I lose my mother, but I lost my best friend. I also lost a shield which always protected me with her kind, constant prayers, whether I asked for them or not.

I am writing this article for two reasons. Firstly, to request all those who read this article to kindly pray for my mother. May Allah grant her the highest status in *Jannatul-Firdaus*, as she played an outstanding role in the moral training and development of her children to make them good Ahmadis. Secondly, to briefly narrate some aspects of her life so that they may become a source of inspiration for young parents, especially mothers.

Amee Jee originally belonged to the small

town of Chakwal, Pakistan. She had formal school education up to the fifth grade. She was very simple in nature and she always wished well for others. Her father, Khawaja Mohammed Amin had an auto business in Dera Doon, India. He had accepted Ahmadiyyat, at the hands of Hadrat Mirza Bashirudin Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him). Amee Jee was not only very kind-hearted, caring and loving—especially to poor people—she was also the best *murabbi* (trainer) for her children. She was an outstanding organizer and a strong administrator. She enforced punctuality. She was very particular about performing the daily activities at their proper time. In my early days of childhood and in later life, I remember vividly a series of incidents where Amee Jee played a very important role that helped and guided all of us—brothers and sisters—to have respect and love for each other, to obtain higher education, to shape our lives successfully, and develop love and devotion for Jamaat Ahmadiyya and the Ahmadiyya Khilafat.

One of the most distinctive features of Amee Jee’s daily life was that she always used to recite *Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim* loudly at the beginning of any chore; whether it was cooking or serving meals, making us wear clothes, or any other task. All the siblings were repeatedly reminded to do the same and adopt it as a permanent practice in our lives. I heard this from Amee Jee so many times in my life, that it became embedded in my mind and has become a second nature to do the same before I start anything. She always advised us that if we start any work with the name of God, the Gracious and Merciful, He will make it easier

for us. By the grace of God, I have practiced this habit all my life and every time it has worked for me and strengthened my belief.

Amee Jee was very vigilant as a mother in discharging her responsibilities dutifully. She always kept a very close eye on relatively small matters pertaining to health and hygiene. She made sure that we cut our nails regularly, brushed our teeth, took a shower every day, and had our hair cut in a time, and kept ourselves very clean.

Back in 1988, I had written an article about my late father, Malik Bashir Ahmad, whom I called “Aba Jee.” In my article, I had indicated that my father was very disciplined and had a great love for Jama’at and the Ahmadiyya Khilafat. He also took keen interest in the training of his children. However, his humble efforts would not have been fruitful without the prayers and the full support of Amee Jee. Aba Jee routinely gave all his children a religious assignment of memorization of Qur’anic verses, etc., in addition to strictly making us offer our five daily Prayers and recite the Holy Qur’an regularly. It was a routine at our home that at dinner time, Aba Jee would ask my mother to confirm as to whether all the children had offered the five daily Prayers at the proper times and had participated in all the activities for the day; such as helping Amee Jee in her work, or taken part in sports, etc. Normally, Amee Jee was very kind-hearted, very caring, and loving. However, when our father enquired from her at dinner time if all the five children (three brothers and two sisters) had offered the five Prayers at the proper times, she would not hesitate for a second in telling if any of us had missed any Prayer. Although she knew well that her true statement will put us in deep trouble if we had not complied with our father’s daily instructions; yet she would always tell the truth. As regards religious obligations, Aba Jee was very strict and would not tolerate if we missed any of our five daily Prayers. In



Munir A. Malik

case we had missed any, we were directed to immediately get up from dinner and offer all the missing *Salats* in full, and loudly, in front of our parents, before we could join them for dinner.

Aba Jee always used to offer Fajr, Maghrib and Isha Prayers in congregation at Islamiya Park mosque, Lahore, and the same was expected from the boys at home. Our mosque was about three blocks away from our home, and we used to walk to the mosque. Many times, as a child, the idea crossed my mind to make an excuse and request Amee Jee to plead my case to Aba Jee for allowing me not to go to the mosque, as it might adversely affect my school work; but to no avail. On matters related to religion and spiritual training, Amee Jee never interfered in Aba Jee’s directives given to the children for fulfillment of their obligations. Amee Jee would fully support Aba Jee in his efforts for the spiritual training of the children. I strongly believe that Aba Jee’s efforts in this regards were successful, by the grace of God, only due to the reason that our mother wholeheartedly supported Aba Jee.

It was the norm for Ameer Jee to always refer us to Aba Jee for the final decision on any extraordinary demand that the children made. On special issues, such as going out of town, or staying late with friends, Ameer Jee told us in plain and simple words that we could proceed only if we have had Aba Jee's permission. Ameer Jee would never secretly grant her permission for anything without the knowledge or permission of Aba Jee.

This shows how the parents are like the two wheels of a vehicle, where one wheel cannot work without the help of the other. That is what I saw all my life growing up at home. That is how Ameer Jee acted all her married life in the best interest of her children and in complete obedience and compliance of her husband's desires and ambitions for the spiritual training and well being of the children. In my view, by doing this, she earned the title of being the best wife and an outstanding mother.

Now, being the father of four children myself, I realize the importance of this principle which my mother followed strictly. It reflected her true love for all of us and gave us the real gift of spiritual training. I remember, in one of his sermons, Hadrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih IV (may Allah's mercy be on him) said that the best gift or ornament that a mother can give to her children is the gift of good spiritual training. Like any good mother, Ameer Jee's love, devotion, selflessness, and her sacrifice for her children was remarkable.

In this regard I cannot forget one incident which brings tears to my eyes even today; after half a century has passed by. This relates to me when I was around ten years old and I became sick with some ailment. The doctor prescribed some very expensive shots to cure the ailment which we could not afford to buy with our normal budget. When Aba Jee told Ameer Jee about the prescribed shots and expressed his inability to purchase the shots due to financial constraints, my dear

Ameer Jee, immediately took off her wedding gold bangles and gave them to Aba Jee to sell them off and buy the medicine for me. Aba Jee did so and by the grace of God, I was cured.

It was Ameer Jee's daily routine to wake up early in the morning, usually half an hour before Fajr Prayer and start the day by offering the *Tahajjud Nawafil* and *Salat-ul-Fajr*, followed by the recitation of Holy Qur'an. By the time we came back from the mosque and finished our recitation of the Qur'an, breakfast would be ready, and we all would eat together in the kitchen at the fixed time daily. This would give the children enough time to prepare and leave for school and for Aba Jee to leave for work. To do everything in a timely manner was her specialty and she always carried the table clock "Big Ben" with her wherever she went around the house, to ensure that all her chores were completed in time.

In her daily life, she always taught us that cleanliness is part of our faith and we should demonstrate and reflect it in our personal hygiene and all our activities. She also insisted that we always put things in their proper designated places. This habit which Ameer Jee developed in us proved to be a great asset for me at home and at work and enabled me to discharge all my responsibilities efficiently. It also saved me from many troubles and problems in my life. Now I am trying to teach these habits to my children.

Ameer Jee was especially kind hearted and generous to the poor women working at our home. She was always very watchful for their personal needs and frequently helped them financially or with food and clothing whenever necessary. After completing my M.Com Degree from the University of the Punjab in Pakistan, I started working for National Bank of Pakistan as an officer. She constantly reminded me to take care of the needs of the workers and to provide them

with extra help and money when they were sick, or for the wedding of their daughters, or to help them find a job. In compliance with Ameer Jee's wishes, I have always tried to follow her wishes to the best of my capabilities by the grace of God. Ameer Jee kept reminding me about it regularly in her letters to me, even after my migration to the USA in 1979.

Despite the very limited resources, Ameer Jee's hospitality was remarkable. With Ameer Jee as the only earning member, and all five brothers and sister going to schools and colleges; it was sometimes a financial strain to cope with the needs of the guests who used to visit us very frequently as we were living in Lahore, which is a major town. As a boy, I was responsible for all outside chores. Sometimes I got tired and irritated as I had to walk a long distance to bring groceries or whatever Ameer Jee wanted to serve to the guests, at odd hours, because there was no refrigerator at home in those days to store things. No matter what, Ameer Jee would put in her best efforts to work with a smiling face, and never let the guests feel that they were not properly taken care of as regards their needs and comfort.

Ameer Jee was very mindful to create and develop love and respect for our two elder sisters who have been very caring and loving to younger siblings. She always treated all the boys and girls equally and never discriminated in any way. I remember that as a child, if I or my brothers had an argument with my sisters over a silly or petty matter, Ameer Jee invariably stood firmly on the side of the sisters and would say, "Your sisters are elders and an elder sister is like a mother and younger brothers must be very respectful to their sisters and always remember to be ready to make sacrifices for their sisters." I have heard this from her repeatedly in my life. This attitude of Ameer Jee and its practical demonstration worked positively in developing in us a great love and affection

and desire of sacrifice for our sisters.

Ameer Jee was very fair with all of us and treated everyone equally, and would not let any brother or sister take undue advantage. There was a time when my *phupho*" (my father's sister) along with her daughter had to move in with us permanently after her husband passed away. In all those years, I noticed very vividly that Ameer Jee would treat our cousin sister, who was of our age, like her daughter and would never discriminate against her in any way.

Like any good mother, Ameer Jee had great love and affection for her own children, but the most pleasant aspect of her life was to demonstrate the same true love, respect, affection and devotion to her sons-in-law and daughters-in-law and their families. All her life she prayed for their health, well being and prosperity, sincerely and humbly.

I would like to mention an incident which was narrated to me by my elder sister which shows Ameer Jee's wisdom, vision and the beautiful way of communicating an advice to her daughter for a successful marriage. Once, my sister was visiting home to see our parents after her marriage. During conversation with Ameer Jee she tried to express some anguish and point out certain things that she did not like in the home of her in-laws, where they were all living in a joint family system with her husband's younger brothers and sisters. On hearing this, Ameer Jee immediately told her to stop further conversation on the subject and advised her, saying, "Do not say anything against your husband or his family, Allah does not like it." My sister says that with this advice from Ameer Jee, she learned something which proved valuable for the rest of her life, and she was always very respectful to her husband and his family for which God blessed her enormously.

Ameer Jee had a very strong desire for her daughters to get an opportunity in pursuing higher education. Her dream was fulfilled by

the grace of God as both my sisters graduated from the University of the Punjab, Pakistan, with honors. They also won merit scholarships starting from fifth grade to the level of university and both retired from executive positions in the field of female education. Ameer Jee was very proud of the fact that her daughters were highly educated and was equally ambitious for the spiritual training of all her children.

Ameer Jee had a very strong belief in prayers and she inculcated this very important habit in her children at an early age. She always reminded us that Allah, the Almighty, especially listened to children's prayers as they were innocent. In this context I remember that when I was in the fourth grade, Ameer Jee wanted to buy a sewing machine so that she could sew clothes for her children and share the financial burden of her husband in view of our meager resources. Due to financial restraint and limited income, there was no money available to buy the sewing machine. She asked me many times to pray that she may be able to buy a sewing machine. As a child, I was very sad and concerned as Ameer Jee could not buy the sewing machine. I started praying regularly. After only two or three weeks, Allah with His mysterious ways miraculously opened the doors for her and she got her desired Singer sewing machine. This made me very happy and strengthened my belief in the power of prayers at a very early age.

The habit of prayer which my dear Ameer Jee inculcated in me in her beautiful ways helped me all my life and I have been reaping the benefits through prayers and enjoying the blessings of prayers abundantly. I have been stressing on my children the message of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him), the reformer of this age, emphasizing that everything can be accomplished through prayers.

In my childhood days, there were no cell phones or easy means of communications,

and transportation was very limited. Whenever there was an extraordinary delay in the return of Aba Jee from work and he did not arrive home at the expected time, Ameer Jee quietly went to the prayer rug, and simply started offering *Nawafil* (optional Prayers), and pray for Aba Jee's welfare and safe return.

I have seen and experienced all my life on many occasions that God Almighty, with His sheer Mercy and Benevolence, had blessed Ameer Jee with the gift of acceptance of her prayers. He also bestowed her with the gift of true dreams. In this context I would like to narrate an interesting incident.

When I migrated to USA in 1979 with my wife and two children with the permission of my parents, I had to go through very difficult times in the early stages, and the only thing that kept me going was the blessing of having full faith in the power of prayers which was inculcated in me by Ameer Jee during my early childhood. In these very challenging times, I asked my wife and children to pray for a miracle that we could settle in this country successfully. Without giving the details of my difficulties, I also wrote to my parents with a humble request for prayers. At that time my parents had no idea of the challenges I was facing, or the plans I had or the efforts I was making or the type of work I was looking for. In response to my request for prayers, Ameer Jee wrote me a letter in which she narrated a dream that she had seen about me the night before. In her dream, Allah, the Almighty, foretold Ameer Jee that I will be getting a job in the mining business; and Allah, with His Mercy and Kindness, also informed her of the salary I will be offered for the job. *Al-Hamdu Lillah, Thumma Al-Hamdu Lillah*, I got the job in the industry and at the pay as per Ameer jee's dream. I have worked for the same company for the last 28 years, in spite the fact that the mining business has gone through some very difficult times repeatedly. During all that

period, many employees were laid off, but Allah saved me in all circumstances and I continued to work there merely due the prayers of Ameer Jee.

Ameer Jee was very particular about offering her five daily Prayers at their proper times and expected the same from her children. Recitation of the Holy Qur'an every morning was a part of her daily routine. Ameer Jee had a great love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and recited *Durud Sharif* frequently. In her young age, she had once seen the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in her dream. Whenever she narrated that dream to us, her eyes would glitter with happiness and I could see

enormous pleasure and enjoyment on her face, that she had been blessed with the opportunity to see Hadrat Muhammad Mustafa (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in her dream. She was very proud to be an Ahmadi and always wanted to raise her children to show great love and respect for the Jama'at and Khalifatul-Masih.

May Allah be pleased with her and may He enable us to follow in her footsteps in bringing up our children with proper spiritual training and that they may all become true Ahmadis. *Āmīn.*

"Rabbirhamhuma Kama Rabbayani Saghira"

"My Lord, have mercy on them even as they nourished me in my childhood."

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Funeral and Burial Services for the Deceased

Syed A. Majid Shah and B. K. Ahmad, North Virginia Majlis

When it appears that death is near, recitation of Surah Yasin (Ch: 36) is recommended. The topics dealt with in this Surah are of a nature which alleviate the suffering of the dying and gives spiritual comfort. One should also recite, in a low but audible tone, the *Takbir* and *Kalimah Shahadah* near the dying person. Once the person is dead, all present and those who later come to know of the death should recite:

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ.

ہم یقیناً اللہ ہی کے ہیں۔ اور ہم یقیناً اسی کی طرف لوٹ کر جانے والے ہیں۔

Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'un.
Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.

The eyes of the deceased should be closed by hand. A cloth band should be bound around his chin and head so that his mouth remains closed. Instead of wailing and crying out aloud, one should remain composed and attend to the funeral and burial arrangements. Islam instructs that Muslims should arrange the burial of a deceased person in a simple but dignified manner. Performance of the rituals of the funeral and burial service (washing of the body of the deceased, shrouding, participation in funeral prayer and burial) are obligatory for all believers but it is considered a *Farḍ Kifāyah* (collective duty). This means if three or more persons undertake to do it, others are absolved. Otherwise it is obligatory on everyone. If no one offers the funeral prayer of a Muslim, the entire local community are considered sinners. So it is essential for everyone to know the basics of how to perform this duty.

Bathing/Washing of the Body of the Deceased

Fresh and clean lukewarm water should be used to wash the body. The practice of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was to put some lote-tree (jujube, Sidr [Arabic], *beri* [Urdu]) leaves in the water to be used for washing the dead body. If lote-tree leaves are not available, a small amount of an antiseptic could be used.

The private parts of the deceased should be washed first. Then those parts of the body which are washed during normal *wudu* (ablution), that is, the hands, face, arms to the elbows and the scalp. It is not required to pour water into the mouth or nostrils. Then the rest of the body should be washed three times, the right side first and then the left. The private parts of the deceased should remain covered by a cloth at all times. Only men may bathe deceased males and women the deceased females. However, if a woman is not available, the husband may bathe his wife's body and vice versa.

Shrouding/Wrapping the Body

After the body is bathed and dried, the next step is shrouding which involves systematically wrapping the body with white cloth (three pieces for men and five pieces for women). The shroud (*kafan*) should be of unsewn inexpensive white cloth.

For men, the shroud consists of three pieces of cloth:

A bottom sheet/piece of cloth to cover the lower part of the body (front and back) completely, like a skirt.

A top sheet/piece of cloth to wrap the

upper part of the body, like a shirt.

A large sheet/piece of cloth that covers the entire body from the head to the feet, and long and wide enough so that the top and the bottom parts may be tied with straps [belts or strings] made of the same cloth. All these pieces of cloth are pre-cut and kept ready to facilitate shrouding when the body is laid on them.

For women, two additional pieces of cloth are used, one for the chest and the other for the head.

The dead body of a martyr does not need to be bathed or shrouded. He/She should be buried in the clothes he/she was wearing at the time of death.

Funeral Prayer (*Salatul-Janazah*)

After bathing and wrapping the dead body in its shroud, it should be placed in a wooden casket and transferred to the place where the Funeral Prayer is to be performed. The Funeral Prayer is held in a suitable gathering place indoors or in the open. The casket is placed in front of the Imam so that the face of the dead body is towards the *Ka'ba*. Those present for the funeral prayer should arrange themselves in an odd number of rows behind the Imam.

The Imam commences the prayer by saying *Allahu Akbar* loudly raising his hands to his ears. The followers say the same in a low tone. The Imam then silently recites *Tashahhud*, *Thana* and *Surah Fatiha*. The followers should recite the same silently. He then says *Allahu Akbar* without raising his hands. The followers also say *Allahu Akbar* in a low tone without raising their hands. The whole congregation then recites *Durud Sharif* silently. After that the Imam says *Allahu Akbar* for the third time and the particular prayer for the deceased is recited by everyone silently (see below). The Imam then says *Allahu Akbar* for the fourth and last time, turning his face towards the right saying: *Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah*. Then turning his face towards the left repeats

the same to mark the end of the Prayer. The followers do the same and repeat silently "*Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah*" turning their faces to the right and left.

There is no *Ruku* or *Sajdah* in the funeral prayer. *Salatul-Janazah Gha'ib* (funeral services in absentia) may also be offered for a deceased person, especially for prominent or well-known person or when only a few Muslims were available to offer the funeral services initially. However, offering Funeral Prayer in absentia should not become a routine practice.

If the deceased is an adult, male or female, the following Prayer is recited:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحَيَّتِنَا وَمَيِّتِنَا وَشَاهِدِنَا وَغَائِبِنَا وَصَغِيرِنَا
وَكَبِيرِنَا وَذَكَرِنَا وَأَنْشَأْنَا اللَّهُمَّ مِنْ أَحْيَيْتَهُ مِتْنَا فَاحْيِهِ
عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِتْنَا فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ
اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَحْرِمْنَا أَجْرَهُ وَلَا تَفْتِنْنَا بَعْدَهُ.

اے اللہ تعالیٰ بخش دے ہمارے زندوں کو بھی اور جو مر چکے ہیں۔ اور جو حاضر ہیں اور جو غائب ہیں۔ اور ہمارے چھوٹے بچوں اور ہمارے بڑوں اور ہمارے مردوں کو اور عورتوں کو اے اللہ جسکو تو ہم میں سے زندہ رکھے اس کو اسلام پر زندہ رکھ اور جس کو ہم میں سے وفات دے۔ اس کو ایمان کے ساتھ وفات دے اے اللہ تعالیٰ اس کے اجر سے ہم کو محروم نہ کر اور اس کے بعد ہم کو کسی فتنہ میں نہ ڈال۔

*Allahumaghfir Li Hayyina Wa Mayyitina
Wa Shahidina Wa Gha'ibina Wa Saghirina
Wa Kabirina, Wa Zakarina Wa Unthana.
Allahumma Man Ahyaitahu Minna Fa
Ahyiyee 'Alal-Islam, Wa Man Tawaffaitahu
Minna Fa Tawaffahu 'Alal-Iman.
Allahumma La Tahrimna Ajrahu Wa La
Taftinna Ba'dahu.*

O Allah, forgive our living ones and our deceased ones, and those of us who are present and those who are absent, and our young ones and our old ones, and our males and our females. O Allah, those of us whom You grant life, keep them firm on Islam, and those of us whom You cause to die, cause them to die in the faith. Deprive us not, O Allah, of the benefits relating to the deceased and subject us not to trial after him.

Funeral Prayer for a male child

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ لَنَا سَلَفًا وَفُرْطًا وَاجْعَلْهُ لَنَا أَجْرًا
وَذُخْرًا وَاجْعَلْهُ لَنَا شَافِعًا وَ مُشَفَّعًا ۝

اے اللہ۔ اس بچے کو ہمارا پہلے جانے والا پیشرو اور اجر و ثواب کے ذخیرے کا موجب بنا دے۔ یہ ہمارا سفارش بنے اور اس کی سفارش قبول فرما۔

Allahummaj'alhu Lana Salafan Wa Furutan, Waj'alhu Lana Ajran Wa Zukhran-Waj'alhu Lana Shafi'an Wa Mushaffa'an

O Allah, make him our forerunner, and make him for us a reward and a treasure and make him for us a pleader and accept his pleading.

Funeral prayer for a female child

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهَا لَنَا سَلَفًا وَفُرْطًا وَذُخْرًا وَاجْرًا
وَشَافِعَةً وَ مُشَفَّعَةً.

اے اللہ۔ اس بچی کو ہمارا پہلے جانے والا پیشرو اور اجر و ثواب کے ذخیرے کا موجب بنا دے۔ یہ ہماری سفارش بنے اور اس کی سفارش قبول فرما۔

Allahummaj'alha Lana Salafan Wa Furutan Wa Dhukhran Wajran Wa Shafi'atan Wa Mushaffa'ah

O Allah, make her our forerunner, and make her for us a reward and a treasure and make her for us a pleader and accept her pleading.

Burial

After the Funeral Prayer, the body should be taken to the cemetery for burial without any delay and all should accompany the body to the grave site.

Those who follow the funeral procession should continue to remember Allah (immerse themselves in *Dhikr-i-Ilahi*) as well as pray for the forgiveness of the deceased in a low tone. The grave may be prepared either as a

dug up area which contains a further niche on the side for the body to rest in or it may be just a dug up area. It is essential for the grave to be wide and spacious. In extreme cases, more than one body may be buried in a single grave. The body must be lowered into the grave with proper care. As the body is placed in the grave, the sheet-wrap should be loosened a bit at the opening and the face be tilted a little towards the *Ka'aba*.

As the body is lowered into the ground the following should be recited:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَبِاللَّهِ عَلَى مِلَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

اللہ کے نام کے ساتھ۔ اللہ کی تائید کے ساتھ۔ اللہ کے رسول کی امت پر۔

Bismillahi Wa Billahi 'Ala Millati Rosulillaahi Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam

In the name of Allah, and with His blessings upon the path set by the conduct of the messenger of Allah, sallallahu alaihi wa sallam.

When the casket is covered up with loose soil the following should be recited:

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى

اسی سے ہم نے تمہیں پیدا کیا ہے۔ اور اسی میں ہم تمہیں لوٹا دیں گے۔ اور اسی سے تمہیں دوسری مرتبہ نکالیں گے۔

Minha Khalaqnakum Wa Fiha Nu'idukum Wa Minha Nukhrijukum Taratan Ukhra.

We have created you out of this (dust) and we shall return you to it and it is out of the same that we shall revive you in the end.

It was the practice of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) to make the grave somewhat raised from the ground, that is, in a slight hump-like form.

When the burial is complete, a brief silent congregational prayer with raised hands should be offered for the forgiveness of the deceased.

The mourners should leave the cemetery reciting the following:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَإِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ لِلْآحْقَرُونَ.

تم پر اللہ کی طرف سے سلامتی ہو، ہم اگر اللہ نے چاہا آپ سے ملنے والے ہیں۔

Assalamu 'Alaikum Wa Inna In-Sha-Allahu Bikum La-Lahiqun.

Peace be upon you and God willing we are certainly bound to join you.

Condolences

Community members must offer condolences to the relatives of the deceased. It is recommended that near and dear ones or neighbors provide meals to the bereaved family for three days. Offering of personal condolences and bereavement should be maintained for a period of three days. After that, life should come back to normal. One must not give in to superstitions.

Bereavement

The period of bereavement for the widow of the deceased is four months and ten days. According to the Holy Qur'an, this period is prescribed to stabilize her mentally and emotionally. Women are under a great deal of stress, more so than men in this situation, and need protection from others who may exploit them when they may be most vulnerable. During this period, a widow should not leave her home except for unavoidable reasons.

If the widow is the only earning member in the family and has to maintain her job obligations, she is allowed to go out to perform essential professional responsibilities. She should dress in a simple manner, abstain from wearing make-up or perfume or take part in festive activities. She should observe patience, offer gratitude to her Creator and spend this time in the remembrance of Allah.

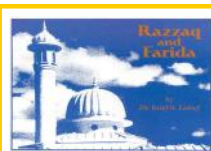
Legal Issues

In case of converts to Islam, the next of kin may be a Christian, or of some other faith. After death, the dead body legally belongs to the next of kin. The Muslim's wishes for his/her funeral and burial arrangements should be discussed beforehand with the legal next of kin. It is best to make a Will for all funeral and burial rights, and provide a copy to one's relatives and another to the Ahmadiyya Community. Adequate funds should be set aside for one's burial arrangements. The relatives should also be made aware that the estate shall be divided according to Islamic laws of inheritance as stated in the Holy Qur'an.

Notes

In the traditions, there is mention of the use of camphor—a kind of perfume—on the body after its washing.

In case of adequate refrigeration, a reasonably delayed funeral is possible when waiting for the arrival of relatives or friends.



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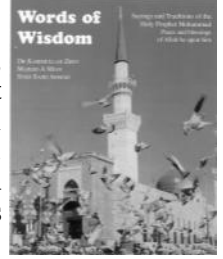
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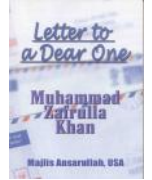
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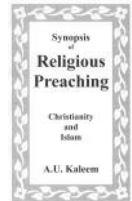
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The Arabic expression Anṣārullāh literally means 'helpers of God', and is taken from the Holy Qur'ān (61[Al-Ṣaff]:15, 3[Āl 'Imrān]:53).

Anṣār Pledge

Ash-hadu allā ilāha illallāhu waḥdahū lā sharīka lahū wa ash-hadu anna muḥammadan 'abduhū wa rasūlūh

(I bear witness that there is no god except Allah, He is One, without partner, and Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger.)

I solemnly promise that I shall endeavor, till the end of my life, for the consolidation and propagation of Islām and Aḥmadiyyat, and for upholding the institution of Khilāfat. I shall also be prepared to offer the greatest sacrifice for this cause. Moreover, I shall urge all my children to remain true to Khilāfat-i-Aḥmadiyya. In-Shā'-Allāh.

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Ḥaḍrat Mirza Nāṣir Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ III (may Allah have mercy on him) at center.
Karam Ilahi Zafar, Missionary Spain, to his left and Chaudhry Zafrullah Khan, Bashir Rafiq,
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