Assalamu ‘Alaikum, Readers,

This issue is a collection of articles covering major Islamic themes, but the most important message is to draw close to the attributes of Allah and understand how to use them everyday. When we pray, we can use His special names that deal with the specific kind of help we need, or things we would like to say “thank you” for.

Beautiful names like Ar-Rahim—the Merciful, Al-Wadud—the Loving, Al-Ghaffar—the Forgiving, Ar-Rafiq—the Kind Friend are just a few of the many ways you can call on Allah. Try to learn as many as possible and use His proper name as often as you can, and may Allah shower his choicest blessings on all our readers and their families.

Wasalam,
Al Hilal Editorial Staff
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Front Cover Design By: Sumera Choudhary
Obedience in Islam

Asim Ahmad/Age 14/Connecticut

“It is binding on a Muslim to listen and carry out an order issued out by his officers whether he likes it or not, except when it involves the violation of a commandment of God, his prophet, or of a superior officer.”

This Hadith lays down the basic Islamic principle of obedience. Obedience is stressed upon greatly in Islam. In fact, the word Islam actually means submission and obedience. Islam stresses obedience because 1) it provides organization, 2) it is commanded by Allah and his Prophets, and 3) it provides discipline and orderliness.

When we look back 1400 years ago, during the battle of Badr, it was a hard time for the Muslims. Most of them had just been driven out of their homeland. This period proved the steadfastness, obedience and commitments of the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Hadrat Sa’d bin Mu‘ādh (may Allah be pleased with him), before the battle of Badr, said to the Holy Prophet, “O Messenger of Allah! Now that we have given our hand in your hand, take us wherever you wish. And we swear upon Allah, who has created you with the truth, that if you ask us all to jump in the ocean, all of us will jump and not a single one shall stay behind.” This was the obedience of the Şaḥābah (Companions). They would die if the Prophet told them to. This obedience is shown over and over
again during that time period. During the first thirteen years after the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) first received the message of Islam, the Muslims were persecuted, disgraced, tortured, and killed. It was the command of the Holy Prophet, not to fight back against the Meccans. This was a huge task, because the Muslims were being tortured wherever they went. When visiting the town of Ṭā‘if, little kids threw stones at the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). His shoes were filled with blood from the stoning. The Muslims could have disobeyed the Holy Prophet, but they did not. If they would have disobeyed the Holy Prophet, and tried to fight back then all the Muslims could have been killed. Obedience provided a state of organization and security. The obedience of the Ṣaḥābah (Companions) is one of the reasons that Islam survived these hard years. In the Qur‘ān, Allah says, “O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority among you. And if you differ in anything refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you are believers in Allah and the Last Day. That is best and most commendable in the end.” (Chapter 4, Verse 60)

If there is a matter of disagreement and the answer is not in the Qur‘ān and traditions, the answer should be sought from the leader. It is the duty of the other Muslims to listen to their leader and accept his decision. May Allah help us to become righteous and obedient Muslims.
Parents have been given the highest rank among blood relations in Islam. Similarly the importance of being obedient to parents and teachers is stressed along with praying and being obedient to Allah.

In a Hadith, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “The happiness of God lies in the happiness of parents and God is also unhappy when parents are unhappy.”

In another Hadith, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “The place of a teacher is equal to a spiritual father.” This tells us that we should respect our teachers the way we respect our parents.

Parents feed the body of the children, but teachers provide them with food for their mind and soul. Teachers teach students by taking them out of the darkness of ignorance. This is why a nation that respects its parents and teachers always succeeds and prospers.

Once, the Holy Prophet said, “He is cursed.” The Companions inquired as to who. He replied, “The one
who found either both his parents or just one in old age and could not earn paradise."

It is very clear from this Hadith that taking care of the parents when they are old, takes one to paradise. We should always respect our parents, and teachers as it is required by our faith.

May we always please Allah by respecting our parents, teachers, and succeed in this world.

We Want to Hear from You!!!

Children are encouraged to send their original writing for publication. Please include your full name, age, city, state and contact number when submitting an article as we may follow-up with the author for clarification. If you would like to send a picture or artwork, please send the original. If you would like the original returned, please include your full name and return address/postage along with this request.

The Children’s Magazine Committee, under the supervision of the Amīr, Jamā‘at Ahmadiyya, U.S.A., will review and approve all submissions before publication.

E-mail Submissions to:
thealhilal@yahoo.com
The mosque is the house of God where we pray. So, we must respect it. Respect means that we should take care of the mosque like it is our own house and behave in a decent manner.

On entering the mosque we pray:
“I enter the mosque with the name of Allah. May peace and blessings be on the messenger of Allah. O Allah, forgive me my sins and open the door of Thy mercy!”

You should also say, Assalamu Alaikum when you enter. This means, Peace be with you. When you hear the Adhan (call for Prayer), you should proceed to the mosque. Don’t rush and run to the mosque. Remember, if the Prayer has started, and you are late, you can make up for it in the end.

You should speak quietly in the mosque so you don’t disturb other people who are praying.

When the Adhan is being recited, you should not talk.

We should not pass right in front of someone who is offering Prayer. That will make the person offering Prayer loose their concentration.
You should always wear good clean clothes when you go to the mosque. You should be careful about body odor and make sure you have fresh breath. In one Hadith (saying) of the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), he said forbade from coming to the mosque after eating garlic or onions.

You should never spit in the mosque or do anything to make the place dirty. We should do our best to keep the mosque clean. If you see something that needs to be cleaned, you should do it or let a grown-up know.

When we leave the mosque, say Assalamu Alaikum again.

I would like to end with a prayer from Holy Qur’ān: “O our Lord, grant us of our spouses and children the delight of our eyes and make each of us a leader of the righteous” (Chapter 25 verse 75)
My name is Samiya Ijaz from San Diego and I am going to present some examples from the life of Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) on his compassion and love for children.

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is the model for the whole of humankind. The Holy Qur’ān says, he is the perfect example for all of us.

His attitude towards children was always that of compassion and mercy. Being fond of children, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) loved to play with them. He would have fun with the children who had come back from Abyssinia and tried to speak Abyssinian with them. He used to give rides to children on his camel for their enjoyment.

In one tradition in Muslim, it is narrated by Anas ibn Malik:

“I never saw anyone who was more compassionate towards children than Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him). His son Ibrahim was in the care of a wet nurse... He would go there, and we would go with him, and he would enter the house, pick up his son and kiss him, then come back.”

The Holy Prophet’s (peace and blessings be upon him) love for children was not restricted to his children and grandchildren. The scope of his mercy and affection embraced all children, and he showed
the same interest and gentleness to children of his companions. Usamah ibn Zaid narrates in Bukhari,
“Allah’s messenger used to put me on his thigh and put Hasan (Allah be pleased with him) on his other thigh, and then embrace us and say, ‘O Allah, please be merciful to them, as I am merciful to them’.”

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was always concerned about everyone’s feelings. The following Hadith in Bukhari shows his thoughtful nature.

“The Holy Prophet said, I start the Prayer intending to prolong it, but on hearing the cries of a child, I shorten the prayer because I know that the cries of the child will incite the mother’s passions.”

Finally, I would like to present one saying of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) that tells Muslims that they should treat their children justly. In Bukhari and Muslim there is the Hadith:

“Fear Allah and treat your children, small or grown, fairly and with equal justice.”

From these Ahadith we see the Holy Prophet’s (peace and blessings be upon him) attitude toward children as an example for all to follow. He is the perfect example.
All praises belong to Allah the Almighty who has created the beautiful world. Allah has created all humans on the Earth to love each other and live a happy life. Allah has blessed me with a loving father and a caring mother. Allah has given me a beautiful house to live in, clothes to wear and food to eat. He has given me a healthy life. In my love for Allah, I always say thanks to Him. I pray to him as He gave me hands to work, feet to walk, eyes to see, nose to breathe, a mouth to talk and hair not to be bald. He has blessed me with an ear to hear. I always pray to him for His love and blessings on me. He has given me lots of things so I should always be thankful to him. In the love for Allah, one changes the bitterness in a person’s life to sweetness.

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Our Holy Prophet, Hadrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) was born in Mecca, a town in Arabia. His mother's name was Hadrat Aminah and his father's name was Hadrat Abdullah. His father died before his birth and his grandfather Hadrat Abdul-Muttalib took care of him. When he was six years old, his grandfather died and his uncle Abu Talib brought him up.

He is the chief of the Prophets and the religion brought by him is called Islam. I am a Muslim and I love my Holy Prophet, Hadrat Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Disclaimer
The material presented herein reflects the original content of the authors. To the extent possible, Al-Hilal staff have attempted to screen the material for accuracy and appropriateness but some oversights may have occurred. If the reader identifies a mistake and/or would like to comment on some of the material, please contact Al-Hilal staff (thealhilal@yahoo.com).
Wealth and Children are ornaments of the life of this world. But enduring good works are better in the sight of Thy Lord in respect of immediate reward and better in respect of future hope. (18:47)

While many people run towards worldly things, usually money, houses, and cars, there are people in the world who devote themselves to God in this world. They please Him instead of only pleasing themselves, and receive pleasure in the next world as a reward. Today, I will tell you about a school that you’ve probably heard about before, where God is put first. This school concentrates on Islamic education. Seven years of this college are intended to produce missionaries and research scholars who would go from door to door and invite people towards the message of Allah, and towards the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him).

The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) himself stated, “If it were within my power, I would have desired to go from door to door like beggars and propagate the True Religion of Allah and thereby rescue humanity from polytheism (Shirk) and disbelief (Kufr). If Allah would grant me the knowledge of the English language, I would
personally embark on preaching (Tabligh) expeditions and spend my entire life in this pursuit even if I were to die in this cause.”

This shows us that if a Messenger of God Almighty were to act as a beggar, just to please God, then we should at least put ourselves at that stage if not lower. And the best way of doing this is by sacrificing everything that we have for the sake of Allah and his Jama‘at. The Promised Messiah further states about dedicating oneself to preaching (Waqf-i-Zindagi),

“...God has granted me such fervor in this field of Waqf (voluntary service to Islam) that even if I were told that there is no reward or benefit in this work other than grief and suffering, even then I cannot hold myself back from this service to Islam. I am therefore duty-bound to convey this message and leave this as a 'will' (wish) to my Community. After this, everyone has the choice of paying heed to my advice or not, that whoso aspires for salvation and a sacred or perpetual existence must sacrifice his life for the cause of Allah.”

By joining Jami‘ah Ahmadiyya (Ahmadiyya Missionary Training School), you are responding to the call of the “caller,” you are dedicating your life to the one and only God, and you come under His protection. There is no better profession than serving the Almighty himself. Throughout the seven years of school, students of Jami‘ah study subjects ranging from Islamic Theology and different foreign languages to comparative religions and major religious scriptures. Moreover, training in human relations, communications, computer skills, accounts and basic sciences is also an integral part of the
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Razzaq and Farida
A story for children by Dr. Yusef A. Lateef. Send $1.50 per copy and your mailing address to
Chaudhary Mushtaq Aḥmad, 15000 Good Hope Rd, Silver Spring, MD 20905.

curriculum. Jami‘ah Ahmadiyya is no longer just located in Qadian or Pakistan, now there are many branches of Jami‘ah all over the world such as North America, Europe, and Africa. Jami‘ah is a great way to prove your allegiance to Ahmadiyyat, and is a direction you would take to become a Muballigh. Just talk to your local Missionary, or your regional missionary, he too is a graduate of a Jami‘ah.
Allah is God, but have you noticed anything more? God who gives us water to drink, food to eat, shelter to keep us away from the rain, parents who take care of us, is our Guardian. Your guardians are your parents. Their guardians are their parents, and so on, but who is the ultimate Guardian? The Holy Qur’an says:

Those to whom men said, ‘People have mustered against you, therefore you must fear them,’ but this only increased their faith and they said, ‘Sufficient for us is Allah, and an excellent Guardian Is He.’ (Chapter 3, Verse 174)

That clearly states that God is our guardian and he will protect us no matter what. Ibn Abbas relates that when Abraham was thrown into the fire, his last words were, Sufficient for me is Allah, and an excellent Guardian He Is.

God is the creator of the Universe. He has made the Earth for us to live on. He has given us parents who take care of us. He is the guardian over everybody. He is the ultimate Guardian.
Allah – The Best Friend

Mueezay Khan/ Age 14/ South Virginia

Allah is our best friend for many reasons. Allah is reliable, trustworthy, merciful and much, much more! One attribute of Allah is Ar-Rafeeq, which means the (best) friend. You can rely on Allah’s friendship anytime, anywhere. For example, imagine you are having a tough time, or you are having some family issues. Allah didn’t promise you days without pain, sorrow, and tears, but He did promise that He will be by your side during these troubled times. All you have to do is to call out to Him. Allah will always be by your side no matter what. In order to gain Allah’s friendship, all you have to do is pray to him, but in order to gain someone else’s friendship, you might have to do some more work. Allah is your one sincere friend that you can rely on.

Allah is such a great friend that He even gives you gifts without you even asking. He gave you parents who take care of you, siblings, who keep you company, a house in which you live, sunrise which brings a start of a new day, flowers in the spring, candy to give you delight, and a
great deal more.
In the Holy Qur’an, Allah says:

And Allah knows your enemies well. And sufficient is Allah as a Friend, and sufficient is Allah as a helper. (Chapter 4, verse 46)

It is important that we do give something for Allah in return. Allah wants us to pray to Him, so we should be attentive in our prayers, go to the mosque regularly, and always remember that Allah is our true friend that we can rely on.

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### Fill in the missing Information about the Battles

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<th>Name of Battle</th>
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<td>Some Muslims disobeyed the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) and he lost his two front teeth</td>
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<td>A storm blew out the fires in the enemy battle camp</td>
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The topic of my discussion is respect for parents and teachers. Parents and teachers are to be highly respected and honored. They love and understand us. They teach us right from wrong. They help guide us through life. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) expressed the importance of respecting and honoring your parents and teachers. Parents sacrifice a lot for the happiness and well-being of their children and no matter what problems you may come across in life, you can count on your parents to help you try to solve them.

Teachers are also highly respected in Islam. Teachers provide the knowledge and wisdom that helps you in life. Islam is a very fair religion and therefore asks that both parents and teachers care for and teach children with kindness. They should be soft-spoken and just. May Allah bless all of our parents and teachers and may He grant us the ability to truly respect and honor them. Āmīn.
I’d like to talk about the revelation, “I shall cause thy message to reach the corners of the Earth.”

Let’s take a journey back in time, to the year 1889. The place is a small remote village in India. Islam is under attack from Christians and Hindus, and on top of that, the condition of Muslims themselves is declining.

From this small village, named Qadian, a voice rises, saying that God has revealed to him a Divine sign, “I shall cause thy message to reach the corners of the Earth.” It is a tall claim by someone who is not well known but it is a claim that is destined to change the history of the world.

Do you know who this person was?
His name was Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him) of Qadian. He is the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Community in Islam.

My dear readers, Allah says in the Holy Qur’an:
“And the Messenger will say, 'O my Lord, my people indeed treated this Qur'an as a thing to be discarded.' (Surah Al-Furqan [Chapter 25], verse 31)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prophesized, “A time will come upon my people when there will remain nothing of Islam but its name, and the Qur’an, but its words.”

India at that time was a religious battleground,
Not only the followers of other religions had forgotten their teachings but even the Muslims had lost contact with God Almighty and gone into the depths of ignorance.

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (peace be on him) defended Islam and propagated the peaceful and loving message of Islam to his fellow natives, and with time his community grew. In 1989, our Jamā'at celebrated its 100 year anniversary, by which point Ahmadiyyat had spread worldwide. This year we are celebrating 100 years of the blessed scheme of Khilāfat and today, 119 years later, the torch of Ahmadiyyat continues to enlighten the world continent-by-continent, land-by-land.

Today the Ahmadiyya Community has been established in more than 190 countries with over 15,000 mosques and missions worldwide. The Holy Qur’an has been translated into over to 50 languages.

The launch of Muslim Television Ahmadiyya (MTA) by Hadrat Khalifatul-Masih IV (may Allah’s mercy be on him), in 1992 opened a new chapter for Ahmadiyyat. Today MTA is watched by millions of people in five continents. Every Friday the Khalifatul-Masih (may Allah be his support) delivers an inspiring
sermon that is watched all over the globe with great fervor. There is no leader in the world whose sermons are seen with such yearning and regularity by his faithful followers. The Promised Messiah said, “I was indigent, helpless, unknown and unskilled. Now one knew which way Qadian was. Peoples’ eyes were not in this direction at all. No one knew about my existence at all. Now you see how the world has inclined towards me. This Qadian has become the focus of the elite.”

I would like to conclude with the following words of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) about the future of Ahmadiyyat and the fulfillment of revelations foretold more than hundred years ago. Almighty Allah has revealed to me that He will make my community to prevail over other communities. My followers will excel over others in knowledge and wisdom because of the light of the truth, arguments and signs of Divine support, and will render the opponents speechless... I will bless you so much that kings shall seek blessings from thy garments.

May Allah guide us, strengthen us and may we always be a part of this successful mission spreading the teachings of our beloved Prophet to the corners of the earth, Āmīn.
Significance of Nasirat Pledge
Labibah Sosan Tehreem/ Age14/
Virginia North

I’d like to talk about the significance of the Nasirat pledge. In order to understand the importance of this pledge we should understand what it is saying and why it is called a ‘pledge’. The word ‘pledge’ means a solemn binding promise to do, give, or refrain from doing something; another meaning of it is to promise to join an organization. Therefore, by reciting the Nasirat pledge, we promise to join Ahmadiyyat and promise to fulfill our pledge. Our pledge is,

Ash-hadu alla ilaha illallahu wahdahu la sharika lahu wa ash-hado anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasuluh

I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One without any partner. And I bear witness that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is His servant and His messenger.

I solemnly promise that I shall always keep myself ready to serve Islam, my nation, and my country and shall always adhere to the truth. (In-Sha-Allah)

I found the entire subject of this pledge in a verse in the Holy Qur’an:

“It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East or the West, but truly righteous is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the Book and the
Prophets, and spends his money out of love for Him, on the kindred and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and those who ask for charity, and for ransoming the captives; and observes Prayer and pays the Zakat; and those who fulfill their promise when they have made one, and the patient in poverty and afflictions and the steadfast in the time of war; it is these who have proved truthful and it is these who are truly God-Fearing.” (Chapter 2, Verse 178)

This verse contains all aspects of the pledge. For example, the first part of the verse about belief in Allah, the Last Day, angels and books, covers the Ash-ha-du al-la ila-ha part of our pledge. The second part of this verse urges us to observe Prayer and pay Zakat, which are both an adherence to the truth as mentioned in the last part of the pledge. So, this part shows that one who follows our pledge is also following the commandments in the Holy Qur’an. And in the same verse, Allah is telling us to fulfill our promise. And our promise to Allah at this stage is to fulfill the Nasirat pledge.

There is another important aspect of the Nasirat pledge. As we are Muslims, the main purpose of our lives is to make a relationship with Allah. If you think about the pledge, it gives us the guidelines to make a connection with Allah. That means by service to Islam, and adhering to the truth. This is achieved by service to Islam and adherence to the truth. Adhering to truth means to always have faith and believe in your religion, and to always be ready to follow Islam. You can only follow the teachings of Islam if you have
strong faith. The Nasirat pledge gives you a perfect plan for your faith and spiritual fitness. It is sad that in this society, people are ready to spend millions of dollars on physical fitness while ignoring spiritual fitness, which should be the aim of our lives. We are the most fortunate people because we have a plan to achieve that spiritual heights in the form of this pledge.

If you take a look at the second part of the Nasirat pledge, you will notice that it tells you to also serve your nation and your country. You improve your way of living by serving. For example, by having different professions and doing your job the proper way, you have a better society with a good sense of community welfare. So, if an average human being is taking care of their responsibilities towards his community, then they set better standards. This works two ways: first you have to make your spiritual life better, and then you work towards improving your community. Others will benefit from you and you will benefit from others. It is a recipe of progression and advancement. In short, if you follow this pledge, then you will lead a good life since you will be a better Muslim and a better member of your community. You will achieve success in this life and the next. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) directed us to fulfill our promises, so we must fulfill our promise in this pledge.

May Allah help us to do so, In-Sha’-Allah.
Test Your Knowledge!

Mark the following statements as either True or False

A) Ramadan comes twice a year
B) The beginning of Ramadan depends on the Moon’s position
C) We can drink water during the fast
D) During the fast, we cannot eat after Maghrib Prayer
E) During the fast, we can eat between Fajr and Asr
F) Eid-ul-Adha is celebrated at the end of Ramadan
G) It is obligatory on children ages 10 and up to fast
H) If a Muslim is fasting, s/he does not need to read the Qur’an
I) We must try hard not to argue during Ramadan
J) One does not need to fast if one is sick
K) It is necessary to make up any missed fasts
L) A Muslim traveling must fast

TRUE  FALSE
TRUE  FALSE
TRUE  FALSE
TRUE  FALSE
TRUE  FALSE
TRUE  FALSE
TRUE  FALSE
TRUE  FALSE
TRUE  FALSE
TRUE  FALSE
TRUE  FALSE

FILL IN THE BLANKS:

People go around a sacred building called ____________ during Hajj.

Muslims go around the Ka‘ba ____________ times.

Hajj is performed during ____________ the month of the Islamic calendar.

The pilgrims must run seven times between the hills of ____________ and ____________.

The Ka‘ba was built by ____________________________.

Hajj is when Muslims from all over the world visit: ________________
Dinotopia
Javaria Khan—Age 6—
Grade 1—Waqf-i-Nau—
Powder Springs, GA