Bai’at - A Pledge of Allegiance

Hazrat Amma Jaan ™ - Her Love and Devotion To God Almighty

Class Waaqifaat-e-Nau Germany: Questions and Answers

Important Advice Before Marriage

Paradise on Earth: Islamic Teachings For Spiritual and World Peace
Ten conditions of Bai‘at

I
The initiate shall solemnly promise that he/she shall abstain from shirk [associating any partner with God] right up to the day of his/her death.

II
That he/she shall keep away from falsehood, fornication/adultery, trespasses of the eye, debauchery, dissipation, cruelty, dishonesty, mischief and rebellion; and that he/she will not permit himself/herself to be carried away by passions, however strong they might be.

III
That he/she shall regularly offer the five daily Prayers in accordance with the commandments of God and the Holy Prophet Muhammad [s] and shall try his/her best to be regular in offering the tahajjud and invoking durud on the Holy Prophet Muhammad [s]. That he/she shall make it his/her daily routine to ask forgiveness for his/her sins, to remember the bounties of God and to praise and glorify Him.

IV
That under the impulse of any passions, he/she shall cause no harm whatsoever to the creatures of God in general and Muslims in particular, neither by his/her tongue, hands, nor any other means.

V
That he/she shall remain faithful to God in all circumstances of life, in sorrow and in happiness, in adversity and in prosperity, in felicity and in trial; and that he/she shall in all conditions remain resigned to the decree of God and keep himself/herself ready to face all kinds of indignities and sufferings in His way and shall never turn away from Him at the onslaught of any misfortune; on the contrary, he/she shall march forward.

VI
That he/she shall refrain from following un-Islamic customs and lustful inclinations and shall completely submit himself/herself to the authority of the Holy Qur’an; and that he/she shall make the Word of God and the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad [s] his/her guiding principles in every walk of his/her life.

VII
That he/she shall entirely give up pride and vanity and shall pass all his/her life in humbleness, cheerfulness, forbearance and meekness.

VIII
That he/she shall hold faith, the honour of faith and the cause of Islam dearer than his/her life, wealth, honour, children, and all loved ones.

IX
That he/she shall keep himself/herself occupied in the service of God’s creatures for His sake only and shall endeavour towards the beneficence of mankind to the best of his/her God-given abilities and powers.

X
That he/she shall enter into a bond of brotherhood with this humble servant of God, pledging obedience to me in everything good for the sake of God, and remain faithful to it until the day of his/her death. That he/she shall exert such a high devotion in the observance of this bond as is not to be found in any other worldly relationship and connection that demand devoted dutifulness.
In today’s world we see more and more people turning away from religion, or thinking that those who are devout followers of religion are extremists, due to the constant negative image portrayed in the media. Those who are ignorant of the truth may be misled to believe that the acts of terrorists or extremists are a true reflection of religion or are caused by religious teachings. It is for this reason that it is vital that as members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, who are blessed with the guidance of the divinely appointed Khalifah of the time; we must strive to show those around us through our actions that Islam is a beautiful and peaceful religion.

One way in which we can do this is to always act upon the Conditions of Bai’at that we agree to abide by as Ahmadi Muslims. Today reliance on God has become secondary while the importance of worldly people and worldly matters has become foremost. We find this to be the situation when we look around. However, we need to analyse ourselves and ensure that we are not falling into the trap of relying more on worldly sources; rather we must remember that it is only through God’s help and blessings that we are able to achieve anything in life.

In his Friday sermon on 11th October 2013 Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Vaba said:

“The Promised Messiahas stipulated ten conditions of Bai’at. He said that anyone wishing to be part of his Community should keep a strong bond with him and fulfil the ten conditions... The Promised Messiahas said not to assume that God is pleased merely by one taking Bai’at. Taking Bai’at is only the outer shell while the core/kernel is within. He said one’s condition should not be like eggs which have no yolk or white and which are discarded. One should scrutinise oneself whether one is mere shell or is there a kernel within!”

In this Issue of Maryam Magazine we will begin a series looking deeper into the Conditions of Bai’at, which will inshAllah give us a better understanding of how we can truly fulfil our Bai’at. This issue will also include some insightful responses to current events in the news given by Waqfe nau girls in the UK. May Allah enable us to benefit and gain knowledge from reading these articles and use these tools to spread the beautiful teachings of Islam. Ameen

Hina Ahmedi

Do you have any comments, suggestions or want your article featured in our next edition?

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Divine Commandments

TAKE NOT YOUR AND ALLAH’S ENEMY FOR FRIENDS

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَخَذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوَّلِيَاءٍ تَتَفَقَّدُونَ إِلَيْهِمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ الْحَقِّ

O ye who believe! Take not My enemy and your enemy for friends, offering them love, while they disbelieve in the truth which has come to you. (Al-Mumtahinah: 2)

DO NOT MAKE FRIENDS WITH A NATION WHOM ALLAH IS WROTH

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَخَذُوا آبَاءَكُمْ وَأَخْوَانَكُمْ أَوَّلِيَاءٍ مَنْ دُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

O ye who believe! Make not friends of a people with whom Allah is wroth. (Al-Mumtahinah: 14)

BELIEVERS TAKE NOT DISBELIEVERS FOR FRIENDS

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَخَذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ أَوَّلِيَاءٍ مَنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

O ye who believe! Take not disbelievers for friends, in preference to believers. (Al-Nisa: 145)

TAKE NOT YOUR DISBELIEVER ANCESTORS FOR FRIENDS

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَخَذُوا أَبَاءَكُمْ وَأَخْوَانَكُمْ أَوَّلِيَاءٍ إِنْ اسْتَخْرَجُوكُمْ فِي الْإِيمَانِ

O ye who believe! Take not your fathers and your brothers for friends, if they prefer disbelief to faith. (Al-Taubah: 23)

PROHIBITION TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH THOSE WHO FOUGHT AGAINST YOU ON ACCOUNT OF YOUR RELIGION

إِنَّمَا يَنْهَأُكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْذِّينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الْدُّنْيَا وَاخْرَجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَى أَخْرَاجِكُمْ أَنْ تُتَوَّلُوا مُنَّ يَتَوَلَّوْهُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمَّ الظَّالِمُونَ

Allah only forbids you, respecting those who have fought against you on account of your religion and have driven you out of your homes, and have helped others in driving you out, that you make friends of them, and whosoever makes friends of them-it is these that are transgressors. (Al-Mumtahinah: 10)
A Saying of the Holy Prophet

(May Peace and Blessings of Allah Ta'ala be Upon Him)

Five Daily Prayers Wipe Out The Faults

TRANSLATION:
Hazrat Abu Hurairah
 relates he heard the Holy Prophet say: Tell me if one of you had a stream running at his door and he takes a bath in it five times every day would any dirt be left on him? He was answered: No dirt would be left on him. The Holy Prophet observed: Such is the case of the five Prayers. Allah wipes out the faults as a result (by offering five daily prayers).

(Sahih Bukhari, Kitab Mawaqeet-us-Salat, vol 1 hadith 528 , pp. 628,629,)

EXPLANATORY NOTES:
A spiritual reformation is not complete only by offering one of the five daily prayers with its complete conditions while being lazy and careless in performing others. This objective will not be achieved unless all five Prayers are offered with all respective dues and conditions. Achievement of every goal is conditioned with eternal action and consistency.

(Sahih Bukhari, Kitab Mawaqeet-us-Salat, vol 1 hadith 528 , pp.629,)

The first act of worship is Prayer; i.e., Ṣalāt which in Arabic means “glorification and praise.” It has been obligated in the form of five Prayers during the course of the day and is offered after the prescribed Wuḍū (ablution) in a prescribed manner. Of these five Prayers, one is the morning Prayer which its offered after the first twilight of dawn and before daybreak. The second Prayer is the Zuhr or midday prayer which is offered after the decline of the sun at noon. The third Prayer is the ‘Asr Prayer which is offered
when the sun has far advanced in its decline. The fourth is the Maghrib or evening Prayer which is offered immediately after sundown. And the fifth Prayer is the Iṣhā Prayer which is offered after the twilight has faded away. Thus, not only different periods of the day, but also the two ends of the night are dedicated to the glorification and worship of God and to prayers addressed to Him. The object of prayer is to establish personal communion with God, keep His remembrance ever-fresh in the heart and cleanse one’s inner self of all evil and evil inclinations and seek His aid in all difficulties. According to another saying of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), perfect Prayer is one during which the worshipper has the immediate and sure feeling that he is seeing God or, at least, that God is seeing him. Timing of Prayers too are a subtle hint about the various periods of human life period. It is not without purpose, therefore, that the intervals between Prayers are shortened during the latter part of the day when the darkness of night is drawing near. The idea is to remind us that, with increase in age, the pace of preparation for the next world should be accelerated. Salāt is the kind of worship which in reality is the very soul of spiritual life, and therefore, it has been termed the mi'rāj (the acme of spiritual exaltation) of the faithful. The extent of the Holy Prophet’s attachment to and enjoyment of Prayer is shown by the following words of his. He would often say: “The coolness (delight) of my eyes lies in Prayer.”

(Forty Gems of Beauty by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmadra, p.23-25)

The Promised Messiah as says: “The Prayer is so powerful that the heavens incline towards the human with it. The one who does full justice to Prayers feels that he has died; his soul has melted and fallen at the threshold of Allah… A house in which Prayer is offered in this manner will never face destruction. It is said in hadith that if Prayer had been ordained to the people of Noah, they would not have been ruined. Hajj is obligatory but with certain prerequisites; so is fasting and Zakat. But the obligation to offer Prayer has no prerequisites. All other obligations are discharged once a year, but the Prayer is ordained five times a day. As long as the Prayer is not performed in accordance with all its requirements, it does not earn the blessings that it carries. Such allegiance [without discharging these obligations] in not of any benefit.”

(Malfuzat, new edition, vol. 3, p. 627)

How to achieve concentration in Prayer? The Promised Messiah as says [that a person who derives no pleasure from Prayer should beg before Allah]: “Allah the Almighty! Thou knowest how blind and sightless I am, and at the moment I am like the dead. I know that in a little while I shall be called and shall present myself before Thee and no one will be able to stop me. But my heart is blind and unenlightened. Do Thou cause to descend upon it such a flame of light that thereby it may be inspired with Thy love and devotion. Do Thou bestow upon me such grace that I shall not be raised up sightless and blind.” When he supplicates in this manner and persists in the supplication, he will see that a time will arrive when something will descend upon him while he is engaged in such a Prayer that will melt his heart.”

Dedicate yourselves

A true Muslim is he who devotes the whole of himself (all aspects of his life) for the pleasure of God and hands himself over to Him. His beliefs and his actions, his target and his ambitions are all directed towards the achievement of His pleasure. All the good deeds that he performs are a matter of pleasure for him and he feels a sort of sweetness by doing them; he finds no difficulty in those good and virtuous deeds. These good deeds of his turn every difficulty into comfort.

A true Muslim loves God the Almighty taking Him to be his beloved and his Master who is all benevolence. It is for this reason that he puts down his head at His doorstep. If a true Muslim is told that he would get no reward for these good deeds of his – and also that there is no Paradise and no Hell, nor is there any comfort or pleasure, he would never abandon his good deeds and he would never do away with his for God, for, he does not worship God nor he obeys Him in the hope of any rewards from Him. He does all these things because he thinks that his very existence is aimed at the recognition of God and His love and obedience, and that there is no other aim of his life than this. When he uses his powers in doing good and appropriate deeds, he sees God before his eyes – he does not mind paradise or hell.

If I am told that I would be severely punished for my love for God and my obedience to Him I would bear all the hardships and I would take the pains of the punishment as a great pleasure and I would never leave loving or obeying Him. Even one step away from obedience to God tantamounts to a thousand, rather innumerable, deaths and collection of all the difficulties and hardships. It is as if a king were to announce that a mother who would give no suck to her baby would be rewarded; no mother would abandon giving suck to her baby in the hope of the reward from the king.
Likewise a true Muslim, whatever the promises of reward and comforts for him, would never go even one step away from obedience to God; he would deem it a total destruction for himself. (Malfoozat Vol. III, p.182) (So-Said The Promised Messiah, p.142-144)

**Real way to paradise**

In order to become a true Muslim it is very essential that a man should mould his nature in such a way that his love for God and his obedience to Him should not be based on rewards and punishments, rather it should become a part and parcel of his nature. When that happens, his love for God will produce a Paradise for him and, in fact, this is the real Paradise. None can enter Paradise unless he treads on this path. I should like to advise you – who have joined me – to enter the Paradise passing through this way, for, this way is the real way to the paradise. (Malfoozat Vol. III, p.183) (So-Said The Promised Messiah, p.144)

**An advice**

I tell you the truth that God has afforded an opportunity to the good natured people. Blessed are those who try to be benefited by it. You who have joined me should not exult in the fact that you have attained to all that you had to. Of course, it is a fact that you are better than those who have disbelieved and belittled me and thus attracted the wrath of God. This also is true that you thought well of me and thus saved yourself from the anger of God. But still, this remains a fact that you have only reached the fountain – the spring – which God has now made to flow for eternal life; you have yet to drink from this spring. You should pray to God that He may enable you to drink to your fill; nothing can be obtained without the help of God. I know it for certain that whoever would drink from this spring will not perish, for, this water is life giving and it safeguards against destruction and it protects from the attacks of the Satan. How can you drink from this spring to your fill? You can do so by performing the two duties that God has assigned to you: one, your duty towards your God, and two, your duty towards His creatures.

You should take your God to be One and without any partner as you declare through the words: Ash hado alla ilaha illallah i.e. I bear witness that there is none other than Allah who is our beloved and whom we are seeking after and whom we have to obey. It is so lovely a phrase that if the Jews and Christians or other idol worshippers had been taught this thing and if they had understood it properly, they would have never perished. The reason why they have perished is that they did not have this Kalima; that is what made their soul leprous and that is what caused destruction.

You Should Try To Understand The Responsibilities Upon You As A Member of Waqf-e-Nau:
To be a member of Waqfe Nau is not merely a title one holds; rather it in fact entails a responsibility. Therefore, you should not be content simply by the fact that you have the honour of being in the fold of Waqfe Nau; instead you should try to understand the responsibilities upon you as a member of Waqfe Nau. You should be aware of the duties and tasks you are expected to perform and the behaviour and conduct you need to display. You should know the appropriate type of clothing to wear and what the standard of your Purdah should be. You should also be aware of the type of education you should attain and secondly how that education can be utilised for the best interest of the Jama’at. If this is not the case then to simply hold the title of Waqfe Nau will hold no value.

Clear Distinction Between A Waqfe Nau Girl And A Non-Waqfe Nau Ahmadi Girl:
There should be a clear distinction between a Waqfe Nau girl and a non-Waqfe Nau Ahmadi girl. The parents of normal Ahmadi girls do not pledge that they will sacrifice their child for the sake of their religion. A normal Ahmadi girl does not have to renew a bond that she will present herself for the sake of serving her religion, and that she will try to acquire education in a manner that will be best for the Jama’at - or in other words that she will acquire an education according to the Jama’at’s requirements. The Jama’at requires doctors, teachers, translators, journalists and also those skilled in a range of other fields suitable and appropriate for Ahmadi girls.

Become Excellent And Beneficial Individuals For The Jama’at:
The Jama’at needs mothers who make sacrifices to carry out the Tarbiyyat and training of their children in such a manner that they become excellent and beneficial individuals for the Jama’at. Although every Ahmadi girl should realise this responsibility of excellent Tarbiyyat and training in order to become beneficial to the Jama’at, a Waqfe Nau girl has a far greater responsibility in this respect.

Attain The Highest Standard Of Religious Education:
I often draw the attention of the women of the Jama’at in general that in order to properly take care of the future generations, Ahmadi women need to enhance their religious knowledge and know their Islamic traditions, so that through this, the future generations can remain attached to the Jama’at. Thus, it is clear to see just how far and wide-reaching the duty of a Waqfe Nau girl stretches.

A Waqfe Nau Girl Must Set The Correct And Proper Islamic Examples For Others:
Every Ahmadi girl needs to dispel this feeling of apprehension that boys or girls in this society will make fun of them after seeing the modest clothes they wear, their Hijaab or the fact that they choose not to befriend boys. However, a Waqfe Nau girl should far exceed others in this standard and give even greater attention towards this, because it is they who must set the correct and proper Islamic examples for others. Islam does not forbid anyone from attaining an education.
The Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saaw} Gave Special Attention And Consideration to Women's Education:
Islam says that no Muslim man or woman should remain ignorant, rather they should indeed attain education. This is why the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saaw} gave special attention and consideration to women’s education. Drawing attention to women’s education, the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saaw} also said that half of the religion should be learnt from Ayesha. Here the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saaw} has not stated for women alone to acquire this education, but rather he has given advice in general to attain knowledge of half of the religion from her.

Train Your Children In The Best Possible Manner:
For a believing woman it is important to acquire wisdom, implement and convey it and to especially to use it for the training of her children. Indeed the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saaw} said that you should train your children in the best possible manner. Further, the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saaw} also said that wisdom is like the lost belonging of believer; wherever it is found he or she should grab hold of it. Hence our women and girls, and in particular the Waqfaat-e-Nau, should attain the highest standard of education and then they should strive to use that knowledge to give benefit to the world.

Lajna Ima’illah And Nasirat Are Fundamental Organisations:
Being Waqfaat-e-Nau does not mean that you are exempt from Lajna Ima’illah or Nasirat and are outside their fold. Lajna Ima’illah and Nasirat are fundamental organisations and so it is necessary to attend their events and functions. In fact, the Waqfaat-e-Nau should take part in the programmes of Lajna Ima’illah and Nasirat to an even greater degree than other normal Ahmadi girls, because you are those who have completely dedicated yourselves to for the service of the religion.

Serve The Jama’at To The Best Of Your Ability:
Never let the thought emerge in your heart that our capabilities are not being utilised properly and we could be given a better opportunity to serve. Irrespective of whether you are given a responsibility that is applicable to your education or not, you must serve the Jama’at to the best of your ability. You should always remember that the purpose of attaining education is to enlighten and illuminate your minds so that you carry out the training and upbringing of your children in a suitable and appropriate manner.

How Your Waqf Will Prove To Be Beneficial:
Your Waqf will bear fruit only when you read and understand the Promised Messiah’s\textsuperscript{sa} teachings and then make it a part of your lives. Your Waqf will be beneficial only when you try to lead your lives according to the Qur’an and the Sunnah (Practice of the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saaw}). And your Waqf will be truly beneficial when you establish a living connection with Allah the Almighty.

Reform Yourself According To The Teachings Of Islam And Develop Modesty Within Yourselves:
You should constantly try to reform yourself according to the teachings of Islam to enable you to maintain your faith and religion. Thus, never miss saying your prayers. Always give attention towards your education. And instead of chasing after the latest fashion in clothes, you should show greater concern for whether your clothing is suitable and modest. It is wrong to think that up to the ages of five, or six or seven, it is fine for a child to wear frocks, dresses or purely European style clothing such as short blouses or jeans. In fact, you would have to develop the habit from an even earlier age of wearing clothes which covers your body appropriately. Thus, you should develop modesty within yourselves.
A Meeting of the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{aw} with a Delegation of the Quraish

When the Quraish noticed powerful people the likes of Ḥaḍrat Ḥamzah\textsuperscript{ra} and Ḥaḍrat 'Umar\textsuperscript{ra} entering the fold of Islām they became quite worried. After mutual consultation, at first, they sent 'Utbah bin Rabī'ah to the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{aw}, that in one way or another, he might convince the Prophet\textsuperscript{aw} to stop the propagation of Islām. But when 'Utbah was unsuccessful in this mission, rather, when the Quraish saw that, quite the contrary, 'Utbah returned impressed and awe-inspired by the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{aw}; they gathered near the Ka'bah one day, and deliberated. It was proposed that a few Chieftains collectively speak to the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{aw}. Therefore, in accordance with this proposal, Walīd bin Mughīrah, ‘Āṣ bin Wā‘il, Abū Jahl, Umaiyyah bin Khalaf, ‘Utbah, Shaibah, Abū Sufyān, Aswad bin Muṭṭalib, Naḍr bin Ḥārith and Abul-Bakhtarī, etc., assembled near the Ka’bah and one man was sent to the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{aw} with the message that:

"The Chieftains of your people wish to speak to you. Come to the courtyard of the Ka’bah and listen to what they have to say."

The Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{aw} would himself remain in search of such opportunities so he set off immediately. After their traditional greetings, the Quraish began their discourse saying:

"O Muhammadsaw! Look at how you have created dissention and division amongst your people. Betraying the religion of your forefathers you have slandered the great men of our nation.

You have cursed at their honourable gods and labelled their respected men as those who think not. What greater defamation and humiliation can a people face than what you have done and continue to do. But in your case, we are bewildered as to what we should do and what we should not do. If your endeavour is with the purpose that you might gather riches and become wealthy, then we shall give you such wealth as you may be deemed the wealthiest of us all. If you seek power and respect, we are prepared to make you our leader and chieftain. If you desire authority, we are not even reluctant in declaring you as our king. If your uproar and disturbance is due to an illness or you have been possessed, we can arrange for your cure at our own expense. If marrying a beautiful girl shall make you content, we can find you the most beautiful girl in all of Arabia."

The Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{aw} listened to this address by the chieftains of the Quraish quietly, and when they finished, he said:

"O Party of the Quraish! I do not desire any one of these things, nor have I been possessed or fallen victim to an ailment. I am a messenger from God and have brought the message of God to you. My heart is satiated in sympathy for you. If you take heed and believe, you shall acquire the good of this world and the next. But if you reject it, I shall wait upon the verdict of my Lord with patience and forbearance."

The Quraish responded:

"O Muhammadsaw! Thus, you accept none of our proposals. If it is thy prophethood you wish us
to accept, then come and let us decide. You see how barren and dry this country is. Nothing can be seen except dry rocks and stones, and infinite mounds of sand. If you are truly the messenger of God, then pray to your God that he might bring forth streams the like of Syria and Iraq. Wipe out these mountains and replace it with fertile land. Then we shall indeed be convinced of your prophethood.”

The Holy Prophet saw said:
“I am only a messenger from God and my task is merely to show you the paths of truth and falsehood, and expound what is in your benefit and loss. However, I do say that if you accept the voice of Allāh, then at the appointed time, God shall make you the inheritors of the treasures of this world and the next.”

The Quraish said:
“Alright, if not this, then, O that we would see an Angel of God descend with you, or would that you resided in castles, and in your hands were heaps of gold and silver, but none of these things are available to you. As a matter of fact, like us, we see that you walk about in the marketplace in search of provisions. Then by which characteristic shall we accept you as one sent from God.”

The Holy Prophet saw said:
“I am not a claimant in the manner that you desire. But yes, I have said, and I say again that if you believe in me, then according to the custom of Allāh, you shall indeed acquire a portion of the goodness of religion and the world.”

The Quraish sarcastically said:
“If not this, then bring forth the chastisement you warn us about - may a piece of the sky fall upon us, or may an army of God’s angels fall before us under the banner of God. By God, all we see now, is that either we shall remain alive or you.”

Upon saying this, suppressing their anger they were silenced and the Holy Prophet saw left with a grieved heart. When the Holy Prophet saw had left, Abū Jahl furiously said:
“O Party of the Quraish! See how Muhammad saw has rejected all of your proposals? He shall never stop from causing this disorder. I swear by God that, I shall not rest until I annihilate Muḥammad saw and then the Banū ‘Abd Manāf can do away with me as they wish.”

Those who were present from the Banū ‘Abdi Manāf (excluding the Banū Hāshim and Banū Muṭṭalib) proclaimed in unison, “We have no objections. Do with Muḥammad saw as you wish.” The next day, Abū Jahl stood to one side in the courtyard of the Ka’bah with a large rock and began to wait for the Holy Prophet saw. But when the Holy Prophet saw arrived, his heart was overtaken by such awe as he simply stood there like an idol, and was unable to move forward to attack.ii (The Life & Character of the Seal of Prophets saw, p.222-225)

God-given Awe of the Holy Prophet saw

There is also another narration regarding Abū Jahl falling in awe of the Holy Prophet saw by which we find that it is the custom of God to especially impress the awe of His messengers upon those who act rudely towards them. As such, it is written that on one occasion, a man named Urāshah came to Makkah to sell some camels, and Abū Jahl purchased these camels from him. After taking hold of these camels he began to defraud him and made excuses in offering payment. Upon this, Urāshah, who was a foreigner without any relations or support, became very troubled. After a few days of earnest requesting and begging before Abū Jahl, he finally approached an assembly of the Chieftains of the Quraish who had gathered near
the Ka’batullāh, and said, “O Honoured ones of the Quraish! A man from among you, Abū Hakam, has seized the value of my camels. Please have mercy and have my payment given to me.” The Quraish mischievously said, “There is a man named Muḥammad bin ‘Abdullāh who lives here. Go to him and he will have your payment given to you.” Their purpose was that the Holy Prophet saw will definitely refuse, and in this way the foreigner will disgrace and laugh at the Holy Prophet saw. When Urāshah set off from there, the Quraish sent a man behind him to see the spectacle. Therefore, in his simplicity, Urāshah came to the Holy Prophet saw and said, “I am but a wayfarer and a Chieftain of thy city, Abū Ḥakam, has withheld my money. I have been told that you are one who can get me my payment. Please have mercy and acquire me my payment.” The Holy Prophet saw immediately stood up and said, “Come, I shall go with you.” Therefore, the Holy Prophet saw brought him to Abū Jahl’s home and knocked on the door. When Abū Jahl came out, upon seeing the Holy Prophet saw, he was flabbergasted, and without a word, began to stare at the Holy Prophet saw. The Holy Prophet saw said, “This man says that you are indebted to him. He is a wayfarer, why do you deprive him of his due right?” At the time, Abū Jahl was turning pale. He said, “Muhammad saw hold on, I shall fetch the money right away.” Therefore, he went inside and immediately gave Urāshah his money. Urāshah expressed immense gratitude to the Holy Prophet saw and then returned to that very assembly of the Quraish and thanked them as well, saying, “You sent me to a good man. May Allāh reward him. He immediately had my money given to me.” The Chieftains of the Quraish were speechless, and looked at each other in astonishment. When Urāshah left, they inquired of the man that followed Urāshah to Abū Jahl’s home as to what happened. He said: “By Allāh, I witnessed a strange sight. When Muhammad saw knocked at Abul-Hakam’s door and Abul-Hakam came out and saw Muhammad saw, his state was as if a lifeless being. As soon as Muhammad saw said, ‘Pay him his money’, he immediately went inside and paid every penny.” After some time, Abū Jahl also joined that gathering. Upon seeing him, everyone swarmed him saying, “O Abul-Hakam, what happened to you that you became so frightened of Muhammad saw?” He said, “I swear by God! When I saw Muhammad saw at my door, it appeared to me as if a furious and enraged camel was standing by him. It seemed to me that if I moan or complain even a little, it would devour me.”

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WHAT IS BAI’AT?

A pledge of allegiance, in the worldly sense, is a solemn promise of loyalty, such as to a person, nation or organisation. However, in the religious context of Islam, this phrase takes on a much deeper meaning. The word ‘bay’ah in Arabic literally means ‘to sell’. Thus, to take bai’at is not to just repeat a set of words. Nor does it just entail a set of rules to abide by when deemed convenient and to forego whenever it causes difficulty. Rather, ‘bai’at’ means to truly sell oneself to Allah the Almighty. The entire basis of bai’at can be found if we look at the meaning of word Islam, submission. Thus, to be a true Muslim is to show complete obedience and submission, not only to Allah himself, but also to The Holy Prophet™ and to the divinely appointed vicegerent of the age. To wholeheartedly obey each command given by these figures of authority with utmost care, never neglecting or forgetting a single detail, however insignificant it may seem. Allah clearly states in The Holy Quran (Ch.24:V.56):

“O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger and those charged with authority among you.”

The Promised Messiah™, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed™ offers us a beautiful example exposition of the true value of bai’at, stating:

‘Taking Bai’at signifies being aware of the reality of Bai’at. Someone takes Bai’at in person by placing hand over hand but does not understand its real objective or does not care. His Bai’at is useless and it has no significance in God’s sight. Another person sitting thousands of miles away takes Bai’at with sincerity of heart and after accepting the reality and objectives of Bai’at, he implements what he has declared, and reforms his practices. This person is a thousand times better than the one who took Bai’at directly but did not implement it.’

Ibn Khaldun™, a great scholar and historian provides us with a beautiful explanation of the extent of obedience that a person is required to undertake after doing bai’at. He states:

“It should be known that the bay’ah is a contract to render obedience. It is as though the person who renders the oath of allegiance made a contract with his amir, to the effect that he surrenders supervision of his own
affairs and those of the Muslims to him and that he will not contest his authority in any of (those affairs) and that he will obey him by (executing) all the duties with which he might be charged, whether agreeable or disagreeable.”

BAI’AT IN THE TIME OF THE HOLY PROPHET SAW

From the time of The Holy Prophet saw till present day, bai’at is a privilege that has not been denied to any, be it a woman, a youngster or even a reformed sinner. In The Holy Quran, Allah says (Ch.60:V.13)

‘O Prophet! when believing women come to thee, taking the oath of allegiance at thy hands that they will not associate anything with Allah, and that they will not steal, and will not commit adultery, nor kill their children, nor bring forth a scandalous charge which they themselves have deliberately forged, nor disobey thee in what is right, then accept their allegiance and ask Allah to forgive them. Verily, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.’

Thus, The Holy Prophet saw, in accordance with this verse, used to take the pledge of allegiance from women. It was his practice that rather than touching the hands of any women, he would get them to repeat the words of the pledge after him and accept their Bai’at.

FIRST PLEDGE OF AL-AQABA

Perhaps the most well-known pledge of allegiance taken in the time of The Holy Prophet saw is known as the Pledge of Al-Aqaba. On this occasion, The Holy Prophet Muhammad saw travelled to the valley of Aqaba with his uncle, Hazrat Abbasas. Here, a congregation of some seventy three people, two of which were women, had travelled from Medina to pledge allegiance before The Holy Prophet saw. Despite the gathering being made fully aware by Hazrat Abbasas that by doing bai’at and accepting Islam, they would have to face strong persecution from the Arabs, they displayed no hesitance. The leader of the party determinedly replied to Hazrat Abbasas, stating:

‘We have heard you. Our resolution is firm. Our lives are at the disposal of The Prophet saw of God. We are decided and only await his decision.’

Thus, The Holy Prophet saw elucidated the teachings of Islam to the crowd, and before he could even finish, they ardently cried out ‘Yes’ and took the pledge of allegiance, not caring if they could be heard by others. Such was their love for faith and spiritual advancement that they lost all fear of the persecutors and suffering became nothing in their eyes.

BAI’AT IN THE TIME OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH AS

The Promised Messiah has, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmedas, whose advent was prophesised by The Holy Prophet saw, was commanded by Allah the Almighty to take the bai’at of others at his hands in the following words:

“And when you make up your mind, then trust Allah. And make an ark before Our eyes and according to Our revelation. Those who take a pledge at your hand take a pledge with Allah. Allah’s hand is above their hands.”

After receiving this revelation, The Promised Messiah as, wary of ensuring that only the truly devotees should join the Ahmadiyya
Maryam15

Jammat, waited for an occasion which would distinguish the truly faithful from those with fragile beliefs. This occasion came in the form of the death of the son of The Promised Messiah, which waivered the faith of the weak, causing them to leave the side of The Promised Messiah. At this time, The Promised Messiah published an announcement titled ‘Ishtihar Takmil-e-Tabligh’ in which he called all those seeking piety and the mercy of Allah to come to Ludhiana to do bai’at, advising them to pray and perform istakhara before doing so. Thus, on 23rd March 1889 in Ludhiana, the first forty bai’ats were taken at the blessed hands of The Promised Messiah, with the honour of the first to take this oath of allegiance being given to Hazrat Maulvi Hakim Noor-ud-Din, who later went on to become the first successor of The Promised Messiah. On this occasion, the Promised Messiah admonished those taking Bai’at at his hands, stating:

“All of you who have taken bai’at and have made a commitment, listen! To utter these words is easy, but to do justice to them is hard because Satan is always busy trying to make man careless about his faith. Satan shows the world and its benefits to be within reach, and faith to be distant. In this way, the heart is hardened and each subsequent condition is worse than the previous one. If you want to please Allah, put your entire strength and effort to abide faithfully to this commitment of freeing yourself from sins.”

THE TEN CONDITIONS OF BAI’AT

When the Promised Messiah published this announcement, he also specified a set of ten conditions for those wishing to take bai’at and enter into the Ahmadiyya Jammat. Not only did he continuously elaborate his demands of a believer, leaving no room for ambiguity, but he lived his life itself as a perfect example of each and every one of these conditions. The first condition specified by the Promised Messiah, which is supported repeatedly in the Holy Quran, is to abstain from ‘shirk’. One is not free from shirk if he/she does not worship idols. Rather, the action of shirk is a multifaceted one which must be understood in very fine detail in order to avoid it. Thus, in every path of life, we must remember that it is Allah who our Creator, our Provider and our Sustainers and that without him, we are nothing. The Promised Messiah clearly admonishes this form of sin, stating:

‘Every sin is forgivable except shirk. Therefore, do not go near shirk and consider it a forbidden tree.’

The Promised Messiah also specified that his followers should keep away from all types of falsehood. Throughout his life, in various trials and tribulations, we see that the Promised Messiah always resorted to telling the truth. It is known that once, a suit was filed against the Promised Messiah. The claim was that the Promised Messiah had sent an envelope within a package containing a manuscript,
something which was considered an offence by the press office. During the case, lawyers advised the Promised Messiah to say that he did not personally place the letter in that package. However, the Promised Messiah chose the path of truth and clearly stated that he had indeed placed the envelope in the same parcel in the manuscript because the subject matter of the letter was related to the manuscript and not because he wanted to save any money. Hearing the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah, the judge acquitted the Promised Messiah. This example, like many others, teaches us that we must never speak falsely to gain even the smallest benefit, or even as a joke or to young children. Indeed, such falsehood is the root of all evils. This is a mere glimpse of the conditions that the Promised Messiah presented alongside his call to the pledge of allegiance. As takers of this pledge, it is imperative that we deeply delve into the details of these conditions and thoroughly inculcate them into every part of our life.

**BAI’AT IN THE PRESENT ERA**

By the grace of Allah, Bai’at has now become an international phenomenon. Each year, on the auspicious occasion of Jalsa Salana United Kingdom, an international Bai’at takes place. It is seen live by millions worldwide, taken for the first time by many and renewed by even more. This emotional experience, one which entails each person to put their hand on the shoulder of the person in front until the entire gathering is connected to the Khalifa, represents a spiritual binding of oneself to the Ahmadiyya Jama’at and to the caliph of the age. To see it as a ritualistic or ceremonial custom is a mistake we must not make. Rather, through regular reflection of this pledge of allegiance and the ten conditions coupled with it, we should not only realise the great responsibility laid upon us but match our pledge with an equal measure of actions and thus progress on the path of spiritual attainment. To enable us to fulfil the responsibilities that come with taking this pledge of allegiance to the Ahmadiyya Jama’at, we must perform heartfelt prayers to Allah the Almighty and keeping the invaluable advice of the Promised Messiah as the forefront of our minds:

“The members of our Jama’at should also be an example to other people. If someone’s life after Bai’at is the same unholy and impure life as before Bai’at; and the one who becomes a poor example while one is in our Jama’at and displays weakness of actions or of beliefs, is cruel for he gives the whole Jama’at a bad name. He even makes us a target for criticism. A bad example is disliked by others and a good exemplar creates attraction and affection amongst others.”

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Paradise on Earth:
ISLAMIC TEACHINGS
FOR SPIRITUAL AND WORLD PEACE

By Tooba Khokhar

“We are like boats dashing together; our eyes are darkened, yet we are in clear water”

Two young Dutch YouTubers recently made a video which demonstrated the truth behind Rumi’s words. The duo went around a market in Holland and read out verses: some encouraging violence, others cruelly; some perpetuating hatred, others espousing misogyny to various strangers, telling them that they were Qur’anic verses. Listeners expressed their horror that any thinking or civilised person could accept such a book. The twist was of course that the text they were holding was not the Holy Qur’an but the Holy Bible in disguise. In the Western world today most have only viewed Islam through the narrow lens of mainstream media, whose discourse is not driven by the desire to give a fair representation of reality but is instead dictated by those with personal agendas and dominated with stories on extremists. To us as Ahmadi Muslims, this state of affairs can be very confusing. We look at Islam, and see only teachings of peace. But others see differently.

Today’s all too common rhetoric of hate and violence has darkened our eyes and created rifts in society. Yet in the age of information, we are in ‘clear water’ indeed. The teachings of Islam in their beauty and richness are laid out before us. The internet is a treasure trove of knowledge: one can read the Holy Qur’an in its entirety online. Let us examine then, the teachings of Islam on peace: Firstly the word Islam itself means “peace”. It comes from the Arabic root S-L-M which means to be “safe, secure or free” (salamā) and also carries the meaning of “peace, or reconciliation” (silman)². This reflects the core philosophy of Islam: which is to create harmony, peace and security in this world: for believers to be at peace with themselves, to have peace in their homes and communities and for there to be some peace on this disquiet earth. Historian Marshall Hodgson writes how “Primitively the term islām refers to the inner spiritual posture of an individual person of good will. The word islām in Arabic means the act of submitting to God...but the term ‘Islam’ (capitalised) has come to refer also more generally to the whole social pattern of cult and creed which...follows from or even grows out of the personal islām of the individual devotee”⁴. And it really is remarkable how a whole religion with its own social patterns and legal framework has sprung from what is in Hodgson’s words “the inner spiritual posture” of a believer. And this religion, Islam, rests on the foundation of the submission of the individual believer.

The Promised Messiah™ in his seminal work, The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam (1905) explained the three stages of spiritual growth and submission. While the first state is the base, natural state of man called Nafs-e-Ammara “the Soul that incites to evil”, the second is Nafs-e-Lawwamah or “the Reproving Self” whereby man checks his natural urges and aspires to a more moral way of living. The final state, Nafs-e-Mutmainah or “the Soul at Rest” is reached “when the soul of a person being delivered from all weaknesses is filled with spiritual powers and establishes a relationship with God Almighty.”⁵

One of the great Muslim poets, Mansur Hallaj described this complete act of submission in the most passionate of terms:

*I lost myself in finding You
Till You annihilated me in You*
- Mansur Hallaj, ‘I Lost Myself in Finding You’

And as the Promised Messiah™ stated this act of submission is not simply about the annihilation of the Self or Ego but also about drawing closer to Allah. Chapter 13, verse 29 of the Holy Qur’an speaks of:

“There those who believe, and whose hearts find...
comfort in the remembrance of Allah. Aye! It is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort.”

In this verse, we are invited to not simply obey our Lord but to find comfort in Him, through remembrance and prayer. We are instructed to give up ourselves, in order that we may gain a much more valuable treasure. Maulana Jalal-ud-din Rumi, another renowned Islamic mystical poet, described this trade off in a moving poem entitled ‘Who Am I?’

My place is the placeless
My trace is the traceless
I have no body or soul,
‘Cause I belong to my Beloved
Entire whole.
I have cast aside duality and embraced Oneness.
One I seek, One I know, One I see, One I call
- Rumi, ‘Who Am I?’

So after submission and reaching towards Allah, we reach the final stage of spiritual peace which is unity with Allah. The Persian mystic and poet Ahmad Jam articulated this experience using vast imagery and symbolism:

I am the ocean and the ocean is in me
This is the experience of one who can see
He that leaps into the river of Unity
He speaks of union with his Beloved’s beauty
- Ahmad Jam, “Your Beauty”

Jam speaks of having inside of his heart an ocean of Divine Love. However having forsaken all else but his Beloved, he himself becomes the ocean too as in he becomes no more than a vessel for the love of Allah. This then is the Nafs-e-Mutmainah or ‘Soul at Rest’ which is described in chapter 89, verses 28-31 of the Holy Qur’an:

“O, thou soul at peace! Return to thy Lord, thou well pleased with Him and He well pleased with thee. So enter thou among My chosen servants. And enter thou My garden.”

The Promised Messiah further writes with reference to this verse that the soul at rest “undergoes a great transformation in this very life and is bestowed a paradise while still in this world. As this verse indicates in its direction to such a soul to return to its Lord, it is nourished by its Lord and its love of God becomes its nurture, and it drinks at this fountain of life and is thus delivered from death.” This is the inner or spiritual peace on which the foundation of Islam is based. Could a soul truly at peace possibly have the destructive urges of a beast? Or be incited towards hatred or cruelty? No, as the Holy Prophet so beautifully and simply stated “Allah is Gentle and loves gentleness in all things” (Bukhari and Muslim). And indeed the teachings of Islam lay the foundations not only for inner peace but social peace too. Chapter 5, verse 9 of the Holy Qur’an reads:

“O ye who believe! Be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people’s enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely, Allah is aware of what you do.”

Justice and equity are two things our world sorely lacks today. According to Islam however, all Muslims have a duty not only to God Almighty but to their fellow creatures as well with whom they must deal justly and with kindness. Hazrat Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said “Charity is incumbent upon every human limb every day on which the sun rises. To bring about just reconciliation between two contestants is charity. Helping a person to mount his animal, or to load his baggage on to it is charity. A good word is charity.” (Bukhari and Muslim). And furthermore the Holy Prophet declared that “A person is not a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself” (Bukhari and Muslim). Such disinterested benevolence and kindness reflects the core Islamic philosophy of ‘Haqooq-ul-Ibad’ or service to the creation of Allah. If everyone sought only to serve their brothers, to bring about reconciliation as the Prophet exhorted and to not create strife, would there not be the most complete peace within our communities? Muslims are told in chapter 3, verse 111 of the Qur’an:

“You are the best people, raised for the good of mankind; you enjoin good and forbid evil and believe in Allah.”

This verse is often misinterpreted by some who think it places Muslims above all other peoples. When it so clearly indicates that the high status of Muslims is only conditional upon their striving towards “the good of mankind” by following the teachings laid out in the Holy Qur’an, mentioned above. And the extremists of today would do well to note that war and violence so rarely serve the good of mankind.

Martin Luther King wrote how almost invariably “the aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness”. And Islam teaches to avoid violence at any cost, allowing believers to draw the sword only as a means of self-defence or as a means of establishing peace and justice.

The Promised Messiah, whose advent marked the
beginning of the age of the Jihad of the Pen, clarified this point: “The Qur’an clearly commands not to raise the sword in order to spread Islam and that the innate qualities of the religion should be presented and that others should be attracted through pious models. Do not think that in the early days of Islam use of the sword was commanded, because the sword was never wielded to spread Islam. Quite the contrary, it was drawn in self-defence against enemy attacks or in order to establish peace.”14
And certainly verses 89-90 of chapter 43 of the Qur’an are very clear in this regard, stating:

“I swear by his repeated cry ‘O my Lord! That these are a people who will not believe. Therefore, turn aside from them, and say, ‘Peace’; and soon they shall know.”

Indeed the very essence of Islam is ‘peace’, after all:
The Paradise promised to a Muslim has been designated as the “abode of peace” in the Qur’an (6:128); the highest stage of spiritual development to which a believer can rise is that of the “soul at peace” (89:28) and the greatest gift which the dwellers of Paradise will receive from God will be “peace” (36:59) because God Himself is the Author of peace (59:24).15

And our beloved Hazoorra also reminded us in a recent Friday Sermon, delivered on the 11th of December 2015 of how: “Islam is replete with the teaching of love and peace and today this teaching needs to be propagated. A true Muslim knows that God is Salam (the Source of Peace) and wishes security for His creation. God has enabled us to accept the Promised Messiahra and has thus chosen us to spread this beautiful teaching in the world. It is the responsibility of Ahmadis to try to save the world from falling in fire and to work towards peace and security.”

May Allah enable us as Waqf-e-nau to work towards bringing peace and security to the world, as well as attaining the inner peace which is the foundation of our faith so that we too may become the “best people” in the sight of Allah, and fulfil the objectives of our Waqf.

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A personal account:

LIFE AS A WĀAQIFAH-E-NAU AND A MISSIONARY’S WIFE

By Madiha Malik, Iceland

I would like the opportunity to begin my account with reflecting upon Allah’s Graciousness. We can never thank Him enough, as He provides for us without us asking. Thus, I foremost am grateful that I was born an Ahmadi Muslim. I was privileged to be born into the reformed part of the Ummah that understands the essence of Islam, a beautiful religion of peace and prosperity, a religious phenomenon and the renaissance of Islam. My life has been blessed with Allah’s presence since I could gather coherent understanding. I never had to look far and wide to build a relationship with Him, but always had the spiritual provisions close by to guide me towards Him. Compared to many, my search for Allah was simplified, because of His unconditional Graciousness.

Like many other Ahmadi parents, when my parents were expecting me, in 1994, they dedicated their unborn child to the cause of Islam. They united me under the scheme of Waqf-e-Nau initiated by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmadra in 1987. I pray to Allah that may He look upon our parents with mercy and kindness, Ameen. Their decision put me on the receiving end of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVra as well as Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Vaba’s special prayers. A Waqf-e-Nau is blessed with the special prayers of Huzur-e-Anwaraba. They have a strong bond with the Jama’at and Khilafat even before they enter this world. Our parents promise that they will, to their best ability, raise us as faithful, loyal and devoted Ahmadis. Yet, the true duty falls upon our shoulders to uphold this oath. A strong reminder of why I chose to uphold my Waqf drove from a memory many years ago. I was four years old and had completed the recitation of the Qur’an for the first time. Apart from the Ameen, which was held at our local Mission House, I was one of the children fortunate enough to receive the opportunity to recite a portion of the Qur’an in the presence of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVra at Noor Mosque in Frankfurt, Germany. To this day I remember my excitement being at its highest, it was my first time in the blessed presence of Huzur-e-Anwaraba. We were seated in semi-circles with the Qur’an in front of us on their beautifully carved, wooden holders. After a little wait Huzur arrived and I, excitedly exclaimed rather loudly, “Huzur”. Upon hearing this Huzur smiled and questioned whose daughter I was. My father answered, telling Huzur that I was his daughter. Huzur’s smile only grew bigger. Throughout the recitations Huzur had a smile on his blessed face. I noticed how his presence filled the room and enveloped us in comfort. It was such a lovely experience, one that I wanted to experience again and again. It was this unforgettable experience of receiving the love and closeness to Huzur, at this young age, which eventually helped me deciding to uphold my Waqf and continue to strive and endeavour in order to attain the love and closeness of Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih Vaba.

Today it humbles me to witness the great trust and confidence Huzur-e-Anwaraba has in us. He is the Khalifah of Islam, with the burdens of the world on his shoulders. Yet, he spends hours praying for us, answering our letters and meeting us during mulqaats. Every speech and sermon Huzuraba delivers is to guide us, pointing out the responsibilities of the members of the Jama’at, in particular those of the Waqfeen and devotees. Every time I have had the opportunity to meet Huzuraba, I have experienced a pure and sincere love and concern for me, that of a father for his child. May Allah continue to strengthen his hand. Ameen.

I know that it is only the blessings of this Jama’at and Huzuraba’s endless efforts to bring us closer to Allah that have helped me stay strong when facing this morally crumbling world. I can certainly say that on many occasions I have thought to myself that I must have pious people praying for me, because Allah has saved me on many occasions from situations or decisions that were not right for me. I have felt guidance in my feelings, thoughts and actions and have at times seen help outside of my scope. A memorable recount is when I was in kindergarten, I remember finding blue egg shells rather frequently as my kindergarten was surrounded by a forest. Many a times my class fellows would ask how I was so lucky. As you can imagine four year old’s got excited by very little! I remember replying to them that I prayed to Allah to find them. On the same day when it was time to go and play outside, they were so curious as to what prayer to Allah was like. So I told them to sit, raise their hands like we do for Dua and pray to Allah. I told them what to say and they followed me word for word. We went out to look for some egg shells and everyone found their share. I cannot forget
how freely we did this. It felt like I was doing something completely natural. The strangest thing that occurred to me later was the innocence of these children. Even though they did not understand my prayer in Urdu, they had a desire to pray to God. It is one of my earliest memories in which I recall understanding the existence and closeness of Allah. Even then I knew I had to ask Allah for even the smallest of things.

My mother and I have a wonderful and close relationship. We are also very similar in nature and personality. She taught me everything and I have always seen her as an inspiration. We speak about everything and anything, I have always trusted my mum and have always come to her for advice. I know girls believe their mothers might not understand them, because of cultural differences, the fact that we think that we are better educated than they are or for whatever other reasons. Yet, we need to remember that our parents have been through life longer than us and once were where we are today. Just because they didn’t have smart phones doesn’t mean they didn’t have the same thoughts and feelings like us. However, I am sure most of us are close and obedient to our parents as Islam teaches us to do so. Thus, when my husband’s proposal came and my mother approached me and requested that I pray for my future, I did so. I knew she had my best interest at heart, I trusted her. It was by no means out of the blue, we had discussed marriage before. We all have fears, many questions. I had gained some knowledge from a few friends about how life as a missionary’s wife is, and to me it sounded wonderful. A life dedicated to spreading the message of peace and inviting people to God. A life of devotion to Allah and the mission we are here for. It is the oath we, members of the Jama’at. I took the first few months of my marriage to devise a plan of what I wanted to achieve now and just get comfortable in Iceland. Since then, I have worked alongside my husband and support him in whatever he needs me to do. Being married to a missionary has added many good things into my life. We pray together in congregation. We teach each other and push each other to increase our knowledge. We help each other in matters, which the other person might not be comfortable or strong in. My husband is teaching me a little Arabic and of course helps me in all the other religious matters, I in return am able to help in designing leaflets, banners and New Year’s greeting cards etc. We are also learning Icelandic at the moment. Egr héi! Madiha. Égr er 21 og by á Íslandi (my name is Madiha. I am 21 and live in Iceland).

As my husband was in Iceland, I only met him for the first time two months after our engagement. Two months later we were married. Time seemed to have flown by. He was not what I expected at all, and I mean that in a good way! Murabbis actually tell jokes! We became friends instantly. We have the same interests, which was beneficial as we literally only had each other here in Iceland. Our Jama’at in Iceland was and still is at its humble beginning. When I came to Iceland they were only three. By the Grace of Allah, we have had some converts recently and are now seven, Alhamdulillah. I can’t imagine how lonely he felt when he first came here, at least when I came I had him. I was very homesick at first, but after a while I settled in and felt at home. A good tip I would give is to see the change as a positive one. Make yourself happy in your surroundings. Find activities to do. We went sightseeing in the beginning in order to see some of Iceland’s majestic places such as the geysers (hot springs), waterfalls, glaciers (from a distance) and old, dried volcanoes (these we actually climbed). We also hiked up Iceland’s famous mountain Esja. We spent a lot of time in each other’s company like this and got to know each other well. One summer day we left at six in the evening for a trip around the famous Golden Circle and by the time we got back, near midnight, the sun was just dipping behind the horizon and it was still rather bright. We have shared many beautiful moments like this.

I have been here for a year and half now. I remember the first time we landed in Iceland. The first thing my husband told me to do was to take in a deep breath of air once we had stepped out of the aircraft. I did and that was the freshest breath of air I had taken in my whole life. The majestic country that Iceland is and the fact that my life brought me here amazed me. Who would have thought? A stark contrast to London, here there is a mountainous landscape with endless dry lava fields. Our humble mission house is very close to the ocean, at a five minute walking distance. We drive by it almost daily. I could go on forever about Iceland.

There is no doubt that married life is tough, it is a change, especially if you are moving abroad, but a good change. You are responsible for looking after your own home and your own family, and in my case, as well as our Tabligh contacts, guests and members of the Jama’at. I took the first few months of my marriage to devise a plan of what I wanted to achieve now and just get comfortable in Iceland. Since then, I have worked alongside my husband and support him in whatever he needs me to do. Being married to a missionary has added many good things into my life. We pray together in congregation. We teach each other and push each other to increase our knowledge. We help each other in matters, which the other person might not be comfortable or strong in. My husband is teaching me a little Arabic and of course helps me in all the other religious matters, I in return am able to help in designing leaflets, banners and New Year’s greeting cards etc. We are also learning Icelandic at the moment. Egr héi! Madiha. Égr er 21 og by á Íslandi (my name is Madiha. I am 21 and live in Iceland).

I genuinely feel pleased with my life. I try to improve myself every day and focus more on God and the mission we are here for. It is the oath we, the Nasirat and Lajna members pledge on various occasions throughout the year, that we will give precedence to faith over everything else. May Allah the Almighty enable me and every one of us to understand our pledges and fulfill them in the best possible manner, Ameen.
In July 2015 a manuscript of the Holy Qur’an held by the University of Birmingham was found to be amongst the earliest known to exist in the world.

Consisting of two parchment leaves, the Birmingham Qur’an manuscript contains parts of Surah Al-Kahf, Surah Maryam and Surah TaHa (Chapters 18 to 20). They are written with ink in an early form of Arabic script known as Hijazi. For many years, the manuscript had been mistakenly bound with leaves of a similar Qur’an manuscript. The possibility that a section of this manuscript could be even older came to light during a detailed study of the document by Dr Alba Fedeli, a PhD research student at the University of Birmingham. Consequently, the parchment on which the text was written was radiocarbon tested at Oxford University’s Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit which dated it to the period between 568 and 645 CE with 95.4% accuracy.

Professor David Thomas, Professor of Christianity and Islam and Nadir Dinshaw Professor of Interreligious Relations at the University of Birmingham, said: “According to Muslim tradition, the Prophet Muhammad received the revelations that form the Qur’an, the scripture of Islam, between the years AD 610 and 632, the year of his death. At this time, the divine message was not compiled into the book form in which it appears today. Instead, the revelations were preserved in ‘the memories of men’. Parts of it had also been written down on parchment, stone, palm leaves and the shoulder blades of camels. Caliph Abu Bakr, the first leader of the Muslim community after Muhammad, ordered the collection of all Qur’anic material in the form of a book. The final, authoritative written form was completed and fixed under the direction of the third leader, Caliph Uthman, in about AD 650”.

“The tests carried out on the parchment of the Birmingham folios yield the strong probability that the animal from which it was taken was alive during the lifetime of

Carbon Dating Results Graph
Maryam23

the Prophet Muhammad or shortly afterwards. This means that the parts of the Qur’an that are written on this parchment can, with a degree of confidence, be dated to less than two decades after Muhammad’s death. These portions must have been in a form that is very close to the form of the Qur’an read today, supporting the view that the text has undergone little or no alteration and that it can be dated to a point very close to the time it was believed to be revealed."^1

The manuscript is made of parchment. Parchment is animal skin that has been de-haired and treated with an alkali solution, such as lime, and left to dry under tension. This process gives it a creamy white colour. The Birmingham Qur’an manuscript is probably made of goat or sheep skin, which were used for early Islamic parchments. The brown ink used on the manuscript would have been made from a carbon-based pigment, applied with a reed pen. The red ink, which may have been added later, could be made from kermes lake pigment, which was available at the time. The inks have not been age-tested as there is currently no scientifically reliable method of dating inks.

The manuscript is part of the University’s Mingana Collection of Middle Eastern manuscripts, held in the Cadbury Research Library. This collection was bought by Alphonse Mingana in the 1930s who was building a world-class manuscript collection in Birmingham. The funds he used to gather this collection were from Edward Cadbury, the Birmingham-based Quaker philanthropist and businessman from the famous chocolate-making family, who had a vision of building a world-class library of theological manuscripts in Birmingham. Mingana acquired the bulk of the manuscripts of his collection during three journeys to the Middle East. Regarding the collection he said “We hold this collection for no selfish ends. It is there as a trust for scholars all over the world” - Alphonse Mingana, 1932.

As time passes, Allah Almighty continues to unveil evidence of the truth of His last Message. In the case of most religions, when historical texts of their scripture are found, the discoveries serve as a reminder of the great number of alterations the original texts have suffered. However, in the case of the blessed Holy Qu’ran we find ever greater proof that this true and final word of God has been shielded from the tampering hands of men by Divine protection; a reminder of Allah Almighty’s promise to preserve this Message Himself.

The Importance of Reading the Books of the Promised Messiah

We are all aware of the fact that when human existence came to be on earth, man was equivalent to that of any other animal with no sense of knowledge and little means of communication. Over time Allah sent down many Prophets for the development of man and to show man the right path. As people developed, so did their communication skills. However, the true development of a man took place with the revolution of language.

With this revolution, Allah chose language to communicate with his people. The last book was sent down through the Holy Prophet in the form of the Holy Qur’an. The companions of the Holy Prophet memorised the Holy Qur’an and preserved it for eternity. But, to be sure that a follower fully understood and comprehended this book, and for them to be able to adapt their lives to it, the need for the Holy Prophet was crucial. It was the Holy Prophet who was to show Muslims the correct way of adapting their lives to Allah’s perfect guidelines and to cancel out any misconceptions and misunderstandings of Allah’s true words.

However, like previous religions, some followers of Islam began to drift away from the true teachings of Islam. According to the Holy Qur’an and hadith, Allah would send a Prophet in the latter days who would guide those followers back onto the right path.

Thus, at such a crucial time, when Islam was being attacked from every side, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian was born to reintroduce the teachings of Islam and submit to the Holy Prophet. He expressed in a poem:

I now distribute those treasures which were buried For thousands of years if someone is desirous

With the help of Allah, the Promised Messiah wrote many books, dialogues, scripts and poems, and gave many speeches in which the glory of the Holy Prophet was expressed and the truth of Islam was proved again and again.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih explains the power of the writings of the Promised Messiah:

‘So in this age this great son of Islam, Champion of Allah, whose pen did the job of the sword, donning the armour of pens strode forth into the heated battlefield of science and advancement of knowledge to convey the message of the Holy Prophet throughout the world and to prove the truth of Islam to the whole world and to propagate the unity of the One Unique God and showed such a miracle of the spiritual valour of Islam and its inner vitality so as to smash every opponent to smithereens and so hoisted the flag of Muhammad the Chosen One and Islam that even today its flutterings can be observed at the heavenly heights going ever higher and this message of Islam is spreading throughout the whole world through the writings of the Promised Messiah (peace and blessings be on him) and will keep spreading.’

We, as Ahmadi Waqf-e-nau Muslims, are fortunate enough to be followers of the Promised Messiah who have such unique treasures, like the writings of the Promised Messiah, at hand. Through his writings we are able to witness and feel Allah’s presence. We are able to meet with the dialogue that made its way into this world through the Promised Messiah. This is explained by the Promised Messiah himself. He states:

‘I particularly experience God’s miraculous power when I put my pen to paper. Whenever I write something in Arabic or Urdu, I feel as if someone is instructing me from within’

The relationship between Allah and his Prophet makes clear to us as his followers that we should be making every effort to read the books of the Promised Messiah so that we too can uphold and continue what the Promised Messiah was chosen
to achieve.

Is this not what being a follower of the true Islam is all about? Is this not the purpose of being a waqf-e-nau?

Because of this reason alone, it is no more than obligatory that we benefit from the writings of the Promised Messiah™ and involve ourselves in achieving the purpose behind such dialogue and carry out the responsibilities of a waqf. And this can be achieved if we read the books of the Promised Messiah™ and understand the true purpose of his arrival.

Although some of the Promised Messiah’s™ books are translated into English, most are still yet to be. Therefore as a waqf we should try our best to learn Urdu to gain the true experience of his writings. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V™ speaks on responsibilities of being a waqf-e-nau. He states that: ‘Urdu is necessary because real insight of faith can be attained through the books of the Promised Messiah™. His books, commentaries and writings are a treasure which can bring about a revolution in the world and impart real Islamic teachings to the world, interpreting the Holy Qur’an.’

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V™ expressed that: ‘It is only through the blessings of the writings of the Muhammadan Messiah that a world is benefitting from spiritual and physical rebirth and those who had been dead for centuries are once again coming to life...’

It is clear to us as followers of the Promised Messiah™ that his writings are not just a matter of reading his writings to be forgotten. They have a purpose. It involves the crucial lessons which are needed to survive in this century as true devotees of Allah and his beloved messenger Muhammad™. It is compulsory that we use his writings to gain knowledge to then answer any allegations put against the true Islam and to bring back those who have gone astray. The purpose of reading his writings is also to bring about a change in ourselves and in others as well.

The promised Messiah™ declares that: ‘The person who does not read our books at least 3 times has a type of pride in him.’

Expanding on this, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V™ explains that: ‘These writings of his are the only means of all types of advancement in knowledge and morality, spiritual and physical cures. One who turns their face away from these treasures is destined to leave this world and the hereafter devoid of faith and is accounted arrogant in the court of God.’

It is evident from this that, as followers of this true religion, we are to read the Promised Messiah’s™ books three times with the purpose to study, store and use such valuable teachings to then be able to represent the Promised Messiah™ and be the true devotees in which the Holy Prophet™ searched from in his believers.

Similarly the Promised Messiah™ proclaims that: ‘He who does not pay full attention to the directions of a Commissioned one and Messenger of God and does not study his writings with care also partakes of arrogance. Try, therefore, that you should not partake of arrogance in any respect so that you may escape ruin and you and yours may attain salvation.’

Therefore, to ensure we are adhering to our duties as Ahmadi Muslims, and true followers of the real Islam, it is as the Promised Messiah™ states, ‘Important for all friends to care to read our books at least once because knowledge is power and power creates valour’ and it is this bravery which will conquer hearts to bring them towards the one God, Allah.

We are more than ever thankful to Allah for making us from among the believers of the Promised Messiah™ and to have such unique treasures in our possession. We must make it our goal to read the writings of the Promised Messiah™ so ‘...that we can be those who light lamps of peace and security in our homes and our environs and that the love of God and His prophet be undulating in our hearts so that through it we go on illuminating the flames of love for mankind and sharing its pains throughout the world.’

May Allah enable us to accomplish this to the best of our ability. Ameen.

REFERENCES:
4. Friday sermon 18th January 2013, by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V™ ‘Reviving the spirit of waqf-e-nau’
Hazrat Syyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum Sahiba,
Hazrat Amman Jaanra

HER WORSHIP AND DEVOTION TO GOD ALMIGHTY

By Zanubia Ahmad

Ummul Momineen, Hazrat Syyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum Sahiba\(^a\) belonged to a very noble family who were descendants of The Holy Prophet (May Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon him). Not only was she brought up in a noble family, she also became the wife of the Imam of the age, the Promised Messiah\(^a\) as was prophesied by God Almighty. Hazrat Amman Jaan\(^a\) is referred to as “My Khadijah” in one of the revelations received by the Promised Messiah\(^a\) relating to his marriage. [Revelation of 1881, Brahīn-e-Ahmadiyya, part 4, p.558, sub footnote 4, Ruhani Khazain Vol 1, p.666 sub footnote 4]. These words clearly show Allah’s love and affection for her. So, bearing these beautiful words in my mind, I thought I should write about Hazrat Amman Jaan’s way of worship and her love and devotion to God Almighty.

A very beautiful aspect of Hazrat Amman Jaan’s\(^a\) life was her true passion for worship and her intense prayers. Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad\(^a\) while describing Hazrat Amman Jaan’s\(^a\) prayers and righteousness said that it was not possible to express this in a few words. It was however apparent through her regular and punctual observance of the five daily prayers. She was also very regular in Tahajjud prayers. The remarkable nature of Hadrat Amman Jaan’s prayers was such that the passion and ardour with which she supplicated would inspire those around her to engage in “Salat” as well. He also states that Hazrat Amman Jaan\(^a\) found true solace in her salat. The greatest testimony to the weight and importance Hazrat Amman Jaan\(^a\) gave to the observance of prayers on time, (in accordance with the hadith that Allah Almighty loves most those who observe prayer punctually), is Hazrat Amman Jaan’s astounding behaviour at the time of the death of her son “Bashir Awwal”. Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad\(^a\) says that when the condition of Bashir Awwal, who was eighteen months old, became very critical and apparently there was no chance of him surviving and it was also the time for salat, Hazrat Amman Jaan\(^a\) rose up to offer her prayers saying that why should I miss my prayers and she did her ablutions and offered her prayers in a very peaceful manner. After offering her prayers she enquired about the child and she was told that he had passed away, upon hearing this she only said “Inna Illaha Wa Innah Illaha Rajoon” and after that she was silent. [Seerat o Sawaneh Hazrat Amman Jaan\(^a\), p.132-132, by Professor Naseem Saeed]

Hazrat Masih Maud\(^a\) was very particular with regards to congregational prayers being offered in the mosque but occasionally when he was not feeling well he used to offer prayers at home. Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad\(^a\) says that on such occasions while offering prayers in the house, the Promised Messiah\(^a\) would ask Hazrat Amman Jaan\(^a\) to offer her prayers along with him on his side. Hazrat Masih Maud\(^a\) would ask Hazrat Amman Jaan\(^a\) to stand by his side and offer her prayers because he sometimes felt dizzy. [Seerat o Sawaneh Hazrat Amman Jaan, p.133, by Professor Naseem Saeed]

Hazrat Amman Jaan’s daughter Hazrat Nawwab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba\(^a\) while recollecting memories about Hadrat Amman Jaan’s\(^a\) prayers says that Hazrat Amman Jaan\(^a\) offered her prayers with great enthusiasm, conviction and passion. Not only were her prayers filled with fervent
supplications, but also the etiquettes of “Salat” were observed meticulously and with inspirational beauty. Hazrat Amman Jaan’s daughter never recalls seeing her mother rush her prayers. She continues that Hazrat Amman Jaan not only observed “Tahajjud” prayers regularly but also “Ishraaq”, (nafal offered in the morning) in addition to the five compulsory daily prayers. Often one could hear her supplications as she exclaimed with such fervour, intensity, pain and restlessness. Interestingly, Hazrat Amman Jaan was also naturally poetic and would sometimes supplicate in a single or rhyming couplet.

A very important point to be noted for all women which is related to us by Hazrat Nawab Mubarka Begum Sahiba is that a particular thing which she noticed since her childhood was that during the days when Hazrat Amman Jaan was not to offer her prayers during certain days she did not waste any time after Azan in idle talk etc. but used to spend this time (prayers time) in supplication and remembrance of Allah. [Seerat o Sawaneh Hazrat Amman Jaan, p.133, by Professor Naseem Saeed]

Hazrat Amman Jaan’s granddaughter, Late Sahibzadi Amatul Qayyum Begum Sahiba, relates that ‘I remember a few things about Hazrat Amman Jaan so clearly as if I am seeing them today, it is not possible for me to fully describe Hazrat Amman Jaan’s prayers in words but the intense humility of her prayers was such that it seemed as if she was actually prostrating in front of Allah Almighty and clinging to His feet’. She recollects that Hazrat Amman Jaan had such a strong faith and belief in her powerful and strong Creator, that one could feel this condition of hers, but to express it in a few words is impossible. [Seerat o Sawaneh Hazrat Amman Jaan, p.133, by Professor Naseem Saeed]

One thing also particularly noticed by those who were close to Hazrat Amman Jaan was that she was very particular in doing ablution. Actually it has been stated by many that Hazrat Amman Jaan generally remained in state of ablution. She used to offer her prayers in the earliest time for a prayer and as soon as she heard Azan she used to stand up to do her ablution and then offer her prayers. She would offer her prayers for long periods and often her “Maghrib” prayer would prolong up to the Isha Prayer.

The wife of Abul Hashim Khan of Bangal says that she went to visit Hazrat Amman Jaan after the birth of her first newborn daughter to request for prayers. She relates that she waited a long time until Hazrat Amman Jaan had completed her prayers. Hazrat Amman Jaan then enquired of the ladies visiting if they had offered their prayers. The lady with the child excused herself, explaining that her baby must have wet herself and that she would go home and offer prayers. At this point Hazrat Amman Jaan expressed some wise words. She said “Never leave prayers using your children as an excuse. In this way, your children become a cause of Allah Almighty’s wrath, when really they are a reward from Allah Almighty”. She says that the deep effect of this advice by Hazrat Amman Jaan had remained in her heart even till that day. Not only was Hazrat Amman Jaan particular in offering her prayers with passion and love for God Almighty but she reminded the women in the household and also members of the family that it was time to offer prayers. Late Sahibzadi Nasira Begum Sahiba (granddaughter of Hazrat Amman Jaan) relates that Hazrat Amman Jaan usually remained in the state of ablution in anticipation of the Azan and as soon as she heard the Azan before offering her prayers she would address the girls in the family and would say: I am about to offer my prayers, larkyo (girls) you should get up and offer your prayers too. That was a way of Hazrat Amman Jaan advising the girls. Hazrat Amman Jaan used to supervise and paid special attention to the prayers of her family members (daughters, daughter-in-laws and their children) and was very particular in Namaz-e-Tahajjad. She often used to advise the family of the Promised Messiah to follow his footsteps. [Seerat o Sawaneh Hazrat Amman Jaan, p.136-137, by Professor Naseem Saeed]
Hazrat Amman Jaan’s love for the Holy Qur’an was also very visible throughout her life. She used to recite the Holy Qur’an abundantly. Whenever she was restless or in pain she would find solace in the Holy Qur’an. When her eye sight weakened she used to ask someone to recite the Holy Qur’an for her so that she could listen. Late Sahibzada Mirza Waseem Ahmad Sahib wrote a letter to his father Hazrat Musleh Maud from Qadian and said that news of illness of Hazrat Amman Jaan and her critical condition had been hugely distressful for him. He wrote that he was living far (he was in Qadian and was one of the 313 Darwesh of Qadian) and was unable to come and see her but wanted to visit and be in the presence of Hazrat Amman Jaan and wanted to serve in any way possible. He also wrote that he was greatly humbled by the opportunity of reciting the Holy Qur’an for Hazrat Amman Jaan after the Fajr Prayers in Qadian. He wrote that he cherished that time. [Seerat o Sawaneh Hazrat Amman Jaan, p.138, by Professor Naseem Saeed]

Once Hazrat Amman Jaan requested someone to recite Surah Al-Yasin, the lady who was asked to do so hesitated (because it is generally known to be recited near the time of death), upon this Hazrat Amman Jaan said that the recitation of Surah Al-Yasin should not be considered for one specific time only but that it is a tonic to relieve one from pain and worries at any time. Hazrat Nawab Mubarka Begum Sahiba has added to this and states that once Hazrat Amman Jaan’s eyes started to ache and because of this Hazrat Amman Jaan was in a lot of pain. During that time Hazrat Nawab Mubarka Begum Sahiba recalled that the Promised Messiah used to recite Surah Al Yasin 2-3 times a day to Hazrat Amman Jaan. Hazrat Nawab Mubarka Begum Sahiba related that Hazrat Amman Jaan used to say that people have specified the recitation of the Holy Qur’an with death without any particular reason. [Seerat o Sawaneh Hazrat Amman Jaan, p.138, by Professor Naseem Saeed]

Hazrat Amman Jaan often used to ask members of the family of the Promised Messiah to recite the Holy Qur’an and Ahadith to her in the evenings. Usually respected Syed Mir Mahmood Ahmad Nasir Sahib, late Sahibzada Mirza Rafi Ahmad Sahib and Late Mirza Hanif Ahmad Sahib had this opportunity. Late Dr. Sahibzada Mirza Munawar Ahmad Sahib who was also a grandson of Hazrat Amman Jaan and physician for Hazrat Amman Jaan related that during her illness in the last days she would ask someone from one of the family members to recite the Holy Qur’an to her. He says that even in the morning of the day she passed away when he went to give her injection she asked him to bring the Holy Qur’an, upon which he requested to let him do the injection first then he will do so and she replied in affirmative by moving her head. So he says after the injection respected Syed Mir Mahmood Sahib, son of Hazrat Mir Mohammed Ishaq Sahib recited the Holy Qur’an to her and even an hour before her demise the Holy Qur’an was recited to her by Mir Mahmood Sahib. [Seerat o Sawaneh Hazrat Amman Jaan, p.139, by Professor Naseem Saeed]

Hazrat Amman Jaan eagerly wished to instil the love of the Holy Qur’an in others. At weddings she would often give the bride a copy of the Holy Qur’an as a gift. [Seerat o Sawaneh Hazrat Amman Jaan, p.138-140, by Professor Naseem Saeed]

Hazrat Ummul Momineen, Hazrat Amman Jaan was the most pious lady of this millennium. Certainly she had absorbed the spiritual light from the Promised Messiah, a Prophet of God Almighty and the Imam of the age. Hazrat Amman Jaan has left an excellent example for all Ahmadi women to follow.

May Allah enable all Ahmadi women to ponder over these beautiful narrations passed on to us by our elders and to follow the beautiful example of Hazrat Amman Jaan and establish a strong bond with God Almighty, Ameen.
We learn and we listen
We raise our hand
To ask Hazoor our questions
So we fully understand

We’re lucky to be near Hazoor
His prayers we all seek
Sometimes we can talk to him
And get a chance to speak

Some of us live near
But some a little further
Some come from Scotland
And some from Manchester

We came to sit at Hazoors feet
He feeds us with spiritual and physical feast
There is nothing more fulfilling
Than sitting with our imam
His love and his wisdom
Are full of charm

The years have gone by so fast
This Bustan class is my last
I am turning twelve in December
I pray for Hazoors company forever

By Ayza Mahmood
In this era, we Ahmadi Muslims are extremely fortunate to be led by the blessed institution of Khilafat. In order to guide the members of the Jamaat, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (May Allah be his Helper) regularly travels to different parts of the world to meet and guide the local Ahmadis. Certainly, the bond of love between the Khalifa and an Ahmadi is truly unique. During his tours, Huzur also spreads the message of Islam through various lectures, meetings and interviews. Dear readers, we hereby present some inspiring and emotional personal reflections and experiences with Khilafat pertaining to some of Huzur’s tours. These incidents and narrations have been taken from the diaries written by respected Abid Khan sahib, who has had the honour of travelling with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (May Allah be his Helper) on various occasions.

A Journey made Just to see the Khalifah...An emotional story

“One of the guests who had travelled from Sri Lanka, Anees Ahmad (38) told me about the obstacles he had faced to come and meet Hazuraba. He said: “We were getting ready for this journey from Sri Lanka ever since we found out Huzur is coming to Singapore. I have been saving money since April so I can come with my family. It was very tough. My three-year-old and seven-year-old were both desperate to see Huzur. In the end I did not have enough money to bring them with me. So I have been crying for weeks, but I had no option but to come on my own......the mulaqat I had with Huzur was so wonderful. Seeing Huzoor with my own eyes brings an electric current. His face is like a star in the sky. May Allah let us stay attached to Khilafat until our final breath.”

[Singapore Tour 2013, A Personal Account by Abid Khan]

An emotional conversation with an Indonesian brother

“From my perspective one of the most emotional conversations I had on that tour was with Arif Rehman Hakim Sahib, a Khadim aged 32 from Indonesia. He was Qaid of the area where our three Ahmadi brothers were brutally martyred in 2011. He himself had been injured during the attack. I did not know any of this when I initially sat down with him and so I was genuinely shocked as I listened and learned about his experiences. As he recounted the incident I felt as though I had been transported to the village of Cikeusik on that fateful day in early February 2011. Yet the amazing thing was that he did not look back on that day with anger, fear or horror but rather he looked back on that day with a sense of pride and honour. Arif Sahib said: “I am a survivor of Cikeusik. I witnessed with my own eyes that event and I myself was injured, however it was not a sad or tragic event. In fact it was the most beautiful thing that ever happened in my life. Nothing can ever be better in my life than what I experienced on that day because to be attacked and injured for my faith and for the Promised Messiah is a great blessing given to me by Allah the Almighty. I want Huzur to know my feelings about that day. I had a Mulaqat a few days ago and I went in with the intention of telling Huzur about what happened, however I
could not express or say anything and I just started to cry. My heart was shaking and my heart was trembling. I wanted to tell Huzur that I was proud to be there and I wanted to tell Huzur that I was the Qaid of those three shuhada and they were my friends and my brothers. My only regret is that I could not protect them but I will never ever forget them.”

[Singapore Tour, September 2013, A Personal Account by Abid Khan]

**First Mulaqat with Khalifah-e-Waqt**

“Khizar Hayat (36) who had recently moved to Ireland from Italy. He was about to meet Huzoor for the first time in his life and was understandably very emotional. He said: “Today for the first time in my life I will have the opportunity to meet the Khalifa-Waqt and so it can only be described as the best day of my life. What I am feeling is a very strange sensation that I have never felt before. What I have desired all of my life and dreamed of every day is coming true, Alhamdolillah. When I will enter the Mulaqat room I will not need to say anything to Huzoor. All I need and want is to see his blessed face and to hear his blessed voice directly.”

[Huzur’s Tour of Ireland, A Personal Account by Abid Khan]

**An Irish convert’s love for Khilafat**

During the Ireland’s tour, I met Fiona O’Keeffe Ahmed Sahiba, an Irish lady who had converted to Ahmadiyyat a few years ago. After becoming Ahmadi she married an Ahmadi living in the United States. Like many converts she had faced difficulties, whereby her family had found it difficult to accept her decision to become a Muslim. Despite such trials, she was resolute in her conviction that Ahmadiyyat was the true path. Recently, she had also been elected as the Lajna Sadr of Boston Jamaat in the US. On one occasion, I asked her about Khilafat and from her response it was clear how much impact Khilafat had made on her and the way it changed her life. Fiona Sahiba said: “Every time I see our beloved Huzur it is as captivating, mesmerizing and awe-inspiring as though I was seeing him for the very first time. Our beloved Huzur’s personal and character draws one completely towards him, so much so that one never wants to be away from him; he emanates nothing but beauty, grace and light upon light that illuminates everything around him. It was these very feelings that flooded my heart the first time I met Huzur and from then came an instant love for Khalifatul Masih. This unconditional love for Huzur changed the course of my life forever and guided me to accept the truth and recognise the beauty of Islam Ahmadiyyat.”

[Huzur’s Tour of Ireland, A Personal Account by Abid Khan]
It was the custom of Hazrat Sayyeda Nawab Mubarka Begum Sahiba, the daughter of the Promised Messiah to give advice to her daughters and the girls of the family before their marriage. In addition to this she would remind them of their moral training on a daily basis. In fact it was these exact teachings that proved to be the golden principals of a successful marriage, which were perfectly aligned with the teachings of the Holy Quran and Ahadith.

On one occasion the Holy Prophet stated that the best life partner is the one, who makes her husband feel happy when he looks at her and if her husband asks something of her, she complies and refrains from doing that which her husband dislikes. (Sunan Nisai)

If only Ahmadi mothers instil these instructions to their daughters, then all homes will resemble heaven. Respected Sahibzadi Asifa Masooda Begum Sahiba, daughter of Hazrat Nawab Mubarka Begum Sahiba in an interview gave the following precious advice and also wrote down the following points:

- Girls should be taught from a very young age to pray to God Almighty for a pious and a blessed match.

- The wife must first become the maid of her husband, then in turn the husband will become her servant. (What a wise and intelligent thing to say, that the wife must first show loyalty and obedience to her husband to win his heart and then the husband will love and cherish his wife).

- Hazrat Amman Jaan used to state this general principal, that the private matters between a husband and wife should never be discussed with anyone. Some men and women have a tendency to talk to their friends about such matters and boast about certain things. This is extremely damaging and inappropriate.

- It is the responsibility of the wife to please her husband in every way.

- When the husband comes home a wife should be presentable. Likewise when he is leaving her attire should also be pleasing, so that whenever he thinks of his wife, he should have a pleasant image of her, and not that of a woman who smells with unkempt hair.

- Never speak when your husband is angry. Only later once he has cooled down, you certainly may gently point out his error to him.

- Never fight when he has just come home, irrespective of how angry you are. Make him comfortable in every way and then you vent your anger.
• When you and your husband are inside a room, do not shriek. Anyone who hears it, may interpret something completely different [to the actual incident].

• A false ego should not come between the relationship of husband and wife. If you (the wife) are at fault, then reconcile with your husband, there is no dishonour in that at all.

• Never threaten to leave the home [after an argument]. Should the husband, out of anger say 'Fine! Leave! Get out!', then how humiliating will this be? This threat will only cause humiliation instead of building respect.

• Hazrat Amman Jaan\textsuperscript{ra} advised my mother to never do something secretly from your husband or something that you feel the need to hide from him. If ever the matter becomes evident you will lose your regard and respect and trust for the rest of your lives, aside from the embarrassment [it will cause].

• Hazrat Amman Jaan\textsuperscript{ra} instructed that one should never discuss your in-laws matters with your family and nor your family matters with your husband’s family. Perhaps you will forget the matter, but it may form a knot in the heart of others. (What magnificent counsels have been given! These days, after their marriage, girls exaggeratingly tell the grandeur and comforts of their parents house to their in-laws and also tell their parents about the short comings and flaws of their in-laws – leading to arguments and disputes that quickly diminish the inter-family relationships).

• My mother (Hazrat Nawab Mubarka Begum sahiba\textsuperscript{ra}) herself never asked me about behaviour of my in-laws towards me. Even if she sensed worry or concern on anyone’s face, she would never express it, instead she would stress on prayers.

• If there were minor disputes between me and my husband in my mother’s presence, she would instantaneously take side with my husband and admonish me - and there is wisdom behind this as her daughter is her own [blood], but the sentiments of the son-in-law should not be hurt.

• Even if we ever complained to our mother, she would act as if she hadn’t heard us, or would act as if it had not concerned her in any way. This would sometimes infuriate me – for who else should I speak to! Where else can I vent my anger!? But now I understand, because I too, act the same way with my own children. However by the grace of Allah, my children do not have the habit of complaining about anyone. (Seerat o Sawaneh Hazrat Sayyeda Nawab Mubarka Begum Sahiba\textsuperscript{ra}, pages 253-255).

[Printed in monthly Misbah magazine, November 2006, page:13,14]

All of these counsels [mentioned above] are worth following and apply to every woman, whether she is a wife or a mother-in-law. It is my prayer, that may God Almighty enable us to act upon this advice with His grace, and Make our homes blissful and heaven like, so that we are bestowed with heaven on this earth and in the hereafter. Ameen.
This article is the second part of the Islamic Art series; you can read about the Art of Islamic Calligraphy on www.alislam.org/maryam/

The beauty of Islamic Art specifically lies in the details of greater art-pieces and structures; the finite details of which are built up through geometry and mirrored arabesque patterns. These patterns are visible on the surfaces of gardens and courtyards of large Islamic empirical buildings; on entrance frames, rooftops and window-openings and on mosaics, textiles and sculptures too. Let us take a journey through the Islamic world and see what the characteristics were of the different types of detailed art and how they came together as one piece.

THE PERCEPTION OF ART IN ISLAM

Art can give an insight into a nation’s culture and perceptions of the world. As such, Islamic art has always been a reflection of the cultural values of different Islamic dynasties throughout the ages; it reflected the views and life of Muslims and important Islamic aspects such as spirituality, the universe and the relationship to Allah the Almighty. Interpreting the symbols used enables one to decode the meaning or/and the intention of the specific piece of art.

One common theme in Islamic art is the absence of the depiction of animals or people. Although the Holy Qur’an specifically neither encourages nor denounces the use of figural art, as the art of the Islamic world is perceived through the eyes of its ideology, hence anything that could create the means of worshipping anything other than Allah the Almighty (shirk) is avoided.

Islamic art aims to reflect the teachings of devotion, peace, tranquillity and love, which are so essential to Islam; this can in noticeable through the fine lines, symmetry and the aesthetics of these art patterns.
COLOURS AND THEIR MEANING IN ISLAMIC ART

Various colours are often used in all kinds of Islamic art and the preference of certain colours is something that can be linked back to the time of Prophet Muhammad\textsuperscript{sa}. Green was known as being the favourite colour of our Beloved Prophet\textsuperscript{sa}, and is largely known for being a symbol of purity, renovation; the outcome of being living as a devoted Muslim.

Other colours often used are white and other natural colours; this can be seen in the above image of the Sheikh Zayed mosque, the colours used here show both a level of purity, femininity and beauty blended with the colours of earth to show nobility and abstractions of sentiments. Blue and sea-like green are often associated with mysticism and used by Sufi Muslims to them these colours symbolise the presence of untypical and mystical qualities. These colours are also used to evoke interest and catch attention.

ARABESQUE ART-FORM

We find that Islamic art has a very different and significant style compared to other styles of art. A common theme in Islamic art is the use of Arabesque designs, which aim to create an infinite pattern, attempting to go beyond the actual material world; and thus create an avenue to appreciate and praise the infinity of Allah the Almighty.

Arabesque art is a term used for both Islamic art (after the 9th century) and for an art-form used in the time of the Renaissance and after. The general feature of Arabesque art is a basic design which is repetitive and often built up by tiles and the like. Arabesque art has traditionally always been part of the various Islamic art-forms with an emphasis on floral structures, which are used to show a level of simplicity.

There was an increased interest in examining and studying Arabesque art in the Middle East during the time after the 1850s; it was found that some aspects of the art-form were derived from ancient Chinese art. Basic shapes and patterns are traced back to both the Byzantine\textsuperscript{1} and Sasanian\textsuperscript{2} Empires. The Islamic artists brought key elements of these classical artistic traditions and invented a new form of decoration which stressed on the terms of unity, order and logic.

It is said that Arabesque art has a certain theological significance, though there is no historical document that proves these claims and no real intentions of these art-forms has been given; nothing other than the decorative purpose. The theological significance lies in the aesthetic and beauty the symmetric patterns show, as it appears as the symbolic understanding of God Almighty’ own perfection. It is interesting to see the overall similarity of Arabesque art whichever region or one compares.
ISLAMIC ART AND GEOMETRY

Although Arabesque art is a genuine art-form, traits of science can be found throughout it as well. The patterns are both mathematically and aesthetically precise.

One can argue that in a way, it aims to reflect the creation of God as His will is expressed through all forms, ideologies, sciences and the nature of the world. The geometric patterns display an order and a unity which is based on universality. The philosophy behind the repetitive patterns is in the praise of Allah whose has created in perfection. It is also a reference to the believers of the Islamic faith, who are united. Any mistakes in the repetition of the pattern is a way of showing the humility of man as compared to the perfection of God.

One of the common motifs of Arabesque art is the eight-pointed star, which is a common element in both tile work and other sorts of art. The complex stars are a way to show a system, coherence and beauty at the same time.

As mentioned before; the Arabesque patterns are so alike, that it is difficult to define its regional origins. One specific type of Arabesque art typically makes use of basic instruments such as a compass and a ruler; and so the circle became a foundation to these Arabesque motifs. Islamic astronomers and cartographers were able to make use of these instruments to develop the academics within their fields.

CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC ART

As displayed in the former article, Arabic writing and calligraphy is perceived as a classical Islamic artform, as it opens up a certain window to address the cultural and religious identity of oneself. A lot of Islamic art today is used as a base definition of what the religion means for the individual Muslim. We see the effort of artists spreading the teachings of Islam through art, with an aim for making the religion more understandable and adaptable in today's society.

The Islamic world has changed in many ways and so has the situation of the world; as such Islamic art no longer only uses the examples of art depicting earlier greater Islamic dynasties for inspiration. The largely negative perception of Islam and the general state of the Islamic world is now also becoming the cause of great artistic expression.

1. Byzantine Empire (c. 330 - 1453): a continuation of the Roman Empire with its capital in Istanbul.
2. Sasanian Empire (224 - 651): The last Iranian Empire before the rise of Islam
Khilafat – Rope of Allah

Allah says in the Holy Qur’an:

“And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allah and be not divided...

Khilafat is that Rope of Allah which unites the believers on one hand. Khilafat is the link which connects us to our Creator. The Khalifa is the successor of a prophet and a prophet is a messenger of God. A successor spends his life fulfilling the duties given to his Master and carries out the mission bestowed upon him. Whenever I have thought about the Rope of Allah, the image that has come to my mind is the lifeline that is thrown to a drowning man from a rescue helicopter, or to someone who is stranded on a hill and he is being pulled to the point of safety by rangers. If you ever see those people and the way they cling to that rope, as if they put all their strength to just remaining stuck to that rope because they know that holding on tight to that rope will save their lives. As if this rope is their only hope, their only route to salvation. This is how we should cling to Khilafat. This is how we should be attached to Khilafat and our Khalifa. We Ahmadis really need to understand how blessed we are to have Nizam-e-Khilafat (the system of Khilafat) within our Jama’at. Until we know the true station of Khilafat and importance of Khilafat we can never attach ourselves fully to it. Remember the drowning man clings to that lifeline only because he knows that this will save his life.

Explaining to those who might confuse a Khalifa with worldly leaders, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Vabb said in a Friday sermon delivered in Germany on 6th June 2014:

“Khalifa of the time has a personal connection with people of all backgrounds and all races. The content of the daily post of Khalifa of the time is an unbelievable matter for worldly people. People write personal letters to him, discussing their personal affairs. It is Khilafat that focuses on the pain of every Ahmadi of the world and Khalifa of the time prays for them. Which worldly leader prays for the ailing? Which worldly leader is anxious for young women to get married and prays for them? Which worldly leader is concerned about education of children? Indeed, governments provide education and also provide health service but it is only the Khalifa of the time who is...”
anxious for Ahmadi children to seek education and is anxious for them to have good health”

When we see how much love our Khalifa has for us, we should look at our responsibilities in return. A Waqf-e-Nau should have a special connection with Khilafat. When your parents devoted you for the service of Allah and His Jama’at, they presented this gift to their Khalifa and the Khalifa of the time accepted this present. Or if you are older, you have already renewed this promise and this vow. As Waqifaat-e-Nau the aim of your life should be that you will spend your life in the service of the Jama’at. And you should always pray that may Allah enable you to be the true helpers of Khilafat. But for this to happen your connection with Khilafat should be very strong. There are many ways of achieving this connection. First and foremost you should pray for our beloved Huzooraba. If this is not the first prayer in your namaz it should be among the first. You will feel that praying for Huzooraba regularly will strengthen your connection and love for your Khalifat. Remembering him in our prayers is our duty as he prays for us without asking. Then it is extremely important that we listen to all the Friday sermons delivered by Huzooraba. If you cannot listen to it live because of school, university or work, you should listen to the recording. A summary cannot replace the real sermon, however reading the summary after you have listened to the Friday sermon can reinforce what you have heard. This should be your spiritual food for one week, which you should ponder upon and implement in your lives. Every Friday sermon is like a piece of jewellery adorned with beautiful gems; take them and wear them. There are incidents and stories narrated from which we can learn. There are quotes from the writings of Promised Messiah as which explain to us what he expected from his Jama’at. To sum it all up, every Friday sermon is a treasure trove and it is open for us to take our pickings from and use them in our lives.

You should attach yourselves to MTA, as Huzooraba has reminded us time and time again. Listen to all the other speeches and addresses delivered by Huzooraba and his Waqf-e-Nau classes should be a must-see for you. If we look around us, we see the world in turmoil. In these difficult times, it is only the Ahmadiyya Khilafat, the true Khilafat, which is a source of peace for Ahmadis and others alike. Allah says in the Holy Qur’an:

“Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security and peace after their fear: They will worship Me, and they
will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be the rebellious.”

And it’s not just that we see it at the time when a Khalifa is appointed by God Almighty that the state of fear is changed into peace, we see this every day. We witness how Khilafat changes our fear into peace in our individual lives and with our own personal matters and also collectively as a Jama’at. All of us have experienced it. The attacks on our mosques in Lahore on 28th May 2010 were a bloody and barbaric act. In one day so many people were cruelly killed just because they believed in the Imam of the time. This was a very difficult time for our Jama’at. But we know how our wounds healed and how our tears stopped. It was only through the kind words of our Khalifa. Those Friday sermons that Huzooraba delivered after the incident depicted how a true Muslim responds to such barbaric acts. Huzooraba told us to respond with prayers and by going through the amazing life stories of those martyrs, he laid out examples for us to follow. Huzooraba personally spoke to the families of the martyrs as they later said in MTA interviews too and how it was such a source of comfort for them.

This is how Khilafat changes the state of fear into peace. When a fire broke out in the Baitul Futuh Mosque complex it caused a lot of anxiety among Ahmadis in the UK Jama’at and also worldwide. Because it’s a digital age many videos and pictures of the fire were being sent around; and although we were not physically present it was very painful for us. But then our beloved Huzooraba delivered the Friday sermon and in such a beautiful way changed our anxieties into peace.

The history of Lajna Imaillah is full of amazing stories of the sacrifices our elders made. Ahmadi women have been at the forefront of saying "labaik" to their Khalifa in the time of need. They have been at the forefront of financial sacrifices made in the early years of the Jama’at. The financial sacrifices that made it possible for us to have a mosque in London, the financial sacrifices they made in the early years of Tehrik-e-Jadid which played a pivotal role in the spread of Ahmadiyyat in farfetched lands. Those great ladies, their devotion to Khilafat and their immense sense of obedience to their Khalifa should be an inspiration for us all. When Hazrat Musleh Maudra instructed that the Jama’at should have a mosque in Berlin, he proposed that this mosque should be built with the financial sacrifices of Ahmadi women. He said that the reason behind this decision was because Europe thinks that Muslim women are treated like animals, and when Europe finds out that this mosque in Germany is being paid for by Muslim women, the Europeans will be amazed and embarrassed.

Ahmadi women accepted this task given to them by their Khalifa with
such passion and obedience. They gave their jewellery and their money for this mosque. Those who did not have either gave their animals. There was one old pathan (Persian) woman who gave 2 rupees, and Hazrat Musleh Maud\textsuperscript{a} wrote that when she put this 2 rupees in his hand she was pointing to her clothes and her possessions saying that whatever she owned was already given to her by Jama’at (such was her financial state!) but still she wanted to make that sacrifice for Allah and for Islam\textsuperscript{iv}. Alhamdulillah. We see it even now how Ahmadi women fulfil their pledge to Khilafat and sacrifice their lives, their property, their time and children for the cause of faith. Giving an example of such a lady Huzoor\textsuperscript{aba} in his address delivered to Lajna Imaillah UK’s national Ijtema on 26th Oct 2014 said:

“An Ahmadi lady from Bangladesh, Siddiqa Sahiba, who was an engineer at a private company expressed a desire to attend the UK Jalsa Salana in 2011 and so requested leave from her work. When her company administrators realised that she was an Ahmadi and travelling to meet her Khalifa in London and attend the Jalsa Salana they pressured her to resign, which she did. Having done so she wrote to me for prayers, and thereafter Allah rewarded her for her strong faith. She said that even though it is normally very difficult to find work in Bangladesh, she was able to attain a better and excellent job without any difficulty on the basis of a simple online application.”

Addressing ladies at Jalsa Salana UK in 2005 our Beloved Khalifa told us what he expects from us Ahmadi ladies. Huzoor\textsuperscript{aba} said:

“Your relationship with Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya must not be a temporary one; it should rather be permanent and continue so long as to be visible in your future generations as well. May Allah, because of this relationship that you have with your Lord, always provide the Jama’at with mothers and fathers to bring up such children who truly wish to sacrifice their lives for the cause of Jama’at and for the sake of Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya. May you bring up such generations whose sole objective of life will be to further the mission of the Promised Messiah\textsuperscript{v}, hoist the flag of the Holy Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Him) over the whole world and seek divine pleasure. May Allah enable us all to lead our lives in accordance with this ideology and may we also practice what we believe.”

\textsuperscript{1} The Holy Qur’an Ch.3: V.104  
\textsuperscript{2} The Holy Qur’an Ch.24: V.56  
\textsuperscript{3} Tareekh Lajna Imaillah, Volume 1, p.96  
\textsuperscript{4} Tareekh Lajna Imaillah Volume 1, p.99  
\textsuperscript{5} Address to ladies at Jalsa Salana UK on 30th July 2005, Centenary Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya souvenir, by TEJ Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan, p.274
FOCUS

BOOKS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH

This section of the magazine aims to provide a brief insight into one of the books of The Promised Messiah. In this Issue, we introduce “Paigham-e-Sulah”

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A MESSAGE OF PEACE

‘A Message of Peace’ is an English version of ‘Paigham-e-Sulah’, the last written work of the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at, The Promised Messiah and Mahdi, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (on whom be peace) in 1908.

The first English translation of ‘Paigham-e-Sulah’ was published in Pakistan in 1968. The second edition (a completely new translation) was first translated by a team of Lajna Ima’illah, UK and revised by Munawar A. Saeed and Fouzan M. Pal in 1996.
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in 1835 in Qadian (India), Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, The Promised Messiah and Mahdi, remained dedicated to the study of the Holy Qur’an and to a life of prayer and devotion. Finding Islam the target of foul attacks from all directions, the fortunes of Muslims at a low ebb, faith yielding to doubt and religion only skin-deep, he undertook vindication and exposition of Islam. In his vast corpus of writings (including his epoch-making ‘Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya’), his lectures, discourses, religious debates etc., he argued that Islam was a living faith and the only faith by following which man could establish contact with his Creator and enter into communion with Him.

He announced that God had appointed him the Messiah and Mahdi as mentioned in the prophecies of the Bible, the Holy Qur’an and Ahadith. In 1889 he began to accept initiation into his Community which is now established in more than two hundred countries. His more than eighty books are written mostly in Urdu, but some are in Arabic and Persian.

BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

Paigham-e-Sulah (A Message of Peace) is the last written work of Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Muslim Jama’at. It was written only in two days and was completed on May 24th –just two days before his demise. The citizens of Lahore were the primary audience for this address; however its subject matter is in no way confined to them alone but is of vital importance to the entire population of the Indian subcontinent. The general principles laid down in the work are applicable to all countries which host multiple religions. In this book, The Promised Messiah made a fervent urgent appeal to two great nations of India, namely, Hindus and Muslims. The Promised Messiah declared that the teaching of Islam clearly inculcates respect and reverence for each other’s elders and leaders, and to show respect to their values and religious sensibilities. The Promised Messiah also wrote that Muslims regard Ram Chanderji and Krishan, as divine saints and believe that the Vedas are from God. However, the Hindus of the present age are narrow-minded and show little understanding and respect and that is why despite the fact that they have been living together for a long time, there is little consideration, among them for Muslims. The Promised Messiah made an urgent plea to Hindus to show tolerance and understanding and to extend a hand of friendship to Muslims. It had always been the effort of the Promised Messiah throughout his life that somehow a working rapprochement could be reached between the two major communities of the Sub-continent—the Hindus and the Muslims. To this end, he exerted a lot of pressure counselling the extremist Hindus to exercise and display restraint and patience. With this end in view, the Promised Messiah decided to write this earnest appeal. He planned to read his message of peace on May 26, 1908, at the Ahmadiyyah Building, Lahore. However, he was summoned by his Creator, after a very brief illness. He died on May 26, 1908, in Lahore. The address was read out on his behalf at a conference held on June 21, 1908 at the Punjab University, Lahore for which it was intended.
“It is the universal beneficence of God which encompasses all peoples, all countries and all ages. It so happened lest anyone should have cause to complain that: ‘God has bestowed His favour upon such and such people, but not upon us.’ Or that: ‘So and so received the Book in order to be guided while we did not.’ Or that: ‘In such and such an age, He revealed Himself through His revelations, communications and miracles but in our time He remained hidden.’ Thus, by demonstrating His universal beneficence, He left no justification for such possible accusations.”
(A Message of Peace p.10)

“It is the universal beneficence of God which encompasses all peoples, all countries and all ages. It so happened lest anyone should have cause to complain that: ‘God has bestowed His favour upon such and such people, but not upon us.’ Or that: ‘So and so received the Book in order to be guided while we did not.’ Or that: ‘In such and such an age, He revealed Himself through His revelations, communications and miracles but in our time He remained hidden.’ Thus, by demonstrating His universal beneficence, He left no justification for such possible accusations.”

Similarly, I can also, from personal experience, give testimony that the present age has certainly not been deprived of communication and revelation from God. On the contrary, God still speaks as He used to speak and still hears as He used to hear. It is not that His eternal attributes have become inoperative. I have been blessed with communication from God for nearly thirty years, and He has shown at my hand hundreds of signs which have been observed by thousands of witnesses and have also been widely published in books and newspapers. Without exception, people from all denominations have witnessed one or another of the signs.”
(A Message of Peace p.15-16)

“O Dear Ones! Age-old experience and repeated trials have established, without question, that to insult and abuse the Prophets and Messengers of different countries and peoples is such a deadly poison which not only destroys the body but also kills the soul, thereby ruining the worldly prospects as well as the spiritual. A country whose inhabitants are always after finding faults in the leaders of others, and constantly assassinate their characters, can never rest in peace themselves. Such people can never achieve true unity who, individually or mutually, refer to each other’s Prophets or saints or divines with malice or foul language. Who would not be outraged at the insults hurled at their Prophet or leader?”
(A Message of Peace p.22)

“My countrymen, a religion which does not inculcate universal compassion is no religion at all. Similarly, a human being without the faculty of compassion is no human at all. Our God has never discriminated between one people and another. This is illustrated by the fact that all the potentials and capabilities which have been granted to the Aryans have also been granted to the races inhabiting Arabia, Persia, Syria, China, Japan, Europe and America.”
(A Message of Peace p.6)

“If someone questions the possibility of reaching reconciliation while religious differences are playing such a negative role, throwing hearts further apart, then my answer would be to say that difference in matters of religion can only play a negative role when it disregards the dictates of justice, wisdom and the well-tested human values. It is to avoid this danger that man has been fully fortified with a clear sense of judgement and common sense. He should thus always carve a path for himself which never deviates from the path of justice and good sense.”
(A Message of Peace p.12)
“Some, in their ignorance, blame Islam of Jihad [waging wars] to spread its message and of gaining converts at the point of sword. They claim that these converts were forced to change their religion under the threat of the sword. Woe to them a thousand times! They have exceeded all limits in their injustice and in their efforts to conceal the truth. O pity! What is wrong with them, that they wilfully turn away from realities? Our Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not appear in the land of Arabia in the capacity of a monarch. It therefore cannot be suspected that he had royal majesty and power with him, such that the people gathered under his banner for fear of their lives.”
(A Message of Peace p.37)

**Sample Glossary:**

**Al-Imam al-Mahdi:**
The title given to the Promised Reformer of the latter days; it means guided leader.

**Baba Nanak:**
Believed by the Sikhs to be the founder of their religion, Baba Nanak (1469-1539) was actually a Muslim. He performed Hajj, married into a Muslim family, and lived a pious life.

**Pundit:**
A term used to denote respect or status in the Hindu religion. Pundits are traditionally known to have memorized a substantial portion of the Vedas and conduct religious services for Hindus.

**Quwwat-e-Qudsiyyah:**
Power of purification.

**Sahib:**
A term of respect for a man, similar to the diversity of English terms like mister or sir.

**Samaj:**
A Hindu term for society.

**Vedas:**
Religious texts of Hinduism.

**Zend-Avesta:**
Means commentaries on Avesta, the sacred texts of the Zoroastrian religion. In the context of this book, it refers to the Zoroastrian religion.

“A Message of Peace” is available to read on www.alislam.org
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SESSION

A Waaqifa-e-Nau asked Huzur-e-Anwar\textsuperscript{aba} that her teacher at school had asked if they were in favour of death sentence? She said that she had replied that she herself was in favour of death sentence because she had heard that Islam says that a ‘life for life and ear for ear’. Upon hearing this her teacher replied that then Islam is a very cruel religion. The Waaqifa-e-Nau said that she wanted to ask why is this so in Islam and how should they reply to their teachers?

Huzur-e-Anwar\textsuperscript{aba} said that the question is that what does the Torah say about this? First, you should ask them to read the Torah. It is the religion of the Jews which is cruel, who usually don’t forgive. The Holy Qur’an says a life for life, but if you pay blood money and the victim’s relatives forgive you then such a sentence can also be pardoned by paying some monetary compensation. Huzur\textsuperscript{aba} said that is not the person who has killed another cruel? And if he is punished, then the Law or Government who have sentenced him are cruel. However, Islam still says that the relatives can pardon the killer and they can do so by either not taking any compensation or by accepting some compensation, this is known as ‘blood money’ (deeyat). Islam punishes yet it also speaks about forgiveness. Islam does punish but it says that if reformation can be done without punishment then reform. Islamic Law is a very balanced Law. Huzur\textsuperscript{aba} asked the girl to tell the teacher to read the Torah and to first call the Jews cruel; then we shall see if anyone can survive or not after calling Jews cruel in Germany. Anti-Semitic Law has been passed everywhere and this will come to the forefront. If you talk ill of a Jew, they will kill you for this. Huzur\textsuperscript{aba} said that you should tell your teacher to discuss the Torah first and talk about the Holy Qur’an after that. Huzur\textsuperscript{aba} said let’s
see what he says. Huzur said there is no need to be afraid, you should debate with confidence.

A Waaqifa-e-Nau said: I have two questions. The first question is that a doctor tells beforehand that someone is about to die, then can assisted dying be used?

Huzur-e-Anwar replied that your question itself is not right. Is a doctor God who can tell that another person is about to die? The question is that certain illnesses are such that a person reaches a stage when even Oxygen is not working correctly in them and he is kept on a ventilator. Or his kidneys are not functioning or any other organ is not functioning, consequently death is inevitable due to the brain damage that has happened. At that stage he is administered artificial oxygen or kept alive on a ventilator or a machine. Huzur asked the girl, do you mean to ask if that should be done or not? Is your question whether mercy killing is permissible or not? Huzur-e-Anwar said that there is a law in Austria that if someone becomes ill, doctors can administer a medicine or injection, if he has become frustrated from a long term illness, or has a disease relating to the nerves, or has depression or has an illness of old age or there is no one to look after him then the doctors can give him an injection and kill him. Huzur asked the girl if this was what she wanted to ask. Then Huzur asked if such a law existed in Germany. In response, the girl replied not in Germany. Then Huzur-e-Anwar said that this law does not exist in the UK also but some other countries do have it. Hence, people travel to these countries from the UK or Germany for this purpose and they die there. The question is that until God Almighty wishes to keep a person alive, it is the responsibility of their family to take care of them. If God Almighty wishes to give death then He will do so Himself. Sometimes one’s illness is prolonged and it may be that the means for the forgiveness of his sins are being created. Huzur said that this is why it is wrong and is unlawful in Islam.

The same Waaqifa-e-Nau asked Huzur another question. She asked Huzur-e-Anwar if he had his own ID card?

Huzur-e-Anwar replied that he has an ID card of his own country. Huzur said that he also has an AIMS card and that when he goes to a Jalsa, he too can show his AIMS card to enter. Huzur said that on the day when the duties start for Jalsa, first of all he gets his card checked in order to register his entry (for Jalsa).

A girl asked if a Waaqifa-e-Nau can become a dølmetscher (translator)?

Huzur replied of course she can, in fact she should become a translator. Huzur said that this is what I have said that you should become multiple times. Huzur said that you are a Waaqifa-e-Nau girl and have turned 15 years old and you still do not know this. Another girl said that some people say that it is not permissible. Huzur replied that it is most certainly permissible. Actually it is a good thing. Huzur advised the Waaqifaat-e-Nau that they should become translators and they should excel so much in the language they learn, whether it be German or any other language, that they are able to translate books and other literature too.

A Waaqifa-e-Nau asked Huzur-e-Anwar that why does he have these classes only with Waaqifaat-e-Nau?

Huzur asked that who has said that these classes take place only with Waaqifaat-e-Nau? He said in the UK, classes are also held with other boys and girls. Huzur said only yesterday in Germany two classes had taken place with university students. They were long mulaqats, lasting over an hour. Huzur said that if there is time then he tries to have a class with others too. The reason classes are held with Waaqifaat-e-Nau is that they have devoted their lives and they need these because they will be working for the cause
of Faith. The Waaqifaat-e-Nau have presented themselves for the cause of Faith. Huzur\textsuperscript{at} said that this is why I have classes with them in order to give them more attention so that they are more trained and can give training to others too. If I have time then I do have classes with others (who are not Waaqifaat-e-Nau) too. Sometimes I hold them with other in the UK too.

A Waaqifa-e-Nau said that some people say that Pharaoh at the time of Prophet Moses\textsuperscript{s} (Hazrat Musa\textsuperscript{s}) was the last Pharaoh. She asked if that Pharaoh was really the last one or another Pharaoh had come after him?

Huzur-e-Anwer\textsuperscript{ba} replied that Pharaohs have been born both before and after. The Pharaoh who was drowned in the time of Hazrat Musa\textsuperscript{s} and whose body is preserved, after him Pharaohs have continued to come. Hazrat Musa\textsuperscript{s} had migrated and gone to his country Canaan. Pharaohs continued to be born (in Egypt). Huzur\textsuperscript{ba} said that the history of Pharaohs is very ancient. Pharaoh was the title given to the kings. The kingdom did not come to an end. The kingdom that remained, that is known as the Pharaohs.

A Waaqifa-e-Nau asked that when non religious people are told that everything is created by God Almighty, they ask then who has created God?

Huzur-e-Anwer\textsuperscript{ba} said that the question is that if you tell a person who does not believe in God Almighty that God exists, He has sent religion and that He has created everything then they will say that I do not believe in God so religion does not matter to me. Huzur\textsuperscript{ba} said that it is important that you first make them believe in God. They believe that there is a power which is running the system of the whole universe and that it follows nature. Then the question is who has created the power which is running the system of the whole universe? They will say that there is a higher power. Whichever power you take them to, finally at one point, they will have to admit that there is a supreme power. Then, whichever power is the final power according to them, that power is God. God does not need to be created. Huzur\textsuperscript{ba} said that, the question is that the ultimate power in which they believe, who has created it or was it created by itself? If that power came into being on its own then God also came into being on His Own. Huzur\textsuperscript{ba} said that you should read the book “Our God” (by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad\textsuperscript{a}). This book is a good book that is easy for children to understand. Huzur\textsuperscript{ba} said that he does not know if the book has been translated into German yet but the English translation has been done by the title “Our God” and that you should read this book. When you have read this book, then discuss the existence of God, and who has and how He was created. Huzur\textsuperscript{ba} said that you should do some reading of your own, as you have become a Waqf-e-Nau, you yourself must seek knowledge.

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**Conditions of Bai’at**

1. **How many conditions of Bai’at are there?**  
   Answer: 10

2. **The first condition states that one must abstain from all forms of what?**  
   Answer: Shirk

3. **In which year did the first Bai’at take place?**  
   Answer: 1889

4. **In which city did the first Bai’at take place?**  
   Answer: Ludhiana

5. **In whose house did the first Bai’at take place in?**  
   Answer: Hazrat Sufi Ahmad Jaan Sahib

6. **How many people pledged the allegiance at the hands of the Promised Messiah as on the first day?**  
   Answer: 40

7. **Who had the honour to become the first person to take the Bai’at at the hands of the Promised Messiah as?**  
   Answer: Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Nooruddeen

8. **On which date did the Promised Messiah as publish the announcement that God had ordained him to take the Bai’at?**  
   Answer: 1st December 1888

9. **On which date did the Promised Messiah as publish a pamphlet in which he laid down the 10 conditions of Bai’at?**  
   Answer: 12th January 1889

10. **In the third condition of Bai’at what does one vow to do?**  
    Answer: That He/She shall offer the five daily prayers and shall try his/her best to be regular in offering tahajjud and invoking darud on the Holy Prophet Muhammadas.
CROSSWORD

Find these words!

- TEN
- BROTHERHOOD
- LUDHIANA
- TAQWAH
- ALLEGIANCE
- BAIAT
- SHIRK
- FALSEHOOD
In Arabic when you call someone you say ياً meaning ‘Oh’. For example: ‘Oh mother’.

Using the following words please translate the questions and answer them in the exercise section of this page. You may need to refer to previous lessons to accomplish this task.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A trouser</th>
<th>سَرْوَالَّ</th>
<th>A shirt</th>
<th>قَمِيصٌ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A hat</td>
<td>قَبْعَةٌ</td>
<td>A coat</td>
<td>مِعْطَفٌ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A pair of shoes</td>
<td>جَذَاَءٌ</td>
<td>A pair of socks</td>
<td>جُوْرِبٌ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A ring</td>
<td>خَاتَمٌ</td>
<td>A belt</td>
<td>جَزَّامٌ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A dress</td>
<td>فُسْتَانُ</td>
<td>A headscarf</td>
<td>جَجَابٌ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brother  أَخَّ \ A sofa  أَرِيَّة \ A bed  سَرِيرَ

A desk  المَكْتَبٌ \ A cupboard  الخَزَانَةُ \ On  عَلَى

In  فِيٞ \ Under  تَحْتَ \ A grandmother  جَدَّةٌ

A teacher  مُعْلِمٌ \ A friend  صَدِيقٌ \ Sister  أُختَ
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Question</th>
<th>Arabic Translation</th>
<th>English Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oh mother, where is my shirt?</td>
<td>يَا أمي، أيْنَ قَمِيصِي؟</td>
<td>Oh father, where is my cap?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your shirt is in the cupboard.</td>
<td>قَمِيصُكَّةٌ فِي الخزَانَة.</td>
<td>Your cap is on your desk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh sister, where is my coat?</td>
<td>يا أختي، أيْنَ قَمِيصٌ؟</td>
<td>Oh brother, where is my belt?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your coat is on the sofa.</td>
<td>قَمِيصُكَّةٌ فِي السَّوَاكا.</td>
<td>Your belt is on the bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh my friend, where is the teacher?</td>
<td>يا أُمي، أيْنَ تَمْثَلُكَة؟</td>
<td>Oh grandmother, where is my headscarf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher is in the mosque.</td>
<td>آمَّكَة.</td>
<td>Your headscarf is under your bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh sister, where is my dress?</td>
<td>يا أختي، أيْنَ رَمْيَةٌ؟</td>
<td>Oh mother, where is my ring?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your dress is on my bed.</td>
<td>رَمْيَةٌ فِي رُكْمِي.</td>
<td>Your ring is on your desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now, try to translate the following sentences:

In Arabic when you call someone you say ﻲِـاُمِّـي

A pair of shoes
A hat
A shirt
A belt
A ring
A pair of socks
A shirt
A trouser

You may need to refer to previous lessons to accomplish this task.
Sajida Hameed: The Mother of Hartlepool Jamaat

“\nThe Pool of Hearts\n”

By Munavara Chauri, Salisbury

It has now been nearly 19 years since Sajida Hameed – my Mother, passed away. Yet, even to this day, Sajida Hameed remains in the hearts of many, and indeed as Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh was to once tell her, “You will be remembered as Queen Victoria in history,” she will continue to be a recurring name in history of Ahmadiyyat. Why? Because she was the first Lajna to start a Jamaat where the majority of the Jamaat was indigenous, that is, natives of this land. In total, she converted 18 ladies, and what is of further surprise, is that she did this over a 20 year period, whilst raising a family of 4 children, caring for her Mother-in-law and extended family, running a family business, writing a book on the Holy Prophetsaw, publishing a religious magazine (“Kaukab”) and battling cancer. It was then Allah’s Decree that He took her from this world at the age of 47. However, she achieved more in that short life, than many people achieve in a period twice as long.

Early Years in Hartlepool & the First Bai’at

Sajida Hameed was born on April 13th, 1947, in Amritsar. She was the daughter of Brigadier Muhammad WaqiuZamman Khan and Qanita Khan. Sadly, Sajida’s first Mother - Qanita, died at a young age when Sajida was around 2 years old. Thereafter, her father affectionately cared for his young daughter and did not remarry until she was around seven years old. He then married Amatul Majeed Sahibah, the daughter of Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmadra. Sajida then had the good fortune to grow up in the household of this pious elder and also interacted with other members of the Promised Messiah’sas family of that era. It embedded a firm faith in her and what was to later become a passion to convey the message of the Promised Messiahas.

Sajida married Dr. Hameed Ahmad Khan, the son of Abdul Majeed Khan Sahib and Malka Khanum Sahiba, in February 1969. The young couple then settled in Hartlepool, Northern England in 1971. Sajida was an intellectual. Before marriage she had achieved a Double Masters Degree in English, which was a rarity for the girls in her family of that era. The couple instantly fell in love with the modest town of Hartlepool. With its port and factories, it was a typical northern town, which would one day become extraordinary. My parents loved northerners and said that they were friendly, humble people. My parents also delighted in the nearby Lake District, and whenever relatives came to visit, it was routine to show them the beauty of Ullswater and Lake Windermere.

The first friend Sajida and Dr. Hameed made in Hartlepool, was whilst he was training at
Hartlepool General Hospital as a medical registrar. Their flat overlooked the same drive at the medical ward where Pamela Elder worked as a nurse. Pam would see the young couple walking in the drive with a pretty toddler girl and a baby in the pushchair. Pam relates that it was customary for the staff to exchange gifts at Christmas. Pam took some Christmas gifts to my parents’ flat; it was this initial act of kindness that was to determine her future path and began Sajida’s life as a passionate Dai’ilAllah (caller to Allah). The couple invited Pam into their flat; it was the beginning of a lifetime’s friendship. Actually, Pam became like a sister to my Mother, and she began to babysit for my parents. We always regarded her as “Aunty Pam”, an aunt we knew more familiarly than many of our biological aunts. My Mother also taught Pam a few Asian recipes; Pam recollects they were friends for several years before Sajida actually began preaching. Indeed, with the basis of a friendship, Pam was aware of the sincerity of her dear friend, Sajida. Sajida gave her a Holy Qur’an and Pam gave her a Bible. They would spend evenings together making a comparative study of Islam and Christianity, and cross referencing these holy books.

In October 1982 it was the auspicious visit of Chaudhry Zafrullah Khan Sahib, which was to be a turning point for both Sajida and Pam. Sajida who was very sociable had begun inviting acquaintances to gatherings. Her contacts would include neighbours, teachers of her children, parents of her children’s friends, the secretaries of her husband and any other acquaintances she made. Thus, it was a mix of such ladies that often numbered 20-30, for whom Sajida would cook a delicious meal, that the venerable Chaudhry Sahib was invited to address, in a Question & Answer session. Pam listened to him most attentively and has recollected the profound influence his words had on her;

“When he spoke he was very inspiring, when you looked at him, you knew he spoke the truth. You knew what he said and did was the same.” At that point of epiphany, Pam realised there was no reason for her not to be an Ahmadi Muslim, as there was nothing that this pious companion of the Promised Messiah said, with which she did not agree. Thus, she took the Bai’at (oath of allegiance) in his presence. At the relatively young age of 34, she had achieved her first Bai’at. Sajida had certain distinctive qualities which were to make her so successful in Tabligh, as Pam has described;

“She was generous; she would share her last bite of food with anybody. She was kind, honest, generous, trustworthy, a wonderful friend...She lived her faith.”

When asked what made Sajida so successful in her preaching, Pam replied; “She gave people a lot of time...She was happy to listen to their views as well.” By the Grace of Allah, Pam has remained an active member of the local Hartlepool Jamaat to date.

A n E x t r a o r d i n a r y ‘ O u t o f B o d y ’ E x p e r i e n c e

1981 was eventful in another way for Sajida Hameed. It was the year she had to undergo a mastectomy, after being diagnosed with breast cancer. My Mother was extremely positive by nature, and her intrinsic faith would never let her sink into any form of depression. It was perhaps because of this deep faith that she was blessed with an extraordinary ‘out of body’ experience, during this difficult time. It was an extraordinary
meeting with Allah Almighty, which seemed to
determine her future. As she lay on the operating
table, she felt that she had died. She saw relatives
crying in the corners of her house. She had a
surreal view of her body lying on the operating
table, and then it was as if she was with her Creator.
She felt upset at her death and expressed this to
Allah Almighty. She explained that her children
were young (I was only 5 at the time and my
older siblings were 10 and 11), and that she did
not wish to die. She requested Allah Almighty to
return her to the world. Allah responded, that the
timescales between the two worlds were different
and that 1,000 years had elapsed since her death,
so her return would be futile, if her object was
to be reunited with her family. My Mother then
replied that surely Allah Almighty was the Lord of
Time, and so could reverse time, as desired. There
was then a pause, as if God was considering her
argument, and then Allah - the Merciful, agreed.
However, He declared that two signs would prove
to Sajida that Allah had decreed this. Firstly, she
would not require the blood given to her, and
secondly, that she would suffer great pain after the
operation.
When my Mother regained consciousness, she saw
the blood being transfused into her and she began
to frantically point to the blood bag, as if imploring
the doctors to remove it. The words of Allah clearly
echoed in her mind. My Father thought my Mother
to be in a confused state; a natural consequence
of her condition. It is thus interesting to learn that
my Mother’s body began reacting to the blood,
much to the surprise of the medical staff. She was
now on her 3rd pint, and usually if a patient was to
badly react to a blood transfusion, it was during
the first pint. The staff were then compelled to
stop the transfusion. Thereafter, my Mother also
suffered acute pain in the area of her operation,
for 2 or 3 days. When the pain became intolerable,
my Mother then passionately prayed to Allah,
stating that she was fully aware that the pain was a
proof that Allah had executed His own Decree, in
the return of her life. Thus, she beseeched Him to
relieve her of it now. Allah -The Merciful, accepted
her prayer.
Indeed, the experience was a unique and profound
one, which I think shaped the rest of my Mother’s
life. What amazes me is that this intense experience,
this communion with God, was experienced at a
relatively young age by my Mother, when she was
only 34 years old.
The following year, my Mother enjoyed the
unexpected delight of a second son - Abid
Waheed Ahmad Khan. It was something she had
desired and had even asked the doctors if it would
be possible, post-operation. They had dismissed
her question, as if she was expecting more than
she should. Yet Allah the All-Powerful, had blessed
her with her heart’s desire. Her son was to be an
intelligent and pious boy, who would grow up to
dedicate his life to the Jamaat, something which
would have pleased my mother immensely.

A L i f e - C h a n g i n g  D e c i s i o n
a n d  O b e d i e n c e  t o  K h i l a f a t

It was the year Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad\(^{\text{\text{h}}}\) -
Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV, visited England, after
his spiritual appointment. My parents had begun
plans to return to Pakistan. My Father worried for
the moral upbringing of his children, and was
considering establishing a surgery in Rawalpindi.
My Mother met Huzoor in London and expressed
their intentions. Huzoor’s response astonished
my Mother, Sajida. He said that he did not like
the thought of them leaving without leaving
anything in this country, and that they should not
go until they had established 10 Ahmadi families
in Hartlepool! This must have seemed close to
impossible when my Mother had only converted
one lady at the time (Pamela Elder), and this only
after the prayers and perseverance of 8 years!
Yet the couple immediately changed their plans

MARYAM 54
and destiny, and indeed that of us, their 4 children. Their obedience to khilafat meant that there was no decision to be made. Indeed, their obedience was quickly rewarded by the fact that Huzoor soon migrated to England (April 1984), and both my parents would have been completely devastated, had they returned to a country in which their beloved Khalifa could no longer reside.

Further Converts

In 1985, my Mother was blessed with 2 more converts. The first was Beryl Taylor, whom she had known for 10 years. Beryl relates being impressed by Sajida's kindness, generosity and hospitality. She would invite the Taylors for dinner two or three times a week. Such was the extent of her hospitality, despite having three young children; she always had time for others. Beryl relates that she loved the close-knit feel of the family Sajida prayed for Beryl for many years. She asked Beryl if she would like to “change”. Beryl, who had now drifted away from the church, although she regularly attended a Methodist church on Sundays when she was young, said she would think about it. There was nothing in Islam which she disliked, but she perhaps lacked the courage to be different. Sajida's prayers were answered. Ever faithful, she had prayed that Beryl may receive a divine sign and she had told her friend that she may receive one. That “sign” duly came. Beryl dreamt that she saw an Asian man, dressed in a white suit, by the side of her bed. She relates that she saw the dream again, but that the next time the man put his hands out towards her. Allah alone knows who or what the individual in the dream was. When Beryl related the dream to Sajida, Sajida told her that it was a sign and that she must tell her, if it recurred. Indeed, a few weeks later, Beryl experienced the same dream again and now had the full conviction to convert. My Mother was ecstatic; it had been about six years of kindness, good conduct and prayer, which now bore fruit. 4 months later, Ronnie Rowsell, also accepted Ahmadiyyat. She was undoubtedly the fruit of another noble pursuit of my Mother’s, which was beginning a magazine designed for Ahmadi children and new converts. Indeed, Sajida was a pioneer, identifying the need for the dissemination of Islamic knowledge within Ahmadi families in the UK, at a time when the Internet was unheard of or a futuristic fantasy. She was courageous and dedicated enough to envisage, create, publish and circulate this magazine, (“Kaukab”), which was soon in popular demand by Lajna, during its years of publication from 1983-1988. My Mother wanted to create something new, something both educational and entertaining. My younger brother Abid has commented about this project:

“My Ummi used her talents. Many of us are guilty of lacking initiative or being fearful and for these reasons we don’t utilise our skills to the best of our abilities. But a great lesson we can learn from her is that you must take the initiative. The Kaukab magazine was a great illustration of that....”

Another important achievement during that period of Sajida’s life was that she wrote a biographical book on the Holy Prophet saw, designed for children (1983). The following year, Patricia Duxfield also converted. Sajida had met her through our Father, Dr. Hameed, who had began preaching to ‘Aunty Pat’s’ husband. I recollect Aunty Pat always relating of her conversion, that it was as if Sajida was able to identify, “the special key” to “unlock her”. She said that it was her interest in Asian cooking which brought them together. So, again, it was my Mother’s hospitality and great friendship, which initially attracted this lady to Islam.

The New Converts’ Forums

My parents now felt the need to provide some moral training for the new converts. They wanted to give them an opportunity to learn from others and exchange views and also to provide an arena for those interested in Islam,
to learn further. It was a weekend programme which subsequently became a regular annual event, until my Mother became unwell in 1992. Browsing over the past programmes (which Uncle Bilal has meticulously preserved), I was impressed by the dynamic programmes they arranged, with both distinguished guests and the new Ahmadies themselves, as speakers and chairpersons. They covered a diverse range of topics.

The second New Converts' Forum in 1989 was covered by The Sunday Telegraph. I remember when the article was published some months later (March, 1990), my Mother was to appear in a striking picture on the front of the magazine in full black hijab, alongside her younger sister (Nabeela Tahir) and Tahira Selby Sahiba. The headline read "Britain's Daughters of Islam". It was a fairly positive coverage of the event. The apex of these forums however must have been the blessed presence of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh for a Question and Answer session in 1991. I wonder now, how my Mother managed to organise receiving Huzoor in her house, and yet still had the time to prepare and execute a speech on "The Existence of God, According to the Holy Qur'an", on the morning of his arrival!

V i s i t s  b y  t h e  K h u l a f a

By the Grace of Allah, in total, three Khulafas of our Jamaat (Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IIIrh, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh and Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Vaba), were to make seventeen trips to Hartlepool. What elevated this humble northern town by the sea, was indeed the passion and commitment to preaching my parents developed there. I am sure it was because of the recognition of their dedication to preaching that Huzoor graced us with his presence so often. In October 1997, Huzoor brought the entire Urdu Class to Hartlepool! It was another remarkable trip and again I believe part of the ongoing blessings my Mother was awarded even after her earthly life, for her dedication to the propagation of Islam, which was to change the lives of 18 women, who converted through her.

The legacy of her work now stands proud in the beautiful, honey-coloured mosque that beautifies Hartlepool. 30 years after Sajida's first endeavours to preach, this mosque in a way commemorates the incredible service to the Jamaat both my parents Sajida Hameed and Dr. Hameed Khan gave. The distinction of the mosque is that it was the first completely purpose-built Ahmadi Mosque, outside of London. It was inaugurated on November 11, 2005, by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Vaba. The mosque stands opposite a local church which is befitting; it seems to reflect the fact that my parents were to also happily coexist alongside their Christian neighbours, in a town they grew to love. It was a town my Mother could never leave after the establishment of a Jamaat. Just as she was to improve and beautify Hartlepool spiritually, the mosque has physically beautified and sparked the regeneration of a once run-down area.

If space was not an issue I could continue to elaborate on how Sajida Hameed was to further expand the Jamaat she began, which Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh was to so beautifully phrase as “Hartlepool - The Pool of Hearts”. InshAllah, the Jamaat will continue to produce such remarkable Lajna members, as the Promised Messiah has himself prophesied the dominance of Ahmadiyyat within 300 years of his advent. What Sajida did at a young age is remarkable (having passed away age 47), and a lesson to us all that nothing is impossible with Divine Help and with the direction and prayers of our beloved Khulafa.
This article will give an overview of the possible career pathways for students currently in, or thinking of applying for Biomedical Sciences. Being a 2nd year student of BSc Medical Sciences myself, the range of career pathways that I have been made aware of are numerous, but below are some of the opportunities that people usually opt for after this particular degree.

What is Biomedical Sciences?
This degree offers a solid foundation in core biomedical subjects such as anatomy, physiology, pharmacology and neuroscience, and is ideal for people with a broad interest in the science of human beings. This course can lead to careers related to healthcare, medical research, or even management of health organisations. This course also provides a very solid foundation for those people thinking about postgraduate medical or dental qualifications.

Teaching & Research
The career which directly relates to a biomedical degree is research and teaching at University level. For this, a Masters and PhD degree is usually undertaken from where you can be directly recruited to undertake research in research labs at various universities. Alongside your research, most universities require you to teach your area of interest at various lectures. Work experience and voluntary work in research should be done whilst studying a Biomedical Science degree to ensure that a career in research is really something that you want to follow later.

Research in Industries
Research opportunities are also available at numerous pharmaceutical and research industries, like Covance, AstraZeneca, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), etc. Again, it is essential to gain some relevant experience before following this career pathway. Experience can be gained either by asking your tutor or your lecturer for a lab placement which usually lasts for 6 weeks. It is also possible to apply for student internships in the aforementioned companies which will definitely give you valuable insight into what working in these areas actually entails.

NHS Scientist Training Program (STP)
This is a competitive 3 year training program in the NHS (salary paid), which also gets you a Masters degree, for postgraduates. You can choose a range of specialisms under the heading of: informatics, life-sciences, physical sciences and biomedical engineering, and physiological sciences. For instance, under physiological sciences, you can chose between audiology, cardiac science, critical care science, gastrointestinal physiology, neurophysiology, respiratory and sleep science, and vascular science. An important thing to note about this program is that it is not just lab based. In this program, it is usually 50% lab-based and 50% clinical-based (especially if you do physiological sciences).

Once you have completed the STP, you are eligible to apply for suitable healthcare science posts at clinical scientist level.

Some useful websites:
1. http://www.astrazeneca.co.uk/home
Any thousands of years ago there lived a poor slave named Androcles. Life was very miserable for the slaves. They barely had enough to eat, and if they didn’t work hard enough they were sent to Rome to be thrown to the lions.

One day, Androcles had a chance to escape. He didn’t hesitate. He ran and ran, and ran again until he was utterly tired, so he hid in the forest until he had enough energy to move on. He was just settling down to sleep when suddenly out of nowhere a great big lion hobbled out from behind a tree. At first, Androcles was terrified, ‘How cruel is my fate?’ thought Androcles, ‘I had just managed to escape my cruel masters only to be eaten by a vicious lion!’

But when he looked closer he realised that the lion was injured; he was not about to jump on him, but was holding out his paw helplessly. Androcles moved cautiously towards the lion, whose paw was all swollen and bleeding. There was a huge thorn stuck in between the claws, which must have been causing the lion considerable pain.

Androcles pulled the thorn out, and cleaned the wound before wrapping it in leaves to keep it dry. The great lion licked Androcles with his very rough tongue and then lied down beside him and fell asleep. He kept Androcles warm all night and in the morning the lion slipped away and Androcles continued on his way.

Many years passed and soon Androcles’ luck ran out; he was captured by his master’s men and was sent to the arena to fight. The trap door opened and a huge lion came pouncing out. Androcles closed his eyes and waited for certain death. But then he felt a rough tongue licking his face. It was his lion! The crowds cheered with delight at this strange turn of events. The emperor was left stunned and he asked Androcles to tell the story of how he had taken the thorn out of the lion’s paw.

The emperor decided to free Androcles, and said that the lion could go with him. Androcles and the lion took great care of one another. Androcles kept the lion’s coat well brushed and his paws free from thorns, while the lion kept Androcles warm in bed at night and so they both lived to a very old age together.

Androcles and the Lion

A Retelling from the Fables of Phaedrus

(Amended and taken from 100 Classic Stories edited by Vic Parker)