

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



100 years of Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya

Created December 1905

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore (U.K.)

The first Islamic Mission in the U.K., established 1913 as the Working Muslim Mission

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Next Meeting

Assalamu alaikum

Venue: **Darus Salaam**

Date: **Sunday 2nd October 2005**

Time: **3.00 p.m.**

The ideal characteristics of a Muslim
by **Habiba Anwar**

Regular activities

Darus-i Quran and Hadith:

Every Friday at 2.30 p.m.

Meetings of the Executive:

First Sunday of every month at
2.00 p.m.

Meeting of the Jamaat:

First Sunday of every month at
3.00 p.m.

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Ramadan 2005

Ramadan begins on **Wednesday 5th October** this year. *Id-ul-Fitr* is on **Friday 4th November**. These have been set by your Jama'at according to the following data and method.

The birth of the new moon takes place (regardless of your location in the world) on 3rd October at 11.27 our time. We then examine the sunset and moonset times that evening in London and find that the moonset at 18.32 local time is *before* sunset at 18.33. If the moonset had been *after* sunset that evening, then we would take that as the beginning of the new month. We would also

have taken that evening as the beginning of the new month if the moon had been at least 18 hours old, but it is not. Therefore, the evening when the new month begins is 4th October, and hence the first fast is on 5th October.

In case of *Id-ul-Fitr*, it is a similar position. The birth of the new moon is on 2nd November at 01.23 our time and the moonset and sunset on the evening of 2nd November are at 16.20 and 16.31 respectively, local time. Therefore we cannot take that evening as marking the start of the new month but it must be the next evening, 3rd November, making *Id* as the 4th.

We use this method as there is no generally accepted and agreed method among Muslims for pre-determining the start of the new month. If there were agreement on some other scheme for *pre-determination* we would follow that.

We kindly request you **not to cause confusion** near the start of Ramadan or just before *Id* by informing that other groups or countries are starting on the day before us or after us. It is now widely known that Saudi Arabia has often been declaring the new month too early. But, to be fair, Saudi Arab religious authorities say that other countries should make their own determination

of the dates *locally* and not follow the Saudi announcements. However, the Central London Mosque always follows the Saudi dates, thus causing confusion as they did at the last *Id-ul-Adha* in January and the *Id-ul-Fitr* before in November 2004. This further encourages other Muslims in U.K. to follow the Saudi dates as well.

Based on previous experience, we have reasons to think that Saudi Arabia will hold *Id-ul-Fitr* earlier than Friday 4th November. Firstly, they might start Ramadan on Tuesday 4th October, in which case they would *have* to hold *Id* on 2nd or 3rd November. Secondly, even if they start Ramadan with us on 5th October, but as they prefer to avoid holding *Id* on a Friday they would declare *Id* to be on Thursday 3rd November. Let us see what happens. It is regrettable that these futile discussions and controversies deflect us from the true purpose of Ramadan, which we describe below.

Islamic teachings about fasting in Ramadan

Importance of self-reform and abstention from base desires

1. "O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil." — The Holy Quran, 2:183.

2. Allah says: "And when My servants ask you (O Prophet) about Me, surely I am nigh. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should hear My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way." — 2:186.

3. "And swallow not up your property among yourselves by false means, nor seek to gain access thereby to the authorities so that you may swallow up other people's property wrongfully while you know." — 2:188.

4. "He who does not give up uttering falsehood and acting according to it, God has no need of his

giving up his food and drink." — The Holy Prophet Muhammad.

5. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights, and explained it by saying: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:2-4.) Moses also fasted forty days and forty nights (Exodus 34:28).

Purpose of fasting in Islam

1. To develop and strengthen our powers of self-control, so that we can resist wrongful desires and bad habits, and therefore "guard against evil" (see extract 1 above). In fasting, by refraining from the natural human urges to satisfy one's appetite, we are exercising our ability of self-restraint, so that we can then apply it to our everyday life to bring about self-improvement.

2. To attain nearness and closeness to God so that He becomes a reality in our lives. As we bear the rigours of fasting purely for the sake of following a Divine commandment, knowing and feeling that He can see all our actions, however secret, it intensifies the consciousness of God in our hearts, resulting in a higher spiritual experience (see extract 2 above).

3. To learn to refrain from usurping other's rights and belongings. In fasting we voluntarily give up even what is rightfully ours; how can then we think of taking what is not ours but belongs to someone else? (See extract 3 above.)

4. Charity and generosity is especially urged during Ramadan. We learn to give, and not to take. The deprivation of fasting makes us sympathise with the suffering of others, and desirous of alleviating it; and it makes us remember the blessings of life which we normally take for granted.

Fasting in Islam does not just consist of refraining from eating and drinking, but from every kind of selfish desire and wrong-doing. The fast is not merely of the body, but essentially that of the spirit as well (see extract 4 above). The physical fast is a symbol and outward expression of the real, inner fast.

Fasting is a spiritual practice to be found in all religions (see extracts 1 and 5 above). The great Founders of various faiths (Buddha, Moses, Jesus, etc.) practised quite rigorous fasting as a preliminary to attaining their first experience of spiritual enlightenment and communion with God. This kind of communion is indicated in extract 2 above.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad on fasting:

“People are unaware of the true nature of fasting. The fact is that no country or realm can be described if one has not been there. Fasting is not just the state of remaining hungry and thirsty. Its nature and effect can only be discovered by experience. The human makeup is such that the less food is consumed the greater is the purification of the soul and the development of the powers of inner vision. God's purpose is that you should reduce one kind of food (physical) and increase the other kind (spiritual). The person fasting must remember that the aim is not simply to remain hungry; he should be engrossed in the remembrance of God so as to attain severance from worldly desires. The object of fasting is that a person should abstain from the food which nourishes the body and obtain the other food which satisfies and brings solace to the soul. Those who truly fast for the sake of attaining to God, and not merely as a custom, should be absorbed in the praise and glorification of God, and in meditating upon His Unity.”

Maulana Muhammad Ali on fasting:

“The real purpose of fasting is to attain righteousness. A person who undergoes hunger and thirst, but does not behave righteously, has done nothing. If someone is told the aim and object of doing a certain duty, and he does that duty but does not attain the required aim and object, it is as if he has not done that duty.”

Prayers during Ramadan urged by Maulana Muhammad Ali on our Jama'at

In the month of Ramadan Maulana Muhammad Ali used to exhort the Jama'at to undertake a spiritual

exertion (*mujahida*) in two forms. One was to fall in prayer before God and beseech Him tearfully in *tahajjud* prayers to enable us to carry out the work of the propagation of Islam and the Quran, and the other was to make financial sacrifices. In this connection he has written many heart-felt, moving prayers in his articles and *khutbas* published in *Paigham Sulh* and entreated every member of the Jama'at that at least in the month of Ramadan they should treat the *tahajjud* prayer as obligatory for them.

Some prayers that he urged upon the Jama'at are given below. These begin with a verse of *Sura Fatiha*, which is followed by a prayer based on the meaning of the verse.

Al-hamdu li-llahi Rabb il-alamin — 'All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds'. O God, You have provided the very best means for the physical development of human beings. Now **provide for Your creation spiritual nourishment through the Quran**, as they have moved far off from You and are lost in darkness racing towards destruction. Acquaint their hearts with the bliss that is attained by bowing at Your threshold.

O God, Who granted the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his Companions unique success enabling them to transform the destinies of entire countries and nations, **foster and nourish us and our Jama'at today** to make it reach the pinnacle of success in spreading the Quran and propagating Islam in the world. Let the foundations for the propagation of Your religion **be laid by our hands**, upon which an edifice continues to be raised till the Day of Judgment.

Ar-Rahman-ir-Rahim — 'The Beneficent, the Merciful'. Your mercy is so boundless that it is aroused even without humans asking for it. It is by Your mercy that the efforts of human beings come to fruition. By Your beneficence **provide guidance** through the Quran to those who are engulfed in darkness. **Make successful our insignificant efforts**, that we may take Your holy message to these people.

Maliki yaum-id-din — 'Master of the day of Judgment'. O God, we are Your humble, unworthy servants. There are shortcomings in us, in myself, in my Jama'at. Sometimes Your orders are even disobeyed. By means of Your authority of judgment, **forgive our faults and infringements**, and let them not be obstacles to the success of our efforts.

Iyya-ka na'budu wa iyya-ka nasta'in — 'Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help'. We serve You and wish to exalt Your name in the world. This is the sole aim of our lives. But we are small in numbers and weak while the task is mammoth. We who are exhausted, weak, humble and sinful, beg only You for help. **Grant this Jama'at the success** which You bestow on people who spread Your name in the world.

Ihdi-nas-sirat al-mustaqim, sirat-allazina an-amta alai-him — 'Guide us on the right path, the path of those upon whom You bestowed favours'. You have been showering Your servants with the greatest favours. You have never let those fail who made it their aim in life to exalt Your name. Guiding us on the straight path, **confer on us the same favour** which You granted to those before us. **Blow the breeze of Your help** upon us as You made it flow for them and **open the doors of Your bounty** upon us in the same way.

Ghair-il-maghdubi alaihim wa la-ddallin — 'Not those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor those who go astray'. O Master, let it not be that we make worldly gain to be our objective and give up spreading religion, as is the state of the general Muslims today, or that we become misguided and destroy our powers for the sake of following exaggerated, wrong beliefs, as some are doing.

Another prayer by Maulana Muhammad Ali:

"O God, Your Holy Word that was revealed for the guidance of the world is not being spread even by its believers. But it is Your promise that You will make it prevail in the world. We too heard the voice of one who came to call to Your message

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad), and our feeble hands came forward to take this great burden. It was this voice which revived our dead hearts. But our Jama'at is like an ant facing the mountain of unbelief. It is Your promise that has strengthened our hearts. We need Your help above all. We know we are unworthy and not fit to receive Your help, but, O God, Your religion, Your Quran and Your Prophet are deserving of Your help. Let help for them be today manifested through our hands, may Your light illuminate our dark hearts, and may we witness with our own eyes the fulfilment of Your promise."

— From *Mujahid-i Kabir*, Urdu biography of Maulana Muhammad Ali, pages 267–270.

Berlin activities

Mosque takes part in Open Day for Historical Buildings

Muhammad Ali reports from Berlin that every year in Germany there are two Open Days when historical buildings, which participate, are open for visitors and there are special arrangements to introduce visitors to the history and architecture of the building. Our mosque took part in these 'Open Days' this year, held on 10th and 11th September. The mosque remained open from 10.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. The German Department of Historical Places prints a book listing all the buildings which will be open and the times of lectures. This year the name of our mosque was also printed in this book and as a result a large number of people came.

On these days we delivered 6 introductory and mosque history related lectures. Besides that, we delivered 2 lectures on Islam in general. After all of these lectures people asked questions. Approximately 400 people visited the mosque in these 2 days. And nearly 300 of them listened to the lectures. Each lecture was about one and a half hour with questions. All of the lectures were delivered by our German Brother Tahir Neef in

the German language. This was the greatest number of visitors I have ever seen in 2 days during my stay here. Visitors came even before the time of lectures and waited patiently and most of them stayed till the end of the lecture. During the time between lectures, we discussed individually with visitors and answered their questions. Overall people were happy to come to the mosque and to see the building and to know a bit more about Islam and the mosque.

Brother Tahir is a German Muslim who is helping us with great zeal for the last one and a half years. He is giving a lot of time to the mosque. Without his help it would not have been possible to manage all this so well. This brother has been a great blessing and help from Allah for us here in Germany.

Two photographs from these Open days are shown below.



Tahir Neef addressing visitors in the mosque



A view of the visitors listening to a lecture

*Commentary on the Holy Quran,
continued from last issue:*

An-Najm: ‘The Star’

Chapter 53 of the Quran

Explained by Dr Basharat Ahmad

Translated from Urdu by Kalamazad
Mohammad, Trinidad

16–18. “When that which covers covered (*ma yaghsha*) the lote-tree, the eye (*basar*) turned not aside (*ma zagha*), nor did it exceed the limit (*ma tagha*). Certainly he saw of the greatest signs of his Lord.

Ma yaghsha (what covered) is another expression indicating honour just as that expressed in verse 10: “So He revealed to His servant what He revealed (*ma auha*)”.

In other words, that lote tree under which the coronation took place in the presence of a heavenly assembly was the place where the Holy Prophet (*sas*) witnessed the most wonderful and most remarkable Divine splendour concerning which the commentary, *Ruh-ul Ma’ni*, says that the covering was really the light of the Lord of Glory and Honour. That is, that particular station was transformed at that moment into a manifestation of Divine refugence and the Holy Prophet (*sas*) was covered with the radiance of the Lord of Honour and all kinds of extraordinarily magnificent Divine bounties and heavenly signs which are beyond the ability of man to comprehend. Of course, our Holy Prophet (*sas*) saw all these singular sights in their fulsome grandeur.

Basar as well as *basirat* means the eye.

It is clearly evident from the above verses that what is mentioned in this verse related to the eye of the heart (spiritual eye). Therefore, the meaning of “eye” here is insight (*basirat*) or the inner eye.

Ma zagha (did not turn aside) means that the eye held firm. In other words, the eye of the heart endured the sight and never wavered.

Ma tagha (did not exceed the limit) tells us that he did not overstep

the boundary. That is, he made no mistake as regards what he saw and heard.

In this verse, attention is focussed on highlighting the natural capabilities and the perfection of the Holy Prophet's spiritual powers. When human senses and powers are not strong enough to bear the burden of a particular task, they then suffer failure and man can derive no benefit from them. For example, if a load is too heavy, then man's strength and arms are rendered useless. Again, if man were to look directly at the sun, his eyes would not be able to tolerate its brilliance and so he would not see anything and might very well end up blind.

Similarly, if the eye of man's heart (spiritual eye) cannot endure the dazzling splendour of the sight of Divine resplendence, then he may suffer from a bout of fainting or giddiness as happened to Prophet Moses (*as*) when he beheld the luminous radiance of the Creator on the mountain and could not bear it (7:143).

However, Allah, Most High, has testified in this verse to the consummate inherent capacities of the Holy Prophet (*sas*) by saying that when the Holy Prophet (*sas*) saw the Divine manifestation, his eye was not averted from it. In other words, he was able to bear it and was not thrown into such confusion as to cause his spiritual eye to err. As mentioned above, this verse stands as a glowing testimony to the Holy Prophet's perfectly developed spiritual powers and natural capabilities. However, it brings into light something further: as the Holy Prophet's spiritual eye never ever deviated in his daily life from Allah, Most High, but instead the eye of his heart was always fixed on the Almighty, therefore, this eye which had become habituated to seeing Allah, Most High, was able to withstand the splendid radiance of Allah, Most High, at the time of the glorious manifestation of this vision, that is, the *Mi'raj* (Ascension).

Thus, in the light of these clear verses, we cannot accept any opinion which says that on the Day of Resurrection when the Divine splen-

dour is manifested everyone will swoon except Prophet Moses (*as*), for he had already fainted once before when he first experienced the glory of the Almighty (7:143). This is not a matter of taking turns in fainting so that if a person swooned before, he has already endured it at his turn, and so it is the turn of others to suffer giddiness. Instead, this matter pertains to the perfection of inherent capabilities, and of all mankind, if there was in the whole history of the world one eye that withstood the glory of Allah's manifestation, it was the eye of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sas*). So there is no reason to suggest that he would not be able to do so again on the Day of Resurrection.

The next verse (18) says: *Certainly he saw of the greatest signs of his Lord*. In other words, the *Mi'raj* was not restricted to the manifestation of the Holy Prophet's excellence and singular rank. More than that, he was also shown magnificent signs that included good news relating to himself and also to the success that would crown his religion in the future.

The use of the phrase *Rabbihi* (of his Lord) can mean those signs which relate to the Holy Prophet's own providential spiritual nurturing or to the spiritual fostering that a whole world would receive through his mission. As such, these signs served the purpose of giving him advance knowledge of the success of his mission in future ages.

Introduction to book *Allah — the Unique name of God*

by
Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi

(Note: A book of the above title has recently been compiled by A.A.I.L. U.K. consisting of material from *Muhammad in World Scriptures* on the subject of the name of God. The Introduction that appears in this compilation, which is edited from introductory comments in the original book, is given below.)

The Holy Quran does not begin with the genealogy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, nor does it begin with the geology or creation of the heavens and the earth in a space of six days. A book of God as it is, it very appropriately begins with the name of God:

“In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.”

His attributes *Beneficent* and *Merciful* comprise the embodiment of His greatness and glory, and ascribe to Him the possession of all attributes of perfection. Through His Beneficence evolved the creation of the heavens and the earth and through His mercy do our deeds flower into results. Thus we have, on the one hand, an expression of His perpetual generosity and sustenance and, on the other, an expression of His infinite and vigilant mercy and favour.

The first verse of the Holy Quran tells us that the Creator of this universe is a beneficent God, that He is not the revengeful Nemesis of the Greeks who holds man as a plaything in her hands. The Arabic word for *the Beneficent* is *Ar-Rahman*, for which we have no word in the English language. It denotes that not only His love and mercy are unbounded, but that He blesses us with gifts of untold proportions both for and in spite of meritorious service on our part. He has granted to all of His creation those indispensable provisions necessary for their existence, sustenance, growth and development: space, forces, time, atmosphere, earth, sun, water, law — to name but a few — which comprise an inconceivably small proportion, all of which, however great or small, are still subservient to His will. We are obliged, therefore, to acquire knowledge of all things, be they in the heavens or on the earth. But in our search for knowledge, we should always be conscious of our Benefactor, to Whom we owe our efforts, to Whom we owe the results of our efforts, and to Whom we look for prototype.

In the Arabic language the proper name of God is Allah, for which again we find no English equivalent and we are forced to interpret it as

God. But Allah is the proper name of the Deity and is, at the same time, more definite in its application and more profound in its meaning than the term 'God'. *God*, in the English language, is more often than not applied to other than the One Supreme Being, besides being continuously used in malevolent and abusive oaths. In Webster's English Dictionary we find:¹

1. A being conceived of as possessing supernatural power, and to be propitiated by sacrifice, worship, etc.; a divinity; a deity; an object of worship; an idol.
2. The Supreme Being; the eternal and infinite Spirit, the Creator, and the Sovereign of the universe; Jehovah.
3. A person or thing deified and honored as the chief good; an object of supreme regard.
4. Figuratively applied to one who wields great or despotic power.

Allah, however, has from time immemorial been applied only to the Supreme Being, the possessor of all attributes of perfection; it has no plural number and no feminine gender.²

The world-renowned late Agha Khan, when asked by a friend, "Is it true that people in India believe you to be God?", humorously replied: "People of India worship cows and calves as gods; it does not matter to them if they believe me to be God".

Saint Paul writes:

"For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords)".³

We also find reference in the Bible that there were stolen gods taken by Rachel:

"Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the household idols that were her father's. ... And Laban said to Jacob: ... but why did you steal my gods?"⁴

The use of the word 'god' in the Bible and in Christian lands is a proof that this term does not apply to the Supreme Being alone.

Allah being the proper name of God, it should not be translated into any other language, futile as the attempt shall be, for we all know that proper names of cities and persons are not translated. Hence Muslims all over the world, regardless of their native languages, refer to the Supreme Being as Allah, and begin their affairs by uttering *Bismillah* — "In the name of Allah".

There does not seem to have been a period of history when mankind did not believe in a supernatural Author and Ruler of the universe; even the most primitive nations have some idea of God or Supreme Being.⁵ There is no language or nation on the earth which is without the name of God. We have stated that there is no equivalent of *Allah* in the English language nor in any other language of the world. Of course, different languages have different names for the Divine Being, but none of them connotes what the term *Allah* does; while they are general or descriptive of a particular expression of His nature, it is only the proper name Allah that entirely embodies descriptive names, i.e. He Who possesses all the attributes of perfection. We have in the Holy Quran:

"And Allah's are all the excellent names."⁶

Again, we have:

"Allah — there is no god but He. His are the very best names."⁷

We conclude, therefore, that the names of God in all other languages are merely expressions of particular attributes, and this the author intends to prove. It would be useful if we now study the concepts of God among different nations of the world.

Education and moral excellence, advance the cause of Islam

by Shahid Aziz

I read in the magazine of our Jama'at from India that 50-60% of the Muslims are completely illiterate in India. They cannot even write down their name. What was even sadder was the fact that there did not appear to be any inclination on part of the Muslims in India to improve their educational status. They were quite happy to remain at the bottom compared to other communities as far as education was concerned.

There is prophecy of the Holy Quran that the pharaoh will be made a sign for the people. The body of this famous pharaoh was found in a pyramid and it is, now, lying in a museum in Cairo. This prophecy could not have been fulfilled unless people developed their knowledge and understanding of archeology. It is sad that Muslims did not carry out this research but that it was done by the non-Muslims.

People ask: why were Muslims successful centuries ago? It was because, at that time, they set out not only to gain knowledge but to dispense it. Had it not been for the Muslims' translations of a lot of unique literature all of it would have been lost to the world.

But the question is: what was the purpose of the Muslims claiming this knowledge and then dispensing it. The purpose was to prove the truth of the Holy Quran and Islam. It was through these efforts that they succeeded. Now we have turned the whole thing on its head. Rather than do research and gain knowledge and convince people by argument, which is of course very difficult, we come up with all these odd fairy tales and we expect people to accept them as genuine and praise Islam on the basis of these.

One day, on the train, a Muslim was sitting next to me and across the way from us were a Hindu father and daughter. Somehow they struck up a conversation. The Hindu gentleman

¹ Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary, version published 1913.

² Edward William Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 'Allah'.

³ 1 Corinthians, 8:5.

⁴ Genesis, 31:19, 26-30.

⁵ James Hastings, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, art. 'God', vol. vi, p. 243.

⁶ The Holy Quran, 7:180.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 20:8.

very sensibly said: "you prove the superiority of Islam to me and I will embrace Islam". I was very keen to see what arguments this Muslim will advance to prove Islam's superiority over other religions. I was not taking part in their discussion but was just sitting and listening. And the Muslim started relating a story which is found in some books about a Hindu Sadhu who went to a great Muslim saint to prove the superiority of Hinduism. The Sadhu said: I will show you a miracle and started to fly. The story then went that the Muslim saint: "pointed to his shoes and his shoes started flying and they started striking the Hindu Sadhu on the head till such time that he came down from high up on to the ground". The Muslim then said to his Hindu travelling companion: "Look, I have proven superiority of Islam over Hinduism and now you must embrace Islam". I found it so sad because, although I wanted to support my Muslim brother, the actual arguments that the Hindu was producing were much more rational, sensible and logical. He was saying that this is not an argument for the superiority of Islam and that you just made up a story. If you expect me to believe that, I can produce many stories from Mahabharata, Ramayana and so on about what Krishna ji and all these people did and the great feats they performed. Would you accept them just because they are written in my Holy Books?

The interesting thing is that, in early Islam, Muslims never presented such things as being the truth of Islam. You read story after story of people embarrassing Islam because of Muslims' character. When the Holy Prophet started the propagation of Islam only a few verses of the Holy Quran had been revealed, the first of course being: "Read in the name of thy Lord who created man from a clot". The Holy Prophet said: "I have lived among you for 40 years. Have I ever lied? Have I ever cheated? If I have not done so to gain worldly benefit, what am I going to gain by fabricating a lie against God". He put his character to the people. Then we go on to give many other instances from the life of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Umar. I related the incident that Hazrat Umar was

doing a round of the streets of Madina one night because he wanted to know how people were and how they felt. He heard a baby crying and the baby kept on crying. Hazrat Umar went to the baby's mother and asked why she was not feeding the child. The woman, after making some derogatory comments about Hazrat Umar, whom she had not recognised, said: "Umar has said that a child will not get the child state allowance until the mother has stopped suckling the child and this is why I am not feeding the child so that I can prove that I am now entitled to the child allowance." Note that these child allowances were not started by the modern West, but by Hazrat Umar. The following day Hazrat Umar asked for people's forgiveness and he announced that from the day it is born a child would receive the child allowance.

I am using this story to illustrate the character of the Head of State. There is the other story that Hazrat Umar heard a lady asking her daughter to add water to milk to increase its volume. When the girl refused, her mother asked what she was afraid of because no one was watching them. The daughter replied that God was watching them and He would know whatever they were doing. The following day, Hazrat Umar sent a man to ask for that girl's hand in marriage for his son. Hazrat Umar was the man who ruled the whole of what is now Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Israel, Iraq, Egypt, all the way up to Turkey, and parts of North Africa. What did he give preference to when he was looking for someone for his son? Piety! These were the things that people saw. Or another example that we give is this. The residents of Jerusalem, when the Muslim army reached its outskirts, said that if the Muslim ruler went in person they will hand over the keys to the city to him without a fight. Hazrat Umar set off from Madina when he received this message. He only had one camel for the journey as he set off from Madina with his slave. They took it in turns to ride the camel. When they reached Jerusalem it was the slave's turn to be on the camel and the people were amazed to see the ruler of this great empire leading the camel, walking on foot,

while the slave rode on the back of it. It was these examples that people saw which impressed them with Islam.

Educational advances prove the truth of Islam

What Muslims of the early ages tried to do was to read the Holy Quran, find prophecies in it and then develop knowledge to prove that the prophecies were true. Going back to the body of the Pharaoh who was going to be made a sign for the people, for fourteen hundred years Muslims said that when the Holy Quran spoke of making him a sign for people, it was in a metaphorical sense. He is mentioned in the stories in the Bible and in the Holy Quran. But then it literally became true when his body was found and put on display and people said this is the man which chased Moses. This was why Muslims developed science because unless you gain knowledge and you understand the universe and what is in it and how it ticks and how it works, you cannot appreciate the Creator Who created that universe. Their objective in gaining knowledge was to prove the existence of God, the truth of the Holy Quran, and the truth of Islam. Their objective was not to make money.

When Muslim of earlier ages gained knowledge and when they did research it was for the sake of the propagation of Islam.

Remember in those days one went to a *madrassa* and learnt Arabic, the Quran and Hadith. But one also learnt mathematics, philosophy, astronomy, surgery and medicine. And it was all regarded as religious learning because, in Islam, knowledge is not divided into religious and secular. All knowledge is like branches of the same tree. It is the tree of knowledge that leads to God with understanding rather than blind faith.

It really is tragic that the religion which has laid so much stress on the attainment of knowledge, its preservation and dissemination, almost 60% of its followers are completely illiterate in many countries.

To be continued.

Ramadan Timetable

October-November 2005

The daily start and end times below apply to London and surrounding areas.

Important note: British Summer Time ends in the early hours of Sunday 30th October, before the fast start time. **Please put your clocks back by 1 hour before going to bed on the night of Saturday 29th October.** The start time of the fast on Sunday 30th October is given below according to the winter time.

Fast number and Day	Date	Starts (a.m.)	Ends (p.m.)		<p><u>Announcements</u></p> <p>Communal Jama'at Iftar</p> <p>Communal <i>Iftars</i>, as marked in the last column, will take place on the following days:</p> <p>Saturday, 8 October</p> <p>Saturday, 15 October</p> <p>Saturday, 22 October</p> <p>Saturday, 29 October</p> <p>You are requested to arrive fifteen minutes before the fast ending time. Dinner will be served after the <i>Maghrib salaah</i>. A <i>dars</i> of the Quran will follow.</p> <p><i>Isha</i> and <i>Tarawih</i> will take place after the <i>dars</i>.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Id-ul-Fitr</i> is on:</p> <p>Friday 4th November</p> <p><i>Id</i> prayers will start promptly at 11.00 a.m.</p> <p>Please arrive before 11.00 a.m. as due to Winter Time <i>Id</i> prayers cannot be later than this time.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Id-ul-Adha</i> takes place on Wednesday 11th January 2006.</p>
1. Wednesday	5 October	5:38	6:29		
2. Thursday	6 October	5:40	6:27		
3. Friday	7 October	5:41	6:25		
4. Saturday	8 October	5:43	6:23	<i>Iftar</i>	
5. Sunday	9 October	5:45	6:20		
6. Monday	10 October	5:46	6:18		
7. Tuesday	11 October	5:48	6:16		
8. Wednesday	12 October	5:50	6:14		
9. Thursday	13 October	5:51	6:12		
10. Friday	14 October	5:53	6:09		
11. Saturday	15 October	5:55	6:07	<i>Iftar</i>	
12. Sunday	16 October	5:56	6:05		
13. Monday	17 October	5:58	6:03		
14. Tuesday	18 October	6:00	6:01		
15. Wednesday	19 October	6:01	5:59		
16. Thursday	20 October	6:03	5:57		
17. Friday	21 October	6:05	5:55		
18. Saturday	22 October	6:07	5:53	<i>Iftar</i>	
19. Sunday	23 October	6:08	5:51		
20. Monday	24 October	6:10	5:49		
21. Tuesday	25 October	6:12	5:47		
22. Wednesday	26 October	6:14	5:45		
23. Thursday	27 October	6:15	5:43		
24. Friday	28 October	6:17	5:41		
25. Saturday	29 October	6:19	5:39	<i>Iftar</i>	
Winter time (GMT) begins :					
26. Sunday	30 October	5:21	4:37		
27. Monday	31 October	5:22	4:35		
28. Tuesday	1 November	5:24	4:34		
29. Wednesday	2 November	5:26	4:32		
30. Thursday	3 November	5:28	4:30		