



The Light

International Organ of the Centre for the worldwide

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam

The *only* Islamic organisation upholding the finality of prophet hood.

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has been fabricated by me. What should we say and what we should write in reply to such persons? Ye, unfortunate people who mistrust and suspect, is it possible that man may fabricate lies against God and still be safe from his

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Call of the Messiah

by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad,
the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*

(Ayyam us Sulah, continued from last month.)

Divine Law

Verily I say unto you that the same fate will overtake those people who rush forward with the rashness of beasts and commit recklessly a kind of adultery and fornication, theft and carnage, and lay their hands on and grab others property, and tyrannize over and trouble human beings. They are afraid neither of the limits laid down by God nor of the laws framed by the Government. And it was the very thing which came to my knowledge, in my first advertisement, as a revelation regarding plague, viz. **إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ إِنَّهُ أَوَى الْقَرْيَةَ** i.e.

The Most High God changes not the good or the bad condition of a people until they themselves keep not away those things which are in their minds; the Most High God has protected this town which is in His Knowledge, from confusion and anxiety. It is regrettable indeed that some unfortunate ignorant allege that this revelation



wrathful hand? The most High God will drive liars to destruction, and make short work of and exterminate those who fabricate lies from their own minds but any that it was Divine revelation; for they had been insolent and imperious to bring a false charge against and slander the Most High God. The time and hour has been fixed for the righteous as well as for the liars; and when the day will come, the Most High God will show who had spoken arrogantly and who had followed and obeyed the voice of the Holy Spirit. The Divine revelation you shall know and recognize from Divine Signs, and neither truth nor falsehood will remain hidden and concealed; and the Most High God who has ever been showing Himself, will even show now that He is with them who fear Him and adopt the ways of righteousness and virtue.

Peace with God

O people, fear God, and make peace and

I Shall Love All Mankind.

reconcile with Him, and put on, as a matter of truth, the garment of goodness and virtue; and it should be that every kind of wickedness and evil should be away from you. There are, in the most High God, countless and innumerable wonderful powers, and infinite mercy and grace. He it is Who can dry up a dreadful deluge in an instant, and with one single will, lift up with His own hand the fatal calamities and throw them far away. But these, His wonderful powers are disclosed upon them who become His exclusively; and His miracles are seen and beheld by those who, for His sake, create a pure change in themselves and prostrate upon His threshold, and become pure and clean like the drop from which the precious pearl is made, and flow in His direction, having been melted with the heat of love, truth and sincerity. The most High God then takes care of them in times of distress and affliction, and protects them, in a strange way, from the intrigues and machinations of their enemies, and keeps them away from places of dishonour and disgrace. He becomes their guardian and protector, and helps them in times of trouble when no human being can be of any assistance, and His armies come for their defence and support. It is indeed a matter for great gratitude that our God is Merciful and Mighty. So will you keep away and forsake such a Powerful Being? Will you break His limits for the sake of your unclean self? For us it is better to die for His pleasure and will than to live a dirty and impure life.

With regard to all commandments in the Holy Quran, great stress has been laid on *taqwa* (fear of losing love of God) and abstinence. The reason being that *taqwa* gives power and strength to be safe from every devil, and impels to run in the direction of every good. And the secret of all this emphasis and stress is that *taqwa* is an amulet of peace and safety for man in every walk of life, and an impregnable fortress to protect him from every kind of mischief. God-fearing man can be safe from many such useless and dangerous disputes, falling into which other people often times reach the brink of perishing and destruction, and create dissension and discord in the nation by their rash deeds and mistrust, and an opportunity to the opponents to

rail at and ridicule. For instance, just ponder over and think that the obstinate and perverse Islamic religious leaders of this age have, without any investigation or proof, stretched their wrong notion of our infidelity and falsehood to such an extent that we are now in their eyes, on account of our unbelief, even worse than Christians and Hindus. Can a God-fearing man who keeps his mind truly away from following doubts and suspicions be caught and entangle in these calamities? Had there been even a grain of *taqwa* in the minds of these people, they



A view of the International Consultative Meeting.

would have adopted, against me, the same course which has been, from very ancient times, the course of seekers-after-truth. For every nation has ever since been believing in this principle, and Islam, too, has endorsed it, that if a difference should arise, in the interpretation of an hadith or the Divine word, between the scholars of the time and those personages- prophets, apostles and others commissioned by God who present themselves as such to the world, the way of deciding disputes with them is not the same as in the case of other ordinary people which is that a party, putting more power and preference in their own interpretation, becomes immediately prepared to call and condemn the other party as arrant liars; but in spite of the fact that a difference in interpretation and commentary may exist between them, and that a statement may apparently carry two significances which may go against the interpretation and exposition of Divine Deputes, still righteous and august souls persist not stubbornly in their own interpretations in opposi-

tion to the recipients of Divine revelation; but when it becomes obviously clear by the successive support of the most high God and different heavenly signs that those are Divinely-appointed persons, the noble souls rule out and relinquish their own interpretations, and accept the meanings offered by the Divinely raised persons, even though some sort of weakness may be discerned in them; for, in the exposition of meanings there is a very wide range, and many a times a man who adopts the side of metaphor and interprets a text in a metaphoric sense, is in the right as compared to the other who confines himself only to the apparent, literal significance, as he has no eye for metaphor and figure of speech. Rather it should be carefully borne in mind to do honour and respect to men of God and recipients of Divine revelations, that even if they put the apparent aside and expounded something without literal sense of the context, they should not be asked as to the cause as is done in the case of other religious scholars, to narrate the relative conditions and circumstances. It is, of course, absolutely necessary to find out and ascertain that they enjoy the aid and assistance of the Most High God, the interpretations, if a difference as to the meaning of a scripture should arise between them and the religious scholars the meaning put forward by them (the Men of God) shall be accepted. This has been the rule in force ever since the world began, for instance, when a difference arose between Jesus the Christ and the Jews with regard to the prophecy uttered by Malachi about the second coming of Prophet Elias, then in spite of the fact that the meaning which the Jews put forward, were the apparent meanings of the verse, and that the statement of Jesus that by the second

coming of Elias was meant the advent of another man in his power and spirit i.e. his like, was a subtle interpretation which appeared to have the tinge of unbelief, and was merely ridiculous in the eyes of the Jews, nor had it the support of circumstances or conditions, yet noble souls, when they saw that Jesus was aided and helped by God, and that the real thing has been disclosed upon him through revelation, accepted the meaning put forward by Jesus and rejected the meanings of the Jews although these meanings appeared to be correct and obvious.

The Like of Moses

A similar dispute arose between the Jews and the Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) when the Jews contented that the prophet like unto Moses, foretold in the Torah (Duet 18:18), would appear in Bani Israel, and argued that God had solemnly promised to David that he would continue to raise prophets in his line. But the Holy Prophet said that their interpretation was wrong, and that the correct significance of the prophecy was that the Promised Prophet was to be raised among the brethren of Bani Israel i.e. Bani Ishmael. And although the interpretation of the Jews had been coming down the ages, for 2000 years, with a general agreement of their religious leaders, constituting a strong argument for an ignorant man that how could the new interpretation be accepted in the face of that interpretation which had been in vogue for 2000 years with the unanimous consent of a large majority of their religious scholars assuming the status of an accepted doctrine, yet when the wise men saw that the latter interpretation had been expounded by such a man who had with him the verification and support of the Most High God, i.e., our Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of God be upon him), and also thought that in the interpretation arrived at by human reason and intellect there could be possibility of an error, but in the significance taught by Divine revelation there could not be any such possibility, they accepted the holy Prophet's interpretation, and threw away, like a waste paper, the interpretation of the opponents, although they had been known as proficient professors and doctors of law of their religion; for, they had come to believe that the man (our Holy Prophet) was a



Baiats at the Annual prayer meeting.

man of wonderful signs, and had the succour and support of the Most High God, and heavenly evidence and testimony attended upon him; they had, therefore, to admit and acknowledge that the interpretation put forward by the Jews and the Christians was incorrect; and hundreds of Jews and Christians, for this reason, became Muslims, forsaking the unanimously accepted meanings which had come down the centuries for 2000 years.

The Right way

Both these examples prove conclusively that if a dispute should arise between a people and a man of God on the interpretation of some Divine text, the meaning expounded by the man of God only will be acceptable, even though these may appear to be weak or inconceivable. And this is the reason that we do not interpret certain texts of the Gospel and the Torah in the same way as do the Christians and the Jews; at any rate we shall accept the meanings put forward by the Holy Quran. And when this principle has been found to be correct and true, it is now to be seen that if our opponent-religious scholars had in them anything of honesty and justice, they would have, in this case when I claimed to be the Promised Messiah and adduced in support of my claim certain traditions and verses of the holy Quran interpreting them in a different way, dealt with me and decided the dispute in the same accepted way as the righteous people used to do before on such occasions, i.e. they should have found out and ascertained whether or not God's help and support was with me. But it is regrettable indeed that they treated me not in that way. And stronger still is the fact that although the sense adopted by us in the interpretation of these texts is not only most correct but also within the bounds of possibility and reason, yet our opponents have turned their faces away from and rejected these meanings, although it was incumbent on them that even if our meanings had been as compared to their, weak and less strong, they should have, after observing the proof of Divine help and support agreed to and accepted these meanings. Just ponder over and think that when such disputes arose between the prophets and other

nations, what course was adopted by the noble souls. Is it not true that they, at any rate, accepted the very meanings which had dropped from the holy lips of the prophets? (The End)



Some foreign guests with Hazrat Ameer.

Al Balad (The City)

Written by Shahid Aziz M.Sc.

Presented by Yahya Saqib B.A

Nay, I call to witness this City!
And you will be made free from obligation in this City -
And the begetter and he whom he begot!
We have certainly created man to face difficulties.
Does he think that no one has power over him?
He will say: I have wasted much wealth.
Does he think that no one sees him?
Have We not given him two eyes,
And a tongue and two lips,
And pointed out to him the two conspicuous ways?
But he attempts not the uphill road;
And what will make thee comprehend what the uphill road is?
(It is) to free a slave,
Or to feed in a day of hunger
An orphan nearly related,
Or the poor man lying in the dust.
Then he is of those who believe and exhort one another to patience, and exhort one another to mercy.
These are the people of the right hand.
And those who disbelieve in Our messages, they are the people of the left hand.
On them is Fire closed over. (90 : 1-20)

I want to consider these verses in the light of the difficulties Muslims are facing in the world these days. Verse 4 says *We have certainly created man to face difficulties*. This applies to individuals as well as to nations. In our ordinary lives we face many challenges; from small normal challenges such as examinations and finding jobs and may be failing to get good grades or the job we wanted and feeling that we have failed. That is because in this world our measure of success is temporal trappings of this life. How big is the house we live in? How grand is the car we drive? What is the highest qualification we have? How much do we earn? The list is an endless one.

The BBC has a calculator, which calculates which 'class' we belong to. It asks questions like what is your highest qualification, salary, friendships etc. and then tells you which

social class you belong to. So greatness in this world is based on these worldly markers. Nowhere in this scenario is kindness, mercy, help, and sacrifice. Failing to achieve a certain status makes one a loser regardless of the good works one may have done.

But, as Muslims we are supposed to follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet. He did not have a Ph.D. to prove his intellectual prowess. He did not have money to show how rich he was. Indeed, at one time, in Medinah, when Hazrat Umar (r) went to visit him he was laying in a bare rope bed with the ropes digging into his holy back and bruising it. When Hazrat Umar saw the state of the Holy Prophet's back he burst into tears. Upon being asked by the Holy Prophet, Hazrat Umar explained that kings of Rome and Iran were lying in soft beds whereas Allah's Holy prophet was on a hard bed which had bruised his back. The Holy Prophet (s) replied "O son of khitaab, are you not pleased that, when given a choice, I chose the hereafter and not this world?" Another time, the Holy Prophet (s) said about his time on this earth that he is like a traveller on a long journey who stops for a

short time to take some rest before continuing on his way.

The strange thing is that we plan for the future in this life but not for the future in the next. We look for a job which has a pension attached to it. We plan to make sure that our mortgage is paid off to ensure a roof over our heads in retirement. But we do little for the time after our retirement. Our retirement will last a few years but the time that will follow will be everlasting.



Azam Alvi sahib presenting Hazrat Ameer with the books printed by the Centre last year.

The difficulties man faces are in making the correct choice when faced with two options as Allah says in the verses that follow. If you are taking your wife to a posh dinner and you walk by the homeless or the hungry and destitute and you have to choose between giving up the posh dinner and giving the money to the homeless or the needy which path will you follow? Most of us will

pretend not to see the homeless and the destitute.

Allah says that He has given us faculties to see, to hear, to communicate, to analyse and to understand but we still cannot understand what is the right thing to do.

Here Allah tells us that there are two paths or ways to live your life. One is to amass wealth and assets in this world. This is the easy path and most follow that. Allah says that eventually, each one of us will look at how he used his resources and realise that spending on beautiful clothes, fancy cars and big houses was a waste. It may have provided physical comfort but did nothing for spiritual development. That is the easy bit.

The other path is that we do the opposite. That is, we give away wealth and assets rather than accumulate them. Everything stated in verses that follow is a hard thing to do. Freeing a slave means giving up an asset for someone else's benefit. Just like the Promised Messiah

said in your will leave a minimum of one tenth for the jamaat for propagation of Islam. But preferably it should be one-third.

This chapter also tells us:

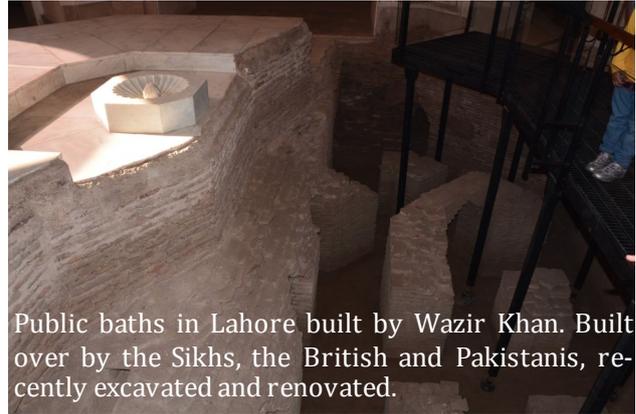
Or to feed in a day of hunger
An orphan nearly related,
Or the poor man lying in the dust.

This relates to daily sacrifices as opposed to the one-time giving up of an asset. This is the equivalent of what the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad said was regular payment of monthly subscription and to spend some time every day on the work of the jamaat. So that your whole life is full of doing good for others. If a person does all this then he is of those who believe and exhort one another to patience, and exhort one another to mercy.

There is no point in shouting that you are a believer without doing good to humanity. Notice here there no mention of any religion of the people to whom you should do good. The verses do not say feed the Muslim or help the Muslim needy. It is worth reiterating that at the time when the Holy Quran was being revealed you had idol-worshippers, Jews, Christians and Muslim not just living next door to each other but also in the same family. We know that when Muslims were attacked the nephew was a Muslim and the uncle with the people of Makkah. In some cases, father was on one side and son on the other.

The verse I just read out also points to another interesting aspect of the teaching of the Holy Quran. A believer believes in the prophethood of the Holy Prophet, does the acts described here but consider what he is to preach to other Muslims. He is not to teach them to kill others, to retaliate, to take revenge etc. On the contrary a believer is supposed to preach patience in the face of adversity and show mercy to those who do him wrong rather than seek revenge.

It is sad that all the Caliphs who are around at the moment forget these beautiful teachings of Islam. They all preach hatred of others despite the fact that some say that they have love



Public baths in Lahore built by Wazir Khan. Built over by the Sikhs, the British and Pakistanis, recently excavated and renovated.

as their motto. Let me repeat the words again: *exhort one another to patience, and exhort one another to mercy*. Killing of hostages, people out to enjoy themselves or going to work, people they don't even know are all killed because it is said that this is what Islam teaches. How is this exhorting one another to mercy and patience? The Holy Prophet (s) was told that he was successful because he was kind and gentle. This should lay down for us the foundation of how and what we are to do.

Let us take the moral high ground. Let us oppose the killing of all innocent people whether it is done in the name of democracy, defence or Islam. It is only direct combatants who may be killed in a battle and not the innocent, according to Islamic teaching and law.

Who is a Muslim, Who Kafir?

MR PICKTHALL'S REJOINDER TO A MAULANA

(From The Light, 8 August 1933)

I must thank you for the very kind manner 'in which you have brought to my notice your objection to my rendering of certain passages in the Qur'an. The view which you advocate is familiar to me, and the same remonstrance has been addressed to me before by Muslim brethren in less courteous terms. I agree with you that it must be well nigh impossible for anyone without prophetic guidance to attain to the condition "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good".

But it must be possible for those other communities which have had such guidance (e. g., Jews and

Christians) - even though their Scriptures have been corrupted, the truth can still be gleaned from them - to attain to it and I believe that many of them do. Moreover, the ideas disseminated by the Prophets, and especially by our

which proceeded largely from this very theory which you uphold (if I understand you aright).

You have quoted certain ayahs which you consider to have abrogated and superseded



Educational Awards.

In each category, junior, secondary and higher, a girl won the award. The winner in the higher category won Prof. Asghar Hameed Shield.

own Last Prophet have infiltrated so widely among the thinking people of the world that they have influenced and largely shaped the mode of thought of many people outside the communities founded by the prophets that we know ; so that it is difficult to set a boundary to the Prophet's influence. On the other hand, we have unhappily to observe the terribly debased spiritual, mental and moral condition of a very large of those who are called Muslims at the present day. These profess to believe in Allah and the Last Day, but in the practice of their daily lives are self-seekers, pleasure-lovers, sycophants, habitual liars, cowards, slanderers, persecutors, drunkards, thieves, adulterers, and steeped in a superstitious ignorance very near idolatry. Surely you cannot believe that these fulfil the condition "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good" Surely you cannot believe that the hope of man's salvation is dependent upon mere lip-service to the creed called "Al-Islam." That would be to fall into the error of the Jews and Christians denounced in the Quran.

those which I quoted. The idea I know, is widely prevalent in non-Arab countries and prevails to a less extent even in Arabic-speaking countries; but it is nonetheless erroneous, I believe.

My view is not a new nor have I invented it. It has always been the belief of the more spiritual element in Islam, as you who have made a study of Sufism well know.

When I was for years engaged in the attempt to convey the meaning of the sublime Quran to English readers I tried naturally and as a piece of my duty to ascertain the meaning which certain expressions (which have now become a part of our technical religious vocabulary owing to their repeated occurrence in the Quran) had for the men who heard them at their first revelation in Mecca or Al-Medinah. In this research I consulted learned European Orientalists as well as Arab and Egyptian *Ulema*. It was only the Orientalists (rather contemptuous of our religion) who advised me to translate the Arabic expression Al-Islam, throughout by "Islam." The Arabs held that there is only one passage where it should be so rendered, the only *ayah* in which it is definitely applied to our religion (Al Maida: verse 3) And that was the very last passage of the Quran to be revealed. In all other passages it means "The Surrender" - with an added warlike meaning for the peoples who were at war with Muslims, but in general and always implying:- The surrender of man's will and purpose to the Will and Purpose of Almighty God."

If we, as a human community, have the exclusive favours of Allah in this matter of eternal salvation, as you seem to claim, then, why does He punish us for our sins like other people ; why does He let us sin at all? No, it is not true. Our recent downfall and our present humiliation are the punishment of the senseless arrogance

Therefore, "Surely the true religion with Allah is Islam" means: "Lo! Religion with Allah is The Surrender" (to His Will and Purpose etc.) i.e., true religion consists, not in mere observance's and recitations and a partisan zeal - such was the so-called religion of the pagan Arabs, and also of some Jews and Christians of Arabia; all that is not religion in the sight of Al-

lah - but in full and glad submission to the will of Allah as present in men's consciences and as revealed by His Messengers from time to time. Therefore, "Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him and he will be a loser in the hereafter" means "And whoso seeketh as religion other than the Surrender (to Allah) it will not be accepted from him and he will be a loser in the hereafter." Religion must involve a change of heart, an act of personal submission and devotion. A man cannot be called religious who continues to follow his own lusts while observing certain formalities miscalled religious; who continues to be mean, false, self-seeking, ambitious, cruel and unjust to others. Man must surrender, to be rightly called religious. For us Muslims that Surrender of man's will and purpose to the Will of Allah was made the whole of Religion; all our simple ordinances and observances symbolize and guard it. We have no privilege above other human beings save that we have been favoured by God's mercy with much clearer guidance, and a straight, plain path of conduct and devotion has been traced for us. Al Islam is the standard for all men and all religion, and we are ordered to uphold the standard, to recommend it to men's minds and hearts which can be only done by such grand examples of right human conduct as the Prophet and his fortunate companions showed mankind. If after that, we who claim the right to the name of Muslim, are worse in conduct than others of our fellow-men, our lip-profession of Islam only adds, to our guilt and shame.

In fact, the verses which you quote as if Allah had thereby intended (God forbid) to restrict the most important portion of His boundless mercy to our community irrespective of our conduct, seem to me to state a universal truth: that there is only one Religion worthy of the name, and that is Man's Surrender to the Lord of

Heaven and Earth.

You will forgive me if I say that the other verses which you quote appear to me irrelevant to our discussion, since they refer to those who reject the Messengers of Allah, deny His Sovereignty and repel and scorn His revelations. Concerning these there is no difference between my view and yours. But here again you mistake the meaning of the word *Kafir* when you say that in (III, 31) "those who do not follow Muhamad have been called *Kafirs*." It is not the followers of other religions that "Allah loveth not" but the furious and violent rejecters of His guidance and deniers of His Universal Sovereignty.

Please do not be little the Quran by attributing such small sectarian ideas to it.

The Prophet said that no one who said "Peace" to the believers should be called a *Kafir*. The *Kafirs* are in fact the enemy army in the field, the enemies of Allah's Sovereignty. They can never be included among those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and do right. I had hoped to answer this at greater length and much more learnedly during this Month of study and remembrance of the Glorious Qur'an, but, unfortunately, I have been overdone with work, and have had scant leisure. And the fasts have somewhat impaired my energy. I ask you to pardon shortcomings in expression and especially to forgive any expression (I hope that you will find none) which may appear discourteous or unsympathetic. I am sure that you really agree with me, but you have taken a fancy for sitting cramped up in a mediaeval cell of thought built certainly not earlier than the third Islamic century.

(The author was a noted translator of the Holy Quran and author. He also served as the imam at the Shahjehan Mosque, Woking, UK)

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam

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