

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 Woking Muslim Mission

Darus Salaam, 15 Stanley Avenue, Wembley, HA0 4JQ (U.K.)

Centre: 020 8903 2689. President: 020 8524 8212. Secretary: 01753 692654.

Fax: 0870 131 9340. E-mail: aaii@saziz.globalnet.co.uk

website: www.aaii.org/uk

Bulletin: September 2005

Next Meeting

Assalamu alaikum

Venue: **Darus Salaam**

Date: **Sunday 4th September 2005**

Time: **3.00 p.m.**

**Diabetes and related diseases
by Dr. Jawad Ahmad**

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.

Contents:

News: An Appeal from Hazrat Ameer	1	100 years of Ahmadiyya Anjuman	7
News: Deaths	3	Our Websites	8
Achievements of the Woking Muslim Mission	4	Muslim Prayer Book with CD-ROM	8
Commentary on <i>An-Najm</i> , ch.53 of the Quran	6		

News

An appeal for your support from Hazrat Ameer to all Jama'ats in the world

*In the name of Allah, the
Beneficent, the Merciful.*

Building Infrastructure in India, Australia and Germany

Dear members of the Jama'at,
*Assalaamu Alaikum wa Rahmat-
ullahi wa Barakatu-hu.*

I pray and hope that you and your families are all in good health and high spirits by the grace of Merciful Allah.

During the last three years I had the opportunity to visit most of our Jama'at all around the world. I am heartened to see our Jama'at making good progress everywhere, *Al-hamdu lillah*, despite the immense problems we continue to face. I am particularly pleased with the endeavours made by some of our Jama'at to develop on-ground infrastructure by acquiring properties and undertaking major improvements to their existing premises.

In the past some projects have been handled at National or Regional level. However, to ensure that the projects are coordinated properly and information shared by our global

community, the Central Anjuman has decided to play a more proactive role in the future. The projects currently in the pipeline are ambitious and require considerable funds. Active and enthusiastic participation by everyone over the next few years will ensure the fruition of these projects so vital for the Worldwide Lahore Ahmadiyya Community. The three major projects in the pipeline currently are as follows:

1. INDIA: Mosque and Centre in Delhi

Just a few years ago we hardly had any members left in India except for our branches in Jammu and Kashmir. It was the lone efforts of our late

brother Abdul Razaq that was keeping the name of the Lahore Jama'at alive by printing and distributing our publications from Mumbai (Bombay). May Allah grant his soul eternal peace and abide in *Jannat ul Firdaus. Aameen.*

The Jama'at in India was revived by the dedicated efforts of our visionary brother Shaukat Ali who set up its headquarters in New Delhi in 1994. From a modest beginning in a single rented room, it has made tremendous progress. It has published and distributed scores of books and started a quarterly journal, *Chaudween Sadi*, in Urdu about three years ago. They have also trained a group of Mobuligheen (preachers) who travel to different parts of India and as a result the number of our members and sympathisers continues to increase.

The India branch of the Jama'at was officially registered with the government under the Societies Registration Act on 29 April 1999. The Jama'at has acquired two modest properties in Delhi and also commenced operation of a primary school about three years ago. They currently have about two hundred students. However, because of the increase in their activities, they are facing space constraints. At this stage the Jama'at needs to establish a permanent home for it to cater for the needs of the future and to enhance its image and profile. They have, therefore, proposed to setup a Jama'at Centre to include a mosque, offices, a school, and a library and book depot in New Delhi. They plan to acquire a piece of land for this purpose. The acquisition of land alone will cost about ten million Indian Rupees (US \$215,000) and an equal amount will be needed for construction of the first phase. The Central Anjuman has endorsed this long overdue project to spread the true teachings of the Promised Messiah in India, the birthplace of the Imam of the age.

2. AUSTRALIA: Mosque and Library in Sydney

Our Sydney Australia Jama'at has come a long way since its establishment just a few years ago. Under the wise guidance of Dr.

Abdul Habib Sahukhan, they remained focused and pursued their mission single-mindedly. They had already acquired a piece of land for a cemetery when I visited them last year. They have now purchased a property worth \$300,000 which they, *Insha Allah*, plan to develop into a hub for the Jamaat's activities, complete with a prayer room, library etc. The project will cost approximately \$500,000. The few but spirited members of Australia have already collected about \$180,000 in just one night of fundraising, *Maashallah*. Australia, with its strategic location, will become the centre of activity for the South Pacific Region and this will offer immense opportunities to the Jama'at to spread the word of Allah.

3. GERMANY: The Historic Berlin Mosque

You are all aware of the history of the Berlin Mosque and the unprecedented gesture of sacrifice when on Maulana Muhammad Ali's appeal, a handful of Ahmadi ladies donated all their jewellery to meet the cost of completing the minarets of the mosque. Today we need more funds for the renovation and repair of this historical monument and an invaluable asset of the Jama'at. We need \$30,000 immediately to pay back to the directors of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore Inc. USA who had very generously paid this amount at short notice on our behalf. *Jazaak-Allah.*

The Holy Quran says:

“The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is as the parable of a grain growing seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies (further) for whom He pleases. And Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing.” (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:261).

“And whatever you lay out at usury, so that it may increase in the property of men, it increases not with Allah; and whatever you give in charity, desiring Allah's pleasure — these will get manifold.” (*Surah Ar-Rum*, 30:39)

On behalf of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Jama'at, I appeal to all our members throughout the world to

support these worthy projects by making generous contributions. In the verses of the Holy Quran which I have quoted above, Allah the Most High has promised manifold reward for those who spend for His Pleasure. The Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, said that whoever builds a mosque, desiring thereby Allah's pleasure, Allah builds for him the like of it in paradise (Bukhari, 8:65). Our Jama'at has a great tradition of making sacrifices whenever the call came, and I am sure that our members will not lag behind this time. I, therefore, request you to come forward, as always, and make generous contributions for these excellent and noble causes. May Allah the Most High, the Ample-giving, All-Knowing, reward you abundantly.

Our target for the rest of the year till 31 December 2005 is US \$150,000, and all contributions should be channeled to the Central Anjuman, which will decide on the shares for each of the projects in different countries.

I announce with great satisfaction that in Pakistan the fundraising campaign was launched with generous donations from our 98 years old saintly member Malik Saeed Ahmad *sahib* and our respected senior lady member *Begum* Hamida Rahman *Sahiba*. *Jazaak-Allah.*

We look forward to your understanding, continuing support and cooperation.

Wassalaam,
Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed,
Ameer-i-Jama'at, International
Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. ■

U.K. Jama'at response

We endorse Hazrat Ameer's appeal and strongly urge our members to contribute towards it. The U.K. Jama'at will collect all the donations from the U.K. and forward them together to the Central Anjuman in Lahore. Our members will recall Hazrat Ameer's visit to U.K. during April and May and the time and effort he devoted to addressing our functions and meeting individual members. So we too should respond to his appeal as he showed so much

care and concern for us. Let us also remember that we are part of an international movement, and any progress made by any branch anywhere, especially by our Centre, is our own progress because it is the advancement of our Movement.

Ramadan also begins just a month after this appeal reaches you, which is a time for giving in Allah's way.

Also let us remind ourselves that shortly, in December and January, it will be one hundred years since the Founder of our Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, created an Anjuman to run the work of the Movement after him. He wrote at the end of his book *The Will*:

"... there should be an Anjuman entrusted to spend, as it determines fit, the funds thus collected from time to time, on proclaiming the teachings of Islam and spreading the message of the oneness of God."

Addressing members of the Movement about making donations, he wrote in *The Will*:

"I do not want to take any possessions from you and make them my own. Rather, you will give your property to an Anjuman for the propagation of the religion, and thus attain heavenly life."

Deaths

It is with sadness that we report the following recent deaths.

1. Mrs Saleema Faruqui, wife of the late Mr Naseer Ahmad Faruqui, passed away in Lahore on 21 July at the age of about ninety. She was one of the most prominent, foremost and active members of the Jama'at. She took a deep interest in the publishing, charitable and social work of the Movement, contributing towards it in every possible way. She was, of course, the wife of one of the greatest personalities of our Jama'at, Mr Naseer Ahmad Faruqui. Mr Faruqui, who died in December 1991, rose to the top-most positions in his professional career in the Civil Service of British India and then Pakistan, on the one hand, and on the other served the cause of our Movement with the highest distinction through his speeches, *khutbas*, Quran

lectures, writings, guidance, advice and financial sacrifices. He was renowned for his scrupulously pure morals, honesty and integrity. Mrs Saleema Faruqui mirrored the exemplary qualities of her husband, and was as humble, simple, kind and generous as he was, notwithstanding the very high position they held in the general society and country. I (Zahid Aziz) write this tribute as a witness to their qualities while visualizing Mr and Mrs Faruqui in my mind as I saw them. I sent the following message to the Central Anjuman, Lahore, on behalf of the U.K. Jama'at:

“ I am writing to express my deepest condolences and sympathy to the Jama'at and to Mrs Faruqui's relatives on her passing away. May Allah grant her forgiveness and protection, have mercy on her, and grant her to enter into His *Jannat* to join the other righteous people like the late Mr Naseer Ahmad Faruqui, *Ameen, Ameen*.

I knew Mrs Faruqui quite well. About six or seven years ago when I was visiting Lahore she invited me for lunch at her home and said to me: You are the guest of honour. We talked at length about the earlier times, her days in Bombay when Mr Faruqui was appointed there in the 1930s, later the time of partition, and still later the time of President Ayub Khan (of Pakistan).

When Mr Faruqui was seriously ill in the 1980s, she used to write replies to any letters that he received on his behalf under his instruction. I have one or two of those letters in her beautiful English handwriting. In one letter, Mr Faruqui says that she was looking after him so well that few wives can serve their husbands so much.

If there is any example of a wife following her husband in righteousness and the highest moral qualities, then it is Mrs Saleema Faruqui. She was also most refined and graceful in her manner and bearing, and yet simple and humble.

We have been deprived of the most excellent example of a true Muslim and Ahmadi lady that there could be. ”

I may add here that our senior member in the U.K., Mrs Akhtar Aziz, is a great admirer of Mrs Faruqui. Mrs Aziz recalls, as a child, attending the *walima* of Mr and Mrs Faruqui in the 1930s. Mrs Aziz also relates that at the annual *Jalsa* (gathering) every December in Lahore, in the ladies section Mrs Faruqui used to listen to every speech with undivided, rapt attention throughout, setting an example for the other ladies.

2. Mr Fazil Ramazan passed away in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, on 2 August 2005. The news received from the Central Anjuman states:

“ Mr. Fazil Ramazan came to Lahore, Pakistan from Suriname in the late 1950s to be trained as a missionary. After attending the training course he decided to stay back in Pakistan and remained actively associated with the Jamaat and involved in its affairs. He also successfully pursued his personal skills and business ventures. He was married to sister Zamurad Baigum [sister of Mrs Abdullah of the Woking Mission] from a prominent Ahmadi family of Wazirabad and has two daughters. On one of his extended visits to his family in Holland he married again and subsequently shared his time between Pakistan and Holland. While in Holland, he took a lot of interest in the activities of the Jamaat. May Allah Almighty grant eternal peace and a place in *Jannat ul Firdaus* to the departed soul. May He also grant patience and fortitude to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss. *Ameen*.”

I met Fazil Ramazan *marhum* in October 2001 at the convention in the Hague organized by our Jama'ats in Holland. He recounted to me his early days in Lahore when he studied under Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi and knew all our family very well.

3. Mr Daoud Ali has died in Canada at the age of 83. Originally from Guyana, he was brother of our U.K. Jamaat member Mr Araf Ali and brother-in-law of Mrs Akela Haroun. The deceased was a fervent Muslim and very devoted to prayer and *salat*. May Allah receive him in His mercy and protection, and grant him a high place in *Jannah, Ameen*.

Achievements of the Woking Muslim Mission

*Speech at a public meeting on
Saturday 23rd April at the New Haw
Community Centre near Woking*

by Zahid Aziz

Respected head of our Movement (Hazrat Ameer Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed), distinguished ladies and gentleman, brothers and sisters — my greetings to you all and *As-salamu alaikum*.

How to be British and Muslim

The theme of my speech originally was to be “how Muslims in this country can both live as Muslims who are true to their faith and as useful, loyal citizens of the community and country”. Then I thought I might illustrate some of the things I was going to say on that topic by dealing with the work of the Woking Muslim Mission which was conducted by our movement from the Woking Mosque from 1913 till the mid-1960’s. I have prepared a leaflet based on my talk but I have not distributed it in advance because my experiences from past occasions show that people, rather than listening, start reading the handout.

If I were to ask you whether there was a Muslim member of the Surrey Home Guard during the Second World War, who moreover received an MBE for his service in the Home Guard, I think most people would find it unbelievable that there could have existed such a man. But this is in fact quite true and the gentleman in question was one Major J.W.B. Farmer who had become a Muslim through the Woking Muslim Mission, and at one stage lived on Oriental Road, near the Mosque. Having served in the First World War, he was during the Second World War in the Surrey Home Guard. He died in 1966 and I learned recently that he received an MBE when honours were awarded at the end of the war. I also then confirmed this by finding his name on the Home Guard website.

Major J.W.B. Farmer, even as indicated by his name and also by his

appearance and bearing in his photographs, was I suppose as quintessential an Englishman as there could be, who served his country and community, yet he was a Muslim at the same time. The people in this country who became converts to Islam through the Woking Muslim Mission from 1913 onwards showed how a person could combine being a Muslim with being British in the best possible sense. It is difficult to define what being British means, but I leave it at being British in the best possible sense and in the highest traditions of this country. They showed that one could be a practising Muslim and yet belong to this country in every good sense. One Woking convert was an aristocrat by the name of Lord Headley. He and many such converts were mature people, well-established in their walks of life, when they became Muslims. They belonged either to the educated sections of the country or upper strata of society. They were not disaffected, rebellious youth who accepted Islam in order to rebel against the prevailing society. Lord Headley was some 58 years of age when he accepted Islam, and was a man of wide experience in many walks of life and a civil Engineer by profession. In an article in the *Guardian* newspaper about mosques in this country, while mentioning the Woking Mosque, it is stated:

“The Woking Mission had been a meeting of high minds, with great learning and a degree of wealth and culture.” (Online edition, 17 June 2002)

The “wealth” part does not carry any importance with us, I may add.

Features of Islam attractive to converts

I will now mention some of the features of Islam which these Woking converts said attracted them to Islam. One point they often mention in their accounts of conversion is that the basic beliefs of the religion of Islam and its concept of God are simple, rational and clear to understand and can be explained by logic and reason. They are not dogmas and mysteries which you are forced to accept even if they go against reason. Another feature which they mention is that the

practices of Islam, for example prayers, are marked by simplicity and don’t involve elaborate rituals and ceremonies, and that all of these institutions of Islam remove social distinctions among Muslims.

Then these converts, in their various accounts over the years, also say that what attracted them was that the teachings of Islam are broad-minded and tolerant, and proclaim that God sent His Prophets and revealed His message to all nations whose religions preceded Islam. We are required to believe in the truth of the Biblical Prophets, and are required to believe in Jesus as a true prophet and messenger of God. Moreover, God is fair and equitable to all. He does not have one favourite religion all of whose adherents, without exception, are the saved ones regardless of what they do, irrespective of their actions, while everyone else, not belonging to that faith, however good he or she may be, is doomed to hell. This is where the teachings of Islam are broad-minded and tolerant.

St George, Patron Saint of England

Yesterday, when I was searching on the Internet for the location of this community centre at New Haw (Addlestone, Surrey), I found a link to the website of the Mayor’s office where there was a list of your engagements and I understand that this evening you are going to a St. George’s Day function.* So that led me to look up some information about St. George. The real St. George lived apparently in the third century C.E. and was born in Turkey. The mythical slaying of the dragon took place in Libya, it seems. He is said to have been beheaded in Rome for his Christian beliefs on 23rd April 303 and thus is regarded as a Christian martyr. He is the patron saint not only of England but also of several other countries including Palestine. Now the serious point here is this. I have already said that Muslims accept Jesus as a true Prophet of God. But our religion also teaches us that the early followers of

* Note: I was addressing here the Mayor of Woking, Councillor Graham Cundy, who was on the platform.

all the prophets were following their teachings correctly and accurately. Therefore we not only revere and respect the Biblical prophets but also the early followers of those prophets as being on the right path. According to the teachings of Islam, the Christian religion for the first 300 years followed what we Muslims regard as the true, original teachings of Jesus, that is to believe in one God and to believe in Jesus as prophet and messenger. So on this basis, just as Moses and Jesus are prophets in Muslim belief, St. George can be accepted as a saint according to our beliefs. Therefore the celebration of St. George's Day as the patron saint of England is not at all something that Muslims would find in conflict with their religion. On the contrary, we too can commemorate his martyrdom, as we find it consistent with our religion to hold that St. George served the true religion of God. Usually, people try to highlight differences between communities and try to accentuate them. But here we find the common ground, that Muslims can also respect and revere the patron saint of England and accept him as a saint and martyr.

As we can see, Islam creates a universal brotherhood of people of all countries, races, classes etc. and that is the kind of teaching of Islam that these converts found appealing. Other features of Islam that they said attracted them are its encouragement of the pursuit of knowledge and the development of science and its promotion of democracy and social equality.

Another message which was broadcast distinctively from the Woking Muslim Mission was that the fundamental teachings of Islam unite all Muslims and that any religious differences between the various sects of Islam are of a secondary nature and should be kept at that level. There must be mutual tolerance and respect among Muslims themselves for such differences in their own ranks. Sectarian divisiveness amongst Muslims was abhorred in the message of the Woking Mission.

The message of Islam emanating from the Woking Mission reached all over the English speaking world,

including U.S.A., Africa, Australia, the West Indies, Singapore, etc. The name Woking, you would be surprised to hear, became well-known in small and remote places in distant Muslim countries. Through reading the literature from the Woking Mission they knew that Woking is a town about 25 miles South-West of London. Events at the Mosque were filmed by the British Pathe newsreel film company and the newsreel clips they produced are still available for viewing from the website of British Pathe News. The earliest film clip is from 1919 which is, of course, silent. Then there are others from the 1920's and 30's. There is one clip from 1954 which has a full sound commentary.

At the Woking Mosque and Mission, Muslim nationalist leaders and intellectuals visiting this country used to meet and discuss plans for future of their countries and the forthcoming independence that they looked forward to during the 1920's and 1930's. Even the name 'Pakistan' was devised as a result of meetings of Indian Muslim students in this country, held initially at the Woking Mission in 1932.

Central London Mosque

Moving to the present day, the Central London Mosque in Regents Park, London, owes its origin to the Woking Muslim Mission. The plan to build a mosque in Central London was proposed by Lord Headley during the First World War. He argued that it would be the pride of the British Empire to have a large mosque in the centre of London, especially after he saw the mosque in Paris. Later he created a trust in the late 1920s and land was bought by this trust in West Kensington in London near the Olympia Exhibition Centre (in Mornington Avenue, which I have visited two or three times). Even the foundation stone of the mosque was laid in 1937, after Lord Headley's death. Then the Second World War broke out and in 1940 it was suggested to Churchill's wartime cabinet that since Muslims in the British empire, especially in India, were supporting the war effort of Britain, it would be opportune to give them a piece of land in central London for building a mosque. This

proposal was discussed at the highest levels in the British government in June 1940. Shortly afterwards, land in Regents Park was presented as a gift by the government to the "Muslim Community in the U.K." and the property and assets of the earlier trust (whose original trustees were Lord Headley and Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din) were incorporated into the new London Central Mosque Trust, which today controls the Central London Mosque.

Conclusion

The success of the Woking Muslim Mission was not due to any building or its location but due to the distinctive ideas and beliefs and concepts broadcast from there and the vision, determination and sacrifices of the people who worked there. These characteristics and qualities are still to be found in the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, by means of which we can again exert our efforts to present the tolerant and broadminded nature of Islam.

Addendum to speech

In this published version of my speech, I may add the following supporting references.

1. On the website of the Muslim Council of Britain there is a document entitled *Islam in the British Isles — Some Key Events and Dates* in which it is stated:

"1916: British Muslim Lord Headley (Al-Haj El-Farooq) writes to Secretary of State Austen Chamberlain for allocation of state funds for the purchase and construction of a mosque in London 'in memory of Muslim soldiers who died fighting for the Empire'.

1928: Formation of the London Nizamiah Mosque Trust Fund by Al-Haj El-Farooq; these funds were subsequently transferred to the London Central Mosque Fund (present day Islamic Cultural Centre in Regents Park)."

(www.mcb.org.uk/scrd181298.html)

2. The website of the present-day Woking Mosque expresses the following view about the work of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din:

"One of the things that is impressive about this early move-

ment, and for this the Khwaja must take the credit, was the simplicity of the message. It is evident that this is one of the things that were most influential in persuading converts to adopt Islam. He preached a message that was free of cultural baggage, a pure message based on faith and belief that encompassed the spirit of Islam. He was always positive, always gentle and always good-natured. It was obvious that he embodied many of the qualities that believers would expect in a man of faith; peacefulness, kindness and a quiet certainty, but [which they] failed to witness in the clergy, where dogma and the ecclesiastical hierarchy were the dominant features.”

(www.wokingmosque.org.uk/history.htm)

In the light of the July bomb outrages in London, the crying need of the time is to present Islam as was done by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din under Ahmadiyya influence.

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

10. “So He revealed to His servant (*‘abdi-hi*) what He revealed (*ma auha*).”

Ma auha (what He revealed) is a reference to the revelation of the Holy Quran. Here *ma* (what) is a particle denoting majesty, thus signifying that Allah, Most High, sent down to His servant a most extraordinary revelation in the form of the Holy Quran. This turn of phrase exists in the Urdu language also. For example, when a person wishes to express his approval of the startling beauty of a particular place or scene, the following mode of expression is employed: “We went to that place and suffice it to say, we saw what we saw.” Although this sentence does not reveal what was seen, yet the listeners will definitely

understand that the scene was unusually beautiful and impressive. In this verse also, by saying: “*He revealed to His servant what He revealed*,” the intention is to create the same impression. What was revealed? Allah, Most High, seems to be saying: “Indeed, how can We explain to you what We revealed?” the meaning is that it was a revelation of such grandeur and majesty that even if Allah, Most High, explained it to us in words we would not be able to discern its sublime nature.

By using the phrase, “His servant,” the motive is to point out that the Holy Prophet (*sas*) is indeed deserving of such an exceptional revelation, for he had traversed all the stages of perfect servitude and had arrived at the utmost point of obedience beyond which it was humanly impossible to proceed. This is why Allah, Most High, chose the loving title of “His servant.” Thus, whatever communication was passed to that beloved servant and whatever bounties vouchsafed to him were beyond the ability of man to comprehend. Sufficient it is to say that something was spoken, and we should leave it at that. It is evident, therefore, that indescribable and grand words were spoken and ineffable favours were granted of such magnitude that mere words are insufficient to convey understanding to man.

11. “The heart (*fu’adu*) was not untrue in seeing what he saw (*ra’a*).”

Fu’adu means the heart, as well as the centre of power or capabilities, while *ra’a* signifies something seen or knowledge acquired.

This verse pertains to the revelation of the Holy Quran. However, the vision that was shown to the Holy Prophet (*sas*) on the night of the *Mi’raj* (Ascension) is also included within its ambit because of the Holy Prophet’s close union with Allah, Most High. We are told that whatever was revealed to the Holy Prophet’s heart, which Satan could not enter and in which no vain or egoistical desire existed, and whatever knowledge was vouchsafed to him was far removed from the

possibility of falsehood, for the heart on which the Throne of the Almighty was seated and which was so closely connected to Him to the extent of being one chord between two bows, could never be influenced by either Satan, or base promptings of the animal self. In fact, no falsehood could approach such a heart.

Many commentators of the Holy Quran think that this verse related to the *Mi’raj* and opine that whatever vision the unsullied heart of the Holy Prophet (*sas*) saw was true and authentic and there was no falsehood in what his heart saw. This meaning is very accurate, but it has confirmed the fact that the Holy Prophet’s Ascension was not with his physical body. It was, instead, an unprecedented spiritual vision in which was divulged to him a view of the stages of closeness he had indeed traversed in his journey towards Allah, Most High. For if he had gone up to the heavens with his material body and had seen everything with his physical eyes, then the Holy Quran would have mentioned that he saw with his eyes. However, the verse states that whatever he saw was seen by his heart and the seeing of the heart is not accomplished with physical eyes.

That sublime station is referred to as “*the measure of two bows*” where not only was the mighty revelation of the Holy Quran given to him but it was also there that he was blessed with all kinds of wondrous and miraculous sights which can lead man to the final point of certainty and deep spiritual insight. Further, in receiving that revelation and in witnessing those delightful spiritual scenes, the heart of the Holy Prophet (*sas*) made no mistake. And how could there be error? If the mirror of the heart is clean and smooth, then the image created in it will be a true representation. In a distorted mirror, such as those in amusement parks, the image is hideously out of proportion.

12. “Do you then dispute with him as to what he saw?”

Whatever revelation of the Holy Quran was given to the Holy Prophet (*sas*), or whatever spiritual phenomena were disclosed to him, were all communicated to everyone. So why

should the objectors have any quarrel with these matters? Every revelation he received, he passed on to the public at large for he was the one who was sent by Allah, Most High, for that very purpose. So their contending with him is pointless, for if they desired to dispute with anyone it should have been with Allah, Most High, for it is He Who revealed His messages to him or unveiled to him spiritual mysteries. Everything that the Holy Prophet (*sas*) heard from Allah, Most High, he imparted to his people. He was only the bearer of a message from his Creator.

13–15. “And certainly he saw (*ra’a*) Him in another descent (*nazlatan ukhra*), At the farthest lote-tree (*sidratil muntaha*). Near it is the Garden of Abode.”

Ra’a means to see. Whom did he see? It was his Lord that he saw. Ibn Jarir in his commentary of the Holy Quran quotes Ibn Abbas as saying: “He (the Holy Prophet) saw his Lord with his heart,” and this does not contradict 6:104 of the Holy Quran: “*Vision comprehends Him not and He comprehends all vision.*”

Hasan also related that the Holy Prophet (*sas*) saw his Lord. The following later verse, 53:17, also supports this interpretation: “*The eye turned not aside, nor did it exceed the limit.*”

Nazlatan ukhra (another descent). One form of Allah’s descent came about through Quranic revelation by means of which the spiritual light of the Almighty used to descend from time to time on the immaculate heart of the Holy Prophet (*sas*). However, we are told that besides this, the phenomenon of Allah’s descent was experienced by the Holy Prophet (*sas*) in another way and that took place at the “farthest lote tree” (*sidratil muntaha*) where the imperial crown of spiritual and worldly kingship was placed on the head of the Holy Prophet (*sas*).

Sidratun is a berry or lote tree and *sidratil-muntaha* signifies a lote tree the like of which does not exist.

Qazi Baidawi has written that it was the custom among the Arabs that when the people had to congregate on momentous occasions especially

for the coronation of a king — an event that brought together a very massive gathering which could not be accommodated in their tiny tents and large public halls were non-existent at that time — they used to sit under a lote tree which was one of the largest shade-giving trees in Arabia. On many occasions the tree used to be stripped of its thorns so that the audience would not be hurt by them and there the chief or king would be crowned according to custom.

With this in mind, Allah, Most High, has employed an Arabic turn of phrase to establish the fact that He, Himself, had crowned the Holy Prophet (*sas*) as Emperor of heaven and earth and so there was none who could stand against him. In other words, this was a heavenly lote tree and not an earthly one so that the decision that was made there by Allah, Most High, and the subsequent coronation of the Holy Prophet (*sas*) could not be derailed by anyone in the world under any other earthly lote tree.

The phrase *sidratil muntaha* (at the farthest lote tree) indicates that although prophets and messengers were crowned under various lote trees in heaven, yet the tree under which the Holy Prophet (*sas*) was invested with his earthly and heavenly kingship was the one which stood at the ultimate limit of progress and perfection, thus signifying that his pre-eminence in knowledge and conduct had reached the furthest possible point of perfection.

Thus, in these verses, we find mention of the Holy Prophet’s vision which he saw on the night of the *Mi’raj* when he was blessed with the most glorious manifestation of his Lord’s glory and circumstances dictated that this should take place under “*the farthest lote tree*” in accordance with the custom of his country. But even more so, it was disclosed to him that this tree was near to Heaven which is the genuine resting-place of man’s life of true happiness and total bliss. In other words, it is that lofty, elevated station from the roots of which spring all heavenly and earthly bounties and on which depends all celestial life, whether of this world or the next.

According to Ibn Asir in the *Nihayah*, the use of the phrase, “*the farthest lote tree*,” signifies the point where knowledge of all the worlds has come to an end and beyond that lies the world of the unseen which no one except Allah, Most High, knows. Another view is that the deeds of man cannot proceed beyond that point for that was the furthestmost boundary of humanity. And of all mankind, this was the honour and status reserved for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sas*) alone.

100 years of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman

At the end of this year and the beginning of 2006 it will be one hundred years since Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad created the *Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya* to govern the Ahmadiyya Movement after him. He announced the creation of this body in his booklet *Al-Wasiyya* (“The Will”), published in December 1905 with a Supplement in January 1906. In this booklet he has also reiterated the religious teachings that his followers must adhere to. We quote from it below:

“ It is essential that you, too, should obtain a share of the holy spirit by showing sympathy to fellow-beings and by cleansing your hearts, for without the holy spirit true righteousness cannot be attained. Totally forsaking all lower urges, walk for the pleasure of God in that path which is the narrowest of all paths. Be not enamoured with worldly pleasures, for they cut you off from God. For the sake of God, choose the hard life. That pain which earns the pleasure of God is better than the enjoyment which leads to His anger. That defeat which earns the pleasure of God is better than the victory which brings His wrath. Forsake that love which brings you nearer the wrath of God. If you come to Him with a pure heart, He will help you in every path, and no enemy will be able to harm you. You can never attain the pleasure of God until, forsaking your own pleasure, your enjoyments, your honour, your property and your life, you bear that hardship in His path which brings

you face to face with death. But if you do undertake that hardship, you will be taken up into the lap of God like a beloved child. You will become heirs to the righteous who have passed before you, and the doors of every blessing shall be opened to you. But few are such! God has said, addressing me, that righteousness is the tree which must be planted in the heart. The water which nourishes righteousness, waters the whole garden. Righteousness is the root without which all else is worthless, but if it is there then everything is there. What does man gain from the useless behaviour of claiming with his tongue that he seeks God, but not taking a step in the path of truth? Look, I say to you truly that the man will perish who has any trace of worldly motives mixed in his faith, and that soul is very close to hell whose aims are not all for God, but some are for God and some for the world. If, therefore, you have even a speck of worldliness in your intentions, all your services to God are in vain. In that case, you do not follow God, but follow the devil. Never expect that God will help you in that condition, for you are a worm of the earth and in a few days you will be crushed like worms are crushed. God will not be in you; but rather, He will be pleased by destroying you. But if you truly die in terms of your desires, then you will appear in God, and God will be with you; that house will be blessed in which you live; those walls will be showered with the mercy of God which are the walls of your house; and that town will be blessed where such a person lives. If your life and your death, and your every movement, and your showing of gentleness or harshness, are all only for God, and at the time of any hardship and distress you do not put God to the test, nor break with Him, but advance forward, then I say truly that you will be the chosen people of God. You are human beings, as I am, and the same God Who is my God is also your God. Therefore, waste not your powers of good. If you incline wholly to God, then look, I tell you according to the will of God that you will become a chosen people of God. Put the majesty of God in your hearts, and proclaim His unity not

only with the tongue but by actions as well, so that God too may open His grace and favour to you by action. Shun malice and show true sympathy to your fellow beings. Walk in every path of virtue, for it is not known from which path you will be accepted."

Our Websites

Please do browse the websites of our Jama'at. The Central Anjuman's website is at: www.aaiil.org

This website has a section for the U.K. Jama'at: www.aaiil.org/uk

Another website is at:

www.muslim.org

The U.K. Jama'at also publishes a website about all aspects of the former Woking Muslim Mission. The home page is at:

www.wokingmuslim.org

People searching through the World Wide Web (popularly known as the Internet) for certain kinds of information about Islam in England sometimes make contact with our websites via e-mail. On 13th August the following e-mail was received:

"I thought you might be interested in this web site devoted to my great-grandfather who converted to Islam in 1909. He was vice-president and secretary of the British Muslim Society, attended the Woking Mosque, and wrote the book, "What is Islam?"

You can find the web site here: <http://www.lovegrove.co.uk/habibullah/index.htm>

The site includes two short clips showing Habibullah Lovegrove attending various events at the Woking Mosque during the 1920s and '30s.

Please let me know if you would like to swap links.

Regards,
Ben Lovegrove "

We were already very much familiar with the name and face of Mr. Habibullah Lovegrove from Woking Mission literature and knew of this website. A reply has been sent to this e-mail, mentioning some information

about Habibullah Lovegrove which Ben may not have, and hoping to exchange information with him.

Another e-mail is as follows:

"I was very interested to see a photograph of John Parkinson on your website. I have been researching his biography for some time now but it has not always been easy to pull together all the information. I live and work in Turkey and it is particularly in relation to his time and contacts here as well as his work with the British Muslim community in the U.K. in the first decade of the 1900s. Any information which you can provide would be gratefully received. Hopefully we can get something into print soon.

Yours sincerely
John Thompson "

Then there was the following e-mail:

"I am contacting you from an organisation called VisitBritain. We are the government-run body responsible for promoting British tourism internationally.

We are currently producing a family's brochure for the UAE Market and are keen to promote Britain as a place where the Muslim faith can be practised openly and easily. To this end, we would like to have some photos of the inside of a mosque, preferably with people worshipping so this idea is clear.

Would you be able to help?

Amy Crees
Segment Marketing Executive "

Appropriate replies have been sent to these e-mails.

Muslim Prayer Book with CD-ROM

You may now obtain from the U.K. Jama'at *The Muslim Prayer Book* by Maulana Muhammad Ali, accompanied by a CD-ROM (for computers) which plays the sound of all the prayers given in the book. In the audio recording, each syllable is pronounced distinctly with a clear separation from the next one to facilitate the hearer in catching the sound correctly.