

“In the name of ALLAH, the BENEFICENT, the MERCIFUL”

NOOR-I-ISLAM

(INTERNATIONAL)

AHMADIYAH ANJUMAN ISH'AT-I-ISLAM (LAHORE), CANADA

DECEMBER - 2003

Guidance from the Holy Prophet

the FEAST after the FAST

Sadiq – Canada

It is a common knowledge that when Ramadan is over, Muslims celebrate with a feast which lasts three days. Since the idea of a feast is associated in people's minds with playing games, fun and enjoyment, as well as having much to eat, it may seem to an outsider that this is a strange way of ending a season of worship such as Ramadan. After having gone through a whole month of fasting as well as night worship, it seems very odd that people should go on the loose, as it were, to have as much enjoyment as they can. To this I reply that Islamic feasts are so different from that. While retaining the aspect of happiness and enjoyment, moderation is a very essential feature of celebrating these feasts, in as much as it is an essential aspect of Islamic life. Moreover, in Islam even feasts are so orientated that we celebrate them hoping for reward from Allah.

When the first Muslim Community came into existence in Madinah and was able to conduct its affairs as it pleased, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) set about changing the attitudes of his followers toward every aspect of life at the individual and social levels. Anas ibn Malik, a companion of the Prophet, reports that when Allah's Messenger (Peace be on him) settled in Madinah, its people had two days a year to celebrate and enjoy themselves. He said to them: "Allah, blessed and sublime be He, has substituted them for you with two better days; the day ending the fast and the day of sacrifice." (related by Ahmad, An-Nassaie, At-Tirmithi and others) The idea of changing attitudes is apparent in the fact that those two days which were celebrated by the people of Madinah in their pre-Islamic days did not have any particular significance other than the fact that they signaled the advent of spring and the end of summer. What was celebrated in them was simply temperate weather. The Prophet replaced that with a celebration of two great occasions. In the first one, those of us who have gone through the duty of fasting throughout the month of Ramadan, abandoning everything which could stain the pure image of pure dedication to Allah which fasting inspires know that the prize we receive as reward for our dedication is forgiveness of our past sins. The Prophet makes it clear that when one fasts, motivated only by his faith, and in response to Allah's order, he is certain to be forgiven whatever sins he might have committed in the preceding 11 months. Winning such a prize calls for a fitting celebration.

Similarly, the day of sacrifice follows the completion of the great duty of attending at Arafat during pilgrimage. It is well known that for pilgrimage a Muslim is granted forgiveness of all his past sins. Again, that is an occasion to celebrate.

Our celebration of a feast begins with a prayer. It was the practice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) that this prayer should be offered in the open space outside the city. This gives a chance to all people in the city to attend that prayer and meet their fellow Muslims afterward, offering them their



congratulations on having completed the duty of fasting in Ramadan and praying Allah to accept their worship and reward them for it. Since the feast is common to all, the Prophet's guidance was that women and children should also attend the Eid prayer which begins the feast. Several Hadiths mention this, the most authentic of which is that reported by Umm Atiyah, a companion of the Prophet, who said: **"The messenger of Allah, (peace be on him) bid us allow young unmarried women, even those who were in the period, to attend Eid prayer on the day ending the fast and on the day of sacrifice. Those who were in the period did not join the prayer although they participated in praising Allah and the general supplication to Him. He was asked about a woman who might not have a dress suitable for going out, and he answered: "Let her sister give her one to wear."** (related by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad and others) The fact that even women in their periods were bid by the Prophet to attend Eid prayers, although they could not pray shows that the Prophet was keen that everyone should be fully aware of what sort of occasion an Islamic feast is. We have to remember here that Eid prayer is not obligatory although this Hadith shows its great importance which we note in the fact that women who could not pray were supposed to go and stand by and participate only in the other aspects of worship in which they are allowed to take part. The Prophet (pbuh) stresses the social aspect in this particular prayer which is vividly apparent in the fact that women are required to attend it, although they are not required to attend Friday prayers. Cooperation in the Muslim community is stressed in the fact that women are encouraged to lend their dresses to those who do not have suitable dresses in which to go out for prayer.

The Prophet (pbuh) also teaches us that we should prepare for this occasion with taking a bath, using perfume and selecting our best clothes. All these are signs of a good and healthy celebration. Moreover, the Prophet (pbuh) went out to pray outside the town using one route, and come back using a different route. This served more than one purpose. By doing so, he met different people on each way greeting and congratulating them. He was also able to answer any questions put to him by as many people as possible. He also publicized the occasion in a way which distressed the hypocrites as they realized that Islam had a large following and also demonstrated that the Muslims were strong enough to practice their religion in total freedom. To follow the Prophet's practice will serve at least some of these purposes, no matter in what condition or situation the Muslim community is.

The Prophet (pbuh) was keen to relate this joyous occasion to the idea of obeying Allah in every situation. It is well known that Eid prayer is offered a short while after sunrise. Several reports confirm that

the Prophet always ate something before he went out to prayer. Anas ibn Malik reports: **"Allah's messenger (peace be on him) did not go out on the day which ended the fast until he had eaten a few dates, keeping them to an odd number."** (related by Al-Bukhari, Ahmad and others) This was in marked difference from his practice on the day of sacrifice. He did not eat then until he had slaughtered the animal and was able to eat something of its meat. It is well known that this sacrifice can be offered only after Eid prayer is over. The reason for eating early on the day of the first feast is that fasting on that day is forbidden because it is the day which follows the month of fasting and signals its end. The Prophet (pbuh) wanted to demonstrate to his companions that the proper attitude of a Muslim is to act on Allah's orders without delay. Since the Prophet (pbuh) ate dates on that occasion, it is Sunnah to follow his example. Some scholars, however, suggest that anything sweet, such as honey, also allows one to follow the Prophet's example, assuming that the Prophet chose dates because it was the sweet thing available to him. Whether one eats something sweet or salty he follows the sunnah if he eats before going out for prayer. If he chooses dates because the Prophet is known to have eaten dates on this occasion, he earns a reward according to his intention, which is to follow the Prophet's example. The Prophet kept the dates he ate to an odd number: three or five or seven, etc. so that it remained a reference to the Oneness of Allah. In fact, he did that in all matters. He kept reminding his nation of the great Islamic principle of the Oneness of Allah in everything he did.

After the prayer, the Prophet (pbuh) addressed the congregation. He encouraged them to maintain the path of obedience to Allah in all aspects of life. The congregation was too large for everyone to hear what the Prophet said, especially women who prayed at a distance from the men's congregation. The Prophet (pbuh), therefore, went to address them separately. Jabir ibn Abdullah reports: **"I attended prayers with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) on an Eid day. He started with prayer before giving the sermon, and without the normal call to prayer of either athan or iqama. When the prayer was over, he stood up leaning on Bilal. He praised Allah and glorified Him. He then counseled the congregation, reminding them of Allah and their duty to obey Him. Afterward, he went to the women taking Bilal with him. He ordered them to maintain their fear of Allah and advised them. He also praised Allah and glorified Him, urging women to always obey Him. He then said to them: "Give much in charity, for most of you will be the fuel of Gehennam." A woman who was not an Arab and whose cheeks had turned slightly black asked: "why is that, messenger of Allah?" He said: "Because you complain too much and are ungrateful to your folk." They began to take off**

their jewelry, necklaces, earrings and rings and threw all that in Bilal's dress giving it all as charity." (related by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad and others.)

This Hadith shows us that the Prophet made a special effort to address women on the day of Eid. According to scholars, the imam or the ruler should also make a special effort to address them. In this modern world, public address system and technology makes it easier to address them without moving from your place. But the Imam should make sure to add certain points in the sermon specially addressing the female

attendance, by doing this the imam will only be following the example of our beloved prophet and earning reward for that.

Please accept my congratulations for completing the Holy month of Ramadan and a very Happy Eid Mubarak to everyone in our community. Try celebrating this Eid as our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) did and asked us to do and see how blessed we will be. Allah be with you all and, once again, Eid Mubarak to you all.

a personal profile

Chaudhry Masood Akhtar

Akbar Abdullah – USA

Ch. Masood Akhtar, born in Lahore (Pakistan), educated as a lawyer, is in his early seventies, married, resides in Hayward, California and has three grown-up children. Two of his older sons, Muneeb and Qasim are married and practicing physicians, the youngest son Bilal is finishing medical school. Brother Masood and his wife Qudsia are amongst the relatives of the late Hazrat Maulana Mohammed Ali (of the blessed memory). During 1970's he migrated to USA with his family.

Before coming to USA, his contribution to Jama'at includes; President of the local Lahore Jama'at, member of the Mutemeddin (a governing body of our jama'at), personal advisor to Hazrat Ameer Dr. Saeed Ahmad Khan, Assistant Imam to London mission and many other services. He has been fortunate enough to render personal service during the tenure of Maulana Mohammed Ali, Maulana Sadruddin, Dr. Saeed Ahmed Khan and Dr. Asghar Hameed (may Allah be pleased with all of them) and has been a close associate with Dr. Abdul Kareem Saeed, our present ameer.

He is a founder member, secretary / director of USA jama'at, and for ten years he has been the Editor of Islamic Review published from Hayward, California. Amongst some of his achievements as secretary of USA jama'at is, that in 1988 he arranged one of the largest gatherings of worldwide delegates at a convention in Columbus, Ohio, and amongst other numerous feats he served as a translator and interpreter, working with the late Maulana Hafiz Sher Mohammed, in the second case in South Africa following the verdict on Ahmadiyya Judgment in favor of our jama'at.

He is also the founding member; secretary cum vice president of Hayward based Lahore Ahmadiyya Anjuman for propagation of Islam. He is a publisher, translator and author of several articles, books and pamphlets.

A REPORT FROM U.S. OF AMERICA

DUA (PRAYERS) AND OUR GREAT JAMA'AT

AKBAR IBN ABDULLAH – USA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jama'at:
Assalaam-o-Alaikum

First of all please permit me to apologize to you for sending a barrage of electronic mail for requesting duas for a period of over two months. I am happy to say this message will bring to a closure of this exhaustive episode.

For the first time in the history of our jama'at this unprecedented experience of seeking prayer Virgil via internet network of world wide web, which

certainly certified a bona fide case of cooperation, compassion, communication, comradery and cordiality that was demonstrated by the members of our worldwide jama'at. Unbeknown to me and until last week when I read an English translation of Hazrat Ameer's inaugural address delivered last year during his acceptance speech in which he made a clarion call that jama'at must communicate with each other. He quoted, "... there is a great need to develop close contact and frequent communication with members of the jama'at within Pakistan and abroad. (within a context of discussion about internet, he

said) – we should seriously think about this and adopt immediate steps to develop close contact through frequent communications.”

During the period of their illness, both brother Masood Akhtar of USA and Noer Sardar of Holland received hundreds of e-mails and scores of telephone calls from jama'at members throughout the world, who encouraged them and wished them well towards a speedy recovery. With the infinite Mercy and Blessings of Almighty Allah and with your continued prayers both brothers are recovering satisfactorily.

I am also pleased to inform you that our dear brothers, the respected Maulana Abdul Mannan Umar of USA, Rashid Pierkhan of Suriname, Dr. Habeeb Sahukahn of Australia, missionary Rafi Shareef of USA, beloved mother of Mehboob Raza of Fiji and Abid Raza of New Zealand, beloved mother of Zahid and Shahid Aziz of UK, and the beloved mother of Mohammed Ali of Germany, for whom prayers were sought, are all graced with shifa and infinite Mercy of Allah. Alhamdulillah!

All the ailing brothers and sisters, either directly or indirectly through their loves ones, have expressed their sincere gratitude for this magnitude of prayers conducted for their well-being by the worldwide jama'at members through the medium of internet network of world wide web. Scores of jama'at members have praised me for my most humble effort to which I say Alhamdulillah, for all praise is due to Allah.

This experience has been a great therapeutic value and a source of contentment to all out ailing brothers and sisters. Many hospitals in USA stress the importance of spiritual healing. A local hospital here state in the patient handbook, under the head

‘Spiritual strength through our connection with God’, “Spirituality refers to that inner part of us that provides meaning and purpose to our lives. It also gives us a sense that we are not alone and that we are connected with God and others. Spirituality helps us achieve a sense of hope, peace and comfort with ourselves and others and gives us the courage to struggle through hard times. A strong connection with God can help in times of illness and suffering. Each person strengthens their connection with God according to their own personal beliefs and values.” For Muslim patients the hospital recommends to read “Islamic Daily Prayers Manual (1997) by Farnaz Khoromi and “Journey to the Lord of Power: A Sufi Manual on Retreat (1990)” by Muhyiddin Inb Arabi.

As I was composing this report, I have received sad news from Hazrat Ameer that sister Samina Malik has been hospitalized with a minor heart attack and our urgent prayers are needed. Sister Samina is a devoted, dedicated and a very courageous Ahmadi member of our jama'at. May Allah with His infinite Mercy and Blessings grant shifa to our dear sister Samina and recover her to normal health soon (Ameen). I have tried unsuccessfully to contact Dr. Noman Malik and Dr. Mohammed Ahmed, however, preliminary unconfirmed report is that sister Samina is undergoing tests at Cleveland Clinic. Inshallah I will contact Ohio later today. As per wish of Hazrat Ameer please continue to pray for her and especially pray during Jumah prayers.

In conclusion, from the bottom of my heart I want to thank you all for your prayers, communication and for keeping in touch with each other via the medium of internet.

Khuda Hafiz, Salaam and Dua to all, and a very Happy and spiritually fulfilling Ramadan Mubarak. (Akbar ibn Abdullah)

DID YOU KNOW?

(a question / answer page for our children)

have a question in your mind? ... send it to msnoor53@yahoo.com

Q: I did not pray for many years. How can I compensate for missed prayers?
(name withheld, Germany)

A: Allah says in the Qur'an that prayers are a duty which has to be offered at certain times. The linking of the duty to its time is of essence. When the time lapses one may still offer the missed prayer provided that he missed it out of forgetfulness or because he overslept. If he deliberately did not pray, then he cannot compensate for the missed prayer or prayers. There is simply no way of atoning for such missed prayers. When someone misses prayers for several years, and then he decides to mend his ways, the proper attitude for him is as follows: he should genuinely repent for the omission of which he was guilty. He must couple his repentance with a resolve that he will attend to his prayers without failing. He should also continue to pray Allah to accept his repentance. When he does that, we hope that Allah will forgive him. When Allah has forgiven him, He will not ask him why he missed his prayers. Allah is most compassionate and merciful. When He accepts someone's repentance, He does not question him about the sin of which he has repented.

ISLAM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

(part two, continued from November issue)

Habiba Anwar

London

As to the provisions of freedom of choice of religion and beliefs, the Qur'an is very specific when it proclaims that there is no compulsion in religion because right has been clearly defined against wrong.

As the right to life, liberty and security, Islam is very emphatic on this issue, forbidding suicides (4:30) infanticide (17:32) and any attacks on anybody's lives. There is a famous verse of the Holy Qur'an that states anybody who kills one person has in fact slaughtered all of mankind because he started disorder by this one murder (5:33).

The property of individuals has been protected by the Qur'an in verses 152 and 153 of chapter 6, which reads: **"Approach not the property of an orphan till he attains his maturity. Give full measure and weight with equity. When you speak, be just. That is what Allah enjoins upon you that you may be mindful."** The Holy Prophet (pbuh) in his address at the farewell pilgrimage had stressed the teachings in this respect in the following Quranic words: "your persons, properties and honor, are declared sacred, like the sanctity of this day, this month and this place. Let them not be violated." As you will agree with me, the charter could not find better words than these.

The article about the abolishment of slavery and all forms of servitude is in fact a repetition of what Islam had enforced many centuries before. The article preventing torture, cruelty, inhumane or degrading treatment/punishment, is in fact an extension of Islamic teachings, especially those expounded by the Holy Prophet who had constantly admonished

people to behave with calmness and dignity in all situations, and emphasized the need for courtesy towards all. He told the leader of a deputation from the tribe of Abul Qais, and I quote: **"you have two qualities which are very acceptable to Allah ... forbearance and deliberation."** He prohibited all cruelty and torture commanding: **"No one should be subjected to punishment by fire"**, and also admonished against hitting any person on the face.

Article 6, 7 and 8 of the Human Rights charter are designed to secure for all persons recognition and quality before the law and protection of the law for everyone without discrimination. Islam introduces and upholds this value with a much stronger emphasis. The famous verses are read in every sermon by the Imam includes the verse: "Allah requires of you to exercise justice and favor". The world justice means informing the accused of the details of the charge against him, and giving him complete opportunity to defend himself against the charge. According to the Islamic Law the plaintiff or complainant is required to produce the evidence and in the absence of convincing evidence, the case against the accused is regarded as null and void if he denies the charge. At another place, the Qur'an states: **"when you judge between people, judge with justice"** (4:59) **"and the course of justice is not to be corrupted through bribery"** (2:159) **"or the recourse to false evidence"** (25:73) Islam's sensitivity to justice is so sharp that it requires Muslims to deal justly with even their enemies: **"let not a people's enmity towards you incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just. That is closest to**

righteousness. Surely Allah is aware of what you do".

Islam has enumerated in junctions like prohibiting people not to enter houses other than your own until you ask leave and have saluted the inmates: **"If ever you are told to go back, then go back"** (24:28-30).

The right of neighbors, travelers, relatives, parents, orphans and the needy have been dually recognized by naming them in the Qur'an (4:37-38)

In his farewell address, our Holy Prophet (pbuh) declared as: **"Your lives, your properties and your honor are declared sacred as the sanctity of this day that is the day of pilgrimage; and this month of Zil Hajj, and this place that is the expense of Arafat."**

It is thus clear that the objectives of this article are fully supported and subscribed to by Islam. Similarly, there are specific and sometimes even more detailed instructions for safeguarding the basic human rights named in the rest of the articles. I will leave further details for some other time.

HADITH NABAWI

Abu Hurrairah reported, the Prophet (pbuh) said:

"On every bone of the fingers charity is incumbent everyday: One assists a man in riding his beast or in lifting his provisions to the back of the animal, this is charity; and a good word and every step which one takes in walking over to prayer is charity; and showing the way (to someone) is charity."

(reported by Al-Bukhari)

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Editor's e-mail box

Ramadan Mubarak to you, your family and the whole Jam'at. (Ashraf & Nafiesa Ali)

Eid-ul-Fitr greetings to our Muslim brothers and sisters as well as to all members of the national community on this happy and joyous occasion. (Dr. Mohammed Ali Aziz)

I am benefited by the articles therein. I appreciate your untiring efforts, keep it up and Allah will bless your efforts. (Mian Fazl-i-Ahmad Sahib)

Brother Sadiq: You have done well to focus your esteemed newsletter, the monthly Noor-i-Islam, to our jam'at's youth worldwide. You have generated enough interest in them that a number of them contributed interesting articles. This newsletter which can genuinely be classified as news magazine is not only being targeted for your youth but good enough for our elders to read. Jazakallah, May Allah grant you strength, stamina and sound health to carry out this noble task. Akbar Abdullah)

Salaam, Ramadan and Eid Mubarak to all. (Robbert)

On behalf of the Central Anjuman and on my own behalf I wish all the women, men and children associated with the Lahore Ahmadiya Movement the world over a very happy Eid-ul-Fitr. Dr. Abdul Kareem Saeed, Ameer-i-Jam'at)

On behalf of all executive members from the Institute of Islamic Studies and Publications (Parameribo, Suriname) I wish all of you Eid Mubarak (Riaz Ahmadali)

On behalf of the members of the Muslim Literary Trust of Trinidad and Tobago, I extend to you, your families and your Jam'at, warmest greetings on the joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr 2003. (Enayat Mohammed, sent by Nadara Khan)

Dear brothers and sisters in Islam: I wish a very happy EID MUBARAK to you. May Allah shower his blessings on all of us. Muhammad Ali)

I have gone through your magazine. As always. A job well done. I noticed that you have changed the design a bit. I like it. Keep it up. (Mujahid)

Many thanks for sending me Noor-i-Islam which I have been receiving regularly. The November issue arrived and as usual it is full of excellent articles especially on the Holy month of Ramadan. May Allah bless you. (Dr. Aqueel Ather)

Ramadan Mubarak, Eid Mubarak and May Almighty Allah bless you for what you are doing for our jam'at. (Arjumand Sadiq)

As usual, the latest edition of Noor-i-Islam was excellent, read it from cover to cover. Habiba Anwar)

I thank all Jam'at members who prayed for the health and recovery of brother Masud Akhtar, Jazak Allah. Ahmad Nawaz)

We have downloaded the latest issue of Noor-i-Islam. Thank you very much. May Allah shower His blessings on you. (Aziz Ahmad)

EID MUBARAK messages from our Jam'at worldwide were received, sent by the following readers:

Col. Shaukat Mahmoud, Mrs. Arjumand Anwar, Amina J Sadiq, A. Santoe, Mohammed Saeed, Muhammed Ali, Nasir Ahmed, Siddiq Sadiq and Raza Saadat.

“I have firm belief that our Prophet (peace be on him) is the last of the prophets and after him there will appear no prophet in this nation, neither new nor old”..... (Founder of the Ahmadiya Movement in his book Nishan-i-Asmani, page 28.)