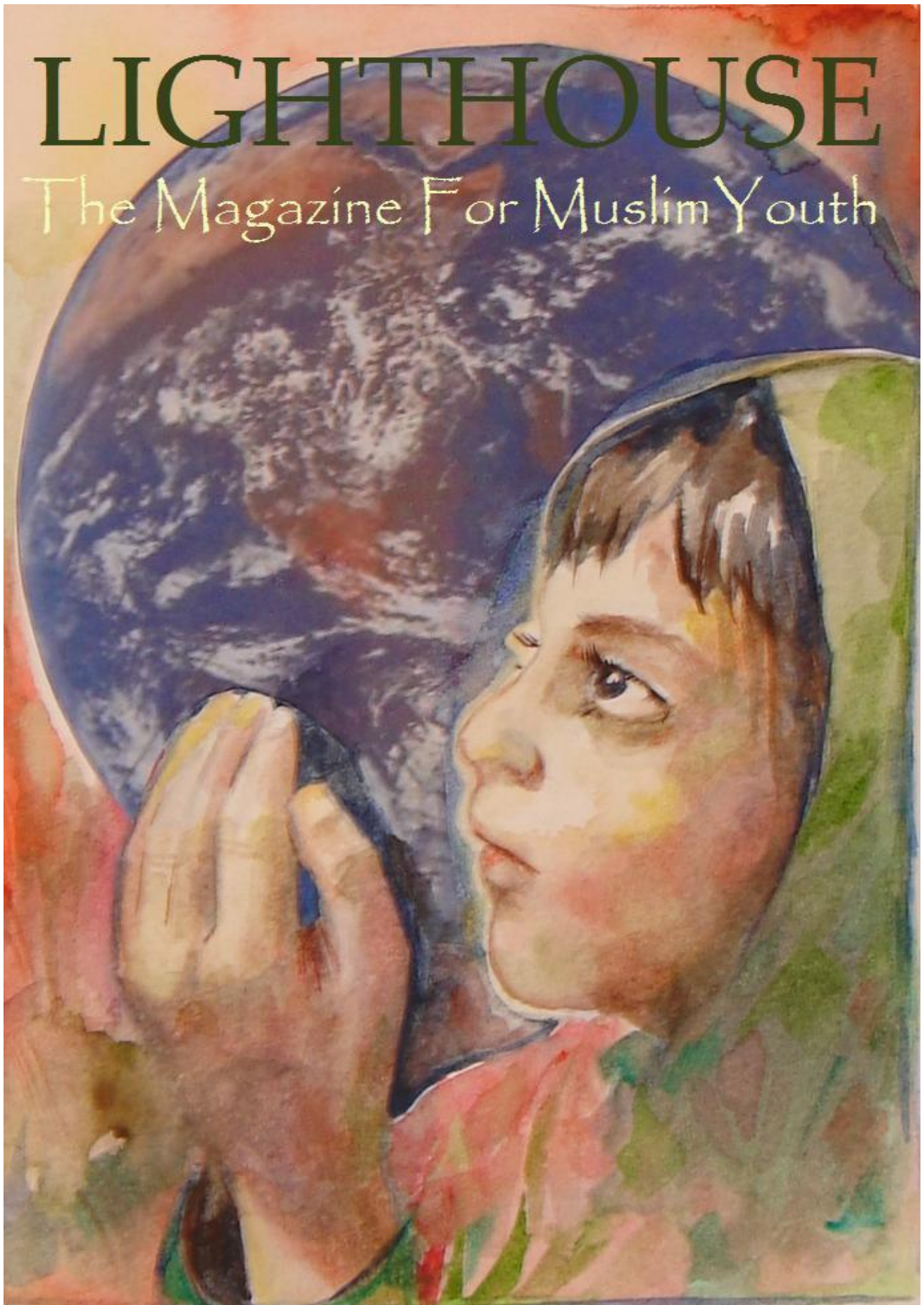


# LIGHTHOUSE

The Magazine For Muslim Youth



# LIGHTHOUSE MAGAZINE

JAN/FEB/MARCH 2011

## Me and my buddy

You always have it, my mother says. It's always with you, no matter where you go, no matter what you do. The first time she said that, I was wondering what she meant; if she had found out about the wad of bubble gum that I was saving as a souvenir of the time I learned to blow my first bubble. I usually kept it stuck behind my ear or inside my sneakers, and I don't think Mom would be thrilled about either location. But she was not talking about bubble gum. She was talking about my conscience. I really think



that something that is with you always should have an easier spelling at least. But who's asking for my opinion? Easy spelling or not, it's with me wherever I go and whatever I do. So I am stuck with it. At first I wanted to prove my mother wrong, because I didn't really want to be lugging something around all the time, like a pesky little brother or sister. But it seemed the more I wanted to ignore this voice called a conscience, the louder it got, maybe because I was aware of it.

There was the time I got to be the goal keeper at soccer for my team. I had been practicing my diving saves and felt I could stop any shot, but at the first goal as I dived to save the ball, instead of knocking it forward I knocked it a little back and it went inside the goal. The thing was, no one but me could have seen it. All the others were too far to notice. My team mates were cheering, "Great save!" but I could not pull my face into a smile. That little voice in my head kept saying, "Tell the truth, it was a goal, be honest", and that kind of unwanted advice. Why couldn't I just savor the moment and be a hero for once, but no. I stood up and yelled, "Hey, actually it was a goal". The other team cheered while my buddies looked at me like I was crazy. I could see Jamal look at Mark and point to his brain, as if to say, he's nuts. I hung my head for letting my team down but there was something light and bright inside me. I was at peace with myself. I could smile at my reflection in the mirror, even if I couldn't smile at my friends. So I guess a conscience is like a spy who knows all your secrets ... Or your mother riding on your shoulders all the time.

Sometimes it can be difficult to listen to what the conscience says when there is a lot of chatter in your head. That can happen when the worrywarts in your brain take over, or if you had too much sugar and your brain was just spinning too fast. The conscience is not noisy. It is a calm, quiet, voice. It can be hard to hear if you constantly have other noises plugged into your head, or if you are constantly talking or

listening to music or texting. It can get hidden under all the clutter but there is an emptiness when it is gone that you must notice, if you are unplugged long enough.

There was the time we were at Ben's house and watched an R rated movie. My parents don't let me watch them since I am "just twelve" as they would say and have made me promise to follow the rules if I am at someone else's house. Yes it all happened so quickly. It was not like I could say something with all the other guys making such a ruckus. Sure, I laughed along with them, hoping the loud shrieks would silence the voice of my conscience. And it was silenced. It just did not feel good. I did not enjoy the movie. The hero's mom started looking like my mom. My stomach was rather queasy. When my parents asked me what I did and I lied to them, I felt like the bigger loser. I remember Mom had baked an apple tart that night, my favorite, yet I could barely choke it down. My conscience sulked for a good many days and the guilty feeling took away the joy from my life.



That episode taught me that while my conscience can seem like a big nuisance, something that makes me stand out like a sore thumb, yet life without it is very strange. It can feel like driving a car with no brakes, hurtling out of a plane without a parachute, eating so much candy that you throw up. That inner voice is like a buddy, a sincere friend, who is always looking out for me and making sure I stay within the limits. A buddy like that can spoil the fun sometimes, but like a parent, cares for you as no one else can. A conscience can be a funny thing. It can even make you tell lies. Allow me to explain.

I have a younger cousin, Nina, who is into ballet right now. Last weekend when her family came to visit, she came dressed in her tutu and tights and insisted on showing everyone her *twirly* moves. Now it would be cute, since she is only four years old, but the problem is that she is really fat. Both my aunt and uncle are pretty heavy and I think she got it from them. So when Nina kept twirling in front of me, knocking my iced tea down, and asking, "How do I look, am I good, huh, huh?", I was sorely tempted to tell her the truth. That she looked like a little hippo doing ballet, she was as clumsy as a hippo too and should throw that tutu in the trash forever and take up some proper exercise that slimmed her down. But as I opened my mouth and said, "You look ..." she stopped twirling and looked at me with wide open eyes and my conscience told me that I knew she would believe what I told her, and it would crush her badly if I told 'the truth'. So I said, "You look cool, but stay away from my drink when you twirl. Actually how about we go outside and play tag and get some exercise." And she whipped off the tutu and ran behind me on her super chubby legs. I felt good about myself and the huge smiles my Mom and Aunt gave me brought on the warm fuzzies.

I guess every person needs to decide for themselves, but what I would say is that a conscience is pretty useful overall. It's like a built in GPS for your soul, guiding you which way to go, sounding alarms when you are headed in the wrong direction. Parents do a pretty good job too, but they are not always around, plus sometimes their advice is hard to take. So pay some attention to that little voice in your head and it can take you all the right places.

# The life of Prophet Yusuf

By Aafia Ahmad Age 11

Prophet Yusuf's story is in mostly in Surah Yusuf in the Quran. It talks about different phases in his life. It contains valuable lessons for us; lessons of faith, forgiveness, purity, patience, and persistence. Prophet Yusuf had 10 step-brothers who were plotting to kill him, because they thought their father loved him the best. So they all went off for a "picnic" where they pushed him into a dry well. The brothers lied to their father and told him Prophet Yusuf had been eaten by a wolf. But Allah had a different plan and so a man came by and lowered his bucket to get water but instead he reeled out Prophet Yusuf.



Prophet Yusuf was then brought to Egypt where he was sold to a man called Aziz. Aziz brought Prophet Yusuf to his house and told his wife to make Prophet Yusuf's stay pleasant and comfortable. Prophet Yusuf was wise because of his bittersweet experiences and also learned many good values from his father Prophet Yaqub, who was also a prophet. Allah would continue to give him guidance as he stayed in Egypt.

Aziz's wife was named Zulaikha and she felt attracted to Prophet Yusuf and so continued, in vain, to try to tempt him with sweet words and false promises. Prophet Yusuf told her: I seek refuge with Allah, surely my Lord has made good my lodging. Surely the wrongdoers are never made to prosper (Surah 12, Verse 23). Zulaikha threatened to have him sent to jail but Prophet Yusuf felt that jail would be better than the constant temptations. So Allah created circumstances for him to go to jail.

In jail, he interpreted the dreams of the other prisoners. The Pharaoh had a strange dream which he did not know the meaning of so he asked for someone to tell him what it meant. Someone mentioned Prophet Yusuf's name and so he was summoned to tell the Pharaoh the meaning of the dream. In the dream, 7 thin cows were devouring 7 fat cows, and 7 healthy crops were replaced with 7 shrunken and sickly ones. Prophet Yusuf told the Pharaoh that this meant that there would be first 7 years of prosperity, then 7 years of famine. The Pharaoh appointed Prophet Yusuf as the person in charge of the grains.



During the 7 years of famine, Prophet Yusuf's brothers came to get grain. The brothers did not recognize Prophet Yusuf, but he recognized them. But he said nothing and let them have their grain. They came again and then Prophet Yusuf revealed his identity and asked them to bring their father to him. The father came and was very happy to see his son. Prophet Yusuf forgave his brothers and later, his own dream of the seven stars bowing down to him was

fulfilled.

We see that Prophet Yusuf's life contained many challenges and hard times. He always used his faith to overcome those challenges and to be patient and hopeful for better times. He chose not to seek revenge and instead forgave his brothers. Later in history when Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) faced the people of Meccah, who had tormented him in so many ways and forced him to leave the city, he forgave them using the words of Prophet Yusuf, and said, no blame is on you this day. He was rewarded by the affection of the people of Meccah, most of whom then accepted Islam as the faith that taught such moral greatness.





# Trust

When worries gather round

And cloud out the sun

And bring on the gloom

Don't panic, don't fret

Just trust

In Allah and all that He wills

For we are in His care

His control



We can let go

And believe He will never

Burden us more than we can bear

So we can give up fear

And trust, just trust

There is a reason and a season,

For every leaf that falls

Every snowflake that melts,

Has a time and a rhyme

Just trust

That our time will come

We just have to show up

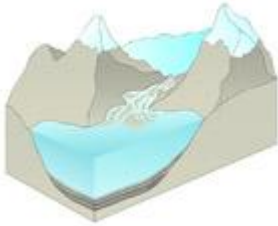
Allah does the rest, He does it all

He never lets us fall

Just trust, let go, and let God

# The Science of Mountains

The Quran tells us that the mountains have been fixed in the earth like pegs that anchor and stabilize the earth. It also tells us that on the Day of Judgement, the mountains will be made to scatter and that will be part of the end of the earth. Mountains are also used in the Quran as metaphors for the obstacles and difficulties that seem insurmountable. The example of mountains is used to comfort the believer, that when faced with great obstacles, never lose faith or feel discouraged because Allah can scatter the mountains as if they were of no account. Indeed this was seen in the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Even when all the odds were against him, he did not lose heart, but trusted in Allah and events that were inconceivable, thought impossible, started to happen till the entire landscape, the entire course of history was changed.



As for mountains serving as pegs to stabilize the earth, let us see what modern science has uncovered about the eternal truths of the Quran.

Live Science.com featured an interesting article about mountains:

“An epic collision between two ancient continents pushed the Himalayas up from the Earth's surface. That much is known, but a new study reveals how deep the unseen wreckage penetrated underground.

Sprawling sections of the Earth's crust — the rocky plates floating on the scorching, molten rock inside the Earth, known as the mantle — collided under what are now India and Asia some 90 million years ago.

Like an 18-wheeler crashing head-on with a pickup truck the larger Asian plate forced the Indian plate deep into the mantle — a process called subduction — sinking it at least 155 miles (250 kilometers) down under the surface, a new study in the May edition of the journal *Geology* suggests. This plunge is double the depth of previous estimates.

"The subduction of continental crust to this depth has never been reported in the Himalayas and is also extremely rare in the rest of world," said study co-author Anju Pandey of the National Oceanography Centre in Southampton, England. The collision site forms the roots of the Himalayas so Pandey and her colleagues cracked open rocks from the mountain range and uncovered a mineral called majorite that is formed at least 125 miles (200 km) below the Earth's surface, which allowed the researchers to pinpoint the depth of the Indian continental crust. Mount Everest in the Himalayas, the world's tallest mountain, rises 29,029 feet (8,848 meters), or 5.5 miles (8.8 km) above sea level.

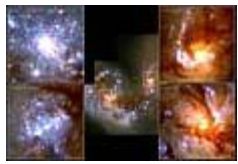


Majorite is stable only under ultra-high pressure conditions where it acts like an oxygen sponge that keeps the Earth from becoming dry and

inhospitable like Mars. As the Earth's crust continues to shift, majorite is pulled to the Earth's surface, where it breaks down and releases oxygen, over millions of years.

Researchers already knew that colliding continental plates push up mountain ranges, ignite volcanic eruptions, and trigger earthquakes, but the details of what is happening on the other end of the crash, deep within the Earth's mantle, has been hotly debated. ”

Subhan Allah! All glory belongs to Allah who shows us His Mercy and Absolute power. Muslims must remember though, that we do not need



science to verify or confirm the word of Allah. We believe in the truth of the Quran even if it does not seem to be in accord with what science says at a certain time period. After all, science is what people strive to learn about of the mysteries and laws of nature. They may make mistakes for humans are prone to error. It is Allah who is Almighty and free from all fault and weakness and whose Knowledge contains every single thing in the heavens and this small speck of the galaxy that we call home.



# IN THE NEW YEAR BECOME AN AGENT OF PEACE

**But how? Here are some small things you can do:**

A spanking brand new Year is here for us to use in whatever way we choose. If we look at the world's problems, it seems that peace is lacking most of all. If a country has peace and security, all other problems can be managed. Hunger and poverty can be addressed. The standard of living for all can be raised by education and awareness. Yet when peace is threatened by terrorism and anarchy, citizens are forced to survive in an atmosphere of fear. Life becomes a series of emergencies and no progress can be made to better the human condition. Mere survival becomes the daily battle as widows and orphans are left alone to cope. The world does not need more young people bent on revenge, seeking the betterment of only their tribe or class or family. It does not need its youth to devote themselves to the pursuit of luxuries and wealth, no matter how brilliant they may be. It desperately needs people willing and determined to bring peace to the world, on a large scale and on a small scale.



Peace, like charity, begins at home. **It is the responsibility of every member of the family to find ways to live more peacefully.** Of course minor skirmishes happen in every household and can be overlooked, but if fights over who got more cereal and who sits in the front seat get too intense and give the parents a headache, these issues should be resolved more intelligently. Fighting is a sure way to NOT get what you want. If you fought tooth and nail to get the best cushion for family

movie night, you might end up getting it, but the sound of your sister sobbing and your mother's anguished face will disturb your peace and you won't enjoy the cushion after all. So you really did not get what you wanted. Peaceful negotiations have the best results and teach us valuable skills about how to negotiate with others throughout our lives and make a deal that is acceptable to all parties.

**If there is a lot of fighting in your family but you are not involved, try to stop it.** If your parents fight too much and scare the kids, tell a trusted uncle or aunt and they may help you find a solution. Tell your parents, when they are calm, how much the arguments scare and hurt you and ask them to get help. There is no shame in seeking help for a problem. The shame is in keeping it hidden and allowing it to get worse.

**If you see bullying at school that really hurts someone, speak up about it.** Tell your parents, a teacher, a counselor, anyone who can do something to help. Do not quietly stand by while someone else is humiliated and tortured, even if you don't like that person. Do it for the sake of Allah. It will make you feel good.

**DO NOT PLAY VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES.** (Parents, please do not let your kids play violent video games, no matter how hard the kids plead, beg, whine. It's not worth



it. There are plenty of other good games out there and other ways of entertainment. Check out the ratings, watch the games when they play and if it is something you don't want them to imitate, do not let them do it.) Even though some say that recent studies have shown that such games do not lead to violence, yet as Muslims, we have to be careful about what we regard as entertainment. If used wisely our entertainment serves to relax and renew us and that is good for our spiritual, mental, and physical health. Relaxation and renewal can only happen if the entertainment is harmless. Shooting people, blowing things up, robbing, and war games etc., cannot be called harmless. If they do not incite violence, they certainly desensitize one to the cruelty of violence, and that should also not happen.



**Speak up for peace and against war.** When with your friends and cousins, be on the lookout for moments when violence is glorified and presented as a good solution. Speak up. You might not win the popularity vote, but in their hearts, your friends will know you are saying the right thing and they will respect you for it, though they probably won't admit it. You will respect yourself!

**Forgive someone every day.** This is really hard. When we feel someone has been mean or rude, or taken advantage of us, the impulse to strike back can be overwhelming and it can feel as if that is the right, the "just" thing to do. But we gain more from forgiveness and often the other person is affected by our kindness and feels sorry for what he has done.

These small steps may seem hard to do at first. Our ego may insist that appearing mighty and macho is more important than being good. Yes deep inside us the goodness is there waiting to come out. There are more people in the world devoted to peace, than there are people who want violence and war. We just need to make our voices heard and to stand up for what we believe in.



The time is ready. The time is NOW.

## Some beautiful hadith to think about:

1. God is gentle, and He loves the adoption of a gentle attitude in all matters.



2. Don't bear aversion (dislike) against one another and don't be jealous of one another and be servants of Allah.

3. No Muslim is allowed not to talk to his brother for more than three consecutive days. The better one is the one who starts the greeting.

4. God has no mercy on one who has no mercy for others.

**5. Be merciful to those who live on Earth so that the One in Heaven (Allah) may be merciful to you.**



**6. Actions are judged according to their intentions and every person will be dealt with (in the hereafter) according to what he intends.**

7. A person who believes in God and Hereafter should speak about good things or else should keep quiet.

**8. Powerful is not he, who knocks the other down, indeed powerful is he, who controls himself in a fit of anger.**

Ok, let's see how carefully you read those blessed sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Please close your eyes, or your computer, and try to remember all the hadith you just read.

How many did you get? All 8? Alhamdulillah!

Awesome memory and attention!

Dear Aisha, I feel like I always do more for my friends than they do for me. The other day, my friend brought cupcakes to class for her birthday but half of them fell in the hall. So when it came time to give them out, everyone rushed up and grabbed one and they ran out, and I didn't get one and no one would even give me a little taste! I'm getting sick of finishing last and I think from now on, I'm just going to look out for myself. I mean, even though Islam tells us we're supposed to be kind to others and share, no one really does that in today's world; if I don't look out for myself, I'll never get a cupcake and it's not fair. These days, you just have to look out for yourself first, right?



**Dear Sick of Selfish Friends,** I've sure felt the way you do! Sometimes, in today's world, it can seem like everyone is out just for his or her self. But I guess Islam tells us the best way to behave at all times, whether everyone else is doing it or not! Like you said, there are lots of examples of how we should behave toward others from the time of our Prophet. For example, did you know that when the early Muslims of Madina received refugees from the city of Makkah, they divided their entire wealth with them in half? They shared their homes, farms, animals and money! That's because Islam takes friendship to a higher level, referring to Muslims as brothers and sisters, and expecting them to treat each other as such. In fact, Hazrat Ayesha's example even shows us that we should prefer others to ourselves. Once she opened the door and a beggar was asking for some food. She only had one piece of food and she gave it to the hungry person instead of eating it herself!



I know, I know. You're thinking all these examples are soooo old! *No one* behaves that way anymore. I used to think that too. But guess what? I had a chance to go to Haiti recently and saw something that really made me believe in the goodness of people. Do you know Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world? They don't even have enough food for one meal a day. A group of people from the US decided to go there and give out some bags of rice, but they only had a limited number to give out. I thought all the Haitians would run up to grab their bag before anyone else could—kind of like the cupcakes--but they didn't! They stood patiently in line. Then when the rice ran out and there were a bunch of Haitians who didn't have any, those who had some opened their bags and gave half to the people who didn't! They shared what they had with their friends just the way the people of Madina did with the refugees from Makkah!



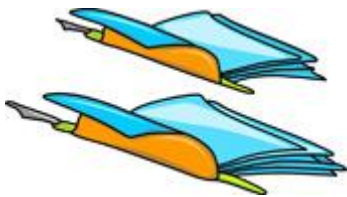
Another thing that really touched my heart was a birthday for the orphans. The orphanage doesn't have enough money for all 50 orphans to have a party when it is their birthday. So the orphans got to have one joint birthday party. They were so excited! They were going to have a dinner party and they would all get to have one piece of chicken! Usually they only get rice and beans to eat. This was such a special treat! They all dressed up and when it came time for dinner, they sat patiently at the table. There were 50 of them so you can imagine, it took a while to serve everyone. When that first piece of chicken hit the plate of the first child, you could see everyone's eyes open wide and the excitement building. Lots of the kids were really young, and I thought they were going to jump on the food as soon as it hit their plate. But they didn't! They waited patiently to make sure everyone got a piece. And when everyone had a piece, they said a prayer of thanks to God. Then, and only then, they attacked their plates enthusiastically!



Can you imagine how hard it was for them to wait for their food? I'm sure it was at least as hard as seeing your friends eat the cupcakes. But you know what? I guess these special people realized something, the things we do are more important than the things we have. What matters most is the kindness and love we show to other people. If we don't get a cupcake, or rice, or chicken, it doesn't matter; but if we are mean to other people to get ahead ourselves, what we've lost is a lot more than just a cupcake.

## The Great Reformer

In this issue of Lighthouse Magazine we shall begin to include excerpts from the book, "The Great Reformer". This book is about the life of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Reformer of the 14<sup>th</sup> century Hijrah and the Promised Messiah. It was written by his close companion Dr. Basharat Ahmad Sahib and recently translated by Dr. Hamid Rahman, who is the grandson of Dr. Basharat Ahmad. We hope that the readers of this magazine will benefit greatly from this account of the life of an extremely pious man, who as a humble servant of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) started a great Islamic revival at a time when the world had all but lost faith in the existence of God.



In accordance with a *hadith* (saying) of Holy Prophet Muhammad,<sup>1</sup> "Most surely Allah will raise for this community at the head of every century one who shall revive for it its faith,"<sup>2</sup> the person who claimed to be a

<sup>1</sup> Holy Prophet Muhammad is referred to in most of the rest of this book as the Holy Prophet.

*Mujaddid* (revivalist or reformer) at the head of fourteenth century of the Islamic era (running approximately the period 1882-1980 C.E.) was Ghulam Ahmad. His father's name was Ghulam Murtaza, his grandfather's name was Atta Muhammad and his great grandfather was Gul Muhammad. By ethnic origin, he was a Mughal Barlas and his place of residence was Qadian, in Gurdaspur district of the Punjab province of India.

### **The *hadith* prophesy about the man with Persian ancestry**

*Hazrat Mirza's* revelation, "Even if faith became suspended from the Pleiades (a cluster of more than 300 stars in the constellation Taurus), this man of Persian descent would have gone there to fetch it," is part of a *hadith* that was originally revealed to Prophet Muhammad. *Hazrat Mirza's* writings indicate that this *hadith* was revealed to him for the purpose of drawing his attention to it. The full *hadith*, as narrated in the *Bukhari*, states that the Holy Prophet, while explaining the verse of the Chapter *Jumu'ah* which reads, "And others from among them who have not yet joined them," placed his hand on the shoulder of Salman the Persian and said, "Even if faith were suspended from the Pleiades, a man from among them (namely a Persian) would have gone there and taken it."<sup>3</sup> Thus, the revelation of this *hadith* by Allah to *Hazrat Mirza* was meant to show that he was the person of Iranian descent and perfect belief who had come in fulfillment of the Holy Prophet's prophecy. *Hazrat Mirza* appeared in an era of agnosticism (the belief that it is impossible to know whether or not God exists) when faith was far removed from the lives of men. By offering as evidence clear proofs, brilliant arguments and heavenly signs, he restored their lost faith and made faith a practical reality in their lives.



### **Maternal family**

*Hazrat Mirza's* mother was Chiragh Bibi. She belonged to a respectable Mogul family of village Aima, in district Hoshiarpur. Generosity and hospitality were among her outstanding characteristics and, in particular, she devoted herself to caring for the old and poor in the society. She personally met the burial expenses of those who died in poverty.

### **Brothers and sisters**

*Hazrat Mirza* had two brothers and two sisters. His oldest sibling was a sister, Murad Bibi, who became a widow at an early age. She was a devout person who spent her life in remembrance of Allah, and her spiritual eminence was manifested by several miracles. A brother, Mirza Ghulam Qadir, and another brother who died in infancy followed her. *Hazrat Mirza* and a twin sister, Jannat Bibi, were the youngest. His twin sister died soon after birth.

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<sup>2</sup> Abu Dawud Sulaiman. *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)*, Book *Al-Malahim* 36:1, Vol. 2, page 241 (printed at Ansari Press, Delhi, India).

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*.65:1xii, 1.



# NATIVITY, CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

## Year of birth

There is no authentic record of *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's date of birth and, as a result, there is some difference of opinion about the exact year of his birth. Research on the subject seems to substantiate the year as 1835



## Aptness of the name

His father named him Ghulam Ahmad (slave of Ahmad) and this name proved to be very apt because he fulfilled to perfection the role of being a slave to the Holy Prophet Ahmad.<sup>4</sup> If the word *Qadiani* is added to Ghulam Ahmad, then by the ancient system of assigning numbers to the letters of the alphabet called *jumal*, the sum of the letters in his name is 1300. Thus by Divine will, the choice of his name was a precursor indicating that thirteen hundred years after *hijri*, towards the end of the thirteenth century, the blessed personality to be awarded the honor of *Mujaddid* (reformer) will be that of Ghulam Ahmad *Qadiani*. Accordingly, when he was appointed to the office of reformer, the words Ghulam Ahmad *Qadiani* were revealed to him and his attention drawn to the sum of the alphabet numbers contained therein.

God revealed the following verse to *Hazrat* Mirza in Urdu on receiving the title of Messiah:

The excellence of Ahmad (pbuh), is indeed so fine,

Behold! His humble slave is the Messiah of the time.

It appears that in bestowing the status of Messiah on Ghulam Ahmad the Divine will was to show the incomprehensible grandeur of the Holy Prophet whose mere slave could be elevated to this eminence. In an ode to the Holy Prophet, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote the following verses, which are apt in this context:

In the dimple of your chin I behold (the beauty of) a thousand Josephs,

And through your inspiration thousands have become like the Messiah.

A multitude entered the Mercy of Allah by turning to your grace,

And yet thousands of people like me wait expectantly at your gate.

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<sup>4</sup> Muhammad and Ahmad were the two given names of the Holy Prophet.