

**MONTHLY  
THE LIGHT**

APRIL 1989



**The Promised Messiah said**

### **THE MOST PERFECT AND PRIDE OF THE PROPHETS**

“The man who demonstrated perfect example of knowledge, deeds, truthfulness and perseverance flowing like a river through his personality, excellent characteristics, practices, noble deeds, spiritual and purifying effects was called the Most Perfect Man. . . The person who was most perfect and super excellent prophet and brought immense blessings and ushered in spiritual awakening and resurrection, through whom occurred the first reckoning in the world and a completely dead world came into life. That blessed Prophet is the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the Last of the Prophets, Leader of the saints, Last of the Messengers and the Pride of the Prophets, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. O our beloved Allah! shower such blessings and salutations on this Loving Prophet that had not been showered on any prophet since the creation of this world. Had this glorious Prophet not appeared in the world, we could not have any testimony to the truthfulness of the prophets preceding him such as Jonah, Jacob, Jesus son of Mary, Malaki, John, Zakariahs etc. Although all of them had been favoured, honoured and friends of Allah, yet it is through the beneficence of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, that their truthfulness was established in the world.”

*(Itmam al-Hujjah, p. 28)*

### **PRAYER IS THE MAINSTAY OF FAITH**

Intensive heat attracts clouds over the sky and consequently causes rain. Similarly human prayers generate spiritual heat and as a consequence attract Divine blessings. In the state of prayer a person should stand before Allah in complete solicitude, annihilation and utmost submission. When a person being a servant does not care to show any respect to his Master, it should be borne in mind that Allah is Self-Sufficient. A nation prospers so long it is apprehensive of the Divine injunctions. Prayer is the mainstay of faith. An ignorant person would say that Allah does not need our prayers. It is true that Allah does not stand in need of our prayers, but we certainly need His beneficent attention. It is with Allah's blessings that we overcome obstacles and difficulties. It is through prayers that Allah forgives thousands of our commissions and omissions and grants us His nearness.

*(Badr, 8th June, 1905).*

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EDITORIAL . . .

## **THE BLESSED MONTH OF RAMAZAN Safeguard Against Temptation**

Temptation is the root-cause of evil. Unless one has a sound moral and spiritual grooming, one is apt to fall victim to temptations. In temptation one is allured by the immediate and ephemeral benefits of certain act or thing in utter disregard of higher and lasting objectives. Religion always guides man towards higher and more lasting objectives in life. The Qur'an says: "He indeed is successful who purifies himself, and remembers the name of his Lord, then prays. But you prefer the life of this world, while the Hereafter is better and more lasting" (87:14-17). We find the same theme narrated in the temptation of Adam and Eve by Devil. They were saved from the evil consequences through "revealed words of Allah". The Qur'an while narrating the incident tells us how to save oneself from the evil of temptation: "Surely there will come to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve" (2:38).

The everlasting Divine Guidance in the form of al-Qur'an was revealed in the blessed month of Ramazan: "The month of Ramazan is that in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the Criterion" (2:185). Fasting in the month of Ramazan is a spiritual manoeuvre to alert and strengthen one's innerself against the inroads of temptation which takes man away from the higher objectives of life.

Prayer and fasting are two ways of showing obedience to Allah and seeking His mercy and blessings. In fasting the entire human body is involved in the spiritual exercise while in prayer the soul struggles to save itself from evil temptations. May Allah grant each one of us ability and opportunity to partake the blessings of this sacred month and enable us to emit light of faith and selflessness in the otherwise utter darkness of faithlessness and mad pursuit of sensual pleasures.

# WHO IS A MUSLIM

by Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad

The most fundamental aspect of the question is, What does a person have to profess, practise, or do, according to Islamic teachings, in order to be known as a Muslim? It must be made clear that the point at issue here is not what are the requirements for a person to be a full and true Muslim in belief and deed. The issue relevant to the question is, What is the criteria laid down by Islam for a person to be known as, identified as and treated as a Muslim so far as matters of civil law and his social relations with other Muslims are concerned. The answer on this point is divided into six parts:

1. From the Holy Quran, extracts showing that belief in God and His messenger makes a person a 'Muslim'.
2. From the Hadith, incidents showing that during the life-time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, people embraced Islam by reciting the *Kalimah Shahadah*.
3. Opinion of Muslim authorities, throughout the history of Islam, again showing that to be known as a Muslim and included in the Islamic community, a person has only to profess the *Kalimah*.
4. Sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, giving certain outward signs of a Muslim, so that a person showing those signs must be treated as a Muslim.
5. The Quran, Hadith, and Muslim theologians, on the prohibition of *Takfir* (calling a Muslim as a *kafir*).
6. Muslim theologians' view that a person cannot be called *kafir* on the grounds that he differs with a commonly-accepted interpretation of some religious point.

## The Holy Quran

The religion of Islam is summarised in the two phrases: *la ilaha ill-Allah* (there is no god but Allah) and *Muhammad-ur rasul Allah* (Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah). By affirming these two precepts, a person enters the fellowship of Islam.

These two constituents do not occur together in the Holy Quran, as they do in the *Kalimah*, but each is a constant theme of the Quran: "Know that there is no god

but Allah” (47:19) and “Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah” (48:29). The Quran also says: “Believe in Allah and His messenger.” (4:171)

As regards who is a Muslim, the Quran says:

1. “Say: It is revealed to me that your God is one God. Will you then be Muslims?” (21:108)
2. “Say: We believe in Allah and in that which has been revealed to us, and in that which was revealed to Abraham and Ismael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and in that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and in that which was given to the Prophets from their Lord. We do not make any distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims.” (2:136).
3. “And when I revealed to the disciples, saying, Believe in Me and My messenger, they said: We believe, and bear witness that we are Muslims.” (5:111)
4. “The desert Arabs say, We have faith. Say to them: ‘You do not have faith, but rather say, we are Muslims – faith has not yet entered your hearts.’ (49:74).
5. “Do not say ‘you are not a believer’ to a person who says *assalamu alaikum* to you.” (4:94)

These verses make it clear that the person who believes in the oneness of God and the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and believes in his revelation, is a Muslim. Verse no. 5 goes so far as to say that a person who offers the greeting *assalamu alaikum* to show that he is a Muslim cannot be called kafir (unbeliever or non-Muslim).

### **How the Holy Prophet converted people to Islam**

1. “Ibn Umar reported that the Messenger of Allah, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, said: Islam is based on five things—testifying that there is no god but Allah and the Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, keeping up prayer, giving in charity (*Zakaat*), the Pilgrimage (*hajj*), and fasting in Ramadaan.” (*Bukhari*, Book of Faith).
2. “Ibn Abbas related that the Holy Prophet sent Mu‘az to Yemen [as governor], and instructed him: Invite the people to testify that there is no god but Allah, and that I am the Messenger of Allah; if they accept this, tell them that Allah has made obligatory for them five prayers daily; if they accept that, tell them that Allah has made obligatory upon them to give in charity, which is taken from their rich and given to their poor.” (*Bukhari*, Book of Zakaat).
3. “When the time of Abu Talib’s death approached, the Messenger of Allah, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, came to him and found with him Abu Jahl, Ibn Hisham and Abdullah Ibn Abi al-Mughira. The Messenger of Allah said to Abu Talib: O uncle! say ‘There is no god but Allah’, I shall bear witness for you to Allah about this.

“Then Abu Jahl and Abdullah Ibn Abi Umayyah said: O Abu Talib! will you

turn away from the religion of Abdul Muttalib? The Messenger of Allah continued to put this *Kalimah* to him, and the other two kept on repeating what they had said, until Abu Talib said his last words to them, that he followed the religion of Abdul Muttalib, and he refused to say, 'There is no god but Allah.' (*Bukhari*, Book of Funerals).

"Abu Bakr said: O Messenger of Allah, what is salvation? The Holy Prophet said: He who accepts the *Kalima* which I put before my uncle [Abu Talib], but which he rejected, that is the means of salvation." (*Mishkat al-Masabih*, Book of Faith, sec. 3)

4. "Anas reported that the Holy Prophet said: There is no one who testifies truly from his heart that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, but Allah prohibits for him the fire of hell." (*Mishkat al-Masabih*, Book of Faith, sec. 1)

5. "It is reported from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, sent riders towards Naid. They brought a man of the Bani Hanifa, whose name was Sumama Ibn Usal, and tied him to one of the pillars of the mosque. Then the Holy Prophet came out to him and said: Untie Sumama. The man went to a date-tree close to the mosque, had a bath, came back into the mosque, and said: I testify that there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger." (*Bukhari*, Book of Prayer; Book 8).

6. Abu Zarr related: "I said to him [Holy Prophet]: Present Islam to me. So when he presented it, I became a Muslim there and then. He said to me: 'Abu Zarr! Keep this matter a secret, and return to your land. When you hear of our triumph, then come.' I said: 'By Him Who sent you with the truth, I shall shout about this to them.' So he [Abu Zarr] went to the mosque, and the Quraish were there. He said: O people of Quraish! I testify that there is no god but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger." (*Bukhari*, Kitab al-Manaqib).

7. In the well-known story of the conversion of Hazrat Umar to Islam, given in Shibli's famous biography of the Holy Prophet *Seerat an-Nabi*, it is related that when Hazrat Umar became convinced of the truth of the Quran, he declared his conversion to Islam by crying out: "I testify that there is no god but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is His messenger of Allah." (*Seerat an-Nabi*, vol. i, pp. 225-226).

8. When Abdullah Ibn Salam heard of the arrival of the Holy Prophet in Madina, he went to see him and said: "I want to ask you three things which only prophets know about." The Holy Prophet answered his questions. The account then runs:

"He [Abdullah] said: I testify that you are the Messenger of Allah. He then said: O Messenger of Allah! the Jews are a people who slander; if they find out about my becoming a Muslim before you ask them about me, they will slander me. So when the Jews came, Abdullah went inside the house. The Messenger of Allah,

may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said: What sort of a man is your Abdullah Ibn Salam? They said: He is our most learned scholar, son of the most learned one, and he is the best of us, son of the best one. The Holy Prophet said: What if you see that he has become a Muslim? They said: May God save him from this! Then Abdullah came to them and said: I testify that there is no god but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. They said: He is the worst one of us, son of the worst one. And they began to deprecate him." (*Bukhari*, Book of Prophets; Book 60).

9. "It is related from Abdul Salama that his mother had expressed a dying wish that a Muslim slave-girl should be freed on her behalf. So he asked the Holy Prophet about it and wondered if he should set free a black slave-girl from the city of Nobiyya whom he owned. The Holy Prophet said: Bring her here. When she came, he said to her: Who is your Lord? She said: Allah. He said: Who am I? She said: The Messenger of Allah. He said: Go and free her, she is a believer." (*Tarjuman al-Sunnah*, vol. ii, p. 128).

10. Abu Hurairah related that he asked the Holy Propht to pray for the guidance of his mother. He prayed: O Allah! grant guidance to Abu Hurairah's mother. Abu Hurairah then relates:

"I then left, being pleased because of the prayer of the Messenger of Allah, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him. When I approached the door of my house, it was closed. My mother, hearing the sound of my footsteps, called out: Stay where you are, Abu Hurairah. I could hear the sound of splashing water. She had a bath, put on her upper garment, and hurried with the head-covering. Then she opened the door and said: O Abu Hurairah! I testify that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. I rushed back to the Messenger of Allah, shedding tears of joy. He praised Allah, and spoke well of her." (*Muslim*, Book of Virtues, vol. vi, pp. 163-164).

11. "Baraida Ibn al-Hasib related that one day they were sitting with the Holy Prophet when he said to his companions: Let us go and visit our sick Jewish neighbour. So when the Holy Prophet went in to see him, he found him near to death. He asked him how he was, and then said to him: Testify that there is no god but Allah, and that I am the Messenger of Allah. The Jew looked at his father, who did not speak. [The Holy Prophet then repeated his question]. The father said: Testify to it. So the boy said: I testify that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. The Holy Prophet said: Praise be to Allah Who, through me, saved this man from the fire of hell." (*Bukhari*, Book of Funerals).

12. While the Holy Prophet was asleep under a tree, a desert Arab came upon him with a sword. The account continues:

"He [the bedouin] said: Who can save you from me now? The Holy Prophet said: Allah. The sword fell from his hand. The Holy Prophet picked it up and

said: Who can save you from me now? The man said: Be a better wielder of the sword [the meaning is: Forgive me]. The Holy Prophet said: Do you testify that there is no god but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah? He said: No, but I promise that I shall not fight you nor side with those who fight you. So the Holy Prophet let him go." (*Mishkat al-Masabih*, ch. Reliance on God and Patience, Sec. 3).

13. A man came to the Holy Prophet while a battle was going on. He said: Shall I first fight the unbelievers and then become a Muslim, or first become a Muslim and then fight? The Holy Prophet said: Become a Muslim first, then fight. The man said: I testify that there is no god but Allah, and that you are His servant and Messenger. He then went and fought until he was killed. (*Tuhfat al-Akhyar*, p. 394).

14. Adi Ibn Hatim, a Companion of the Holy Prophet, related: The Holy Prophet, seeing me, said: Adi, why do you run from *la ilaha ill-Allah* [There is no god but Allah]? Is there anyone other than Allah worthy of being worshipped? Why do you refrain from saying *Allahu Akbar*? Is there anyone greater than Allah? These words made such an impression upon me that I immediately recited the *Kalimah* and became a Muslim. (*Tafsir Ibn Kasir*, Urdu, under verse 1:5).

**WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT US. . . .**

## **POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE AHMADYYA DOCTRINE OF GOD**

"In this study considerable attention has been given to the unique, unknowable God of Islamic orthodoxy, as well as to the immanent God of the Sufi mystics. In the Qur'an there is evidence of both of these accents, though weightage is given to the majesty and sovereignty of God. Later Islam accented the majesty and sovereignty of God to such an extent that His kindly attitudes to men and His ample provisions for the universe were sublimated. By ignoring some of the older doctrinal formulations of the orthodox and drawing their inspiration more directly from the Qur'an the Ahmadiyyas have recovered a more balanced conception of God. Some of the more recent studies of the Qur'an based on modern methods of linguistic and semantic analysis bear out the correctness of this Ahmadiyya adjustment. It would be interesting to know if this adjustment in thought about God is actually the result of going back to the original source of Islam or due to Christian influence, but that is beyond the scope of this study. The fact remains that the Ahmadiyya Muslims have some constructive things to say about the beneficence of God in providing for the needs of man, and about His kindly disposition toward



man in the midst of all troubles, physical and spiritual. It is an improvement over the often barren and sterile descriptions of God in the old dogmatists of Islam. Though the Ahmadiyyas do not lose the sense of God's majesty, they yet value and draw inspiration from His nearness and concern for men . . .

### **Its moral motivation**

The moral motivation of the Qur'an is based on thankfulness to God for His benefits, fear of God and the punishment of hell, and the hope of reward. In Sunni Islam the motivations of the fear of God and His punishment, the example of the Prophet, and the hope of reward are very prominent. Although the Ahmadiyyas also urge some of their ethical injunctions on the basis of these motivations, their main ethical and moral thrust is that man exists to be God's vice gerent on earth and to manifest the attributes of God. This gives a better purpose to life than the fear of hell or the hope of reward. This sense of purpose may explain some of the dynamic *esprit des corps* of the Ahmadiyya Muslims mentioned above.

### **Its appealing aspect**

In addition to the positive aspects of the doctrine of God mentioned above, the Ahmadiyya doctrine of God mentioned above, the Ahmadiyya doctrine of God has some appealing aspects. The positive aspects have been recognized as wholesome even by non-Muslims. The appealing aspects are more dubious. They are aspects which attract others to the Ahmadiyya conception of God, although they are not valid from the Christian viewpoint.

### **Its simplicity**

The simplicity of the Ahmadiyya Muslim doctrine of God is probably that aspect which appeals most to certain types of Christians who are confused, baffled, and offended by the complexity of the history and formulation of Christian doctrine, especially the doctrine of the Trinity with its associated doctrines of the deity of Christ and the atonement. There are many people in the West who regard all dogma as some sort of evil; the Ahmadiyya Movement appeals to such persons. The bare unity of God, from which flow His attributes and His works, appears, on the surface at least, to make religion simple. An English convert to Ahmadiyya Islam is reported as saying, "I wanted a simple, practical faith, free from dogmas and tenets . . . This I found in Islam.

### **Its Appeal to Reason**

Closely related to the appeal of simplicity is the appeal to human reason. The history of al-Ash'ari and the Mu'tazila proves that human reason can become embarrassing to those who espouse it most, but this truth has not yet become existential for the Ahmadiyya Muslims. Many of their doctrinal affirmations about God are backed up with appeals to reason. In an age permeated by rationalism and the

scientific outlook there are many who are attracted by this emphasis.

### **Its syncretism**

The Ahmadiyyas regard all religions as basically one. Following the Qur'anic lead, they believe that a genuine prophet has been sent to every nation, and that the kernel of each prophet's message has been the same. The divergencies of present-day religions are interpreted as departures from the pristine purity of their earlier forms. Thus Hinduism with its idolatry is regarded as a corruption from the original unity of God supposedly preached by Krishna. Christianity with its doctrine of the Trinity is described as an unwarranted declension from the simple unitarian faith of Jesus. Ahmadiyya Islam claims to restore these and other religions to their original perfection."

(Henry J. Otten, *The Ahmadiyya Doctrine of God*, Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies, Hyderabad, India, pp. 85-87)

## **THE THEORY OF ABROGATION A REPLY TO CRITICISM AGAINST MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI**



by Zāhid Aziz (Nottingham, England)

A book entitled *Ulum al-Quran* – An Introduction to the Sciences of the Holy Quran was published in January 1984 by the Islamic Foundation, Leicester, England. Written by Mr. Ahmad Von Denffer, a Research Fellow at the Foundation, it deals with various topics connected with the study of the Holy Quran, and is largely a summary of the traditionally received views on the subject. Here we deal with the section of the book on abrogation in the Quran (see *Al-Nasikh Wa al-Mansukh*, pp. 104-113), which we are prompted to do because it contains criticism of Maulana Muhammad Ali's treatment of the subject.

Von Denffer notes that some scholars hold the view "that there are no genuine reports available on this issue, going back to the Prophet, while those going back to the Companions contradict each other" (p. 111). At this point, he adds a footnote referring to Maulana Muhammad Ali's *Religion of Islam*, and quotes the Maulana's view as follows:

"... in most cases, where a report is traceable to one Companion who held a

certain verse to have been abrogated, there is another report traceable to another Companion, to the effect that the verse was not abrogated."

Von Denffer then attempts to prove in this footnote that the three examples cited by the *Maulana* in support of this point are not correct.

### First Example

The first example given by the *Maulana* concerns the verse 2:180, telling Muslims to make wills if they leave wealth behind, which is held to be abrogated by verses 4:7-9 which specify the heirs and their shares. Von Denffer comments about the *Maulana*:

"His first case concerns *Sura* 2:180. It has certainly been superseded by other verses, e.g., 4:7-9 and that is probably all that is meant, when saying it is *mansukh*."

The *Maulana* has cited this as an example of a verse which is called *mansukh* in one report, and not *mansukh* in another, hence showing that such reports are contradictory. This example is certainly not disproved in any way by Von Denffer's explanation. He has not made clear what he means by a verse being "superseded," but if it means (as it must) that the injunction contained in 2:180 is no longer to be obeyed because there are other later verses to be applied in its place, is that not abrogation and cancellation of the command in 2:180?

### Second Example

The second example given by Maulana Muhammad Ali concerns the verse 2:184 in connection with fasting, which allows those who are too weak to fast to give food to the poor instead of fasting. In some reports this concession is considered as having been abrogated by the next verse in the words: "Whoever witnesses the month of Ramadan, let him fast therein." In another it is held to be not abrogated, but still in force. Von Denffer quotes the *Maulana's* words:

"2:184 is considered by Ibn Umar as having been abrogated while Ibn Abbas says it was not."

and then criticizes him in the following inexplicable words:

"See below, where I have quoted this very hadith from Ibn Abbas where Ibn Abbas himself explains *why* he does not hold it as abrogated" (*italics in original*).

We cannot understand this objection at all. As he says, he has quoted the hadith in which Ibn Abbas, after saying "This verse is not abrogated," has explained why it is not abrogated. The point made by the *Maulana* is exactly that Ibn Abbas does not regard this verse as abrogated! What is the objection?

As to Ibn Umar's view, it is found recorded in *Bukhari*, Book of Fasting (Book 30), chapter 39. The heading of this chapter tells us that Ibn Umar and one Salama Ibn Aku regarded this verse (2:184) as abrogated by the next verse (which begins "The month of Ramadaan. . ."). A hadith in this chapter says that Ibn Umar recited this verse and said: *hiya mansukhun*, i.e., it is abrogated. In the *hadith* giving Ibn Abbas's opinion, as quoted by Von Denffer, it is recorded that Ibn Abbas said: *Laisat bi-mansukhin*, i.e., it is not abrogated. Maulana Muhammad Ali is, therefore, perfectly correct in citing this as a case in which one Companion says that a verse is abrogated while another says that it is not. As a matter of fact, the very next *hadith* in *Bukhari* after the one Von Denffer has quoted about Ibn Abbas, records Salama Ibn Aku as saying that the verse 2:184 was abrogated by the verse which follows it. If our critic had just glanced at these two hadith together, he would have found the truth of the Maulana's argument staring him in the face—that one source calls a verse "abrogated" while another says the opposite.

### Third Example

The third example cited by Maulana Muhammad Ali is verse 2:240, according to which Muslim husbands should make a bequest in favour of their wives for maintenance and residence for a period of one year after the husband's death. The *Maulana* writes:

"2:240 was abrogated according to Ibn Zubair, while Mujahid says it was not."

Quoting these words of the *Maulana*, Von Denffer reports:

"This is wrong, see *Sahih Bukhari*, VI, Nos. 53 and 54, where both Ibn Zubair and Mujahid hold the verse to be abrogated. Furthermore both Ibn Zubair and Mujahid are *Tabi'un*, and not Companions."

Earlier in his text in another connection, he has actually quoted the hadith referred to as No. 54 above, in which Mujahid has commented on the verse 2:240. In giving references and quotations from *Bukhari*, Von Denffer has used the English translation of *Sahih Bukhari* by Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, and we think that in quoting this particular *hadith* he has been misled by following the English translation. He has not looked carefully at the original Arabic text, which is to be found printed opposite the English translation in Dr. Muhsin Khan's work.

This *hadith* report consists of a number of statements ascribed to various authorities, in the following sequence:

1. An explanation (by Mujahid) of the meaning of 2:240.
2. A statement commencing "Ata said: Ibn Abbas said: . . ."
3. A statement commencing with just "Ata said: . . ."
4. A statement commencing "Ata added: . . ."

5. A statement ascribed to Ibn Abbas, commencing with the words, "Ibn Abbas said. . . ."

Of these five statements, the first is clearly an explanation by Mujahid of the meaning of 2:240, to the effect that God entitled the widow to be bequeathed one full year's maintenance and residence, and she could avail it or leave her late husband's house and remarry (after the compulsory period of waiting). Obviously, this shows that Mujahid held 2:240 to be in force, and not abrogated.

At the end of the first statement, the following words occur in the Arabic text: *Za'ama dhalika 'an Mujahid*—"Thus did he relate from Mujahid." That is to say, a reporter of this hadith, one Ibn Abi Najeeh, related this part of the report from Mujahid. These words are not to be found in the English translation in the opposite column. Apparently, from this omission Von Denffer has got the impression that the entire extract is a narration from Mujahid, and hence he has placed the words "Narrated Mujahid" as the heading to the entire hadith. But in fact the rest of the report, after the first statement, has been reported by Ibn Abi Najeeh, *not from Mujahid but from Ata*, the latter also reporting from Ibn Abbas.

As regards the other four statements contained in this report, three of them, namely, nos. 2, 3 and 5, far from declaring 2:240 as abrogated, actually speak of this verse itself as abrogating something else! All they say is that 2:240 has cancelled the requirement that the widow should spend the 'period of waiting' after her husband's death in his house, and that she can choose to spend it there or elsewhere.

It is only statement no. 4 which appears to suggest that the ordinances relating to inheritance have cancelled the requirement mentioned in 2:240 to provide the widow with a year's residence. This, however, is the view of Ata, and cannot be ascribed to Mujahid. Hence Maulana Muhammad Ali is perfectly correct in writing that Mujahid did not consider this verse to be abrogated, as is evident from the first statement in this hadith report.

Von Denffer does, however, agree with the *Maulana* that Ibn Zubair is recorded as having said that 2:240 was abrogated. We therefore put to him a highly illuminating point arising out of that particular hadith. This report is as follows:

Narrated Ibn Zubair: I said to Uthman (while he was collecting the Quran) regarding the verse: Those of you who die and leave wives . . . (2:240), "This verse was abrogated by another verse, so why should you write it (or leave it in the Quran)?" Uthman said: "O son of my brother! I will not shift anything of it from its place." (*Bukhari, Kitab al-Tafsir*, quoted from Dr. Muhsin Khan's English translation of Bukhari, vol. vi, hadith no. 53, pp. 40, 41).

The question ascribed to Ibn Zubair is the very obvious one which comes to mind regarding abrogation—why is a verse still included in the Quran when it has been abrogated by another? If this question is asked today, the followers of the conventional *Ulum al-Quran*, such as Von Denffer, immediately give the reply: “the ordinance contained in the verse has been abrogated, but not the recitation of its text.” Uthman, presumably not being so accomplished in the technicalities of Quranic studies as are even ordinary grade Muslim scholars today (!), gave the logical reply that he could not exclude any verse from the received text of the Quran on the alleged ground that it had been abrogated.

Another mistake Von Denffer claims to have discovered is that Maulana Muhammad Ali has cited the views of Ibn Zubair and Mujahid as being reports from Companions, whereas these two were not Companions but from the next generation. It is true that Mujahid was not a Companion, but no one can really fault the *Maulana's* basic argument on this basis, especially as the same text in the *Religion of Islam* mentions not only the Companions but also later authorities as disagreeing among themselves on the abrogation of particular verses. And what about Von Denffer's own clear error here in asserting that Ibn Zubair was not a Companion. He is listed among the Companions in the *Sahih Muslim, Kitab Faza'il Ashab an-Nabi* (Book on the Qualities of the Companions)!

### General Comments

Having dealt with his attempt to refute Maulana Muhammad Ali's argument against the doctrine of abrogation, we turn to Von Denffer's own treatment of this subject. At the outset of the section he strongly supports this doctrine, yet in his summary at the end (pp. 112, 113) he is forced by common sense to effectively retract all his assertions on the previous pages.

At the beginning he says that knowledge of *al-nasikh wal mansukh* (i.e., knowing which verses are abrogated, and by which ones) is very important, indeed “It is one of the important preconditions for explanation (*tafsir*) of the Quran . . . for understanding and application of the Islamic law” (p. 105). However, the number of verses which are said to be abrogated (this number presumably reflecting the “importance” of the knowledge of *nasikh-mansukh*) keeps on diminishing as we progress through the text of this chapter. Starting from Ibn Salama's figures, from which we deduce that the number of abrogated verses is well above 65, Von Denffer ends up with Shah Waliullah's conclusion that there are only 5 such verses. This would hardly suggest that the knowledge of *nasikh-mansukh* is of much importance. And as a much greater number of verses have been, as one may put it, de-abrogated over the course of centuries, the knowledge of how all these came to be reconciled with the supposed *nasikh* (abrogating) verses is certainly much more vast and important than the knowledge of the five remaining ones!

At the outset, Von Denffer states that information about abrogated verses "must be based on reliable reports, according to *Ulum al-Hadith*, and should go back to the Prophet and his Companions" (p. 105). Yet nowhere does he disclose the crucial fact that there is no report at all, reliable or otherwise, according to which the Holy Prophet himself declared a verse as abrogated. And as regards the reports of abrogation, traceable to secondary authorities, which he has quoted as examples earlier on, he himself goes on to question their reliability in his 'Summary':

"Aisha alone reported that 10 or 5 sucklings had been part of the Quranic recitation, and *only* 'Umar reported that the 'verse of stoning' had been included in the Quranic text. These legal rulings are *not* included in the Quran precisely because they were not considered reliable, being based on one witness only. Similarly, other examples about *Naskh*, based on the words of Ibn Abbas or Mujahid alone, are to be judged by the same measure" (pp. 112, 113)

Words such as 'alone' and 'only' above have been italicized in the book itself. Why are these examples given when they are admitted to be unreliable! The ridiculous position taken by Von Denffer here is that, on the one hand, these reports speaking of abrogation were not considered reliable so as to be taken into account in the actual collection and compilation of the Quranic text, but on the other hand, they relate factual and historical examples of abrogation. Thus the 'verse of stoning' was not put in the Quran because the report mentioning it is not reliable, but the report is true that there was such a verse, so says the author apparently.

In his very last sentence in this section, Von Denffer is reduced to the following position:

"However, as mentioned there remain a small number of verses which, as far as can be ascertained from the internal evidence of the Quran, have been superseded by other verses in the Quran."

So all his parading of reports and the "knowledge of *al-nasikh walmansukh*" collapses to just this! The only "internal evidence" he cites, viz. 2:106, refers to the abrogation of previous religious scriptures by the Holy Quran. If this passage is considered as referring to abrogation in the Quran itself, then as it speaks both of revelation which had been abrogated and revelation which had been forgotten, it would mean that some Quranic verses had been forgotten, which is not held by any Muslim.

The final point we deal with is Von Denffer's general criticism of the section on 'abrogation' in the *Religion of Islam* in the words: "It may be pointed out that Ali's treatment of the subject is not very thorough." In that treatment, Maulana Muhammad Ali has not only disproved abrogation on the basis of the wider Quranic principles, but he had refu

principles, but he had refuted every argument advanced in favour of this doctrine, and actually dealt with specific verses supposed to be abrogated, showing how they can be reconciled with verses which are thought to have superseded them. Could he have been any more thorough? Other authors have drawn on his research in this connection given in the *Religion of Islam*. Interestingly enough, Von Denffer has briefly noted that Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi also takes the *naskh* spoken of in 2:106 as referring to the abrogation of previous scriptures by the Quran itself. As the Islamic Foundation and Von Denffer himself in his book *Ulum al-Quran* have a very high reverence for Maudoodi, who is their spiritual founder, so to speak, they should compare his treatment of this issue with that of Maulana Muhammad Ali and see which of the two, in reaching the same conclusion, has been more thorough. We would be most interested in such a comparison being published.

Von Denffer has also made the following comment regarding what he calls the "knowledge of *al-nasikh wa al-munsukh*" (i.e., knowledge of which verses are abrogated and by which ones): "*Tafsir* (explanation of the Quran) or legal ruling is not acceptable from a person who does not have such knowledge" (p. 105). Does this standard apply to the late Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi, in the light of his views on abrogation?

## News in Brief .....

### PAKISTAN

Mr. Zafar Iqbal Abdullah, president of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman USA was on a short visit to Pakistan in March last. He called on Hazrat Ameer Dr. Saeed Ahmad Khan Sahib and posted him with the latest progress in the field of translation of the Quran into Chinese, French and Russian languages. A reception was arranged in his honour on 12th March by the Local Jamaat at the Jamia Darus Salaam, Lahore. Hazrat Ameer and other prominent members of the Central Anjuman attended. On his return journey Mr. Abdullah made a brief stop-over in London and met Sheikh Sharif Ahmad, Imam of the London Mission. They discussed matters of mutual interest and cooperation between USA and UK Anjumans in the publication of books.

### HOLLAND

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Hague has been regular in its Friday congregations and other appropriate social functions as usual. A meeting was held on 5th March at the Jami'ah Ahmadiyya to celebrate 'Miraj al-Nabi'. Speeches were made to



explain spiritual significance of this important event of the Holy Prophet's life. The members met again on 17th March to commemorate *Shabi Bara'at*. Speeches were made to explain true significance of the night in the light of the Quran and Sayings of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. A group of the Jamaat intends to visit Berlin Mission after *'Id al-Fitr* to provide assistance for the repairs of the Jami'ah.

## INDONESIA

By the grace of Allah the Jamaat in Indonesia is making strides both in membership and functioning. We have now two more branches in Jogjakarta i.e. at Bentul and Sleman. Similarly in Central Java one more Jamaat has been established at Purbolinggo besides the Jamaat at Purwokerto.

Ahmadiyya youth of Yogyakarta on 23rd March held a special meeting at Jami'ah Piri to celebrate Centenary of the Ahmadiyya Movement. On 2nd April Mr. Yatimin, our young and spirited missionary, delivered an impressive speech about the message of the Ahmadiyya Movement at the monthly meeting of the Madium Branch in East Java.

Monthly Quranic meetings are regularly held at the home of Dr. Rahmatullah ibn Sikander, president of the Local Jamaat Jakarta. This is in addition to the monthly meeting in Kesehatan and the weekly Wednesday evening meetings.

### The Qur'an in Javanese

Arrangements are underway to bring out a new edition of the Javanese translation of the Holy Quran. It is expected to be ready for sale along with the Indonesian translation of "The Religion of Islam" and "A Manual of Hadith" on the eve of the Annual Jalsa of the Jamaat in the last week of December, 1989.

## FJI

Maulana Shafqat Rasul arrived from Pakistan at the Nadi Airport on 1st March, 1989. Mr. M.M. Sikander Feroze Sahu Khan received him at the Airport and drove him in his car to Suva where members of the Executive Committee of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Fiji and other prominent members of the Jamaat accorded him a very warm welcome. Maulana Shafaqat Rasul led Janaza congregation of a lady at the Jamia Muhammad Ali, Maro on the 5th of March and gave a brief talk about the concept of life hereafter in Islam. Next day he delivered *Dars-i Quran* at the same Jamia after Maghrib prayer. Maulana's 40-minute interview was recorded on 8th March by Suva Local Radio which was broadcast on 10th March. Maulana recites the Holy Quran in a very elegant and soul-stirring tone. This has attracted many

men and women who have started learning *qir'at* from him.

## CANADA

In a recent letter from Vancouver, Canada Mr. Yaseen Sahu Khan, General Secretary of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Canada has expressed great appreciation for the successful conclusion of the two-day International Consultative Council meeting held at Lahore in which he and his wife Sameena Sahu Khan attended as representatives of the Canada Jamaat. He has described his stay in Lahore as an experience of great spiritual fervour and warm bonds of brotherhood.

Mrs. Sameena Sahu Khan who is president of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Canada and Dr. Nouman Elahi Malik of USA are taking keen interest in the progress of work concerning the translations of the Qur'an in Chinese, Russian, French and German languages. In February she went to Houston (USA) to attend an important meeting of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman USA in connection with the translations of the Qur'an. She also took a brief tour of Columbus, Montreal and Quebec.

Our respected brother Mr. Yusuf Ma Pin Sho in a recent letter has informed us that Mrs. Sameena Sahu Khan and Dr. Nouman Elahi Malik are expected to visit Taiwan in the first week of May in connection with the Chinese translation of the Quran.

## SURINAME (South America)

### Inaugural Centenary Convention

Mr. Rashied Pierkhan, President of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Suriname in a television interview in Paramaribo on 15th February, 1989 gave his impressions about his visit to Lahore and participation in the two-day International Consultative Council Meeting. The Suriname Ahmadiyya Anjuman has decided to hold International Ahmadiyya Convention in connection with the Centenary celebrations of the Ahmadiyya Movement from 28th to 31st July in the Central Jamia Paramaribo. During these days a meeting of the International Consultative Council will also be held. About 200 delegates from Jamaats all over the world are expected to take part in the celebrations. Further details about these celebrations will be given in the next issue.



## YOUTH ARE OUR FUTURE

We have undoubtedly been able to produce remarkable literature on Islam which has not only earned appreciation both from Muslim and non-Muslim knowledgeable circles but has also brought about wholesome change in the western outlook about Islam and its Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Yet there is still a great deal to be done in this field. Ahmadiyya Movement has upheld a pragmatic line of thinking by presenting rational and universal interpretation of the message of Islam. After the fifties there has been tremendous change in the political and religious thinking of the Muslim world due to the impact of Western ideas and socio-political challenges. Orthodox approach of seeking guidance from the Quran and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet has disillusioned the Muslim youth. If Ahmadiyya Movement cherishes to maintain its progressiveness and providing enlightenment, then it should enthuse and activate its youth and pass on to them the rich heritage of knowledge, deep understanding and enthusiasm left for us by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement and his veteran disciples such as Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali and Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din. Youth are the future of the Movement. There is a great need that we should prepare our youth to absorb the rich heritage and inculcate in them a new zeal and devotion for acquiring more knowledge and enlightenment in order to meet the new challenges.

It is gratifying to note that *Light* has resumed its publication. It will not only keep its traditions but provide to its readers information about the progress of the Movement and thus certainly enlighten them with new ideas and guidance.

Lahore

Fazl-i Ahmad

## AN EVENT OF THE YEAR

The re-appearance of your esteemed periodical is undoubtedly an unforgettable event of this year. True to its name this English organ of the Lahore section of the Ahmadiyya Movement has championed the cause of Islam in the world for the last sixty years or so. It has strived hard to portrait the true picture of Islam and has shattered the gloom over it whenever and wherever it eclipsed its pristine beauty.

Although the paper is and has been religious in its nature but it never lagged behind to advocate the socio-political problems of the Muslims of Indo-Pak subcontinent and the late Quaid-i-Azam on a number of occasions did acknowledge its service to the cause of Muslim struggle for independence.

Rawalpindi

Fakhar-ud-Din Ahmad

### CONGRATULATIONS FROM FIJI

I have received first issue of the monthly "Light". Please accept my best wishes and congratulations. Allah in His Infinite mercy has once again given us the opportunity to serve the cause of the Movement. May Allah grant the editors of the *Light* and the Paigham-i Sulh good health and strength to carry on this noble and excellent work.

Suva, Fiji

G. N. Dean.

### RESUMPTION OF LIGHT

Praise be to Allah that monthly "Light" has resumed its publication. Articles in the February issue were interesting and comprehensive of the day to day problems. Report about the two-day International Consultative Council meeting in which twelve representatives from abroad participated was very encouraging. Fourth edition of my book "Christ in Kashmir" is about to finish. I hope its fifth edition will carry some recent findings and more photographs. I have received a copy of *Ma'arif al-Quran* from USA. It consists of *Dars-i Qur'an* of Mian Naseer Ahmad Faruqui on *Surah Fatihah* and *Surah Baqarah*. Explanations and commentary of the Quran are simple and lucid. I intend to publish a review on it in the daily "Roshni".

Srinagar (Kashmir)

Aziz Kashmiri Editor, *Daily Roshni*