



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
 "In the name of Allah,  
 The Beneficent, The Merciful".



# THE CALL

JOURNAL OF THE AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHA'AT-IL-ISLAM.  
 TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

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*Eid*

*'Eid Mubarak*

*Greetings*

AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN COMMEMORATES  
 ELEVENTH ANNIVERSARY ON EID DAY

Eid-ul-Fitr falling on Monday 9th June, 1986 coincides with the Eleventh Anniversary of the Formation of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaati-Islam Inc., Trinidad and Tobago. The history of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Trinidad is significant if only for the contribution that Ahmadiyya thought has made to the upliftment and enlightening of the muslim mind in particular and the national life in general.

The Ahmadiyya approach to Islam was first introduced to these shores by Maulvi Fazal Karim Durrani during the 1920's. His dynamism inspired Maulvi Ameer Ali to study theology at Ahmadiyya Buildings, Lahore at the feet of the then President of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman, Maulana Muhammad Ali, the famous trans-

We believe in the finality of Prophethood in Muhammad.

رَحْمَةً وَرَسُولِ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدًا تَمَّ النَّبِيُّونَ

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lator of the Holy Qur'an. During the 1930's however, there was a small group of pledged Ahmadis led by Tajammul Hosein of Princess Town. Though this group was Urdu-speaking they introduced a unique concept of propagation of Islam. Breaking away from the traditional Maulood gatherings they initiated the reading and explanation of the Holy Qur'an on a house to house basis. This was the first group recognised as a branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement.

From 1930 onwards, Maulvi Ameer Ali, introduced Ahmadiyya concepts of the propagation of Islam to the majority English speaking muslims. His major achievement was the bringing of muslim women to the forefront of Islamic propagation. In spite of opposition to him because of his Ahmadiyya connection, Maulvi Ameer Ali's efforts left an indelible impact on even the muslims of the Ahli Sunnat wal-Jamaat. It is well worth noting that in Guyana, Mosques can still be distinguished as being Ahmadi or Sunni on the basis of whether women attend prayers or not (the Ahmadi Masjids accomodating women at prayers). In Trinidad however, all Mosques now permit women not only to pray but to actively participate in all religious activities.

Through a succession of prominent Ahmadi Missionaries from Lahore, the true teachings of Islam were kept alive among the intelligent section of the Muslim community. It was during the period of stay of Maulana S.M. Tufail, however, that Ahmadies first saw the need to have a properly constituted Ahmadiyya Jamaat. In August 1964 an Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaati-Islam was formed for the sole purpose of financing an Ahmadi Missionary in Trinidad. This group later became absorbed as a committee within the Trinidad Muslim League (T.M.L.)

In the mid-sixties, the T.M.L. summoned a conference of Jamaats for the purpose of getting their views as to whether or not the

League should be affiliated to the Ahmadiyya Anjuman, Lahore. At that famous conference which was presided over by Justice Noor Hassanali, then Attorney General of Trinidad and Tobago all Jamaats except one advocated affiliation.

As a result of this 'Green Light' a resolution was passed at the following General Meeting affiliating the League with the Anjuman. Subsequently, by further resolutions, the League became the Branch in Trinidad and Tobago and finally the name 'Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaati Islam, Trinidad was appended to the name of the League (the above two paragraphs extracted from T.M.L. Silver Jubilee Brochure 1972).

For twenty-five years the T.M.L. with its roots nourished from the literature of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman, gave forth as fruits jamaats committed to the propagation of Islam through Ahmadiyyat. One of these fruits sprung up and became plant of its own.

### THE FIRST SUBSCRIBERS:

On Monday 9th June, 1975 the following eleven members of the Fireburn Jamaat, Maulana M.K. Hydal, Mrs. Norisha Aleem, Mr. Abdool Aleem, Mr. Abdul Jehangir, Mr. Shafiat Shorab, Mr. Haniff Ramjohn, Mr. Samsair Baksh, Mr. Zaman Mohammed, Mr. Wahid Sulaiman, Mr. Hamid Khan and Mr. Enayat Mohammed consented to a resolution forming the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaati Islam, Trinidad and Tobago. Since then, the Anjuman has grown to an organisation of over three hundred registered active members with a support that extends over five thousand muslims locally. The Anjuman was not only properly constituted on 26th December, 1975 but it was later accepted by the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaati-Islam, Lahore to make representation under its pledge and banner in Trinidad and Tobago and in any part of the world. The Anjuman also

became an incorporated body by Act of Parliament in December, 1977.

Throughout the past eleven years the Anjuman has laid first emphasis on its members to reform their lives by committing themselves to acting on the teachings of Islam. Its members have been called upon not only to eschew alcohol but to denounce it as well at all weddings, wakes and other social or religious gatherings. It has recently published a book "Intoxicants the Devil's Work". It has inspired its youth through the Ahmadiyya Youth Movement to perform community service, and it has encouraged its women's Movement to promote family life based on Qur'anic Principles. The Anjuman has succeeded, through its Inter-Faith thrust, in motivating Hindus and Christians to advocate the Oneness of God in accordance with the Qur'an 3 : 63.

A summary of the activities of the Anjuman, throughout the years has been published in the last issue of "The Call". Since then the Anjuman has been able, through generous donations, to spend considerable funds on Radio Programmes on the occasions of Miraaj, Ramadaan and Lailatul Qadr. It has also been projecting the message of Islam every Friday on Television 'Meditation' programmes. At present the Anjuman's primary concern is in providing the knowledge and literature necessary for the training of future missionaries of Islam, particularly in a rapidly changing world situation.

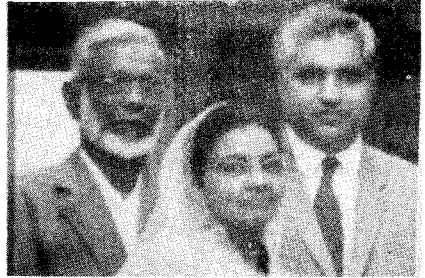
In conveying to members, supporters and well-wishers **Id Mubaarak** — the Blessings of Eid The Religious Head of the Anjuman, Maulana M.K. Hydal has pointed out that it is our Anjuman which has been entrusted by Allah, with the responsibility of bringing to fulfilment the prophecy of the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, that the sun (light of Islam) will rise in the west. The Religious Head further reminds us that as our physical and emotional endurance has to be tested before that day

of joy – Eid, likewise our spiritual and financial sacrifice has to be manifested before the world attains its day of happiness by returning to its spiritual food - The Holy Qur'an.

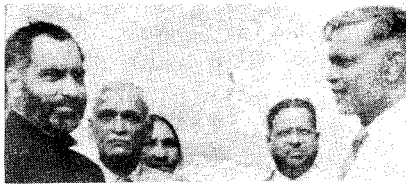
Let us therefore think of the Anjuman and its tasks ahead on this day of Eid! Let us commit ourselves to the propagation of Islam through the Ahmadiyya Anjuman!



**Maulana F.K. Durrani**  
First Ahmadi Missionary in Trinidad.



Ahmadi Missionary Maulana S.M. Tufail (left) Maulvi Ameer Ali (right) first Trinidadian to be trained as a Muslim Missionary by Ahmadiyya Anjuman, Lahore.



Ahmadi Missionary Maulana B. A. Minto (left) Maulvi Ameer Ali, Founder of the T.M.L. (right). Next to Maulana Minto is Mr. M. Ayub Khan, Imam of Jinnah Memorial Mosque

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## AHMADI MURDERED IN GUYANA

Mr. Muhammad Anwar, Imam of the UK branch of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman, Lahore was shot and killed on Wednesday 9th April, 1986 outside the home of Molvi Muhammad Rasheed. *Inna lil-laah wa in-naa ilaihi raajioon - To Allah we belong and to Him we even-*

*tually return.* He had just returned from performing Ishaa prayers. The Imaam was in Guyana to attend the opening ceremony of the new Islamic Centre of the Guyana Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaati Islam. One of four persons involved in the killing was arrested and charged with the murder.

Mr. Anwar and his wife originally from Pakistan, have been residing in London since March 1981 where he was sent as Assistant Imam to the UK Branch. In August Mr. Anwar was in Trinidad to attend the 10th Anniversary celebration of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaati Islam Inc., Trinidad and Tobago. At that time another Ahmadi also of Pakistan but of the Rabwa section, was similarly shot and killed.

The murder of these two Ahmadis as also the bombing of the Ninth Ahmadiyya Convention in Trinidad is believed to be revenge for the death of the murderer of another Ahmadi in USA. In August 1983 William Cane of Akron, Ohio, shot and killed Dr. Muzzaffar Ahmad, Secretary of the Rabwa Jamaat in Ohio. Later the same night Cain and another man died of smoke inhalation after they attempted to burn down the Ahmadi (Rabwa) Centre in Detroit.

The body of Mr. Anwar was flown via Trinidad and London to Pakistan where he was buried. Janaza Prayers were said at Mosques in Trinidad on Friday 11th April. The Ahmadiyya Anjuman has conveyed to Mrs. Anwar and the family our sincerest condolences.



**The late Muhammad Anwar (left)  
Mrs. Anwar (right)**

# *Questions and Answers*

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## ABOUT THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

### AMONG THE CATEGORY OF SAINTS (AULIA)

- Q. It is said by the Rabwites that the status of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement is higher than a *wali* (saint).
- A. If by the use of the term "Son of God" metaphorically Jesus Christ's status becomes higher than that of a prophet then by the use of the term "prophet" **metaphorically and not in the real sense** the status of the Founder becomes higher than that of a *wali* (saint). The truth, however is that by the use of such terms in a particular sense neither Jesus Christ becomes God nor the Founder a prophet. That is why when it comes to the question of his claim the Founder says:

"The ignorant opponents accuse me that I have laid claim to be a prophet. I lay no such claim"

*(Ek, Ghalati ka Izaala).*

"And our Messenger is the last of the prophets and with him is cut off the chain of messengers."

"And I have been called a prophet by God metaphorically, not in a real sense"

*(Haqeeqat-ul-Wahy supplement pg. 64-65).*

**MAULANA S. M. TUFAIL.**

*A Talk over Radio Guyana*

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

ISLAM—THE SOLUTION TO ERADICATING  
UNRIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE WORLD

*by*

*Moulvi Mohammad Rasheed*

*Chief Missionary Guyana Ahmadiyya Anjuman*

Recently my organization received a very unusual letter. Why I have said so, because it has come from a Muslim, where the question has been asked, “Why it is that Muslim Festivals are dull and not as exciting as other non-Muslim Festivals”. Somewhat similar views are often expressed by some of our brothers and sisters especially the youths of today who feel that living it up as they say is the real purpose of life. This is strange reasoning if we examine the question against the real purpose of the creation of man and his participation in the Divine Scheme. To answer this question I will have to turn naturally to Allah’s guidance—The Holy Quran.

I have entitled this talk “Islam—The Solution to Eradicating Unrighteousness in the world”. The reading of the Holy Quran is taken from Chapter 57:20 “Know that this world’s life is only sport and play and gaiety and boasting among yourselves and a vying in the multiplication of wealth and children. It is as rain, whose causing the vegetation to grow pleases the husbandmen, then it withers away, so that thou seest it turning yellow, then it becomes chaff. And in the hereafter is a severe chastisement, and (also) forgiveness from Allah and (His) pleasure. And this world’s life is naught but a source of vanity.”

This world’s life stands for the material side of life, which is



utilised by men to satisfying their material cravings, thus their indulgence in their pursuits is like running after a mirage, for in their quest of this what is real and everlasting holds very little personal application. The Holy Quran has likened this attitude of men with vegetation that reaches its fullness but withers away at this stage. Thus if this material life is not utilised properly and constructively to attain real goal of life it would surely mean that we have wasted away the opportunity to gain everlasting happiness in this world and the hereafter. We should realise that individuals as well as nations are, as it were, racing for the transitory goods of this life, of adoring the outside, for riches and gaiety, to the utter neglect of the higher values of life which is so clearly brought to our attention in the Holy Quran.

When we view this world's life there is so much that is offered to man for his utilisation, but the question is, how best he makes use of all that Allah has placed in his nature and in the vast universe, is the problem that confronts man in his daily life. Indeed man has learnt to fly in the air like birds, and to swim in the water like fish, but how to live a purposeful life on earth we have yet to learn. This is where Islam comes to the aid of man.

Let us take for instance the question that has been asked. Why Islamic Festivals are dull and not as exciting as non-Muslim Festivals? Now generally Festival would mean an occasion that is celebrated with jollification, free mixing of the sexes, dancing, music, consumption of Alcoholic drinks and so on. Indeed these forms of celebration are not upheld by Islam as these lead to man's destruction of his higher self . Islam caters for the moral fibre of man to be preserved and the development of his inner self to transcend above any low desires and practices. Its whole aim is that man should follow a guidance that would enable him to climb the spiritual ladder that would lead him to perfect union with the Absolute.

The religion of Islam does not allow man to indulge in any divi-sionary practices that might impede his spiritual growth. Things we consider exciting for us, are in fact harmful and evil considering their evil consequences for human society according to the standards set by our religion. Let us take for instance, Music. Everyone loves it

in its various forms. According to my understanding Music is not bad. It is a fine art, and has been cultivated by Muslims. But religion and its observances, from an Islamic point of view, are too sacred for it. Anything which by its abuse is likely to excite lower passions and kill high morality has been placed outside the scope of religion in Islam. It is all very well and it may be desirable in other respects, but religion is too serious for it. Islam has reformed evil occupations of the human mind. Before the advent of Islam, Arabia was not without its festivities and jollifications, but they created occasions for excesses and abuses which only pampered to the satisfaction of the lower desires of men. The Holy Prophet kept those festivities, but purged them of such things which were likely to give licence to undesirable practices.

It is with the best intention in view and for the preservation of human dignity that Islam does not countenance at its Festivals **satisfaction** of the baser desires. Islam does not approve of such pastimes, entertainments and recreations as tend to stimulate sensual passions and vitiate the canons of morality. Dancing, drinking and other indecent practices are a waste of time, money, energy and destroy the moral fibre of society. Get togethers and other recreational activities are no doubt a necessity. These quicken the spirit of life and adventure. It is as important to life as water and air, particularly after hard work. But recreation must be such as refreshes the mind and enlivens the spirit, and not of a type that depresses the spirit and depraves the passions. The absurd and wasteful entertainments where thousands of dollars are spent, where people exhibit themselves in the most distasteful way, where depraving scenes of crime and immorality are the very contrast to healthy recreation or of celebrating festivals in an exciting manner. Although these may be gratifying to the sensuous passions yet their effect upon the minds and morals of the people is horryfying.

Islam forbids its believers from adopting bad and evil ways of non-Muslims, because it is fraught with danger of losing their identification, as far purity and decent social behaviour demanded by Islam are concerned. The psychology of imitation suggests that it springs from a sense of inferiority and lack of knowledge that tends

to create a defeatist mentality. That is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has forbidden Muslims from adopting evil aspects and modes of non-Muslim cultures.

Islam advocates to learn from others their will to action, social discipline, knowledge and technical accomplishments. Muslims are warned to guard against such tendencies that would make them lose their identity and religious superiority. Thus we must come to understand that Islamic festivals have their own way of celebration within the context of its moral and social pattern.



### AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN PUBLICATIONS

Intoxicants the Devil's Work	\$2.00
Selections from the Holy Qur'an	\$10.00
Muhammad and Christ	\$8.00
Muslim Prayer Book	\$4.00

#### Available from.—

Usman Ali	Ali's Hardware, Cane Farm, Arouca
Mr. Imam Shah	Bhagwantee Trace, New Grant
S.M. Kaidar	Siparia
Mrs. Rakeeban Ramjohn	Uquire Road, Fireburn
Hazra's Variety Store	Freeport Junction
M.K. Hydal	24. Ruhee Gardens, Calcutta Rd. No. 2 Freeport.





**TEXT OF A RADIO TALK BROADCASTED ON  
FRIDAY 9TH MAY, 1986 OVER RADIO 610 AT 5.55 A.M.**

Ramadaan is the ninth month in the Islamic year in which Fasting has been made obligatory on all muslims. The muslim Calender being lunar, the month begins approximately eleven days earlier, each year. Thus in 33 years muslims fast throughout the entire solar year, through all seasons. The significance of this shifting of the month of fasting is that Allah, the One True God is accessible throughout the year – no month, no day, no season is cut off from His Blessings. Indeed it is in Ramadaan that the believer searches for, and finds God.

The Qur'an, God's Holy word verifies that Fasting is an ordinance from Allah to the followers of Muhammad as it was a divine ordinance from Allah to the followers of Muhammad as it was a divine ordinance to the people of other religions.

In Hinduism fasting is called *Vrut* and is observed for two days in the 11th of each month. Besides this some Hindus fast every Monday in the month of *Kaatik*. There is also abstinence from food or drink for forty (40) day periods.

Like Muslims, the Jews had fasting proclaimed in the ninth month as Jeremiah 36 : 9 indicates. Even in the time of Jesus the disciples of John the Baptist and the Pharisees fasted. Jesus indica-

ted that his own disciples will fast after he is taken away from them, Mt. 9 : 15. Moreover in Mt. 6 : 16 he clearly advised that fasting must be out of the sincerity and love for God and not for show. Acts 13 : 2, 3 demonstrates that fasting was performed by the early Christians.

Fasting among the prophets of God is always associated with the receiving of great spiritual blessings — particularly divine revelation. Thus we see that Moses fasted for forty days before he was given the Torah. It was only after severe fasting that Buddha obtained enlightenment. Jesus fasted for forty days before he was commissioned to preach to the Israelities. Krishna too teaches the concept of renunciation as a requirement which precedes spiritual upliftment.

Ramadaan is the month in which God's word, the Holy Qur'an was revealed. It is thus the anniversary of the revelation from God. Jesus has truly said that man shall not live by bread alone but every word that comes out of the mouth of God. It is only the Muslims, through fasting, who put into practice this teaching of Jesus, for in the month of Ramadaan, the muslim man and woman, sometimes even children, give up or abstain from the bread of life and nourish and sustain themselves with the Qur'an — the word that has come out of the mouth of God.

Islam is not a religion of violence. It is a religion of volition — the free will to endure deprivation for Allah's sake.

Fasting gives a message to Muslims that the glory of Islam lies not in the conquest of others, but in the conquest of ones own self.

The believer is not asked to walk with guns which can hardly protect the body. He is required to walk with piety which is the true ornament for his soul.

Muslims are expected not to bring others to surrender to their will through wars, but to bring themselves to surrender to the will of Allah through fasting.

*MAULANA M. K. HYDAL*

**TEXT OF A RADIO TALK BROADCASTED ON  
FRIDAY 9TH MAY, 1986 OVER RADIO 610 AT 6.05 P.M.**

As Muslims we begin our fast tomorrow and will continue daily for thirty days after which the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr will be celebrated on Monday June 9th.

The Islamic fast requires one to have a meal about an hour before sunrise and then to eat or drink absolutely nothing until sunset.

Fasting to a muslim is not an experience for which he merely hopes Allah will reward him. It is an act of duty ordained by God to enable man to know his own powers of endurance. Thus fasting is to be seen from the viewpoint – that it is not what man wants or does, it is what God wants or requires man to do.

Being a fulfilment of the teaching of Jesus – that man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God – fasting is the closing of the eyes to the sustenance from the material world and the opening of the eyes to the sustenance from the spiritual world.

Man can serve God by giving in charity. But to be charitable, one has to possess material wealth. Fasting is an opportunity to serve God with one's own self – so that even a poor man, or an unemployed youth is not denied the opportunity of serving God.

God has granted to man two types of capabilities – a physical and a spiritual. Man is required in Islam to perfect and increase these two capabilities.

For the development of the physical, knowledge, skills and material means are available.

But for the development of the spiritual, Allah has revealed laws by acting on which, man's spiritual capabilities are enhanced.

Sometimes these laws are such that they decrease the physical

capabilities in order to augment the spiritual. For there are occasions when man's physical capabilities and resources are so abundant he becomes neglectful of the developments of his spiritual capabilities.

Just as man is expected to forego leisure in order to pursue exercise in order to increase physical health, so too, he is required to pursue spiritual exercises by forgoing his basic physical needs.

Fasting is not a mortification of any organ or limb of the physical body. It is rather the **mollification** of the two most powerful drives in man – the drive for food and the drive for sex. *Thus the intention is not to weaken the body, but to strengthen the soul.*

Fasting in Islam is indeed a battle with the self, to find peace with God. It is therefore false to proclaim that Islam which means peace, teaches aggressive violence to attain peace with man.

There is a religious usage amongst muslims of contemplation in solitude and silence. This is called "I'tikaf" secluding oneself in the mosque. This is a form of temporary celibacy and ascetism that Islam provides for those who of their own accord may wish to seek God through this means. But this practice is limited to only ten days per year – the last ten days of Ramadan. It is a voluntary practice not obligatory. Those who desire to go through this form of devotion during Ramadan leave their homes and take up their abodes in small cubicles or silence – chambers in the mosque which they leave only for necessity. Their food – which never exceeds bare subsistence, for they too are fasting – is brought to them by their people. It is a period of contemplation of the attributes of God and a searching, enquiry into the votaries' own shortcomings. The nightly hours of I'tikaf are mostly spent in prayers, meditation and contemplation. The worshipper looks more to have his life intuned with the Universal Spirit and in the dark hours of the chamber he tries to kindle the divine flame within himself and receive illumination.

MAULANA M. K. HYDAI

## ISLAM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

by

*Dr. M.A. Aziz F.R.C.S (London)*

The Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states as follows: "Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Whereas disregard of and contempt of human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief in freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people.

Whereas it is essential if man is not compelled to have recourse as a last resort to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that Human Rights should be protected by the rule of law.

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations.

Whereas the people of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realisation of this pledge.

Now, therefore, The General Assembly proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common



standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for the rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

The Declaration of Human Rights does not in the accepted juristic sense constitute a law. It stands however as a prominent landmark in the long and arduous history of the development of man always looking ahead with hope towards the goal of freedom, justice and equality. Man's struggle for these human rights has been fought in all ages and in many battlefields with varying fortunes. These battles have in some measure advanced the cause of Man and inspired the formulation and adoption of this Declaration.

Several articles of the Declaration are incorporated in the constitution of many emerging independent nations and much more remains to be achieved in the field of implementation. Legislative action at the national level supported by a free and independent judiciary would go a long way in the direction of securing the desired objective.

Man is beginning to become conscious of his own position in the global struggle for survival and demands that his personality and dignity must be accorded due respect and honour. *WA LAKAD KARRAMNA BANI ADAM*. "I have accorded dignity to Man." (The Quran, 17:70). He is beginning to take note of that which is owed to him by his fellowmen, society and State and in turn what he owes to them. This awareness needs to be stimulated where it is still lacking and to be accelerated where it has been awakened. In this context emphasis must be placed on man's obligations and duties towards his fellowmen as the principal means of securing his own rights, freedom and privileges since they are both sides of the same coin. Islam has taught over the centuries that prosperity and happiness—*falah*—for all is promoted through mutual sharing and cooperation rather than through the exploitation and domination of some by others.

The present world situation is primarily the result of greed, selfishness, exploitation and dominance by a few over the majority and the history of many Muslim countries lend support to this theory.  
(To be continued)

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## GOD-REALISATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN CHARACTER

by

*Nasir Ahmad B.A. LL.B.*

*Text of a talk delivered at the Sum Sum Hill Mosque.*

“My Lord make me keep up the prayer, and from my offspring (too). Our Lord accept my prayer. Our Lord, grant me protection, and my parents and the believers on the day when the reckoning comes to pass.” (The Qur’an, 14:40, 41).

These verses of the Qur’an which I have just recited constitute the closing du’a of every prayer, whether obligatory, Sunnah, Nafal or otherwise. I believe every Muslim, man and woman, recites it at least 14 times a day in his regular prayers. Let us reflect over this and find out its significance in relation to our daily life. It gives us an idea of the type of mental attitude and social behaviour, we Muslims should adopt in our daily life. It also points to man’s responsibility for reforming himself, his children and for his care and concern for parents, members of his family and the society at large. The object of selecting these verses for daily prayers is to keep on reminding us of the objectives of life envisaged by the teachings of Islam.

### **Significance of daily prayer in Islam**

Prayer in Islam is not a ritual exercise to please God, or appease His wrath, as in the case of other religions. Allah does not stand in need of our prayers, but we certainly need His mercy and compassion for our physical and spiritual well-being in this life and in the life hereafter.

The other day I was reading an article in the July issue of *Readers’*

*Digest* in which a world-renowned columnist has rightly said: "The fact that my column has survived for nearly thirty years, underscores, for me, the central tragedy of our society—the loneliness and insecurity that paralyze so many people." Prayer in Islam helps in establishing communion with God which alone can bring solace and peace to the human heart and it also urges one to contribute towards this noble cause. The Quran says: "Those who believe, and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah. Now surely in Allah's remembrance do hearts find rest." (13:28). I am happy to know that Muslims living in such a remote corner of the West, have been able to retain traditions of warmth and closeness, which is the hallmark of Muslim brotherhood throughout the world. Islam, by means of the institution of prayer wants to develop in an individual, and in the society as a whole an attitude of awareness and responsibility of reforming, caring and serving one's family, parents and members of the society. The question is how to inculcate and activate these higher values of life in man? Every religion urges man to inculcate God-realisation. Islam alone gives a clear perception of what God-realisation means in the life of a man and how to achieve it. These verses of the Quran which I recited in the beginning states that the first step towards attaining God-realisation should be by reforming and cleansing oneself of the dross and evil within him which prevents him from achieving the goal. Thus the Qur'an says: "Surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil; and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest force." (29:45)

Again it is through prayer that Islam intends to create in men and women an awareness of social responsibility of human care and relationship. We have just seen how the modern society is suffering from hazards of loneliness and insecurity inspite of all the comforts and joys of life. It is through this awareness alone that we can bring in closeness, warmth and joy in the society. The Qur'an gives guidelines on almost all difficult aspects of human relationship. But here I would confine myself only to a few of them to which reference has been made in the closing *du'a*. Regarding care and respect for parents who form the basic unit of family life, it says: "And the Lord has decreed that you serve none but Him, and do good to parents. If

**We accept Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement as the Muiaddid of the 14th century and we affirm that he never claimed to be a Prophet.**

either or both of them reach old age with thee, say not "fie" to them, as they brought me up when I was little." (17:23, 24). The Qur'an has a beautiful way of reasoning and persuasion. Here it asks us to visualise that time, when we are children and our parents sacrificed their time, comfort, money and every thing to bring us up, educate us and see us grow as young and healthy children. You may differ with them now on certain matters but this should not in any way prevent you from showing respect and care for what they have done for you. The care of parents, specially older ones, is a problem today because we do not wish to sacrifice or part with even a small portion of our joy, our comfort, our time, our attention for others who badly need them. No material reasoning and philosophy can develop and activate the enobling spirit in man that urges him to care and sacrifice for others. Over the centuries religion has given impetus to such humane thoughts and actions. Islam has gone a step further and has established various institutions and acts of devotion for the development and exercise of these higher values of life.

(To be continued)



**Name:**

**Address:**