



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful



THE CALL

JOURNAL OF THE AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHA'AT-I-ISLAM INC., TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Shabaan/Ramadaan

September /October , 2005

Editor: Imaam Iqbal Hydal (B.Sc., Dip.)

TIME TABLE FOR THE MONTH RAMADAAN 2005

RAMADAAN	CALENDAR DATE	FAJR-BEGINS (DAWN A.M.)	FAJR-ENDS (SUNRISE)	SUNSET P.M.
1	October 5	4.44	5.54	5.54
2	October 6	4.44	5.54	5.53
3	Friday October 7	4.44	5.54	5.52
4	October 8	4.44	5.54	5.52
5	October 9	4.44	5.54	5.51
6	October 10	4.44	5.54	5.51
7	October 11	4.44	5.54	5.50
8	October 12	4.44	5.54	5.50
9	October 13	4.44	5.54	5.49
10	Friday October 14	4.44	5.54	5.49
11	October 15	4.44	5.54	5.48
12	October 16	4.44	5.55	5.48
13	October 17	4.44	5.55	5.47
14	October 18	4.44	5.55	5.47
15	October 19	4.44	5.55	5.46
16	October 20	4.44	5.55	5.46
17	Friday October 21	4.44	5.55	5.46
18	October 22	4.44	5.55	5.45
19 I	October 23	4.44	5.55	5.45
20 `	October 24	4.44	5.55	5.44
21 T	October 25	4.44	5.56	5.44
22 I	October 26	4.44	5.56	5.43
23 K	October 27	4.45	5.56	5.43
24 A	Friday October 28	4.45	5.56	5.43
25 A	October 29	4.45	5.56	5.42
26 F	Lailatul Qadr October 30	4.45	5.56	5.42
27	October 31	4.45	5.57	5.42
28	November 1	4.45	5.57	5.42
29	November 2	4.45	5.57	5.41
Shaw-waal 1	Thursday November 3	`Eid	ul	Fitr

Editorial

28 Days In Ramadaan ?

Through the press, A.S.J.A. has released notification that Muslims should "look for the New Moon for Ramadan after sunset on Tuesday October 4, 2005 - The Moon will be 36 ½ hours old at Sunset. If the new moon is not sighted then fasting commences on Thursday October 6, 2005, Insha Allah"

36 ½ Hours

The fact that the Crescent Moon is 36 ½ hours old on Tuesday October 4, makes it 1½ days old after the birth of the new moon and thus it is imperative that fasting

should start the next day. Should Muslims wait to fast on Thursday October 6, it means that the age of the Crescent Moon would then be 2 ½ days old on Wednesday. This would result in the loss of a day of fast in the Holy Month of Ramadaan

29 Days in Ramadaan

Furthermore the Crescent that determines the date of 'Eid-ul-Fitr will appear on November 2, when it will be 20 ¼ hours old. This in effect will make the month of Ramadaan extend for 29 days. If one should begin fasting on Thursday October 6, then the month of Ramadaan will comprise of 28 days. Since no lunar month is ever of 28 days, as every Muslim knows that the

Holy Prophet has indicated that the month is either 29 or 30 days. Muslims would have missed a day of fast in the Holy Month of Ramadaan.

The more serious implication of this miscalculation would be in the observance of "Lailatul Qadr". the Night of Majesty, which falls on one of the odd nights in the last ten nights of Ramadaan. If Muslims start the month of Ramadaan one day late, then in effect, an odd night would in fact be an even night in the month. Those who resort to "Iktikaaf" and confine themselves to the Mosque for the last ten days in the Holy Month of Ramadaan, would in fact realize that they had observed "Iktikaaf" for only nine days.

THE ESSENCE OF ISLAM

By Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib of Qadian

Paper presented by Shaleeza Ramlal



SHALEEZA RAMLAL

(Undergraduate Student, U.W.I. St. Augustine)

Explanations of the teachings of Islam usually represent the faith in terms of dogma, ritual, and aspects of outward behavior. The impression is strongly received that what Islam requires from its followers is merely mechanical belief and observance, without any involvement of thought or feeling or the creation of a

relationship with God. However, a study of the Holy Qu'ran and the Holy Prophet's life (p.b.u.h), shows such a projection of Islam to be entirely unjustified. One of the chief tasks for which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad appeared as a *Mujaddid* was to revive that lost, real spirit which, according to the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet, (p.b.u.h)

should underlie a Muslim's belief and actions. In the extract presented here from his book, *A'ina-i Kamalati Islam*, Hazrat Mirza Sahib lays bare the real essence of what is Islam and what it means to be a Muslim in the true and actual sense.

What is the meaning of Muslim and Islam?

In the Arabic language, **Islam** is the word for paying the price in advance for a thing, *or* to give the charge of one's affairs to someone, *or* to ask for peace *or* to give up a matter or an enmity.

The technical meanings of Islam are those indicated in the following verse:

"Nay, whoever submits himself whole-heartedly to Allah, and he is a doer of good to others, he shall have his reward from his Lord. And there is no fear for such people, nor do they grieve" (2:112).

This verse tells that a Muslim is one who gives over his entire self to the path of God, the Most High. That is, he dedicates his being to Allah for the pursuance of His will and for the attainment of His pleasure, and then he devotes himself to doing good works for God, and employs all his practical faculties in His way. In terms of belief, it means that he must truly consider all his being to have been created in order to know God, to obey Him, to love and adore Him, and to gain His pleasure. In terms of deeds, it means that purely for the sake of Allah he must perform acts of

true virtue that are associated with every power and every God-given faculty, and with such fervour, zeal and presence of mind as if he is seeing the face of his real Master in the mirror of his obedience.

The meaning of the rest of the verse is that if a person's beliefs and deeds are founded on such personal love, and he does good deeds with such instinctive passion, he is the one who deserves reward in Allah's view, and such people have no fear or grief; that is, they have ready salvation. For, when a man is in full accordance with Allah, by believing in His person and attributes, so that his purpose is akin to God's will and all joy is in His obedience, and all good deeds come to be performed not by hard effort but by the attraction of joy and delight; that is the state which must be called success, salvation and deliverance. And in the next world, whatever is perceived and felt are, in reality, the images and impressions of this constant state which will be manifested physically in that world. The meaning is that a heavenly life begins in this very world, and the root of the torment of hell, too, is the filth and the heedless existence of this world.

Complete Devotion of life in God's way-

By looking carefully at the verses which have been extolled above, every wise person can see that the real essence of Islam can only be established in someone if all his being, with all its inner and outer faculties, is devoted solely for God and His way, and all that he has received from God as a trust is returned to

the Real Giver. It should not only be in terms of belief, but in terms of deeds as well, he must display the full image of Islam and its perfect essence. In brief, it must be established that his sincere step has reached the stage where whatever is his, is not his, but has become God's; and all his limbs and faculties are so engaged in the service of God as if they were the limbs of God.

It is also plainly and clearly seen that the essence of Islam, has two sides to it. First, God must be believed to be the One Who is to be worshipped, sought and loved. In serving Him, loving Him, fearing Him and hoping from Him, no one must be taken as being His partner. Celebration, glorification and service of God, all the forms and commands in relation to serving Him, the commandments and prohibitions, and matters relating to the destiny ordained by Him, must all be accepted with one's heart and soul. All these orders, limits, laws, and circumstances ordained for us, must be borne with complete devotion, in the most humble and lowly manner.

The other aspect of devoting one's life for God is that it must be dedicated to the service, sympathy and help of His creatures, the bearing of their burdens and the true sharing of their grief. One must bear hardship to provide relief to others, and for their comfort tolerate difficulty for oneself.

This discourse shows that the essence of Islam is very high and lofty, and no one can be truly accorded the honorable title of "follower of Islam" until

he gives to God the whole of his being, with all his powers, desires and aims, and leaving aside his egotism and all its implications, devotes himself in the path of God. Therefore, a person can only be called a Muslim in the real sense when a mighty revolution has overtaken his life of indifference, obliterating forever the stamp of his lower self and all its passions, and after this death a new life of "doing good for the sake of Allah" has been born within him, a life so impeccable that it consists of nothing but obedience to the Creator and sympathy for His creation.

Obedience to God and love for His creatures -

Obedience to the Creator must be as such: One must be ready to accept dishonor and degradation in order to display God's power, glory and uniqueness; to keep alive the idea of His unity, one must be prepared to accept death a thousand times; and the love of the greatness of His commands, and the thirst for attaining His pleasure, should make one detest sin as if it were an all-consuming fire or a fatal poison or lightening which reduces everything to ashes, from which one must escape using all one's strength. In brief, to accept His will, one must give up all the pleasures of the soul, and to receive His blessings, one must accept being hurt with mortal wounds. Service to the creation of Allah is like this. One must do good with all the real, selfless and true sympathy that one can show, solely for the sake of Allah, and help every needy person with one's God-given ability, exerting oneself to

bring about reform and improvement in their life of this world and the next.

This devotion in the way of God, however, can only be worth its name when all the faculties show the mark of Divine obedience as if they were an instrument of God, which manifests Divine acts now and again, or a clear mirror in which the will of God is reflected as a perfect image. When obedience and service for the sake of God reaches this perfect stage, then by the blessing of this Divine coloring, it is correct to say, in the sense of the *wahdat ash-shuhud* (unity of attributes), that just as a person's limbs are fully under the control of his will and intent, likewise, when the perfect man reaches this stage, he acquires complete conformity with the will and intent of God. God's greatness, unity, kingship and lordship, and every wish and command are as dear to him as they are to God Himself. Hence, this great and grand obedience and service for the sake of God, which was attained through love and affection, and is replete with sincerity and real substance -- that is Islam, its essence and gist, which is attained after the death of one's self, desire and will.

Stages of Spiritual Progress - Fana, Baqa and Liqa:

It should also be remembered here that the verse mentioned above, that is, *Nay, whoever submits himself wholeheartedly to Allah, and he is a doer of good to others, he shall have his reward from his Lord; and there is not fear for such people, nor do they grieve*, refers to

the three essential stages of perfect spiritual good grace: *fana* (annihilation), *baqa* (continuance) and *liqa* (meeting with God). As we have just said, the words *submits himself wholeheartedly to Allah* teach that all powers and limbs and whatever else is one's, must be handed over to God and dedicated in His way, and this is the state which in other words is called *fana*. The reason is that when a person, according to the sense of this verse, hands over his whole being along with all its powers to God, devoting it to His way, and refrains completely from the urges and comforts of his lower self, then undoubtedly a kind of death comes over him, and it is this death which the men of the spiritual sciences call *fana*.

The words after this, *and he is a doer of good to others*, refer to the stage of *baqa* because when man, after a complete and perfect *fana* and extinction of lower passions, comes to life again through Divine urge and prompting, and after the termination of all selfish actions, becomes activated again by spiritual movement, this is the second life which ought to be termed *baqa*.

The words after this, *he shall have his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such people, nor do they grieve*, affirm and prove the receiving of reward, and negate and deny fear and grief. This refers to the state of *liqa*. For, when a person reaches that high rank in knowledge, conviction, reliance (upon God) and love, where the reward for his sincerity, faith and fidelity does not seem to him to be mere imagination,

supposition, or conjecture, but is as certain, definite, manifest, palpable and perceptible, as if he had received it, and he acquires such a faith in the existence of God as if he can see Him and all fears about the future are lifted from view, and no trace is left of any past or present grief, and every spiritual favour appears to be present -- this is the state which is clean of all murkiness, safe from every doubt, and above any pain of anxiety, and is termed *liqa*. The rank of *liqa* is fully attained by the spiritual wayfarer when the Divine hue conceals and covers under itself the human element as fully and completely as

fire hides the colour of a block of iron, so that to outward appearance there is nothing but fire.

My dear brothers and sisters what I have just read is what we as Muslims should try to attain. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote these words over a century ago, words that we as Muslims today need to heed more than ever. The society in which we live is becoming more anti-Muslim. Muslims are suspected and blamed for almost every terrorist act occurring internationally. We have to become stronger in our faith and learn our religion in its true and intended sense. We

should not be ashamed to say we are Muslims for fear of being stereotyped 'a terrorist'. We need to move forward into the future with a faith in our Creator and Master so strong that not even the strongest of opponents can break.

To all my fellow youths, I hope you all have heard my message and I pray that some if not all of it will be put into use. As we approach another holy month of Ramadan, let each and everyone of us here seek knowledge and improve our minds, body and soul with the teachings of the Holy Qu'ran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (u.w.b.p.).

What our Youths Think About the Miraj

Can people other than the Prophet experience Miraj, and if not what is the closest we can come to doing so?

by
Farzana Rafeeq



FARZANA RAFEEQ
(Law Student)

Almighty Allah gave us the Holy Qur'an as a guide. He also gave us a real life example in the Holy Prophet Muhammad. The Holy Prophet Muhammad is an example of what every believer should aspire to be. This means that whatever the Holy Prophet achieved spiritually,

we can achieve also if we follow the Holy Qur'an and the example set by the Prophet. The rewards gained by the Prophet for his deeds also apply to us. This concept should be applicable to the Miraj also.

The Holy Prophet is quoted as having said, "Assalaato Mirajo Momineen", "Prayer is the Miraj of the Believer." When we further examine this statement we see that Miraj is really closeness to Almighty Allah and Salaat as prescribed to us by Almighty Allah is our way of strengthening our connection with our creator. Therefore prayer is indeed a form of Miraj.

Through Prayer we strengthen our bonds with Almighty Allah, guard against evil and cleanse ourselves spiritually. With regard to prayer, the Qur'an says in chapter 29 verse 45:

"Recite that which has been revealed to thee in the Book and keep up prayer. Surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil;

and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest (force). And Allah knows what you do."

Almighty Allah does not need us or our prayers. He has recommended prayer for us as a means of strengthening our relationship with Him. "And certainly We gave Luqman wisdom, saying: give thanks to Allah. And whoever is thankful, is thankful for his own soul; and whoever denies, then surely Allah is Self-Sufficient, Praised." (31:12)

Almighty Allah is a Being of Attributes. When we pray to Him, we are reminded of His attributes. By trying to embody those attributes, we elevate ourselves and become more like our Creator. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad experienced the Miraj, he was at that point the closest to Almighty Allah that he had been in his life.

Similarly, each time we pray, we are able to become closer and closer to Almighty Allah.

What do you understand the Mir'aj to be?

by
Roshni Rafeeq



ROSHNI RAFAQ

(Undergraduate Student, U.W.I. St. Augustine)

As revealed in the Holy Qur'an and I quote 17:1

"Glory to Him Who carried his servant by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Remote Mosque, whose precincts We blessed, that we might show him of Our signs! Surely He is the Hearing, the Seeing." 17:60

"And when We said to thee: surely thy Lord encompasses men. And We made not the vision which We showed thee but a trial for men, as also the tree cursed in the Qur'an. And we warn them, but it only adds to their great inordinacy."

Although the dictionary meaning of the word ascension is the act or an instance of rising upwards, the ascension of the Prophet Muhammad is metaphorical. This means he did not physically rise to the heavens but experienced deliverance from a difficult period in his life through a vision from Allah.

It is the belief of many that the Prophet, upon whom be peace physically mounted himself on a long white animal, bigger than a donkey but smaller than a mule and crossed distances swiftly and transcended all dimensions of the

material world until he reached the holy Presence of Allah. The events during the occurrence of the Miraj by the holy Prophet Muhammad is not exactly clear, although Aishah, the Prophet's wife and most intimate companion of his later years, declared emphatically that *"he was transported only in his spirit, while his body did not leave its place."* However, the common speculation among Muslims today is during the Ascension, the Prophet entered *Masjidul Aqsa* in Jerusalem and subsequently Heaven where he met with the previous Prophets, saw angels and beheld the beauties of Paradise and the terrors of Hell. He also observed the essential realities of all the Qur'anic issues and the meanings and wisdom of all the acts of worship. He went as far as the realms where even the greatest of angels, Gabriel, cannot reach and was honored with vision of God's 'Countenance', free from any qualitative and quantitative dimensions and restrictions. This was in order to bring humanity out of the darkness of material existence into the illumined realm of belief and worship, through which they could realize a 'spiritual' ascension each according to his capacity.

During this period in his life, many members of his family experienced death and the Holy prophet was subjected to all kinds of persecution from the people of Israel. It was at this time that the Prophet Muhammad was granted the *mir'aj* (ascension): He saw in a vision that he was received in heaven by God, and was witness to the marvels of the celestial regions. On returning, he brought for his community, as a Divine gift, *salaat* (the ritual prayer) which constitutes a communion between man and God.

The ascension came to him as a form of comfort, as Allah's way of reassuring the Prophet that his mission would be successful and to be patient and understanding.

It has been demonstrated that by his conduct, the attributes and character of the highest excellence were apparent in the way the Prophet performed his mission, and in accordance with the moral principles prescribed by the religion of Islam. Praiseworthy virtues of the highest order are to be found in the Law he brought. It is the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, who manifested the Divinity of God at the greatest level and in the most brilliant fashion through the most perfect and comprehensive way of worship contained in this religion.

In closing, I would like to list the result/fruits of this ascension.

1. The ascension brought to men the essentials of Islam. It was at this time, the Holy prophet Muhammad realized the importance of the 5 Daily Prayers.
2. The Prophet himself received the vision of Allah's beautiful Countenance
3. The discovery of the importance of man and his superiority over all animals.
4. The hidden treasure of eternal happiness during the ascension
5. Through the success of Prophet Muhammad in his mission, it has freed the universe from being seen as a disordered heap of things doomed to destruction.

The significance of Miraj to the world

by
Saeeda Hydal



SAEEDA HYDAL
(Engineering Analyst, Schlumberger)

It must be remembered that the Miraj was a spiritual journey where the prophet saw himself in the presence of God. It was during this period of Miraj that the prophet Mohammed (pbuh) found himself being transported at night to the Kabah and from there to the place of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem where Masjid-ul-Aqsa now stands. This demonstrates that it is possible for human beings to ascend to spiritual heights and be in the presence of their lord.

It is a known fact that the Miraj occurred at the lowest ebb of the prophet's mission. At this point in his life he felt he was virtually unsuccessful in his mission and was still mourning the death of his wife Katijah. This illustrates to us and to the world that it is at the hardest times in one's life that Allah comes to the faithful and helps them in their times of anguish and loneliness.

The ascension of the prophet did not occur to only demonstrate the profound experience of the Kingdom of God in the Heavens and the earth to the Prophet of Islam, but also to re-assure the Prophet of the Success of his mission. In fact such a prophetic journey of tremendous importance suggests a number of other significant and complex realities of far reaching effects to humanity. Surahs in the Qu'ran that relate to this heavenly journey indicate that Mohammed was charged with the office of prophet hood for both the Houses of God; those in Jerusalem and Mecca. The significance is that he was sent as the leader of the east and west and the entire

human race till the end of time. As the inheritor of all the teaching of the prophets of the old, he, as the final prophet of Allah, represented the fulfillment and accomplishment of mankind's religious development.

His night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem expresses in a figurative way that his personality conformed to the oneness of the Kabah at Mecca and the Masjid-ul-Aqsa at Jerusalem. The fact that all the prophets arrayed themselves behind him in prayer at Masjid-ul-Aqsa emphasizes the fact that the philosophy of Islam preached by him was final, universal and all comprehensive. It was meant for every class and section of human society throughout the ages.

Why do you believe the Mi'raj was spiritual and not physical?

by
Nyla Mohammed



NYLA MOHAMMED
(Undergraduate Student, U.W.I. St. Augustine)

"And when We said to thee: Surely thy Lord encompasses men. And We made not the vision which We showed thee but a trial for men, as also the tree cursed in the Qu'ran. And We warn them, but it only adds to their great inordinacy."

This verse, taken from Chapter 17 of the Holy Qur'an, speaks of an important landmark in the life of the last and final messenger of Allah. This event is known as the Mi'raj or Ascension of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). It is clear from this verse that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) experienced a vision rather than a physical journey to the

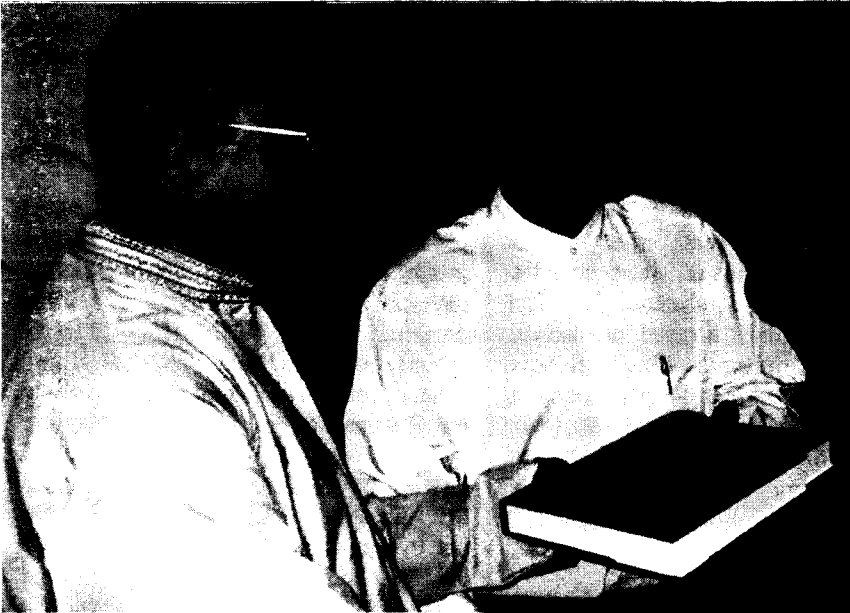
Heavens. However, many Muslims believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) physically ascended to Heaven and saw Allah with his physical eyes on the night of the Mi'raj.

Let us consider the interpretation of the Mi'raj as a physical journey of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). This would imply that a physical being has entered a spiritual domain. A physical Holy Prophet (pbuh) along with a physical Buraq cannot enter a spiritual realm such as the Heavens.

Even if we assume such a task to be possible, this would indicate that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was not a regular mortal being but rather a being with supernatural powers. However, the Holy Qur'an tells us in Chapter 14 Verse 11, "Their messengers said to them: We are nothing but mortals like yourselves." The Holy Prophet (pbuh) declared himself to be an ordinary mortal just like us. Therefore, he had no special power which would allow him to physically ride a Buraq and ascend to the Heavens.

Imagine a human being riding a horse-like creature with wings towards the Heavens. After analyzing the physics of it, this would be considered a clear defiance of the laws of nature. The Holy Qur'an states in Chapter 67 Verse 3, "Thou seest no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent." This means everything follows the laws of nature. There are no irregularities in these laws. Therefore, according to the Holy Qur'an, a physical ascension of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) could not have taken place.

Believing the Mi'raj to be a spiritual experience rather than a physical one does not negate its miraculous nature. Even though the spiritual concept of the Mi'raj is important and must be understood, the significance of the event to the Holy Prophet and to each of us must not be forgotten.



Maulaana M.K. Hydal presents a copy of the Qur`anic Dictionary and Concordance to the Librarian of the University of the West Indies.



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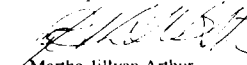
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