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In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

# The HOPE Bulletin

ISLAM: I SHALL LOVE ALL MANKIND



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IN MEMORY OF JALAL-UD-DIN AKBAR IBN-I ABDULLAH, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

## LATE MR. MASUD AKHTAR

MAY ALLAH BLESS THE DEPARTED SOUL WITH PERENNIAL COMFORT  
AND PEACE



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## **EDITOR'S CONDOLENCE NOTE ...**

### **IN MEMORY OF THE LATE MR MASUD AKHTAR CHOUDRY**

#### **FAREWELL TO BROTHER MASUD**

Br Masud was an honest person. That was why, while serving in the Customs and Excise Department and in other fields in his homeland, he always had a tough time.

His love for Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement grew as he got older; whether he was in the Service or out of it, they remained uppermost in his mind.

Right from his school days he was a good speaker, and during the 1940s, the Muslim League's struggle for a separate land for Muslims attracted him.

His father sent him and his younger brother, Ahmad Nawaz, to Lahore for a better education. After passing his Matriculation, he had to work to make his living. While working, he also took evening classes and managed to graduate in Law.

While in Lahore, he became an active member of the Young Men's Ahmadiyya Association. He also started delivering lectures and writing in Urdu and English. Some of his articles were published in the weekly *Paigham-i Sulh* and *The Light*.

The unfortunate *Pakistani Constitutional Amendments of 1974* which declared Ahmadis as non-Muslim shocked him and he decided to migrate. For a year he worked as Assistant *Imam* of the UK *Jama'at* in London before migrating to the USA. He and his supportive wife, Qudsia, faced all the ups and downs with dignity and determination. In the USA, they had to start from scratch, but they maintained their family traditions and never ignored their pledge 'to uphold religion above the world'.

Masud Bhai's passion to serve the cause of religion never abated, even in difficult times. Despite his struggle to earn a living, he founded the California *Jama'at*, started the monthly *Islamic Review*, and participated in Friday and other congregational services at the Oakland Mosque. Together with Br Muhammad Mustafa, and with the cooperation of Ahmadis from Fiji, he made the Oakland Mosque buzz with activities.

It was during this period that he restarted the monthly *Islamic Review* of England and served as its editor and managed all its affairs singlehandedly. He did this for more than ten years.

And it was in these difficult times that he was asked by the late Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan to go to South Africa to assist Hafiz Sher Muhammad in the Ahmadiyya Case at the Supreme Court of Cape Town. He left his work and his family. His wife, Qudsia, accepted the challenge and gave her full support in looking after the children, who were still at school. The children are now settled in their respective fields, and married with children. His three sons are doctors.

This is not the time to tell how much of his time and money he spent to get works of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement translated into English and published; how, with his brother, Ahmad Nawaz, and Br Muhammad Mustapha, *Imam* of the Oakland Mosque, Hayward, he organised the distribution of copies of the English translation of the Qur'an and other books and leaflets on Islam at a rented stall in the local market centre in Hayward, California. His book, *Gems from the Holy Qur'an*, will give a glimpse of his love for Allah and His message.

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## A WORD OF THANKS

Mrs Qudsia Masud and Br Ahmad Nawaz wish to convey their thanks to everyone who expressed their condolences by phone, email and letters, and those who joined them in offering *Janaza* prayers for the late Masud Akhtar Choudry. We are grateful to all of them and to Prof. Hamid Rahman and Dr. Tanveer Ahmad who came all the way from Santiago and Las Vegas to pay their last respects.

May Allah bless them all for the kindness and sympathy they showed in this difficult time of grief and bereavement.

Masud Akhtar Choudry's three sons – Muneeb, Bilal and Qasim – and their families, and his two brothers-in-law – Mr Abdul Karim and Mr Abdus Sattar – also send their thanks to all the brothers and sisters in the family and other members of the *Jama'at* at large for their kindness.

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## A CLOSE-UP OF MASUD BHAI

**Group/Capt. (R) Ahmad Nawaz**

### **His Last Journey**

Masud Bhai breathed his last in the company of his immediate family on Wednesday, September 21, 2016 at 12.30 pm in Norton Hospital, Louisville, Kentucky. "From Allah we are and to Him is our eventual return."

He had been living in Kentucky with his son, Dr Qasim Choudry, for the last twelve years. Respecting his association with Hayward, where he spent most of his years after immigrating to the USA, his body was flown to the San Francisco Bay area on September 24.

Prof. Dr. Hamid Rahman of San Diego led the *namaz-e-janaza*. The burial took place at the Garden of Mercy within the Chapel of Chimes, Hayward, in the presence of an impressive crowd of 150. A recitation of the Qur'an with English translation was done by Asad, the grandson of Shaheed Brig. Abdul Latif. Ms Ferooze Abdullah, daughter of Zafar Abdullah, and Ms Maryam Choudry, the daughter-in-law of the deceased, delivered tributes marking an end to a dynamic life. May Allah shower His choicest mercy and blessings on the departed soul.

### **Brief life history**

Masud Akhtar Choudry was born on November 21, 1930 at the CM Hospital, Murree, now in Pakistan. He was the second son of Ch. Sardar Khan and his wife Amtullah Begum. His other siblings included Ahmad Sajjad, Sabiha Khan Mohammad, Nasreen Gul, and me (Ahmad Nawaz). Our mother, Amtullah Begum, was the daughter of Dr Ilahi Bakhsh, who hailed from a well-known family of Bihar. Dr Bakhsh was the first Muslim student at the Calcutta Medical College, India, established in 1835, and was the only Muslim who graduated in the first batch of doctors in 1838. In 1839, Dr Bakhsh joined the British forces fighting the First Afghan War in Afghanistan. Subsequent to that, he was

posted to South Africa under the command of Field-Marshal Kitchener to take part in the Boer War against the Dutch settlers. In 1905, he retired from the medical service and started his own practice. His travels took him to Qadian where he associated himself with the Ta'leemul Islam High School as a medical officer. When the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community at the time, Hazrat Maulana Noor-ud-Din, injured himself when he fell off a horse, Dr Ilahi Bakhsh provided medical services to him with full devotion.

Our paternal grandfather, Ch. Khair-ud-Din, was a Sufi and a well-respected personality in his native village, well-known for his integrity, hospitality, honesty, sincerity and services to the masses. Under the British Raj, he served the Indian Railway Service as a guard and was posted in Kohat. These were the times when the British East India Company was struggling to lay down the railway line due to bitter opposition from the local tribes. Realising his respectful position among the local elites and masses, the British requested him to approach the tribal people to give safe passage to lay the railway track. In lieu of this valuable favour they offered him a top class salary and other facilities. He further used his influence to keep religious harmony among people of different faiths in the area. Following a dream, he went to Qadian and took *bai'at* (pledge) with Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

Masud Bhai was very close to his paternal grandfather and took some of his traits, including honesty and fighting for the right cause. He also inherited the zeal to understand the true meaning of the Qur'an and to teach it to others. That is why we find that during his life in the USA he was adamant about holding *Dars-e Qur'an* every Saturday morning at his home.

Masud Bhai passed his Matriculation from Government High School located in Dera Ismail Khan which, in those days, was a cantonment with a brigade of 5000 British soldiers. It was a self-sufficient city encompassing all sorts of educational and civic facilities.

It was also the time when the partition of India movement had started, and Masud Bhai actively participated in the activities of the Muslim Students Federation, which was the youth wing of the Muslim League. After the Division of the Indian sub-continent, the family moved back to its native town of Mandi Baha-ud-Din.

Masud Bhai got admission at the Zamindara College, Gujrat, where he passed his inter examinations. In 1949, our father sent him and myself (his younger brother, Ahmad Nawaz) to Lahore for further studies. To make a living, Masud Bhai took odd jobs and rented accommodations in various parts of the city, such as Chuna Mandi, Davis Road, and Fleming Road near Mochi Gate. A year later, in 1950, the family moved to Abdullah Building in Muslim Town, Lahore.

Through sheer hard work in the midst of financial struggle, he completed his law degree and then joined the Customs and Excise Department located at Nedous Hotel in Lahore. As he was a very straightforward and honest person, he felt that it was not possible for him to go on within this Department. Therefore, he got himself appointed as a law instructor in the Customs and Excise School at Takia Gawandi, near Kasur.

After some time he decided to practice law and joined a senior Advocate in Lahore. Again, his temperament of being honest and sympathetic to the underprivileged did not suit his senior in attracting clients. His dream, too, of starting an independent practice could not be fulfilled.

He then got a job as Secretary in the head office of Punjab and Vegetable Ghee Mills, Lahore. While working there he came close to Hazrat Ameer Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan, then Vice-President and also head of the Foreign Missions Department of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement based in Darus Salaam, New Garden Town, Lahore. Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan was very impressed with Masud Bhai's knowledge about Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement as well as with his impressive writing and speaking skills and so offered him the position of Assistant *Imam* of the UK *Jama'at* based in Tooting, London.

After working there for more than a year, in 1979 he decided to migrate with his family to the USA. Unfortunately, while he was preparing for his apprenticeship in Law, he suffered a heart attack and was advised to have complete rest for several months. His financial situation, which included three sons still in school, forced him to seek full time employment and to discontinue his dream of practicing law in the USA.

It was during this time that he was requested by the Head of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan, to go to South Africa and help the main witness, the scholar Hafiz Maulana Sher Muhammad, in interpreting his statements and translating papers prepared for submission before the Court. During these times and afterwards, his wife Qudsiya also played an equally commendable role in looking after the household affairs and raising their children. She worked at a Hayward branch of Wells Fargo bank in order to support the family. By the grace of Allah, their children fared well in their personal lives.

Masud Bhai's passion for serving the cause of Islam always took priority with him. He would deliver talks and write articles about Islam and the Ahmadiyya standpoint on current religious and Islamic issues. His earliest talk, given in Urdu at a meeting of the Young Men Ahmadiyya Association held at the Ahmadiyya Building, Lahore in the early 70s, was later rendered into English and was published in the form of a pamphlet entitled *Verdict of History* (available at <http://aaiil.org/text/books/others/Choudrymasudakhtar/verdicthistory/verdicthistory2008ed.pdf>.)

### **His passion for the cause of Islam**

Even after migrating to the USA, Masud Bhai continued his service to the cause of Islam and founded the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam, Hayward, California. Here he restarted the monthly *Islamic Review* with financial assistance from Dr Nouman Elahi Malik of Ohio, and he singlehandedly edited it for more than ten years.

In spite of working hard to earn his living, he continued his commitment to religious service by delivering Saturday morning *Dars-i Qur'an*, distributing English translations of the Qur'an and other Islamic literature with the help of his family and members from Fiji such as Br Muhammad Mustapha. This voluntary service was carried out from a stall in the Chabot Market Centre in Hayward. The stall was more or less a preaching point.

With time, Masud Bhai's children also contributed financial support in expanding the work. Copies of the English translation of the Qur'an and other books were placed in public and local libraries in nearby cities.

When his health started to decline, and he developed serious heart and diabetes problems, on the insistence of his son Qasim Choudry, Masud Bhai moved to Louisville and lived the remainder of his years in retirement, enjoying his grandkids.

However, distance could not erase the fondness of Hayward from his heart, and thus his life journey which had started from the hills of Murree in 1930 came to an end in 2016 with his body finding its eternal abode at the foot of the low-rising serene hills in the Garden of Mercy in the Chapel of Chimes, Hayward, California.

A Redwood tree was planted at Weekes Branch Library, Hayward in living memory of Masud Bhai.

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**MY MASUD – WE WILL MISS YOU, ALWAYS**  
**A TRIBUTE TO A LOVING HUSBAND**

**Qudsia Masud**

**Dear Nasir Bhai,**  
*Assalamo alaikum.*

First of all, my children and I would like, through the *HOPE Bulletin*, to thank all those who expressed their condolences and sympathies on the death of my dear husband, Mr Masud Akhtar. We are grateful for the kind and prayerful words which were of great solace and comfort at the time of bereavement.

We were happily married in December 1965, and, by the gr3ace of Allah, He blessed us with three sons: Muneeb, Qasim and Bilal. In due course, while in the USA, they completed their education and became medical doctors. They are now married and have children and are well settled. May Allah keep them under His blessed care and protection.

We migrated to the USA in 1979. We struggled hard and Allah was kind and rewarding. The children did well in their studies and are well settled now in the medical profession in its various fields.

We were still in Pakistan when the Central Anjuman Ahmadiyya in Lahore (Pakistan) offered Mr Masud a position as Assistant *Imam* under Dr Nazir-ul-Islam at the Ahmadiyya House, Tooting, London.

After working for one year in the UK, Mr Masud migrated to the USA with his family. Even here he continued his work for the Ahmadiyya Movement. He actively delivered *dars-i-Qur'an* at homes and edited the monthly *Islamic Review*. My brother, Abdus Sattar, and my brother-in-law, Br Zafar Abdullah, helped him. Dr Nouman Elahi Malik provided financial support in the publication. During this time he was asked by our then *Ameer*, Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan, to go to South Africa and help the late Hafiz Sher Muhammad Sahib in the Court case. Hafiz Sher Muhammad Sahib needed someone to translate his statements and evidence before the Court. Mr Masud went twice to assist Hafiz Sahib. By the grace of Allah, we won the case.

The distribution of the Qur'an and other books on Islam was Mr Masud's passion. He always had books with him – at the Mosque, in the hospital, at workplace or at a party – wherever there was a gathering – he would distribute books or talk about Islam.

He was a noble person, a good and helping husband, a sincere friend, an affectionate brother, a caring relation, an obedient son, and a loving father. He was very friendly with his children and they felt comfortable to talk to him on any subject. He knew how to talk about religion to people of all ages. He worked hard to impart knowledge and understanding about Islam to children. He was – to me and to my children and to the members of the family – a gentleman indeed!

For the last couple of years his health started going down. Since last year problems with his heart and diabetes took a serious turn for which he had to be admitted to hospital several times. Advancing age and increasing ailments made him weak day by day. The best medical support was there, but his worldly journey was gradually coming to the end, and finally he passed on to the other world. To Allah we belong and to Him is our Eventual return. His mission was accomplished. We lost a person who was everything for us. He cared for us and now we have left him in the care of the Beneficent. May Allah shower His blessings and forgiveness on the departed soul and guide us to fulfil what He always wishes us to be. *Ameen!*

It was his dire wish that someone very close to him should lead his *Janaza* prayer. Allah fulfilled his wish and our dear and learned brother, Dr Prof. Hamid Rahman from San Diego, California, came all the way and led the *Janaza* prayer. At the graveyard he paid glowing tributes to Mr Masud for his noble character and dedication for Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement. We all are grateful to him.

Mr Masud's body was lowered in a grave in the Garden of Mercy in the well-known and beautiful Cemetery – Chapel of Chimes – overlooking small mountains covered with grass and blooming flowers. May his grave remain evergreen and blessed.

\* \* \*

## ABU LAID TO ETERNAL REST

### Dr Qasim Choudry

It was with tears and a sad heart that we lowered Abu's body into his eternal resting place in the 'Garden of Mercy' on September 25, 2016 in the Chapel of the Chimes Cemetery in Hayward, California.

Uncle, Prof. Dr Hamid Rahman, came all the way from San Diego by air to lead the funeral prayer of his very dear colleague and devoted Ahmadi brother. He introduced Abu as a stalwart Lahori Ahmadi Muslim. The body was then taken to the gravesite and buried respectfully. Recitation from the Quran was done during the burial. Grandchildren Mariam Choudry and Fairuz Abdullah then reflected on Abu's life with recollection of sweet memories and a few poetic verses.

As far as the last twelve years in Louisville are concerned, my father was able to write a wonderful book – *Gems from the Holy Quran* – during this time. Abu held Quran study meetings at this place for a significant period of time that was attended by both our Ahmadi families as well as non-Ahmadi friends. Abu was well-known in this community for his knowledge about religion and the Quran.

Abu was a wonderful father and was always more of a friend to us rather than a figure of authority. He always encouraged us to ask questions and seek knowledge wherever it could be found. He was a brave man who openly distributed the Holy Quran and the *Religion of Islam* in a market environment even after 9/11 in the USA. He cared deeply for *Tabligh* of the true Islam and was dedicated to this purpose his whole life. He was never hypnotized by the material glitter of this world and always put ‘religion over the world’.

His loss has left a big void in our hearts and in our family. I pray that Allah give us, his children and grandchildren, the strength and conviction to follow in his footsteps and in particular in the service of Islam. Please pray for his departed soul.

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## I COULD NOT HAVE ASKED FOR A BETTER FATHER!

**Dr. Bilal Choudry**

My Father, Choudry Masud Akhtar recently parted from his weakened frail body to join his Maker. As he passed, we certainly were in a state of deep grief and despair, but took solace in the fact that perhaps it was a sign of the Almighty’s mercy so that he would no longer have to suffer from his medical problems which over the last year had become a great burden over him.

### **A God-Conscious person**

He was a man, who had great influence on those that grew up around him and also those that had the pleasure of making his acquaintance. He not only made it a point to teach religion and “God consciousness” ( a term he not only used often, but embodied) to his own children and family, but also to the community as a whole. I really started to gain consciousness as a child growing up in the early 80’s in the San Francisco Bay Area, where at that time there was little organization of any Muslim events. Even Eid, and other religious celebrations were limited. He helped champion a revival of religious fervour in the area, by not only helping to organize the Jama’at, but also organizing events such as Eid and conferences for not only people from the Bay Area, but from across the globe. At that time, being a Lahori Ahmadi, did not seem as much a big issue to the local Muslims, as we seemed to be one of the few people doing anything, and therefore maybe out of need, they attended regularly.

He also made sure his own family, was well versed in learning religion. I remember early on having a deep interest in reading some of the books written by the Jama’at like “Table Talk” and “Christ is Come” which helped open my own eyes to the bigger scope of the Hazrat Sahib’s mission and also the idea of using rational logical deductions in dealing with religion. He helped all of us develop a

deep interest in religion, and also helped in developing a very liberal open mind in interpreting the religion. He made the household such, that we could question anything, and at times put him on the spot to answer difficult questions as if he was on the stand. Of course, being a lawyer in training, he rarely ever backed down and often enjoyed the conversations. Maybe, he did know, that by having these often fun arguments, he was allowing us to think more deep and also develop our own thought process about what religion means to us, often by having to argue against the very thing we believed in. By him having to answer, he was in fact supplying us with the ammunition that we would need when our friends and probably later our own children will ask. Of course, being a lawyer, if we weren't entirely satisfied with his answer, he would sometimes say that we would understand if we just read more. We were only, able to have the back and forth arguments, because even though he was quite conscious of his fatherly duties, he did not really treat us like a father, but more like a friend. By doing this we were able to ask him the most intimate questions and also jest back and forth with each other.

### **A person committed to religious values**

His sacrifices for the Ja'amat are well documented, at least among the elder members, who probably know better than me all that he has done. He was a man who stood firm on his beliefs, particularly when it came to standing up for what he felt was right. He never made himself submissive to any alliances, and only was submissive to God's will and the rule of law. He was a man who only feared the wrath of God, and did not fear at all, what some other person would think of him. Unlike other religious figures that we often encounter, he did not profess anything out of fear of losing his position, and never submitted himself to the whims of others, if he felt they were in error, no matter what the reprisal would be. This, is in fact, what true "God consciousness" is. A person, who out of fear of losing his or her position, compromises their beliefs, is no longer serving God, but his or her own ego and desires. It is not so uncommon for this type of person to drown in their own desires. One, who does not compromise his beliefs, may seem to other's as idiotic or insane, but in fact has freed himself from the chains that mankind tends to place on each other and has gained a much higher stature with the Almighty. These are the qualities that I noted in my father. Completely, uncompromising in his beliefs but yet completely open and accepting of other's beliefs if it made sense with the practices of the Holy Prophet (sas) and the tenants of the Islam and the Qur'an. As with most men, he was someone whose beliefs continue to evolve even till the last days of his life. His evolution as a man, was not only in his nature, but also in his understanding the religion itself.

He was a man who never worried about the worldly life, never once complaining about doing work that others with his education and background would have frowned about and done in despair. His mind and heart was so committed to the religion and propagation of islam that he did what he needed to do for the family, without complaining once. He took refuge from his worldly duties by committing all of his free time to Godly matters. He had organized a weekly Darse-Qur'an for all of the local family and acquaintances when we were growing up. This not only helped in fostering a sense of family, but also of community. For the younger children (me included) he also helped set up a Sunday-Fun Islamic Class, where we were able to enact plays to perform in front of others while still learning about the religion and right and wrong. I didn't know, but these classes helped me develop a sense of right and wrong at an early age and also gain interest and pride in my religion and its history.

### **Education was his special focus**

Education was a special focus for him. He taught some of the younger kids mathematics and English in a weekly class. A man that was at times holding several jobs to feed his family, still knew that what really counted in this world was to instill a good value system and base for not only his own kids, but also for his relative's kids. He treated the female cousin's with the same fervour in wanting them to learn and succeed as he did with the males. It is no surprise, that at his own funeral, that from the next generation, only females eulogized him. This is something, that one of my own best friends who is a Sunni was surprised, as in his tradition women are often absent and in the background in the funerals, while in my father's they helped and were in the forefront. It was through his own foresight that he helped shape the base we all use for interpreting this beautiful religion, but also helped us ascend and succeed in the matters of education and profession.

### **A man with interminable energy**

He was a blessed man, who from a young age was influenced by truly holy figures. This helped instilling in him an interminable energy to devote his life to propagate Islam. I am confident that all his effort will surely be rewarded by the Almighty with a high place in Jannah. I hope that we can emulate some of his energy that he tried channeling into us, so that when our turn comes, we will be able to join him. It is for these reasons, that on my last night with him, when I had a feeling that his time on earth with us was coming to an end, that I kissed him and told him that I just wanted him to know that I love him and couldn't have asked for a better father!!

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## **THE LATE CHOUDRY MASUD AKHTAR AS I REMEMBER HIM**

# **HE STOOD BY THE MOVEMENT IN DIFFICULT TIMES**

**Dr Zahid Aziz**

Choudry Masud Akhtar, who passed away in September 2016 in the USA, was a very devoted and staunch member of the Lahore Ahmadiyya *Jama'at*. He did many services to the Movement, including literary work. I had some contact with him over the years, although it was not extensive. I am also familiar with his work through reading some of his writings and through those people who worked with him more closely than I did.

### **In Muslim Town, Lahore**

Masud Sahib, as we called him, spent some of his early life in the Muslim Town suburb of Lahore where he saw some of the greatest figures of the Lahore Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* who lived in that area, such as Maulana Muhammad Ali, Dr Syed Muhammad Husain Shah, Syed Asadullah Shah and Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi. He not only saw them, but was deeply struck by their righteous character, holy lives and scholarship, and he conveyed his impressions and anecdotes of those times to later generations of the *Jama'at*. One of his earliest memories went back to the silver jubilee (25th Anniversary of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Anjuman) *Salaana Jalsa* in December 1938 in Ahmadiyya Buildings, Lahore.

As he grew up, he participated in *Jama'at* activities, both organizational and literary. One of his writings is entitled *Verdict of History*, published around the year 1970. It shows his great knowledge of history and politics, and how he applied it to the study of the Ahmadiyya Movement. It was one of the first booklets I read about the mission and work of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

### **His love for the Ahmadiyya Movement**

Then came the year 1974 when events in Pakistan, and the political decision to declare Ahmadis as a non-Muslim minority, created the most serious crisis in the history of our *Jama'at*, threatening nothing less than the destruction of its identity. It was suggested by some that the word 'Ahmadiyya' may be removed from the name. Masud Sahib was one of the young men who strongly voiced their opposition to any such change. Their firm stand strengthened the hands of our elders, led by Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan and others, who were able to save the *Jama'at* from taking such a dangerous and self-destructive step. Many years later, Masud Sahib wrote about those days as follows:

“It was a very trying time for our *Jama'at* and its members, testing their resolve to the limit. It seemed difficult to see how it was possible to survive from the shock of this decision [to declare Ahmadis as non-Muslims] which we had suffered collectively as a *Jama'at* and also individually. The fact is that before this decision many members of the *Jama'at*, like me, had perhaps not assessed the importance of their beliefs and of their *Jama'at*, or even thought about these matters at all. This was a time for trial. It was a time to distinguish between truth and falsehood, a time to make sacrifices for the sake of truth, a time to decide between the fake and the genuine arguments.” (Translated from *Paigham Sulh*, November–December 1998, p. 20)

The writer of these lines may add that if one day you yield to an unjust demand under pressure, the next day you will face pressure from the same quarters making other demands. This is exactly what Mr Z.A. Bhutto realised later on. After he appeased the militant Muslim clerics to declare Ahmadis as non-Muslims, the clerics moved on to other demands upon him to introduce an Islamic system in Pakistan. Even though he acceded to these demands as well, the religious parties did not rest until they had him overthrown from power and executed in March 1979. In fact, declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslims in 1974 was the start of the long road to ever-increasing intolerance, and it led to Muslim extremism and extremist groups being established, and they are an imminent threat to the very stability of Pakistan.

### **Brief stay in London**

A little later, in 1977–78, Masud Sahib came to the UK with Dr Nazir-ul-Islam, to serve under him as assistant *Imam* of the UK *Jama'at*. At that time I lived in Manchester, at a distance of about 180 miles from London. I recall that on two occasions Masud Sahib and Dr Nazir-ul-Islam visited Manchester and met *Jama'at* members there, accompanied by me. Although he stayed in the UK for only one year, yet he, along with the late Dr Nazir-ul-Islam, worked hard to organise *Jama'at* meetings at the newly bought *Jama'at's* centre, 'Ahmadiyya House', at Tooting, London in 1975.

### **Foundation of *Jama'at* in California**

Following his return to Pakistan, Masud Sahib then emigrated to California, USA, in which country he lived for the rest of his life. Shortly after his arrival, he, with some other members, established the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam Lahore Inc. in Newark, California. They also revived the *Islamic*

*Review*, which had ceased publication from England in 1971. Its first issue appeared in October 1980 and it continued in publication till the end of 1989. Masud Sahib was its main editor and wrote many articles in it. In 1986, when our missionary in the UK, Br Muhammad Anwar, was assassinated while visiting Guyana motivated by religious hatred, Masud Sahib wrote an impassioned article in this magazine, from which we quote below:

“It is tragic that some wolves in the garb of clerics go about in the world of religion even in this era of civilisation and enlightenment. ... Day in and day out, they exhort their ignorant followers to commit criminal acts against those who do not agree with their viewpoint in religious beliefs. ... By their black deeds, they in fact bring their religion into disrepute and do not render any service to God or the religion itself.

For the survival of the human race, it is essential that this usurping of power by the establishment clerics in the name of God and the religion should end, or else the religion that they stand for will drown along with them. Today’s mankind can ill-afford any forces of hatred, prejudice and divisiveness, even if these be in the name of religion. The hard choice we have to make is between establishment clericalism or religion as a force of unity.

Imam Hussain is a symbol of freedom and righteousness for all freedom fighters, whereas Yazid and his partisan *ulama* are a symbol of evil and injustice. This war between Hussainiyyat and Yazidiyyat is an ever-continuing process. We are following in the footsteps of Imam Hussain by being ready to suffer even our lives for the sake of preserving our freedom of conscience and not submitting to the forces of evil. ... The martyrdom of Imam Anwar is just evidence of our conviction and dedication in the cause we espouse. He is just one more victim of Yazidiyyat, just another star on the path of Hussainiyyat. By embracing death in the cause of Allah, he attained life eternal.” (*The Islamic Review*, California, USA, June-July 1986)

This was written several years before the violent activities of Muslim extremist groups in the name of Islam became widespread as they are now, bringing Islam into disrepute all over the world. Muslims have yet to make “the hard choice”, mentioned above by Masud Sahib, between Muslim political clerics and true Islam.

### **An invaluable service for the Movement**

Now came a time when Masud Sahib rendered one of his greatest services to the *Jama’at*. He was required to be the interpreter and translator for our great scholar and missionary, Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad, in the Cape Town court cases. For the first of these two cases, Masud Sahib went to Cape Town in November 1984, just as the court hearings were about to begin. When he arrived, I had been there for three weeks, interpreting for Hafiz Sahib before our advocates while we briefed them on the issues of the case. I was now about to depart for home and Masud Sahib was to replace me as interpreter. However, when the hearings began, the Muslim Judicial Council, who were the defendants against whom Ahmadis were taking legal action, asked the court to determine whether such a secular court was an appropriate forum for judging the Islamic religious issue as to who is a Muslim. The court reserved its judgment on this point and postponed the case pending its ruling on this question. Masud Sahib then returned to the USA. During 1985, but before the case resumed, he published a book from California, under the title *Clear Evidence re Ahmadiyyah*, consisting of many

of the articles written by Hafiz Sahib which I had translated into English for the case, and it included one article that Masud Sahib himself had translated.

It was in the second case that Masud Sahib played a major role as interpreter and translator. Both he and Mr Shahid Aziz went to Cape Town in the summer of 1987 for this purpose. To perform this service Masud Sahib had to give up his business in the USA, which he had just started, and to sacrifice his livelihood. Hafiz sahib was in the witness box for 27 days over a period of nearly seven weeks, from July to September 1987, first giving his own evidence and then being cross-examined by the advocate for the opposite party. All this time he spoke through his interpreter. Even when he was not in the witness box, the court proceedings had to be interpreted into Urdu for Hafiz sahib. In the evenings, or when the court was not sitting, preparations for the case continued for many hours. This work would have been impossible without Masud Sahib's services as interpreter and translator.

Masud Sahib also took a great interest in translating books of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad into English. He did some of the translation work himself, and brought in other members of the *Jama'at* to translate more, such as Capt. (R) Abdus Salam Khan. He urged that our *Jama'at's* existing, incomplete translation of the book, *Barahin-i Ahmadiyya*, should be brought to completion. In fact, he translated much of the remaining sections of this book himself. But all these translations then require to be carefully checked against the original, revised and edited as necessary, and formatted for publication. This could have been accomplished if this had been properly planned. Anyhow, for Masud Sahib there will *inshallah* be reward from Allah for devoting his time, money and efforts to this work.

### **His love for spreading the Qur'an**

The last time I saw Masud Sahib was when he visited the UK in 2009 for the Lahore Ahmadiyya Centenary Convention organized by the UK *Jama'at*. I informed him of my work to produce an edition of the English translation of the Holy Quran by Maulana Muhammad Ali with updated language and briefer footnotes. He was able to have funds raised in the USA which enabled us to have it printed in the UK in 2011.

### **Compiling biographies of the Elders in English**

Another literary service rendered by Masud Sahib was to translate into English the accounts of the lives of the great figures of our *Jama'at* which were compiled under the *Yaad-i Raftgaan* in the 1960s. These translations used to appear in the *HOPE Bulletin*, and Masud Sahib had added extra information in them on the basis of his own knowledge. I used to be asked by the editor, the late Akbar Abdullah, to look through them and further revise them if necessary, or add photographs if possible. These articles are a valuable, in fact indispensable, contribution to the history of our *Jama'at*.

There cannot be the least doubt about Chaudhary Masud Akhtar's unwavering loyalty to the Lahore Ahmadiyya cause and to the interests of the Central Anjuman of Lahore. He demonstrated and proved it by his words, actions, work and sacrifices. He was always seeking ways of taking the *Jama'at* forward and making it progress. With his demise, another one has left us who was inspired by the company of the founders of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. May Allah grant him forgiveness and protection, admit him into His mercy, and join him with the righteous ones who departed before. *Ameen*.

I also extend my condolences to his wife and family in their great loss. May Allah be their Support and Helper. *Ameen*.

\* \* \*

## MY MASUD BHAI

### Mr Shahid Aziz, London, England

Choudry Masud Akhtar is now the *late* Choudry Masud Akhtar. He has left behind much work that still needs to be completed, and now I do not have anyone to talk to about it. Work such as the English translations of the Promised Messiah's books, which he was keen to see in print. That is why we are told that if we think of doing some good work we should do it immediately and not to put it off to some other day.

He has left behind a family which mourns him and it consists of not just his wife and children but people all over the world who knew and loved him.

#### **In London As Assistant Imam**

I first met him when he came to the UK as an assistant *Imam* to help Dr Nazir ul Islam. We met at Heathrow from where Dr Islam and Masud Bhai, as he later became to me, were taken to Ahmadiyya House, 56 Longley Road, Tooting, London SW17. Masud Bhai shared a bedroom and other facilities with Dr Islam. There was no heating in the house and they used a fire to heat the bedroom; the kitchen being unheated. As if that was not enough, there was a sitting tenant in the room next door who could not be evicted because of the terms and nature of his tenancy. Masud Bhai bore all the difficulties with patience, although at one stage, when things became too hard, he moved to Slough to live with us for a few weeks. But mostly they carried on under these unbearable conditions for about a year. They cooked, cleaned, washed clothes and led *Jumu'ah* prayers, taught the Quran and everything else that a missionary was required to do.

Masud Bhai then returned to Pakistan, where he was employed by the Centre while he awaited the clearance of his family-sponsored visa to the US. When he eventually moved to the US he had a stop-over in the UK and stayed with us for a few days.

Upon arriving in the US, he set about more actively forming a *Jama'at*. He became editor of *The Islamic Review*. He had to write the editorial, collect articles, get them type-set, proofread, and have the magazine printed and distributed. He made sure that it was posted to all the university libraries. He made a valuable contribution to the work of propagation of Islam, not just in the US, but also in other countries. He did all this in addition to trying to establish his feet in a foreign country, earning a living and looking after his family.

He had such affection for our elders and their children that as soon as he arrived in San Francisco he set about looking for Sheikh Abdus Samad, the long lost son of Hazrat Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi. He traced Sheikh Abdus Samad's daughter in the hope that she knew where her father was. She was

also searching for him and she also hoped that Masud Bhai may find her father. It was not to be and Masud Bhai gave up.

When we held a convention for the opening of Darus Salaam UK, he wanted to be there, but for various reasons he could not. It saddened him very much that he missed that historic occasion. He was full of hope that this will come to replace what had been lost at Woking.

### **His devoted services for the Second Ahmadiyya Case in South Africa**

It was not long before he was asked by the Central Anjuman Lahore to make a sacrifice for the *Jama'at* and he did it without a demur on his forehead. He went to act as interpreter both at the High Court and the Supreme Court of Cape Town (South Africa) for cases where the crucial issue of Lahore Ahmadis are Muslims was being contested. The late Hafiz Maulana Sher Muhammad was our expert witness. Hafiz Sahib, though an established scholar of the Qur'an, *Hadith* and writings of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, did not know English. And there was a need for a person who not only knew English but also had a grasp of the Lahore Ahmadiyya literature and views. Masud Bhai hadn't been in the US for long and his family was not yet settled and yet when the call came from Hazrat Ameer Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan Masud Bhai showed no hesitation in answering it. For the First Case he did not have to stay long as it was soon adjourned on the plea of the non-Ahmadi petitioner that a non-Muslim cannot decide an issue relating to Islam.

However, when he went to South Africa for the Second Case, he stayed for nine long months, I think. When I arrived in Cape Town to interpret at the court, he was already there with Hafiz Sher Muhammad, working on the translation of our evidence to the court by hand. Fortunately, just before leaving the UK I had implemented a project for my employers, which involved use of computers for day to day office work. At my request, the *Jama'at* arranged two computers for us to use. Masud Bhai did not like computers, so he continued to write out his translation by hand and we hired someone to key it in. He worked tirelessly with Hafiz Sahib to make sure that the judge had the right material made available to her in English. And after I left he took over the responsibility of interpretation at the court.

We worked together, laughed together, went out together, and slept in the same room. About the second or third day he asked me how I had slept and I said it was fine. He laughed loudly and said: "I know I snore and you need your sleep because you have to stand in the court all day and interpret." The next night he went and slept on the sitting room floor. I was embarrassed but he told me not to worry.

He did another kindness to me. The hearing lasted longer than expected. My annual leave ran out and I was wondering whether to resign. He advised me to return to my job because a good job is a blessing from Allah. It was at that point that he mentioned that he had to wind up his real-estate business to be able to help in the case and there was no point in everyone losing his livelihood. I was astonished at his sacrifice. He said all of the translation work had been done and he could handle the interpretation on his own; and so he did. We kept in close touch by phone and fax for the remaining part of the case.

After Masud Bhai returned to the US, we were in touch by phone and letters. In 1999 my wife and I decided to visit him in California. One day, he took us on the 49-Mile Scenic Drive, which is a

scenic drive just outside San Francisco. However, he was so busy talking about the glory that was Ahmadiyya Buildings, Lahore that he lost his way and the 49-mile drive became a 149-mile drive! During our stay, we talked about the Centre, about the *Jama'ats* in Pakistan and in other countries, about propagation of Islam, the situation in Pakistan, and mostly about how much he regretted not being able to find Sheikh Abdus Samad, who was his friend from the time when Masud Bhai would visit Hazrat Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi in Muslim Town in Lahore.

When we held a convention in the UK I specially invited him. He was more than happy to come but his sons were concerned about the impact of the long flight on his health. Masud Bhai insisted on coming and I promised to look after him. He had missed the opening of Darus Salaam and he did not want to miss this. He came with Akbar Abdullah and both of them initially stayed at my home. When the convention formally started Akbar Abdullah moved to the hotel booked by the *Jama'at* for guests but Masud Bhai refused to go there. He had found my books and loved reading them. Whenever my wife or I went to see if he needed anything he would be reading one of the Promised Messiah's books. He would look up and say we need to tell people these things. I enjoyed his stay with us and I put him on the plane. Little did I know that we were never to meet again.

Masud Bhai was fond of telling stories of our elders, particularly of the time of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali and his time at Ahmadiyya Buildings, Lahore. When the Centre's newsletter, *The HOPE Bulletin*, was started, Masud Bhai made a valuable contribution to it by translating the life history of our elders and adding to them extra material that he knew.

#### **His passion for English translation of the books of the Promised Messiah**

In the past some of the Promised Messiah's books had been serialized in *The Light* from Lahore. He arranged for these to be compiled. He had them typed and sent to me. These were: *Braheen-i Ahmadiyya* and *Ayyam-i Sulh*. The main text of the *Braheen* had been published and translated into French. *Ayyam* was serialised in *The Light* from the UK and it is being compiled into book form.

When he heard about the French translation of *Braheen* he was overjoyed. He rang me to congratulate me. He kept saying this is the work we should be doing. He thanked Allah for allowing him to live long enough to see this desire come to fruition. In our last telephone call, which lasted for about one hour, I requested him to write down his family history. He told me about his forefathers and family on the phone but regretted that he was no longer able to sit and write. I asked him to record it and I'll get it typed, but it was not to be.

I have lost a very sincere brother but the *Jama'at* has lost a dedicated and devoted person who, by his commendable example, showed us that there are still people around who care little for material things. Goodbye, my brother. You are now in better company than mine. I pray we meet in the Hereafter and you embrace me and say in your usual droll voice: "*Shahid, assalamu alaikum. Ki haal ay, tain aj kal ki ker rai o?*" (Shahid, Asslamu alaikum. What are you doing these days!)

My Lord, give my brother the highest station in the Hereafter and let his children follow in his footsteps. (Amin.)

\* \* \*

## MY BELOVED FATHER-IN-LAW

Mariam Choudry (WIFE OF DR BILAL CHOUDRY)

(As I reflected on the life and character of my beloved father-in-law, Masud *Mamoo*, my heart poured out this short poem. May his soul rest in peace.)

We will miss you day and night.  
Your eyes would shine so bright;  
Your smile would bring the room to light;  
You thoughts and words had immense wisdom and might;  
Your actions accordingly were so upright.  
For your convictions you would bravely fight;  
For humanity's service you never slowed down in the slight.  
With your family and friends you were so loving and tight;  
Now lay to rest, oh dear one,  
We will pray for you  
And miss you day and night.  
Your body that was once in plight, has been left behind,  
And your soul, oh dear one, is surrounded by eternal light.  
The embrace of the Almighty is with you,  
Who destined this to be the time that was right.

\* \* \*

## A TRULY ADMIRABLE LIFE

Sara Choudry

(Sara Choudry is the wife of Dr Qasim Choudry, the youngest son of the late Mr Masud Akhtar. This is how she remembers her maternal uncle and father-in-law. – Ed.)

“*Ya Ghani! Ya Allah!*” The majestic words that I often heard my father-in-law, whom I called Masud Mamoo, recite. Whether he was sitting, standing or just busy in his daily routine, he often called upon and remembered his Creator.

If one believes that the main purpose of human existence is to recognize, realize and ponder upon his/her Creator, then the best way to do that is through submitting one's life in the way of Allah. And my dear Masud Mamoo did just that. He was passionate about the Qur'an, and spent a great deal of his life learning and sharing Qur'anic knowledge with others. Not long after arriving in the U.S. in the late seventies, he rented a stand at the local free market and would distribute copies of the Qur'an. Additionally, he held *dars-i Qur'an* with his family and friends every Saturday morning. This tradition lasted for over a decade before he moved to Louisville, Kentucky to live with his elder son.

I remember him telling me once that Allah has been very kind to him and has kept his heart free from the love of material wealth. That is exactly how I remember him to be.

His elder son, Br Muneeb, recalled an incident at the funeral home where Masud Mamoo's body was taken for *ghusul* before burial. Br Muneeb was presented with a few forms to be filled out and one of them required information on the deceased's assets. Br Muneeb was left in deep admiration and awe when he ticked "No" to the list of assets that people usually have at the time of their death, that is, stocks, bonds, cars, bank accounts, and/or home. This incident will stay with me for as long as I live.

A common human being spends his entire life running after wealth. The fear of losing one's health, home and retirement is enough to take away one's peace of mind, not to mention, our trust in the Almighty.

My mother-in-law recalls that whenever she found herself frustrated by financial pressures, Masud Mamoo always comforted her by saying that "Allah will take care of all our needs." And no doubt, Allah did take care. Masud Mamoo left this world with nothing, yet Allah provided him with everything one could possibly wish for: a pious wife, obedient and well-educated children, love of knowledge and charity, peace of mind, and all worldly comforts.

His love of knowledge was so immense that he funded free education for many children from lower-income families. His relatives knew him to be a big-hearted and generous person. I have never witnessed him denying help to a person in need.

People leave, but they leave a legacy behind. He has left so much for his children that I can claim with full confidence that his generations-to-come will benefit from his deeds.

He was a fearless man who always spoke what he believed to be true and just. His faith in Allah was reflected in his strong conviction in the Almighty's beneficence. He helped so many through his love for the Qur'an. His heart and his hands were always open to the needy.

Even though he has left this world to meet his Maker, he will stay in our hearts and in our lives for ever. I thank Allah for giving me the opportunity to live and experience a man of his calibre. "Truly, to Allah we belong and truly to Him we shall return" [Qur'an 2:156].

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## A NOBLE GENTLEMAN

Camille Helminski

Dear Masud, a noble gentleman.

"Prosperous,"

"Happy," in his sons,

And in his dear wife, Qudsia.  
Of noble spirit and long lineage;  
Of seeking Your Love and seeking Your Face among men.  
The generosity of this family keeps flowing to many hearts;  
And we all give thanks for this patriarch,  
Who knew how to raise a family in Your Remembrance;  
Gently educating sons in Your interest,  
That they, too, might engage with body and heart in Your Spirit,  
Ways of giving, of sharing joy – Your Munificence through all our hands.  
Dear Lord, please bless with great blessing this noble gentleman  
as You bring him Home even deeper into Your Love;  
To stand at Your right hand in witness to all the glories of Your Presence;  
And the intimacy of being even nearer under the folds of Your blessings, forever.  
*Ya Rabbul A'lameen! Shukrun lillaah!* For such a kind human being!  
With all love to all who remember him, each day as they rise and each eve as they rest;  
May Your abundant blessing be pouring always through his prayers.  
*Ameen.*  
With so much love to dearest Qudsia, and Muneeb, and Qasim, and Bilal and all the lovely people  
of the family.  
You and dear Masud are all together much in our thoughts and prayers.

\* \* \*

## SELFLESS SACRIFICE

**Mr Ebrahim Mohamed, President, AAIL, South Africa**

It is with great sadness that we learn about the passing away of our dear brother Masud Akhtar. *Inna lil laahi aa innaa ilayhi raaji'oon.*

We have fond memories of Br Masud Akhtar, especially his selfless sacrifice as interpreter in the second Ahmadi Court Case in South Africa.

May Allah reward his good deeds and enter him into His Eternal Abode of Heavenly Peace.

Please pass our sincerest condolences to all his family and loved ones.

\* \* \*

# TRUE AHMADI

Dr Jawad Ahmad, Milton Keynes, England

May Allah bless his soul in Heaven. He was a true Ahmadi.

A very sad day for our *Jama'at*.

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## MEMORIES OF THE SECOND AHMADIYYA CASE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Masud Akhtar Choudry, B.A., LL.B.

## AHMADIYYA CASE IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE CAPE PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA AT CAPE TOWN IN 1987

Sheikh Muhammad Jassiem, *at all* – Plaintiff

VS

1. Sheikh Muhammad Nazim, President of the Muslim Judicial Council of South Africa; and
2. Muslim Judicial Council of South Africa, through its President and Board of Trustees – Defendants

This case arose as a consequence of the Judgement by Mr Justice D. M. Williamson of the Supreme Court of Cape Province, South Africa, in the case brought by Mr Ismael Peck, a member of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam, Lahore (South Africa), in which the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam Lahore (South Africa) had also joined as Plaintiff against the Muslim Judicial Council and others (as Defendants).

Mr Justice D. M. Williamson, through Judgement in that case, had held that, amongst other things:

1. The Plaintiffs are Muslims in the light of the evidence from the Holy Qur'an, *Hadith*, and writings of the eminent scholars of Islam of various eras; and as Muslims,
2. They are entitled to all civil rights, such as offering prayers in any *masjid* and burial of their dead in a Muslim cemetery. [For detailed Judgement and evidence on which that Judgement was based, please see: *The Ahmadiyya Case*, translated and compiled by Dr Zahid Aziz, published by the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam Lahore Inc., 36911 Walnut Street, Newark, CA 94560, USA (1987).]

Since the right of the members of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam Lahore (South Africa) to offer prayers in a *masjid* like other Muslims was established, some of the Ahmadis of the Lahore Section of the Ahmadiyya Movement resumed offering their Friday prayers in the *masjid* where the Plaintiff, Sheikh Muhammad Jassiem, was the *khateeb* and *Imam*. Some other Muslims, including some members of the Board of Trustees of the *masjid*, objected to Ahmadis offering prayers in that *masjid* and asked the Plaintiff not to allow Ahmadis in there. Sheikh Muhammad Jassiem refused to accede to their demand, explaining to them that in view of the Judgement rendered by Mr Justice Williamson, barring entry of the Ahmadis in the *masjid* will amount to a wilful contempt of the Court and, as such, he could not disallow them from entering the *masjid* for the purpose of offering their prayers.

The Defendant, Sheikh Muhammad Nazim, in his personal capacity as well as in the capacity of President of the Muslim Judicial Council, ordered Sheikh Muhammad Jassiem not to allow Ahmadis to enter the *masjid* for prayers. The Plaintiff refused to meet this demand, reiterating the position already taken by him. After this, Sheikh Muhammad Nazim, as President of the Muslim Judicial Council, called upon the Trustees of the *masjid* to pass a resolution recommending to the Muslim Judicial Council the removal of Sheikh Muhammad Jassiem from the position of *Imam* and *Khateeb* of the *masjid*. On receiving this Resolution, the Muslim Judicial Council, who were the employer of the Plaintiff, dismissed Sheikh Muhammad Jassiem from his job.

Upon this, the Plaintiff, Sheikh Muhammad Jassiem, filed a civil suit against Sheikh Muhammad Nazim and the Muslim Judicial Council for wrongful dismissal from service, and requesting restoration and payment of his salary from the date of wrongful dismissal.

Thus, initially, it was simply a suit for setting aside the Plaintiff's wrongful dismissal from service, but the Defendants, through their averments in their Written Statement, turned it into a case of full discussion of a religious nature. It seems that they had realized their mistake of walking out of the Court (Ismael Peck's Case) after the rejection of their Preliminary Objection to the jurisdiction of the Court to hear a case which involved Religious Doctrinal matters, and letting the case proceed ex-parte. Now, considering Jassiem's case as an opportunity to have their day in Court, they raised afresh all those issues which had been decided in favour of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam Lahore (South Africa) and Muhammad Ismael Peck by Mr Justice Williamson. Since they had not filed an appeal in the Supreme Court of South Africa against the Judgement in the Ismael Peck Case, that Judgement had the force of law in Cape Province. They, in fact, intended to obtain another Judgement from any other Judge of the Supreme Court of the Cape Province in the matter in their favour so that Mr Justice Williamson's Judgement may no longer hold the status of law in Cape Province. If Sheikh Jassiem's Case were to be decided in favour of the Defendants, then Sheikh Muhammad Jassiem would have to appeal to the Supreme Court of South Africa and the Defendants would have a chance to get the matter decided by that body. This would make good their failure to go to the Supreme Court of South Africa against Mr Justice Williamson's judgment in the Ismael Peck Case as the reason for their failure to pay the cost of the case levied on them by Mr Justice Williamson. It was a clever move on their part to have the case heard and decided by the Supreme Court of South Africa without payment of the cost of the case levied against them in the Ismael Peck Case. But it all depended on what the Court decided in Sheikh Jassiem's Case. A Judgement in favour of the Plaintiff, Sheikh Muhammad Jassiem, would thwart their planned move.

After receiving the Written Statement from the Defendants, Mr Rashad Khan, Attorney for the Plaintiff, asked the Central Anjuman in Lahore for their help in debating the doctrinal issues raised by the Defendants in their Written Statement. Simultaneously, he, along with Mr Suleman Ibrahim, toured the USA, meeting Dr Noman Elahi Malik and Dr Abdullah Jan, Directors of the USA *Jama'at*, requesting them to bear the cost of Advocates' and Attorneys' fees as Sheikh Muhammad Jassiem, being a poor person, could not meet the expenses. After their request was agreed to, Rashad Khan and Suleman Ibrahim then went to California to meet other Directors of the USA *Jama'at*.

During their meetings with the members of the USA *Jama'at* in Hayward, California, Mr Rashad Khan asked me [Masud Akhtar Choudry] to help him in writing a Replication to the Written Statement filed by the Defendants. I agreed on the condition that he let the Central Anjuman in Lahore decide the matter because they have their own Legal Advisor who is a senior Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, and also a senior member of the General Council and Executive Committee of the Central Anjuman in Lahore. Mr Rashad Khan approached the Central Anjuman in Lahore, and on receiving instructions from the Central Anjuman, I went to Cape Town to assist Mr Rashad Khan in preparing the Replication.

This was the beginning of my involvement in the Case, as late at the actual hearing of the case by Justice Mr Van Den Heever I acted as interpreter during the cross-examination of the Plaintiff's Expert Witness, Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad Sahib, and even after that acted as interpreter for Hafiz Sher Muhammad Sahib for briefing and preparing Mr De Villiers, the Advocate for the Plaintiff, on a daily basis, on the doctrinal issues as they came up during the cross-examination of the Defendant's Expert Witness, Prof. Ghazi Mahmud Ahmad, a professor of theology at the King Faisal University, Islamabad.

The case was heard for many months and hearings were consecutive from Monday to Thursday every week. In the beginning, we had thought that the case may take about four to six weeks, and Mr Shahid Aziz, Secretary of the UK *Jama'at*, had taken a month's leave from his job and had come to assist in the case. He acted as interpreter to Hafiz Sher Muhammad Sahib in recording the Examination-in-Chief (where the party's Advocate examines his own witness in stating his own case on various issues).

The Examination-in-Chief being over, the cross-examination by Mr Hoberman, a Jewish lawyer who was the Advocate for the Defendants, started. He took about fifteen days to complete the cross-examination of Hafiz Sahib on the first doctrinal issue as to the definition of a Muslim. During this, Mr Shahid Aziz had to return to his job in the UK as his vacation days were over. After his departure, I had to take his place as interpreter.

The cross-examination of Hafiz Sher Muhammad Sahib by the Defendant's lawyer, Mr Hoberman, was completed in about six weeks, in spite of the fact that the case was being heard on daily basis and the Court was hearing this case exclusively for the whole day. The Defendants' lawyer grinded Hafiz Sher Muhammad Sahib for days on each doctrinal issue but could not gain any 'useful material' from the replies given by Hafiz Sahib. The Defendants presented a large number of quotations from the writings of various Muslim scholars of yore in an attempt to rebut the documents filed by the Plaintiff.

During the Examination-in-Chief, Hafiz Sher Muhammad held his position firmly by offering further reference material to counter the attempt of the Defendants to gain a breakthrough in the evidence brought by the Plaintiff. The number of Exhibits was increasing every day and at times we were flooded with a pile of references from writings in Urdu, Persian and Arabic. I could not possibly translate the whole lot; therefore, we sought the help of Mr Shahid Aziz and Dr Zahid Aziz in translating this material. We used to fax them the quotations and they would fax the translated material back to us. They proved to be a great help – a help which would not have been possible otherwise. The volume of exhibits was so voluminous that by the end of the hearing the number ran into more than four thousand.

At the completion of the cross-examination of Hafiz Sher Muhammad Sahib, the Court thanked him for the valuable material and explanations of religious issues presented by him and told him that his presence in the Court was no longer required. Thus, Hafiz Sahib was free to return to Lahore. However, our Advocate required Hafiz Sahib's help for the preparation of the cross-examination of the Defendants' Expert Witness, Professor Ghazi Mahmud Ahmad. Thus it was decided that Hafiz Sahib would not attend the Court but would stay in Cape Town to assist the Plaintiff's lawyer in preparing for cross-examination.

Hafiz Sahib needed my presence as an interpreter not only in the Court but also for discussions and briefings between him and the Plaintiff's Advocate.

The cross-examination of the Defendants' Expert Witness by the Plaintiff's lawyer took many weeks and was not yet completed when the Court was adjourned for the seasonal vacation.

The routine was that every evening we used to assemble at Mr De villiers' office and Hafiz Sahib would brief him fully till midnight on a particular issue for cross-examining Prof. Ghazi Mahmud Ahmad, which was to be discussed the next day in Court. On weekends, we used to get some rest but would assemble again on Sunday nights to prepare for the next day's hearing.

The case went on for quite some time, the details of which are available in the Court record. It runs into thousands of pages. However, some interesting things that happened during the proceedings are worth recounting:

1. Throughout the proceedings, the visitors' gallery used to be full to capacity, mostly with supporters of the Muslim Judicial Council. People would come from long distances, as far away as Johannesburg and distant towns of the Republic of South Africa, and this included press reporters of all the important papers and news agencies. The daily proceedings were reported in all the English dailies published from Cape Town. Most conspicuous among the audience was a sympathiser and supporter in a long robe. She held a long rosary in her hand, and she kept the beads rolling, and at the completion of each count she would blow towards Hafiz Sahib with the hope that it might affect him in his presentations. This she would continue while Hafiz Sahib was in the witness box and when our Advocate, Mr De Villiers, was cross-examining the Plaintiff's Expert Witness, Prof. Ghazi Ahmad. Most probably, she was trying to work some magical spell on Hafiz Sahib and Mr De Villiers.
2. There were almost all the well-known English translations of the Holy Qur'an readily available at the Court for reference, such as that by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Marmaduke Pickthall, Muhammad

Asad, Maulana Muhammad Ali, Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi, Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar, and Maulana Abul Ala Maududi. But whenever during cross-examination Prof. Ghazi Mahmud Ahmad needed any translation for reference, he always asked for the English translation of Maulana Muhammad Ali. At one stage, our Advocate, Mr De Villiers, asked Prof. Ahmad: "Why do you always ask for the English translation of Maulana Muhammad Ali, when you consider Ahmadis as non-Muslims?" His response was: "Of all the translations available here in the Court, Maulana Muhammad Ali's English translation is the most appropriate and nearest to the Arabic text of the Qur'an." This was a great admission by an opponent, and in appreciation, I presented him with a copy of the *Maulana's* translation, which he accepted with thanks.

3. During the cross-examination, at one stage the Court asked Prof. Ghazi Ahmad: "Was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad not a pious person?" Prof. Ghazi Ahmad replied: "Yes, he was a pious person." This admission appeared in all the papers the next day in bold heading: "*Ahmadiyya Founder was a Pious Person,*" admits Expert Witness of Muslim Judicial Council.
4. When Prof. Ghazi Ahmad was being cross-examined on the issue of whether Ahmadis are Muslims or not, besides other things, he asserted that there is an *ijma'* (consensus) of all the Muslims that Ahmadis are not Muslims. At this, Prof. Ghazi Ahmad was asked whether he knew Maulana Abul Ala Maududi. His reply was that not only did he know Maulana Maududi but he had had the honour of sitting at the feet of the *Maulana* and had rendered some of the *Maulana's* books into Arabic. He then went on to praise the *Maulana* with glowing tributes. Our Advocate, Mr De Villiers, further asked him: "In that case, you must be familiar with the *Maulana's* handwriting?" "Yes, of course," was Prof. Ghazi Ahmad's reply. At that point, Mr De Villiers handed him a letter written by Maulana Abul Ala Maududi, written in 1937 from Pathankot, Dist. Gurdaspur, Punjab, the then headquarters of the Jama'at-i Islami, in reply to a query made by a person residing in Sheikhpura, Punjab about Maulana's opinion about a member of the Lahore Ahmadiyya *Jama'at*. (This letter was kept safely by the said member in a locker in a bank.) Maulana's reply was written on two pages. On page one, he dealt with the Qadian *Jama'at* (now the Rabwah *Jama'at*), and opined that according to the *Shari'ah* they are not Muslims.
5. In the first instance, Mr De Villiers gave Prof. Ghazi Ahmad page one of the letter. Prof. Ghazi Ahmad saw it and confirmed that it was in the handwriting of the *Maulana*. After reading the entire page, Prof. Ghazi Ahmad was very happy to know that the *Maulana*, in this letter, expressed the same views as that of the consensus of the Muslims at large that Ahmadis are non-Muslims.
6. Mr De Villiers then handed over to Prof. Ghazi Ahmad the second page of the letter and asked him to read it and to translate it into English for the Court. On the second page, the *Maulana* had expressed his opinion about the Lahori Ahmadis (members of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'ati-i Islam, Lahore) that as "they do not believe Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet (*nabi*), therefore, according to the *Shari'ah*, no *fatwa* can be given against them."
7. The opinion expressed in this writing gave lie to what Prof. Ghazi Ahmad had been saying so far, that there is a consensus among Muslims that Ahmadis are non-Muslims. At this, Ghazi Ahmad suddenly put forward that the *Maulana* had changed his opinion on this point in 1953 when he wrote his Urdu booklet, "*Qadiani Mas'ala*" (The Qadiani Problem).
8. Mr De Villiers further asked whether there had been any change in the beliefs of the Lahore Ahmadis since 1937. Prof. Ghazi's reply was: "No." At this, Mr De Villiers, addressing Prof. Ghazi Ahmad, repeated that, according to what he had just stated, the *Maulana* changed his opinion about the Lahori Ahmadis in 1953, and Mr De Villiers drew Prof. Ghazi Ahmad's attention to a public announcement published by the Majlis-i Tahaffuz-i Khatm-e Nubuwwat, Gujrat, Punjab, stating that Maulana Maududi does not consider Lahori Ahmadis as non-Muslims and that the

announcement was based on a statement issued by the Personal Secretary of the *Maulana* reiterating what the *Maulana* wrote in 1937. The alleged criticism was made in 1964. To this, Prof. Ghazi Ahmad had no answer to offer.

9. When Prof. Ghazi Ahmad claimed that he was a professor at the King Faisal University of Islamabad, Pakistan and taught M.A. student classes, the Court inquired about his qualifications. He said that he had completed the *Dars-i Nizami* course, which is equivalent to a doctorate degree. Upon this, the Court asked the Clerk of the Court to retrieve documents relating to Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad's qualifications from the papers submitted. The Court was informed that Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad had completed the *Dars-e Nizami*. The Court then observed that Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad, too, could have claimed to have a doctorate in Islamic studies, but that he did not make any such claim.
10. A night before the issue of the 'death of Jesus' was to come up for cross-examination in the Court, Hafiz Sher Muhammad briefed Mr De Villiers till late, and so we had overwhelming material in support of our stand on the subject. During the briefing, Hafiz Sahib tried his best to cover every possible evidence which might be presented by Prof. Ghazi Ahmad from the Holy Qur'an, the *Hadith*, and the writings of well-known writers and scholars of present times as well as older in rebutting our stance on the issue. This briefing continued till 2.30 a.m., when we had to stop. We all had had hardly four hours of rest before attending the Court the next morning.
11. When Prof. Ghazi Ahmad was presented with the evidence from various commentaries of the Qur'an about the translation and connotations of the word *tawaffa*, he explained the view of the majority of the Muslim *ulama* and the interpretation of the word. In support of our view and to counter Ghazi Ahmad's, the *fatwa* of Sheikh Muhammad Shaltut, the Rector of Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt, was presented to Prof. Ghazi Ahmad. The *fatwa*, besides other things, contained detailed discussion on the word *tawaffa*. In response to that, Prof. Ghazi Ahmad said that the *fatwa* had been overruled by a subsequent *fatwa* of a later date by a scholar of Al-Azhar University. When he was asked to produce it, he said that he did not have it at the time, but would be to produce it before the Court after obtaining a copy from Cairo. Evidently, the Professor had concocted that plea just to save face and it was never produced right up till the end of the case. He could not possibly do so no such *fatwa* existed.
12. He knew that he did not have any evidence on the issue, and so realizing that it was not possible for him to disprove or contradict the overwhelming evidence produced by the Lahori Ahmadis regarding the death of Jesus, he was compelled to take a devious stand that if somebody sincerely believes that in the light of the Qur'an Jesus is dead, then according to him it should not be objectionable. Thus it was a 'smart' move on his part as he could not deny the overwhelming evidence. At this, Mr De Villiers asked Prof. Ghazi Ahmad: "What was the source of your personal belief which is different from what you had been advocating all this time before the Court?" Prof. Ghazi Ahmad was quite reluctant to answer this straight question.
13. At this point, the Court came to his rescue and asked Mr De Villiers why he was pestering the Expert Witness when he had conceded on the issue. In fact, there was a reason why Mr De Villiers wanted to further engage Prof. Ghazi Ahmad in this debate. Mr De Villiers was briefed thoroughly by Hafiz Sahib on each and every issue that could possibly be raised in the Court on this subject, but the new stand taken by Prof. Ghazi Ahmad needed further briefing by Hafiz Sahib and Mr De Villiers wanted to unearth the basis of his new stand so that he could get briefing on all such points and evidence. The Court's intervention, however, stopped Mr De Villiers from getting the chance to prolong the proceedings on this issue, hence he had no option but to ask for an adjournment on his personal family engagement, which the Court graciously granted.

When Prof. Ghazi Ahmad made that admission on the death of Jesus, I was sitting in the front row along with Mr Rashad Khan, one of our attorneys, and the person sitting next to me was the chief of the Qadriyyah Masjid and Madrissa of Johannesburg. He, along with other followers of the Qadriyya Silsilah, had come to show support for the Muslim Judicial Council. I whispered to him that as a result of this admission by Prof. Ghazi Ahmad they had lost the case on the other issue of 'the Return of the Messiah', as well, as according to the Qur'an and the *Hadith*, one who has died shall not arise till the day of Resurrection. On hearing what I had whispered, the leader suddenly got up and asked his followers to also rise, and they all walked out of the Court. Surprisingly, it took the Muslim Judicial Council two days to persuade them to return to the Court to show their support for the Council.

**(Courtesy: Dr. Bilal Choudry)**

\* \* \*

### THE TWO BROTHERS



1. The late Mr. Masud Akhtar Choudry with Group/Capt. (R) Ahmad Nawaz

### MR. MASUD AKHTAR IN LONDON, UK



2. Mr. Masud Akhtar with Dr. Nazirul Islam, in Tooting, London.



3. Mr. Masud Akhtar, Asstt. Imam UK Ahmadiyya Centre, delivering a talk.

## MR. MASUD AKHTAR AND FAMILY



4. Family group: L to R. Dr. Qasim Choudry, Mrs. Qudsia Masud, Natasha Choudry (wife of Dr. Muneeb), Dr. Muneeb Choudry, Masud Akhtar, Sara Choudry (wife of Dr. Qasim), Hasan (son of Dr. Qasim).



5. Family group: L to R: Dr. Muneeb Choudry, Masud Akhtar Choudry, Dr. Qasim Choudry, Dr. Bilal Choudry



6. Mr. Masud Akhtar Choudry in an estate in New Orleans, LA.



7. Mr. Masud Akhtar Choudry and wife Qudsia Masud in the French Quarter in New Orleans



8. Dr. Bilal Choudry with his wife Mariam Choudry, and children Essa and Omar.



9. L to R: Mrs. Mariam Choudry, Dr. Bilal Choudry, Mr. Masud Akhtar Choudry, and Qudsia Masud with kids Essa and Omar in San Diego.

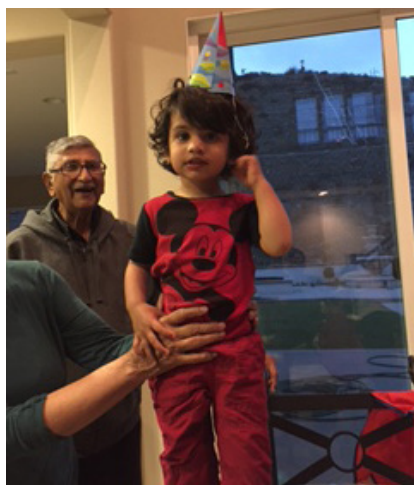


10. L to R: Dr. Qasim Choudry, guest from Pakistan, Mr. Masud Akhtar Choudry and Dr. Muneeb Choudry.

### MR. MASUD AKHTAR WITH HIS GRANDSON



11. Mr. Masud Akhtar Choudry with wife Qudsia Masud and grandson Essa.



12. Mr. Masud Akhtar Choudry with his grandson Omar.



13. Favourite sketch: Grandfather playing with his grandson Omar

## AT THE OAKLAND MOSQUE, HAYWARD, CALIFORNIA

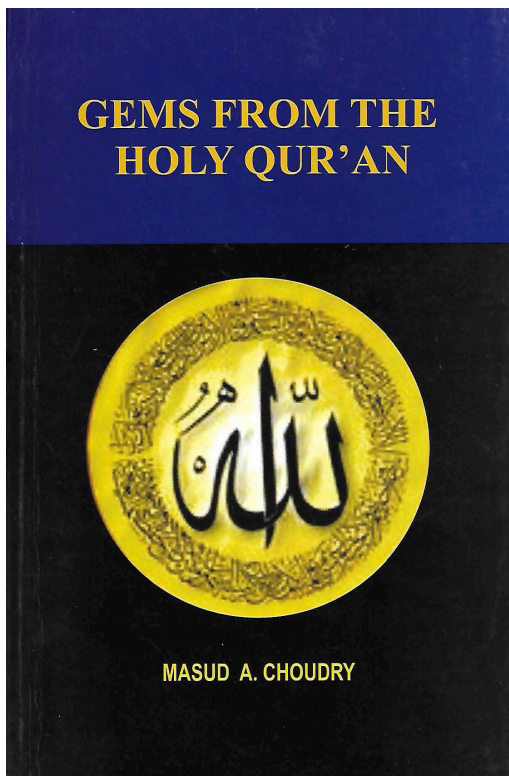


14. Mr. Masud Akhtar with Mr. Jaffar Bakhsh, vice president of the Oakland Jama'at

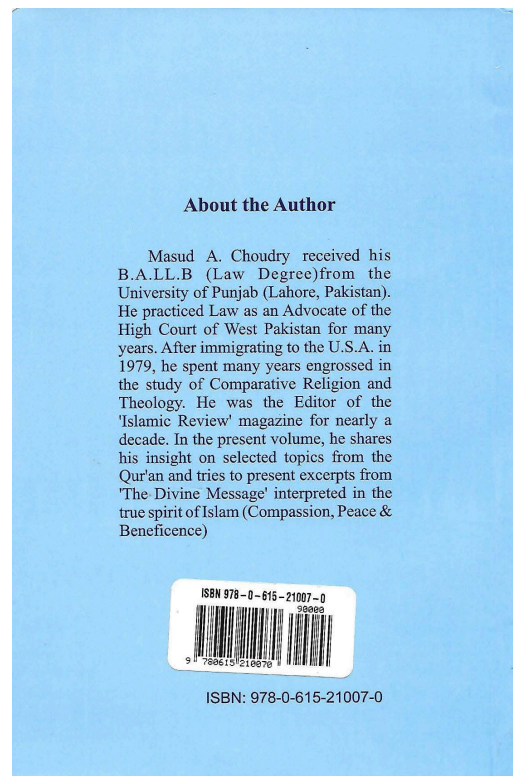


15. A group at the Oakland Mosque: L to R. Mr. Ahmad Nawaz, Mr. Riyadh Abdullah, Mr. Zafar Abdullah, Mr. Masud Akhtar and Mr. Muhammad Mustapha, president and Imam of the Oakland Mosque.

## HIS LITERARY CONTRIBUTION



16. Title of: Gems from the Holy Qur'an by Mr. Masud Akhtar Choudry.

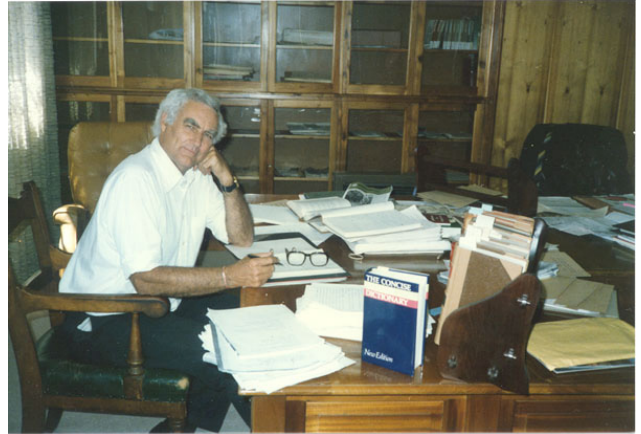


17. Back title of the Book with "About the Author".

## FIRST AHMADIYYA CASE IN SOUTH AFRICA



22. L to R. Mr. Colin Prest (Asstt. Solicitor), Hafiz Maulana Sher Muhammad, Mr. Edwin King (Senior Solicitor) in the first Ahmadiyya Case.



23. Mr. Justice D. M. Williamson (Judge in the first Ahmadiyya Case) in his chamber



Ahmadi member Mr Ismail Peck (left) and Hafiz Sher Muhammad, a witness from Pakistan, who gave historical and theological evidence in the Cape Town Supreme Court in support of Mr Peck's application for an interdict against the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC).

24. Mr. Ismail Peck with Hafiz Maulana Sher Muhammad Sahib



25. Group of the Jama'at members (L to R sitting) Dr. Zahid Aziz, Hafiz Maulana Sher Muhammad and others.



27. Dr. Zahid Aziz (centre) with Hafiz Maulana Sher Muhammad.



20. Standing outside the Court Building.

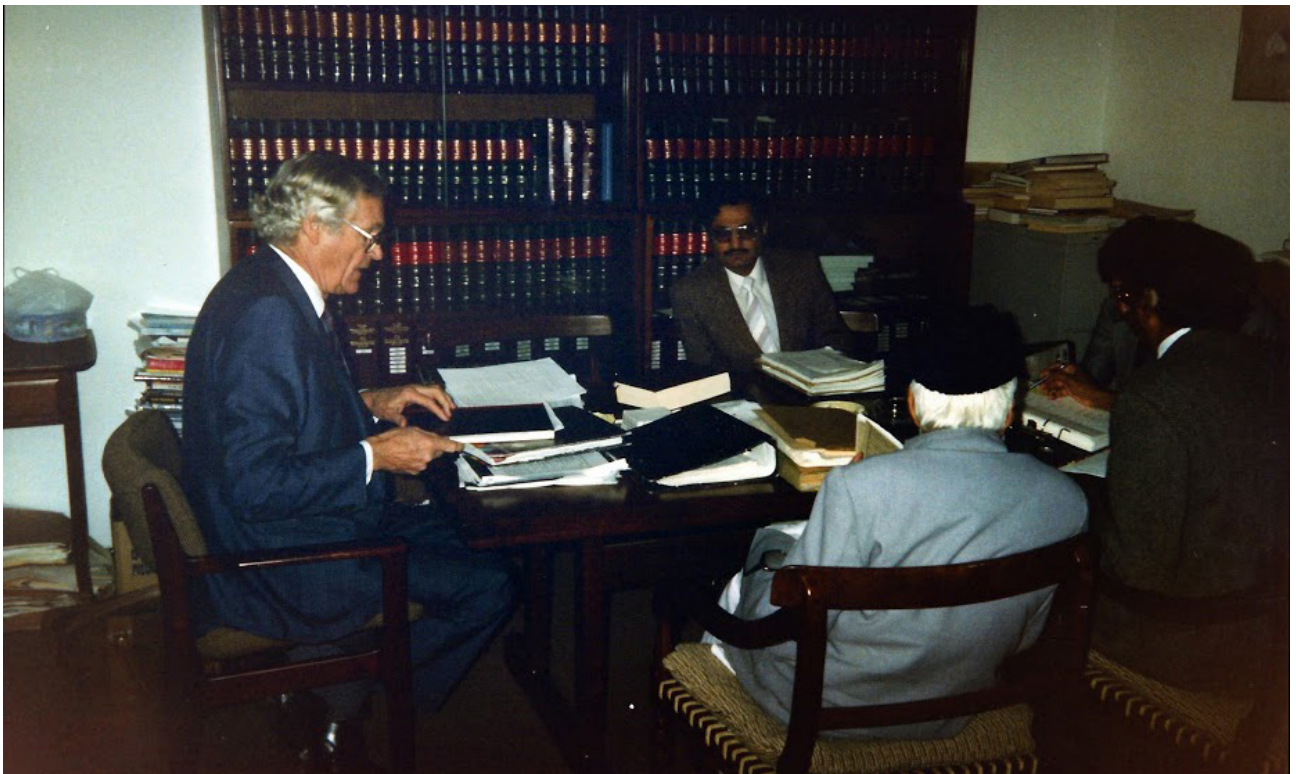


26. Friday Gathering at the house of late Mr. Dawood Sydow with Hafiz Sher Muhammad Sahib sitting in the centre.

## IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA



18. In the chamber of Mr. De Villiers: L to R. Mr. Shahid Aziz, our Attorney Mr. Rashad Khan, Mr. Masud Akhtar, (standing behind) Mr. Sheikh Jassiem, Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad and Mr. De Villiers (with his back).



19. Another view of Mr. De Villiers' chamber with Mr. Shahid Aziz, Mr. Masud Akhtar Choudry and Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad.



21. Walking towards the Court with Mr. Shahid Aziz in the front and Hafiz Maulana Sher Muhammad following him with a bundle of papers escorted by the Police Guards.

## TOWARDS HIS LAST ABODE



28-32 Mr. Masud Akhtar's body travelling to his resting place.



29.



30.



31.



32.

## IN MEMORY OF



33. The Red Wood tree planted in memory of late Masud Akhtar Choudry in Weeks Park by his younger brother Group/Capt. (R) Ahmad Nawaz near the Branch Library in Hayward on Wednesday November 16, 2016 at 10.30 am. This was the place where the two brothers for years used to have evening walks for almost twenty years before Bro. Masud moved to Louisville

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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**ISLAM** stands for: **I SHALL LOVE ALL MANKIND**

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