



In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

..... **The HOPE Bulletin**

Health, Ongoing Projects, Education



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AAIIL Worldwide Edition

Editor: Akbar Abdullah

CALIFORNIA JAMA'AT PROJECT: APPROVED BY THE CENTRAL ANJUMAN, LAHORE

INTRODUCTION

In this edition of *The HOPE Bulletin*, the segment ALL ABOUT US, which carries a bio-sketch of our venerable stalwart, the late Dr. Basharat Ahmad (1876-1943), covers a large part of this magazine. We have, therefore, decided to curtail considerable material from other sections of the *Bulletin* to accommodate the entire article in one issue.

This year, Ramadan was marked by the passing away of two brothers, Jabir Muhammad and Imam Warith Deen Mohammad, illustrious sons of the late Honourable Elijah Muhammad. Brother Jabir Muhammad was the manager of the famous World Champion Boxer Muhammad Ali, and Imam Warith Deen Mohammad was the National Leader of the larger of the two groups of the Afro-American Muslim Community. *Inna Lillahe Wa Inna Iلهi Rajeoon.*

During Hazrat Ameer's visit to Chicago in 2004, Br Jabir Muhammad had invited us to a sumptuous fish luncheon at a posh Mid-East/Mediterranean restaurant in Chicago. A day before that, Hazrat Ameer had had a fruitful discussion with the late Imam Warith Deen Muhammad, who had also invited us to lunch at the conclusion of the meeting. A day later, Hazrat Ameer participated in an historic dialogue, discussing matters of mutual interest with the Honourable Minister Louis Farrakhan, National Leader of the splinter group of the Afro-American Muslim Community, which was held at the latter's mansion, a fortress-like residence that was originally built for the late Honourable Elijah Muhammad.

I attended the funerals of both brothers and extended to the bereaved family the sympathy and condolence message of Hazrat Ameer and the *Jama'at*, which was very much appreciated. May Allah (*swt*), with His infinite mercy and cherished blessings, grant peace to the dearly departed souls and rest them in high places in *Jannate-Firdous*. *Aameen.*

JAMA 'AT NEWS

Dr. Zahid Aziz's daily Qur'an study guidance during Ramadan

During the month of Ramadan, we were delighted to receive daily guidance on selected Qur'anic readings from Dr Zahid Aziz, Editor of *The Light*, UK Edition.

We commend him for formulating such a useful program of Qur'an reading for each of the thirty days of Ramadan. May Allah (*swt*) reward him and bless him for this timely spiritual guidance. *Aameen*.

***Eid-ul-Fitr* celebration reports**

We are thankful to several of our *Jama'ats* for promptly submitting photographs taken during *Eid* prayers followed by *Eid* milan and celebrations in their respective *Jama'ats*. Other *Jama'ats* who have yet to submit their *Eid* reports are asked to do so as soon as possible. This year, in fairness to those *Jama'ats* that have already submitted their reports, we will not hold back the release of the *Eid* supplement. We have, therefore, set a deadline of 8 November 2008 to receive all reports, including photographs. Your cooperation and contribution will be highly appreciated.

Feedback on UK Virtual Mosque videos

Mudassar Aziz from the UK *Jama'at* has circulated the following request:

“Please click on the following link to open the desired files, including new videos:

<http://www.virtualmosque.co.uk/video.php>

I have made some changes, I have increased the size of the video, so it is easier to watch, and also moved all the videos to a new page so that people can download them and then watch them directly on home machines. Could you please give me some feedback on whether the new video size is good etc.”

Change of address

We have received the following letter from Br Santoe informing our *Jama'ats* of his new mailing address. We pray that Allah will bless Br Santoe's new place of residence.

“Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Assalamo alaikum WRWB.

I herewith request you to kindly take notice of change of my home address:

From: Zevengetijdeklaver 5-Rotterdam

To: Joliotplaats 864
3069 TT Rotterdam- Netherlands.

Particularly those branches/Anjumans sending me hard mail, magazines etc. are requested to make necessary change in their address list.”

PRAYER & HEALTH NEWS

A special inspirational *du‘a* message from Hazrat Ameer

Asslamu alaikum wr wb.

I have been in touch with Ehtasham, son of Abid saheb on daily bases for the last three days and am grateful to Allah that news is always a good one. In the Fajjar time Darrus e Quran I delivered I spoke on a relevant subject and then stressed to all present that prayers for the sick members should not be a one time only practice; but the 'prayer should be walked to its destination' i.e. till its positive outcome is seen and felt.

In this connection I have asked them to make it their duty to 'walk the prayers for the healths of Nuzhi Bhabi wife of my brother Brig. Nasir Saeed (who suffers from Cancer and is under treatment in Canada where she resides), Abid Raza saheb who holds the key to success of our Jamaat in NewZealand and has been operated for blockage of his heart vessels) and Nazar Rabb saheb who resides in Darus Salaam Lahore and is being managed in Shaikh Zayed Hospital where he has been operated by a urologist.

I had also cited the examples of two persons in whose case Allah had really responded and that was the recovery from illness of my Bhabi Sabiha, wife of Brig. Muhammad Saeed, and a child in America, Khalid Rafeh, we all have been praying for many months now and who now gives hopes of coming out of his illness with which he was born; needing transfusions, renal dialysis and transfusions and respirator use on many occasions. We must have full faith that Allah help is nigh to all those who call upon Him. *Aameen.*

Messages from Amir Aziz, General Secretary, AAII Lahore, Pakistan

Du‘a

We at the Center are praying for the fast recovery of Br Abid Raza. Hazrat Ameer announces in every prayer that we all must pray for Br Abid Raza's health. We are hopeful that Allah will descend His blessings and favours on Br Abid Raza in the form of perfect health.

Condolence

Hazrat Ameer and all members of AAII are deeply grieved at the sad demise of our respected Naib Imam Hadji Jusuf Hussain Ishaq. We pray to Allah that may He enter his soul in heaven. We pray that may he be among His chosen ones and be among those who are successful.

His services as an *Imam* will be remembered for all times to come by AAII. We pray that may Allah help his family to bear this great loss with patience and perseverance.

“Tribute to my grandmother” by Faequa A. Khan, granddaughter of Enayat and the late Hazra Mohammed — <http://faequa.vox.com/library/post/tribute-to-my-grandmother.html>

Jun 3, 2008

The last thing in this world that I ever expected was to be flying to Trinidad yesterday for my grandmother's funeral. My family and I had planned a surprise trip to Trinidad and we were supposed to fly in last night. However, Grandma decided to do the surprising...

When I first found out, all I could think about was everything that she would miss in not only my life, but my cousins' lives, as well as the lives of everyone around her. Grandma was always interested in what was going on with everyone, despite how minute the detail may be. But Faheemah made a good point when she told me that we should remember everything about Grandma. When I got on that plane, the memories kept coming, and then anecdotes speak for themselves for the type of person my grandmother was. My grandmother had a big heart, and it's apparent from the kind of support our family has received during this difficult period. Grandma had this way of making everyone and anyone feel welcome and as these past few days go by, I have been hearing countless stories about all the help she has offered. I just smile to myself, or cry for that matter, and think "that was my grandmother they are talking about!"

Just about everything I have learnt from Grandma comes from the days when she used to own her store and I used to spend countless hours, watching and observing as she dealt with customers, but to her, they were not customers, but friends. And Grandma made everyone feel special. I learnt about compassion and kindness but, above all, generosity from her. Although you would frequently hear her complaining to her grandchildren about how she wants to give us more, the material things never mattered to us; it was her actions and kind heart that spoke up above the rest.

The time filled with the most memories for my brother, sister and myself was those times she spent in Miami. To us, no Miami trip would ever be complete without us calling her bionic woman as she shuffled through Wal-Mart. Also, during these trips, in the mornings, she would lie in her room – yes, the guest room would be known as Pappy & Grandma's room – and take her morning sun while Pappy went for a walk. Sometimes his walks would last a long time and we would spend the morning reassuring her that Pappy was just enjoying his walk and he would be home soon. I even think she convinced Mom to drive around the block to check on him. Her Wal-Mart run, checking up on Pappy, and the frequent Indian movies would be staples during a visit but I am grateful she gave us these memories to treasure.

When I asked Fadil what he remembers most, he told me that Grandma was always on his side. This could not be truer. Whenever my mom would complain about all the trouble my poor brother would give her, Grandma's exact words would be, "Leave the boy alone. I don't know why she's complaining for he's a good boy; just leave the boy alone." So Grams, thanks for sticking up for us.

When I asked Faheemah what she most remembered, there were lots of stories, but perhaps her favorite one was the fact that whenever Grandma came to Miami she would say, "Faheems, go fix up a movie and let's watch." And Grandma and Faheemah would sit there and watch movies, while Faheemah got her tea and crackers, her all time favorite. Faheemah was always the one who would take care of Grandma and make sure she got her medicines and that she was properly bathed and help her put on clothes whenever she wasn't feeling too well. To Grandma, Faheemah was like the doctor and Faheemah would always remember taking care of her grandmother like that.

In the conversations I have had with Dani and Travis they have been telling me about the wonderful last two happy weeks that Grandma had had. Grandma went out and saw Travis's boat race and she had such a good time laughing and cheering. And then just on Saturday, she finally went and saw Dani's store and was looking around in amazement at all she had and how she had fixed it up so nice.

Dani told me she remembered all through her school days when she used to dance Indian dance and Grandma used to sew all her clothes for her and then there was that time that Grandma had made *haluwa* for the entire class during Common Entrance as a surprise for Dani. She was just that type of person.

Travis's relationship with Grandma was one that was unique because he was the first grandchild. Grandma always supported Travis in all his endeavors and was his biggest fan with his boat races. Everyone around Travis comments on his unshakeable family support when it comes to racing his boats and it can be attributed to Grandma for keeping everyone together through the good and the bad.

As for me, Grandma and I clicked on a different level. In fact, it was from her that I got my love for anything artistic. I always loved showing off my art pieces to her and I even created a piece that she was planning on putting in her new house. She was crazy about this piece. Let me describe it to you. I did a painting of her house, the very one in front of us, complete with the red bricks and the beautiful orchids. In each window were images of the different generations of family. Grandma loved this painting and I know that every time I look at it now, I will think about her and this home, this life she built with love.

In many ways, Grandma was like the orchids she raised – beautiful, tender, lovely – yet, like these orchids, sensitive, cared for, and humble. She took care of her orchids the same way she took care of her family and friends. Stefania, Inaya and NoorJihan unfortunately won't have the memories we had, but we will do whatever we can to keep Grandma's spirit alive. I know when we reach different milestones in our lives, Grandma would be there cheering us on, and as Stefania has been saying, "Mama is still here looking over us; she's just invisible." So Grandma, we love you and we will miss you.

The goodbye — <http://faequa.vox.com/library/post/the-goodbye.html>

Jun 19, 2008

"The last thing in this world that I ever expected was to be flying into Trinidad yesterday for my grandmother's funeral. My family and I had planned a surprise trip to Trinidad and we were supposed to fly in last night. However, Grandma decided to do the surprising..."

This was how my speech for my grandmother's funeral started out. And although the circumstances seem to have been one only a movie would be capable of portraying, this actually happened. We were going to Trinidad. Actually going and everything was set and then the night before, completely unexpectedly, my grandmother passed away. She was gone like that. I cried a lot, I'm not going to lie, but it was tears of sadness. The tears that fall because you know you would never see that person again. You would never hear their laughter. You would never see their smile. You would never see their generosity. Ever again. And it was when this stark reality sunk in that the tears start to flow. And they don't stop, let me warn you. But, despite all of this, I had an understanding that she needed to be somewhere else, and I've realized that it was quite selfish of me to want to keep her for all those things.

These last two weeks I have certainly grown as a person. And looking back, I have realized that this event is one of those so-called defining moments. It's going to be one of those moments in which, looking back at life, things either happened before or after this event.

The emotions that I felt during the first four days in Trinidad were ones that I can't even put into words, but I learned a lesson about family and friends and support. Family and friends really are the lifeline which we all hold on to and it's amazing that through great difficulty, the way everyone pulls together and helps each other.

One of the most memorable days in Trinidad was the day when we ventured to Maracas. I couldn't have asked for a more beautiful, distracting day. It was a rare occasion and people would think we were crazy for going to the beach two days after the funeral, but you have to get distracted and I would say this again, great tragedy brings, really brings about a great closeness. And although the mood was somber, there was this closeness in the atmosphere. And I realized that I was not the only one going through this; we were all experiencing the same loss. And once I realized that, going through the motions of the next two weeks became easier.

Being in Trinidad with people constantly around you was one of the most comforting things; however, the gravity of this situation did not hit until I walked into my own house and realized that Grandma would not be walking through those doors again. But to be honest, the real loneliness did not hit until a couple of days into my routine when I felt as though I was going through the motions, yet nothing had changed but then again everything had changed. And this feeling is one that is hard to even explain and you can't really understand it unless you live through it. Although you are stepping back into your routine and doing things that seemed important to you, they no longer hold any relevance because life feels different. But I did learn that it is important to persevere through it all. However, each and every day has proven to be more difficult than the last and I sometimes ask myself, "When is it going to get better?"

I could only hope that it will because, if not, then there is no point in living and each of us needs to find a reason to go on. For me, it has been to be able to accomplish my goals and know that grandma is looking at each accomplishment. I was recently told to paint again and I think I may start doing that. For my mother and her siblings, they have to be there to continue to mould and teach their children about all the things they learnt from their mother. But the hardest would be for my grandfather. I know it may seem impossible to go on; I can hardly imagine living without Grandma, but my grandfather has to be there for all eight of his grandchildren and all five of his children. He has a huge role to fill, but one that I know he will fill. Even though my grandmother was the heart in our family, my grandfather is the soul and we need his guidance, his strength and his faith to guide us through and make sure that we do things to my grandmother's accord.

Through all of this, I have found out that talking about her helps, and whenever I need to be brought down to earth I look back on those few days before the funeral when my biggest concern was probably what to wear. I haven't told anyone this, but the day my grandmother died I had lunch with a high school friend. And right as I met him for lunch, my mother called and told me that they had taken Grandma to the hospital. Bret, my friend, was standing there and he had a look of concern on his face but I told him that we were going to Trinidad in the morning and it couldn't be that bad, it was only a precaution, I mean my grandmother was a fighter and when I get there everything will be back to normal. Up to now I haven't told Bret what happened. Perhaps a part of me does not want to admit to that mistake of taking her for granted, even in her last hours. This conversation will plague me for a long time but things do happen for a reason.

It has taken me one and half months to write this. Not one of my finer works I promise, but it's amazing how writing can be great therapy. I will post the speech that I wrote for my grandmother in the next post, only because she deserves to be honored in every way possible.

ALL ABOUT US

Life Sketch of Dr. Basharat Ahmad (1876 – 1943)

[Researched and written by Choudry Akthar Masud, Secretary, AAAIL, Hayward, California, USA.]



(Photograph courtesy aaiil.org)

After the fall of Muslim rule in India and the takeover by the British Government, many Muslim families of the area, which later came to be known as the United Province (UP), moved to various cities in the Punjab. Dr Basharat Ahmad was the scion of one such family. Some members of this family had settled in Sialkot, where the family of Shamsul Ulama Mir Hassan, teacher and mentor of Dr Sheikh Sir Muhammad Iqbal, was also settled. Dr Basharat Ahmad wrote an account of his early life and his joining the Ahmadiyya Movement, which was published in *Paigham-e-Sulh* of 7 November 1933. It reads thus:

I WAS INTERESTED in religion from my childhood and from an early age I was very fond of sitting in the company of religious scholars (*'ulama*). Whenever any *maulvi* or preacher happened to visit our vicinity I would not rest until I had attended their lectures. My ancestral elders were followers of the Hanafi school of thought but, in spite of an innate fondness for religion, I had the natural bent of mind for research in religious doctrines.

Joins Ahle Hadith Jama'at

Many of my acquaintances belonged to the Ahl-i Hadith *Jama'at*. Because of my research, I found their beliefs more acceptable and I became a member of this organisation. I could not understand how the statement of an *imam* of *fiqh* could have preference over the *Hadith*. This was a time when the Ahl-i Hadith were called Wahabis. They were beaten and thrown out of *masjids*. In those days, our family was residing in Sialkot. Our residence was in Saddar Bazaar (Sialkot Cantonment) but I was a student in Scotch Mission High School.

After becoming a Wahabi, I started folding my hands over my breast and uttering *Ameen* loudly during the performance of prayers in the main *masjid* of the Cantonment. The late Maulvi Mubarak Ali was the *imam* of that *masjid*. He was a scholarly person and did not react to my behaviour, but a great fuss was made by the other Sunnis who used to offer their prayers in that *masjid*. They protested vehemently and made threats of dangerous consequences. Finally, the matter was reported to my grandfather who was at the time the head of my family. He was very upset on hearing this. I did not say a word to him but started going to the Ahl-i Hadith *masjid* in Sialkot City to perform my Friday prayers. The late Maulvi Abdul Karim was the *imam* in that *masjid*. There I had the freedom of *fafa' yaddam* (raising the hands high) and uttering *Ameen* aloud.

As I said before, I was a student at Scotch Mission High School in Sialkot City where the late Maulvi Qaimuddin and Dr Sir Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal (the renowned poet and philosopher) were my classmates. Padre Youngson, a very clever and sensible priest, was the Principal of this school. During Bible studies periods, Maulvi Qaimuddin and Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal used to engage in lively debates with him, but when the matter of Jesus Christ being alive, and thus the excellence of Christ, was discussed, Maulvi Qaimuddin and Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal were helpless in providing suitable answers. The climax of the matter was reached the day when Rev. Youngson quoted the Quranic verse, "*Is call Allah ya Isa inni mutawaffika wa rafeoka illiya,*" as proof of the excellence of Christ. Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal was so nonplussed by this argument that he said: "This verse is not in the Qur'an." This was a clear victory for the padre as the verse was, in fact, in the Qur'an. We Muslims were put to great shame on that day. I was heartbroken and, God forbid, was unhappy with Allah that by raising Jesus Christ to heaven He had made the Christian insult us.

After hearing the padre's words against Islam day in and day out, doubts about the truth of Islam arose in my mind and many times the thought of giving up Islam crossed my mind. The Arya Samajists were much in the news at that time and our Hindu schoolmates used to proudly count the excellences of Hinduism. Many times the idea of becoming an Arya Samajist also crossed my mind, but the love for Islam, which was ingrained in me from young, did not allow it. Our *ulama*, in whom we had so much faith, were not able to provide satisfaction.

During such a state of mental uneasiness, one day in 1891 I was lying on my bed in our courtyard when my grandfather handed me a book saying: "Look at the wonder of the fourteenth century! A person, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadian, has claimed that he is the likeness of Christ and has published this book." The book was *Fath Islam* (Predominance of Islam). As I started reading it, its style greatly impressed me, and as I continued, the points made registered a deep influence on my heart and mind. When I read the arguments and proof from the Holy Qur'an pertaining to the death of Jesus Christ, I jumped up from my bed in pleasure and did not leave the book until I had finished it. I said to my grandfather: "This man is truthful." He responded: "You are still a child. You do not know our *'ulama*. I have heard that they are preparing a great *fatwa* of *kufr* against him."

The truth of the message of that book completely influenced my mind and I was not fully inclined to give up the proof of the death of Christ as I had been able to lay hands to this pearl of my objectives after great desires. The same verse of the Qur'an, "*Is call Allah ya Isa inni mutawaffika wa Rafeoka illiya,*" which had felt like a thorn in my heart, had now become in all its beauty a means of satisfaction to my mind. Now the state of affairs were such that in every gathering of Muslims in the Sialkot Cantonment Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had become the main topic of discussion, but for the most part, in the vain of opposition.

During that time, I had a strange dream. I saw that there was a very high minaret on top of which the Holy Prophet (pbuh) was seated, and wanting a close glimpse of him, I was going up the stairs simultaneously reciting the verse, “*Koi subhani kahey koi unal Haq bilbilaye – dill bay tera bilbilana yeh maqam-e-Ghour hay.*” While reciting this verse and stealing up the stairs, I awoke. At that time I could not interpret the dream, but today I understand that the words *subhani* and *unl Haq* meant the doctrine of *baruz*, and that the appearance of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) was pointing towards the appearance of his *baruz*, and the appearance at the top of the minaret indicated was told to the Promised Messiah through *ilham*, that is, “*Pacy Muhammadian bar meenar buland tar Mukham uftad.*”

Promised Messiah visits Sialkot in February 1892

After some days the news spread that the claimant to being the Promised Messiah was visiting Sialkot. Prior to that, we had witnessed the visits of Maulvi Buruddin Bheravi, Maulvi Abdul Mannan Wazirabad and Sheikhul Qul Maulana Nazir Ahmad Dehlvi to the city. As on previous visits such as this, I went to Sialkot City. Hazrat Mirza was staying at the home of Hakim Hassamuddin and the street was teeming with people. My friend and I made our way through the crowd saw that Mirza Sahib had walked across the street from one house to the other house facing that one. In this short period, from the glimpse I caught of his face, I witnessed a lustre of purity reflecting in such a way that my mind convinced me that this cannot be the face of an imposter. This was the lustrous face of a truthful person. After that, Hazrat Mirza led the *Asr* prayer in the Hakeem Hassamuddin *Masjid* and we offered our prayer behind him. Thereafter, he was seated in the doorway of the *masjid* and a great number of people who were present were questioning him on various matters of Islam and he was giving such satisfactory and convincing answers that rendered one’s belief about that matter strengthened anew. Maulvi Abdul Karim, the *imam* of the Ahl-i Hadith, who had already sworn his allegiance at the hands of the Promised Messiah, was sitting next to me. He said to me: “Do you notice how radiant his face is?” I concurred.

We returned home in the evening with a deep impression of Mirza Sahib’s knowledge and piety. The next day, we went again and on that day Hazrat Mirza gave a *tafsir* of *Surah Fatihah*. Today, every Ahmadi child is conversant with this excellent *tafsir* as it is available in print, but on that day, when we, for the first time heard it, the truth and fine and deep knowledge and subtleties of the this *surah* opened our eyes and all the previous speeches of all other ‘*ulama* which I had heard appeared much below the standard of this speech. Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal, who was sitting on the roof of the entrance to the porch of the *masjid*, was full of praise for this *tafsir*. During Hazrat Mirza’s stay in Sialkot, many persons swore their allegiance at his hands. The late Maulvi Mubarik Ali, who was *imam* of the Jamia Masjid Sialkot Saddar, was one of them. On his joining the Ahmadiyya Movement, disturbances broke out in Saddar Bazaar.

Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi visits Sialkot

After Hazrat Mirza’s visit, Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, who was the leader of the Ahl-i Hadith organisation for Punjab province and who had a great reputation for his scholarly discourses, visited Sialkot. His mission was to oppose Mirza Sahib. Since I was a member of the Ahl-i Hadith, for this reason I held him in great honour. I met him at a dinner and after that he delivered a speech in Jamia Masjid. He was giving some incomplete quotations from *Izala Auham* and through distortion, he was able to make us believe that Mirza Sahib’s claims that “*Inna anzalna hoo Qareebun min al Qadian*” is a verse of the Qur’an and that he claimed that the verse, “*Mubashsherun bi Rasulin yati min baadi ismohoo Ahmad,*” is about him and not about the Holy Prophet (pbuh), and that “the Holy Qur’an is full of abusive words,” and that “four hundred prophets were liars.” With this, Maulvi Batalvi Sahib incited the public, including us, against Hazrat Mirza. We did not realise that such a highly reputable *allama* was telling lies while standing in a *masjid* and was making false allegations against Mirza Sahib through distortions and misquotations. We were deceived because of our favourable view about the *mullah* and thus missed the honour of being amongst the earlier supporters of the Promised Messiah. Thus, Maulvi Batalvi destroyed

the good atmosphere in Sialkot and also destroyed my peace of mind. The Ahl-i Hadith community of Sialkot had been widely fractured because of Maulvi Abdul Karim and many other members joining the Ahmadiyya Movement and offering their prayers in the Hakeem Hassamuddin *Masjid*. A few remaining Ahl-i Hadith members now started offering prayers in an old *masjid* of the Moghul period. Maulvi Muhammad Ibrahim Sialkot, who was yet a young starter, was made *imam*. I went there once but did not find the *khutbah* enlightening and stopped going.

Meeting a Sufi elder

Meanwhile, by chance I met an old Sufi of the Chishtiah Sabriah family. In spite of being a Wahabi, I had a taste for *tassawuf* from my early days. In his company that old taste was renewed. I learnt all the *wazaif* and *aurad* (pl. *virid*) of the Chishtiah Sabriah *Silsilah* from him. When he enquired about why I was interested in learning these *wazaif*, I told him that I was interested in becoming a *wali*. On hearing this he said, "You are the first person who has made such a request. Other people learn *wazifah* and *virid* for their worldly gains." In short, I mastered the *wazifah* of *ism-e-zaat* as a result of which a throbbing of heart and was experienced.

One day I happened to meet an atheist. He raised such objections that my *iman* was almost lost. He said whatever one believes is just one's own fancy or imagination. When I presented that objection to my Sufi guide, he said engaging in debate is not the way of a *faqir*. I said that while living in the world one comes across opposing thoughts, so what, after all, is the solution for that. He replied that I should continue with my *wazifah*. How could I, when my belief had been lost, continue with the *wazifah*? I tried hard but failed to achieve concentration. In those days, mesmerism was getting a great deal of publicity. I read a few books about it which served to destroy whatever *iman* was left in me. I was passing through a state of great mental turmoil and life appeared like hell to me.

Reading *Barahin-i Ahmadiyya*

In the 12th Calvary in Sialkot Cantonment, the late Maulvi Jalaluddin, who was a very righteous Ahmadi elder, used to teach in Fauji Madrassah (Military School). One day I went to see him for a particular matter. He was taking a shower in his bathroom at the time, and on the *charpai* (cot) in his courtyard, Hazrat Mirza's renowned book, *Barahin-i Ahmadiyya*, was lying open. As I sat on the cot, my eyes fell on the open page and I started reading. The writing was an ointment for my burnt heart. In it were such powerful proof and arguments proving that the Holy Qur'an is a revelation from Allah that, as I continued reading, all veils were being removed from my eyes and my *iman* was finding a new life. That day I considered myself a born-again Muslim. I became convinced, regardless of whether the claims of Mirza Sahib were understood or not, that a surety about the truth of Islam can be achieved only through Hazrat Mirza's writings.

This view was further confirmed when I listened to Hazrat Mirza's lecture at the interfaith conference in Lahore from 26-29 December 1896. The Muslim public was listening to this lecture completely absorbed. In those days I was a student at the medical college in Lahore and after listening to this lecture, the truth and grandeur of Islam ran through the veins of my body like a life bestowing wave.

Proceeding to Africa

After completing my medical education, I went to East Africa in connection with my work. There I found the company of Dr Rahmut Ali, who was a very righteous Ahmadi. In his company, I had a chance to read Hazrat Mirza's books at length and my mind was being filled every day with the truth about Hazrat Mirza. However, the previous influence of the *'ulama* and their *fatwa* of *kufr* were an obstacle to my becoming an Ahmadi at that time.

On my return from Africa, I was posted in Zafarwal District, Sialkot to treat patients suffering from the plague. I sent for a lot of Hazrat Mirza's books. I read his literature about other religions as well about his own claims. Of these books, *Aina-i-Kamalat-i-Islam* and *Ayyam al Sulh* had the greatest influence on my mind.

Further research about the Promised Messiah

My next posting for the treatment of plague patients was in Shakargarh District, Gurdaspur. There, Munnawar Khan Zaildar of Bhati Pathanan Village had been suspended for not rendering help in eradicating the plague. He asked me to recommend him for reinstatement as a *zaildar*. He said before this, whenever any calamity fell upon him he used to request Mirza of Qadian for payers and his hardships were removed by Allah, but now that Hazrat Mirza had claimed that he was the Messiah, and our *ulama* had issued a *fatwa* of *kufir* against him, therefore, he had stopped going to him. When I enquired whether he personally knew Mirza Sahib, he said, "Yes, I have known him since childhood. He is a very pious, righteous, devout and Godly person whose prayers are granted by Allah. We have personal experience of the acceptance of his prayers, which are very effective. He is a *wali*, there is no doubt about it, but, as you know, it is *aulia Allah* who stumble. He seems like Mansoor (Hallaj); on some stage of *salook* he has stumbled." This speech of his influenced my mind and I recommended his restoration to the post of *zaildar* to the Deputy Commissioner.

During my posting in Gurdaspur, I was required to tour a great deal and meet many people, including Sheikh Nur Ahmad, one of the nobility of Batala, and others who were not Ahmadi and who knew Mirza Sahib from childhood. From enquiries about them about Mirza Sahib, it was established that Mirza Sahib was a righteous, Godly person. I had already been satisfied about his claims from reading his book and writings but still I did not have the courage to swear allegiance to him. This hesitation was because, amongst the masses of Muslims in India, strong feelings of opposition to Ahmadiyyat were widespread and the '*ulama*, through false allegations, distortions and lies, had generated a widespread hatred against Mirza Sahib and his followers. Above all, this opposition to Ahmadiyyat was very strongly rooted in my family.

Illness of Mumtaz Ahmad and visit to Qadian (1902)

My elder son, Mumtaz Ahmad (Mumtaz Ahmad Faruqi), who at that time was two years old, fell ill with typhoid fever. The fever was severe and constantly running at 105°. My wife and my children were living in Amritsar and the services of the best doctors were available, but when the fever continued for about ten days, the team of doctors who were treating the child declared that it was a severe form of typhoid fever which is likely to continue for three to four weeks. I had come on a week's leave from my plague duty in Shakargarh. On the eleventh day of the fever, the child was lying unconscious due to the severity of the fever and his pulse had become irregular. It was the last day of my leave and due my son's serious condition I decided not to return to my job, but my elders advised me against doing that. They said whatever Allah has in *taqdir* would happen to the child but that I should not destroy my career.

By chance, Mirza Sahib's book, *Barakat-ud-Du'a*, was lying among my books, which my wife had read. She said, "You have to go to Shakargarh through Gurdaspur, and Batala falls on your way. If you visit Qadian and request Mirza Sahib to pray for the health and recovery of our son, then maybe Allah will favour us with His Grace." Mirza Sahib has vehemently claimed in his book, and she read that Persian verse which says: "You who say that if the prayers have effect where is that, then hurry to me so that I show you that like the sun." On hearing these words from my wife, I immediately got ready and called a friend of mine who was an Ahmadi and requested him to accompany me to Qadian as I was not familiar with that place.

The train left Amritsar at 10 pm and by midnight we reached Batala and hired a *yakka* (horse cart) for Qadian. The road was in bad state. We arrived in Qadian at 2 am. It was pitch dark and there were no street lamps. These were winter nights; all doors were closed and people were sleeping. My friend was leading the way and I was following him and was thinking God knows what Mirza Sahib would be doing at that time. Maybe he is sleeping or maybe busy offering his *Tahajjud* prayers. My friend knocked at the door of a house and the door opened with the pressure of the knock. Inside the room, Mirza Sahib was busy in his *Tahajjud* prayers. After completing the *rakah*, he welcomed us and directed us to go upstairs to Masjid-e-Mubarak. We went there. It was a small *masjid* with a room called *Darul Fikr* attached to it. We went to that room where we saw people busy offering their *Tahajjud* prayers in the *masjid* with great absorption and devotion. In the room, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din Sahib got up and said: "Please, you may sleep on the cot." Considering that we had disturbed his sleep, I said: "No, please, you keep sleeping on it." He replied that he was going to offer his prayers. I stretched myself on the *charpai* (cot) and Khwaja Sahib performed *wudu* and began offering his *Tahajjud* prayer. Actually, by lying on the cot I was feeling small that people around me were busy devotedly offering prayers and I was resting, but I was so tired that sleep overtook me. At about 4 am, someone woke me and gave me water for *wudu*. I had offered two *rakah Sunnah* prayers and was seated waiting for the *jama'at* prayer when Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib came into the *masjid*. On seeing him, I was very pleased as he had been my old Ahl-i Hadith *Masjid imam* in Sialkot. He met me very warmly and said: "Finally, you have come." I said: "Yes, Allah had brought me here." Then I mentioned to him that my son was seriously ill and requested him to pray for my son's recovery. He replied: "You become a *hanif* like Ibrahim (pbuh) that the heavenly call of 'O fire, become ice cold and peace on Ibrahim.' A Qur'anic verse will come for you and Allah will change this state of fire into peace of mind and serenity for you." On hearing these words, my mind felt satisfied. Meanwhile, Hazrat Mirza Sahib arrived and, catching my arm, Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib introduced me to him with these words: "Huzoor (Sir), this too is an auspicious soul which I am presenting to you." Hazrat Mirza Sahib warmly shook hands with me and I introduced myself to him, giving information about who I was and where I worked and the nature of my work, etc. Then *salah* started and I was standing next to Hazrat Mirza Sahib and Maulvi Abdul Karim Sialkoti was leading the prayer. I had offered prayers behind him in Sialkot but I realised that the beauty of his recitation of the Qur'an now had reached new heights. His recitation was now captivating and soul-stirring.

After *salah*, Hazrat Mirza Sahib returned to his room. Khalifa Rashid-ud-Din Sahib had already enquired from me whether I would like to see Hazrat Sahib in the *masjid* or in private and I had indicated my preference for privacy. After a while, Hazrat Mirza Sahib called us in. Some children were asleep in the room and Hazrat Mirza was sitting on a *charpai* with no cover on it. On seeing me, he moved towards the foot of the *charpai* and asked me to sit at the head. Out of respect, I refused to sit there but he held my hand and made me sit there and he sat at the foot, with my friend in the middle. I requested him to tell me a *wazifah* whereby one may achieve cleanliness of heart. He said: "Offer your *salah* in the proper manner and with understanding its meaning." He further spoke about the cleanliness of the heart. It was like a spiritual healer was trying to treat the illness after properly diagnosing the disease. Answers to the weaknesses and doubts of my mind were being offered in such a way that at times it seemed to me as if my mind and my heart were lying open before him and he was prescribing treatment for these after seeing them. When he said, "The example of a sinner is like that of a criminal whose arrest warrants have already been issued and every moment he thinks that he will be caught any moment thus the peace of mind which is bestowed upon a person who had a relationship with his God, how can that be available to a sinner," completely shook me. His every word was penetrating into my mind. When he said, "A human being should keep ready to go to the next world in a manner in which a traveller who is far away from his homeland happily remains prepared to return home," then this worldly life and its concerns all became worthless in my sight. He concluded his talk with proof of the death of Jesus (pbuh) as was his usual practice. During his speech, I was so absorbed that my son's illness and asking for prayers for his recovery

were all forgotten. Nor did any other worldly concern remain attractive to me. When in the end he said, “Whatever objections or doubts you may have, you can write a letter to me for their removal or you can come personally to satisfy yourself, then the transience of life became apparent to me and I understood that I had passed my life thus far in research and had remained deprived of the benefits of Ahmadiyyat. One does not know when his death will occur; it should not happen that one should die the death of an ignorant one and I requested Hazrat Mirza Sahib to let me swear allegiance at this hands and he granted my request and I took *bia'at*.

Effect of the prayer of the Promised Messiah

At the time of my departure from Qadian, I informed Hazrat Mirza Sahib about my son's illness and requested him to pray for his health. He raised his hands in prayer and kept praying for a while. Then, after making *du'a*, he permitted me to leave. From there I went to Maulvi Nur-ud-Din Sahib, with whom I had had a close association since my Wahibiat days. He, too, gave a short talk on *du'a*. Then I went to Gurdaspur Railway Station where I found the British doctor who was my boss. I told him about my son's illness and requested leave. He said, “You go to Shakargarh, I will return from Pathankot in two days, then you can go on leave for ten days. So I proceeded to Shakargarh. There, on the third day, I received a letter from home informing me that my son's fever had gone and that he was now well. Since I had already obtained leave, I went home. In Amritsar, I discovered that the day when I had requested the Promised Messiah to pray for my son's recovery, that is, the tenth day of his fever, and his condition was at the time alarming, and a state of hopelessness was prevalent at the start of the night, yet when the temperature was checked after midnight it was found to be normal. The elders in the home said that the thermometer may not have been placed properly but when, after many attempts it showed the same normal temperature, they notified the doctor who was treating him. He said it had never happened that typhoid went away in twelve days, and that they must have placed the thermometer incorrectly. When he checked the thermometer and my son's pulse for himself, he said: “This is God's special favour. I cannot understand it. I have never before seen that in such a bad condition one may suddenly become healthy. It is like a Messianic miracle.”

Miraculous indeed it was and a Divine grace, as the Promised Messiah has said in one of his Persian couplets, the English translation of which reads:

You may put in a thousand efforts and the difficulty is not solved.
When you go to Him, it is the work of one prayer.

By the grace of Allah, and in spite of staunch opposition originally, slowly my whole family and near and far relatives became Ahmadis. It was Allah's special favour that during my visits to the Promised Messiah I used to fix my gaze on his luminous face and used to thank Allah for my good fortune that He had favoured me with not only the sight of, but of swearing allegiance to the Promised Messiah. Desiring to know and to see him was the greatest wish of many *aulia Allah* of the Muslim *ummah*.

Dr Basharat Ahmad Sahib had great love for the Holy Qur'an and wherever he was posted during his service, he used to deliver *dars-e Qur'an* to his family members, friends, and their families etc. He continued this practice for his entire life. During his service after Shakargarh, he was posted as Assistant Surgeon at Campbellpur, Bhera and Ludhiana. Then he was posted as Civil Surgeon and District Health Officer at Karnal, Jhelum and Gujrat, amongst other districts. Thus he had a great number of admirers spread all over the Punjab Province who held him in great esteem due to his honesty, righteousness, piety and compassionate nature. His *dars-e Qur'an* was so effective and absorbing that even those who were against Ahmadiyyat appreciated it.

When he was Civil Surgeon of Gujrat, a prominent *gaddi nasheen pir sabib* was his patient. He used to stand outside by the window to listen to Dr Basharat Ahmad's *dars*. Once, a *mureed* of the *pir* saw him listening to the *dars* from outside the window and asked him why he was listening to the *dars* of a Mirzai. The *pir* told his *mureed* that Allah speaks through Dr Basharat Ahmad's tongue and that is what attracted him. After his retirement from the Service, Dr Basharat Ahmad used to give *dars-e Qur'an* every morning during the *Jalsa Salana*, which was always eagerly attended.

Dr Basharat Ahmad wrote a *tafseer* of the thirtieth part of the Holy Qur'an which was published under the title *Auwar-ul Qur'an*. It was followed by a *tafseer* of the twenty-seventh part of the Qur'an, published as *Anwar-ul Qur'an, Part II*. These books have been translated into English by Kalamazad Mohammed and Nasir Ahmad and were published by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Literary Trust of Trinidad and Tobago. His last *dars-e Qur'an* at the annual *Jalsa* of 1942 was so full of truths and was so enlightening that Maulana Muhammad Ali, during his speech at the *Jalsa*, expressed his appreciation by saying: "I wish you could have been the author of *Bayan-ul-Qur'an*" [Urdu *tafseer* of the Qur'an by Maulana Muhammad Ali].

Dr Basharat Ahmad retired from Government service at the end of 1931. In the beginning of 1932 he received an offer from a Muslim state of India to be the Chief Medical Officer of that state. He wrote a letter to Maulana Muhammad Ali informing him of the offer and seeking his advice and opinion on the matter. In reply, Maulana Muhammad Ali wrote a Persian verse of the Promised Messiah's, which reads:

*Umar bagazasht wa namandast juz ayyam-e-Chand
Beh keh dor yaad-e-kasay subh kurni Sham-e-Chand.*

Age has passed; there is not left but a few days.

It is better that now you pass your remaining evenings till morning in remembrance of Someone [i.e. Allah].

Dr Basharat Ahmad immediately accepted the advice of the Promised Messiah, got the verse calligraphed and framed, and placed it in his room, and devoted the rest of his life to the service of religion. He used to write articles for *Paigham-e Sulh*. He now expanded its volume. He not only wrote a *tafseer* of the twenty-seventy and thirtieth parts of the Holy Qur'an in 1934, but also wrote *Al-Ruh [Reality of the Human Soul] in the Light of the Qur'an and Science, Tanasakh* (Transmigration of Souls – A False Theory of the Days of Ignorance), *Taqdeer* (Its Reality in the Light of the Teachings of the Qur'an), *Qur'an Karim ka Alamgir Paigham-e Hurriyat* (Qur'an on Freedom of Mankind), *Waladat-e-Masih* (Birth of Jesus According to the Qur'an and Bible), *Mirat-al-Ikhtalaf* (A Critical Evaluation of Mirza Mahmud Ahmad's *Khutbah* about the Split in the Ahmadiyya Movement and the Reality of the Bahisti Maqbrah), and *Aina-e-Ghulve-o-Ikhtalaf* (Replication to the Objections of a *Mureed* of Mirza Mahmud Ahmad about the Split in the Movement).

In 1936 he started work on the monumental project of writing a biography of the Promised Messiah. Old age and poor health were the greatest impediments in this matter. It was a gigantic undertaking which involved a great deal of research by going through thousands of pages of the Promised Messiah's writings, newspaper articles, news, publications of the opponents of the Promised Messiah and the Ahmadiyya Movement from both Muslims and non-Muslims, books and pamphlets of both sections of the Movement, in addition to the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an, *Hadith*, *Fiqh* and writings of the *Imams* and *aulia Allah* of Muslim history. The result of six years of extensive research and labour was *Mujaddid-e-Azam*, which was published in three volumes. Undoubtedly, it is comparable with the best works of biographies produced in any language in any part of the world. The beauty of this biography is that it not only gives a year by year account of the life the Promised Messiah but also analyses his writings, beliefs and

achievements in the light of the teachings of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. This great work is a wealth of information which one will have to spend years in religious schools and universities to acquire.

Dr Basharat Ahmad had two bouts with abdominal tumour attacks but Allah granted him recovery in order that he may complete his undertaking. He completed work on the third volume, and after handing over the script in December 1942 to the Anjuman for publishing, he went to Bombay in January 1943 to stay with his younger son, Naseer Ahmad Faruqui, ICS, Collector Thana (Bombay), in order to complete the *dars-e-Qur'an* which he had been doing for many years. There his illness recurred and became more acute, as a result of which he breathed his last in a hospice in Bombay at noon on 19 April 1943. *Inna lilahi wa inna ilaih rajo'on*. His body was taken to Lahore by Frontier Mail on 21 April 1943 and funeral prayers were offered after Friday prayers after which he was laid to rest in the Ahmadiyya section of the Miani Sahib Muslim Cemetery.

Two more aspects of Dr Basharat Ahmad's life need to be mentioned. Firstly, he was very particular about paying his monthly subscription to the Anjuman, as was mandated by the Promised Messiah. The first thing he did on receiving his salary was to send a money order of his subscription to Qadian, and, after the Split, to Lahore, and only after that will he take the remaining money home. He used to donate money on appeals for various Anjuman projects. He continued this practice even after his retirement, as sending his subscription was the first thing he would do on receiving his pension.

Secondly, he was a very compassionate person. Allah had favoured him with a large family – two sons and six daughters. In addition, he brought up orphaned children of his and his wife's near relatives like his own. No distinction was made in their clothing, food or education. He also arranged their marriages in the same manner as he did for his own children.

These speak volumes about his compassion and his following the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, both in letter and spirit. Such persons are rare to find these days. May Allah shower His choicest blessings on his soul and grant him the highest place in Paradise. *Ameen*.

[Br Masud read the first volume of *Mujaddid-e-Azam* translated by Dr. Hamid Rahman. He praised the superb translation, printing and presentation of this publication. *Jazak Allah!*]

WHAT OUR READERS SAY

Correspondence from Sandra Ilaahibaks-Wazir, Suriname

Assalaam o alaikum, w.r.w.b.

Allah is great, Allah is the greatest. Personally I don't know brother Abid Raza and his family, but reading all the mails concerning his health it seemed like my own father or brother was suffering. When I opened my mail this morning, yours was the eye catcher. With pleasure I read about brother Abid and I pray to the Almighty Allah that He grants our brother full recovery so that he can continue his good work for our *jamaat*.

In my prayers, I will surely continue to pray for all that are in pain and also for our *jamaat* that Allah gives us strength and guide us to show the world the real ISLAM.

Prayer from Ejaz Sayal, Pakistan

Thanks for the update.

May Allah Almighty grant Brother Abid Raza complete & superb health. *Amin!!!*

LESSON OF THE DAY

Court sets Atheist's holiday

In Florida, an atheist became incensed over the preparation of Easter and Passover holidays. He decided to contact his lawyer about the discrimination inflicted on atheists by the constant celebrations afforded to Christians and Jews with all their holidays while atheists had no holiday to celebrate.

The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the long, passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel and declared, "Case dismissed!"

The lawyer immediately stood and objected to the ruling and said, "Your Honor, how can you possibly dismiss this case? The Christians have Christmas, Easter and many other observances. Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah, yet my client and all other atheists have no such holiday!"

The judge leaned forward in his chair and simply said, "Obviously your client is too confused to even know about, much less celebrate his own atheists' holiday."

The lawyer pompously said, "Your Honor, we are unaware of any such holiday for atheists. Just when might that holiday be, your Honor?"

The judge said, "Well, it comes every year on exactly the same date – April 1st. Since our calendar sets April 1st as April Fool's Day, considering that Psalm 14:1 states, 'The fool says in his heart, there is no God,' thus, in my opinion, if your client says there is no God, then, by scripture, he is a fool, and April 1st is his holiday. Now, have a good day and get out of my courtroom!"

HOPE MEMBER SERVICE

Recipe of the Month

Oven Roasted Potatoes

Ingredients

- 1/8 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried marjoram
- 1/2 teaspoon dried dill weed
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon dried parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 large potatoes, peeled and cubed

Method of Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 475 degrees F (245 degrees C).
2. In a large bowl, combine oil, garlic, basil, marjoram, dill weed, thyme, oregano, parsley, red pepper flakes, and salt.
3. Stir in potatoes until evenly coated.
4. Place potatoes in a single layer on a roasting pan or baking sheet.
5. Roast for 20 to 30 minutes in the preheated oven, turning occasionally to brown on all sides.

PHOTOGRAPHIC PRESENTATION

(Courtesy Faizal Sahu-Khan)

Today (Sunday October 19, 2008), Colin Powell officially endorsed Barack Obama for President. But the big news today is that this was not even his most important endorsement of the day. As it turns out, the most important thing endorsed by Colin Powell today was an America that's worth leading and worth fighting for, an America that encapsulates the idea of what some might call a "more perfect union." To that end, Powell invoked a picture to illustrate his point.

“Is there something wrong with being a Muslim in this country? The answer is no. That's not America. Is there something wrong with a seven-year-old Muslim-American kid believing he or she could be president? Yet I have heard senior members of my own party drop the suggestion that he is a Muslim and might have an association with terrorists. This is not the way we should be doing it in America.

I feel particularly strong about this because of a picture I saw in a magazine. It was a photo essay about troops who were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. And one picture at the tail end of this photo essay, was of a mother at Arlington Cemetery and she had her head on the headstone of her son's grave. And as the picture focused in, you could see the writing on the headstone, and it gave his awards – Purple Heart, Bronze Star – showed that he died in Iraq, gave his date of birth, date of death, he was 20 years old. And then at the very top of the head stone, it didn't have a Christian cross. It didn't have a Star of David. It has a crescent and star of the Islamic faith.

And his name was Kareem Rashad Sultan Khan. And he was an American. He was born in New Jersey. He was fourteen years old at the time of 9/11, and he waited until he could serve his country and he gave his life.”

This is the picture:



Editor's Note

Several members have circulated this story, but interestingly enough, Br Nizam Ud Dean pointed out the presence of the Holy Qur'an placed at the base of the headstone. It is a great thrill to see the crescent on the headstones in a gravesite where one normally sees thousands of crosses or the Star of David. My younger brother, Ismatullah Abdullah, was buried in a military graveyard in Northern California and his headstone bears a crescent amongst thousands of graves bearing crosses.

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