



لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ
(There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah)

Daigham-e-Haqq

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE BENEFICENT THE MERCIFUL

ORGAN OF THE AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHAAT-I-ISLAM, FIJI

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY - HEADQUARTERS 12 BAU STREET, SUVA, FIJI

JULY/SEPTEMBER 1995

No. 71

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

AND FROM AMONG YOU THERE SHOULD BE A PARTY WHO INVITE TO GOOD AND ENJOIN
THE RIGHT AND FORBID THE WRONG, AND THESE ARE THEY WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL.

The Holy Qur'an Ch. 3 verse 103

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Paigham - E - Haqq

Editor: Nizam - ud - Dean
Published by: Dr. M.S. Sahu Khan for the
Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam (Lahore) Fiji.
Typesetting: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam (Lahore) Fiji.
Printed by: Quality Print Ltd

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OUR BELIEFS

Ashhadu-an la ilaha ill-allahu wahdahu la sharika lahu wa ashhadu-anna Muhammad-an abduhu wa rasuluhu.

1. We believe Allah to be the Possessor of all the perfect attributes, free from all defects and imperfections, Unique in His Person, unrivalled in His Attributes and Works, and One without a partner.
2. We hold it essential to believe in angels, all of the Divine Books, and all the prophets and messengers of God.
3. We believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the *Khatam al-Nabiyyin*. With his advent religion has been perfected, so he is the Last Prophet after whom no prophet shall come, neither a new one nor a former one.
4. We believe in the life after death, and in all matters relating to the grave, the day of judgement, and paradise and hell, that are proven from the Qur'an and Hadith.
5. From the depth of our hearts, we hold the Righteous Caliphs, the Holy Companions (*ashab*), the Purified Wives, and members of the Holy Household (*ahl bait*), as beloved, worthy of respect, and honourable in the sight of God.
6. We hold the Imams Abu Hanifah, Shafi'i, Malik, and Ahmad Hanbal to be the leaders of jurisprudence (*fiqh*); and saints such as Shaikh 'Abdul Qadir Jilani, Khawajah Naqshband, and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi to be leaders of *Tusawwaf* (the spiritual sciences). We believe all such elders of the religion to be worthy of esteem.
7. In accordance with the Holy Prophet's sayings about mujaddids and muhaddaths, we believe in the truth of the mujaddids of all the centuries, and in accordance with the same tradition, believe in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian as the Mujaddid of the fourteenth century of Hijrah, *not as a prophet*.
8. We consider each such person to be a Muslim who professes to believe *la ilaha ill-allah, Muhammad-ur rasul Allah* (there is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) and calls himself a Muslim.
9. All the members of the Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore believe in acting according to God's Book the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and if no specific direction is found there, they give precedence to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence.

The Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore has not only been proclaiming these beliefs but, for over eighty years, it has been engaged in the propagation of Islam and service to its cause. The whole world and in particular the Muslim religious scholars of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent have borne witness to this fact.

SWORN DECLARATION OF HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD OF QADIAN:

"I make it clear to the public that I swear by Almighty Allah that I am not a *kafir*. My belief is *la ilaha ill-allah Muhammad-ur rasul Allah*, and regarding the Holy Prophet I believe that "he is the Messenger of Allah and *Khatam al-Nabiyyin*" (the Qur'an, 33:40). I swear to this statement as many times as the Holy Qur'an, and as many times as there are excellency of the Holy Prophet in God's eyes. No belief of mine is opposed to the directions of God or of the Holy Prophet, and he who thinks otherwise is mistaken. Whoever still considers me a *kafir*, and does not refrain from declaring me as such, should remember with certainty that God will question him after his death."

"In all matters my beliefs are the same as those of the other *ahl sunnah*. In this house of God, I admit most clearly that I believe in the finality of prophethood of the *Khatam al-anbiya*, the Holy Prophet. Whoever denies the finality of prophethood, I consider him to be a disbeliever and outside the pale of Islam."

SWORN DECLARATION OF HAZRAT MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI, FIRST HEAD OF THE LAHORE AHMADIYYA COMMUNITY:

"I, Muhammad Ali, head of the Lahore Ahmadiyyah Community, do swear by Almighty God that my belief is that Hazrat Mirza Sahib was a Mujaddid and the Messiah, but not a prophet, and that a person cannot become a *kafir* and excluded from the pale of Islam by denying him as such; this was also the belief of Hazrat Mirza Sahib himself. "O God, if I have lied in swearing by Thy name, send upon me such exemplary punishment as could not come from human means, and by which the world would see how terrible and frightening is God's punishment for those who deceive His creatures by swearing falsely in His name."

OUR SOLE AIM IS SERVICE OF ISLAM

by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam

Let this fact be remembered that Almighty God has terminated all kinds of Prophethood and Apostleship after the Holy Quran and the personality of the Last Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Let this also be remembered that we have come in this world and have been sent only as a servant of the Faith of Islam and not in order to forsake the Islamic faith by coining another one. Let then every one safeguard himself from the devil's insinuation and let him evince a sincere love for Islam, never forgetting the true glory of the Holy Prophet, may peace be on him. In all sincerity and truth, we are only servants of the faith of Islam and this is the sole aim of our advent.

However, the words prophet and apostle used in respect to us are meant only in metaphorical and figurative sense; because in the Arabic lexicology apostleship implies being sent while prophethood means divulgence of future secrets from God as well as to reveal deep secrets and profound spiritual mysteries of faith. Keeping well this much in mind, therefore it may be permissible to use them in these restricted significance. But in the Islamic terminology, these words, Prophet and Apostle, applicable only to a person who brings a complete code of *Shariat* or to one who annuls some of the previous orders or to one who reckons himself not as a follower of a previous prophet or still yet to one who claims direct communion with God

without the intervention of another prophet. Hence, it should be clearly distinguished as not to take such a meaning here in this case. Because we have no other Book besides the Holy Quran, we have no other faith except Islam to follow, and we do believe in the fundamental principles of Islam, *i.e.* the Finality of Prophethood with our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the last of the Books, the Holy Quran.

It is important hence to remember that true Faith of Islam may not be made a plaything in the hands of children. We entertain no other claim for us contrary to being true servants of the Faith of Islam. Whosoever therefore ascribes any higher claim besides it, on our part, attributes a false claim to us. We are recipients of spiritual beneficence only through the medium of our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and acquire spiritual lore and learning only through the Holy Quran. Hence it is of utmost importance that none should entertain any other belief beside it in his heart; otherwise he himself would be accountable for the same before God.

If we are not servants of the Faith of Islam, then all our endeavours are bound to be ineffectual, rejected and fruitless and we would be responsible to God for the same (*Al-Hakm*, 1899).

DIGNITY OF MAN AS EMPHASISED BY ISLAM

Masud Beg Mirza

Islam has made unique contributions to human civilization; and among these is the concept of the dignity of man. According to the Holy Quran, man is the noblest of God's creation, as it says: "Certainly We created man in the best make" (95:4). At another place the Holy Quran declares: "And surely We have honoured the children of Adam and We carry them in the land and the sea, and We provide them with good things, and We have made them to excel highly most of those whom We have created". (17:70) Man was made Allah's vicegerent on earth, and he was destined to rule everything around him. Says the Holy Quran: "And when thy Lord said to the angels, I am going

to place in the earth one who shall rule in it". (2:30) And the idea of man being the ruler of the universe is repeated in many verses of the Holy Book. "And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all, from Himself". (45:13) "Allah is He Who made subservient to you the sea that the ships may glide therein by His command, and that you may seek of His grace, and that you may give thanks". (45:12) "He has made subservient to you the sun and the moon; each pursues its course till an appointed time". (31:29) "And He has made subservient to you the night and the day and the sun and the moon. And the stars are made subservient

by His command. Surely there are signs in this for a people who understand". (16:12)

Man's degradation

According to Islam, man's position in nature was that of a conqueror. He was created to control all the forces of nature and to rule in the earth and not to bow before them. But man degraded himself to the utmost when he started worshipping the earth, rivers, trees, fire, the sun and the moon and the stars, and all those objects of nature which were made subservient to him. He even worshipped unhewn stones, and sometimes carved out idols with his own hands and worshipped them as if they were Divine, or as if they controlled good or evil for him. As the Holy Quran says: "Do you worship that which you hew out? And Allah has created you and what you make". (37:95-96) And as Abraham asked his Sire: "Why dost thou worship that which neither hears, nor sees, nor does it avail thee in the least". (19:42) The gravest of sins, according to the Holy Quran, is *Shirk* or associating others with Allah. This is not due to a feeling of jealousy on the part of God, but because *Shirk* demoralizes man, while Divine unity brings about his moral elevation. That is why Islam has laid so much emphasis on *tauheed* or oneness of God, which is the most fundamental principle of the Islamic faith.

Attainment of knowledge by man

Man was endowed with vast capabilities for attaining knowledge. In the first place, he was given knowledge by Allah, as the Holy Quran says: "And He gave Adam knowledge of all things". (2:31) The Arabs were an illiterate people, and reading and writing was so rare among them that it may be said not to have existed at all. The Holy Prophet himself did not know reading and writing and is called an Unlearned Prophet, as stated in the Quran: "And thou didst not recite before it any book, nor didst thou transcribe one with thy right hand". (29:48) Yet the first Divine message received by him was about reading and writing. As the Quran says: "Read in the name of thy Lord Who created. Creates man from a clot. Read and thy Lord is most Bounteous, Who taught to write with the pen. He taught man what he knew not" (96:1-5) Read and write, was thus his first message; and to these two means of gaining knowledge of things, the faculty of observation was

also granted to man. The Holy Quran has repeatedly invited the attention of man to the creation of this universe and the various phenomena working around him. He is asked to observe and reflect. To quote one instance from the Quran: "In the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day, there are surely signs for men of understanding. Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and (lying) on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord, Thou has not created this in vain"! (3:189-90) The process of observing and reflecting convinces man that every thing made by God is perfect. He sees no in-congruity in Allah's creation, and this naturally leads him to His glorification. "Glorify the name of thy Lord, the Most High! Who creates things, then makes them complete; And Who makes things according to measure, then guides them to their goal". (87:1-3)

Man, before Islam, was at the lowest ebb of human civilization. He was just a slave of nature's forces. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) raised him to the dignity of the master and the ruler, and it was due to this realization of man's position in the universe that the Muslims in their very early history took vigorous strides towards the expansion of knowledge and the advancement of the sciences. Reading and writing was within a few years spread throughout the whole of Arabia and other countries which came under the influence of Islam, and the Muslim State so encouraged the pursuit of study and scientific research, that centres of learning and universities sprang up throughout the empire of Islam.

Man's sinlessness at birth

According to Islam every child is born in a state of sinlessness; and it is afterwards in life, that a person becomes a Jew or a Christian or anything else by following the religion of his parents. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Every child that is born conforms to the true religion (Allah's *fitrah*); and it is his parents who make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian". (Bukhari, 32:79). Every child is thus recognized by birth to be a Muslim; and the purity of human nature is not affected by his being born of non-Muslim parents. The Holy Prophet once related a vision in which he had seen the prophet Abraham in paradise with children all around him, and he added that those children were all the children that had died in the state of nature, i.e.

before they attained the age of discretion. Some of the companions of the Holy Prophet thereupon asked him if the children of the polytheists were also included? The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes, the children of those who set up gods with God (*mushrikeen*) as well". (Bukhari, 91:48) The doctrine of the sinlessness of man by birth is an aid to his leading a sinless life. If a man does good and avoids evil, he is true to his nature. It further strengthens him to overcome sin, because he knows that nature had fitted him for this task. And step by step he can further rise to very high spiritual levels.

The goal of life for a Muslim

Not only that no impurity is attached to man by birth, but he also partakes of the Divine nature, for

it was the Divine spirit that was breathed into man, into every human child. As the Holy Quran says: "Who made beautiful everything that He created, and He began the creation of man from dust. Then He made his progeny of an extract of worthless water. Then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit". (32:7-9). The Divine Spirit spoken of here is something distinct from the animal soul. It shows a mystic relation of the spirit of man with the Divine Spirit, and refers to the higher life of man. The destiny of man, according to Islam, is thus higher than mere conquest of nature; it is to seek union with the Divine Spirit. The goal of life is *liqa-Allah*, or the meeting of God. In the language of the Holy Quran: "O man! thou must strive a hard striving (to attain) to thy Lord until thou meet Him". (84:6).

Definition of a Muslim in the light of the Quran and the Sunnah - I

by Hafiz Maulana Sher Muhammad

Rendered into English by Masud Akhtar, B.A., LL.B.

The question 'Who is a Muslim?' should normally be much too simple to answer and the definition of a Muslim is so easily intelligible that it should not be difficult for a person of average mental competence to know as to who is a Muslim. But selfish motives and political ambitions render one's thinking so crooked that he becomes incapable of seeing and recognizing simple and common truth. This, coupled with the practice of 'Professional Priestcraft' pooling the monopoly of religious teachings in a self motivated class of people generally known as 'Ulema' has so completely confused the perception of the common Muslim that most of even those who hath had the benefit of receiving modern education in colleges and universities can not fully understand as to who is and who is not a Muslim. The nefarious practice of proclaiming a Muslim a heretic or *kafir* has been so extensively indulged into by the so-called 'Ulema' of various ages in Islamic history that without proper insight into the teachings of Islam it is really difficult to determine as to who is a Muslim or what is the definition of a Muslim. It will be no exaggeration to say that the blood bath of Muslims by Muslims in the name of religion that has gone on in the name of religion at various intervals since the times of Hadhrat Ali, Allah be pleased with him, and the proclamation of *Kufr* (heresy) against the great Imams and the Savants of the Muslim Ummah in various periods during the last fourteen hundred years, all emanated from political and selfish motives. The very fact that there is not a single sect or school of thought in the whole Muslim World which has not been made victim of a

proclamation of *Kufr* by the Ulema of one or the other Muslim sect should suffice to bear out the truth of our above assertion to a man of average common sense.

History of the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent for the past hundred years or so warrants a special study in this regard. The induction of the political process of electioneering into Indian Politics by the British rulers helped accelerate the practice of proclaiming *Kafir* or Muslims by the Ulema of India. As and when the elections drew nearer, the politicians, who otherwise had nothing to do with religion, would start experiencing the 'fits' of religion - "Religion is in danger at the hands of so and so sect or school of thought," they will proclaim and resultantly a political or mass movement in the name of religion will be mounted. At times Shia-Sunni differences will be fanned or Brailvi-Dev Bandi issue will be jumped, anti-Wahabi or anti-Ahmadi sentiments will be generated and exploited in the name of 'danger to Islam' or 'protection of the Finality of the Prophethood'. Strange though it may appear, yet the fact remains that all such political movements and proclamations of *kufur* originated in those areas of India where either the Muslims formed the majority of the population or they formed quite a sizeable minority. This tradition has been kept going even after the independence of India and partition into two Sovereign States of Bharat and Pakistan as 'danger to Islam' and 'Finality of Prophethood' continues to loom in Pakistan, a Muslim majority state, and not in Bharat in spite of more than three hundred anti-Muslim riots during the past 35 years. The pattern of this

process is not difficult to follow. The politicians are interested in the votes of the majority of the populace, hence they select as their victim any Muslim Sect which is smaller in number and level all sorts of false and fabricated allegations against it. Since the media and press are either in the hands of the majority, or none dares incur the displeasure of the majority in the better interest of their business, the poor victim of the process finds itself completely helpless. No one listens to them in the wilderness of the hysteria generated by political forces of the country. No one cares to verify as to what the true facts are and this goes on year after year. No one stops to think that 'Islam' and 'Finality of

Prophethood' are not that weak as would exist only through the help and assistance of those 'political wrestlers'. No one remembers that Almighty Allah has vouchsafed 'Islam' and the 'Finality of the Prophethood' and Himself is the best protector of all. Since, in this political halloo-baloo, the real teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah as to 'Who is a Muslim' and what are his rights to be considered a Muslim are relegated to the back of minds and, since this practice of proclamation of *Kufr* is being now extended to all over the world, hence it seems necessary that the teachings of Islam, with regard to this problem, be brought to the knowledge of our readers.

FIRE FROM THE GREEN TREE

N.A. Faruqi, Lahore

The Holy Quran says:

Does not man see that We have created him from a small life-germ? Then lo! he is an open disputant. And he strikes out a likeness for Us, and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones, when they are rotten? Say: He will give life to them, Who brought them into existence at first. And He is the Knower of all creation, Who produced fire for you from the green tree, so that with it you kindle. (36:77-80)

These are verses of the well-known chapter, *Surah Ya Seen*, which is recited to a person who is dying. And rightly so, for it discusses the question of life after death, and holds out promise of the life eternal. There could be nothing more reassuring and soothing to a dying person, for who wants to cease to exist? However poor and miserable one's life may be, one does not wish to die as that *looks* like the end of one's existence. He who commits suicide is rightly described by the law as "temporarily of unsound mind" He is liable to punishment, if he survives the attempt, under all laws. He also incurs the punishment of the Hereafter.

A normal person who is sound in mind does not wish to cease to exist. To him the good news that he is merely passing on to a next and a better life is the best news that could be. Says the Holy Quran: "Nay, you prefer the life of this world, while the Hereafter is better and more lasting" (87:16-17). What could be better news to the dying person?

Life After Death

Life after death is therefore the fulfilment of man's strongest desire to live for ever. All religions have given this assurance. Yet, a large number of people these days deny that there is life after death. Why? Because of the Divine Judgment which will be made

in the Hereafter of how one spent one's life in this world. The skeptics do not really want to be judged. But they raise spurious objections about the possibility of resuscitation. And the well-known objection is the one quoted in the verses with which this article opens, "Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten?" The flesh rots first. The bones last a long time. But even they rot in course of time. So this ultimate disappearance of the human body is made the basis for the objection to resuscitation.

The first point made by the Holy Quran about a person who raises such an objection is that "He strikes out a likeness for Us, and forgets his own creation", meaning that such a person judges Allah upon himself, forgetting that he is a mere creature while Allah is the Creator and the two cannot be alike. Man is helpless in the matter of creation because he himself is a part of it. He should not judge the Great Creator upon himself. Still the objection has to be answered on merits. How can man reduced to dust be resuscitated?

To that a *preliminary* reply is given: "He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first." This is really a theoretical reply to a theoretical objection, "who can re-create the human body after it is reduced to dust?" The plain, simple but most logical answer is: "The same Creator Who first created the human body from dust".

I have said that this is only a theoretical reply to a theoretical objection. For the Holy Quran says that the human body which deteriorates with age and becomes a burden and a suffering to the ageing person is no longer a suitable vehicle for the human soul whose progress is unlimited and everlasting. The soul therefore passes on to another, a better and an everlasting world where it gets a body which does not deteriorate because it is ever-lasting like the world of

the Hereafter, unlike this world's ephemeral life for which an ephemeral body was given. Says the Holy Quran in the same chapter as the opening verses of this article: "And whosoever We cause to live long (in this world), We reduce to an abject state in the matter of physical creation. Do they not understand?" What people do not understand is that the physical body which necessarily deteriorates with age cannot be the vehicle for an ever-lasting life. It is a drag, a burden and a source of constant suffering to the ageing person. So that man is in a way glad to be relieved of his physical sufferings at death. And death should have no horrors or the fear of ceasing to exist, for he goes to a better and an everlasting life.

The common misconception that the same body of clay which is reduced to dust in the grave will be revived is removed a few verses later in the same chapter of the Holy Quran: "Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the *like* of them? Yes! And He is the Creator *par excellence*, the Knowledgeable" (36:81) The mention of the creation of heavens in this verse conveys the great knowledge that the heavens were created for man's life after death. His soul came from the heavens to which it "returns". The fact of the human soul *returning* to its Creator after death is repeated so often in the Holy Quran.

The commentary of the late Maulana Muhammad Ali on the verse quoted immediately above is most illuminating: "In the Resurrection, therefore, men will be the like of what they are here, not exactly the same bodies of clay. Elsewhere, after mentioning that man wonders at the new creation, it is said, "We know indeed what the earth diminishes of them, and with Us is a writing (record) that preserves" (50:4). The body may become dust, but what man does of good or evil is preserved, and it is according to this good or evil that he receives a new body. The idea of Resurrection is carried to perfection in Islam, and the Resurrection is meant to give a new life to all. Ultimately the spirit of man is returned to the Spirit Divine, and that is again and again called the meeting with God."

The Mystery of Resurrection

In this scientific age, man wants to know, and to unveil, all mysteries of Allah's wonderful creation. That leads to scientific research in all branches of the creation. The Holy Quran is not a book of physical sciences. But it has made a science of religion and spiritual matters. To enable man to understand the science of the spiritual world, the Holy Quran frequently refers to the physical sciences, because the material and spiritual worlds (call them matter and anti-matter as the modern scientists refer to the two)

run parallel. And in doing so, the Holy Quran disclosed scientific truths nearly 1400 years ago which were not known then even to the scientists of that time. To give only two out of several such cases, the Holy Quran said, "And We gave life to all things from water", or "And We created a pair of each thing" (51:49). The Arabic word translated as 'pair' has a wider connotation of opposite sexes or opposites which attract each other such as positive and negative particles of electricity.

The Holy Quran is the only revealed book to give even a scientific explanation, with reference to the physical world, of how man's resurrection takes place after death. In the verses quoted at the beginning of this article, the giving of next life to the dead persons is compared to the production of "fire for you from the green tree, so that with it you kindle".

Man and the Tree

The above comparison made by the Holy Quran is an amazingly simple explanation in a few words of the mystery of resurrection. Details of resurrection may or may not become known to us when we die because we ourselves will be undergoing the process. But one gets some concept of the complicated mystery from the comparison made by the Holy Quran.

The greenness of the tree, in fact of all vegetation, is due to the presence in it of a green chemical substance called Chlorophyll. But the Holy Quran has named the tree, and not all the vegetation, for comparison to the man as there is a similarity between the two. The tree is rooted in the earth from which it draws its sustenance and life. So is man rooted in the earth in this life to draw his sustenance and physical life. When sunlight from the sky falls on the tree sapling it grows and acquires its stature. So does man grow in human stature in the moral and spiritual sense, when the heavenly light (sent down by Allah in the form of revelation through His prophets) falls on man and he benefits from it. As the tree grows old and wrinkles up, and ultimately dries up and dies, it is cut from its roots in the earth. So does man wrinkle up with age, lose his health and colour and ultimately die, when his physical link with the earth is cut off. The sun's energy, as I will explain later, lies hidden in the dead and dried up tree and is released when a spark is provided and fire is produced which is the stored-up sun's energy re-appearing as heat and light as it had fallen from the sun on the tree. So will man's spiritual self, made up of the soul which came from Above and developed in the human body by whatever good or bad man did in his life, and which "self" (*Nafs*) lies hidden in him, emerges into the next life. The cause which made the hidden energy of the sun re-emerge from the dead tree was the spark applied to it. In the

case of man, the cause will be the Divine Command, for the Holy Quran says in the very next verse: “His command, when He intends anything is only to say to it; Be, and it becomes” (36:82). I repeat a portion of Maulana Muhammad Ali’s commentary on this: “The body may become dust; but what man does of good or evil is preserved, and it is according to this good or evil that he receives a new body.”

Chlorophyll and Photo-synthesis

Let us revert to the green tree. Its greenness, as I have already explained, is due to the presence of a chemical substance called Chlorophyll. Its primary function is to absorb carbon dioxide gas from the air, but only when the sunlight falls on it. What happens then is a chemical process called photo-synthesis. It is retarded on cloudy days and is totally stopped in the dark. Carbon dioxide thus taken in combines with water which the leaves have been supplied from the earth to undergo a series of chemical changes within the leaves. The final product is glucose (sugar) that serves as food for the tree’s growth and development. All these reactions, which are continuously going on in the tree, require some kind of energy for their functioning, which in this case is supplied by the sunlight. Chlorophyll traps the sunlight and converts it into solar energy that is used by the plant in manufacturing glucose from carbon dioxide and water.

The solar energy does not disappear after it has performed the manufacturing process but remains entrapped in the plant substance. The energy lies, so to say, in a dormant state. It is a scientific axiom that energy cannot be destroyed but it can be transformed into different forms. The solar energy lies conserved even in the apparently dead and dry logs of wood - but imperceptible to the human eyes due to its limited range of vision. The dormant energy requires a cause to become visible. The cause is provided by its ignition. The elements composing its substance disassociate into the elements it was made of, namely, carbon dioxide, water etc. During this process of disassociation, the conserved solar energy is re-transformed into light and heat (which we term as fire) which originally came from the sun in the form of light and heat. The fire from the wood thus comes from the sun really.

Summing up

The analogy drawn by the Holy Quran may be analysed as follows:

- (a) Like the green tree, man is rooted in the earth from which he originates and from which he draws the water of life.
- (b) Like the green tree again, man acquires his true stature by a combination of the water of earthly life as well as the heavenly light sent down by Allah in the form of revelation through prophets who have been compared to the sun. Says the Holy Quran: Blessed is He Who made the stars in the heavens and made therein a sun and a moon which is illuminated” (25:61). Now, science has revealed that the stars are also really suns, but they look like stars because of their distance from the earth. Similarly, the prophets, before the Holy Prophet Muhammad, have become distant from us because their revealed books are more or less lost and so are their true teachings. Their heavenly light has thus become dim for us. By Divine dispensation, *the* star (namely our sun) meant to give heavenly light to the earth for all time to come however shines in its full glory. Now, the Holy Prophet Muhammad has been compared to our luminous sun (33:46) in the spiritual world. And the Book revealed to him is preserved completely as admitted even by its critics. And the sayings and deeds of the Holy Prophet are also *fully* preserved. So that his revealed Book and his example shine in full glory for the benefit of mankind for all time to come. (The moon referred to in the verse quoted above are the *Mujaddids* or reformers who will appear every 100 years and will reflect the Prophet’s light after he died as the moon reflects the sun’s light after it has set. Like the moon, because of their elevation in the spiritual world, the *Mujaddids* catch the Holy Prophet’s light and reflect it for the benefit of the world).
- (c) Like the green tree, with the help of the heavenly light, the man who accepts that light and acts upon it, gains moral and spiritual stature for himself and also serves Allah’s creation as the green tree does. Remember, that with the help of the heavenly light, the green tree derives nourishment for its own growth and

development, and it also purifies the atmosphere by absorbing and breaking up its poisonous carbon dioxide, and re-generating oxygen for the benefit of mankind and even the animals.

(d) When the tree dies, it is cut off from the earth. So is man on his death.

(e) When a spark is applied to the dead and dried up tree, it is transformed into another form, namely, that of fire. In that process the carbon within the tree combines with the oxygen once generated by the tree for the benefit of mankind and the animal world. Similarly, a dead human being's own goodness and the good he did to others combine to give him the new life. The activating cause, like the spark applied to the dead wood, is the Divine Command "Be, and it becomes" as already explained earlier. Like the sun's energy hidden in the tree which comes out in the form of fire when the wood is lit, the spiritual energy received by man from On High which lies hidden in his body comes out of it in the form of a new creation as different from his first creation as fire is from the dead wood.

Human Form in the Hereafter

I have already quoted the Holy Quran's verse: "Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them (human beings). Yes. And He is the Creator *par excellence*, the Knowledgeable" (36:81).

Man's re-creation for his life in the heavens will be *like* his worldly being but not the same body. Other places in the Holy Quran also throw light on the subject. To quote one of them: "We have ordained death among you, and We are not to be overcome, that We may change your state and make you grow into what you know not" (56:60-61). Maulana Muhammad Ali's commentary on it runs as follows: "It is the Resurrection that is spoken of here. The present state will be changed, we are told, and men will be made to grow into a new creation which they do not know (here). Clearly it is not the material body of this life, but a new body which grows out of the deeds of men"

Determination of the New Moon

by Prof. Abu Zafar

Translated by Shahid Aziz, M.Sc., England

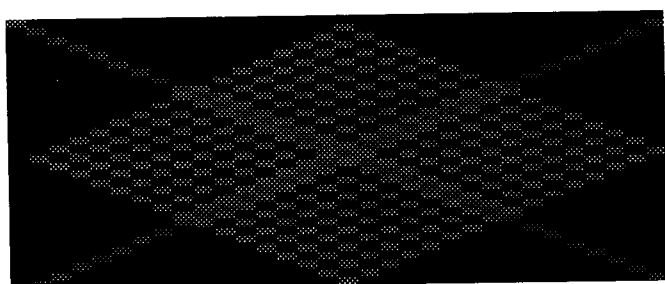
(Traditionally, the commencement of a Muslim month, which begins with the appearance of the new moon, has been determined by observation by eye. For some years now a debate has been going on in the Muslim world about the use of scientific computations to determine the moon. We produce an authoritative article below which shows conclusively that there is nothing "un-Islamic" in the use of such modern methods. - Editor)

In dealing with this topic it is wrong to call those having a different point of view from one's own as insincere, or to issue some kind of a religious decree against them. All the contending parties may be sincere. I am not hinting at any person or group in writing this article but want only to bring to the public's notice some academic research I have carried out. The Holy Prophet had this to say about observing the moon to determine the beginning or end of the month of Ramadaan:

- (1) "We are an unlettered people; we neither write nor keep account. Sometimes a month is this much and sometimes that much, so that it is sometimes twenty-nine and sometimes thirty days" (*Bukhari*).
- (2) "Ibn Umar related the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying: When you see it (the moon) start the fast, and when you see it (again) end it (i.e., Ramadaan); if it is cloudy then estimate it" (*Bukhari*).
- (3) "The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Look for the moon to start the fast and look for it to end it (i.e., Ramadaan), and if it is cloudy then complete thirty days" (*Bukhari*).

Meaning of Ru'yat ("Seeing") and Faqduru ("Estimate")

The issue becomes clear if the words *ru'yat* and *faqduru la hul* meaning "seeing" and "estimate it" are explained. Literally, *ru'yat* means to see with one's eyes or sense or heart. All lexicons of Arabic (*al-Munjid*, *Aqrab al-Muwarid*, *al-Qamus*, *Lisan al-Arab*, *Mantah al-Arab*) contain all of these



alternative meanings. Further, Imam Raghīb in the *Mufradat* gives examples of the various meanings in which the Quran has used this word:

“*Ru’yat* (or *to see*) is of many different kinds in accordance with human faculties. First, as perception, e.g., “you will surely see hell”. Second as imagination, e.g., “if only you could see him when he was taking the unbelievers’ soul”. Third, as intellect, e.g., “you do not see what I am seeing”. Fourth, as understanding, e.g., “there was no shadow of doubt in what the heart saw” (*Mufradat*, Letter *ra* followed by *ya*, p.208).

Therefore, *ru’yat* includes seeing by eye, by imagination, by intellect, or by understanding. So, *ru’yat* means to gain knowledge of a thing by any of the methods described above. The Holy Quran uses *ru’yat* (to see) thirty or forty different times in such a way that it cannot possibly mean “to see with the eye”. For example:

- (1) “Did you not see how your Lord dealt with Aad” (89:6).
- (2) “Did you not see him who argued with Abraham” (2:258).

In neither of these verses can one take “to see” to mean “to see with the eye”, for none of those who witnessed these events were alive at the time of the revelation of the Holy Quran. Therefore, in these verses, “to see” means to gain knowledge from historical or technical sources. So when the Holy Prophet said, “when you see the moon...” it means when you determine that the moon is new, by seeing it with the eye, or by some other method, then start and end the month of fasting.

Similarly, the other phrase of the tradition, *faqduru lahu*, literally means “estimate it”. Since the early days of Islam the elders of religion have been interpreting this phrase in two ways:

1. Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn Ali of Baghdad (d.370 A.H.) famous as Imam Jasaas, writes in *Ahkam al-Qur’an* (vol.i, p.236):

“Some people say that this tradition means to rely on stages of the moon. Therefore, if the location is such that, had there not been cloud or dust, the new moon would have been visible, then both for the beginning and end of the month of Ramadaan, the order of “seeing with the eye” would be applicable; otherwise not. Others contend that if it is cloudy then thirty days of Shabaan (month preceding Ramadaan) should be completed.”

We are not concerned here with a discussion of

the correctness or otherwise of either of these interpretations. However, it is clear from this that from the very inception there were at least some people who felt that astronomical calculations could be relied upon. In fact both interpretations are correct because the two different traditions (nos.2 and 3 above) deal with two different situations. One relates to completion of thirty days for those places where astronomers or astronomical data are not available. The other to where such experts or data is available, so that the day and the time of the new moon can be determined by computation.

2. Hadrat Matarrif ibn Abdullah of Basra (d.87 A.H.), a leading personage from the generation after the Companions, gave the same interpretation (*Hadaita al-Mujtahid lil-Qurtabi*, p.275):

“When the new moon is hidden by clouds then the knowledge of the movement of the sun and the moon shall be referred to.”

3. Some members of the Shafi’i school of jurisprudence also agree with this. *Al-Fiqh ‘ala l-madhahib al-arba’* (vol.i, p.551) states:

“An astronomer, and any one who has faith in such computation, can rely on a statement (of the appearance of the new moon).”

4. Imam Subki Shafi’i considered computation to be more reliable than the evidence of two eye-witnesses. In *Rad al-Mukhtar* (vol.ii, p.100, published in Egypt) it is said:

“In a writing of his, Imam Subki Shafi’i has also inclined to relying on astronomers because computation is definite...”

5. Qazi Abdul Jabbar and the author of *Jam’ al-Ulum* also adopted this position. In vol.ii (p.100) of the above mentioned book we also find:

“Qazi Abdul Jabbar and the author of *Jam’ al-Ulum* have already been quoted as saying that there is no harm in relying on astronomers.”

6. In the same place the author of *Quniya* is quoted as giving the view-point of Ibn Muqatil as follows:

“He used to consult astronomers, and when a

group of them concurred he used to accept their advice.”

7. Allama Subhi Mamsani quotes Ahmad Shakir’s *Awail al-Shahur in Falsifatu al-Tashri* as saying that it is a unanimously agreed principle of jurisprudence that an effect remains only for the duration of its cause, and then it ends. He then goes on:

“And it is on the basis of this principle that some jurists declared the use of astronomical computation to be lawful in determining Muslim months, particularly the month of Ramadaan. The explanation is that the tradition which commands that only “seeing with the eye” of a new moon can be relied on, was related to a special reason. That was that the nation being addressed was unlettered and could not compute. Now that this nation has come out of its state of illiteracy and is literate and can compute with certainty, it now becomes incumbent that they should refer to certainty (computation) to determine the new moon, and only on the previous method where astronomical computation is not known.”

8. According to *Muwahhi al-Din*, a commentary of the Hadith collection *Mu’atta* of Imam Malik, (vol.ii, p.85):

“Ibn Arabi has quoted Ibn Suraij’s statement that “*Faqduru lahu*” (estimate it) is for those who have knowledge of astronomy, and *fakmilu al-iddah* (“complete the term” of thirty days) is addressed to the ordinary people.”

There is nothing in Islam which makes the use of knowledge for religious purposes illegal. Here four examples are quoted. Firstly, law of heritage is a religious matter. However, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) himself used the science of physiognomy to determine lineage.

Secondly, punishment of a thief is a religious matter in Islam. However, if a thief is apprehended by the use of fingerprints or tracker dogs this would not be unlawful.

Thirdly, determining times of daily prayers is a religious matter. Scholars of the past had decreed that the use of computation was unlawful even for this. Yet, today we find such time-tables in every mosque and every home.

And, fourthly, determination of the times of starting and ending a daily fast is a religious matter and yet we find that these time-tables are published months in advance. What makes these lawful?

Indeed, the scholars should direct themselves more to declaring the computed time-table for prayers unlawful, rather than the determination of the new moon by computation. For prayer has a higher place in Islam than fasting and it is said that after death one will be questioned about prayer first!

In this day and age, astronomical computations are as certain as two plus two makes four, and experts can compute times of all events related to heavenly bodies so that there is not a hair’s breadth of difference between the occurrence and the computation. The Lord did not create these bodies to deceive us, or so that we may ignore them. On the contrary, they were created so that we may make use of them to determine the calendar.

“Allah has ordained stages for the moon so that you may be able to compute the calendar from them” (10:5). These stages are predestined so that there can be no deviation and this leaves no doubt in computation. That is why the Holy Quran exhorts us to use rather than ignore them.

Time is the best dispenser of religious decrees. When the loud-speaker was invented its use was declared unlawful for sermons, but now it is used even for prayers. Paper currency was also declared unlawful, yet there is not a single Muslim country without it now. Of course, there are differences of opinion on all matters of jurisprudence; if these are going to make us unacceptable to each other then we will have to wash our hands of all of these. Indeed, as Astronomy and astronomical computation have reached a pinnacle, and the time when, as they improve in scholarship, all Muslims accept them is not far, these problems will, in fact, find their own solution automatically and the world will bow its head to the commandments of Islam. It is a sad commentary on our intellectual state that at a time when men are landing on the moon we are involved in heated debates on whether it is lawful to determine a new lunar month by computation! May Allah grant us the wisdom to understand and act upon the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The question was whether *ru’yat* can be applied to determine the new moon by astronomical knowledge. In the light of the Holy Quran, traditions of the Holy Prophet, and the views of the elders of religion, our honest opinion is that, because knowledge of astronomy has reached such a level of certainty, there is no danger to our faith to do so. If you disagree with us, then wait a few years, and you will find, *insha Allah*, that all Muslim countries will begin to have confidence in these calculations.

Maulana Muhammad Ali in the eyes of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement - 1

*Compiled by Hafiz Maulana Sher Muhammad Sahib
and translated into English by Mr Nasir Ahmad.*

1897

The late Maulana Muhammad Ali took oath of allegiance at the hand of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam in 1897. At that time he was a lecturer in the Oriental College, Lahore. Simultaneously he was preparing for the final examination of Bachelor of Laws. The Maulana had such an extreme love for the Founder that he used to go to Qadian almost every Saturday or Sunday without fail. Here is what the Maulana himself writes about it:

“In our student life we used to go to Qadian very often. Those days the train from Lahore used to reach Batala at about twelve o’clock in the night. At that late hour of night no *tanga* or *yaka* was available which could carry us to Qadian - a place about eleven miles from Batala. So we used to walk down to Qadian and during the night would lie down on the floor of the mosque for rest till the call for the Fajr prayer was sounded. Our visit used to be just for one day. I entertained a strange zeal and eagerness for the visit. My heart would eagerly yearn to meet Hazrat Mirza Sahib. We would reach Qadian on Saturday and start back on Sunday evening.”

During student life regular exchange of letters continued between Maulana Muhammad ‘Ali and Hazrat Mirza Sahib. Translation of some of the letters is given below:

1898

(1)

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

My dear brother Maulvi Muhammad ‘Ali Sahib, Assalamo alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh.

Received your kind letter. I am fervently engaged in praying for you. Allah, the Great, the Forgiving may grant you success. I hope you will have perfect trust in Allah and will answer the questions (in the examination) with care, attention and without haste. You also keep praying. May Allah bless you. Amen!

Yours affectionately,
Ghulam Ahmad from Qadian

5th Dec. 1898

(2)

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

My dear brother Maulvi Muhammad ‘Ali, M.A., Assalamo alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh.

The manuscript of the defence petition, which is to be printed, has been sent through my dear brother Maulvi Sher ‘Ali Sahib. It is my candid opinion, and I consider it expedient and essential, that you translate it with due attention and alongside pass it on for printing... If something in this article has been overlooked by me, kindly add it. In the end I pray that Allah may bless you with success and may reward you for the service. Amen!

Yours affectionately,
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

18th Jan. 1899

(3)

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

My dear brother Maulvi Muhammad Ali Sahib, Assalamo alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh.

Congratulations on the outstanding success in the Examination. All these days, when the time for the announcement of the result was nearing, I was much worried and concerned. All praise be to Allah that He blessed you with success...

Yours affectionately,
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

8th Feb. 1899

(4)

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

My dear brother Muhammad ‘Ali Sahib, Assalamo alaikum wa Rahmatullah was Barakatuh.

I have received your kind letter. I am extremely happy that Allah in His perfect wisdom has made available an opportunity for your stay in Qadian. It seems God Almighty has destined much reward and blessings for you. And that is why this opportunity has been provided to you. I think it will be better that you spend the summer till the end of October in Qadian and vigorously serve the cause of Islam.

And during this stay avail of the opportunity of listening to the lectures of Maulvi Noor al-Din Sahib on the Qur'an. Thus in October, when the winter starts, you will be free to do your own work. This period of your stay will certainly prove to be an elixir for serving the cause of Islam. I entertain highly pious opinion about you. And I am sure you will attain great heights. Since long time I am thinking of dividing my community into two groups. One of those who are inclined partly towards the worldly gains and partly towards religion and cannot bear great trials and hardships. And the other of those who enter the fold with utmost truthfulness and devotion and in fact they have sacrificed their very souls for the cause of religion. I wish you to be among the latter group. Please come after 15th May 1899 for the long stay in Qadian. I am confident you will be richly rewarded for it. If later on you wish to prepare for some other examination you can easily do it in this secluded life as you will be having ample spare time at your disposal. Anyhow I can visualise that your stay will entail great blessings. So be firmly determined in your heart that you will stay in Qadian till the end of October. Rest is alright.

8th May, 1899 Yours affectionately,
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

(5)

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

My dear Maulvi Muhammad 'Ali Sahib,
Assalamo alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh.

Just now received your kind letter of 8th February 1899. Allah may reward you for the enthusiasm and devotion with which you have started the work. Amen! Amen!

8th Feb. 1899. Yours affectionately,
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

(6)

“Maulvi Muhammad 'Ali is one of the top-most sincere members of my Jama'at. Besides his other capabilities, he has just passed the Law Examination and is staying in Qadian for the last few months, at the cost of worldly loss, for the sake of religious work i.e. to translate my writings into English... During his stay with me I have been watching his character, religious interest and temperament both outwardly and secretly. So thanks to Allah that I have found him an extremely fine person in all aspects of piety and nobility. He

is a humble, modest, righteous and forbearing person, and in many virtuous qualities even enviable... It is evident that a promising and intelligent young man like him, who is characterised with all kinds of good qualities and is also able and praiseworthy, is very hard to find.” (9th August, 1899 *Majmu'ah Ishtiharat*, vol.vi, p.47)

(7)

“I am extremely happy over the fact that by the grace of Allah another righteous young man has become member of our Jama'at. He is my dear brother Maulvi Muhammad 'Ali, M.A., Pleader. I find him promising. He is staying these days in Qadian at the cost of his mundane benefits, to serve the cause of religion. He is being benefited from the lectures of Maulvi Noor al-Din Sahib which are full of deep knowledge and subtle truths of the Qur'an. I am confident, and I will not be wrong in my estimation, that the said young man will make great strides in the way of Allah. I am also sure that the young man, by the grace of Allah, will set such examples of righteousness and perseverance in the way of Allah that these will be worthy of being followed by his fellow friends. O God! may it be so! (4th October, 1899 *Majmu'ah Ishtiharat*, vol.vi p.68).

(8)

“I wish that I write a book on the teachings of Islam and Maulvi Muhammad 'Ali should translate it. The book will consist of three parts: (1) Our duties towards Allah, (2) Duties we owe to ourselves and (3) Our duties towards other human beings.” (10th Dec. 1899 *Manzoor Elahi*, p.188)

(9)

(a) Maulana Muhammad 'Ali wrote in reply to one of the letters to Hazrat Mirza Sahib as follows: My dear leader and Master,

Assalamo alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh.

Your honour told me yesterday afternoon that this humble servant should permanent reside here. I would like to submit something in this connection. When I visited your honour last May for a long stay I had nothing in mind except that some arrangement be made so that, leaving aside all mundane interests, I may sit at your feet and God is witness to it. And this again is the great urge of my heart at the moment. I went to my home-place once or twice during this time but that was just for the pleasure of my parents and nothing else. It never occurred to

my mind to go to my native place and settle down there. I am at your feet and am always at your service. I request you to pray for me that God may keep me steadfast throughout my life and make me die on this very faith. I am prepared to work and live as and wherever your honour would command me. Although I entertain much fear in making this solemn commitment as every guidance lies with Allah, yet as your honour also takes a similar promise while taking the pledge so I dare to say the same words i.e., "I shall keep religion above worldly affairs." It means that the disciple should entrust his entire self and all his capabilities to the divine spiritual guide. Regarding residence I only wish that it should be such that I still enjoy your physical neighbourhood as is the present place where your honour has arranged for my stay. In case I start my legal practice, I still intend to visit you every week-end and that is why I do not wish to reside at a distant place - as distance causes rust on the heart. Thus I would like to construct my house at a place where you may command me and accordingly I will send for some money from my home-place.

Yours affectionately,
Muhammad 'Ali

23rd March, 1900

In reply to the above, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote a reply on the back of this very letter which runs as follows:

(b) My dear brother Maulvi Sahib,
Assalamo alaikum wa Rahmatullah.

I am over-joyed to receive your letter just now. May Allah fulfil your noble aspirations. I am constantly looking for a house. I hope suitable house will be available soon. Anyhow I hope the present house will be sufficient for you for the time being. I had you in my mind while constructing this house and no body else. But private residential portion needs some extension so that all essentialities may be met with. I am after it. I hope Allah will remove the hindrances and will pave the way towards fulfilment of our ambitions. He is All-Powerful indeed!

Yours affectionately,
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

23rd March, 1900.

1901

(a) Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib announced about the starting of a journal in English viz., *The Review of Religions* in a leaflet "An Important Suggestion". There was no Anjuman at that time neither was there any arrangement of

finances for the Journal. All the members got together in Qadian at the call of Hazrat Sahib and decided to run the Journal through contributions. Then an Anjuman was constituted viz., Isha'at-i-Islam to look after the contributions and arrangements of the Journal. The following office-bearers were elected:

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad - *Patron*
Maulvi Hakim Noor al-Din Sahib - *President*
Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib - *Vice-President*
Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din Sahib - *Secretary*
Maulvi Muhammad Ali Sahib - *Assistant Secretary*
Maulvi Muhammad Ali Sahib &
Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din Sahib - *Editors*

Due to certain reasons publication of the Journal was delayed. - 15th Jan. 1901

1902

(a) Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib called editors of *Al-Hakm* and *Al-Badr* and instructed them that they should "always take utmost care in publishing speeches and articles. Lest something is stated in a wrong manner inadvertently... Therefore it seems advisable that you show such articles to Maulvi Muhammad Ali before they are sent to the Press." (*Mal'uzat-i-Ahmadiyya*, vol.vii, p.445) 2nd Nov. 1902)

(b) Hazrat Mirza Sahib said about Maulana Muhammad Ali: "Maulvi Sahib's extremely fine English is something extra-ordinary. Even English people think that I have employed some European who writes for the Journal." (*Al-Badr*, 17th Nov. 1902)

1903

Hazrat Maulana Muhammad 'Ali writes: "A true dream, which I have not seen published anywhere was narrated to me by the Promised Messiah which runs as follows: 'The Promised Messiah and myself are riding a horse together. The horse is galloping at a great speed through streets and lanes of a city. There is a danger of his dashing against at ever turn, but he passes by safely until we reach an open field. There we find a person who points towards me and says that my name is *Majd-ud-Din* (Glorifier of Religion).'" (*Paigham-i-Sulh*, 15th Jan. 1935)



The Glorious Deeds of Muslim History

HOW SPAIN WAS CONQUERED!

By Masud Beg Mirza

During the reign of the Ommayyad Caliph, Waleed bin 'Abdul Malik, Musa ibn Nusair was the governor of the Mediterranean coast and the land stretching westward from Egypt to the Atlantic. The kingdom of Spain at that time was ruled by Roderick, a usurper and a tyrant, to whom Count Julian, the governor of Ceuta, was bitterly opposed. Many Spaniards had taken refuge in Muslim Africa from the grinding tyranny of their kings and bishops. Count Julian and the Spanish refugees made an appeal to Musa to liberate the country from the usurpers' yoke. Musa sent a few hundred men in four ships to make a reconnaissance on the southern coast of Spain. The report was favourable, and next year in the month of Rajab, 92 A.H. (711 A.D.), Tariq ibn Ziyad, a freedman of Musa and his ablest lieutenant, embarked on the coast of Spain. He had under his banner a small force of just 7,000 men, mostly Berbers and some Arabs, and crossing the straits, took possession of the fortress called after him, Gibraltar.

Having properly fortified the Rock to serve as a base for his operations, he descended upon the adjacent province of Algeciras. Immediately on landing, Tariq set fire to the small fleet that had brought his small army to those shores. Allama Iqbal refers to this incident in the following words:

When Tariq burnt his boats on the coast of Spain, They said:

Thou hast acted unwisely.

Far away are we from home, how shall we reach back?

How is it lawful according to Shariat to discard means?

Smiling, he stretched his hand to his sword and said:

"Every land is our land, since it is our God's land".

In a fiery speech he roused the spirits of his men to dash ahead. There was no going back now.

The boats had been burnt. Trusting to the help of God and the sharp edges of their steel, they must make a new home for themselves in Spain. And when they fell on the Spanish army, their feats of valour struck terror into the hearts of the enemy. Theodomir, the Spanish General, sent news to the King in most alarming words. "Our land has been invaded by people", he wrote, "whose name, country and origin are unknown to me. I cannot even tell thee whence they came, whether they fell from the skies or sprang from the earth." The King at once raised a huge army of one hundred thousand to save his crown. Tariq also appealed to Musa for reinforcement, who sent him a detachment of 5,000 cavalry. Thus reinforced, Tariq was able now, with 12,000 men, to hold his ground against the great army of Roderick.

On a lovely July morning the two armies met near Lake La Janda. Before engagement, Tariq once more addressed his soldiers in stirring words. He also told them his vision in which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had given him the happy news of victory. The struggle lasted for eight days, but the issue was uncertain. In the meantime, the two armies had traversed a distance of 20 miles and reached the neighbourhood of the river Guadalete. Here was fought one of the most momentous battles which changed the entire course of history. The famous historian Scott has described the discomfiture of Roderick's army in the following words:

"With amazing ignorance or with fatal disregard of the elementary rules of military tactics, the Goths took up their position with the river Guadalete in their rear Pressing forward with the shrill war-cry of the Moslem, which struck terror into the

defeated Goths, the Moorish squadrons drove the enemy into the rapid waters of the Guadalete The soldiers of Tariq gave no quarter. The ground was heaped with corpses. The channel of the river was choked with the dead and dying, with horses and chariots, and camp equipage, with treasures which the fugitives vainly tried to save. Of the invaders three thousand are said to have fallen, but no computation was made of the loss of the Goth The war-horse of Roderick with trappings of great value was taken, but no trace remained of the King. One of his sandals, encrusted with rubies and emeralds was found on the bank of the river which would seem to indicate that he perished by drowning; but his body was never recovered and his fate is a mystery". ("Moorish Empire in Europe")

The Gothic host was completely routed, and the moral effect of this magnificent victory was immense. It took the heart out of the Spaniards to meet the Muslim invaders in the open. Cities, one after the other, opened their gates, and those who offered some resistance, were also easily capitulated. Tariq now divided his small force into four divisions, and directed one of his lieutenants to proceed towards Cordova; while the other marched on Malaga, and third moved upon Granada and Elvira. And at the head of the main body, Tariq himself marched towards Toledo, the Gothic capital. All these places fell, one after the other, without much difficulty and the whole of Algeciras was quickly reduced to subjection.

In the meantime, Musa ibn Nusair too, fired with jealousy or emulation, landed in Spain with 18,000

men to complete the conquest begun by his illustrious lieutenant. His army included many noble Arabs of the best families of Yemen and several descendants of the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Taking an easterly course, Musa soon reduced Seville and Merida, and was joined by Tariq at Toledo. Aragon, Saragossa, Tarragona, Barcelona and other principal cities of the north opened their gates in succession, and in less than two years the whole of the Spain, as far as the Pyrenees, was in the hands of the Muslims. Portugal was also conquered a few years later, and was formed into a separate province under the name *Al-Gharb*, "The West", and a province of modern Portugal is still called Algarve.

Musa soon crossed into France, and easily reduced the land that had belonged to the Gothic dominions. Standing on the Pyrenees, the brave General conceived the project of conquering the whole of Europe; and in all human probability had he been allowed to carry out his plan, he would have succeeded. The West lay completely at his feet; but the Caliph sent a messenger to recall Musa to Damascus. The cautious and hesitating policy of the Caliph lost the glorious opportunity, with the result that Europe remained enveloped in intellectual darkness for the next eight centuries. Musa was preparing to push farther into France with the object of crossing into Italy, when a second messenger with sterner and immediate mandate arrived with orders for the return of the two conquerors. And marching through the scenes of their unparalleled achievement, both Musa and Tariq made their way back to the straits of Gibraltar.

