

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



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THE FIRST ISLAMIC MISSION IN THE U.K. ESTABLISHED 1913 C.E. AS THE WOKING MUSLIM MISSION

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore (U.K.)

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February 2002 C.E. Meeting

Assalamu alaikum

Venue: *Dar-us-Salaam*

Date: Sunday, 3rd February 2002

Time: 3 p.m.

Topic: The Holy Quran: your source of Inspiration for 2002.
by

Dr M. Hami

Note: Prof. Hami requests you to bring your copy of the Holy Quran, having studied carefully Chapter 2: Section 34.

Regular Activities

Radio programme Every Friday at 2 pm on Panjab Radio (Astra Digital Satellite ch. 880).

Dars-i Quran Third Sunday of every month at 3 pm.

Meeting of the Executive First Sunday of every month at 2 pm.

Meeting of the Jamaat First Sunday of every month at 3 pm.

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By Jalal Ud Din

A discussion of the relationship between religion and culture and life in a multi-faith society.

News

UK
‘Id al-Adha will be celebrated on:
Friday 22nd ‘Id al-Adha
Prayers will take place at 11 a.m.

Holland

Maulana Abdul Raheem Jaggoe has been awarded the Ridder in de Orde van Oranje, Nassau (The Knighthood of the Order of the House of Orange, Nassau) by Her Majesty the Queen of Holland. Many years ago, while in Surinam, Maulana Jaggoe was awarded a royal honour of a lower order. The Mayor of Utrecht, Maulana's home town, decorated the Maulana in an official ceremony. The UK Jamaat congratulates the Maulana on this great honour awarded for exceptional service to the community.

Indonesia

A reprint of the translations of the Holy Quran in the Javanese and Indonesian language is planned. Printing of the Indonesian translations of three other major books of the Jamaat is also being considered. A total of US \$15,000 is required to complete the printing projects. The current economic outlook in Indonesia is poor but members of our Jamaat are doing their best to make sure that these projects reach completion. May Allah bless them and strengthen their resolve.

India

This Jamaat was formally organised and registered only a few years ago. They quickly outgrew their first centre and purchased larger premises. Mr Shaukat Ali, the Regional Director of the South East Asia and Pacific Regions, now writes:

“I need substantial sums next year when we launch a major project to

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buy a piece of land in Delhi to build a mosque and associated facilities. Land prices are very high, therefore it will be a costly project for a small Jamaat. However, Allah is the Greatest and will show us the way.

Delhi is the National Capital of India and it is essential that we have a permanent 'home' for the Anjuman.

I have already sounded out many members around the world regarding our requirements in Delhi and *insha-Allah*, they will rise to the occasion and give their support.

Apart from the mosque project the annual budget of the Indian jamaat is going to be Indian Rs. 385,000. The main expenditure is on translations of books into various Indian languages, printing, free distribution of literature and publishing the monthly journal *Chawdhween Sadi*.

Pakistan

To give our literary work greater impetus, a Writers' Forum was established by the Central Anjuman some time ago. It reports that:

Jesus in Heaven on Earth is being translated into Urdu, with a completion target of January 2002.

Tehrik-i-Ahmadiyyat, written by Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali in Urdu, describes the intellectual ethos of this organisation. It was translated into English by the late Maulana Muhammad Tufail and published under the name *The Ahmadiyya Movement*. It has now been translated into Arabic and printed.

Tareekh-i-Ahmadiyyat (History of The Ahmadiyya Movement) Volume 1 is complete and it was going to be made available to members at the Annual Duaiya in December 2001.

Hamail Shareef, an abridged edition of the Urdu translation and commentary of the Holy Quran by Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali, had been out of print for some time. It has been reprinted and ready for distribution.

'JESUS DEBATE' A TV Programme in the US

A television program on 'The Jesus Debate' was aired on WIN TV in May 2001, conveying that there are hundreds of scholars in the country who cast doubt in the deity of Jesus, and believe that Jesus would not return in person.

Members include tenured professors from Harvard and Yale and have included respected scholars like John Dominic Crossan of DePaul University. They hold seminars here and in other cities around the country. Not long ago, they would have risked their careers and reputations even talking about these controversial issues in public.

In 1985, Dr Robert Funk, of Vanderbilt University, invited about 40 scholars to meet in California. Funk headed the Graduate Department of Religion at Vanderbilt University, and the Society of Biblical Literature. In a public setting, Funk and his panel debated controversial issues of religion, so that the public might learn a different perspective than that of the church. Since then, 150 scholars have participated in the research.

After a lot of study, analysis and debate, members meet twice a year to vote on hundreds of sayings and deeds attributed to Jesus. These scholars and former clergy voted overwhelmingly against some of the basic and most important elements of Christianity.

"What bothers us is our mortality, and if you have a savior who is mortal, then he can't give you what you need — immortality. But I think that's too selfish a conception of what God's about," says John White, a member of the seminar and professor at Loyola University. White grew up as a Protestant but says he now attends many different Christian churches. He says he does not believe that Jesus is literally the Son of God. Did Jesus literally rise from the dead? The Jesus Seminar explores these issues.

Here's the vote from the seminar:

Ninety percent strongly agree that the future of Jesus does not depend on his status as God Incarnate or as the Jewish Messiah. Zero percent agree to the proposition that Jesus will return someday and usher in a new age. Sixty-seven percent agree that the resurrection does not mean that his corpse was resuscitated, but rather the kingdom of God lives on.

"What it does not mean, we'd all agree, is that a body got up and walked around. Not a resuscitated corpse. What it means beyond that is difficult to say," he says. "If you base on an early stage of tradition, there's no evidence that Jesus was literally predicting the end of the world or his own return, but in some essential sense, the new age was always present."

(From *Quarterly Newsletter* issued by Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, Lahore, vol. 2, issue 2)

My First Ramadaan by Hussain Wilson

This is my first Ramadaan. In fact, I have to keep reminding myself that I have only been a Muslim for six and a half months! That is hard for me to believe, because I feel so natural with Islam, so at home with Islam that it feels as if I have been a Muslim all of my life.

I am asked on many an occasion if it is an easy thing to do, to not eat during the hours of daylight. If you had asked me a few months ago, I would have answered that it probably was a hard thing, but I discovered a strange thing on the first day. It was easy. It has continued to be easy. I expected people eating around me, as I work with non-Muslims, who are having tea breaks and coffee breaks and sandwiches and all manner of things to eat around me, to make it difficult to maintain the fast — I was wrong.

I discovered I was a Muslim on my first visit here (Wembley). I have spent a lot of time searching for a religion. It has taken me a long while to know and understand (and accept?) that I have always been a

Muslim. I am now trying to be the best Muslim I can possibly be. As I just said, this is my first fast and the first of many I hasten to add.

I have been a Christian, a Buddhist, an atheist, one who believes in nothing and a Christian again. I struggled with Christianity for a long while, because there are aspects I just cannot accept, the Son of God being one — a pivotal belief in Christianity, I hasten to add! I tried to accept Christianity; mainly because that is the society and culture I have been born into. I grew up in Italy surrounded by Catholics, who brand non-Catholics as heathens, and then in England by atheists and Christian Protestants of one denomination or another. I tried to find out why there are so many branches of this particular religion and the more I delved the harder it was to find common good, or acceptance into any of the disciplines.

I was attending the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses for a time, and their particular brand of Christianity, I feel, is the closest you are ever going to get to being a true Christian, the Christianity of Jesus' time. Their clear path doctrine, though was the closest any Christianity has ever come to putting across how Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) would have wanted it. I followed their teachings for a while, doing regular study with them, from their own publications and also from the Christian Bible. But all the time I had questions, and more questions. Christianity gave me a headache. I soon discovered that Christianity and me were just not mixing as well as it should, or could. I still had not found the right religion.

I attended meetings with the Jehovah's Witnesses, but when I pressed them on the issues I did not understand, for instance: 'how can God have a son?' they gave me an answer, but when I compared it with the Holy Quran it did not make any sense to me. I have never accepted that Christ (peace be upon him) is God (Trinity) or that Jesus is the son of God. **To me this is impossible,**

because the purpose of having a son is so that he can replace the father. The need for a son is as a successor. How can God need replacing? How can God become old? Or die? Why the need for a son? I think then I started to read more of the Quran, Islam and the Hadith.

I think I understood that all of the fundamental principles of Islam, I had, or have already believed or accepted. I think I made a discovery at this time, I was not a Christian. So what was I? I decided to make the effort to study Islam, to take it to heart, to learn as much about it as possible.

I knew Islam existed; I had been studying world religions, privately, for some years, I soon discovered that most of the world's religions have a book, a guide as well as a set of laws. I formed the opinion that God has sent prophets to all of the nations so as they could teach about Him in that nation's language. I also thought that it would be nice to study religion and get some qualifications at the end of it. I joined the Open University and as a preliminary to my second year I re-contacted this organisation, the Ahmadiyya Movement, for instruction in prayer, the pillars of faith and other aspects of Islam.

It was upon my visit here in May, for a week of instruction, that I discovered that the beliefs I had held myself and tried extremely hard to find a religion that they matched, where the beliefs of Islam. I promptly converted there and then and have not looked back, only with sorrow to the fact I could have been happy a long, long time ago. I guess, though, the years of searching have given me a unique perspective on both world religions and Islam itself. I stopped trying to understand Christianity. The only way to explain it, is not as a Christian, but as a Muslim.

I have joined the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement and fully support the idea of propagating Islam's message of compassion, mercy and world unity.

For me, the long search, I think, is finally over. I have found the light of Islam and will do my best to fuel that light and keep it bright.

I have always strived hard to do what Allah requires of me and have always searched ways of worship that would please Him. **I was privileged the other day to have a conversation with this young woman in my local supermarket who was buying Christmas sweets and cakes, she said: 'We're celebrating Jesus' Birthday, but when do we celebrate God's?' I said to her 'I am a Muslim and as Muslims, we celebrate God every day. Five times to be precise, and at the moment it is Ramadan, an entire month dedicated not only to the celebration of God, but one of humble reflection on our position as humans and servants of Mighty Allah.'** She was surprised to hear that we pray five times a day and said: 'does that not interfere with everyday life?' I laughed. Does praying interfere with everyday life? I used to be of the same opinion, but soon discovered that life fits around prayer and if you miss a time of prayer, you soon know that you have. It is the one time, and it is a small time, for us to be close to our God. I have found that this month particularly, prayer has become more important and also more humble — especially for myself.

What is a few minutes of our time each day? What is the bounty and reward for doing this small thing? What is a few days of discomfort where we can only eat and drink when the sun goes down? Just think of the things our Lord has done for us. As Chapter 55 of the Quran states, "What then of the bounty of your Lord will you deny?" I wish not to deny any, and I wish to serve my Lord to the utmost. Especially now that I have found an acceptable form of worship and an acceptable religion that He himself approves of and smiles upon.

I never understood before what it was like to fit into a religion. I am so privileged to have had the opportunity of finding Islam and not

being born into it. The joy and happiness of finding the Lamp of Allah are beyond description, beyond words and pictures. My heart leaps when I open the Quran, I weep tears of joy to know that I am a member of a privileged group of people who worship the same way — all over the world.

I read recently in a book that Arabic is the language of the Quran as it was revealed in Arabic and therefore must be recited in Arabic, so the world over Muslims, no matter what ethnic group or background or culture, pray in Arabic. It made my heart leap to read that, for I am a member of that group. I am a Muslim, I cannot, now, picture life without Islam.

This quiet moment of reflection we have all been privileged to share in, is at an end. I feel sad that Ramadan is over and joyful that I have made it through without any serious lapses. **I thank Allah for helping me and all of you, through this time and I also thank Him for making the world, for making us, for populating our world and most importantly for making us all Muslims. I thank Him more for myself than others, because I was not privileged to be born a Muslim but had to find Islam by the hard way. By searching.**

In the Christian Bible there is a passage that states: "To find God, one must continue to search for it, as if one is searching for gold." In the Quran, finding Allah is like finding a lamp. *"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. A likeness of His light is as a pillar on which is a lamp — the lamp is in a glass, the glass is as it were a bright shiny star — lit from a blessed olive tree, neither eastern nor western, the oil thereof gives light, through fire touch it not — light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He pleases. And Allah sets forth parables for men and Allah is Knower of all things."* That is a beautiful verse of the Quran and one I find that touches my heart deeply. *"For Allah guides to His light whom He pleases."* I strongly feel I was guided to His light, as He pleased. Now that I have



Maulana Hydal, Imam and missionary in-charge of the Trinidad & Tobago Jamaat, giving the *jumu'ah khutba* to open the Golden Jubilee celebrations of The Hague Jamaat.

found it, I shall keep it burning bright as I am sure *all* of us who have been privileged to be either born Muslims or become Muslims do. *"Say: this is my way. I call to Allah with certain knowledge and those who follow me. And glory be to Allah! And am not of the polytheists."* (Surah 12:108)

Within one day of being in Wembley, I accepted the truth of Islam and accepted my new Muslim name Hussain. I chose this, the martyred grandson of Muhammad (peace be upon him and blessings of Allah), and not Muhammad because I feel Muhammad is a great name with a lot of responsibility attached to it.

I truly understand that Islam is the way forward for all of us. It is a beautiful and simple religion that only asks of us to serve and remember God. It is not a difficult thing to do. I have tried a few religions, but this is the only one that brings tears of joy to my eyes and makes me feel happy. I thank Allah for this. I thank Allah for allowing me to have found Islam and also I thank him for all of those who have helped me, especially the Ahmadiyya Movement.

What others say about us ...

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT AND THE POSITION OF THE LAHORE GROUP

by *Andreas Faber Kaiser*

(Spanish philosopher, journalist and scholar of comparative religion)

The Ahmadiyya Movement was created in 1888 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, from Qadian but the name Ahmadiyya was not adopted until about a decade later. In a manifesto dated 4 November 1900, the Founder explained that the name referred to Ahmad, the alternative name of the Prophet Mohammed. Mohammed, which means 'the praised one', refers to the glorious destiny of the Prophet, who adopted the name from about the time of *the Hegira*; but 'Ahmad' stands for the beauty of his sermons, and for the peace that he was destined to establish in the world through his teachings. These names thus refer to the two aspects of Islam and Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad says that in later times it was the latter aspect that commanded greater attention. In keeping with this, his object was to establish peace in the world through the spiritual teachings of Islam, which he believed, offered the only means of restoring peace to the mind of man, and, thus, of helping him to live at peace with others and with God.

The message of the Ahmadiyya Movement is thus indicated by its name — it is a message for Muslims telling them that they can conquer the world through the two great spiritual forces given to them: the Koran and the Prophet Mohammed. At the same time, it is a message for the non-Moslem world, and especially for the Western world, which, with the growth of civilisation has fallen into an exaggerated materialism. For Westerners, the message is that it is

only through the spiritual strength of Islam that man can reach peace.

From the Movement's foundation, its attention has been focused on revealing the felicities of the Koran's and Mohammed's teachings, and on spreading the message of Islam to the West. In his book *Izalah Auham*, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad expressed his desire to see the Koran translated into English so as to assist in this task. He was convinced that the Koran was the major spiritual force in the world, and that it could bring about not only an awakening of the Moslems, but also a change in the material aspect of the Western world. The only thing that he claimed for himself was the title 'Imam', and his chief wish was that his followers should broadcast across the world the truths of the Koran, correcting error, and that they should present an authentic image of Mohammed, who had so often been defamed.

Ghulam Ahmad died in May 1908 and was succeeded as leader by Nur-al-Din, who died in March 1914. Under Nur-al-Din's leadership, the Movement went from strength to strength, and, in particular, attracted enormous popularity among Moslems. However, though there were no outward signs of division within the Movement, there were tensions under the surface, and it was only the strength of Nur-al-Din's personality that prevented these from showing themselves.

The main point over which there was controversy was whether those who did not accept Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet should be considered infidels, and it was this that, after Nur-al-Din's death, caused the Movement to split. Those who were of the opinion that the Movement's founder was not a prophet (he had not claimed to be one) broke away from the rest of the Movement, which was created in Qadian, and established themselves at Lahore as the 'Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam'. They keep to the original doctrines of the Movement and continue to work for the spiritual awakening of the world, proclaiming

Mohammed and the Koran, and translating the Koran into foreign languages.

The Ahmadiyyas, knowing of the existence of Jesus' reputed tomb in Srinagar, have published numerous studies of the matter and have broadcast to the Western world the things that they have discovered linking Jesus with Kashmir. However, according to information that I have received on the last day of my stay in Kashmir but have not yet been able to verify, the Ahmadiyyas have now been expelled from the Islamic community, on the grounds that they place too much emphasis on Jesus.

(*Jesus Died in Kashmir*, ch 7: 'The Ahmadiyya Movement', pp. 142-144, published by Gordon Cernonesi Ltd, New River House, 34 Seymour Road, London N8 0BE, 1977)

Religion, Culture and Social Interaction

by *Jalal Ud Dean*

(*Secretary, Fiji Branch*)

What is the relationship between religion and culture?

It is important to remember that the Holy Qur'an is the Ordinance of Muslims. It is a revealed book. Prophet Muhammad was a prophet and the Ambassador of Allah. Religion, Culture and social interaction are compact concepts that have been galvanised into Muslims' practices. These practices source from the Holy Qur'an and the *Sunnah* or *Hadith* (the practices and sayings of Prophet Muhammad). Prophet Muhammad was the world's greatest exemplar in terms of religion, culture and social interaction. *Sunnah* indicates Prophet Muhammad's recorded doings and *Hadith* indicates his sayings to given situations. They also make up various prophetic and historical elements. The five principles of

Islam are belief in *One God*, *Prayer* five times daily, *Charity*, *Fasting* and *Pilgrimage*. The transmission of the practices and sayings of the Prophet from one person to another became necessary during his lifetime, 1,500 years ago. Considering civilisation infrastructure at the time, the Prophet himself gave instructions about transmission of what he taught. He said, "He who is present here, should carry this message to those who are absent" (Bu. 3:77). He also said "Write down, for I only speak the truth" (AD 24:13). In another event he said, "My sayings do not abrogate the word of Allah, but the word of Allah can abrogate my saying" (MM. 1:6). He also stressed that the Holy Qur'an is the only Book of God but the writing of his sayings and practices do not become alternate books of God. All Muslims are mindful of this demarcation.

How important is the use of religious language and symbols in public life?

Religious language and symbols give unique identity to Muslims. Clarity and completeness in achievement of consistent practices in public life are driven by the inner feelings of individual Muslims. Muslims (as faith) are developed from a common mould and template of the Holy Qur'an. All the important affairs of a Muslim's life and death become universally common when using religious language. Issues such as birth, prayer, charity, fasting, pilgrimage, marriage, religious festivals, death and post-death events are universally common, using Arabic language words. The Islamic symbol of new crescent and star is commonly consistent and aligned with all Muslims. This can also be seen on flags, currencies, postage stamps and logo of many countries that have dominant Muslim population and common philosophies. For those who understand Muslim culture, the symbols mean a wide spectrum of common life styles and to some extent the stylistically common governance of the country.

Where Do We See Secular Personalities Using Religious References?

This happens daily in many parts of the world as it also did in the past in documented history. It is common knowledge that religious ownership runs in peoples' veins. Religion is so sensitive. Whilst conflicts between parties may be originating from socio-economic or political causes, unscrupulous individuals always aggravate the situation to their advantage by introducing religious dimensions. This country is not immune from such unscrupulous personalities. The immediate victims are those people who cannot differentiate secular from religious complexities.

To What Extent Does Religion Inspire Social Activity And To What Extent Is Religion Misused To Legitimise Social Activity And Decisions?

Some of the most important religious institutions in Islam, for instance, are Prayer and Charity. The service of prayer is divided into two parts. One is personal and the other congregational. In congregational prayer, there is levelling of social differences amongst the congregation and all persons from a king to a pauper, with differences in culture, ethnicity and colour. All these differences vanish within the ranks, as people prostrate themselves before Allah. Charity also helps to bridge the gap between the wealthy and the poor. Muslims are required to fast for 29 or 30 days. Again this brings about a levelling of the rich with the poor. However, there are trouble-mongers in most societies. Influential aggressors, who introduce religious strategies to entice people towards hidden agendas, often abuse the vulnerability of human sensitivity. This cowardly attitude has been seen often in the Middle East where border conflicts are so frequent. In reality, the hidden agenda may be political but society becomes sadly divided along lines of religious affiliation.



Haqiqat-ul-Islam Mosque, one of the many mosques built in Surinam by the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam of Lahore.

How Do We View The Role Of Religion In Social Interaction?

According to the ordinances in the Holy Qur'an, good morals and good manners are the real test of peoples' excellence. Such an example is stated in scripture as, "The noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the best of you in conduct" (Holy Qur'an, 49:13). Another quotation taken from Prophet Muhammad's sayings is, "The best of you are those of you who have the most excellent morals" (Bu. 61:23). Development of people begins at home. Home is the unit of human society. Happiness and stability of society depends to a large extent to the inter-relationship between family members. In the moral code of Islam, respect of and kindness to parents occupies a very high place. A further quotation from the Holy Qur'an reads, "And do good to your parents. If either of them or both of them reach old age with thee, say not to them fie; nor chide them; and speak to them a generous word. And make thyself submissively gentle to them with compassion, and say, My Lord!

Have mercy on them as they brought me up when I was little" (Holy Qur'an, 17:23-24). Parents, on the other hand, were required to be kind and gentle towards their children. Unity and brotherhood of all mankind is a fundamental conception of Islam. Muslims, however, are particularly exhorted to be kind to one another and to help one another. Islamic tradition requires Muslims to be part of one structure and compares them to a human body: when one member of it ails, the entire body ails. Islamic tradition has been one of the most honourable professions. Prophet Muhammad had special words of praise for the truthful and honest businesspersons. Islam upholds honesty and truthfulness as the hallmark of a good society in all dealings. It is the essence of good society. Once a society begins to respect the fundamental rights and privileges of others in the country, there is bound to be harmony and good nation building.

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