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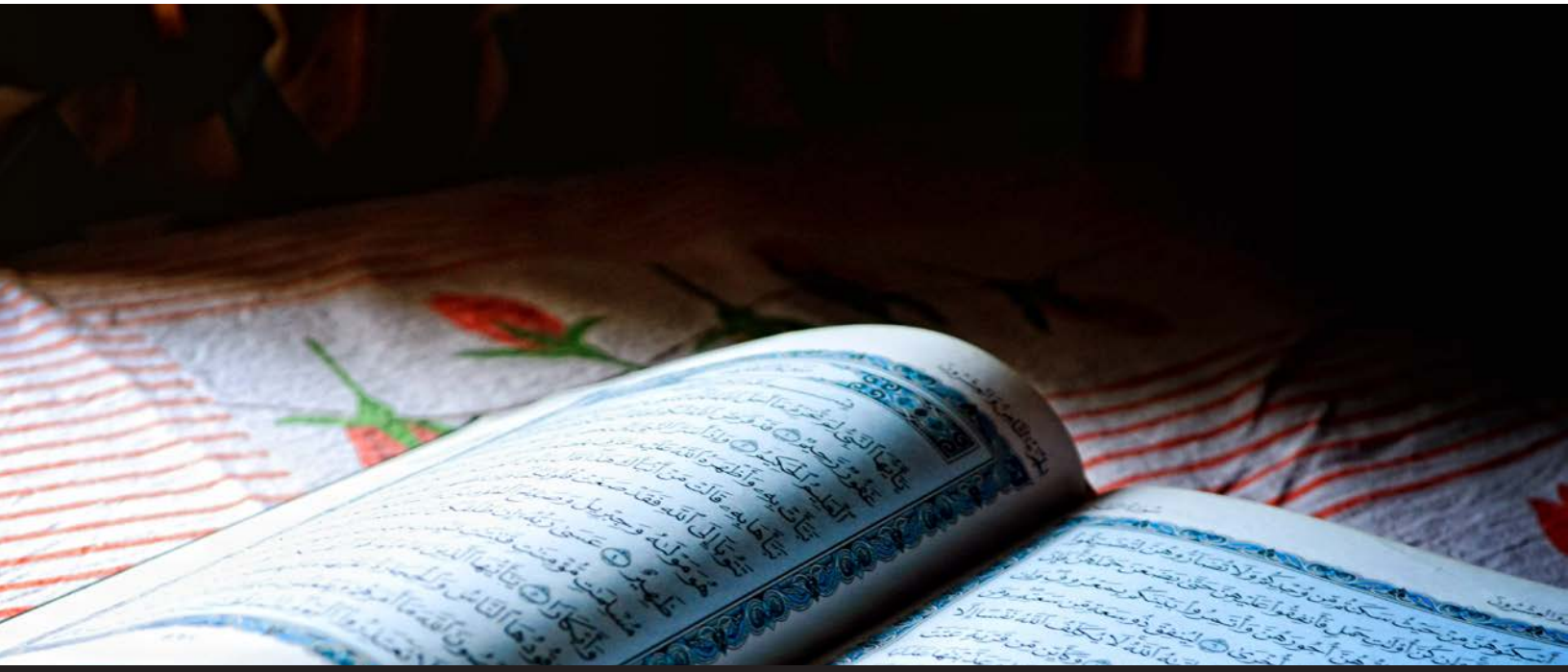
"O YE WHO BELIEVE! FASTING IS PRESCRIBED FOR YOU, AS IT WAS PRESCRIBED FOR THOSE BEFORE YOU, SO THAT YOU MAY BECOME RIGHTEOUS. "

(THE HOLY QUR'ĀN, 2:184)

Ramadānul Mubarak



رمضان کی برکات سے فائدہ اٹھائیں

AḤMADIYYA GAZETTE CANADA
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ABBREVIATIONS OF SALUTATIONS

sa (ḥallallāhu 'alaihī wa Sallam - May peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him!)
Usage: Salutation written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa]

as (Alaīhis-Salām/ 'Alaihas-Salām - May peace be upon him/her!)
Usage: Salutation written after names of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa], and pious women prior to the era of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa]

ra (RaḥīAllāhū 'anhu / 'anhā/ 'anhum - May Allāh be pleased with him/her/them!)
Usage: Salutation written after names of Companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] and Companions of the Promised Messiah[as]

rh (Raḥimahullāh - May Allāh have mercy upon him!)
Usage: Salutation written after the names of deceased, pious Muslims who are not Companions

aa (Ayyadahullāhu Ta'ālā binaṣrihil-'Azīz - May Allāh be his Helper!)
Usage: Salutation written after the name of Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa]

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PEARLS OF WISDOM

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

THE HOLY QUR'ĀN

شَهۡرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِیۡۤ اُنۡزِلَ فِیۡهِ الۡقُرۡاٰنُ هُدًی لِّلنَّاسِ وَ بَیِّنٰتٍ مِّنَ
الۡهُدٰی وَ الۡفُرۡقَانِ ۚ فَمَنۡ شَهِدَ مِنۡکُمُ الشَّهۡرَ فَلۡیَصُمۡهُ ؕ وَ مَنۡ کَانَ
مَرِیۡضًا اَوۡ عَلٰی سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّۃٌ مِّنۡ اَیَّامٍ اُخَرَ ؕ یُرِیۡدُ اللّٰهُ بِکُمُ الۡیُسۡرَ وَ لَا
یُرِیۡدُ بِکُمُ الۡعُسۡرَ ۫ وَ لِتُکۡمِلُوا الۡعِدَّۃَ وَ لِتُکَبِّرُوا اللّٰهَ عَلٰی مَا هَدٰىکُمۡ
وَ لَعَلَّکُمۡ تَشۡکُرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۸۶﴾

The month of Ramaḍān is that in which the Qur'ān was sent down as a guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and discrimination. Therefore, whosoever of you is present at home in this month, let him fast therein. But whoso is sick or is on a journey, shall fast the same number of other days. Allāh desires to give you facility and He desires not hardship for you, and that you may complete the number, and that you may exalt Allāh for His having guided you and that you may be grateful. (2:186)

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ وَّعَلٰی اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَّبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ اِنَّكَ حَمِیْدٌ مَّجِیْدٌ

ḤADĪTH

عَنۡ اَبِیۡ هُرَیۡرَۃَ رَضِیَ اللّٰهُ عَنۡهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُوۡلُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّی اللّٰهُ عَلَیۡهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
قَالَ اللّٰهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: کُلُّ عَمَلِ ابۡنِ اٰدَمَ لَهٗ اِلَّا الصِّیَامَ فَاِنَّهٗ لِیۡ وَاَنَا اَجۡزِیۡ بِهٖ۔
وَالصِّیَامُ جُنَّۃٌ فَاِذَا کَانَ یَوۡمُ صَوۡمِ اَحَدِکُمۡ فَلَا یَرۡفُثۡ وَلَا یَصۡخَبۡ فَاِنۡ سَابَّهٗ
اَحَدٌ اَوۡ قَاتَلَهٗ فَلۡیَقُلۡ: اِنِّیۡ صَآئِمٌ۔ وَالَّذِیۡ نَفۡسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِیَدِهٖ لَخُلُوۡفُ فَمِ
الصَّآئِمِ اَطۡیَبُ عِنۡدَ اللّٰهِ مِنۡ رِیۡحِ الۡمِسۡكِ۔ لِلصَّآئِمِ فَرۡحَتَانِ یَفۡرَحُهُمَا، اِذَا
اَفۡطَرَ فَرِحَ، وَاِذَا لَقِیَ رَبَّهٗ فَرِحَ بِصَوۡمِهٖ۔

(صحیح بخاری۔ کتاب الصوم، باب ھل یقول انی صائم اذا شتم)

Hazrat Abū Hurairah[ra] narrates that the Holy Prophet[sa] said, "Allāh Almighty says that all actions of man are for himself, but the fast is for Me and I am its reward. Fasting is a shield; the person observing the fast should not behave foolishly or impudently, and if somebody argues with him or fights him, he should say, 'I am fasting.' By Him in Whose Hands is my life, the smell from the mouth of one fasting is better in the sight of Allāh than the smell of musk. There are two causes of happiness for one fasting: when he opens the fast, and when he meets his Lord because of the fast"

(Saḥīḥ Bukhārī, Kitābus Saum, Bāb Hal Yaqūl Inni Sā'imun).

SO SAID THE PROMISED MESSIAH[AS]

The Purpose of Fasting is Purification

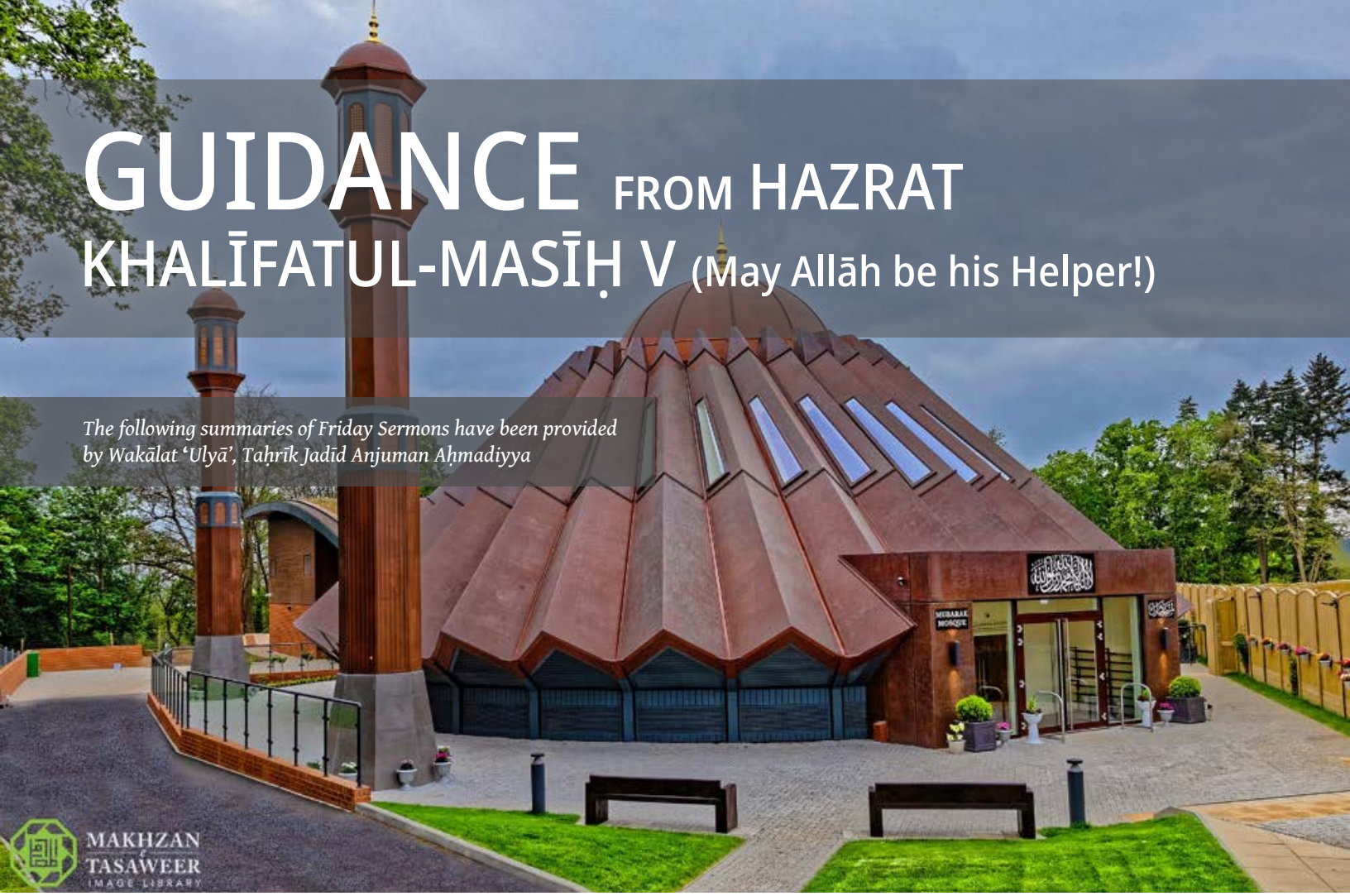
I have already spoken of the Salat. Next in order is worship in the shape of the fast. It is a pity that some who call themselves Muslims at this time desire to modify these forms of worship. They are blind and are not aware of the perfect wisdom of God Almighty. These forms of worship are essential for the purification of the spirit. These people seek to intervene absurdly in a sphere of which they have no knowledge and devise false schemes for the improvement of a territory that they have not visited. Their lives are devoted to worldly affairs; of spiritual matters they have no notion. To be moderate in eating and drinking and to bear hunger and thirst are necessary for the purification of the spirit and promote the capacity for visions. Man does not live by bread alone. To discard all thought of eternal life is to invite Divine wrath.

It should be remembered that the fast does not mean merely that a person should abstain from food and drink over a certain period. During the fast one should be occupied greatly with the remembrance of God. The Holy Prophet[sa] occupied himself greatly with worship during the month of Ramadān. During that month one should discard one's preoccupation with eating and drinking; and cutting asunder from these needs should address oneself wholly towards God. Unfortunate is the person who is bestowed material bread and pays no attention to spiritual bread. Material bread strengthens the body, and spiritual bread sustains the soul and sharpens the spiritual faculties. Seek the grace of God, as all doors are opened by His grace. (Essence of Islām, Vol. 2, p. 316)

Mināratul-Masīḥ
Qadian, India

GUIDANCE FROM HAZRAT KHALĪFATUL-MASĪḤ V (May Allāh be his Helper!)

The following summaries of Friday Sermons have been provided by Wakālat 'Ulyā', Taḥrīk Jadīd Anjuman Aḥmadiyya



'RIGHTLY GUIDED CALIPHS – HAZRAT UTHMĀN[RA]

5TH FEBRUARY 2021

After reciting *Tashahhud, Ta'awwuz* and *Surah al-Fatihah*, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said that he would continue highlighting incidents from the life of Hazrat Uthmān[ra].

His Holiness[aa] said that another battle was that of *Dhatur-Riqa*. It is recorded that when the Holy Prophet[sa] set out for this battle, he appointed Hazrat Uthmān[ra] as the *Amir* of Madinah in his stead.

INCIDENT DURING CONQUEST OF MAKKAH

His Holiness[aa] said that on the occasion of the Conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet[sa] forgave everyone, except four people. One of them was Ikrimah bin Abi Jahl, who fled before he could be caught by the Muslims, however he later returned and accepted the Holy Prophet[sa]. There was another person named Abdullah bin Abi Sarh who had been hiding. When the Holy Prophet[sa] was accepting people's oath of allegiance, Abdullah came out and Hazrat Uthmān[ra] asked the Holy Prophet[sa] on his behalf to forgive him and accept his oath of allegiance. Initially, the Holy Prophet[sa] refused, but then he agreed and accepted his oath of allegiance. With regards to this incident, His Holiness Holiness[aa] said that there is a narration wherein it is stated that the Holy Prophet[sa] later asked why his companions had not killed Abdullah bin Abi Sarh when he had initially refused to accept his oath of allegiance. However from other narrations and commentaries, His Holiness[aa] said that it is proved that the Holy Prophet[sa] in fact never said this.

HAZRAT IKRIMAH'S[RA] ACCEPTANCE OF ISLĀM

His Holiness[aa] then also related the incident of Ikrimah bin Abi Jahl's acceptance of Islām according to historical accounts. It is recorded that Ikrimah fled towards the ocean and his wife went after him. He was either just about to, or had already boarded a ship, when his wife came to him and said that she had sought security for him, and that he should return and accept Islām. Hence, Ikrimah returned to Makkah, went to the Holy Prophet[sa] and accepted Islām. After this, the Holy Prophet[sa] told Ikrimah that he would grant Ikrimah whatever he wanted. Ikrimah requested that the Holy Prophet[sa] should pray that Ikrimah be forgiven for all the enmity he had held against him.

The fact that Hazrat Ikrimah[ra] accepted Islām was also the fulfilment of a prophecy, which the Holy Prophet[sa] saw in a dream. He once saw that he was in a beautiful garden where he saw a branch laden with dates. The Holy Prophet[sa] asked who

this was for, and was told that it was for Abu Jahl. Initially this worried the Holy Prophet[sa] as he said that the gardens are only promised for the believers. However, later when Hazrat Ikrimah bin Abi Jahl[ra] accepted Islām, the Holy Prophet[sa] understood that dream to be about him.

GREAT SACRIFICE OF HAZRAT 'UTHMĀN[RA] DURING BATTLE OF TABUK

His Holiness[aa] said that at the time of the Battle of Tabuk, Hazrat Uthmān[ra] rendered great services. The Holy Prophet[sa] made an appeal for financial help in preparation for the battle. When the Holy Prophet[sa] made this appeal, Hazrat Uthmān[ra] presented a hundred camels. Then the Holy Prophet[sa] made another appeal after which Hazrat 'Uthmān presented another hundred camels. The Holy Prophet[sa] then made a third appeal, upon which Qur'ān presented another hundred camels. It is also recorded that Hazrat Uthmān[ra] presented ten thousand dinars to the Holy Prophet[sa] as well. After this, the Holy Prophet[sa] prayed for him and said that whatever Hazrat Uthmān[ra] did from then on, he would be forgiven. It is recorded that the Holy Prophet[sa] prayed that God should be pleased with Hazrat Uthmān[ra] as he was pleased with him. His Holiness[aa] presented a few more narrations which gave various accounts of all the things which Hazrat Uthmān[ra] presented for the preparation of this battle.

His Holiness[aa] said it is also recorded that the Holy Prophet[sa] said that Hazrat Uthmān[ra] had bought a piece of heaven. In fact it is recorded that the Holy Prophet[sa] said this to Hazrat Uthmān[ra] on a few occasions.

PROPHECY REGARDING THE CALIPHATE OF HAZRAT 'UTHMĀN[RA]

His Holiness[aa] said that the Holy Prophet[sa] also said to Hazrat Uthmān[ra] that he would be given a mantle to wear, but there would be those who told him to take it off. But all those who told him to take it off would be hypocrites. His Holiness[aa] said that thus, it was foretold that those who would later oppose and raise disorder against Hazrat Uthmān[ra] were hypocrites.

Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa]

His Holiness[aa] said that Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] held Hazrat Uthmān[ra] in high esteem. He trusted him a great deal, and often consulted with him in important matters and found his advice to be full of wisdom.

HAZRAT UTHMĀN'S[RA] SACRIFICES ACCEPTED IN THE HEAVENS

His Holiness[aa] said that once during the Caliphate of Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra], there was a drought. One day, when the people went to Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra], who told them not to worry, and that they would find ease that evening. On that same day, Hazrat Uthmān[ra] returned with his trading caravan from Syria, carrying wheat and grains. Upon his return, people went to his home and asked him to sell the wheat and grains he had brought back, so that it could be distributed amongst the poor. Hazrat Uthmān[ra] asked how much profit they would give him. They said that they would give him one or two more dirhams than the actual cost. Hazrat Uthmān[ra] said that there was someone who was offering him more. They asked who was offering him a greater price, to which Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] replied that God was offering him more. Then he gave the wheat and grains to them as alms so that it could be distributed amongst the poor.

His Holiness[aa] said that later that night Hazrat Ibn Abbas[ra] saw the Holy Prophet[sa] in a dream, and saw him to be in a hurry. Hazrat Ibn Abbas[ra] asked why he was in a hurry. In the dream, the Holy Prophet[sa] replied that Hazrat Uthmān[ra] had given alms, and this was accepted by the heavens, and God had settled his marriage in heaven and they had all been invited.

HAZRAT UTHMĀN'S[RA] ELECTION AS THE CALIPH

His Holiness[aa] said that after Hazrat 'Umar[ra] had been attacked, people used to ask him to appoint a Caliph after him, however he would not do so. Instead, one day he announced that if he died, there should be six people who elect the next Caliph. Thus he appointed such people with whom the Holy Prophet[sa] had been pleased; 'Alī bin Abi Talib[ra], Zubair bin Awwam[ra], Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf[ra], 'Uthmān bin Affān[ra], Talhah bin Ubaidillah[ra], Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas[ra]. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] also outlined how the election should take place. His Holiness[aa] then detailed the election of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] as the next Caliph. His Holiness[aa] also read out the first address delivered by Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] as the Caliph.

His Holiness[aa] said that he would continue highlighting incidents from the life of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] in the future.

‘A GREAT SERVANT OF THE COMMUNITY – CHAUDHARY HAMEEDULLAH ṢĀḤIB’

12TH FEBRUARY 2021

After reciting *Tashahhud*, *Ta‘awwuz* and *Surah al-Fatihah*, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said that he would mention the life of a great servant of the Community, Chaudhary Hameedullah Ṣāḥib, who passed away in recent days, on February 7, 2021.

His Holiness[aa] said that he was currently serving as the *Wakīl A‘lā* in *Taḥrīk Jadīd* Rabwah. He was also serving as the *Afsar Jalsa Sālāna*, a capacity in which he served for a very long time.

Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa]

PARENTS OF CHAUDHARY HAMEEDULLAH ṢĀḤIB

His Holiness[aa] said that Chaudhary Ṣāḥib’s father’s name was Babu Muḥammad Bakhsh Ṣāḥib and his mother’s name was Aisha Bibi Ṣāḥiba. Chaudhary Ṣāḥib was born in 1934 in Qadian. His father had accepted Aḥmadiyyat five years before Chaudhary Ṣāḥib’s birth, upon seeing a dream, in which the Holy Prophet[sa] directed him to accept Aḥmadiyyat.

His Holiness[aa] said that when the Second Caliph[ra] made an appeal for people to devote their lives in service to the faith, Chaudhary Ṣāḥib’s mother took him to the Second Caliph[ra], and presented him as a life devotee. Upon this, the Second Caliph[ra] gave certain instructions with regards to his continued education.

EDUCATION & BEGINNING OF HIS SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY

His Holiness[aa] said that Chaudhary Ṣāḥib taught in the TI College in Rabwah, and upon the instruction of the Third Caliph[rh], he left the college and came into the service of the Community. He was then appointed by the Third Caliph[rh] as the *Nāzir Ḍiyāfat*. Then the Fourth Caliph[rh] appointed him as the *Wakīl A‘la* of *Taḥrīk Jadīd* Rabwah. He was later also appointed as the *Sadr Majlis Taḥrīk Jadīd*. He served in these capacities till his demise. He also served as *Amīr Muqāmī* for some time during the era of the Third Caliph[rh].

His Holiness[aa] said that Chaudhary Ṣāḥib had the honour of serving as the President of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Youth Association, at the time when the headqaurters for the Youth Association were central in Rabwah for the entire world. His Holiness[aa] read out the words of the Third Caliph[rh] at the time of Chaudhary Ṣāḥib’s appointment as the President of the Youth Association, in which he outlined the importance of serving with the true spirit, whether one is from the direct progeny, or the spiritual progeny of the Promised Messiah[as]. His Holiness[aa] said that this guidance received from the Third Caliph[rh] was because of Chaudhary Ṣāḥib. Thus, whenever a worker of the Community, a life-devotee, or a member of the family of the Promised Messiah[as] ponders over these words, they should also pray for the elevated station of Chaudhary Hameedullah Ṣāḥib.

His Holiness[aa] read out the report read out at the farewell program held, upon the completion of Chaudhary Ṣāḥib’s term as the President of the Youth Association, in which his various achievements during this time were highlighted. The Third Caliph[rh] also presided over the program, in which he greatly appreciated the efforts made by Chaudhary Ṣāḥib during his term as President and prayed for him to have the ability to serve in other capacities in the future as well.

SERVICES AFTER MIGRATION TO LONDON

His Holiness[aa] said that after the Fourth Caliph[rh] migrated to London, upon his instruction, Chaudhary Ṣāḥib resided in London for over a year where he played a vital role in establishing the central offices in London.

His Holiness[aa] said that Chaudhary Ṣāḥib also served as the President of the Elder’s Association for seventeen years.

His Holiness[aa] said that after the demise of the Fourth Caliph[rh], Chaudhary Hameedullah Ṣāḥib had the honour of serving as the Chairman of the Khilāfat Committee. He was also appointed in 2005 as the President of the Khilāfat Jubilee Committee. His Holiness[aa] also highlighted the various services of Chaudhary Ṣāḥib pertaining to Jalsa Sālāna. His Holiness[aa] also read out the comments of the Fourth Caliph[rh] regarding Chaudhary Ṣāḥib and his great efforts in the organisation of Jalsa Sālāna Qadian.

Mubarak Mosque, Islamabad, Tilford UK

CHAUDHARY ṢĀḤIB'S EXAMPLE AS A HUSBAND & FATHER

His Holiness[aa] said that Chaudhary Hameedullah Ṣāḥib is survived by his wife, a son and two daughters. His Holiness[aa] read out the comments of Chaudhary Ṣāḥib's wife and the excellent manner in which he treated her. She said he would often come home late from the office, but he would never bother her, in fact he would heat up his own food and eat it. She said that he would happily eat whatever he was presented with and would happily wear whatever clothes he was given. She said that he was very caring, and His Holiness[aa] commented that if everyone acted in this way, then the majority of domestic issues would automatically be resolved. His children said that he was not only their father, but was also a friend. He always emphasised two things; offering the five daily prayers and listening to the Friday sermon delivered by His Holiness[aa].

CHAUDHARY ṢĀḤIB'S EXAMPLE IN HIS WORK

His Holiness[aa] read out some of the comments of those who worked with or under Chaudhary Ṣāḥib, in which they outlined the excellent manner in which Chaudhary Ṣāḥib used to work, the details he would focus on before making a decision and the kindness with which he treated everyone. His Holiness[aa] said that at times he has instructed the office bearers in Rabwah to travel throughout Pakistan and convey his *salam* [greeting of peace] to Aḥmadi households. Thus, Chaudhary Ṣāḥib also undertook such journeys, and at times he went to areas where a car was unable to drive and so he would visit the homes on foot.

His Holiness[aa] said that at times Chaudhary Ṣāḥib would himself undertake the training of life-devotees in an excellent manner. Thus, His Holiness[aa] said that at times, he would send life-devotees to Chaudhary Ṣāḥib and instruct him to train them. Chaudhary Ṣāḥib would advise people that he heard the Third Caliph[rh] say that if one was ever experiencing hardships in their personal life, they should give more time to serving the Community. Chaudhary Ṣāḥib exemplified obedience to Khilāfat. Whenever he received any instruction of His Holiness[aa], he would always implement it right away. At times he would receive such instructions at night, but regardless of the time, he would ensure that it's implementation would begin right away.

CHAUDHARY ṢĀḤIB'S HUMILITY

His Holiness[aa] said that Chaudhary Ṣāḥib was also very humble. Once, he went to the *Langar* [kitchen of the Promised Messiah[as]] and said that he had just come from a meeting and had to go to another in a few minutes, and asked if there was anything he could quickly eat. Some food was heated for him, but then when it was taken to him, it was seen that he had already taken some of the leftover food left on the table and eaten that, for he feared that the waiting for the food to be heated would make him late for his next meeting.

CHAUDHARY ṢĀḤIB'S EXEMPLARY OBEDIENCE

His Holiness[aa] said that there are many things which could be mentioned regarding Chaudhary Hameedullah Ṣāḥib, but he has only taken a few due to the shortage of time. However it is certain that there is no embellishment in whatever has been said. His Holiness[aa] said that he too worked with Chaudhary Ṣāḥib, who taught him many things. Then when His Holiness[aa] became *Nāzir A'lā* Chaudhary Ṣāḥib treated him with great respect. Then, His Holiness[aa] said that when he became the Khalīfa, Chaudhary Ṣāḥib exemplified respect and complete obedience.

His Holiness[aa] prayed that may Allāh elevate his station in paradise, and may Allāh continue to grant Khilāfat such great helpers.

His Holiness[aa] again directed the Community to pray for the condition being faced by Aḥmadis in Pakistan.

PRECAUTIONS REGARDING CORONAVIRUS

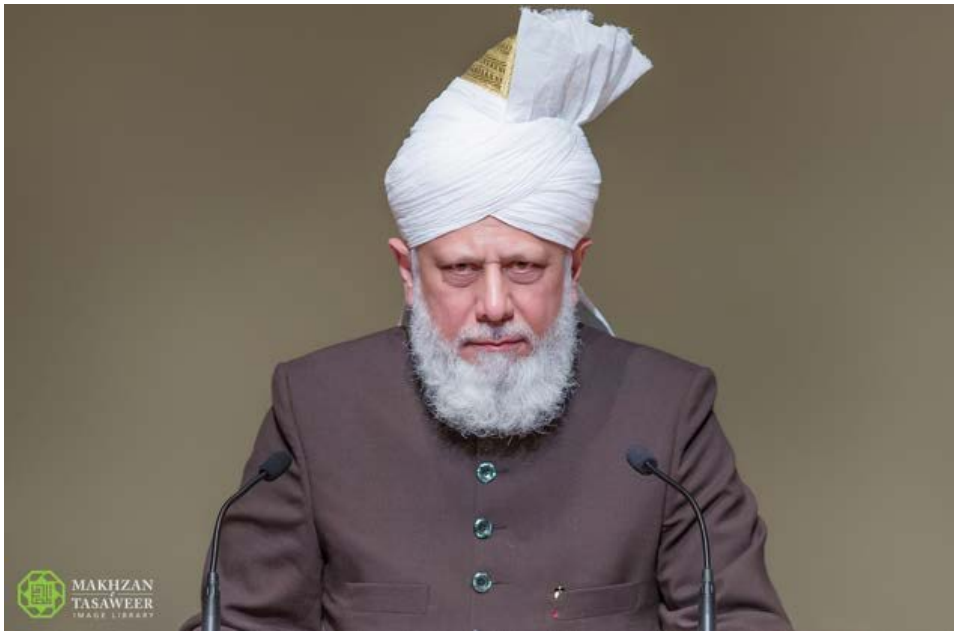
His Holiness[aa] directed members of the Community to strictly adhere to the various safety precautions with regards to the coronavirus pandemic. His Holiness[aa] said that masks should be worn and in the proper manner, it should not be that the nose is left exposed or that the mask is simply hanging around the neck, as there is no use of this. His Holiness[aa] said that social distancing must also be strictly adhered to, otherwise this virus will continue to spread. His Holiness[aa] said that unnecessary travel should also be avoided. His Holiness[aa] prayed that may this virus be eradicated swiftly and may Allāh heal all Aḥmadis and non-Aḥmadis alike who are suffering from this virus.

His Holiness[aa] said that he would lead the funeral prayer in-absentia of Chaudhary Hameedullah Ṣāḥib after the Friday prayer.

‘PROPHECY OF THE PROMISED SON – HE WILL BE FILLED WITH SECULAR & SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE’

19TH FEBRUARY 2021

After reciting *Tashahhud*, *Ta‘awwuz* and *Surah al-Fatihah*, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said that in the Community, February 20 commemorates the prophecy vouchsafed to the Promised Messiah[as] regarding the Promised Son. Holiness[aa] said that in today’s sermon, he would focus on one aspect of the prophecy, which is that ‘he would be filled with secular and spiritual knowledge.’



Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa]

‘HE WILL BE FILLED WITH SECULAR AND SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE’

His Holiness[aa] said that as far as the formal education of Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] is concerned, it was not very extensive as he only studied up until the primary level. However, his academic achievements are such that an entire series of sermons would be required to cover them to some degree. His Holiness[aa] said that though these achievements cannot be covered in a single sermon, he would present an introduction to the fulfilment of this aspect of the prophecy.

His Holiness[aa] said that he has taken examples of the various speeches, writings and works of Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] from the time of his youth, during which time he began showing extraordinary academic capabilities.

For example, at just the age of 17, Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Mahmoud Aḥmad[ra] delivered a speech on the ‘*Unity of God*.’ It was an extraordinary speech which was greatly appreciated by the First Caliph[ra]. In fact the First Caliph[ra] said that he had presented new points which had never before been heard.

COMPREHENSION OF THE LOVE FOR GOD

His Holiness[aa] said that in March 1907, when he was only 18 years old, Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] wrote a treatise on the topic of the ‘*Love for God*’. His Holiness[aa] said that this shows that God Almighty had instilled this awareness in him from a very young age. He compared the various concepts of God across various religions, and in doing so showed that the God presented by other religions was incomplete, whereas the view of God presented by Islām is the only view that is complete and encompassing, thus enabling one to truly love God. He said that it is only the God presented by Islām, Who still guides humanity through revelation to this day. After one supplicates to God, he does not respond straight away, rather he puts the supplicant through a trial, after which God opens the door of divine communion for the supplicant. It is then that the supplicant enjoys the beauty of prayer.

KNOWLEDGE WITH REGARDS TO ATTAINING TRUE SUCCESS

His Holiness[aa] said that in December of 1908, Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra], at the age of 19, presented a speech at the Annual Convention in Qadian on the topic of ‘*Attaining True Success*’. He said that one must realise that there is an everlasting life in the hereafter. He posed the question, that when people take every precaution in this world for a life which is temporary, but should they not also prepare more so for a life which is to last forever? He said that everyone strives for success in this world through their work or business, but there is another sort of trade, which may not bear fruit in this world, but will surely bear fruit in the hereafter. In order to be successful in this sort of trade, Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] laid out some important principles which must be followed: **1)** To always seek forgiveness for one’s sins **2)** always pay attention to worship **3)** always be thankful to God **4)** enjoin good **5)** be mindful of the boundaries established by God. Following these steps he said, can lead one to true success.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE REMEMBRANCE OF GOD

His Holiness[aa] said that in the Annual Convention of 1916, two years after becoming the Caliph, Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] delivered a speech on ‘*The Remembrance of God*’. He said there are four kinds of remembrance:

1) Offering prayer **2)** reciting the Holy Qur'ān **3)** to proclaim and explain the attributes of God to others **4)** to ponder over the attributes of God in solitude. He presented over a dozen ways in which one can become regular in offering supererogatory prayers, twenty ways in which one can become regular in prayers, and a dozen benefits for the remembrance of God.

> . . . the need for religion is based upon the existence of God and his converse with people, and in this age, no one has had more converse with God than the Promised Messiah[as].

AWARENESS OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

His Holiness[aa] said that in October 1919, Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] delivered a speech in Patiala, the topic of which was the attribute of God, '*Lord of all the Worlds*' also known as the general grace of God which applies to all things and all people. In this speech, he explained how God Almighty has established means for the betterment and progress of the soul and one's spirituality. He explained that it was under this general grace, that the Holy Prophet[sa] was sent to enlighten the world, and then later, the Promised Messiah[as] was sent to revive that very same message.

His Holiness[aa] said that another lecture delivered in 1919 was '*The Outset of Dissention in Islām*.' In this lecture, Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] said that the dissention which arose in Islām after about fifteen years after the demise of the Holy Prophet[sa] is often cited by the opponents of Islām as a blight against the religion Islām. Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] said that he wished to dispel such false notions, and thus presented a detailed explanation of all events and their background, clearing up misconceptions such as the fact that the dissension arose as a result of some senior Companions of the Holy Prophet[sa]. He thoroughly explained the events that occured and the primary proponents to the rise of dissension such as Abdullah bin Saba and other opponents and hypocrites. However no matter the opposition, Qur'ān and other senior companions remained steadfast upon the teachings of Islām and showed the utmost kindness, even to the dissidents. His Holiness[aa] presented the comments of some non-Aḥmadi scholars and historians after hearing this lecture or reading its published version. A renowned historian said that he has never seen such a detailed and well-researched treatise on Islāmic history.

INSIGHT INTO DIVINE DECREE

His Holiness[aa] said that another speech delivered in 1919 was on the subject of '*Divine Decree*.' His Holiness[aa] said that this, no doubt, is a difficult subject to tackle, however Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] presented it in a most eloquent manner. Regarding this, the Fourth Caliph[rh] said that to deliver such a speech at the Annual Convention, where both learned and educated people were listening, as well as those who were not educated, and to present it in such a manner that both could understand is indeed a great feat. He dispelled many misconceptions regarding divine decree and explained the subject with extensive proofs and explanations. His Holiness[aa] said that this is something about which many questions arise and so people should read this book.

ADVICE TO MUSLIM NATIONS

His Holiness[aa] said that Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Aḥmad[ra] delivered another lecture on the topic of '*The Treaty of Turkey and the Future Conduct of Muslims*'. After the first world, war, the deals made with Muslim countries were very crippling and unfair. Thus, Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] gave sound advice and guidance as to how Muslims countries such as Turkey should proceed in the future. He highlighted the negative aspects of the treaty signed by Turkey, and suggested how Muslims could avoid its ill effects. He further elucidated how Muslims could prosper in the world. His Holiness[aa] said that the landscape described regarding the manner in which western countries dealt with Muslim countries bears some resemblance even today. His Holiness[aa] said that the manner in which Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] gave guidance and advice is clearly indicative of the fact that the help of God was with him.

His Holiness[aa] said that in 1920 Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] delivered a speech spanning two days on the subject of '*The Angels of Allāh*.' Though this is also a complex subject, he presented it in a manner which is very easy to understand. He explained the existence of Angels; their purpose, their work, the various types, and in the end also presented various means through which one could establish a connection with Angels.

THE NEED FOR RELIGION

His Holiness[aa] said that in March 1921, Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] delivered a speech on the topic of '*The Need for Religion*.' He addressed topics, such as the fact that some say that there is no longer any need for religion, that there are those in other religions who make prophecies, and that the success of the Promised Messiah[as] is not indicative of his truth as Lenin in Russia was also successful. He answered all of the points with great proficiency stating that the need for religion is based upon the existence of God and his converse with people, and in this age, no one has had more converse with God than the Promised Messiah[as]. He said that in terms of others receiving revelation, those claims made by them are made solely based on their knowledge and have an aspect of conjecture in them. Finally as for the success of the Promised Messiah[as], he said that the Promised Messiah[as] had been foretold of his success before it even happened.

His Holiness[aa] said that another treatise by Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd

Aḥmad[ra] was '*The Existence of God*.' He explained in great detail the concept of God; he presented the concept of God in various other religions in history and soundly proved the existence of God.

> . . . true Muslims should use all the means available to them, and then after expending their God-given abilities, they should leave the rest to God Almighty.

A GIFT TO THE PRINCE OF WALES

His Holiness[aa] said that another book which Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] wrote was '*A Gift to the Prince of Wales*' which was sent to Edward VIII. In this, he conveyed the true message of Islām to him and invited him to accept the true message. The Prince of Wales received this book and also sent a note of thanks to Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra]. Non-Aḥmadis also presented their views of this book, in which they greatly appreciated and lauded the fact that Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] undertook the duty of presenting the true message of Islām to a current-day monarch.

Inviting the World to the True Islām

His Holiness[aa] said that Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīng Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] wrote a book titled *Aḥmadiyyat or The True Islām*. A summary of this book was read out at the Wembley Conference in 1924. This book presented such great ideas, that even Christian priests attested to the fact that this book presented such points which had never before been heard. In this book, he stated and clarified that Aḥmadiyyat and the true Islām are one in the same. He elucidated the type of relationship that one should have with God among covering many topics. He also clarified the misconception that Muslims must abandon all worldly means. He said that true Muslims should use all the means available to them, and then after expending their God-given abilities, they should leave the rest to God Almighty. He further proved that the teachings of Islām regarding the establishment of high morals are unmatched by any other teaching. He also mentioned how people should interact with each other in a society, and also expounded upon how global tensions between countries should be settled by presenting teachings from the Holy Qur'ān. In the end, Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] invited the world to accept Aḥmadiyyat.

His Holiness[aa] said that these examples were just a glimpse into the life of Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] when he was still in his youth. Though he did not have any formal education, according to the divine promise, he was filled with both secular and spiritual knowledge. His Holiness[aa] said that this does not even cover a hundredth of what Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] did and accomplished. His Holiness[aa] prayed that may Allāh continue to elevate his station in paradise.

His Holiness[aa] again made an appeal for prayers for the Aḥmadis residing in Pakistan. He prayed that may Allāh swiftly foil the plots of all the opponents.

RIGHTLY GUIDED CALIPHS – HAZRAT 'UTHMĀN[RA]

26TH FEBRUARY 2021

After reciting *Tashahhud, Ta'awwuz* and *Surah al-Fatihah*, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said that he would continue highlighting incidents from the life of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra].

His Holiness[aa] mentioned the Battle of Sawari which took place between the Muslims and Romans. Constantine set out an army of 500 ships against the Muslims. But in the end, the Muslims prevailed. Similarly, His Holiness[aa] highlighted the victories in various regions and countries afforded to the Muslims during the time of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] These include places such as Rome, Armenia, and Afghanistan.

MESSAGE OF ISLĀM REACHES THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

His Holiness[aa] said that the message of Islām also reached the Indian sub-continent during the time of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra]. It is narrated that Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] sent armies towards Mukran and Sindh where the Muslims were able to spread the message of Islām. Similarly, an envoy was sent to what is now Balochistan in Pakistan where the opponents of Islām were defeated. Similarly, the message of Islām was spread to Kabul, which historians say was also part of the Indian sub-continent at that time.

DISSENTION FORETOLD BY THE HOLY PROPHET[SA]

His Holiness[aa] said that the Holy Prophet[sa] had foretold the fact that there would be opposition against Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra]. The Holy Prophet[sa] said to Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] that it could be that one day, God would grant him a mantle to wear, and there would be those who would wish for him to take it off. However, the Holy Prophet[sa] said that if the hypocrites tried to make Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] take this mantle off which was given to him by God, he should not take it off. According to another narration, the Holy Prophet[sa] mentioned a disorder which would soon arise. At that time, there

was a hooded man walking by. The Holy Prophet[sa] said that when this disorder arose, that person would be on the rightly guided path.

His Holiness[aa] said that during the days of his illness, the Holy Prophet[sa] called Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] and they sat alone and the Holy Prophet[sa] spoke to him. It is narrated that as the Holy Prophet[sa] spoke to him, the colour in his face changed. Later, on *Yaumud Dar* (the day when Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] was martyred) Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] said that the Holy Prophet[sa] had foretold and warned him about what was about to happen.

His Holiness[aa] said that it was during the time of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] that disorder amongst the Muslims began to arise. His Holiness[aa] quoted the Second Caliph[ra], who said that some blame either Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] or Hazrat 'Alī[ra] as the reasons why this disorder began, however he explained that such a notion is completely false, for both were great servants of Islām and had reached such heights of spirituality that they could not commit any deed that would contradict the teachings of Islām.

Furthermore, the first 6 years of the Caliphate of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] was a period of great peace. He was awe-inspiring and greatly respected amongst all, due to the great services he rendered for Islām. Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] was also well-known as one who fulfilled the rights owed to others.

SPREADING OF MISCHIEF

There was in fact a group of people who were spreading falsities regarding the Companions of the Holy Prophet[sa]. They would go around and express their complaints to whoever would listen. Slowly, this group began growing, being easily influenced as they would be entrapped as soon as they accepted Islām and their faith was weak. Furthermore, they had never met or spent time around the Holy Prophet[sa], or even his senior Companions[ra]. Thus they were easily influenced. Those who spread these falsities included some from among the Jewish people as well as less-learned Muslims.

Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa]

CLEMENCY & WISDOM OF HAZRAT 'UTHMĀN[RA]

During the time of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra], this disorder was brewing, however even the perpetrators of the disorder accepted the fact that they would not be able to openly spread this disorder whilst Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] was in power. In fact, Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] gathered these people as well as the Companions[ra]. At this time, those raising this disorder began seeking forgiveness from Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra]. The Companions[ra] however said that it would even be permissible to kill those who were raising this disorder. However, Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] said that he would accept their apologies and that there was no reason to take such action.

His Holiness[aa] said that Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] clarified the various allegations being levelled against him by the hypocrites. For example there was an allegation that whilst travelling, Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] would not shorten his prayers as instructed by the Holy Prophet[sa]. Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] clarified that this only took place once when he travelled to Mina, and he did not need to shorten his prayer there because he owned property there, and his in-laws also resided in Mina. Furthermore, another allegation was that he would appoint youngsters to high posts. However he clarified that he only appointed those who possessed high levels of piety and possessed the capacity to undertake the duty of the given post.

Even still, when the Companions[ra] insisted that they should be killed on account of the disorder they were brewing, but Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] firmly said that no such action would be taken, for he hoped for the reformation of those people. This was the level of mercy shown by Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra]. Unfortunately, however, this forgiveness and mercy shown to them did nothing for the hypocrites, and instead they continued to increase in their dissension and disorder.

His Holiness[aa] said that he would continue highlighting incidents from the life of Hazrat 'Uthmān[ra] in the future.

FUNERAL PRAYERS

His Holiness[aa] said that he would lead the funeral prayers in absentia of the following:

Abdul Qadir Ṣāḥib

Abdul Qadir Ṣāḥib who was originally from Peshawar was martyred on February 11. He was working at the medical clinic, when the bell rung by patients was rung, and when Abdul Qadir Ṣāḥib went to open the door, there was a boy posing as a patient, who then shot and killed Abdul Qadir Ṣāḥib. His grandfather accepted Aḥmadiyyat during the time of the First Caliph, after his older brothers had gone earlier to meet the Promised Messiah[as]. Abdul Qadir Ṣāḥib

Mubarak Mosque, UK

loved Khilāfat a great deal, and had a zeal for propagating the message of Islām Aḥmadiyyat, due to which he was made to face great opposition. He always treated his wife and children with great kindness. He was regular in offering prayers, in fact his prayers were such that his family would often check to see if he was alright as he had been in prostration for so long. He is survived by his wife, four sons and five daughters. His Holiness[aa] prayed that may elevate his station in Paradise, protect his family and enable his children to keep the legacy of his virtues alive.

Akbar Ali Ṣāḥib

Akbar Ali Ṣāḥib who passed away on 16 February. He was in jail as a prisoner in the way of Allāh, on account of his faith, where he passed away due to a heart attack. He had been imprisoned for four and a half months, after the case had not even been properly heard. He worked as a security guard and was a very brave person. He worked as a security guard at a bank, and when someone told the bank manager that he had hired a disbeliever, the manager replied that he saw him offering prayers and reciting the Qur'ān, how could he be disbeliever? He is survived by two wives, a son and a daughter. His Holiness[aa] prayed that may Allāh treat him with forgiveness and mercy and enable his children to continue the legacy of his virtues.

Khalid Mahmood-ul-Hassan Bhatti Ṣāḥib

Khalid Mahmood-ul-Hassan Bhatti Ṣāḥib who was *Wakīlul Māl Thālith* in Rabwah. He was also serving as the Vice-President of *Majlis Ansarullah* and the *Naib Afsar Jalsa Sālāna*. He served the Community in various capacities over a span of thirty-eight years of service. In his capacities, he would travel to various places where he would help teach people about the Community, its system, and would encourage people to increase their connection with Khilāfat. He is survived by a wife, two daughters and a son. He worked with great passion and dedication, and always trusted God in all matters. He established the spirit of a life-devotee in its true sense. Despite always being busy with his work, he never neglected his duties at home and was always present. His Holiness[aa] prayed that may Allāh elevate his station in Paradise and enable his children to keep alive the legacy of his virtues.

Mubarak Aḥmad Tahir Ṣāḥib

Mubarak Aḥmad Tahir Ṣāḥib who passed away on February 17. He is survived by his wife, four sons and two daughters. One son is Hafiz Ijaz Aḥmad Tahir, a professor in Jāmi'a Aḥmadiyya UK and Nasr Aḥmad Tahir, a life-devotee serving in *The Review of Religions*. Mubarak Aḥmad Tahir Ṣāḥib served as a life-devotee in various capacities, including as a teacher in Uganda. Upon returning to Rabwah he served in various offices. He was appointed as the *Mashīr Qānūnī* by the Fourth Caliph[rh], a post which he served in until his demise. He always came home with a smiling face, and always recounted his stories and incidents with the Caliphs and would advise youngsters to remain attached to Khilāfat. He always trusted in God and had a great connection with Khilāfat, which he would attribute as the reasons for any success. His Holiness[aa] said that he himself saw him to have great trust in God, and no matter the difficult circumstances being faced, he would be content as he trusted in God and knew that the prayers of the Caliph were with him. Once, The Third Caliph[rh] placed some money in his pocket, due to which his pockets always remained full. He would always spend in the way of Allāh and would give to the poor and needy. He advised his children who also became life-devotees, that to devote one's life is to become completely obedient. It is on the basis of this advice that his sons are serving as life-devotees. He was granted great wealth by God Almighty, a majority of which would be spent in helping the less fortunate and poor. His Holiness[aa] commented that he possessed many great qualities and saw him work with great patience and care and never became worried as he constantly kept his trust in God.

FASTING: THE FOURTH PILLAR OF ISLĀM

Hazrat Sir Chaudhary Muḥammad Zafrulla Khan[ra]

Muslims throughout the world will be fasting during the sacred month of Ramaḍān. This article is by one of the greatest international statesmen and jurists of his age, the late Hazrat Muḥammad Zafrulla Khan. It gives a brief and lucid insight to the fourth Pillar of the Islāmic faith. It was originally published in the Review of Religions in March 1994.

'The Holy Qur'ān states: 'O ye who believe, fasting is prescribed for you during a fixed number of days as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may safeguard yourselves against every kind of ill and become righteous. But whoso from among you should be ailing, not being permanently incapacitated, or should be on a journey, shall complete the reckoning by fasting on a corresponding number of other days; and for those who find fasting a strain hard to bear is an expiation, the feeding of a poor person, if they can afford it. Whoso carries through a good work with eager obedience, it is the better for him. If you possessed knowledge you would realise that it is better for you that you should fast.'[1]

'The month of Ramaḍān is the month in which the Qur'ān began to be revealed, the Book which comprises guidance for mankind and clear proofs of guidance and divine Signs which discriminate between truth and falsehood. Therefore, he who witnesses this month, being stationary and in good health, should fast through it. But whoso is ailing, not being permanently incapacitated, or is on journey, should complete the reckoning by fasting on a corresponding number of other days. Allāh desires ease for you and desires not hardship for you; He has granted you this facility so that you should encounter no hardships in completing the reckoning, and that you may exalt Allāh for His having guided you and that you may be grateful to Him.'[2]

'It is made lawful for you to consort with your wives during the nights of the fast. They are as a garment for you and you are as a garment for them. Allāh knows that you were being unjust to yourselves, whereof He has turned to you with mercy and has corrected your error. So consort with them now without compunction and seek that which Allāh has ordained for you, and eat and drink till the break of dawn begins to manifest itself. From then on, complete the fast till nightfall. But do not consort with your wives during the period when you are in retreat in the mosques. These are the limits prescribed by Allāh, so approach them not. Thus does Allāh expound His commandments to the people, so that they may safeguard themselves against evil.'[3]

The idea of the fast has been inculcated in all religious disciplines which are based on revelation, though strict conformity to the ordinances relating thereto is no longer insisted upon. Indeed, within some disciplines, the fast has been reduced to a purely symbolic observance. In Islām, the ordinances relating to the fast are clearly stated and defined and to the degree of their applicability, they are strictly observed. A tendency towards greater rigidity is sometimes encountered and has to be checked and countered through exposition of the true purpose of the fast and of the meaning of the regulations and their spirit.

Subject to the permissible exemptions, the observance of the fast is obligatory upon every adult Muslim during the month of Ramaḍān, the ninth month in the lunar calendar current in Islām. As the lunar year is shorter by about eleven days than the solar year, Ramaḍān rotates through the year and the seasons, arriving [ten] days earlier every year. Thus in every part of the earth, it progresses through every season in turn. In the tropics, when Ramaḍān falls in the summer season, not only are days longer than in the winter but the fast entails additional hardship on account of the heat, as normal occupations and pursuits have to be carried on and in the intense heat and dryness, a severe degree of thirst may have to be endured through several hours each day. The fast is, however, in no sense a penance. It is a physical, moral and spiritual discipline, and the object is the promotion of righteousness and security against evil. Through the experience of the fast, the worshipper is impelled to exalt Allāh for His having provided the guidance and is prompted to the beneficent use of His favours and bounties.[4]

Outside Ramaḍān, a voluntary fast may be observed at any time, except on the two festival days. The Holy Prophet[sa] often observed a fast on Monday and Thursday but he did not approve of a voluntary fast being observed on a Friday.

A fast is prescribed as an expiation or as an alternative penalty in respect of certain crimes or defaults, but in these cases also, the object is the promotion of physical, moral and spiritual values. For instance, if a person on Pilgrimage to the House of Allāh is unable to offer the sacrifice of an animal as prescribed, he should observe the fast for three days during the course of pilgrimage and for seven days after return home, making up ten altogether.[5] The expiation of an oath is a fast for three days.[6] The alternative penalty for killing game while on Pilgrimage is a fast for a number of days corresponding to the number of animals killed. The alternative penalty for manslaughtered is a fast for two consecutive months[7] and the same is the penalty for Zihar, a frivolous declaration by a husband that henceforth consorting with his wife would amount to consorting with his mother, a hateful method of

pronouncing a divorce, practised in pre-Islāmic days abolished by Islām.[8]

A vow of silence during a certain period [9] has also been described in the Holy Qur'ān as fast.[10]

PHYSICAL OBSERVANCE

The observation of a fast, whether obligatory or voluntary, or by way of expiation or as a penalty, is subject to the same regulations. The period of the daily fast extends from the first flush of dawn normally about an hour and a quarter before sunrise, till after sunset. During this period neither food nor drink or nourishment may be pass through the lips of a person who is observing the fast. Nor should any drug or other substance be swallowed or injected into the system. The fast may, however, be discontinued in case of emergency and would be terminated if the person observing the fast becomes sick. Nor should there be any consorting between husband and wife or any approach to it.

The fast must not be continued beyond sunset even if nothing is immediately available for terminating the fast save a few drops of water, a pinch of salt or sugar, a bit of stale bread or a dried date, etc.

If during the fast, food or drink should be swallowed in complete forgetfulness of the fast, that would not vitiate the fast and the fast should be completed till nightfall. Should, however, something be swallowed through carelessness, even involuntarily, the fast is vitiated and cannot be continued.

It is customary and is considered desirable that a light breakfast should be taken immediately before the commencement of the fast. The breaking of the fast after sunset should not be made an occasion for gorging oneself with food and drink. This would be in contravention of the fast and would be a departure from the example of the Holy Prophet[sa] which must be adhered to. It could also prove harmful to health.

The month of Ramaḍān is a period of intensive training in beneficent values. Abstention from food and drink and conjugal relations for a certain number of hours each day through a month is a valuable exercise in endurance and steadfastness. But that is only the outer shell, as it were of the fast. Yet even this has a great social significance. It brings home to the well-to-do sector of society the meaning of hunger and thirst. Privation ceases, in their case also, to be a mere expression and becomes an experience shared in common with all. The consciousness that a large number of their fellow beings have to go hungry most of the time is sharpened and there is great eagerness to share with them the bounties that Allāh has, of His grace, bestowed on themselves.

THE TRUE PURPOSE OF RAMAḌĀN

The true purpose of Ramaḍān, as of all forms of Islāmic worship is to draw people closer to Allāh. Though normal pursuits and occupations are carried on as usual, the emphasis on moral and spiritual values and concentration on them are intensified, and everything is subordinated to the main purpose. The hearing, the sight, the

tongue, the mind are all under stricter control. For instance, not only vain talk, but much talk is also eschewed, so that there should be greater concentration on remembrance of Allāh and reflection upon His attributes. The Holy Prophet[sa] said: 'He who abstains from food and drink during the period of the fast but does not restrain himself from uttering a falsehood starves himself to no purpose.' It is related of him that during Ramaḍān, his own concern for and care of the poor, the needy, the sick and the orphan was intensified manifold, and that his charity knew no limit.

RECITATION OF THE QUR'ĀN AND I'TIKAF

The study of the Qur'ān and reflection over the Divine Signs recited therein takes up the greater part of the time that can be garnered by reducing the other demands upon it to a minimum. Divines and scholars carry on discourses on the Qur'ān throughout the month. Voluntary Prayer during the latter part of the night is deemed obligatory during Ramaḍān but may be offered individually or in congregation. For the convenience of those who may find it difficult to proceed to a mosque at that hour to take part in the service, a congregational service is held after Isha, the evening service. Whether held after Isha or before Fajar the follow up passage after the Fatiha assumes considerable proportions. The service comprises eight raka'as, offered in four units of two raka'as each, and is led by an Imām who is Hafiz, that is one who has learnt the whole Qur'ān by heart. During this service, the recitation from the Qur'ān is made in sequence and the recitation of the whole of the Qur'ān is completed during Ramaḍān. This entails the recitation of approximately one twenty-eighth of the Qur'ān in the course of the daily service, one eighth of that portion being recited as the follow-up passage after the Fatiha in each raka'a. The Imām , of course, recites from memory and the congregation follows the recitation with rapt attention.

That is another unique feature of Islām. No less than seventy times is the Scripture of Islām referred to in the Revelation itself by the name Qur'ān. The word means that which is repeatedly read, recited, proclaimed. It is the only Scripture which is in its entirety expressed in the words of the revelation. It is thus the only one which is literally the Word of God. Its very name is a prophecy that it will be widely and repeatedly read, recited, and proclaimed. Its text, in the words of the revelation, is preserved intact and in its proper sequence in the memories of millions of its devotees from generation to generation. Hundreds of millions read and recite portions of it in Prayer services and otherwise in the course of the day and night around the globe. During Ramaḍān the number is greatly augmented. Numberless people read it through by themselves during that month. Others hear it interpreted and expounded.

A much larger number hear it recited from beginning to end in the course of the service just described. All this in the very words of the revelation in which it was sent down close upon 1400 years ago. That in itself is a matchless Divine Sign and Testimony.

During the last ten days of Ramaḍān, many people go into seclusion, as it were, in a mosque and devote the whole of their time, not occupied by the obligatory and voluntary services, to the study of the Qur'ān and the remembrance of Allāh. This period of complete devotion of a worshipper's time to the exercise of the purely spiritual values, is the culmination of the physical, moral and spiritual discipline instituted by Islām. To carry such a discipline farther would be a sort of asceticism or monasticism which is not approved of in Islām.[11]

PROHIBITIONS

Complete abstention from food and drink during the period of the fast does not constitute so great a hardship for a Muslim as adherents of other disciplines may be disposed to imagine. Muslim children are brought up in an atmosphere of respect for and devotion to the values indicated by the faith. Very early they begin to exhibit an eagerness to practise them. Parents have often to restrain young children from observing the fast. They are trained into endurance of the rigours of the fast through a gradual process, spread over a number of years. A child of twelve or thirteen may be permitted to observe the fast on three or four days at intervals during one Ramaḍān. The following year, he may be permitted to increase the number to eight or ten. In the third year he may be content with fasting on each alternate days. In the fourth year, he would be ready to assume the full obligation.

Another very helpful factor is furnished by the dietary regulations of Islām. In the matter of food, the prohibitions are blood, the flesh of an animal that dies of itself and is slaughtered for food, the flesh of swine and the flesh of an animal on which the name of any other than Allāh has been invoked, meaning thereby, sacrifices made to idols or other gods and offerings made to saints or to any being other than Allāh.[12] The first three categories are prohibited because they are harmful for the body, and that which is harmful for the body is necessarily harmful for the spirit. The last prohibition relates to something which is manifestly harmful morally and spiritually in as much as it involves association of others with Allāh.

A relaxation is made in the case of a person who is driven by necessity and to whom no other means of sustenance and nourishment is for the time available. Such a one may partake of a prohibited article of food, consuming only that much as he may consider necessary for his immediate need. In such instance, priority is given to the need of maintaining and sustaining life, as against the possibility of such harm, if any, as might result from the consumption of a minimum quantity of the forbidden article.[13]

Liquor and all intoxicants are forbidden. It is recognised that some people may derive some pleasure or advantage from the use of liquor or other prohibited article, but it is pointed out that the harm resulting from their use is far greater than any pleasure or advantage that might be derived from it.[14] The prohibition however is clear and absolute:

'O ye who believe, liquor, gambling, idols and divining arrows are only an abomination of Satan's handiwork. So shun each one of them that you may prosper. Satan's design is only to promote enmity and hatred between you through liquor and gambling and to keep you back from the remembrance of Allāh and from Salat. Will you desist?'[15]

It needs to be remembered that in the matter of any pleasure or advantage to be derived from liquor or any other intoxicant, and the harm that may result from their use, it is, not only an individual or a class that has to be considered; society as a whole must be taken into account. It may well be that the harm resulting to an individual or to a number of individuals may not be overtly manifested, but there is no denying that society as a whole suffers grave harm from the use of liquor and other intoxicants. The purpose of the Qur'ān is not only to furnish guidance for the individual, but to furnish guidance to the individual as a member of society and, indeed, to mankind as a whole.

These are the prohibitions, but not all that is permissible may be used as food and drink in all circumstances. Of that which is permissible, only that may be used as food and drink which is clean and wholesome.[16] This has a relative aspect also. Articles of food and drink over a wide range may be wholesome for a child or for an invalid. But even that which is permissible and is clean and wholesome may be partaken of only in moderation:

'Children of Adam, look to your adornment at every time and place of worship, and eat and drink but be not immoderate, surely, He loves not those who are immoderate.'[17]

Photo by Sinan Toy on Unsplash

Within these limitations, there is neither harm nor sin in eating and drinking of the good things provided by Allāh out of His bounty, so long as the objective is that life may be sustained and health promoted for the purpose of carrying out Allāh's will through firm faith in the guidance that He has sent down and action in conformity therewith.

'There is no harm for those who believe and work righteousness in respect of that which they eat, provided they are mindful of their duty to Allāh and believe and work righteousness, are again mindful of their duty to Allāh and carry it out to the uttermost. Allāh loves those who carry out their duty to the uttermost.'[18]

Here, then is a gradation which is elastic and yet takes full account of the immediate as well as the ultimate purpose of food and drink. That which is harmful on the whole is forbidden altogether, except in the case of extreme necessity, when the preservation of human life must take precedence even at the risk of some, possibly only temporary, harm. The exemption or relaxation in such a situations is only in respect of the minimum quantity that would suffice for the immediate need. Under this restriction, the possibility of harm would be slight, and once the immediate need has been met, the prohibition would continue to operate.

Of that which is permissible only that which is clean and wholesome may be consumed as food and drink but only in moderation. That again is a relative matter to be determined with reference to the requirements of each individual and class.

Finally, not only the immediate purpose of food, drink, but also the ultimate purpose, namely the promotion of the moral and spiritual values must be kept in view.

DISCIPLINE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

It will thus be appreciated that a Muslim's freedom in respect of food and drink, as indeed in respect of all matters is controlled by beneficent regulation, and is disciplined. During Ramaḍān, the regulation and discipline become stricter in order to intensify the effort for the

achievement of the ultimate purpose. That which is forbidden as being harmful, whether in the matter of food and drink or in respect of any other activity, is to be abstained from at all times. In the month of Ramaḍān, there is to be abstention during the period of the fast even from that which is lawful and permissible; food and drink which sustain life, and marital intercourse which promotes the continuance of the species, the purpose being to win the pleasure of Allāh. It also has a symbolic aspect. By observing the fast, the worshipper makes a pledge or covenant that if in the course of carrying out his duty of complete submission to the will of Allāh, he should be called upon to put his life in jeopardy or to sacrifice the interests of his progeny, he would not hesitate to do so. Such a discipline practised through a whole month every year should ensure that the participant would, during the remaining eleven months of the year progressively achieve greater and greater adherence to moral and spiritual values.

It must never be overlooked that the whole of fasting, whether obligatory, as during the month of Ramaḍān, or voluntary, as at other times, is to promote righteousness, which means the progressive cultivation of spiritual values. The same applies when the fast is observed as an expiation or a penalty. The spiritual recompense of proper observation of the fast is high indeed. The Holy Prophet[sa] has said:

'There are appropriate spiritual rewards for all worship and righteous action; the ultimate reward of the person who observes the fast solely for winning the pleasure of Allāh is Allāh Himself.'

PRAYER

The month of Ramaḍān is one of the months of the lunar calendar. It begins with the appearance of the new moon and ends with the next appearance of the new moon. As soon as the new moon of Ramaḍān is sighted, a joyous surge of anticipation inspires the hearts of young and old. The season of closer communion with his Most Glorious, Ever Merciful, Most Compassionate, Most Forgiving Lord of the worlds, Originator, Creator, Fashioner and Maker, Master of the Day of Judgment, has opened and we have been accorded once more, by His Grace, the good fortune of witnessing it and the privilege of striving to enrich ourselves through the continuous opportunities it provides of seeking the pleasure of Allāh. All praise to Allāh for His unending bounties! Greetings and felicitations are exchanged all round. All is bustle and solemn preparation. Mosques begin to fill with eager worshippers for the Maghrib service to be followed after brief interval by Isha and then Taravih during the eight raka'as of which the congregation is privileged to listen to the recitation of the Holy Book from the very beginning to the end in proper sequence, evening after evening till, by the end of the month, the whole has been recited. The greater part of the night is passed in supplication and in precise, glorification and remembrance of Allāh. Those who prefer to offer the eight raka'as of voluntary Prayer during the latter part of the night rather than in the evening as Taravih occupy themselves with it as the time approaches for a light breakfast in the solemn dawn hour. The Muezzin's Call to Prayer with its first Allāho Akbar, Allāh is Great is the signal for the commencement of the fast and preparation for the Fajr Salat.

Thereafter the normal daily routine is followed with a heightened consciousness of the duty owned to Allāh and to His creatures, one's fellow beings. Praise, glorification and remembrance of Allāh form, as it were, the infrastructure of all activity and greater attention is directed towards caring for the poor, the needy, the widow, the orphan, the sick, the distressed, the neighbour, the wayfarer, etc. Courses on the Holy Qur'ān are given in mosques and seminaries. Towards the close of the day the heart experiences a glow of gratitude to the Divine that His Grace has enabled one to approach the end of the fast having spent the night and the day in striving to conduct oneself in conformity to His will.

The Muezzin's Call to Prayer for the Maghrib Salat is the signal announcing the end of the fast, which is terminated with a mouthful of water, a cup of tea, a dried date or two, or even a pinch of salt should nothing else be immediately available and with the supplication:

'Allāh, for thy sake I observed the fast putting my trust in Thee, and I have ended it with that which Thou has provided. Thirst is quenched and the arteries refreshed and I look for my recompense with Thee, if Thou should so will. I beg of Thee Allāh, of Thy mercy that encompasseth all things, that Thou may be pleased to forgive me my sins.'

The Maghrib Salat follows within a few minutes and thereafter, the evening meal is partaken of. It is considered very meritorious to invite others, but more particularly the poor, the needy, the orphan to the breaking of the fast and the evening meal. These two need not be, however, separate occasions. A simple meal may be taken at the time of breaking the fast, thus preceding the Maghrib Salat. An elaborate meal designed as a compensation for the period of assentation is not only contrary to the spirit of the fast but tends to also upset the digestion. In this, the spirit of the fast is not respected and observed as strictly in certain part of Muslim would as could be wished.

> "As soon as the new moon of Ramaḍān is sighted, a joyous surge of anticipation inspires the hearts of young and old.

TERMINATION

The 'Ishā service and *Tarāvih* complete the rhythm and tempo of daily life during Ramaḍān. When the month beings to approach its end, the general mood is one of pensiveness which promotes eagerness to take full advantage of the remaining days to make up for any shortcomings and fallings off during the earlier periods. Numberless people experience closer communion with their Maker and Creator during this blessed month, the intensity

and frequency of which continue to increase as the month progresses.

The fast terminates with the appearance of the new moon. The new moon may be visible after sunset of the twenty-ninth day of the fast, but if not the fast must be continued the next day, thus making a total of thirty days during the month. It may be that on the thirtieth evening, visibility may be very poor due to atmospheric conditions, and the moon may not be visible. That would make no difference and Ramaḍān would terminate at sunset on that day, as it is recognised that a lunar month cannot extend beyond thirty days. The same rule governs the commencement of the month.

The day following the last day of Ramaḍān, determined as above, is observed as the Festival of the termination of the fast. It is one of those occasions when even a voluntary fast may not be observed. In conformity with the spirit of Islām, the only celebration prescribed for the Festival is an additional service during the forenoon comprising two raka'as and an address by the Imām . The service may be held in one of the bigger mosques of a large city, but in view of the large numbers involved, is generally held in the open. It is customary, following the example of the Holy Prophet[sa] to take a light breakfast after sunrise before setting out for the service, and also to vary the route home on returning from the service.

The festive character of the occasion is proclaimed through exchange of visits, feeding the poor, visiting the sick and glorification of Allāh and celebrating His praise in thankfulness to Him for the guidance provided by Him, particularly with regard to all that pertains to the observance of the fast, and for having enabled those upon whom the fast was obligatory to observe it duly.

Allāh is Great, Allāh is Great;
None is worthy of worship save Allāh;
Allāh is Great, Allāh Is Great;
To Allāh belongs all praise!

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3. Ibid., 2:188
4. Ibid., 2:186
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8. Ibid., 58:5
9. Ibid., 19:11
10. Ibid., 19:27
11. Ibid., 57:28
12. Ibid., 2:174-175
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THE LIFELONG SPIRIT OF RAMAḌĀN

Sarmad Naveed, Missionary serving in the *Review of Religions*

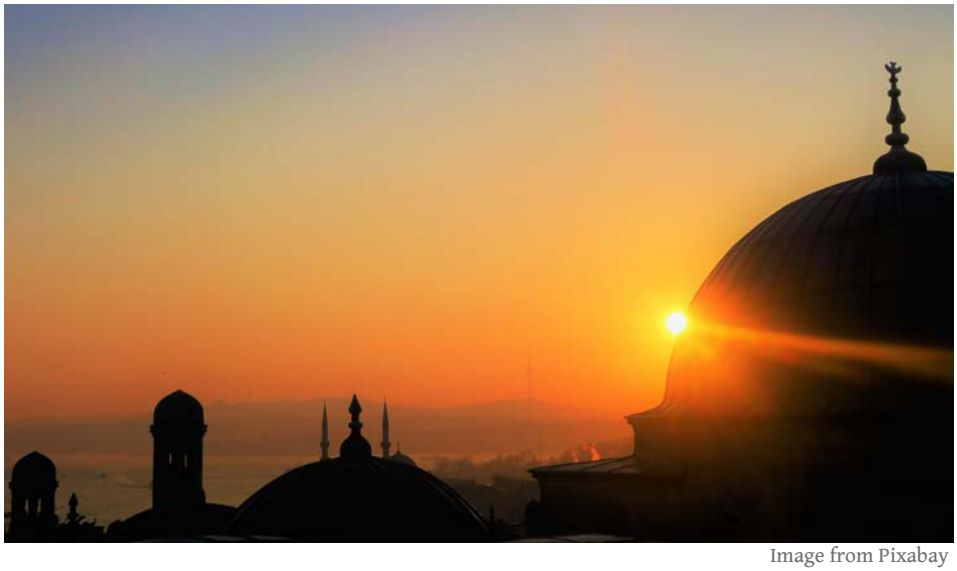
Centuries ago, there was a pandemic—of sorts. The atmosphere had become toxic. The more people met, the more they gathered, the more this disease spread. There was a revolutionary among them, who felt that there was a cure out there to this toxicity. As he searched for the cure, he self-isolated, so as not contract the illness, nor play a part in its spread.

The main symptoms included worship of false gods, immorality and inhumanity at all levels in varying degrees, the usurping of rights, especially those of women, and an underlying greed and selfishness. It was spreading rapidly, and there seemed to be no cure—no end.

Finally, in order to bring an end to this pandemic and revive those who had proverbially died, God Himself sent the cure, as Muḥammad[sa]—who sat in isolation—received his first revelation in the lunar month of Ramaḍān. Thus, Islām began—in isolation.

The month of Ramaḍān is the most sacred time of the year for Muslims all around the world. It entails fasting from dawn till dusk, abstaining from all kinds of food and drink, along with a greater focus on worship in an effort to attain a stronger bond with God Almighty. It's true essence can be found by examining the word Ramaḍān itself. The Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, Hazrat Mirzā Ghulam Aḥmad[as] explains:

'The burning of the sun is called *Ramd*. Since one abstains from food, drink, and all physical delights during Ramaḍān, then also establishes a zeal and fervor for [fulfillment of] the commandments of Allāh; the spiritual and physical zeal and burning combine to make Ramaḍān.' [1]



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Thus, Ramaḍān is a combination of the physical and the spiritual. The physical difficulties ('burning') that come about from the sacrifices of abstinence from food, drink, and other enjoyments of life enable the soul to attain spiritual enhancement. On the same token, the soul's burning passion for spiritual enhancement is what encourages the body to undertake such hardships upon itself. In fact, these precepts of Ramaḍān are aptly reflected through the perfect example of the Holy Prophet[sa]. His soul ardently yearned and longed to find God and be one with Him; 'And He found thee wandering in search of Him.'[2] This fervor enabled his body to make the necessary physical sacrifices; climbing up a steep mountain into the depths of a dark cave to isolate in worship, separate from his family, outcast from the society around him, with the scarcest of means for nourishment. This in turn, enabled him to attain the spiritual heights he ardently searched for. Thus did the rest of his life pan out – physical sacrifice encouraged by spiritual longing, resulting in the attainment of heightened spirituality.

Ramaḍān is a clear reflection of this very concept. It entails sacrifice; sacrifice of the mind, body and soul.

The physical sacrifice of giving up food and drink even though it's readily available. Why? In order to focus more on satiating the soul's longing for spiritual nourishment.

The physical sacrifice of standing in prayer for extended periods of time throughout the day, even aside from the five daily prayers; and then sacrificing sleep to wake up in the middle of the night to offer supererogatory prayers. Why? To fulfill the soul's fervor for seeking repentance,

to pray for family and friends, and most of all, attaining a heightened and stronger relationship with God.

Thus does the physical *Ramd*, combine with the spiritual *Ramd*, resulting in Ramaḍān. This also means that the rites of Ramaḍān cannot be performed as mere superficial service. If the physical burning is not met with spiritual zeal and vice versa, then the month will pass by without one having experienced Ramaḍān. Ramaḍān is not mere ritual; it's a way of life. The Holy Prophet[sa] once said, 'When the month of Ramaḍān enters, the gates of heaven are flung open and the gates of hell are shut, and satans are chained.'[3] The words, 'when the month of Ramaḍān enters' refer to Ramaḍān, its spirit and its essence, entering one's heart. Ramaḍān is not limited to mere fasting, rather its true form is when it enters one's heart and becomes a way of life, as a result of the due sacrifices being made.

If this is the case, it means that this way of life, or its effects—including physical sacrifices—transcend the month itself. Hazrat Mirzā Bashīrud-Dīn Mahmūd Aḥmad[ra], second Caliph of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community elaborates on this point:

'Fasting endows one with the ability to bear hardship. Those who are used to bearing any sort of hardship do not lose hope during difficult times, instead they face them with bravery and are successful in doing so...Thus, fasting inculcates the habit of sacrifice in a nation...The Holy Prophet[sa] once said that fasting is not simply averting one's mouth from food and drink, in fact fasting also connotes abstaining from vain speech, Thus, fasting is also avoiding foul speech, avoiding fighting and quarreling, and it is also necessary to avoid other vanities as well. Thus speaking less is also a part of Ramaḍān. Eating less, speaking less, sleeping less and decreasing physical relations, all four are part of Ramaḍān... When a person who is fasting decreases these four means of ease and comfort, he inculcates the habit of bearing hardships and is able to find success in boldly confronting any difficulty in life.' [4]

Not only does the concept of fasting transcend simply not eating, but the concepts of sacrifice and hardship transcend the month of Ramaḍān. The Second Caliph[ra] likens it to an army, which trains for certain periods of the year in order to stay ready for any sort of situation that may arise. Their training is such that whenever called upon, they are able to endure whatever comes their way. So too does Ramaḍān prepare Muslims to endure whatever may come their way. To

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adopt the spirit of Ramaḍān is to increase tolerance to hardships of any kind.

Ramaḍān also serves as a reminder of what could be, or what is—seemingly far from home. The struggle of the less fortunate, those unable to eat for extended periods of time and those who suffer on a daily basis. But this year, Ramaḍān could not have come at a more opportune time.

This year, everything hits closer to home. What people have known to be their lives – for their entire lives – has effectively changed. Jobs have been lost, schools have been closed and majority of the world has been confined to their own homes. Graduations cancelled, weddings postponed, funeral services compromised, patients and frontline workers alike succumbing to the effects of this disease; it's an entirely new reality. It is certainly a difficult time, a time when not only sacrifices must be made, but hardships must be endured. If ever there were a time to adopt the spirit and essence of Ramaḍān and the lessons it teaches, it's now.

If there is a sacrifice to me made, it may be as simple as staying in isolation—if that can even be called a sacrifice. But for many, that is the hardest part of this entire ordeal. Many studies show that social distancing and isolation can have various forms of negative effects on the mind and even body. Hans Kluge, director of the European branch of the World Health Organization said:

"Isolation, physical distancing, the closure of schools and workplaces are challenges that affect us, and it is natural to feel stress, anxiety, fear and loneliness at this time"[5]

Yet, amidst the hardship, Muslims have an opportunity to tap into the spirit of Ramaḍān and employ the lessons they've learned of dealing with and combating hardships. It's also an opportunity to re-visit the very origins of Islām, so heavily linked to this month, as 'The month of Ramaḍān is that in which the Qur'ān was revealed as a guidance for mankind,'[6] It was on that momentous Ramaḍān night, as the Prophet Muhmmad[sa] sat in isolation, that revelation of the Holy Qur'ān began, thus initiating the religion of Islām. Under the newly imposed laws of social distancing and isolation, Muslims can follow this example of deep thought, devotion and prayer which lead the Prophet Muḥammad[sa] to such spiritual heights.

But there is yet another incident which took place on the very same night. After the pinnacle of Divine communion had been reached, his soul having received what it sought, the Prophet Muḥammad[sa] hurried down the mountain – still awe-struck – and narrated the incident to his beloved wife Khadijah[ra]. As he expressed his worry, she reminded him of the sacrifices he had made to reach this point:

'You treat your kith and kin with love. You are truthful, and assist others in discharging their responsibilities, and have gathered in yourself lost virtues. You are

hospitable, and a helper to others in the way of truth.' [7]

In a society where these things were few and far between, Hazrat Khadijah[ra] reminded him of the sacrifices he had made to uphold such values. That was the night when the joining of physical Ramd and spiritual Ramd was realized; and for the first time, the true essence of Ramaḍān was born.

What this testimony shows, is that in order to reach God, in order to truly find Him and establish the highest form of connection with Him known in the history of humankind, the Prophet Muḥammad[sa] focused on service to humanity. His beloved wife, the closest witness to his true character, bore testimony to the way in which he served humanity before being commissioned as a prophet. But his dedication to the service of humanity after his prophethood has been testified to by the greatest Witness of all, God Almighty Himself.

'Surely, a Messenger has come unto you from among yourselves; grievous to him is that you should fall into trouble; he is ardently desirous of your welfare; and to the believers he is compassionate, merciful.'[8]

He could not bear to see others in hardship, to the extent that something as simple as the thought of a mother's worry when her child cried during prayer brought pain to the Prophet Muḥammad's[sa] heart and so he would hasten the prayer.[9] He brought a death upon himself in order to revive the world. He endured the loss of loved ones, the torture of companions, only because he sought the greater good, and could not bear to think of a God-less, immoral, inhumane world. And so he strove, and he strove, and he strove to establish humanity in the world, to establish morality and to establish the Unity of God in the world. And even when the thought of having done all he could was not enough for him, God Almighty yet again testified to his unmatched care and love for humanity, 'Haply thou wilt grieve thyself to death because they believe not.'[10]

It was thus that the Holy Prophet[sa] established a person's greatest responsibility as being service to humanity, second only to serving God. In fact, he showed that it is in serving God's creation that one can truly serve God and fulfill one's rights to Him.

Ramaḍān marks a time of heightened worship, heightened sacrifice and a greater focus on the Divine. But it must be realized that if one desires to achieve this, it cannot be done without a heightened sense of service to humanity. The Holy Prophet[sa] was already extremely generous and bountiful, yet it is recorded that during the month of Ramaḍān, his generosity would increase so much that he would give charity faster than storming winds[11] It is from examples like these that we are able to understand that one of the most important and integral aspects of Ramaḍān is increased service to humanity.

In today's times, service to humanity is that much more important. In fact, the Promised Messiah[as] has stressed that especially in times like these where a pandemic has spread, caring for and serving humanity is of paramount importance. When the plague had spread, he advised.

'Whoever, by Divine Decree, is afflicted with the plague; be supportive of them and their relatives and help them in any way, and do not leave even the slightest effort in their treatment.' [12]

It is often said that technological advancements have turned the world into a global village. Perhaps now, more than ever, the world must truly come together as a village, helping one another as neighbors; looking out not just for ourselves, but the greater good, and humanity at large. So, in light of today's circumstances, how can we serve our communities or increase in our charity this Ramaḍān? Well, when the simple act of meeting someone with a smiling face can be considered an act of charity then indeed any good we do for the benefit of others, especially humankind at large can be considered an act of charity. This means that staying home, in isolation, not going out and about as we normally would in order to stop the spread of this pandemic in our families, communities, countries and the world as a whole can also be considered an act of charity; when done for the sake of service to humanity and for the sake of God. This, along with countless other ways of serving humanity, now and always, are what truly enable one to inculcate within themselves, the essence of Ramaḍān resulting in a true connection with God, and thus does a permanent change come about within a person.

In his Friday Sermon delivered on April 24, 2020, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] stated:

'...turning your attention purely towards Allāh Almighty, abstaining from even the lawful things purely for His sake, tolerating hunger and thirst for His sake, paying greater attention towards the worship of Allāh Almighty than before and paying particular attention towards fulfilling the rights of His servants – when one fulfills these injunctions, this in essence is true Taqwa [righteousness] and this is the very purpose of Ramaḍān and fasting. When a person observes the fast and passes through the month of Ramaḍān with this objective and for this purpose and does so with pure intentions then this will not bring about a temporary transformation. Rather, it will be a permanent change.'

Hence, if we want to get through this difficult time, we must sacrifice and adopt the true spirit of Ramaḍān; and if we want to adopt the true spirit of Ramaḍān, we must adopt service to humanity.

ENDNOTES

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3. *Saḥiḥ Bukhārī*
4. *Tafsīr Kabīr* by Hazrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd[ra] Vol. 2, pp. 376-377
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7. *Saḥiḥ Bukhārī*
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WAQF NAU DAY 2021
JAMĀ'AT VAUGHAN

Ghulam Ahmad Abid Secretary Ishā'at Vaughan Jamā'at

The Waqf Nau scheme holds such great importance for Jamā'at members that thousands of families worldwide have devoted their children for this noble cause. Parents of these Waqf Nau children feel proud as they are part of that group of families who fulfil the desire of our beloved Imām . Devoting children brings a responsibility upon the parents. To remind them of their responsibilities the national department of Waqf Nau arranges a nation wide Waqf Nau day which is held in all branches. Our Jamā'at's Waqf Nau department actively worked to make this event successful. This Ijlas was held on the 7th of February, 2021. This program was especially for parents and is held annually.

Due to COVID-19, the program was held virtually and upon the request of respected Muhammad Zubair Mangla Ṣāḥib local Amīr Vaughan, respected Dr. Aslam Daud Ṣāḥib Naib Amīr Jamā'at Canada presided over the event. The program began at 1:30 pm with recitation of the Holy Qur'ān, from Surah An-Nisa Chapter 4 verses 125-127, by Frass Ahmad Chaudhary Ṣāḥib of Kleinburg. The English translation of these verses of the Holy Qur'ān was presented by Subhan Tariq Ṣāḥib of Woodbridge South. After this, a poem written by the Promised Messiah[as] (Hymns and Preaching of Truth/ *Munajāt aur Tablīgh Haq*) was recited by Ramish Ahmad Ṣāḥib of Vaughan South, following which Kashif Dawood Ṣāḥib of Woodbridge South presented its English translation.

The first speech of the program was by respected Mirza Muhammad Afzal Ṣāḥib Murabbi Silsila Vaughan. The topic of his speech was Spirituality and Service—Two integral parts of True Waqf. The Waqf Nau scheme was started in the light of Hazrat Ibrahim's[as] devotion of his son Hazrat Ismail[as]. Hence it is integral that all Waqf Nau understand the purpose of Hazrat Ibrahim[as] devoting his son Hazrat Ismail[as]. In Surah Ibrahim verse 38 of the Holy Qur'ān, it is mentioned that this devotion was for the sake of Allāh and for the revival of spirituality and service. In order to uplift spirituality it is important to offer five daily prayers, and as a Waqf Nau child you must seek Huzoor Anwar's[aa] advice and offer your services where he appoints. The spiritual revolution which Allāh has planned for the world is meant to be through Aḥmadiyyat and Waqf Nau are the foot soldiers of this revolution. This revolution is not with a power struggle rather with service to humanity. Therefore every Waqf Nau child must prepare for it and follow the program of the Waqf Nau department and stay in touch with Huzoor Anwar[aa], and if these things are done with the grace of Allāh, you will be the recipients of the blessings of Allāh Almighty. Amīn!

Following this speech, the keynote address was delivered on the topic of "Parent's desire to have Waqf Nau progeny," by respected Dr. Aslam Daud Ṣāḥib Naib Amīr Jamā'at Canada. He mentioned that it was during the time of a righteous woman, the mother of Mary and the woman of Imran when she said: 'My Lord, I have vowed to Thee what is in my womb to be dedicated to Thy service. So do accept it of me; verily, Thou alone art All-Hearing, All-Knowing.' On the 3rd of April 1987, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ IV[rh] proposed to the Jamā'at to follow the traditions of the Prophets and dedicate their most prized possession—their yet to be born children in the way of Allāh, to the cause of Islām, propagation of Aḥmadiyyat and service to mankind. To present one's child to Allāh is an extremely important event, so before these children have grown to an age that they are to be 'given' to the Jamā'at , their parents have a great responsibility. On the 10th and 17th of February 1989, Huzoor[rh] mentioned some of the responsibilities

of parents towards Wāqifīn Nau of which some of them are listed below:

1. Parents should pray for their children and watch them closely.

2. Parents should inculcate love and truthfulness in the heart of their children.

3. Parents will have to attend to their own training before training their children.

4. They should be taught contentment and to dislike greed for wealth and material gain.

5. Parents should help their children to attain the highest standard of honesty and trustworthiness.

6. Parents should teach their children to be jovial and pleasant.

7. From the beginning, Wāqifīn Nau should be taught the Holy Qur'ān and to recite it daily and with comprehension.

8. Parents should ensure that their children have a vast religious and secular knowledge so that they become great leaders.

9. Wāqifīn Nau should be taught patience and tolerance.

10. Parents should not say anything against the Nizām Jamā'at and avoid any kind of gossip in their homes.

11. They should be encouraged to partake in sports.

12. Keep them away from absurd literature.

13. Great emphasis should be laid on learning Arabic, Urdu and other languages.

14. Their good manners should win the hearts of the people.

> "Huzoor Anwar[aa] states that you should always remember that you are the section of Jamā'at whose parents have made a pledge with Allāh to dedicate our lives to the cause of Jamā'at and Islām.

15. Wāqifāt Nau should be taught teaching, medicine, computer science, languages.

16. Great emphasis should be laid on prayers so they have a close and personal relationship with Allāh from childhood.

17. A personal file should be created for each Waqf Nau child. This file should contain all personal and educational documents suggested by Markaz. Copies should be sent to local and national secretaries.

18. Parents should adopt an attitude of moderation in their child's training.

19. A child's training should be done by personal example.

Huzoor Anwar[aa], said "So, I want to convey to all such mothers and fathers that just the name of Waqf Nau is not enough. Rather, Waqf Nau is an important responsibility. It is the responsibility of the parents until Waqf Nau becomes an adult and thereafter it becomes his own responsibility." May Allāh enable us to fulfill this great responsibility in the best possible way! Amīn!

After this, upon the instruction of Local Amīr Ṣāḥib, respected Kamran Ashraf Chaudhry Ṣāḥib President Woodbridge North conducted a question and answer session. The panel included Naib Amīr Jamā'at Canada Dr. Aslam Daud Ṣāḥib, Murabbi Silsila Mirza Muhammad Afzal Ṣāḥib, Murabbi Silsila Arslan Warraich Ṣāḥib, local Amīr Vaughan Muhammad Zubair Mangla Ṣāḥib, and Secretary Waqf Nau Vaughan Kashif bin Arshad Ṣāḥib.

Thereafter, respected Kashif bin Arshad Ṣāḥib, Secretary Waqf Nau Vaughan, made some announcements. The last part of the session was specifically for Waqf Nau fifteen year and older. The last speech of this event was by respected Arslan Warraich Ṣāḥib Murabbi silsila Vaughan on the topic of "Guidance of Khulafā' for Wāqifīn Nau in selecting a career." He said that the key question when looking at this topic is what is the pledge we have made with our beloved Imām? Huzoor Anwar[aa] states that you should always remember that you are the section of Jamā'at whose parents have made a pledge with Allāh to dedicate our lives to the cause of Jamā'at and Islām. Therefore we should always understand and recognize what our importance is. And with that we should never break the promise that our parents have made. When selecting a career typically we look at our goals and aspirations and we look for motivation to see what we enjoy. But as Waqf Nau We should be motivated to select the careers and create the goals which are in accordance with what the Jamā'at needs most. Huzoor Anwar[aa] says that when selecting a career, ask the Jamā'at about which field to enter into. I have said it before that Waqf Nau boys should give the first priority to go to Jamia and become a Murabbi. It is the need of the hour." No matter how we feel or what our desires are in terms of our careers, the most important thing is to write to Huzoor Anwar[aa] for guidance, and then act accordingly. The process to deciding a career for a Waqf Nau is as follows,

- **Decide now if you would like to continue as Waqf Nau.**

- **Consult with the Waqf Nau department.**

- **Write to Huzoor Anwar[aa] for guidance and approval of career.**
- **Serve Jamā'at or auxiliary as a volunteer.**
- **Once you complete your education, offer your services.**
- **If continuing with your own job or business, seek permission from Huzoor Anwar[aa].**

If we follow these steps, then we will truly be fulfilling our waqf. May Allāh enable us all to do so! Amīn!

The program concluded with silent prayers led by Naib Amīr Jamā'at Canada Dr. Aslam Daud Ṣāḥib. The total attendance was 140.

Ramish Ahmad Ṣāḥib

Frass Ahmad Chaudhary Ṣāḥib

Subhan Tariq Ṣāḥib

Kamran Ashraf Ṣāḥib

Murabbi Silsila Arslan Warraich Ṣāḥib

Mirza Muhammad Afzal Ṣāḥib Murabbi Silsila Vaughan.

Kashif Dawood Ṣāḥib

Kashif bin Arshad Ṣāḥib

TAHRĪK FOR **FINANCIAL SACRIFICE** IN RAMAḌĀN

Khalid Naeem, National Secretary Māl

SPENDING IN THE WAY OF ALLĀH IN RAMAḌĀNUL MUBĀRAK

Hazrat Ibn Abbas[ra] states that the Holy Prophet[sa] was the most generous of all people. In Ramaḍān, the Holy Prophet's[sa] generosity would increase even more; so much so, that his generosity was like the gusting winds. (*Saḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Kitābul Wahi)

ZAKĀT

Zakāt is one of the (five) fundamental pillars of Islām. Regarding it, the Promised Messiah[as] states:

> So, offer the five daily prayers in such fear and with such complete attention as though you were actually beholding God Almighty. Sincerely observe your fasts for the sake of God. Let everyone who is liable to pay the Zakāt do so. (*Noah's Ark*, p. 25)

Stating the importance of Zakāt, Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa] says:

> An important [type of] charity which I want to turn your attention towards is Zakāt. Zakāt is paid at a fixed rate. Usually, not enough attention is given to it (*Al-Fazl Daily*, Rabwah, August 24, 2004)

> ...This is a fundamental injunction. Those on whom Zakāt is obligatory must pay it. Some people have enormous savings in their bank accounts for many years. If any amount has been kept for a year, Zakāt should be paid on it. Furthermore, women must pay Zakāt on the jewelery they own; This is a fundamental commandment that needs to be fulfilled. (Friday Sermon, March 31, 2006, qtd. in *Al-Fazl International*, April 21, 2006)

THE RATES OF ZAKĀT

Zakāt is obligatory upon any wealth accumulated for a year. For current circumstances in Canada, the amount upon which Zakāt is obligatory is set at $6,200.00. If one has owned this amount in cash, jewelery or other assets for a full year, then 2.5% Zakāt is obligatory on their wealth. Zakāt must also be paid on gold, silver and other such valuables not used on a daily basis.

Members, especially the sisters, are requested to assess if Zakāt is obligatory on them [based on the rates above], and if so, they should pay it during Ramaḍānul Mubarak.

FITRĀNA, 'ĪD FUND AND FIDYA

- The rate of Fidya is set at $5 per fast.
- The rate of Fitrāna is set at $4 per head [mandatory for each family member; even a day old baby].
- Likewise, every earning member should offer at least $10 to the 'Īd fund. These donations should be made prior to the 'Īd Namāz.

Remember the main objective of Fidya, Fitrāna, and 'Īd Fund is to aid those with insufficient resources so that they can cover their expenses during this month, including 'Īd related expenses. This is why we should try to offer Fidya, Fitrāna and 'Īd fund at the start of Ramaḍānul Mubarak so that funds may reach such deserving members in a timely manner.

CHANDA JALSA SĀLĀNA

The rate of Chanda Jalsa Sālāna is 1/120 of one's [annual] salary or 1/10 of monthly income for those members who pay Chanda 'Ām.

May Allāh the Exalted enable us all to offer financial sacrifices in this blessed month and may Allāh bless our wealth and persons! Amīn!

AHMADIYYA MUSLIM JAMAAT
INTERNATIONAL

Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at Press Releases

The following press releases have been provided by Press & Media Office, Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at

Mubarak Mosque, UK

NATIONAL MAJLIS 'AMILA IN NIGERIA HAVE HONOUR OF VIRTUAL MEETING WITH WORLD HEAD OF AḤMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

His Holiness[aa] gives guidance on a wide array of administrative and religious matters

On 20 February 2021, the National Majlis 'Amila (Executive) of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community Nigeria were granted a virtual official meeting and audience with the World Head of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), His Holiness[aa] Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] for the very first time. Also present were the Principals of Aḥmadiyya Muslim Schools in Nigeria, Doctors serving in the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Hospitals in Nigeria and Missionaries serving in the country.

His Holiness[aa] presided the meeting from his office in Islāmabad, Tilford, whilst the 'Amila members joined the meeting virtually from the Lajna Hall in Ojokoro in Lagos, Nigeria.

During the almost 60-minute meeting, all present had the opportunity to speak to His Holiness[aa] and to receive the guidance and instructions of His Holiness[aa] on a range of issues.

Speaking to the National Talīm Secretary, responsible for the Education of the members of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community in Nigeria, His Holiness[aa] said that the department should guide Aḥmadi Muslim students throughout their education.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"You should form a counselling and guidance committee. The purpose of the committee will be to guide and counsel the students who are secondary school-going students and guide them what further education they can pursue according to the local conditions and the local requirement."

His Holiness[aa] also advised the National Tarbiyyat Secretary, the secretary responsible for the moral training of Aḥmadi Muslims, to ensure Aḥmadi Muslims living in Nigeria were observant of all Islāmic teachings.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"Each and every Aḥmadi Muslim should be very particular and punctual in offering five times daily prayers, should be very particular in reciting the Holy Qur'ān, should be very punctual and regular and particular in reading some books of Hadith and of the Promised Messiah[as]. You should prescribe some book also for the members of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community that they can read – those books which have been translated into English – so they can read and know what the purpose of the advent of the Promised Messiah[as] is; what did he say, what does he want from us and how an Aḥmadi Muslim should behave."

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] further stated:

"If the Tarbiyyat department is active and you have done your job appropriately and in the best manner, then quite a number of other departments will run smoothly."

His Holiness[aa] also instructed that in each and every chapter of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community in Nigeria there should

be a local missionary and so, His Holiness[aa] said, a detailed plan should be made in this regard to outline how to train missionaries to fulfil this target.

Furthermore, His Holiness[aa] said that every ‘Amila member should commit their time for a two-week Waqf Arzi period whereby the ‘Amila members dedicate their time for helping teach the Holy Qur’ān to the members of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community or to convey the message of Islām to the wider public.

> “Each and every Aḥmadi Muslim should be very particular and punctual in offering five times daily prayers, should be very particular in reciting the Holy Qur’ān

As the meeting concluded, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] prayed for the attendees and said:

“As I have already guided some of the secretaries, they should work hard according to my instructions and identify where you are lagging behind and see how you can improve. May Allāh the Almighty bless you all!”

LAJNA IMAILLAH NIGERIA HAVE HONOUR OF VIRTUAL MEETING WITH WORLD HEAD OF AḤMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

“Encourage every girl to get higher education” – Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa]

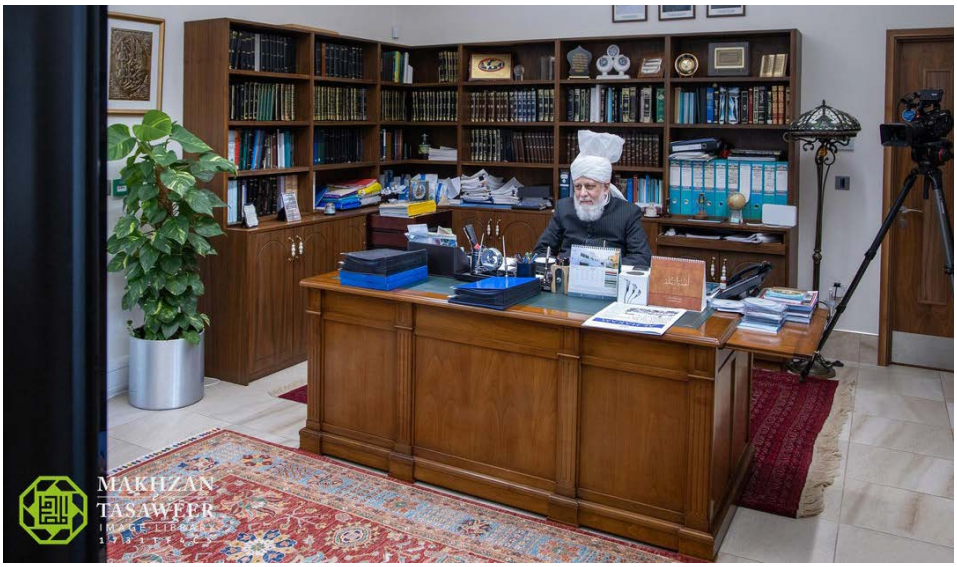
On 21 February 2021, the World Head of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), His Holiness Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] held a virtual online meeting with members of the National ‘Amila (Executive) of Lajna Imaillah Nigeria (Aḥmadiyya Muslim Women’s Auxiliary).

His Holiness[aa] presided the meeting from his office in Islāmabad, Tilford, whilst the ‘Amila members joined the meeting virtually from the Lajna Hall in Ojokoro in Lagos, Nigeria.

During the meeting, His Holiness[aa] outlined the various responsibilities assigned to the respective Lajna ‘Amila members and gave guidance on improving the activities of their departments.

Speaking to the Secretary Nasirat, responsible for the moral and spiritual training of girls up to the age of fifteen, His Holiness[aa] said that their department should keep a good record of how many girls are engaging and taking part in the initiatives that were being run by the national department.

His Holiness[aa] also encouraged exercise and instructed the Secretary Sehat Jismani, responsible for Health and Fitness, to ensure that the ‘Amila members should lead by example and exercise regularly.



Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa] presiding the virtual meeting

During the meeting, the Secretary Sanat-o-Tijarat, responsible for Trade and Industry, showed some of the products that the Lajna Imaillah members from across the country had made, such as bags and other items. The secretary highlighted that the Lajna Imaillah members are being assisted in making an earning and are being supported in starting their own businesses. They had also assisted local society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Later in the meeting, reiterating the importance of gaining higher education, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

“Encourage every girl to get higher education.”

As the meeting concluded, His Holiness[aa] outlined his expectations of Lajna Imaillah.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

“You have a huge task in front of you and I hope Lajna can achieve it and if you do, it will also encourage the men to be more active. You have to push them! My expectations with Lajna are more than the men. So I hope you fulfil my expectations. May Allāh the Almighty bless you in every respect! Allāh bless you all!”

MAJLIS KHUDDĀMUL AḤMADIYYA MAURITIUS HAVE HONOUR OF VIRTUAL MEETING WITH WORLD HEAD OF AḤMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

"Let the youth understand the importance of prayer. The five-time daily prayer – Salat - is obligatory for each and every Muslim." – Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa]

On 27 February 2021, the World Head of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), His Holiness Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] held a virtual online meeting with the National 'Amila (Executive) of Majlis Khuddāmul Aḥmadiyya Mauritius (Aḥmadiyya Muslim Youth Auxiliary), as well as Local Qaideen.

His Holiness[aa] presided the meeting from his office in Islāmabad, Tilford, whilst the 'Amila members joined from the Darus Salaam Mosque complex in Rose Hill, which serves as the National Headquarters of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community in Mauritius.

During the meeting, the Khuddām representatives were able to present a report of their respective departmental activities and proposed future plans.

Speaking to the National Secretary Tarbiyyat, responsible for moral training of the youth, His Holiness[aa] outlined that they must inculcate the importance of basic Islāmic practices within the youth, such as the offering of the five daily prayers.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"Let the youth understand the importance of prayer. The five-time daily prayer – Salat - is obligatory for each and every Muslim. Make them realise the importance of it by providing them verses from the Holy Qur'ān, the Ahadith and the passages of the Promised Messiah[as] and of course the directions given to the Khuddām by the Caliphs of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community. Each and every youth himself should realise the importance of prayer... In this regard, 'Amila members should set an example for others to follow. Until and unless you set your example, people will not follow your instructions."

Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa] presiding the virtual meeting

During the meeting, His Holiness[aa] gave extensive guidelines on the correct upbringing of older children from amongst Majlis Atfal-ul-Aḥmadiyya, the department charged with the religious training of Aḥmadi Muslim boys aged seven to fifteen.

Speaking to the National Atfal Secretary, His Holiness[aa] outlined the importance of ensuring the moral and spiritual development of Aḥmadi Muslim children and outlined his expectations in this regard.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"When boys reach the age of 14 or 15, they normally develop different preferences and often become lazy with regards to the religious activities of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community. So, this is a very crucial time and age for the Atfal where you should strive to keep them closer to you. Always try to attach them to their religion and involve them in the activities of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community as much as you can."

Later in response to another question, His Holiness[aa] again emphasised the importance of moral training of the youth at 14 and 15 years of age.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"Try to make programmes which are of interest to the older Atfal and the Khuddām. Ask them what type of activities they think will be beneficial for them and do not only just follow the traditional programmes and plans... Try to find out from them, what do they suggest? As long as their suggestions are within the four walls of the traditions of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community and the teachings of Islām then you can make your plans accordingly. In this way you, you can increase the number of Atfal and Khuddām taking part in your activities."

His Holiness[aa] also outlined the importance of sports and physical activities for the youth of all ages.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"Make it a point that Khuddām should play some outdoor games and not just waste their time wandering the streets or just playing indoor games on the TV or online. They should play outside physical games, be it football, rugby, cricket, badminton, table tennis or other games. It should not be that they just waste their time on TV and video games."

MEMBERS OF WAQF NAU IN THE UK HAVE HONOUR OF A VIRTUAL MEETING WITH THE HEAD OF THE AḤMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

"Whether you are a medical student or studying any other field, concentrate in your studies and, alongside this, pay attention towards prayers. Increase your connection with Allāh." – Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa]

On 28 February 2021, the World Head of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), His Holiness, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] held a virtual online meeting with male members of the Waqf Nau Scheme from the United Kingdom.

His Holiness[aa] presided the meeting from his office in Islāmabad, Tilford, whilst the 'Amila members joined the meeting virtually.

The event started with the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān, followed by a poem and sayings of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa] and the Promised Messiah[as].

His Holiness[aa] was also shown a video presentation about the various engaging talks and presentations held the previous day in a Waqf Nau Virtual Retreat organised by the Waqf Nau department of Majlis Khuddāmul Aḥmadiyya UK.

During the rest of the 50-minute meeting, the Waqf Nau members had the opportunity to speak directly to His Holiness[aa] and asked questions on various matters relating to their future career choices, the importance and objectives of life dedication and the challenges facing the youth in this day and age.

His Holiness[aa] was asked how a Waqf Nau student of medicine should study to ensure that he becomes the best possible medical professional for the benefit of humanity and in order to fulfil the pledge of being a Waqf Nau.

In response, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] stated:

"A medical student should study regardless of whether he is a Waqf Nau or not. You will not attain a degree if you do not study well. Indeed, whether you are a medical student or studying any other field, concentrate in your studies and, alongside this, pay attention towards prayers. Increase your connection with Allāh. Offer your five daily prayers at their appointed time."

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] continued:

"If an atheist studies and works hard whilst not believing in God, it does not matter; he will receive his recompense from Allāh the Almighty for the efforts he puts into his studies. But an Aḥmadi Muslim is someone who believes in Islām, in the existence of Allāh the Almighty and has certainty that Allāh helps him. So, along with his studies he will also have to prove that he has a connection with Allāh the Almighty."

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] further said:

"Do not think that just because an atheist attains success, therefore you should attain success too [without prayer]. There is a difference between the two. And you have to consider this difference. It is a very subtle difference and you will have to bear this in mind. If you keep this in mind, you will have a connection with God and you will pay attention towards your studies and you will then be able to achieve your targets."

Another question related to what specialisations the Waqf Nau doctors should do to benefit the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"We need all kinds of specialists. If you are going to Africa then we need general surgeons there. If we send you to Pakistan, in Rabwah, then we need cardiologists – interventionists or simple cardiologists. Therefore, every Waqf Nau who is becoming a doctor, once he completes his degree, should write and seek guidance as to which specialisation he should go into. There is no general principle. We cannot say, 'All Waqifīn Nau should go into this field or that field.' It depends on the requirements and the interests of the individual. I guide them based upon that."

One student asked what they should give priority to if they are studying, whilst, at the same time, volunteering in various roles within the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community.

In reply, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"Those who are studying in university should see if they can do justice to their Community responsibilities along with their studies. If they cannot do justice then they should mention to their superiors that for a certain time, and particularly during exam periods, it is not possible for them to serve fully. At such times, focus upon your studies. However, other than the time you spend on your studies, at weekends and other free time, utilise for service of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community. You should not waste your time in futile pursuits."

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] continued:

"Do not waste your studies at the excuse of serving the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community. It should not be so. Give first preference to your studies and then use any spare time to serve the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community. When your studies are complete, you should write and inform that you are ready to fulfil your life dedication and that you are giving your complete time for the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community. Then without any greed, fulfil the purpose of devoting your life and accomplish your life dedication."

His Holiness[aa] was also asked what prayer or spiritual procedure should be adopted by those looking for work during the difficult period of COVID-19 when many jobs are in short supply.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"Do your prayers five times a day and pray whilst prostrating that Allāh the Almighty may create ease for us. There is no supplication other than this. The greatest supplication is the observance of the five daily prayers. Allāh the Almighty has not said that if you do one particular prayer He will certainly accept it. Allāh the Almighty has said that you should do the five daily prayers and fulfil your obligatory prayers and pray during them and He will accept the prayers."

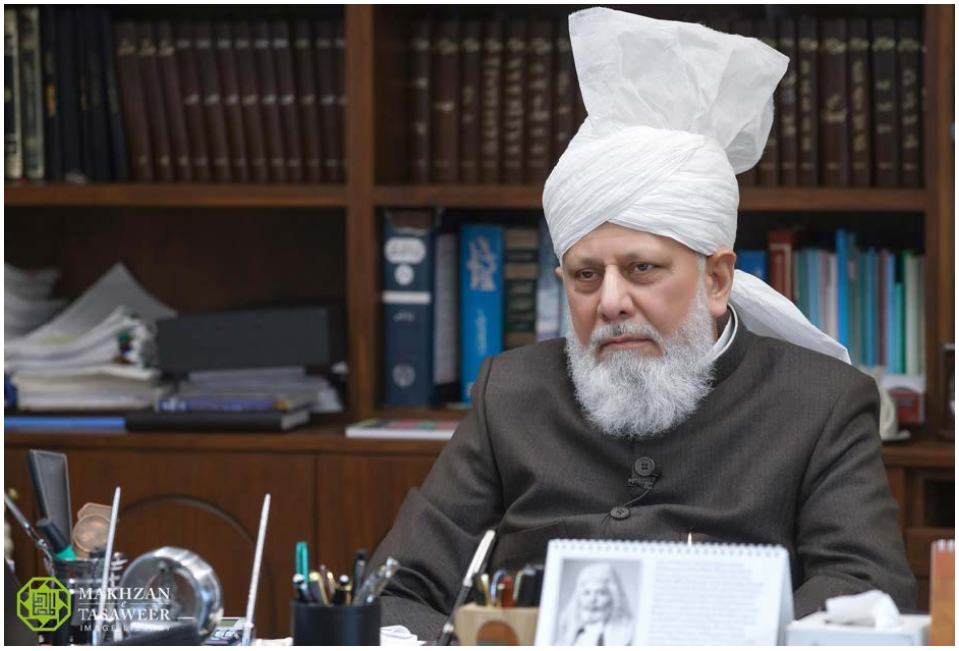
One of the Waqf Nau asked what sacrifices Waqf Nau members can make which will be acceptable in the sight of Allāh the Almighty.

In response, Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"Anything you are doing to please Allāh the Almighty, for the sake of Allāh the Almighty, then He will accept it. Allāh the Almighty says that even if you put a morsel of food in your wife's mouth, for the sake of attaining the love of Allāh, even that action will be considered to be your sacrifice and even that will be pleasing to Allāh the Almighty. This is the extent of the mercy of Allāh!... What more do you need? Whatever you are doing to achieve the love of Allāh and for the sake of Allāh, Allāh will accept it and consider it as your sacrifice for Him."

His Holiness[aa] asked how many of those present were studying engineering and would be devoting their time for the service of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community after completing their studies. His Holiness[aa] advised that after their studies they should gain experience in the field and they can then be sent to Africa under the International Association of Aḥmadi Architects and Engineers which helps develop deprived areas of the world by providing water, electricity and other basic necessities.

In a very affectionate exchange, His Holiness[aa] asked if those present had taken part in previous classes that His Holiness[aa] has held over the years with children and youth.



Syednā Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa] presiding the virtual meeting

His Holiness[aa] remarked that because of the COVID-19 lockdown it had been a long time since he had met them and they had grown and their appearance had changed.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"You have grown up and many of you have grown very beautiful beards and look older and that is why, maybe I am not able to recognise some of you. It has actually been a very long time since Waqf Nau classes have been held. COVID-19 has caused a lot of problems for everyone in the past year and so I have not even been able to meet you all. Today I am seeing your faces and they have changed, and some of you may even have become married! Anyway, you are handsome by the Grace of Allāh but I cannot recognise some of the faces. I will most likely remember your faces if I see older photos of you."

One of the Waqf Nau members asked his Holiness[aa] for advice for those studying sciences such as physics, biology and chemistry and whether they should focus more on research or pursue teaching careers.

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] said:

"We need people in all fields. Aḥmadi Muslim scholars should also go into research. Those studying physics in particular should do so. Those studying biology will go into biomedical sciences and then they can go into research. If someone who is studying biology and chemistry and is unable to enter into medicine, he can go into biomedical sciences. The ones studying chemistry should go into research too. Other than that, if someone is not at the level where they can go into research – their second preference should be teaching. First preference should be research and second preference should be teaching."

Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad[aa] continued:

"From amongst the Waqf Nau we need teachers in every subject. We only need a certain percentage to serve in our Aḥmadiyya schools. Other than that we need teachers who can teach in external schools here in these countries. If there are good teachers working in these schools they can at least teach good morals to the children. This is something we also have to consider. As many Aḥmadi Muslim teachers go into schools to teach, the greater the moral training that can be done of children, regardless of those children being Christians, Buddhists, atheists or Aḥmadi Muslims. Wherever an Aḥmadi Muslim is present, then other than his own subject, he will be delivering a moral training too to the children. Therefore, teaching is a very good profession."

Humanity First
Serving Mankind

COVID-19 Fact Sheet

stay home • stay safe • help others
#HFCares

As COVID-19 continues to spread, there are things we can all do to keep each other and ourselves safe. Stay informed and take all necessary precautions to ensure we are doing our part to help the government and frontline workers combat the virus.

SOME ARE AT HIGH RISK

Anyone with pre-existing medical conditions and/ or a weakened immune system is at a higher risk.

This includes seniors and those with the following conditions:

- Heart disease
- Hypertension
- Lung disease
- Diabetes
- Cancer

HOW TO REDUCE YOUR RISK

STAY HOME

Stay home if possible and limit the number of visitors at your home

- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces in your home regularly

If you must step outside, please take the following measures:

- Avoid touching high touch surfaces
- Change your routine to avoid crowded places, such as going to the grocery store at off peak hours.
- Keep at least a 2 arms length (or 2m) distance from others
- Avoid all nonessential travel

HYGIENE MEASURES

- Wash your hands frequently according to the World Health Organization's guidelines and use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when not available.
- Avoid touching your face and food with your hands

BE PREPARED

PLAN AHEAD

- Stock up on necessary supplies in case you need to stay at home for a few weeks.
- Identify services that can deliver food and medications

COMMUNICATE

- Communicate with your healthcare provider. They will help ensure you have enough prescribed medication and medical supplies.
- put a system in place to regularly check on family and friends via phone or email.

STAY INFORMED

- Learn about the symptoms of Covid-19, how it spreads and preventative measures you can take
- Ensure your information is coming from reputable sources, such as Public Health Agency of Canada and the World Heath Organization.
- Monitor yourself for symptoms
- Give yourself a break from the news and find time to relax

Visit canada.ca/coronavirus for more info

Contact Humanity First: +1 416 440-0346 humanityfirst.ca info@humanityfirst.ca Twitter: @humanityfirst

PRAYERS FOR THE CURRENT PANDEMIC

In these days, we should pay special attention to the study of Kashti-e-Nooh (Noah's Arc) and arrange regular Dars of this book in our homes.

In the current situation, whereas Syedna Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masiḥ V (May Allah be his Helper!) has advised us to take other precautionary measures, Huzoor[aa] has also urged us to turn to Allah in repentance and pray.

Therefore, some prayers from the Holy Qur'an, Ahadith and prayers of the Promised Messiah[as] are given below:

Prayer of Hazrat Ayub[as]

Hazrat Ayub[as] supplicated to seek cure from his illness and presented his weak state for attracting Allah's mercy. This prayer was accepted and, miraculously, the affliction was removed.

اَنِّیْ مَسَّنِیَ الضُّرُّ وَاَنْتَ اَرْحَمُ الرّٰحِمِیْنَ

Affliction has touched me, and Thou art the Most Merciful of all who show mercy. (21:84)

Prayer of Hazrat Moses[as]

When an earthquake overtook Hazrat Moses[as] and the chiefs of his people , Hazrat Moses[as] considered it indication of Allah's displeasure and he supplicated as:

اَنْتَ وَلِیُّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَاَنْتَ خَیْرُ الْغٰفِرِیْنَ

Thou art our Protector; forgive us then and have mercy on us, for Thou art the Best of those who forgive. (7:156)

Prayer for Protection against All Harms

Uthman ibn Affan[ra] says: I heard the Holy Prophet[sa] say: "He who recites this prayer thrice in the morning and again in the evening every day, God will protect him from anything which is harmful."

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الَّذِیْ لَا یَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهٖ شَیْءٌ
فِی الْاَرْضِ وَلَا فِی السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِیْعُ الْعَلِیْمُ

In the name of Allah, with Whose name nothing can harm in the earth and in Heaven, and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Sunan Abi Dawood: 5088)

Prayer for Protection from Pandemics

During a pandemic, God Almighty conveyed it the Promised Messiah[as] that, as a remedy against it, Allah should be remembered through His following attributes:

یَا حَفِیْظُ۔ یَا عَزِیْزُ۔ یَا رَفِیْقُ

O Protector, O Almighty, O Companion (Tadhkirah, p,660)

یَا حَیُّ یَا قَیُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِکَ أَسْتَغِیْثُ

O Ever-Living and Self-Subsisting One, I supplicate for Your mercy. (Tadhkirah, p,439)

The Promised Messiah[as] has stated that it was conveyed to him that this is the Great Name (اسم اعظم) of God and that whoever supplicates with these words would be delivered from every affliction.

رَبِّ کُلُّ شَیْءٍ خَادِمُکَ رَبِّ فَاحْفَظْنِیْ وَانْصُرْنِیْ وَارْحَمْنِیْ

O my Lord everything serves You. So O my Lord, protect me and help me and have mercy on me. (Tadhkirah, p,601)

Prayer for Deliverance from Sufferings and Illness

سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ وَبِحَمْدِهٖ سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ الْعَظِیْمِ
اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ وَّاٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

Holy is Allah and worthy of all Praise; Holy is Allah, the Great. Allah, bestow Your blessings on Muhammad and the people of Muhammad. (Tiryaqul-Qulub, pp. 36–37, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 15, pp. 208–209)