

“Call to the path of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation,
and argue with people in the best manner.” (The Holy Quran, 16:125)

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Exponent
of Islam
and the
Lahore
Ahmadiyya
Movement
for over
eighty
years
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The Light

& Islamic Review

July – September 2002

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Presents
Islam as:
PEACEFUL
TOLERANT
RATIONAL
INSPIRING
•

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احمدیہ انجمن اشاعت اسلام لاہور

◆ Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at Islam Lahore Inc., U.S.A. ◆
P.O. Box 3370, Dublin, Ohio 43016, U.S.A.

The Light was founded in 1921 as the organ of the AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHA'AT ISLAM (Ahmadiyya Association for the Propagation of Islam) of Lahore, Pakistan. *The Islamic Review* was published in England from 1913 for over 50 years, and in the U.S.A. from 1980 to 1991. The present periodical represents the beliefs of the world-wide branches of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, Lahore.

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The main object of the A.A.I.L. is to present the true, original message of Islam to the whole world — Islam as it is found in the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, obscured today by grave misconceptions and wrong popular notions.

Islam seeks to attract *the hearts and minds* of people towards the truth, by means of reasoning and the natural beauty of its principles.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), our Founder, arose to remind the world that Islam is:

International: It recognizes prophets being raised among all nations and requires Muslims to believe in them all. Truth and goodness can be found in all religions. God treats all human beings equally, regardless of race, nationality or religion.

Peaceful: Allows use of force only in unavoidable self-defence. Teaches Muslims to live peacefully under any rule which accords them freedom of religion.

Tolerant: Gives full freedom to everyone to hold and practise any creed or religion. Requires us to tolerate differences of belief and opinion.

Rational: In all matters, it urges use of human reason and knowledge. Blind following is condemned and independence of thought is granted.

Inspiring: Worship is not a ritual, but provides living contact with a Living God, Who answers prayers and speaks to His righteous servants even today as in the past.

Non-sectarian: Every person professing Islam by the words *La ilaha ill-Allah, Muhammad-ur rasul-ullah* (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) is a Muslim. A Muslim cannot be expelled from Islam by anyone.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad taught that *no* prophet, old or new, is to arise after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. However, *Mujaddids* will be raised by God to revive and rekindle the light of Islam.

About ourselves

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore has branches in many countries including:

U.S.A.	Australia
U.K.	Canada
Holland	Fiji
Indonesia	Germany
Suriname	India
Trinidad	South Africa
Guyana	

Achievements:

The Anjuman has produced extensive literature on Islam, originally in English and Urdu, including translations of the Holy Quran with commentaries. These books are being translated into other languages, including French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Russian, Chinese, and Arabic.

The Anjuman has run several Muslim missions around the world, including the first ever in Western Europe.

The Movement's contribution to Islamic thought is summed up on the left.

History:

1889: *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founded the Ahmadiyya Movement.

1901: Movement given name *Ahmadiyya* after Holy Prophet Muhammad's other famous name *Ahmad*.

1905: *Hazrat* Mirza appoints central body (Anjuman) to manage the Movement.

1908: Death of *Hazrat* Mirza. Succeeded by Maulana Nur-ud-Din as Head.

1914: Death of Maulana Nur-ud-Din. Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam founded at Lahore as continuation of the original Anjuman. Maulana Muhammad Ali elected as Head.

1951: Death of Maulana Muhammad Ali after fifty years of glorious service to the cause of Islam. Maulana Sadr-ud-Din (d. 1981) becomes Head.

1981–1996: Dr. Saeed Ahmad Khan, an eminent medical doctor and religious scholar, led the Movement, at a time of intense persecution.

1996: Prof. Dr. Asghar Hameed, a distinguished retired University Professor of Mathematics, and learned Islamic scholar, elected Head.

Ahmadiyya and globalization

*Speech at the A.A.I.I.L. U.S.
Convention, August 2002*

by **Professor F. Ahmadi Djajasugita,
Indonesia**

To begin our discussion, allow me, first of all, to make comment on the term ‘globalization’. According to the Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus, the word ‘global’ is used as an adjective meaning ‘worldwide’, ‘all-embracing’ or ‘total’. It can also mean ‘concerning or including the whole world’ (Collins). Based on such definition, this paper takes global as a word meaning totally or including the whole world. Globalization era, therefore, means a period of time when various nations in the world are becoming worldwide. In other words, it is an era when various nations cannot be separated by geographical boundaries or when they can no longer be isolated from one another anymore.

It is recorded in the world history that the complexity of cultural interactions between societies over the last three thousand years started from trading. This, for example, can be seen in the following evidence.

In the years of 1200 B.C., interactions between or among ethnic groups or nations had not yet existed except those between neighboring groups. Such situation was changed when people of Phoenicia (today Lebanon), having seaward orientation, took several journeys to almost all ports along the Mediterranean Sea. They sailed through the gulf of Gibraltar to the Atlantic Ocean and stopped by at many ports in the north part of Europe and to the shores of Africa. Some people predicted that they had even reached America. It is recorded that this people conquered areas from Cyprus to Corsica in Spain. Their victory lasted until about the year 800 B.C.

Like Phoenicians, Portuguese, Chinese, and Malay people were also examples of those who took a long journey to many places in the world for trading. Jenghis Khan (1167-1227), who was famous because of being strong and violent, for example, expanded his influence by attacking Russia, Persia,

Poland and Hungary and intimidated people in Europe. The result of his attack was the interaction between Chinese and Europeans.

Until the middle of the 19th century, Japan had led isolation for its political system. Such system lasted until 1853 when the United States army under commodore Matthew C. Perry gave an ultimatum for Japan to open up its ports for the United States trading mission. This movement, put in the form of Kanagawa treaty, made Japan open for the whole people in the world since March 31, 1854.

There are still other examples showing that trading is the main reason of the process of internationalization or globalization and it is after the Islamic period that there were other motivations that make people becoming global. It was a motivation to spread Islam. The conclusion is, therefore, Islam confirms universalization more than merely interaction as it offers universal transformations among mankind. It is stated in the Quran:

“Mankind is one single nation” (2:213),

and:

“And (all) people are but a single nation” (10:19).

Also it is stated:

“And We have not sent thee but as a mercy to the nations” (21:107).

In the course of development it is expected that a momentum will come when mankind is leading towards universalism and internationalism.

Mankind is a single nation, which means that everyone from all nations has to feel that he or she is a member of a large family. The tendency towards this circumstance is beginning to appear, for example:

1. The establishment of international organizations such as Red Cross which provides aids to everyone irrespective of nationality, either friends or foes, which was pioneered by Florence Nightingale.
2. The emergence of common interests among nations which have led to the establishment of the United Nations body.
3. European countries have adopted a single currency and have established a European Parliament.

4. The adoption of Human Rights has been universally accepted and has been widely implemented in some ways.
5. All kinds of information have been widely made available and accessible to all countries.

In Islam, therefore, the world is regarded as a resting place, or house, and the heaven or sky as its structure or roof. All nations therefore have to have the same assumption that the world is a house or a couch for all of them as a family. It is stated in the Quran:

“(Allah is He) Who made the earth a resting place for you and the heaven a structure” (2:22).

There is no historical equivalent of the global reach and volume of cultural traffic through contemporary telecommunication, broadcasting and transport infrastructures. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and the Founder of Ahmadiyya had already stated this issue in terms of the method of how to spread Islam and how Islam can gain its victory. He points out in *Barahin Ahmadiyya*:

“... Although Islam has gained its victory since the very beginning because of its power in winning people’s hearts and thought and because its enemies had faced defeat and humiliation, but Islam’s victory over people, communities and nations depends on the coming of communication which can hold the whole people together, creating the world as a unity. ... Therefore, Allah appointed me in this century [14th *Hijra*] ... to spread the real teaching of the Holy Quran to all the nations and all the countries in the world” (pp. 498-502).

Therefore, it can be concluded that communication plays an important role in creating globalization in many aspects of life. In globalization, we are not put in a position to choose whether we want it or not because we cannot escape from it. Some people feel awe on this era but some others feel happy. As an analogy, I put forward debate among people when telephone first developed. The debate was about whether or not people were ready to use telephone. On the one hand people say that the use of telephone could not be made to happen if the economic condition of society had not yet reached a certain level. On the other hand, some others say that the

economic condition could not develop if there was no telephone facility. The same is true in the case of the invention of internet. Whether people are reluctant or eager to accept internet or not because of the bad impact upon society is not a question anymore. It has already become an inescapable reality. Taking Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s advice, we must not be pessimistic in facing the development of communication.

According to him, Islam can gain its victory when communication makes the whole world like one nation. In other words, it can be accomplished when there is already globalization in communication. With the development of the internet reaching all parts of the world, can it be one of the sources of gaining Islamic victory?

Experts or scholars in communication are always obsessed with the accessibility of the whole information at anytime and anywhere. It is a commonsensical assumption, therefore, that they will always try to meet the obsession and this will lead the way toward the globalization, which means leading to the victory of Islam. What Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad points out shows us that the victory of Islam will be as fast as the development of communication itself.

Under such global condition, spreading Islam can be carried out fast and everywhere and misunderstanding can be avoided and solved. Misunderstanding can result in hatred and understanding can create love and those who can gain this “love” are those who exceed in the teaching material: right, clear, beautiful, reasonable or in accordance with nature (*fitrah*). Ahmadiyya certainly meets such criteria.

But what kind of reality should be faced that makes Ahmadiyya put much concern on the development of communication?

There are two problems faced that should be taken into account by Ahmadiyya:

First, there are still a great number of non-Muslims who misunderstand Islam.

Second, there are a lot of Muslims who misunderstand Ahmadiyya.

In dealing with the first problem, Ahmadiyya puts much concern upon Jihad with pen. That is why the Ahmadis concentrate on writing and publishing as a method of spreading Islam. This is in

accordance with some Hadith reports concerning how to defeat Dajjal, which say:

“When he (Dajjal) appears, and I am among you, I will defeat him by guideline; and when he appears and I am not among you, each of you should argue with him.” (*Kanz-ul-Ummal*, vol. vii, p. 2076).

“Therefore, when he (Dajjal) appears and I am among you, I will defeat him by regulation on behalf of Muslim people; but whenever he appears after my absence, each of you should argue on his own behalf.” (*Kanz-ul-Ummal*, vol. vii, pp. 2025, 2079).

Therefore, defeating enemies of Islam with guideline or regulation means defeating them with writings not with weapons.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad states:

“... today sword, however, is not used anymore but it is pen and argumentation that are used to criticize Islam. Because of this reason, Allah prefers those working with pen to those using sword and the enemy of Islam should be dealt with by writings.”

In international level, Ahmadiyya Movement already provides materials written in English. I deeply appreciate what our brothers and sisters, especially in England and the United States, have done for that. That is indeed a hard work. May Allah Almighty bless them all. *Amin*.

In dealing with the second problem, Ahmadiyya always confirms that in terms of *aqidah*, Ahmadis are not different from other Muslims. Solving this problem is indeed a difficult task. In Indonesia, Ahmadiyya Lahore is often mistakenly regarded as Qadiani. Other Muslim fellows also condemned us as being not Muslims. What we have to do, therefore, is not only to clarify the difference between Lahore and Qadian but also to inform about our reformation teachings as taught by our *Mujaddid*. On our mission, Maulana Muhammad Ali points out:

“Because of its distinctive characteristics, Ahmadiyya can be called a ‘sect’ or a school of thought. In reality, however, it is a big movement in Islam whose main mission is to promote Muslims and to consolidate their effort to spread Islam.”

The above mentioned mission explains also Ahmadiyya’s role in globalizing Islamic teaching.

As examples, let me put forward three important global events that should be taken into account: the tragedy of September 11, 2001, the Ahmadiyya Case (the trial in Cape Town, South Africa), and distributing thirty thousand Qurans in Russian to Russia. The significance of those events can be explained as follows.

The tragedy of September 11, 2001

Our concern centers on the fact that there were human beings who were willing to commit suicide in order to destroy the symbol of American power without taking into account the innocent people. The question arises then: what did they know about Jihad? Does Islam teach them to do this thing?

A distinguished ulama Dr. Yusuf Qardhawi condemned this action and invited Muslims to donate blood to the victims and made statements as follows:

“We are hurt because of the attack of WTC and other targets in the United States although we are strongly against American policy in supporting Israel for military, political, and economic support.

Islam is a tolerant religion and puts importance in human lives and we believe that attacking innocent people is a serious sin.”

It is also stated in the Holy Quran:

“...whoever kills a person, unless it be for manslaughter or for mischief in the land, it is as though he had killed all men. And whoever saves a life, it is as though he had saved the lives of all men” (5:32).

The Holy Prophet Muhammad states:

“A *mu'min* will be still in his faith as long as he does not kill other people illegally”.

Dr. Qardhawi also points out that it is easier to find young people who have strong enthusiasm in Jihad but we hardly find those who can stay for one or three years to devotedly and eagerly learn Islam, whose teaching includes Jihad of course. On Jihad, Quran teaches us:

“And strive hard for Allah with due striving” (22:78).

Dr Qardhawi, however, puts forward another controversial statement by stating:

“What Palestinians did in fighting can be called a great Jihad as ordered by Allah. Suicide bombing is acceptable in Shariah.”

According to him what they did is in accordance with *Sura Al-Anfal* (v. 60) and *Al-Hashr* (v. 5):

“And make ready for them whatever force you can and horses tied at the frontier, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah and your enemy” (8:60).

“Whatever palm-tree you cut down or leave it standing upon its roots, it is by Allah’s permission, and that He may abase the transgressors” (59:5).

Qardhawi is again questioning why those who refuse suicide action were silent when the United States bombed Afghanistan and killed a lot of innocent children, women, and old people? His change in opinion is probably the result of the United States’ attack on Afghanistan.

Therefore, the great happening on September 11 makes both Muslims and non-Muslims aware and eager to know the truth about Islamic Jihad and about Islam in general. It is this eagerness, which I mean to be a global spirit. In only a short period of time, about one or two weeks, about one thousand of the Holy Quran (English version) were sold in the United States. This may be an indication or a sign of the coming of what is stated in Hadith that in the last era the process of how non-Muslims convert into Islam is like salt dissolved in the ocean (water).

The Ahmadiyya Case (the trial in Cape Town, South Africa)

The Ahmadiyya Case is a book about a trial in Cape Town, South Africa. Written in the form of compiled documents of the trial and essays, the main issue of this trial is to find out whether Ahmadiyya is actually Muslim or not. These trials took several years in the 1980s.

This was indeed an international or global forum because the anti-Ahmadiyya party invited Islamic scholars from other countries, especially Pakistan, and sought assistance from many Islamic countries, whereas on the Ahmadiyya side there were senior members from Pakistan, U.K. and U.S.A. who provided data and arguments for the lawyer.

Therefore, *The Ahmadiyya Case* became very important because it contains a lot of information about Ahmadiyya. Allow me to express our thanks to brothers and sisters who were involved in the trial and in compiling the book. May Allah Almighty bless them all. Amen.

For your information, *The Ahmadiyya Case* is already translated into Indonesian and is going to be published soon, *Insha Allah*.

Distribution of a great number of Russian Quran

The amazing breakthrough in distributing the Quran is its distribution in Russia which, today, may even already have reached 50,000 copies. We all know that when this Russian edition was in the process of translation, Russia was not yet open as it is today. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad once said:

“the number of my followers in Russia will be like particles of sand in the desert”.

Can this distribution mark the creation of “the particles of sand in the desert”? May this become a reality, *Amen*.

These three important events are actually related to each other as it directly or indirectly has something to do with the role of Islam in the world.

It is stated in *Sura Al-Anbiya*:

“And We have not sent thee but as a mercy to the nations” (21:107).

We certainly believe in the truthfulness of the verse above. Can it mean that it is our job, as Muslims, to make Allah’s “mercy” to the nations or to the universe come true?

The fact is that people in the world today are becoming more and more eager to know about Islam, and Ahmadiyya plays an important role in providing the information as the method taught by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is in accordance with today’s method which is regarded as the most effective method in spreading Islam today. Moreover, the development of telecommunication enables us to perform better in carrying out this job.

Our life is only a sequence toward perfection and there are still other long sequences, which we may not experience. Therefore, it is a great loss if we do not make use of our time carefully. The giant task starts from here. It is our job to make the number of Muslims as many as sediments of sand in the desert. ■

Need for the Ahmadiyya Movement today

Speech at the A.A.I.I.L. U.S. Convention, August 2002

by Dr Mohammad Ahmad, Columbus, Ohio

The tragic events of 9/11, and the anti-Islamic propaganda being carried out by Christian evangelistic groups, have clearly spelled out the need for projecting the reform and the defense of Islam by the Ahmadiyya Movement. On one hand we have witnessed the horrific consequences of the erroneous interpretation of Islam by the religious zealots behind the events of 9/11. We are also now experiencing the anti-Islamic campaign of misinformation being carried out in the media by the right wing Christian evangelistic movement. The Holy Quran prophesied such a turn of events for the Muslim *ummah*:

“You will certainly be tried in your property and persons. And you will certainly hear from those who have been given the Book before you and from the idolaters much abuse. And if you are patient and keep your duty, surely this is an affair of great resolution. And when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Book: You shall explain it to men and shall not hide it. But they cast it behind their backs and took a small price for it. So evil is that which they buy. Think not that those who exult in what they have done, and love to be praised for what they have not done — think not them to be safe from the chastisement; and for them is a painful chastisement. And Allah’s is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. And Allah is Possessor of power over all things.” (3:185–188)

We are also told in a hadith that Islam started its career as *gharib* (as a stranger in a land or as a sufferer at the hands of others) and it will once more (i.e., after rising to power) return to the state in which it began (Hadith report in *Ibn Majah*).

The Holy Quran in these verses tells us of a difficult time in the distant future when Muslims will have to face trials by loss of property and

person, and they will have to face abuse from the People of the Book. They are advised to be patient and to keep their duty under such circumstances. In addition by giving the example of those who were given the Book before them, a warning is given to the Muslims not to follow in their footsteps: i.e., to explain and not hide the book, not to be ignorant of its teachings and not to accept a small price (worldly gain) for it. Today we face a similar state of affairs in the Muslim world. Events of the recent past have shown thousands of innocent lives being lost in Bosnia, Kosova, Palestine and Kashmir. The ignorance of the Muslim masses and the scholars from the teachings of the Book is quite evident, as are the vituperations of the People of the Book. I will consider both of these situations separately and then highlight the dire need for the world today to become aware of the real image of Islam presented by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Reformer of this age.

Let us first consider the first group. The philosophy of this group is represented by the former Taliban regime and the Ulema organizations in Pakistan. Such Ulema groups are not just confined to Pakistan. Unfortunately they exist in almost all Muslim countries. Where considered politically expedient, they are suppressed; however, in most cases, their views are not challenged as un-Islamic. This is primarily because of the lack of moral courage on part of the political establishment. They, to quote the Holy Quran, “take their doctors of law and their monks for Lords besides Allah” (9:31). Free expression in these societies is suppressed in the name of religion. The Quranic edicts of “there is no compulsion in religion” (2:256) is completely ignored, as is the principle of: “And whose affairs are (decided) by counsel among themselves” (42:38). The Muslim masses in turn have also ignored the Divine command: “Allah commands you to make over (positions of) trust to those worthy of them” (4:58). As a consequence of this we see non-democratic governments all over the Muslim world where free expression is subdued. Taking Pakistan as a prime example of such a state currently in existence, the doctors of law or the present day Ulema have misinterpreted the principle of Jihad, shown blatant disregard for the sacred and equal rights of women in Islam and we see women being sentenced to death and thrown in prisons under the guise of Sharia law. The blasphemy laws, and their usage by the theocratic hegemony, have stifled

religious tolerance. It has also led to the murder and incarceration of those who dare to differ. It has also caused the worst form of sectarian violence where murders are committed in mosques. The first victims of this religious intolerance were Muslims belonging to the Ahmadiyya Movement. In spite of all the talk against terrorism today by the leaders of Pakistan, we see them lacking the moral courage to redress such inequities. This role model can be applied to most Muslim states in existence today. Having thus briefly considered the first group, I would now like to discuss the second group.

The second group which is giving Islam a bad name today includes certain right wing Christian evangelical groups. Their *modus operandi*, which was subtle prior to September 11, has now become more apparent and virulent. I will quote a few examples.

Noted tele-evangelist Pat Robertson recently proclaimed during a broadcast of the 700 clubs that Islam “is not a peaceful religion that wants to coexist. They want to coexist until they can control, dominate and then, if need be, destroy.” He continued: “I have taken issue with our esteemed President in regard to his stand in saying Islam is a peaceful religion. It’s just not. And the Quran makes it very clear, if you see an infidel, you are to kill him.”

Attorney General John Ashcroft told syndicated columnist Cal Thomas during an interview last November: “Islam is a religion in which God requires you to send your son to die for Him. Christianity is a faith in which God sends His son to die for you”.

Franklin Graham, son of evangelist Billy Graham, claimed: “The God of Islam is not the same God. It’s a different God, and I believe it is a very evil and wicked religion.”

Most recently Jerry Vines, a Jacksonville Fla. Pastor and former president of the Southern Baptist, while addressing the Pastors Conference, which meets before the two-day annual meeting of the nation’s largest Protestant denomination, remarked: “I am here to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that Islam is not just as good as Christianity. Christianity was founded by the virgin-born Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Islam was founded by Mohammed a demon-possessed ...” (We seek the protection of Allah in reproducing his imprecations.

He then goes on to criticize the marriages of the Holy Prophet in the most vulgar manner).

Jack Graham, elected as the next president of the Southern Baptist, said: “I will not respond to Dr. Vines’ statement other than to say that anyone who follows any path who wants to go to heaven should look carefully at who they are following and what they believe.”

When angry Muslims confronted the former SBC President about his remarks last month, Vines said he was merely citing their own texts as quoted in the Caner brothers’ book, *Unveiling Islam*. The Caner brothers are three American brothers of Turkish origin, whose father was a Muslim. They converted to Christianity, and are now holding academic positions in Southern Baptist universities. They have written a book, *Unveiling Islam*, in which one of them, Emir Caner, writes: “Any honest account of Muhammad’s life can be summed up in the words complexity, expediency and depravity. By any measure the life on earth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, far exceeds Muhammad’s in integrity, grace and wisdom.”

The misinterpretation and misrepresentation of Islam by these two religiously diverse groups brings us to the role of the Ahmadiyya movement in the post September 11 world. This does not differ much from the purpose of this movement from the time it was formed, i.e. the defense and propagation of Islam. The need for it is again more acute today. The attacks on Islam are very similar to those of the Christian missionary movement at the time of the advent of the *Mujaddid* (reformer) of this age, whose mission was ordained by the Divine word: “Surely We have revealed the Reminder, and surely We are its Guardian”. The ignorance of the Muslim scholars is likewise appalling. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in his book *Fath Islam* (‘Victory of Islam’) states:

“O you seekers of truth and true lovers of Islam! It is clear to you that this age in which we are living is a time of such darkness that great deterioration has taken place in all matters, whether relating to belief or action, and a severe storm of misguidance and evil is raging from every direction. What is termed *faith* has been replaced by a few words merely professed by the tongue; and what are called *good deeds* are considered to be some rituals or works of extravagance and show, while

there is utter ignorance of true righteousness.”

Regarding the Christian propaganda he states:

“The teachings of the Christians too are digging all sorts of tunnels to blow up the edifice of truth and faith. In order to extirpate Islam, the Christian people have worked very hard to create all manner of subtle falsehood and fabrications, which they employ at every place and opportunity to rob the faith. Ever newer methods and modern techniques to mislead and misguide are invented. They are abusing and reviling that Perfect Man [the Holy Prophet Muhammad] who is the pride of all the holy ones, the crown of all the chosen ones, and the chief of all the prophets.”

In this book he also points out that the triumph of Islam will be by spiritual means.

Quote begins:

“No one should be hasty in denial, lest he be adjudged to dispute with God the Most High. The worldly people whose minds are in darkness and who are clinging to their old notions will not accept him. But that time will shortly come which will make their error manifest to them. ‘A warner came into the world, but the world accepted him not. God, however, will accept him, and establish his truth with very powerful onslaughts.’ This is not the saying of a mortal, but the revelation of God the Most High and the word of the Glorious Lord. I believe that the days of these onslaughts are near, but they shall not be with the sword and spear, nor will there be any need for bayonets and guns. On the contrary, the help of God the Most High will come with spiritual armaments, and there will be a tremendous battle with the Jews. Who are they? They are today’s worshippers of the outward forms, about whom it is agreed that they are following in the exact footsteps of the Jews. The heavenly sword of God will cut them into two, and obliterate the Jewish trait. Every worshipper of the world, the one-eyed *Dajjal* who hides the truth, being blind to faith, shall be slain by the sword of cutting arguments.

“Truth will be triumphant, and that day of freshness and brightness will dawn again for Islam as prevailed in earlier times, and the sun of Islam shall rise again in its glory as it rose before. But it is not so yet. It is essential that heaven must keep it

from rising until our hearts bleed with toil and sacrifice, and we forsake all comforts for its manifestation, and accept all manner of humiliation for the honour of Islam. The revival of Islam demands of us a sacrifice. What is that? That we lay down our lives for this end. This is the death upon which depends the life of Islam and the Muslims, and the manifestation of the Living God — and this is what is known in other words as *Islam*. It is the revival of this Islam which God the Most High now wishes to bring about. For the implementation of this grand plan it was essential that He should create a great Movement, which is effective in every way.

“So the Wise and Powerful God did just that by sending this humble servant for the reformation of the people, and in order to draw the world towards truth and righteousness He divided the work of the support of truth and the propagation of Islam into several parts.

“One part, from among these branches, is the work of writing and producing books, which has been entrusted to this humble servant. And I have been taught the profound knowledge and the fine, subtle truths which can only be learnt through Divine power, and cannot be attained by human effort. Difficult and intricate points have been solved, not by human reasoning, but by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

“The second part of this work is the publication of notices, which is carried on by Divine command for the purpose of fully conveying the arguments and proofs. Till now, more than 20,000 copies of notices have been published to present the arguments of Islam to the non-Muslim people, and this will continue in future according to the needs of the times.

“The third part of this work is in connection with the visitors, callers, those journeying in search of the truth, and those arriving here for various purposes, who, having received news of this heavenly Movement, constantly come to meet us, being prompted by their inner intentions. ... there is no doubt that the giving of answers orally in reply to the questioners, or explaining something according to the time and the circumstances, has been proved in many cases to be more beneficial, effective and easier to absorb than by means of writings. This was the reason why all prophets employed this method. ... This was not like the speakers of this age who merely wish to make a display of their knowledge

through their speech, or to entrap the simple-minded by their deceptive logic and false arguments, making their victims even more deserving of hell than themselves. The prophets, on the contrary, spoke in very simple words, and what flowed out from their own hearts they poured into the hearts of others. Their sacred utterances exactly suited the occasion and the needs of the time. They did not speak as a pastime or relate tales to the audience, but rather, finding them spiritually ill and stricken with moral ailments of all kinds, they gave them good counsel as a healing and dispelled their doubts with incontrovertible arguments.

“They spoke in few words, but with much meaning. This humble servant also follows the same principle, so that the speech is always in accordance with the capacity of understanding and the needs of the visitors and guests, and bears in mind their spiritual ailments. ... It is undoubtedly certain and recognized that the great task of the reformation of mankind cannot be done merely by paper work. For this purpose it is essential to tread that path along which the holy ones of God have been walking since the beginning. And Islam, at its very outset, has established this effective method so firmly and strongly that its parallel cannot at all be found in other religions. ... With this glad tidings did the Lord God send me, saying: ‘Rejoice that you shall see that time very soon, when the Muslims have been firmly established on a lofty tower.’

“The fourth part of this work is the writing of letters to the seekers after truth and the opponents. Up to now, in the period mentioned above, over 90,000 letters have been received, which have been replied to, except those which were considered to be junk or unnecessary. This work continues regularly, and the number of letters exchanged every month probably varies from 300 to 700 or even a thousand.

“The fifth part of this work, which God the Most High has specially established with His revelation, is the formation of disciples and those who take the *bai‘at* (Pledge). At the time of founding this Movement, God informed me, saying:

‘There is a storm of misguidance raging on the earth, so build this ark at the time of this deluge. Whoever enters this ark will be saved from drowning, but he who denies will perish.’

And:

‘He who gives his hand into your hand, he has given it not into your hand but into the hand of God.’

“And the Lord God has given me the following glad tidings:

‘I will cause you to die and exalt you towards Myself, but your true followers and devotees will remain till the Day of Judgment, and will always be dominant over those who oppose.’

“This is the five-fold Movement which God the Most High has set up with His own hand. Although a person looking superficially will consider only the work of producing writings to be essential, and regard the other parts as unnecessary and superfluous, but in the sight of God all of these are essential. And the reformation, which He has willed, cannot be accomplished without the use of all these five methods.”

In making an appeal for funds for this movement he states:

“O Muslims! who are the remaining signs of the great believers, and the offspring of the virtuous, hasten not to denial and mistrust, and fear the terrifying pestilence spreading all about you, which has entrapped a countless number of people. You are seeing what vigorous efforts are being undertaken to obliterate the religion of Islam. Is it not your duty to make efforts in reply? Although Islam is not made by man so that the exertions of man could destroy it, but alas for those who are bent upon its annihilation, and alas again for those who have everything to spend on their wives, their children and their own pleasures, but have nothing for Islam in their pockets! Woe to you, O indolent ones, while yourselves lacking the strength for the propagation of Islam or showing its light, you do not even accept with gratitude the Mission established by God to manifest the brilliance of Islam. Today Islam is like a lamp shut up in a box or a sweet spring of water covered over with dust and filth. This is the reason why Islam is in a state of decline, and its lovely face cannot be seen nor its handsome figure known. It was the duty of the Muslims to exert themselves, to their breaking point, to show its beloved face, and not only their wealth but they should have poured forth even their own blood like water. But they did not do so. On account of their excessive ignorance, they adhere to the erroneous view that the earlier

literature on Islam is adequate. They do not know that in order to repel the modern evils, which are appearing in ever-newer ways, a modern mode of defense is also required. Moreover, at the time of the spread of darkness in every age when prophets, messengers and reformers made their appearance, were not previous books already in existence? ...

“O men of means of Islam, look, I deliver to you the message that you must assist this Reform Mission which has come from God Himself, with all your heart, full attention, and absolute devotion. You should have regard for all its various aspects, and fulfill your duty of service very soon. He who wishes to make monthly donations, in accordance with his means, he must make the payment every month by his own motivation and concern, considering it an essential religious obligation incumbent on him, and allow no neglect or laxity in making the payment, as a duty purely for God. And he who wishes to make a lump sum donation may render his assistance in this manner. But it must be remembered that the real manner by which this Movement is expected to function without fail is that the true well-wishers of the faith should make a binding compact with themselves to give such affordable sums monthly, according to their resources and means, which they can conveniently pay unless prevented by some unforeseen occurrence. But the one who has been granted a generous heart and the opportunity by Allah the Glorious can also render help, in addition to the monthly contribution, by a lump sum in accordance with his motivation and his means.

“And O my dear friends and my beloved ones, the flourishing branches of my tree, who have entered into my Movement by the mercy of God which is upon you, and are sacrificing your lives, comfort and wealth in this path, I know that you will accept what I say, considering it your good fortune to do so, and will not hesitate to do as much as is within your power. But I do not lay upon you any duties for this service in explicit words, so that your work should be of your own accord and not under compulsion from me. Who is my friend, and who is dear to me? It is the one who recognizes me. And who recognizes me? Only he who believes that I have been sent, and accepts me as are accepted those who are sent by God. The world cannot accept me, for I am not of the world. But those whose nature has a share of the other world accept me and will do so in the future. He, who forsakes me, forsakes Him

Who has sent me, and he who forms a bond with me, forms a bond with Him from Whom I have come. I have a light in my hand. He who comes to me shall definitely get a share of that light. But he who runs away from me with suspicion and mistrust shall be cast into darkness. I am the impregnable fort of this age. He who enters within my gates shall save himself from thieves, robbers and beasts, but he who wishes to live outside my walls confronts death from every side, and even his dead body will not be safe. Who enters into my gates? He who shuns evil and adopts good, forsakes perversity and walks on the path of righteousness, frees himself from the servitude of the devil and becomes an obedient servant of God the Most High. Everyone who does this is within me, and I am within him. But only he is able to do this whom God has placed under the shadow of a purifying soul, so that when the latter takes a step into the hell of the inner self of that man, it cools down as if fire had never been in it. Then he progresses higher and higher, until the spirit of God the Most High comes to dwell in him. The Lord of the worlds becomes established in his heart with a special manifestation. Then, his former self having been consumed by fire, he is granted a new and pure human nature. And God the Most High too forms a new and special relation with him, as if He had become a new God, and he receives all the pure provisions of heavenly life in this very world.”

End of quote

As pledged members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, the question we have to ask ourselves now, individually and collectively is, how can we fulfill these objectives today. Besides supporting the work of printing, publishing and free distribution of literature, we should seek venues of public speaking to spread the message of Islam. Utilizing e-mail and the Internet we should generate discussions, and provide information to uninformed or misinformed groups. Writing letters to the editor in our local newspapers, when a controversy about Islam is raised, is another way of counteracting such misinformation. Advertising in major news publications on critical issues, although an expensive undertaking, may be the need of the day. Each one of us should think of innovative ways to counteract this storm of opposition and misinformation against Islam. May Allah help us and make us worthy of this task. *Amen.* ■

Translation of *Mujaddid-e-Azam* — ‘The Great Reformer’

*Speech at the A.A.I.I.L. U.S.
Convention, August 2002*

by Akram Ahmad, U.S.A.

My intent today is to give you a flavor of a remarkable biographical work that will be published, *Insha'Allah*, beginning in the next few months. The name of this biography is *The Great Reformer*, and it is the English translation of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib's biography in the Urdu language.

The original biography of the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement is titled *Mujaddid-e-Azam*. It is the work of the late Doctor Bashaarat Ahmad Sahib, and it is comprised of three volumes, spanning approximately one thousand eight hundred pages! The first volume is currently being translated by Doctor Hamid Rahman Sahib. The second volume has been translated by me, and the third volume has been translated by Mrs. Zainib Ahmad and Sister Sarah Ahmad.

As I mentioned in my preamble, my objective today is to give you a flavor of this comprehensive biographical work. To this end, I've selected a handful of excerpts from the second volume of *The Great Reformer*. The first excerpt begins as follows:

In an era of materialism, when people regarded believing in God as a delusion of days past, Hazrat Mirza Sahib clearly and emphatically invited the entire world to believe in a Living God. Along with this, he presented his personal experience, that man can meet God in this world, and this conclusively settled the matter with the materialists and atheists of that era; those people were unable to come up with a response. Hazrat Mirza Sahib challenged them by stating that if they harbored even the vestige of the investigative spirit, then they should seek Hazrat Mirza Sahib's society so that he could demonstrate for them the heavenly signs that were manifesting themselves recurrently. He asked them that if they considered it imperative to exert themselves for trifling things of this world, then why couldn't they try to seek the grand object of finding God. He

invited the atheists to learn from him about the ways of Allah and Prophet Muhammad, because the following is Allah's eternal promise:

“And those who strive hard for Us, We shall certainly guide them in Our ways. And Allah is surely with the doers of good.”
(Ch:29, Verse:69)

So Hazrat Mirza Sahib explained that while the laws of the universe point to the fact that the universe must have a Creator, it is actually God's communication with man that leads man to the conviction that there is indeed a Creator. In this regard, he stated that God spoke to him; this was the claim whereby Hazrat Mirza Sahib settled the matter conclusively with the atheists and materialists of the era. In fact, his poems and public announcements are replete with invitations to people that they should seek his society whereby he could demonstrate for them the heavenly signs that were manifesting themselves. As a sample, I present Hazrat Mirza Sahib's following verses of poetry:

We have veritably tried Islam for ourselves;
Let us tell you that it's a radiant light

We have grown weary now, telling these things repeatedly;
In every direction, we launched arrows of invitations

Nobody came, though, to verify our claims;
We invited every opponent to come and test us

O people! Come hither, and you shall find the radiance of God;
There, we have told you the Mount Sinai of spiritual contentment

Today, those lights well up inside this humble man;
We have immersed our existence in this illumination

O God! May Your unbounded peace and mercy be upon Prophet Muhammad;
Our Lord, We have truly received this illumination from him.

This brings me to the end of the first excerpt. The second excerpt is in the form of an anecdote. I will just add that this biography is packed with anecdotes from the life of Hazrat Mirza Sahib. Here is the sample that I excerpted from the second volume of *The Great Reformer*. It begins in this way:

Regarding Hazrat Mirza Sahib's patience and forbearance towards children, Maulvi Abdul Karim illustrates these qualities with the following example:

On scores of occasions, I have personally observed Hazrat Mirza Sahib's patience and forbearance towards children. It is Hazrat Mirza Sahib's custom to sit on the verandah, with the door shut, when he is pondering some issue, or when he is in the process of writing. His young son knocks on the door and says, "Father, open the door." He immediately stands up and opens the door for the child. The child enters, rambles around the room, out of childish curiosity, and soon leaves. Thereupon, Hazrat Mirza Sahib closes the door. Not more than two minutes have passed when the child returns, pounding on the door and shouting to be let into the room. With complete composure, Hazrat Mirza Sahib again rises from his work and opens the door for the child. This time the child doesn't even enter, but simply peeks inside the room and scurries away, muttering something under his breath. Hazrat Mirza Sahib — cheerful and steadfast as ever — closes the door and returns to his essential and delicate work. Only five more minutes have elapsed when the child reappears at the door, and the process repeats. Yet neither does Hazrat Mirza Sahib utter a single word of complaint, nor does he seek to stop the child from these annoying episodes of interference with his important work. Once when I counted, this process repeated itself 20 times! Yet, Hazrat Mirza Sahib did not utter a single word of annoyance on any such occasion...

This brings me to the next excerpt, which begins as follows:

Not only did Hazrat Mirza Sahib settle the matter definitively with the materialists and atheists, he also settled the matter conclusively with the adherents of all other religions. He proved that only Islam is capable of leading man to the Living God. He demonstrated that it is solely through the message and spiritual blessings of the Holy Quran, revealed to the living Prophet, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), that man can reach God. Apart from this, no doors are open that shall lead man to God. In fact, hundreds of pages of Hazrat Mirza Sahib's written works, both prose and poetry, are replete with such claims. As a sample, I would like to present his following poetic verses wherein he addresses the adherents of religions other than the religion of Islam:

O you who doubts and rejects the king of the Faith, Prophet Muhammad;
You should cast an eye at his servants

Nobody has witnessed the manifestation of any Divine signs at the hands of your elders;
In your hands is nothing more than a mere collection of fables

But if you so wish, then come this way;
We shall show you hundreds of signs that verify the glory of his uprightness

O you who has shut his eyes because of envy and malice;
Come hither so that his brilliance may rupture the veil from behind which you cannot see anything

The light of truth shines forever for the righteous people;
The liars died, and their legacy perished as well

Prophet Muhammad is God's shining sun;
May the curse of the heavens and the earth be upon his enemies

This then is the symptom of wretchedness;
That these woeful people languish like bats in the dark

Neither is their heart pure, and nor is their intellect capable of discerning the right way;

They are accursed in the eyes of the Lord of the worlds

No matter how your enmity of Prophet Muhammad may exceed all bounds;

Excepting Prophet Muhammad's way, you shall never find the path of uprightness

Until Prophet Muhammad's light serves as your remedy and cure;

You shall never emerge from the gloom of darkness

Every prophet's light is due to the mediation of Prophet Muhammad;

Every prophet's name is resplendent due to Prophet Muhammad's radiance

God granted Prophet Muhammad the Book that is radiant like the sun;

The world became bright due to its brilliance

The Quran is a pure and sterling tree;

It bears the fruits of unmistakable signs in every era.

These verses of poetry by Hazrat Mirza Sahib bring me to the end of this excerpt. Dr. Saeed Ahmad Sahib, the late and beloved President of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, often used to quote from Hazrat Mirza Sahib's insightful and endearing verses of poetry. For those of you with an interest in poetry, this biography contains a good number of excerpts from his poetry.

As I mentioned earlier, in addition to being packed with anecdotes from the life of Hazrat Mirza Sahib, this biography contains an abundance of excerpts from scores of his religious works. This is a quality that I think you'll find very appealing, because this biography will give you an excellent flavor of Hazrat Mirza Sahib's various religious works. As an example, I present an excerpt that begins as follows:

In his book *Kishti-e-Nooh*, Hazrat Mirza Sahib also explained the philosophy of ascertaining the timings of the five daily prayers. He compared the famous prayer for the daily bread that is taught to Christians in the Bible with the famous prayer that is taught in the Holy Quran, *Surah Al-Fatihah*. The fact of the

matter is that a perusal of this comparison is sufficient to obtain an idea of the greatness of the Holy Quran. Finally, Hazrat Mirza Sahib reflected upon the person whose horizons are circumscribed only by prayers for the daily bread. Once that such a person has obtained his bread, what more does he then have to seek from God? In this regard, Hazrat Mirza Sahib noted:

Also remember that, among the great objectives of *Surah Al-Fatihah*, is the following prayer: "Guide us on the right path, The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favors". While it is taught in the Bible to pray for the daily bread, *Surah Al-Fatihah* teaches one to pray to God for all those blessings that were bestowed upon previous prophets. This comparison is quite remarkable. Jesus Christ's prayer was accepted so that the Christians have achieved enormous material gains. Similarly, the Quranic prayer *Surah Al-Fatihah* was accepted through Prophet Muhammad whereby righteous and saintly Muslims, and especially the dedicated followers, were made the spiritual inheritors and beneficiaries of the Israelite prophets. That the Promised Messiah was raised from that nation is in fact a result of the acceptance of that prayer, *Surah Al-Fatihah*.

A countless number of righteous and saintly Muslims, though they have remained inconspicuous in the public scene, have been blessed with their share of spiritual resemblance to the Israelite prophets. But the manifest and very public advent of the Promised Messiah took place in this age in accordance with the will of God. The Promised Messiah was contrasted with the Israelite Messiah so that the resemblance between the nation of Prophet Moses and the nation of Prophet Muhammad could be understood.

I'll conclude my talk with this final excerpt that reflects Hazrat Mirza Sahib's wish to propagate Islam in the world. Thus, he observed:

If it were in my power, I would go from house to house like a beggar, taking to their residents the teachings of Islam, the true Faith of God. I would thereby try to save

them from the unbelief that has become so pervasive in the world. If God were to teach me the English language, I would personally embark upon a tour to spread the teachings of God to others, even though I might have to spend my entire life in such a quest, and even if I were to perish in the endeavor.

This concludes the final excerpt that I had chosen to relate to you. I had just enough time to narrate a mere handful of excerpts from the approximately 800 pages in the second volume of this biography. I look forward to the day when each one of you will soon be able to acquire a copy of this biography, *The Great Reformer*, and to read it in its entirety. ■

Jihad — today's situation and a hundred years ago

Speech at the A.A.I.L. U.S. Convention, August 2002

by **Zahid Aziz, Editor *The Light***

When the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), began his mission of presenting the religion of Islam to the world, one of the most formidable obstacles he faced was that there was a slur and stigma widely prevailing against Islam relating to the concept of *jihad*. It was alleged against Islam, by its mainly Christian and Western critics, that Islam tells its followers to indulge in acts of violence against people of other faiths and that it highly commends and extols those of its followers who perpetrate such violence and promises them a place in paradise in the next life. On the one hand this was thrown as an accusation against Islam, but on the other hand some Muslim religious leaders and their followers reinforced exactly the same idea by their statements and their actions, that Islam does indeed allow, encourage and urge the use of violence and shedding of blood in order to conquer and subdue people of other religions.

This slur was not only causing hatred and prejudice against Islam in the world, and hindering the progress and understanding of Islam, but it

meant that when someone like the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement arose with the mission of spreading Islam it was suspected that their objective was to start an armed uprising to overthrow the existing rulers by violence and acts of terrorism. So the Founder of this Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, had to explain in detail, and repeatedly, that the popular notion of jihad in the minds of people, whether non-Muslims or a large section of Muslims, was entirely contrary to the real teachings of Islam. When we look at those explanations of his, written a hundred years ago, we see amazing parallels with the situation that exists today.

Reading his lengthy statements on this subject, one striking point is that he is very anxious to convey his message to Muslims of other Islamic countries, outside his own country India, that they should reject the wrong concept of jihad. He writes in one place:

“I wrote books in Arabic and Persian in order to spread this teaching of the prohibition of *jihad* to other countries, thousands of rupees being spent on their printing and publication. All those books were published in *Arabia, the lands of Syria, Turkey, Egypt, Baghdad and Afghanistan*. I believe some day these will show their effect.” (*Kitab al-Bariyya*, p. 7–8)

Strangely enough, these are the countries which are in the news nowadays in connection with the wrong and twisted doctrine of jihad. The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement sent good advice to these countries for their own benefit, a hundred years ago. Perhaps the All-Knowing Allah had shown him the dangerous consequences that may befall these countries as a result of pursuing the wrong concept of jihad.

I will now summarise and paraphrase from an Urdu book by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad whose title means ‘The British Government and Jihad’. What it says is applicable today to the relations between Muslims and Western governments.

He begins by explaining the term *jihad* and then describes why and under what circumstances the Muslims of the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad took up arms. He tells us that when people began to join the religion of Islam the vested interests of the Arabs and their leaders, as well as the Jews and Christians living in Arabia, became jealous

of this new development and started trying to crush and uproot it. They began torturing and killing the converts to Islam by the most barbaric methods, and continued this for thirteen years. However, the Muslims bore this persecution with patience, as God had commanded them, without resorting to retaliation. When these vicious brutalities exceeded all bounds then God gave Muslims the permission to fight in retaliation, by revealing the verse:

“Permission to fight is given to those upon whom war is made, because they have been wronged ... those who have been driven out from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allah” (22:39).

But Muslims of later times, some centuries later, misunderstood this *limited* permission to fight, and developed the wrong concept that jihad is a war that is arbitrarily launched against unbelievers. The way in which the doctrine of jihad is preached by some Islamic religious leaders to their followers is greatly mistaken and it results only in creating a group of people who behave like brutes and lack all good human qualities. He writes:

“I know it for certain that, all the unjustified killing that is done, is perpetrated by ignorant men following their lowest base desires, who are completely unaware of the reasons and causes of why Islam at the beginning of its history had to fight wars.”

Then Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad gives a second reason why jihad is misunderstood as fighting and planning to kill human beings. It is that, apart from what the ignorant among the Muslim religious leaders have taught on this issue, the Christian critics of Islam also spread the false idea through thousands of publications against Islam that Islam is a brutal religion which teaches war and violence, and that Islam is synonymous with wielding the sword. The result of this widespread propaganda will *not* be, he says, that Muslims will give up Islam as their critics intend. The result is only that the masses become even more convinced that their religion does indeed teach them violence against followers of other religions.

Any person who has eyes and reads the Quran and the history of early Islam will realize it quite well that the name of jihad, under which many vicious people are fighting, is not at all the jihad taught by Islam. These are criminal acts which are

done through the arousal of base passions or in the vain hope of attaining paradise. Our Holy Prophet was not the first to raise the sword, but bore intense persecution from his enemies for a long time. His followers also acted on the same principle. They showed such patience and perseverance and restraint that there is no other example of it in the world. However, this was not because they were weak or cowardly or unable to retaliate. They were courageous, brave and strong people. This was proved after they were permitted to fight, when they fought against enormous odds and won. So they displayed patience and restraint while possessing the capability and skill of fighting in battle.

During this period of persecution, the Holy Prophet never tried to think of some means of fighting back but told his followers that Allah had commanded him to show patience. Hazrat Mirza then asks: As Muslims have this most excellent example of forbearance and restraint, of which they can be proud over the whole world, then to discard this example is the height of foolishness and a great misfortune by your own hands.

Then he goes on to depict the kind of atrocities that are perpetrated in the name of Islam and religion. The ignorant religious leaders have greatly deceived the masses and declared acts of brutality, cruelty and inhumanity to be the key to attaining paradise. He poses the question:

Is it a virtuous deed that there is a man going about in the market place, we have no connection with him so much so that we don't know his name and he doesn't know our name, but despite this we take a shot at him intending to kill him? Is this religious behaviour?

Contrast this with those holy early Muslims whom Allah instructed in Makka not to respond with violence even if you were cut to pieces. Alas, today the religious leaders have forgotten all those events, and think that to fire a gun at an innocent man constitutes Islam. Again he asks:

It is a matter of regret and of shame that a man whom we do not know at all, who has no enmity with us, and he is going about his lawful business, we shoot him dead and in an instant make his wife a widow, his children fatherless and his house a place of mourning. Is such killing taught in the

Quran or Hadith? Can any Muslim religious leader answer?

The ignorant ones have merely heard the word *jihad* and are using it as a pretext and cover for satisfying their own selfish ends, or purely out of fanaticism and lunacy are perpetrating bloodshed.

In those days the wrong view of *jihad* was being propagated particularly in the North-Western Provinces of India adjacent to Afghanistan and within Afghanistan itself. So referring to it in this book Hazrat Mirza advises the king of Afghanistan to gather a forum of learned, distinguished Islamic scholars to discuss the doctrine of *jihad*, and then through these scholars to educate the general public of the country on the error of the misconceived view of *jihad*. Some books should also be published on this subject and widely distributed. In this way, the fervour for indulging in acts of violence in the name of *jihad* will be reduced. It would be a great service by a Muslim ruler, he says, to get the general Muslim public freed from the clutches of the ignorant religious leaders who are inciting them to commit violence under the name of *jihad*.

It is the *jihad* of self-purification that is a fundamental, permanent and unconditional part of Islam. He writes:

“Those who join my army, I order them to give up these misconceived ideas of *jihad* with the sword, and to purify their hearts, develop and nurture their feelings of mercy towards all humankind and be helpers of those in distress and suffering. They should spread peace on the earth, as this is how their religion will spread. Be not surprised as to how this can happen. For just as God has created the modern inventions of the present times for the physical needs of man, similarly He will meet the spiritual needs of mankind by causing the light and the message of truth to spread widely and far by means of these very ways of communication and transport.”

Hazrat Mirza also points out to the British government of India that the second reason why these atrocities are being committed, in the name of becoming a hero or martyr for the religion of Islam, is that the Christian and Western critics of Islam have reinforced the false idea that Islam teaches this kind of *jihad* through their books and magazines

spread throughout the country. This, he says, has led to many ignorant fanatics who know nothing of their own religion Islam to actually believe that it is an act of great reward to kill the unbelievers. These writings have damaged harmony and reconciliation in the country, and sown the seeds of enmity between the communities.

To deal with this problem, he advises the government to follow the example of the Turkish government (the biggest and main Muslim government of that time) which adopted a trial measure that for a few years it would be prohibited for any religious faction, in their writings or speeches, to make any mention of other religions, but only to teach the good points of its own religion. In this way, new discords will not develop, old grudges will gradually be forgotten, and people will turn towards mutual harmony and concord.

In another publication, addressing the government of his time, he has summarised the teachings of Islam on this point (i.e., the use of violence against others in support of your religion) as follows:

The Quran teaches that Muslims, bearing the persecution and pain inflicted upon them, must invite others to the truth with gentleness. In particular with regard to Christians the Holy Quran instructs: “Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation and argue with them in the best manner” (16:126), best manner meaning politely and in a civilized way. The truth does not stand in need of force to spread it. Use of force actually proves that your arguments are weak. God also revealed to His Holy Prophet: “Be patient as are men of resolution patient”, meaning that the Holy Prophet should show such patience that it is no less than the sum total of the patience shown by all the previous prophets. Then God also revealed: “There is no compulsion in religion”. And again He said that the true believers are those who “restrain their anger and forgive people”.

Can the God Who gives this teaching also say that you should kill those who don't accept your religion, rob them of their property and make their homes desolate? This is only the misconception of the ignorant among the common Muslim religious leaders and the unwise Christian and Western critics of Islam, which is groundless and without foundation. Hazrat Mirza then says about himself that he has been sent because God intends in these times to clear the religion of Islam of the slur of the violent

jihad and to show the world that Islam does not at all stand in need of force and the sword, but captures the hearts by its spiritual power.

If you read the context of one of the verses of the Quran quoted above by Hazrat Mirza, it is as follows:

“Obey Allah and the Messenger, that you may be shown mercy. And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden as wide as the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who keep their duty: Those who spend [charitably] whether they are in easy circumstances or in adversity, and who are **suppressors of their anger and forgivers of mankind**. And Allah loves the doers of good to others.” (3:132-134)

First Muslims are told to obey Allah and the Messenger. Then they are instructed to run towards God’s forgiveness and towards a Garden which has been prepared for those who keep their duty, and these are those who suppress their anger and forgive people. This then is the way to reach heaven, paradise or *janna*. It is not by giving vent to anger and rage and lashing out at the people of the world.

How many people, including Muslims, know that the Holy Quran requires Muslims to be **“suppressors of their anger and forgivers of mankind”** (*al-kázimína-l-ghaiẓ wa-l-‘áfína ‘ani-nnás*). In another place in the Quran it is said regarding the true believers that “whenever they are angry they forgive” (42:37).

If Muslims feel that in parts of the world they have been wronged by others, then the teaching of the Quran applicable in the present circumstances is to suppress your anger, forgive those with whom you are angry, and leave it up to God what judgment He dispenses upon them. You should concentrate on your own moral and spiritual cleansing, and social and educational and intellectual development, so that you as individuals as well as your communities and nations are an example of goodness and a model to others. If you have suffered material loss at the hands of other nations, then don’t use such ways to redress your grievances that bring Islam into disrepute. Instead of adopting such ways, bear your loss patiently as a sacrifice for the sake of the reputation of Islam.

Jesus is particularly associated with the teaching to forgive those who harm and hurt you.

Unfortunately Christians themselves came to regard that teaching as impractical to act upon. But ours is an age in which Muslims can act on that teaching and show that in circumstances like the present that is the right approach which leads to success. This in fact is a great favour done by Islam to the Christians: that it vindicates the teaching of total forgiveness of enemies and non-resistance to them as given by Jesus. That teaching had been dismissed as impractical and impossible to act upon, even by Christians themselves who throughout history engaged in wars. Yet not only did the Holy Prophet Muhammad act upon it, particularly during his life at Makka before his emigration, but in our time too a Reformer urged the Muslims to show the same example in their dealings with Christians, thus actually vindicating the teaching of Jesus as being applicable in certain circumstances.

Postscript

My speech finished at this point, but here I would like to add some comments on the fact noted just above that *Islam has done the greatest possible favours to the Jews and Christians*. In the first place, Islam proclaimed that the prophets of the Bible, including Jesus, were all true prophets of God who lived unblemished lives of perfect purity. Islam also made it compulsory for Muslims to declare belief in all these prophets, such as Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, Jesus etc., just as they declare belief in the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Moreover, the Holy Quran relates inspiring incidents from their lives and clears them of certain slurs upon their character arising from stories in the Bible. It is the Quran that exonerates Jesus of the so-called ‘curse’ allegedly placed upon him by God, a doctrine held by both Jews and Christians. Also the Holy Quran praises Jews and Christians, when praise is due. It says that God’s blessings were bestowed upon the Children of Israel (2:40, 47) and that the disciples of Jesus received revelation from God (5:111). Even the Jews and Christians of later times, after their deviation and corruption, are described as having groups among them who are upright, doers of good and righteous (3:113-114; 7:159). While mentioning monkery as a wrong practice innovated by later Christians, the Quran still says that they did it for a good motive (57:27).

After all these favours done by the Holy Quran, should Islam receive such abuse and vilification from the followers of the Bible? ■

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