



# The Light

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## The Call of the Messiah

by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad,  
the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*

(Ayyam us Sulah, continued from last month.)

### An Objection

The objection which our imprudent and indiscreet scholars of Islam put forward over and again that the Messiah must necessarily descend from the heavens near the Eastern minaret of Damascus, is so fantastic and futile that, compared to the arguments, signs and established facts, written in this book, a wise and sensible man will only be struck with surprise and sorrow at it. These people, it is, regrettable indeed, think not that such statements which stand against unequivocal and decisive statements, should be accordingly interpreted and explained. Is the word of the Most high God nothing but a bundle of contradictions and inconsistencies (God forbid)? But if you should have fear of God in your mind, you can interpret such statements in whatever way you like. What necessity, therefore, what compulsion, that such meanings should be imposed upon these tradi-

tions which militate against established signs and clear arguments? In the Holy Quran the term نازل *nazil* has been used in respect of our holy Prophet: قَدْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكُمْ ذِكْرًا رَسُولًا i.e. Allah has indeed sent down to you a Reminder - a Messenger who recites to you the clear messages of Allah (65:10,11). But did the Holy Prophet actually descend from the high heaven? Be not, therefore, unkind and cruel unto your souls, and remove the contradiction from your midst. Such statements can easily be interpreted in a simple way, that the Promised messiah will be raised by the Most high God in the east of Damascus; and there is no doubt that Qadian lies in the eastern side of Damascus. Other points can similarly be explained, and the interpretations will not be inconsistent with the established facts.

Some ignorant persons contend that in certain sayings of the Companions along with the term *nazool* the *ila* has also been used which indicates the coming down from above. But they understand not that when this idiom has been used, in a metaphorical sense, in the Torah, the Gospel and the Quran, for the Messengers of God that they come down and descend from heaven, why should an exception be taken



Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad  
who passed away on 26 May  
1908

if a similar sense the term *ila* has been used along with *nazool*. Is it not written in Holy Quran: فَلَمَّا تُوَفِّيْتَنِي And when the death of Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) is decisively proved from the Holy

Quran, and in the Sahih Bukhari, too, the meanings of these verses are to cause to die, and this was also the belief of great Imams like Imam Malik and Ibn-i-Hazam, why should, then the wedge of discrepancy and discord be thrust into the doctrines of Islam? Our opponents, excepting the utterance of words of deception and dishonesty, cannot give a reply to this. The oppositionists argue that from the hadith in Bukhari in which the Holy Prophet is reported to have likened himself to Prophet Jesus in the matter of death, it is understood and inferred that Jesus did not die as did the Holy Prophet; for there should be some difference and distinction between *mushabbah* (that which is compared to another) and *mushabbah bi-hi* (that with which comparison is made). What an artful trick these people have the audacity to play. The sane and sensible persons should think that there is no doubt some distinction between *mushabbah* and *mushabbah bi-hi*, but can it be of such a nature that one of them be a living person and the other a mere dead body; what similarity can a dead body have with a living being, and what analogy or aptness a living one with a dead body? In the science of interpretation it has been clearly explained that in the real matter both *mushabbah* and *musnabbah bi-hi* have co-partnership. For example, if it is said that Zaid is like a lion, then both Zaid and lion will become *mushabbah* and *mushabbah bi-hi*. But this similitude certainly will not mean that Zaid is a coward whereas lion is brave; but in the real matter which is bravery, both have their participation, with the only difference that in the case of lion it is ferocity or brute force, and in the case of Zaid it is valour and courage; the fact of boldness will be found in both. Take an other example. When it is said اللهم صل على محمد كما صليت على ابراهيم certainly does not mean that the significance of the term *salaat* with reference to the Holy Prophet is different from that in the case of Abraham. Such a thought will obviously be a sheer stupidity. In the same way it will be absurd and foolish to think that the verse **فَلَمَّا**



**تَوَفَّيْتَنِي** when taken with reference to the Holy Prophet, will mean his death, but the very same verse a propos of Prophet Jesus will mean his life; how will similarity be established in this case? Both these conditions are diametrically opposed and contrary to each other. There can be no bigger absurdity than to fish out negatives

and contraries in a simile. Of course, the distinction which must necessarily exist between *mushabbah* and *musdabbah bi-hi*, in spite of their co-partnership in the matter of similarity, is obvious in this way that Jesus had to answer the question that after his death he was worshipped and adored, and the holy Prophet had to

answer that after his death some people remained not on the paths and practices of Islam, and preferred the life of this world over the life to come. From this difference which is found in the deviation from the right path of the two nations, the distinction between *mushabbah* and *mushabbah bi-hi* has become obviously clear; and it should have been so, and not that the *mushabbah* and the *mushabbah bi-hi* should be opposite and contrary to each other as is a dead body to a living being, or a coward to a hero.

### Islamic Scholars' Moonshine

I cannot say that the Islamic scholars, although endowed with intellect and sense, rap out and speak such stupid things merely by mistake; it seems, on the other hand that it is their deliberate intention to hood-wink and bluff the people and keep them from accepting the prophecies uttered by the holy Prophet, so much so that some of them have set afloat the news that the most palpable sign of the Promised Mehdi is that milk, instead of blood, will run through his veins. The motive of this fabrication seems to be that until the Promised Mehdi be cut into pieces, and the milk flow out of his veins, the fact of his truthfulness cannot be established and proved. The story, therefore, goes on to say that the inoculation against smallpox which our British rulers have ordered to be done, is nothing else but a search after the Mehdi; and that the very

same man whose body will give out and yield milk instead of blood, will be the Mehdi, who would be apprehended forthwith; although this sane government have nothing to do with such absurdities; one may be Mehdi or Messiah, they have certainly no concern with this affair, unless of course he should interfere with the affairs of the state by propagating ideas of disloyalty and revolt, and create mischief in the land. In short, by the propagation of such falsehood and absurdities, these people have spread, in the name of Islam, ignorance and folly instead of knowledge and wisdom. And no one feels inclined to ask them that nearly two thousand years have passed since the departure of Jesus the Christ from this world, and as many as thirteen hundred years having elapsed over the prophecy of the holy Prophet, fourteen years more have passed of the 14th century, will then the prophecies relating to the Promised Messiah and Mehdi recede more and more into the distant future? The invidious denial of the Islamic scholars which they have launched against us, has proved conclusively that they were as a matter of fact devoid of righteousness for God would never suffer a righteous man to be perished, or go astray.

## ***Shab-e-Barat*<sup>1</sup> to Ramadan**

The topic of *Shab-e-Barat* has been so badly distorted that a positive clarification is essential. At the outset, both the Holy Qur'an and the six most authentic Hadiths do not report any report showing the Prophet Muhammad (s) observed *Shab-e-Barat*, as an important annual event for Muslims.

### *Shab-e-Barat* is the not universally celebrated

1 *Shab-e-Barat* comes from Persian roots, which was the official language during the Mughal Rule of India (1526-1857). The various other Arabic country equivalents are *Lailatul-Bara'ah*, *Laylatul Nisfe min Shaban* and (*Lailatul Nisfe* in Southeast Asia). Some Muslim communities confuse this issue further, by incorrectly quoting the Holy Qur'an at 44:3: "We revealed it on a blessed night . . ." This refers to *Lailatul-Qadr*, which falls in the last 4 or 9 nights of Ramadan. This verse is in past tense and thus cannot be referring to *Shab-e-Barat*, which is 6 weeks before Ramadan. The Holy Qur'an's revelation commenced with Chapter 96, on the 27th night in the month of Ramadan. This means the gap from 14th-15th Shaban till the 27th night in Ramadan is 6 weeks into future. Surely, the quotation in the Holy Qur'an at 44:2-3 refers to *Lailatul-Qadr* and not *Shab-e-Barat*. No revelation before *Lailatul-Qadr*. Further, amongst the Shiite communities, 15th Shaban is also the celebrated birth date of their 12th and last Imam, Imam Mahdi. Hence the common Muslim is pelted with so much confusion and so gets very misguided.

throughout the Muslim world. In some Muslim communities, *Shab-e-Barat* is given disproportionate publicity, and in some other Muslim communities, *Shab-e-Barat* is just another night of dutiful prayers.

The event of systematically moving forward from *Shab-e-Barat* to Ramadan may be compared to the analogy of changing traffic lights in modern times; and the legal expectation of voluntary compliance by vehicle drivers. Of course, the common universal understanding on light colour signals is "green" for proceeding through; "orange or amber" is a warning system of preparing to stop before the "red" which is compulsory stops.

In fact *Shab-e-Barat* warns Muslims as an early warning system inasmuch as the "amber or orange" light as "preparing" before the period of Ramadan. Ramadan includes an ascending combination of personal discipline, voluntary compliance and appreciation in understanding the feelings of others, who may not be variously endowed in all the material dainties in this worldly life. Similarly, the stipulated life for all Muslims is not cruising away in the "green light" at all times.

*Shab-e-Barat* is correctly viewed as annual reminder or warning for preparedness. In some other Muslim communities, *Shab-e-Barat* has been greatly elevated to the status of very expensive religious festival, which involves buying new



clothes, festoon lights, fireworks and lots of sweets (and in some ways similar to Deepavali in India). The obvious question is: why the variation of understanding exists around the world within the communities of Muslims? As detailed above, this early warning is around 2 weeks prior, allowing people to get their household inventory in order in

preparation for fasting and finally culminating to joyous Eid-ul-Fitr.

Two significant events, which occur within Ramadan and later upon completion of Ramadan, are explained in subsequent paragraphs, towards the end of this article. These events are *Lailatul Qadr* and Eid-ul-Fitr respectively. Since *Lailatul Qadr* is the twenty seventh night in the month of Ramadan, it is without any doubt an inherent feature at fixed times within that month, and so expected to progressively shift along in same pace as the main month of Ramadan, on annual adjustments according to the lunar calendar. This is clarified below.

Mainly Muslim from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and to lesser extent the peoples of Iran and Afghanistan celebrate the *Shab-e-Barat* as a significant annual event. The ideologies applied by these communities differ both geographically and to some extent politically, and in some other cases, their Governments allow the event celebrated nation-wide. Although their common principle scripture, the Holy Qur'an does not impose any specific observation and practice of *Shab-e-Barat*, the Diasporas of these communities from India, have continued and carried their beliefs on *Shab-e-Barat* as customary and "unnecessary excess baggage" into their cultures and which is becoming a serious worry. This practice differs significantly amongst different sects within Islam; and this document positively clarifies that neither the Holy Qur'an nor the leading six Hadith collections even mention *Shab-e-Barat* as an important or even a compulsory event for celebrating annually by Muslims.

In majority of Arab-world countries, *Shab-e-Barat* is non-event and generally unheard of. In a few other Arabic speaking countries, *Shab-e-Barat* is given some recognition, but under different descriptive names; as already explained in Footnote No 1.

It is necessary to understand, by rolling back into history, how *Shab-e-Barat* actually started in India. Accordingly, it is also necessary to dwell into and understand some of the significant events, which impacted upon India over the last 400-500 years, commencing with Delhi Muslim Sultanate (1206-1526), the Mughal Empire (1526-1857) and the British Raj (1858-1947), which finally led to independence of India and



Pakistan in August 1947. During these very trying times (1206-1857), the Indian communities were under intense pressures, where on one hand the Mughal Rulers imposed strict Muslim prescriptions, on the other hand the mixed Indian populations went through transformations, which included conversions from other faiths to Islam and some extent of cross-marriages. Islam was periodically infused with Arabic, Turkish, Afghani and Persian culture-mix and the host country's Hindu influences. This was especially during the reign of the great Mughal Emperor Jalal-Ud-din Muhammad Akbar, who accommodated these cultural and religious interventions. It should also be noted, that such non-prescribed "add-ons" are prevalent only in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and to lesser extent by the peoples of Iran and Afghanistan. Millions of Muslims in the rest of the world have mostly not even heard of the term "*Shab-e-Barat*", let alone celebrating it. The Mughals actually allowed introduction of foreign rituals to some extent within Islam in India. The main ideology imposed by the Mughal era religious leaders, was based on unfounded propagation that Allah annually reviews and rewrites the destinies of all Muslims on the night of *Shab-e-Barat*; and hence they must stay awake all night in prayer. The distribution of sweets to friends and relatives was the symbolic equivalent of distributing "prashad" by Hindus after a prayer retreat. It is now necessary to explain Ramadan, an event which has been mentioned in the scriptures of both the Holy Qur'an and the six Sahih Hadith.

In recorded history, all Israelite prophets fasted in some form according to the prescriptions valid during their ages. There is some uncertainty on other prophets who were not from the Israelite mainstream. This conclusion comes from the content of 2: 183 in the Holy Qur'an.

Ramadan is also a self-auditing continuous process, in making a better person out of the wider broadband of mankind. Once a person successfully completes a month of fasting and in full compliance to all prescribed requirements, then that person must analyse and review his/her past actions and then struggle to extend compliance of virtues for the next eleven months. That experience, then brings a person full-circle back to where the full compliance started, and it simply means that the person has now proven track-record of ascending higher and that he/she can easily become a better person with continued full compliance and performance.

All prophets of Allah as His Ambassadors fasted. His prophets, numbered in excess of 124,000 and that there is not a nation where Allah did not send His prophets as His Ambassadors on earth. As examples, we are given in Scriptures names such as Adam, Lot, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Solomon, David, Daniel, Isaiah, Moses and Jesus. They all fasted for certain periods to meet certain obligations. We read in the Bible in Exodus at 34:28 that Moses fasted for 40 days and 40 nights when he went up to Mount Sinai to receive the two Holy Tablets, which we call the Ten Commandments. We also read in the Bible in Matthew at 4: 1-11 that Jesus fasted for 40 days when the devil challenged him to convert stones to bread. So fasting has been a universal practice.

As stipulated in the Holy Qur'an (2:183), all persons of both gender are compelled to fast. This is required both as a spiritual discipline and a moral discipline in obedience to Allah. Notwithstanding the broad thrust of compulsion for fasting, the Holy Qur'an also allows certain communities and classifications of people in certain situations, optional freedom from regular fasting. They are as:

- a) People living in the close circles of Polar Regions of North and South poles where periods of darkness and daylight exceeds 24 hours.
- b) People who are sick and need to take medicines regularly.
- c) People travelling on journeys extending over different time zones. Such people must re-

sume after skipping fasting, and then continue fasting and make up the missed fasts after Ramadan.

- d) Women who are pregnant with child.
- e) Women who are breast-feeding babies.
- f) Girls/women on monthly periods (menstruation). They must resume after skipping fasting and continue fasting and make up the missed fasts after Ramadan.
- g) Very old people dependent on meals during the day.

The Holy Qur'an at 2:183 states, "O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil." The conclusion is that all prophets before the birth of Prophet Muhammad (s) were detailed to fast, but according to different prescriptions, to suit the levels of civilization and the particular countries' cultures practised thousands of years ago. They are all on record as having a system of fasting, but without *Lailatul Qadr*, as *Lailatul Qadr* is specific and only for Prophet Muhammad (s) with his declaration of prophethood and the revelation of the Holy Qur'an over a space of 23 years.

Whilst the Holy Qur'an has mentioned aspects of reward in more than 150 places, the Holy Qur'an most graciously has specific mention of the rewards for fasting, and abstaining from vices, and respecting the five pillars of Islam; and the balance of fairness is for both genders, as the Holy Qur'an states at 33:35 "Surely the men who submit and the women who submit, and the believing men and the believing women, and the obeying men and the obeying women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the charitable men and the charitable women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and the men who guard their chastity and the women who guard, and the men who remember Allah much and women who remember — Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward."

*Lailatul Qadr* or the Grand Night is really the point of commencement of Islam when Prophet Muhammad (s) received the first visitation and revelation directly from Archangel Gabriel.

Within the month of Ramadan, the remaining five odd-date nights of last ten days are of special significance, and one of these nights is the Night of Majesty. The midpoint of these odd-dates (25th, 27th and 29th) days of month is the 27th night. This midpoint date has been universally accepted and practised, as the Night of Majesty. It was on this night, in the month of Ramadan, that Prophet Muhammad (s) received his very first revelation, which historically became the glorious commencement of Divine authorship of the Holy Qur'an, and which is basically the 19 verses of Chapter 96 of the Holy Qur'an:

"Read in the name of thy Lord Who creates. Creates man from a clot. Read and thy Lord is most Generous, Who taught by the pen. Taught man what he knew not. Nay, man is surely inordinate because he looks upon himself as self-sufficient. Surely to thy Lord is the return. Hast thou seen him who forbids a servant when he prays? Seest thou if he is on the right way, or enjoins observance of duty? Seest thou if he denies and turns away? Knows he not that Allah sees? Nay, if he desist not, We will seize him by the forelock. A lying, sinful forelock! Then let him summon his council, We will summon the braves of the army. Nay! Obey him not, but prostrate thyself, and draw nigh (to Allah)."

These 19 verses become encapsulated as the sum-total of the description and life-cycle of mankind from conception and birth, material life on earth and material death on earth, and then to the "great trial of all mankind" on the great Day of Judgement, when Allah alone is the Supreme Judge. This introductory first-revealed Chapter 96 of 19 verses to the Holy Qur'an, is also most magnificently further-validated at 74:30.

Inasmuch as the anniversaries of person's births are accepted as birthdays, *Lailatul Qadr* is the anniversary of the introduction of Holy Qur'an and so on to "the birth of Islam to mankind on this planet earth." The above (to some extent) explains the majestic aspect of *Lailatul Qadr*, also referred to as the Grand Night and the Night of Majesty.

It is now necessary to explain what exactly Eid-ul-Fitr is. (Eid means "recurring happiness" and Fitr means "beginning"). Eid-ul-Fitr is joyously celebrated, not because people can now

resume regular mealtimes, but it is a celebration for honouring those dedicated people who fasted for a month, abstained from stated activities, and who followed all the prescribed requirements for Muslims; and most importantly, kept away from all evils.

Eid-ul-Fitr also requires compulsory congregational prayers at all mosques and religious centres; and Muslims of both gender and all age groups and of whatsoever ethnicity, including those people who may be physically disadvantaged, must all congregate for Eid prayers. This strengthens the brotherhood of Islam as unity in diversity.

It is for all correct thinking Muslims to guide and assist other Muslims; the Holy Qur'an has sanctioned that correct advice shall be given to those who need to be guided. This is given in the Holy Qur'an at 3:103, as "And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful."

## Acts of kindness

### Shahid Aziz

When parents ask a child to do or not to do something the first question the child asks is why. The response from the parents varies between "because I say so" and giving reasons why the child should or should not do what he is asked to. The desire to know why we are being asked to do something is a part of human nature. We do not teach our children to ask why. But the children do so, much of the time to our intense annoyance and irritation!

The same applies to religion. When a person is asked to do or not to do something that person wants to know the reason. We find this is in the New Testament where disciples constantly asked the holy prophet Jesus reasons for doing or not doing something. Similarly, the companions of the Holy Prophet asked questions to try and clarify verses of the Holy Quran.

There are again two responses. The first one is to make a law and force people to do what the Holy Quran, for example, commands. If this course is followed then we find that people just pay lip service to the command. Alcohol is forbidden in some Mus-

lim countries so, while there, some Muslims do not drink because they are afraid of the punishment they will receive. But once the fear of the punishment is removed they will resort to alcohol. The Holy Quran takes a different approach. It acknowledges that there are benefits in alcohol. We know it can be used as a disinfectant. Homeopathic tinctures are preserved in alcohol etc. But it then goes to explain that overall the harm it causes is much worse than any benefit you derive if you drink alcohol. It explains that drinking and gambling cause enmity and hatred amongst people. To summarise, the Holy Quran gives reasons for its command so that people stop drinking out of conviction rather than coercion.

The same thing applies to our religious devotions. Islam, and it is distinguished from other religions in this because it is the only religion that does so, explains to people the purpose of the devotions that it has commanded us to carry out.

The Holy Quran does not just stop at giving reasons for individual commands but also the purpose of religion in general. It says in surah Maun (chapter 107), verses 1 to 7:

Hast thou seen him who belies religion?  
That is the one who is rough to the orphan,  
And urges not the feeding of the needy.  
So woe to the praying ones,  
Who are unmindful of their prayer!  
Who do (good) to be seen,  
And refrain from acts of kindness!

This shows that a person who does not carry out acts of kindness belies religion. So the purpose of Islam is to teach us to be kind. It then gives a number of specific examples such as being rough to orphans and not feeding the poor.

It then goes on to lament to lack of understanding of people who think prayers will give them access to the Divine Being. It says that such people have not understood the purpose of prayer and the good that they do such as saying their prayers is just for show.

There is great wisdom in these words of the Holy Quran. For the impact acts of kindness have is much greater than any outward show of

personal piety.

When, having escaped persecution in Makkah, the Muhajareen (the Emigrants) arrived in Madina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) paired each Muhajir with an inhabitant of Madina, who came to be known as Ansar (Helpers). Each of the Ansar took a Muhajar home, laid out his belongings and said half is yours and half is mine. The Ansar shared equally with their brother Mujahirs all their possession. They had never met, never set eyes on them, they did not even know their names and they still offered them half of their worldly possessions. An unparalleled example of generosity, humanity, love and kindness.

Whenever the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) appealed for financial assistance because Muslims were under attack people competed with each other to see who will make the greater sacrifice. Once, Hazrat Umar (r) was determined to outdo Hazrat Abu Bakr (r) in the amount he sacrificed for the sake of Islam. As people arrived with their contributions the Holy Prophet (s) asked Hazrat Usman (r) what proportion of his assets he was donating. Hazrat Usman (r) replied that it was a quarter. The Holy Prophet (s) replied that Hazrat Usman (r) had done well. Then the Holy Prophet (s) asked Hazrat Umar (r), who recalled that beaming with pride that he had surely outdone Hazrat Abu Bakr (r), he replied half. The Holy Prophet (s) praised him for his sacrifice. And, last of all he asked Hazrat Bakr (r), who replied that he had brought everything in the world that he possessed and he is donating it for Allah's cause. Hazrat Umar (r) fell to the ground on hearing this and cried "O Abu Bakr, how shall I outdo you in making sacrifices."

Acts of kindness for the community and individuals are of such paramount importance in Islam that the Holy Quran admonishes anyone who neglects these. The Holy Prophet (s) was preaching Islam to some important leaders when a blind man tried to interrupt. The Holy Prophet's reply for the man to wait had a tinge of irritation in it. Allah immediately admonished the Holy Prophet for showing the slightest irritation towards a needy person who had sought to learn Islam. And, a chapter of the Holy Quran was revealed. In addition, Allah was here estab-

lishing the complete equality of all humans. If Islam is to succeed Muslims should depend on Allah and not powerful, rich and well connected chieftains. When such people are given undue importance then they expect special favours in return.

The Holy Quran admonishes Hazrat Abu Bakr (r). Hazrat Abu Bakr supported with finance a very poor member of his family. When a false rumour was spread about Hazrat Ayesha (r), the wife of the Holy Prophet (s) and daughter of Hazrat Bakr (r), this man took a leading part in spreading this rumour throughout the community. When Hazrat Ayesha (r) was proven to be innocent Hazrat Abu Bakr (r) became angry with this person and stopped paying him his allowance.

Upon this Allah admonished Hazrat Abu Bakr (r) saying that a human being is given the ability to help of his poor brothers and as soon he is made angry by this person, he takes away this man's sustenance. What would happen to this world if Allah took away the sustenance of people every time they made Him angry. When we remember that Hazrat Abu Bakr (r) was the person upon whom depended the survival of Islam more than once. He was the Holy Prophet's companion during the migration to Makkah. He was the person who, upon the death of the Holy Prophet, stood firm and saved and stabilised the community. Yet, he is admonished.

How did Hazrat Abu Bakr (r) respond to this admonition. He sought pardon from Allah, he went to the man whom he supported and asked forgiveness from him. And, he restarted his stipend. Is there another example of a father financially supporting a person who spread lies about the character of his beloved daughter.

Such acts of kindness are not restricted to human beings but extended to all living creatures. The Holy Prophet (s) forbade overburden-

ing animals used for labour, he forbade slaughter of animals in view of other animals acknowledging that all living creatures have feelings. He forbade separating babies from their mothers and admonished his followers when he saw a distraught bird looking for its chicklet.

There is the famous example of how he praised a woman who was running across burning sand, having taken off her socks to get water for a dog dying of thirst, to drip water into the mouth of a dog dying of thirst. His opinion was that any sin she had committed was forgiven by Allah because of that one act of kindness. His companions (r) pointed that she did not have a good reputation. The Holy Prophet (s)'s response was that she taken suffering upon herself to try and relieve the suffering of another living creature.

Muslims seem to have forgotten this. We concentrate on great translations of the Holy Quran, printing beautifully produced literature and distributing it. We run 24 hour TV channels showing the beauties of the Islamic teachings to the world. But the world turns round and asks a question: Can you show us practically how Islam has made you a better, a kinder human being? If it has not then why are you preaching it to us.

People turned to Islam because they saw the change it had produced in the Muslims. How it made them caring human beings concerned with the welfare and freedom of every human being, regardless of their colour, creed or caste. They did not embrace Islam because they were given some translation but because of the practical changed they observed in people who were Muslims and who embraced Islam. Without this change in our hearts all we do is carry a Muslim sounding name without having an Islamic nature, which is sad. It also bring Islam into disrepute, which is even sadder. May Allah have mercy upon us all.

## Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam

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