



The Light

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Editors:

Shahid Aziz
Mustaq Ali

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of India] should fail to honour the divine example, and its conduct is contrary to God's pure example, then that nation shall soon be destroyed, and not only itself but will invite destruction upon its unborn generations as well. Ever since the world came into existence, the righteous ones of all lands have proclaimed that man survives by cultivating the fine attributes of God, and that both the physical and spiritual life of man depend on his conformity to all the Divine morals from which all peace is to be obtained.

(From *A Message of Peace*, May 1908)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

The Call of the Messiah

by **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad,**

The Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*

That religion is no religion which does not inculcate broad sympathy, nor does that man deserve to be called man who does not have a sympathetic soul within him. Our God has not withheld His bounty from any people. The powers and faculties which He bestowed on the ancient peoples of India, have also been bestowed on the Arabs, the Persians, the Syrians, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Europeans and the Americans. For all of them, the earth of God serves as a floor, and for all of them His sun, moon, and stars give light, and also perform other functions. All of them derive benefit from the air, water, fire, earth and other things created by God, and all of them use the produce of the earth, its corn and its herbs, its flowers and its fruits. These liberal ways of God teach us that we also should do good to all mankind, and should not be narrow-minded, nor limit our sympathy. Friends, know it for certain that if either one of us two nations [Muslims and Hindus



BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Nazra Ali

(Delivered on 30 April 2016 at Horsham Inter-faith Service, Horsham, England)

I begin in the name of God, the one, the most Beneficent the most Merciful. I will commence today's talk with a Prayer of Peace usually attributed to St Francis:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon,
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is darkness, light,

I Shall Love All Mankind.

And where there is sadness, joy,
O divine Master, grant that I may not so
much seek to be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal
life. Amen

I would fail in my duty if I did not relate to you how this event has come to fulfilment today. Without a doubt we are here today by the permission of God and we will return home safely with His love and permission. As God conscious individuals, this we cannot deny. But we are here because of a brief encounter with a remarkable lady whose love for God and love for Humanity knows no limits. This is no other than Jenny Turner. A short encounter between her and myself in an ECG cubicle at Harefield Hospital has culminated in this event because she wanted to know if Islam encourages its followers to carry out such heinous crimes as seen on the television.

The topic I have chosen to talk about this afternoon is Building Bridges through interreligious dialogue. The reason for this topic is due to a breakdown in interreligious harmony and disregard for human lives as has become evident in the atrocities in the world today, predominantly done in the name of a religion, namely Islam.

Historically, and unfortunately, human suffering has become associated unwillingly with every religion. For many years, political instability in Northern Ireland, the Israel-Palestinian issues, the Sri Lanka divide, unresolved land issues in Kashmir and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia has seen some of the worst loss of innocent life associated with religion. However, over the last 20 years or so, Islam as a faith has suffered at the hands of its followers and continues to do so and consequently the world is now engulfed by Islamophobia.

The reason for this is that Muslims have left the dictates of the Quran and the example of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and latched on to the words of misinformed leaders. If Muslims in the



21st century want to rebuild the tarnished image of themselves and their faith they need to ask some hard and pertinent questions and these are:

1) Does the Quran encourage its followers to participate in inter-religious dialogue and does it encourage inter-religious harmony?

2) Did the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) participate in inter-religious dialogue and did He promote inter-religious harmony?

Answer to Question 1 is found in the Quran in chapter 3, The family of Amran, v. 64: "Say: O People of the Scripture! Come to an agreement between us and you: that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside Allah. And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him)."

Here the Quran addresses Jews and Christians as People to whom books and prophets were sent, encouraging them to have dialogue with Muslims, thus promoting inter-religious harmony. The verse encourages the members of the Abrahamic faiths to look to the original message of their scriptures and come to an agreement as to the worship of the One God. The Quran even goes so far as to tell us how to have these discussions. In ch. 29, v. 46 it says: "And do not argue with the People of the Book except in the best manner, save with those of them who act unjustly, and say: We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you, and our God and your God is one, and to him do we submit."

So the tone of our discussion during our dialogue is such that we should not raise our voices at each other and should not offend each

other with our speech, even if we differ with each other on doctrinal issues. So, to unite us the Quran says: come to agreements, focus on what we should agree on. Such as, both the Quran and the Bible address God as One. In Deuteronomy, ch. 6, v 4-5, it says: "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might..." and in Surah *Al-Ikhlās* of the Quran (112:1) it says: "Say He Allah is One." (*To be continued*)

Religious Pluralism and Civic Rights in a "Muslim Nation" –

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An Analysis of Prophet Muhammad's Covenants with Christians

Craig Considine

Department of Sociology, Rice University,
Houston, TX 77005, USA.

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(Continued from the May 2016 issue)

Scholars of pluralism, such as Eck, suggest that four elements must be in-place if a community — or in this context, a nation — aims to consider itself "pluralistic". First, "pluralism is not diversity alone, but the energetic engagement with diversity". Eck implies that pluralism is not a given in socially diverse societies, and that reaching a state of pluralism requires genuine social interactions and the building of authentic relationships. Second, Eck states "pluralism is not just tolerance, but the active seeking of understanding across lines of differences". While religious tolerance, broadly speaking, encourages a level of respect for religious traditions, it does little to counter ignorance and stereotypes of religious communities. Tolerance, Eck argues, reproduces old patterns of division and violence; as a result, it "is too thin a foundation for a world of religious difference and proximity". Tolerance also does not require Muslims and Christians to know anything about each other. In essence, Eck calls on individuals and groups to move beyond the "indifference" of tolerance and towards the "celebration of difference" as found in the pluralist tradition. Pluralism can be further distinguished from tolerance in another other way. While pluralism

treats religious diversity as something to be celebrated in order to produce positive social changes, tolerance can be said to encourage social isolation and impenetrable social group boundaries. The third feature of pluralism, as put forth by Eck, is that pluralism "is not relativism, but the encounter of commitments". In this regard, pluralism can be seen as open and supportive of various religious values and institutions. Finally, Eck's last feature of pluralism stresses the importance of inter-religious dialogue, which she summarizes as "encounter, give and take, criticism and self-criticism". She adds: "Dialogue means both speaking and listening, and that process reveals both common understandings and real differences". Eck's fourth feature of pluralism follows Kamali in that pluralism "does not simply aim at tolerance of the other but entails active effort to gain an understanding of the other". People of different religious backgrounds can live side-by-side with one another in a relative state of tolerance, yet these people can remain ignorant of the lifestyles and beliefs practiced and expressed in other religious communities. Unless individuals actively engage with people outside of their immediate religious circles, there is no pluralism.

In the light of this overview of pluralism, it is important to recognize that there are different types of pluralism, among them being cultural, political, and religious. For the purpose of this article, it is necessary to focus on religious pluralism. In the Covenants, Prophet Muhammad can be seen as an advocate for a religiously pluralistic society; he not only considered the interests of Christians, but he safeguarded them; he also demonstrates a preference for pluralism in the sense that he viewed Christianity as containing some "true values" that were in-line with Islamic values and principles. The Covenants of the Prophet—in addition to the *Qur'an* and *hadiths*—attest to Islam's affirmative stance on pluralism. A special place is reserved in Islamic scripture for Christians as well as Jews. In the *Qur'an*, beliefs in the truth of Christian and Jewish doctrine are encapsulated in the term *ahl al kitab* ("People of the Book"), or people who have received and believed in earlier revelations from the prophets of the Abrahamic tradition. The pluralistic nature of the term *ahl al kitab* is evident in the use of the noun "book" in the singular and not the plural, meant to emphasize that Jews, Christians, and Muslims follow one and the same book, not various conflicting scriptures. Islamic holy texts

I Shall Love All Mankind.

like the *Qur'an* also accept all Abrahamic prophets before Muhammad and recognize Jewish scripture—the Talmud—and Christian scripture—the Gospel—as sacred books. Furthermore, under Prophet Muhammad's leadership, Christians and Jews received the special status of *dhimmi*, or “protected peoples”, and *al-mu'minin*, or “the faithful”. These two statuses indicate that the Prophet considered both Christians and Jews to be monotheistic “believers” alongside Muslims. Far from denying the validity of Christianity and Judaism, Muhammad regarded them as standing in *de jure* with Islam as religions from the same God.

Emon, however, argues that the discursive intersection of Islamic law and the rights of minorities creates the “*dhimmi* rules”, which often lie at the center of debates about whether Islam as a “political system” is tolerant or intolerant of non-Muslims. The “*dhimmi* rules”, he argues, means that non-Muslims:

are subjected to various rules regulating the scope of what modern layers would call their freedom and liberty, whether to manifest their religious beliefs or to act in ways contrary to Islamic legal doctrines but in conformity with their own normative traditions.

While Emon claims that *dhimmi* rules are important indices of the inherent intolerance in the Islamic tradition, they appear to contradict several *hadiths*. Prophet Muhammad, for example, stated “Whoever oppresses a *dhimmi* or burdens a weight over him more than he can carry, I will be his enemy”. Similarly, Prophet Muhammad stated “I am claimant of anyone who depresses a *dhimmi*. The one who I claimant of (in this world), I am also claimant of on the Day of Judgment”.

Yet, despite these favorable *hadiths* towards “People of the Book”, there are also passages of the *Qur'an* which appear to support the “*dhimmi* rules” as described by Emon. One particular verse of the *Qur'an* verse (9:29) states the following:

Fight against those who do not believe in God or in the Last Day, who do not forbid what God and his Prophet have forbidden or practice the true religion, among those who have been given the Book, until they pay the *jizya* [poll tax] from their hand, they being

humbled.

This verse has been traditionally interpreted to mean that the *jizya* was intended as a symbolic expression of subordination of Jews and Christians. However, this verse stresses that certain conditions have to be met to fight against “People of the Book”. Abualrub elaborates:

This verse stresses the necessity of fighting against the People of the Scripture, but under what conditions?...The Islamic State is not permitted to attack non-Muslims who are not hostile to Islam, who do not oppress Muslims, or try to convert Muslims by force from their religion, or expel them from their lands, or wage war against them, or prepare for attacks against them. If any of these offenses occur, however, Muslims are permitted to defend themselves and protect their religion. Muslims are not permitted to attack non-Muslims who signed peace pacts with them, or non-Muslims who lived under the protection of the Islamic State.

Abualrub's analysis suggests that verses of the *Qur'an* must be examined in a scriptural and historical context. Another controversial verse of the *Qur'an* (8:55–56) is frequently taken out of context; according to some critics of Islamic scripture, this verse refers to non-believers of Islam as “The worst of beasts”:

Verily, the worst of beasts in the sight of God are those who conceal (the truth), and do not acknowledge it. These are those whom you have made a peace treaty with, but they break their treaty at every opportunity and have no fear of the law.

This passage, however, goes on to clarify the cause of the condemnation of the “non-believers”. Prophet Muhammad condemned them not simply because they were “non-Muslims”, “but because they violated a treaty they had agreed to, which resulted in the deaths of many Muslims”. Treating this verse as supposedly “violent” quickly dissolves with a brief consideration of the textual and historical context. As discussed below, the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of his time are further substantiated when one looks at verses of the *Qur'an* and *hadiths* in their historical context.

In his Covenant with the Christians of Persia, the Prophet is nothing less than emphatic

I Shall Love All Mankind.

on the issue of complete religious freedom:

And even as they honour and respect me, so shall Moslems care for that people as being under our protection and whensoever any distress or discomfort shall overtake [Christians], Moslems shall hold themselves in duty bound to aid and care for them, for they are a people subject to my Nation, obedient to their word, whose helpers also they are.

It therefore is proper for my sake to attend to their comfort, protection and aid, in face of all opposition and distress, suppressing everything that becomes a means to their spoliation.

A similar — if not identical passage — is found in the three other Covenants addressed in this paper. Muhammad makes it clear that freedom of religion is an inherent right for Christians living in a Muslim nation. Christian Persians are allowed to practice Christianity and they are under no compulsion whatsoever to accept or reject Islam. In viewing Christian Persians as *mu'minin* or believers, the Prophet is consistent with the *Constitution of Medina*, one of the earliest known documents in Islam. Although this particular document addressed the *ummah's* relations with Jewish tribes, it nevertheless highlights how Prophet Muhammad wanted Muslims to interact with "People of the Book". Article 20 of the Constitution notes how non-Muslim minorities have the same rights as Muslims: "A Jew, who obeys us (the state) shall enjoy the same right of life protection (as the [Muslims] do, so long as they [the Muslims] are not wrong by him". Jews and Christians were not only given the same rights as Muslims within the realm of the Muslim nation, but also "throughout Christendom", as clearly noted in the Covenant with the Christians of Persia.

The specific community referred to in the Covenant with the Christians of Persia is, of course, composed of people "who are friends of Islam, the brothers and sisters of the believers, and not Crusaders, colonizers, or imperialists". The Covenant of Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of Persia, the Constitution of Medina, and the *Qur'an* all provide religious freedom to non-Muslims, but they, by no means, forbid Muslims from fighting them if there were violations of an agreement or treaty. The *Qur'an*

(22:39), after all, permits self-defense regardless of the religious background of enemies: "Permission (to fight) is given to those on whom war is made, because they are oppressed." Nevertheless, the expression of religious pluralism in the Covenant with the Christians of Persia is a corollary of the freedom of religion in the *Qur'an* (11:118): "And if your Lord pleased, He would have made people a single nation". An informative *hadith*, summarized by Musa, offers a compelling story in support of this verse of the *Qur'an*:

Christian merchants from Syria came to Medina to trade. While they were there, they converted the two sons of one of Muhammad's followers. The sons then returned to Syria with the merchants. When their father sought permission from the Prophet to go after his sons and demand their return, the Prophet responded by reciting the verse: "There is no compulsion in religion". The story goes on to say that the man held this against the Prophet, which led to the revelation of a verse of the *Qur'an* (4:65): "But no, by *your* Lord! they do not believe until they make *you* a judge of what is in dispute between them, then find no reluctance in their hearts as to what *you* decide and submit with full submission." So no matter how much the Muslim father wished to demand that his sons return to Medina and Islam, the Qur'anic command that there is no compulsion in religion prevailed.

By guaranteeing the Persian Christians — and the two sons of Muhammad's follower — the right to freely practice Christianity, Prophet Muhammad emulated "real pluralism", which implies equal treatment of citizens before the law without any distinction being made based on religion. Securing the rights of these people meant that the Prophet wanted Christians to feel like they "can bring their full identities to the table", which for Patel and Meyer is a crucial element in creating a religiously pluralistic society. Muhammad allowed Persian Christians the right "to believe that they are right and others are wrong, and they are allowed to think their beliefs are true and others' are not".

The religious freedom that Muhammad granted the Persian Christians directly contrasts with how states such as the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia treat their minority religious communities. Saudi Arabia is a sovereign Islamic state that bases its law on the *Qur'an* and *sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad. While Article 8 of the Saudi Constitution states the government is based on “the premise of justice, consultation, and equality — in accordance with the Islamic Shari’ah” — the United States State Department claims that religious freedom is heavily restricted in Saudi Arabia. Freedom of religion, in fact, “is neither recognized nor protected under the law and is severely restricted in practice”. In Saudi Arabia, the public practice of Christianity — and indeed every other religion other than Islam — is prohibited, nor does the Saudi Constitution separate “state” and “religion”. Saudi Arabia’s Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (CPVPV) continues to conduct raids on private non-Muslim religious gatherings. Despite these restrictions on Christians, the United States State Department did note “incremental improvements” in terms of safeguarding religious freedom in Saudi society. However, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia does not appear to care for Christians to the same extent of the Prophet himself. Prophet Muhammad set a legal precedent for Muslim rulers; non-Muslims were given the right to live in a nation that neither promotes nor disparages any particular religion. Under the leadership of the Prophet, religion — whether it be Islam, Christianity, or any other tradition — was not meant to be a matter of duress, intimidation, or persuasion, but rather of conscience and free will. According to the Covenant with the Christians of Persia, Muslims who coerce Christians into converting to Islam commit an act of *fitnah*, or sedition and, therefore, must be resolutely avoided. The Covenant explicitly points out: “There shall be no compulsion or restraint against them in any of these matters”. This commandment, which mirrors a verse of the *Qur'an* (2:256) on religious freedom, indicates that coercion and faith are not to mix in a “Muslim nation”.

Lapidus explicitly claims that Prophet Muhammad separated religious matters from political matters; he also argues that secular governments have existed in the Muslim world throughout history. He notes:

In fact, religious and political life developed distinct spheres of experience, with independent values, leaders, and organizations.

From the middle of the tenth century effective control of the Arab-Muslim empires had passed into the hands of generals, administrators, governors, and local provincial lords; the Caliphs had lost all effective political power. Governments in Islamic lands were henceforth secular regimes — Sultanates — in theory authorized by the Caliphs, but actually legitimized by the need for public order. Henceforth, Muslim states were fully differentiated political bodies without any intrinsic religious character, though they were officially loyal to Islam and committed to its defense.

In modern times, there are many “Muslim nations” that can be considered secular states. Turkey, for example, has negated its Islamic Ottoman system and adopted a secular-oriented system of government. Turkey adopted a secular civil code to replace *shari’a*; the secular code provided equal rights to men and women in matters of marriage and divorce and dropped the Islamic court system as well as institutions of Islamic education. Other Muslim-majority nations said to have “secular governments” include Albania, Gambia, Kazakhstan, Senegal, and Uzbekistan. These secular countries maintain their loyalty to Islam as the dominant religion in a similar manner to how many Americans consider the United States to be “secular” but still loyal to Christianity. Islam might be the religion of the majority, but the state or nation itself has no overt religious identity.

The emphasis the *Qur'an* places on respecting the “People of the Book” indicates that Muslims are tolerant of religious groups so long as they are monotheists, or believers in “one God”. While the *Qur'an* frequently calls on and encourages non-Muslims to worship God according to “Islamic principles”, the Islamic holy text can be interpreted as extending freedom of religion to “disbelievers” or those outside the Abrahamic tradition. Verse 9:6 of the *Qur'an*, for example, provides protection for “idolators”: “And if anyone of the idolaters seek your protection, protect him till he hears the word of Allah, then convey him to his place of safety. This is because they are a people who don’t know”. While this verse calls on “disbelievers” to embrace Islam as the “truth”, it does not call on Muslims to convert — whether by persuasion or force — non-Muslims to Islam. According to Ali, this verse

leaves no doubt that the Holy Prophet was never ordered by God to oppress anyone on account of his or her religion. While the Covenants of Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of his time deal specifically with Christian communities in his midst, there is reason to believe that the Prophet would extend freedom and protection to polytheists as highlighted in the *Qur'an*.

According to Prophet Muhammad, a “Muslim nation” must also extend rights to Christian religious leaders, as discussed in the Covenant with the Christian Monks of Mount Sinai. This particular community had complete freedom in anointing leaders and control over their places of worship. Consider the following passage from the Covenant:

A bishop shall not be removed from his bishopric, nor a monk from his monastery, nor a hermit from his tower, nor shall a pilgrim be hindered from his pilgrimage. Moreover, no building from among their churches shall be destroyed, nor shall the money from their churches be used for the building of mosques or houses for the Muslims.

This passage suggests that an Islamic state must not harm Christian churches in any way, nor can any Muslim leader intrude on how Christian groups anoint leaders. So long as Christians submit to Muslim authorities and seek the protection of Muslims, all help would be given to them by Muslims in every way legitimate. In this agreement with the Monks, Muhammad showed himself to be a religious pluralist rather than a religious absolutist, or denier of religious diversity. Muslim absolutists assert that democratic principles, such as the right to private property and freedom of religion, are fundamentally incompatible with “Islamic values” and that Muslims, by necessity of their religion, must oppose all forms of democratic culture and governance. Recent Pew Global Attitudes surveys, in fact, show that majorities in the “Arab world” favor democracy as a form of government. As noted above, most experts cite Turkey, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malik, and Senegal as democracies. Indonesia, the world’s largest “Muslim nation”, is an interesting case study in observing how the pluralist spirit of the Covenants has been applied to modern societies. Article 28E of the Constitution reflects much of what was written in the Covenant

with the Monks of Mount Sinai:

- (1) Every person shall be free to choose and to practice the religion of his/her choice, to choose one’s education, to choose one’s employment, to choose one’s citizenship, and to choose one’s place of residence within the state territory, to leave it and to subsequently return to it.
- (2) Every person shall have the right to the freedom to believe his/her faith, and to express his/her views and thoughts, in accordance with his/her conscience.
- (3) Every person shall have the right to the freedom to associate, to assemble, and to express opinions.

Moreover, Article 28D states that every Indonesian citizen — regardless of ethnic or religious background — “shall have the right of recognition, guarantees, protection and certainty before a just law, and of equal treatment before the law”. The Constitution of Indonesia clearly protects religious freedom and, in practice, the government generally respects the religious freedom of the six officially recognized religions. However, in some instances, the government fails to protect citizens from discrimination and abuse based on religion. For example, the central Indonesia government holds authority over religious matters, but in previous years has made no effort in some regions of the country to overturn local laws restricting rights otherwise provided by the Constitution. Despite these shortcomings, the Constitution of Indonesia can be seen as closely mirroring the Covenants of Prophet Muhammad, who did not subscribe to “Islamic absolutism”; he respected Christians as equal members of the Muslim nation, and showed appreciation for cultural and religious diversity as something to be protected. The relations that he forged with the Monks at Mount Sinai were based on plurality and not sectarianism.

(To be continued)

Prayers for Ramadan

Maulana Muhammad Ali used to exhort members of the *Jama'at* to say special prayers during Ramadan within their daily, set prayers (*namaz* or *salat*). Below is a small selection of the prayers that he advised members to say:

I Shall Love All Mankind.

1. *'All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds.'*

O God, Your providence comprehends every iota of the universe. You have provided the very best means for the physical development of human beings. Now provide for Your creation, who have moved far off from You and are lost in darkness racing towards destruction, spiritual nourishment through the Quran. Acquaint their hearts with the bliss that is attained by bowing at Your threshold.

O God, Who granted the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his Companions unique success enabling them to transform the destinies of the entire countries and nations, foster and nourish us and our *Jama'at* today to make it reach the pinnacle of success in spreading the Quran and propagating Islam in the world. Let the foundations for the propagation of Your religion be laid by our hands, upon which an edifice continues to be raised till the Day of Judgment.

2. *'Forgive us, grant us protection, have mercy on us. You are our Patron, grant us victory over the disbelieving people!'*

O God, unbelief is dominant over the world. Love of worldly things and wealth have taken hold of human hearts. Human beings are being led astray by possession of physical power, material resources and outward adornments. But, O God, it is Your promise that You shall make Islam triumph in the world. It is Your promise that after falling into the greatest deviation and wrongdoing people will again turn to You. Fulfil this promise of Yours today and let the truth overcome falsehood and let Islam triumph over unbelief.

O God, the armies of unbelief and misguidance are attacking with full force. Your strength in the past too has been manifested through weak human beings. Let it be manifest today through this small *Jama'at*. We are weak, humble and sinners but we have a strong zeal to see Islam prevail over unbelief. Forgive us our

faults, grant us protection, save us from stumbling, and be our helper and make this weak *Jama'at* of Islam overcome the vast strength of unbelief. O God, make the Quran and Muhammad *Rasulullah* and Islam triumphant in the world, and wipe off the forces of unbelief and misguidance.

3. *'Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help.'*

O God, we do as much as it is in our power to obey You and to spread Your name and Your Word in the world, but we are weak and cannot fully discharge our duty of obeying You. Help us and produce within us the greatest strength to obey You.

O God, spreading Your name in the world is the exalted mission for which You had been appointing Your chosen ones, and it was only with Your help that they succeeded in achieving this magnificent goal. One such chosen man of Yours has entrusted us with this task, but we are small in numbers, weak, and lacking in means. We are opposed not only by outsiders but also by our own who hamper our way. Guide us through Your graciousness and infuse in us the same strength with which You have ever filled Your chosen ones, and create in our hearts the same light with which You have been illuminating the hearts of Your chosen ones.

O God, spreading Your message in the world is the most difficult of tasks in the world. Whenever such a reformation came about, it was not because of the strength of any man or army but it was from Your aid and succour. So we seek from You that help and aid which You have been bestowing upon Your chosen ones.

(From *A Mighty Striving*, pages 314 – 315)

Ramadan Mubarak

May Allah bless and accept all our devotions and grants us an opportunity to serve Islam through the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement.

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam

Founders of the first Islamic Mission in the UK, established 1913 as the Woking Muslim Mission.

Dar-us-Salaam, 15 Stanley Avenue, Wembley, UK, HA0 4JQ

Centre: 020 8903 2689 President: 01793 740670 Secretary: 07737240777 Treasurer: 01932 348283

E-mail: info@aail.uk

Websites: www.aail.org/uk | www.ahmadiyya.org | www.virtualmosque.co.uk

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