بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

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

The first Islamic Mission in the U.K., established 1913 as the Woking Muslim Mission

Darus Salaam, 15 Stanley Avenue, Wembley, HA0 4JQ (U.K.)

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Bulletin: July 2005

Next Meeting

Assalamu alaikum

Venue: ***Darus Salaam***

Date: **Sunday 3rd July 2005**

Time: **3.00 p.m.**

Annual General Meeting and Elections to the Executive Committee

Regular activities

Darus-i Quran and Hadith:
Every Friday at 2.30 p.m.

Meetings of the Executive:
First Sunday of every month at 2.00 p.m.

Meeting of the Jamaat:
First Sunday of every month at 3.00 p.m.

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Our system of organization

From the booklet

Instructions and Guidance for the Ahmadiyya Jama‘at

by Maulana Muhammad Ali

translated by Zahid Aziz

Without organization a community cannot even survive, let alone make progress. The better and stronger the organization of a community, the faster will that community progress and the more successful will it be in attaining its objective. To organize the community, it is essential to keep in view the following principles.

Responding to one will and one voice

The characteristic of every living body is that as soon as it wills to do something all its organs set to work towards that end. As soon as you start the engine of a machine, its various parts and components come into action and begin their allotted work. This is also the sign of a living community, that on receiving the call from one source all its workers responsible for that task set about their work. This is known as the organization of a community. The community in which there is no organization, whose members do not set about exerting their all for achieving its objective after having heard the *one voice*, that is not a living community. If the various components of a body do not work subject to one will, it cannot be called a living body but is merely a heap of separate parts.

Therefore, as a community our first and foremost need is that we must come together to respond to *one voice*, and when that voice calls us to the attainment of the objective of our existence, we all rush immediately, forgetting everything else, and each one sets about his work. At that time our individual will must be subordinated, and all our

efforts must be directed towards the fulfilment of another will, in obedience to which the community should come into action.

Voice and call of consensus

The one voice to be obeyed can be the voice of an individual or that of the whole community. By the voice of an individual is meant that all the affairs of the community are placed in the hands of one man, and he is given absolute authority to run the movement in whatever way he wishes. By the voice of the community is meant that the call to be obeyed is that of the decision of the movement arrived at by mutual consultation. It is this second method which is taught by Islam: "Their affairs are by consultation among themselves" (The Holy Quran, 42:38). The Holy Prophet Muhammad is ordered: "Consult them in affairs" (The Holy Quran, 3:159).

The reason for the principle of consultation is that every person should be given his human right of expressing his opinion, but in such a way that the diversity of views does not cause harm to the community. When several people give their opinions about a certain matter, each view is bound to differ in some degree, and it is impossible to act on all of them. Therefore it is essential to reach an agreed view. This is decided by the majority of opinion, that is to say, taking the views of those people who have been chosen as persons of sound opinion, whatever decision is favoured by the majority of them, that is decreed to be the consultative decision or the will of the community. It is then binding upon every member of the movement to obey that decision.

This is the only way in which, despite the freedom of opinion, there can be agreement upon one view. Muslims have generally ignored this principle, and instead of mutual consultation or the will of the community prefer to follow the opinion of one man. In fact, sometimes even when consultation does take place, the collective decision is made subject to the will of one man, so that when opinion is divided the imam or *amir* is free to follow the majority or the minority as he wishes. This is nothing other than imposing the will of an individual over the will of the community. On the other hand, the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad made decisions according to the majority view.

Ahmadiyya Movement to work by majority view

In this present age, the Promised Messiah has again revived this true principle, and has clearly written with his own hand that whatever is the decision of the Anjuman arrived at by a majority, that shall be followed, and no individual shall be able to over-ride such a decision. So this is the principle which our community ought to abide by in its system of organization. The man who disregards the collective decision, or prefers instead to follow his own view, is violating the clear command of Allah given in the words: "Their affairs are by consultation among themselves," and is adjudged by God as a sinner.

It must also be borne in mind that consultation is only done in case of the important matters. Therefore, the administrative tasks which are entrusted to particular people shall also be started according to collective decisions. The principle is that an individual's opinion shall be subservient to the will of the community, and cannot prevail over it. However, in matters of religious belief, sometimes when a person's mind has led him to a certain conclusion he cannot be compelled to reject it. But as regards the work done by the community, if, after agreement having been reached, a uniform view is not followed the result is disunity and ruination of the community.

Respect for, and trust in, one another

For the running of the organization of the community, another essential requirement is that the workers must respect, trust, and think well of one another. When those who are working mistrust one another, the work suffers badly. If the workers are godly and selfless, there is as a result less occurrence of mutual mistrust. However, there could still be misunderstandings. Sometimes, a doubt or suspicion keeps on building up in a person's heart, till it reaches a dangerous level. Then that suspicion is propagated, in the form of criticism, from one person to another till it damages the unity and the organization of the community.

Therefore, first of all what is needed is that you should think well of your fellow-worker, as far as possible. When he does something which can be represented both in a good and in an adverse light, you must refrain from taking it in the bad sense. If you have a complaint against a worker, then instead of harbouring it in your heart, so that it takes root there, or spreading it to all and sundry, you must take it to those people who can rectify it and who can hold the worker concerned to account.

Workers will always make mistakes. The best way of rectifying these mistakes is to bring them to the notice of responsible officers. Along with this, I will also emphasize that anyone appointed in this Movement to some office, no matter how high or great, is responsible before Allah and before the people for properly discharging the trust placed in his hands by the community. Nonetheless, mistakes are mistakes, and if he turns from the right way it is the duty of the community to set him straight. This is just as *Hazrat* Abu Bakr, when accepting his *Khilafat*, said: if I deviate, you must set me right.

This is also needed today, so that while on the one hand we honour those who work in the way of Allah, on the other hand we must be prepared to call them to account for their mistakes. And this cannot be done unless all the members of the community take so much interest in each and every work of the Movement as if it were their personal work.

> *… take so much interest in work of the Movement as if it were personal work.*

Hazrat Ameer with the children at the Milton Keynes function.
Mrs Sumera Ahmad is also in the picture.

Hazrat Ameer's tour of the U.K.

Reports on function at Milton Keynes

by Dr Mujahid A. Saeed

2nd May 2005 was a bright, sunny day, but it had been forecast that it would drizzle around midday. Yet the 'Sun of Ahmadiyyat' had shone bright throughout the day. **Dr. Jawad Ahmad** (son of Mr. Nasir Ahmad Syed) had arranged a meeting at his residence in Milton Keynes, inviting Hazrat Ameer for lunch and to address his family members (approximately 5 families from Milton Keynes). Also present were: **Mr. Hammad Ahmad** (Dr. Jawad Ahmad's brother), **Mr. Khalid Abdullah** (son of Dr. S.M. Abdullah, the late Imam of the Woking Mosque) **and his wife, Mr. Azhar-ud-Din Ahmad** (son of Mr. Fakhur-ud-Din Ahmad of Rawal-pindi, ex-General Secretary of the Central Anjuman) **and family,** and others. In total there were about 50 people invited.

The function started with the visitors chatting amongst themselves on various topics. The children, on the other hand, were making sure they made the most out of one another's company, the sunny day, beautiful weather and the well-trimmed back garden!

This was followed by a sumptuous lunch, making Hazrat Ameer feel quite at home with the traditional Pakistani dishes.

Poem recitation followed the lunch, and Faizan Ahmad, son of Dr. Jawad Ahmad, melodiously recited two poems from the *Songs of Islam*. Young Shahyan Ahmad, son of Mr. Hamad Ahmad, and a cousin of his were soon to follow suit with recitation of the *Kalima*.

Then Hazrat Ameer made everyone's day with a beautiful exposition of *Sura Luqman* (Chapter 31 of the Holy Quran), that was addressed particularly towards the children present for the occasion. In an easy-to-understand language, he taught these young Ahmadis the qualities of a true believer in Allah.

Then came tea and refreshments followed by a photo shoot to capture this memorable occasion.

Zuhr and *Asr* prayers were then offered in congregation, and then Hazrat Ameer bid farewell to the members that had travelled so many miles to be in his presence.

On his way back to Bedford, Hazrat Ameer was shown around Milton Keynes by Dr. Jawad Ahmad, and there was a short stop at a beautiful mustard farm.

May Allah reward all those who made this day possible. And, for Allah to have allowed all of us to benefit from Hazrat Ameer's blessed visit.

To read about the history and the world-renowned work of the Woking Muslim Mission, our Mission in the U.K. from 1913 to the 1960s, please visit the website:

www.wokingmuslim.org

Commentary on the Holy Quran, continued from last issue:

An-Najm: 'The Star'

Chapter 53 of the Quran

Explained by Dr Basharat Ahmad

Translated from Urdu by Kalamazad Mohammad, Trinidad

5-6. "One Mighty in Power (*shadid-ul-quwa*) has taught him. The Lord of Strength (*dhu mirratin*). So he attained to perfection."

The meaning of *mirratun* is strength, whilst *dhu mirratin* signifies a powerful or a brave person or a person who is gifted with intellectual strength and wisdom. In the verse, "*The Lord of Strength. So he attained to perfection*" *Dhu mirratin* (the Lord of Strength) is an attribute of Allah, Most High.

Shadid-ul-quwa refers to someone who is extremely powerful and this, too, is a reference to the Almighty.

Quwa is the plural of *quwwatun* and the plural is employed here to denote honour and reverence.

In the expression, *dhu mirratin* (Lord of Strength), reference is made to sensory and intellectual powers and so connotes a person whose intellectual acumen and sagacity are so immense that no one can overpower him in these matters whilst the phrase *shadid-ul-quwa* (Mighty in Power) connotes strength in action. That is, he is the possessor of such power that in the grandeur of his actions no one can compare with him.

We are told in the above verses that the One Who taught the Holy Quran is very powerful and extremely wise. As the guidance comes from One Who possesses exceeding powers, therefore, His laws are inexorable and if man should break them, he cannot expect to lead a prosperous life and the dominance of this guidance to overwhelm the whole world is certain.

Furthermore, as the teaching proceeds from the Lord of Strength (*Dhu mirratin*), it is therefore based on wisdom and truth and is sound and perfect and can never be controverted by science or by any other form of human knowledge. Thus, so perfect was the knowledge that the Holy Prophet (*sas*) acquired, and so relevant and so overwhelming was it in terms of truth and wisdom, that he was prepared to confront the whole world with the greatest confidence. Further, his practical faculties were in such a well-balanced state that as regards all his powers, they were all so measured and moderate that not one of them was out of proportion, neither was any faculty of his suppressed by the others so as to render it stunted, and manifest proof of all this was his impeccable conduct in practical affairs.

Therefore, in these verses, side by side with his perfect knowledge we are told that every single practical ability of his was on the level of moderation so that he had on both counts attained perfection. In other words, not only was he spotless in character but also perfect in every other conceivable way.

7. "And he (*huwa*) is in the highest part of the horizon (*ufuq*)."

The personal pronoun *huwa* (he) refers to the Holy Prophet (*sas*). *Ufuq* means the point at which the furthest limit of the sky seems to meet the ends of the earth, that is, the horizon. It also signifies the furthest limit, side, region or tract.

This means that in regard to his perfection in knowledge and character, he had achieved the most noble and most lofty station possible. In other words, his Divine knowledge and spiritual capabilities and the fact that all his practical faculties were on the path of temperance had propelled him to the furthest limit of perfection beyond which it was impossible for any human to proceed. And although every faculty of his had reached perfection, yet he observed the golden mean; and this is a side of his morals in which no human being in the world could be compared with him.

Furthermore, the manifestation of every virtue of his reached the pinnacle of perfection just when circumstances were in total contrast to his station in life. For example, he became a king, yet he lived the life of a poor man. If he had eschewed kingship and chosen the life of poverty, then there would have been no proof that all his faculties were fully developed. Similarly, the perfection of his faculty of forgiveness could be seen when his bloodthirsty enemies were defeated and could have expected all kinds of retaliatory punishments from him. Yet he forgave them all. In like manner, his forgiveness of his friends when, through error and disobedience, they had become deserving of punishment for causing the community to suffer untold damage to life and property is standing proof of the perfection of his faculty of forgiveness.

In short, we are told in this verse that not only was he perfect but more than that, his perfection had reached the furthest limit possible for human nature and human capabilities and that he had surpassed in excellence all those in the past as well as in the future.

As *ufuq* also means side, it is a further indication that the Holy Prophet's progression had reached the furthest limit of human capability. In other words, he had arrived at the side of Allah's throne so that he was midway between Him and mankind. That is, he did not become God, but he had traversed every requirement and every stage of human perfection.

That is the *mi'raj* (ascension) which is the culmination of human progress, several stages of which were shown to the Holy Prophet (*sas*) by means of an extraordinary vision in which he traversed all the heavens and finally stood at the side of Allah's throne where neither angel nor man could dare.

The vision of the *Mi'raj* (Ascension of the Holy Prophet) was only a testimony of the Holy Prophet's perfection which, in fact, he had always achieved.

To be continued.

Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din's answers to five basic questions

Translated by Zahid Aziz

(*Note:* In the Ahmadiyya community newspaper *Badr*, 17 April 1913, a letter by the Head of the Movement Maulana Nur-ud-Din is published containing answers to five questions asked by an enquirer. The letter is preceded by the list of questions. The translation is given below.)

Questions:

(1) What is your belief about God, the Messenger of Islam and the Holy Quran?

(2) What is your view about the poems chanted in eulogy of the Companions of the Holy Prophet?

(3) What are the particular and fundamental beliefs of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian? In what sense did he claim to be Promised Messiah and Mahdi of the Age?

(4) What is the difference between your beliefs and the beliefs of other sects of Islam, in particular the *ahl-i Sunna*?

(5) In the present circumstances what course of action should the Muslims follow?

Answer:

1. (a) I believe Allah the Most High to be *Rabb-ul-'alamin, ar-Rahman, ar-Rahim, Malik-i yaum-id-din* and the Creator and Master of the whole world. I have no hesitation, qualms or uncertainty in holding this belief. He is the Creator and the whole universe is His creation.

(b) Regarding the Holy Quran, my conviction is that it is the word of Allah the Most High. We possess it in a protected, unchanged, unaltered, compiled form.

(c) Muhammad *Rasul-ullah*, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, is the *Khatam-un-Nabiyyin* and the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds. By following him, a person can become loved by Allah the Most High.

2. The ranks of the Holy Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, depend on the love they had for Allah the Most High. Only Allah has knowledge of it, no one else. Ponder over this.

In the organizational system of Islam, Abu Bakr holds the first place, may Allah be pleased with him, after that is Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, then Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him, then Ali, may Allah be pleased with him. But far beyond, and more subtle than, their position in the organizational system are their pure relations with Allah, and those relations are above human comprehension. If, on the one hand, the honoured Abu Bakr defeated the disorder and established peace and gave his young daughter in marriage to the Holy Prophet for his comfort, on the other hand the works of the Muslim saints done through following the honoured Ali are not few and are acknowledged.

3. The fundamental and particular beliefs of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad *sahib* are those which are found in the Holy Quran and authentic Hadith reports. Mirza *sahib* had that same Quran which exists in a protected form, and among books of Hadith he gave preference to Bukhari over other books. It is in these two books that the principles of Islam are to be found.

It is surprising that Mirza *sahib* wrote 85 books but you have not studied them to find out in what sense he claimed to be Messiah and Mahdi. In brief, Mirza *sahib* himself wrote:

"As I have been given light for the Christian nations, this is the reason why I was given the name 'son of Mary'."

It is in this sense that Allah, His angels and His Prophet have called him 'Messiah'. In combating the external threats to Islam he was Messiah, and in removing the internal dissensions he acted as the Mahdi. For the Aryas he was Krishna.

4. We consider ourselves to be *ahl-i Sunna wal-Jamaat*. The strongest evidence of this we have is that we have accepted the Quran and Sunna as our leader and guide, and we are a Jama'at following one Imam. Other people are neither under one Imam, nor do they follow an accepted Sunna, nor do they belong to a Jama'at. So how can they be *ahl-i Sunna wal-Jamaat*?

5. In the present circumstances, what Muslims should do is to refrain from mutual wrangling or at least to reduce it. They should reflect carefully on the tricks employed by the preachers and the mullas who, for their own material gains, incite disagreements among people. They should avoid being concerned with differences in small matters and leave those disagreements which cause mutual fighting.

For example, the Shias need only give up verbal abuse and practices of *shirk* like idol-worship. Their adversaries, the Khawarij, should cease making scurrilous attacks on the family of the Holy Prophet and the habit of killing. The *ghair-muqallid* should act upon authentic hadith reports, and the *muqallid* should not insist on following the statements of their imams when these conflict with authentic hadith reports. Everyone must soften their attitude in the matter of declaring others as *kafir*. Everyone must accept the clear statements of the Quran and authentic hadith reports. If people differ in their understanding of them, they must not fight over it or at least keep the dispute to a minimum. They must let everyone follow his own understanding.

[Note: *Muqallid* are those who follow a school of law, e.g. Hanafis. *Ghair-muqallid* do not follow any school.]

My beliefs

by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

Translated by Zahid Aziz

"We believe in the five fundamentals upon which Islam is based, and we abide by the word of God, i.e. the Holy Quran, which it is incumbent upon us to follow. Like the *Farooq* (Hazrat Umar), may Allah be pleased with him, we say that 'the Book of Allah is sufficient for us', and like Hazrat Aishah, may Allah be pleased

with her, when a disagreement and conflict arises between the Quran and Hadith we give precedence to the Quran, especially in matters of stories which, as generally agreed, are not even subject to abrogation.

We believe that there is none to be worshipped but God the Most High, and our leader Muhammad *Mustafa*, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, is His Messenger and the Last of the Prophets (*Khatam-ul-anbiya*) and we believe that angels, raising of the dead, the Day of Resurrection, and heaven and hell, are all truths. We believe that whatever Allah, be He glorified, has said in the Holy Quran, and whatever our Holy Prophet has said, is true, in accordance with our statement above. And we hold that any person who removes even one jot from the *Shari'ah* of Islam, or adds even an iota to it, or discards what is obligatory and permits what is forbidden, is without faith and turned away from Islam.

I enjoin upon my followers that they should have whole-hearted faith in the *Kalima Tayyiba: La ilaha ill-Allahu, Muhammad-ur rasul-ullah* (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah), and should die in that faith. They must believe in all the prophets and all revealed books, whose truth is proved from the Holy Quran. And they must adhere to Islam, properly and correctly, by considering obligatory upon themselves *Salat* (prayer), *Saum* (fasting), *Zakat* (charity) and *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Makka), and all duties laid down by Allah and His Messenger; and by considering as unlawful all that is prohibited. To conclude, it is obligatory to believe in all those matters, relating to faith and practice, on which the past righteous religious elders of Islam were agreed, and which, by consensus of opinion of the *Ahl as-Sunna*, are held to constitute Islam. And we call heaven and earth to bear witness that this is our religion. Whoever attributes to me anything contrary to this religion, he is forsaking fear of God and honesty, and committing slander against me; and on the Day of Judgment I shall have my claim against him as to when he cut open my bosom and saw that instead of my above profession I am actually at heart opposed to these statements. Beware, indeed the curse of Allah is on the liars and fabricators.

— From the book *Ayyam-us-Sulh*, published January 1899, p. 86–87.

Questions by e-mail

answers by Dr. Zahid Aziz

1. About Yusuf Ali

From Ahmed Tijjani, Nigeria, 15 June 2005*:*

"I am happy to see your web site here in Dutse, the capital of Jigawa state. Before I continue let me pray for your good work, may the almighty Allah reward you with al-jannah firddaussi ameen.

I was always reciting Holy Quran which was translated by Mallam Yusuf Ali, but here in Nigeria we have such name and he is an Islamic scholar in Kano state. Is he the same person that translated the holy book in to English language? Help me and answer my question, may God help you, ameen"

Our reply

"Dear Ahmed
assalamu alaikum

The Yusuf Ali who translated the Quran into English had the full name Abdullah Yusuf Ali and he died more than 50 years ago in about 1954. He was from India and lived in England for many years. He died in London and is buried in England."

2. Two questions

From Mike Lapine, U.S.A., 16 June 2005:

assalamu alaykum,

Dear Dr. Aziz, (or to whom ever it may concern)

I don't know if you remember me but I spoke to you a year ago about the concept of hell according to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Anyways I have two questions which I am trying to do research on now. If you know any of the answers please tell me.

The first one is on the *salawats*. Do Ahmadis believe it is beneficial to make *salawats* on the Prophet s.a.w.? A lot of Sufi *tariqats* believe it necessary to send greetings and blessings on the Prophet like: *allahumma salli ala Muhammad-in wa ala aali Muhammad-in:* 'O Allah, send blessings on the Prophet and his family.'

Also I have a question on the Islamic concept of inheritance. A lot of anti-Islamic websites say the Quran makes a mathematical error in 4:11 and 4:12 when the Quran talks about dividing up the inheritance. Here is an example from one guy:

If I (as the male head of the family) die and leave behind (in the order given in the verses above):

3 daughters: 2/3rds
both parents: 1/3rd (1/6th each)
my wife: 1/8th
which adds up to: 1+1/8th

I read an article that Maulana Muhammad Ali wrote on Inheritance in his book about Islam, but it was too complicated for me to understand. Anyways, I would love to hear your thoughts on it.

Our reply **(revised for Bulletin)**

Dear Mike,
assalamu alaikum

It is nice to hear from you again and a pleasure to reply to your questions.

1. To pray to Allah for blessings to be sent upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad is a direct command of the Holy Quran (33:56). It is also a part of the regular *salat*. So obviously Ahmadis believe it to be beneficial. In fact, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement has greatly stressed the importance of saying the *Darood* or *Salat-un-Nabi* outside of *salat* as well.

However, calling for blessings of Allah upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad must be accompanied by action to bring the world to love, admire and praise the Holy Prophet and realize his greatness. You must be aware how the Holy Prophet is being vilified and reviled in the world today with false accusations. Reciting the *Salat-un-Nabi* should lead us to work hard to refute these

false charges and spread the true picture of his inspiring life and qualities. If our prayers for the Holy Prophet are not accompanied by efforts of this kind then we are merely uttering empty words.

I should add, regarding your translation: 'O Allah, send blessings on the Prophet and his family', that while *aal* does mean 'family', but in case of a prophet his *aal* means his true followers, whether they belong to his family or not. So we send blessings on the Holy Prophet and all those who strive to follow him truly.

You may like to read a speech of mine entitled 'The significance of *Salat-un-Nabi* or *Darood* ', available online at:
http://www.muslim.org/islam/salaatnabi.htm

2. Regarding the shares of inheritance, what Maulana Muhammad Ali has explained is that the share of the daughters (when there exist two or more daughters and no sons) is 2/3rds of the **remainder** after the parents and wife have received their fixed shares of 1/3rd and 1/8th respectively. The basis for this interpretation is that if the progeny included any males then the progeny would inherit **all that remained** after deducting the fixed shares for the parents and wife. Therefore when the Quran speaks of the shares where there are only daughters, 1/2 in case of one daughter only and 2/3rds in case of two or more daughters, it is 1/2 or 2/3rds of the remainder **after** deducting the fixed shares for the parents and wife (and not 1/2 or 2/3rds of the total inheritance). The rest of the remainder goes to the nearest male relative.

Gift Aid donations

by Zahid Aziz

In the *Bulletin* for April 2004 I had given details of a mechanism for making donations to the Jama'at online on a website as 'Gift Aid'. This also had the benefit of increasing your donations by the amount of tax you had paid, if you are a U.K. tax payer. When certain members used that website, they encountered some drawbacks. It takes a long time from the donation being made to the donation being received by the Jama'at. Also, these intermediary organizations charge a fee which reduces the extra amount added to the donation from the tax refund.

In view of these drawbacks, I explored the more direct method whereby the Jama'at applies to the Inland Revenue, making a 'Charity Repayment Claim' on behalf of its donors. You continue to donate directly to the Jama'at, as our members have always been doing, monthly as well as on special occasions. You also sign a simple 'Gift Aid Declaration' Form, copies of which we have produced and are available from the Jama'at. Then from time to time, as the nominated contact for the Jama'at, I apply to the Inland Revenue, submitting a tax repayment claim on the donations given to the Jama'at by U.K. tax payers. For every £100 of donations that people make to the Jama'at, the Jama'at would receive a repayment of £28.20 from the Inland Revenue out of the donors' taxes.

The regulations allow claims to be made on all donations given since April 2000. To set the system going, we made a claim for the donations of one member who had a record of his donations made in the past few years. A few weeks later, **we received a cheque from the Inland Revenue made out to the A.A.I.I.L. (U.K.) for the sum of £923.71 — *al-hamdu-lillah.***

We now intend to make claims for other donations as far as possible. If you have a record of your donations to the Jama'at, extending as far back as possible, up to April 2000 at the earliest, please let us know. These of course must be donations made *directly by you from your income after tax* (i.e. not through any scheme such as GAYE which already would have given the tax benefit).

A lesson we can learn from this exercise is that with just a small amount of *thought*, *time* and *effort* much can be achieved. First, we need to keep on looking for, and thinking about, any possible ways in which the Jama'at can increase its resources and improve its functioning. Then those ideas must be brought forward and discussed, and viable plans drawn up. Unfortunately, most plans don't go any further than the stage of talk. But once you get over that hurdle and start putting something into practice, instead of postponing it again and again, then good results become possible.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad

as a teacher and guide

by Ambreen Muzaffar, M.A.

It is a historical fact that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, founder of Islam, was the "most successful religious personality of the world." He was not just a "hero" as Thomas Carlyle has called him. According to the Holy Quran, he was "an excellent exemplar" for mankind (33:21), who has shown us the way of achieving "real" success in this life.

By studying the life of the Holy Prophet (*saw*), we can learn those important principles which he followed in his life and helped him to achieve unprecedented success. In short, the Prophet of Islam was a positive thinker and a pragmatic leader in every sense of the word. All his activities, decisions and directives were result-oriented. He completely refrained from idealism and always aimed at achieving goodness and nobility.

First Principle: To start with, the possible. This principle has been well-explained in a saying of Hazrat Ayeshah, wife of the Holy Prophet. She said: "Whenever the Prophet had to choose between two options, he always opted for the easier choice" (*Al-Bukhari*). It means to begin from the possible, so that one could utilise energy and resources available to him and is sure to achieve success, accordingly. In other words, it also means that one should be practical in planning one's course of action.

Second Principle: To achieve advantage in a disadvantage situation. In the early days in Makkah, the Holy Prophet of Islam faced extreme

opposition and persecution. At that time, a verse of the Holy Quran was revealed: "With every hardship there is ease, with every hardship there is ease" (94:5-6). This means that if there are problems, then one should not lose heart but exert one's efforts by availing all the opportunities to find solution accordingly. This is a positive way of facing problems. Determination to work with a faith that after hardship one is bound to achieve success is the key to success.

Third Principle: To change the place of action. This principle is derived from the Holy Prophet's migrating from Makkah to Madinah, which is called *Hijrah* or Migration. It was to find a more suitable place to carry on his Mission. And, ultimately, Madinah became the centre of Islam.

Fourth Principle: To make a friend out of an enemy. The Prophet of Islam was constantly subjected to antagonism and persecution by the unbelievers of Makkah. The Holy Quran exhorted the believers to observe patience and maintain norms of good morals and nobility. In other words, to return good for the evil. And the Holy Quran assured them that in this way they would ultimately win over the enemy: "You will see your direst enemy has become your closest friend" (41:34). The life of the Holy Prophet of Islam demonstrated such an honest and sincere behaviour that even his opponents would trust more in him than any other person. That is why he was called *Al-Ameen*, the most trustworthy person.

Fifth Principle: To look for lasting results rather than grab at immediate benefits. After the Battle of Badr, about 70 of the unbelievers were taken as prisoners of war. According to Arab custom, they were to be released on the payment of ransom money, which at that point in time was much needed. But the Holy Prophet cared more for the far-reaching effects of getting his own people educated. As these prisoners of war were educated people, the Holy Prophet announced that if any one of them would teach ten Muslim children or adults to read and write, he would be freed. This was how the "first school" in the history of Islam started even though the teachers were from the enemy rank.

Sixth Principle: Peace is stronger than violence. When the city of Makkah was conquered, and all the leading opponents of the Holy Prophet of Islam who were war criminals were brought before him, he did not order them to be killed. Rather, he ordered a general amnesty. This extremely kind and generous gesture on the part of the Holy Prophet of Islam won their hearts and most of them saw the latent power of the truth of Islam and entered its fold.

Seventh Principle: To be receptive and not dogmatic. In the famous battle of Mawta, Khalid bin Walid, the commander of the faithful, decided to withdraw Muslim forces from the battlefield because he discovered that the enemy out-numbered them. When the Muslim army reached Madinah, some of the Muslims received them with the words: "O *Furar*" (O deserters)! The Holy Prophet said: "No, they are *Karrar*" (those who planned to advance in future). The people in Madinah were thinking about the immediate results and wanted to go ahead with what was decided. In their view, the Muslim army should have either fought at the battlefield or retreated. But they did not visualise that the Muslims should evenly assess the situation and act accordingly. Fighting should be only a last resort. The Prophet said: "No. There is also a third option, and that is to avoid war. Either negotiate peace or gain time to strengthen yourself." History tells us that the Muslims, after three years of preparations, advanced again towards the Roman army and won a resounding victory.

Eighth Principle: To plan for the ultimate peace in a conflict. The occasion is that of Hudaibiyya, where Muslims were withheld from proceeding towards Makkah. At that time, the Holy Prophet of Islam and his companions set out with the sole object of performing Pilgrimage to Makkah. The unbelievers, finding the situation in their favour, were determined to engage the Muslims in fighting. But the Holy Prophet, instead of fighting, negotiated peace on their terms unilaterally. It was a ten-year peace treaty. Until then, the meeting ground between Muslims and non-Muslims had been on the battlefield. Now the area of conflict shifted to the ideological field. Within two years, interaction between Muslims and unbelievers increased and the Muslims so impressed the latter that the superiority of the simple and ennobling teachings of Islam dawned upon their hearts. Thus Islam emerged as victorious.

Ninth Principle: Peaceful persuasion, rather than force and persecution, brings lasting results. This principle is well-established by a saying of the Prophet of Islam, recorded in *Al-Bukhari*. Hazrat Ayeshah says that the early verses of the Holy Quran related mostly to faith in God and the accountability of one's actions in the next life. These teachings of the Quran, its moral and social discipline imparted by the Holy Prophet of Islam, turned the hard-hearted Arabs into kind-hearted and civilised people. Ten long years of persecution resorted to by the unbelieving Arabs and unbelievable perseverance and high moral character shown by the believers worked wonders. The worst evils, like adultery and drinking, were eliminated all together. This is clear proof that in order to bring social change evolutionary method yields more lasting results than resorting to force.

Tenth Principle: To be objective and not subjective in negotiating over a dispute. During the drafting of the peace treaty at Hudaibiyyah, the Holy Prophet dictated the words: "This is from Muhammad, the Messenger of God." The leader of the Quraish delegation raised objections over the words. The Prophet of Islam did not insist on the words; rather, he had more concern for the lasting results which he was to get by these apparently humiliating terms of the peace treaty. He asked Hazrat Ali, who was taking the dictation, to remove the words "Messenger of God" and instead write the words "Muhammad, son of Abdullah." So, at that point in time, peace was the objective and not the words.