

# An-Nisaa'

Lajna Imāillah Canada

Volume: 30 January to April 2018 Issue: 1



## Excellence in Morals

A magazine for the moral and spiritual  
training of Lajna Imāillah Canada.

### ***Prayer for Faith, Health and Good Manners***

Ḥazrat Abū Hurairah<sup>ra</sup> relates that the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said to Ḥazrat Salmān Fārsī<sup>ra</sup>, "I want to teach you such a prayer which you can offer with great affection and sincerity to the Gracious God, every morning and evening." This is the prayer:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیْ اَسْأَلُكَ صِحَّةً فِیْ اَیْمَانٍ، وَ اَیْمَانًا فِیْ حُسْنِ خُلُقٍ وَ نَجَاحًا  
یَتَّبِعُهُ فَلَاحٌ، وَ رَحْمَةً مِنْكَ وَ عَافِیَةً، وَ مَعْفِرَةً مِنْكَ وَ رِضْوَانًا۔

O Allāh, I beg You to bestow health upon me while being in a state of belief. Along with faith grant me good manners. I beg for success after success. I am also desirous of attaining Your pleasure and Your forgiveness.

Source: Treasure House of Prayers, page 153, available online at  
<https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Treasure-House-of-Prayers.pdf>



*In the Name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the ever Merciful!*

Lajna Imāillah Canada's

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spiritual training of Lajna  
Imāillah Canada

# An-Nisaa'

**Volume: 30    Issue: 1**  
**January to April 2018**

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Holy Qur'ān/Hadīth	1
A Note from the Editor	2
Spiritual Treasures from the Writings of the Promised Messiah <sup>as</sup>	3
Summary of Friday Sermons by Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V <sup>aa</sup>	5
Love of Allāh—Achieve Purpose of Life	10
Mosques around the World	12
Status of Women in Islām	14
Become a Successful Dai'ilallah / Silent Tablīgh	16/17
Salāt—An Obligatory Prayer	18
Negative Impact of Social Media	20
Concept of Sin/ Regularity in Salāt	21
Avoid Backbiting and Gossiping	22
New Year Resolutions	24
Report of Local Events	25
Nāsirāt Corner	28

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# From the Holy Qur'ān

The English translation of the Arabic verses is rendered by Maulvi Sher Ali Sāhib<sup>ra</sup>.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ  
حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ  
وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ۖ

Verily you have in the Prophet of Allāh an excellent model, for him who fears Allāh and the Last Day and who remembers Allāh much. (33:22)

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ  
بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ  
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ  
الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ  
أُولَٰئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

And the believers, men and women, are friends one of another. They enjoin good and forbid evil and observe Prayer and pay the Zakat and obey Allāh and His Messenger. It is these on whom Allāh will have mercy. Surely, Allāh is Mighty, Wise. (9:71)

## Hadīth: Saying of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>

### High Morals of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>

It is related by Hazrat Sa'ad bin Hisham bin `Aamir<sup>ra</sup> and he said,

"I came to Hazrat Ayesha (peace be upon her) and said, 'Umm al-Mu'mineen! kindly tell me about the high morals of the Messenger of Allah<sup>sa</sup>.' She said, 'His morals were just according to the Holy Qur'ān.' Further she said, 'Did you not read in the Holy Qur'ān, the word of Allāh the most honoured and high, you surely possess high moral excellences.'" (Musnad Ahmad, p. 91/6)



# A Note from the Editor

Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīh IV<sup>rh</sup>, gave a discourse on the basic moral values he wished to inculcate in the members of Jamā'at Ahmadiyya in his Friday Sermon of November 24, 1989. Huzoor<sup>rh</sup> stated in the beginning of his Friday Sermon:

“At present the Ahmadiyya Community is passing through a period of exceptional importance about which I have often reminded you as we move ahead from the end of the first century of the Movement founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>. This is in terms of time. The Holy Qur'ān has made clear prophecies that the gap of time can be bridged and can be overcome if one does not let one's moral values decline nor let one's actions slip behind. The Holy Qur'ān states:

*And He will raise him among others of them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise (62: 4)*

This verse carries the same message and the same glad tidings. It has been fulfilled and has revived our spirit. It is of utmost importance therefore, that those of us who have accepted the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> according to the prophecy of the Holy Qur'ān have seen and proved that the time gap can be removed through moral practice...”<sup>1</sup>

Huzoor<sup>rh</sup> then presented five fundamental moral values that he wanted all Lajna, Khuddām and Anṣār to embody for their spiritual growth. These are: **truthfulness; gentle and pious speech, fortitude (avoiding unnecessary wastage), sympathy for the poor and having resolve and courage.**

After expounding on these five basic morals,

Huzoor<sup>rh</sup> said at the end of his Sermon, “Our organizations should specially keep in mind these five fundamental moral values in the preparation of their spiritual training programmes and give much attention to them. I feel that their advantages will continue to reach mankind not just for the next century but for many hundreds of years to come. If the Ahmadiyya Community is firmly established on these five moral values and parents become responsible for implanting them in their children then we can depart this life in a state of peace and tranquility with the consciousness that we have accomplished the task with which God entrusted us, according to the best of our ability.”<sup>2</sup>

In this first issue of An-Nisaa' of 2018, we have focused on the theme of excellence of moral values. Included are the Friday Sermon of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup> delivered on the High Moral Excellence of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>; How to avoid Backbiting and Gossiping; Love of Allāh, Negative Impact of Social Media; Ṣalāt, an Obligatory Prayer and many more.

Please continue to send for An-Nisaa' your written work and suggestions. I would like to thank all the members who submitted their work whether it has been published or not—your effort is much appreciated. May Allāh enable us to benefit from all the good advices included in this issue. Amīn!

## Sources:

1. Review of Religions, January 1990, page 3, Friday Sermon November 24, 1989, available online at [www.reviewofreligions.org](http://www.reviewofreligions.org)
2. Review of Religions, January 1990, page 3, Friday Sermon November 24, 1989, available online at [www.reviewofreligions.org](http://www.reviewofreligions.org)

Sadiqa Hifsa

# Spiritual Treasures from the Writings of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>

*The following excerpts are taken from The Essence of Islām: Volume I, pg. 263-264; 313-315 (available online at [www.alislam.org/books](http://www.alislam.org/books)); a compilation of extracts from the writings, speeches, announcements and discourses of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>, translated into English by Hazrat Chaudhry Muhammad Zafrulla Khan<sup>ra</sup> and revised by Munawar Ahmad Sa'eed.*

## Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>—the Grand Reformer

### Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> Brought Morals to Perfection

In meekness and gentleness, Moses stood higher than all the Prophets in Israel and no other Prophet in Israel, whether Jesus or anyone else, approached the lofty station of Moses. The Torah bears witness that in meekness and gentleness and in moral qualities Moses was higher than all the Prophets in Israel. The third verse of the twelfth chapter of Numbers says that Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth. God has in the Torah praised the meekness of Moses as He has not praised any other Prophet in Israel. It is true, however, that the high moral qualities of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] that are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān are thousands of times more exalted than those of Moses. God has said that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] combined in his person all the high moral qualities which were found in the different Prophets and said with regard to him:

Thou dost possess the highest moral qualities. (68:5)

The word 'azim in Arabic idiom is used as connoting the highest quality of a thing. For instance, when a big tree is called 'azim, it would

mean that it possesses all the height and width and bulk that is possible for a tree to possess. Thus, this verse means that all the high moral qualities and excellent characteristics which a human being can possess, were all present in the fullest degree in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Thus, this is the highest possible praise. This is also indicated in another verse:

“...and great is Allāh's grace on thee.” (4:114)

Meaning that: God has bestowed His grace upon thee in the largest measure and no Prophet can be equal in rank with thee. This praise is mentioned in Psalm as a prophecy concerning the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as is said: Therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. (Psalms, Ch. 45)<sup>160</sup> [Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 605-606, sub-footnote 3]

### Perfect Morals of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> in Adversity and Victory

...The high qualities of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] were demonstrated on hundreds of occasions and their reality shone forth like the sun. The qualities of generosity, beneficence, sacrifice, bravery, piety, contentment and withdrawal from the world were



demonstrated more clearly and brilliantly in the case of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] than in the case of any other Prophet. God Almighty bestowed great treasures upon the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and he spent them all in the cause of God and did not spend a penny on self-indulgence. He raised no structures and built no mansions, but spent the whole of his life in a mud hut, which was no different from the dwelling of the poorest person. He behaved benevolently towards those who had persecuted him and helped them in their distress out of his own resources. He lived in a small adobe hut and slept on the ground and ate of barley bread or went without food. He was granted abundant wealth of the world, but he did not soil his holy hands with it and always preferred poverty to wealth and meekness to power. From the day of his advent to the day when he returned to his Companion on High, he attached no importance to anything except to his Lord. He gave proof of his bravery, fidelity and steadfastness in battle against thousands of enemies, solely for the sake of God, when death appeared a certainty. In short, God Almighty manifested such high qualities as benevolence, piety, contentment, bravery and all that pertained to the love of the Divine in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) the like of which had not appeared in the world before him, nor will appear after him. In the case of Jesus, these high qualities were not clearly established for they can only be proved in a period of power and riches and these were not granted to Jesus. Thus in his case, both types of qualities remained hidden as conditions for their demonstration were not present, but this objection which can be raised against the deficiency in the case of Jesus has been repelled by the perfect example of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] inasmuch as his benefi-

cent example perfects and completes the case of every Prophet, and through him whatever had remained hidden or doubtful in the case of Jesus and other Prophets shone forth brightly. Revelation and Prophethood came to an end in that holy person in the sense that all excellences reached their climax in him. This is the grace of Allāh. He bestows it upon whom He wills. [Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 276-292, footnote 11]

**God** Almighty divided the life of our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] into two parts, one of pain and troubles and suffering and the other of victory, so that during the period of suffering those qualities might be manifested which belong to the period of suffering, and in the period of victory and power, those qualities might be demonstrated that cannot be established without power. Thus, both types of qualities were clearly established in his case by his passing through both these periods. By reading the history of his period of distress, which extended over thirteen years in Mecca, it becomes clear that he demonstrated those qualities which the perfectly righteous demonstrate in the period of distress, that is to say, trusting in God and abstaining from complaining and not slackening in his work and not standing in awe of anyone, in such manner that the disbelievers believed on witnessing such steadfastness and bore witness that unless a person had full trust in God, he could not endure suffering with such steadfastness. When the stage of victory, power and prosperity arrived the high qualities of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]—his forgiveness, generosity, bravery—were demonstrated so perfectly that a large number of disbelievers observing those qualities believed in him. He forgave his persecutors and

(Continued on page 15)

# Summary of Friday Sermon

## The Holy Prophet's<sup>sa</sup> Moral Standards

Source: Friday Sermon Archives from [www.alislam.org](http://www.alislam.org)

**Extracts from the Friday Sermon by Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup> delivered on March 02, 2018 at Baitul Futūh Mosque, London.**

Falsehood is a sin and truthfulness is a lofty moral.

The leader of a people is their servant

The Holy Prophet was the embodiment of all the perfect morals

One who does not care about the morals is ignorant

Be cordial to your parents even if they are nonbelievers

The demon of pride deprives man from doing good deeds

Abandoning the morals is sin and evil

After reciting the *Tashahhud*, *Ta'wwuz*, and Sūrah Al-Fatiha, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (may Allāh be his Helper) stated:

Islāmic teachings greatly emphasise practicing good morals and excellent manners at home and in the society at every level. No other religion addresses this matter in such detail. However, unfortunately, it is Muslims, who are generally considered to be at the lowest level in this regard. Non-Muslims criticize them because their practice is contrary to what they preach. Muslims generally claim to love the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> but do not follow the spirit of the teachings of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>. When Almighty God sent the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> to remind people of

these blessed teachings, Muslims violently rejected him. This state of theirs should draw the attention of us Ahmadis towards making utmost efforts to inculcate in us, the most excellent of morals. We should try to adopt the highest morals utilising all our faculties, which is also the teaching of Islām and the practical example of which, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> has established before us. Otherwise, it would be of no benefit for us to be 'Ahmadis' or of being called so.

If we look at the practical example of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, we see astonishing (moral) standards. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> admonished his wife for mocking the short height of another wife, as this will cause emotional pain to the others). He<sup>sa</sup>



advised one wife not to show even the slightest displeasure at any of the other wives over anything they do. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> advised children to attain high moral standards by not to damage other's fruit trees by throwing stones at these, if desperate only take the fruit that has already fallen down the tree.' But even better, pray to God Almighty that you never end up in such a desperate situation. Once a child was eating quickly and moving his hand all over the plate, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said, "First, recite the prayer to start in the name of Allāh, eat with your right hand and eat from what is right in front of you." Thus, we should undertake the moral training of children in this manner, so that they come to adopt excellent morals as they become adults.

Furthermore, dishonesty is a sin and truthfulness is a virtue and good moral. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> has given guidance to instil this (moral quality) in the hearts of children from their very childhood in this manner. A companion narrates an incident of his childhood saying that once, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> came to our home. Due to my immaturity, a short while later, whilst the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> was still present at home, I was about to leave to play outside. Hence, to stop me from leaving this blessed environment, my mother said, "Come here and stay here. (If you do so) I will give you something." Upon this, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said, "Do you wish to give him something?" My mother replied, "Yes, I will give him a date." Upon this, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said, "If this was not your intention and you merely said this in order to call the child, you would have been guilty of committing a sin as you told a lie." Thus, in this way even this child became aware of the importance of truthfulness and the abhorrence of dishonesty at this very young age. Once, the

Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said to a person that if you are unable to refrain from every vice, then you should refrain from telling lies. You should at least refrain from one vice. Now, we should also assess ourselves as to whether we are upholding such standards. In one of the narrations it has been mentioned that in relation to the greater sins, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said, "major sins are Shirk (associating partners with God) and disobedience towards parents." The person narrating this says that the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> was listing these major sins whilst he was sitting down and leaning against something. He then sat up straight and said, "Listen carefully. It is also Dishonesty and giving false witness."

The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> elevated the standards of forbearance and patience in his companions. A Bedouin started to urinate in the mosque. People ran towards him to stop him. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said, "Leave him alone and pour water over the area he urinated on.' The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> further said, 'You have been created to provide ease for people, not to cause them hardships." Following this, that Bedouin always mentioned this act of kindness of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>.

On one occasion, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said, "If you wish to find out whether you are doing something good or bad, you should turn towards your neighbours and see what opinion they have about you." Following this, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said to the leaders, "Your high morals will manifest themselves when you will consider yourselves to be the servants of the nation and when you will serve the public with all your capabilities and capacities." Thus, the office bearers in our Jamā'at should also pay attention towards this matter.

When possessing unbridled power after the con-

quest of Makkah, the excellence of the morals of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> shone through. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> forgave all his enemies, even those who had subjected him to the bitterest of persecution. This act of forgiveness served as the means for the acceptance of Islām for many (among them). Mentioning the standards of the highest moral qualities of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states on one occasion, 'Addressing the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, Allāh the Glorious says: 'thou dost surely possess high moral excellences' [68:5]. Hence, in accordance with this elaboration it means that every form of moral excellence, such as generosity, courage, justice, mercy, benevolence, truthfulness and forbearance etc. (i.e. to tolerate something with forbearance) are found in your character. ...., all of these moral qualities are in fact natural conditions and feelings of a person and are can only be labelled as moral qualities when they are manifested on their appropriate and proper occasion and in accordance with a person's intention, ,,,.'

Mentioning the various circumstances of displaying high moral qualities, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states: **"High morals can be gauged under two circumstances; in times of trials and tribulations and in times of success and prosperity. A person who demonstrates patience and endeavours to acquire the pleasure of Allāh the Exalted at times of trials and tribulations, possesses high moral qualities. Furthermore, a person who demonstrates humility and establishes justice in times of success and governance, can also be considered as one who possesses high moral qualities. Thus, both of these circumstances manifest themselves in all their glory in the life of our Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>."**

Commenting on insincere flattery and deceitful politeness while hearts are full of rancour, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states: "This is not Islāmic teaching, as these are not the true Islāmic virtues. Instead, high virtue is that whatever you say, it should be heartfelt." If you are showing compassion, it should come from your heart. If you are showing any other emotion, it should also come from your heart. ... As God Almighty says: 'Verily, Allāh enjoins justice, and the doing of good to others; and giving like kindred.' [16:91]"

This is the best practise: to do justice, say things as they are. Then there are situations where Ehsan (doing good) is required, you should do good. Then going a step further, treat people like a mother treats her children, or a close relative treats his kith and kin. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states: "this is the best practise and there is guidance for the best practise in Allāh's book."

Thus, purity of heart is required. You are required to follow the path of Allāh's commandments and pleasure. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states that "Good morals are the key to other good deeds. Those who do not look after their morals, gradually become useless." Thus, a man is only of use if he possesses high moral virtues. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states: "in such an instance, one becomes worse than the dead animal. At least the skin and bones of a dead animal can be used, but a man's skin is useless. This is the point when he becomes the most inferior creature. So, remember, improvement of your morals is extremely important as morals are the mother of good deeds."

If you have good moral virtues, you will be able to do good deeds. How these morals are ex-



pressed in day to day life, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states: "Some people get annoyed when they see a beggar... In the Holy Qur'ān it says 'do not rebuke the beggar.' ... Virtue is that one should not be angry towards the beggar. Satan's desire is to keep you from doing good deeds and to make you do evil."

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> further states: "Reflect on the fact that a virtuous deed generates another virtue and similarly an evil deed is the source of causing another evil. Just as something absorbs another, similarly God Almighty has established this system of assimilation in every action. The system of learning and mastering." Thus, one good deed leads to the other and one's capacity to do more good will perpetually increase.

About the treatment of parents, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> advised Sheikh 'Abdur Rahman sahib Qadiani ( whose parents were Sikh): "You should pray for them. ... One should demonstrate their good manners and pure example more than ever before to prove the truthfulness of Islām to them." The standard of true Islām is such that its followers are able to achieve high morals through it and as a result, they become distinguished individuals. Through you, perhaps God will inculcate the love of Islām in their hearts. Islām does not prohibit one from serving their parents. You should show utmost obedience to them in any way possible in worldly affairs that do not damage the faith. Serve them with your heart and soul."

**"Morals are what distinguish human beings from animals"** elaborating upon that, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states: "Firstly, animals cannot differentiate between a condition and quantity and they take whatever is in front of them. ... Secondly, animals do not understand the differ-

ence between what is lawful and unlawful." The abode of humans who usurp something and devour it unlawfully is hell. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states about the practice of morals by human beings: "If they do not fulfill the rights of Allāh and do not accept His magnificence, do not worship Him, do not pay attention to His commandments, and do not strive to obtain His pleasure, then these are not good morals. If they do not fulfill the rights of human beings and usurp their wealth unlawfully and try to cause them harm and demonstrate bad morals towards them then this is also against virtue." The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> further says: "Alas! There are very few people who focus on the aim and objective of a human being's life."

Then, arrogance is another vice which deprives one from performing virtuous deeds, rather, it is a source of God's displeasure. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> says: **"... one should safeguard against the subtlest types of arrogance. Sometimes wealth creates arrogance. ...At times, people become arrogant due to family lineage and tribe. ...Every so often knowledge becomes a source of arrogance."** In short, arrogance exists in many forms and they all deprive a person from attaining virtuous deeds and prevent people from benefiting others. One should protect oneself from all of these.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> then states: **"No person is bestowed with the power to do moral good, save the opportunity to do virtuous deeds. To abandon one's morals is vice and a sin."** The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states: "Man is granted the opportunity to carry out virtuous deeds." He further stated: "To abandon one's morals is vice and a sin. If you forget your moral values, in turn they will lead you to vice and sin. At the same time, the opportunity to perform virtuous deeds will also diminish."

**The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> says: "I advise my community that whosoever shows a change in their moral behaviour to their neighbour, i.e. of what they were before and how they are now, then it is as if he has displayed a miracle and through this they can be a positive influence on their neighbour."**

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> then says: "... if an individual enters this fold (i.e. joins the Jamā'at) and does not uphold the honour and respect of this community by committing an act that is contrary to its values, then in the eyes of God Almighty he is culpable because he not only ruins himself, rather he has a negative impact on others and becomes the reason for them to remain bereft of the good fortune of guidance."

If people see corrupt examples, this will distance them from the Jamā'at. Thus, you should seek the succour of God with all your might, and with all your strength and courage you should strive to remove your weaknesses. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> continues by saying: "Until man does not strive and seek help through prayers, he will not be able to remove the stain from his heart." Therefore, whether it is our Jamā'at or any other person, they can only bring about a change in their morals when they strive and pray, otherwise it is not possible.

May God Almighty enable us to follow the noble example of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and better our morals in every aspect and in all situations and circumstances. We have accepted the Imām of this age, therefore we should always be cognisant of the fact that no action of ours should be such that dishonours the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>. Moreover, we should constantly seek to raise the standards of our morals and for this we should prostrate and supplicate

before God Almighty and seek His help to achieve this.

After the Friday prayers, I shall lead a funeral prayer in absentia of Sheikh Abdul Majid Sāhib, son of Sheikh Abdul Hameed Sāhib from Defence Society, Karachi. He passed away on 15th February 2018 at the age of 88. His grandson writes: "Right from his childhood he had a special relationship with God Almighty due to being in the company of the elders in Qadian. Once, he did not perform well in his English matriculation exams and he was on his way from the direction of the mosque and Hazrat Mualana Sher Ali Sāhib was coming out from the mosque. He met Maulana Sāhib and he enquired about the exam and he replied that the exam did not go well. Maulana Sher Ali Sāhib raised his hands and immediately began to pray and then gave the good news that he will pass. The prayer was heard in such manner that he passed in every exam after that." When Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV<sup>rh</sup> launched MTA, he immediately donated ten million rupees. ... "When the incidents in Dar-ul-Zikr and Model Town occurred on 28th May 2010, he donated ten million rupees towards Syedna Bilal Fund." Similarly, he donated very large sums of money for the publication of the Holy Qur'ān. He lived his life with great simplicity. May God Almighty shower him with His blessings and elevate his status and grant patience and courage to his grandchildren and daughter and may He enable them to continue his good deeds. After the prayers, I shall lead his funeral prayer in absentia.





# Love of Allāh ~ the Only Way to Achieve the Purpose of Life

By: Maria Iqbal, Brampton Flowertown

“O ye who believe! fear Allāh as He should be feared; and let not death overtake you except when you are in a state of submission.” (3:103)

The purpose of our creation, as many of us probably know, is mentioned by Allāh Himself in verse 57 of Sūrah Al-Dhariyat,

“And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me”. (51:57)

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> further explains this purpose by looking at verse 73 of Sūrah Al-Ahzab, where Allāh says “Verily, We offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and were afraid of it. But man bore it. Indeed, he is *capable of being unjust to, and neglectful of, himself*.”

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> explains that the “Divine Trust” means “the love of God and complete obedience to Him even in the face of hardship”. According to the verse, this Trust was offered to all of Allāh’s creation, but they were too afraid to take it. “But,” he writes, “man undertook it for he possessed two qualities, that he could force himself in the cause of God Almighty and could advance so far in love of Him as to forget altogether everything else.”

[Taudih-e-Maram, Rūhānī Khazā’in, vol. 3, pp. 75-76]

In an Urdu couplet, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> says in DurreSamin:

*Islām cheez kya hai khuda ke liye fana / Tarke razaae khwaish paiy marzeeay khudaa*

Translation:

**What really is Islām? ‘Tis perishing for God. / Relinquishing own desires upon the Will of Allāh.**

We can therefore conclude that the love of Allāh is the only way to achieve the purpose of life, because in fact, it *is* the purpose of life which ultimately leads us to complete obedience to Him.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> writes in *Chashma-e-Masihi*, “Love is a wonderful thing. Its fire consumes the fire of sin and extinguishes the flame of disobedience.” We learn therefore that love of Allāh is true path to salvation.

Allāh Almighty, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, knows that we are very weak and prone to make mistakes. That is why we must pray to Allāh for His help in developing love for Him. He teaches us in Sūrah Al-Fatiha the prayer,

“Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help.” (1:5)

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> writes that this means



that we should use our own abilities to follow Allāh's path while seeking His help in the process. The good news is that Allāh has promised to help us whenever we turn to Him.

We learn from a Hadith that Allāh says: "When a servant of Mine advances towards Me a foot, I advance towards him a yard, and when he advances towards Me a yard, I advance toward him the length of his arms spread out. When he comes to Me walking, I go to him running." (*Bukhārī*)

A beautiful example of God's love and help for His servants is found in a poem called "Footprints in the Sand", where a man sees in a dream that he is walking along the beach with God. In the sky, the man sees scenes from his life flashing before him and two sets of footprints; one which is his own and the other which belongs to God.

After the last scene flashes before him, the man notices that in many scenes, especially during the most difficult and saddest times of his life, there was only one set of footprints.

Turning to God, he asks "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me."

To this, God answers, "my precious, precious child, I Love you and I would never leave you! During your times of trial and suffering when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

That is our Allāh, *al-Khaliq* the Creator, *al-Wudood* the Loving, *al-Wali* the Friend.

According to the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, Allāh says about His servant when He loves him that

"[...] I become his ears by which he hears, and his eyes with which he sees, and his hands with which he grasps, and his feet with which he walks. When he asks Me I bestow upon him and when he seeks My protection I protect him." (*Bukhārī*)

*Sabb ghair hain wohee hai, ik dil ka yaar jaani/ Dil mein meray yehee hai subhaana mainyaraani*

Translation: "All are strangers, He alone is the darling of my heart; / The only cry of my heart: 'Holy is He Who watches over me.'" (*Durr-e-Sameen*)

To conclude, let's remember the Promised Messiah's<sup>as</sup> words that love and nearness to Allāh is a **"wealth [...] worth procuring"** and **This is why those who are perfect in their love for God are constantly seeking Allāh's forgiveness, and the surest sign of a sinless person is that he occupies himself in Istighfar far more than other people...** (Chashma e Masihi, Fountain of Christianity, pp. 57-59)

May Allāh Almighty inspire in each of us true love for Him and may He come running to love us back. Amīn! Let us pray this prayer — Abu Durdaa<sup>ra</sup> narrates that the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said that Prophet David<sup>as</sup> used to pray in the following words:

"O Lord, grant me Thy love and the love of those who love Thee; and the love of the deeds which will enable me to attain Thy love. O my Lord, make Thy love dearer to me than my own life, my kith and kin, and even dearer than cold water (to a man dying of thirst in scorching heat)." (Tirmidhi)



# Mosques Around the World!

## Baitul Islām Mosque

By: Amatul Rafiq – Edmonton West

**And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me. (51:57)**

*Masjid*, or mosque is a spiritual sanctuary for worshippers to offer both individual and collective prayer. Some of our mosques are built such that they appear majestic to our eyes, while most are simple. The richness of a mosque comes not from its artistry, but humility of worshippers inside. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup> says in one of his Friday Sermons:

“It is a great blessing of Allāh on the Ahmadiyya Community that He is enabling us to build mosques in every region, every city of the world. Always remember that the dues of building mosques can only be honoured when one goes to mosque with the intention that people should gather there for worship of God and purely for worship of God. Only then will one be truly rewarded and only then will each believer be deemed as paying the dues of the purpose of his creation; will be deemed as fulfilling the objective for which Allāh the Exalted has created man. Allāh declares in the Holy Qur’ān: ‘And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship me.’ (Sūrah Al Dhariyat – 51:57). Therefore, whether one is a person of great position, is a person of great rank and grandeur, is a very wealthy person or is a very poor person, Allāh the Exalted has stated the objective of the

creation of both kinds of people as this alone that they worship Him.

These mosques signify that everyone, rich and poor, gathers in one place and discarding all worldly positions and ranks stands together most humbly in the Presence of Allāh to worship Him. So that they may turn to God, bow before Him as one entity and seek His blessings. When worship of God is observed as one entity, so that the grace of His blessings is increased more than before, then Allāh the Exalted also rewards such worship twenty-seven times more. If one harbours discriminatory feelings of wanting to stand next to such and such and not wishing to stand next to such and such or that such and such has newly taken their bai’at and one presumes their status to be less than one, then, despite the fact that one is in a mosque for the worship of God, one is not worthy of this reward.”<sup>1</sup>

Today I will introduce the **Baitul Islām Mosque** situated in Toronto, Canada.

On September 20<sup>th</sup> 1986, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV<sup>rh</sup> laid the foundation stone of Baitul Islām Mosque in Toronto. In his address at the foundation laying ceremony of Baitul Islām Mosque, Huzoor said:

“We are extremely grateful to God Almighty

that He enabled us to undertake this sacred project of building a House of God in this beautiful country. There is a special reason and it carries historic importance in construction of this mosque, of which the audience is unaware. People of this place are also unaware of why we have come here and what are our intentions in building this beautiful mosque. During these days, places of worship have become the hub of political activity and the center of subversive movements... I would like to make it abundantly clear that wherever we shall build mosques and places of worship, they will be for the sacred cause explained by the Holy Qur'ān. They will not be built to spread enmity, hatred or terrorism. They will strive with every nerve to establish love and peace in their surroundings. This is only due to the fact that we are a peace-loving community.” (Ahmadiyya Gazette Canada, Nov-Dec 2003, pg. 49)

Baitul Islām mosque was inaugurated on October 17, 1992. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV's<sup>ra</sup> Friday Sermon on October 16, 1992 became the first live worldwide telecast on MTA.<sup>2</sup>

This mosque lies in the heart of Peace Village, which is a monumental housing project of 260 homes built near Baitul Islām Mosque in Maple, Ontario. All nine streets within the neighbourhood are named after the Khulafā's names and other prominent Ahmadī scholars. The main street is called Ahmadiyya Avenue. The mosque is visible from all the streets, illuminating the whole area with spirituality and peace!

Our beloved Imām Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup> has said:

“Remember the victory of Islām and Ahmadiyyat is tied with keeping these mosques occupied with supplicants. Thus, O Ahmadis, get up and run towards the mosques and keep them occupied with prayers, so we may see the day of triumph of Islām according to the promises of Allāh.”<sup>3</sup>

May Allāh, with His extreme mercy, give us the ability to keep mosques occupied with prayers! Amīn.

#### Sources:

1. Friday Sermon, April 25, 2008
2. *Ahmadiyya Muslim Mosques around the world*, page 273
3. *Ahmadiyya Muslim Mosques around the world*, Address of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup>, xii



**“O ye people, praise Allāh. Whoever builds a mosque for Allāh, Allāh, the Exalted, shall build a house for such a one in Paradise.” (The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>)**



# The Status of a Woman in Islām

By: Dania Rashid, Vancouver

“Embarrassment”, “shame” and “humiliation” these are the words that described women.

Imagine that you are living in a world where you are considered an embarrassment and a piece of property. Your status is lower than that of slaves and at times, even animals. You, as a woman, are such a shameful commodity that the people among you would bury their infant girls alive in fear of humiliation. However, this world isn't an ordinary place; this is Pre-Islāmic Arabia.

This is a world where as a woman or young girl your day to day life is filled with uncertainty, abuse, harassment and fear. A world where instead of being “Daddy's little girl,” a baby girl was the source of extreme shame and embarrassment for her father. A world where mothers frantically sought to hide their female offspring because if their husbands found out what they had given birth to, they would snatch the innocent infant from their arms and bury them alive. This is a world where instead of being in a loving and loyal relationship with their spouse, a woman could be traded as a commodity if her husband lost a bet. This, my dear sisters, is just a very brief snapshot of the situation of women in Arabia before the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad<sup>sa</sup>.

However, the women of Arabia and indeed of the entire world were destined to be delivered from this barbaric cruelty. Not beyond their homes lived a noble and gentle being who was to come to their rescue. This was none other than the

mercy for mankind, the prophet of God, the Holy Prophet Muhammad<sup>sa</sup>.

This is the society into which the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> was born. However, his pure character was not tarnished by this cruelty. In fact, his heart bled tears of grief at the plight of the women of his time, which is why when he was commissioned as a noble Prophet of God, he abolished all of these inhumane practices and gave women a status they had never seen before. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> shattered the hate towards women in a thousand pieces and instead, brought in the fruitful jewel of equality.

For daughters, he gave their fathers the glad tidings that whoever had daughters and brought them up kindly and educated them would enter paradise and be as close to him as two fingers of one hand (Muslim). For mothers, he gave them the highest status in society by proclaiming that “Paradise lies at the feet of the mother” (Muslim). As for wives, the Prophet Muhammad<sup>sa</sup> ensured that they would be treated with kindness and love as he admonished his followers, “The best among you is the one who is best in the treatment of his wife” (Tirmidhi). Indeed, he treated all of his wives with extreme kindness and love. His first wife, Hazrat Khadija<sup>ra</sup>, although much older than him in age, always occupied a place of great honour in his heart. Because of all of her sacrifices, he kept her memory alive even many years after her death. Islām taught that marriage is the harmonious union of two souls, with the



object of marriage to seek comfort from each other.”

Allāh, the Almighty described the significance of women in the Holy Qur’ān by saying:

“...They are a garment for you and you are a garment for them...” (2:188)

In chapter 81, verse 8 of the Holy Qur’ān, Allāh proclaims:

**And when the girl-child buried alive is questioned about** (81:9)

**‘For what crime was she killed?’** (81:10)

The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> abolished the terrible crime of female infanticide. It is related that once, a man came to the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and related an incident from the days of pre-Islāmic Arabia when baby girls were viewed as not blessings, but a curse. The man told the Prophet<sup>sa</sup> that he had a young daughter, who was a very loving and lovely creature. Whenever he called her, she would happily come skipping to his side. One day, his ignorance overtook him and he called her to go outside with him. She came happily and walked along his side until they came upon a well. Suddenly, without warning, he lifted her up and threw her down the well. She cried out in

terror and began calling out to him over and over again to save her, but he instead piled dirt down the well, until her innocent cries were smothered in death. Upon embracing Islām, he lamented his grave sin and lived with immense guilt. When the Holy Prophet (saw) heard this story, his eyes welled up and tears poured down his face until his face and beard were drenched. Such was the heart of gold and mercy that was our beloved Prophet<sup>sa</sup>. (Bukhārī, Muslim)

With his daughter Fatima<sup>ra</sup>, he had a special bond whereby whenever she would come into his presence, he would stand, kiss her hand, and offer her his seat. (Bukhārī Muslim)

The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> was truly the best exemplar in every aspect of life and women especially owe a debt of immense gratitude to him for his grace upon us. Let us send thousands of peace and blessings on his holy personage. May Allāh elevate his lofty station infinitely. Amīn.

#### Reference:

Pathway to Paradise, A Guide book to Islām, available online at: [https://www.alislam.org/library/book/pathway-to-paradise/#online\\_text](https://www.alislam.org/library/book/pathway-to-paradise/#online_text)

*(Continued from page 4 - From the Writings of Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>)*

gave security to those who had expelled him from Mecca and enriched their needy ones. Having obtained authority over his principal enemies, he forgave them. Many people, observing his high qualities, testified that unless a person came from God and was truly righteous, he could not possess such qualities. That is why the old rancour of his enemies was immediately removed. The Holy Qur’ān testifies to his exemplary morals in **this verse**:

**Say, ‘My Prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. (6:163)**

This means that: Tell them that my worship and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for God alone, that my whole life is devoted to manifesting the glory of God and providing comfort for His creatures so that with my death they might regain spiritual life. [Islāmi Usul ki Philosophy, Rūhānī Khazc’in, Vol. 10, pp. 447-448]



# To Be a Successful Dā'ī Ilallāh, Work with "Hikmat"

By: Atia Shaikh , Edmonton West

A Dā'ī Ilallāh is someone who invites people towards Allāh. To be successful at inviting people towards Allāh, we must use wisdom and foresight. This is known as *Hikmat*.

Listed below are ways that a Dā'ī Ilallāh can put that wisdom into practice.

## Make Appropriate Selection

Approach those people who show an interest and willingness to listen, and learn. By placing our efforts on good natured people, one can avoid wasting time.

## Approach According to Circumstances

Discuss topics that are of interest to the person. This means that the first topic may not be regarding Islām. The initial stage may involve acts of kindness. Such as offering them a ride home, inviting them over to the house or a future event at the mosque.

## Act in Accordance with their Nature

Understand the personality of the person being addressed and deal with them accordingly. Be mindful of which topics to discuss or avoid.

## Act within your Capabilities

Hikmat demands that we take our own temperament and tendencies into consideration.

## Changing Times

Hikmat demands that one must converse

taking the mood of the time into consideration.

## Manner of Discussion

Always approach your contact with kind words and a smile. Using Hikmat means to approach people with respect and the understanding that they are raised with a set of beliefs that are different than yours. Respect that, and do not argue with them. Always stay calm and respecting while addressing them with strong logical proofs.

## Practice Patience

Holy Qur'ān advises us not to rush. In matters of Tablīgh, Allāh advises that showing patience draws more success. Overlook the faults of others, and remain tolerant for the sake of Allāh. This is the best way.

## Remain in Constant Contact

It is very important to keep in contact with those you have been preaching to, otherwise your hard work may go to waste. Exchange phone numbers, and emails with them.

It is only with Allāh's help that we can achieve success in our efforts. As such, sincere prayers are very important in being successful. It is important as a Dā'ī Ilallāh to offer Tahajjud prayers, obligatory prayers and recite the Qur'ān with translation.

# How We Can Participate In Silent Tablīgh

By: Seema Chowdhury, Maple

Silent Tablīgh means to call others to Allāh simply by adopting and enacting high morals and piety.

We are all Dai'ilAllah, callers to Allāh, and it is our prime duty to convey the beautiful message of true Islām. If we try, we can all do Silent Tablīgh daily by doing the following:

- 1) Adopt the virtues of gratitude, grace, humility, sincerity, and honesty.
- 2) Inspire and motivate others.
- 3) Follow divine commandments with enthusiasm and try to overcome our shortcomings and imperfections.
- 4) Act righteously and submit to the will of God, even in the most difficult and challenging situations.
- 5) Be caring to our friends, neighbours and contacts.

6) Instill the spirit of sacrifice and forgiveness.

7) Pray for God Almighty's guidance and help at every step of the way.

8) Stay away from unjust wrongful doings.

9) Shun pride, arrogance and ego and become the loyal servants of the All-Listening and All-Knowing God.

10) Be emotionally intelligent and bring positive changes in ourselves.

11) Avoid wasting any opportunity to propagate the message of true Islām.

13) Live modestly, and share our wealth with less fortunate people.

14) Pray to Allāh to show us His miracles, blessings and increase our religious knowledge.

15) Say our prayers regularly and sincerely.

## Announcements | Requests for Prayers

- By the grace of Allāh, Sadiqa Hifsa Sāhiba and Tariq Zubair Ahmed Sāhib of Brampton Caledon Jamā'at have been blessed with a son on February 6, 2018. Hazarat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup> has graciously named the child Haziq Ahmed. The child is also part of the blessed scheme of Waqfē Nau. The child is the paternal grandson of Ghulam Ahmed Raan Sāhib and Amina Bibi Sāhiba of Pakistan and maternal grandson of Taqi Ahmed Sāhib and Amtul Salam Nusrat Sāhiba of Brampton Caledon Jamā'at. Members are requested to pray for the long, healthy life of the child and that he becomes a true servant of Khialfat. May Allāh bless him with a long and healthy life, and make him the delight of his parents' eyes. Amīn!
- From Malton Jamā'at, Atia Khan Sāhiba and Anjum Luqman are requesting for prayers. Members are requested to remember them and their children in their prayers.



# Ṣalāt ~ An Obligatory Worship

By: Maheen Imran, Brampton Heartlake North

Islām has five pillars or basic duties which a Muslim must perform - these are called the Five Fundamentals of Islām or the Five Pillars of Islām. Of all religious obligations, the greatest emphasis has been laid on the institution of Ṣalāt. It is enjoined upon every Muslim to pray five times a day. Besides the five obligatory prayers, there are other types of prayers which are optional.<sup>1</sup>

The performing of the Ṣalāt was the first duty enjoined upon the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and the keeping up of prayer is the most frequently repeated injunction in the Holy Qur'ān. Performing mere recitation of God's praise by the tongue, therefore, is not sufficient. In Islām, no one day is set aside exclusively for Ṣalāt such as the Sabbath (Saturday) for the Jews and Sunday for the Christians. For Muslims, Ṣalāt is made part of everyday life. It's offered at different times of the day; before sunrise; another just after mid-day; a third in the afternoon; a fourth at sunset; and a fifth later in the evening. Each Ṣalāt includes some obligatory and some non obligatory prayers. *Fardh* prayer is obligatory upon all Muslims whereas *Sunnah* prayer is not obligatory. However, it was offered by the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and, therefore, should be performed. *Nafl* prayer is completely voluntary but offered by many Muslims seeking extra blessings.<sup>2</sup>

For a Muslim the spiritual life is just as important as the worldly life. As air and food are essential for our physical life, likewise, Ṣalāt is needed for spiritual growth. Offering of Ṣalāt purifies us by getting rid of sins as it takes us towards God and godly things. Ṣalāt brings

man closer to his Creator. The worshipper tries to imitate God in His most excellent attributes and is constantly transformed from a lowly and worldly person to a highly noble and sublime servant of God. The Holy Qur'ān mentions this distinctive quality of Ṣalāt by saying:

**Recite that which has been revealed to you of the Book and observe Prayer. Surely Prayer restrains one from indecency and manifest evil. Verily, the remembrance of Allāh possesses the highest beneficence. And Allāh knows what you do. (29:46).**

According to the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> Ṣalāt is the pinnacle of the spiritual life of the believer. It is the highest form of Divine worship. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, is further reported to have observed:

Prayer brings the believer into communion with his Lord.<sup>3</sup>

As Ahmadī Muslims who have joined the Jamā'at of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> we pledge to abide by the 10 conditions of Bai'at. After being instructed to refrain from shirk (associating partners with Allāh) and falsehood we are instructed to be regular in our five daily prayers. The third condition of Bai'at reads:

That he/she shall regularly offer the five daily Prayers in accordance with the commandments of God and the Holy Prophet Muhammad<sup>sa</sup> and shall try his/her best to be regular in offering the tahajjud and invoking Durud on the Holy Prophet Muhammad<sup>sa</sup>.



Drawing the Jamā'at's attention to the attendance of the obligatory prayers, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup> said in his Friday Sermon delivered on June 22, 2012 that the blessings of Khilāfat have only been promised to those who observe their prayers. The Holy Qur'ān is full of exhortations in this regard, but some members of the Jamā'at do not pay proper attention to the observance of prayers. Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> said that the USA Jamā'at is doing a great work in building new mosques, but we will only benefit from them if they are full of worshippers who come to pray five times a day. Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> said: Ahmadīs in the west should not fall prey to any kind of inferiority complex and should offer their prayers punctually. If we wish to transform the world, we first have to bring about a transformation in our own selves, and this is not possible without worship. Huzoor said: The Holy Qur'ān enjoins us to safeguard our prayers and especially Ṣalāt-ul-Wusta—The Prayer which comes in between our worldly pursuits. Being lax in the observance of prayers excludes one from the list of God's obedient servants. When we pray, we should do so with all our heart and not just as a ritual. Prayers that are offered with zeal and fervor bring peace and bliss to the suppliant. The Holy Qur'ān says that prayer stops us from frivolous and unwanted activities and it warns those who are unmindful of their prayers. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> came to establish a

Jamā'at that would enjoy a firm relationship with God and safeguard their prayers. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> says that Heaven will count you among my followers only if you sincerely follow the path of Taqwa. So offer your five daily prayers with such fervour as if you see God right before you. Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> said that the state of pleasure and bliss in prayer can only be experienced with God's blessings. Therefore, we should first of all pray to God for His nearness.<sup>4</sup>

May Allāh grant us all the pleasure of offering such prayers. Āmīn. As such we should continuously strive to perfect our Ṣalāt and offer it in the best way possible. May Allāh enable us to do so, Amīn.

#### Sources:

1. Importance of Prayers in Ṣalāt – The Muslim Prayer Book, page 2 & 3, <https://www.alislam.org/library/book/salat/>
2. Islāmīc Arts of Worship in A Book of Religious Knowledge by Waheed Ahmed, <https://www.alislam.org/library/book/book-religious-knowledge/islam-religion-obedience/islamic-acts-worship/>
3. Importance of Prayers in Ṣalāt – The Muslim Prayer Book, page 4, <https://www.alislam.org/library/book/salat/>
4. English Summary of Friday Sermon June 28, 2012 by Wakīl A'lā, Tahrīk Jadīd Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan

## RIDDLES

By: Aysha Sohail, Airdrie

1. He has married many women, but has never been married. Who is he?
2. The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?
3. A man rode out of town on Sunday, he stayed a whole night at a hotel and rode back to town the next day on Sunday. How is this possible?
4. Suppose you had to pick 1 of 3 doors to go through. One has ninja assassins, one has a lion that hasn't eaten in 3 months, and one has a fire in it. Which door should you choose in order to live?

1. A priest
2. Footsteps
3. His horse's name was Sunday
4. The one with the lion. It hasn't eaten in 3 months, therefore it's dead!!!

Answers



# The Negative Impacts of Social Media

By: Kainat Hameed

Social media is an influential communication platform for users globally. While there are many benefits, it also has a damaging effect on human relationships and individual self-esteem.

The continuous use of social media results in lowering users' self-esteem due to the constant need for validation. Users look at the bodies of models and celebrities, which causes them to start feeling bad about themselves. They compare their imperfections to others' perfections. It makes users self-conscious, dissatisfied, and disappointed at themselves. It destroys a person's self-esteem and causes them to lose their self-confidence. Low self-esteem makes people second guess their decisions, lose faith in themselves, become anxious and stressed. This can also lead to depression. Another issue concerning social media is that it makes users hungry for validation. Their low self-esteem now needs peoples' opinion to prove that they are worthy of praise. Users seek this validation by posting on various apps.

They seek validation from others because they do not know their own worth due to low confidence. A low self-confidence can lead users to jump into online relationships quickly without considering the unfavourable outcomes. For example, when a girl with low self-worth finds someone online, who praises and validates her, she may get involved with this person because he becomes her pillar of confidence. The individual

may pose to be someone he is not, and she might wind up in the hands of a sexual predator, leading to sexual harassment.

An additional method in which social media is affecting users negatively is by harming real life relationships. It replaces face-to-face meetings with online interactions, causing family problems. With the ever-growing friend list, many people do not feel the need to go out for face-to-face interactions. That may be because it feels tedious to go through the process of getting ready, looking presentable, and going out talk to someone. Using social media to connect feels like a convenient option.

People also spend so much time online that they forget they have a family that requires their attention. This problem is very common in teenagers and adolescents. Parents are worried that not only does social media make their children distant, but it allows access to inappropriate content. All social media sites contain inappropriate ads that parents would rather keep their children away from. Children on the other hand, who are oblivious to these impacts feel that their parents are unnecessarily overprotective and strict.

This can cause a clash in the parent and child relationship. Moreover, in many cases social media users become targets of cyberbullying.

*(Continued on page 27)*



# Concept of Sin

By: Sahar Malik, Calgary NW

*The following questions and answers have been compiled from a section of the book titled “Way of the Seekers” (pages 37—45) by Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh, Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad<sup>ra</sup>.*

## What is Sin?

Sin is an activity which renders the human soul sick and incapable of viewing the face of God.

## What are good deeds?

Good deeds are deeds which bring a person enough strength to join the onward march in the hereafter and which makes the soul capable of viewing the face of the Lord.

## What is the Islāmic treatment of sin?

Islāmic treatment of sin is unique. It is part of its perfect teaching. Islam does not start treating sin after It has been committed. It turns more to prevention than cure. It raises the question: what can be done to prevent sin? Islam does not merely tell us what to do after a person has become sin infected, it also tells us what is to be done when sin has not yet appeared and what may be done to prevent it appearing.

## Is Sin is a sudden phenomenon?

Sin is not a sudden phenomenon. The foundations of sin are laid long before a person becomes an adult. A child is a great learner. He begins to learn as soon as he is born. His first acquisitions seem harmless enough. Sometimes he shows streaks which could become sins later on. But the parents ignore them saying he is but a child. They forget that it is in childhood that the seed is sown and impressions become deep. A person who begins to steal as an adult could have been saved from this nefarious practice if he had been checked and taught self-control when he was a child.

# Regularity in Salāt

By: Nuzhat Islam, Brampton Heartlake North

There are many reasons for why one should be regular in offering Salāt. First and foremost, **Salāt is the most direct and best way to communicate with Allāh.** It is the vehicle for daily dialogue with the One who created us. It gives us an opportunity to express our gratitude for the things He provides for us while confessing our sins and shortcomings, and asking for HIS help in overcoming them. Salāt is the key to success. Allāh says in the Holy Qur’ān: “Surely, success does come to the believers, Who are humble in their Prayers,” (23: 2-3)

**Salāt shields us against evil things.** Allāh says in the Holy Qur’ān: “...Surely, Prayer restrains *one* from indecency and manifest evil, and remembrance of Allah indeed is the greatest *virtue*...” [29:46]

Humans are weak beings and without seeking help from Allāh, it is impossible to refrain from evil. Therefore, Salāt acts as a shield and protects us from following Satan and descending into darkness. **Salāt washes away sins and keeps us clean; spiritually and physically.** The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> is reported to have asked, “If a person had a stream outside his door and he bathed in it five times a day, would any dirt be left on him?” The people replied, “No dirt would remain on him whatsoever.” The Prophet<sup>sa</sup> then said, “That is like the five daily prayers: Allāh wipes away the sins by them.” (Muslim.)

This Hadīth illustrates that **Salāt is a form of purification for human beings.** Repeated standing in front of Allah throughout the day cleanses the soul while ablution performed before Salāt cleanses us physically. This is why it is imperative for a Muslim to offer Salāt regularly.



# Tips to Avoid Backbiting and Gossiping

By: Natasha Rahman

God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:

**O ye who believe! avoid most of suspicions; for suspicion in some**

**cases is a sin. And spy not, nor back-bite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead? Certainly you would loathe it. And fear Allāh, surely, Allāh is Oft-Returning with compassion and is Merciful. [49:13]**

In the Friday Sermon of December 26, 2003, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup> says that some of the vices may apparently look insignificantly small, but they have long-lasting and widespread effects on the entire society. Backbiting is one such vice, among others. A hadith describes backbiting to be equivalent to eating the flesh of a fellow Muslim brother. Even the most cruel tyrant would be reluctant in engaging himself in such a filthy act. Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> related an account where a companion of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, along with his friends, walked by the body of a dead mule, whose stomach had swollen after its demise. The companion said that it is better to eat the flesh of this mule than backbite against a Muslim brother.

Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> said that some people don't know the definition of backbiting and they pass nasty remarks about others without realizing that they are backbiting. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> explains that anything which may be said in the presence of a person and would be unpleasant to him be-

comes part of backbiting when said in the absence of that person. Generally, backbiting about the following in a person's absence would be unpleasant to him if he found out: his spirituality, his worldly matters, his physical appearance, financial status, his spouse, his servants, his personality and his relationships with others.

Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> continued by saying that a hadith reminds us that the beloved of Allāh are those who possess His attributes and one is reminded of Allāh when one sees such a man. We should strive to become such a person who is the beloved of Allāh.

Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> further states in his sermon that the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> was so cautious that he would warn against the slightest indications of a sinful activity. At one occasion, all Hazrat Ayesha<sup>ra</sup> said to the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> about someone was that she is short. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said that even this is backbiting. At another occasion, the Holy Prophet said that on the day of Qiyamah, a man's deeds will be read out to him. He will remind Allāh of the good deeds he had done, but Allāh will say that those good deeds have been taken away from your account because you participated in backbiting. Such is the gravity of this sin that it takes your good deeds away from you. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said listening to gossip and indulging in gossip are both forbidden.

(Friday Sermon, December 26, 2003)

Below I will present a few tips of breaking bad habits such as backbiting from the Friday

### **Avoid focusing on short-term gains**

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup> reminds us that when backbiting and gossiping, people often focus on short-term gains. For a short-term gain of worldly benefit, people often forget the matters of faith and that engaging in sinful practices interfere with their belief in the Unity of God. Worldly needs come in way of their practices and immediate gain makes them forget long-term benefit. Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> stated that a great example is given by Hazrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd<sup>ra</sup> in the following analogy:

A man's boss is unkind and unjust to him, but the man cannot do anything about it. By chance he meets his boss' superior and the superior officer says something negative about his boss. The man is delighted to find an opportunity to tell the superior officer his boss' shortcomings – ultimately, putting him in trouble with his boss. The man does not stop and think before backbiting to take his revenge and only keeps the short-term advantage in view. (Friday Sermon, December 20, 2013, English translation)

### **Keep love of Allāh in mind**

Huzoor said that often human relations and customs gain an upper hand, and the love of Allāh or fear of Allāh is weakened. Sometimes this is due to greed, friendship, resentment, or malice. While temporarily pleasing friends, or inflicting harm on enemies, a man forgets Allāh. Therefore, it is important to always keep the fear and love of Allāh in mind. (Friday Sermon, December 20, 2013, English translation)

In other words, one should have *Taqwa* or fear of Allāh. A righteous person remembers Allāh always and thinks twice before gossiping or backbiting.

### **Commit to reformation as a family**

In the same Friday Sermon of December 20, 2013 Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> says, God Almighty states in the Holy Qur'ān:

**O ye who believe! save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones, over which are appointed angels, stern *and* severe, who disobey not Allāh in what He commands them and do as they are commanded.** [66:7]

Hence, there is an added importance to not only reform oneself, but also influence other family members to reform themselves. Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> mentioned that unless the whole family commits to improvement, one of them is bound to influence the others back into immoral practices like backbiting. Everyone in the family should make an effort, but the head of the family has an important role to play. (Friday Sermon, December 20, 2013)

These are but a few tips that one can utilize to break from bad habits. I will conclude this essay with these words of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup>: in his Friday Sermon of December 20, 2003 Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> advised us that no one is perfect, therefore we must look at our own condition critically before we raise our finger towards another person. It takes a courageous man to look at his own faults. Once he starts to observe himself, he will refrain from talking about others. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> has reminded women that they should avoid dishonesty, criticism of others, exaggeration and false accusations. The way to self-reformation is different for every person. Each Ahmadī needs to self-reflect, make sacrifice and make a firm pledge towards reforming their practices. May Allāh enable everyone towards self-reformation. Amīn!



# An Ahmadī's New Year Resolutions

By: Shumaila tul Hai, Emery Village

**2018**. A new year. At the start of every year, many individuals make a check-list of goals to accomplish. What should an Ahmadī resolve to achieve in the new year? We can understand this better by reflecting on the past year.

Look back at your last year, and think of the things that you missed, or could have done to fulfill the rights of Allāh. Did you offer all five daily prayers? Did you read two *rukus* of the Holy Qur'ān daily as prescribed by our beloved Imām, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup>? Did you offer nawafil daily? If you believe that you discharged all your duties owed to Allāh (Huqooqul Allāh) then don't stop there — but try to improve. As Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> mentioned in his Friday Sermon of April 13, 2018: **The same way as stagnant water becomes stale after a time, if a believer does not strive to move further, he is likely to falter. A true believer will always keep progressing. If you stand still at one spot, you won't stand for long and will fall down.**

Another responsibility is to fulfill the rights of our fellow beings. When it comes to fulfilling the rights of people, Allāh has given it more precedence than fulfilling His Rights. So, ask yourself, were you kind to those around you? How was your relationship with your neighbours? Did you shout at someone out of anger? Did you fulfill any promises you made? Did you help others in need? Did you act arrogant or talk behind someone's back? Did you hurt people's feelings? Did you take care of your parents and obey

them? Were you kind to your relatives? In answering these questions, you can gain a better understanding of your current moral and spiritual state, and think of ways to improve.

I will now talk about our responsibility of guiding others to the path of righteousness. Start by reflecting on your past year and ask yourself if you did Tabligh often. If you weren't able to, then let this new year be an opportunity to reform yourself in a way that you guide others, by being a role model for them, and by being active in Tabligh. Rather than being just a *muttaqi* (the one who attains a level of nearness to Allāh that he comes under Allāh's protection), aim to become a *mohsin* (the one who other than being under the Protection of Allāh, brings other people under His protection as well).

Lastly, let us think about our obedience to Khilafat and our beloved Imām. Ask yourself if you were obedient to our Khalīfa in the past year? When he told us to wear knee-length coats, and scarves that covered all our hair and our chin, did you immediately respond by doing it? Did you listen to all his Friday Sermons? Did you follow whatever instructions and guidance he gave us in those sermons? Did you prioritize religion over worldly matters? Did you listen to the office bearers? Keeping all these things in mind, we should look to the new year with a clear understanding of our direction. We should become so spiritually charged like a torch of righteousness, that those around us wish to be like us. May we fulfill all our resolutions, and may this year be full of blessings for all. Amīn.



# Reports of Local Events

## **Women in Islām Event at University of Calgary**

By Sophia Rajpoot, Calgary West

On November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Calgary West Lajna arranged a Tablīgh stall at the University of Calgary. Since the topic of Muslim women's rights has become very prominent in Canada, the theme for this event was set to "The status of Women In Islām." By the Grace of God, the event served as a great learning opportunity for students of various religious backgrounds. One trifold at the event displayed general information regarding the rights of women in Islām and a second trifold was titled "Muslim Women Are..." and people were encouraged to complete the sentence – adding various positive words to the trifold. Free books and pamphlets were also handed out. Both students and professors stopped by the booth to discuss the current image of Islām in the media and many people showed gratitude in learning additional information on Islām. Many people asked for a copy of the Holy Qur'ān and were impressed to see that the Ahmadiyya community has printed the Holy Qur'ān in many languages. Overall, the event was a success by the Grace of God.

## **Regional Health Symposium, Vancouver Region**

By the Grace of Allāh the Almighty, the Annual Regional Health Symposium was successfully held on January 20<sup>th</sup> 2018 at Bait-ur-Rahman

mosque. The program started off with a beautiful recitation of the Holy Qur'ān by Sarah Lakhan Sāhiba, followed by the English translation of the respective verses. The opening remarks were then given by Mrs. Madeeha Awan Sāhiba. This symposium consisted of many interesting and informative presentations on health. Dr. Sadia Ahmad Sāhiba enlightened is all about oral hygiene and Dr. Samina Munir Sāhiba shed light on the topic of mental health and its many causes as well as ways to treat it. Following these two presentations, the dynamics of thoughts and stress was introduced by Dr. Shahida Sāhiba. All these presentations were very well composed as they were informative for all ages. Additionally, these presentations gave Lajna the opportunity to acquire knowledge and be more aware of certain topics that they may have had limited awareness about prior to this event.

The symposium was concluded by a question and answer session followed by some health tips for every Lajna. With the blessings of Allāh, the most Gracious and ever Merciful, the total attendance for this symposium was 120. May Allāh the Almighty continue to shower His blessings on us and make our future events even more successful, Amīn.

## **Annual Women's Interfaith Symposium, Hamilton**

By: Sumaira Manzoor, Hamilton North

On Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 in Saltfleet Secondary School, the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Women's Inter-



faith Symposium was held. A Sikh Gurdwara was visited to give invitations and raise awareness about this blessed event. A book stall was also set up for this symposium. Several guests placed orders for books. The following books were taken by guests, including “Life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad<sup>sa</sup>”, “Absolute Justice”, “Our God”, “The Philosophy of Teachings of Islām”, “The World Crisis”, “The Holy Qur’ān in English”, and “Revelation Rationality Knowledge and Truth”, along with pictures of the bookstall.

This was a very successful event! May Allāh enable us to continue to spread the message of Islām! Insha’Allāh!

### **Jalsa Musleh Mau’ūd, Surrey, B.C.**

By the grace of Allāh the Almighty, the Nāsirāt in Surrey West Majlis in British Columbia celebrated and attended an enlightening Jalsa Musleh Mau’ūd<sup>ra</sup> on Friday, February 2nd, 2018.

There was an excellent attendance of 20 Nāsirāt and their mothers.

Nāsirāt learned the true significance and history behind this special day and about the grand prophecy of Musleh Mau’ūd. A special presentation was presented on the establishment of the auxiliary organization called Nāsirātul Ahmadiyya.

The program concluded after a quiz competition and an Urdu speech. Everyone was able to take home some new knowledge and may Allāh enable all the Nāsirāt to implement it in their lives! Amīn.

### **A Visit To A Synagogue**

By: Written by Khaula Mangla

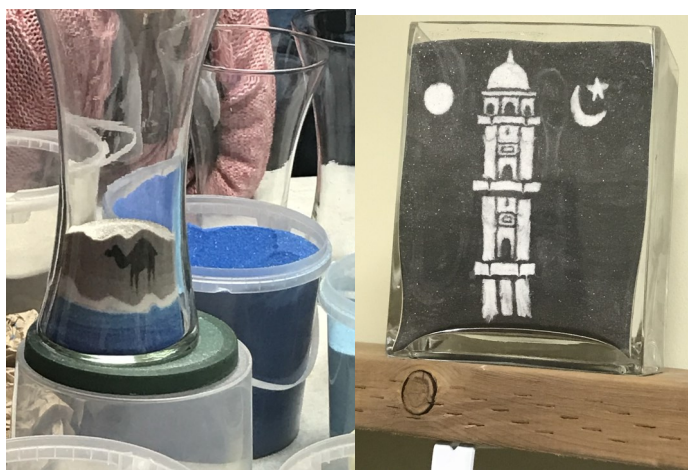
A group of Lajna from our Jamā’at went to visit a synagogue in Thornhill, Ontario. It was a good educational opportunity for us. We attended their service and prayers and saw the lighting of

their candles. At the end of their session, they invited us to speak. The president of our Halqa spoke—she delivered an excellent short speech in which she introduced the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> and the Jamā’at. She ended her speech with a message of peace. We gave them gifts and cards with flyers which contained information about Ahmadiyyat. They were open to attending our event in future as well. Our visit ended with having food with them as they had arranged a potluck. By the Grace of Allāh, it was a good experience.

### **Sand Art Trip**

By Malaika Choudhry, Milton West

On November 24th, 2017 a field trip was arranged for us to attend a workshop of Sand Art. It was fun going together as a group and the Nāsirāt were welcomed by the staff and wasted no time in touring the area and learning the several techniques used to create Sand Art at Geoponics. The Nāsirāt learnt how to make mountains, waves, whales, camels, and birds. The best part was when they got to make their own sand art with different coloured sand. It was hard at first but then it got easier. At the end, everyone got beautiful gifts from the staff. Altogether, this was a really great experience and day.





## Don't Let Hope To Ever Die

By: Seema Chowdhury, Maple

Be grateful to your dear Lord  
Who always helps in even and odd  
And guides your way out of fear  
By giving His love and peace share

Bow in front of your Gracious God  
Ask for forgiveness and mercy accord  
Hold sincerely to His care's rope  
And never quit or let down hope

Remember God puts you in a trial  
Where He keeps you only for a while  
Then He brings you out with a smile  
To help you and bless you in His style

Just don't give up or ever sigh  
Do not let hope to ever die  
Let faith and believe in your heart  
See Lord's blessings filling your cart

Kneel before Him and always pray  
As God is your true friend I'll say  
Be grateful and ask for peace share  
Surely He'll keep you under His care.

## HOW TO GET RID OF EXAM ANXIETY

By: Fareeha Basharat

- Develop good study habits and strategies.
- Manage your time properly. Avoid distractions and laziness.
- Organize material to be studied and learned.
- Get rid of outside pressures, such as grades and peer pressure.
- Review your past performance on tests to improve and learn from experience.
- Approach exam with confidence.
- Get a good night sleep.
- Don't go to exam with an empty stomach.
- Take slow deep breaths if you are tense.
- Lastly, always pray to God for your success.

*(Continued from page 20 - The Negative Impact of Social Media)*

Cyberbullying is the use of the internet to bully someone through threats and hate. Almost everyone will face psychological, physical, and emotional stress due to this. Cyberbullying can cause change in the victims' personality such as the development of temper issues and/or depression. It also affects real life relationships because individuals facing cyber bullying tend to withdraw themselves

from their family members and friends. They stop talking and trusting their loved ones which can make the situation worse. All of this proves how social media can be harmful and we should all use more caution when engaged in this online platform.

May Allāh safeguard us all from the harmful affects of social media and enable us to use it as per the instructions of our beloved imām, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V<sup>aa</sup>. Āmīn.

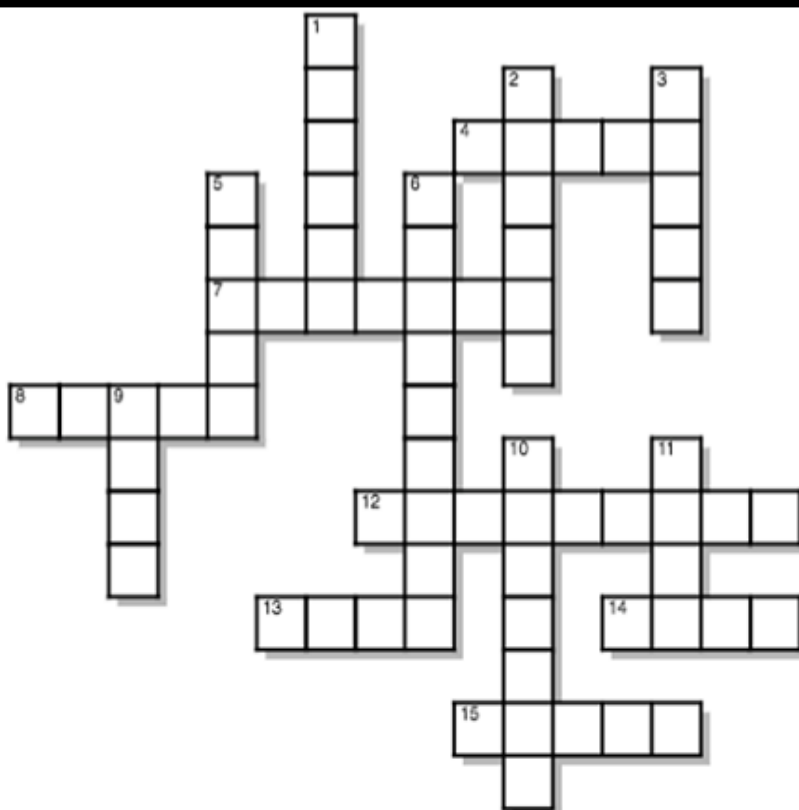


## Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad<sup>ra</sup>

1. Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad<sup>ra</sup> was the \_\_\_\_\_ successor of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>.
2. He was the \_\_\_\_\_ son of the Promised Mesiah<sup>as</sup>.
3. He started learning the translation of the \_\_\_\_\_ and the Aḥadīth from Hazrat Maulana Nooruddin<sup>ra</sup>.
4. He received his first divine revelation in \_\_\_\_\_, when he was only \_\_\_\_\_ years old.
5. In September 1912, he performed the pilgrimage to ---- \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin<sup>ra</sup> was elected as Khalīfatul-Masīh when he was only \_\_\_\_\_ years old and his period of Khialfat was \_\_\_\_\_ years.
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ Mosque in London, England was founded on October 19, 1924 by Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh II<sup>ra</sup>.
8. He divided the jamaat into many different \_\_\_\_\_ organizations such as Lajna Imāillāh, Nāsirātul Ahmadiyya, Majlis Anṣārullāh, Majlis Khuddāmul Aḥmadiyya and Majlis Atṭālul-Aḥmadiyya.
9. On January 28, 1944 Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh II<sup>ra</sup> claimed for the first time that he was indeed the \_\_\_\_\_ as mentioned in the \_\_\_\_\_ regarding Musleh Mau'ūd.
10. He passed away at the age of seventy-seven and his funeral prayer was led by \_\_\_\_\_, the newly elected Khalīfatul-Masīh III<sup>rh</sup>.
11. He was buried in the Bahishti Maqbarah by the side of his \_\_\_\_\_, Hazrat Ummul Mu'mineen, Sayyidah Nusrat Jahan Begum<sup>ra</sup>.

Answers on the next page!

## Islāmic Crossword



### ACROSS

- 4 The Holiest place in Islam
- 7 Muslims fast during this month
- 8 Muslims call to prayer
- 12 Eid of Sacrifice
- 13 Zakaat should be paid to these people
- 14 The person who leads the prayers
- 15 It means peace and Obedience

### DOWN

- 1 Someone who follows Islam
- 2 The city where Prophet Muhammad **sa** was born
- 3 The pillar performed five times daily
- 5 Holy Book of Islam
- 6 Muslims celebrate this eid after Ramadan
- 9 Muslims must perform this once in their lifetime
- 10 Prophet Muhammad **sa** was from this tribe
- 11 The first prophet

Answers / Fill in the blanks from the previous page:

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 1. Second      | 5. Makkah (Mecca)                          |
| 2. Promised    | 6. 25 and 52                               |
| 3. Holy Qur'ān | 7. Fadl                                    |
| 4. 1905 and 16 | 8. Auxiliary                               |
|                | 9. Promised Son and prophecy               |
|                | 10. Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad <sup>ra</sup> |
|                | 11. Mother                                 |

## My Trip To Dubai

By: Mahrosh Javed. Age 8.  
Airdrie, Alberta

By the Grace of Allāh I was able to spend my winter vacation in Dubai! I was so excited when I was told I will be visiting Dubai, as I had heard of lots of good things about the city and especially the good weather in comparison to snowy Alberta!!

Dubai is a city and emirate in the United Arab Emirates, located on the south-east coast of the Persian Gulf.

The journey from Calgary to Dubai which in all took us 24 hours was long, but because I was so excited I didn't feel tired and as soon as I arrived in Dubai and felt the warm heat it felt so good to be in Dubai.

One of the things that you get to see instantly from where ever you are in Dubai, is the world's tallest building which has 163 floors – the Burj Khalifa. I was lucky to go up to the observation deck of the tower at 125th floor, the view was most stunning and beautiful!