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The Muslim Sunrise

November/
December 2023

An Islamic magazine
published since 1921

In the Latter Days, the sun shall rise from the West (The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him))



OPENING THE DOORS OF
DIVINE LIGHT.

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Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (may peace be upon him)



AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY
United States of America

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a religious organization, international in its scope, with branches in Africa, North America, South America, Asia, Australia, and Europe.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was established in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (may peace be upon him) (1835-1908) in Qadian, a small and remote village in the Punjab province of India. He claimed to be the expected reformer of the latter days, the Awaited One of the world community of religions (the Mahdi and Messiah).

The Movement he started is an embodiment of the benevolent message of Islam: peace, universal brotherhood, and submission to the Will of God-in its pristine purity.

Hazrat Ahmad (may peace be upon him) proclaimed in the commentary of the Verse 6 of Chapter 98 of the Holy Qur'an:

"[Islam] is the religion of the people of the right path."

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was created under divine guidance with the objective to rejuvenate Islamic moral and spiritual values. It encourages interfaith dialogue, diligently defends

Islam and tries to correct misunderstandings about Islam in the West. It advocates peace, tolerance, love and understanding among followers of different faiths. It firmly believes in and acts upon the Qura'nic teaching:

"There is no compulsion in religion" (The Holy Qur'an: 2:257).

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community strongly rejects violence and terrorism in any form and for any reason.



The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is led by the elected successors of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him). The present Head of the Community, His Holiness Mirza Masroor Ahmad, was elected in 2003. His official title is Khalifatul-Masih V or Fifth Successor of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (peace be on him).

One of the longest running Muslim publications in America



In 1920, the first Ahmadi Muslim missionary, Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq (ra), arrived in America. In 1921, he founded the Muslim Sunrise, which stands today as one of the longest-running Muslim publications in America. The magazine seeks to open discussions on Islam and topics related to religion in general. It highlights the role of Islam in an ever-changing global society and provides a platform for public opinion on contemporary issues while presenting solutions from an Islamic perspective.

The Muslim Sunrise welcomes letters to the Editor, questions, and submissions.

Email us at: contact@muslimsunrise.com or go online: www.MuslimSunrise.com

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The Muslim Sunrise

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Muslims follow the name of God's prophets with the prayer 'Alaihis-Salam or 'may peace be upon him,' and for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam or 'may peace and blessings of God be upon him.'

Companions of prophets who have passed away are saluted by Radiyallahu 'Anhu/a or 'may God be pleased with him/her.'

While such salutations sometimes are not set out in the text in order to facilitate reading, we encourage readers to offer these prayers as if set out in full.

Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

- sa: Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)
- as: 'Alaihis-Salam (may peace be upon him)
- ra: Radiyallahu 'Anhu/'Anha (may Allah be pleased with him/her)
- rh: Rahimahullahu Ta'ala (may Allah shower His mercy on him)
- aba: Ayyadahullahu Ta'ala Bi-Nasrihil-'Aziz (may Allah support him with His mighty help)

Verse numbers in the references from the Holy Qur'an count "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful" at the beginning of a chapter as the first verse.

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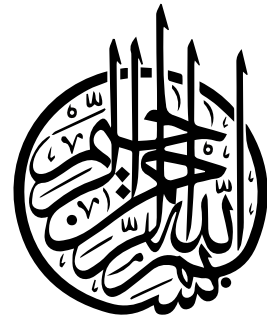


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From The Holy Qur'an

Verily, he truly prospers who purifies himself,

﴿١٥﴾ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى

And remembers the name of his Lord and offers Prayers.

﴿١٦﴾ وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى

But you prefer the life of this world,

﴿١٧﴾ بَلْ تُؤَفِّرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا

Whereas the Hereafter is better and more lasting.

﴿١٨﴾ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى

﴿١٩﴾ إِنَّ بَدَأَ لَيْلَى الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَى

This indeed is what is taught in the former Scriptures — The Scriptures of Abraham and Moses.

﴿٢٠﴾ صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى

The Holy Qur'an (87:15-20)

Saying of the Prophet Muhammad

(Peace and blessings of Allah be on him)

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ يُونُسَ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو حَصِينٍ، عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ،

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ

"لَيْسَ الْغِنَى عَنْ كَثْرَةِ الْعَرَضِ، وَلَكِنَّ الْغِنَى عَنِ النَّفْسِ."

Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) related:
The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said,

"Wealth is not in having many possessions, but rather
(true) wealth is feeling sufficiency in the soul."

(Sahih al-Bukhari 6446)

Editorial

Essence of Recognizing Allah

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as) tells us that man depends on two things to reach God. Firstly, avoid evil, and secondly, do acts of virtue. Merely shunning evil is nothing special. The fact is that ever since man was created, he has had both capacities in his nature. On the one hand, selfish passions incline him to sin, and on the other hand, the fire of Divine love, which is hidden in his nature, burns away sin just as physical fire burns away physical garbage. However, the flaring of the spiritual fire that burns away sin relies on Divine knowledge because love and adoration of something is associated with its knowledge. If we are not aware of the beauty and the qualities of something, we cannot adore that thing. Thus, knowledge of the sublime beauty and attributes of God the Highest, the Most Glorious, generates the fire of His love, and His love burns away sins. However, the way of God is that this knowledge is granted to ordinary people through the Prophets of God, and people attain light by following them; they attain whatever has been granted to the Prophets.

Our task is to give everything to the living God: our aversions, our suffering, and the minutiae of our days. If we do this out of love, seeking no return, the more of ourselves we give to God, the more we will know His presence in our daily lives.

In the current issue of the Muslim Sunrise, we present articles that show how following a living teaching can enable one to be the recipient of the Word of God and how it can open the doors of Divine light.

Note of appreciation:

Missionary Mubasher Ahmad's leadership as Editor-in-Chief since 2016 has represented steady progress, growth, and consistency for the Muslim Sunrise.

Beginning in November 2023, Dr. Wajeeh Bajwa will serve as this publication's Editor-in-Chief. Missionary Mubasher Ahmad will continue serving the Muslim Sunrise as Editor Emeritus.

This time of transition provides an opportunity to express sincere appreciation to our outgoing Editor-in-Chief, Missionary Mubasher Ahmad, for his remarkably dedicated and effective leadership of the Muslim Sunrise, the longest-running Islamic magazine in the USA.

We welcome his successor, Dr. Wajeeh Bajwa, as Editor-in-Chief and pray earnestly for the Muslim Sunrise to continue towards greater success, increased circulation, and a worldwide understanding of the true message of Islam Ahmadiyyat, God Willing.

STATEMENT OF THE AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY

on Recent Escalations in the Israeli and Palestinian conflict
OCTOBER 10, 2023 PRESS RELEASES



AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY
Press & Media Office

The following statement is published according to the guidance of the Worldwide Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad.

Statement on behalf of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community:

"Over the past few days, hundreds of Israelis and Palestinians, including women, children and the elderly, have been killed or injured as a result of senseless violence and bloodshed. The killing or harming of innocent civilians is a direct violation of the teachings of the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings be upon him), who taught that even in a state of warfare, no woman, child or elder should be targeted or harmed in any way. Nor should any religious leader or place of worship be attacked.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community extends its deepest sympathies and prayers to all those who have been left bereaved or affected in any way. Our hearts go out to them all.

We pray and urge for an immediate end to hostilities and for peace to prevail so that no more lives are lost. For that, it is necessary that the channels of communication between relevant parties and nations remain open.

Until a ceasefire occurs, any military action taken must ensure that civilians do not come to any harm.

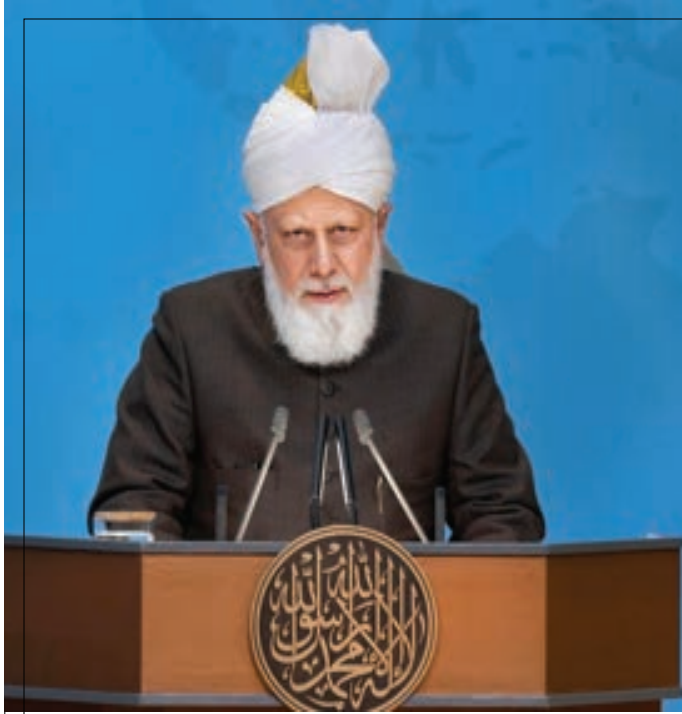
Furthermore, Muslim countries within the region should unite in an effort to establish peace and to ensure that the rights of those innocent Palestinian people, who have no link with extremists, are protected.

We urge the United States and other influential nations to abstain from any actions or statements that may further inflame the volatile situation. Instead, alongside the relevant international organisations, they should make every possible effort to urgently de-escalate the conflict and secure peace as soon as possible.

Justice and equity are of paramount importance in achieving lasting and sustainable peace. Thus, all the major powers must focus on establishing long-term and sustainable peace based upon the principles of fairness and true justice.

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Friday Sermon:

Essence of Recognizing Allah

by Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V
(may Allah support him with His mighty help)
on March 14, 2014

On March 14, 2014, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba) delivered the Friday Sermon at the Baitul Futuh Mosque, Morden, London.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) said that a few weeks ago, he had given Friday sermons on the reformation of practices in which he had explained how the Promised Messiah (as) had presented God to us and what are the ways and means of attaining Divine knowledge and Divine love and nearness that the Promised Messiah (as) taught us. The signs and miracles granted to the Promised Messiah (as) were also mentioned in early sermons. All these matters should be tried and understood in light of the words of the Promised Messiah (as) for enhancement of our faith and our practice.

Today Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih (aba) presented some extracts from the writings and pronouncements of the Promised Messiah (as) regarding Divine knowledge, or knowledge of God. His writings on this subject cover hundreds of pages but today just a few examples were presented as regards his guidance on Divine knowledge. Prophets of God and saints have a distinct station in Divine knowledge, but the Promised Messiah (as) explained what should be the standard of an ordinary Muslim in this respect.

The Promised Messiah (as) said that man is dependent on two things to reach God. Firstly, avoid evil and secondly, do acts of virtue. Merely shunning evil is nothing special. The fact is that ever since man has been created he has both the capacities in his nature. On the one hand selfish passions incline him to sin and on the other hand the fire of Divine love which is latent in his nature burns away the rubbish of sin just as physical fire burns away physical rubbish.

However, the flaring of the spiritual fire which burns away sin is reliant on Divine knowledge because love and adoration of something is associated with its knowledge. If you are not aware of the beauty and the qualities of something you cannot adore that thing. Thus, knowledge of the sublime beauty and attributes of God the Most High, the Most Glorious generates the fire of His love and His love burns away sins. However, the way of God is that this knowledge is granted to ordinary people through Prophets of God and people attain light from their light by following them, they attain whatever has been granted to the Prophets.

The Promised Messiah (as) also said that he had studied all religions in depth and had analysed them and it was after this that he had concluded that at this time it is only Islam which can create real knowledge of God in every age. This is because this is the only religion with a living Prophet, a living teaching. In the love and subordination of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) one can be the recipient of Word of God and doors of Divine light can be opened to one.

In explaining that there is a connection between the reality of Islam and Divine knowledge, the Promised Messiah (as) said that God has declared knowledge as the source to attain the reality of Islam. There are many other sources of attaining the reality of Islam, for example fasting and observance of Salat, prayer and all Divine commandments which number more than six hundred. However, knowledge of God's greatness and knowledge of God's Unity/Oneness is reliant on knowledge of God's signs and knowledge of His attributes and these are the sources to recognise God as is His right to be recognised. How can a person who is negligent and devoid of Divine knowledge

be enabled to offer Salat or fast or pray or give charity. All these aspects are dependent on Divine knowledge and all other sources are borne of it. Divine knowledge is initiated through the Divine quality of Rahmaniyyat (quality of being Gracious) and not by virtue of any action or any prayer or any beneficence. It is found merely through being obedient. Later, this knowledge is enhanced and burnished by good works and beauty of faith, ultimately reaching a stage where God speaks to man illuminates his heart with the light of the faith called Islam.

As regards Divine knowledge, deliverance from sin, enablement of virtue and level of prayer the Promised Messiah (as) said that the truth is that a person cannot really rid of sin or truly attain love of God or fear Him as He ought to be feared unless he is given knowledge through God's grace and is granted strength from Him. It is most evident that all kinds of fear and love are borne of knowledge. Sentiments of love, fear and repulsion from anything in the world are generated in man after he has gained knowledge. It is true that knowledge cannot be attained without God's grace and it cannot be beneficial without His grace. When knowledge is gained through God's grace, it opens a door of recognition of truth and seeking of truth and remains open for frequent grace of God. In short, knowledge is gained through God's grace and also remains through His grace. God's grace makes knowledge very pure and bright and removes covers [between Divine and human] and removes the dust of the self that incites to evil, it grants strength and life to the soul and releases the self from the prison of evil and purifies it from the impurity of bad wishes and takes it out of the tumultuous flood of selfish desires. It is then that a change comes about in man and he is naturally disinclined to evil and the first thing that he is drawn to after God's grace, is prayer! Do not imagine that you pray every day and offer Salat which is also a Prayer, because the prayer that one is enabled to make through God's grace and after gaining knowledge has a unique tenor and condition. It annihilates; it is a fire that melts, it is a magnetic pull that draws God's mercy, it is a death that ultimately brings life, it is a tumultuous flood which ultimately turns into a vessel and everything that has gone wrong is fixed with it and every toxin ultimately becomes an antidote through it.

The Promised Messiah (as) explained why man lowers himself towards sin so much. He said the audacity to commit sin stems from hearts devoid of fear of God. How can fear of God be generated? For this Divine knowledge is required, the greater one's Divine knowledge the more one will fear God. Divine knowledge is central and it results in fear of God. When man has knowledge of something, he even fears and avoids tiny insects like the flea and mosquito etc. Then what is the reason that man is so audacious to go

against the commandment of God, Who is All-Powerful, All-Knowing and All-Seeing and Master of the heaven and the earth! If one thinks about it one realises that this is because man has no knowledge. Many verbally profess the existence of God but a little probing shows them to be atheistic. When they are engaged in worldly matters they completely forget God's greatness and His wrath. This is why it is very important that you should seek knowledge from God through prayer. Perfect belief cannot be attained without it in any way. It can be attained when one has the knowledge that there is death in disassociation from God. While one should pray to be protected against sin one should never let go of planning [regarding this] and should give up all gatherings and assemblies which promote sin and pray and be very aware that one can never be free from the tribulations that are destined for man without God's help.

Huzoor (aba) remarked that there are few assemblies these days which do not incline towards sin, be it TV or the internet or Facebook. In USA recently 600,000 Facebook accounts had to be closed because they had caused extreme anxiety.

The Promised Messiah (as) wrote: "Remember, immunity to sin is only possible when man comes to have absolute faith in God. Indeed, the chief object of human life is none other than deliverance from the clutches of sin. Look, how a child is tempted to catch a snake for it fascinates him. He may even touch it. But a sensible person who knows the snake will bite and kill shall never dare touch it. He will not even enter a house in which he knows there is a snake. Likewise when one knows that poison kills, he will never be foolhardy enough to taste it. In the same manner, one cannot avoid sin unless one believes it to be a deadly poison. This kind of conviction is not possible without true understanding and knowledge. Why then does man commit sin with audacity, despite having faith in God and considering sin a sin. The only possible explanation is that he does not possess the knowledge and perception which destroys the disposition to sin. Inability to attain this state would be tantamount to admitting that, God forbid, Islam is devoid of its paramount quality. But I reiterate that such is not the case. It is through Islam alone that this objective can be attained to its highest degree, and the only way to it is through converse and communion with God, for this creates complete faith in the Creator, and thus alone do we come to know that God detests sin and punishes it. Sin is poison: it is venial at first, then becomes deadly and ultimately leads to disbelief" (Lecture Ludhiana, pp. 55-56). The Promised Messiah (as) said about the significance of knowledge in respect of avoiding sin that knowledge is something that prevents man from sinning. Just as a man who knows that arsenic kills snakes and lions, does not go

near it. Similarly, if man has knowledge he does not go near sin. This is why it is important to enhance/develop knowledge and this happens with prayer. Salat is Prayer. The more one adorns one's Salat the freer one is from sin. Knowledge cannot be attained by verbally professing something. Many a great sage left God because they had created objects in their sight and they did not pay heed to prayer. Created objects validate the existence of a Designer, a Maker, but do not prove that indeed He exists. 'Should exist' and 'does exist' are two separate matters. Knowledge of 'does exist' cannot be found anywhere apart from in prayer. Those who only address this matter intellectually cannot attain the knowledge that He 'does exist'. This is what is meant by 'Eyes cannot reach Him...' (6:104) that He cannot be recognised merely through intellect. On the contrary He can be recognised through the sources that He Himself has given. In this regard there is no other prayer like: 'Guide us in the right path - the path of those on whom Thy hast bestowed Thy blessings...' (The Holy Qur'an (1: 6-7)).

Regarding true repentance, the Promised Messiah (as) said one who is resolute in his search of God finds Him. Not only does he find God but he also sees Him. A lot of trouble and expense is incurred in attaining worldly knowledge. This kind of knowledge indicates the principles to attain spiritual knowledge. The way for a beginner of spirituality is to first gain awareness of God and then [understand] His attributes. This awareness should reach the stage of belief. He will then find out about the Being of God and His perfect attributes and his soul will cry out that he has indeed found God most satisfactorily. When man accepts the existence of God to the degree of belief, man feels as if he has seen God and is aware of God's attributes, this is when a repulsion to sin is generated and just as one was inclined towards sin before, one withdraws from it and detests it and this is what repentance is!

Elucidating the verses 'Guide us in the right path - the path of those on whom Thy hast bestowed Thy blessings...' (The Holy Qur'an (1: 6-7)), the Promised Messiah (as) wrote that this is the prayer taught to be recited in the obligatory Five Prayers. Why then should someone from the Ummah be denied this blessing? Is the blessing given to Prophets of God which is mentioned in Surah Al Fatihah currency? Obviously the blessing granted to Prophets (peace be on them) was the privilege of Divine dialogue and Divine Word through which their insight reached the level of certainty of knowledge and the splendour of [Divine] dialogue was followed by seeing [the Divine]. Thus what else does the prayer show us but the path so that we too may be recipients of the blessing ... 'O God, bestow on us too the honour of dialogue.' Many ignorant say that this prayer signifies 'O God strengthen our faith and enable us to do

good works and make us do what pleases You.' But these foolish people do not realise that strengthening of faith or doing of good works or doing things that please God are all consequences of perfect knowledge. A heart that has not received any share of knowledge of Allah the Exalted is a heart also deprived of strong faith and good works. Fear of God is instilled in hearts with knowledge alone and it is with knowledge that love of Allah the Exalted surges in hearts. Just as it is also seen in the world that love and fear of anything is owing to its knowledge! If a lion stands by you in darkness and you do not know if it is a lion rather you think it is a goat, you will have no fear. However, when you will come to know that it is a lion you will run away in fright. Similarly if you think that a diamond lying in the forest worth hundreds of thousands is only a stone you will have no care for it. But if you find out that it is a diamond of glory and magnificence you will love it excitedly and will try your best to acquire it. This shows that all fear and all love is dependent on knowledge. Man will not put his hand in a hole if he knows that inside the hole is a poisonous snake and he will also not leave a house about which he comes to know that a large treasure is buried underneath it. Since fear and love are completely reliant on knowledge, therefore man can only completely turn to God Almighty when he has knowledge of God. Firstly to be informed of His existence and then have His attributes and perfect strengths be evident! How can this kind of knowledge be gained without someone having the honour of dialogue with God and the belief by virtue of Divine revelations that God is the Knower of the unseen and has All-Powerful and does as He please! Thus the real blessing (on which strength of belief and good works are dependant) is Divine dialogue and being spoken to by God through which firstly God is found and then one is made cognisant of His powers and in accordance with this cognisance man witnesses God's powers with his own eyes. This is the blessing which was granted to the Prophets (peace be on them) and then this Ummah was commanded 'seek this blessing from Me, I will grant it to you too'. Thus whoever's heart has the longing to seek this blessing will doubtlessly be given this blessing!

The Promised Messiah (as) said about doing good and shunning evil that all goodness is dependent on recognising God and there is only one thing that stops selfish passions and satanic actions and that is perfect knowledge of God. It tells us that there is a God Who is All-Powerful and is Severe in reckoning. This is the only formula which falls like scorching lightening on man's refractory life. Until man moves from the stages of 'belief in Allah' to 'knowledge of Allah' it is not possible for him to avoid sin. A truth which we cannot deny is that we cannot be saved from sins without knowledge of God and belief in His attributes. It is our everyday experience that man does

not go near what he fears. For example with the knowledge that snake bite can be fatal which wise person would let alone put his hand in snake's mouth, even want to go near a stick with which a poisonous snake has been killed just in case it's residue poison remains on the stick. If someone finds out that there is a lion in such and such jungle he would not want to travel through it or at least not go there on his own. Children too have the sense to be frightened of something about which they have been convinced to be dangerous.

Unless knowledge of God and conviction of the toxins of sin is instilled in man, no other way, be it suicide or sacrificial blood, can bring salvation and cannot kill life of sin. Most certainly be sure that flood of sins and river of selfish passions cannot stop unless a resplendent belief is attained that yes, there is a God and His force befalls each disobedient person like lightening. Unless this is instilled man cannot avoid sin. If someone says that they believe in God and also believe that He punishes sinners but sin does not leave them. I will say in response that this is a lie and a delusion of nafs (self). There is mutual enmity between true faith, true belief and sin. Where there is true knowledge and luminous belief in God, it is not possible for sin to remain there!

The Promised Messiah (as) said that one should move swiftly towards recognising God. One who recognises God can enjoy God and prayer of one who does not move towards God with truthfulness is not fully accepted and some part or the other of darkness remains with him. If you move a little towards God Almighty, He will move more towards you but it is essential that you make the first move. It is a useless idea that one should expect something from God without making any move. It is always the way of Allah that first man takes an action and then God Almighty responds with an action. If a man shuts all the doors of his house, shutting of doors will be his action. The action of God Almighty in response will be that the man's house will be filled with darkness...

Some people complain that they did good, offered Salat, fasted, gave alms and charity and made spiritual endeavour but they did not attain anything. Such people are inherently miserable and they do not believe in the Divine quality of Rububiyat (quality of nurturing) and their good deeds were not done for God Almighty. If something is done for the sake of God Almighty it is not possible for it to go wasted and for God Almighty to not reward it in this life. This is why many people remain embroiled in suspicions and they are not even sure if God Almighty exists or not. Man understands that a sown garment will definitely have a sewer and even if man finds a clock that tells time in a jungle he will be sure that a clockmaker had made it.

Observe the works of God Almighty how many kinds of timekeeping He has created and what wonders of nature there are! On one hand are intellectual proofs of His existence and on the other hand are signs which convince man that there is a God of magnificent powers. He first reveals His will to His chosen ones and this is the weighty matter that Prophets bring which is called prophecy!

The Promised Messiah (as) wrote that the root of faith is recognition of God and knowledge of Divine blessings while its branches are good works and its flowers are high morals while its fruits are spiritual blessings and most exquisite love which develops between God and His servant. And to derive benefit from this fruit is a consequence of spiritual sanctity and purity... Excellence in love is generated by excellent knowledge and Divine love surges by virtue of knowledge and when personal love [of God] is instilled, is the first day of new birth and that moment is the first moment of a new universe!

The Promised Messiah (as) said God is a pearl and after attaining His knowledge man looks at material things with such disdain and disregard as if merely looking at them is also a coercion for him. Thus seek knowledge of God Almighty and move onwards towards Him alone for therein is success.

The Promised Messiah (as) said: "I say most truthfully that man's righteousness, belief, worship and purity all come from the heavens. And this is dependent on the grace of God Almighty. If He so wills He may keep it or He may remove it."

True knowledge is when man considers himself as nothing and lowly and seeks God Almighty's grace by bowing humbly on the Divine threshold. When he seeks that light of knowledge which burns away selfish passions and creates an inner light, strength and energy for virtues. If he partakes of God's grace and at any given time he attains some sort of enlightenment and conviction of heart he should not feel arrogant and proud about it. On the contrary his humbleness and humility should further increase because the more he considers himself as nothing, the greater conditions and lights will descend on him from God Almighty which will give him luminosity and strength. If man keeps this creed then it is hoped that with the grace of Allah the Exalted his moral condition will become very good. It is arrogance to consider one to be someone in this world and this is very telling. Man ends up cursing others and considering them contemptible.

I say these matters repetitively because God Almighty has willed to make this community with the objective to re-establish true knowledge which is lost from the world

and true righteousness and purity which cannot be found in the world!

The Promised Messiah (as) said:

“Because sin and wickedness has vastly increased in the world in the current times and paths of recognising God cannot be seen, Allah the Exalted established this movement and sent me with His grace and favour alone so that I may inform the negligent and the unaware about Allah the Exalted. Not only should I inform them about God but I may also show God Almighty to those who come to this way with honesty, patience and sincerity. This is why God Almighty addressed me and said: ‘You are from Me and I am from you.’”



Huzoor said this was the objective for which the advent of the Promised Messiah (as) took place; to instil knowledge of God in us in a manner as if we are seeing God. May we do everything in light of love and fear of God and may we have such Divine knowledge instilled in us which burns away all our sins and we fulfil the objective of the Promised Messiah’s advent. May God enable us to put all this in practice and understand its spirit!

Reference:

<https://alislam.org/friday-sermon/2014-03-14.html>

How is belief in God different from belief in Santa Claus?

Rizwan Khan



Atheists who ask this question try to make a parallel between the blind faith that adults have in religion and the blind faith that children have in Santa Claus. Unfortunately, for those misguided religions that accept the need for blind faith, this parallel has some merit. For example, Christian doctrine accepts the need for blind faith. Christianity starts with blindly accepting three in one and one in three. It starts with a blind belief in the Trinity.

The Islamic perspective is completely different. It teaches a concept of God that is perfectly intuitive. The Islamic concept of a singular Supreme Being is in such accordance with human nature that it is universally found in every culture and civilization.

The reality is that when people make things up, like Santa Claus, there is a vast difference between the things they fabricate because they are independently a product of their imagination. Every culture has vastly different fairy tales because they have no connection with one another. However, when it comes to the existence of God, a monotheistic concept of God survives in every part of the world, even in the most polytheistic cultures. Take Hinduism as an example, which teaches a concept of One God Who is supreme over all other gods. This is a part of Hindu scripture and Hindu understanding even today. I went on a tour of a Hindu temple where we were shown idols but told that Hindus still considered themselves monotheistic. Even in Greek mythology, which added so many gods to their original religion, there is still a concept of one God who is the

God of gods. In Zoroastrianism, there is the God of good Who prevails and is supreme over the God of evil. In Christianity, the Holy Ghost intercedes with The Father (1), and Jesus begs of The Father (2). In Christianity, it is inconceivable that The Father would ever intercede with or beg of the Holy Ghost or the Son. Thus, no matter how many gods polytheistic peoples added to their original religions, there always remained a God of gods who had a supremacy that cannot be denied. A universal concept of monotheism has consistently survived in every culture despite their being completely isolated from one another.

To equate belief in God with any fictional fairy tale is a false equivalency that fails to appreciate the miracle in the historical consistency that resulted from God Almighty revealing Himself through true prophets sent to every part of the world.

The Second Khalifa of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad (ra), said, “In truth, all world religions agree on the existence of a being who is the creator of the universe. While there may be differences in doctrines and beliefs because of geographical and circumstantial variances, all faiths universally accept the existence of God even if they diverge on the particulars, such as an understanding of His attributes. All major contemporary religions—Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism, and Zoroastrianism—believe in the existence of the One God, Elohim, Parameshwara, Paramatma, Satguru or Yezdan.

Archaeological evidence also shows even religions now considered extinct were (in their essential features) monotheistic; whether they were found in the far-off places of the Americas, the forests of Africa, or in Rome, England, Java-Sumatra, Japan, China, Siberia or Manchuria. How did this harmony of belief arise, and who apprised the inhabitants of America about the creeds of the people of India and similarly who told the people of China about the beliefs of Africans? (...) How could a consensus emerge on this particular belief among remote and distant communities of different dispositions and cultures? It is difficult enough for two people to agree on something that has been fabricated; the fact that so many nations and countries have reached a consensus on a single principle, without any means of exchanging their ideas, is proof of the veracity of this belief which has been mysteriously revealed by Islam and which in the past has been expressed to peoples of all countries and nations. Historians agree that when a claim (or a source) has been affirmed by chroniclers of different (ancient) communities, it ought to be considered authentic. Therefore, when hundreds and thousands of people have agreed on this fundamental precept, why should it not be accepted that they came to believe in it through some sort of (divine) manifestation?" (3).

Isn't the whole religious belief system based on blind faith?

Answer: The followers of misguided religions have no choice but to base their beliefs on blind faith because they have lost touch with their roots and now lack reasoning and evidence. However, Islam is a living and true religion, and it firmly rejects blind faith. The Holy Qur'an says,

"And when it is said to them, 'Follow that which Allah has sent down,' they say: 'Nay, we will follow that wherein we found our fathers.' What! Even if their fathers had no sense at all and no guidance?" (4).

Elsewhere, a similar verse ends with the words, "What! Even though their fathers had no knowledge and no guidance?" (5).

Islam condemns people for blindly following the religion of their parents. The Holy Qur'an repeatedly teaches us to approach religion while making use of our intellect, understanding, knowledge, perception, reflection, etc.

Islam does not ask anyone to blindly believe in the truth of the Prophet Muhammad (sa). For example, the Holy Qur'an presents the flawless honesty and character of the Prophet Muhammad (sa) as one evidence of his truth, and then

appeals to our 'aql, which is intelligence and understanding.

"Say, (...) 'I have indeed lived among you a whole lifetime before this. Will you not then understand?'" (6).

Islam does not ask anyone to blindly believe in the truth of the Holy Qur'an. For example, the Holy Qur'an presents the flawless harmony of its teachings as one evidence of its truth, and then tells us to do *tadabbur*, which is to meditate upon it.

"Will they not, then, meditate upon the Qur'an? Had it been from anyone other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much disagreement" (7).

In other places, the Holy Qur'an repeatedly tells us to investigate its truth by making use of our 'ilm (knowledge), *shu'ur* (perception), *fikr* (repeated consideration in order to obtain clear knowledge), etc.

When Islam does call us to believe, it tells us to base our belief on reasoning and rationality. In one place, the Holy Qur'an presents the origins of the universe in the Big Bang and the origins of life in water as a reason to turn our attention to our Creator.

"Do not the disbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were a closed-up mass, then We opened them out? And We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?" (8).

When the Holy Qur'an calls us to a belief in the unseen, it calls us to a belief that is founded on reason and evidence.

"Belief in the unseen does not mean blind belief or belief in things which cannot be grasped or understood. Nothing can be farther from the spirit of the Qur'an than to imagine that it demands from Muslims belief which reason and understanding do not support. The Qur'an strongly denounces such beliefs. True faith, according to it, is that which is supported by reason and argument (53:23; 46:5; 30:36; 6:149, 150; 25:74).

Moreover, the word *ghaib*, used in the Qur'an does not mean, as assumed by some hostile critics, imaginary and unreal things, but real and verified things, though unseen (49:19; 32:7). It is, therefore, wrong to suppose, as Wherry has done in his Commentary, that Islam forces upon its followers some mysteries of faith and invites them to believe in them blindly. It is Christianity which forces on its followers mysteries like Trinity in Unity and the Sonship of Jesus, completely beyond human understanding and human reason" (9).

However, to reach the point of believing is not sufficient in Islam. Belief is not the ultimate objective. Once a person believes in Islam, he must continue progressing until he rises above faith and reaches certainty. For example, a hypothesis is not a destination, it is only a way of getting closer to experiencing a reality. That reality is the destination. Similarly, the purpose of belief is to reach a certainty that is based on experience. The Promised Messiah and Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), explained,

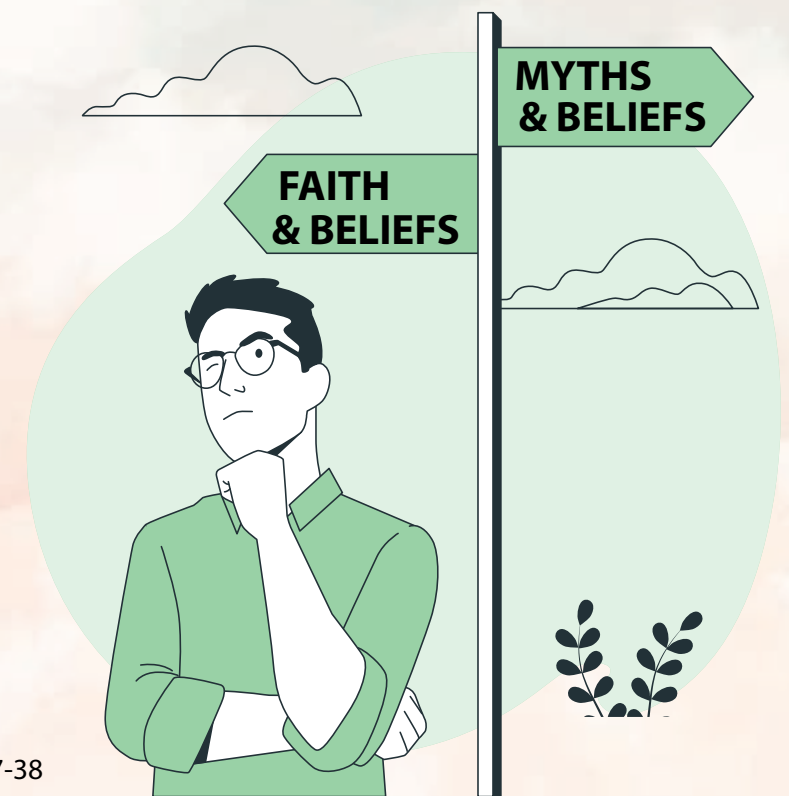
"Be it known, therefore, that faith means a sincere declaration of the acceptance of the message of a Prophet, out of righteousness and as a matter of wise precaution, purely on the basis of goodwill. That is to say, to proclaim acceptance wholeheartedly, finding that certain reliable factors point in that direction without waiting for perfect and conclusive proof. The stage when perfect reasons and conclusive arguments become available in support of the truth is designated the stage of certainty through knowledge. When God Almighty, out of His special bounty, should in an extraordinary manner bestows the lights of guidance, and should acquaint a creature of His with His favours and bounties, and should bestow reason and knowledge from Himself, and opening the doors of visions

and revelation should disclose the wonders of Divinity, and should reveal His beauty as the Beloved, that stage is designated understanding, or in other words, certainty by sight and is also called guidance and insight" (10).

Thus, Islam completely rejects belief in any religion based on blind faith. Rather, it demands that we believe on the basis of all our God-given intellectual faculties and continue to progress until we experience the existence of God firsthand and reach certainty.

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The Problem of Giving Concrete Shape to God and to the Worship of Handmade Statues

Dr Amrinder (Amr) Singh Mann

Allah is the name of the One Almighty God, and it is used exclusively for God and never for any other living creatures. Allah is always used in the singular and never used in the plural context, as Islam believes in the absolute unity of God. There are 99 attributes of Allah mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. Allah is mentioned as the "The Most Gracious, Most Merciful, Lord of All the Worlds, Master of the Day of Judgment, The Provider, and The Sustainer" (1). Islam is a monotheistic religion that reminds an individual to remember the oneness of God by offering daily Salat (Islamic prayer) five times and regularly reading the Holy Qur'an to understand the eternal code of conduct (2). This has uncountable blessings for an individual, starting with physiological and spiritual blessings on this earth and becoming a favorite child of Allah in the hereafter.

The dangers associated with limiting God to a concrete shape can be linked to believing and/or worshipping multiple Gods. This is polytheism and idolatry, which are contrary to Islamic beliefs and practices, and can trap individuals into believing a materialistic symbol(s) as a deity. This whimsical nature encourages them to feed the statues even though they do not contain any working digestive system like the human body. Where millions of individuals sleep without having food, and yet tonnes of food have been wasted under the ritual of offering to deities (3). This becomes a problem as an individual from any religion, who is supposed to remember and say thank you to God for everything, may focus on worshipping that handmade statue. Furthermore, they attach sentiments to it, and as the statue is 'mortal' compared to God, it changes the level of understanding of God. When the handmade statue is broken, the individual's heart is broken; this then becomes a trap of materialism where the individual is

forced to buy another handmade statue even though he/she is struggling to make ends meet. The artists put different price tags on the statues, and the aristocratic individuals buy the most expensive deities. The beauty of Islam is it works on equality regardless of whether someone is rich or poor in materialism, and the sole focus is given to nurturing the soul through spiritual wealth. Worshippers in Hinduism immerse their lord Ganesha in a river, sea, or water body. They believe it was started by an Indian Maratha leader (Chatrapati Shivaji) to promote nationalism (4). This has caused water pollution as the immersed statues release toxic chemicals like mercury and lead, and this has disturbed the equilibrium of aquatic life (5). A source of water for the common man is filled with toxins and has been shown to cause mental diseases (6). While every religion spreads the message of truth, justice, and respect, the man-made customs in Hinduism have caused a lot of problems for society. Hinduism teaches to respect and love every creature created by God, and the act of immersing their Lord Ganesha poses many threats to sea life.

Islamic teachings remind us that God is not born, and He does not give birth to anyone, and no compromise is permitted to breach the unity of God. This unity of God should be maintained in everything from worshipping to believing. So, a question can be asked: if He is not born, then why is God considered a living God because He loves His creation and listens to their supplications. Statues or deities can serve as a distraction because an individual can establish a direct and eternal connection with God by implementing the teachings from the Holy Qur'an instead of having an intermediary (2). Allah says, "And call to mind when Luqman said to his son while he admonished him, 'O

my dear son! Associate not partners with Allah. Surely, associating partners with Allah is a grievous wrong" (7). This verse explicitly reminds us that the first and foremost belief is that God is One. Everything emerges from this doctrine, and individuals can stifle and stunt their physiological and spiritual growth by worshipping any other thing or being besides Allah (7).

Islam taught 1400 years ago that people can be tempted to worship false gods. These false gods can take the form of human-like beings to whom they attribute divine powers or natural objects such as the sun, the moon, and the stars. They can also worship inanimate objects made of wood or stone, as well as their own customs, prejudices, superstitions, desires, and passions (8). These kinds of superstitions and misbeliefs condition the human brain to think negatively, and they tend to miss the real purpose of life. God Almighty is free from limitations, and having portraits of deities with sharp noses, chiseled looks, and fair complexion forces an individual to make a picture of their God in their minds. In fact, the artists who make these portraits have not even met or seen them once, as there is no reference in history of this kind of meeting to date. The artists take inspiration and follow the interests of their customers to make the handmade statues (9). Actually, everything should follow the seminal teachings of a religion free from any adulterations, which is only to be found within the Holy Quran.

Idolaters limit their God to a single place at a particular time, but this is not correct, as God has a presence everywhere. The Promised Messiah, his Holiness Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), states the reality of God as presented by Islam: 'God is the light of the heavens and the earth. All visible lights, whether found in the heights or valleys, within souls or bodies, apparent or hidden, in the mind or outside of it, are gifts of grace from the Lord of the worlds. This clearly indicates that His grace encompasses everything and nothing is deprived of it. He is the source of all grace, the ultimate cause of all lights, and the fountainhead of all mercies. His Being sustains the entire universe and is the refuge of all, whether high or low. He brought everything out of the darkness of nothingness and bestowed upon everything the gift of being. No other being is present and eternal in itself or not the recipient of His grace. Earth and heaven, man and animals, stones and trees, souls and bodies, have all come into existence by His grace' (10). These beautiful and very revitalizing words written by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah (as), not only graciously and gracefully describe God but speak to us to not entrap ourselves in the concrete shapes of idols; otherwise, we will miss the opportunity to avail the spiritual bounties made available to us by the Creator.

Individuals who associate partners with Allah by praying and offering gifts to the statues think that Allah needs their physical touch to offer something and, in this context, it poses a serious challenge for a disabled person, for example, to pray to the statue as their mobility and capacity may be very limited. The reality is that Allah gives us so much freedom as an individual that we can remember Him anywhere at any capacity, as Allah says, "Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and ponder over the creation of the heavens and the earth: "Our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain; nay, Holy art Thou; save us, then, from the punishment of the Fire" (11).

Throughout history, people have placed great importance on idols, investing both emotions and money into performing rituals and offerings, as well as keeping them clean and safe. Unfortunately, idols have also been used to create false systems of class, where the size or cost of the idol is seen as a sign of wealth or favor from a false god. Some individuals even spend exorbitant amounts of money on the largest idols or the most intricate ones. We can see some of these idols in museums, utterly helpless! But is an inanimate object truly a god if it cannot sustain itself? Is God limited by our financial or material offerings? Would God prefer that we use our resources to help those in need instead of making others jealous or creating complexes in people with our displays of wealth? Perhaps if we feed or help those in need, we can make a difference in God's creation, bring hope, and add to their prayers to those we assist. This reminds us of the beautiful couplets of his Holiness Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him) as he says:

*He sees it - why do you attach your hearts with strangers?
What do you find in the idols that He does not have?*

*We pondered over the sun but did not find that light-
When we saw the moon, it too, was not like the Beloved.*

*He is One, Unique and Immortal-
All are subject to death but He does not perish.*

*All good lies in attaching your heart with Him-
Pray seek only Him, friends, there is no loyalty in the idols (12).*

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Ten Proofs for the Existence of God

Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad (ra) (1889-1965), the Musleh Mau'ud (the Promised Reformer), was the son of the Promised Messiah (as) and his second successor. He was elected as the Khalifa of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in 1914 at the age of 25 and led the movement for 52 years. In the period of his Khilafat, the message of Ahmadiyyat spread to countries as far and wide as the United States of America and Japan. He also set the foundations of the community's administrative structure and launched numerous initiatives for the propagation of Islam, most notably Tehrik-e-Jadid and Waqf-e-Jadid. A prolific writer, orator, and the author of a ten-volume commentary of the Holy Qur'an, he leaves a profound and enduring legacy that lasts to the present day.

Of all the objections raised against religion in the present age by the materialistic world, the greatest are those which relate to the existence of God. Idolaters associate partners with God, but at least they believe in His existence. Atheists, on the other hand, reject the very idea of a deity. The foundations of contemporary science are built on [the principle of] observation; therefore, atheists argue that if there is a god he should be shown to them, otherwise it is impossible for them to believe in him. Modernity has eradicated the concept of the Holy God from the hearts of most of our youth. Hundreds of college students, barristers and other such professionals are turning away from belief in His existence and every day their number increases. Moreover, the hearts of thousands of others are devoid of faith in God, though they do not publicly confess it from fear of societal repercussions. Accordingly, I have long resolved that if God blessed me with the opportunity, I would write and publish a short treatise on this subject in the hope that some fortunate souls may benefit from it.

Atheists primarily contend that they would believe in God if they could see Him. I have heard this argument many times before and it always surprises me since people perceive different types of physical properties through different senses; for example, [some properties are perceived through] sight, others through touch, or smell, or sound or taste. As a case in point, colour is recognised through sight rather than by smell, touch or taste. Hence, if a person denied its existence on the grounds that they could not discern it by way of the faculty of sound, would they not be considered a fool? Similarly, sound itself is perceived through hearing. Again, would it not be ignorant for a person to insist they would only believe someone could

speak once they had seen their voice? Likewise, fragrances are known through the sense of smell; yet, if someone were to claim they would only accept the truth of the aroma of a rose if they could taste it, could such a person be considered erudite and intelligent? In contrast, flavours such as sweet, sour, bitter, salty and so on are known by taste and can never be recognised through smell. Hence, it is not necessary to disbelieve in that which cannot be seen and accept only that which is visible to the naked eye. To do this would be to deny the existence of the fragrance of a rose, the sourness of a lime, the sweetness of honey, the bitterness of aloe, the hardness of iron and the beauty of the [human voice]; none of these phenomena are perceived through sight, rather through the faculties of smell, taste, touch and sound. Thus the assertion that one has to see God to believe in Him is gravely mistaken. Do such detractors recognise the fragrance of a rose or the sweetness of honey through their sight? If not, why do they insist on sight as the determining factor for belief in God?

Again, there are numerous parts of the human body whose presence we affirm without having viewed them and in fact we are compelled to admit to their existence. Do people believe in the heart, liver, brain, intestines, lungs and spleen only once they have seen them or do they recognise them otherwise? If a person tried to remove their organs in the hopes of being able to see them and prove that these organs existed, they would die before ever getting the chance to see them.

So far, I have cited examples which demonstrate that not all objects are recognised by sight alone, rather some are perceived by the five senses. I will now turn to those

phenomena which are known, not through the five senses directly, but by different means. For example, the existence of the mind, intellect and memory is an accepted truth which no one in the world denies; yet has anyone ever seen the intellect, or heard, or tasted, or smelled it? How then was the intellect recognised and how was the existence of memory discerned? There is also strength: an ability which all beings, whether powerful or weak, possess to some degree. But, has anyone ever seen, heard, [smelled], touched or tasted it? Again, how then was the existence of strength established? It can be easily understood from this, even by the most ignorant of people, that such phenomena are determined not through our senses, but by contemplating their effects. For example, when we see people take the time to resolve the various problems that afflict them, it is evident that there is something within them that has assisted them at that moment; we call this thing intelligence. Thus the intellect is not discovered directly through the five senses. Its fundamental truth is determined by witnessing its wonders. Similarly, when a person carries a heavy load, it is clear they possess some sort of capacity which enables them to lift the weight, or to physically manipulate a weaker object; we refer to this as strength or power.

Accordingly, the more refined and subtle a thing is, the more imperceptible it is to the naked eye. Its existence is known through its effects rather than by looking upon it, by smelling it, by tasting it or by touching it.

Hence, when seeking to determine the existence of Allah the Exalted Who is the most subtle of all, it is unjustified to put limitations on the requirements for belief in His existence such as that His existence can only be attained through sight. Has anyone seen electricity? And yet is it possible to deny the truth of electricity when telegrams are sent by it, machines are operated by it and bulbs are lit by it? Modern research on ether has initiated many breakthroughs in the physical sciences, but have scientists been able to discover a method of seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, or tasting this compound? Yet if one denies its existence, the process by which sunlight reaches the earth cannot be explained. Therefore, under these circumstances, it is wrong [for atheists] to ask to see God in order to believe in Him. Allah the Exalted is certainly visible, but He can be observed only by such eyes as are capable of seeing Him. For those who desire to look upon Him, God stands before the world through His strength and power and despite being hidden, He is the most manifest of all. God Almighty explains this in the Holy Qur'an in the following brief yet incomparable words: "The being of Allah the Exalted is such that eyes cannot reach Him but He reaches the eyes. And He is the Incomprehensible, the

All-Aware." (The Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-An'am, 6:104).

Here Allah the Exalted draws the attention of human beings to the fact that their eyes are incapable of seeing Him for His being is subtle and the finest subtleties cannot be discerned by sight. Power, intelligence, the soul, electricity and ether cannot be seen; how then can the human sight penetrate to the subtleness of God's being?

With that said, how are people meant to see God, and attain knowledge of His being? To this the Holy Qur'an says: "He reaches the eyes." That is, He Himself reaches the human eye, and though it is too frail to penetrate to the truth of His being, God reveals Himself to human beings through His power, strength and the manifestation of His perfect attributes. The human eye cannot see Him and so He shows Himself in different ways through demonstrations of His infinite power and strength - whether by way of calamitous punishments, by way of the prophets, by way of signs of divine mercy or through the acceptance of prayer.

If after this explanation, the truth of God's existence is still dependent on observation and it is argued nothing can be accepted until it is seen, then almost four-fifths of the phenomena of the world would have to be denied. And according to some philosophers this would be true for all phenomena, as in keeping with their beliefs, no worldly objects are perceivable, only their attributes can be observed.

I will now seek to present those proofs that establish the existence of God and strengthen human beings in the conviction that they have a creator and are not self-created.

FIRST PROOF

In accordance with my belief that the Holy Qur'an has expounded on all the essential ways to attain spiritual progress, I shall God willing, look only to its verses when submitting proofs for God's existence. In view of the fact that the first sensory experience a newborn child has of the world is through sound, my opening proof will derive from auralty.

In the Holy Qur'an, God says: "Verily, he truly prospers and succeeds who purifies himself, and proclaims the name of his Lord and who not only makes a verbal declaration but engages in worship to demonstrate his belief through his actions. But you prefer the life of this world, whereas the Hereafter is better and more lasting. And this is not an argument presented by the Holy Qur'an alone; rather this indeed is what is taught in the former Scriptures—thus the Scriptures of Abraham and Moses imparted this very same teaching to the world." (The Holy Qur'an, 87:15-20)

In this verse, Allah the Exalted sets forth the argument to the opponents of the Holy Qur'an that those who eschew selfish desires, who affirm the existence of God and show [themselves] to be His true servants always attain victory and success. And the evidence in favour of this teaching is its commonality among all the religions of the past.

And so, to the followers of the prevalent religions of that era—Christianity, Judaism and Meccan paganism—God makes the decisive argument that the teaching of Abraham (as) and Moses (as), which they all accept, is the exact same teaching. Therefore, the principle that [the loved ones of God always meet with success] and the unanimous agreement of all religions on this teaching and the ubiquity of this truth among all nations is presented by the Holy Qur'an as a great proof of the existence of God.

The more one reflects over this argument, the more convincing and veracious it appears. In truth, all world religions agree on the existence of a being who is the creator of the universe. While there may be differences in doctrines and beliefs because of geographical and circumstantial variances, all faiths universally accept the existence of God even if they diverge on the particulars, such as an understanding of His attributes. All major contemporary religions—Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism, and Zoroastrianism—believe in the existence of the One God, Elohim, Parameshwara, Paramatma, Satguru or Yezdan.

Archaeological evidence also shows even religions now considered extinct were [in their essential features] monotheistic; whether they were found in the far off places of the Americas, the forests of Africa, or in Rome, England, Java-Sumatra, Japan, China, Siberia or Manchuria. How did this harmony of belief arise, and who apprised the inhabitants of America about the creeds of the people of India and similarly who told the people of China about the beliefs of Africans? In the past, [means of transportation and communication such as] trains, telegrams and the post did not exist as they do now, nor were there airplanes or large ships regularly traveling back and forth. Journeys were usually undertaken by horseback or mule and the sailing vessels of the time would take months to complete voyages that now take just days. Vast swathes of the world remained undiscovered during this period. How could a consensus emerge on this particular belief among remote and distant communities of different dispositions and cultures? It is difficult enough for two people to agree on something that has been fabricated; the fact that so many nations and countries have

reached a consensus on a single principle, without any means of exchanging their ideas, is proof of the veracity of

this belief which has been mysteriously revealed by Islam and which in the past has been expressed to peoples of all countries and nations. Historians agree that when a claim [or a source] has been affirmed by chroniclers of different [ancient] communities, it ought to be considered authentic. Therefore, when hundreds and thousands of people have agreed on this fundamental precept, why should it not be accepted that they came to believe in it through some sort of [divine] manifestation?

SECOND PROOF

The second proof forwarded by the Holy Qur'an for the existence of God can be found in the following verses:

"Our argument which We gave to Abraham against his people. We exalt in degrees of rank whomso We please. Thy Lord is indeed Wise, All-Knowing. And We gave him Isaac and Jacob; each did We guide aright, and Noah did We guide aright aforetime, and of his progeny, David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. Thus do We reward those who do good. And We guided Zachariah and John and Jesus and Elias; each one of them was of the virtuous. And We also guided Ishmael and Elisha and Jonah and Lot; and each one did We exalt above the people of their time." (The Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-An'am, 6:84-87)

And then:

"These it is whom Allah guided aright, so follow thou their guidance." (The Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-An'am, 6:91)

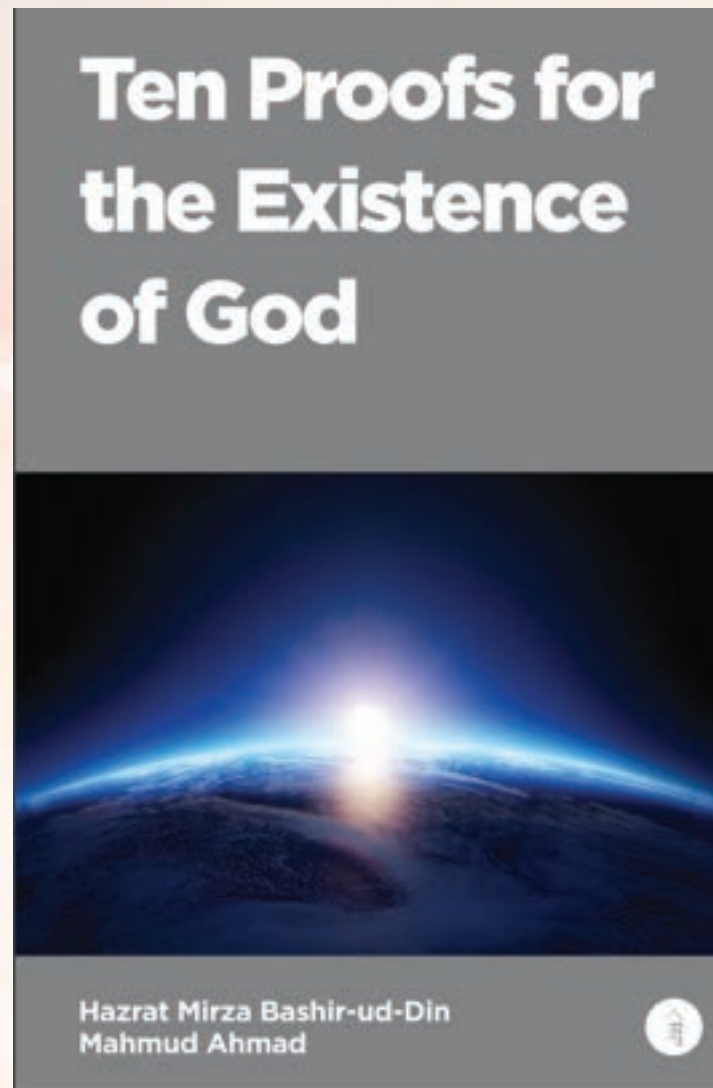
Through these verses, God Almighty asks whether the testimony of numerous righteous people ought to be accepted and given preference to or the claims of uninformed people whose integrity cannot compare with the former. Clearly the claims of those who have, through their character and conduct, established their righteousness and piety and avoided sin and falsehood ought to be given credence to. It is, therefore, incumbent on everyone to follow them and reject their adversaries. Accordingly, we are able to see that all those who, in the past, have spread goodness and established the truth of their piety before the world through their actions, have testified to the existence of a being who across various languages is known as Allah, God or Parameshwara. In India we have the example of righteous individuals like Ramachandraas and Krishnaas, in Iran there is the righteousness of Zoroasteras, in Egypt there was the righteous one of Moses (as), then the righteous Jesus (as) of Nazareth and the righteous Nanakrh of Punjab, and ultimately we have the Supreme Leader of the Righteous and the Light of Arabia, Muhammad (sa) the Chosen One, who in his earliest years was given the title of The Truthful by his people and who said: I have lived [all] my life

amongst you, can you prove even one lie against me?' (The Holy Qur'an, Surah Yunus, 10:17). And his people did not refute this. All these individuals and thousands more besides have, from time to time, appeared in the world and declared in unison that there is one God. Not only this, they also claim to have met Him and to have talked to Him. Even the greatest of philosophers who has clearly left his mark in the world cannot present an achievement which matches up to even a thousandth part of the accomplishments attained by these righteous individuals. In fact, if the two were compared with one another, beyond their sayings little would be found by way of deeds and actions in the lives of the philosophers. How can these philosophers compete with the righteous in terms of their demonstration of truthfulness and piety? They teach people to be honest, but do not eschew falsehood themselves. In contrast, those [righteous people] I have mentioned above endured great suffering for the sake of the truth and did not waver even for a moment in their convictions. Plans were made to kill them; they were forced into exile; many tried to humiliate them in market places and alleyways; and the whole world severed their ties with them, yet they remained firm in their claim and did not resort to lies as a means of protecting themselves. Their actions, their abhorrence for the material trappings of the world, their rejection of ostentation, demonstrated they were selfless individuals whose works were not motivated by selfish desires. Therefore, when such truthful and upright persons have, with one voice claimed to have met with God, heard His voice and witnessed His manifestations, what reason would anyone have to deny their assertions? We accept even the joint testimony of known liars and consider it to be true. Similarly, we accept the reports we read in newspapers even though we are ignorant of the circumstances of those who wrote them. Yet it seems that despite this, we are unwilling to believe the word of these righteous. People claim there is a city called London and we concur; geographers write America is a continent and we accept this truth; travellers say Siberia is a vast sparsely inhabited region and we do not deny this. Why? Because numerous people have given testimony in support of these facts. We believe them in spite of the fact that we are unaware of the circumstances of these people and whether they are tellers of truth or tellers of lies. On the other hand, those who give first-hand testimony of the existence of God Almighty are such that their honesty is as evident as daylight and they establish truth in the world at the cost of their wealth, their lives, their homeland and even their honour. It is grossly unfair to accept the assertions of travellers and geographers and at the same time refute the claims of such pious people. If the existence of London can be established through the testimony of a few people, why cannot the existence of God be similarly authenticated through the testimony of thousands of

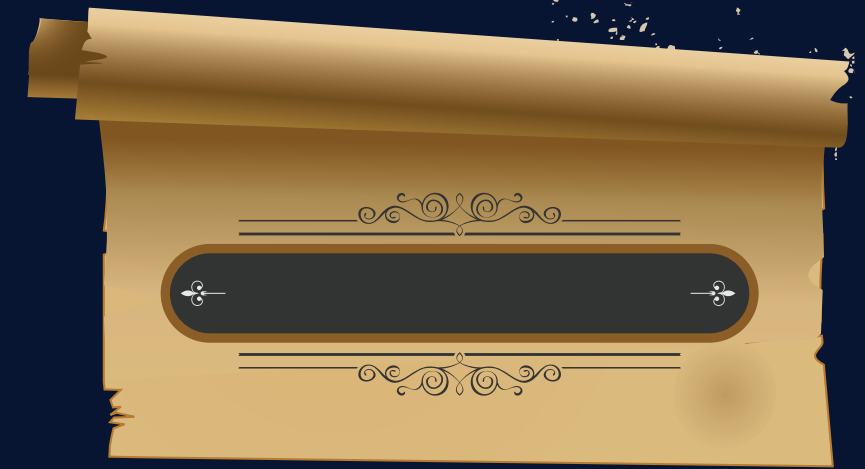
righteous people?

In short, the testimony of thousands of truthful and righteous, people who have borne witness to the existence of God on the basis of their personal observations, cannot be refuted under any circumstances. It is curious that when those who have shared in this experience are unanimous in the claim that there is a God, others who have no understanding of spirituality still call on people to reject their assertions, even though according to [established] principles regarding the processes of testimony, if two witnesses of equal integrity give [conflicting] evidence, the testimony of the eyewitness will be accepted over the other by reason of the fact that while it is possible the latter did not see anything, it is unreasonable to conclude that the former witnessed nothing, but assumed it upon himself that he had. Hence, the testimony of those who claim to have seen God stands over and above those who deny Him.

(To be continued in the next issue of the Muslim Sunrise.)



A page from history:



"The Only Solution of Color Prejudice" published in "The Moslem Sunrise" No:2, October 1921, Pages 41-42:

What sad news we come across every now and then about the conflict between the Blacks and the Whites in this country. It is a pity that no preaching of equality or Christian Charity has so far been able to do away with this evil. In the East, we never hear of such things occurring between the peoples. There are people fairer than North Europeans living on friendly terms and amicably with those of the dark skin in India, Arabia and other Asiatic and African countries and in fact there is no question of color ever heard of. In Islam no Church has ever had seats reserved for anybody, and if a Negro enters first and takes the front seat, even if the Sultan happens to come after him, never thinks of removing him from that seat. "I tread under the feet the racial prejudice" said the Master-Prophet Muhammad (sa) once, and thus obliterated those great tribal differences which so badly affected Arabia in the pre-Islamic days.

Commenting on "Brown Christianity" in India in the columns of the Literary Digest, it has been suggested by one writer that "Christianity" can destroy the color hostilities. But, I ask, has not Christianity failed in this respect too, even right here in America, the very land of freedom, equality and justice? It has failed here with all the education, how will it be successful in the East? I believe, and it is a well-proven fact, that Islam is the only religion that has ever destroyed color and race prejudices from the minds of the people. Go to the East and you will find the fairest people of Syria and Turkestan eating at the same table with darkest Africans and treating each other as brothers and friends. Nothing is more successful than success itself. If you want to implant ideals of a Universal Brotherhood in the world, come and gather under the Banner of the God-Established Union founded by the Prophet of the day "Ahmad" and known as the Ahmadiyya

Movement in Islam. The Creator is the Best sympathizer with the creation. He always raises a Guide to work under His own guidance whenever the world wants it. And He has raised one even now. I am here in this land to spread the glad tidings of his advent. The very word Islam means – Peace, Safety, and Harmony.



Our God

Poem by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, translated by Mirza Bashir Ahmad, M.A., *Our God* (Hamara Khuda), Pages 93-95, Islam International Publications Ltd., 2017

How manifest is the light of the Source of all light,
Turning the Universe into a mirror for eyes to see His reflection.
When I saw the moon yesternight, I was overwhelmed with longing,
For it reminded me a little of the beauty of my Beloved Lord.
His eternal beauty has set our hearts afire;
Mention not to us the beauty of the Turk or Tartar.
O Beloved! Present, strange and wonderful, is the spectacle of Your glory all around;
Whichever way we turn is the path that leads to You.
Your own light burns bright in the resplendent fountain of the sun;
In every star can be seen the spectacle of Your glowing beauty.
With Your own hands have You sprinkled salt upon the souls,
Causing a great commotion of love among Your anguished lovers.
You have invested each particle with amazing qualities;
Who can ever decipher Your boundless mysteries?

No one can fathom the extent of Your limitless power;
Nor can anyone unravel the mysteries of this intricate knot.
It is Your beauty that lends charm to every beautiful face;
So are the hues and colours of each flower and garden but a reflection
of Your loveliness.
The love-laden glances of a beautiful face ever remind us of You;
Every curly lock points its finger in Your direction.
To every believer and non-believer, Your countenance alone should
be the focal point;
But alas! The sightless suffer from a thousand veils.
O my Beloved, Your enchanting glances are like the sharp sword
Which cuts off all bondages of loyalty and love for others.
Logical Arguments for the Existence of God
Only to win Your love have I reduced myself to dust;
Hoping, the pangs of separation may thus be assuaged a little.
Except when I am with You I am ever restless;
Like the sinking heart of a patient, life seems to be ebbing away.
Wherefore this noise in Your neighbourhood? Pray, tarry not!
Lest some love-lorn lover should perish unknown.



WHEN December 22 - 24, 2023

WHERE Bait-ul-Hameed Mosque
11941 Ramona Ave
Chino, CA 91710

The Promised Messiah^{as} states:
*“It is essential for those who can afford to
undertake the journey, that they must come to
attend this Convention which embodies many
blessed objectives.”*

(Majmoo'ah Ishtiharat Vol. I page 340-341)

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Humanity First USA is in Maui:

Legal and Logistics: Attorneys from the HFUSA network are helping people remotely to understand the available assistance and complete the right forms to get help.
 Medical: The HFUSA Doctors4Humanity initiative sent volunteer medical professionals to see dozens of patients for injuries and chronic conditions. Partners included local groups like Mauna Medics and Maui-based reps of national institutions.
 Education: HFUSA's The Education Project has set up weekly lessons by local teachers and 1:1 virtual tutoring to keep kids learning while school is disrupted.

GUAM TYPHOON MAWAR

Humanity First USA mobilized immediately to cook meals and distribute non-perishables. We joined Nihi Kids, the Red Cross, and Mayor's office to clean up debris, set up shelters, and deliver food to families struggling to access resources.

TÜRKIYE & SYRIA EARTHQUAKE

Humanity First USA sent doctors and experienced response teams to join the HF international relief effort. Our medical camps treated nearly 6,000 patients and we served 1 million meals to displaced families.

PAKISTAN FLOODS

Humanity First, with local partners, distributed tents and food and provided care to people at 75 medical camps. To help rebuild, we are constructing homes and helping people recover their livelihoods with support for agriculture and livestock.

PUERTO RICO AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

After Hurricane Fiona flooded thousands of homes and cut electricity and water, Humanity First reached both places to clear debris and give people needed supplies.

UKRAINE CRISIS

A displaced person carrying multiple bags is greeted by a volunteer at a Humanity First tent. An international Humanity First team deployed to the Polish-Ukrainian border in February 2022 to provide medical and food assistance to Ukrainian refugees. HF collaborated with WHO, WFP, OCHA, Sauvetures Sans Frontieres (SSF) and Intersos.

www.usa.humanityfirst.org

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- Divinity or Prophethood of Jesus Christ
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Ask a Question

Q: Can one receive divine light?

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him) said that he had studied all religions in depth and had analysed them and it was after this that he had concluded that at this time it is only Islam which can create real knowledge of God in every age. This is because this is the only religion with a living Prophet, a living teaching. In the love and subordination of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) one can be the recipient of Word of God and doors of Divine light can be opened to one.



Ahmadi Muslim Mosques in the USA



Bait-ul-Hameed Mosque - Chino CA



Yousuf Mosque - Tucson AZ



Ahmadiyya Mosque - Pico Rivera LA



Bait-ul-Aman Mosque - Hartford CT

AZ – Phoenix - (Bait-ul-Aman Mosque)
2035 W Elliot Rd, Chandler, AZ 85224-1717

AZ – Tucson - (Yusuf Mosque)
250 W Speedway Blvd, Tucson, AZ 8570.

CA – Bay Point - (Dar-us-Salaam Mosque)
520 Pacific Ave, Bay Point, CA 94565-1330

CA – Los Angeles (Chino) - (Bait-ul-Hameed Mosque)
11941 Ramona Ave, Chino, CA 91710-1661

CA – Los Angeles (Pico Rivera) - (Ahmadiyya Mosque)
7419 Passons Ave, Pico Rivera, CA 90250-6107

CA – Silicon Valley - (Bait-ul-Baseer Mosque)
926 Evans Rd, Milpitas, CA 95035-3409

CT – Hartford - (Bait-ul-Aman Mosque)
410 Main St, Meriden, CT 06451-5090

DC – Washington - (American Fazl Mosque)
2141 Leroy Pl NW, Washington, DC 20008-1848

FL – Miami - (Bait-un-Naseer Mosque)
208 NW 7th Ct, Hallandale Beach, FL 33009-2323

FL – Orlando - (Bait-ul-Aafiyat Mosque)
9501 Satellite Blvd Ste 103, Orlando, FL 32837-8445

GA – Atlanta - (Bait-ul-Ata Mosque)
1800 Willow Trail Pkwy NW, Norcross, GA 30093-2668

HI – Honolulu - (Mosque/Community Center)
650 Kohou St Ste 1B, Honolulu, HI 96817-4422

IL – Chicago - (As-Sadiq Mosque)
4448 S Wabash Ave, Chicago, IL 60653-3121

IL – Chicago - (Bait-ul-Jaami Mosque)
2S510 State Route 53, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137-7176

IL - Zion - (Fath-i-Azeem Mosque),
2700 Lewis Ave, Zion, IL 60099

KS – Kansas - (Mosque/Center)
11648 W 135th St, Overland Park, KS 66221-2837

LA – New Orleans - (Dar-ul-Aman Mosque)
2113 38th St, Kenner, LA 70065-3509

MA – Boston - (Bait-un-Nasir)
4 Nasir Ahmad Rd, Sharon, MA 02067-1164

MA – Fitchburg - (Bait-uz-Zikr Mosque)
370 Main St, Fitchburg, MA 01420-8007

MD – Baltimore - (Bait-us-Samad Mosque),
7302 Pulaski Hwy, Baltimore, MD 21237-2528

MD – National Headquarters - (Bait-ur-Rahman Mosque)
15000 Good Hope Rd, Silver Spring, MD 20905-4120

MI – Detroit - (Bait-ul-Muzaffar Mosque - to be rebuilt),
8218 Wyoming Ave, Detroit, MI 48204-3114

MI – Detroit - (Masjid Mahmood)
1730 W Auburn Rd, Rochester Hills, MI 48309-3856

MN – St. Paul, MN (Nusrat Mosque)
11450 Robinson Dr, Coon Rapids, MN 55433-3745

MO – St. Louis - (Bait-ul-Hafeez Mosque)
4529 Emerson Ave, Saint Louis, MO 63120-2237

NC – Cary - (Mosque/Center)
830 Old Apex, Cary, NC 27513-4235

NC – Charlotte - (Mosque Charlotte)
5314 Mt Holly Hunterville Rd, Charlotte, NC 28216-8801

NJ – Central Jersey - (Bait-ul-Hadi Mosque)
27 South St, Old Bridge, NJ 08857-2951

NJ – Northern New Jersey - (Bait-ul-Wahid Mosque)
131 Wagaraw Rd, Hawthorne, NJ 07506-2711

10 conditions of Bai'at (initiation)

NJ – Willingboro - (Al-Nasir Mosque)
500 Bridge St, Willingboro, NJ 08046-3741

NV – Las Vegas - (Bait-ut-Tauheed Mosque)
6574 W Cheyenne Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89108-4929

NY – Albany - (Bait-un-Nur Mosque)
941 River Rd, Schenectady, NY 12306-6526

NY – Buffalo - (Mahdi Mosque)
9610 Colvin Blvd, Niagara Falls, NY 14304-2812

NY – Binghamton - (Bait-ul-Hamd Mosque)
10 Sheedy Rd, Vestal, NY 13850-5902

NY – Bronx - (Bronx Mosque)
3421 White Plains Rd, Bronx, NY 10467-5704

PA – Harrisburg - (Hadee Mosque)
245 Division St, Harrisburg, PA 17110-1262

PA – Lehigh Valley - (Bait-ul-Ata)
2860 S Pike Ave, Allentown, PA 18103-7637

PA – Philadelphia - (Baitul-A yat Mosque)
1215 W Glenwood Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19133-1336

PA – Pittsburgh - (Al-Noor Mosque)
747 South Ave, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221-2939

PA – York - (Ahmadiyya Mosque)
7063 Wertzville Rd, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050-1543

TN – Alabama/Tennessee - (Mahmood Mosque)
101 Maple St, Smyrna, TN 37167-2631



Bait-un-Nasir Mosque – Columbus OH



Bait-ul-Ahad Mosque – Cleveland OH



Bait-ul-Hamd Mosque – Binghamton NY



Bait-ul-Ihsan Mosque – Syracuse NY



Bait-uz-Zafar Mosque – Queens NY

NY – Brooklyn - (Bait-ut-Tahir Mosque)
1477 W 8th St, Brooklyn, NY 11204-6402

NY – Long Island - (Bait-ul-Huda Mosque)
64 Union Ave, Amityville, NY 11701-3024

NY – Queens - (Bait-uz-Zafar Mosque)
188-15 Mclaughlin Ave, Hollis, NY 11423-1137

NY – Rochester - (Bait-un-Naseer Mosque)
1609 East Main St, Rochester, NY 14609-7009

NY – Syracuse - (Bait-ul-Ihsan Mosque)
6650 Old Collamer Rd, East Syracuse, NY 13057-1214

OH – Cleveland - (Bait-ul-Ahad Mosques)
297 Center Rd, Bedford, OH 44146-2251

OH – Columbus - (Bait-un-Nasir Mosque)
3360 Toy Rd, Groveport, OH 43125-9430

OH – Dayton - (Fazl-i-Umar Mosque)
637 Randolph St, Dayton, OH 45417-3203

OR – Portland - (Rizwan Mosque)
9925 SW 35th Dr, Portland, OR 97219-6136

TX – Austin - (Bait-ul-Muqheet Mosque)
800 Deepwood Drive, Round Rock, TX 78681-5628

TX – Dallas - (Bait-ul-Ikram Mosque)
1850 Hedgcoxe Rd, Allen, TX 75013-3083

TX – Fort Worth - (Bait-ul-Qayyum)
2801 Miller Ave, Fort Worth, TX 76105-4134

TX – Houston - (Bait-us-Samee Mosque)
1333 Spears Rd, Houston, TX 77067-1507

VA – Central Virginia - (Mubarak Mosque)
4555 Ahmadiyya Dr, Chantilly, VA 20151-3393

VA – Richmond - (Anwaar Mosque)
2617 Turner Rd, Richmond, VA 23224-2539

VA – Woodbridge - (Masroor Mosque)
5640 Hoadly Rd, Manassas, VA 20112-3408

WA – Seattle - (Bait-ul-Ehsan Mosque)
23515 Old Owen Rd, Monroe, WA 98272-7636

WI – Oshkosh - (Qamar Mosque)
300 N Eagle St, Oshkosh, WI 54902-4225



When Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him) was divinely instructed to take Bai'at and start a Jama'at, he published an announcement on 1 December 1888, paraphrased below:

“Another message that I wish to convey to the people at large, and to my Muslim brothers in particular, is that I have been commanded to take an oath of allegiance [bai'at] from seekers of truth who wish to acquire true faith and purity; who yearn to find the path to Allah's love...

- 01 That till the last day of his life, he shall abstain from **Shirk** (associating any partners with Allah).
- 02 That he shall keep away from falsehood, cruelty, adultery, dishonesty, disorder, rebellion and every kind of evil
- 03 That he shall offer Prayers (**Salat**) five times daily
- 04 That he shall not inflict injury on any of Allah's creatures
- 05 That he shall bear every hardship for the sake of Allah
- 06 That he shall not follow vulgar customs, and shall guard against evil inclinations
- 07 That he shall discard pride and haughtiness, live in humility and meekness
- 08 That he shall hold his faith, dignity, and the welfare of Islam dearer than his own life, wealth and children
- 09 That he shall have sympathy for all of God's creatures, and devote his talents to their welfare
- 10 That he shall establish brotherhood with him (i.e., Ahmad), obeying him in all good things, and firmly adhere to these rules until the last breath of his life

The list provided here gives an overview and abbreviated version of the Ten Conditions of the Bai'at. Please see the full text of the Ten Conditions of Bai'at at: <https://www.alislam.org/articles/conditions-initiation-baiat/>