



The Light

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International Organ of the Centre for the Worldwide Lahore Ahmadiyya Community.

WE BELIEVE

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) is the Last Prophet. After him, no prophet, old or new, can ever come.

The Holy Quran is complete, and no verses are missing from it.

The Holy Quran is perfect, and none of its verses is abrogated.

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- Mon to Thursday**
1900 - Urdu - تدریس القرآن
19:30 - English - Reflections on the Holy Quran
 - Friday** 13:00 Friday Service
 - Saturday**
 - 14:00 – Urdu – Pure discussions
WhatsApp group
- Podcasts of all broadcasts are available on Podbean and Spotify.

Request for Prayers

Mr Abdul Jalil (Guido) Travaglioni, our dear brother and one of the editors of The Light, is to undergo serious brain surgery on March 28. We request everyone to pray **constantly** for his speedy and complete recovery. Our readers will remember that brother Abdul Jalil had started publishing in Italian, his understanding of the Holy Quran.

The Call of the Messiah

by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi



(Editor's note: "Predominance of Islam" is the English translation of the Promised Messiah's book, Fath-i Islam, by the late Mirza Masum Baig. In this, the Promised Messiah discusses his mission. The translation has been edited to bring the English up to date.)

An incident

It will not be out of place to make mention of a strange incident. Once I happened to go to Aligarh. Because of severe mental fatigue, of which I also had an attack at Qadian some time ago, I could not talk much or undertake a task requiring mental exertion and deep thought. Even now, I am in the same condition. I have neither the power to speak much nor reflect on and contemplate. In that condition, a *Maulvi Sahib* of Aligarh, Muhammad Ismail, called on me with the humble request for a lecture. He said people had been yearning for a long time to hear me speak and that they would be assembled in a house where I should deliver my discourse to them. As I am always passionate about explaining and expounding matters of Truth to the people, I accepted the invitation with a very willing heart. I thought of delivering a lecture on the truth about Islam – what Islam was and what the people had begun to think about it in the present age. The *Maulvi Sahib* was also told that, God willing, a lecture on the true significance of Islam would be delivered in that public meeting.

Personal contact with the Prophets

The Most High God raised thousands of prophets and apostles for this reason. He commanded people to get into personal contact with them. If they had in every age a living, visible model and an excellent embodiment of the Divine Word before their eyes, they might well be able to follow their example. If being in the company of the righteous and having personal contact with them was not an of the essential of religion, the Most High God could have, without raising any prophets and apostles, revealed His Word in some other way. Or He could have

restricted the institution of apostleship and revelation to the earliest time only and then discontinued it for all time to come. But the Most High God's great wisdom and infinite knowledge willed it not. And in times of need and necessity, whenever essential matters such as the love, adoration and fear of God, piousness and purity suffered deterioration and decay, holy personages, having been blessed with Divine revelation, have been coming into the world to serve as models and guides. And both these things are interdependent. If the reformation of His creatures was always the Will and Pleasure of the Most High God, then there needed always to appear individuals especially blessed with the Divine light to illuminate those who have the strength and stability to strive hard in His way.

Illumination of the Holy Prophet's companions

Undoubtedly, this tremendous task of the reformation of humankind cannot be accomplished by mere lip profession. To achieve this great purpose, one must trudge toilsomely upon the same path on which trudged the holy prophets of God ever since. And Islam, as soon as it stepped upon the stage, gave this excellently effective method such a strong impetus and currency that an example thereof is not to be found in other religions. Can anyone point out, in another religion, the like of this big community, exceeding ten thousand in number, which lay day and night at the Holy Prophet's threshold, with full faith and devotion, humility and strong attachment, for the acquirement of truth and righteousness? There is no doubt that Prophet Moses had a community of his followers. But how insolent and rebellious, far from spiritual grace and true guidance they had been, are well-known facts to the readers of the Bible and the students of Jewish history. But the followers of the Holy Prophet had created among themselves such a unique unity and spiritual concord that they had, from the viewpoint of Islamic brotherhood, become a single body. Their daily life, internal as well as external, had been saturated with the Holy Prophet's light to such a high degree that they were, as a matter of fact, the reflected images of the Holy Prophet himself. This mighty miracle of the internal transformation by which people addicted to gross idolatry became the worshippers of the One

True God. Those engrossed in the love of this world formed so close a relationship with the Most High God that they shed their blood like water in His way, which was, in reality, the sublime result of living with sincerity and devotion in the benign company of the true and perfect Prophet. So, in pursuance of this plan, this humble servant has also been raised. I wish that the scope for those who want to stay in my company be further extended and enlarged so that such people who yearn for the enhancement of their faith, love and belief may be able to live with me day and night. There may shine upon them those lights which have shone upon me. And that ardour and zeal vouchsafed to this humble servant may be conferred upon them. So that the light of Islam may spread all over the wide world and the ugly stain of dishonour and disgrace may be washed from the Muslims' forehead. With these glad tidings, the Most High God has sent me, saying: "Be happy and cheerful, for your time is near, and Muslims have been firmly established on the top of a lofty tower."

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A sermon, delivered on April 21, 1916

Survival of a Nation - 1



By Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali

(Translated into English by Dr Muhammad Ahmad, USA, with minor editing.)

"O people, keep your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind), and spread from these two many men and women. And keep your duty to Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship. Surely Allah is ever a Watcher over you." (4:1)

This chapter is called *Al-Nisa*, which means 'The Women.' It focuses on the rights and responsibilities of women and outlines the rights and duties of men and women toward each other. At its heart, the chapter is about social interaction. In the preceding chapters, *Al-Baqarah* and *Al-Imran*, we find guidance on preserving a nation; in *Al-Nisa*, the focus turns to maintaining social relationships and coexisting with other people. The following chapter, *Al-Mā'idah*,

expands further on the subject, discussing broader aspects of civil interaction. Together these four chapters cover the relationships, from the individual level through to that of wider societies and nations.

Arrangement of the Holy Quran

Some people, Muslim and non-Muslim, contend that the Holy Quran is a collection of randomly assembled chapters. This is a very flawed concept. The more that one studies the Holy Quran, the more evident it is that exceptional knowledge and wisdom guided its organisation. The chapter entitled *Al-Baqarah* is at the very beginning, preceded only by *Al-Fatihah*, the essence of the Holy Quran. In *Al-Fatihah*, guidance toward the right path is sought, while the first section of *Al-Baqarah* outlines that path.

The Beginning and the End of Chapters

Another remarkable aspect of the Holy Quran is that the subject matter at the beginning of a chapter is also discussed toward the end. For example, in *Al-Baqarah*, the success and final triumph of the believers are discussed at the outset of the chapter, and the closing words relate to the same subject in the form of a prayer: "...so grant us victory over the disbelieving people." (2:286) Similarly, in *Al-Imran*, the topic of Christianity is discussed at the beginning and the conclusion. Likewise, *Al-Nisa* begins with a discussion about women's rights and concludes with the words, "If a man dies and he has no son, and he has a sister..." (4:176), again referring to the subject of women's rights. Thus, every chapter of the Holy Quran begins with a particular subject, discusses its various ramifications in detail, and concludes with a summary of the same topic to reinforce its message.

The Life and Death of Nations

Another amazing aspect of the Holy Quran is the connectivity between its chapters. The most relevant question for any nation is whether it will endure over time. There is much debate about what should be prioritised in this matter. In placing *Al-Baqarah* at the outset of the Holy Quran, Allah the Most High has told us that the subject of national success is of prime importance. The whole of *Al-Baqarah* discusses

how dead nations can be revived, taking as its example the children of Israel¹.

The Life and Death of the Children of Israel

In *Al-Baqarah*, the Holy Quran states: "Have you not considered those who went (*kharaju*) forth from their homes, and they were thousands, for fear of death. Then Allah said to them, die. Then He gave them life. Surely Allah is Gracious to people, but most people are not grateful." (2:243)

The Arabic word *kharaju* (exodus) in this context refers to the nation mentioned in the Bible's Book of Exodus, namely the children of Israel. They escaped the tyranny of the Pharaoh with Prophet Moses, then wandered for forty years in the wilderness. They were brought back to life from this veritable death and given ownership of the Holy Land. Therefore, the life and death of a nation and the factors influencing this are of prime importance.

The Cause of Muslim Downfall

A significant cause for the downfall of the Muslims was neglect of this essential duty and the fact that they did not make an effort to increase their numerical strength. Allah the Most High had shown them the way in these words of the Holy Quran: "And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful." (3:104)

This was the golden principle for the revival of the nation. Alas! Muslims neglected to promote their religion and wasted their strength. Nothing can remain static: it either makes progress or deteriorates. If I have power in my arms, I should use them so that they become stronger and help me make further progress. If I do not use them, they will lose strength and become useless. This verse tells us that to sustain our nation's life, we cannot remain stationary; we must move forward. If you stop making any effort, you will decline, and death will

rapidly come. Any faculty, if left idle, will fade and go to waste. A tree that does not absorb nutrients from the earth through its roots will fail to thrive and soon wither away.

Similarly, a nation that nurtures itself by bringing in fresh nutrients will stay alive and maintain its strength. If it neglects this duty and fails to invite and include newcomers, loss of strength is inevitable.² This is a firm, universal law of Allah the Most High. Power can only increase if used properly; otherwise, it is wasted. The laws of God do not change, as stated in the Holy Quran: "Thou seest no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent." (67:3)

The Early Period of Islam

Why and how did the Muslims terminate their lifeline? It occurred when they neglected the duty of inviting outsiders into their faith. In the beginning, a child requires only a tiny amount of nourishment to sustain its growth. During this early period of the Muslim nation's growth, noble companions of the Holy Prophet overcame tremendous odds and carried the message of Islam to all corners of the world. When the development of the Islamic nation reached its prime, it was deprived of this nurturing sustenance, although more nutrition is needed in the youthful years of growth. In *Al-Baqarah* and *Al-Imran*, Allah the Most High says that you can only be given spiritual life when you strive to promote Islam and invite others into your faith. Nothing remains static; change is inevitable. That which does not progress cannot remain stationary. It inevitably goes into a state of decline.

Social Interaction Ordained by Allah

After emphasising the need to strive for national rejuvenation by actively promoting growth, the Holy Quran draws our attention toward social interaction in these words: "O people, keep your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind), and spread from these two

¹ Refers to the ten lost tribes of Israel, which were exiled from Palestine by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 500 BC. See Khawaja Nazir Ahmad's epic work, *Jesus in Heaven on Earth*.

² This is the reason that the Promised Messiah stressed the need for asking people to take the baiat to join the Community.
- Editor

many men and women. And keep your duty to Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship. Surely Allah is ever a Watcher over you.” (4:1)

Was this excellent arrangement the work of Abu Bakr (r) or Zaid bin Thabit (r)? The Holy Quran states: “Surely on Us rests the collecting of it and the reciting of it. So when We recite it, follow its recitation.” (75:17-18)

This arrangement was the work of Allah alone. The principles of social and civil interaction evolve from family relationships.

Women’s Rights and the Marital Relationship Between Husband and Wife

The relationship between a husband and a wife is the basis from which family life evolves, and it eventually affects the broader spectrum of national and civil affairs. Therefore, relations between men and women must be as positive as possible. The Holy Prophet made an excellent statement in this regard: “The best of you is he who is good to his wife.” This is the truth, for he who does not treat his wife well cannot be expected to treat outsiders with kindness or empathy.

There is another Hadith in which Hazrat Umar (r) states, “During the days of ignorance, we gave no importance to women. With the revelation of the Holy Quran and its emphasis on women’s rights, women became more aware and started to stand up for their rights. My wife once challenged my decision, to which I retorted: ‘Who are you to speak to me thus?’ She told me to visit my daughter and see how she argues with the Messenger of Allah.” Umar (r) then visited Hazrat Hafsa (his daughter and a wife of the Holy Prophet) and told her that he had learned of her argumentative behaviour toward the Holy Prophet. He advised her to refrain from this, for displeasing the Holy Prophet (s) would not be correct. Being his daughter, she remained respectfully silent. Hazrat Umar (r) then visited Hazrat Um-e-Salamah, another wife of the Holy Prophet, and offered the same advice. She answered, “Umar, who are you to interfere in our family matters?” At this, Hazrat Umar turned back.

These incidents illustrate that the Holy Quran established women’s rights in a society where, before its revelation, they were nonexistent. How could Islam ignore the rights of half of humanity and leave women in a state of subjugation? That is why it gave them their lawful rights. In this chapter, *Al-Nisa*, these rights and those of orphans are delineated.

Establishment of the Rights of Women and Children

Historically, Arabs typically believed that the right of inheritance belonged only to one who could wield the spear. They gave no right of inheritance to women, who generally remained at home and did not participate in battles. In many countries, women’s and children’s inheritance rights are not acknowledged, even now. Islam considered this unacceptable and gave women and children equal inheritance rights alongside men. This chapter discusses these topics and references some of the battles undertaken to defend the rights of women and children facing the tyranny of disbelievers. This is expressed in the following words of the Holy Quran: “And what reason have you not to fight in the way of Allah, and of the weak among the men and the women and the children, who say: Our Lord, take us out of this town, whose people are oppressors, and grant us from a friend, and grant us from a helper!” (4:75)

Responsibilities of Women with Acquisition of Rights

Islam covers each of its topics comprehensively. Thus, where the Holy Quran outlines the rights of women and men, it also delineates their responsibilities. The Holy Quran states, “And women have rights similar to those against them in a just manner....” (2:228). It is a typical failing that we want our rights recognised but fail to recognise our responsibilities. Both men and women exhibit this shortcoming. It is essential to appreciate that those who fail to accept their responsibilities cannot expect their rights. We must first fulfil our responsibilities and then demand our rights. Thus, this chapter begins with the words, “O people, keep your duty to your Lord.” (to be continued) ([Return to Contents](#))

Imam Muhammad Abdullah

By **Fathie A. Abdat**



(About the author: Fathie A. Abdat is a civil servant in the Ministry of Education (Singapore). Away from the pressures of the Ministry, he researches Islamic groups in 20th century America. He lives in Punggol in the northeast of Singapore with his wife and three kids and lives for Islam, historical research and football.)

Despite his unassuming demeanour, Imam Muhammad Abdullah (1905-1992) has played a pivotal role in shaping the Islamic experience in Fiji and America that spanned over six decades. As a result of his adaptive ability to move across spatial geographies, he emerged as a figure of devotion across several Islamic communities. Ironically, as these different Islamic groups staked their respective claims over Abdullah’s legacy on their movements, memories of the Punjabi-born figure became the site of an emotionally-charged contest. Subsequently, his actual historical identity has become shrouded in murky obscurity while myths, half-truths and exaggerations bog his legacy. Therefore, this heightens the necessity to disentangle the mythical Abdullah from the historical Abdullah.

Abdullah’s origins were simple and a distant world away from his future odyssey. He was born on 15th June 1905 in Ehsanpur, a small village by the Indus River located in Punjab’s district of Muzaffargarh. His father, Malik Gohar Ali, descended from Punjab’s rural land-owning class, though declining fortunes compelled a career switch to teach in an elementary school. Abdullah’s mother, of Afghan extraction, traced her family’s ancestral roots to the Mogul era, where they served as imams (Islamic leaders), qazi (judicial duties), hafiz (Quranic teachers)



“Master” Muhammad Abdullah.

and physicians. Abdullah inherited this blend of teaching-from his father- and Islamic spirituality-from his mother.

His introduction to the Lahore Ahmadiyya was far from

straightforward. Initially, both Abdullah’s father and himself were sceptical of its tenets. Nevertheless, as young Abdullah navigated through various tiers of educational institutions: - Ehsanpur Elementary School, Kot-Addu Middle School, Muzaffargarh High School and Lahore Central Training College for Teachers, he came into contact with several members of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam Lahore (AAIIL) - who nudged him closer into the religious fold. Upon graduation, the Ahmadiyya networks and friendships earned him teaching stints in the Lahore Muslim High School and Baddomalhi Ahmadiyya Muslim High School in the Sialkot district. Abdullah taught English to prepare students to clear the Matriculation Exams in the latter.

At the turn of the twentieth century, circumstances crystallised in Fiji, paving an opportunity for Abdullah to become British India’s first designated Indian Muslim export to the southern Pacific Islands. In 1916 after the Girmitya system of contractual labour was abolished, about 7,500 Indian Muslims remained in Fiji. But their religious identity came under threat from the looming twin spectres of syncretism and Hindu, Christian proselytisation. In response, various Fiji Islamic societies mushroomed, including the Anjuman Hidayat-ul Islam (Islam Teaching Society-AHDI). Created in 1915 as a middle-class activist movement, the AHDI advocated educational reforms for the upliftment of suppressed Muslims. It established a rudimentary Islamic school in Nausori but lacked the staff to develop and deliver the curriculum. Sometime early in 1930, the AHDI circulated a job advertisement in several Indian Muslim newspapers inviting an experienced Indian Muslim teacher and propagator to meet their fledging needs.

AHDI’s request came to the attention of Babu Manzur Ilahi, Joint Secretary of the AAIL, who handled correspondence with other Islamic organisations beyond Lahore. As an auxiliary educator in an AAIL institution, Abdullah was offered this opportunity and with his curiosity for adventure piqued, he signed up for the assignment. In Abdullah’s case, the foreign assignment to a tiny, far-flung South Pacific Island did not garner much publicity, and so it was not given the customary sending off for outgoing missionaries. Before his departure in early 1930, the twenty-five-year-old Abdullah tied

the knot with Hamidah Begum (1912-2012) from Abbotabad under the watchful eyes of Maulana Muhammad Yayha, an important Ahmadiyya official who performed the *nikah*. Then, Abdullah and his wife immediately prepared for the upcoming travel to Fiji. At the eleventh hour, while boarding luggage at a platform of the Lahore Railway Station, Abdullah was surprised by the sight of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali, Amir of Central Anjuman- sprinting towards him, gripping his hands and reciting prayers for the departing pair. The encounter lasted only five minutes but left a deep- lasting impression on Abdullah, "I could not hear the prayers, but I could certainly feel their effects. It seemed as if my hands were connected to an electrical battery, and its current was penetrating the fibres of my being. While thanking God for the privilege of feeling the spiritual power of the late Hazrat Amir, I realised that there was Divine purpose in the farewell meeting not being held for me".

Devoid of international airlines, the couple arrived in Fiji by steamer ship in 1931. Within a few months of arriving, Hamid Abdullah gave birth to their first child Akbar Abdullah (1931-2013), in Suva, Fiji. A sickly child for a few years in his childhood forced the Abdullahs to juggle between nursing Akbar back to health and implementing the AHDI's project. Since Abdullah was a certified, experienced teacher from British India, Fiji's colonial government enlisted him in the Civil Service and deployed him to Levuka for a brief teaching stint. By the second half of 1931, however, Abdullah resettled in the Nausori, a suburb area within the capital city of Suva, to embark on the AHDI vision of erecting Islamic schools- but faced seemingly insurmountable challenges.

Abdullah discovered a dysfunctional middle school consisting of "only one room and which had no provision for electricity and water". On Sep 16, 1931, Abdullah wrote to the editor of *The Light* lamenting depressingly low literacy levels and scarcity of skilled teachers due to the colonial administrator's aversion to recruiting trained colonial educators from India. Instead, British authorities favoured the longer-term modus operandi of starting a Teachers' Training

Institution for grooming Fiji Indian youths as future teachers. But this still left immediate issues unresolved. Though another teachers' training association existed, this was conducted by the Methodist Missionary Society of Australia. While a handful of wealthier Fiji Indians sent their youths to Australia and New Zealand for better education, this option was largely closed to the Fijian Muslims who languished in a "very backward condition". Abdullah ruled the grimy, archaic administration of Islamic youth education for over 2,000 Muslim youths, "only two ill-organised and meagrely equipped Muslim primary schools. There are two teachers in the boys' schools with an attendance of 70. The teacher in the Girls' school is an Indian Christian lady with attendance of about 30- half being Hindus." In stark contrast, several dozens of Hindu-based vernacular schools dotted the Colony. Practically, Abdullah was left on his own to build up an Islamic education infrastructure.

As the existing building was insufficient to hold the growing numbers of enthusiastic Fijian Muslim schoolchildren, Abdullah devoted his energies to fundraising to renovate the AHDI building. He indefatigably traversed on foot along feeder roads and past sugarcane farm plantations to solicit donations among impoverished Muslim labourers and prominent Muslim traders in Fiji. In Aug 1934, Abdullah wrote to *Young Islam*¹, another fortnightly AAIIIL publication requesting Rs.5,000 funds to be passed to a Mr N.B. to start male and female schools. Further, Abdullah announced nascent plans for a foreign student exchange scheme by sending one Fijian male student to India and two female students to Aligarh Girl School. By the mid-1930s, His Majesty's Governor-General of the Fiji Island formally declared the newly constructed £1300 Vunimono Islamia High School building open. Within a few years, Abdullah oversaw the AHDI's Nausori's upgrade from a single-classroom building into a multi-classroom complex. In 1942, Abdullah dipped £150 into his savings to sponsor the construction of student hostel facilities. He purchased a former American military barracks and relocated them to high school. As the only Muslim school in the region, the student hostel facilitated access to education for out-of-town students. For over

¹ A private publication edited and financed by Dr Allah Bakhsh.

twenty years, Abdullah served as a driving force for the school, helming many responsibilities— as headmaster principal, designer of the school curriculum and publisher of textbooks. Today, Abdullah’s Vunimono Islamia School boasts a multi-storey Nausori High School, replete with a library, science laboratories and advanced computer technology infrastructure. It remains indebted to Abdullah’s tireless devotion to transforming the educational landscape in Nausori.

Apart from concerning himself with youth education, Abdullah was also keen on shielding the Islamic identity of the Fiji Muslim community from the pernicious threat posed by Arya Samaj and Sanatan Dharm Sabha missionaries. As soon as Abdullah arrived in Fiji, he warned readers of *The Light* that Hindu missionaries were “hard at work to crush the Muslims” and whose operations were “of a clandestine nature but to the observant eye, they are vivid and clear”. Abdullah made a clarion call to “the Muslim organisations of India should come to the assistance of the Muslims here. One or two able and sincere preachers are required who would tour the whole Colony and organise the Muslims. Would the Islamic societies of India not rise to the occasion and help maintain and strengthen this far-flung outpost of Islam in the South Pacific Ocean?” The AAAIL responded to Abdullah’s plea by dispatching Muzaffar Beg Sateh, a highly skilled linguist and missionary to Fiji in 1933.

Yet, it is important to note that before his American experience, Abdullah did not serve in any official AAAIL (F) capacity but straddled the interstices between the AHDI and the AAAIL in Lahore and Fiji. Between 1934 and 1935, Abdullah worked as a freelance, ad-hoc correspondent for *Young Islam*, a biweekly English language magazine reporting on AAAIL developments in Fiji. In August 1934, Abdullah wrote a column, “The Ahmadiyya Movement Day by Day”, announcing the AAAIL Fiji’s inaugural celebrations held on July 1, 1934, in Suva, Fiji. This was written amidst the acrimonious backdrop of the Fiji Muslim League (FML)’s ban on AAAIL members, prohibiting their entry to Jame Masjid in Amy Street, Suva and voting all Lahoris out of the FML board on accusations of heresy. A few months later, in Oct 1934, the AAAIL severed their cords from the nationwide FML by formally registering the AAAIL-Fiji in Suva. By the

end of 1934, the AAAIL’s Annual Report indicated that the AAAIL (F) had recovered from their earlier setbacks. It clearly outlined that both “Master Muhammad Abdullah and Mirza Muzaffar are doing very useful work in Fiji” to transform the initial hostility of the islands’ inhabitants towards a friendlier disposition towards AAAIL. Proudly boasted that nearly 500 men have joined the movement. In April 1935, Abdullah penned another article titled “Voice from Fiji Islands”, extolling Young Islam for rendering “yeomen service for the cause of true Islam Ahmadiyyat”. To reciprocate the AAAIL’s financial contribution to AHDI Islamic school, Abdullah widened the newspaper’s circulation by registering another five subscribers. Officially, Abdullah maintained neutrality in terms of his religious affiliation by donning the title ‘Headmaster’ of the AHDI school. On a practical level, Abdullah found it mutually beneficial to cultivate close social, financial and transnational networks with the Central Anjuman to boost the odds of survival for both his school and the newly-formed AAAIL-Fiji.

After the cataclysmic events of World War II, Abdullah began displaying an internationalist outlook. In 1953, Abdullah assumed a diplomatic role by inviting Habibur Rahman, the first Pakistani High Commissioner to Australia, to visit the Vunimono Islamia School. At the high-profile event, several senior British civil servants and the Governor of Fiji gathered to deepen Commonwealth ties between Pakistan, Australia, Britain and Fiji’s diasporic Muslim community.

In the mid-1955, contingent events intervened to hand Abdullah his first opportunity as an official AAAIL representative. Bashir Ahmad Minto, the inaugural President of the Muslim Society of USA (MSUSA) in San Francisco, California, had been recalled to Pakistan and subsequently redeployed to reinvigorate missions in Trinidad, Guyana and Surinam. Having burnished his credentials in Fiji, Abdullah was appointed to replace Minto as “Imam” and plug the leadership gap. Abdullah’s meteoric rise through the pinnacles of the Lahori hierarchy was hardly surprising considering the qualities he brought.

First, Abdullah’s financial canvassing acumen assured an injection of sorely needed capital from Fiji to the nascent MSUSA. Nowhere

was this more starkly demonstrated than before he departed for San Francisco. Within a short time, Abdullah reached out to donors from the islands of Suva, Nausori and Labasa and from diverse religious and economic backgrounds to support Minto's San Francisco Mosque Appeal Project. At the conclusion of the fundraising event held in Vunimono Muslim School, his endeavours netted £1675.90. Among the list of luminaries who graced the occasion were Devi Dayal Bhatiya (Commissioner for Government of India in Fiji), Mr C. Elliot (general manager of CSRC Ltd) and Mr K.B Singh (Principal of several schools). Between 1955 and 1957, Abdullah continued to raise funds for the proposed mosque construction project in San Francisco; and was determined to finance it through contributions from American citizens from various denominations.

Second, in 1956, Abdullah's connections created a pipeline between Fiji Indian students and overseas tertiary institutions. From the early late 1940s, the American government began relaxing annual immigration regulations from the region. Abdullah took advantage of this opportunity to establish a mutually beneficial nexus where Fijian Indian students were afforded a golden opportunity to continue their higher learning at Western universities. In exchange, this Fijian diaspora community in the West (especially USA) served as a ready pool to tap into of young, well-educated members for MSUSA. This scheme kickstarted in 1949 when Abdullah sent his eldest son, Akbar, who graduated from High School in Fiji, to study Chemical Technology in California. While studying, Akbar retraced his father's footsteps of Islamic activism by serving as secretary of MSUSA. As Secretary to Minto, Akbar printed Islamic articles and disseminated letters to Bay Area residents. In September 1953, Akbar wrote an article for the *Islamic Review* (Working Mosque), underscoring the growing number of Fijian Muslim students who successfully pursued university education in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and Pakistan. In particular, Akbar fulsomely credited the MSUSA for creating a pathway for seven graduates from his father's Fijian Islamic schools to continue their learning journey. In this scheme, Abdullah acted as the main conduit- shortlisting interested, eligible Fijian students and prodding the MSUSA to oversee their welfare and integration once they enrolled in their respective American

colleges and universities.

Third, it was highly plausible that Abdullah's strong Fijian connections greatly assisted in printing MSUSA booklets and publications. Copies of MSUSA's list of Islamic books and literature, such as Marmaduke Pickthal's Islamic literature, were sold under the aegis of the MSUSA at 519 Grant Street Building, 1095 Market Street. However, these were printed in Fiji by the Sangam Sarada Printing Press in Nadi, Fiji. This press was owned by Swami Rudrananda, a member of the Ramakrishna missionary group. It worked for Indo-Fijians' educational and cultural uplift by publishing newspapers and publications in Tamil, Hindi and English. In some of these Islamic materials, Minto formally expressed his thanks to "many Muslim friends in the Fiji Islands (South Pacific) for their assistance in bearing the cost of this publication".

Thus in July 1955, Muhammad Abdullah boarded the S.S. Orofisay from Port Suva to Port Francisco to help with the Lahori's mission and visit his sons, Akbar and Khalid Abdullah. This was a breakthrough for Abdullah in more ways than one on a personal level. He stepped out of his decades-long role as an educator, and Abdullah also broke new ground by clinching an official position within the Lahori American hierarchy. A whirlwind of energy, Abdullah dedicated himself whole-heartedly to the mission of spreading the rationale, modernist, the liberal orientation of Islam. M. Abdullah represented MSUSA at the World Parliament of Religions at the University of Oregon. On April 13, 1956, MSUSA participated in a symposium on Organic Evolution held at San Francisco State College. Abdullah delegated Sahu Khan featured as the Islamic representative alongside other Catholic, Jewish, Baptist and science expert panellists. In October 1956, MSUSA held Prophet Day celebrations at MSUSA headquarters; Mr B.N attended. Nanda, Indian Consul General in San Francisco, delivered a speech commending Prophet Muhammad's message of universal brotherhood and equality for humanity. On November 5, 1956, Abdullah assumed the mantle of Islamic representative at an Inter-Faith Council held at Poly State College, San Luis Obispo, California. He kickstarted the assembly on "Religion in the India-Pakistan Struggle", propounding how Islam was not a new Mohammedan religion but rooted earlier in Prophet

Abraham. He contended Islam advocated the unity of God and the brotherhood of humanity and encouraged tolerance towards all religions. On the flip side, Abdullah accused European and Oriental historians of unfairly caricaturing a “distorted picture” of Islam as a violent, intolerable faith spread by the sword. A visibly impressed Dr Robert Roddin, Chairman of the meeting, spoke highly of Islam, while Dr Eugene E. Dawson, Dean of Kansas State College, extended Abdullah an invite for a future talk. At the conclusion of the council, an appreciative Reverend Ray Heer, Executive Secretary, presented Abdullah with a golden pin.

The 1957 California City Directory records disclosed “Reverend Muhammad Abdullah” as an “assistant pastor”. But Abdullah never wholly lost his affinities with his Fijian past, and soon on January 12, 1957, Abdullah returned to Fiji, leaving the MSUSA leadership temporarily vacant. Back in Nausori, he retained his role as a vigorous defender of the American Lahori movement. On March 8, 1957, Abdullah prophesized in *The Light* (Pakistan) that the turn of the twentieth century would mark an Islamic renaissance “again on the march”. The AAIIIL would spearhead this through its double-pronged approach of an intellectual jihad through a proliferation of Islamic literature and its missionary encroachments into the West. Abdullah stressed the pivotal role of disseminating Maulana Muhammad Ali’s translated copy of the Quran in 1918. And the global reach of AAIIIL’s missionaries permeating into Britain, Germany, Indonesia and the United States. Abdullah exerted though the AAIIIL seemed to be fewer in numbers, they punched above their weight through their active presence in the proliferating number of international missions dotting the globe. Essentially, Abdullah underscored the Lahori founding fathers’ basic line on the inevitable march towards an Islamic flowering in the West.

On May 24, 1957, Abdullah regaled listeners on a local radio talk programme with tales of the USA’s rich tapestry of religious experiences. He lauded America for its materialistic advancements while still retaining a keen sense of spirituality. African-American Baptists’ “demonstration of madness and love shown at the time of their church services” fascinated him. Interestingly, Abdullah drew parallels between Sufi Muslims and African-American Pentecostals.

The latter’s “dancing in this church is a necessity. When the Minister is infused with spirit, he starts dancing while other members of the congregation follow”. Such Christian passion and public expressions of spirituality were not dissimilar to Muslim Sufis “who display similarly while very touching hymns are sung”. The Christian Science denomination left a vivid impression on him for its awe-inspiring architecture and faith-healing practices. Mormons were viewed positively for contributing to Utah’s economic growth. Abdullah’s conciliatory attitude was best exemplified in his short commentary on the African-American Nation of Islam. He said: “the followers of Eliaj (sic) Muhammad are very zealous workers. The women don’t take part in social dances, and they wear head coverings”. Though Abdullah was fulsome in his praise for Elijah Muhammad’s followers’ sincerity and spiritual passion, he noted an excessive tendency in their believers to be “fanatics in many ways”. Abdullah’s liberal embrace of every single American religious movement seems curiously unorthodox for an AAIIIL missionary charged with inspiring others to follow his Islamic lead. However, in this regard lay his unique strength of being an enlightened individual who at times operated beyond the bounds of conventional organisational activity. In a utopian manner, Abdullah clung to his firm convictions that despite the bewildering diversity of religious denominations, they could all work together harmoniously through inter-faith councils and conferences.

Besides writing for *The Light*, Abdullah continuously leveraged his San Francisco network to beef up his Vunimono Muslim school’s library. At the end of 1956, Reverend Ramsay Deoki officially opened the Adult section of his library. In mid-1957, Abdullah requested officials from San Francisco City Library and Winfield Scott School, San Francisco, to help open a children’s section. At the official opening ceremony in Nausori, Mr Miller, Principal of Scott Winfield School, addressed a gathering of 220 children and guests, complimenting Abdullah as a “quiet man with a peaceful disposition”. Abdullah was sincerely appreciative of the San Francisco organisations’ altruistic gestures that bedecked his library with copies of “The World Around Us”, “All About Story Land”, “Looking Forward”, “Today and Tomorrow”, “From Sea to Sea”, “Our Home”, “The Illustrated Encyclopedia”. At the event’s finale and to further drive the students’

motivations, 25 children of various levels were presented with awards by the Assistant Manager of Colonial Sugar Refining Company, Nausori, for outstanding examination performances. This event illustrated Abdullah's humanistic ability to connect with and synergise people across age groups and faiths for the greater good.

Another heart-warming Fiji-San Francisco acquaintance Abdullah forged was between Mrs Bonnie Freisen, a credit clerk from Petaluma and himself during his stint of duty in San Francisco. A dilettante antiquarian, Freisen had been trying to decipher a mysterious language inscribed on strange manuscripts and an ancient ceremonial sword she discovered while rummaging through an old apartment. The language experts she consulted couldn't decipher the writing. She was not fully satisfied with their hypothesis that it stemmed from a long-forgotten Rejang alphabet developed by 13th C Arab adventurers in Borneo. By a fortuitous encounter in San Francisco, Freisen chanced upon Abdullah writing in Arabic and struck a personal friendship with the gentleman. He shared with her the daunting challenges youths in Nausori, Fiji faced. The big-hearted Freisen embarked on a one-woman campaign, transforming her basement into a reception centre for clean, used clothing and books from like-minded donors within the community. Next, she persuaded Matson Shipping Line to deliver several crates of books and four boxes of clothing to Nausori High School for free. This created a clothing centre at the school and stocked up its library with more than 1200 books. Through her growing affinity with Fjian youths, Freisen also financially sponsored Miss Prakash Mati, a struggling, physically disabled Fiji Indian girl's education at Yuba College, California as a pre-medical student. The unfortunate girl lost her right arm during a horrific bus accident as she returned home from Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation Day celebrations in Suva in 1953. Abdullah orchestrated a fundraising campaign to provide for her airfare to California while the Freisens' paid for her education and took her into their family home as an adopted daughter whom they lovingly named "Parky". These benevolent acts are featured in San Francisco Examiner and The Light (Pakistan) to inspire their respective readers.

Unquestionably when we see Muhammad

Abdullah, we see the embodied Islamic sense of deep piety, capacity for hard work and fierce commitment to duty. Between 1931 and 1959 in Fiji, Abdullah possessed obligations to both (emphasis mine) the AHDI Vunimono School in Nausori, Fiji and AAAIL-via-the MSUSA in San Francisco. By the end of the 1950s, these responsibilities became symbiotically intertwined and the boundaries between the two movements increasingly blurred. So much so that by 1958, Abdullah's Vunomino High School, Nausori, was converted into the AAAIL's main contact point in Fiji, as officially enumerated in AAAIL publications. On May 3, 1958, A. Rasul Baksh, a colleague from Vunimono High School, wrote a missive to The Light asking for the astronomical-religious symbolic significance of crescents and stars employed by Muslim countries in their state emblems. By Jul 1958, The Light publication listed their AAAIL representative in Fiji to be "Master Muhammad Abdullah, Vunimono Muslim School, Nausori".

In the following article *insha-Allah*, I will chart Abdullah's second (and definitive) foray into America between 1959 and 1992, when he reinvented himself as an international representative for the AAAIL and a spiritual guide for Imam Wallace Muhammad's African-American Muslim community. (to be continued) ([Return to Contents](#))

To Get or Not to Get!

Collyer Bristow LLP



(From: Lexology.com [shorturl.at/puxAR](https://www.lexology.com/shorturl.at/puxAR))

Alan Moher pleaded guilty to controlling and coercive behaviour on 28 February 2022, in a landmark private prosecution brought by his ex-wife, Caroline Moher, in part concerning his refusal to grant her a 'Get' (the document effecting a Jewish couple's religious divorce).

This denied Ms Moher the freedom to remarry under Jewish law. Although the couple civilly divorced in 2019, a Get can only be granted voluntarily, with a husband's free will, leaving many women chained to marriages that are over in all but name.

Moreover, in the pursuit of a Get, many women find themselves prisoners to their

husband's demands, effectively blackmailed into agreeing to a worse settlement in the civil courts regarding finances or contact with the children. Indeed, Mr Moher exerted such leverage, offering his wife an extra £80,000 in their civil divorce if he did not have to give her a Get.

There are a few options open to the English courts to persuade recalcitrant husbands to grant their wives a Get. For example, refusing to finalise the civil divorce or order that the husband makes periodical 'maintenance' payments to his wife until he grants the Get (this was ordered in the Moher case and is something Mr Moher unsuccessfully appealed). Some Batei Din also impose sanctions on these men, but a Get granted under coercion is invalid under Orthodox law.

Mr Moher was abusive to Ms Moher in other ways. He had previously received a public order conviction when he "shouted abuse" at Ms Moher after a family court hearing and said she was "going to get what was coming to her". He has physically assaulted and threatened to kill her.

On 1 April 2022, the property tycoon was sentenced to 18 months in prison for controlling and coercive behaviour under The Serious Crime Act 2015. Judge Martin Beddoe said, "You sought to manipulate and control her all in the knowledge that it would substantially impact her mental health and, in some respects, also impact her physical health."

Ms Moher's victim impact statement read, "Imagine being put into a straitjacket, gagged, your hands and feet are tied... You are dependent on your captor to set you free. That's how I feel still being married to Alan."

After the sentencing, Ms Moher addressed the press, saying, "To those victims out there – you are not alone, and justice and humanity are on your side... I urge you not to stay silent but to fight for your freedom." However, even imprisonment cannot compel Mr Moher to grant his ex-wife a get, and Ms Moher remains shackled to her abuser.

With the new "no-fault" divorce laws coming into force in the English civil courts this week, in part so that someone whose spouse refuses

to accept a divorce will no longer have to wait five years for one to be granted, many may feel that it is immoral that a woman can be indefinitely chained to her ex-husband and kept forever hanging at his whim. ([Return to Contents](#))

RAMADAN MUBARAK!

By Iain Dixon



Asalamu aleikum wa rahmatullah wa barakhatuhu to all my beloved Muslim friends! From my heart to yours, I wish you a sincere RAMADAN MUBARAK!

Warm Christian greetings to each one of you! May you enjoy the blessings and bounties of this special month in your sacred calendar - and may it be a truly unforgettable Ramadan for you this year, filled not only with duty - but with delight! Wow! This Ramadan, you don't only have to fast - you GET to fast! May you experience a renewed connection with our wonderful Creator and a greater opportunity to be good and do good. May you know the joy of being forgiven and being a forgiver also.

WATCH YOUR TONGUE

Ramadan should be a time of self-reflection and an opportunity for self-improvement. Just as a caterpillar is gradually transformed into a butterfly, so the days of Ramadan can be a chrysalis of change and transformation for each one of us. What qualities about you (and me!) need changing over these next thirty days? It has been said that not one of us is perfect - but we are being perfected, no one of us is sinless - but we should be sinning less! Maybe this Ramadan, we could be careful in using our tongue - only uttering words that build up, encourage, and strengthen those who feel weak and discouraged.

LOOK AROUND

We live in a fractured and broken world, like a beautifully decorated vase that has been forcefully thrown to the ground smashing into many pieces. We see beautiful people around us broken and bruised by war, conflict and abuse. Hate has replaced help, greed has replaced generosity - and superiority has replaced humility. May each of us this Ramadan be a healer and restorer - making a difference and bringing

change, even if it is just making a discouraged one smile.

LOOKUP

How do you see Allah? Is he just a doctrine? Is he just a belief? Do we see Him as a dictator or a mystery who keeps us guessing? May each one of us this Ramadan be renewed in our purpose to know Allah more closely, to hear his voice more clearly, to seek his ways, and to find him again as our greatest treasure - more vast than the oceans, more majestic than the universe, more precious than silver and gold! May we look up and see Allah once more in all his glory and greatness - yet feel his presence closer than our breath. Ramadan Mubarak!. [\(Return to Contents\)](#)



Eternal Life

By **Imtiaz Hooseni** and **Robbert Bipat**



(Largely based on the book *The Religion of Islam* by Maulana Muhammad Ali.)

As the Holy Qur'an speaks of the development of a higher life even here on earth, the spiritual experience of man is the first stage of the higher life. Yet man usually neglects this higher experience. Only those of remarkably high spiritual development are aware of that higher life. The Barzakh is the second stage of the development of that higher life, and it seems that all people at that stage have a certain awareness of the higher life, although the full development has not yet taken place. The Holy Qur'an mentions that the development of physical life also goes through three stages:

The state of being dust from the earth

In the mother's womb
When the child is born

He knows you best when He brings you forth from the earth and when you are embryos in the wombs of your mothers (53:32)

And He began the creation of man from dust. Then He made His progeny of an extract, of worthless water. Then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit (32:7-9)

And certainly, We create man of an extract of clay, and then We make him a small life-germ in a firm resting-place . . . We cause it to grow into another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of the creators! (23:12-14)

In line with these three stages of physical human development, the dust stage, the embryonic stage, and the birth stage, the Holy Qur'an speaks of three stages of spiritual development. The first is the development of a spiritual life, which already begins in this life, but is a stage in which there is usually no consciousness of that life, such as the dust stage of man's physical development. Then comes death, and with death, it enters the second stage of the higher or spiritual life, the Barzakh or *qabr* stage, corresponding to the embryonic stage of human material development. At this stage, life has taken on a particular form, and a certain consciousness of that life has arisen. Still, it is not yet the full consciousness of the final development, which takes place with the Resurrection and can thus be compared to the actual birth of man, as he moves towards true progress, towards a forthcoming awareness of the great truth. The development of the higher life in the Barzakh is as necessary a stage in the spiritual world as the development of physical life in the embryonic state. So the two phases are entirely aligned.

The spiritual experience of the Barzakh stage

Immediately after death, at least some degree of awareness of a new spiritual experience is sufficiently clear from the various Quranic statements. For example, the same verses in which the *Barzakh* is spoken of (23:99-100) speak of the spiritual experience of the evildoer, who becomes directly aware that he has done something in his first life that prevents the development of the higher life. Therefore he desires to return to perform good that will promote the development of the higher life. It shows that the consciousness of a higher life arose in him immediately after death. In another place, we are told that God makes the evildoers taste the evil consequences of their actions in a *Barzakh* state, in which the awareness of the punishment on the Day of Resurrection becomes clear:

And evil chastisement overtook Pharaoh's people - the Fire. They are brought before it (every) morning and evening, and on the day

when the hour comes to pass: Make Pharaoh's people enter the severest chastisement (40:45-46)

According to the Holy Qur'an, the guilty are punished in the *Barzakh* state. The punishment is mentioned in the hadith under the name *'adzab al-qabr* or the punishment given in the grave. In the book of *Bukhari*, the chapter on *'adzab al-qabr* begins with quotations from the Holy Qur'an, one of which is the verse about the punishment of Pharaoh's people in the *Barzakh*. This shows that *Bukhari* considers these two punishments as one and thus establishes the identity of *qabr* and *Barzakh*. The 90th chapter of *Bukhari* bears the title: Dead are shown their dwelling in the morning and the evening. (B. 23:90) Under this title, 'Abd-Allah ibn 'Umar's hadith says this. The Prophet (s) said that when a person dies: "his dwelling (in the afterlife) is brought before him in the morning and the evening. Paradise for the inhabitants of Paradise, and fire for the inhabitants of the fire". This *hadith* also shows that *adzab al-qabr* means only the mental state of the guilty in the *Barzakh* state.

Likewise, the righteous are said to taste the fruits of their honourable deeds immediately after death:

And think not of those killed in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they are alive being provided sustenance from their Lord, Rejoicing in what Allah has given them out of His grace, and they rejoice for those who, (being left) behind them, have not yet joined them, that they have no fear, nor shall they grieve (3:169 -170).

These verses show that the deceased themselves are aware of what they have left behind, which establishes a clear connection between this and the next world.

It is important to realise that non-material life in the afterlife reflects immortality. So, no living being will be immortal in this earthly life, and physical presence in the afterlife is simply impossible because one must go through the dead to enter that stage. In the third and final part, we will address the matter of the presumed physical immortality of the Prophet Jesus (as). [\(Return to Contents\)](#)

[French Article](#)

RAMADAN

By Abou Tiéné - Cote d'Ivoire



Ces jours sont le mois de Ramadan au cours duquel le Coran a été descendu comme guide pour les gens, et preuves claires de la bonne direction et du discernement. (Coran Al-Baqara 2 :185)

Le mois sacré de Ramadan est un mois favorable durant lequel Allah le Très-Haut nous accorde de nombreuses récompenses. Au cours de ce mois béni, nous nous particulièrement des faveurs dont Il nous a gratifié ; nous les saisissons, certes, mais sans vraiment Le remercier comme il se doit.

Le but du jeûne est de parvenir à la crainte révérencielle d'Allah (*taqwa*) et de réprimer les sollicitations de l'âme charnelle (*nafs*) en la disciplinant et en la contrôlant. Le jeûne doit être accompli dans une attitude de constante adoration si nous voulons réellement bénéficier de ses bienfaits. Il nous permet d'obtenir de nobles vertus comme la patience et la force de caractère, de manière à ce que les vils instincts de notre égo soient formellement écartés. Comparable à un bouclier, le jeûne protège notre honneur en nous libérant des préoccupations liées aux besoins de manger et de boire, ce qui est, au demeurant, une notion propre à l'animal. Le jeûne procure courage et endurance par temps de famine et de malheur. Il nous enseigne aussi à être reconnaissants et satisfaits des bontés qu'Allah nous octroie chaque jour. Lorsque nous jeûnons, nous comprenons les difficultés que rencontre le pauvre qui souffre du manque de nourriture et, en réponse à cela, notre miséricorde envers lui est en mesure de devenir beaucoup plus conséquente. Comprendre cette réalité de cette manière peut empêcher d'une part le développement de troubles sociaux et d'autre part que les différentes classes qui

composent la société soient en butte à des conflits entre elles. En conséquence, nous pouvons dire avec assurance que la nature première de l'adoration en Islam ne permet pas qu'il y ait des divisions sociales au sein des nations. Le jeûne et la prière (salat) rendent les hommes et les femmes égaux devant Allah. Nul n'est dispensé d'accomplir ces actes d'adoration excepté ceux qui ont excuse valable.

En raison de ses aspects positifs, les prescriptions relatives au jeûne ne concernent pas seulement les musulmans puisque les communautés antérieures en avaient également bénéficié. Allah le Très-Haut dit dans Sa parole :

« Ô les croyants ! On vous a prescrit le jeûne comme on l'a prescrit à ceux d'avant vous, ainsi atteindriez-vous la piété, pendant un nombre déterminé de jours. » Coran Al-Baqara 2 :183-184.

L'Islam prescrit également une variété de pratiques culturelles à l'intention des croyants. Les différentes formes d'adoration en Islam ont pour but de guérir les différentes sortes de maladies spirituelles. Ces maladies augmentent particulièrement quand les temps sont aisés et prospères. Pendant la Mecquoise, les musulmans n'avaient aucune possibilité de les développer parce que la lutte pour survivre dans les conditions difficiles qui étaient les leurs les occupait constamment. Cependant, après avoir émigré à Médine, leur situation financière s'améliora et ils se trouvèrent à l'abri des persécutions que leur faisaient subir les Mecquois incrédules.

Afin de prévenir les musulmans du mal provenant des abus de la richesse et des plaisirs mondains, il y avait besoin d'un moyen pour restreindre l'utilisation des biens matériels. C'est au cours de cette période que le jeûne fut prescrit ; il avait pour but de préserver la santé spirituelle des croyants. En fait, le jeûne agit comme un médicament qui soigne les maladies de nature physiologique et spirituelle. Ainsi, semblable à une posologie, le jeûne a été prescrit pour un nombre limité de jours et non pas pour une année entière.

Si certains médicaments sont utilisés toutes l'année en cas de pathologie grave, le système immunitaire du corps humain s'y habitue et ne permet plus à l'utilisateur d'en bénéficier de manière suffisante. De même, le jeûne doit être accompli à des temps déterminés ; qui plus est, cela peut affaiblir l'organisme au point de rendre difficile l'accomplissement des prescriptions islamiques. C'est la raison pour laquelle le Saint Prophète Muhammad (que la paix et la bénédiction d'Allah soient sur lui) avait toujours refusé catégoriquement que ses compagnons jeûnent de façon quotidienne.

Tous les musulmans doivent obligatoirement jeûner le même mois de l'année, en l'occurrence le mois sacré de Ramadan, car cela renforce les liens d'unité de la communauté (Umma) et le jeûne plus aisé. Ce sens de l'unité est en mesure d'apporter à notre vie spirituelle d'avantage de bonheur et de clairvoyance.

Ce jeûne se déroule au cours d'un mois lunaire, ce qui est un aspect primordial. Par conséquent, en se déplaçant d'une saison à l'autre à travers tout le calendrier solaire, nous jeûnons aussi bien pendant les longues et chaudes journées d'été que pendant les courtes et froides journées d'hiver. En raison du fait que chaque jour de l'année respecte le mois de Ramadan durant sa période appropriée, ce jour est par conséquent propice à recevoir toutes les bénédictions que ce mois béni est susceptible de lui apporter, en l'occurrence une variété de saveurs et de plaisirs spirituels. Cela rend le jeûne plus facile et permet au croyant de goûter à une expérience différente. Nous pouvons aussi discerner cette richesse (spirituelle) dans l'exégèse du verset coranique suivant :

« Ô les croyants ! On vous a prescrit le jeûne (as-siyâm) » ; dans le but de nous reconforter, le verset stipule que le jeûne avait été prescrit également aux autres communautés : « comme on l'a prescrit à ceux d'avant vous ». En définitive, le verset précise que le jeûne n'est pas prescrit pour tous les jours de l'année : « pendant un nombre déterminé de jours. » Coran Al Baqara 2 :183-184.

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[Dutch Articles](#)**Onsterfelijkheid- deel 2**

Door
**Imtiaz
Hoeseni**
en
**Robbert
Bipat**



(Voornamelijk gebaseerd op het boek de Religie van de Islam van Maulana Muhammad Ali)

Aangezien de Heilige Koran spreekt van de ontwikkeling van een hoger leven dat zelfs hier op aarde begint, is de geestelijke beleving van de mens de eerste fase van het hogere leven. Toch verwaarloost de mens gewoonlijk deze hogere beleving. Alleen degenen van zeer hoge geestelijke ontwikkeling zijn zich op enige manier bewust van dat hogere leven. De *barzakh* is in werkelijkheid het tweede stadium van de ontwikkeling van dat hogere leven, en het schijnt dat iedereen in dat stadium een zekere bewustzijn van het hogere leven zal hebben, ondanks de volle ontwikkeling nog niet heeft plaats gehad. De Heilige Koran maakt er melding van dat ook de ontwikkeling van het stoffelijke leven drie stadia doorloopt:

De toestand van stof zijn

In de baarmoeder van de moeder
de geboorte van het kind

Hij kent jullie het best wanneer Hij jullie voortbrengt uit de aarde en wanneer jullie embryo's zijn in de baarmoeders van jullie moeders (53:32)

En Hij begon de schepping van de mens uit stof. Daarna maakte Hij zijn nageslacht uit een extract, van nietswaardig water. Toen vervolmaakte Hij hem en blies hem van Zijn geest in (32:7-9)

En zeker scheppen Wij de mens uit een extract van klei, daarna maken Wij hem tot een kleine levenskiem in een geborgen rustplaats... dan zorgen Wij ervoor dat het uitgroeit tot een andere schepping. Dus gezegend zij Allah, de Beste van de scheppers! (23:12-14)

In overeenstemming met deze drie stadia van stoffelijke ontwikkeling van de mens, het stofstadium, het embryonale stadium van het geboortestadium, spreekt de Heilige Koran van drie stadia van geestelijke ontwikkeling. Het

eerste is de ontwikkeling van een geestelijk leven, dat al in dit leven begint, maar slechts een stadium is, waarin gewoonlijk geen bewustzijn van dat leven is, zoals het stofstadium van de stoffelijke ontwikkeling van de mens. Dan komt de dood en daarmee treedt ze het tweede stadium van het hogere of geestelijke leven in, het *barzakh* - of *qabr*-stadium, overeenkomend met het embryonale stadium van de stoffelijke ontwikkeling van de mens. In dit stadium heeft het leven een bepaalde vorm aangenomen en is er een zeker bewustzijn van dat leven ontstaan, maar het is nog niet het volle bewustzijn van de laatste ontwikkeling, die met de Opstanding plaatsvindt en die dus vergeleken kan worden met de werkelijke geboorte van de mens, bij het zich op weg begeven naar ware vooruitgang, naar een volkomen bewustwording van de grote waarheid. De ontwikkeling van het hogere leven in de *barzakh* is in de geestelijke wereld van een even noodzakelijk stadium als de ontwikkeling van het stoffelijke leven in de embryonale toestand. De twee stadia zijn dus parallel aan elkaar.

Geestelijke beleving van het *barzakh*-stadium

Dat er onmiddellijk na de dood een soort bewustwording van een nieuwe geestelijke beleving is, blijkt voldoende duidelijk uit de verscheidene Koranische verklaringen. Bijvoorbeeld dezelfde verzen waarin van de *barzakh* gesproken wordt (23:99-100) spreken over de geestelijke beleving van de kwaaddoener, die zich er direct bewust van het feit wordt, dat hij zijn eerste leven iets heeft gedaan dat nu de ontwikkeling van het hogere leven in hem in de weg staat, en daarom verlangt hij terug te keren om goede daden te doen, die de ontwikkeling van het hogere leven zullen bevorderen. Het toont aan, dat het bewustzijn van een hoger leven onmiddellijk na de dood in hem is ontstaan. Op een andere plaats wordt ons gezegd, dat God de kwaaddoeners de slechte gevolgen van hun daden in *barzakh* -toestand laat proeven, waarin het bewustzijn van de straf op de Dag der Opstanding duidelijk wordt:

En een kwalijke straf overviel de mensen van Farao- het Vuur. Zij worden er iedere ochtend en avond voorgeleid, en op de dag dat het Uur Zal

geschieden: Maak dat de mensen van Farao de zwaarste straf binnengaan (40:45-46)

Opgemerkt moet worden dat, terwijl de schuldigen volgens de Heilige Koran straf krijgen in de *barzakh* -toestand, deze straf in de Hadith vermeld wordt onder de naam van 'adzab al-qabr of de straf die in het graf wordt toegemeten. In het boek *Boechari* begint het hoofdstuk over 'adzab al-qabr met aanhalingen uit de Heilige Koran, waarvan een het vers is over de bestraffing van Farao's volk in de *barzakh*. Dit toont aan dat *Boechari* deze twee straffen als één beschouwt, en zo stelt hij de identiteit van *qabr* en *barzakh* vast. Verder draagt het 90^e hoofdstuk van *Boechari* de titel: Aan de dode wordt 's morgens en 's avonds zij woning getoond (B. 23:90). Onder deze titel wordt een *hadith* van 'Abd-Allah ibn 'Oemar verhaald, volgens welke de Heilige Profeet gezegd zou hebben, dat als een mens sterft, "zijn woning (in het leven hiernamaals) 's morgens en 's avonds voor hem wordt gebracht: in het Paradijs, als hij een van de inwoners van het Paradijs is, en in het vuur, als hij een van de inwoners van het vuur is" (B. 23:90). Deze *hadith* toont ook aan, dat *adzab al-qabr* slechts de geestelijke toestand van de schuldigen in de *barzakh* -toestand betekent.

Evenzo wordt er van de rechtschapenen gezegd, dat zij de vruchten van hun goede daden onmiddellijk na de dood smaken:

En denk niet over de degenen die gedood worden langs Allah's weg als waren zij dood. Nee, zij zijn levend en worden van onderhoud voorzien door hun Heer, zich verheugend in wat Allah hen gegeven heeft uit Zijn goedgunstigheid, en zij verheugen zich voor degenen die, achter hen (gelaten), zich nog niet bij hen hebben gevoegd, opdat zij geen vrees zullen hebben, noch zullen treuren (3:169 - 170)

Deze verzen tonen aan, dat de overledenen zelf bewust zijn van wat zij achtergelaten hebben, en dit stelt vast, dat er een soort van verband bestaat tussen deze en de volgende wereld.

Belangrijk is te beseffen dat het niet-

stoffelijke leven in het hiernamaals een reflectie van onsterfelijkheid is. Geen enkel levend wezen zal dus onsterfelijk zijn in dit aardse leven en ook niet fysiek in het hiernamaals aanwezig kunnen zijn. In het derde en laatste deel zullen wij de kwestie van de veronderstelde fysieke onsterfelijkheid van de profeet Jezus (as) aan de orde stellen. ([Return to Contents](#))

Italian article



Il nulla

By Luca del Negro

Gli atti terroristici e stragisti e di guerra che si susseguono nel pianeta vengono spesso rivendicati attraverso una propaganda assai curata dal punto di vista giornalistico e artistico (di debordiano ricordo); oggi addirittura anche quelli intentati.

Il nome di Dio (Allah come IL Dio, l'Uno) è comunque prima di ogni ragionamento portato costantemente alla ribalta, in primissimo piano. E... se... dietro a tutta questa maledetta violenza non ci fosse nulla? Se... si trattasse solamente di "devastazione socio-culturale" di una massa di sottoproletari che si prestano alla violenza? "Crisi di identità", sorta di ("giuoco") adulto "blu-whale" !?

Purtroppo abbiamo precluso ogni ragionamento "serio" e, una base di partenza per un isolamento di questi "insani comportamenti": senza una base, "questa base", mi permetto di dire, fondamentale pensiero il quale deve e dovrebbe diventare una chiamata per la Umma, l'Islam, oggi, si presterebbe al servizio di questo orrore, presterebbe il fianco all'islamofobia. Tenetevi tutto il resto per Voi...([Return to Contents](#))

[Spanish Article](#)



Ramadán

Vivir el islam a plenitud.

By Hno Ocbany León López (Alí)

Ramadán Mubarak! Ramadán bendito!

Estamos viviendo los primeros días del Ramadán(رمضان, en árabe), el noveno mes del

calendario islámico y millones de musulmanes alrededor de todo el mundo celebran con júbilo el advenimiento de este mes bendito.

Pero.... ¿Cuál es la importancia de este mes para millones de musulmanes alrededor del mundo? ¿Que lo hace especial y diferente del resto de los meses?

Para contestar estas interrogantes comenzaré diciendo que Ramadán o Ramzan (en urdu) es también conocido como Shahrul Quran o Mes del Corán y esto se debe a que fue precisamente en una de sus noches cuando Allah hizo descender el Corán al corazón del santo profeta Muhammad, esa noche es conocida como Lailat al Qadr o Noche del destino y las primeras palabras reveladas fueron: (اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ) "Lee en el nombre de tu Señor; el cual ha creado".

En relación a esta noche especial el Corán nos dice que "Lailat al Qadr es mejor que mil noches" lo que resalta sin dudas su gran significado y relevancia.

El ayuno o Sawm(صوم en árabe)

La revelación del "Corán al Karim" o Sagrado Corán durante el mes de Ramadán le otorgó un brillo singular a este mes. Sin embargo lo que realmente hace famoso al Ramadán alrededor del planeta es el ayuno que tiene lugar durante todos los días de este bendito mes que generalmente tiene una duración de 29 a 30 días. Este ayuno es obligatorio para todo musulmán o musulmana que alcanza la edad de la pubertad y solo están exentos de ayunar algunos pocos como los enfermos, los viajeros, aquellos que padezcan enfermedades crónicas, mujeres menstruando, embarazadas o musulmanas que estén en los períodos de lactancia. Ayunar en Ramadán es uno de los 5 pilares del Islam y para los musulmanes representa un gran beneficio y sin dudas la oportunidad perfecta para acercarnos más a nuestro Creador mediante la piedad y la caridad. De lo antes dicho nos da evidencia el sagrado Corán cuando nos informa: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ ۖ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ ۖ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

"¡Oh creyentes! se os prescribe el ayuno, como fue prescrito a los que os precedieron, para que seáis justos." (2:184).

Del anterior versículo coránico también podemos deducir que el ayuno no es un fenómeno único del islam y que su finalidad es alcanzar la piedad y la cercanía al Rabbil 'aalamin (señor de los mundos). En efecto diferentes clases de ayuno están presentes en el judaísmo y cristianismo respectivamente cada uno con sus particularidades y especificidades.

¿Cómo se realiza este ayuno?

El ayuno de Ramadán comienza antes del amanecer, específicamente antes del llamado a la oración de la mañana o fajr. El musulmán o musulmana deben estar purificados con ablución y poner una intención verbal o mental de realizar el ayuno (cada cual puede hacerlo en su idioma) Antes de comenzar a ayunar los musulmanes toman el Suhur lo que vendría siendo un desayuno frugal para ayudar al cuerpo en las horas de abstinencia de bebidas y alimentos. Como es bien conocido durante el ayuno el musulmán tiene prohibido ingerir bebidas y alimentos. Tampoco están permitidas las relaciones sexuales o aspirar humo o polvo y otros pequeños aspectos en los cuales no haré énfasis pues nos tomaría mucho tiempo enumerarlos y no es el objetivo de este artículo. Otro aspecto clave del ayuno es el ayuno espiritual, los ayunantes deben alejarse de toda conducta impropia de un verdadero musulmán y acercarse a las acciones de bien como son los actos bondadosos y de humanidad hacia sus semejantes, las oraciones y la lectura del sagrado Corán.

El ayuno diario culmina oficialmente cuando se escucha el llamado a la oración del ocazo y después de las oraciones los creyentes con premura celebran el Iftar o cena con sus familias y amigos. Si bien en los países árabes se acostumbra a terminar dicho ayuno con diversos platillos de carne, ensaladas, dulces y zumos de frutas la costumbre del profeta en el momento de romper su ayuno era comer un dátil fresco, sí no habían dátiles frescos tomaba uno seco y sí esto no estaba a su disposición solamente tomaba un vaso de agua y decía: « دَهَبَ »

“Dhahaba al-dama’ wa abtalat al-‘uruq wa zabata al-ayr in sha Al-laah (La sed se ha ido, las venas se han humedecido y la recompensa se ha alcanzado, in sha Al-lah)” [Abu Dawud y Ad-Daraqutni].

Este actuar del profeta del islam nos anima a poner fin al ayuno de una manera humilde y cotidiana, ingiriendo los mismos alimentos que acostumbramos a tomar todos los días, sin fastuosidad, sin derroches, sin manjares succulentos que están lejos de los hogares pobres pues si bien en la noche termina la abstención de alimentos continua el ayuno espiritual

Todo esto por supuesto puede presentar sus variantes en dependencia de la escuela de pensamiento islámica que siga el musulmán pues en el mundo islámico existen musulmanes sunnitas y musulmanes shiitas siendo estos últimos minoría a nivel mundial.

La piedad

El Corán nos enseña con claridad que el objetivo del ayuno es alcanzar la piedad y no solo la abstención de alimentos, bebidas y relaciones íntimas. Y resulta que ayunar en los días de Ramadán es también un ayuno para el cuerpo y el alma, es la abstención no solo de aquellas cosas que nutren nuestro cuerpo físico sino también un alejamiento de aquellas acciones que nos distancian de Dios y que alimentan nuestro ego y bajas pasiones. La filosofía del Ramadán es empatizar con todos aquellos seres humanos que sufren hambre y sed involuntariamente, significa doblegar nuestro espíritu rebelde para ponernos al servicio de Dios y de aquellos millones de seres humanos que viven rodeados de carencias y dificultades alrededor del mundo. Ramadán se trata de vivir el islam al 100%, se trata de ser musulmán al 100%.

El profeta del islam dijo: "Si el valor de este mes fuera conocido por la gente, todos desearían que todo el año fuera Ramadán." Y es cierto que ese estado de piedad y espiritualidad debería ser nuestra constante todo el año y no solo un mes anualmente.

Abu Huraira relató que el Profeta dijo:

"Cualquiera que ayuna durante el ramadán con imán (fe) y busca su recompensa de Alá solamente, tendrá sus pecados pasados perdonados. Cualquiera que reza de noche durante el ramadán con fé y busca la recompensa de Alá solamente, tendrá sus pecados anteriores perdonados, y alguien que pasa Lailatul Qader (la noche del decreto) en oración con fé y busca su recompensa en Alá solamente tendrá sus pecados pasados perdonados." (Bujari, Muslim)

Abdulá ibn Amer reportó que el Profeta dijo: El ayuno y el Corán intercederán por un creyente en el Día del Juicio. El ayuno atestiguará: ¡Oh Señor! Yo le negué el placer de comer y de copular durante el día, así que acepta mi intercesión por él. El Corán dirá: ¡Oh Señor! Yo le negué el descanso y el sueño de la noche así que acepta la intercesión para él. Alá aceptará la intercesión de ambos.

Las tradiciones y dichos del profeta antes expuestos nos develan solo una ínfima parte del cúmulo de bendiciones que reciben los musulmanes en Ramadán las cuales son incontables como la misericordia y la gracia de Dios todopoderoso. Una de las joyas más preciadas de Ramadán.

La Sadaqa.

En árabe صدقة "caridad" es una limosna voluntaria. Este concepto abarca cualquier acto de dar por compasión, amor, amistad (fraternidad), deber religioso o generosidad.

En la historia del islam encontramos muchas narraciones testimoniando que el último profeta de Dios el profeta Muhammad (La paz y las bendiciones de Dios sean con él y su familia) solía ser muy caritativo siempre pero que durante los días de Ramadán se esforzaba mucho más por ofrecer ayuda a los necesitados. Por estas razones y siguiendo el ejemplo o sunnah del profeta Muhammad los creyentes musulmanes emulan entre sí en la donación de ropas, zapatos, alimentos y dinero. Es sin dudas un tiempo ideal o favorable para hacer el bien, para ganar las bendiciones espirituales del cielo y fortalecer nuestra paciencia que finalmente nos llevará al paraíso inshallah (si es la voluntad

de Dios).

Aquellos que hemos tenido la dicha de vivir la experiencia del Ramadán en países islámicos podemos atestiguar la alegría y la espiritualidad que se viven en esos días. Adorar a Dios se vuelve una necesidad y muchos aprovechan este tiempo de ayuno para retirarse al interior de las mezquitas, alejarse de lo trivial y pecaminoso de la sociedad y dedicarse exclusivamente a la lectura del Corán y las oraciones a Allah. Este retiro espiritual se conoce como 'Itikaf y aquellos que participan en el se prohíben así mismos salir de la mezquita y atender asuntos mundanales excepto si ocurre alguna emergencia. En resume podemos ver que Ramadán es el clímax del islam, Ramadán nos hace más humanos, más empáticos con el sufrimiento de los oprimidos y la puerta del paraíso para los creyentes que sinceramente busquen el favor divino y amen a la humanidad.

Cómo vive el ayuno la comunidad Ahmadiyya Lahore de Cuba?

A continuación y relacionado al tema que estamos abordando me gustaría hacerles partícipes de la experiencia del Ramadán para la Comunidad Ahmadi Lahore de Cuba.

La comunidad Ahmadiyya Lahore de Cuba es uno de los grupos religiosos marginados de la isla. Los ahmadies no son reconocidos por ninguna de las escuelas islámicas existentes en la nación caribeña sea shia o sunni y mucho menos por el gobierno actual. Nuestra existencia es ilegal al igual que las reuniones para los rezos del viernes u otras festividades anuales del islam. Nuestra comunidad ha sufrido la intolerancia religiosa, actos de fanatismo y campañas difamatorias por parte de otros musulmanes cubanos (Que Allah los gué y perdone)

En este contexto adverso la comunidad Ahmadiyya Lahore de Cuba experimenta el ayuno. Las familias ahmadies cubanas viven el Ramadán en un escenario muy parecido a aquel

que vivieron el profeta Muhammad y los primeros musulmanes en los inicios del islam. En un país donde la escasez de alimentos y el racionamiento de los mismos es la regla común de todos los días los ahmadies cubanos no pueden siquiera pensar en romper su ayuno con un dátil o una copa de té y la mayoría de las veces lo hacemos con agua como era una de las costumbres del mensajero de Allah. El conseguir alimentos Halal o aptos para el consumo de un musulmán se vuelve toda una odisea. Los precios de los alimentos están fuera del alcance de los bolsillos de los musulmanes ahmadies y muchas veces los alimentos no son Halal. Muy diferente sucede con nuestras hermanas comunidades shiitas y sunnitas quienes cuentan con el beneplácito del gobierno y reciben infinidad de donaciones de alimentos procedentes de asociaciones islámicas en el extranjero que les ayudan a garantizar los productos halal para el Suhur e Iftar, damos gracias a Dios todopoderoso por proveer a nuestros hermanos con esa abundancia, alhamdulillah! Nosotros los ahmadies de Cuba como fieles seguidores del Mensajero de Dios nos esforzamos por seguir la Sunnah del profeta Muhammad y beneficiarnos de las bondades espirituales del Ramadán. La falta de comidas halal para nuestras familias, para nuestros niños, la falta de un lugar o mezquita para reunirnos, la falta de libertad para asociarnos y otras adversidades las sufrimos con paciencia y las suplimos con más oraciones y más adoración. Está escrito en el sagrado Corán: "en verdad, Allah está con los pacientes" [al-Baqarah 2:153]

"Allah ama a los pacientes" [Al-Imran 3:146]

Querido lector, seas musulmán o no te pedimos con humildad que hagas súplicas por nuestra comunidad cubana ahmadi, Allah escucha las oraciones de los corazones sinceros.

Le pedimos a Dios altísimo que derrame su misericordia sobre sus siervos, perdone nuestras faltas y nos permita participar en este Ramadán Karim. Amén! ([Return to Contents](#))

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore

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