

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

IS_{HALL} L_{OVE} A_{LL} M_{ANKIND}.



The Light

A multilingual journal of Islam.

ISSN:2754-2661

March
2023

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.

Webcasting on the world's first real-time Islamic service at

www.virtualmosque.co.uk

Editors

Managing Editor Lord Shahid Aziz (UK.)

Canada – Prof Mir Faizal, **Italy** – Mr Abdul Jalil (Guido) Travaglioni, **Ivory Coast** - Mr Abou Tienne, **Suriname** - Prof Robbert Bipat, **Uruguay** - Prof. Ubaldo Pino

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| The Call of the Messiah | 2 |
| Duties of the Ahmadi Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali | 3 |
| Leaning into Lent Iain Dixon | 6 |
| Towards Ramadan Afolabi O. Quadri | 8 |
| Women's Rights Aubaid Ahmad Akhoon | 10 |
| Hazrat Ameer's Ramadan Message | 12 |
| Italian Article | 12 |
| Spanish Article | 13 |
| Dutch Article | 14 |

Broadcast Schedule (UK time)

- 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.

Broadcast Venues

- <https://www.facebook.com/LahoreAhmadiyyaCommunity/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/c/WorldwideAhmadiyyaAnjumansLahore/videos>
- <https://mixlr.com/radio-virtual-mosque/showreel>

Our Websites

- [International HQ.](#)
- [Research and History](#)
- [The Woking Mosque and Mission](#)
- [The Berlin Mosque and Mission](#)
- [Quran search](#)
- [Blog](#)

Announcements

The blessed month of Ramadan begins on Thursday, 23rd March

Eid-ul-Fitr will be celebrated on Friday, 21st April

And Eid-ul-Adha Wednesday 28th June.

THESE DATES WILL NOT CHANGE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

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.)

The cut-offs

I have mentioned only a few friends as an example of this calibre and high quality. There are others, of whom complete mention will be made in a separate pamphlet. I also think it necessary to make here a declaration of the fact that all the people who have entered into my fold are not yet, all of them, worthy of a good opinion or esteem. Some of them look like dry branches that the Great God, Who is my Protector, will hew down and throw into the fuel to be burnt. There are some others whose hearts, in the beginning, throbbed with sympathy and sincerity, but now they are curled and congealed. The light of a disciple's love, empathy and enthusiasm, which illuminated them, has vanished, leaving behind the cunning and craftiness of Balaam, son of Beor.¹

¹ The reference is to Balaam, son of Beor, an Old Testament personage to whom guidance was vouchsafed from Heaven, but who turned away from it, went astray, and beguiled the people. It is written in the Book of Numbers (31: 16): "Moses said: Behold these (women war prisoners) caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord." And in II Peter (2:14, 15): "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls; a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children, who have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the course of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness. -

Like rotten teeth, these people are useless now except that they should be extracted from the mouth and thrown into the dust. They became weary and tired, and the vile world shackled them with the strings of its deception.

Verily I say to you that they will soon be cut off and cast away from me, except for him whom the grace of God will hold anew by the hand. And there are many whom the Most High God has given to me forever, and they are the green branches of the tree of my existence. Of them, I shall write on a different occasion.

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you

I also take this opportunity of removing a misconception from the minds of those people who are rich and influential and consider themselves to be generous and devoted to the cause of Islam. Yet, even in the hour of urgent need, they refuse point-blank to spend out of their wealth. They say that if they had found that it was the time of a true messenger of God raised for the revival of religion, they would have surrendered submissively, even to the extent of laying down their lives in the way of his victory and triumph. However, what could be done, they allege, when deception, fraud and trickery are raging all around?

Therefore, all you people, let it be clear to you that a man has been raised for the revival of faith, but you have not recognised him. He is in your midst, the same man speaking to you, but thick veils cover your eyes. If your hearts seek truth, examining this man who claims to have been graced with Divine communication is easy. Come and stay in his company for two or three weeks and see the blessings being showered upon him with your eyes. And the lights of Divine revelation descending on him. He who seeks finds it, and the door will be opened to him who knocks on it. If you should, after closing your eyes tightly and concealing yourself in a dark dungeon, utter in the complaint, "Where is the sun?" your censure will be

Translator.

useless and absurd. O, ignorant man! Open the doors of the chamber, and lift the veil from over your eyes so that the shining sun may not only be visible to you but also enlighten and illuminate you.

Divine communion is life's ultimate object

Some say establishing anjumans (societies) and opening schools are enough to revive religion. But they know not the real import of faith. Nor the ultimate aim of our existence, and how and by what means this object can be achieved. It should, therefore, be understood that the ultimate objective of our life is attaining that true and genuine relationship with the Most High God, which sets us free from all sensual strings and takes us to the fountainhead of salvation and deliverance. So the path to this perfect faith can never be discovered by any amount of human planning and ingenuity. Manufactured philosophies cannot be of any use in this connection. The Most High God sends this guidance and light from Heaven at the time of darkness through the agency of His special messengers, and only he who has come from above can take and carry others to the high heavens. Therefore, you who are sunk deep in darkness, held in the thrall of doubts and suspicions and caught in the bondage and servitude of sensual passions, indulge not in pride and conceit over your nominal and ceremonial Islam. And think not that your true happiness and welfare, your real good and benefit, and your ultimate success lie in these schemes implemented through the present-day *anjumans* and schools. These institutions may be beneficial, as the first rung of the ladder leading to progress and advancement, but they are far from the real purpose. Such devices may perhaps create quickness of intellect and skill, the acuteness of mind, and ability in the art of dry reasoning and argumentation and may win the distinctive title of scholarship and learning. They may even be helpful to some extent in attaining the actual objective after you have acquired knowledge for a long time. But, as says the ancient adage, by the time the antidote arrives from Iraq, the snake-bitten person will have expired. [\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Duties of the Ahmadiyya Organization

By Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali

Translated by Dr Muhammad Ahmad

Edited by Lord Shahid Aziz



And from among you, there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are those who are successful. (3:104)

What is the purpose of the coming of the Promised Messiah? This is something he has clearly expressed. Unfortunately, it seems very difficult for the Muslims to come out of their present condition; even those who accepted the Promised Messiah supported his mission and took the pledge at his hands. Many of them even did not try to make an effort to thoroughly understand his mission or make it the purpose of their lives. Was the purpose of his coming only to solve the problem of the death of Jesus? Or give some practical guidelines for the reformation of the Muslims? Or to rectify some wrong assertions regarding the religion of Islam, remove the chains of worship of religious mentors weighing down the necks of Muslims, or clarify the subject of Divine revelation? Undoubtedly, all of these were outstanding accomplishments reminiscent of the work of reformation done by imams of previous ages. However, the great work accomplished by the Promised Messiah for which he was sent is different. *Hadith* describes his task as the breaking of the cross and the killing of the swine. The Holy Quran clearly defines it as:

The Religion of Truth that He may make it prevail over all religions. (9:33)

Purpose of Coming of the Holy Prophet

The purpose of the coming of the Holy

Prophet Muhammad was that Allah the Most-High make Islam prevail over all other religions. God fulfilled most of the promises made to the Holy Prophet in his lifetime. And this process is ongoing into the future. For example, this promise that Islam would be made to prevail was, in one way, fulfilled clearly during the Holy Prophet's lifetime. All the Arabs accepted the message of *la ilaha-ill-Allah Muhammad-ur-Rasool Allah* (None deserves to be worshipped besides Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. This promise was therefore fulfilled to a great extent during his life. *Hadith* states that Allah the Most High will fulfil this promise excellently in the latter days. This does not mean no one was there early on to bring this promise to fruition. The Holy Prophet had already laid its foundation in his lifetime. However, he did not complete the task, but this was left in the hands of his followers.

Companions of the Holy Prophet and the Generation that followed them

The companions of the Holy Prophet were responsible for the spread of Islam worldwide, even to the lands where opposition was powerful. This was one phase of the spreading of Islam. The generation that came after the companions made similar sacrifices for the propagation of Islam. Their purpose was also to exalt the name of God. They had not yet succumbed to the desire to acquire wealth or kingdom. Their objective was to provide relief to the nations consumed by false beliefs and guide them toward the truth; for this purpose, they were willing to face great difficulties.

Religious Elders and Muslims of the Present Age

Unfortunately, a time came over the followers of Islam when they completely neglected the propagation of their religion. We observe that all over India, mausoleums are marking the graves of religious elders. Who were these people? They were spiritual personages who considered the propagation of Religion as the prime objective of their lives. They would unflinchingly go into the strong-

holds of disbelief, including temples of idol worship, and start preaching the religion of Islam. Those who believe that the sword spreads Islam deceive themselves and show unfamiliarity with the historical narrative. These spiritual elders of the Muslim nation had such an overwhelming passion for Islam in their hearts that wherever they went, they attracted people toward the Unity of God instead of idol worship. The institutions connected with these mausoleums have now discarded the teachings of the Unity of the Divine Being and are becoming idol worship symbols. Their passion for the propagation of Islam has been lost and replaced by a colouring of a different variety. This decline has taken hundreds of years to set in. It does not even cross their minds that it is their duty to propagate the religion of Islam, although they are familiar with these words of the Holy Quran:

And from among you, there should be a party who invite to good (*al-Khair*) and enjoy the right and forbid the wrong. And these are those who are successful. (3:104)

From this verse, it appears that this task should always be pursued. The Arabic word *al-Khair* means Islam. It is lamentable indeed that no Muslim nation pays attention to this responsibility. It has only been fifty years since the first translation of the Holy Quran in Turkish was published. The Turks were a sovereign Muslim nation given the title of the servants of the Two Sacred cities. From this degree of inertia, you can estimate how much importance was being given to the task of propagation by Muslim nations. Under such conditions prevailing throughout the Muslim world, a great Reformer came at the head of this century. When propagation had stopped, **God commanded him to form an organisation to invite people towards Islam**, a monumental task he accomplished.

Promised Messiah and the Work of Reformation

Whosoever must invite to Islam; his beliefs should be free of defects. That is why the Reformer of this age was tasked with clari-

ying the belief regarding the death of Jesus. Considering Jesus to be alive was equivalent to giving him Divine status. It was essential for the propagation of Islam to reform this belief. The pledge the Reformer of this age took from his followers indicates why he was sent to the world. It contains the commitment “**to hold the religion above the temporal.**” People have misunderstood these words. They do not simply mean that I will fulfil certain religious obligations. It means that, instead of the love of this world in my heart, I will have a love of religion. No matter how hard he prays or fasts, a person who loves wealth cannot reach the spiritual status of the one who fulfils this pledge.

The Holy Prophet said:

You cannot be a believer unless you love me more than your father, mother, and all humankind.

What is the love of the Holy Prophet? It is to create the same passion he had for Islam in our hearts. This was the reason for the coming of the Promised Messiah. **And to fulfil this purpose, he formed an organisation in his life to continue the work of propagation.** If we think about it, in Islam, only those people are called religious guides who consider the propagation of Islam as their goal in life.

Three Essential Steps

We must first read and understand the Holy Quran and then act upon it. These are three challenging stages. It is easy to read the Holy Quran, but many fail to understand it properly, and very few act upon its guidance. This organisation’s purpose cannot be achieved unless its members read, understand, and act upon the word of the Holy Quran. They cannot claim to invite people towards Islam until they go through these three stages. We must fulfil these three requirements. Only the word coming out of the heart can bring about a change in someone else. It was the Holy Quran that the Holy Prophet took in hand and accomplished his task. That Holy Quran is now in our hands. We have to carry out the task as the Holy

Prophet did:

Who shall recite Thy messages, teach them the Book and the Wisdom, and purify them? (2:129)

Purification of the Human Soul and the Holy Prophet

This is the greatest accomplishment and the most challenging stage. Holy Prophet Muhammad uplifted the whole of humanity from its fallen state. His passionate pleas before the Lord of the Worlds helped to bring about this remarkable transformation. We look at his example; he recited the message of the Holy Quran to the people and showed them how to follow it. His greatest accomplishment was the purification of the hearts of his honoured companions. Only God knows the fervent prayers he recited in the solitude of the cave of *Hira*, pleading before the Lord for the guidance of humanity. As a result, he was given Prophethood and commanded thus:

“O thou covering thyself up! Rise to pray by night except a little ...Truly thou hast by day a prolonged occupation (73:1,2,7)

The Holy Prophet was informed by Allah the Most-High that his period of solitude had ended. He was now tasked with conveying and teaching the message of the Holy Quran to the world. Under these circumstances, his days were to be occupied; therefore, he needed more time to worship and supplicate at night.

Sacrifice and Prayer

The Christians are in error regarding the principle of sacrifice. The truth is that a prophet should cry out his heart and supplicate for the reformation of his people. The Holy Quran states:

“Then maybe thou will kill thyself with grief, sorrowing after them, if they believe not in this announcement. (18:6)

This indicates that the Holy Prophet supplicated with such fervour. He had a great pas-

sion in his heart for the reformation of people. If you want to invite people to Islam, you should create a desire in your heart and supplicate for them. Prayers can soften the most hard-hearted of opponents. Hazrat Umar goes out with the intent to kill the Holy Prophet. He listens to the words of the Holy Quran on his way there, which immediately opens up and softens his heart, and he converts to Islam. If you also have the passionate intent and pray fervently, Allah the Most-High changes the hearts of the most hard-hearted disbelievers.

Quranic Lessons during Ramadhan

I have fixed a time for Quranic lessons during Ramadhan. This appears to be a daunting task, but if I am given the opportunity and the health, by Allah's permission, it is bound to happen. My intent in doing this is that our members should read and understand the Book of Allah. Prayers are accepted during Ramadhan:

And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, surely I am nigh. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me. (2:186)

Therefore, we should read this Quran to understand it, put it into practice, and seek Allah's pleasure through it. God's help is much needed in the work of propagation. Allah has given us the month of Ramadhan. The time of *Tahajjud* prayer is the time for supplication. Pray fervently, and do not lose sight of your true objective.

The Need for Teachers of Religion

I have to say this with regret. In the past, wherever we had members of this organisation, they became teachers and missionaries for the Ahmadiyya movement. Now I see that people have become sluggish. One day, the step that does not take a forward stride will retreat backwards. We should not become lazy but try to move forward. The local members can do the work that has to be done by a paid missionary. They are, in fact, more effective by being role models. You need to resume this task now. There should indeed be people who invite

to Islam. Had there been a system from the beginning of such religious teachers, these objections against Islam would not have arisen. Remember, those who accept the truth are always there in the world, but we need people ready to work for the cause of truth. The numbers of workers need to be increased because sometimes only a few out of the hundreds of thousands are helpful.

Similarly, many get educated, but only a few accomplish great tasks. We should not be concerned about whether someone can propagate the religion of Islam or not. Allah the Most-High makes everyone capable of propagating his faith according to his capabilities.

Our Duty

The Ahmadiyya organisation is meant to serve and propagate Islam. There is nothing more to it; you should be proud of serving Islam. It is nothing to be proud of to call ourselves Muslims and the rest disbelievers. **In this age, a person claimed to be the Promised Messiah. How hard is it to understand his claim? No effort is made in this regard.** That is the reason for the lack of progress. In one way, we are responsible for this lack of progress, and there is weariness on our part. The obstacle is in the form of our own beliefs. **If we present an accurate picture of the Ahmadiyya beliefs, it would be impossible for them not to gain acceptance.** We saw a person stand up and go to propagate Islam in a land where the cross was dominant, and the call of *Allah hu Akbar* (Allah is the Greatest!) had not been heard. People used to look at pictures of Muslim Prayer services as a novelty. Allah the Most-High makes him successful, and the people who used to see photos of prayer services now pray that way. In short, Allah's Grace comes in proportion to our effort. ([Return to Contents](#))

LEANING INTO LENT!

By Iain Dixon



A few years ago, I discovered a buried treasure - a precious jewel hidden and

obscured by misunderstanding, misuse and neglect. What was this buried treasure? I am talking about the season of Lent! The poet Gideon Heugh describes Lent as: “a time of beautiful re-focusing....a sanctuary in time; a seven-week island in a stormy sea. . . [an] intentional period in which we can reorientate ourselves....it is a time to be drawn further into the heart of God.”

A STRONG ROPE OF MANY FIBRES

Lent is a special season of forty days in the lead-up to Easter observed by many Christians worldwide, mainly within the Catholic, Anglican, and Orthodox traditions - but it is rapidly gaining traction with many others too. Although strictly speaking, it is not a Bible teaching or commandment, the season of Lent is firmly based on Bible principles and disciplines. As a chair is built on a firm foundation of four legs, Lent is also built on the four foundations of repentance, prayer, fasting and alms-giving. Another way of illustrating it is to liken the season of Lent to a rope that consists of many fibres twisted together, giving it form and strength. Lent consists of the fibres of repentance, prayer, fasting and alms-giving - and this rope provides not only a firm ‘handhold’ on God but also becomes a ‘guide rope’, guiding us safely through the darkness of this world into the light of the Kingdom of God and his righteous values.

FROM THE CASUAL TO THE CONSECRATED

I grew up with the (mistaken) belief that Lent was about giving up chocolate (or perhaps some bad habit) for forty days, and at the end, you rewarded yourself with a big Chocolate Egg! How wrong I was! Many ‘secular’ (and even church) people I once worked with would ‘give up’ something for Lent - but never comprehended the strong rope of many fibres. Or never considering, as Gideon Heugh describes it, “a time to be drawn further into the heart of God.” I wonder how many people giving up their chocolate for Lent ever considered their relationship with God or experienced a time of “beautiful re-focusing”? Many are rediscover-

ing the precious jewel of Lent and seeing within it a hidden treasure that exerts more power than an atomic bomb. As servants of the Most High God, we are called to live as consecrated, dedicated, and set-apart people. A follower of Jesus is summoned to a life of purity and prayer - and called to a life of faith and action. Lent is a training ground, a boot camp, in which spiritual transformation takes place, and a DNA of spiritual discipline is formed, which moves beyond the forty days - overflowing into EVERY day. It is a bit like people wanting to paint their house will first obtain a small ‘tester pot’ of a small quantity and quality paint. The bigger paint tins finally chosen for the decorating are made of the same paint as in the tester pots - but in a larger quantity. The atomic power of Lent should spill over into our daily lives. We move from the tester pot of forty days, to the fullness of daily consecration to the God who deserves our very best.

TAILOR-MADE

The real beauty of Lent is that (if done correctly) it promotes a connection with God. How do I fast? Ask God. How much extra time do I spend in prayer and praise of my Heavenly King? Ask him! How much money do I give to the poor, or what can I practically do to serve the community around me? God will show you. Rather than Lent being a time of going into ‘automatic pilot,’ it involves a heartfelt communion with the Emperor of the Universe - a time for asking and receiving guidance on what you need to do. The genius of Lent is that it is the great leveller. Whether rich or poor, sick or healthy, God can tailor-make just what you need to grow spiritually during the forty days. There is no competition with others. There are no grounds for boasting.

FASTING SO YOU CAN FEAST ON GOD

The Bible has many examples of fasting, including fasting by giving up food and fasting by giving up both food and liquid. There are also partial fasts, where particular foods are given up. Fasting during Lent doesn’t result in weight gain or colossal amounts of wasted food like in other religious traditions. Many eat just a sim-

ple meal daily, often cutting out meat and dairy products. Others may choose a period of a few days merely drinking fruit juices and water. None of it is meritorious, gaining spiritual 'Tesco Clubcard Points' in Heaven. Instead, the discipline of Lenten fasting is solely about drawing close to God, self-discipline in developing righteous hearts - and having compassion for the poor. As Lent creates a hunger for God, a hungry stomach produces compassion for those hungry through no choice. It is also an opportunity to fast from distractions such as social media and electronic gadgets. Why not use that extra time for scripture reading and talking with your Creator?

ATTITUDE DETERMINES YOUR ALTITUDE

Jesus (his peace be upon us) taught us Lenten disciplines in Matthew chapter six of the Bible. He said: "When you give," "when you pray," and "when you fast." The implication is that these core things were rooted in the life of a true believer. More importantly, though, in the same chapter, he taught how believers should have humble hearts and have no trace of self-righteousness in these disciplines. He spoke strongly against the outward show and hypocrisy. In doing so, he echoed the prophet Isaiah who had proclaimed the word of the LORD centuries before. He said, "Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loosen the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens and to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke? Is it not to give your bread to the hungry?"- Isaiah 58:6-7

If you read the whole chapter 58 of Isaiah, it is a sobering rebuke of self-righteousness.

TAKING OFF AND TAKING UP

The season of Lent begins with a day called Ash Wednesday when we are reminded of our mortality, that we will one day return to dust (like ashes). We must remember that one day we will have to stand in judgement before our Maker. Lent is a season of repentance where we recall the words of the prophet Joel calling out to our hearts: "Therefore even now says

the LORD, turn to me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping, and with mourning. Rip apart your heart, not your garments, and turn to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful."- Joel 2:12-13. Lent becomes a time of soul-searching, putting aside sin and self-centeredness. God must come first. It also becomes a time to 'take up' good and worthy things and to support charities that help others and benefit society.

WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR LENT?

Back in 2015, a movement was started called Muslims4Lent. Many Muslims worldwide came out in solidarity with their Christian friends, thanking them for their love and support for the Muslim community and their devoted brotherhood and devotion to the one true God. Many Muslims were thankful that Christians fasted during Ramadan and used this time to pray for God's blessing on them. In response, Muslims posted on the internet how they would keep Lent. Times are changing; even nowadays, Muslims are reading the Bible (websites like www.biblehub.com and www.Bible.is are very popular), and interfaith connections are strengthening. It is a beautiful thing that we can learn from and respect each other. Lent has become a bridge-builder across the religious divide.

I am thankful to have discovered Lent: a buried treasure, a precious jewel. And if you ask me what I hope to do for Lent, my answer is simple - I want to become a better person.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Towards Ramadān

**How shall we prepare
for it?**

By Afolabi O. Quadri



(From:

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/03/towards-ramadan-what-shall-we-prepare-for/>)

Ramadān, as a Holy Month in Islam, cannot be equated with any other month, carrying the heavyweight prescription of Allah for the entire Muslim Ummah to fast. This fasting has been prescribed for communities before Prophet Muhammad, though with notable differences. Fasting is to boost the piety of Muslims. Allah says: "O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous" Quran 2: 183.

From the preceding, it is clear that Ramadān fasting is mandatory for Muslims. Muslims already hold the four other pillars of Islam; the Kalimatu shahadah (acceptance of Allah as the only God and Muhammed as His messenger), Salāt (the daily prayer), Zakat (alms-giving) and Hajj (pilgrimage to the Holy Land) as prerequisites of Islam as a religion.

The entire Muslim community is currently in the euphoric mood of anticipation to embrace the fast-approaching Holy Month, but with necessary preparations, which include getting one's mind ready for the great act of 'īmān (faith in Allah). Also, among the preparations is to ascertain readily provisions that will ease the task ahead of us.

However, the best preparation is what Allah says in the Quran to be "Taqwa"(piety). "And take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is fear of Allah. And fear Me, O you of understanding". Quran 2:197

The fear of Allah as a preparatory requirement towards the Holy Month of Ramadan entails, to mention but a few, the following:

Improve your Salah. The five times daily canonical prayers are the major distinguisher between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. It is incumbent on every Muslim at this period to strictly monitor their Salah, keeping to its time while adequately fulfilling its components. For such a Muslim, this will ease the ability to catch up with the additional act of 'Ibādah (worship). For example, Tarāwih (the prayer in the Holy Month) at night during Ramadān and Nawāfil during the day. This will intensify one's reward

and aim at the primary goal of the Holy Month, which is to fear¹ Allah at every moment.

Compensation for missed fasts, if any: this is mainly for Muslim women and, of course, men who, due to a reasonable hindrance, have missed some days of fast in the previous Ramadān. The wife of the Holy Prophet, Aisha (RTA), has said that she frequently paid for her missed fasts in the month of Sha'ban (the month preceding the Holy Month).

Abstinence from all unrighteous deeds: Islām, at all times, is a religion which strictly shuns unrighteousness in all of its forms and encourages righteousness, whether big or little. Therefore, Muslims who prepare themselves for the Holy Month should avoid all misconduct that might have engulfed the soul before Ramadān to prevent these illicit acts from reducing the great rewards that should be accumulated during the Holy Month.

Getting oneself acquainted with the uniqueness of Ramadān: reading about the virtues of the month of Ramadan to get familiarised with its benefits toward the expiation of one's sins, multiplication of rewards on every act of 'Ibādah (righteousness), and how Allah swiftly answers every supplication made therein, as this will boost the morale and eagerness in us to seize every opportunity to purify our souls in the most anticipated Holy Month.

Preparing a Ramadān schedule: fasting comes with a natural weakness that will deprive the body of absolute activeness to merge rewardable acts with personal daily activities. Note the different religious practices you would like to engage in at every point in time in the Holy Month is necessary. For example, reading the Holy Quran, observing nawafil (supererogatory prayers), and attending lectures are others to be prioritised. But without overwhelming oneself with unrealisable goals on the to-do list.

Planning to take care of someone else's

¹ Obey Allah expresses the sentiment here much better.

fasting: without a doubt, all members of the Ummah are naturally meant to be financially unequal. While some have all it takes to fast in terms of foodstuffs and provisions, other people find it challenging to do so. Therefore, another commendable act that a fasting Muslim can do is to cater to the feeding of one or more needy Muslims. One of the companions of Prophet Muhammed, Abu Hurraira, noted that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) once said, "Whoever helps ease a difficulty in the world, Allah will grant him ease from a difficulty in the world and the Hereafter." (Tirmidhi: 1930)

With the preparations listed above, every Muslim will have the mindset to strive relentlessly towards seeking the face of Allah in the month of Ramadan., We pray to Allah that, in His infinite mercy, bless Sha'bān for us and allow us to reach the Holy Month of Ramadan. Aameen. ([Return to Contents](#))

Women's Rights and Equality in Islam

Challenges and Progress

By *Aubaid Ahmad Akhoon*



(From:

<https://thekashmirimages.com/2023/03/15/womens-rights-and-equality-in-islam-challenges-and-progress/>)

The practice of female infanticide in pre-Islamic Arabia was a tragic and barbaric reality that reflects the depth of misogyny and cruelty that existed at that time. Through its teachings and principles, Islam brought a revolutionary change in the status and treatment of women and challenged the patriarchal norms and practices of Arab society. The Quran and the Prophet's teachings unequivocally condemned the practice of female infanticide and affirmed women's dignity, worth, and rights as equal members of society.

"The concept of guardianship in Islam is

not meant to give men control over women but rather to ensure their protection and well-being."

Have you ever wondered why women in our society seem to age faster than men? Why do daughters start resembling their mothers' sisters within a few years of getting married? The most stunning woman's body may become unshapely and unsightly before its time, while a man can appear to be his own wife's younger brother only a few years after their marriage. Who or what is responsible for this situation? The physical makeup of our society or the men and women who inhabit it?

Although women may be physically weaker than men, nature has endowed them with all the faculties necessary not only to carry out the task of reproduction but also to maintain a physique that is appealing to men and a source of happiness. However, in our society, the opposite seems to be the case. A majority of girls in our culture do not wish to marry, and often their acquiescence is in some way a form of compromise.

Sometimes, the woman makes this compromise, with gratitude toward her parents, love, and respect for the family being the underlying elements. On other occasions, a woman is coerced into accepting the marriage. In either case, we wish the girls to marry quickly so that the second or third proposal can be accepted swiftly. When bidding her farewell, we often pray that her funeral will leave her in-laws' house.

Once married, a woman's primary duties include bearing children, serving her husband, raising her in-laws, and assuming complete responsibility for the household. After giving birth to six children within seven years and carrying out all other obligations, a woman reaches many milestones, leaving the pace of time far behind. At this point, a thirty-year-old woman may begin to appear as her fifty-five-year-old mother's sister, thus piquing a man's interest, as men are naturally inclined toward beauty.

Now, the woman has an obligation to the man that she no longer desires. She is not interested in spending time with him, laughter no longer appeals and entertainment opportunities become as scarce as Eid's moon. Although a woman may age physically, do her heart and soul likewise grow old? Don't all young men's desires and aspirations change in their hearts?

One of the endless tragedies of our society is that we consider that women's problems are limited to purity, chastity, intimacy, special days, and childbirth and that all our "research" revolves around these subjects. Women's emotions, desires, psychology, and needs are not granted the same respect or attention as men's. We must consider why a girl who was her father's darling for twenty years becomes an older woman in charge of the household just five years after getting married.

Women's emotions, desires, psychology, and needs are not granted the same respect or attention as men's.

It's important to remember that women's rights and gender equality are not just women's but human rights issues. Progress in the last century toward women's empowerment is remarkable, but much work still needs to be done. Women still face discrimination, violence, and harassment in many parts of the world.

Islam, as a religion, has always advocated for the rights of women. The Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) clearly state that men and women are equal in the sight of Allah. Both men and women have their rights and responsibilities.

"And among His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquillity in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought." (Quran 30:21)

Men are appointed as guardians of women, but they also have a great responsibility to pro-

tect and care for them.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) advocated for women's rights and set an example of treating women with kindness and respect. "The most perfect of believers in faith are those with the best character, who lower their wings (i.e. are humble) and are kind and courteous towards their wives." (Hadith, At-Tirmidhi). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also taught that women should be educated and encouraged to seek knowledge.

In many Muslim countries, women play a vital role in society. They contribute to the economy, participate in politics, and progress significantly in many fields. However, women still face many challenges, such as lack of access to education and healthcare, gender-based violence, and discrimination in the workplace.

Remember the women who have fought for gender equality and women's rights. Let us honour the women who have made a difference in our lives and the world. And let us work together toward a future where all women are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was a perfect example of this and showed utmost respect and kindness towards women. The Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) advocated for women's rights and condemned any mistreatment or abuse towards them.

The concept of guardianship in Islam is not meant to give men control over women but rather to ensure their protection and well-being. It is the responsibility of men to provide for their families and take care of them in every possible way. This includes emotional, physical, and financial support.

However, this responsibility does not come without accountability. Men will be held responsible for their actions towards women and will be accountable for any mistreatment or abuse. Islam strongly condemns violence or oppression towards women and regards it as a

grave sin.

In Islam, men and women are equal in the eyes of Allah, and both have important roles to play in society. Men are not superior to women, nor are women inferior to men. Both are created by Allah and are deserving of respect and dignity.

Furthermore, Islam promotes mutual respect and cooperation between men and women in all aspects of life. This includes the family, work, and society as a whole. Women are encouraged to pursue education and careers and are not restricted.

Bottom Line: The concept of guardianship in Islam is not meant to give men authority over women but to ensure their protection and well-being. Men are responsible for their families and will be held accountable for their actions towards women. Islam promotes mutual respect and cooperation between men and women and regards them as equal in the eyes of Allah.

“And live with them (i.e. your wives) in kindness. For if you dislike them – perhaps you dislike a thing and Allah makes therein much good.” (Quran 4:19)

In our culture, women do not want to be free from men; they want to live with men and experience all the colours of life beside them. As a result, men must include women in all their legitimate desires, as it is their responsibility to earn a living and live a good and happy life.

“Let’s celebrate and empower women, for when a woman rises; she brings a whole community with her.” [\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Hazrat Ameer’s Ramadan Message

The month of Ramadan is that in which the Qur’an was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the Criterion. (Al Baqarah 2:185)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,
Assalam-o-Alaikum Wa Rakhmatullahi Wa Barakaato Hoo.

Let us all thank Allah for granting us another month of Ramadan and the opportunity to connect with and gain nearness to Him. There is a Hadith ul Qudsi (Divine Tradition) in which Allah says that between Him and man there is no veil, but between man and Him there are seventy thousand veils. This means that Allah is closer to us than our jugular vein, but we distance ourselves from Him by our actions. Each of our actions, which goes against the guidelines ordained by Allah Ta’ala in the Holy Qura’n, places a veil between Him and us. Allah is most Beneficent and Merciful towards His servants. When they repent, he grants them forgiveness for their sins, but the repentance must be sincere. We must regret our actions, repent for our sins, and not repeat them.

Among His countless bounties is the revelation of the Holy Qur’an and the blessed month of Ramadan in which its revelation started. In this month, His mercy and forgiveness become manifold, and He readily forgives our faults and weaknesses. The Holy Qur’an guides us in all our affairs and lays out how we should spend our lives. The Holy Qur’an, being called a Criterion (Al Furqan), points to the fact that it contains teachings that separate the truth from falsehood.

I pray that during this Ramadan, we can remove all the veils between our Maker and us by following the guidance that the Holy Qur’an gives us and gain nearness to Allah through our supplications and acts of devotion. May He grant us health and strength to carry out all the devotional services we offer and their acceptance by Allah Ta’ala—Aameen. [\(Return to Contents\)](#)

[Italian Article](#)

La donna (femmina)

è un essere umano poco dotato intellettualmente?

Lucaa del Negro

<https://autorenegro.org/mashaallah-book/>



Support the project, spread and comment:
www.gofundme.com/f/ma-sha039-allahxischyzil-libro

La donna, grazie alla vitale attrazione che emana, è costantemente sotto esame particolareggiato; oggi, e come allora, nell'evitare il ridicolo e pericolosamente costeggiando il provocatorio sentiero delle assurdità (soprattutto scritte), l'esame si incentra soprattutto nel costume e nell'abbigliamento, scansando e quasi maldestramente quanto è riconducibile al suo comportamento, alla moralità che la contraddistingue all'interno delle società cosiddette civili in quanto procreatrici, madri in somma. Adoperandosi in un ragionamento leggermente e solo leggermente approfondito, potremmo ben dire che queste analisi sociologiche che rimangono confinate in fin dei conti nell'estetica, in realtà sono solamente un escamotage per nascondere e nemmeno troppo bene il controllo esclusivo che l'altro sesso vuole mantenere e mantiene in una forma esclusiva, un controllo che diviene sovente esigenza di dominio verso la persona, dove il vestiario ed il trucco in fondo non sono così interessanti ma vengono addirittura riproposti per adattarsi ai maschi. La società "moderna" di Occidente mostrandosi come la più "libera" e "tollerante" in realtà cela quanto ha sempre proposto e cioè un maschio despota e padrone della morale? La Religione islamica fino a che punto tollera questi affari che sono sempre più "sporchi" (depravati in quanto è

"la famiglia" che viene meno) in considerazione del transumanesimo cavallo di battaglia dei nuovi potenti? [\(Return to Contents\)](#)

[Spanish Article](#)

La Niñez en el Islam

Por **Ubaldo Pino**



"Y no matéis a vuestros hijos por temor a la pobreza. Nosotros les proveemos a ellos y a vosotros. Matarles es un gran pecado." [Corán 17:31]

"El mejor de vosotros es el que mejor trata a su familia, y yo soy el mejor de vosotros con mi familia." [Tirmidhi]

"Quien no respeta a nuestros mayores, ni se compecede de nuestros pequeños, ni

reconoce el derecho de nuestros sabios, no es de los nuestros." [Abu Dawud]

"Jugad con vuestros hijos durante siete años; educadlos durante otros siete; y sed sus amigos durante los siguientes siete." [Al-Hakim]

La niñez en el Islam es una etapa de la vida que tiene una gran importancia y valor, tanto desde el punto de vista jurídico como ético. Según la jurisprudencia islámica, los niños tienen una serie de derechos y deberes que los protegen, educan y orientan hacia el bienestar espiritual y material. Algunos de estos derechos y deberes son:

- El derecho a la vida: El Islam prohíbe el aborto, el infanticidio y cualquier forma de violencia o maltrato contra los niños. Los niños son un don de Dios y deben ser respetados y cuidados desde antes de su concepción hasta su madurez.

- El derecho a la identidad: El Islam reconoce el derecho de los niños a tener un nombre, una filiación, una nacionalidad y una pertenencia religiosa. Los niños deben ser registrados al nacer y recibir una educación acorde con su fe.

- El derecho a la familia: El Islam establece que los niños deben crecer en un ambiente familiar sano, amoroso y protector. Los padres tienen la obligación de proveerles sustento, educación, salud, seguridad y buen ejemplo. Los hijos tienen el deber de obedecer, honrar y cuidar a sus padres.

- El derecho a la educación: El Islam considera que la educación es un derecho fundamental de todo ser humano y un medio para alcanzar la felicidad en este mundo y en el otro. Los niños deben recibir una educación integral que abarque los aspectos intelectuales, morales, sociales y espirituales.

- El derecho a la participación: El Islam valora la opinión de los niños y les otorga un espacio para expresarse, consultar y decidir sobre asuntos que les conciernen. Los niños deben ser escuchados con respeto y consideración por sus padres, maestros y autoridades.

- El derecho a la protección: El Islam defiende el interés superior de los niños frente a cualquier amenaza o peligro que pueda afectar su integridad física o psicológica. Los niños deben ser protegidos contra el abuso, la explotación, el trabajo forzado, el matrimonio precoz, la guerra y otras formas de violencia.

Estos son algunos ejemplos de los derechos y deberes que el Islam otorga a los niños

como parte de su dignidad humana. La jurisprudencia islámica se basa en las fuentes primarias del Islam (el Corán y la Sunna) así como en las interpretaciones jurídicas (fiqh) realizadas por los eruditos musulmanes a lo largo de la historia. ([Return to Contents](#))

[Dutch Article](#)

Het pad naar rechtvaardigheid

Vertaling van "The Path to
Righteousness" uit het boek

"Selections from the Discourses and
Exhortations of the Promised Messiah"

*Gebundeld en naar het Engels vertaald
door Kalamazad Mohammed, BA. Dip. Ed.
Verantwoordelijk voor de Nederlandse uit-
leg: prof. dr. Robbert Bipat*

Taqwa

De Paradijstuin is de beloning voor het geloof, en aangezien waterstromen nodig zijn om de tuin weelderig en groen te houden, zijn deze "stromen van water" het resultaat van het verrichten van goede daden. De waarheid is dat goede daden in deze wereld symbolisch zullen lijken op rivieren en kreekjes van water die in het hiernamaals stromen. We zien hetzelfde in deze wereld: hoe meer een persoon groeit in zijn of haar goede daden, hoe meer hij of zij waakt voor handelingen die kunnen worden beschouwd als daden van ongehoorzaamheid aan de Almachtige God, en hoe meer hij of zij praktijken opgeeft die buiten de grenzen van Allah liggen, hoe groter zijn of haar geloof wordt.

Elke nieuwe daad van goedheid maakt hem gelukkiger en geeft hem een sterker gevoel van innerlijke kracht. Uiteindelijk bereikt de gelovige met Zijn genade een staat van liefde voor Allah waarin hij volledig wordt ondergedompeld en brengt de kennis van Allah hem euforie. Zijn hart is volledig gehuld in het licht van Allah en alle vormen van duisternis en obstakels worden uit zijn weg verwijderd. De nederige dienaar bevindt zich in deze staat wanneer alle obstakels en beproevingen die zich op de weg naar Allah bevinden, hem zelfs geen seconde zorgen baren. In plaats daarvan

is het voor zulke mensen een bron van vreugde om op Allah's weg ontberingen te ondergaan. Dit is dan ook de laatste en hoogste fase van geloof.

Er zijn zeven componenten aan geloof, plus een laatste die voortkomt uit Gods liefde en genade. De achtste deur van het paradijs kan alleen worden ontgrendeld door de speciale genade van God, daarom zijn er slechts zeven deuren naar het paradijs. Het is belangrijk om in gedachten te houden dat de hemel en de hel in de volgende wereld niet helemaal nieuw zullen zijn. Hun ware filosofie is dat ze een weerspiegeling zijn van iemands daden en geloof. Het zal niet iets zijn dat van buitenaf aan een persoon wordt geschonken; het zal eerder van binnenuit een persoon komen. Voor de oprechte gelovige is er een "paradijs" in deze wereld voor elke omstandigheid die hij zou kunnen tegenkomen. De belofte van het paradijs in de volgende wereld maakt deel uit van het "paradijs" dat hij in deze wereld heeft. Hoe voor de hand liggend is het dat het paradijs te vinden is in de eigen goede daden en overtuigingen van mensen! Het plezier ervan wordt voor het eerst ervaren in deze wereld. Het geloof en de goede daden van deze wereld geven het uiterlijk van tuinen van het paradijs en stromende rivieren van water. [Pagina's 386-388 van Malfuzaat, Vol. 2].

Wanneer de handelingen van een persoon duidelijk en rechtvaardig zijn, zijn ze in hun beste en meest bevredigende staat. Zijn daden moeten hiervan getuigen en hij moet altijd omringd zijn door Allah's zegeningen en buitengewone, sterke tekenen. Alleen dan kan hij echt bij Allah en Allah echt bij hem zijn. Overal waar hij komt, zoekt satan naar manieren om mensen te misleiden en op een dwaalspoor te brengen. Taqwa, oftewel rechtvaardigheid, is een serieuze zaak. Met Taqwa moet men alle "satans" die dreigen hun innerlijke kracht en macht te verpletteren bestrijden. Al deze krachten zijn de duivel in de mens, of het zelf dat aanzet tot het kwaad, of de staat van nafs-e ammara. Deze krachten zullen de dienstbaarheid van een persoon uiteindelijk reduceren wanneer ze niet onder controle zijn. Wanneer ze worden misbruikt, veranderen intelligentie en kennis ook in 'satans'.

Het is de taak van de rechtvaardige persoon om deze en al zijn capaciteiten op de juiste manier te ontwikkelen. Net als degenen die zich verzetten tegen de natuur en vechten

tegen de fundamenteën van de menselijke natuur en het menselijk instinct, gaan degenen die van mening zijn dat wraak zoeken, wrok koesteren en het huwelijk allemaal slechte dingen zijn, tegen de natuur van de mens in. De ware religie is er een die het menselijk potentieel eerder vergroot dan vermindert. De viriliteit en boosheid van de mens zijn aspecten van de menselijke natuur die Allah daar plaatste; waardoor het opgeven van deze zaken door een kluizenaar of een monnik te worden, een conflict met Allah betekent. Zaken die tegen de natuur van de mens ingaan, verminderen het bestaansrecht van de mens. Immers zijn die vermogens door Allah in ons geplaatst. [Pagina's 33-51 in Deel 1 van Malfuzaat] [\[Return to Contents\]](#)

Vasten in zomer en winter - een spirituele beschouwing

De Ramadan zal binnenkort van start gaan en vooral in gebieden met een heel vroege zonsopkomst en een heel late zonsondergang kunnen de vastentijden heel lang zijn. Daardoor zullen vele Moslims onwillig of fysiek niet in staat zijn te vasten. In deze Noot zullen we trachten een alternatieve visie te geven op vasten in de zomer, waardoor ook deze broeders en zusters desgewenst de Ramadan vastend kunnen doorbrengen.

We citeren eerst een deel van maulana Muhammad Ali's uitleg van vers 2:187 uit de Koran: "Hier komt een belangrijke vraag naar voren met betrekking tot de landen waar de dagen soms erg lang zijn, en waar het voor gewone mensen niet mogelijk is zich van voedsel te onthouden van het aanbreeken van de dageraad tot zonsondergang. Er is een verslag waarin over de metgezellen van de Profeet wordt verteld dat zij hem vragen stelden over hun gebeden op een dag die zich uit zou strekken over een jaar of een maand. Van de Profeet wordt gezegd dat hij antwoordde dat zij zouden moeten meten naar de maatstaf van hun dagen (AD. 36:13). Hieruit zou volgen dat in landen waar de dagen te lang zijn, de vastentijd afgemeten mag worden in overeenstemming met de lengte van een gewone dag, of daar waar dat praktisch uitvoerbaar is, het vasten uitgesteld mag worden naar kortere dagen van ongeveer normale lengte."

Op basis van deze uitleg van de maulana geven we hieronder nog enkele argumenten op basis waarvan de lezer minder uren zou kun-

nen vasten op hele lange dagen.

Het eerste punt betreft de spirituele betekenis van de rituelen die we uitvoeren.

De Koran vertelt ons in 2:183 dat vasten ons moet leiden tot meer taqwa (ons hoeden voor het kwaad). Ook het doel van het gebed is om ons tegen het kwaad te beschermen, zoals we lezen in Koran 29:45: "Het gebed houdt (ons) weg van onzedelijkheid en het kwade." Verder lezen we in Koran 22:37 dat bij het offeren niet het vlees en bloed (het fysieke deel) het belangrijkste is, maar de volbrenging van onze plicht. Verder zijn er diverse hadith (overleveringen van de Profeet Mohammed) over het vasten, die ons leren dat het vasten niet volledig is als we onszelf overgeven aan kwaadsprekerij of slecht gedrag. Dus niet de uiterlijke daden van het vasten zijn het belangrijkste, maar de innerlijke waarde.

Ten tweede kunnen uit het gegeven dat vasten en gebed ons weghouden van slechtheid, ons afvragen tegen wie deze slechtheid zou kunnen worden geuit. Tegenover onszelf? Hoogstwaarschijnlijk niet, die slechtheid zouden we waarschijnlijk tegenover anderen doen gelden. Als we ons dus moeten weerhouden van het kwaad (tegenover anderen), dient ons vasten dus minimaal de periode te bestrijken waarin we contacten hebben met medemensen.

Er is een overlevering volgens welke de Profeet vermeldt dat de Moslims na het Isha gebed (laatste nachtgebed) het liefst niet meer moeten praten (Maulana Muhammad Ali, Manual of Hadith, hoofdstuk 9, hadith 10). Dit is waarschijnlijk omdat de Profeet dit gebed beschouwde als onze allerlaatste daad van de dag. Het advies is dat zijn volgelingen zich na het Isha gebed niet in onnodige discussies moeten begeven, omdat we met dit gebed juist kunnen reflecteren over de fouten van de dag, kort voordat we ons ter ruste leggen. Dit gebed is dus onze laatste daad van de dag, en het Fajr gebed (ochtendgebed) is onze eerste daad van de dag. Tussen deze twee gebeden in ligt ons sociaal leven, met name in de tijd tussen Fajr (ochtendgebed) en Maghrib (vroege avondgebed).

Dus als het doel van het vasten is om ons te weerhouden slecht te doen (tegenover anderen), heeft het geen zin om bijvoorbeeld om 3:00 uur in de ochtend te beginnen met vasten, omdat we pas enkele uren later beginnen aan ons sociaal leven.

In de winter kan de situatie worden omge-

keerd. Velen zijn onwillig om de lange uren in de zomer te vasten, maar in de winter maken ze wel gretig gebruik van de gelegenheid om hele korte dagen te vasten. Wij zijn van mening dat ook in de winter ons vasten minimaal de periode moet bestrijken waarin we onze meeste sociale contacten hebben, bijvoorbeeld tussen 6:00 a.m. en 19:00 p.m. minimaal. In december in Nederland zou men bijvoorbeeld minder dan 10 uren vasten als we uitgaan van dageraad en zonsondergang, en het ontvasten zou zijn rond 4:30 p.m., terwijl we daarna nog actief deelnemen aan het sociaal leven. Van daar dat het vasten in zulke gevallen langer zou moeten duren, totdat de reguliere sociale activiteiten voorbij zijn.

We moeten ook rekening houden dat de Islam geen religie is van uitersten, maar van matigheid en het zoeken van een middenweg. In landen met een hoge breedtegraad (hoger dan 50 graden), is heel lang vasten in de zomer het ene uiterste, voor velen heel moeilijk vol te houden, en vasten in de winter is het andere uiterste, waar het vasten soms niet eens als vasten aanvoelt. In Engeland kan het vasten in de zomer zelfs 19 uur duren, en in de winter slechts 9 uur. Het is een fundamenteel beginsen van de Islam om tegenover elkaar liggende extremiteiten in onze religieuze (en andere) activiteiten te vermijden. Zie Koran 20:81, onder andere.

Verder geeft Koran 2:187 de toestemming aan Moslim mannen om 'tot hun vrouwen in te gaan' in de nachten van de Ramadan. Van deze toestemming kan moeilijk gebruik worden gemaakt als het (in het midden van de zomer) slechts enkele uren nacht is. Dus als we het vasten van dageraad tot zonsondergang letterlijk nemen in de zomer, leggen wij onszelf ontberingen op die Allah niet voor ons heeft bestemd.

Ook voor de gebedstijden zou het een optie kunnen zijn om die te concentreren rondom de periode waarin we sociaal actief zijn (in geval van overmatig lange of overmatig korte dagen). Het heeft bijvoorbeeld weinig zin om het ochtendgebed om 3:00 a.m. te verrichten en dan weer te gaan slapen. In deze gevallen zou overwogen kunnen worden het ochtendgebed

te verrichten voordat de tijd van sociale contacten begint, zo rond 5:00 of 6:00 a.m.

Hetzelfde geldt voor het Isha gebed (late nachtgebed). Dit kan worden verricht voor het slapen gaan, ook al is het nog niet helemaal donker. Zonsondergang in juni bijvoorbeeld, zal in Nederland rond 10:00 p.m. zijn, en het volledig invallen van de duisternis is dan na middernacht. Volgens een overlevering van de Profeet heeft hij afgeraden om voor het Isha gebed te gaan slapen (Manual of Hadith, hoofdstuk 9, hadith 10). Naar onze mening heeft het geen zin om tot na 0:00 a.m. (middernacht) wakker te blijven om daarna het Isha gebed te verrichten, en dan na 4 uren weer op te staan voor het Fajr gebed. Deze paar uren geven overigens ook niet veel tijd aan de meer godvruchtigen onder ons om het vrijwillige nachtgebed, de Tahadjoed, te verrichten (deze mensen zullen ook weinig spirituele vervulling krijgen als ze in de korte zomernachten op zoek gaan naar de Lailat al-Qadr, de nacht waarin de eerste openbaring van de Koran plaatsvond). Neem nogmaals in gedachten dat het belangrijkste doel van de dagelijkse gebeden niet is om bepaalde uren aan te houden, maar om ons te beschermen tegen het kwaad (Koran 29:45).

Onze mening is derhalve dat - in geval van extreem lange of extreem korte dagen - het vasten volbracht zou kunnen worden in de periode dat we het meest met onze medemensen in contact zijn, met een minimum van ongeveer 13 uren en een maximum van ongeveer 15 uren (15 uren is ongeveer de langste vastentijd in Mekka), en om ook binnen deze periode de dagelijkse gebeden te plannen. Dat is natuurlijk - nogmaals - onze mening, gebaseerd op interpretaties van Koranverzen en overleveringen van de Profeet Mohammed, maar als anderen hun vasten- en gebedstijden willen richten op tijden van zonsopkomst en -ondergang, is daar natuurlijk niets op tegen als we de letterlijke betekenis van de verzen in beschouwing nemen. Deze Noot is in de eerste plaats bedoeld om aan hen, die zich hadden voorgenomen om niet te vasten op de lange zomerdagen, een gelegenheid te bieden om op een minder zware manier aan hun plichten te voldoen. Met dank aan Dr. Zahid Aziz ([Return to Contents](#))

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore

Established 1913 as the Working Muslim Mission.

E-mail: editor.thelight@LACommunity.uk

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