



*Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha' at Islam Lahore
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March, 97 Bulletin

March, 97 Meeting

Assalamu alaikum, You, together with your family and friends, are cordially invited to take part in our next meeting.

Venue: *Dar-us-Salaam*

Date: **Sunday, 2 March 97**

Time: 3 p.m.

Subject: The Holy Prophet

Muhammad (peace be upon him) - The Ahmadi view

Please remember meetings of the Jamaat are held on the first Sunday of each month. The next meeting is on April 6, 1997.

'Id al Fitr Khutba

"O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil." (2:183)

Earlier in the same chapter it says:

"And every one has a goal to which he turns himself, so vie with one another in good works. Where-ever you are, Allah will bring you all together. Surely Allah is possessor of power over all things." (2:148)

We are today celebrating the end of Ramadaan. The first verse I have recited not only gives Allah's Command to Muslims to fast; it also gives the reason for fasting,

because Islam is the only religion which does not believe in blind acceptance of religious dictates and historicity of religion. All other religions depend on what they call "faith" but by faith what they mean is blind obedience. There is very little historical evidence for the existence of founders of most religions, let alone the authenticity of their teachings. That is why the followers of these religions say that a measure of faith is involved in believing in God and His Commandments.

This is not true of Islam. Not only is the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) documented in minute detail but the revelation to him was preserved during the Holy Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) own life time. Real faith depends on belief; belief in turn depends on understanding and understanding depends on evidence put forward to justify a proposition. We do not have to go far; just look for historical evidence available for the existence of the holy prophet Jesus.

We find there was no contemporary evidence for his existence let alone other events associated with his life and mission. We are therefore told to believe in these things as a matter of faith. Faith here meaning to accept some thing without evidence or reason.

This is not the definition of faith in Islam. Not only is there firm historical evidence for the life of

the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) but even the Commandments of Allah tell us the reason why Allah has Commanded us to do something or to refrain from another. In the first verse I have recited we are told to fast because fasting helps us keep away from sin. This is the goal of fasting. The second verse I have recited to you tells us what is the objective of a Muslim's life. As the verse says every one has an objective in life. Indeed the latest management theory tells us that only those who set themselves objectives and work to achieve them are the ones who are successful. The verse recognises that people seek different things in life. Some may have grand objectives such as being the best in the World in their chosen field. Others may have more modest objectives such as marrying a particular girl or boy or a pay rise or a promotion. Whatever else we may seek in life, a Muslim's over-riding objective is to "*vie with one another in good works*".

These two verses represent two different aspects of human conduct. One is to avoid sin for the sake of one's own soul. But avoidance of sin, although a noble action as far as an individual is concerned, may not mean actively pursuing doing of good to others. Although it is

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good for the individual, it may not lead to collective good. The second verse tells Muslims that they must pursue a proactive approach to doing good to others. Islam has a very wide definition of sin and of doing good. Every action that has a detrimental affect on the soul or society is evil and is a sin. Indeed, those actions which disturb the harmony of the Muslim unity are regarded as being particularly abhorrent. Remember also that in Ramadaan we gave up eating and drinking and other lawful acts because Allah has commanded us to do so in the Holy Quran. There are other things which Allah Commands us to do. The Holy Quran says:

“O you who believe, let not people laugh at people, perchance they may be better than they; nor let women laugh at women, perchance they may be better than they. Neither find fault with your own people, nor call one another by nick names. Evil is a bad name after faith; and whoso turns not, these it is that are the iniquitous. “O you who believe, avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases in sin; and spy not nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You abhor it! And keep your duty to Allah, surely Allah is Oft-returning to mercy, Merciful.” (49:11-12)

At another place the Holy Quran says:

“And obey Allah and His Messenger and dispute not one with another, lest you get weak-hearted and your power depart; and be steadfast. Surely Allah is with the steadfast.” (8:46)

Further on:

“And follow not that of which thou hast no knowledge. Surely hearing and the sight and the heart, of all of these it will be asked.” (17:36)

And again:

“On the day when their tongues and their hands and their feet bear witness against them as to what they did.” (24:23)

In verses 11 and 12 of chapter 49, the Holy Quran calls evil giving people nick names, laughing at them and mocking them. It further equates suspicion of your brothers and sisters and thus attributing motives to their actions, spying on them and back-

biting to sin. Just as the Holy Quran calls drinking, stealing, adultery etc. sinful acts, in the same way it is calling these actions evil and sinful. There is no difference. It is surprising that we abhor one set of actions because it is called evil and sinful by the Holy Quran but we happily engage in others without the slightest thought. We make fun of the physical or mental handicaps of others. We treat each other with suspicion. We are always on the look out to find an error or sin that someone may have committed. Why are we so keen to do so? The reason is that we want to spread gossip about them. Although the Holy Quran openly states that back-biting is equal to eating the flesh of your dead brother; even the severity of this admonishment has no affect on us. On the Day of Judgement Allah will question your hearing, your sight and your heart about whether they had true knowledge of what they were propagating and why they spread gossip. Allah will then punish those that do so just as surely as He will punish the thief and the usurper. As I recited above: *“On the day when their tongues and their hands and their feet bear witness against them as to what they did.”*

It seems to me that the reason we pray, fast, give charity and perform the Haj is because others can see these actions and call us pious and give us titles such as Haji etc. Such praise and these titles make us feel good. But no one can see that we do not mock others or back-bite so we ignore these commands. If your prayer, fasting, charity and Haj is for show then these actions are without benefit to your soul or the Muslim Brotherhood. In that case, whether you pray or fast or you do not is the same. It is good that during Ramadaan we fasted and tried to say our prayers more meticulously than we would have done otherwise and that we may even have said extra prayers. However, we must always keep in mind the purpose of devotions. The purpose is to make us better human beings. If this has not happened then we have wasted our time for Allah does not stand in need of our prayers, fasting or charity. We are like the student who attended a

college and took no notice of the teaching, advice and guidance and he leaves as ignorant and illiterate as he was when he joined the college. Would you not say that he has wasted his time!

Our collective devotions are to engender in us a unity. Unity of faith, unity of brotherhood and unity of purpose. This is why Allah tells us: *“And obey Allah and His Messenger and dispute not one with another, lest you get weak-hearted and your power depart; and be steadfast. Surely Allah is with the steadfast.”* As I have said before, we have obeyed Allah Who told us to fast and we should also follow His Guidance in these matters. I have always wondered why it is that we can not see the obvious advantages of unity and disadvantages of disunity. We can see that the world is trying to become united. The US, Canada and Mexico have joined together in a mutual trade agreement to the benefit of their citizens. The European Union is trying to foster greater unity by introducing a common currency, abolishing passport and visa requirements, abolishing trade barriers etc. This is being achieved by discussion not by dispute. If you dispute with each other on every issue, you will not make any progress. It will sap your morale and as the Holy Quran says *“you will become weak-hearted and power will depart from you.”* This is not mere theory for we can see the results of our disputes from Bosnia to Pakistan.

Ramadaan has come to an end. In this month we laid a great stress on reciting the Holy Quran which is good. How much better will it be if we laid some stress on understanding what was being recited and better still if we vow to put **all** the Commands of Allah into practice, not just those that suit us. Let us promise that we will give up mocking, back-biting, gossiping and disputing and *“vie with one another in good”*.

May Allah grant us the wisdom to follow His Commands. (Amin)

Id Mubarak