"God is the Light of the heavens and the earth" (The Qur'an 23:35)

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 (The Qur'an 3:103)

CONTENTS

ALLAH IS THE LIGHT ................................................................. 4
SEEK THE PLEASURE OF ALLAH ............................................. 6
WHEN A MUSLIM'S WORD WAS HIS BOND .......................... 7
OUR BELIEFS

Ash'a'du an la ilaha illa allahu wahdahu la sharika lahu wa asshadu anna Muhammad anabduhu wa rasuluhu.

1. We believe Allah to be the Possessor of all the perfect attributes free from all defects and imperfections. Unique in His Person, unrivalled in His Attributes and Works, and One without a partner.

2. We hold it essential to believe in angels, all of the Divine Books, and all the Prophets and Messengers of God.

3. We believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the Khataam al Nabiyyin. With his advent, religion has been perfected, so he is the Last Prophet after whom no Prophet shall come, neither a new one nor a former one.

4. We believe in the life after death, and in all matters relating to the grave, the Day of Judgment and paradise and hell, that are proven from the Qur'an and Hadith.

5. From the depth of our Hearts, we hold the Righteous Caliphs, the Holy Companions (ashab), the Purified Wives, and members of the Holy Household (ahl bait) as beloved, worthy of respect, and honourable in the sight of God.

6. We hold the Imams Abu Hanifah, Shafi'i, Malik, and Ahmad Hanbal to be the leaders of jurisprudence (fiqh); and saints such as Shaikh'Abdul Qadir Jilani, Khawajah Naqshband; and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi to be leaders of Tusiawwaf (the spiritual sciences). We believe all such elders of the religion to be worthy of esteem.

7. In accordance with the Holy Prophet's sayings about Mujaddids and Muhaddaths, we believe in the truth of the Mujaddids of all the centuries, and in accordance with the same tradition, believe in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian as the Mujaddid of the fourteenth century of Hijrah, not as a Prophet.

8. We consider each such person to be Muslim who professes to believe la ilaha illa allah, Muhammad ur rasul Allah (there is no God but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) and calls himself a Muslim.

9. All the members of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-I- Islam Lahore believe in acting according to God's Book the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and if no specific direction is found there, they give precedence to the Hanafi School of jurisprudence.

10. The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-I- Islam Lahore has not only been proclaiming these beliefs but, for over Eighty years, it has been engaged in the propagation of Islam and service to its cause. The whole world and in particular the Muslim religious scholars of the Indo Pakistan sub-continent have borne witness to this fact.

SWORN DECLARATION OF HAZRAT MIRZA GULAM AHMAD OF QADIAN

"I make it clear to the public that I swear by Almighty Allah that I am not a Kafir. My belief is la ilaha illa allah Muhammad ur rasul Allah, and regarding the Holy Prophet I believe that "he is the Messenger of Allah and Khatam al-Nabiyyin (The Qur'an, 33:40). I swear to this statement as many times as the Holy Qur'an, and as many times as there are Excellency of the Holy Prophet in God's eyes.

No belief of mine is opposed to the directions of God or of the Holy Prophet, and he who thinks otherwise is mistaken. Whoever still considers me a kafir, and does not refrain from declaring me as such should remember with certainty that God will question him after his death."

"In all matters my beliefs are the same as those of the other ahl sunnah. In this house of God, I admit most clearly that I believe in the finality of Prophethood of the Khatam al-anslya, the Holy Prophet. Whoever denies the finality of Prophethood, I consider him to be a disbeliever and outside the pale of Islam."

SWORN DECLARATION OF HAZRAT MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI, FIRST HEAD OF THE LAHORE AHMADIYYA COMMUNITY:

"I, Muhammad Ali, Head of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Community, do swear by Almighty God that my belief is that Hazrat Mirza Sahib was a Mujaddid and the Messiah, but not a Prophet, and that a person cannot become a kafir and excluded from the pale of Islam by denying him as such; this was also the belief of Hazrat Mirza Sahib himself "0 God, if I have lied in swearing by Thy name, send upon me such exemplary punishment as could not come from human means, and by which the world would see how terrible and frightening is God's punishment for those who deceive His creatures by swearing falsely in His name."

Paigham-E-Haqq MESSAGE OF TRUTH
Instructions and Guidance for the Ahmadiyya Jama‘at

For every Ahmadi to read from start to finish, and to note whatever applies to him and to put it into practice.

by

Maulana Muhammad Ali
First Head of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement

SUMMARY

Our work: To prepare resources of Islamic knowledge, to produce translations of the Holy Quran in different languages of the world, and to spread them throughout the world.

Distinctive features of our jama‘at.
1. The aim of our lives is the propagation of Islam.
2. To make sacrifices of one’s person and possessions for this end.
3. To learn about Islam and its history, and about other faiths.
4. To follow the teachings of Islam and respect its institutions.
5. To show tolerance and broad mindedness in the propagation of Islam, and to have love for Muslims.
6. To respect and honour the service of Islam.

Our system of organization:
1. We all follow one call and respect that call.
2. That call is the call of the consensus of the Jama‘at, from which no individual should deviate.
3. The financial system is that all members must:
   a. give two thirds of their zakat to the Jama‘at,
   b. pay out of their income one sixteenth for every dollar as contributions, and
   c. donate towards specially arising needs.
4. To respect and honour one another, think well of one another, and also hold the leaders to account.
5. To take such a close interest in the work of the community so as to give it precedence over personal business.
The Holy Quran tells us that Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth and that He guides to His light whom He pleases. We are also warned that if Allah does not give us light, there is no other source of light for us and darkness will be our fate.

Four questions come to mind. To whom was this light given, why was it bestowed, can we ordinary human beings share in this light and where is that light to be found?

Firstly, the Holy Quran tells us that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) was the greatest recipient of this light for he was siraj munir (a light-giving sun – 33:46). Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, explains that just as there is a physical sun for the bodies of human beings, so, too, there is a spiritual sun for the souls of mankind and that sun was no other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the resplendence of whose light Mirza Sahib extols in the following words:

“...That light of high degree that was bestowed on the perfect man was not in the angels, was not in the stars, was not in the moon, was not in the sun, was not in the oceans and the rivers, was not in rubies or emeralds, or sapphires, or pearls; in short, it was not in any earthly or heavenly object. It was only in the perfect man whose highest and loftiest and most perfect example was our lord and master, the Chief of the Prophets, the Chief of all living ones, Muhammad, the chosen one, peace be on him. That light was bestowed on this man and, according to their ranks, upon all those who bore the same colour to some degree...this dignity was found in its highest and most perfect form in our lord and master and our guide, the immaculate Prophet, the righteous one, testified to by the righteous, Muhammad, the chosen one, peace be on him” (Ayena-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, pp. 160-161).

Secondly, why was that light conferred on the Holy Prophet with such dazzling splendour? The Holy Quran says: Surely Allah commands you to make over amanat (trusts) to those worthy of them… (4:58).

What is the meaning of amanat (trusts)? On one level, Maulana Muhammad Ali explains the word in this way:

“This section deals with the granting of kingdom to the Muslims, who are here required to entrust the affairs of State to people who are worthy of this responsibility. The words that follow, requiring judges to be just, corroborate this significance, the whole verse stating the reciprocal duties of the governed and the governors. Explaining the word amanat, I’Ab said that it means duties. The Prophet (pbuh) himself explained the word amanat as meaning Government or affairs of State. The Prophet (pbuh) said, When the amanat (trust) is wasted, wait for the sa’ah, i.e. the hour or the doom. It was said, How will the trust be wasted, O Messenger of Allah? He said, When Government is entrusted to those unworthy of it, then wait of the doom’ (B. 81:35)” (The Holy Quran, Note 592).

On another level, Mirza Sahib gives the following meaning:

“The meaning of amanat is that perfect man gives back to Allah, Most High, everything which Allah had bestowed on him as gifts, all his capabilities, his intelligence and knowledge, his heart and soul, his desires, his love, his fears, his honour and dignity and all his physical and spiritual powers until he fulfils the verse: Surely Allah commands you to make over amanat (trusts) to those worthy of them; that is, he annihilates himself in Allah and bequeaths his life to His service and this glory is found to the highest, most perfect and most complete degree in no other person than our Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as Allah Himself says in the Holy Quran: Say: My prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are surely for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. No associate has He. And this I am commanded and I am the first of those who submit (6:163 - 164)”. (Ayena-e-Kamalat-e-Islam).

An explanation of these verses is given by Mirza Sahib in the same book.

As regards prayer, he writes:

“First, God must be believed to be the One Who is to be worshipped, sought and loved. In serving Him, loving Him, fearing Him and hoping from Him, no one must be taken as being His partner. Celebration, glorification and service of God, all the forms and commands in relation to serving Him, the commandments and prohibitions, and matters relating to the destiny ordained by Him, must all be accepted with one’s heart and soul. All these orders, limits, laws, and circumstances ordained for us, must be borne with complete devotion, in the most humble and lowly manner. And one must learn thoroughly all the pure truths and knowledge which are the means of realising His vast powers, the medium of discovering the elevated glory of His dominion and kingship,
and a powerful guide for recognising His favours and blessings” (The Meaning of Islam, p. 4).

Concerning sacrifice, he says that every personal desire must be given up in preference to the will of Allah and every gift of Allah, concrete and abstract, must be used for the glory, praise and service of the Almighty.

“That is, the person claiming to be a follower of Islam must prove that his hands, feet, heart and mind, his sense, reason, anger, mercy, gentleness and knowledge, all his spiritual and physical powers, his honour and property, his rest and comfort, and all that he has, from the hair of his head to the nails of his toes, both outwardly and inwardly, so much so that his intentions, the fears in his heart, and the feelings in his soul— all these have become as obedient to God as a person’s limbs are in his own control” (The Meaning of Islam, p. 3).

In respect to our living and dying for Allah, it must be our conscious resolve that every cell that is born in our bodies must live for the sake of Allah and His creation and when it dies it must do so in complete fulfilment of this resolution. Or as Mirza Sahib writes:

“The other aspect of devoting one’s life for God is that it must be dedicated to the service, sympathy and help of his creatures, the bearing of their burdens, and the true sharing of their grief. One must bear hardship to provide relief to others, and for their comfort tolerate difficulty for oneself” (The Meaning of Islam, p. 4).

Further:

“Service to the creation of Allah is like this. As regards all the needs of His creation, and all the various ways in which Divine providence has made some people dependent on others, one must do good with all the real, selfless and true sympathy that one can show, solely for the sake of Allah, and help every needy person with one's God-given ability, exerting oneself to bring about reform and improvement in their life of this world and the next” (The Meaning of Islam, p. 5).

The expression awwalul Muslimin (the first of the Muslims) has been variously interpreted, but Mirza Sahib gives this explanation as if coming from the mouth of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) himself:

“From the beginning of the world to the end of it there will never be another person as perfect as I am — no one would lose himself in Allah to the extent that I have nor would anyone return his trust to Allah as I have done.”

Remember that besides peace and submission to the will of Allah, Islam also means paying the price in advance for a thing, and our Holy Prophet (pbuh) had indeed fulfilled the trust in advance in return for the wasila for which he has asked us all to pray that Allah may grant it to him as is reported in the hadith: “Ask Allah to grant me the wasila.” When asked what the wasila was, be replied: “The highest grade in Paradise which only one man will attain and I hope I may be he” (Robson’s Mishkat, p. 1236).

The third question is, how can we ordinary mortals be blessed with some of this light of Allah? The Holy Quran informs us in 33:21: "Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the Latter day, and remembers Allah much, and in 68:4, in reference to the Holy Prophet (pbuh), Allah says: And surely thou hast the most sublime morals.

Our Holy Prophet (pbuh) himself is reported to have said: “Allah has sent me to perfect good qualities of character and to complete good deeds” (Robson’s Mishkat, pp. 1236-37).

For those who desire to share in Allah’s light, the Holy Quran discloses the only possible way in this verse: Say, If you love Allah, follow me (the Holy Prophet). Allah will love you and grant you maghfirah (protection) from your sins. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful (3:30).

Maghfirah means not only forgiveness of past sins, but also protection from committing sins because of human weakness and very significantly, suppression of a defective state — that is, more and more perfection or more and more light or as the Holy Quran says, light upon light (24:25).

The following two ahadith [sayings of the Holy Prophet (pbuh)] also inform us that without loving the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and following his way, there is no hope of receiving Allah’s Divine Light. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) said:

"None among you is a true believer unless I become dearer to him than his father, his children and the whole of mankind" (Bukhari).

"I leave with you two things; as long as you hold fast to them both, you will never be misguided: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger" (Muwatta).

If there is any doubt in our minds, the Holy Quran removes it in the following promise (which is made in the clearest of words): O you who believe, turn to Allah with sincere repentance. It may be your Lord will remove from you your evil and cause you to enter Gardens wherein flow rivers, on the day on which Allah will not abase the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their light will gleam before them and on their right hands — they will say: Our Lord, make perfect for us our light, and grant us protection; surely Thou art Possessor of power over all things (66:8).
In extolling the excellence of following the Holy Prophet (pbuh) with love and fidelity, Mirza Sahib writes in the following excerpts:

"By walking under his shadow for ten days one obtains that light which before him could not be obtained in a thousand years.... We have found every light by following the immaculate Prophet (pbuh) and whoever follows him will also find it and he will become so accepted of God that nothing will be impossible for him. The Living God Who is hidden from people, will be his God and all false gods will be trodden under his feet. He will be blessed everywhere and Divine Power will be with him. Peace be on him who follows the guidance" (Siraj Munir, p. 82).

"It is my personal experience that to obey the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, with a sincere heart and to love him, ultimately make a person beloved of God. God creates in his heart a burning for His Own love and such a one, withdrawing his heart from everything else, leans towards God and his affection and desire remain only for God Almighty. Thereupon a special manifestation of Divine love falls upon him and bestowing upon him the full colour of love and devotion pulls him towards itself with great force. He then overcomes his passions and from every direction extraordinary works of God Almighty appear as signs in his support and to help him" (Haqiqatul Wahi, p. 65).

Finally, we may ask: Where can that light be found in this earthly existence? Again, the Holy Quran answers in clear and explicit words:

(It is) in houses which Allah has permitted to be exalted and His name to be remembered therein. Therein do glorify Him, in the mornings and the evenings, men who neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the keeping up of prayer and the paying of the poor-rate – they fear a day in which the hearts and the eyes will turn about (24:36-37).

In other words, according to Mirza Sahib, the prerequisite for that light of Allah is purity of heart. Sincerity of heart must come first; after that everything is open to us, and this is borne out by that statement of Allah to our Holy Prophet (pbuh): "The heavens and the earth, vast as they are, cannot contain Me, but the heart of a believer can."

In Kishti Nuh (The Ark of Noah) Mirza Sahib writes:

"Everybody claims that he is a follower of the true religion, but the religion of that man alone is true who obtains light in this very life itself. And everybody says that he will get salvation, but only he is justified in making this claim who is given light in this earthly life itself."

He later prays that our hearts should be changed so that we become like stars on this earth filling the planet with the light and life which we get from Allah, Most High.

This is the light for which our Holy Prophet (pbuh) prayed and which he taught every believer to pray for in the following words:

"O Allah, pour light into my heart, pour it into my eyes, and into my ears. Pour it to my right and pour it to my left. Pour it in front of me, and behind me and give me light. Pour light into my nerves, and into my flesh, and into my blood, and into my hair, and into my skin, and into my tongue, and into my soul and increase my light, and transform me into light; and surround me with light. O Allah, bless me with light" (Bases of Islamic Culture, p. 53).

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**SEEK THE PLEASURE OF ALLAH:**

(An advice to those who have taken the pledge and are members of the jama'at)

By Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahid of Qadian

The Light, August - September, 1990

O my friends who have taken pledge and have become members of the Movement, may Allah grant you the power to do things which please Him.

Today you are small in number and are looked upon with contempt and humiliation. Presently you are passing through a trial. In accordance with established Divine practice, every effort will be made to dissuade you. Distresses will be inflicted upon you and you will have to bear all these nasty and slanderous remarks. Everyone who will inflict upon you pain through his hand or tongue will deem it a service to the cause of Religion. You will also have to face heavenly tribulations so that you maybe tested in every manner.

So listen! Mere logic and reasoning will not make you triumphant or dominant. Do not resort to ridicule in retaliation to ridicule hurled at you or abuse the opponents because they abuse you. Because if you adopt these methods your hearts will become hard. You will be thus indulging in mere talk which Allah hates and despises. So do not act in the
manner that you incur two curses – one of the people and the other of Allah.

Our Lord is truthful and faithful in fulfilling His promises. He shall bring about what He has promised. Although these are the last days of the world and many calamities are destined to befall, yet it is imperative that this earth witnesses all these events to come to pass as has been foretold.

Allah intends that all righteous souls, whether living in Europe, Asia, or in any other part of the world, should be drawn towards His Unity and be brought together into the fold of One Religion…. So try to achieve this objective, laying emphasis on meekness and supplication. You should seek Divine help through the Holy Spirit with complete subservience to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and purification of your inner selves. One cannot achieve real inner purification except through the Holy Spirit. In order to seek Divine pleasure, one should abstain from indulging in sensual pleasures. Follow the path which is the narrowest of all. Do not delve into worldly pleasures as these take one away from Allah. Earn Allah’s pleasure by leading a life fraught with difficulties and hardships.

WHEN A MUSLIM’S WORD WAS HIS BOND:
By Muhammad Yakub Khan
Taken from: The Golden Deed of Islam

By the side of the sandy track that ran from Makkah to Madinah, there rose a lovely grove of palm trees. Underneath these flowed springs of cool crystal water. Caravans that wended their weary way across the bleak desert thanked Allah as they came upon this boon. Unloading their camels, they halted there, enjoyed the cool refreshing water and spent the noon-tide in the thick shades of the trees. Their animals, in the meantime, roamed about and helped themselves to whatever came their way. Scattered among these trees were humble huts in which the tenants of the Sheikh, who was the master of the oasis, dwelt. In the centre of this hamlet and surrounded by rich orchards there stood a nice little villa, the residence of the Sheikh himself.

Peace and content reigned in this lonely habitation. Life went on smoothly until one fateful day when a young man on camel-back chanced to pass that way. As usual, he dropped at the oasis to have a little rest. Letting his camel loose to graze about, he stretched his weary limbs under one of the trees by the side of the stream. The breeze was cool, he was tired and before long he was fast asleep.

Meanwhile, his animal moved about freely, chewing on every bush or bramble that it came across. As ill luck would have it, it broke at length into the Sheikh’s garden and spoiled the rich vineyard. The keeper of the garden, a pious old man, was busy making a matting for the mosque. As he looked up, he saw the beast damage his master’s property. Taking hold of his club, he rushed at the animal and drove it out. A short while afterwards the beast found another way in. The old man again turned it out, but the animal repeated the raid a third time, and a third time the keeper branched his club at it. This time, however, the blow fell on a tender spot and the camel fell with a thud! It was dead.

The young man, the owner of the camel, was fast asleep while all this went on. Little did he dream what fate his old camel had met. When he woke up, the shadows had already lengthened. The rays of the sun had lost much of their heat. It was time to start. Like a good Muslim, however, his first concern was to say his afternoon prayers. Taking a dip in the cool brook and making the necessary ablutions, he spread his prayer carpet and in solemn bow and prostration thanked Allah for the cool shade, sweet water, rest and comfort He had vouchsafed him in that desert place. This done, he promptly made ready to resume his journey. He looked about for his camel, but the animal was nowhere to be seen. “Where on earth has it gone?” he said to himself. However, as he proceeded further and entered the Sheikh’s garden he saw the camel lying stiff and cold. A bolt from the blue could not have caused him greater shock. The death of the beautiful beast which was to him as dear as a friend caused him much grief.

The gardener who had done it came up to explain the whole thing. “Please pardon me, O son,” said the old man. “It was an accident. I meant no harm. The camel was spoiling the garden. I just wanted to drive it out. Twice I turned it out but it came in a third time. That time the blow proved fatal. It was an accident pure and simple, and I am so very sorry.”

The young man was too upset to listen to any explanations. His rage knew no bounds. “You old fool!” he shouted, and with his big brawny hands he caught the poor old man by the throat. “You old fool! How dare you touch my beast?” And in the fit of anger he gave the old man such a violent shake that his weak age-worn body could not stand it. His heart failed, and in the twinkling of an eye, the keeper of the Sheikh’s garden was no more. He fell down dead.
Now, when the excitement of the moment had passed, the young man stood aghast at what he had done. He was filled with remorse. He had taken the life of a fellow man and had violated the sacred law of Islam. Had not the Prophet said: "The life, honour and property of one Muslim is sacred and inviolable unto another"? Was this not the very parting message of the Prophet to the world of Islam on the eve of his departure from this world? The words kept ringing in his ears. He was overwhelmed with shame. He was an unworthy son of Islam, he said to himself, a traitor. In taking the life of a brother man, he had betrayed the very last trust the Prophet had reposed in every Muslim.

It was, however, too late. What was done was done. The question now was: What was he to do? There was nobody about. Must he slip off to save his neck? To stay there was to court the hangman’s rope. What was he to do? Thus did he muse within himself and was almost on the point of giving way to the instinct of self-preservation and taking to his heels, when there came a sharp and firm voice from within. "No! Never!" said this voice. It was un-Muslim-like to have given way to his wrath. It was sheer madness. But even a mad Muslim must not be a mean Muslim. To escape the law of the land would mean deception and it was not for a Muslim to deceive. Straightaway he made for the Sheikh’s villa and gave himself up as the murderer of the old gardener.

This was in the time when Umar the Great reigned in Madinah as the Caliph of Islam. The fame of his even-handed justice had spread far and wide. It spared neither high nor low, friend nor foe. He had ordered his own son, when found guilty, to be flogged to death. To such a court was the young man sent by the Sheikh to stand trial. The old man’s two sons accompanied him.

After a weary march, the party, prosecutors as well as the accused, arrived at the capital of Islam. The suit was duly lodged before the Caliph. Umar’s court was nothing like our modern courts with so much of pomp and ceremony but with so little of justice. Simplicity was the badge of Islam in that golden age. The court was no other than the thatch-roofed mosque; nor was the judge bedecked with any wig, hood or gown. In his patched yet clean garments sat the mighty Caliph on a bench of no other than a palm matting. Nevertheless, the wrong-doer trembled at his sight. His stern justice was the protector of the weak and the terror of the oppressor. The jury was equally simple. It consisted of the pious congregation of Muslims who had come to say their prayers. God-fearing folks, they were all lovers of justice and fair-play. Before such a judge and such a jury was the young man brought, charged with the murder of the old man, the keeper of the Sheikh’s garden.

"Amir-ul-Muminin," said the elder son. "This man stopped at our oasis for rest. As he was having a nap, his camel strayed into our Sheikh’s garden and did much damage to the vineyard. Our father twice drove the beast out, but it came in again. The third time the blow fell on some vital organ and the animal died. It was just a mistake. He meant no harm. He was only doing his duty. That was his job and that was what the Sheikh paid him to do. This young fellow was lying asleep all this while and knew nothing about it. My father could have denied any knowledge of the incident if he had so chosen. There was no eye-witness to the incident. But he was a true Muslim and a true follower of the Prophet. He would not sully the name of Islam and the Prophet by telling a lie. He often told us that a Muslim must be truthful, no matter what the consequences. Truthfulness, he would tell us, was the brightest gem in the Prophet’s character. Even before he was made a prophet, he was nick-named al-Amin, the Upright. A man of such pure Islamic sentiments could not stoop so low as to tell a lie merely to save his skin. He came up to this man and frankly told him all that had happened and expressed his sorrow. But this fellow, rather than appreciate his candid Islamic confession and regret, rushed at his aged throat and killed him outright."

Total silence reigned in the courtroom as the old man’s son related the sad story.

"What have you to say to this, young man?" came the firm clear voice of the judge, breaking the silence.

"Sire," said the young man, his head hanging low in shame and remorse. "I have nothing to say, no defence to offer. I am filled with shame and sorrow at what my hands have wrought. I care not if I pay for it with my life, which I am here to do. What pains me most is that I have been a traitor to Islam. I turned my back on the noble teachings of Islam. The Prophet has enjoined that a Muslim must respect old age. The Prophet in his very last will to the world of Islam made the life, property and honour of one man sacred unto another. I turned my back on all this and raved rather than show respect due to a grey-bearded man, I lost my head and took his life. I have nothing to say but submit to the law. I plead guilty."

The audience in the mosque was visibly moved by this candid confession of the young man. They all admired his Islamic courage to tell the truth, even in the face of death. "Well done," said the Caliph. "Well done, my boy. This is how a Muslim lad must behave. It is never too late to repent and feel ashamed of one’s evil conduct. Though a murderer, I must congratulate you on your high sense of truthfulness. That is what Islam expects from every one of its sons. What if death should stare him in the face? A Muslim must never be so mean as to tell a lie. It is a coward who tells lies. He is afraid of consequences. Whatever else a Muslim may be, he is never a coward. Fear is not a word in the dictionary of Islam. I am glad that at this critical juncture you have behaved as a worthy son of Islam. Nevertheless, I am so sorry. It
cannot be helped. The law must have its course. You shall
die.”

“Amir-ul-Muminin,” rejoined the young man. “You need not be
sorry. A Muslim is one who submits to the will of Allah. It
is His will that I should die and I cheerfully submit to His will.
I have just one last request to make. Back at home I have
some debts to clear off. This is what rankles in my mind.
How shall I face God with my obligations to my fellow-men
unfulfilled? I may be a murderer, but let it not be said that I
was dishonest. I vividly recollect how the Prophet, when on
the point of death, had just this one anxiety in his mind. He
expressly asked if he owed anything to anybody so that it
might be paid. He asked if he had offended anybody, so that
he might make amends for it while he was yet alive. He did
not wish to leave this world but with a clean sheet. Better
ashamed before man than ashamed before God, he said. I
would be unworthy of his illustrious name and a slur on his
noble memory, should I leave behind my debts unpaid. Please,
therefore O, Amir-ul-Muminin, allow me just enough respite
to go home and clear off these debts. This is my last, my
only wish.”

The congregation, as well as the Caliph, was once more
filled with admiration for the young man. “What a high sense
of honesty!” they all said. “Just at the threshold of death,
only one anxiety troubles his heart — his unfulfilled obligations
to man! What a pity that such a worthy son of Islam should
have to die!”

There was, however, no way out of it. The law was no
respecer of persons. Die he must. But everybody wished
that his last request might be granted.

“So be it,” declared the Caliph. “Your wish is granted. But
you must produce someone to stand surety for you and be
responsible that you duly turn up at the appointed hour for
execution.”

“Amir-ul-Muminin!” submitted the young man. “My word of
honour is the only surety I can give and a Muslim’s word of
honour is his bond.”

“You are right,” rejoined the Caliph. “That is what is expected
every son of Islam. He must be true to his word even if it
should cost him his life. But the procedure of the law must
be observed and the law does not recognise a mere word of
honour as surety. You must produce someone to stand surety
for you.”

This cast a gloom over the young man. He was a stranger to
the place. Who would stand surety for him and endanger his
own life for a mere stranger? He was at a loss what to do. It
was a critical affair. In case he failed to turn up at the appointed
time, the surety ran the risk of his own life. This was too
much for a stranger to expect. He cast a helpless look of
despair all around, but he could not take heart to ask anyone.
He knew it would be asking too much.

Thus stood the young man there, the very picture of gloom
and disappointment, when, to the joyful surprise of all, from
a corner of the mosque, an elderly man sprang to his feet.
“Amir-ul-Muminin!” he announced, “I offer myself as a surety
for this young man.” This was Abuazar Ghaffari, the well-
known Companion of the Prophet.

The young man was forthwith released. Promising to return
in time for his execution, he hastened home to set his affairs
straight. Before he faced God, he must square up his dealings
with man. His home was a long way off. He travelled day and
night. The time at his disposal was short and he had to be
back in time to meet his doom. So he hurried and went as
fast as he could. At last he reached home. The whole family
was filled with joy. His little children ran up to him. Each
wielded the others to reach him first, throw their tiny arms around
his knees and win the first kiss from him. His wife and old
parents were transported with joy as they saw this cheer
and sunshine brought back to the family after many days of
absence. The aged mother advanced and imprinted a warm
kiss on her son’s forehead. This scene of love and joy was,
however, too good to last long. A cloud soon passed over it.
The young man looked unusually agitated and sad emotions
seemed to swell up within him. The older members of the
family could not fail to sense that all was not well.

“What is the matter with you?” exclaimed the mother
anxiously, “You look so agitated, so upset. What is wrong?”
Silence prevailed. The young man buried his head in his
hands. He did not know how to break the news to his family.
To his dear old mother and father, these brief moments of
suspense seemed ages. This was the first time that a ripple
of anxiety had ever crossed the forehead of their son. It forbore
something serious. The young man at last raised his head,
and summoning courage, thus broke the silence:

“My dear mother! While I was yet a boy, you told me stories
of the bravery of Muslims of the time of the Prophet. They
bore great hardships, but a murmur never came to their lips.
It was the will of Allah and their joy lay in doing His will. They
had to encounter great dangers but they were never daunted.
It was the will of Allah. At the field of battle they wrought
deeds of valour and if duly called, they plunged into the very
jaws of death. Fearless, dauntless, death itself was to them
a doorway to Heaven. Didn’t you tell me all this, my dear
mother?”

As, however, the young man went on in this strain, talking of
dangers, daring, death and all that, his parents listened with
bated breath. Their anxiety knew no bounds. With their eyes
riveted on their son’s lips, they trembled as all sorts of
conjectures crossed their minds. What was he about to
divulge? they wondered.
"Well, my dear mother," continued the young man, "you have always told me how brave Muslim mothers and fathers were. At the call of duty they would rouse the spirits of their dearly loved sons to brave all dangers. Duty or death — that was to be their motto in life, they told them. Now listen! The moment has come when our Islamic mettle shall be put to the test. Be brave and I will tell you."

The parents, now prepared for the worst, assured their son that he might break the news. He would find them worthy of the traditions of Islam. The young man then recounted the whole story — how, while he was taking a nap at the oasis, his camel was killed by the gardener; how he got enraged, lost his temper and caused the death of the old man; how he was taken to the court of the Caliph, tried and condemned to death; how he implored the Caliph to let him pay off his debts; how he had been released on bail; how a stranger, trusting his mere word of honour, had stood surely for him. "I am now here," he continued, "not as the son of this house, to live under this dear old roof and share your joys and sorrows, but I am here to pay my last respects to you and to bid you farewell for good. Let the money-lenders whom I owe money be sent for. I must be quick. I have just enough time to settle the account and be back in time for my execution."

As the young man thus delivered himself, the parents were dumb-founded. Streams of tears trickled down their cheeks, on which age had drawn deep furrows. It took them some time to recover from the shock.

"Allah's will be done," said the mother. "What is written is written and you must keep your word. Let it not be said that the son of a Muslim mother was untrue to his word to save his life."

The money-lenders came. As a class, these money-lenders are devoid of all humane feelings. They are notorious for their pound of flesh. But now, when they came to know that the young man had but a few hours to settle the account, they saw their opportunity. They must extort more than their due from him, they thought. He had no cash. He could only pay in kind and live-stock and it was for these hard-hearted money-lenders to fix the price. They did it at a very low rate, less than half the market value. But there was no helping it. The debt had to be paid, there and then. Much of the young man's property was thus made over to the creditors.

The most crucial time was yet to come, the hour of departure. The camel was duly brought and saddled. The young man must bid eternal farewell to his sweet home and leave. The wrench was by no means easy. Between sobs and tears and kisses, the parents embraced their darling, one after the other. The young wife fainted as the parting of ways came and her beloved husband, the sweet companion of her life, advanced towards her. There on the ground she lay unconscious, her rich beautiful hair dishevelled and rolling in dust. The young man bent over her and gave her a parting kiss. So far he kept up his courage. But when he turned to the dear little ones standing by, lost in amazement at all this, his iron resolve seemed to give way. He sat in their midst and warmly hugged and kissed each one.

"Daddy!" said the eldest of the three. "Is Mummy dead? Who will take us to the fair? Please Daddy, don't go."

The younger two clung to his knees as he got up. "We would also go with you, Daddy," they began to cry.

For once the young man's courage seemed to fail him. The sight of these sweet little things who thought their mother was dead and father was leaving them too, unnerved him. There was no policeman about. A word of honour was all that bound him. Besides, living in the heart of the desert, it would be no easy thing for the arm of the law to reach him. Why, for a mere word of honour, kill the joy and happiness of a whole family for life? Why break those tiny innocent hearts? He was the offender, not they. Why doom them to the miserable lot of orphans? As he thus mused within himself, for a moment, it seemed, the flesh in him was about to get the better of the spirit. But the last moment had come. To be in time for the execution, he must put his foot in the stirrup at once and be off.

There at the most crucial cross-roads of his life, the young man stood, lost in thought about which course to take. Honour called him back to execution. Love of parents, wife and children nailed him to the ground there. There was a severe conflict within him — conflict between the flesh and the spirit. But this lasted for just one brief moment. His Muslim sense of honour re-asserted itself. Let not your wealth or your children divert you from the path of God! came the clarion call of the Qur'an to his ears. And his choice was made. To a Muslim, his word of honour must be more than his father, his mother, his wife, his children. So, in the midst of tears and cries, he jumped on his camel's back and was off to Madinah and his doom. The dear ones left behind followed him with wistful looks till he was lost in the distance.

At full speed the young man hurried to Madinah and his own execution. Yes, his own execution! A very strange thing indeed, but such happens to be a Muslim's code of honour. When once he has pledged his word he never goes back upon it, not even if it should cost him his life. The history of Islam is rich in promises kept under the most trying circumstances. A worthy son of Islam, the young man acted up to these noble traditions of Islam. Death stared him in the face, but it was not for a follower of the great Prophet to play false and go back upon his word. On and on he sped towards the capital. In spite of himself, however, he was unavoidably detained on the way. His stirrups gave way and he had to drop at a way-side hamlet to get them mended. This took
some time. The appointed hour of execution came and he was still on the way.

In the meantime, there was much sensation in Madinah. People had gathered at the mosque. Abuzar Ghaffari, the surety, was also there. The young man was expected back at any moment. The time fixed for execution came and went but the young man did not turn up. This caused much anxiety on account of Abuzar, whose life was now in the balance. There were all sorts of surmises. Perhaps the young man had lied.

"Poor Abuzar!" everybody said. "He must die for nothing."

Abuzar, on his part, was cool and calm. "What is written is written," he said. "A Muslim must cheerfully submit to the decree of Allah. It is His will that I should die. I am ready for it."

All that Abuzar asked for was that before leaving this world he might be allowed to say his last prayers. He made his ablutions and said his prayers. Then he made ready for the execution. When, however, all was ready, there, on the distant horizon, was seen a moving speck in a cloud of dust.

"Wait! Wait!" ordered the Caliph, as the executioner was on the point of doing his job. "Wait! It may yet be the young man."

The executioner stayed his hand. All eyes were now turned towards the advancing speck. At first it was dim and indiscernible. As, however, it drew nearer and nearer, it brought added hope to the anxious crowd. It was someone on camel back riding along at full speed. The figure gradually became more and more distinct. To the immense relief of everyone present, it turned out to be the condemned young man. Abuzar was the recipient of congratulations from all sides and excitement ran high. The young man arrived at last.

"I am sorry," he said, as soon as he stepped into the mosque, "that I could not turn up at the right moment and kept you waiting so long. I must specially ask pardon of my unknown benefactor who stood surety for me at the risk of his own life. It must have been a great worry to him. But I could not help it." And he explained at length what had detained him on the way.

Everybody admired the young man's sense of honour, no less than Abuzar's spirit of self-sacrifice. The Caliph was deeply touched, too, and allowed the man to take rest before he should prepare for execution. As they all sat down in the mosque, the young man, Abuzar, the murdered old man's sons, the great Caliph, Umar, with the eager crowd around them, the Caliph thus questioned Abuzar:

"Abuzar. What made you risk your own life for the sake of this young man?"

"Amir-ul-Muminin!" replied this great Companion of the Prophet. "When the young man cast a helpless glance at the Muslim congregation, wondering whether someone would come to his assistance and stand surety for him, I was filled with shame that in a crowd of Muslims, a fellow Muslim should feel so helpless and find himself a stranger. Let not people say, I said to myself, that the Islamic teaching, that all Muslims are brothers, is mere platitude and that in time of distress one Muslim does not come to the help of another. Come what may, I said, the good name of Islam must not be sullied, and so I stood surety for him."

Everyone was greatly touched at these words. The Caliph then turned to the young man: "What was it, O young man, that made you come back to your own execution?"

"Amir-ul-Muminin," replied the young man, "it was not an easy thing for me to do. Great was the temptation in my way. My home is in the trackless heart of the desert, which the hand of justice can hardly penetrate. There was nobody about to force me back here. Then there were before me the age-worn faces of my dear old mother and father streaming with tears, as I was coming away. My lovely young wife fell down unconscious at the thought of life-long separation. My three sweet little children clung to my feet, clamouring, 'Dad! Dad! Where are you going?' It was not easy to wrench myself away from these dear ones. But every time the flesh within me was about to get the upper hand of the spirit, I said to myself, 'What would people say of it? A Muslim breaking his solemn word of honour! Let not the name of Islam be sullied through me, I resolved, and in the midst of tears and shrieks of those dear ones, I jumped onto my camel's back.'"

The audience was once more moved to a high pitch of excitement. They greatly admired the young man's sense of honour. A perfect Islamic atmosphere prevailed which could not but move the gardener's sons.

"Amir-ul-Muminin!" they spoke out. "This young fellow has killed our father and we have come all the way to see that he is made to pay. But now it seems to us that in avenging our father's death we would be ignoring the higher Islamic teaching of forgiveness. A tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye was the ancient law. But Islam has given us the higher gospel of forgiveness. To forgive an offender, teaches the Qur'an, is more meritorious in the eye of God than to punish him. Let it not be said that two unworthy sons of Islam were too petty-minded to forgive and forget. Islam's name shall not be sullied through us. We forgive the young man."

"Allah-o-Akbar!" went up the enthusiastic shout from the crowd. There was great joy that all ended so well.
"The main difference of beliefs between the two sections are as follows":

**Lahore Section ........................**

1. Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is khatam al-Nabiyyin, the interpretation of which is that he is the greatest and last of all the prophets.

2. The Holy Quran is the final Shariah (code) for the world.

3. No prophet, whether new or old, shall come after the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

4. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian was not a prophet but a Mujaddid (Reformer) and Promised Messiah and Mahdi in Islam.

5. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad never changed claim, views or definition of prophet hood in in 1901 with the Publication of Ek Ghalati ka Izala.

6. Belief in the advent of Mirza Sahib as a Mujaddid is not essential for becoming Muslim but his acceptance is necessary in the interest of progressive Islam.

7. Any one who profess faith in the Kalima-Lailaha illa Ilahu Muhammad ur Rasul Allah (there is only one God and Muhammad is His Apostle) - is a Muslim and not a Kafir.

8. It is permitted to say prayers behind any Muslim Imam provided he is not guilty of dubbing other Muslims.

9. Marriage relations with non-Ahmadis are permitted.

10. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Wahi-e-Nabuwat has ceased, only Wahi-e-Walayat (Saintly revelation) is continued. Hazrat Mirza Sahib’s revelation was Wahi-e-Walayat and not Wahi-e-Nabuwat.

11. The Founder of the Lahore Section was Maulana Muhammad Ali, M.A.LL.B. Translator of the Holy Quran into English, a companion and disciple of the Founder of the Movement.

12. The members of this section call themselves Ahmadis, and are generally known also as Ahmadis or Ahmadis of Lahore Movement.

**Qadian Section ........................**

1. Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is khatam al-Nabiyyin, the interpretation of which is that he is the greatest though not last of all the prophets.

2. The same.

3. Prophets may come after the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

4. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet as well as Promised Messiah and Mahdi in Islam.

5. The first written evidence of the change of the belief with regard to prophet hood was the poster EK GHALTI KA IZALA.

6. Belief in the mission of Mirza sahib as a prophet is essential for becoming Muslim.

7. Any one, who does not believe Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian to be a Prophet, is a kafir.

8. It is not permitted to say prayers behind any Imam who does not recognize Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s claim.

9. Marriage relations with non-Ahmadis are not permitted.

10. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Wahi-e-Nabuwat is continued. Hazrat Mirza Sahib’s revelation was Wahi-e-Nabuwat.

11. The Founder of the Qadian Section was Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, who was the son of the Founder of the Movement and was a young man in his teens at the time of his noble father’s death.

12. The members of this section call themselves Ahmadis, but are generally known as Qadianis.