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Al Bashir

A MAGAZINE FOR ATFAL



Majlis Atfalul
Ahmadiyya USA



MESSAGE FROM SADR MAJLIS

Our parents aren't perfect, but we aren't either. If we were "perfect" we wouldn't have needed anyone to change our diapers, make us dinner, and to buy our school supplies. Just as our parents did and do these things for us, we should think about what sacrifices we are making to please and respect our parents. If you're having a bad day and lose your cool, you can apologize to your parents. Also, when they do simple things like those above, say "JazakAllah". Just do the basics really well. Most importantly, never lie to them.

The Holy Prophet^{SAW} taught us to pray: ***Rabbir ham humma kama rabbiyaani sagheera***, ie. Our Lord, have mercy on my parents as they had mercy on me when I was young. This is a prayer to God and a reminder to us that we should return the love our parents showed us by giving them the respect and honor they deserve.

Wasalaam,

Bilal Rana
Sadr Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya USA

MESSAGE FROM MUHTAMIM ATFAL

Distinguishing Right from Wrong

In the early years of Islam, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} invited members of Quraish, most of whom were his extended family members, to a meal in order to share the message of Islam as instructed by Almighty Allah. After his message, the gathering was completely silent. It was a thirteen-year-old boy (age of a Tifl) stood up and said: "Although I am among the weakest and youngest of all, I shall support you". As most of you know this was Hadhrat Ali^{RA}.

The reason I wanted to remind you of this story is to remind you that even though as Atfal you may be young, Allah Almighty has given you the sense to distinguish right from wrong especially through the continuous guidance that we receive from Huzoor (aba). So whenever you get into a difficult situation, maybe when you are in school or with a few friends or even when you are alone browsing the internet, listen to your heart and use your best judgment. Don't consider yourself to be too young. Don't just do what everyone else is doing. Bravely follow the example of Hadhrat Ali (ra) and chose the right thing to do.

If we stop using our ability to chose the right path, we lose this ability as we grow older, we lose the courage that is naturally part of every Tifl. May Allah continue to guide us all to the right path and keep us attached to Khilafat. Ameen.

Wasalam,
Intisar Malhi
Serving as Muhtamim Atfal



Intisar Malhi

Serving as Mohtamim Atfal

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“And He will raise him among others of them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise.”

62:4

QUR'AN

iReli

“If Faith were to go up to the Pleiades, a man, or men, from among these [referring to Salman Farsi] would surely bring it back.”

SAHIH BUKHARI

HADITH

PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

“The belief that Jesus^{AS} would come back into the world, and joining with the Mahdi, slay the infidels, falsifies the Qur’anic verse quoted above [Ch. 5: V.118], and must, therefore, be rejected.”

REVIEW OF RELIGIONS VOL.3,
NO.9, SEPTEMBER, 1904

gion

HUZOOR^{ABA}

“By the grace of Allah, today, that voice which emanated from that small village has spread to 210 countries and this too is a proof of his truthfulness. In far-off places where 30-40 years ago, one could not imagine Ahmadiyyat would have spread, not only has the message reached there, God Almighty is also granting people with such firm faith that one is left amazed.”

FRIDAY SERMON

3/23/18



My Memorable Journey to Southeast Regional Ijtema 2018

Sajeel Khan | Charlotte

It was Thursday, March 22, 2018 when my grandfather, Majeed Malik Sahib asked me to go to bed earlier to wake up early to go for long journey to attend the combined Regional Ijtema of Ansar, Khuddam and Aftal in Orlando, Florida. We departed after saying our congregational Fajr prayers. There were four people in our car. I, a Tifl, as well as two khuddam and one Nasir. Brother Ehsan, who is newly converted to Islam and Ahmadiyyat is also a very good friend of mine. Dr. Kareem Syed who is our Qaid too was with us. We said our prayers silently before departure. It was a very long, long journey of 9 and 1/2 hours.

Most of the driving was done by Brother Ehsan and Qaid Khuddamul Ahmadiyya - Charlotte, Dr. Kareem Syed Sahib. In fact, he was not driving, but was more like flying! He was trying his absolute best to get us there before the Friday Prayers. Sadly, we got stuck in traffic and we missed the prayer just by a few minutes. At last, we arrived at Ijtema and stretched out as soon as we came out of our car. There was a lot of greenery, water, fresh & open air, and a big place to run around. We left our luggage in the car and started to meet local people and other regional Ahmadi. The local people were very, very helpful and volunteered to give us any possible help that we needed. All arrangements of the Regional Ijtema was done under the supervision of Regional Qaid, Safer Bhatti Sahib.

In the evening all of us went into the city of Orlando where we all took a 400 feet circle ride on the giant ferris wheel, called the Orlando Eye, formerly known as the Coca-Cola Orlando Eye. It was really fun. I bought popcorn and cotton candy with the \$20 my mom gave me to spend. We took a lot of pictures while we were on the high and circle ride. This circle ride never stopped, and always kept circling, and even we got on and off while it was circling. After having the ride, we all got together and planned to spread a lovely message of Islam to the general public. We divided into small groups and everyone took some leaflets to distribute in the public. In approximately in 60-90 minutes we conveyed a considerable amount of Ahmadiyyat and the true message of Islam to many people. When we came back it was dark and time to sleep.

It was Friday the first night, and the bed I had to sleep on was hard like a stone and uncomfortable, but I did it knowing and thinking that I am getting Allah's reward by participating in the Regional Ijtema. Definitely, Allah's blessings are much more rewarding than the pain I was going through. Plus, I do not want to be a thankless person to complain or criticize to the local administration. I can easily figure out how much hard work the local Jam'at did for us to accommodate us here. I noticed that some local people had to sleep on the floor and I think some

had not even slept the whole night. Considering this, I felt myself a fortunate person and I quickly fell asleep praying for Allah's blessings.

On Saturday, I was so tired but I forced myself for Fajr prayer. I went to bed again after immediately finishing my prayer. When I got up again I was proud of myself of collecting Allah's blessings not even knowing I offered my Fajr prayer. I woke up again at around 7:00 A.M. I started playing with the other Aftal and some young Khuddam. We started to climb on a tree. When I sat on the tree, my grandfather yelled "You look like a monkey!" Everyone laughed at this. But not even an hour later, all the sports had started.

The first sport I participated was basketball. We did not do very good in basketball. I took 5 shots and I made all of them. The second game was the final. We lost by only one point. I felt that I could have made the game-winning play, but another teammate decided to try it himself. Although we lost, I at least had fun.

The second sport was soccer. It was not much fun. All we did was kick a ball around waiting for one person so we could not play. When I did get to play, I lost badly (5-1) but I had a few saves as goalie and the only goal for my team. Again, at least I had some fun in soccer too.

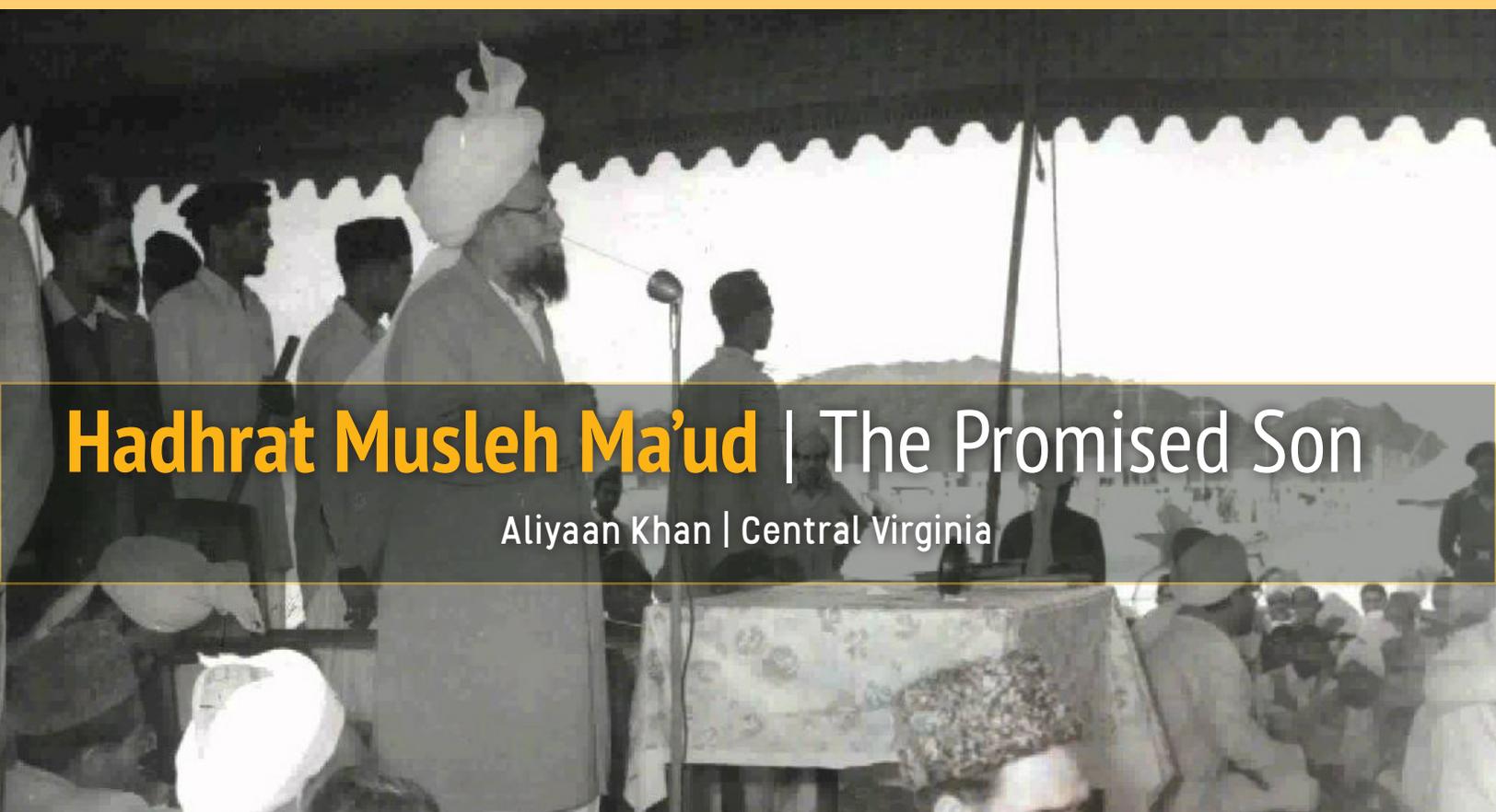
The third sport was football. Basically, we did nothing because our opponent's defense was amazing. We lost 7-98 (which is one touchdown to 14 touchdowns) and I did not have fun. I understand that in life you lose but the Atlanta Aftal rubbed it in so much so that I knew I had to beat them in SOMETHING.

Now came the fourth sport, table tennis, also known as ping pong. Since last year's Ijtema, I had not played table tennis. So, when I started to warm up against my grandfather, soon, I felt updated and back in action. The first person I played was from the Orlando Jama'at and also was a Tifl. I beat him by 21-0. Next, I played

with a Nasir also from Orlando Jama'at as well, I defeated him too. Another Nasir saw how I was playing and he told me "Baita (Son), if you beat him, I will give you \$10." I took the challenge. This Nasir was a great player and even had his own special ping pong paddle. He beat me by only 2 points at 19-21. The Nasir who offered me \$10 to beat this champion watched our match very enthusiastically and still offered me \$10 as my present. First I took the money from him but later on I realized that I shouldn't put the burden on him. So, I went to him and tried to give him the money back but he refused to accept it back and insisted me to keep it. He said it is my present and you should not refuse the gift. I gratefully thanked him and kept his money as my gift but I really wanted to give it back. I went on to beat everyone else who played against me. I even played in doubles and I won!

On Saturday night, I slept on floor in the Orlando mosque. It was comfier than the cabin at the Ijtema site. I realized that today we were leaving. So, we went to the campsite, had a ceremony and award recognition and we said our congregational Zuhr prayers and then everyone left, thus bringing the 9 hour drive again. Sunday morning I was very sad, because the time of our return was getting closer plus our Qaid Dr. Kareem Syed Sahib got sick. We prayed hard for his health and he made a speedy recovery. MashAllah.

Although I did not win an award, I was satisfied that I competed and participated in the recitation and memorization of Holy Qur'an. At least I tried and I am satisfied that instead of playing video games at home I got Allah's pleasure by participating in Regional Ijtema. To all my Aftal brothers: it was fun and a great change from our routine! I urge and request every Tifl to participate in Jama'at activities even if they have to force themselves. When I recall past moments I had in Ijtema; I really enjoy even that difficult time I had on the Ijtema site.



Hadhrat Musleh Ma'ud | The Promised Son

Aliyaan Khan | Central Virginia

“Rejoice therefore, that a handsome and pure boy will be bestowed on thee... He is the light of Allah...he will be characterized by grandeur, greatness, and wealth.... He will be extremely intelligent and understanding and will be meek of heart and will be filled with secular and spiritual knowledge...delight of the heart, high ranking, noble.” (Fazl-e-Umar)

Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{RA} was the promised son of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah^{AS}, and his wife, Nusrat Jahan Begum^{RA}. He had three brothers and two sisters. When he was young, Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{RA} was unlike most children. He was much more dedicated to prayer and religious knowledge.

One of the Promised Messiah^{AS}'s companions saw him in his childhood and said three things characterized him: his goodness, his complete honesty in all matters, and his interest in religious matters. As he grew up, he remained the pious man that was promised by Allah. He married seven times, never having more than four wives at a time, in accordance with Islamic teachings. One of his marriages resulted in

him becoming the son-in-law of the first Khalifa. He had a total of 22 children, including the 3rd and 4th Khalifa^{RA}, and the mother of the 5th Khalifa^{ABA}.

From March 14th, 1914, to the 7th of November, 1965, (51 years), he led the Jama'at and accomplished many things. He began Al Fazl, the schemes of Tehrik-e-Jadid and Waqf-e-Jadid, the completion of the Minaratul Masih, and the translation of the Holy Qur'an into 14 different languages. He also created the organizations of Ansarullah, Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, Lajna Imaillah, Nasiratul Ahmadiyya, and Affal-ul Ahmadiyya.

Hadhrat Musleh Ma'ud A Living Prophecy

Abeer Alam | North Jersey



The Promised Messiah^{AS} was promised by Allah that he would have a son who would spread the message of true Islam to the corners of the Earth. This was the prophecy of the Musleh Ma'ud, Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{RA}. Due to the prophecy, he was known as the Promised Son, and he would go on to become the 2nd Khalifatul Masih.

Hadhrat Musleh Maud^{RA} established many things during his time as a Khalifa. Some of his achievements including creating the auxiliaries of Ansarullah for men who are above the age of 40, Khuddamul-Ahmadiyya for boys and men from ages 15 to 40, and Aftal-ul-Ahmadiyya for boys under 15. I myself am part of Aftal-ul-Ahmadiyya. There are many more things that he established, but it would be too long to list them all here.

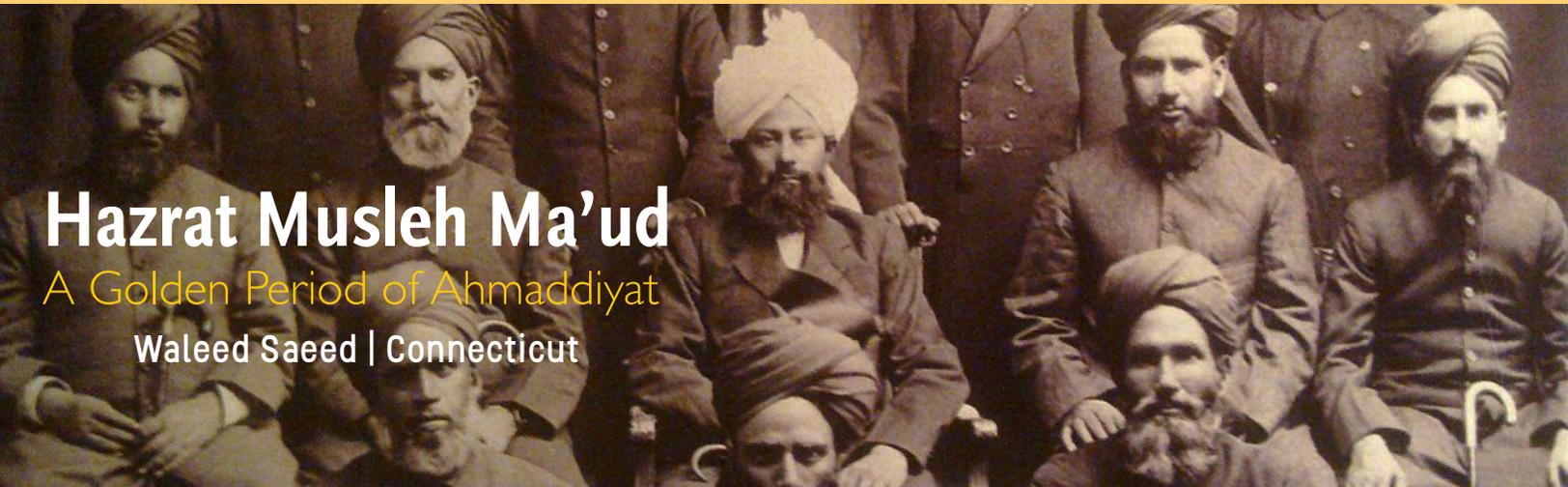
Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{RA}'s love for the Holy Qur'an was deep and abiding. On Saturdays, he would give Dars-ul-Quran

among women. The ladies would sit in the courtyard, or in rooms. It was, in those days, a very small crowd. Despite the low attendance, the 2nd Khalifa greatly enjoyed teaching others about the true teachings of Islam. He knew that all of those people would spread the true message of Islam to the corners of the earth. When he wasn't teaching others about the Qur'an, he would spend much of his time reading and memorizing the Qur'an. His love of the Qur'an was awe-inspiring, and only a few people in history have shown more affection for it.

His love for salat matched his love for the Qur'an. Every time there was a problem in his house or in the Jama'at, he always went to a quiet place and prayed to Allah. He would cry, begging forgiveness for his wrongdoings. He would do his prayer as slowly as he could to spend the most time with Allah. He used to pray for every person in the entire world, that they had would be blessed with good health, both physi-

cal and mental. When he saw someone who was ill, no matter who it was, he would pray to Allah for a quick recovery. And most of the time, his prayers came true.

Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{RA} was a very kind, selfless person. He always followed commands, especially if it was from Allah. Even if it was not from Allah, he would follow the command, unless if it had no use at all. At the age of 25, he became the 2nd Khalifatul Masih. It became his duty to lead Ahmadiyyat, which wasn't always a easy task. One of the aspects of his life that helped him was what he learned from his father, the Promised Messiah^{AS}, as a child. Since he always listened to what his father told him, he was prepared to lead the community when his time came to serve as Khalifa. Over his 51 years of Khilafat, he propelled our community to almost unimaginable heights. May Allah allow us to continue in his footsteps. Ameen.



Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud

A Golden Period of Ahmadiyyat

Waleed Saeed | Connecticut

Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{RA} was the second successor and son of the Promised Messiah^{AS}. Hazoor^{RA} was a distinguished Khalifa because of his countless achievements including the establishment of Aftal-ul-Ahmadiyya. Among this, Hazoor^{RA}'s birth was foretold by the Holy Prophet^{SAW}. During the forty days prayer in Hoshiarpur (India), the Promised Messiah^{AS} was told by God Almighty that a pure son (Musleh Ma'ud) would be born to him within a period of nine years. This prophecy was published on February 20th, 1886.

On March 14th, 1914, the day after the death of Khalifatul Masih^{RA} I, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{RA} was elected Khalifatul Masih the second when Hazoor^{RA} was only 25 years old. As Khalifa, Hazoor^{RA} took many necessary steps in order to organize and expand Ahmadiyya across the world. On April 12, 1914, the first Majlis-e-Shura took place to formulate a worldwide tabligh plan. Also, one of Hazoor^{RA}'s greatest achievements were getting the Holy Qur'an translated in various important languages of the world so that, those who did not know Arabic, the glory and wisdom of the divine book could be made available to them in their own languages.

Furthermore, Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{RA} reorganized the financial structure of the Jama'at on very sound footings by initiating various schemes and appeals for donation and contribution. These include Tehrik-e-Jadid and

Waqf-e-Jadid which were funds used for the expansion of Jama'at.

As the Jama'at began to grow rapidly, it was divided into different age groups in order to ensure better training for all Jama'at members. This included the establishment of Lajna Imaillah, Nasirat-ul-Ahmadiyya, Majlis Ansarul-lah, and Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya. Majlis Aftal-ul-Ahmadiyya was established On July 26, 1938 when Huzur^{RA} announced: "Within one month, Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya should establish an organization for youth between the ages of 7-15 and should name the organization Aftal-ul-Ahmadiyya." From then on, the educational and moral training of Ahmadi youth took on an organized form and, to this day, by the Grace of Allah, this organization continues to run exceptionally. By the Grace of Allah, today thousands and thousands of young Ahmadi children are receiving beneficial training in Majlis Aftal-ul-Ahmadiyya. Without a doubt, the establishment of Aftal-ul-Ahmadiyya was among the huge achievements of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{RA}. This was a tremendous effort towards the tarbiyyat of the future generations of Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya.

Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{RA} possessed a unique combination of qualities of leadership, organizational skills, and depth of knowledge in many fields. No doubt, his 51-year long Khilafat represented a golden period in the history of Ahmadiyyat.

This year, Easter, also known as Resurrection Sunday, falls on the first of April. On this day, Christians celebrate what they deem as the death of Jesus^{AS} on Good Friday and his ascension on Easter Sunday. They claim that during this time Jesus^{AS} had temporarily died on the cross to relieve all those who believed in him of Original Sin, and then he ascended physically to heaven. He would then return to the Earth during the last days and would judge all of mankind, sending them to eternal heaven or hell. However, how much of this is in accord with ancient scripture, and did Jesus^{AS} teach his disciples to follow such practices?

Easter Sunday and Good Friday are not truly the start of the religious festival. For most Christians, it starts on Ash Wednesday, six weeks earlier. On these days, Christians place crosses made of ashes on their forehead, reminding them that they are made from dust and they will return to dust and that they should repent. This six-week period is known as the Lent, when Christians enter into a period of repentance and fasting. They give up certain luxuries to emulate Jesus's 40-day journey into the desert. This event culminates in the last week, Holy Week, when Jesus^{AS} returned to Jerusalem, was crucified, and supposedly died on Good Friday and was resurrected on Easter Sunday.

However, if one were to read the New Testament and the sayings of Jesus^{AS}, they would conclude that Christ did not instruct his followers to observe the period of Lent or the Holy Week. Rather, these practices began a few centuries after the crucifixion of Jesus^{AS}, when

other saints decided to anoint holidays to commemorate the life of Jesus^{AS}. The introduction of such holidays gradually led to the deviation from the truth taught by the prophet of God as Christians adopted beliefs from other groups of people.

Easter specifically has its roots in a land far different than the one of Jesus^{AS}. Basically, Easter was a celebration held by some pagans of Europe. The word Easter comes from the Anglo-Saxon word Eostra, the name of their goddess of the dawn and spring, and she was a pagan symbol of fertility. It was from these pagan festivals where today's customs of Easter were found. The tradition of making hot cross buns originates from the commemoration of their goddess, who they believed to have slaughtered an ox. The horns of the ox were carved into a cross, becoming a symbol of the goddess, and was placed on bread, dividing it into 4 sections, corresponding to the 4 quarters of the moon. Easter eggs and bunnies were symbols which represented fertility, and the custom of praising Jesus^{AS}'s resurrection as the sun rises on Easter Sunday came from an ancient custom of worshipping the sun. The great feast usually held during Easter used to be the feast held by the Romans at the time of spring, the vernal equinox. Clearly, Easter is not a holiday meant to be associated with Jesus^{AS} and his Biblical teachings, rather it is only a pagan holiday that was adopted by the Church.

When Christianity was brought to such people living in Europe, the saints and clerics had decided to implement these previous customs of



The Truth Behind Easter

Munassar Alam | North Jersey

the pagans to give them incentive to convert. However, such acts were greatly looked down upon by Jesus^{AS}, as it is said in the New Testament:

“Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have in the fire to their gods. What thing so ever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it” (Deuteronomy 12:30-32).

Therefore, what the Christians have added to their beliefs was absolutely wrong and the polar opposite of what God and Jesus^{AS} had wanted them to do. Yet, the Christians had done so, and therefore they are referred to in Surah Fatiha of the Qur’an as “ضالين”, meaning “those who have gone astray”.

The part of Easter meant to relate to Christianity was his supposed resurrection. Yet, that is clouded in great mystery and the Church is not even entirely sure what took place. It is said that Jesus^{AS} was laid into his tomb on Holy Saturday, but on Sunday his body was missing from the tomb. Using this, Christians claim that Jesus^{AS} was resurrected and later ascended to his kingdom in the heavens. For if Jesus^{AS} had truly died immediately after the Crucifixion, then he would be disgraced and not a prophet, nevertheless the Son of God, as stated in the Bible:

“Cursed is anyone who hangeth from a tree” (Galatians 3:13).

Nowadays this is what Christians claim. However, in 1835 God had sent another Messiah for mankind. Just as Jesus^{AS} was sent to reform the Jews and to bring them back to the original teachings of Moses^{AS}, so had Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{AS} of Qadian. He came to bring back to

faltering and confused Muslims to the original perfect faith given to Muhammad^{SAW}. He had unambiguously stated that, contrary to popular Christian and Muslim belief, that Jesus Christ^{AS} was dead. He found that the Qur’an had categorically said the same, yet the Muslims of his time refused to believe it.

The Quran states:

“Oh Jesus, I will cause thee to die a natural death and will exalt thee to Myself, and will clear thee from the charges of those who disbelieve, and will place those who follow thee above those who disbelieve, until the Day of Resurrection; then to Me shall be your return, and I will judge between you concerning that wherein you differ (3:56).

Clearly, God has stated here that Jesus^{AS} has died and will remain so. The phrase “exalt thee to myself” starts with the Arabic word “رافعك”, which in all other places of the Qur’an means, “to exalt in rank/spiritual status”, not in the physical sense. The above verse of the Holy Qur’an has abolished the idea that Jesus^{AS} had ascended bodily to heaven and has stated that he had died a natural death. However, there are Hadith narrated by the Holy Prophet^{SAW} regarding the return of Jesus^{AS}. One is as such:

“Allah will send the Messiah, son of Mary; he will descend close to the white Minaret to the east of Damascus. He will be wearing 2 long bleached clothes and his hands will be placed on the wings of 2 angels. Whenever he lowers his head drops of water will fall down and when he raises his head drops of moisture will fall down. No disbeliever can survive his breath” (narrated by Nawaz bin Salman).

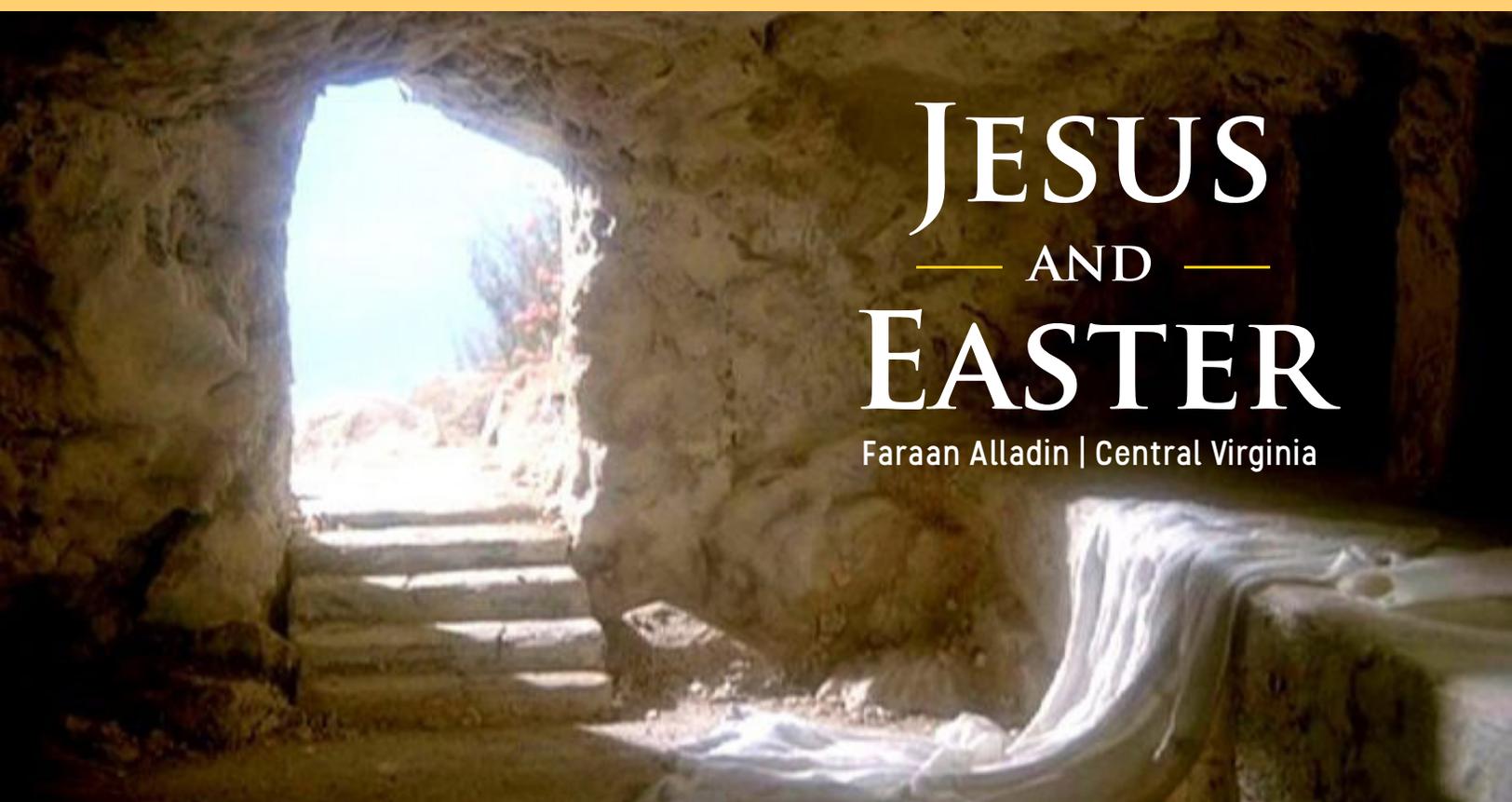
This Hadith seems to show that Jesus^{AS} is not dead and will certainly return in the latter days. However, Jesus^{AS} has undoubtedly already come to Earth, yet all non-Ahmadi Muslims refuse to believe so. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{AS} of Qadian was the Promised Messiah^{AS}, awaited by Muslims and Christians alike, and he was

the second coming of Jesus, son of Mary. He explained that the above Hadith and others relating to it must not be taken literally, for if this was the case, nothing but contradictions upon contradictions would appear, and all people would eventually lose faith in religion as a whole. How can Jesus^{AS} descend from the heavens if the previous Qur'anic verse mentioned declared him dead? Why would he kill all the disbelievers with his breath if one of his fundamental teachings was to turn the other cheek? This is why this Hadith must be taken as a metaphor, and only then does the truth begin to reveal itself. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{AS} was born in Qadian, and if one were to look at a map they would find that town is directly east of Damascus. The white Minaret signifies the bounty and light of God whenever he sends his messengers to mankind. Disbelievers dying from his breath means that the Messiah will give proper and irrefutable arguments which will crush those of the disbelievers and show their falsehood, and therefore he would bestow to the world the supremacy of God's perfect religion, revealed after long periods of spiritual evolution, Islam.

However, what about the actual person of Jesus^{AS}? What happened to him after his crucifixion? These questions were undoubtedly answered by his second coming. The Promised Messiah^{AS} stated, confirmed by Qur'anic evidence, that Jesus^{AS} did not die on the cross nor was ascended. After the crucifixion he was taken down on the start of Sabbath and was tended to by his Apostles. They gave him special herbs such as Myrrh which are used for healing wounds. In addition, Jesus^{AS} foretold that he would give a sign like the sign of Jonah^{AS}. Jonah^{AS} was a previous prophet who was swallowed by a big fish and stayed therein for three days and three nights until being spit up on land. His was a great story of survival, and Jesus^{AS} said that the same was to happen to him. Therefore, Jesus^{AS} had to have survived the crucifixion, otherwise it would not be a sign of Jonah^{AS}.

What had Jesus^{AS} done after he was healed, since his tomb was seen empty on Easter Sunday? He had fled from the land of Judea and had traveled outward. The mission of Jesus^{AS} was to preach to the Twelve Tribes of Israel who had scattered throughout the Middle East due to invasions from foreign rulers. Therefore, if Jesus^{AS} had died on the cross or was resurrected and ascended afterwards, then he did not complete his mission to preach to the Twelve Tribes. The Promised Messiah^{AS} stated that this was exactly what Jesus^{AS} had done, and finally, he found the final tribe living in the land of Kashmir. In his book *Jesus in India*, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{AS} talks about this concept in depth and proves his points using religious and historical evidence. He also found a tomb in Srinagar, labeled as Roza Bal, meaning the Honored Tomb, and the one within the tomb is known as Yuz Asaf. People of the area say he was a prophet of the People of the Book, therefore he could only be Jesus^{AS}.

To summarize, clear evidence shows that the Christian holiday of Easter and its preceding periods of Lent and the Holy Week do not have much connection with Jesus^{AS} or his biblical teachings. The holiday of Easter had instead stemmed from a pagan holiday commemorating their goddess of the spring, moon, and fertility. These holidays were not observed by Jesus^{AS} nor by his apostles, rather these customs began a few centuries later. In addition, the Christian idea regarding the resurrection and ascension of Jesus^{AS} has been altered with the course of time. The Second Coming of Jesus^{AS}, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{AS} of Qadian, provided the truth with what happened to Jesus^{AS} after the crucifixion and that in the end he had completed his mission, preaching to the Twelve Tribes of Israel. And through the Promised Messiah^{AS}, a new dawn would emerge for Muslims just as Jesus^{AS} had done for the Jews, and in due time Muslims would rejoice as they will have discovered the true Islam preached by Muhammad^{SAW}, the true Islam meant to save all people from Hellfire, and the true Islam meant as the perfect religion for all mankind.



JESUS — AND — EASTER

Faraan Alladin | Central Virginia

The story of Hazrat Isa^{AS} is one with many endings. Luckily, the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{AS}, wrote *Jesus In India*, explaining that Hazrat Isa^{AS} did not die on the cross. In sum, the Jews nailed Hazrat Isa^{AS} to a cross for what they believed to be blasphemy; thinking he was dead, they took him off the cross within a few short hours. In fact, he was in a coma-like state. When he awoke from his coma, people thought he had been brought back to life and, thereafter, resurrected. This false belief gave rise to the celebration of Easter - a Christian holiday celebrating Jesus^{AS}' alleged resurrection from the dead.

With this backdrop, one can now piece together what actually happened. Firstly, Hazrat Isa^{AS} was born into the Jewish clan Judah and was from Nazareth, which is in Galilee. Mary^{AS} was his mother. He had five siblings, four brothers and one sister. He was a carpenter (Mark 6:3). Being ever-inclined to God, Hazrat Isa^{AS} spent a great deal of his youth in the temple. During his adult life, God bestowed Hazrat Isa^{AS} with the office of Messiah, compelling Hazrat Isa^{AS} to preach God's teachings to fellow Jews. His

teachings enraged the Jews, who, with the help of the Romans who ruled Palestine at the time, ultimately succeeded in sentencing him to death by crucifixion. This is where confusion begins

Christians believe Hazrat Isa^{AS} died on the cross, after which God resurrected him to Himself. Non-Ahmadi Muslims, like Christians, claim that Hazrat Isa^{AS} was resurrected and is alive today, but believe Hazrat Isa^{AS} was never placed on the cross with God saving him from this ordeal. Jews believe, God forbid, that Hazrat Isa^{AS} died on the cross and suffered an accursed death. The false Christian belief in the resurrection of Christ following the crucifixion gave rise to Easter.

The Promised Messiah^{AS}, however, points out that the Bible says *“one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water” (John 19:31-34)* ... he was taken down alive from the cross, like the two thieves. That was the reason why blood gushed out when his side was pierced, whereas the blood of a dead man is con-

gealed” (Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, 30). He was taken down from the cross because it was the Sabbath, the holy day for Jews that takes place on Saturday. Science has established that after they die, people do not bleed in the manner described in the Bible regarding Hazrat Isa^{AS}.

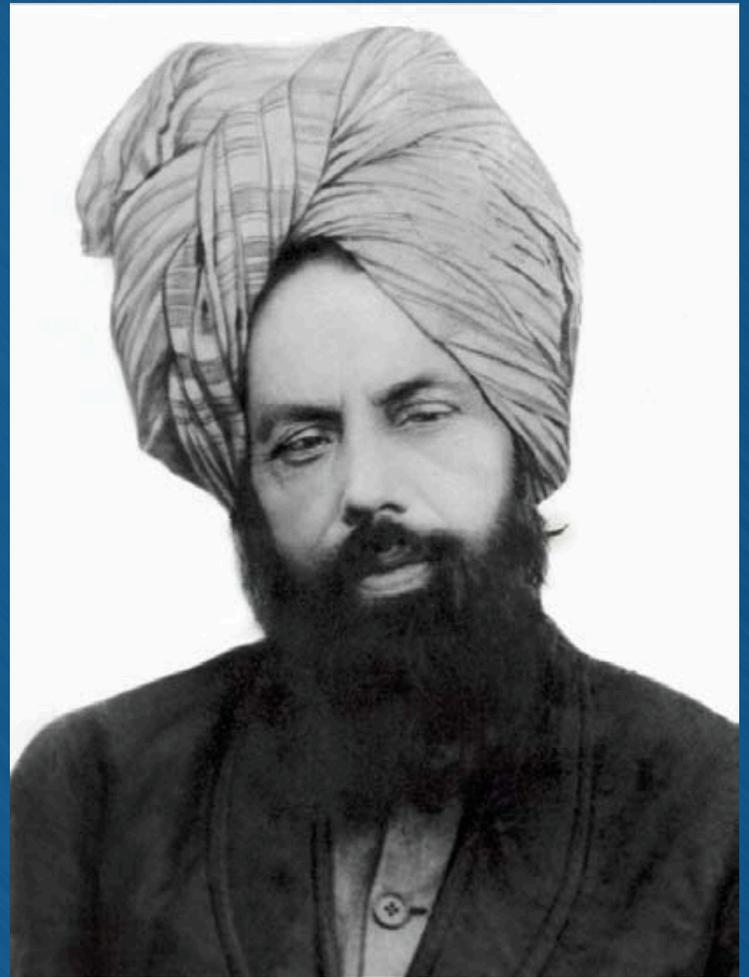
This is because blood can only freely flow from a body that has a beating heart. So, Hazrat Isa^{AS} while being crucified, did not actually die on the cross and was not subsequently resurrected. When people saw him after his supposed “death,” he was actually alive. So when Easter is celebrated, we should remind ourselves of the true story of Hazrat Isa^{AS} as the Promised Messiah^{AS} taught us.

EASTER

Numan Saeed | Connecticut

Many Christians worldwide celebrate Easter with special church services, music, candlelight, flowers and the ringing of church bells. They view Easter as the greatest feast of the year. It is a day of joy and celebration to commemorate that Jesus Christ^{AS} is risen, according to Christian belief.

Although Easter maintains a great religious significance for Christians, children in countries around the world think of it as a time to decorate eggs and to participate in Easter egg hunts where eggs are hidden by the “Easter Bunny”. Many children receive Easter baskets full of candy, snacks, and presents around this time of the year. Christians celebrate Easter Sunday as the day of Jesus Christ^{AS}’s resurrection, which is written in the New Testament of the Christian bible. According to the Gospel of John in the New Testament, Mary^{AS} came to the tomb where Jesus^{AS} was buried and found it empty. Chris-



tians believe an angel told her that Jesus^{AS} had gone to heaven. Christians worldwide have celebrated Easter for centuries believing in the return of Jesus^{AS}.

Ahmadi Muslims hold the unique belief that Jesus^{AS} (peace be upon him) survived the crucifixion and travelled towards India to continue his ministry among the Lost Tribes of Israel. Furthermore, they claim that his tomb, containing his body, has been recently re-discovered in India where it can be seen to this day. Ahmadi Muslims also assert that this belief is not only upheld by the Holy Quran and the Sayings of Muhammad^{SAW}, but even by the Holy Bible itself.

A Tale of Two Ijtemaat

Atlanta Ijtema

Jalees Ahmad | Muntazim Alaa | Atlanta

It was sheer grace and mercy of Allah that Majlis Aftal-ul-Ahmadiyya Georgia held its first ever two day local Ijtema on Saturday Feb 17 through Sunday February 18th, 2018 in Masjid Baitul Ata. Program began with Sadaqa and a letter to Huzoor^{ABA} for his earnest prayers. In preparation to this event an organizing committee was formed under local Aftal leadership of Murrabbi Aftal Syed Farrukh Shah sahib and Nazim Aftal Jalees Naseer sahib.

Local Aftal were assigned responsibilities to manage different departments and had their badges clearly marked with their department. The officers of the Ijtema were seated on chairs on the side of the stage. Other Aftal adorned Aftal scarf and sat in 4 rows in front of the stage in an organized manner.

The event started with registration at 9:30AM and opening ceremony began at 10:30AM sharp under the chair of Local Jamaat President Hazeem Pudhiapura sahib. The program started with Tilawat, Aftal pledge, poem and opening remarks by the President sahib. He emphasized the importance of Aftal organization and reminded them of their responsibilities, the session ended with Dua.

Sports competitions were next as part of the program. Aftal physical competitions were separated in two groups Mayar-e-Sagheer and Mayar-e-Kabeer. Aftal enthusiastically participated in two team events Basketball and Soccer. This activity exhausted kids and they were led to Masjid for a lecture at 12:45PM. Mansoor Tahir sahib introduced kids with the organization of Jamaat and Aftal's responsibil-



ity to strengthen the hands of Khalifatul Masih. He also briefly discussed the financial system of Jamaat in an interactive session. Namaz-e-Zu-har was offered at 1:15PM lead by a Senior Tifl. Kids enjoyed the lunch after Namaz and went back to Masjid to have session with Respected Murrabi Yahya Luqman sahib, Aftal enjoyed this QA session. This session ended with the Asr prayer at 4PM and followed by individual sports competitions.

Educational competitions started after the Maghrib prayer at 6:30PM. Most of the Aftal participated in at least one of the category. This continued till Dinner.

It is worth mentioning here that Aftal participated in preparation and serving of food, they were involved in every aspect like cleaning and marination of BBQ with little adult supervision. In fact food menu for the lunches and dinner were finalized by Aftal themselves. Last session of the day started after Isha Prayer at 7:45PM which included the remaining education competitions. Kids had their free time starting from 9PM until lights were turned off at 11PM.

Sunday started with Tahajjud prayer at 5:45AM followed by Fajr prayer and Dars. A delectable breakfast of Halwa Puri and variety of other

items to suit the taste of everyone was served at 7AM. Some of the kids went back to sleep while others enjoyed the time playing with age fellows.

Plenty of refreshments were made available to quench the thirst and satisfy churning stomachs.

Closing ceremony started after Zuhr prayer and it was presided over by National Murrabi Aftal Imam Yahya Luqman sahib. As usual it started with Tilawat and poem by the winners of the Educational competitions. There were two short speeches delivered by Aftal. Tasleem Bhatti sahib briefly touched upon the life of Musleh Maud^{RA} while Bilal Siddiqui sahib outlined the importance of Aftal organization in urdu. This followed a 10 minute documentary about the activities of Aftal during this Ijtema which was filmed without their knowledge, kids en-

joyed the happy moments.

Next item on the agenda was the report by the Muntazim-e-Ala and prize distribution. Imam Yahya Luqman sahib emphasized the importance of Musleh Maud^{RA} day and pointed out the relevance of Yawm-e-Musleh Maud in relation to fulfillment of the prophecy. Nazim Aftal tendered the vote of thank to all participants and parents who took time to make themselves available for the final session. This Ijtema concluded with Dua lead by Imam Yahya Luqman sahib.

The Ijtema was attended by 35 Aftal out of 40 tajneed. Total attendance including parents and Khuddam was close to 140.

May Allah enable to us continue these events in future.

Silicon Valley Ijtema

Rashid Waraich | Nazim Aftal

Alhamdulillah, Majlis Aftalul Ahmadiyya Silicon Valley held its local Ijtema on March 3rd, 2018 at Baitul Baseer Mosque (Milpitas, California). The main objective was to increase participation of Aftal from Majlis Silicon Valley at the upcoming regional Ijtema in San Francisco (May 2018), by starting preparations earlier.

The Ijtema started in the morning with breakfast and registration. After Tilawat, Pledge and Nazm, Nazim Aftal Silicon Valley provided an overview of the day, which was followed by opening remarks by Murabbi Khalid Khan Sahib. Due to the weather conditions, sports competitions were conducted first, which included soccer, basketball, tug of war and a 100m dash. The sports competitions were immediately followed by Taleem competitions, which included recitation of the Holy Qur'an, memori-



zation of the Holy Qur'an, Speech, Urdu Poem, Religious Knowledge and a short written exam. After the competitions lunch was served which was followed by Salat and the closing session. After the prize distribution National Mohtamim Aftal (Intisar Malhi Sahib) delivered his closing remarks.

Alhamolillah, 17 out of 25 Aftal participated in the Ijtema and 18 parents/guests honored the event with their visit.





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Al Bashir is a publication of Majlis Atfalul Ahmadiyya

Al Bashir translates to "the bearer of good news." With that in mind, we hope this magazine brings good news and happiness to all who read it.

Ameen



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