

# AHMADIYYA Gazette

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CANADA 

## The Sixth Condition of Bai'at

That he/she shall refrain from following un-Islamic customs and lustful inclinations, and shall completely submit himself/herself to the authority of the Holy Qur'an; and shall make the Word of God and the sayings of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> the guiding principle in every walk of his/her life.

(The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful*

## EDITORIAL

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada has published an exclusive publication for its April edition of the *Ahmadiyya Gazette Canada* on identifying and combating un-Islamic customs and innovations. According to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), the greatest jihad is the struggle against one's ego. This edition is based on this jihad. This is the foundation upon which the Conditions of *Bai'at* stipulated by the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) are established.

In the sixth condition of *bai'at*, we have been instructed to abstain from every kind of un-Islamic custom and innovation. Keeping this central aspect in mind, for this special issue, our editorial board has collected references from the Holy Qur'an, the traditions of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, quotations of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> and his Khulafa. A particular focus has been given to presenting the guidance and directives of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!). Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> has guided our attention to the fact that all kinds of innovations and customs are taking place in Western countries. Living in this society, we are, wittingly or unwittingly, influenced to the extent that sometimes we adopt some of those customs. We must safeguard ourselves as well as our children from these influences.

Some of the practices which have been addressed in this issue are:

Extravagant spending at weddings; unnecessary expenditure on wedding cards; dancing and music at weddings; holding a "Shaleema" instead of a *walima*; gender reveal parties; placing flowers upon graves; celebrating birthdays; shaking hands with the opposite gender; attending Christmas and Halloween functions; New Year celebration parties; face painting and tattoos; hair removal; body piercing; changing gender norms, celebrating Mother's Day and Father's Day; and keeping dogs as pets in the home, etc.

It is our hope that this special issue of the *Ahmadiyya Gazette Canada* will urge us to partake in the greatest jihad against our ego and we will be granted the ability to act upon the guidance of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) by which we will be able to abstain from innovations and customs, and strive to establish an Islamic society and promulgate Islamic traditions. *Insha'Allah!*

*Hadi Ali Chaudhary*

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



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An Educational and Spiritual Publication

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Un-Islamic Customs & Innovations

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#### ABBREVIATIONS OF SALUTATIONS

- sa** *Sallallahu alaihi wa Sallam* — peace and blessings of Allah be upon him  
USAGE: Salutation written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad
- as** *Alaihis Salam / Alaihas Salam* — peace be upon him/her  
USAGE: Salutation written after names of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad<sup>as</sup> and pious women prior to the era of the Holy Prophet Muhammad<sup>as</sup>
- ra** *Radhiallahu anhu / anha / anhum* — may Allah be pleased with him/her/them  
USAGE: Salutation written after names of Companions of the Holy Prophet<sup>as</sup> and Companions of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>
- rh** *Rahimahullah / Rahimahallah* — may Allah have mercy upon him/her  
USAGE: Salutation written after the names of deceased, pious Muslims who are not Companions<sup>as</sup>
- aa** *Ayyadahallahu Ta'ala bi Nasrihil Aziz* — may Allah be his Helper  
USAGE: Salutation written after the name of Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V

SPECIAL MESSAGE  
of  
HAZRAT KHALIFATUL-MASIH V

(MAY ALLAH BE HIS HELPER!)

— ENGLISH TRANSLATION —

*In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful*

*We praise Him and invoke blessings upon His Noble Messenger<sup>sa</sup>, and upon His servant, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>*

*By the grace and mercy of God—He alone is the Helper*

Islamabad, UK

19-03-2024

Respected Amir Sahib, Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada,

*Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu*

You have written that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada is preparing the April issue of the *Ahmadiyya Gazette* on bad customs. You have requested me to send a message for this issue.

At this occasion, my message for you is that to be included in the Jama'at of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) one must avoid everything that leads to vice and innovation in Faith. There are many vices that occur during wedding ceremonies, and which are also imitated by others. These vices gradually take root in society, causing corruption in both the Faith and the system of the Jama'at.

Admonishing the Jama'at, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) stated:

“I see that in our homes, various corrupt customs and inappropriate practices that erode faith are becoming collars around necks. People love these bad customs and actions contrary to Sharia more than they should love good and righteous deeds ... so, today, I openly and loudly declare that the straight path through which a person enters Paradise is to abandon the ways of *shirk* [associating partners with Allah] and ritualism and embrace the path of Islam. Whatever Allah Almighty has stated in the Noble Qur'an and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has guided, do not turn your face away from that path, neither to the left nor to the right; rather, step firmly on that path, and do not adopt any other path contrary to it.”  
(*Majmu'ah Isbtiharat* [2019], vol. 1, p. 84)

Recently, a trend has emerged where, instead of holding separate functions for the *rukhsati* [wedding] and *walima* [wedding banquet], the bride and groom's families are now combining the funds and holding a single function in large expensive hotels or wedding halls. This practice is being termed as a "Shaleema". This practice is against the Sharia. A *walima* cannot be held until the husband and wife have been together in privacy.

Similarly, another ritual that is becoming prevalent is that in the fifth or sixth month of pregnancy, when the gender of the child is determined through an ultrasound, a party is arranged in which a cake is cut in front of relatives and friends, which reveals either a blue or pink colour inside. The blue color symbolizes a boy, while the pink color signifies a girl. This ceremony is called a "gender reveal".

People who indulge in such improper practices are introducing innovations. Sometimes, the gender report turns out to be incorrect. It is necessary to avoid such innovations. Instead of spending money on these parties, it should be given to the needy or to charities that help the poor. Becoming wealthy does not mean that wealth should be misused nor that the customs of irreligious and worldly people be adopted.

The primary requirement from the Jama'at is to lead a simple life. Today, when materialism is on the rise more than ever before, Ahmadiis need to pay great attention to this because it is only by adopting simplicity that sacrifices can be made for the needs of the Faith. Extravagant spending occurs at wedding ceremonies. If that money is saved, it can be used to arrange the marriages of some poor people. It can be donated for the construction of mosques, and it can be given for other initiatives, or it can be contributed to various schemes.

In the sixth condition of Bai'at, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) has written that one "shall refrain from following un-Islamic customs and lustful inclinations". This means that an effort will be made to refrain from customs and to guard against all evil inclinations. This condition applies to every Ahmadi, whether rich or poor. It should always be kept in mind by every Ahmadi, considering his own means.

May Allah enable us to keep ourselves free from all kinds of innovations and burdensome customs. May we act according to the commands of Allah the Almighty, follow the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and—in accordance with the teachings of the Judge and Arbiter of the age [the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>—always give precedence to the Faith over worldly affairs. Giving precedence to the Faith over worldly affairs is also an act that encompasses all goodness and reminds us to forsake all evils and vain customs. Special attention should be given to this as well. May Allah the Almighty grant everyone the ability to do so. (Ameen!)

*Wassalam*

The humble one

***Mirza Masroor Ahmad***

KHALIFATUL-MASIH V

# PEARLS OF

## THE HOLY QUR'AN

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful*

Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet, the Immaculate one, whom they find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel *which are* with them. He enjoins on them good and forbids them evil, and makes lawful for them the good things and forbids them the bad, and removes from them their burden and the shackles that were upon them. So those who shall believe in him, and honour and support him, and help him, and follow the light that has been sent down with him—these shall prosper.

(7:158)

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي  
يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ  
يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ  
لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ  
عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ  
فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ  
الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

Some people spend their time and substance in acquiring idle diversions to lead people astray from the path of Allah, without knowledge, and to make fun of it. For them there will be a humiliating punishment.

(31:7)

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ  
عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۖ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا  
أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿٧﴾

This is My straight path; so follow it. Follow not diverse ways lest they lead you away from His way. That is what He has enjoined upon you that you may safeguard yourselves.

(6:154)

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا  
السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّكُمُ  
بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

# WISDOM

## HADITH

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مُجِيدٌ

O Allah! Bless Muhammad<sup>sa</sup> and the people of Muhammad<sup>sa</sup>,  
and bestow grace and salutations, for verily You are the Praiseworthy, the Majestic.

### Beware of newly-invented matters in Faith

Yahya bin Abu Mutaa narrated, “I heard Hazrat Irbadh bin Sariyah<sup>ra</sup> say: One day, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stood up among us and delivered a deeply moving speech to us that melted our hearts and caused our eyes to overflow with tears. It was said to him: ‘O Messenger of Allah, you have delivered a farewell speech, so enjoin something upon us.’ He said: ‘I urge you to fear Allah, and to listen and obey, even if [your leader] is an Abyssinian slave. After I am gone, you will see great conflict. I urge you to adhere to my Sunnah and the path of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and cling stubbornly to it. And beware of newly-invented matters, for every innovation is misguidance.’” (*Sunan Ibn Majah*, no. 42)

حَدَّثَنِي يَحْيَى بْنُ أَبِي الْمُطَاعِ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ الْعِرْبَابِصَ بْنَ سَارِيَةَ، يَقُولُ قَامَ فِينَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ فَوَعظَنَا مَوْعِظَةً بَلِيغَةً وَجَلَّتْ مِنْهَا الْقُلُوبُ وَدَرَفَتْ مِنْهَا الْعُيُونُ فَقِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَعَظْتَنَا مَوْعِظَةً مودِعٍ فَأَعْهَدَ إِلَيْنَا بِعَهْدٍ فَقَالَ: عَلَيْكُمْ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَالسَّمْعِ وَالطَّاعَةِ وَإِنْ عَبْدًا حَبَشِيًّا وَسَتْرُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِي اخْتِلَافًا شَدِيدًا فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمُهَدِّدِينَ عَضُوا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاجِدِ وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالْأُمُورَ الْمُحْدَثَاتِ فَإِنَّ كُلَّ بَدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ .

(سنن ابن ماجه، كتاب المقدمه، باب اتباع سنه الخلفاء الراشدين)

### Every innovation in Faith is an error

Hazrat Jabir bin Abdullah<sup>ra</sup> said: When Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) delivered the sermon, his eyes became red, his voice rose, and his anger increased so that he was like one giving a warning against the enemy and saying: “The enemy has made a morning attack on you and in the evening too.” He would also say: “The Hour and I have been sent like these two,” joining his forefinger and middle finger. He would further say: “The best speech is embodied in the Book of Allah, and the best guidance is the guidance given by Muhammad. And the most evil affairs are their innovations; and every innovation is error.” He would further say, “I am nearer to a Muslim than himself; and whosoever left behind property, then that is for his family; and whoso dies under debt or leaves children [in helplessness], the responsibility [of paying his debt and bringing up his children] lies on me.” (*Sahih Muslim*, no. 867a)

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ، قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا خَطَبَ أَحْمَرَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ وَعَلَا صَوْتُهُ وَاشْتَدَّ غَضَبُهُ حَتَّى كَأَنَّهُ مُنْذِرُ جَيْشٍ يَقُولُ صَبَحَكُمْ وَمَسَاكُمْ وَيَقُولُ بُعِثْتُ أَنَا وَالسَّاعَةُ كَهَاتَيْنِ وَيَقْرُنُ بَيْنَ إِصْبَعَيْهِ السَّبَابِيَّةِ وَالْوُسْطَى وَيَقُولُ أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ وَخَيْرُ الْهُدَى هُدَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا وَكُلُّ بَدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ أَنَا أَوْلَى بِكُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ مَنْ تَرَكَ مَالًا فَلِأَهْلِهِ وَمَنْ تَرَكَ دِينًا أَوْ ضَيَاعًا فَإِلَيَّ وَعَلَيَّ .

(صحيح مسلم، كتاب الجمعة، باب تحفيف الصلاة والخطبة)

## Allah will not accept one who follows innovation in Faith

Hazrat Hudhaifah<sup>ra</sup> narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Allah will not accept any fasting, prayer, charity, Hajj, Umrah, jihad, or any other obligatory or voluntary action from a person who follows innovation in Faith. He comes out of Islam like hair pulled out of dough.” (*Sunan Ibn Majah*, no. 49)

عَنْ حُدَيْفَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ لِصَاحِبٍ بِدْعَةً صَوْمًا وَلَا صَلَاةً وَلَا صَدَقَةً وَلَا حَجًّا وَلَا عُمْرَةً وَلَا جِهَادًا وَلَا صَرْفًا وَلَا عَدْلًا يُخْرُجُ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ كَمَا تَخْرُجُ الشَّعْرَةُ مِنَ الْعَجِينِ .

(سُنَنِ ابْنِ مَاجَه، كِتَابُ الْمُقَدِّمَةِ، بَابُ اجْتِنَابِ الْبِدْعِ وَالْحَدَلِ)

## Innovations in Faith are rejected

Hazrat Aisha<sup>ra</sup> narrated that Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “If somebody innovates something which is not in harmony with the principles of our religion, that thing is rejected.” (*Sahib al-Bukhari*, no. 2697)

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ أَحْدَثَ فِي أَمْرِنَا هَذَا مَا لَيْسَ فِيهِ فَهُوَ رَدٌّ .

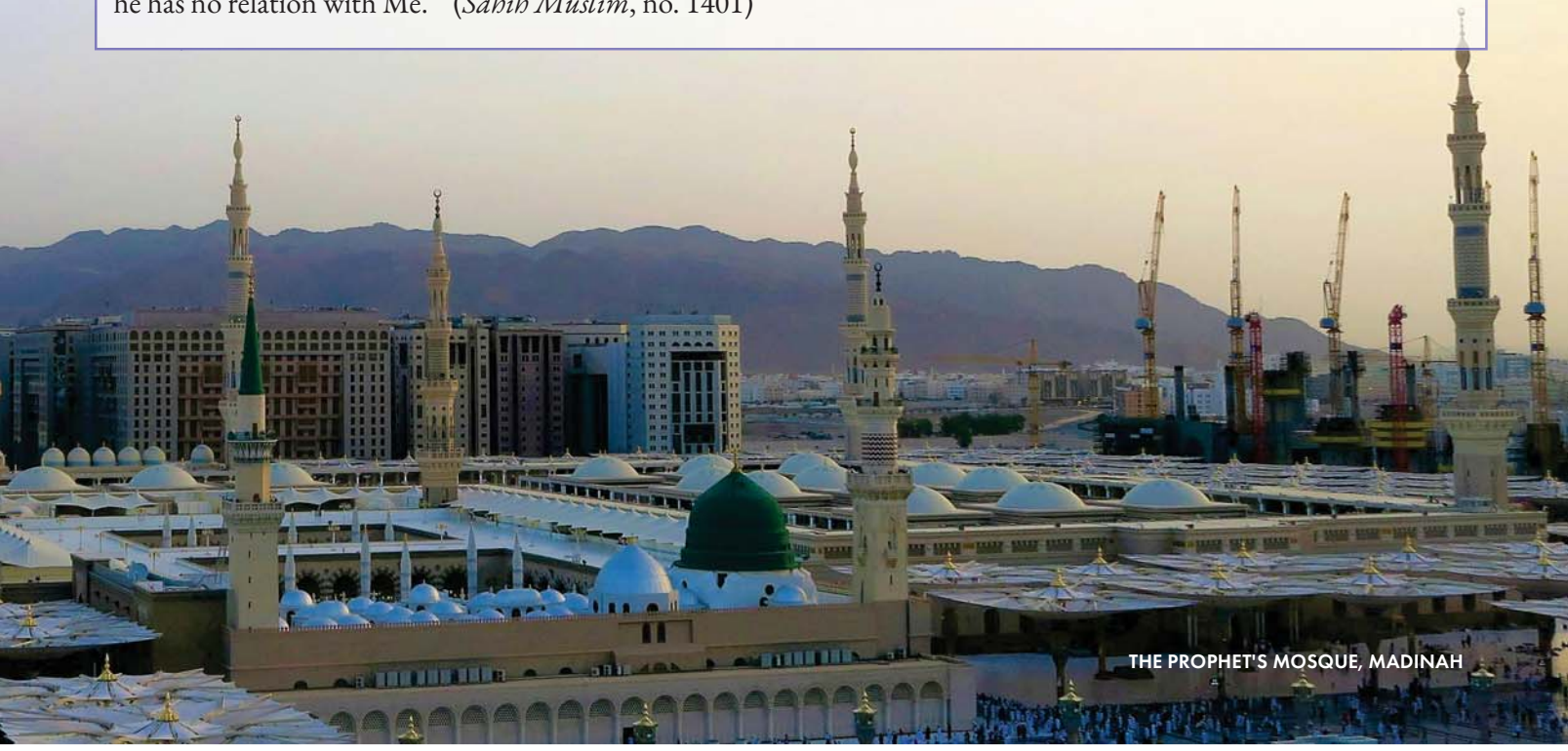
(صَحِيحُ الْبُخَارِيِّ، كِتَابُ الصَّلَاةِ، بَابُ إِذَا اضْطَلَحُوا عَلَى صَلَاحٍ جَوْرٍ فَالْصَّلَاحُ مَرْدُودٌ)

## “One who turns away from my Sunnah has no relation to me”

Hazrat Anas<sup>ra</sup> reported that some of the Companions<sup>ra</sup> of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> asked his wives about the acts that he performed in private. Then, some [of those Companions<sup>ra</sup>] said: ‘I will not marry women.’ And some among them said: ‘I will not eat meat.’ And others among them said: ‘I will not lie down in bed.’ Upon this, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> praised Allah and glorified Him, and said: “What has happened to these people that they say so and so? As for me, I observe prayer and I sleep too; I fast and I also break the fast; and I marry women. He who turns away from my Sunnah [practice], he has no relation with Me.” (*Sahib Muslim*, no. 1401)

عَنْ أَنَسٍ أَنَّ نَفَرًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَأَلُوا أَزْوَاجَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنْ عَمَلِهِ فِي السَّرِّ فَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ لَا أَتَزَوَّجُ النِّسَاءَ . وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ لَا أَكُلُ اللَّحْمَ . وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ لَا أَنَامُ عَلَى فِرَاشٍ . فَحَمِدَ اللَّهُ وَآثَنَى عَلَيْهِ . فَقَالَ مَا بَالُ أَقْوَامٍ قَالُوا كَذَا وَكَذَا لِكَيْ أُصَلِّيَ وَأَنَامُ وَأَصُومُ وَأُفْطِرُ وَأَتَزَوَّجُ النِّسَاءَ فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَن سُنَّتِي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي .

(صَحِيحُ مُسْلِمٍ، كِتَابُ النِّكَاحِ، بَابُ اسْتِخْبَابِ النِّكَاحِ لِمَنْ تَأَقَّتْ نَفْسُهُ إِلَيْهِ)





# SO SAID THE PROMISED MESSIAH

(PEACE BE UPON HIM)

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## Sharia does not prohibit all customs

“The main point is that the Sharia [Islamic Law] does not prohibit all customs. If it did, then boarding a train, using telegraph and postal services to inquire about news would all be considered innovations.” (*Malfuzat* [2022], vol. 9, p. 71)

## The difference between a Sunnah and an innovation in the Faith

“Therefore, at the present time, people have fallen prey to serious error in relation to what constitutes a practice of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> [Sunnah] and the reality of an innovation in the Faith. They suffer from a grave misconception and cannot differentiate between the Sunnah and an innovation in the Faith. They have abandoned the exemplary model of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and have invented many practices of their own accord considering them to be an ample form of guidance for their lives, even though these practices are leading them astray. When a person is able to distinguish between a practice of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and an innovation in the Faith, and follows the way of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, they are saved from dangers. However, an individual who does not differentiate between the two, and blurs the line between the Sunnah and innovations in the Faith, cannot have a good end.” (*Malfuzat* [English], vol. 3, pp. 297–298)

## Act within the limits set by God

“To do something for the sake of the world, and to feed one’s own esteem and renown, can never attract the pleasure of God Almighty. This is the state of the world even in the present era, inasmuch that everything has shifted from its proper place; worship and alms are offered as acts of show. A few traditions have taken the place of righteous deeds. Therefore, the purpose of uprooting non-religious customs is so that any action or statement that is at odds with the instruction of God or His Messenger may be abolished.

“When we call ourselves Muslims and all of our words and actions must be in accordance with the will of Allah Almighty, why should we care about the world? Any action, which goes against the pleasure of Allah Almighty and His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, must be forsaken and abandoned. One must act within the limits set by God and act upon the counsel of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. This is what it means to revive the Sunnah. There is no harm in anything which does not contradict the exhortations of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and the commandments of Allah Almighty, and which is free from ostentation, but rather done to show gratitude to God and express His favours.” (*Malfuzat* [English], vol. 3, p. 301)



HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD OF QADIAN  
THE PROMISED MESSIAH (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

## Anything against the Book of Allah is innovation in the Faith

“Whatever is happening against the Book of Allah is all innovation in the Faith, and all such innovation leads to Hellfire. Islam is about not going astray from the established Law. What right does anyone have to repeatedly create a new Sharia?”

(*Malfuzat* [2022], vol. 4, p. 264)

## Bad customs and actions contrary to Sharia

“I see that in our homes, various corrupt customs and inappropriate practices that erode faith are becoming collars around necks. People love these bad customs and actions contrary to Sharia more than they should love good and righteous deeds ...

“So, today, I openly and loudly declare that the straight path through which a person enters Paradise is to abandon the ways of *shirk* [associating partners with Allah] and ritualism and embrace the path of Islam. Whatever Allah Almighty has stated in the Noble Qur’an and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has guided, do not turn your face away from that path, neither to the left nor to the right. Rather, step firmly on that path, and do not adopt any other path contrary to it.”

(*Majmu’ah Ishtiharat* [2019], vol. 1, p. 84)

## Devising excellent methods for serving Islam is not innovation in Faith

Translating and commenting on 8:61 of the Holy Qur’an, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) said:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ

“For the enemies of the Faith, prepare all possible means, and expend all efforts for the propagation of the message of Islam ...

“Those who contemplate upon the aforementioned verse can understand that accord-

ing to the Hadith ‘Deeds are judged by intentions’, devising excellent methods for serving Islam is not innovation in Faith or misguidance. Just as with the changing times, Islam faces new challenges or adversaries come up with new ways to attack us, similarly, we also have to come up with new strategies. However, if, in line with the current situation, we are to consider a strategy to prevent and counter such attacks, it is not at all related to innovations in Faith ... An innovation in Faith is that which is fundamentally contrary and contradictory to the Sunnah [practices] of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, and which is admonished and warned against in the Prophetic teachings.”

(*A’ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Rubani Khaza’in*, vol. 5, p. 609, 611–612)

## Emulating the disbelievers is not permissible

“Emulating the disbelievers is not permissible in any way ... Believers should always maintain a dignified outfit and behaviour. Our Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to tie a loincloth and it is related that he also purchased *saraweel*, which are commonly called pajamas or trousers. One may wear them as they please. Besides this, it was his blessed habit to wear a cap, kurta, shawl and turban. There is no harm in wearing whatever one desires. However, if someone faces a new necessity, they should choose something that does not resemble the disbelievers and is closer to Islamic attire. When a person declares that he is a believer, then what is there to fear afterwards? What is the thing that still lingers in his heart? Is it the customs and traditions of the disbelievers? Now, he should only fear God and follow Muhammad<sup>sa</sup>, the Messenger of Allah. One should not consider any sin to be trivial, as minor sins can turn into major ones and insistence on a minor sin is a major sin.”

(*Malfuzat* [2022], vol. 5, pp. 55–56)

## Practicing rituals is a dishonour to the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>

“Practicing rituals is not merely a contradiction of the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) but it is also a dishonour to him, as if his words are not deemed sufficient. If enough consideration were given, there would be no need to concoct customs of one’s own accord.”

(*Malfuzat* [2022], vol. 5, p. 140)

## The actual basis rests on one’s intention

“The first Hadith in Bukhari is:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

“Meaning, deeds are based on intentions. With good intentions, even an apparent offence, no longer remains to be as such ... every action is based heavily on one’s motive. In Islam, this concept solves many issues. Hence, if someone does a deed with good intentions, purely for the sake of God, they should not care about how worldly people view that action ...

“Therefore, at the present time, people have fallen prey to serious error in relation to what constitutes a practice of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and the reality of an innovation in the Faith. They suffer from a grave misconception and cannot differentiate between the Sunnah and an innovation in the faith. They have abandoned the exemplary model of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and have invented many practices of their own accord considering them to be an ample form of guidance for their lives, even though these practices are leading them astray. When a person is able to distinguish between a practice of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and an innovation in the Faith, and follows the way of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, they are saved from dangers. However, an individual who does not differentiate between the two, and blurs the line between the Sunnah and innovations in the Faith, cannot have a good end.

“Whatever Allah the Exalted has stated in the Holy Qur’an is perfectly clear and evident, and the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has demonstrated this in practice. The life of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> is a perfect example. However, despite this, there are times when independent reasoning (*ijtihad*) is required as well. Where a person—due to their own weakness—is unable to find a precedent in the Holy Qur’an or the practice of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, they ought to employ independent reasoning. For example, if the food that is distributed to the guests at weddings is purely to boast and flaunt one’s status, this would be an act of ostentation and arrogance, and would therefore be unlawful. However, it is not unlawful for a person to offer people food out of kindness if the intention is solely to give practical expression to the verse:

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ

*And the bounty of thy Lord, proclaim. (93:12)*

One may seek to act upon the following instruction as well:

وَمَا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

*And they spend out of what We have provided for them. (2:4)*

Therefore, if a person arranges a function with this intention seeking nothing in return except for the pleasure of Allah Almighty, they could serve a feast to 100 people or 100,000 people, and this would not be forbidden. The actual basis rests on one’s intention; if the intention is ill and corrupt, this turns a perfectly permissible and lawful action into an unlawful one.”

(*Malfuzat* [English], vol. 3, pp. 293–294, 297–298)

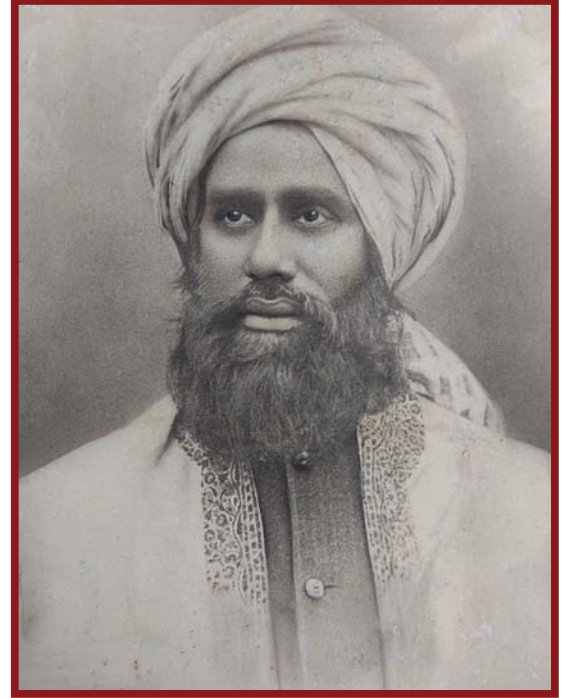
# Sayings of the Khulafa-e-Ahmadiyyat

## Customs and traditions turn one into a rebel against Allah

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I  
(may Allah be pleased with him) stated:

“There is a disease in humans, which always turns them into rebels against Allah, and it causes them to oppose the prophets, messengers, steadfast believers, saints, and truthful servants. That disease is the habit of following customs, traditions, and whims without any genuine need ... No matter how much advice you give, when someone sees something against their habit, tradition, or perceived necessity, they will always seek some excuse to avoid it.”

(*Khutbat-e-Noor*, p. 650)



HAZRAT HAKEEM NOOR-UD-DEEN  
KHALIFATUL-MASIH I (MAY ALLAH BE PLEASED WITH HIM)



HAZRAT MIRZA BASHIR-UD-DEEN MAHMOOD AHMAD  
KHALIFATUL-MASIH II (MAY ALLAH BE PLEASED WITH HIM)

## The yoke of self-concocted customs

Commenting under 36:9 of the Holy Qur’an, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him) wrote:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ أَغْلَالًا فَهِيَ إِلَى الْأَذْقَانِ فَهُمْ مُقْمَحُونَ

*We have put around their necks chains of habits and custom, which reach up to their chins, thus forcing up their heads. (36:9)*

“This verse indicates that without the revelation of the Sharia, a person willingly places the yoke of his own self-concocted customs around his neck, and the severity of these customs increases to the extent that the person cannot even see what is in front of him. To avoid them, he closes his eyes and lifts his neck high. It means that even with his eyes open, he does not see that he is stuck in baseless customs. But occasionally, to alleviate the discomfort, he raises his neck high, meaning he wants to secretly avoid the pain of these customs.”

(*Tafsir-e-Saghir*, 36:9 footnote)

## Abandon all customs, traditions, and cultural constraints

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II<sup>ra</sup> stated:

“In my opinion, we should focus more on religious education, and this religious education alone can keep our children’s senses intact. People in our country are blindly imitating Europe to such an extent that it is shameful and embarrassing to see. We should not only strive to save ourselves but also others.”

(*Al Azhar li Zawatil Khimar*, p. 213)

He also stated:

“According to the guidance [of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>], it is our duty to establish the teachings of Islam in the world. We should abandon all customs, traditions, and cultural constraints so that the Islamic atmosphere that the Promised Messiah (peace and blessings be upon him) wanted to establish in the world can be established. Remember that Western culture, civilization, and fashion will not remain intact but will be eradicated, and in their place, Islamic civilization will be established in the world.”

(*Khutbat-e-Mahmood*, vol. 3, p. 488)

## Useless customs are like chains and collars

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II<sup>ra</sup> said:

“Allah Almighty says:

إِنَّا آغْتَدْنَا لِكُفْرِيْنَ سَلْسِلَ وَأَغْلَلًا وَسَعِيرًا

*We have prepared chains and collars and a blazing Fire for the disbelievers. (76:5)*

“What is that chain? It is the customs that are associated with the nation. For example, when it comes to the marriage of a son, regardless of one’s financial situation, loans are taken to fulfill ritual customs. This is the chain that binds the disbeliever, and he cannot break free from it.”

(*Al Azhar li Zawatil Khimar*, p. 213)

At another juncture, he stated:

“Useless customs are like chains and collars around the neck of the nation, dragging it into the abyss of disgrace and decline.”

(*Khutbat-e-Mahmood*, vol. 3, p. 301)



## Abandon all bad customs

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih III  
(may Allah have mercy upon him) said:

“The demand regarding this system [of the Jama’at] and these teachings, that

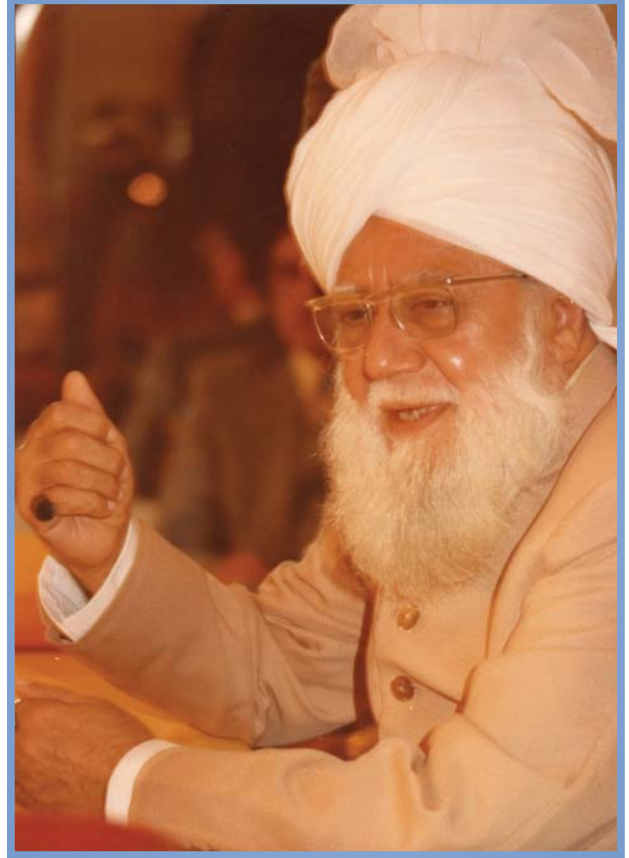
أَنْتِ يَقْرَأِينَ غَيْرَ هَذَا أَوْ بَدِّلِيهِ

‘Bring forth a Qur’an other than this or change it,’ (10:16)

if we look at the history of the last fourteen hundred years, this demand was not only of the opponents; rather, every innovation that arose within the Muslim ummah anywhere in the world practically proclaimed, ‘Change the Qur’an for us—make it according to our desires’. Those evil customs and non-righteous actions which contradicted the Holy Qur’an were effectively saying, ‘We would like a different Qur’an—not the teachings that were revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) by Allah Almighty through revelation’.

“If we Ahmadis truly recognize God Almighty and love Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and truly take him as our model ... then we must abandon all bad customs. We must abstain from all innovations. We have to create that life within our society.”

(*Khutbat-e-Nasir*, vol. 8, p. 535)



ABDUL HALEEM GURESHI

HAZRAT MIRZA NASIR AHMAD  
KHALIFATUL-MASIH III (MAY ALLAH HAVE MERCY UPON HIM)

## Adopt the Qur’anic path of guidance

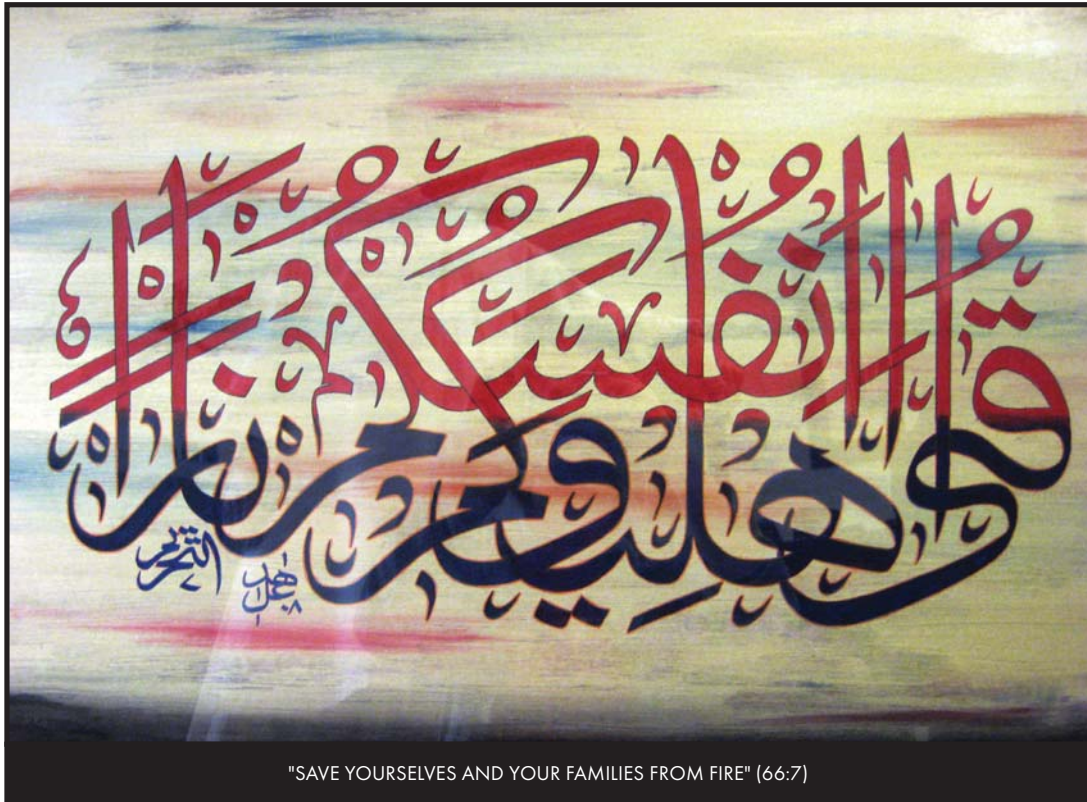
Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih III<sup>th</sup> stated:

“If you desire nearness to Allah, then instead of customs and innovations, you must adopt the Qur’anic path of guidance—the straight path. Until you close the doors of customs and innovations upon yourself, the doors of Allah’s mercy cannot open for you.”

(*Khutbat-e-Nasir*, vol. 1, pp. 378–379)



ADOBE STOCK



CALLIGRAPHY BY HADI ALI CHAUDHARY

"SAVE YOURSELVES AND YOUR FAMILIES FROM FIRE" (66:7)

## The jihad of uprooting all bad customs from homes

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih III<sup>th</sup> stated:

“Innovations and customs are a major barrier in the establishment of *Tawhid* (belief in the oneness of Allah). This is a reality that cannot be denied, that every innovation and every bad custom is a path to polytheism (*shirk*), and a person who desires to establish pure *Tawhid* cannot do so until they eliminate all innovations and all bad customs. Tens, hundreds, or even thousands of bad customs have infiltrated into our society particularly, and generally among Muslims worldwide. It is incumbent upon Ahmadi households to uproot and discard all bad customs from their homes ...

“I have, according to the will of Allah Almighty, declared jihad against every innovation and bad custom in order to establish purity within the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at—that purity for which Prophet Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) were commissioned in the world. I hope that all of you will join me in this jihad and close all avenues of satanic temptations to purify your homes through prayers, efforts and striving—which is indeed the true meaning of jihad—and to establish the oneness of Allah in the world, in our homes, in our hearts, and in the hearts of our women and children; and for the purpose of permanently closing our doors to Satan. May Allah Almighty grant me and you success in all kinds of goodness.”

(*Khutbat-e-Nasir*, vol. 1, p. 758, 763)

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih III<sup>rh</sup> said:

“So it is incumbent upon every Ahmadi, every Ahmadi family, and every Ahmadi auxiliary to protect themselves from customs and innovations in the Faith, and also to ensure that no Ahmadi adheres to customs and traditions, and does not become entangled in innovations.”

(*Khutbat-e-Nasir*, vol. 1, pp. 385)



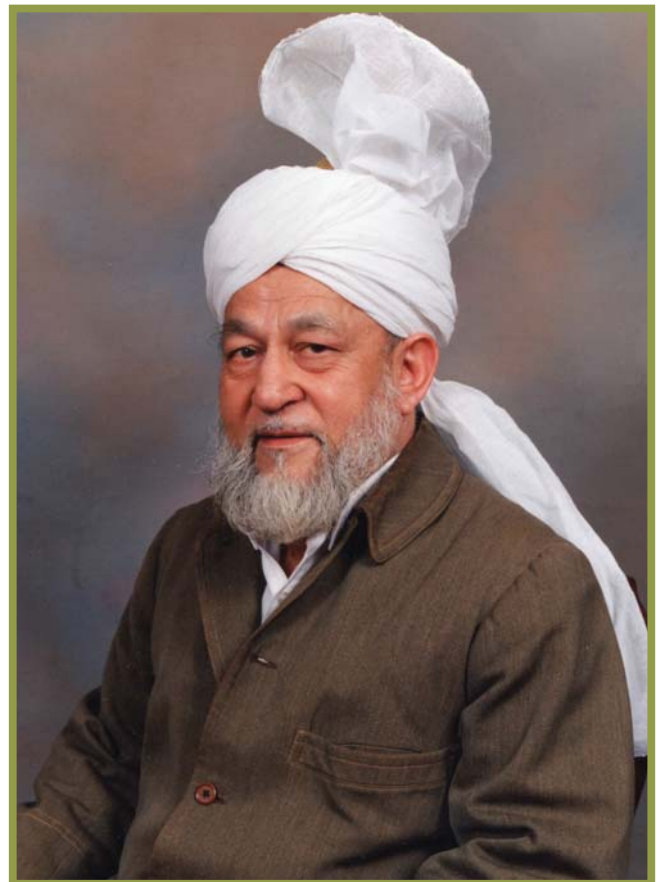
MASJID MUBARAK, RABWAH

## Freeing yourself from customs is in your own best interest

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV  
(may Allah have mercy upon him) said:

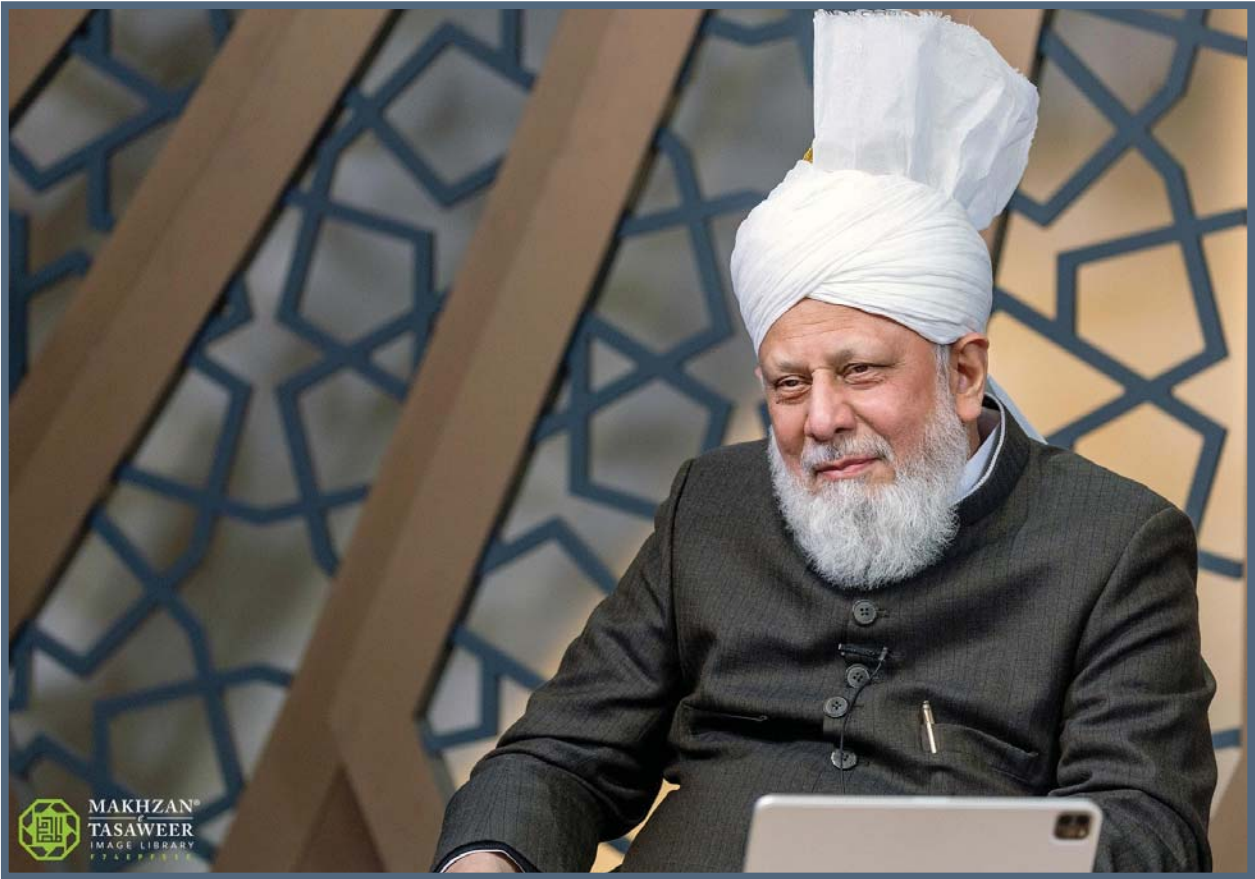
“These customs are those against which we must strive, and we must liberate our Jama’at from these burdens; otherwise, many disputes will arise. Customs in themselves are often useless things, and freeing yourself from them is in your own best interest. However, the consequences that arise from it lead to a societal breakdown. Differences increase, hatred is bred, materialism thrives, and spirituality suffers greatly. These are the cascading effects that continue to worsen with time. Therefore, do not consider customs to be trivial. If you overlook them, they will eventually gain control over you, and then they will become difficult to shake off.”

(*Khutbat-e-Tahir*, vol. 2, p. 636)



HAZRAT MIRZA TAHIR AHMAD  
KHALIFATUL-MASIH IV (MAY ALLAH HAVE MERCY UPON HIM)





## DIRECTIVES OF HAZRAT KHALIFATUL-MASIH V (may Allah be his Helper!)

”

### What do Allah and His Apostle<sup>sa</sup> expect from us?

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) stated:

“When the customs take root, their victim is blinded and gradually comes fully into the grip of carnal desires, whereas the pledge during *bai’at* is that he/she will safeguard completely from the carnal desires and will be completely subservient to the sovereignty of Allah and the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. What do Allah and His Apostle expect from us? Only that we forsake frivolous customs and abide by the commandments of Allah.”

(*Conditions of Bai’at and Responsibilities of an Ahmadi* [2004], p. 105)



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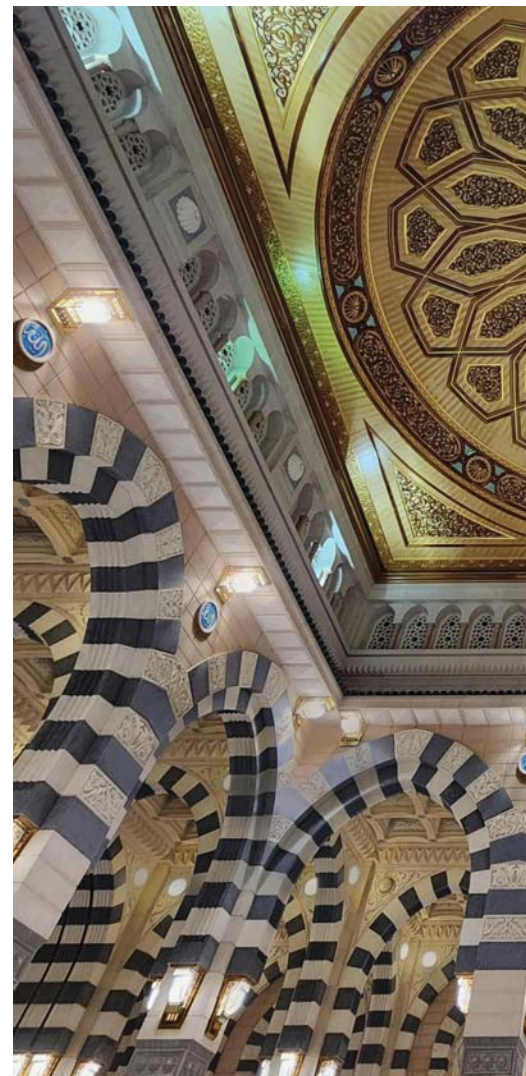
## Break free from blind adherence to customs

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) said:

“Every good deed done for the sake of Allah becomes worship. If we keep this in mind, our survival lies in it. And through this, we can save ourselves from customs, innovations, wasteful expenses, frivolities, and injustices. These injustices include not only overt oppression but also instances where people, sometimes unwittingly, become victims of such customs and end up harming themselves ...

“In societies where injustices, frivolities, innovations, and the like prevail, such societies become those that trample upon the rights of others ... If we refrain from these things, we will refrain from violating rights, from injustices, and we will become those who seek Allah’s pleasure. Today, who, besides Ahmadis, proclaims to establish a society where discussions revolve around seeking Allah’s pleasure and upholding the rights of others? Who, besides Ahmadis, pledges to break free from blind adherence to customs and following desires? Who, besides Ahmadis, commits to accepting the authority of the Holy Qur’an completely? Who, besides Ahmadis, pledges to make the Qur’an and Sunnah the guiding principles in every aspect of their life?”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 8, pp. 36–37)



“

## The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> removed shackles of false ideologies

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) said:

“If we continue to be ensnared by the shackles of customs, frivolities, or vices due to worldly pursuits, then we will neither be able to fulfill the rights of worship nor benefit from the Divine light. In the Holy Qur’an, Allah Almighty has stated about the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him):

يَأْمُرُهُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُجِدُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ  
وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ

*He enjoins on them good and forbids them evil, and makes lawful for them the good things and forbids them the bad, and removes from them their burden and the shackles that were upon them. (7:158)*

So always keep in mind that we believe in the Prophet<sup>sa</sup> who distinguished between lawful and unlawful for us, removing the shackles of false ideologies about religion from our necks. But, as I mentioned, it is unfortunate for Muslims that despite these clear guidelines, some still choose to wear yokes around their necks.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 8, p. 39)



INTERIOR OF THE PROPHET'S MOSQUE, MADINAH

PEXELS

”

## Innovations in Faith ought to be shunned

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) said:

“The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> told us ... that those innovations that have nothing to do with faith, which take one away from faith, which disrespect the commandments of Allah and His Apostle, are all worthy of rejection. They are all useless and ought to be shunned. Stay away from them because they will gradually corrupt faith.

“The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> has expressed grave concern and has given severe warnings to those who create innovations in matters of religion. He was very concerned about it. A Hadith relates that he said, ‘I am terrified at the thought of you falling prey to these innovations and lustful inclinations. I am afraid that this may cause great harm to the religion and may lead you astray!’”

*(Conditions of Bai'at and Responsibilities of an Ahmadi [2004], pp. 107-108)*

”

## Refraining from customs and rituals is part of Islamic teachings

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) said:

“Refraining from unwanted customs and rituals, and restraining oneself from lustful inclinations, are indeed part of Islamic teachings. To comprehend this teaching, we turn towards the Holy Qur'an as our guide. The truth of the matter is that if a believer adopts the Holy Qur'an as the source of guidance in his daily life, all his evils will start vanishing automatically. His heart shall contain no lustful desires because this is the pure Book which completes the Sharia as a way of life. Keeping in view all facets of human life, Allah the Almighty revealed this Book to the pure heart of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>. And then whenever it was required, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> expounded upon the teachings through his practices, actions, and sayings. That is the reason why the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> has instructed us to accept the Book as fully binding upon us.

*(Conditions of Bai'at and Responsibilities of an Ahmadi [2004], p. 110)*



THE INTERNATIONAL BAI'AT CEREMONY AT JALSA SALANA UK

”

## Always remember the sixth condition of Bai'at

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) said:

“Do not burden yourself under the weight of societal customs and traditions. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to liberate you, freeing you from these things, and by joining the Community of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) in this era, you have further strengthened this covenant which is mentioned in the sixth condition of Bai'at. The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) has written that one must ‘refrain from following un-Islamic customs and lustful inclinations’. This means efforts will be made to refrain from customs and desires. So, adhere to contentment and be grateful. This condition applies to every Ahmadi, whether rich or poor. It should always be kept in mind by every Ahmadi, according to his own circumstances.”

*(Khutbat-e-Masroor, vol. 3, p. 694)*

”

## Carelessness will tighten the shackles around our necks

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V<sup>aa</sup> said:

“After pledging allegiance to the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him), we have once again understood how to remove this yoke from our necks. It is by Allah’s grace that we have been saved from prostrating at graves. Generally, we have been saved from idol worship. Although complaints of various kinds do come up in some places, by and large, we have been saved from some incorrect customs and traditions; but, as I mentioned, some things are becoming prevalent. If we continue to be careless, these shackles will once again tighten around our necks, which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had removed from us, and which the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) removed during his era, and then advised us against. Otherwise, we will drift away from the Faith. Now, it is evident that when such a situation arises, we will eventually be expelled from the Jama’at because only those who partake of Divine light, Allah, His Messenger<sup>sa</sup> and His Book can remain attached to the Jama’at. Those who are not partaking of Allah, His Messenger<sup>sa</sup>, and His Book are not partaking of the Divine light. Those who are not striving to partake of the Divine light are moving away from faith ...

“May Allah Almighty grant us the ability to strengthen our faith, to act upon the commandments of Allah and His Messenger<sup>sa</sup>, to abstain from customs and traditions, to stay away from worldly desires, lust, and injustices, and to always remain partakers of Allah’s light. May our misfortune not deprive us of this light.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 8, pp. 39–40)



HAZRAT MIRZA MASROOR AHMAD  
KHALIFATUL-MASIH V  
(MAY ALLAH BE HIS HELPER!)

”

## Adhere to the boundaries set by Allah Almighty and His Messenger<sup>sa</sup>

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V<sup>aa</sup> stated:

“Today, observe that among Muslims, various innovations and customs have crept in during times of joyous occasions, as well as during times of sorrow. However, it is essential for an Ahmadi to reflect upon these matters and ensure that whatever actions they engage in, should yield some benefit in one way or another. Every deed should be performed with the intention of adhering to the boundaries set by Allah Almighty and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 8, p. 34)

# Wedding Customs

## Extravagant spending at weddings

The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) said:

“In our society, there is also the bad custom of extravagantly spending money on weddings. So, it should be borne in mind that distributing lavish meals among relatives as a show of wealth and status, and partaking of them, are both unlawful in the eyes of the Sharia. Displaying fireworks, hiring dancers and singers are all strictly forbidden.

Money is needlessly wasted and one is burdened by sin. Besides, the only directive in Islamic Law is that the groom should host a *walima* (wedding feast) after marriage, which means preparing food and inviting some friends.” (*Malfuzat* [2022], vol. 8, p. 283)

The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) also stated:

“Watching vulgar dances or engaging in fireworks displays is sinful, immoral and extravagant. It is not permissible.” (*Malfuzat* [2022], vol. 5, p. 32)

Commenting on these quotes of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him), Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) stated in his Friday Sermon of January 15, 2010:

“About a century ago, a hundred rupees used to be a significant expense. But nowadays, expenses amount to hundreds of thousands, even exceeding one’s means. This perhaps surpasses the value of a hundred rupees from that time ...

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا  
لَمْ يَكُنِ فَوْقَ أَوْلِيَاءِ يَقْتَرُوا  
وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا

“THOSE WHO ARE NEITHER EXTRAVAGANT NOR MISERLY  
IN SPENDING, BUT KEEP A BALANCE BETWEEN THE TWO” (25:68)

ADHAM FADI AL-JA'FARI / FREE ISLAMIC CALLIGRAPHY

“Fireworks are displayed at weddings. Nowadays, people even illuminate their homes for weddings, exceeding the actual need ... prices have skyrocketed, while on the other hand, by extravagantly spending more than necessary, some households are not only causing harm to the country but also indulging in sin ...

“It is a special grace of Allah Almighty upon the Jama'at that we have been spared from the prevailing customs during times of grief ... Sometimes, or rather often, these customs become burdensome for families. However, if society becomes influenced by one form of bad customs, other customs can also emerge, and then discussions about these customs may start here as well.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 8, pp. 35–36)

## Avoid everything that leads to evil and innovation in the Jama'at

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) said:

“To be a part of the Jama'at of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him), one must avoid everything that leads to evil and innovation in the Jama'at ... These include demanding dowry from the bride, wedding and *walima* expenses, customs, and some other rituals that are completely superfluous and burdensome. We should be pleased that we follow a religion that frees us from the customs and traditions of society, tribes, and families—such customs that had made life very difficult—instead of adopting these vanities in imitation of the practices of other religions.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 3, pp. 691–692)



PEXELS

## Mehndi parties

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V<sup>aa</sup> said:

“There is the custom of a *mehndi* [traditional South Asian bridal party]. It has been given as much importance as the wedding itself. Invitations are sent out for it, cards are printed, stages are decorated; and not only this, but a series of parties continues for many days before the wedding, and new stages are decorated every day. Then, comments are made about how many dishes are being prepared each day. These are all customs that have ensnared even those who did not have the means, and non-Ahmadis had already been indulged in this. Now, in some Ahmadi households, these frivolous and useless customs are being followed on a large scale, or some families have fallen victim to it. Instead of avoiding these customs by adhering to the words of the Imam of the Age, they are being entangled in these customs by going along with society. ... Some people have started indulging excessively in these customs... Now, I am saying openly that do not follow these improper customs and put an end to them.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 8, pp. 34–35)

## Announcing the Nikah with drums

The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) said:

“That which is evil is forbidden, and that which is pure is lawful. Allah Almighty does not declare any pure thing to be forbidden, rather He declares all pure things as lawful. However, when impure and filthy things are mixed with pure things, they become forbidden. Now, it is permissible to publicize a wedding with drums. However, when dancing and other such things are included in it, then it becomes prohibited. If one were to act according to the instructions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), then nothing would be forbidden.”

(*Malfuzat* [2022], vol. 9, pp. 336–337)

“Such practices which are against the instructions of God and His Messenger<sup>sa</sup>, or which are tainted by the association of partners with God or ostentation, and which serve to stroke one’s own ego, are all classed as sin, and they are forbidden. The reason it is necessary for a wedding to be announced by the beating of a drum is so that if a dispute arises in the future, this announcement may serve as a form of testimony. Similarly, on a marriage engagement or agreement, if someone distributes sweets so that the newly formed bond is strengthened, then this is not a sin. However, if this is not the intention and the purpose is only to garner renown and to boast, then this is not permissible. Similarly, in my view, the use of trumpets is also lawful, for there is nothing in this that is against the Sharia, so long as one’s intention is not corrupt.”

(*Malfuzat* [English], vol. 3, p. 304)



UNSPASH

## Expensive wedding cards

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V<sup>aa</sup> said:

“Extravagant amounts are also spent on wedding invitation cards. In Pakistan, an invitation card can be printed for as little as one rupee. The purpose is to invite so there is no need for an extravagant display. However, expensive cards are printed unnecessarily. When asked, they say that it is a very cheap printing, just fifty rupees. Now, if the cards are printed in quantities of five hundred, those fifty rupees become twenty-five thousand rupees in Pakistan. If a poor person receives twenty-five thousand rupees for a wedding, they become overwhelmed with joy and gratitude. Hence, savings can be made in many different ways.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 3, p. 334)



UNSPASH



## Dancing and music at weddings

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V<sup>aa</sup> said:

“There is also harm in women dancing among women ... As far as singing is concerned, if girls sing decent wedding songs, and there is no objection in this.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 2, p. 94)

At another juncture, Huzoor-e-Anwar (may Allah be his Helper!) also said:

“I warn you to avoid such vain and useless activities. Then, there is dancing. There are indecent types of music or dances being performed at functions hosted by the bride or after the wedding when the bride comes to the groom’s house, and close relatives are involved in it. Permission cannot be granted for this whatsoever ... Some people organize separate programs for their special guests, after most of the guests have left, where such vain activities and revelries continue. There are separate dances in the house. Whether it is girls dancing among girls or boys dancing among boys, the songs and music being played are so vulgar that they cannot be tolerated.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 3, pp. 686–688)

Huzoor-e-Anwar (may Allah be his Helper!) further said:

“In every nation and country, there are certain customs and traditions, and one such type is related to their wedding ceremonies ... In our countries, such vulgar and obscene songs are played at wedding occasions that it is shameful to listen to them. Such shameless and indecent words are used that it is hard to imagine how people tolerate them. *Alhamdulillah*, the Ahmadi community is largely protected from these vulgarities and frivolous activities. However, these things have rapidly permeated into our Pakistani and Indian society. They are rampant among other religious communities, who have forgotten all their values, and religion holds no significance to them. They dance, sing and revel after drinking alcohol on joyous occasions, creating a tumult of indecency. As I mentioned, the influence of such a society can also affect Ahmadis, and I receive occasional complaints about it. So remember, Ahmadis must protect themselves from these vulgarities and save themselves.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 3, pp. 686–687)



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## Dowry

Regarding the recommended amount for dowry, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) said:

“There is no harm in [any amount] agreed upon by both parties. A dowry ‘by Sharia standards’ does not necessarily mean that there is a specific limit set in the texts of Hadith. Rather, it refers to the customary practices prevailing among people at that time. In our country, the problem is that intentions are tainted, and the dowry is set at hundreds of thousands of rupees merely for show. Often, these amounts are written to intimidate the groom into compliance. This can lead to adverse consequences. Neither are the intentions of the bride’s family considered nor the capacity of the groom to fulfill such demands.

“My belief is that when disputes arise in such situations, until it is proven that both parties were equally willing to agree to the specified amount of dowry, it should not be given. The decision should be made considering his means and the cultural norms, et cetera, because following indecent practices is neither sanctioned by Sharia nor by law.”

(*Malfuzat* [2022], vol. 5, p. 101)

## Limit of the dowry

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him) stated:

“I have advised setting the dowry from six months to one year’s income, meaning if someone seeks my advice regarding dowry, I suggest setting it equal to six months’ income, up to one year’s income. This advice is based on the fact that according to Divine will, the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) stipulated one-tenth of one’s earnings as a condition to be a part of the system of *Wasiyyat*. This has been considered a great sacrifice. Based on this, I believe that allocating one-tenth of one’s income, aside from other expenses, is not an ordinary sacrifice but rather such a great sacrifice that in return, a promise of Paradise has been given to such a person. In this respect, allocating a year’s income for the wife’s dowry—which is effectively a tenth of one’s ten-year income—is not only sufficient to fulfill the purpose of dowry but is, in my opinion, the utmost limit.”

(*The Daily Al-Fazl Qadian*, December 12, 1940, p. 1)



## Legal disputes over dowry

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V<sup>aa</sup> said:

“Sometimes, such disputes arise here, in Europe, in which the country’s law facilitates the woman’s rights in the case of divorce; there are some people who think that this is sufficient and there is no longer a need to give the dowry. Firstly, if there are children involved, sometimes these rights belong to the children. Secondly, even if they are the wife’s rights to some extent, they are only for a certain period, so, in my opinion, demanding that the dowry not be given and that the court-ordered rights be adjusted in the dowry is not permissible.

“As the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) said, the first thing is that the dowry should be set after due consideration, and within the groom’s means. Qadha can determine how much it should be. When it is determined, then he said that this is a loan, and the payment of the loan must be made in any case; so there should be no excuse for not paying the dowry. So, when it is in the form of a loan, the dowry must be paid like a loan; it has no connection with those rights provided by the country’s laws.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 3, pp. 697–698)

## Arrangements for male and female servers

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V<sup>aa</sup> said:

“Once, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV (may Allah have mercy upon him) directed that Ahmadi boys, Khuddam, and Atfal should form teams to work on weddings and other events in such a way that they serve the community and reduce expenses. Many households cannot afford such expenses, but some people still incur them for the sake of show. In this manner, the practice of inviting [serving] boys from outside the Ahmadi community will also come to an end. Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, Ansarullah, or, if it is a bridal function, then girls of Lajna Ima’illah should work. And if there is still a keen desire to spend more, and servers are hired, then male servers should serve in the men’s side. I have observed here that women also serve in the women’s side, so arrangements should also be made for women, and there should be no feeling of inferiority in this regard. As I have said before, some people spend out of competition with each other, which is a kind of inferiority complex. There should be no feeling of inferiority. If the intention is to implement the commandments of the Qur’an and to maintain purity, then the work will be done, and along with that, you will also receive Divine reward.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 2, p. 88)

## “Shaleema”

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) received some reports that recently, a trend has emerged where, instead of holding separate functions for the *rukhsati* [wedding] and *walima* [wedding banquet], the bride and groom’s families are now combining the funds and holding a single extravagant function in large expensive hotels or wedding halls. This practice is being termed as “Shaleema.”

Huzoor-e-Anwar (may Allah be his Helper!) has instructed the following:

“This is incorrect and against the Sharia. A *walima* cannot be held until the husband and wife have been together in privacy. (‘Privacy’ refers to when the husband and wife are alone together in a place where no one can enter without their permission.)”

(*Letter of Add'l Wakilut Tabshir UK*, December 15, 2023)



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## Walima does not need to be on a large scale

Regarding the *walima*, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) said:

“Then, there is the *walima* which is actually enjoined, in which relatives should be invited to a meal. Upon observation, this is the only meal that has been enjoined by Islam. However, it does not need to be on a large scale. It depends on one’s capacity. Invite as many people as one can afford to accommodate.”

(*Khutbat-e-Masroor*, vol. 8, p. 36)



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## The significance of *rukhsati* in Islam

A group of Waqifat-e-Nau from Canada was blessed with the opportunity to meet Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) in a virtual meeting on June 11, 2023.

One member enquired, what is the significance of *rukhsati* [the bride's send off] in Islam and why are individuals instructed not to meet their spouse alone after the *nikah* until the *rukhsati* has taken place? Huzoor-e-Anwar (may Allah be his Helper!) said:

“You are absolutely right in saying that Islam emphasizes *nikah*, whereas *rukhsati* is our traditional wedding. Once *nikah* is performed, you are free, you become husband and wife from an Islamic point of view. Now, whether you do *rukhsati* or the groom takes the bride by her hand and brings her home directly from the mosque after *nikah*, the parents have no right to stop it. However, since these are our traditions, and many of us living in Indo-Pakistan are influenced by Indian culture, Hindu culture, or their traditional culture, so *rukhsati* functions started happening. Otherwise, *nikah* is the actual ceremony, and instead of spending on weddings, this is a better way.

“First, there is an engagement ceremony before *nikah* where rings are exchanged. There is a big celebration and feast, and money is wasted. Then, the *nikah* takes place, and there is more expenditure of money during the subsequent *nikah* function. Once the *nikah* is done, they say it's time for the wedding. Now, when the wedding is about to happen, *mehndi* rituals take place. Unless the *mehndi* rituals are performed, parties are thrown, drums and music are played, parties for a hundred or two hundred people are thrown, the families of the bride and groom are not satisfied that the wedding festivities were enjoyable. After that, the wedding takes place. You spend on the wedding, but then you also end up holding four functions for one event. Nevertheless, the Islamic way is what you're saying, that once *nikah* is performed, the *rukhsati* should take place and simplicity should be preferred. With the money you save, instead of holding so many functions, it is better to cover the wedding expenses of a poor person.



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“During the time of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), *rukhsatis* used to be simple, to the extent that sometimes the Companions<sup>ra</sup> were not even aware that someone's marriage had taken place. Once, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> saw a Companion<sup>ra</sup> whose clothes were dyed. He said, ‘It looks like you have gotten married.’ He said, ‘Yes, my marriage took place yesterday or the day before. The *nikah* was done at home and the *rukhsati* happened there as well. So the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said, ‘Okay, that is good; congratulations! But hosting a *walima* meal is necessary in Islam. So go and host a *walima*, even if it is just with a goat.’ So the *nikah* and the *walima* are necessary. If you have the courage, then confront the customs and your family, and have the *rukhsati* take place right after the *nikah*. When your wedding happens, then take a stand and say that this is the Islamic way. You have my full permission.”

(*Al-Fazl International*, June 22, 2023)



## Showing off at weddings

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V<sup>aa</sup> said:

“There are some frivolous customs during celebrations of marriage—like showing off the dowry given to the bride by her groom’s family, or the gifts brought by them, or publicly displaying the dowry given to the bride by her own family. There is quite a show. Islam only enjoins *haq mebr* [bride’s due right] to be publicly announced as a part of the condition of the religious marriage ceremony. All other customs are frivolous.

“This is one of the blessings of joining the Jama’at of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>. It is a consequence of the sacrifices made by your forefathers and a blessing resulting from the supplications offered by them. But there are some who, instead of being thankful by bowing before Allah the Almighty and spending in His way, become a prey to self-exultation and demonstration by excessive spending in marriages.

“A lot of food is wasted in marriage celebrations and *walimas* [reception given by husband after the marriage has been consummated]. Many dishes are prepared for public display. As a consequence, those who are not so well-off go into debt in order to have bridal dowry to display publicly. Some parents have to go into debt for fear of criticisms from their in-laws that their daughter has not brought much dowry with her. The groom’s family should fear Allah. Do not permit your poor in-laws to go into debt in order to maintain your own false sense of self-esteem.”

(*Conditions of Bai’at and Responsibilities of an Ahmadi* [2004], p. 103–104)



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## THE WORLD HAS BEEN RAVAGED BY IDOLATRY AND INNOVATION

*Selected couplets from an Urdu poem written by the Promised Messiah (upon whom be peace).*

کیوں نہیں لوگو تمہیں حق کا خیال  
دل میں آتا ہے مرے سو سو اُبال

Why do you not, O people, heed the truth?  
Your condition constantly worries my heart.

آنکھ تر ہے دل میں میرے درد ہے  
کیوں دلوں پر اس قدر یہ گرد ہے

My eyes are tearful and heart in anguish.  
Why are your hearts covered in the dust of  
remissness?

آسماں پر غافلہ اک جوش ہے  
کچھ تو دیکھو گر تمہیں کچھ ہوش ہے

Heaven is keen to show its glory—  
O negligent ones! Behold, if you are in your  
senses.

ہو گیا دیں کفر کے حملوں سے چور  
چپ رہے کب تک خداوندِ غیور

Faith has been ruined due to the assaults  
launched by disbelief;  
How long shall Almighty God, who is jealous of  
His honour, remain quiet?

اس صدی کا بیسواں اب سال ہے  
شرک و بدعت سے جہاں پامال ہے

The twentieth year of this [Hijri] century is in  
progress;  
The world has been ravaged by idolatry and  
innovation.

بدگماں کیوں ہو خدا کچھ یاد ہے  
افترا کی کب تلک بنیاد ہے

Why do you think so ill of me? Why have you  
forgotten God?  
How long do you think falsehood can last?

(*The Miracle of Ahmad* [2019], pp. 56–57)

# DEATH RITUALS & CUSTOMS

## Rituals and customs at the time of death

The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) said:

“The only way to please Allah Almighty is to obey the true commandments of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It is observed that people are caught up in various customs and rituals. When someone passes away, all sorts of innovations and rituals are performed, whereas one should instead pray for the deceased. Practicing rituals is not merely a contradiction of the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) but it is also a dishonour to him, as if his words are not deemed sufficient. If enough consideration were given, there would be no need to concoct customs of one’s own accord.”

(*Malfuzat* [2022], vol. 5, p. 140)



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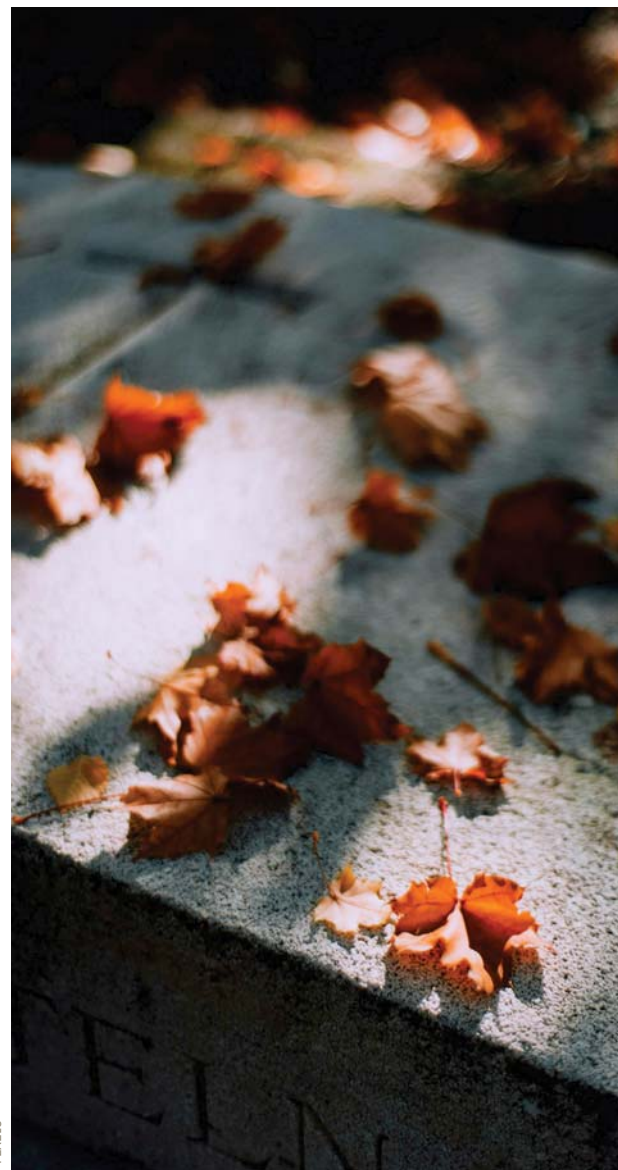
## Wailing over the deceased

In his Friday Sermon of March 1, 2024, Hazrat Khali-fatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) mentioned the events that took place after the martyrdom of Hazrat Hamzah bin Abdil Muttalib (may Allah be pleased with him) at the Battle of Uhud. Explaining how the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade Muslim women from wailing over the loss of their loved ones, Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said:

“The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> prohibited the Muslims from howling and shrieking over the deceased and he did this in an extremely wise manner. In a narration, it is related by Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar<sup>ra</sup> that when the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> returned from the Battle of Uhud, he heard that the wives of the Ansar were crying and wailing over their husbands. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said, ‘What is the matter? Is there no one to weep for Hamzah?’ When the women of the Ansar came to know of this, they gathered to wail and shriek in lamentation over the martyrdom of Hazrat Hamzah<sup>ra</sup> as well. Later on, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> went to take some rest. He was perhaps at a distance from them in the mosque. When he woke up, the women were still wailing in that very same manner. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said, ‘Will they continue crying over Hamzah today? Will they not stop? Tell them to return!’ Following this, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> instructed them to return to their homes and not wail or howl over the death of anyone after that day. (*Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal*, vol. 2, Hadith 5563 [Beirut, 1998], pp. 418-419)

“Hence, in this manner, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> prohibited them from wailing over their dead and did away with any form of wailing and howling in this manner over the dead. In this way, with great wisdom, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> remained very considerate of the sentiments of the wives of the Ansar. Instead of preventing them from mourning over the loss of their husbands and brothers, he mentioned Hazrat Hamzah<sup>ra</sup> and stated that there was no one to weep for him.”

(*Al Hakam*, March 29, 2024, p. 17)





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## Offering charity on behalf of the deceased

The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) said: “The charity and good deeds done in the name of the deceased can indeed reach them. However, it is not established from the practice of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his noble Companions<sup>ra</sup> to recite the Holy Qur’an with the intention of sending its reward to the deceased. Instead, supplications should be made for the deceased. Performing charity, good deeds, and supplications for the deceased is established from the Sunnah of a 124,000 prophets. However, it is better if the charity is given by one’s own hands because through it a person authenticates his faith.”

(*Malfuzat* [2022], vol. 8, pp. 229-230)

## What is the Islamic ruling regarding women visiting graveyards?

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) was asked about women visiting graveyards for funerals and standing behind men or sitting in their cars during the burial. Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> provided the following answer in his letter dated June 9, 2018:

“From various ahadith, we learn that the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> had generally advised women against visiting graveyards along with funeral processions, but this was not strictly forbidden. If, for some specific reason, a woman was seen at a funeral, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> would ignore it.

“In the pre-Islamic era, excessive mourning over the deceased was a common practice and it was mostly done by women. Islam forbade excessive lamentation and, at the same time, women were generally forbidden to go to the graveyard with the deceased so that they may not engage in excessive lamentation upon being overwhelmed by emotions at the time of burial.

“Previous righteous scholars and Islamic jurists have also declared it undesirable for women to visit graveyards along with a funeral procession.

“During the blessed time of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> and the time of his Khulafa after him, it has generally been the practice that women are allowed to join the funeral prayers with a separate arrangement from the men, but at the time of burial, women are not allowed to come along.

“Therefore, except for special circumstances, women should not go to cemeteries for funerals. If for any reason women have to go to the cemetery during the funeral—as you have written in your letter—they should remain seated in their cars. After the completion of the burial and the funeral, when the men have left, they may pray at the grave.”

(*Al Hakam*, January 8, 2021)



## Placing lamps on graves

It is narrated by Hazrat Abdullah ibn Abbas that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed women who [frequently] visit graves, those who build mosques over them, and those who place lamps on them.

(*Sunan Abi Dawud*, Book of Funerals, no. 3236)

## Placing flowers on graves

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV (may Allah have mercy upon him) was once asked that whereas flowers are planted alongside graves in graveyards, why is it not permissible to place flowers directly on top of the graves? He responded:

“Placing flowers on graves is not a Sunnah [practice of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>]. Graves should be simple and of plain soil. However, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was pleased by decorations, with gardens and flowers. Therefore, flowers are planted along the pathways [in graveyards]. There is no harm in this because the flowers are not placed directly on the graves but are used to beautify the surroundings.”

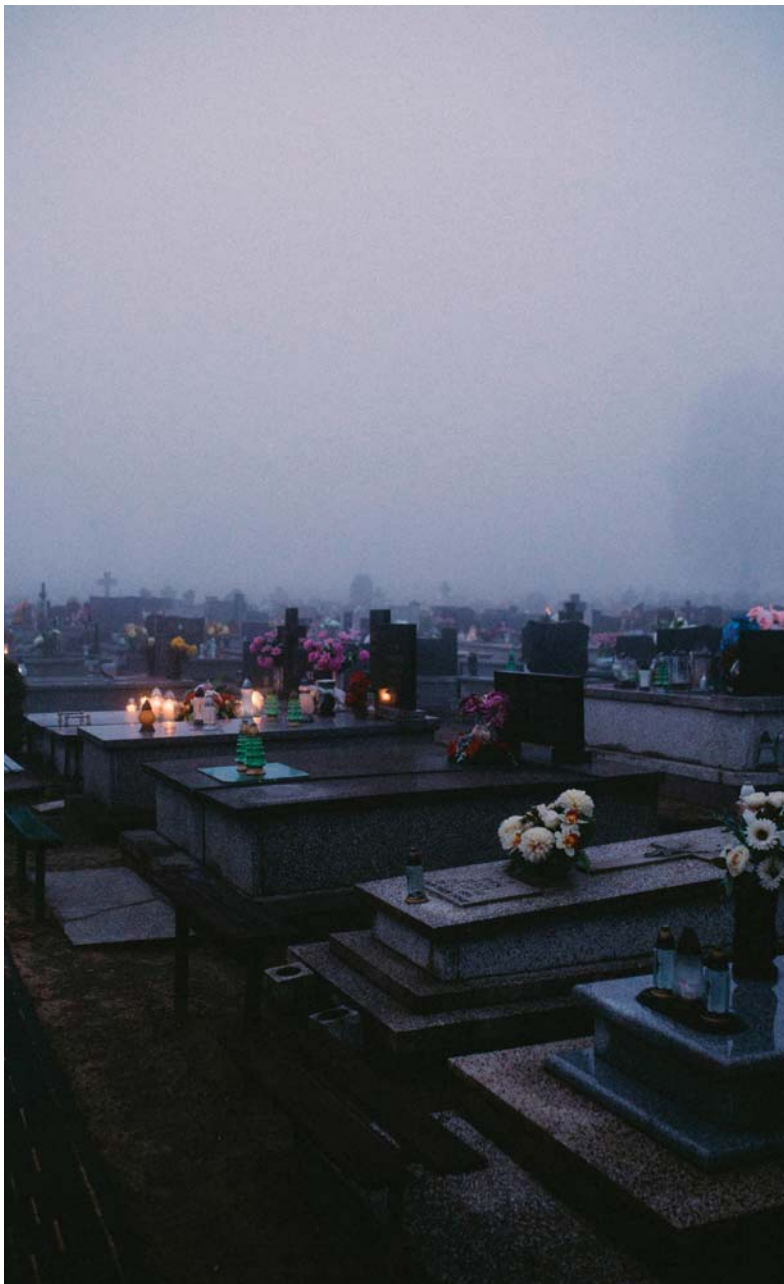
(*Rabwah*, November 25, 2000, pp. 3–4)

## Preparing food for a bereaved family

The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) was once asked whether it is permissible to prepare food for the family of a deceased brother. He responded:

“Not only is it permissible, it is important to do so out of brotherly compassion.”

(*Malfuzat* [2022] vol. 9, p. 194)



PEXELS

# PREVAILING SOCIETAL CUSTOMS



## Celebrating children's birthdays

In response to a question regarding birthdays, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) said:

“There is nothing wrong with celebrating children's birthdays and cutting cakes within one's home with the family members in a way that does not involve any kind of innovation or extravagance or any un-Islamic acts. However, at the same time, one should also give some charity in the way of Allah and the children should be instructed to especially offer *nawafil* [prayers] on this day to give thanks to Allah the Exalted for giving them a healthy life and to beseech His grace for the future.”

(*Al Hakam*, January 14, 2022, p. 12)

## How to truly celebrate birthdays

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) was asked why we do not celebrate birthdays. Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> replied:

“We do not celebrate birthdays. We also do not celebrate the birthday of the Holy Prophet (peace be and blessings of Allah be upon him); instead, we conduct a *Jalsa Seerat-un-Nabi* [session on the life and character of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>].

“If someone reminds me that today is my birthday, I offer two *rak'aat* of *nafl* prayer, give charity, and thank Allah for granting me life and enabling me to follow His commandments. I pray that in the future, Allah's grace always remains with me.

“On the occasion of a birthday, instead of burning candles, cutting cakes, and spending money on parties, it is better to donate this money to the needy. Give it to charity organizations; they help the poor, and your contribution will assist them in their work. You may donate to Humanity First. Instead of wasting money here and there, that amount can help the needy. Thus, we celebrate our birthdays by doing such deeds for the sake of Allah's pleasure.”

(*Al-Fazl International*, October 18, 2013)

## Gender reveal parties

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) instructed the following regarding gender reveal parties:

“The ritual of cutting a cake to reveal the gender of the child is also introducing innovations and [people are] engaging in improper practices. Sometimes, the gender report turns out to be incorrect. It is necessary to avoid such innovations. Instead of spending money on these parties, it should be given to the needy or to charities that help the poor. Becoming wealthy does not mean that wealth should be misused nor that the customs of irreligious and worldly people should be adopted.”

(*Letter of Add'l Wakilut Tabshir UK*, dated December 15, 2023)



## Halloween

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V<sup>aa</sup> said:

“The ritual of Halloween, which is now considered ‘fun’ by people, is based on satanic ideas and polytheistic beliefs and is a hidden evil. A true Muslim and especially an Ahmadi should always remember that one must safeguard against anything which is based on *shirk* [polytheism] even if it is done for enjoyment because such rituals take a person away from religion. Moreover, it is also against the dignity of an Ahmadi child to go begging, as beggars do, around people’s houses on the occasion of this festival in the name of entertainment. An Ahmadi has a certain distinction which we should inculcate in the minds of children from childhood.

“Thus, no Ahmadi is permitted to participate in the ritual of Halloween, neither by dressing up as a ghost, nor as a witch or a fairy, because this ritual is based on false and polytheistic beliefs.”

(*Al Hakam*, April 8, 2022, p. 5)



## Attending Christmas and Halloween events at school

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) was once asked by a mother whether her child was permitted to participate in Christmas and Halloween functions at school. Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said:

“Halloween is wrong in any case. What happens in Christmas programs?”

The mother said that there is a party and gifts are exchanged. At this Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> responded:

“She should not go there and start singing songs about Jesus being the son of God. Otherwise, if she wants to go, she may. The rest is just gift exchange. You should also invite her friends over at Eid. Halloween is something else entirely. That is not permitted.”

(*Al-Fazl International*, February 15, 2019)



FREE ISLAMIC CALLIGRAPHY

وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمْ جَنَاحَ الذَّلِيلِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْنِي إِكْرَامًا رَبِّيَ إِذَا صَغِيرًا

"BE HUMBLY TENDER WITH THEM AND PRAY: LORD, HAVE MERCY ON THEM, EVEN AS THEY NURTURED ME WHEN I WAS LITTLE." (17:25)

## Celebrating Mother's Day & Father's Day

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) was once asked in relation to Mother's Day that sometimes children in kindergarten are told to give their mothers gifts; so what is Huzoor's<sup>aa</sup> guidance in this regard? Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> replied:

“You may certainly accept those gifts. However, Islam says that every day is Mother's Day. Celebrate Mother's Day every day. There was a function in London; it was the inauguration of a mosque. Some English people were also present, and it happened to be Mother's Day that day. So I said to them, ‘Your Mother's Day is today. Islam teaches us to celebrate Mother's Day every day; to respect your parents and to behave in an excellent manner with them; to not even say ‘uff’ to them and to serve them.’ If you have the means, give them a gift every day.”

(*Al-Fazl International*, July 20, 2012)



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## Ramadan decorations & Eid countdown calendars

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) was asked about the permissibility of the practice of decorating homes during Ramadan and creating calendars to count down to the day of Eid, similar to the custom of advent calendars for Christmas. Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>ra</sup> provided the following answer to this question:

“The essential matter here is that in this regard too, we ought to consider the directive of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

[‘Deeds are judged by motives.’ (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Kitab Bad’il Wahy)].

If the intention in decorating houses during Ramadan and putting up Ramadan calendars is to direct the attention of the household and children towards the significance of Ramadan; to cultivate an environment within the home that encourages family members, particularly children, towards the importance of various kinds of worship and supplications of Ramadan; so that they may engage in prayers and supplications at *subhoor* [pre-dawn meal] and *iftar* [meal at sunset] times, influenced by this atmosphere; and so that they can embrace each day of Ramadan with enthusiasm and fervour, benefiting from the blessings bestowed during this time, then there does not seem to be any issue with this action with such intentions.

“However, if the sole purpose is ostentation, and all these efforts are merely for show and display, and each day passes with the thought of, ‘Well, that’s good, so many days have passed, we’re relieved of them, the remaining days will soon pass too, and then we’ll celebrate Eid’, and on Eid, instead of seeking genuine happiness, one’s concern is merely superficial joys, then decorating houses and putting up Ramadan calendars with this intention is unequivocally not permissible.

“In conclusion, if this activity brings about a pure transformation within the family, and it generates attention towards the blessings of Ramadan, providing them with the opportunity to benefit from them, then such decoration and the putting up of such calendars is permissible. However, if the objective is merely to show off and to treat Ramadan as a burden, then such decorations and calendars would be impermissible and would be considered an innovation in religious matters.”

(*Al Hakam*, June 2, 2023, p. 7)



## Body piercing

A woman asked Hazrat Khali-fatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) about the issue of boys and girls getting pierced on different parts of their bodies. Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> gave the following reply to her question:

“Besides rulings about what is lawful or unlawful, Islam also teaches that some things are good [*tayyib*] or not good and some things are vain [*laghw*].

“The custom of girls having their ears and noses pierced in order to wear jewellery has been around since the beginning and there is nothing wrong or unlawful about it. However, it is undesirable and absurd for boys to have even their ears or noses pierced.

“Everything has its limits. When one exceeds those limits, even a lawful practice can sometimes fall into the category of unlawful or *laghw*, which has been forbidden to the believers. (23:4)

“In any case, having the mamillae and other parts of the body pierced, which Islam has commanded to be veiled, is indecent and against the Sharia. Other than that, piercing on the tongue and in and around the lips can lead to many types of diseases and infections. Therefore, in my view, even for women, it is only permissible to have their noses and ears pierced in order to wear jewellery, while also staying within the limits of *pardah*. Exceeding that would be considered *laghw* and unlawful, even for them.”

(*Al Hakam*, October 21, 2022, p. 6)

## Face painting

During the Gulshan-e-Waqf-e-Nau Class for Nasirat, held in Canada on July 11, 2012, a girl mentioned to Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) that once, at a henna stall at a *meena bazaar*, she saw signs indicating that they offered tattoos and face painting. She asked whether that was allowed in Islam. Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> replied:

“Those who do tattoos or face painting are wrong. There should only be henna at the henna stall. If the president of Lajna had arranged it, then that was completely wrong. [Should one] put henna on the face to appear mad or to become a cartoon? Allah has made them humans yet you are making them look like animals? At the henna stall, one can have henna applied only on the hands.”

Then, while pointing to the front and back of his hand up to the wrist, Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said:

“You can have it applied up to here as women usually do for adornment. That is permissible. However, applying henna to the face or tattooing is forbidden in Islam.”

At this point, Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> asked the president of Lajna as to why it had happened. Upon hearing her reply, Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> further said:

“Why was face painting arranged? That should not happen. Were you trying to make them look like monsters like other people do here?”

The Lajna president said that they had done it for *tabligh* [outreach] purposes, to which Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> said:

“If this was done for *tabligh*, then is there only face painting left for *tabligh*? No one has the right to distort faces. Islam has given a very clear injunction on this.

“Do not introduce new customs. If you, the Lajna, introduce such customs and innovations, then what reformation can you do? This is how innovations creep into religion on the pretence of a good deed. When Hazrat Adam<sup>as</sup> was misled by Satan, he did not say, ‘If you follow this, you will gain some pleasure from it.’ First, he said, ‘This is a good deed, so act upon it and you will become pious forever.’ Did Satan not mislead Adam in this manner, promising that he would become righteous forever? However, it was a satanic promise. You people are acting in the same evil manner and introducing these ever-new innovations.

“It is the duty of Lajna and office-bearers that they look towards the countenance of the Khalifa of the Time and see what he is saying. Do not create your own innovations and customs.”

(*Al Hakam*, May 28, 2021, p. 9)

## Tattooing

Someone wrote to Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) that water did not reach the skin of the part of the body that had been tattooed. He then asked for guidance regarding the validity of *wudhu* [ablution] or *ghusl* [bathing] of someone who had a tattoo on their body. Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> provided the following guidance on this issue:

“Firstly, it is not permissible to tattoo someone or to get a tattoo anyway. This prohibition has also been mentioned in *ahadith*, where it states that Allah the Exalted had cursed those women who, for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes, practised tattooing, and those who got themselves tattooed ... who altered Allah’s creation. (*Sahih Bukhari*, Kitab al-Libas)

“When the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> was commissioned as a prophet, on the one hand, the poison of various kinds of polytheism had spread everywhere in the world and especially in the Arabian Peninsula, and on the other hand, different kinds of misguided attitudes had also gripped humanity in their claws. Men and women were involved in various kinds of polytheistic rituals and social evils. They included polytheistic practices such as having the image of a goddess, idol or animal tattooed on the body, face, or arms to seek blessings or it was done for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes to then promote social misconduct and obscenity.

“It is not forbidden for a person to adopt any legitimate methods for their own beauty while remaining within the permissible limits. The attainment of beauty about which the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> warned of God’s curse means something else and the wisdom behind the prohibition of some of those means appears to be that there is a fear that this kind of action may lead to an inclination towards *shirk*, which is the gravest of sins; or if these things are carried out in order to beguile the opposite sex in an impermissible manner, then all those means would also be considered unlawful and actionable.

“As far as getting a tattoo is concerned, whether it is a man or a woman, the only purpose behind it is to show it off or to beguile the opposite sex

in an impermissible manner. That is why people usually get tattoos on body parts that they may then expose and exhibit to the public. However, if a person gets a tattoo on a body part which is commanded to be veiled [*satr*], then first of all, at the time of getting that tattoo, the individual violates the commandment of *purdah* and commits obscenity which is against the teachings of Islam. Moreover, one idea behind getting tattoos on the veiled parts of the body is that they may be exposed in front of the opposite sex while committing evil deeds. All of these methods are prohibited because they contradict Islamic teachings.

“Furthermore, tattoos have also been linked to a host of physical and health issues. For instance, the sweat glands under the skin are badly affected in the areas of the body that have tattoos, that is, having a tattoo reduces the sweating in the concerned parts of the body, which is harmful to one’s health. Similarly, since tattoos become permanent features on the skin, sometimes as the body grows or shrinks, so does the shape of the tattoo, which makes the tattoo look ugly instead of ‘beautiful’. Then such individuals begin to think of them as a plague that they cannot get rid of. Thus, for these reasons alone, it is futile and absurd to get a tattoo.

“Therefore, it is not permissible for a believing man or a believing woman to get a tattoo on their body. However, if a person has had a tattoo on their body before becoming an Ahmadi and now Allah the Exalted has given them the ability to accept Ahmadiyyat by showing them the true path of Islam, then this act would fall under the category of *إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ* i.e., ‘except what has already passed’. (4:23)

“Moreover, such a tattoo from prior to accepting Islam would not affect the validity of one’s *wudhu* or *ghusl*. Just as a woman’s applying nail polish does not affect her *wudhu* and her *wudhu* is valid even though she has applied nail polish, in the same manner, such a person’s *wudhu* and *ghusl* with tattoos would be valid.”

(*Al Hakam*, July 1, 2022, p. 6)

## Hair removal and tattoos

A woman wrote to Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) asking if it was permissible for a Muslim woman to run a business involving the plucking of eyebrows and making tattoos on women's bodies. Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> provided the following guidance on this issue:

“It is not permissible to tattoo someone or to get a tattoo. Its prohibition has also been mentioned in ahadith, where it states that Allah the Exalted had cursed those women who, for cosmetic or aesthetic purposes, practised tattooing, and those who got themselves tattooed, and those who plucked facial hair, and those who artificially created a space between the front teeth, and those who practised artificial lengthening of the hair, and those who got their hair lengthened artificially, who altered Allah's creation. (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Kitab al-Libas)

“There is always some or the other point of wisdom behind every Islamic commandment. Moreover, some Islamic injunctions have a specific context and background to them. If we disregard their background, then they would become distorted. When the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> was commissioned as a prophet, on the one hand, the poison of various kinds of polytheism had spread everywhere in the world and especially in the Arabian Peninsula, and on the other hand, different kinds of misguided attitudes had also gripped humanity in their claws. Men and women were involved in various kinds of polytheistic rituals and social evils.

“The *abadith* that prohibit the above-mentioned actions, especially mention two motivators [behind those actions]; (a) the altering of God's creation, or (b) looking more beautiful.

“When we carefully consider these two aspects, we observe that the first aspect, namely ‘the altering of God's creation’, points to social evils and also reflects polytheistic practices. Hence, wearing long braids, wrapping them around like turbans and then considering those to be a sign of nobility or sacrament; wearing braids or topknots as a vow of devotion to some saint or guru; shaving the top of the head while growing hair around it and considering it a blessing for children; having the image of a goddess, idol or animal tattooed on the body, face

or arms, etc., to seek blessings—these were all polytheistic practices, driven by mythical superstitions.

“The second aspect, that is ‘for the sake of beauty’, in some respects, reflects social misconduct and obscenity. It is not forbidden for a person to adopt any legitimate methods for their own beauty while remaining within the permissible limits. Hence, it is mentioned in a hadith that a person said [to the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>] that he liked and admired a fine dress and shoes and he asked if it constituted arrogance. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> replied that that was not arrogance. Arrogance was to deny the truth and despise others. He went on to say:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَمِيلٌ يُحِبُّ الْجَمَالَ

“Allah is most Beautiful and loves beauty.”

(*Sahih Muslim*, Kitabul Iman)

“Moreover, it is a well-established fact that even in those days when women were to be married, they too would be adorned according to the traditions of that era. (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Kitabul Hibati wa Fadhiha; *Fath al-Bari fi Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, Kitabun Nikah)

“Therefore, the attainment of ‘beauty’ about which the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> warned of God's curse certainly means something else. Hence, when we carefully ponder over the *abadith* in this regard, we see that the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, when prohibiting these things, added that the Children of Israel perished when their women started such acts. At the time of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, lewdness was common among the Jews and at that time, there were several brothels in Madinah. The women who were involved in this business would employ such tactics of embellishment to beguile the men. Hence, Allah's Messenger<sup>sa</sup> expressed his dislike and forbade believing women from using those [means of enhancing beauty].

“Thus, the prohibition of these things appears to stem from the wisdom that if they result in such an artificial change in the physical appearance of an individual that the distinction between man and woman, which God Almighty has created in human beings, vanishes, or there is a fear that this kind of action may lead to inclination towards shirk, which is the gravest of sins; or if these things are carried out



in order to beguile the opposite sex in an impermissible manner, then all these actions would be considered unlawful and actionable ...

“As for the question of women shaping eyebrows for beauty while staying within their Islamic limits, it was within the context of the [above-mentioned] vices that the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> forbade such things to the believing women. However, he also gave permission in exceptional circumstances on grounds of someone’s suffering or illness. Hence, it is narrated by Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas’ud<sup>ra</sup> that:

سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ نَهَى عَنِ النَّامِصَةِ وَالْوَاشِرَةِ وَالْوَأْصِلَةِ  
وَالْوَأْشِمَةِ إِلَّا مِنْ دَاءٍ

“I heard Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbidding the plucking of hair, filing of the teeth, having artificial hair and having tattoos done except on grounds of illness.’

“Islam has made actions dependent on their intentions. Therefore, in this age, there is nothing wrong with a woman making use of these things in a lawful way and for a legitimate purpose as long as she is observing the Islamic injunctions regarding hijab. Nonetheless, if these actions lead to an inclination toward vices or they lead to an expression of any polytheistic rituals or disobedience to a clear command of Islam—for example, if women do not take full care of their purdah and expose their private parts [*satr*] in front of other women while having their waxing or other treatments et cetera done, then such actions would be counted among those against which we have been warned by the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and they would be unlawful.

“Furthermore, it should also be kept in mind in this regard that Allah the Exalted has declared discord and disorder to be greater sins than murder and has commanded their abolition. There have been some instances where marriages were dissolved or divorces were issued after marriages because the husband found out later that the woman had facial hair. If they are not cleaned or plucked out, these few hairs would ruin more houses, and a long series of unpleasanties would begin. In any case, it was not at all the objective of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> to give rise to a situation in society that would lead to the spread of disorder in the homes. The wisdom behind his uttering such harsh words appears to be that since polytheism is the gravest of sins and these practices were employed for the sake of various deities et cetera, or since they used to be tools for promoting indecency, he expressed his disgust about them in the strongest possible terms, and thus uprooted polytheistic customs and indecency.”

(*Al Hakam*, July 15, 2022, p. 6)



## Changing gender norms

During a virtual meeting with Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!), someone asked him:

History shows that the way people presented themselves according to their gender in ancient times has now changed. For example, in ancient Egyptian times, men commonly used makeup, which was considered a symbol of their masculinity and wealth. But now, this is perceived against gender norms. There is a *Hadith* that mentions that in the last days, men will start dressing like women and women like men. What is the opinion of Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> about this? How can the meaning of this *Hadith* be understood in today's era?

Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> responded:

“The first thing is that we cannot generalize what you mentioned earlier, that men in the past used to adorn themselves. Some traditions belong to certain tribes, and they also had their specific festivals where they would dress or adorn themselves in a particular way. Similarly, women also use makeup and dress up according to their customs and traditions. There are ancient tribes like the Aboriginals of Australia, the Maoris of New Zealand, the Native Americans, etc., each with their own customs and traditions. So, to say that men generally used to dress like women and vice versa is incorrect. The sign of a man was to exhibit masculinity. Therefore, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also said that a man should appear as a man, however, there would come a time when the distinction between men and women will blur, when the characteristics of beauty would disappear, when preferences would change, and when would identities shift. In that era, not everyone would be able to recognize their own rights. The result of this today is that immorality is spreading.

“Nowadays, when the trend of changing gender has emerged, when a person indulges in these types of evils, it is because the environment is affecting them in this manner. Girls start saying that they would rather be boys and boys say they would rather be girls. Even if not that, then boys start wearing earrings; they start growing long hair. The Holy

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said that there should be a distinction between male and female. Men should display their masculinity according to its principles. Women, who are the gentler sex, should dress accordingly. When such changes occur, it is a sign of the latter days. At that time, when corruption begins to spread in the entire world, Allah sends His messengers to guide people and reform the world. In this era, Allah Almighty sent the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) with the correct teachings and instructions to guide people on the right path and fulfill the rights of others. The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) said that he came with two objectives: to connect people with Allah and to fulfill the rights that people owe to each other and to display the highest morals.

“So these morals are essentially about establishing a connection with Allah Almighty, obeying His commandments, and adhering to the way Allah has created humans. It is not about following worldly trends or fashion just for the sake of it; that has become a custom. Some people are ill—leave them be—but most people are not ill and they willingly indulge in such superficial behaviors as a fashion, influenced by others. Then they drift away from Allah and faith, becoming completely immersed in the material world. Such individuals, if they do not return to the right path, will be punished by Allah. It's not necessary that they face punishment in this world; it may happen in the next world as well. He would say, ‘Why did you not remain as I created you? Why did you not act upon the message of morality and faith that I sent you? Why did you oppose? Why did you remain submerged in the world?’ How Allah deals with man is His concern, but the point is that in this era, under the guise of freedom and every form of expression, people do whatever they desire, leading to evils. This will eventually lead to the reduction of the human species and the destruction of nations, just as previous nations were destroyed due to their corruption.”

(*Al-Fazl International*, June 7, 2022)

## Keeping dogs and cats at home

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) was asked, “Some people keep dogs and cats, etc., in their homes and lovingly cuddle them. Do the clothes remain pure in this manner? Can prayers be offered while wearing those clothes?” Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> responded:

“If someone wants to keep them just for fun, then there is no purpose in that. However, if one were to keep dogs for a special purpose, then there is no harm in it. Cats usually roam around in homes and are generally found everywhere. However, because they can create dirt and mess, they should have a separate place. People who keep dogs and cats usually train them in such a way that they know if they need to relieve themselves, they should go outside to a designated area for defecation and urination.

“Similarly, dogs should not be kept inside the house; rather, they should be kept outside in a designated area where they can be protected from the cold in winters and stay there. There is no harm in touching them, patting them, or showing them affection with your hands. Even during the time of the Holy Prophet (peace be and blessings of Allah be upon him), people who had large herds of goats also kept dogs, and these dogs would spend the entire day with them, sometimes even touching their clothes and they would also touch the dogs. Then, they would come to the mosque in Madinah, perform ablution, and offer prayers in those same clothes during the Zuhr and Asr prayers. If there is no apparent filth on the clothes, then they do not become impure just by the dogs’ touch. Usually, their skin is clean. However, for those who keep dogs and cats, they should keep them clean. Nowadays, there are excellent systems available. They have even made shampoos for bathing cats and dogs. However, they should not come inside the house because of the dirt. Sometimes, their fur sheds so much that even a Hoover [vacuum cleaner] cannot handle it. Although Hoover’s [vacuum cleaner] advertisements claim that it will collect cat, dog, and pet hair, but it doesn’t actually; some dirt still remains. Sometimes, allergies and illnesses start because of this. Therefore, try to keep them outside. Some people



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even kiss dogs’ mouths, which is incorrect. However, there is no harm in touching them or allowing them to touch you, or if a dog scratches you with its leg and you touch your clothes with it, there is no harm in it. Dogs should be kept for hunting or guarding purposes. If someone wants to keep them just to fulfill their interest, they should avoid it. But cats are kept by everyone. People also keep cats in their homes in Pakistan.”

(*Al-Fazl International*, February 24, 2023)

At another juncture, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) was asked if it was permissible to keep dogs inside homes whilst they were being trained to become guide dogs for the blind.

Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said that it was permissible to keep dogs as guard dogs, for hunting purposes, guide dogs for the blind and for security and safety purposes. Huzoor<sup>aa</sup> said:

“But not in your room, not in your bedroom, not in your drawing room [and] not in your dining room. Make a pen for them outside and keep them there. You can take them along with you when you are going outside for a walk but don’t allow them to enter your house.”

(*Al Hakam*, September 17, 2021, p. 8)

## Male and female cousins shaking hands

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV (may Allah have mercy upon him) was once asked if a woman can say *Assalamu Alaikum* to her husband's brothers or cousins, or her own cousins, by shaking hands. He responded:

“Shaking hands is a practice of the Western society that has become a custom among us. Righteousness demands that one must practice extreme caution in this regard. In our households, elders lovingly embrace children and, at times, affectionately pass their hands over the child's head. This gesture would not imply any negative connotation even in one's wildest imagination. A common tradition is to lower one's head before elders out of respect. I am unaware of the source for this practice, however, I have never witnessed anything negative resulting from it, in the way it is practiced. On the other hand, the scenario which the questioner is mentioning—where cousins are shaking hands with each other at home—may lead to the spreading of vices. This would initiate a culture of inter-mingling. Therefore, in my opinion, this practice should be strictly forbidden and restricted. If you popularize customs, then many vices will arise in the society. May Allah the Exalted safeguard us from this. Ameen!

“Signalling greetings by one's hand or head demonstrates respect for one another. This is enough. Eventually, the beauties of your traditions will spread among them.”

(*Al-Fazl Rabwah*, October 5, 2002, p. 3)

## Shaking hands with the opposite gender

During a Waqifat-e-Nau class in Germany with Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!), a girl asked, “I went to a local institution where a seated man outstretched his hand to greet me. What should be done in this case?” Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> responded:

“This has happened with me once or twice as well. I simply lean towards the individual and they understand. Safeguarding yourself in this situation is solely upon your determination. Nothing can be done if you are afraid of societal norms. If you observe your own method of greeting a few times, and inform others that my religion restricts me from shaking the hands of men, they will eventually come to understand this fact.”

Another girl stated, “A lady from our local *halqa* [chapter] said that when she visited the doctor he greeted her by extending his hand, upon which she shook hands with the doctor. I mentioned to her that shaking hands [with males] is forbidden. That aunty replied, ‘neither of us had any ill intentions, so there was nothing wrong with shaking hands.’”

Upon this, Huzoor-e-Anwar<sup>aa</sup> replied:

“She is wrong. Where is it written that it is permissible to shake hands if one does not possess ill intentions in their heart? I have previously explained as well that Islamic commandments cover every possibility. Eighty or ninety percent of men who shake hands with women do not harbour ill intentions in their hearts, yet Allah the Almighty has still forbidden them to do so. God Forbid, did the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) harbour ill-intentions in his heart towards women? Or, did women possess ill intentions for the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>? There are various narrations in which women extended their hand for initiation (*bai'at*) but the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, ‘I do not take *bai'at* of women by holding their hand.’ Many incidents of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> can be found in the *ahadith*. Keep in mind that *bai'at* is a holy practice and then consider the great status of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>. Despite this, the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> stated that ‘I do not shake hands with women.’ Now, after this which vice remains? These are mere excuses. People feel intimidated when living in this society. Rather than explaining their beliefs and strengthening their faith, they succumb to cultural norms, which is cowardice. Hence, the lady who shook hands was very cowardly.”

(*Al-Fazl International*, March 9, 2017)



UNSPASH

## How to start the New Year

In his Friday sermon of January 30, 2016, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) stated:

“Worldly individuals, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims, spend their days, months, and years in tumult and pandemonium desperately trying to achieve materialistic satisfaction. They indulge in all kinds of acts at the beginning of the year, which begins on the first of January. Specifically, in Western and developed nations, all kinds of clamour and chaos takes place on the night between December 31 and January 1. People stay up until midnight, rather, for the entire night, to revel in partying, drinking, dancing and singing. Practically, they conclude the previous year in vanity and immorality, and commence the new year with similar vanities.

“Most of the world has lost vision in its spiritual eye, which is why their sight cannot reach the depths of a believer’s vision. It behooves a believer to abstain from such vain activities and express his disregard for them. Not only that, he should go one step further to reflect upon the past year and evaluate: What did it give and what it take? What did I gain during the year, and what did I lose? A believer should reflect upon his gains and losses during the year from a worldly perspective; how his material life improved? He should also evaluate his gains and losses from a spiritual and religious perspective ...

“We Ahmadis are fortunate that Allah the Exalted has granted us the opportunity to accept the Promised Messiah and Mahdi<sup>as</sup>. He encapsulated

the essence of the teachings of Allah the Almighty and His Messenger<sup>sa</sup>, thereby allowing us to determine whether we have attained—or even attempted to attain—the objective of our life. You can become true believers by keeping this criterion in mind. These are the conditions by following which you will be able to effectively scrutinize your faith. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> has taken a pledge of allegiance from each and every Ahmadi. The conditions of *bai’at* stated in this pledge are the modus operandi given to us. He has hoped and expected that every Ahmadi will act upon this modus operandi, and reflect upon it on a weekly, monthly, and annual basis.

“Therefore, if we spend the last night of the year and the beginning of the new year with reflection and prayers, then we will truly prepare ourselves for the next life. However, we will incur significant loss, and attain close to nothing, if we initiate the new year with hollow congratulations and temporal conversations. If, upon reflection, we realize that many weaknesses are still lurking, and that our analysis has not resulted in a satisfactory result, then we should pray that the oncoming year may not be like the previous year, in terms of spiritual weakness. Rather, may our every step enable us to attain the pleasure of Allah the Almighty. May each day be a day in which we practice the example of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). May each day and night take us closer to fulfilling our pledge of allegiance with the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him).”

(*Al-Fazl International*, January 20, 2016, p. 6)

## OBEDY ME AND FOLLOW ME

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (peace be upon him) said:

“It has been stated in the Holy Qur’an:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

*He indeed truly prospers who purifies the soul.*

(91:10)

“It is recorded in a Hadith that if the heart is reformed, the entire body is set right and repaired. Indeed, how true it is that the eyes, ears, hands, feet, tongue, etc., in fact, all the limbs, actually follow the ruling of the heart. A thought arises and the concerned limb becomes ready at once to follow its command.

“In short, to cleanse and purify this House of God from idols, a jihad is required. I am to show you the way of this jihad and I assure you that if you act upon this, you will crush these idols. The way I show you is not of my own improvisation; in fact, God has commissioned me to inform you of it. What is the way? Obey me and follow me. This voice is not a new voice. To purge Makkah of its idols, even the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

*Say, 'If you love Allah, follow me: then will Allah love you. (3:32)*

“In the same manner, if you follow me, you shall grow able to break your inner idols and purify your breast of the multitude of idols

that fill it. There is no need for forty-day retreats in order to purify your soul. The companions of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, did not engage in such retreats, or perform the Sufi ‘invocation of the saw’ (*dhikr-e-arra*), or engage in meditative practices of ‘negation and affirmation’ (*nafi-o-asbat*), and so on. Quite the contrary, they had something entirely different at their disposal. They were engrossed in obedience to the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. The divine light that the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> possessed was carried to the hearts of the companions through the arteries of obedience, and would crush all thoughts that were besides Allah. Instead of darkness, their breasts would be filled with divine light. Bear well in mind that even today, the same state of affairs is applicable. Until your heart receives the divine light which is conveyed through the channel of the Divine, your soul cannot be purified. The breast of man is the place where divine light descends and this is why it is referred to as the House of Allah, as it were. The important task is none other than to shatter the idols that sit within it, until nothing but Allah, and Allah alone remains.”

(*Malfuzat* [English], vol. 1, pp. 194–196)





“May Allah enable us to keep ourselves free from all kinds of innovations and burdensome customs. May we act according to the commands of Allah the Almighty, follow the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and—in accordance with the teachings of the Judge and Arbiter of the age [the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>]  
—always give precedence to the Faith over worldly affairs ... May Allah the Almighty grant everyone the ability to do so. Ameen!”

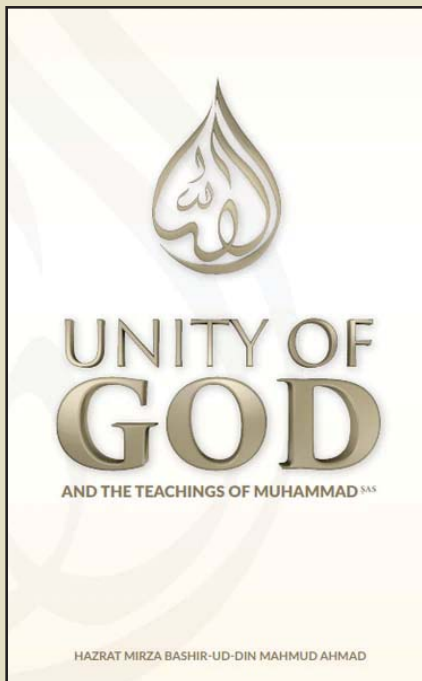
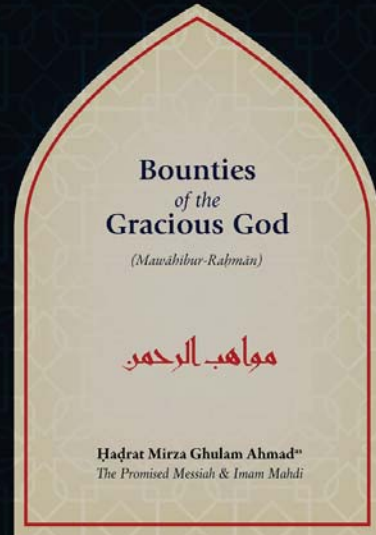
— Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!)

BOUNTIES OF THE GRACIOUS GOD is the English translation of *Mawāhibur-Rahman* authored by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad<sup>as</sup> of Qadian, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi.

In this book, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> pens a detailed rebuttal to the editor of the newspaper *Al-Liwa* regarding the inoculation against the plague and the meaning of relying on Allah.

This book covers the beliefs of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>, the teachings for his Community and signs that God Almighty had vouchsafed to him within the previous three years of its original Arabic publication in 1903.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[alislam.org](http://alislam.org) & [booksonislam.org](http://booksonislam.org)



UNITY OF GOD AND THE TEACHINGS OF MUHAMMAD<sup>sa</sup> is the English translation of a lecture by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Deen Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih II<sup>ra</sup>.

It explores the essential principles of *Tauheed*, also known as the Unity of God, emphasizing its relation to humanity's universality and the significance of upholding the core tenets of the Holy Qur'an.

Huzoor<sup>ra</sup> also highlights the importance of emulating Prophet Muhammad's<sup>sa</sup> exemplary conduct in facilitating peace, regardless of religious affiliations.

Ultimately, the lecture advocates for promoting greater awareness of the Holy Prophet's<sup>sa</sup> teachings, fostering empathy, and understanding to create a more harmonious world.

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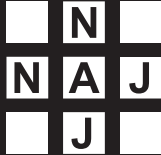
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