

The Creation of Pakistan and role of the Lahore Ahmadiyya – 3

Friday Khutba by Dr Zahid Aziz, for Lahore Ahmadiyya UK, 27 August 2021

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۗ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ
قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا ۗ وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ
لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

“And hold fast by the covenant (or rope) of Allah all together and do not be disunited. And remember Allah’s favour to you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favour you became brethren. And you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes clear to you His messages that you may be guided.” — ch. 3, v. 103

This verse reminded the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad that before their acceptance of Islam they were a divided and disunited people. They were members of the same nation, living in the same land of Arabia, but were enemies of one another and constantly at war. By embracing Islam they became united because they all now had the same purpose in life: to serve Allah and to do good to people. They followed the same Book, the Quran, and had the same leader and model in life, the Holy Prophet Muhammad. That is how their hearts were united in believing in the same things and they became brethren.

The verse opens by telling Muslims to hold unitedly to this covenant or pact which they have made with God. The word translated as “covenant” or “pact” here, *habl*, means “a rope”. It has also been explained as meaning the Quran. You could say that God has lowered this rope down from Himself so that Muslims take hold of it and use it to climb up from their lower, worldly lives towards higher moral and spiritual lives. The instruction here, “do not be disunited”, does not mean that every Muslim must hold the same opinion and that you are not allowed to differ from others. It means that you should not throw others off that rope because of some difference of opinion with

them — the rope which **you and they** are holding on to. You must help and support others in holding on to that rope. As you are united in certain fundamentals, for example in believing in the same book of God, the Quran, you must not let differences on other matters make you into each other's opponents, so that you only fight with one another, oppose and obstruct one another, but never work together on the goals which you share.

The meaning of “do not be disunited” is also explained in this verse itself when it says: “by His favour you became brethren”. How you become disunited is by failing to regard other Muslims as your brethren and by expelling them from the brotherhood of Islam. Some Muslims say that the words “do not be disunited” mean: Do not create sects in Islam. That is true if “sect” means a group which **only** wants to separate itself from other Muslims on the basis of some difference in beliefs or interpretation, and its **only** aim and only work is to run others down, look down upon them, prove them to be in the wrong and claim that only our group is approved by Allah and we will go to heaven while all others are doomed to hell.

However, to form a movement or group to work in a positive sense for some cause or for the benefit of Islam or the Muslims is **not** the same as creating a divisive sect. The work of such a movement brings benefit to all Muslims. Take the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. Its literature and its missions have been a source of great help and advantage for all Muslims, and many of them have acknowledged benefitting from the work of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. Through the Lahore Ahmadiyya literature and missions, they found answers to questions about Islam, and replies to objections against Islam, which had been disturbing them, for which they could not find answers anywhere else, and their belief in Islam was strengthened. When other Muslims benefit from your work, it means you are not a sect which only exists to denigrate others and to prove them wrong.

The Pakistan Movement, the campaign to create Pakistan, which I have been mentioning in the last two *khutbas*, was also working for the benefit of **all** Muslims, even those who were against it. This is why the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement

supported it. Mr M.A. Jinnah had good relations with the Lahore Ahmadiyya leaders, in particular with Maulana Muhammad Ali. They supported and appreciated each other's work. I will read out an incident from the book about the life of Maulana Muhammad Ali. This incident was reported by someone present at that occasion, Maulana Yaqub Khan. He writes:

“The *Quaid-i Azam* Muhammad Ali Jinnah was a visitor to Maulana Muhammad Ali from the days when he was known as plain Mr. Jinnah and was one of the leaders of the Congress party. Once when he came to Lahore Maulana Muhammad Ali gave a tea party in his honour, at which were invited the prominent Muslim figures of Lahore. The Maulana referred, in a brief speech, to the Islamic services of his Anjuman. In those days the Arya Samaj campaign of *shuddi* [to convert Muslims to the Arya Hindu sect] was at its height and the Anjuman had done much work to counteract it. He also explained the beliefs of the Lahore Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* and said that the real purpose of the Ahmadiyya Movement is to serve Islam, while holding itself above sectarianism. This speech had a good effect. Afterwards, when the guests were talking among themselves, Mr. Jinnah took the Maulana to one side and was discussing this topic with him. Mr. Jinnah praised the work of the Anjuman and expressed regret at the opposition of the prejudiced among the Muslims. The conversation was in English and one sentence, reflecting Mr. Jinnah's informality with the Maulana, still resounds in my ears. In connection with the relations of the general Muslim community with the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* Mr. Jinnah said: ‘Look here, Muhammad Ali! You should also be tactful. Don't be aggressive in your preachings’.”

Another meeting was also reported by the same participant, who again was present at the occasion. It is as follows:

“Much later, when the *Quaid-i Azam* Muhammad Ali Jinnah had taken up the leadership of the Muslims of India in their demand for Pakistan, he came to a tea party at the Maulana's invitation at his residence in Muslim Town. The Maulana had also invited members of the Anjuman. The *Quaid-i Azam* made a short speech

in which, while expressing admiration for the Anjuman's services, he mentioned an incident regarding the Anjuman's English weekly organ *The Light*. He said that once, during a conversation, the Viceroy of India had told him that his [Jinnah's] recent statement that democracy was not suitable for India had caused commotion in the country and he did not understand how he could oppose such a wonderful system. The *Quaid-i Azam* said that he told the Viceroy in reply that he would send him a newspaper to read about this. So he sent the Viceroy an issue of *The Light* which contained an article on the topic that parliamentary democracy was not suitable for India [because the majority religious community would be permanently in power]. The next day he returned it with a note saying that he understood his position and what he had stated was justified. After relating this incident the *Quaid-i Azam* said: 'Your Anjuman is doing very fine work. I receive your paper, *The Light*. I am a politician and read this paper for political articles, but along with that I also read religious articles. I keep a file of this paper.'

He also said that he received letters from other countries containing enquiries about Islam: 'Foreigners think that as I am a leader of Muslims they can write to me seeking information about Islam. I pass those letters on to your Anjuman for appropriate answers'."

Some years before this occasion, in 1932 when Mr Jinnah was living in London, he attended the Eid-ul-Fitr prayer at the Woking Mosque on 9 February 1932. There is a report of that function in *The Islamic Review*, April 1932, by Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, who was assistant Imam at the time. The report says that, after the prayers and the *khutba*, three notable personalities rose to say a few words. It says: "Mr M.A. Jinnah, the renowned Indian-Muslim politician, also spoke in appreciation of the Mosque and its work."

In May 1944, three years before the creation of Pakistan, while Mr Jinnah was visiting Kashmir he gave a press conference in the capital Srinagar. It was attended by eight newspaper editors, five of them Muslims and three Hindus. One of the Muslims was a member of our Jamaat, Abdul Aziz Shura, editor *Roshni*. There was a local

Muslim body in Kashmir, known as the Muslim Conference, which had excluded Ahmadis from being its members. Mr Jinnah was asked: “As Ahmadis are considered to be non-Muslims, they are not being allowed to be a part of the Muslim Conference. What is your opinion about this?” Mr Jinnah replied: “What right I have to declare a person non-Muslim, when he claims to be a Muslim”. This incident is reported in an Urdu book *Tahrik Hurriyyat Kashmir* (Movement for the Independence of Kashmir), vol. 2.

The member of our Jamaat who was present, Abdul Aziz Shura, issued a statement in 1988, on oath in Urdu on legal note paper, in which he gave further details of Mr Jinnah’s response. He writes that Mr Jinnah’s reply at first was:

“I have been asked a disturbing question, as to who among the Muslims can be a member of the Muslim Conference. My reply is that, as far as the constitution of the All-India Muslim League is concerned, it stipulates that any Muslim, without distinction of creed or sect, can become a member, provided he accepts the views, policy and programme of the Muslim League, signs the form of membership and pays the subscription. I appeal to the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir not to raise sectarian questions, but instead to unite on one platform under one banner. In this lies the welfare of the Muslims. In this way, not only can Muslims make political and social progress effectively, but so can other communities, and so also can the state of Kashmir as a whole.”

According to Mr Abdul Aziz, one of the Muslim editors tried as hard as he could to persuade Mr Jinnah to declare Ahmadis as being out of the fold of Islam. But Mr Jinnah stuck resolutely to his principle and kept on replying: **“What right I have to declare a person non-Muslim, when he claims to be a Muslim.”**

We pray that may Allah establish Pakistan on this principle again — *Ameen*.

بَارَكَ اللهُ لَنَا وَنَاوَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعْنَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِالآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، إِنَّهُ تَعَالَى جَوَادٌ كَرِيمٌ

مَلِكٌ بَرٌّ رَوْوْفٌ رَحِيمٌ-