



In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

Lajna Ta'leem Lesson Plan Outline

Month: March 2018

Learning Objectives: To learn the important facts from the early history of Ahmadiyyat

Time	Activity and Comments	Resource
20 minutes	<p><u>History of Ahmadiyyat</u></p> <p>Chapter 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Alexander Dowie (1847) was a Catholic and was a bitter enemy of Islam and the Holy Prophet ^{saw}. He founded a Catholic sect and in 1901 he started to build Zion City in Illinois and claimed to be Elijah III. In his publication <i>Leaves of Healing</i> he gave repeated expression to his hostility towards Islam. On one occasion he wrote: 'I think of the falsehood of Muhammad with great contempt. If I were to accept those falsehoods I would have to believe that in this gathering and indeed in any part of God's earth there is no single woman who possesses an immortal soul... and you would die the death of dogs. This would be your end. This is the religion of Muhammad.' [Vol. 7 26th May 1900] On another occasion he said: 'I warn the Christian people of America and Europe that Islam is not dead. Islam has great strength, though Islam and Muhammadanism must be destroyed.' Being provoked by his reviling of Islam and the Holy Prophet saw, and his eagerness to destroy Islam and the Muslims, Ahmad confronted him the following challenge in September 1902: 'we address ourselves to Dowie who deifies Jesus and calls himself his apostle and says that the prophecy mentioned in Deut. 18:15 is fulfilled in his advent and that he is himself Elijah and the apostle of this age. He does not know that his artificial god was never conceived of by Moses, and that Moses repeatedly admonished the children of Israel that they must not deify any creature, whether man or animal, neither in heaven nor on earth. <p>As regards the Muslims, we wish to point out respectfully to Mr Dowie that there is no need for the fulfilment of his purpose to subject millions of Muslims to destruction. There is a very easy way of determining whether Dowie's god is true or our God. That way is that Mr Dowie need not repeatedly announce his prophecy of the destruction of all Muslims, but should keep me alone in his mind and should pray that of the two of us, the one who is false may die before the other. Dowie believes in Jesus as god and I consider him a humble creature and a prophet. The matter in issue is which of us 2 is in the right? Mr Dowie should publish this prayer which should bear the testimony of at least 1000 persons. When the issue of the paper that contained this announcement reaches me I too will pray accordingly and shall append to my prayer the testimony of 1000 persons, if God so wills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This challenge written by the Promised Messiah ^{as} was greatly publicised in the American press. The <i>Argonaut</i> of San Francisco gave an account of the challenge under the caption 'English versus Arabic Prayer Contest'. They concluded the article by saying: 'In brief the Mirza has written to Dowie: You are the leader of a 	<p>Ahmadiyyat, The Renaissance of Islam by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan. Chapter 6 & 7, pages 96-130.</p>



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	<p>community. I too have several followers. The decision as to who is from God can be easily sought. Each of us should pray that whoever is false God should take him away in the lifetime of the other. The one whose prayer is heard shall be considered from the true God.’ The paper commented: ‘This indeed is a most reasonable and just position.’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dowie gave no reply to this challenge but announced in the <i>Leaves of Healing</i> on 14th February 1903: ‘I pray to God that Islam should soon disappear from the world. O God, accept this prayer of mine. O God destroy Islam.’ On 23rd August 1903 Ahmad published another statement addressed to Mr Dowie in the course of which he said: ‘Dowie has not so far replied to my challenge nor has he referred to it in his paper. I, therefore, grant him time for 7 months from today, 23rd August 1903. If during this period he comes forth in opposition to me and makes an announcement in his paper that he accepts fully the plan that I have put forward, the world shall soon see the end of this contest.<p>If Mr Dowie runs away from this contest I would call upon the people of America and Europe as witnesses that this would also be deemed to be his defeat, and in such case it should be concluded that his claim of being Elijah is a mere boast and deceit. He may try to flee from death in this manner, but he should realise that his flight from the proposed contest is also a species of death. Be sure, therefore, that a calamity will most certainly befall his Zion very soon.’</p>• From that moment Dowie entered upon a progressive decline of all his affairs and on 9th March 1907 he died a miserable death thus fulfilling the prophecy of the Promised Messiah ^{as}. In June 1907 the <i>Truth Seeker</i> wrote: ‘The Qadian man predicted that if Dowie accepted the challenge, he would leave the world before his eyes with great sorrow and torment. If Dowie declined, the Mirza said, the end would only be deferred; death awaited him just the same and calamity would soon overtake Zion. That was the grand prophecy: Zion would fall and Dowie would die before Ahmad.’ The <i>Herald of Boston</i> observed: ‘Dowie died a miserable death with Zion city torn and frayed by internal dissensions.’• The Promised Messiah ^{as} missed no opportunity of expounding the truth on the basis of the Holy Qur’an, the Christian scriptures and human reason. While exposing the baselessness of the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus, he always took care to point out that, according to the teaching of the Holy Qur’an, he himself believed in Jesus as a true Prophet of God and revered him as such. The Christian missionaries carried out an offensive, scurrilous and abusive campaign against Islam, the Holy Qur’an and the Holy Prophet ^{saw}. As the Christian mission gained footing in a small village in Amritsar (Jandiala) in 1893 the Muslims rallied together in defence of Islam. The missionary in charge, Rev Dr Henry Martyn Clark wrote a letter to one of the Muslims in which he suggested a public debate should be arranged between accredited representatives of the 2 faiths to determine which of them was true. This letter was taken to Ahmad with the request that he might be pleased to represent the Muslims.	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An agreement was reached by Ahmad and Dr Clark that the debate would be held from 22 May – 3rd June 1893 between Ahmad and Mr Abdullah Athim (a retired civil servant) who would represent the Christian mission. The debate continued for a fortnight in which papers dictated in the meeting by the representative of each side on the subject of discussion set for the day were read out and exchanged. At the close of the debate Ahmad's final paper announced that he had prayed to God that He might give His judgement in this debate. He went on to say that he was given the sign that of the two parties, the one who was deliberately following a falsehood and forsaking the true God would be thrown into hell within 15 months of the debate (1 month for each day of the debate) and that he would suffer open disgrace if he did not turn to the truth; and that the one who was following the truth and believed in the true God would be openly honoured. He then asked Athim: If this sign is fulfilled, would you accept it as a perfect and a divine prophecy according to your liking? Would it not be a strong proof that the Holy Prophet ^{saw}, whom you have called a Dajjal (antichrist) in your book, is a true prophet?• When Athim heard these words he trembled visibly and turned pale. He repeatedly uttered the words: 'I repent, I repent. I did not mean to be disrespectful and I have never called the Prophet Anti-Christ.' After the debate he withdrew altogether from public life, made no public speech, nor said a word against Islam or the Holy Prophet ^{saw}. He moved from place to place and was haunted by death. He survived the 15 month period thus causing a commotion regarding Ahmad's prophecy. The Promised Messiah ^{as} claimed that Athim's declaration on hearing the prophecy and his passive attitude thereafter were proof that he had turned to the truth and had changed his attitude towards Islam.• In an atmosphere of almost universal hostility towards Ahmad, Dr Clark devised a plan to bring about the humiliation and disgrace of Ahmad which further illustrated his utter lack of moral principles. On 1st August 1897 Dr Clark filed a complaint charging Ahmad with conspiracy to murder him. Dr Clark produced a witness who made a statement on oath that Ahmad had instructed him to proceed to Amritsar and assassinate Dr Clark. On the basis of this a warrant was issued for the arrest of Ahmad. The case was passed on to Captain M.W. Douglas who, after thorough examination, was satisfied that the charge against Ahmad was utterly false and baseless. Thus the only course open to him was to discharge Ahmad honourably, which he did, and told Ahmad that he could prosecute Dr Clark for malicious prosecution. Ahmad replied that he had no desire to prosecute Dr Clark before an earthly court. <p>Chapter 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Holy Prophet ^{saw} had mentioned one of the functions of the Promised Messiah ^{as} was that he would revive the faith (Islam). This indicated that at the time of the advent of the Promised Messiah ^{as}, Islam and Muslims would be in a state which could be described as devoid of life. The Holy Prophet ^{saw} said that at that time Muslims would neglect the observance of the 5 daily prayers and the guidance	
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	<p>contained in the Holy Qur'an. The Holy Prophet ^{SAW} also said that the signs of the approach of the last day would be that true knowledge would disappear, ignorance would spread, adultery would be multiplied and addiction to liquor would become wide spread. He mentioned that forms of gambling would be multiplied and respect for and good behaviour towards parents would decline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The problems confronting the Promised Messiah ^{AS} were not only the hostility of the followers of all other faiths towards Islam and their complete indifference towards moral and spiritual values, but also the condition of the House of Islam itself, which was riddled with mutual strife and ignorance of the values inculcated by Islam for the regulation of all aspects of human life. The Holy Prophet ^{SAW} had foretold that the Muslims would fall into decline and become divided.• Confronted and distressed by this pitiable situation of Islam and Muslims, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad addressed himself at an early age, long before the divine call, to the exposition of the verities and the guidance contained in the Holy Qur'an so as to foster a sense of trust, confidence and pride in the Muslims through the appreciation of the tremendous divine bounty which is the Holy Qur'an. He discovered that the Muslims laboured under numerous misconceptions concerning the Qur'an. One of his great services to the cause of Islam was the removal of these misconceptions and the generation in the hearts of the Muslims sentiments of deep love and honour for the Qur'an, and the Holy Prophet ^{SAW} and firm faith and reliance upon Allah. The Promised Messiah ^{AS} that the Holy Qur'an was fundamental and supreme and that the Ahadith were a very valuable source of light and guidance for the understanding of the Holy Qur'an. But any hadith in conflict with the Qur'an should be rejected.• Another error into which the Muslims had fallen was their assumption that the Holy Qur'an made it obligatory upon them to use force for the propagation of Islam. This constituted a grave affront to the Holy Qur'an and its teachings. The Qur'an has laid great stress on freedom of conscience: There shall be no compulsion in religion, for guidance and error have been already distinguished. [2:57] Proclaim: this is the truth from your Lord, then let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve. [18:30] The Arabic expression for striving is Jihad. The Promised Messiah ^{AS} considered it essential, as part of his service to the cause of Islam and humanity to make a detailed and reasoned exposition of the true concept of Jihad as propounded in the Holy Qur'an and as illustrated by the Holy Prophet ^{SAW} in his practice.	
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