

Learning Objectives:

- To learn the key points from History of Ahmadiyyat

ACTIVITY

HISTORY OF AHMADIYYAT

Time: 30 min

RESOURCE: Silsila Ahmadiyya by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad Sahib M.A^{ra} Pages 299-318

Below section has been translated in English by the National Lajna Ta'lim Department for the purpose of lesson plan.

The system of Khilafat and the khilafat of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}

The system of Khilafat:

The Quranic teaching and the history of Prophethood clearly depict that it is the Sunnat of Allah the Almighty that after the death of a Prophet He appoints righteous men from among his Jamaat as his Successors one after the other in order to complete the work of the Prophet. These Successors are known as Khalifa in Islamic terminology, as the meaning of the word Khalifa is the one who follows and also the one who is appointed.

The Promised Messiah^{as} writes, "I came from God as a Manifestation of Divine Providence and I am a personification of His Power. And after I am gone there will be some other persons who will be the manifestation of second Power of God." [taken from the English translation of the book The Will]. According to the Islamic teachings, a Khalifa is elected by righteous Muslims but God foresees the entire process Himself and by his special powers moulds peoples' heart towards the person whom He pleases and finds fit for the role.

This system differs from the democratic system largely because in a democratic government a President is elected for a term or two whereas a Khilafa is elected for a lifetime. Secondly a President is obligated to accept a lot of people's advice in a democratic system whereas a Khalifa is ordered only to seek advice but is not obligated to accept it, in fact he can overrule it. On the other hand, this system is also different from a dictatorship, as usually a dictator has complete authority over all matters so much so that he might even change an old Law and replace it completely with a new one whereas a Khalifa's authority is confined within the boundaries of Islamic law and the prophet's instructions. But the real difference between Khilafat and all worldly systems is Khilafat's religious station. A Khalifa is not just an officer, he has a spiritual standing as a Successor of the Prophet. He is supervisor over Jamaat's religious education and spiritual training and he is an example and a role model for people.

The election for the first Khalifa:

The election took place in accordance with Islamic principles on the 27th May 1908. All Ahmadis from Qadian and abroad, who had gathered for the Promised Messiah's^{as} funeral, elected Hazrat Maulvi Nooruddin^{ra} as the first Khalifa and swore allegiance at his hand. Each and every one of them took the pledge, including all the members of Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya and all the family members of the Promised Messiah^{as} and all the Ahmadis present and not even a single member objected to the Khilafat of Hazrat Maulvi Nooruddin^{ra}. And in this way the first consensus of Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya and the Jamaat took place confirming the standing of Khilafat.

Hazrat Hakeem Nooruddin^{ra} was among the first people to accept the Promised Messiah^{as} and take the pledge and the Promised Messiah^{as} regarded him as his closest friend and thus was highly respected in the Jamaat. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} not only had complete religious knowledge but was extremely well read in medicine and modern sciences. Before moving to Qadian he had worked as the royal Physician in the court of Maharaja Jammu and Kashmir. After the bait ceremony Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} delivered a moving speech, in which he urged the Jamaat members to remain united in this difficult time and work together to accomplish the work started by the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Jamaat reunited under one flag:

As people received the news of the death of the Promised Messiah^{as} and the bait, they accepted him as the first Khalifatul Masih^{ra} without any hesitation, thus in a very short time, uniting the whole Jamaat once again.

The seed of divergence:

Within the first year after the Promised Messiah's^{as} passing away some people started arguing that the Promised Messiah^{as} did not wish for a Khalifa after him but rather the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya to oversee the system of Jamaat Ahmadiyya.

The intentions of the people arguing were not noble due to the following reasons:

1. The people arguing were also members of Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya themselves, including Maulvi Muhammad Ali M.A. and Khawajah Kamaluddin B.A., L.L.B. both of whom played leading role. Obviously they would have gained power by the Sadr Anjuman becoming powerful.
2. After the Promised Messiah^{as} passed away, the Sadr Anjuman had already decided in favour of Khilafat, by acknowledging they need a Khalifa, obedience to whom would be necessary by all.
3. The allegation was false that the Promised Messiah^{as} did not want a Khalifa after him in Al-Wasiyyat. But in fact, he spoke in detail about the need for Khilafat, even giving examples of Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra} and went on to say that there will be not just one Khalifa, but a long line of Khulafa that would continue after him.
4. The people arguing did not speak to the first Khalifa about the matter, in fact they continued their propaganda in secrecy which does not indicate pure intentions.

When Hazrat Khalifatul Masih^{ra} learned about this propaganda, he called all the members to gather in Masjid Mubarak, Qadian on the 13th January 1909 and delivered a speech in which he explained in detail the important station of Khilafat in accordance with Islamic teaching and the writings of the Promised Messiah^{as} and the role of Anjuman was merely to look after administrative work.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih^s^{ra} speech was so moving that the audience started crying and even the instigators apologised and rejoined him. But it was soon evident that the Anjuman supporters had continued their propaganda and now had two objectives. Firstly, they continued to say that the Anjuman held the actual significance in the Jamaat and not the Khalifa. Secondly, they started to accuse and defame Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra}. So that if the Jamaat people did not agree to refuse Khilafat, they still would not accept Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin^{ra} as Khalifa. Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra} swore that he had no intention or desire to be the next Khalifa. In fact, he said that it was against Islamic teachings to even discuss any matter with regards to the next Khalifa, when the first Khalifa is alive.

During this period, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra} delivered several speeches in defence of Khilafat at numerous occasions, which were extremely beneficial, as the majority of Jamaat understood the importance, blessings and station of Khilafat and a very small minority remained in opposition.

The English translation of the Holy Qur'an:

During the Khilafat of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}, Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya asked Maulvi Muhammad Ali M.A. to translate the Holy Qur'an in English and also write brief English commentary. Hence after years of hard work he completed the English translation and also asked Hazrat Khalifatul Masih^{ra} for help writing the commentary, as Hazrat Khalifatul Masih^{ra} was a very learned Islamic scholar and commentator himself. But before the completion of this work Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra} passed away and Maulvi Muhammad Ali M.A. moved to Lahore along with his other supporters and took the English translation with him and after completing it, published it in Lahore. Hence we cannot tell what changes were made to the translation and commentary by the time it was completed.

The construction of several public buildings in Qadian:

During the time of Hazrat Khalifatul Messiah I^{ra}, several public buildings were constructed in Qadian. For example, the extension of Jamai Masjid Aqsa, the construction of Taleem-ul Islam High School and its Boarding which costed nearly Rs. 125,000. Masjid Noor was constructed within the school boundary and there was a medical dispensary close by, which was named Noor Hospital.

Substantial growth in Jamaat Press:

During the time of Hazrat Khalifatul Messiah I^{ra}, there was substantial growth in Jamaat press through the publication of four new newspapers. The first was the Noor newspaper in 1909, which was published in Qadian by a new convert Sheikh Muhammad Yusuf for the purpose of Tabligh to the Sikh community. After this the Al-Haq newspaper was published in Delhi in 1910 by Meer Wasim Ali. Then the Al-Fazl newspaper

began publishing on the 19th June 1913 in Qadian. This newspaper was published by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra} for the purpose of Tabligh, training and education. The fourth newspaper was Pegham-e-Sulah was published from Lahore in 1913.

Jamaat Ahmadiyya's first overseas mission :

During the time of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra}, the Jamaat's first overseas mission was established. In 1912, Khwajah Kamaluddin B.A. L.L.B. was sent to England by a prominent Muslim to fight his case. Later, he stayed there for Tabligh purposes and requested a helper. On the suggestion of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra}, Chaudhry Fateh Muhammad Sayal was sent to England by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra} in accordance with Ansarullah's overseas Tabligh scheme. Hence Chaudhry Fateh Muhammad was the first missionary sent by the Jamaat solely for the purpose of Tabligh abroad. Chaudhry Fateh Muhammad worked for sometime in Woking with Khawajah Kamaluddin, but after Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra} passed away he left Khawajah Kamaluddin on the instructions of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II^{ra} and moved from Woking to London where he established the Jamaat's mission.

The demise of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra}:

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra} fell from a horse and was injured on the 18th November 1910. He had a scare on the left side of his forehead due to surgery. After the accident his health was never fully recovered. After the Jalsa Salana in 1913 his health deteriorated. During his illness Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra} asked Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood^{ra} to lead prayers and deliver the Friday Sermon. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra} wrote his will on the 4th March 1914 in which he wrote that after he passed away the Jamaat should choose a pious, learned and loving person to be his successor and take the pledge at his hand. Then Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra} asked Maulvi Muhammad Ali M.A. to read out this will in a gathering where Maulvi Muhammad Ali and his friends were also present and after conveying his message to all Jamaat members he gave it to Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan for safekeeping. At quarter-past two in the afternoon, on Friday the 13th March 1914, when he was almost 78 years old, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra} passed away.

The high stature of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I^{ra}:

It was indeed a great blessing for the Jamaat that after the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as}, it received the leadership of such a learned, pious and righteous person when no one else was yet eligible for the role. His most outstanding quality was his love for the Holy Qur'an. He started giving Dars-ul-Qur'an when he first came to Qadian and continued even during his Khilafat. He was of an extremely humble and modest nature. He had a highly captivating way of presenting an argument which would leave the opponent dumbfounded. He was fully devoted and completely obedient to the Promised Messiah^{as}, who also loved him dearly.