

Introductory Note

by Maulana Muhammad Ali

Al-Wasiyyat, as will be obvious from reading it, is the Will of the Promised Messiah. In December 1905, when he received intimation from Allah the Most High of his impending death, he immediately wrote this booklet, *Al-Wasiyyat*, in which he expressed his Will as to the arrangements for running the Movement after him, and published it at the same time. In fact, as regards the system for the control of the finances of the Movement which he wished to put in place, he did not postpone its implementation till after his death, in case some disagreement arose at the time destroying his original aim. He himself created the Anjuman which was to have charge of the administration of the Movement, and published its rules and regulations under his own signature. In the Supplement to *Al-Wasiyyat*, published only fifteen days later on 6th January 1906, he declared this Anjuman in clear words to be his “successor”, and plainly gave all the powers for the administration of the Movement after him to this Anjuman. He did, however, make separate arrangements for the taking of the *bai‘at* (pledge) to admit new entrants into the Movement, and thus created a system which was complete in every way. Moreover, he put into practical effect, while he was still alive, all that part of this system which could be implemented during his life to prevent any dissension after his death.

The selfish motives of human beings, however, did not let even such a comprehensive system stay in place, and the Will of the Promised Messiah was thrown into neglect.

It was, therefore, felt that *Al-Wasiyyat* should be published again for the attention of our friends, and at those places where clarification is required, or those regarding which there is a difference of interpretation, brief notes should be provided to explain the meaning. Friends! bear in mind that the words of this Will were written by the man whom you believe to have been appointed by God. Moreover, as regards those words upon which there is today a difference of interpretation, he explained their significance practically by acting upon them. It is, therefore, the duty of each and every one of you, for himself and in his own place, to read the Will of the Promised Messiah with great care and to consider with cool minds whether or not the present system* corresponds to the description “so whoever changes it [the command] after having heard it”. The Will is in Urdu, and every Ahmadi, even if illiterate, can easily understand its meaning. Each and every one of you is personally responsible and answerable before God. When you have the writing of the Promised Messiah, take hold of it first of all.

There arose a disagreement even during the life of the Promised Messiah in connection with the part of the Will which he had put into operation. The question was raised whether the Anjuman created by him had the ultimate authority, and whether its decisions were binding or not? If such a disagreement had taken place after the death of the Promised Messiah, it was possible that there would always remain room to differ over this question. But it is a matter of great thankfulness to God that this disagreement itself occurred during the life of the Promised Messiah, and he gave his judgment by his own hand in his own writing. That judgment was that the decisions of the Anjuman are final and binding. However, an exception was made but only for the duration of the life of the Founder of the Movement, to the effect that in religious matters the Anjuman must inform him before making a decision because of the possibility that he

* *Translator's Note:* The reference is to the so-called *khilafat* established by Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad after the death of Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din in 1914.

might receive Divine revelation to guide him in that matter. But he did not wish to leave this privilege, which he retained as the Founder of the Movement, for any individual after his death. He wrote absolutely plainly:

“After me, the decision of this Anjuman in every matter shall be sufficient.”

Had he assigned this power to any individual, it would have contravened his own words which he had written in the Supplement of *Al-Wasiyyat*:

“The Anjuman is the successor of the *Khalifa* appointed by God.”

The powers that he had reserved exclusively for himself during his life, those too he gave to none other than the Anjuman after his death. He thus proved that in fact no one other than this Anjuman was his successor. The Anjuman is the successor in the real sense because, by his note of 27 October 1907, he gave to the Anjuman, and to none else, all the powers which he himself possessed. In this way, the note of 27 October 1907 is, in actual fact, an unequivocal and conclusive explanation of his Will which does not leave room for anyone to put forward some other interpretation of the words of the Will. This is why we have undertaken the expense of printing a photographic image of this decisive note along with this edition of *Al-Wasiyyat*, so that Ahmadis may see the original writing with their own eyes and dare not deny its existence.*

The section of the *Jama'at* which has taken the *bai'at* of Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad has discarded, in fact altered, the following provisions of *Al-Wasiyyat*:

Firstly, according to *Al-Wasiyyat*, it is certainly not obligatory upon Ahmadis to repeat entering into the *bai'at* of various persons. There is not one word in the entire Will which makes it compulsory and obligatory for Ahmadis to enter into

* *Translator's Note*: See page 51 for the image and translation of this note.

the *bai'at* of another individual after having entered into the *bai'at* of the Promised Messiah. The mention in *Al-Wasiyyat* of new entrants to the Movement taking the *bai'at* refers to the *bai'at* with the Promised Messiah, though it is taken at the hand of another. However, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad declares those Ahmadis as sinners (*fasiq*) who do not enter into his own *bai'at*, and considers it obligatory for all Ahmadis to take the *bai'at* at his hand. It is as if belief in the Promised Messiah has no value unless one believes in Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, whereas belief in a man who is not commissioned by God is a meaningless concept.

Secondly, according to *Al-Wasiyyat*, if forty members agree upon an individual, he is entitled to receive the *bai'at* in the name of the Promised Messiah. But Mirza Mahmud Ahmad does not accept its validity.

Thirdly, according to *Al-Wasiyyat*, the Anjuman is the successor to the *Khalifa* appointed by God, the Promised Messiah. So the powers exercised by the Promised Messiah over the Anjuman must, after his death, pass to the Anjuman, as is made clear by the note of 27 October 1907, and not to some individual. But Mirza Mahmud Ahmad has blatantly contravened this instruction of the Founder of the Movement by taking these powers for himself and by substituting his own name for the name of the Promised Messiah in the regulations of the Anjuman.*

Fourthly, according to *Al-Wasiyyat*, the funds of the Movement shall be spent as the Anjuman determines. But Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, by giving himself authority over the Anjuman, has reduced to naught the decisions of the Anjuman as well as this instruction of *Al-Wasiyyat*.

* *Translator's Note:* See page 55 for the full quotation of the resolution by which Mirza Mahmud Ahmad replaced the name of the Promised Messiah by his own name.

Maulana Nur-ud-Din's practice

To all these objections, the answer is given that all these things were agreed when the *bai'at* of Hazrat Maulvi Nur-ud-Din was entered into. This is entirely wrong. When did Hazrat Maulvi Nur-ud-Din announce, after people had entered into his *bai'at*, that anyone who does not do so is a sinner? It is true that he certainly did call those as sinners who, having entered into the *bai'at*, are then disobedient, and this is right because *fasiq* means one who breaks his pledge. Nor did he ever take those powers for himself which Mirza Mahmud Ahmad has done. He never had the regulations of the Anjuman amended to insert his name in place of the name of the Promised Messiah, despite the fact that during his time Mirza Mahmud Ahmad and his supporters kept on trying to have them amended. He never interfered in the affairs of the Anjuman, nor did he ever demand that, just as the Promised Messiah had to be kept informed in matters involving religion, he also must be similarly informed. Despite the fact that there existed no difference in the *Jama'at* as regards his leadership, still he never assumed the powers which contravene *Al-Wasiyyat*. All that he said about himself is as follows:

“In the writing of Hazrat sahib [i.e. the Promised Messiah's *Al-Wasiyyat*] there is a point of deep knowledge which I will explain to you fully. He left it up to God as to who was going to be the *khalifa*. On the other hand, he said to fourteen men: You are collectively the *Khalifat-ul-Masih*, your decisions are final and binding, and the government authorities too consider them as absolute. Then all those fourteen men became united in taking the *bai'at* at the hand of one man, accepting him as their *khalifa*, and thus you were united. And then not only fourteen, but the whole community agreed upon my *khilafat*.

“... I have read *Al-Wasiyyat* very thoroughly. It is indeed true that he has made fourteen men the *Khalifat-ul-*

Masih, and written that their decision arrived at by majority opinion is final and binding. Now observe that these God-fearing men, whom Hazrat sahib chose for his *khilafat*, have by their righteous opinion, by their unanimous opinion, appointed one man as their *Khalifa* and *Amir*. And then not only themselves, but they made thousands upon thousands of people to embark in the same boat in which they had themselves embarked.”*

So Hazrat Maulvi Nur-ud-Din accepted the Anjuman as the successor of the Promised Messiah and as the *Khalifa* of the Messiah, and also recognised that the decisions of the Anjuman were final and binding. This was why, in spite of being strongly urged to do so, he never considered it allowable that the regulations of the Anjuman should be amended to give to him the powers possessed by the Promised Messiah, or for the name ‘Promised Messiah’ to be replaced in the regulations by the name ‘*Khalifa* of the Messiah’. What greater proof than this can there be of the fact that he recognised the Anjuman as the successor of the Promised Messiah?

The fact that the whole of the *Jama‘at* united upon his hand is a separate matter which has no connection with the directions of *Al-Wasiyyat*. As is plainly obvious from his words quoted above, this was left up to God. But now that a difference has arisen in the Movement, the true successor must be the one designated in the Will of the Promised Messiah, namely, the Anjuman. Hazrat Maulvi Nur-ud-Din made his case amply clear as follows: he was called *Khalifat-ul-Masih* by the agreement of the Community and *not* according to the provisions of the Will. He himself recognised the Anjuman as the *Khalifat-ul-Masih* according to the Will. When, upon his death, the agreement of the Community no longer remains, then the *Khilafat* held by him in his special case comes to an end. But there remains in existence the *Khilafat* created in the Will.

* Newspaper *Badr*, Qadian, 21 October 1909, p. 11, col. 1.

Again, it is repeatedly argued that it is that Anjuman, the true successor of the Promised Messiah, which by majority of opinion has made itself subject to one man as its authoritarian head,* and this decision of the Anjuman must be accepted as binding. ***This is not right*** because the decisions of the Anjuman can only be considered as final and binding as long as they do not contravene the directions of the Promised Messiah or *Al-Wasiyyat*. Now the Promised Messiah writes in his note of 27 October 1907 that, after his death, no one individual shall have power over the Anjuman, but the Anjuman makes a decision *against this* by majority of opinion, allowing a man power over itself. These two judgments are contradictory, and the one to be accepted is the judgment of the Promised Messiah, who is the Founder of the Movement.

Besides this, by this decision of the Anjuman, that Anjuman in reality ceases to exist which was created by the Promised Messiah because its founding principle was that, after his death, no individual shall have the power to interfere in its decisions. However, now Mirza Mahmud Ahmad has the power to interfere in the decisions of the Anjuman. Consequently, though the name of the Anjuman remains the same, in reality that Anjuman no longer exists.

This is why in Lahore the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam has been established on exactly the principles laid down by the Promised Messiah for his successor Anjuman. Therefore now only the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam can be considered as the successor of the Promised Messiah as mentioned in *Al-Wasiyyat*. As to the change in location, the seats of headquarters have shifted previously as well. So there is nothing wrong if the seat of the Anjuman has had to be moved of necessity. Moreover, it is possible that this may only be a temporary move. This is just as there was a prophecy in respect of Jerusalem that it would always remain in the hands of the Muslims, but for almost a hundred years it went out of their

* *Translator's Note:* The reference is to Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, and to the Resolution giving him supreme power as quoted on page 55.

hands and came under Christian occupation; however, the Muslims re-took it later. Similarly, it is possible that Allah the Most High may create such circumstances that the centre of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at Islam may revert again to Qadian, and the present state of affairs may be a temporary trial.*

We now present to all Ahmadi friends the Will of the Promised Messiah, along with this Preface, some Notes, and a photo-reproduction of the Promised Messiah’s note of 27 October 1907. It is requested that they read these writings dispassionately and carefully. Leaving aside partisan thinking, and bearing in mind only the good of the Movement, they should decide whether Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, by rendering the Anjuman powerless, has not violated *Al-Wasiyyat* in the respects mentioned above.

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* *Translator’s Note:* The Qadianis themselves were forced to shift their centre from Qadian when the partition of India took place in 1947 and their leader Mirza Mahmud Ahmad fled to Pakistan. A new headquarters was then established in Pakistan at Rabwah. But up to that time they had been claiming that, as the Promised Messiah had described Qadian as the permanent centre of the Movement, therefore it was a sign of their truth that they were based in Qadian while Maulana Muhammad Ali and his associates had moved to Lahore! In 1984 the seat of the Qadiani *Khilafat* shifted again, to England, when the leader Mirza Tahir Ahmad, son of Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, fled from Pakistan.