

# THE GREAT REFORMER



# THE GREAT REFORMER

Biography of  
*Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian

*Mujaddid* (Reformer) of the Fourteenth Century *Hijri*,  
Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*

Volume 1

Based on  
Dr. Basharat Ahmad's  
*Mujaddid Azam*

Rendered in English by Hamid Rahman

It was the time for the Messiah to come, and of none else  
If I had not come (as the Messiah), it would have been someone else

– *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad



*Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, Mujaddid (Reformer) of Fourteenth Century Hijri, The Promised Messiah and Mahdi (The Rightly Guided)*

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The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, Lahore (Ahmadiyya Association for the Propagation of Islam) was founded at Lahore, Pakistan, in 1914 by the prominent followers of *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. It exists to promote a liberal, tolerant and peaceful picture of Islam, as found in the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It has published a vast quantity of highly acclaimed literature on Islam in various languages, and has branches and members in several countries.

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This translation is dedicated to  
the memory of my mother,  
Begum Hamida Rahman *bint* Basharat Ahmad.

Hamid Rahman

## PUBLISHER’S FOREWORD

It is with a sense of profound gratitude to Almighty Allah that the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, (Lahore) USA is publishing the English translation of the first volume of Dr. Basharat Ahmad’s three volume Urdu biography of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. This monumental work has been translated by Dr. Hamid Rahman, Professor of Finance at Alliant University and grandson of Dr. Basharat Ahmad. Dr. Rahman has performed this work ever so diligently and has produced a final product worthy of bearing the title of the original. May Almighty Allah, the most Merciful and most Gracious, bless Dr. Rahman and his family for their sacrifices in this cause.

This book will, *insha Allah*, go a long way in removing the many misconceptions Muslims harbor about Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. It should provide a source from which persons will be able to judge the claims, work and teachings of this great figure in a fair and objective light. Today, we see the general Muslim populations adopting positions on jihad, apostasy, freedom of religion, etc. exactly in accordance with what Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad advocated. This work before you provides detailed insight into the extraordinary personality that started this reformation of thought over a century ago.

We end with the heartfelt supplication:

“O Allah, help those who help the religion of Muhammad and make us of them...”

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

*Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is perhaps one of the most controversial religious personalities of recent times. To his followers, he is the *Mujaddid* (Spiritual Reformer) of the fourteenth century *hijri*, the Promised Messiah and the *Mahdi* (The Rightly Guided One), whose advent had been predicted by the Holy Prophet Muhammad. To his detractors, he is an imposter who fraudulently claimed to be a prophet, and the recipient of revelations. His followers are convinced that he removed the dross from the preaching and practice of Islam that had accumulated through the centuries, and restored the religion of Allah to its pristine purity. His detractors are equally adamant that he introduced dangerous innovations in Islam - innovations so unorthodox that he and his followers deserve to be excommunicated from Islam. A million or more Muslims who revere him as a spiritual guide are to be found in every corner of the world, actively proselytizing and winning new adherents to their Islamic faith. But millions of other Muslims abhor him, and fill the airwaves and electronic space with their messages of hate. Frequently this hateful propaganda results in acts of violence against the properties and persons of *Hazrat* Mirza's disciples. Almost a hundred years after his death, the controversy about his personality and the Movement he started has not died down, and it evokes the same kind of passion, perhaps even more, as it did during his lifetime. It is obvious, that *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is not the kind of person who will be confined to and forgotten in the pages of history.

Although his severest critics have been the Muslims themselves, his mission was not to disunite the Muslims by chalking out a turf for himself, but to rally and unite the Muslims against the onslaught of Christianity, which threatened the very existence of Islam in the nine-

teenth-century world - a world in which 'Britannia ruled the waves' and the 'sun never set on the British Empire.' Over six hundred years of Muslim rule in India from Delhi came to an end when the British successfully quelled the Mutiny of 1857. Under the protection and active encouragement of the British government, thousands of missionaries landed in India and other colonies with the express purpose of turning the natives into believers in salvation through Christ. However, since the Trinity of Christianity did not have much appeal against the strict monotheism of Islam, the Christian missionaries adopted a two-pronged strategy. The first prong of this strategy was the character assassination of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and the second prong was the exploitation of a widely held belief among the Muslims regarding the second coming of Jesus and the eventual success of Islam under his leadership. Most Muslims believed that the Israelite Jesus did not die on the Cross, but was bodily elevated into heaven. From there, he would descend in a later time and in the company of the then ruling Caliph, termed the *Mahdi* (the Rightly Guided One), would wage a bloody war, kill the infidels and ensure a lasting victory for Islam. The Muslims were strengthened in this belief by some references in the Books of *Hadith* about the second coming of the Messiah. The Christian missionaries were quick to jump on this belief and argue, "If the final success of Islam has to be at the hands of Jesus, why wait for that time, and why not believe in him now?" This argument proved effective against many simple minded Muslims, who were won over to Christianity. The Muslim clerics, who for the most part had abandoned reasonableness, rationality, and application of their mind to matters of religion, were unable to face the onslaught of the Christian missionaries.

For the Muslims of India, this was a double tragedy. The loss of temporal power was followed in short order by relentless attacks on their faith, and they felt powerless to defend themselves. Encouraged by the general malaise that gripped the Muslim nation, the Hindus too picked up the courage to launch their own attacks under various movements such as the *Arya Samaj*, *Brahmu Samaj*, *Deo Samaj* etc. Muslim intellectuals bemoaned the helplessness of the Muslim nation and cried out for a savior. The situation of the Muslim world outside of India was no different. The following verses by the poet Hali, who lived in that era, are representative of the state of the Muslims at the time:<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Mussadas Hali*. English translation by Dr. A.K. Pasha Saeed

If you want to see how the nations fall,  
See the falling of a tree that stood tall.

Witness Islam in its declining days,  
It is unable to see the distant rays.

It is convinced there will be no rise,  
After the sun has set from the skies.

It was at this critical juncture, when the Muslim existence in India and elsewhere had hit a nadir, that Allah raised Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to defend His faith, not with the sword but with the pen, and to carry the battle into Christian territory. His powerful writings rallied the Muslims, restored their faith, and put the Christian missionaries on the defensive. Muslim clerics on the whole applauded and appreciated his efforts. In 1885, he announced that he was the *Mujaddid* of the fourteenth century *hijri*, and this did not cause any stir among the Muslim community. In accordance with a well-known tradition of the Holy Prophet, *Mujaddids* had been coming in previous centuries to revive the Muslim faith, and most agreed that the time was ripe for another *Mujaddid*.

In 1890 *Hazrat* Mirza claimed that Allah had directed his attention to verses of the Holy Quran that proved beyond doubt that the Israelite Jesus was dead. He claimed also that the reference in the Books of *Hadith* to the second coming of the Messiah was an allegorical reference to a person who would have a spiritual likeness to Jesus, and that he, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was that Promised Messiah. The Muslim nation, which was waiting for the descent of the Israelite Jesus, was generally unwilling to accept such a claim, and launched a campaign to excommunicate *Hazrat* Mirza on the grounds that he had claimed prophethood. Throughout his life, *Hazrat* Mirza expressed his belief that prophethood had ended with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and no prophet could come after him. He argued forcefully that the concept of the finality of prophethood, so dear to him and the Muslims generally, obviated not only the ordination of new prophets but also revisits by prophets who had sojourned on the earth before the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

*Hazrat* Mirza died in 1908 and was succeeded by his trusted friend and companion, *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din who led the Movement his mentor had started. It was during the time of *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din's leadership that Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud, who was the eldest surviving son of *Hazrat* Mirza from his second wife and who was a mere lad of nineteen

when his father died, began to shape his creed that his father was a real prophet whose denial would put a Muslim outside the pale of Islam. This heretical creed was strongly opposed by the old faithful companions of *Hazrat Mirza*, who had spent a lifetime under his spiritual tutelage and knew well the beliefs of their mentor. When *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* died in 1914, and *Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud* succeeded him as the head of the Movement, a significant section of *Hazrat Mirza's* disciples who had not wanted to have anything to do with *Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud's* heretical beliefs, broke away from the organization in Qadian, moved to Lahore and set up the *Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, Lahore* (Ahmadiyya Organization for the Propagation of Islam) to carry on the work of their mentor. Since then, the two schisms of the Ahmadiyya Movement have been known as the Qadiani section and the Lahore section.

In a sense, the falsification of the Promised Messiah's creed by the Qadiani section has a strong parallel with the falsification of the Israelite Messiah's creed. Just like the Pauline creed bestowed Divinity on Jesus, a claim he had never made, and only a small section, the Unitarians, adhered to the original teachings of their master, the *Mirza Mahmud* creed bestowed prophethood on *Hazrat Mirza*, a claim he had never made, and a small section, the disciples at Lahore, adhered to the original teachings of their mentor. Not surprisingly, the general Muslim populace pounced on the heretical beliefs of the Qadiani Section, and started citing them as the beliefs of *Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad*. Thus, in a strange irony of fate, the son substantiated the charges that had been leveled against his father and that his father had strongly refuted throughout his life. The beliefs of the Qadiani section strongly tarnished the image of the pious saint of Qadian, *Hazrat Mirza*.

In 1936, Dr. Basharat Ahmad, a close companion of *Hazrat Mirza*, took upon himself to present the correct picture of the life, works and claims of his mentor to remove the dirt that had been heaped upon the pious life of this saint by foes and misguided friends. He embarked on this project at an advanced age while suffering from cancer. In a colossal undertaking spread over three volumes containing over 1700 pages, he wrote a detailed biography of his mentor in Urdu. He named the book, *Mujaddid Azam* (Great Reformer). It appears that God kept him alive to finish the book. Hardly had the ink dried on the completed manuscript of Volume 3 when the call came from on High, and he left this earthly abode for his heavenly home. Volume 3 was published after his death.

During the last hundred years, the Ahmadiyya Movement has become a truly international movement with adherents all over the world. In addi-

tion, the still ongoing controversy about the claims and life of *Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad* has evoked a strong interest in his life and works by impartial observers. Clearly, a great need existed for a detailed biography of this pious saint of Qadian in the English language. In 1991, I started work on translating the first volume of *Mujaddid Azam* and finally completed it in 2004. My brother-in-law, Akram Ahmad, has translated the second volume, and his wife, Zainab Ahmad and her sister, Sairah Ahmad, collaborated in translating the third volume. God willing, the entire English translation of *Mujaddid Azam* will become available to the interested reader soon.

The work of a translator is difficult. It requires delicate judgment to capture the essence of the text without straying too far from the literal meaning. In addition, the style of writing in Urdu differs greatly from English and a literal translation often makes the text difficult to understand in English. For this reason, I prefer to call this book, *The Great Reformer*, not a direct translation of *Mujaddid Azam* but rather a book based on it. The author, however, remains Dr. Basharat Ahmad, and all first-person references in the text refer to him. For the most part, I have followed the text faithfully, but on occasions have edited the text to make it readable without changing the meaning.

In most instances, I have used the English equivalent of the Arabic names of the prophets. It is common in the Urdu literary style and culture that appropriate epithets invoking Allah's blessings on the religious personalities are said or written after their names. I have dispensed with such invocations in most places in the interest of readability, but I assure the reader that no disrespect is intended by this omission. Instead, I ask the reader to recite the same on their own where the names of prophets and companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad are mentioned.

In the case of Arabic religious terminologies, too, I have mostly used the English equivalent except where a good alternative did not exist. However, I have provided the terminology in the other language, Arabic or English, in parenthesis in one or more places to help with understanding the text.

There are many who helped and encouraged me in the completion of this work. At the top of the list is my wife, Munira Rahman. She painstakingly researched the meaning of difficult Urdu words from the dictionary and made a list available to me ahead of time so that my translation work would not be impeded. In addition, she was a source of constant encouragement and she took over much of the housework that I should have done so that the maximum time was available for me to do the translation.

Dr. Zahid Aziz was my constant mentor and advisor to whom I turned for help for understanding difficult passages. Dr. Zahid Aziz has translated the Urdu works of many authors of the Ahmadiyya Movement into English. I have used some of his translated passages in places where the Urdu works of these authors was quoted in *Mujaddid Azam*. Qazi Ahad was a valuable resource in locating *Hadith* references. Sister Safia Saeed translated the Persian verses of *Mujaddid Azam* into Urdu so that I could translate them into English. Ali Abu Rahma helped me with the translation of Arabic passages and gifted me an Arabic-English dictionary that proved very helpful. His brother, Ala Abu Rahma, designed the cover of this book. My son, Dr. Ersalan Rahman, checked the completed manuscript and made valuable suggestions to improve readability. I must also thank Dr. Noman Malik and Sister Samina Malik for their encouragement and assistance in this endeavor. Many noble souls made financial contributions for the printing of this book. They prefer to remain anonymous. May Allah reward abundantly all these individuals.

In the end, I pray to Allah to accept my humble effort and to grant my written words the power to move the hearts of the readers to the service of Islam.

Hamid Rahman  
San Diego  
October 15, 2004

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR – DR. BASHARAT AHMAD

Dr. Basharat Ahmad (1876-1943), of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, was a leading Islamic intellectual, scholar and author, noted particularly for his fresh and inspiring expositions of the Quran. He was born on October 3, 1876, in the town of Bagsoor in northern India. His grandfather, Shaikh Ahmad Ali Faruqi, was a tutor of Persian and Urdu to British Army officers in Dharamsala Cantonment. Dr. Basharat Ahmad spent his early childhood in Dharamsala. On retirement, his grandfather moved to Sialkot, and it was there that Dr. Basharat Ahmad received his formal education, first in the Scotch Mission High School, and then in Murray College. His grandfather wanted him to pursue a career in medicine. When Dr. Basharat Ahmad obtained admission to the Medical College in Lahore (later known as King Edward Medical College), a prestigious medical institution, his grandfather also moved to Lahore to provide all possible care and attention to his education.

After finishing his medical education, Dr. Basharat Ahmad's first appointment was in East Africa where he stayed for one and a half years during the late 1890s. He then returned to India and worked first as a medical officer and then as the chief medical officer and administrator of several hospitals in some major cities of Punjab such as Gujrat, Rawalpindi and Mianwali. Dr. Basharat Ahmad was highly regarded in his professional field of medicine for his proficiency, honesty, integrity and above all, his kindness and benevolence towards his patients. When he retired from government service in Ludhiana in 1931, he was offered the high post of Chief Medical Officer by the state of Malerkotla, but on the suggestion of the late *Hazrat* Maulana Muhammad Ali he decided to settle down in Lahore to serve the cause of Islam with his vast knowledge of the religion,

deep understanding of the Quran, and true comprehension of the claims and teachings of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

From an early age, Dr. Basharat Ahmad studied the Quran intensely to develop a full understanding of the last Divine message to humanity. He applied his own analytical thinking and reasoning to aid his understanding of the Holy Quran, Hadith and other Islamic literature. He then turned to teaching, explaining and expounding the Quran to others. During his government service and even after retirement, he regularly gave *Dars-i Quran* (Quranic lessons) in the afternoons. In his exposition, he brought out deep new truths from the Quran to shed light both on age-old questions as well as new issues that have arisen in the modern age. In his explanations, he made reference to current events, trends, thinking, scientific knowledge and discoveries, and showed how the Holy Quran sheds light on them, so that man may derive benefit from their positive aspects and shun their deleterious impacts. His exposition was eloquent, impressive, convincing and relevant to the present circumstances, and it attracted Muslims of all persuasions and sections and even non-Muslims.

Dr. Basharat Ahmad has narrated in one of his publications the inspiring events of how he came to join the Ahmadiyya Movement. In 1901, his eldest son became critically ill and doctors lost all hope of his survival. By that time, *Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad*, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, had become well-known for his spiritual eminence. Dr. Basharat Ahmad especially went to Qadian to request him to pray for the child. When he met *Hazrat Mirza*, he became totally captivated by his humble, hospitable manner and his spiritual aura. Dr. Basharat Ahmad requested *Hazrat Mirza* to give him some spiritual advice. *Hazrat Mirza's* response was so profound and moving that Dr. Basharat Ahmad felt as if *Hazrat Mirza's* replies were entering deep into his heart, removing the doubts within, and purifying his soul. He felt a strong compulsion within him to forthwith accept *Hazrat Mirza* as his spiritual mentor. Accordingly, he took the pledge right there and joined the Ahmadiyya Movement. It was only at the end of their talk that Dr. Basharat Ahmad remembered the original purpose of his visit - to request *Hazrat Mirza* to pray for his son. He made the request, and *Hazrat Mirza* prayed for the child. Dr. Basharat Ahmad later learnt, to his astonishment, that the child began to recover from his hopeless situation the same day that *Hazrat Mirza* prayed for him. By the third day, he was fully recovered. This extraordinary acceptance of prayer further intensified Dr. Basharat Ahmad's faith in the truth of *Hazrat Mirza*.

In 1914, after the death of the Founder, a split took place in the



Ahmadiyya Movement because Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, eldest son of Hazrat Mirza from his second wife, invented and started propagating the heretical doctrine that the Founder was a prophet and all those Muslims who did not accept him were disbelievers and outside the fold of Islam. Dr. Basharat Ahmad, from that time onwards, wrote numerous articles and booklets refuting these false doctrines and clarifying the true nature of the claim and status of the holy Founder.

For almost thirty years Dr. Basharat Ahmad wrote extensively in the Urdu periodical of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, the *Paigham-i Sulh*, on a wide range of issues relating to the Quran, Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement. He replied to questions posed to him in a most cogent and authoritative manner which not only satisfied the questioner but also showed the rationality and deep Divine wisdom underlying the Last Word of Allah. A large number of such articles relating to Islam were later compiled by his elder son, Mr. Mumtaz Ahmad Faruqi, in book form and published in three volumes under the title *Basharat-i Ahmadiyya*. Some of his lengthy articles have also been published as separate booklets. These include, *Kashaf-uz-Zanoon*, a rebuttal of various charges against Hazrat Mirza by his opponents, *Ikhtaylaf-e-Silsala-e-Ahmadiyya per aik Nazar*, *Nabi ka Naam Paanay kee Khusooseeat*, and *Fazeelat kee Haqeeqat*.

Towards the closing years of his life, Dr. Basharat Ahmad wrote an enlightened commentary of the 30<sup>th</sup> and then the 27<sup>th</sup> parts of the Holy Quran, entitled *Anwarul Quran* (The Light of the Quran). The commentary of Part 30 has been rendered into English by *Imam* Kalamazad Mohammed and published by the Muslim Literary Trust, Trinidad and Tobago. This translation was very much appreciated by members of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Trinidad and Guyana. Due to requests from people in Suriname, Holland and Indonesia, who were also greatly impressed by it, it has now also been translated into Dutch and Indonesian.

With the passage of time, Dr. Basharat Ahmad became convinced that he must write a comprehensive, authentic biography of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, covering his life and works, and dealing particularly with the unique services to Islam of this outstanding Islamic revivalist of the age. He compiled and published his monumental research work in three volumes entitled *Mujaddid Azam* (The Great Reformer). This book is widely considered, by friend and foe, to be the most authentic biography and a true depiction of the great and tireless service done for Islam by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. The first two vol-

umes, published in 1939 and 1940 respectively, consist of the Founder's life history, and also contain synopsis of each of his major Urdu, Arabic and Persian works. The third volume deals with his Islamic philosophy, thought, exposition of Islamic concepts, defense of Islam in reply to non-Muslim critics, and his mission of carrying the message of Islam to the West. This volume was published shortly after the death of the author.

In January 1943, Dr. Basharat Ahmad went to Bombay to stay with the younger of his two sons, Mr. Naseer Ahmad Faruqui, who was the Collector of Bombay (a post in the Indian Civil Service) at that time. He wanted to impart his knowledge of the Quran to his son who was equally a keen student of the Quran. Dr. Basharat Ahmad had been fighting cancer for several years before his visit to Bombay, but he succumbed to the disease there and died peacefully on April 21, 1943. His body was brought to Lahore by train, where *janaza* (funeral) prayers were offered for him at the Ahmadiyya Buildings Mosque on April 23rd and he was buried at the Miani Sahib Ahmadiyya Cemetery in Lahore.

*Compiled by:*

Dr. Zahid Aziz

Mr. Nasir Ahmad

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

All thanks are due to Allah for revealing His Books and sending His Messengers for the guidance of mankind; for sending in the end our Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, with the perfect and complete Book - the Quran; and for decreeing a chain of *Mujaddids* (reformers) in the *Umma* (Muslim nation) for the protection, propagation and service of the religion brought by the last Prophet. One of the *Mujaddids* of particularly great eminence was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian. We witnessed his period of ministry as a *Mujaddid* and Messiah, and it was a time of godliness, the like of which are described in the Quran as *Ayam-e-Allah* (days devoted to Allah). His company induced such strong faith in the living God that we experienced the truth of the Quranic verse, "We are nearer to him than his life-vein" (50:16). Unfortunately, the people of this world did not realize his value. He expressed this poignantly in one of his Persian verses:

My people today are unacquainted with my status,  
Someday, in tears, they will remember the blessed time that  
came with me

### **Reason for the compilation of *Mujaddid Azam* (Great Reformer)**

It is impossible for the pen to portray what the eyes witnessed of the living belief in God, the adoration of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, the love of Quran, and the great passion for the service, protection, and propagation of Islam. However, this holy period is fading into history, and those who witnessed the era are passing away. Enemies, for reasons of prejudice and obstinacy, and misguided friends by transgressing in their devotion, have presented such an incorrect and repulsive picture among the public of this righteous person that an honest person's heart

bleeds from sorrow and sadness, and the eyes shed tears uncontrollably. It is for these reasons that I pick up my pen to present, to the best of my ability, the correct picture of this God-chosen person through this book *Mujaddid Azam* (Great Reformer). I hope that it will convince some fortunate souls of the facts about this *Mujaddid*, and motivate them to live a life in the service of Islam, for this was the mission of this *Mujaddid*, and this was the purpose for which he founded a party.

God alone has given me the power to complete the first two volumes of this biography. In view of my poor health and inadequacy for this job, I did not think that I would be able to accomplish this. Three years ago, I started writing this book, and during the three years, on occasion, I was so ill that for several months at a time I did not have the strength to hold a pen. Allah, the most High, blessed me with life again and brought two volumes to completion. I pray to the same Merciful and Generous Lord to enable me to complete the third volume.

FIRST VOLUME: Starts with the family history and birth of *Hazrat Mirza* and records the events of his life up to June 1900.

SECOND VOLUME: Starts from June 1900 and extends up to the death of *Hazrat Mirza*.

THIRD VOLUME: This is still under compilation and *Inshallah* (God willing), given life, health and power, will contain an exposition of the character and morals of *Hazrat Mirza*, and commentary on his services to the faith.

### **Sources of this biography**

I consider it necessary to state a few things about the sources from which this biography has been compiled. I have relied in the first instance on *Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's* published documents such as books and announcements. Beside this, I have examined and extracted material from the records of newspapers, *Al-Hakam*, *Al-Badr*, *Badr*, and the magazine *Review of Religions*. Biographies are books of history, and historical events are not made up at will. It is necessary in the compilation of biographies to study all relevant existing books and documents and to take from them all the facts that appear authentic, true and reasonable, much like one would compile a bouquet after carefully picking flowers out of thorny bushes. Accordingly, I have read books published from Lahore and Qadian, and benefited from the material contained in them. I have taken some description of the early life of *Hazrat Mirza* - for example, education, lawsuits, employment in Sialkot, and some early debates - from Sheikh Yaqub Ali Torab's books *Sirat-ul-Nabi*, *Sirat Ahmad*, and *Sirat*

*Masih Maoud*, which were published in 1915. From Mirza Bashir Ahmad's book *Sirat-ul-Mahdi*, Volumes 1 and 2, I have taken *Hazrat* Mirza's genealogy and some family facts. The discussion about his date of birth has been adopted from Mirza Bashir Ahmad's research, as it appears to be accurate. I have taken assistance regarding some early parts of the biography from *Pir* Siraj ul Haq's book *Tazkirat-ul-Mahdi*. I have also benefited from several other books published from Qadian and Lahore. Of special mention are *Maulana* Muhammad Ali's books *Tehrik Ahmadiyya*, *Muslaih Maoud* and *Ayatullah*. The latter book contains an excellent account of the dispute with *Maulana* Sanaullah that prompted *Hazrat* Mirza to publish the announcement entitled "The Last Judgement." Similarly, *Maulana* Muhammad Ali's book *Muslaih Maoud* deals comprehensively with *Hazrat* Mirza's prophecy of a magnificent son. In the two matters, which form the subject of the books *Muslaih Maoud* and *Ayatullah*, I have borrowed a great deal from them. I have also relied on other books and I consider it my duty to thank the authors of these books.

### **Thanks to Allah for the compilation of this book**

I have no words to thank Allah, the most High, for His favor and benevolence in granting me strength and enlightenment during the compilation of this biography. My knowledge was inadequate for the task, and my health was poor, but He, merely from his blessing and mercy, strengthened and enlightened me. I wrote for hours and felt little tiredness. On the contrary, the work gave me great pleasure, and it appeared to me as if I was walking through a garden of spirituality, and plucking pearls of knowledge and wisdom as I strolled along. Through writing this biography, I witnessed in my mind once more, as if I were watching a spiritual movie, the Qadian of *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's time, so alive and vibrant. My heart saw the holy personalities that were once the essence of his Movement, and heard their talk full of wisdom and knowledge. As in a dream, I was engrossed in watching these scenes when the curtain dropped and the holy faces that I was seeing and the words of wisdom I was listening to vanished once again. I had finished the book, and with it the pain of parting returned in the wound that was inflicted on my heart when *Hazrat* Mirza left this world. An involuntary sigh escaped me, and with it this verse, which I have been frequently repeating of late, came to my lips:

Alas! In the blinking of an eye ended the company of my beloved,  
Spring ended before my gaze had had the fill of the flowers.

The era of *Hazrat* Mirza was spiritually so invigorating and captivating that one wishes it had not come to an end so soon. But to our regret, before we realized it, that beloved of Allah had departed. Although he had announced that he was about to depart, we were mentally not willing to accept such an eventuality. When the biography was finished, my sorrow renewed but my soul prostrated with thanks before the most High for enabling me to fulfill this obligation and I said a prayer: O Lord, it is with your graciousness that this book has been written; accept this book, and through your bounty alone, let it influence the hearts of men; let it make the truth apparent to them and motivate the hearts of Muslims to the service of their religion. O Allah! Help those who help the religion of Muhammad, peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, and make us one of them. O Allah! Abandon those who abandon the faith of Muhammad, peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, and do not make us one of them. O Lord of the Worlds! Be it so.

### **A humble request to the reader**

Amongst the hundreds of arguments the Quran has given in support of the truthfulness of Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, is the powerful argument given in *Sura* Younas to the effect that: "I have lived among you a lifetime before it. Do you not then understand?" (10:16). This verse directs the Prophet to say: I have spent a lifetime amongst you; my life before my claim to prophethood is before you, and there is nothing hidden of my conduct and actions. Have you ever seen any failing in my righteousness, honesty and trustworthiness? You know my intentions and sincerity. When I have never been guilty of any falsehood towards men, how can I commit calumny against God, for there is no greater injustice than that? Therefore, reflect with a calm heart and a cool mind on the truth of my claim.

In presenting to the public the life of *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, I invoke this same God- given tradition and argument. I request the reader to reflect according to the following dictate of the Quran: "Say: I exhort you only to one thing, that you rise up for Allah's sake by twos and singly, then ponder! There is no madness in your companion. He is only a warn- er to you before a severe chastisement" (34:46). I repeat the same injunction of God. Singly and collectively, with a cool heart, free from any prejudice and stubbornness, reflect whether a person can be a fabricator of lies against Allah when his whole life has been devoted to righteousness, remembrance of the most High, and the love of Allah's religion and His Prophet. And how can those revelations be fabrications when they support

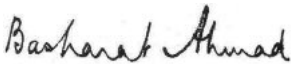
Islam at every step, and evidence clear signs of Allah's help? A person, who is so prolific in supporting Islam with knowledge and wisdom, cannot be insane. The truth is, as was revealed to *Hazrat* Mirza, "A warner came to the world but the people did not accept him; but God will accept him and manifest his truth with powerful assaults."

Brothers in Islam! Reflect what a great injustice we are doing not only to ourselves but also to Islam if suspicion and propaganda prevents us from contemplating the message of a man whose life was spent in the love of God, the Holy Prophet, Quran, and Islam. The damage that is taking place from this inattention is, in the ultimate analysis, injuring Islam and all Muslims. Blessed is he who can recognize this truthful man, and blessed is he who joins this *Mujaddid* of the era to serve God's religion.

Your intelligence and understanding is like a drop of water,  
But the sea of God's power is limitless and infinite.

If you hear about the life of saints,  
Be not like those who shake their heads and jeer.

You think yourself very clever and wise,  
But know not the high standing of such men of God.



Basharat Ahmad  
Lahore, April 7, 1939.

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## Chapter

# 1

## NAME, ANCESTRY, FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES & PLACE OF RESIDENCE

In accordance with a *hadith* (saying) of Holy Prophet Muhammad,<sup>1</sup> “Most surely Allah will raise for this community at the head of every century one who shall revive for it its faith,”<sup>2</sup> the person who claimed to be a *Mujaddid* (revivalist or reformer) at the head of fourteenth century of the Islamic era (running approximately the period 1882-1980 C.E.) was Ghulam Ahmad. His father’s name was Ghulam Murtaza, his grandfather’s name was Atta Muhammad and his great grandfather was Gul Muhammad. By ethnic origin, he was a Mughal Barlas and his place of residence was Qadian, in Gurdaspur district of the Punjab province of India.

### **Ethnic origin**

The Holy Prophet had prophesied the advent of a great spiritual revivalist at a time when Islam would have lost its spirit. According to the prophecy, the revivalist would be a man of Persian origin. It is important, therefore, to establish the ethnicity of *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to

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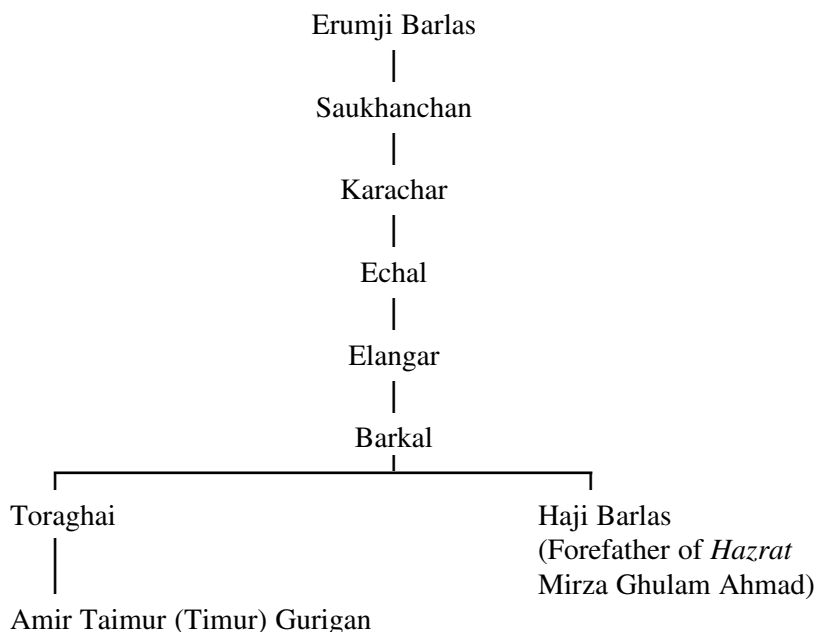
1 Holy Prophet Muhammad is referred to in most of the rest of this book as the Holy Prophet.

2 Abu Dawud Sulaiman. *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)*, Book *Al-Malahim* 36:1, Vol. 2, page 241 (printed at Ansari Press, Delhi, India).

determine if he is the intended object of this prophecy.<sup>3</sup> *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad belonged to the Barlas Tribe. It is commonly believed that Barlas is a respected and well-known sub-section of the Mughals, a people of Central Asian origin. However this is a misclassification because, in reality, the Barlas were a people of Iranian origin who were settled in and around Samarkand. Timur, a famous fourteenth century C.E. conqueror known in the West as Tamerlane, was of this ethnic origin. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* records under 'Timur' that his father was a noble of the tribe of Barlas. In the book *Tazk Taimuri* it is reported that Timur's father prayed for a son who would enhance the respect and fame of the Barlas tribe. Thus, all the historical sources indicate unanimously that Timur was a Barlas. This tribe inhabited the area around Kesh and Samarkand, and according to the *Tazk Taimuri*, it was Karachar, an ancestor of Timur six generations removed, who brought his tribe to the plains of Kesh and settled it there.

### Genealogy of the Barlas tribe

The relationship between Timur and the ancestors of *Hazrat* Mirza is shown below in a genealogical diagram.




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3 See following page.



### Timur was a Barlas

The genealogical diagram shows quite clearly that Haji Barlas, a forefather of *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was the paternal uncle of Timur. It also shows that Karachar was the grandson of Erumji Barlas, the patriarch of the tribe of Barlas. Karachar was the first of the line to migrate from Iran to Toran, and this took place around the time of Genghis Khan's invasion. The large size of Karachar's progeny, and his personal capabilities and noble lineage ensured a place of respect for him in the Barlas tribe. Out of respect, Genghis Khan used to call Karachar his paternal cousin, and advised his successor, Chagatai Khan, to consider Karachar in his place after his death. Chagatai Khan initially made Karachar his minister, but later also gave his daughter in marriage to him. Upon Chagatai Khan's death, Karachar succeeded him as a ruler. This took place in 652 *hijri* (1254 C.E.) when Karachar was eighty years old. Karachar was the first person from his tribe to convert to Islam, and it was he who settled his tribe in and around Kesh about thirty miles south of Samarkand.

Amir Timur Gurigan was born in the sixth generation of Karachar. He was called Gurigan, which in the Mongol language means son-in-law, because he was the son-in-law of Khizer Khawaja Khan, the Emperor of the Mongols. It was a matter of great honor to be the son-in-law of the Mongol strongman at a time when the power of the Mongols was at its zenith. Timur, therefore, adopted the surname 'Gurigan' with great pride and, subsequently, this became the surname of his descendants.

### Connecting Timur's ancestry with Genghis Khan is a mistake

It was a matter of great pride to claim Mongol ancestry, and so some historians of the time started connecting Timur's genealogy with Genghis Khan out of flattery and claimed a Mongol descent for him. In reality, he was from the tribe of Barlas that was of Persian origin. Accordingly, Sir Henry Howorth writes:<sup>4</sup>

After the great exploits of Timur in the fourteenth century, it

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3 Abi Abdullah Muhammad Bin Ismail Al-Bukhari. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith), Kitab Tafsir al-Quran* 62:1. Abu Hurairah says: "We were sitting with the Holy Prophet when the chapter entitled *al-Jumuah* was revealed to him, and in it the words *others from amongst them who have not yet joined them*. I asked the Holy Prophet: 'Who are these?' He gave no reply until I questioned him thrice. Salman, the Persian, was sitting among us, and the Holy Prophet placed his hand on Salman, and said, 'Even if faith were near the Pleiades, a man from among these would surely find it.'"

4 Howorth, Sir Henry. *History of the Mongols*. Page 41. London, 1876-88.

became the fashion of his flatterers to connect his ancestry very closely with that of the family of Jingis (Genghis) Khan.

Sir John Malcolm<sup>5</sup> also expresses the same opinion in his historical scholarship and states that Timur's flatterers had made up these connections. Well-respected historians, such as Vambéry,<sup>6</sup> and Skrine and Ross<sup>7</sup>, have also clearly stated that the purported relationship between Genghis Khan and Timur is mere fiction that was discredited a long time ago.

The only truth to the Mongol ancestry of Timur is that, in the sixth generation, one of his grandmothers was a Mongol princess, the daughter of Chughtai Khan, who became the wife of Karachar. Apart from this, Timur had no blood connection with the Mongols. Well-known historian Erskine<sup>8</sup> writes that Timur's tribe had lived among the Turks for two hundred years, and this long association influenced its language and mannerism and made them appear Turkish though in reality they were not.

### **Barlas was another name for Scythian**

Historian Harold Lamb<sup>9</sup> states that the Barlas are the same people who were known as Scythians in ancient times. The article on Scythia in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* is written by E. H. Minns, a professor of Cambridge University. He states that the generally accepted opinion considers Scythians to be Persians. This, together with Mr. Lamb's opinion, leads to the conclusion that the Barlas were Persians.

### **Immigration of Persians into Turkistan**

*Tabaqat Nasri*<sup>10</sup> quotes Imam Muhammad Ali Abu Al-Qasam Hamadi from his book, *Tarikh Majdul*, as follows:

Yazdigird, a Sassanid prince of Persia, was killed in a village of Billadmaro during the period of Caliph Usman, may Allah be pleased with him. His family and followers stayed on in Turkistan

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5 Malcolm, Sir John. *History of Persia*. London 1829.

6 Vambéry, Arminius. *History of Bokhara: from the earliest period down to the present*. London 1873.

7 Skrine, and Dennison Ross. *The Heart of Asia: a History of the Russian Turkestan and the Central Asian Khanates from the earliest times*. London 1899.

8 Erskine, William. *History of India under Baber and Humayun*. London, 1854.

9 Lamb, Harold. *Tamerlane: The Earth Shaker*. Page 24, Note. New York 1928.

10 Ancient book of history published from Calcutta, 1864.

and developed relationships with the people there. After two or three generations had passed, they became indistinguishable from the local Turks and came to be considered as one of them. Their palaces can even now be found in that land.

In *Muajam al Baldan Yaqut Hamvi*<sup>11</sup> it is recorded that Yazdigird, king of Persia, fled his country out of the fear of the Arab conquerors and sought refuge with the Turkish king Khakan who ruled in Transoxania,<sup>12</sup> the area of Maverannehr (beyond the river). Farishta, a famous historian, also gives the same account. These statements are completely in accord with the findings of Mr. Erskine who writes:<sup>13</sup>

The scattered individuals of Taimur's tribe from long residence in Turki countries had become Turks in manner and language.

The statement from *Tarikh Majdul* "Their palaces can even now be found in that land" is very similar to that of Schuler.<sup>14</sup> He writes:<sup>15</sup>

The local traditions ascribe its (Samarkand's) foundations to Afrasiab, a mythical hero (who was Persian), whose conquests and victories are legendary in Persia and Turkey, as well as in Central Asia.

The original name (of Samarkand) is probably of Persian origin. Hiouen-Thsang writes it Sa-mo-kien.

...and all the great edifices in Samarkand - as is evident from inscriptions - were erected by Persian architects, or by their pupils.

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11 Volume 4, page 409.

12 Transoxania is a translation of the Arabic Maverannehar (that which lies beyond or across the river) and it generally denotes the country lying beyond or on the right shore of the Oxus (Syr River). The Persian name for this is Turan and the Urdu name, Turkistan. Sogd and Kesh were districts of Transoxania. Samarkand was the major town of Sogd.

13 Erskine, William. *History of India under Baber and Humayun.*, Page 69. London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans 1854.

14 Schuler, Eugene. *Turkistan, Notes of a Journey in Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Bukhara and Kuldja*, Vol. 1 page 236. New York 1876.

15 Schuler, Eugene. *Turkistan, Notes of a Journey in Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Bukhara and Kuldja*. Page 248. London 1876.

Yazdigird was the last king of the Sassanid dynasty of Persia. Regardless of whether Sassanid and Scythian are synonymous or not, it is apparent that Iranian princes and nobles along with their tribes fled Iran for fear of the Arabs and settled in Maverannehr and Turan, the modern-day Samarkand and Bokhara. There they intermarried, developed local relationships, and came to be regarded as Turks. Karachar, of the tribe of Barlas, also migrated from Persia to Turan and settled in Samarkand and Kesh during the life of Genghis Khan.

### **The inhabitants of Sogdiana or Samarkand were of Iranian origin**

All historians agree that Samarkand and the surrounding area were called Sogdiana in ancient times. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* states categorically that the inhabitants of Sogdiana were of Iranian origin. Schuler, a well-known historian, writes:<sup>16</sup>

So far as race is concerned the inhabitants of Turkistan may be broadly divided into those which are of Iranic or Persian origin and those of Turkish descent. To the former belong the Tadjiks, who were the original inhabitants not only of the country between the Syr and the Amu, the ancient Maverannehr, but also of the right bank of the Syr, Khokand and Kashgar. It was Firdusi in the *Shah-nameh* who first made the Amu the boundary between Iran and Turan, but Professor Grigorief has clearly shown that these terms were used in a purely geographical and not in an ethnological sense, and that the contest between Iran and Turan was not a contest between two different races, but a rivalry between two tribes of the same origin.<sup>17</sup> In later times Turan has been confounded with Turk, and it has been used not only as a general term for all races of Turkish descent, but even still more broadly and improperly to express everything which is neither Semetic nor Aryan, and in fact everything of which ethnologists and philologists knew little or nothing.

As stated above, it is true that Firdusi<sup>18</sup> has mentioned River Jehun as the

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<sup>16</sup> Schuler, Eugene. *Turkistan, Notes of a Journey in Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Bukhara and Kuldja*. Vol.1, page 105.

<sup>17</sup> Trudi Vostochnago Otdieleniya Imp. Russ. Archaeologicheskago Obshchestva. 'The Scythian people Sacae.' Vol. XVI, page 286.

<sup>18</sup> See following page.

boundary between Iran and Turan but he also writes in the *Shahnameh* that Emperor Faredoon divided his kingdom Faras into two parts and gave one to his son Iraj, which was called Iran after him, and gave the other to his son Tor, which was called Turan after him. Otherwise, the country was one and the people were one, being of the same Iranian race.

The book *Aryana antiqua* states:<sup>19</sup>

But we have already shown that there is good reason to place Persians even in Transoxiana long before the barbarous tribes of the Caspian plain were heard of. After their irruption the same state of things took place probably that exists in the present day, and a political combination of distinct and even of different tribes, constituted, as it still constitutes, the kingdom of Persia. In this loose combination the designation of one member of the aggregate may have been applied to all, and the Daae may have given a name to the Persians on the Oxus, although they became a constituent portion of the Persian State long after it had held a prominent rank amongst the monarchies of Asia.

Professor Gibb writes:<sup>20</sup>

The Oxus (Jehun) is a boundary of tradition rather than of history... It was from the legends of Sasanian times, enshrined in the pages of the historians and the national epic of Firdawsi, that the Oxus came to be regarded as the boundary between Iran and Turan.

Through all the centuries of invasion, however, the peoples of Sogdiana and the Oxus basin remained Iranian at bottom, preserving an Iranian speech and Iranian institutions.

It is written in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* edited by Hastings

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18 Firdusi is the author of the literature classic *Shahnameh* (The Epics of Kings: Hero Tales of Ancient Persia) written around 1000 C.E.

19 Wilson, Horace Hayman. *Ariana antiqua: Antiquities and Coins of Afghanistan and Northern India*. Page 141 and 142. London 1841.

20 Gibb, Sir Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen. *The Arab Conquests in Central Asia*. Page 1. New York 1923.

under the article on Turk:<sup>21</sup>

It must be noted that, while we hear of the Turks under that name in S. Russia even in the 1st cent. A.D., they only established themselves in Turkestan ('Land of the Turks'), the country named after them, in the 4th cent. A.D. Before that the country was known as Iran or Iranistan ('Land of the Iranians'), and stretched further west into the present Iran.

Vambéry states in the preface of his book:<sup>22</sup>

The great majority of the inhabitants of Transoxania were Iranians, and Persian was the ordinary language of Bokhara, Fergana and Khahrezm under the Arab, Samanide, Seldjukide and Khahrezmian Princes...

Again, on Page 5, he writes:

That the lands on the other side of the Oxus were already in the period of grey antiquity the home of a people of pure Iranian descent, is proved to us in the first place by the oldest monument of the Iranian people, i.e. the Vendidad.

Professor Gibb writes:<sup>23</sup>

For the Arabic records in general are misleading on two important points. By their use of the word 'Turk' for all the non-Persian peoples of the East, they give the impression (due perhaps to the circumstances of the time in which the chief histories were composed) that the opponents of the Arabs in Transoxania (Mavara'n-nahar) were the historical Turks. The truth is that until 720 the Arab invaders were resisted only by the local princes with armies composed almost entirely of Iranians...

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21 Hastings, James: *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. Vol. XII. page 476.

22 Vambéry, Arminius. *History of Bokhara, from the earliest period down to the present*. Preface page XXXV. London 1873.

23 Gibb, Sir Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen. *The Arab Conquests in Central Asia*. Page 10. New York 1923.

The last and the strongest opposition to the Arab forces was, in fact, offered by the Barlas princes at Kesh but because they received no succor from the Mongols, they were defeated.

### **Timur's National Emblem was Iranian**

The historian Vambery writes that Timur's own coat of arms was three rings with the motto *Rusti Rasti*, i.e. "Justice is Strength." He states that they were most likely borrowed from the heraldry of ancient Iran, for the rings as symbols of strength and unity are also to be seen on the tombs of the Sassanides.<sup>24</sup> Vambery also writes that the palace built in Kesh was of Iranian design and the principal front bore the emblem of Iran - the sun and a lion.<sup>25</sup>

### **The title Mirza is purely Iranian**

It is worth noting that the whole tribe of Barlas used the title Mirza. This title is not found among the Tatars<sup>26</sup> and neither is this word part of their language. The Tatars always used the surname Khan as, for example, Genghis Khan, Halaku Khan and Manku Khan. They were never known as Mirzas, which is a purely Iranian word and used with Iranian names. The word is derived from *Amirza*, which means a noble, and it is a title of esteem only amongst the Iranians. The Tartars did not use this title.

### **The ending *ji* in Arumji Barlas**

The ending *ji* in the name of Arumji Barlas, who was the patriarch of the tribe and after whom the tribe was named, is also an Iranian ending. Many Iranian names have this ending, for example, Rustomji, Sohrabji and Bahramji. The Tatar names do not have the *ji* ending.

### **Summary of discussion**

Thus research proves the Iranian origin of the Barlas tribe. The major supportive arguments are summarized below. Researchers accept that:

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<sup>24</sup> Vambery, Arminius. *History of Bokhara*. Pages 204-205 footnote 1. Arno Press, New York, 1873.

<sup>25</sup> In my discussions about the Iranian ancestry of Taimur and the Scythians, I have benefitted from the article by *Maulvi* Abdul Rahim Dard in the *Review of Religions* Urdu, appearing in the Dec 1934 issue. This article was researched from the books of history in the London library and the opinions of reputable professors.

<sup>26</sup> Tatar: Member of any of a group of Turkic peoples found mainly in the Tatar Republic of Russia and parts of Siberia and Central Asia – Webster's New Encyclopedic Dictionary.

- Timur was not a descendant of Genghis Khan. Some historians have alleged otherwise but their opinion is not considered creditworthy as it relies on sycophantic sources whose motive was clearly flattery.
- Timur was a Scythian and Scythians were of Iranian origin.
- These Scythians later came to be known as Barlas after the important patriarch Arumji Barlas.
- Iranians inhabited the areas of Turan, Maverannehr, Samarkand and Kesh, and the Barlas were ethnically part of this population. The inhabitants of these areas never forgot their origin and retained their Iranian language and institutions. The whole of southern Turkistan extending up to Russia was considered part of Iran till the 4th century C.E. and it was only after the Tatars began settling in this area that it came to be called Turkistan.
- Timur's tribe Barlas was mistakenly considered as Turkish because of its association with the Turks for two hundred years. In reality, they were not Turkish but Iranians. The Barlas were settled around Samarkand and Kesh.
- Timur's national insignia and the architecture of his palaces were Iranian. The title, Mirza, common in his tribe, and the name of the patriarch of the tribe, Arumji, were also typically Iranian.
- Haji Barlas, a forefather of *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was the paternal uncle of Timur and thus belonged to the same Barlas tribe that was settled around Samarkand and Kesh.

### **Haji Barlas was the forefather of Mirza Hadi Beg**

Mirza Hadi Beg, a descendent of Haji Barlas and a forefather of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was the first person in *Hazrat* Mirza's family to emigrate from Samarkand to India. Sir Lepel H. Griffin also records this fact.<sup>27</sup> In his book, *Izala Auham*, *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad writes:<sup>28</sup>

Papers and documents left behind by my ancestors show conclusively that my respected elders, for reasons unstated, migrated from Samarkand to Delhi with a large party during the reign of Emperor Babar. It is not very clear from those papers whether they entered India with Babar or came a little later. The papers do show categorically, however, that they had a special relationship

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<sup>27</sup> Griffin, Sir Lepel H., K.C.S.I. *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*. Volume II, page 34. 1940.

<sup>28</sup> *Izala Auham*. Vol. 1, Page 121.



with the Royal family as a result of which they were included among the nobility. The Emperor granted them a large estate of several villages and this made them the owners of a large tract of agricultural property.

Also, *Hazrat Mirza* records in his book *Kitab-ul-Bariyya*:<sup>29</sup>

Family documents of great antiquity, still preserved with us, show that my ancestors migrated to this country from Samarkand. They were respected nobles and came to this country with their families, employees and servants, an entourage of about two hundred people. They settled in an uninhabited tract of land about a hundred miles north-east of Lahore and founded this small town which they called Islampur. Later, it came to be known as Islampur Qazi Majhi and, over a period of time, the word Islampur was dropped and only Qazi remained. With time, this changed to Qadi and was later distorted to Qadian.

### ***Hazrat Mirza's claim of Persian descent made on basis of revelation***

*Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad* was unaware of the literature that ascertained the Persian origin of Barlas, and disproved the commonly accepted notion of their Mughal ancestry. This research did not become available till after his death. However, in his book, *Kitab-ul-Bariyya*, *Hazrat Mirza* states in a footnote that his ancestors came from Samarkand, and then in an explanatory note to the footnote writes as follows:<sup>30</sup>

About seventeen or eighteen years ago, I was informed by repeated revelations from God that my forefathers were of Persian descent. I included those revelations in Part 2 of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. One such revelation in my respect is, "Hold fast to Unity, hold fast to Unity; O sons of Persia." A second states: "Even if faith was suspended from the Pleiades this man of Persian descent would have gone there to take it." A third is, "Those who disbelieve, their faiths have been refuted by this man of Persian descent. God is thankful for his effort." All these revelations evidence that my ancestry is Persian. This is the truth that Allah has manifested.

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<sup>29</sup> *Kitab-ul- Bariyya*. Page 134, marginal note.

<sup>30</sup> *Kitab-ul- Bariyya*. Page 134.

And that which Allah revealed turned out to be true. Independent historical research has shown that the tribe of Barlas, from which *Hazrat Mirza's* family came, is indeed Persian. In *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*, *Hazrat Mirza* writes:<sup>31</sup>

The ancestry of this humble person is Iranian. Because of some unknown error, the family became identified as Mughal.

Further on, in the same book, he states:<sup>32</sup>

Sheikh Mohyuddin ibn Arabi has also reported this prophecy in his book *Fusus Al-Hikam* (The Wisdom of the Prophets). The Sheikh writes that, 'He will be of mixed blood,' by which is meant that he will also have Turkish blood in his family.

*Hazrat Mirza's* Barlas ancestry was Persian but his forefather Karachar married the daughter of Chagatai Khan, which brought Turkish-Chinese blood into their progeny as well.

### **The *hadith* prophesy about the man with Persian ancestry**

*Hazrat Mirza's* revelation, "Even if faith were suspended from the Pleiades, this man of Persian descent would have gone there to take it," is part of a *hadith* that was originally revealed to Prophet Muhammad. *Hazrat Mirza's* writings indicate that this *hadith* was revealed to him for the purpose of drawing his attention to it. The full *hadith*, as narrated in the *Bukhari*, states that the Holy Prophet, while explaining the verse of the Chapter *Jumma* which reads, "And others from among them who have not yet joined them," placed his hand on the shoulder of Salman the Persian and said, "Even if faith were suspended from the Pleiades, a man from among them (namely a Persian) would have gone there and taken it."<sup>33</sup> Thus, the revelation of this *hadith* by Allah to *Hazrat Mirza* was meant to show that he was the person of Iranian descent and perfect belief who had come in fulfillment of the Holy Prophet's prophecy. *Hazrat Mirza* appeared in an era of agnosticism when faith was far removed from the lives of men. By adducing clear proofs, brilliant arguments and heavenly signs, he restored their lost faith and made faith a practical reality in their lives.

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31 *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*. Pages 77-78.

32 Ibid, page 201.

33 *Al-Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*.65:1xii, 1.

### Place of residence

To summarize, Mirza Hadi Beg, a forefather of *Hazrat* Mirza, came to India during the reign of Babar as a respected noble with a group of about two hundred people comprising his family, employees and servants. He went to the court of the Emperor in Delhi and was awarded titles and an estate about one hundred miles north east of Lahore, in the present District of Gurdaspur. He settled this area, which was a veritable jungle at that time, and founded the town of Islampur.

The town later came to be known as Islampur Qazi Majhi. Islampur was a common name and the word Majhi was suffixed to show its location because the entire tract of land extending from Gurdaspur into the districts of Lahore and Amritsar was known as Majhi. The award of an estate also entailed judicial and administrative responsibilities for the area. The word Qazi means a 'judge' and the use of this word in the name indicated that the judge for the area resided in this town. As a rule, people tend to abbreviate long names and so over a period of time, Islampur and Majhi were dropped and only Qazi remained. Since the Arabic letter *Zowad* is frequently pronounced as *Doad*, especially by the Hanafis, the name Qazi became Qadi and was later distorted to Qadian. This author has, over an extended period, noticed that the carriage drivers at Batiala railway station refer to the town as *Qadeen* and the villagers still call it *Qadi*. This fact also verifies the *hadith* that states, "The *Mahdi* will come from a town whose name is *Qaddah*..."<sup>34</sup>. *Qaddah* is just a distorted form of *Qadi*.<sup>35</sup>

### Genealogy

Mirza Hadi Beg was awarded a large estate in the Punjab and his descendants lived and prospered in the area enjoying both respect and authority. *Hazrat* Mirza lists in his book *Kitab-ul- Bariyya* the generations of his family that lived and passed away there. He gives his genealogy as follows:

My name is Ghulam Ahmad son of Mirza Ghulam Murtaza, son of Mirza Atta Muhammad, son of Mirza Gul Muhammad, son of Mirza Faiz Muhammad, son of Mirza Muhammad Qaim, son of

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34 Sheikh Ali Hamza Ali Malik Al Tusi. *Jawarul Asrar* published 1435.

35 It is possible that the word in the *hadith* may originally have been *Qadi*. Initially, the *hadith* were transmitted verbally but later, when rendered into writing, the word *Qadi* may have been written as *Qaada* in accordance with the dictation of the time. Later the diacritical points may have been left out and only *Qada* was left and to give it an Arabic touch the scribe may have later written it as *Qaddah*. Be that as it may, *Qadi* and *Qaddah* have the same origin, one is Punjabi and the other Arabic.



*View of modern day Qadian.*





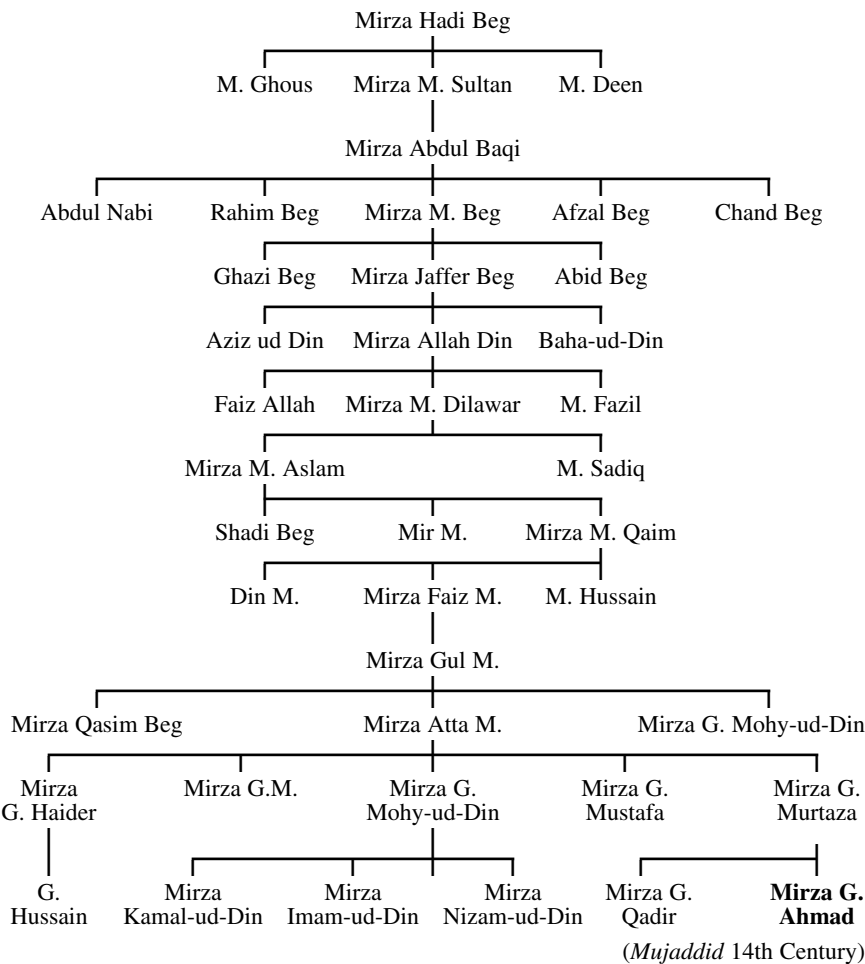
*Another view of Qadian with the Ahmadiyya Colony in the background.*

Mirza Muhammad Aslam, son of Mirza Muhammad Dilawar, son of Mirza Allah Din, son of Mirza Jaffer Beg, son of Mirza Muhammad Beg, son of Mirza Abdul Baqi, son of Mirza Sultan, son of Mirza Hadi Beg, the patriarch.

The detailed genealogical tree of *Hazrat* Mirza is as follows:

**Genealogy of *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad**

Abbreviations: M. = Muhammad; G. = Ghulam



Abbreviations: M. = Muhammad; G = Ghulam

### Persecution of the family by the Sikhs

When the Sikh rose to power in the Punjab, *Hazrat* Mirza's great grandfather, Mirza Gul Muhammad, was a chieftain in the area. *Hazrat* Mirza portrays vividly in his book *Kitab-ul-Barriya* the condition of their estate at the time, and the persecution his family suffered at the hands of the Sikhs. He writes:<sup>36</sup>

When the Sikh rule started, my great grandfather, Mirza Gul Muhammad, was a distinguished noble of the area whose estate extended over fifty villages. As a result of repeated attacks by the Sikhs, many of these villages were wrested from his possession. However, it is a measure of his generosity that despite his own losses, he gifted, out of sheer kindness, several villages and associated lands to Muslim noblemen who had been forcibly dispossessed of their estates in that period of lawlessness. This property is still owned by them to this day. In short, even in that period of anarchy, my great grandfather was an autonomous chief in the area. About five hundred people, sometimes a little more and sometimes a little less, ate at his table each mealtime, and he paid stipends to about a hundred religious scholars, pious persons, and *Hafiz Quran* (those who have memorized the whole Quran). These people were his constant companions and the conversation in their gatherings was mostly on religious issues and what God and His Prophet have commanded. His employees and associates were such that they could not conceive of missing their prayers, and even the maids employed to ground the wheat prayed five times and said the *Tahajjud* (late night) prayer... In those troubled times, this blessed little town was a refuge for every Muslim. It was common to find injustice, cruelty, and transgression in most places those days, but in Qadian, only Islam, piety, purity and justice prevailed.

I have personally heard from people who lived close to that era about the wonderful atmosphere that prevailed in Qadian during that period. They compared Qadian to a garden whose vegetative flora were men of religion, piety and learning - noble of character and courageous. It is well known locally that the late Mirza Gul Muhammad was one of the most pious persons of his time and

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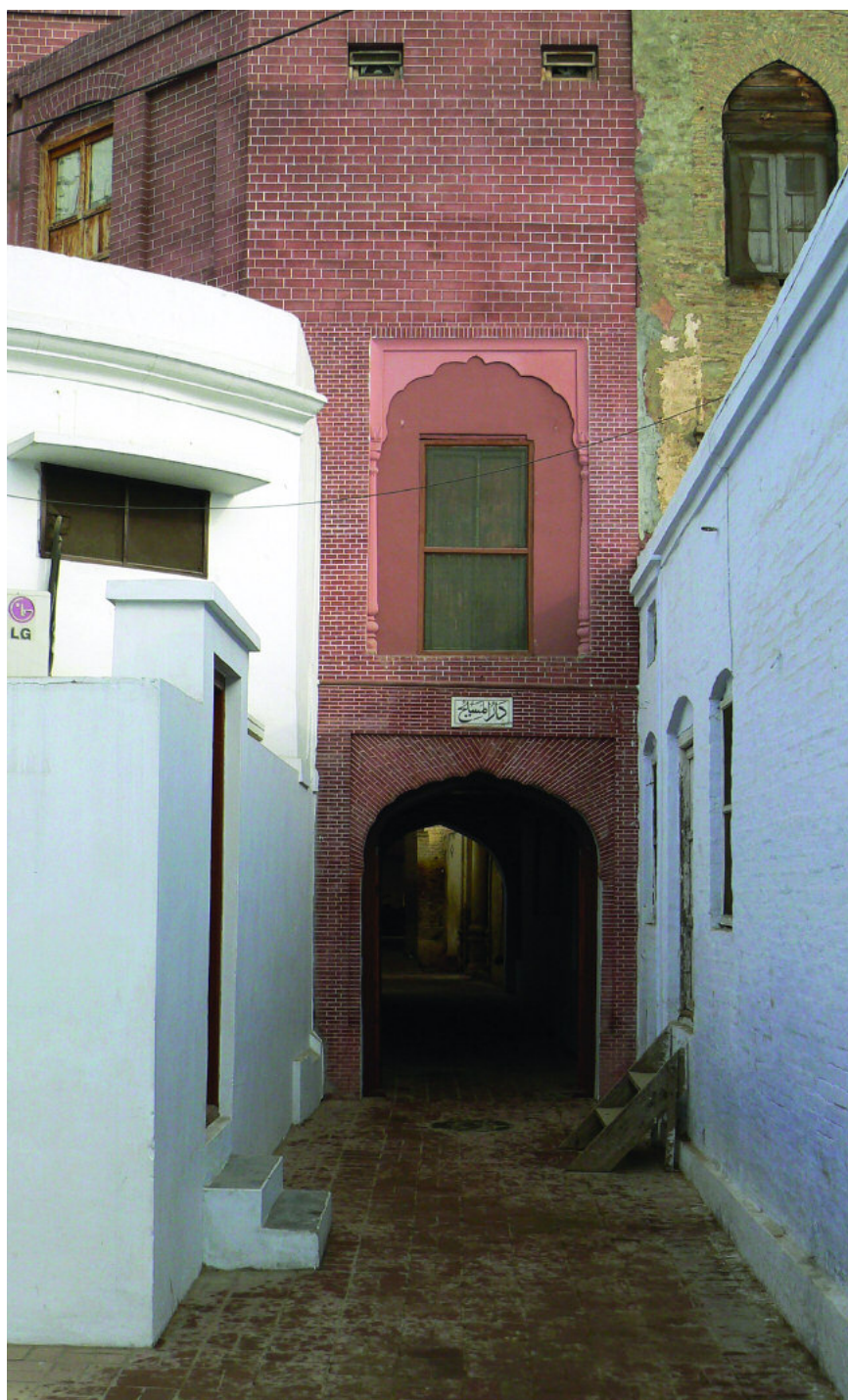
<sup>36</sup> *Kitab-ul-Barriya*. Page 132, footnote.

possessed great spiritual eminence. Many religious, pious and learned people had gathered in Qadian to benefit from his company... In summary, his fame stemmed not only from his temporal wealth and authority, but also from his integrity, piety, courage, perseverance, and readiness to defend Islam and support Muslims. My great grandfather, Mirza Gul Muhammad, died from the disease of hiccups with some additional complications. At the height of his ailment, it was the unanimous opinion of the physicians treating him that wine could have a therapeutic effect and arrest the course of the disease, but none of them had the courage to broach the subject with him. Finally, they recommended the proposed treatment to him and tried to downplay its (religious) implication. His reply was, "If God has willed my recovery, then there are many other medicines of His making that can cure me. Whatever God has ordained, I bow before His will, but I will not use this filthy thing." After a few days, he died from the disease. Death was ordained for him but his righteous action of preferring death to drink has become a lasting monument to his memory. To what lengths does man not go to preserve his life, but he preferred death to disobedience of God's command...In brief, when my great-grandfather died, he was succeeded by his pious son, Atta Muhammad, my grandfather.

During my grandfather's time, Allah willed that the Sikhs should prevail in the fighting. My grandfather took several measures to protect his estate but, since Allah had decreed otherwise, these were unsuccessful. The Sikhs captured our villages one after another until our estate was reduced to Qadian and the surrounding lands. The town of Qadian was built like a fort and had a protective perimeter wall with four towers in which armed soldiers were stationed. The defensive arsenal included a few cannons as well. The perimeter wall was about twenty feet high and the rampart was wide enough for three bullock carts to travel abreast.

A section of the Sikhs called Ramgariah deceitfully got permission to enter the town and then proceeded to capture it. Our elders had to face complete ruination at that time. They were taken captive, like the Israeli nation (by the ancient Egyptians) and their money and property was looted. Many mosques and fine buildings were razed to the ground and many orchards were cut down,





*Entrance of Hazrat Mirza's ancestral home.*



*Inner courtyard of Hazrat Mirza's ancestral home.*

in a stupid show of bigotry. Some mosques were converted into Sikh temples and one of these continues as such to this day. Our ancestral library, containing five hundred handwritten copies of the Holy Quran, was heartlessly torched and burnt that day. After giving the matter some thought, the Sikhs decided to expel our family and ordered them out of the town. Men and women were loaded into bullock carts and forced into exile. They sought refuge in another state of the Punjab but soon thereafter, these enemies poisoned my grandfather and he fell victim to their plans.

During the latter part of his reign, Ranjit Singh restored five villages from our original estate to my father, Mirza Ghulam Murtaza, who then returned to Qadian. Our villages had passed into the hands of Ranjit Singh when he annexed the smaller states of Punjab into his empire, which now extended from Lahore to Peshawar and on the other side to Ludhiana. Thus, our ancestral estate, after being reduced to nothing, now grew to a modest five villages. Even so, because of the old standing of the family, my father was an eminent chief of the area and was always invited to the Governor General's assembly of chiefs. In 1857, he bought fifty mounts and financed a like number of cavalry soldiers for the British government and promised further help, as necessary. Because of outstanding services rendered, he received many letters of commendation from the officers of the British government and was mentioned by Sir Lapel Griffin in his book *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*. He was very popular with the administration, and senior officers, including the Deputy Commissioner, would sometimes visit him at his residence to please him.

To summarize, *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was the scion of an old, respected and noble family that was held in high esteem, not just for its worldly authority and position but also for the men of great learning and piety that it had produced.

### **Evidence of Sir Lapel Griffin**

Sir Lapel Griffin speaks of this family in his book *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab* in the following words:

In 1530, the last year of Emperor Babar's reign, Hadi Beg, a

Mughal of Samarkand, emigrated to the Punjab and settled in the Gurdaspur district. He was a man of some learning, and was appointed Qazi or magistrate over seventy villages in the neighbourhood of Qadian, which town he is said to have founded, naming it Islampur Qazi, from which Qadian has by a natural change arisen.<sup>37</sup> For several generations, the family held the offices of respectability under the Imperial Government, and it was only when the Sikhs became powerful that it fell into poverty. Gul Muhammad and his son, Atta Muhammad, were engaged in perpetual quarrels with the Ramgarhia and Kanhaya *Misals*, who held the country in the neighbourhood of Qadian; and at last, having lost all the estates, Atta Muhammad retired to Begowal where, under the protection of Sardar Fateh Singh Ahluwalia, he lived quietly for twelve years. On his death, Ranjit Singh, who had taken possession of all the lands of the Ramgarhis *Misal*, invited Ghulam Murtaza to return to Qadian, and restored to him a large portion of his ancestral estates. He then, with his brothers, entered the army of the Maharaja, and performed efficient service on the Kashmir frontier and at other places.

During the time of Nao Nihal Singh, Sher Singh and the Darbar, Ghulam Murtaza was continually employed on active service. In 1841, he was sent with General Ventura to Mandi and Kulu, and in 1843 to Peshawar in command of an infantry regiment. He distinguished himself in Hazara at the time of the insurrection there; and when the rebellion of 1848 broke out, he remained faithful to his Government and fought on its side. His brother, Ghulam Muhi-ud-din, also did good services at this time. When Bhai Maharaj Singh was marching with his force to Multan to the assistance of Diwan Mul Raj, Ghulam Muhi-ud-din with other *jagirdars*, Langar Khan Dahiwal and Sahib Khan Tiwana, raised the Muslim population, and with the force of Misar Sahib Dayal attacked the rebels and completely defeated them, driving them into the Chenab, where upwards of six hundred perished.

At annexation the *jagirs* (estates) of the family were resumed, but a pension of Rs. 700 was granted to Ghulam Murtaza and his

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37 The Punjab dialect has z, and the Arabic z and d are often interchanged as Gumbaz, Gunbad; Ustad, Estaz.



brothers and they retained their proprietary rights in Qadian and the neighbouring villages. The family did excellent service during the Mutiny of 1857. Ghulam Murtaza enlisted many men, and his son, Ghulam Qadir, was serving in the force of General Nicholson when that officer destroyed the mutineers of the 46th Native Infantry, who had fled from Sialkot, at Trimmu Ghat. General Nicholson gave Ghulam Qadir a certificate stating that in 1857, the Qadian family showed greater loyalty than any other in the district.

Ghulam Murtaza, who was known as a skilful physician, died in 1876, and was succeeded by his son, Ghulam Qadir. The latter was always active in assisting the local authorities, and possessed many certificates from officers connected with the administration. He served for a time as superintendent of the Gurdaspur District Office. His only son died in early youth and he had adopted his nephew, Sultan Ahmed, who since Ghulam Qadir's death in 1883, was regarded as the head of the family. Mirza Sultan Ahmed entered the service of Government as Naib-Tahsildar, and rose to be an Extra Assistant Commissioner. He was a *Lambardar* (village headman) of Qadian, but his duties in this capacity were performed by his uncle, Nizam-ud-din, the eldest son of Ghulam Muhi-ud-din.

### **Maternal family**

*Hazrat* Mirza's mother was Chiragh Bibi. She belonged to a respectable Mogul family of village Aima, in district Hoshiarpur. Generosity and hospitality were among her outstanding characteristics and, in particular, she devoted herself to caring for the old and poor in the society. She personally met the burial expenses of those who died indigent.

### **Brothers and sisters**

*Hazrat* Mirza had two brothers and two sisters. His oldest sibling was a sister, Murad Bibi, who was married to Mirza Muhammad Beg Hoshiarpuri but became a widow at an early age. She was a devout person who spent her life in remembrance of Allah, and her spiritual eminence was manifested by several miracles. A brother, Mirza Ghulam Qadir, and another brother who died in infancy followed her. *Hazrat* Mirza and a twin sister, Jannat Bibi, were the youngest. His twin sister died soon after birth.

## Chapter

# 2

## NATIVITY, CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

### Year of birth

There is no authentic record of *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's date of birth and, as a result, there is some difference of opinion about the exact year of his birth. Research on the subject seems to substantiate the year as 1835 although *Hazrat* Mirza himself mentioned in his book *Kitab-ul-Bariyya* that he was born either in 1839 or 1840. It is apparent from the wording of the statement, however, that this was an approximation rather than an exact determination based on some written record. Further evidence of this is provided in the same article of the book *Kitab-ul-Bariyya* when, a little further on, *Hazrat* Mirza writes, "Thus about forty years of my life were spent in the protective companionship of my father before his death." It is known with certainty that *Hazrat* Mirza's father died in 1876 and from this, *Hazrat* Mirza's year of birth can be deduced as approximately 1836.

In his book *Ainah Kamalat Islam*, *Hazrat* Mirza mentions that his mother would remark to him at times that, "The time of tribulation for our family passed into prosperity with your birth." For this reason, she considered his birth to be blessed. It is well established that the period of difficulties for the family came to an end during the reign of Ranjit Singh, who restored to Mirza Ghulam Qadir the town of Qadian with its surrounding lands and gave him a respectable military rank in his force. Mirza Ghulam Qadir performed some military duties for Ranjit Singh



*Room in which Hazrat Mirza was born.*

# THE ROOM WHERE THE PROMISED MESSIAH WAS BORN

THIS IS THE ROOM WHERE THE PROMISED MESSIAH AND MAHDI HADRAI MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD OF QADIAN (PEACE BE UPON HIM) WAS BORN AT FAJR TIME ON FRIDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> SHAWWAL 1250 A.H. (13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 1835 A.C.) HIS EXALTED STATION IS MENTIONED IN THE FOLLOWING REVELATIONS,

جَرَى اللّٰهُ فِي حُلِيِّ الْاَنْبِيَاءِ (مَدَنِي)

"THE CHAMPION OF ALLAH IN THE MANTLES OF THE PROPHETS."

اَنْتَ مُبَارَكٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ (مَدَنِي)

"YOU ARE BLESSED IN THIS WORLD AND IN THE HEREAFTER."

مَقَامٌ اَوْ يَمِينُ الزَّوَاهِدِ تَقْتَضِي بِمُورَاتِ رَسُوْلَانِ نَاظِرِ دَمْدَمِ (مَدَنِي)

"DO NOT UNDER VALUE HIS RANK. FOR PROPHETS HAVE TAKEN PRIDE IN HIS EPOCH."  
(PARALLAXE EXPLANATION)



Plaque in the room in which Hazrat Mirza was born.



who, as is historically established, died in 1839. This shows that *Hazrat Mirza* must have been born three or four years before the death of *Ranjit Singh* because the sequence of events, obtaining a military rank, performing military services leading to a favorable disposition by the *Raja*, and the restoration of the family property, must have taken some time. This puts the year of birth as 1835 or 1836.

The most reliable evidence is furnished by using the published almanac of *Mirajuddin*, which gives the calendar for the 125 years from 1783 to 1907 C.E. *Hazrat Mirza* has categorically stated in his book *Tuhfa Golarwiyya* that “My birth was on Friday, the fourteenth day of the lunar month.” He had also mentioned verbally to *Mufti Muhammad Sadiq* that his birth was in the month of *Phagun* (the twelfth solar month of the Hindu calendar called *Bikrami*). The above-referred almanac reveals two possible dates that fulfill the required conditions in the period that approximately covers the birth of *Hazrat Mirza*. One of these is February 13, 1835, which corresponds to *Shawal* 14, 1250 *hijri* and *Phagun* 1, 1891 *Bikrami*. The other is February 17, 1833, which corresponds to *Ramzan* 14, 1247 *hijri* and *Phagun* 1, 1888 *Bikrami*. Both of these dates were Fridays on the 14th day of the new moon in the month of *Phagun*. However the first date of February 13, 1835 is the one that is consistent with the writings of *Hazrat Mirza*.

In the supplement to the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* Part 5, *Hazrat Mirza* gives his age as seventy years. Working back from the date of that writing gives us 1835 C.E. as the year of his birth. Similarly, his age can also be deduced from some of his other works. In *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*,<sup>1</sup> he states that he reached the stage of spiritual discourse with God in 1290 *hijri* (1875 C.E.), and in various other writings, he has mentioned his age at the time to have been forty years. These statements would indicate the year of his birth to be 1835 C.E. corresponding to 1250 *hijri*.

In summary, the arithmetic of the almanac and the evidence of *Hazrat Mirza*’s writings indicate his date of birth as February 13, 1835, and this should be accepted as correct.

### **Fulfillment of a prophecy about the birth of Messiah**

*Hazrat Mirza* was born on a Friday morning. He was the second of a twin birth. His twin sister, *Jannat Bibi*, was born first but died soon after delivery. The circumstances of his birth were in accordance with a prophecy recorded by *Sheikh-e-Akbar*, *Hazrat Mohyuddin ibn Arabi*, in

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1 *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*, Page 199.

his book *Fusus Al-Hikam* (Wisdom of the Prophets). This prophecy stated that the promised Messiah, who will be *Khatam-ul-willayat* (seal of the office of saint), would be the second of a twin birth, the first being a girl.<sup>2</sup>

### **Aptness of the name**

His father named him Ghulam Ahmad (slave of Ahmad) and this name proved to be very apt because he fulfilled to perfection the role of being a slave to the Holy Prophet Ahmad.<sup>3</sup> If the word *Qadiani* is added to Ghulam Ahmad, then by the ancient system of assigning numbers to the letters of the alphabet called *jumal*, the sum of the letters in his name is 1300. Thus by Divine will, the choice of his name was a precursor indicating that thirteen hundred years after *hijri*, towards the end of the thirteenth century, the blessed personality to be awarded the honor of *Mujaddid* (reformer) will be that of Ghulam Ahmad *Qadiani*. Accordingly, when he was appointed to the office of reformer, the words Ghulam Ahmad *Qadiani* were revealed to him and his attention drawn to the sum of the alphabet numbers contained therein.

God revealed the following verse to *Hazrat* Mirza in Urdu on receiving the title of Messiah:

The excellence of Ahmad, you can't comprehend is how fine,  
Behold! Even his slave is the Messiah of the time.

It appears that in bestowing the status of Messiah on Ghulam Ahmad the Divine will was to show the incomprehensible grandeur of the Holy Prophet whose mere slave could be elevated to this eminence. In an ode to the Holy Prophet, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote the following verses, which are apt in this context:

In the dimple of your chin I behold (the beauty of) a thousand  
Josephs,  
And the like of the Christian Messiah, there have been thousands  
through your inspiration.

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2 This prophecy is to be found on page 83 of *Fusus Al-Hikam*. It is stated in an explanation that the last person to whom Allah will reveal His secrets, and after whom no such person will be born, would have a twin birth. His twin sister, at whose feet his head rests, will be born first.

3 Muhammad and Ahmad were the two given names of the Holy Prophet.

A multitude entered the Mercy of Allah by turning to your grace,  
Thousands like me wait expectantly at your gate.

### Childhood

*Hazrat Mirza's* childhood was one of purity. It was also a time of many Divine signs. Soon after his birth, the Sikh rule ended in the Punjab, and with it terminated a period of repression and suffering for the Muslims at the hands of Sikh marauders. The Muslims were once again able to enjoy religious freedom. *Hazrat Mirza's* family lived through great adversity and financial difficulty under the Sikh rule until their estate was partially restored and prosperity returned. With time, their condition improved further, and although the family never fully regained their former estate and authority, the family position became quite comfortable.

*Hazrat Mirza* exhibited remarkable attributes from early childhood. When *Hazrat Mirza* was a toddler, his father bought him many toys and invited neighboring children to stay in the house and be his son's play-mates so that his son could enjoy and have a good time. But Providence had given the child Ghulam Ahmad a nature that showed no interest in frivolity and material possessions. From the beginning, his countenance gave the appearance of being absorbed in the preparation of some great mission.

### Education

When *Hazrat Mirza* was six years of age, his father employed a Persian-speaking instructor by the name of Fazal Elahi for his education. He taught him to read the Quran and started him in the study of the Persian language. When *Hazrat Mirza* was about ten years old, *Maulvi* (title of a religious scholar) Fazal Ahmad, who was fluent in Arabic, was engaged for his education and instruction. *Maulvi* Fazal Ahmad was a very pious and religious person and the father of *Maulvi* Mubarak Ali of Sialkot. This author remembers one incident of his piety that is worth recording. At the time, I was a young lad living in Saddar Bazaar, Sialkot and *Maulvi* Fazal Ahmad was the *Imam* (spiritual leader) of the largest mosque in the city. On an extremely cold and rainy winter day, a person named Abdul Ghaffar who worked as a head clerk in a local office saw the *Maulvi*, completely drenched, proceeding somewhere with a clod in his hand. "Where are you going in this storm?" he asked, "and why are you carrying this clod?" *Maulvi* Fazal Ahmad replied, "Yesterday, I went to visit *Kotwal* (sheriff) Muhammad Nazim and plucked out a handful of clay from the mud wall of his compound to cleanse myself. I reflected

today, that as there is no certainty of life, and death can come anytime, I might be interrogated on the Day of Judgment for taking the clay without the permission of the owner. I am now going to put back this clod from where I had taken the clay yesterday.” Death came to this venerable person in a remarkable way too. He died in prostration while praying in the month of *Ramzan*.

There is an adage ‘A saint recognizes a saint.’ Despite being a teacher, this pious person treated *Hazrat Mirza* with great respect and politeness. Later, when *Hazrat Mirza* claimed to be a *Mujaddid* (Reformer), *Maulvi* Fazal Ahmad bore testimony, without hesitation, that even when *Hazrat Mirza* was a student, it was apparent from the deep insight he showed in discussions, and the wondrous miracles associated with him that *Mirza sahib* was headed for greatness. This pious person tutored *Hazrat Mirza* very conscientiously in the rules of conjugation and syntax in Arabic grammar.

When *Hazrat Mirza* turned seventeen or eighteen, *Maulvi* Syed Gul Ali Shah was appointed to tutor him. This *Maulvi* was a resident of Batala and belonged to the *Shia* sect. *Maulvi* Syed Gul Ali Shah taught *Hazrat Mirza* grammar, logic, medicine and other customary subjects. Initially, the tutoring took place in Qadian but later *Maulvi* Gul Ali Shah decided to go back to Batala, and *Hazrat Mirza* followed to complete his education there.

### **Student days in Qadian**

When *Maulvi* Gul Ali Shah was tutoring *Hazrat Mirza* in Qadian, the lessons were given in a mud building, which had primarily been designed as an audience hall. In the southern part of the building, were the living quarters of the *Maulvi*. The houses of Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan now occupy the site of this structure.

Whenever *Hazrat Mirza*’s father engaged a tutor for him, he would pay the teacher’s salary in full himself, but allowed other children to take lessons from the teacher free of cost. Consequently, other children of the family also came for lessons and there was light talk, amusement and play, as would be expected normally in a school situation. However, *Hazrat Mirza* concentrated only on his studies, and was not fond of playing with other children. He read his lessons a few times with the *Maulvi* and then retired to an upstairs room to memorize it in isolation. If he forgot any part of his lesson, he came downstairs, asked the teacher directly and then retired again to study in isolation. He did not participate in the frivolous play and amusement of the other kids, but if any of them need-

ed assistance with their lessons, he was always ready to help. Sometimes, the students played tricks on the teacher, and in particular, a number of these tricks concerned the smoking habit of *Maulvi* Gul Ali Shah, who was fond of the hookah. *Hazrat* Mirza, in contrast, always respected his teacher and not only distanced himself from these pranks but disapproved of them.

Popular sports of the time included wrestling, *kabbadi* (a game resembling prisoner's base) and weightlifting. Quail and cock fighting were also common. But *Hazrat* Mirza's nature detested these sports. Nobody ever saw him playing or quarreling with the other boys.

### **His passions**

*Hazrat* Mirza's only passions were the mosque and the Quran. He frequently walked to and fro both within and outside the mosque. This was his only exercise, but he did it with such frequency and regularity that it was sufficient to maintain his health. In fact, deeply immersed in his thoughts, he paced to and fro so often that his path would get etched into the ground.

### **Educational period in Batala**

*Maulvi* Gul Ali Shah had to return to Batala for some reason, and *Hazrat* Mirza also proceeded there to finish his education. He took up residence in a large house he owned in the city.

A couple of his fellow students from this period are noteworthy. One of them was *Lala* Bheem Sain who later practiced law in Sialkot. His maternal grandfather, Makhan Lal, was Extra Assistant Commissioner in Batala. He belonged to the Kayasth caste and in keeping with a long tradition of Persian scholarship in this caste, he sent his grandson into the tutelage of *Maulvi* Gul Ali Shah, where he became a fellow student of *Hazrat* Mirza. *Lala* Bheem Sain was so impressed by *Hazrat* Mirza's nobility, high morals, his life of purity, sense of honor and love of religion that when *Hazrat* Mirza moved to Sialkot in connection with his employment, *Lala* Bheem Sain actively sought his company and friendship. He had great respect for *Hazrat* Mirza and became an eyewitness to many of his miracles. This was the same *Lala* Bheem Sain whose son, *Lala* Kunwar Sain later became the Principal of Law College, Lahore.

Another fellow student was *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi. He, too, witnessed the lifestyle and pure morals of *Hazrat* Mirza and bore testimony to it with his own pen in *Ishaat-ul-Sunnah* Volume 7. He wrote:

The author's familiarity with the ideas and events expressed in *Barhain Ahmadiyya* is such that few of our contemporaries can match it. The author is not only my compatriot, but also a schoolfellow from an early period. Since then we have maintained contact through correspondence and meetings. My statement, therefore, that I am familiar with his nature and ideas is no exaggeration.

After thus expressing himself with regard to the credibility and importance of his opinion, he proceeded to describe *Hazrat Mirza* and his book, *Barhain Ahmadiyya*, which he was reviewing, in the following words:

The book's author has steadfastly helped the cause of Islam with all his heart and wealth, and with his pen and eloquence, in a way the like of which has rarely been witnessed among the Muslims before.

Further on he poses a challenge to test the veracity of his statement:

If somebody considers my statement as a typical Asiatic exaggeration, then show me another book that contends so powerfully against all the opponents of Islam, especially the *Arya Samaj* and *Brahmu Samaj*, and identify for me few persons who have helped Islam so much with their life and wealth, their pen and eloquence, and who have taken upon themselves the responsibility for the victory of Islam in the present time. And show me an individual who has challenged the opponents of Islam and the deniers of revelation with the claim that if they doubt the phenomenon of revelation, they should come to him to witness its demonstration, and has shown to such doubters the truth of his contention.

The students in a school know the character, habits, and morals of each other so well that even little weaknesses do not go unobserved. Later, if one of them claims to be a saint and God appointed, they would be unimpressed if his morals were flawed early on. *Lala Bheem Sain* had observed *Hazrat Mirza* as a fellow student at a time of his life when youth and inexperience can easily cause one to err. *Hazrat Mirza* was a handsome person in the prime of his youth; he was a student and unencumbered by any religious claim. If at this time of his life, he had not exhibited exemplary piety, *Lala Bheem Sain* would never have held him in such

high esteem and become a life long admirer and a loyal friend.

Muhammad Hussain Batalvi was a scholar and an expert of *Hadith* (tradition) in his own right, but he respected *Hazrat* Mirza to such an extent that he considered it an honor to help him put on his shoes and to pour water for his ablution. *Maulvi* Batalvi reviewed *Barahin Ahmadiyya* for his magazine *Ishaat-ul-Sunnah*, and his views quoted above clearly show his conviction that *Hazrat* Mirza possessed an excellent character, virtuous morals, and had made great efforts for the defense of Islam. He believed *Hazrat* Mirza received revelation from God and was a well-informed person. However, *Maulvi* Batalvi became inflamed when *Hazrat* Mirza claimed to be the Promised Messiah. Blinded by his prejudice and orthodoxy, he became a bitter opponent, and even went to the extent of drawing up a decree of heresy against *Hazrat* Mirza and getting signatures of many *Ulamas* (Doctors of Religion) of India affixed on it. In spite of this, he was unable to criticize any aspect of *Hazrat* Mirza's life prior to his claim to be the Promised Messiah. Even when challenged by *Hazrat* Mirza, he could not come up with any accusation against his pious life. This challenge was published in the form of an open letter to him in which *Hazrat* Mirza addressed him as follows:

Examine my past life, if you are a seeker of truth, and you will find overwhelming evidence that, through God's protection, I have never lied. A number of times, in the British courts, my life and honor were gravely threatened and my lawyers advised me that a little falsehood would save the situation but, by the Grace of Allah, I was willing to jeopardize my life and honor for the sake of truth. Sometimes in financial suits, I was willing to suffer huge losses rather than to resort to false statements. I have given evidence against my father and brother, merely from the fear of Allah, and did not for a moment forsake truth.

In this village and in Batala, I have spent a lifetime. Is there anyone who can show that I have spoken a lie? When I did not, for the sake of Allah, speak any falsehood against any person and preferred to sacrifice my life and honor, then why would I utter falsehood against God?

Consider the forceful assertion of his truthfulness and the powerful challenge to those who knew him in any way, whether as fellow residents, students or acquaintances, to contradict him if they could. None of them

could identify any weakness or falsehood in him. His opponents may call him an infidel and call his claim false but they fail to make their case using the Quranic yardstick of “I have lived among you a lifetime before it. Do you not then understand;” (10:16).

### **Medical education**

*Hazrat Mirza's* father was a competent physician of eastern medicine and an expert in this field. He tutored him in this discipline.

### **Love of reading**

*Hazrat Mirza* was a voracious reader. Besides his school texts, the books that he continually studied were the Holy Quran, *Sahih Bukhari*, *Fatwah-ul-Ghaib*, *Dalail-ul-Khairat*, *Tazkirat-ul-Auliya*, *Safar-us-Saadat*, and the poems of *Maulana Rume*. The selection of these books is a reflection of the purity of his spiritual and moral nature.

### **Yearning for knowledge of Quran**

Love of Quran was an integral part of *Hazrat Mirza's* existence. He spent the greater part of the day and the night reciting the Quran. He recited it while sitting, standing and walking, and was frequently moved to tears by it. He prayed fervently to Allah to grant him understanding of the Quran, and beseeched the Lord for this while prostrating before Him. If he found some verse of the Quran difficult to understand, he focused on it and humbly prayed for knowledge about its real meaning until such time that revelation enlightened him. As some new insight unfolded, he made notes to refresh his memory later on.

Allah alone knows how many times he read the Quran cover to cover. A Quran that he used for seventeen years is now with the heirs of *Maulana Muhammad Ali*. The pages are worn through use, and in the margins *Hazrat Mirza* has serially numbered the directives and prohibitions mandated by the Quran. *Mirza Sultan Ahmad*, *Hazrat Mirza's* eldest son, was of the opinion that he must have read the Quran more than a thousand times.

*Hazrat Mirza's* father was afraid that this excessively intensive study of the Quran may prove detrimental to his son's health, and so he advised him not to overdo it and to develop other interests as well. He strongly encouraged him to get interested in the management of their lands and to assist him in the litigation with which he hoped to reclaim the lost lands and villages of his ancestors. *Hazrat Mirza*, however, had no interest in this.



## Chapter

# 3

## ADOLESCENCE AND DEVOTION TO ALLAH

From an early age, *Hazrat Mirza* loved solitude. As a boy, he would retire with his lessons to an upstairs room to study alone. He abhorred idle play and amusement. His hours of solitude were spent in remembering Allah; nothing else interested him. The driving force behind his educational pursuits was the desire to enhance his understanding of Allah and to see how the knowledge could be profitably utilized in the service of Allah's creation and Islam. Physical desires often dominate a person's actions during youth, but in his case, adolescent passions only nurtured the seed of Allah's love ingrained within him. As childhood turned into adolescence, his immersion in the service and love of God increased and his quest for knowledge of Quran intensified.

### Marriage

*Hazrat Mirza* married when he was 19 years old.<sup>1</sup> His father arranged the match with the daughter of *Hazrat Mirza's* maternal uncle Mirza Jamiat Beg. Two sons were born from this marriage, Mirza Sultan Ahmad and Mirza Afzal Ahmad. (An account of his second marriage appears later.) Breaking from normal family customs and tradition, *Hazrat Mirza's* marriage was solemnized with great simplicity and remained

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1 One view expressed is that *Hazrat Mirza* married at the age of 15, but this assumes his year of birth as 1839. I have shown earlier that his actual birth was in 1835, which makes his age at marriage 19.

unsullied by the wedding extravaganzas introduced by the later Muslims. There must have been a Divine hand in this simplicity because the wedding of *Hazrat Mirza's* brother, Ghulam Qadir, was performed with the pomp and show that was customary for the family.

The experience of marriage at a young age can be extremely engrossing, but not so for *Hazrat Mirza*. He maintained a caring, intimate relationship with his wife, but for him the Divine attraction was so strong that no worldly event could make an iota of difference in his spiritual striving. He continued to spend long hours in solitary devotion to Allah in the mosque or in the small room attached to it. Often his food was brought to him there.

### Diet

*Hazrat Mirza's* diet was extremely simple. He shared whatever food he received from his house with some orphan and poor children. He divided the food into four or five equal portions and gave a loaf of bread and some gravy to each child until just one loaf was left for him, and sometimes not even that. If all the bread had been distributed, he would be content with just sipping some gravy. The children who shared *Hazrat Mirza's* food invariably turned up at mealtime, but if perchance someone did not show up, he would save a portion for the absent child. Each child thus knew that his meal would be waiting for him even if he were late.

Later in the afternoon, if *Hazrat Mirza* felt hungry, he would send for some chickpeas from the market and snack on them. An occasional cup of tea concluded his austere diet. His intake of food progressively diminished and became so small that he commented about it in *Kitab-ul-Bariyya* as follows:

These efforts have molded my spirit in a way that I can go without food for long periods. The thought has crossed my mind many times that, if an obese person, who besides his corpulence is also a wrestler, is made to fast with me, he would die before I felt the need for food.

### Devotion

*Hazrat Mirza* was a lover of the Quran and the *Sunnat* (practice) of the Holy Prophet, and his devotions never exceeded the limits set by the Quran and *Sunnat*. Besides the compulsory five daily prayers and the optional *Ishraq* (mid-morning) prayer, *Hazrat Mirza* loved to pray the *Tahajjud* (late night prayer). His concentration was so keen during prayers that it appeared as if he had been transported out of this world. In particular, he recited the *Sura Fatihah* with great concentration and affection in the *Tahajjud* and followed it with lengthy supplications.

In his younger days, *Hazrat Mirza* sometimes repeated prayers several times if he felt that his concentration had been lacking. He had learned this prescription from an alcoholic, and he described the incident as follows:

One day I did not feel the Divine presence in my prayer, and so I decided to go out of town and pray in the wilderness, free from distractions. On the way, I passed through a bazaar and overheard a Hindu describing his experience of the previous night to a friend: "Last night," he said, "I had a drink but did not feel intoxicated. I had a second and still felt nothing. So I kept on drinking till I was intoxicated." I thought to myself that I, too, would repeat my prayers over and over again until I was spiritually intoxicated and sensed the Divine presence.

Besides prayers, his devotional acts included recitation of the Quran, the *Darud* (a prayer invoking blessings on the Holy Prophet) and *Istaghfar* (supplication for protection from or forgiveness of sins). *Hazrat Mirza* was truly in love with the Quran and its recitation was forever on his lips, whether he was standing, sitting or walking. He was so moved by it that tears flowed uncontrollably from his eyes. He said the *Darud* often and with a lot of feeling, beseeching Allah for His salutation and blessings on the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his followers. Often, the intensity of his emotions caused him to break down and weep. About his devotional acts, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote in *Kitab-ul-Bariyya*:

I have not performed difficult religious exercises, nor have I, like some of the current Sufis put myself through violent afflictions. Neither have I secluded myself to undertake specific religious prescriptions, nor have I indulged in monkish acts against the orders of *Sunnat* to which the Book of Allah may have any objection.

*Hazrat Mirza* considered the devotional acts of current-day Sufis and Muslim ascetics, that go beyond the limits set by the Quran and the *Sunnat*, as innovations. In fact, he considered such acts to be synonymous to a new *Shariat* (law). In this connection, *Hazrat Mirza* would frequently recite this verse:

Try to achieve righteousness, piety and sincerity,  
Strive for it but never embellish in any matter (the practice of)  
Muhammad Mustafa.

### ***Hazrat Mirza's solitude concerns his father***

*Hazrat Mirza's* disinterest in worldly matters and his fondness for solitude caused his father considerable concern for he desired him to become actively involved in managing their estate and in pursuing the litigation with which he hoped to retrieve the original family fortunes. Seeing his son absorbed day and night in intense religious study and prayers, he would remark in frustration "How has this *Mullah* (cleric) been born in our family?" Visitors who enquired *Hazrat Mirza's* whereabouts from his father were met with the reply:

Go look for him by some faucet in the mosque's washroom (a reference to performing ablution,) and if you find him not, then search for him in the nooks of the mosque, and if you still do not find him, then check to see if the person who stowed away the prayer carpets did not inadvertently roll him up and leave him stashed away in it; for truly even in life, he is dead.

These remarks are full of meaning. They show that the father, who fervently desired his son to follow in his footsteps, had recognized that the only pursuit that interested his son was the worship of Allah, and his ardor for it had put him in the state of the living dead. In other words, he had killed all worldly desires, passions and wishes, and set himself free for exclusive devotion to Allah. This is a true example of *Mauto Qabal an Tamuto* (dying before the actual death).

Mirza Ismail Beg, a family employee, recorded an incident in which *Hazrat Mirza's* father made some telling comments about his son's excessive passion for Divine worship. Mirza Ismail Beg was a young lad who had been employed just to serve food to *Hazrat Mirza* and to accompany him in prayers. In addition, during the winter months, his duties included fetching hot water for *Hazrat Mirza's* ablution for the *Tahajjud* prayer and to offer the prayer himself. Thus his duties were very light and consisted of saying prayers and serving meals. He also ate from the meals he served because in *Hazrat Mirza's* food, there was a share for him as well, in addition to the share of the orphaned and poor children. If Mirza Ismail overslept, *Hazrat Mirza* would wake him gently by shaking him. He did not call out to him lest the sleeping household be disturbed. Mirza Ismail recounted:

The elder Mirza sahib sent for me and asked me to sit by his side on one of the two chairs that lay near the bed on which he was lying. "Tell me," he said, "How does your Mirza spend his time?"

I replied that his time was spent in the study of the Quran. On this he enquired, "Does he even pause (in the recitation) to breathe?" Then he asked, "Does he sleep at night?" and I replied that he slept and then got up for prayers. He then remarked, "He has divorced himself from all relationships. I have to get others to work for me. His other brother is so capable but he provides no service."

The father here gave evidence of three things. First, the son had such intense love of the Quran that he never tired from reading it. Second, the son prayed for such long hours in the night that the father was concerned whether he slept at all. Third, that he had cut all worldly relationships to devote himself totally to God.

A father's concern never ceases, and even though the son may have grown up, paternal affection overwhelms other emotions. *Hazrat Mirza's* father was disappointed with his son for his inattention to farming and family litigation, but in his heart, he knew that his son was doing the right thing. Thus he once remarked:<sup>2</sup>

I know the direction in which my son is inclined, but it is only out of kindness that I draw his attention to worldly matters. Even so, the truth is that it is we who are wasting our lives.

Seeing his son so totally absorbed in spiritual matters with complete disregard for worldly affairs, the father's paternal affection desired that a share of the enjoyment and pleasures of life should also fall to his son. He was also really worried about his future, and showed his concern by remarking at times, "How will this son of mine provide for himself after me?" Despite this anxiety, deep within himself, he realized that the real path to tread was the one his son had taken, and not the one they had chosen, for the latter path amounted to a waste of one's life.

Sometimes, before partaking his meals, the father would ask, "Has somebody sent food to the *Maseetar* (a Punjabi term meaning a person who spends an excessive amount of time in the mosque) or not?" What tremendous affection and kindness are hidden in these words, and once again, this provides a father's testimonial to the complete devotion of his son to Allah.

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2 *Kitab-ul-Bariyya*.

## Teaching

*Hazrat* Mirza loved solitude, but he had to interrupt his life of devotion in Qadian to pursue the family litigation in accordance with the wishes of his father. The time remaining after discharging these responsibilities was devoted to religious study and to teaching and instruction. The children who visited him, and this included the orphans and poor children with whom he shared his meals, took lessons in prayer, *Darud* and other aspects of Islam. The employees likewise were instructed in matters of religion and great stress was laid on regularity of prayers. In situations of distress and affliction, *Hazrat* Mirza emphasized the importance of reciting the *Darud* and *Istaghfar* because he maintained that these constituted an effective prescription for warding off evil.

In addition to the verbal instruction, *Hazrat* Mirza taught some standard textbooks to a mixed group of pupils. This included his eldest son, Mirza Sultan Ahmad, who took Arabic lessons from him. Mian Ali Muhammad finished the Persian primers *Gulistan* and *Bostan* with him. A well-known *Arya* (member of a Hindu sect) of Qadian by the name of Bhai Kishen Singhji, who was easily recognizable in the town by his mane of long flowing hair, asked *Hazrat* Mirza to teach him medicine. Despite his preoccupations, *Hazrat* Mirza did not turn him down and took him as a student. Kishen Singhji recounted his experience and that of the other students:

When I went for lessons to *Hazrat* Mirza's room, the door would be closed but on hearing my approaching footsteps, he would open the door. He never once lost his temper the entire period I studied with him. We had no hesitation in going to him at any time, and he never pleaded preoccupation or resting time as a way of putting us off. Sometimes, he would be sleeping and our arrival would wake him up, but he did not mind being disturbed by our arrival. If it was mealtime, he started the lessons and continued with his meals. If he suspected an error, he would forthwith go to fetch books of reference for clarification. In reply to our protestation that he should first finish his meal, his answer was that he did not want to waste our time.

Thus *Hazrat* Mirza did not just confine himself to Divine worship but spent time and effort to help and benefit others.

## Chapter

# 4

## RIGHTEOUS CONDUCT IN LITIGATION

### **Aversion to litigation**

*Hazrat* Mirza had no interest in farming, and the litigation that almost invariably ensued from its pursuit in the rural communities of India. In fact, he detested the intrusion it caused in his favorite pastime - the remembrance of Allah. Even so, he had to devote time to these matters in compliance with the wishes of his father. He writes in the book *Kitab-ul-Bariyya*:

My father instituted several suits in the British courts to recover his ancestral lands. He asked me to take on the conduct of these suits and, much to my regret, these useless quarrels engaged me for a long period and wasted a lot of my precious time. In addition, my father entrusted me with the supervision of farming matters as well. I had no aptitude or inclination for such work, and for this reason, I frequently incurred my father's displeasure. His kindness and affection for me were great, but he wanted to make me a worldly person and this disgusted my nature.

Once the Commissioner was to visit Qadian and my father told me repeatedly that we should go a few miles outside the town to welcome him. My nature, however, revolted against this idea and since I was also not well, I did not go. This matter, too, displeased him.

My father desired that I should remain immersed in worldly affairs all the time, but I could not bring myself to do this. Nevertheless, I did devote myself to this work in accordance with my father's wishes, merely for the reward of compliance, and not with the hope of any worldly gain. I also prayed fervently for my father. He was fully convinced that I was 'one who does good to his parents' and at times would remark, "I know the direction in which my son is inclined (i.e. towards religion) but it is only out of kindness that I draw his attention to worldly matters. However, if the truth be known, it is really we who are wasting our lives."

In accordance with my father's wishes, I took employment with the British government although temperamentally I was revolted by the idea. After a few years, my father found it difficult to bear my separation and directed me to resign. In compliance with his directions, which were in accord with my wishes, I resigned from this service that was so totally against my nature and, relieved of this responsibility, I returned home to my father.

I learnt from this experience that most persons in employment lead an impious life and there are but a few who fulfill their religious obligations and resist illegal gratification from temptations that surround them as a trial. I am amazed at the attitude of the majority. Their sole concern is to gather wealth by fair means or foul, and their entire striving is directed towards advancement in this short mortal life. I found very few who merely from remembering the greatness of Allah inculcate in themselves high moral virtues based on traits of kindness, chastity, humility, sympathy, purity of soul, truth, control of passions, and consumption of only that which is lawful. Most were proud, immoral, and careless of their religion, and in their meanness of conduct appeared to be associates of the devil.

Because Allah in his infinite wisdom desired that I should experience all manner of men, I came in contact with all kinds of persons. I am pained and revolted by the memory of those days and my feelings are summed up by these verses of *Maulana Rume*.

I am disillusioned with all manner of men, rich and poor,  
They are all one and the same.



They befriended me in accordance with their own needs,  
But none tried to find out the hidden secrets in my heart.

When I returned to my father in Qadian, I became busy once again with the affairs of our farm but I was able to devote most of my time to the study of the Quran, its commentaries, and the Books of *Hadith*. Sometimes, I read from these books to my father, who was in a state of melancholy because of the unfavorable outcome of the lawsuits. He had spent about seventy thousand rupees in legal and lawyer fees but the suits were decided against us as our ancestral lands had passed out of our possession a long time ago and regaining their ownership was just a vain idea. Because of this failure, my father was caught up in a deep abyss of sorrow and grief and was spending his days in a state of restlessness. His condition was a clear testimony to the benefit of spiritual values and a life unsullied by worldly contamination. Although my father owned several villages, was the recipient of an annual award from the British government and had a pension from his previous employment, all this was nothing compared to what he had seen. He was, for this reason, always in a state of sorrow and grief, and often remarked that if he had strived for religion the way he had for this impure world, he would perhaps have been a saint or religious mendicant. Frequently he recited this verse:

Your time has gone by leaving behind nothing save a few  
days,  
Remembering Someone from night till morn is the way to  
spend these few days.

Sometimes, he would recite the following verses, which were of his own authorship:

O the Being Who is the support of everyone without support,  
I do not believe that I will return disappointed.

And sometimes, he would recite this verse, also his own, with great feelings:

The tears of lovers and the woes of others,  
Makes my heart miserable at the sadness of others.

Towards the end of his life, he felt intense regret that he had to face his Lord empty handed. Mournfully, he would remark that he had wasted his life in the meaningless wrangles of this world...and would add that the latter part of his own father's (my grandfather's) life was also spent in misery, sadness and grief just like his. His father had also failed in whatever he tried, and he (my grandfather) in turn would often repeat a verse of his father, i.e. my great-grandfather, the first line of which I have forgotten but the second one reads as follows:

When I plan for something, fate laughs.

This sorrow and pain of my father intensified greatly in his old age. As a result, about six months before his death, he undertook the construction of a mosque in the center of the town, which later became the principal mosque of the area. He willed that he be buried in a corner of the mosque so that the name of God may keep reaching his ears. It is entirely possible that this act may be his salvation. The day the mosque was completed, or perhaps a few bricks may still have remained to be laid in the floor, my father died after a brief bout with dysentery. He was buried at the place in the mosque he had chosen. O Allah! Have mercy on him and grant him a place in paradise. He was between 80-85 years old when he died.

### **Pursuit of litigation in compliance with father's wishes**

Thus *Hazrat* Mirza pursued the litigation initiated by his father merely in compliance with his father's wishes and against the inclination of his nature. He went wherever his father directed him to go for this purpose, and at times bore great difficulties in the process.

### **Visit to Dalhousie**

*Hazrat* Mirza traveled to Amritsar, Lahore, Gurdaspur and Dalhousie numerous times in connection with court cases. At times, he walked all the way from Qadian to Dalhousie. In those days, the means of communication were poor and facilities for travelers nonexistent. The journey to Dalhousie involved travel along mountainous paths, and when performed on foot was especially arduous. *Hazrat* Mirza undertook these long trips frequently on foot and showed great courage and energy in braving the ascents and descents on the way. He describes the wondrous sights and his feelings during the days of the journey:

Whenever I had an occasion to visit Dalhousie, the greenery of the mountains and the flowing water created a spontaneous desire in me to declare the praise of Allah, and this gave me great pleasure in prayer. There were also numerous occasions for solitude there.

He once narrated an incident that occurred on his journey to Dalhousie:

I was traveling to Dalhousie for a court case when it started to rain heavily and my companion and I got off the horse carriage and made our way to a wayside house, belonging to a local man, with the intention of asking for shelter. My companion went ahead to ask the permission of the owner to let us in but he refused. This resulted in an altercation between them, and the owner of the house became very angry and abusive. I stepped forward to pacify the owner but as soon as we made eye contact and before I could say anything to him, he hung down his head and said, “The truth is that I have a grown up daughter and so I do not allow strangers into my home. However, you are free to enter.” The man was a total stranger and I did not know him nor did he know me.

This author submits that *Hazrat Mirza*’s countenance clearly showed his great piety and purity, so on seeing him, the homeowner was convinced of his honest intentions and his fear was dispelled.

### Conduct in journey

The pursuit of legal suits took *Hazrat Mirza* frequently to Batala and Gurdaspur. It was common to travel with a companion in those days. *Hazrat Mirza* would take a mount for the way, and his normal mode was to set out on the journey riding the horse but outside the precinct of the village, he dismounted and would ask his companion, a friend or employee, to ride the horse and walked himself.<sup>1</sup> Half way through the journey, they switched positions. Sometimes, he walked all the way while the companion rode. The same procedure was used on the way back.

Mirza Ismail Beg, his valet and frequent travel companion, often protested that he felt embarrassed to ride when *Hazrat Mirza* was walking. *Hazrat Mirza*’s reply to him was, “If I am not embarrassed to walk,

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1 Sometimes his father hired a horse carriage for him but he would get off outside the village and preferred to walk along reading a book. The traveling companion was asked to stay in the carriage.

then why should you be embarrassed to ride?"

### **The habit of walking**

Allah Himself arranges the affairs of His chosen men. It was physically necessary for *Hazrat* Mirza to dissipate the fatigue from mental labor, lengthy supplications through the night and day, and the intense concentration on Allah; the exercise proposed by God Himself for this purpose was walking. Whether traveling or residing in a place, so deeply ingrained was the habit of walking and pacing that *Hazrat* Mirza never went without it even for a day. After prayers in the house or mosque, he frequently paced to and fro reciting the Quran. The morning walk was an integral part of his lifestyle. *Hazrat* Mirza would say that at times he sets off for his morning walk after the *Tahajjud* prayer and reaches Wadiala, a village five and a half miles from Qadian on the road to Batala, by the time of the morning prayer. Even in his old age, when he was over seventy years old and suffering from a number of maladies, he frequently walked four or five miles in the morning. This humble author has had the opportunity of accompanying him for walks. His pace was so fast that many people had difficulty keeping up with him and, in particular, *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din would get very tired.

*Hazrat* Mirza was a prolific writer, and most writers can concentrate best on their writing when seated. However, *Hazrat* Mirza had his own distinctive style. Besides writing while seated, he also wrote while pacing in his courtyard. An ink-pot was placed on either end of the courtyard and as his pacing took him to one end, he would dip his pen in the ink and continue with his writing until he reached the other end where he would replenish the ink from the other pot. Portions of the great religious literature he authored were written while thus pacing. It is amazing that this manner of writing did not produce any break or flaw in his inspiration or the fluency of the script.

### **Stay in Batala**

*Hazrat* Mirza's family owned property in Batala consisting of some shops and residential units. Ultimately, this property was sold to pay the bills for litigation, but before that happened, an upstairs apartment in the residential unit was kept for the stay of family members when business brought them to Batala. *Hazrat* Mirza stayed in this accommodation when he came to Batala for the court cases.

A poor weaver was the caretaker of the property. On his arrival, *Hazrat* Mirza would give him two paises to buy some bread. *Hazrat*

Mirza ate only a small piece of one bread with water and gave the rest of the bread and lentils, supplied for free by the baker with the purchase of bread, to the weaver.

A frequent companion of *Hazrat* Mirza on these trips was Mirza Din Muhammad from the village of Langarwal, who belonged to a very religious family. This background motivated him to seek *Hazrat* Mirza's company and he began to spend a lot of his time with him. He stated:

Whenever I accompanied *Hazrat* Mirza to Batala, he asked me to ride on his horse behind him. On arriving in Batala, he ordered two paises worth of bread for himself but actually ate only a small piece of one bread and gave the rest to the weaver. He would separately give me four annas (i.e. eight times as much as he spent on his own food) for my meals. His food intake was very modest and he was not addicted to anything.

This was the manner in which *Hazrat* Mirza treated his friends and employees. He was solicitous of their comforts, and spent more on their meals than he did on his own.

### **Preparation for court cases**

*Hazrat* Mirza's nature was disinclined towards litigation and, in fact, he abhorred such activity, but this does not mean that he showed any carelessness in the conduct of the cases or that the unfavorable outcomes of the suits were the result of indifference on his part. Based upon his resources and the moral and legal legitimacy of means used, he prepared diligently for each court appearance. Summaries of important documents and oral evidence were made and copies of plaint and papers in the file were kept ready to aid in understanding and explaining the facts. He also maintained meticulous account of all expenses although his father never asked him for it.

### **Prayer and love of righteousness**

*Hazrat* Mirza prepared fully for court appearances, but never resorted to falsehood or illegitimate means. His supplication for the outcome of the litigation always kept foremost the approval of God, and the only thing he asked for was that the suit be decided on merit in favor of the party that had right on its side. After the night prayers on the day prior to a court appearance, he would tell the congregation in the mosque:

I have to be in court tomorrow in accordance with the wishes of my father, which I cannot disobey. I request you to pray that this suit be decided favorably for the rightful party and that I may be released from this obligation. I do not ask that the suit be decided in my favor for Allah alone knows who is in the right. Whatever is right in His eyes may be corroborated and may that person win the suit.

He then spread wide his hands in prayer and supplicated for a long time with the congregation joining in the prayer. Thus, *Hazrat Mirza's* prayer in these suits was never for his success but for the victory of right and truth. He hated lies and false testimony. Sometimes, his lawyers would disassociate themselves from his cases because they believed that, without false evidence, conviction was a foregone conclusion and therefore, there was no use in representing him. Even in the face of a sure loss *Hazrat Mirza* never deviated from what was right and he frankly told his lawyers:

I have engaged you because religion directs that all lawful resources be used in any venture. However, I know fully well that nothing happens on this earth until it is first willed in heaven. There is no way that I will make Allah angry for your sake.

Worldly wise men were astonished at his naiveté but *Hazrat Mirza* did not care for their perceptions where principles were concerned. Interestingly, *Hazrat Mirza* was aided miraculously in all such cases.

### **An example of honesty in litigation**

This example of steadfast adherence to righteousness in litigation happened around 1877 or 1878. Chronologically, it belongs to a period after the death of *Hazrat Mirza's* father but it is appropriate to mention it here because it provides an excellent example of *Hazrat Mirza's* honesty. The cause of action in the suit was a breach of law inadvertently committed by *Hazrat Mirza* himself. *Hazrat Mirza* narrates:

Almost fifteen years ago or maybe a little more (the incident took place in the year 1877 or 1888), this humble person wrote an article in defense of Islam against charges made by the Arya Samaj sect of Hinduism and sent it to a press for publication. The owner of the press was a Christian named Ralia Ram who was a lawyer in Amritsar and also published a paper called *Wakil Hindustan*.

The article was mailed with a wrapper around it so that both its sides were open. Along with the article, I enclosed a letter addressed to Ralia Ram. The letter, besides giving instructions for printing, also commented on the truthfulness of Islam and the falsehood in other religions. Ralia Ram was angered by these comments and seized upon an opportunity to attack me. I was not aware that it is illegal to enclose a letter in a wrapper containing material for publication.<sup>2</sup> Violation of this rule is punishable by six months' imprisonment or fine of five hundred rupees.

Ralia Ram informed the postal authorities of the violation and collaborated with them in lodging a criminal complaint against me in court. Even before I was informed about the proceedings against me, Allah showed me in a vision that Ralia Ram had sent a snake to bite me and I had fried the snake as one would a fish and sent it back to him. I believe that this was an indication that the final adjudication in court would set a new precedent for lawyers.

Eventually, I received summons to appear in District Court, Gurdaspur, for answering charges against me. All the lawyers I consulted said that the only way out of the situation was to resort to falsehood. They advised that I should deny putting the letter in the same wrapper as the article and to contend that Ralia Ram himself must have put the letter in it. They further said that, if the charge was denied, the case would have to be decided on the basis of evidence, and acquittal could be obtained by producing some false witnesses. In the alternative, there was no way to avoid a conviction. I rejected all such advice and remained firm that under no circumstances would I give up truthfulness, come what may.

That day or the next day, I appeared in the court of a British magistrate. The complainant was the Postal Authority and it was represented by one of its British officers. The first question the magistrate asked me was if the letter and parcel were mine, and if I had put the letter with the article. Without hesitation, I replied in the affirmative and explained that I had not done this with any ill intention to deprive the government of revenue but that I had not

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<sup>2</sup> Material for publication in an open-ended wrapper is charged a lower rate of postage. For this reason, it is illegal to enclose anything that attracts a higher tariff.

considered the letter separate from the article, nor had I written any private matter in it. As soon as the magistrate heard this reply, Allah turned his heart in my favor. The postal officer put forward lengthy arguments in English that I did not understand, but after each argument, the magistrate would respond with “No! No!” When all the arguments of the postal officer were exhausted, the magistrate started writing the judgment and after writing a line and a half or so, he told me I was free to go. I stepped out of the court and thanked the Beneficent who had granted me victory against an English officer. I know full well that it was the blessing of truth that Allah warded off this evil from me. Some time earlier I had seen in a dream that a person tried to snatch my cap and I said to him, “What are you doing?” and he replied, “It’s okay! It’s okay!”

### **Honesty in litigation - a second example**

This incident, too, is best narrated in the words of *Hazrat Mirza*:

My son Sultan Ahmad filed a complaint in court correctly alleging that a Hindu had constructed his house on our land, and my son asked for the demolition of the structure. However, the facts of the suit given in the complaint contained one matter that was incorrect, and if proven so, the suit was liable to be dismissed. The failure of the suit meant that we would lose ownership of the land.

The defendant spotted the weakness in Sultan Ahmad’s complaint and asked the court to summon me as a witness. In response to the summons to appear as a witness, I went to Batala and stayed with *Babu Fateh Din*, sub postmaster, whose house was near the courts. The judge in the case was a Hindu, whose name I do not remember, but I recall that he was lame of a leg.

Before the court appearance, Sultan Ahmad’s lawyer came to see me at the house and asked what I would depose. I told him that I would depose only that which was true and factual. He became very upset and said, “Then what is the need for you to go to court? There is no sense for me to pursue this suit and I am withdrawing from it.”

The suit was lost merely because of my bias for truth but I consider truthfulness for the sake of Allah’s pleasure to be more important than any material loss.



These two incidents are not without proof. Sheikh Ali Ahmad, advocate of Gurdaspur<sup>3</sup> and Sardar Muhammad Hayat CSI, are witnesses of the first incident I narrated and the court record, too, must be preserved in Gurdaspur. Witnesses of the second incident<sup>4</sup> are *Babu Fateh Din*, the lawyer, whose name I do not recall now, and the judge I mentioned above ... another witness of this suit is *Nabi Baksh, Patwari* (an official who maintains the record of land ownership) of Batala.

### Honesty in litigation - third example

This incident is also from a period after the death of *Hazrat Mirza's* father but his brother *Ghulam Qadir* was alive at the time. *Hazrat Mirza* narrated:

After the death of my father, *Mirza Azam Beg Lahori* instigated the former partners in the village common of *Qadian* to file a suit in the District Court against me and my brother, *Mirza Ghulam Qadir*, praying the court to grant them rights in the village common. I knew fully well that their rights had been extinguished during the period of Sikh rule. Later, my father had single-hand-

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- 3 Sheikh Ali Ahmad attorney was engaged to appear for *Hazrat Mirza* in the complaint filed against him by the Post Office. When he realized that *Hazrat Mirza* was not willing to act according to his advice, he withdrew from the suit because, in his opinion, it was impossible for *Hazrat Mirza* to be acquitted. Section 12 and 56 of Act 14, 1866, and Government of India Notification No. 2442 dated December 7, 1877, made the action of *Hazrat Mirza* an offence for which the punishment was as stated in the narration. *Hazrat Mirza* put himself at risk merely to seek the pleasure of Allah and Allah did not abandon him but brought about the circumstances leading to his acquittal. He had to appear in court alone without a lawyer, but God was with him. *Hasbinallah ho wa naimal wakil* (3:173), Allah is sufficient for us and He is an excellent Guardian. God himself protects those who devote themselves entirely to Allah.
  - 4 The disputed house in the complaint of *Mirza Sultan Ahmad* is the same large brick house that readers may have seen in the vicinity of the principal mosque of *Qadian*. The owner of this house was a Hindu Extra Assistant Commissioner. When he retired and moved into the house, he would sit very haughtily and proudly before it and sometimes accosted the people using the mosque. He was a vehement opponent of the *Ahmadiyya* Movement. It is said that when he planned to build another story on his house, *Hazrat Mirza* sent him a message as follows: "The mosque is next to your house. It is not nice to raise a house next to the Royal Camp. Desist from this disrespect." However, that proud man did not heed. In a short while, nobody was left in that house except an old woman. The house was put up for sale and *Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din* broached *Hazrat Mirza* to buy the house. He replied, "I will not buy that house even for ten rupees."

edly instituted suits and spent eight thousand rupees to recover the village common and none of the other partners had participated in this effort at all.

When I prayed for success in the suit during its pendency, I received the following revelation in Arabic: “I will accept all your prayers except the one about the partners.”<sup>5</sup> After receiving this revelation, I called together my brother, all the men and women of my family, and friends, some of whom are still alive, and told them openly that we should not contest the suit filed by the partners as this was against the will of God. They did not heed my advice and ultimately lost the suit. Even those who are now my opponents are witnesses to my resolve to bear the loss of thousands of rupees but not to litigate. Since my brother controlled all the affairs of our estate, I repeatedly tried to convince him of the futility of litigation but he did not agree and ultimately had to suffer a loss.

### **Litigation made no difference to his communion with Allah**

The litigation instituted by *Hazrat Mirza*’s father to recover their ancestral property continued for a long time. In addition, there were always other suits connected with their farming that were pending in courts. *Hazrat Mirza* had to travel to Batala, Gurdaspur, Dalhousie, Amritsar and Lahore in connection with these suits. Some of these suits

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5 The author submits that “I will accept all your prayers,” does not mean that God will always accept each and every prayer. He has power over all things. He may grant any supplication He desires and rejects any that He, in His wisdom and knowledge, chooses not to grant. The word ‘all’ here is relative and applies to all the prayers that *Hazrat Mirza* was making at that time. But with this good news was the exception about the prayer for success against the partners. Thus, this revealed verse did not lay down a generic rule but was limited in its applicability to the prayers being made at that time.

There is a departure in this instance from the normal mode in which *Hazrat Mirza* prayed for suits. He generally asked only that justice be done but in this case, he was so convinced about the correctness of their position that he prayed directly for success. However, Allah had decreed a large material loss for him as a trial, and *Hazrat Mirza* was found fully prepared for this sacrifice. No sooner did the revelation come to him, he decided not to contest the suit and to accept the large loss this action entailed. Anyone else may have tried to interpret the revelation in a hundred other ways, but not so *Hazrat Mirza*. His strong faith, and his nature always prepared to bow before Divine will made him ready to sacrifice anything at the slightest sign from God.

A man of God should be such,

That he should bow his head before any directive of the Beloved.

(Persian Verse)

had to be pursued right up to the Chief Court of Punjab. Through all of this, *Hazrat Mirza's* condition can best be described by the Persian proverb, 'The hands are busy with the work but the heart is with the beloved.' His devotion to Allah did not falter one bit regardless of whether he was traveling or staying in one place. Generally the parties to a suit, be they plaintiff or defendant, show some restlessness and anxiety but *Hazrat Mirza* was never perplexed or concerned. He was the embodiment of the Quranic verse, "Now surely in Allah's remembrance do hearts find rest" (13:28).

There was not a single prayer that he did not offer at its appointed time during the entire period of litigation. If it was time to pray while he was waiting for his turn in court, he offered his prayer in the premises of the courts and became so totally engrossed in it as if he had no other work in the world. At times, his turn in court came while he was praying but he did not interrupt or hasten his prayer and kept on praying with the same tranquility. He narrated one incident:

I was in Batala for a suit and it became time to pray while I was waiting for my turn in court. I was still in prayer when the bailiff called my case and I did not respond. The opposing party appeared before the judge and pressed for an *exparte* decree. The judge not only refused their request but also decided the suit against them. I went to the court after finishing my prayer and fully expected that the judge would have recorded me as absent. I told him that I had been praying and he replied that he had already awarded the decree in my favor.

There are many other such instances as well.

### Abhorred litigation

*Hazrat Mirza* abhorred litigation and agreed to oversee the conduct of the suits merely to comply with his father's wishes. He prepared for each suit to the fullest extent possible, made all legitimate efforts, and then left the outcome to God. His faith in Allah and satisfaction with His will made him feel neither sorrow on losing a suit nor happiness on winning. The end of a suit, without regard to its outcome, was a matter of great relief because it meant freedom from a worldly preoccupation. The following incident typifies his attitude in this matter.

*Hazrat Mirza* came to Lahore in connection with a suit and stayed with Syed Muhammad Ali Shah, a notable of Qadian, who was working

for the Forest Department in Lahore. *Hazrat* Mirza had to spend the greater part of the day in the Chief Court and so it was arranged that an employee would take his lunch to him there. One day the employee returned with the food uneaten and on inquiry told Syed Shah that *Hazrat* Mirza had told him that he would be home for lunch. In a short while, *Hazrat* Mirza arrived, looking very happy and cheerful. Syed Shah asked, "Why are you so happy today? Has the judgment been announced in the suit?" He replied, "Our petition was dismissed but I am thankful to God that this litigation is finally over." *Hazrat* Mirza had predicted the fate of the suit beforehand but Syed Shah was still grieved at the outcome. *Hazrat* Mirza, however, was completely tranquil and cheerful and repeatedly reassured Syed Shah that, "The loss of a suit is not something to grieve about."

This is the picture of a *nafs al-mutmainna* (soul that is at rest). Consider the facts. *Hazrat* Mirza's father files a suit for the recovery of his ancestral estate and the final decision is to be given by the Chief Court of Punjab. The suit is dismissed. This amounts to a loss of hundreds of thousands of rupees. *Hazrat* Mirza is one of the two heirs to the fortune and yet he is completely unperturbed. On the contrary, he is elated that this daily headache, so wasteful of time, is over and he can devote himself fully to the remembrance of Allah. What a show of the love of Allah that had permeated every cell of his being. Everything could be sacrificed for Him.

## Chapter

# 5

## EMPLOYMENT

### **Journey to Jammu**

*Hazrat* Mirza had shown no interest in farming and the associated litigation that inevitably ensued. As an alternative, his father then began to consider a career for him in the bureaucracy. On the advice of a nephew and the strength of his contacts in the State of Kashmir, where he himself had served meritoriously, he directed *Hazrat* Mirza to proceed to Jammu for finding suitable employment. Accordingly, *Hazrat* Mirza and Syed Muhammad Ali Shah set out for Jammu, traveling by way of Kalanoor. On the way, as was customary with him, *Hazrat* Mirza was completely engrossed in his devotions to Allah and had little consideration for his own person. While crossing a stream near Kalanoor, he lost a shoe and did not even notice it until somebody pointed it out to him several miles further on in the journey. Finally, they reached Jammu.

*Hazrat* Mirza, however, could not bring himself to accept State employment because he detested the flattery and courtier mannerism required of employees in the principalities of India. He spent his time there in prayer and recitation of the Quran. When his father learnt of this, he sent a relative to bring him back to Qadian.

### **Employment in Sialkot**

Employment with the British Government offered a more dignified bureaucratic career and *Hazrat* Mirza's father next used his contacts to place him in a clerical job in the District courts of Sialkot. This was the year 1864 C.E. and for the next four years, *Hazrat* Mirza lived and worked

in Sialkot. During this period, he fulfilled the rights and obligations due to God, his superior officers, and to the public in the best possible manner. He earned tributes for his righteousness, honesty, piety and regard for duty from both friends and foes.

A description of *Hazrat* Mirza's life in Sialkot is vividly portrayed in a letter written by Professor Emeritus Syed Mir Hassan, an eminent scholar of Persian and Arabic,<sup>1</sup> and a published author. Sheikh Yaqub Ali Turab, editor of *Al-Hakam*, published it in his newspaper. I reproduce this letter in its entirety because it is a testimonial from a person who was not a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza but who wrote the facts as he saw them.

### **Syed Mir Hassan's letter**

In 1864 C.E., *Hazrat* Mirza accepted employment in Sialkot and came to live here. He possessed a reclusive temperament and abhorred the waste of time in idle and frivolous conversations usual in most social gatherings. He, therefore, kept himself aloof from such company.

His frequent companion and best friend, if he had one, was the lawyer *Lala* Bheem Sen, whose maternal grandfather, Deputy Mithan Lal, was extra assistant commissioner in Batala. Mirza sahib knew him from Batala and they continued their friendship in Sialkot. *Lala* sahib had an affable temperament, an open mind and mastery of the Persian language, and these qualities, additionally, earned him the respect of Mirza sahib as a fellow scholar.

Initially, Mirza sahib's colleagues in the office were unaware of his literary talents. In the early part of the summer that year, an Arab youth, by the name of Muhammad Saleh, arrived in the city and was suspected of spying. The Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Parkinson, who later became Commissioner of Rawalpindi, summoned Muhammad Saleh to his office for interrogation. An interpreter was needed. Since Mirza sahib had complete mastery over written and spoken Arabic, he was called in as an interpreter and directed to translate the questions into Arabic and the answers into Urdu so that the officer could write them down. Mirza sahib performed this task admirably and people began to realize his literary accomplishments.

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1 This author was also a student of Syed Mir Hassan and studied Persian and Arabic from him.

Through the efforts of *Maulvi* Elahi Baksh, Chief District Inspector of Schools, night classes in English were started for the clerical staff of the courts. Mirza sahib joined this class and completed the study of one or two primers of English.<sup>2</sup>

Mirza sahib was extremely fond of religious discussions and frequently debated with Christian missionaries. Amongst the missionaries he debated was Reverend Elisha, an Indian priest who resided in South Hajipura. During the debate, the Reverend contended that, "Salvation cannot be achieved without accepting Christianity." Mirza sahib retorted, "Define salvation and what you understand by it in a comprehensive manner." Reverend Elisha could not give a detailed reply, and quickly ended the debate. His final remarks were, "I have not studied this kind of logic."

Another Christian clergyman Mirza sahib debated frequently was Reverend Butler M.A., a learned scholar who lived near village Gohadpur. Once Reverend Butler commented, "The secret of the virgin birth is that Jesus was born of a woman without human intervention of a man, who is a sinner, and thus Jesus remained unpolluted by human sins." Mirza sahib replied, "But Mary was from the human race, then how could Jesus remain unpolluted by the sins of humanity. Furthermore, it was really a woman that instigated Adam to eat the forbidden fruit and become a sinner. To keep Jesus unpolluted by sin, the need of a woman should have

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2 This author submits that Mir Hassan's knowledge in this matter may not be totally reliable. *Hazrat* Mirza may have started to learn English but it appears that his preoccupation with the remembrance of Allah prevented him from making progress in it. At the time when I got to know *Hazrat* Mirza, he did not have any knowledge of English and whatever he may have learnt earlier was completely forgotten by then.

Much later, when his following had increased into thousands and his health was continually indifferent, he did try to study English from Mufti Muhammad Sadiq. His motivation was to develop the communication skills for proselytizing among the Europeans but he did not develop sufficient interest in the language to persist. He would say, "Learning the English language is just a matter of forty prayers in the *Tahajjud*." He had already experienced this with Arabic when, as a result of his supplications, Allah blessed him with such a superior knowledge of this language that he was able to challenge Arabs and non-Arabs to match their literary skills with his. He, however, gave up his intention to study English and commented, "If I proselytize in this language as well then nothing would be left for my friends. I leave this aspect for my Movement so that its members can earn a reward by joining in this *jihad* (effort)."

been dispensed with as well.” The Reverend had no answer to this.

The Reverend Butler held Mirza sahib in high esteem and conversed with him very respectfully. He had genuine affection for Mirza sahib. When Reverend Butler was returning to England, he came to the Deputy Commissioner’s office for a farewell visit. When the Deputy Commissioner enquired about the reason for his visit, he replied that he had come to meet with Mirza sahib for he was planning to go home to England and wanted to visit him one last time. He visited Mirza sahib at his place of work and sat on the ground with him. After conversing with him for some time, he departed.

Seeing that Mirza sahib was extremely fond of debating missionaries, Murad Beg, a resident of Jullandar who was a writer and wrote under the pen name of Mirza Shakista, and later under the name Muwahhid, advised him that it may be beneficial for him to correspond with Sir Syed Ahmad, who had written a commentary on the Bible. Accordingly, Mirza sahib wrote a letter in Arabic to Sir Syed.

Amongst his colleagues, Mirza sahib had a lot of affection for the late Allah Daad, a former record keeper of the office. From the religious personalities of the city, he was extremely fond of *Maulvi* Mahbub Alam, a pious recluse and a *Sufi* of the *Nakshbandi* style.

During his stay in Sialkot, Mirza sahib shared a small apartment with *Hakim* Munsab Ali, deed writer by profession. The apartment was in a bazaar, not far away from the clinic and pharmacy of *Hakim* Hassam-ud-Din and this created the opportunity for the two to get acquainted. Mirza sahib taught *Hakim* sahib some portions of two books of medicine, *Qanuncha* and *Mujaz*.

Mirza sahib did not like the idea of being an employee and considered becoming a legal attorney. He studied law and sat for the qualifying exam to become an attorney but was not successful. How could he be successful? He was not cut out for worldly affairs. How true is the Persian saying:

Every person has been made for a special task.



At that time, Punjab University had just been established and a position was available for a professor of Arabic with a salary of one hundred Rupees. I (i.e. Maulana Syed Mir Hassan) requested Mirza sahib to apply for the position because his knowledge of Arabic was so complete that I had no doubt he would be selected for the job. He said, 'I do not want to be a professor because most people misuse their knowledge and make it into an instrument of mischief and illegal acts. I fear the threat in the verse: "Gather together those who did wrong and their associates." (37:22) This reply clearly shows the purity of his soul.

Once somebody enquired why Prophets did not have wet dreams. Mirza sahib replied, "Because Prophets never have anything but pure thoughts in their mind, whether awake or sleeping. They do not let impure ideas touch their hearts and hence do not have wet dreams."

Conversation once turned to dress. A group argued that pants that were loose at the ankle, as were commonly worn in India, were preferable to pants that were tight at the ankle (like harem pants). Others held the opposite viewpoint. Mirza sahib stated, "For the purpose of hiding nakedness, pants that are tight at the ankles are preferable because such pants conceal more completely, and the tight fit at the ankles hides the nakedness even from the earth." All those present liked his reply.

In 1868, Mirza sahib resigned from service, for which he had no great affection, and left Sialkot. He visited here again in 1877 and stayed with *Lala* Bheem Sen. During his stay, he was also a guest at the house of *Hakim* Mir Hassam-ud-Din for a meal.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (may Allah grant him protection) had started writing a commentary on the Holy Quran that year and I had received his commentary on three *Rukus* (paragraphs). Sheikh Allah Dad and I went to see Mirza sahib at the house of *Lala* Bheem Sen, and the conversation turned to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his commentary. I said that I had received the commentary on three *Rukus*, which contain a discussion on prayer and revelation. Mirza sahib said, "When you come tomorrow, please bring the commentary with you." The next day when I visited him, he heard

the commentary on both the topics and was not pleased with the discussion. He did not like the commentary.

At that time, according to my estimate, Mirza sahib was between 24 and 28 years old. Thus in 1864, his age was not more than 28 years.

Writer - Mir Hassan.

### **A supplementary letter of Professor Emeritus Syed Mir Hassan**

Another letter of Syed Mir Hassan published by Sheikh Turab Ali supplements the above account of *Hazrat* Mirza's stay in Sialkot and is reproduced below:

*Hazrat* Mirza sahib first stayed as a tenant in the house of Umra Kashmiri in Mohallah Kashmirian, which was very close to my place of residence. As soon as Mirza sahib returned home from office, he got busy reciting the Quran. He recited the Quran sitting, standing and walking, and cried profusely during the recitation. There was such humility and sincerity in his recitation that it is difficult to find another such example.

It is customary for people with pending work in government offices to call on the employees of that office at home and to request for favors. Such people started calling on Mirza sahib as well. His landlord's elder brother, Fazal-ud-Din, was a venerated personality of the area and *Hazrat* Mirza sent for him and told him, "Try to make the people understand not to come here. They waste their time and mine. I really cannot help them. I do not make the decisions. Any part of their work that I am required to do is done before I return home." Fazal-ud-Din then started to intervene and would send such people on their way after explaining the situation to them.

*Maulvi* Abdul Karim, who afterwards became one of the closest companions of Mirza sahib, was born and raised in this same Mohallah Kashmirian.

Mirza sahib later moved to an apartment opposite the main mosque. He shared this apartment with Munsab Ali Hakim, a deed writer at the office. There was a store near their apartment

that stayed open at night because its elderly owner, Fazal Din, lived in the store. Some people would gather there in the evenings to socialize. Because Fazal Din was a virtuous man himself, those who came to his store for this purpose were all respectable people. Sometimes, Mirza sahib would join them. Another occasional visitor to this group was Nasrullah, the Christian headmaster of a Mission school. He and Mirza sahib would frequently get into religious discussions and those present benefited greatly from Mirza sahib's arguments.

Mirza sahib was also a visitor at the house of *Maulvi* Mahbub Alam, a pious and ascetic personality. On the advice of Mirza sahib, *Lala* Bheem Sen, too, would occasionally call on *Maulvi* Mahbub Alam. At times, the discussion focused on the role of spiritual leaders and the necessity of pledging allegiance to them by their disciples. Mirza sahib was of the view that self-striving and personal exertion was sufficient to find the way to Allah. He quoted from the Quran, "And those who strive hard for Us, We shall certainly guide them in Our ways" (29:69). *Maulvi* Mahbub Alam did not agree with this and maintained that a pledge to a spiritual guide was necessary to find the right way.

In matters of religion, the excellence and leadership of Mirza sahib was well recognized, but in one incident, those present saw an example of his physical prowess as well. The day's work was over and the clerks in the office were preparing to go home when the conversation turned to competitive running. Almost all the clerks asserted they were swift runners but one Balla Singh claimed he always outran his competition. Mirza sahib told him to prove his contention by racing with him. Sheikh Allah Dad was appointed as a referee and it was decided that the race would be run barefoot from the office to a bridge at the boundary between the city and the government offices. A person was sent to the bridge ahead to record the finish. The two runners handed their shoes to someone in the group and at a signal, Mirza sahib and Balla Singh were off racing for the bridge. The rest of the crowd followed at a normal pace and when they reached the bridge, they found that Mirza sahib had won the race and Balla Singh had been left behind.

Writer - Mir Hassan.

### **Another testimony about the stay in Sialkot**

During his stay in Sialkot, *Hazrat* Mirza was in the prime of his youth. He was handsome and a picture of masculine beauty, but his life was pious and pure. Even those who for some reason did not accept his claim conceded that he led a virtuous life. One such person was *Maulvi* Siraj-ud-Din Ahmad, the founder of the newspaper *Zamindar*. He was the father of *Munshi* Zafar Ali Khan, the present proprietor of the paper. *Maulvi* Siraj-ud-Din Ahmad once wrote in his newspaper about *Hazrat* Mirza's stay in Sialkot:

In 1860 or 1861,<sup>3</sup> Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a clerk in Sialkot. At the time, his age was probably between 22 to 24 years and I can testify as an eyewitness that even in youth he was pious and righteous. After work, all his time was spent in the study of religion and he did not socialize much with the common people.

### **Work - an act of worship**

Though a government employee, *Hazrat* Mirza never did anything against the pleasure of Allah and thus his work was also an act of devotion. At home, he had no other interest except prayer, recitation of the Quran and study of religion. However, the chain of debates, which were to become an integral part of his life, had already started. One of the persons he had impressed by his arguments was the learned, European clergyman, Reverend Butler who started calling on him at his house. The other missionaries, who considered this behavior degrading for the mission, did not take to this kindly and they requested that these visits be stopped. Reverend Butler, however, politely declined by saying, "He is a very great person. You do not recognize him, but I do." An example of his affection was the farewell visit he made to see *Hazrat* Mirza in his office. He sat on the ground with him and conversed for a long time. When the Deputy Commissioner asked him the purpose of his visit, he told him frankly that he had come to visit Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

### **Qualifying exam to practice as an attorney**

During his stay in Sialkot, in 1868, *Hazrat* Mirza decided to take the qualifying exam to practice as an attorney. His motivation seems to have been his disillusionment with the moral and spiritual values of life associ-

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3 *Maulvi* Siraj-ud-Din Ahmad's memory has faulted about the date. *Hazrat* Mirza went to Sialkot in 1864.

ated with civil service. His opinion about government service was not very favorable as has been stated earlier. He probably thought that legal practice would offer a degree of freedom in choosing a lifestyle not permitted by government service. The profession also offered opportunities to help victims of injustice.

The Chief Court had recently been established in Punjab and special facilities existed to encourage suitable persons to join the legal profession. Government employees could take the exam for becoming lawyers or attorneys. *Lala Bheem Sen*, who has been mentioned several times in this narration, was not at the time a lawyer. He was an employee of the Local Board and held the position of Chief of Section. His maternal grandfather, Deputy Mithan Lal, had used his contacts with the Deputy Commissioner to obtain temporary permission for *Lala Bheem Sen* to practice law. The permission had a stipulation that if the law exam was not passed, he would have to revert to his original job. *Lala Bheem Sen* had taken leave from his job to prepare for the exam. It was he who first suggested to *Hazrat Mirza* to consider joining the legal profession.

On the urging of *Lala Bheem Sen*, or for other reasons, *Hazrat Mirza* sat for the exam but failed. How could he pass? He did not bear to be away from the Quran even for a moment, and while other candidates spent their nights reading books of law, he spent his nights in the recitation of the Quran. This was a compulsion born of love that he could not resist. He recited the Quran throughout the night, even before the day of the exam. The result was that he failed the law exam of this earthly government but passed the law exam of the heavenly government for which God had molded him.

His real objective in wanting to join the legal profession was to help the poor. On further reflection, he realized that, at times, the litigants put forward false and fictitious claims and the whole proceedings then continued on this falsehood with the lawyers as accessories. Sometimes false witnesses were produced. In short, a lawyer's job presented many hurdles in pursuing a life of total honesty. The desire not to transgress the bounds of righteousness by even a jot drove the idea of the legal profession from his mind.

### **Prediction of success for *Lala Bheem Sen***

Before the results of the exam were declared, *Hazrat Mirza* saw in a vision that the question papers distributed in the exam were of two types - yellow and red. All the candidates received yellow papers except *Lala Bheem Sen* who was given a red one. *Hazrat Mirza* interpreted this vision

as meaning that *Lala Bheem Sen* will pass. The red color denoted success and the yellow, failure<sup>4</sup>.

Some events that occurred in the examination hall almost resulted in declaring the exam void. When the result was finally announced, it was completely in accord with the vision - *Lala Bheem Sen* was the only candidate to pass. *Hazrat Mirza* had narrated his vision and its interpretation to *Lala Bheem Sen* and about thirty other people. It was for this reason that *Lala Bheem Sen* was so devoted to *Hazrat Mirza*. He was an eyewitness of his chaste and ascetic life from teen to youth and was greatly enamored by it.

### **Prediction of Raja Teja Singh's death**

*Hazrat Mirza* frequently told *Lala Bheem Sen* about events that were to occur in the future and the latter had witnessed the fulfillment of these predictions. One such incident is recounted below. *Hazrat Mirza* writes:

I told this lawyer, i.e. *Lala Bheem Sen*, who practices in Sialkot, that Raja Teja Singh, who had been granted several villages and their administrative control in *Tehsil Batala* in lieu of his villages and estate in Sialkot, had died. This prediction was based on information I had received in a dream. *Lala Bheem Sen* expressed surprise at my dream.

About 2:00 P.M. that day, the Commissioner, Mr. Princip, arrived unexpectedly from Amritsar.<sup>5</sup> He instructed the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. McNeeb, to immediately prepare an inventory of Raja Teja Singh's orchards etc. in Sialkot as he had died the previous day in Batala. On hearing this news, *Lala Bheem Sen* was amazed at how this information was made known to me ahead of time.

### **Prophet Abraham's fire incident and God's protection in Sialkot**

Once a person inquired from *Hazrat Mirza* about the nature of the fire to which Prophet Abraham was subjected by his opponents and which was cooled by Allah's command. He desired to know if the fire was an alle-

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4 The clue in the interpretation is that the Urdu word for red is *surkh*, which is also the first syllable of the word *surkhru* meaning successful.

5 In those days, the District of Sialkot was under the jurisdiction of Commissioner Amritsar.

gorical reference to mischief and intrigue or whether it was a real fire. *Hazrat Mirza* replied:

The fire of mischief and intrigue inevitably confronts every Prophet and creates a situation against which Allah aids His Prophets with a miraculous power. It is not a difficult matter for Allah to have suppressed an actual fire for Abraham. Such events keep on occurring. It is not necessary now to conduct extensive research about these incidents of Abraham (peace be upon him) because thousands of years have elapsed since the events happened. In the present time, I am witnessing such occurrences and experiencing them in person. When I was in Sialkot, it so happened one day that it was raining and lightning struck the room I was sitting in. The room became charred and emitted a sulphurous smell, but I was unharmed. The same bolt of lightning also hit a temple, known as the temple of Teja Singh. The temple was surrounded by a maze of walls to permit the customary circumambulation of the temple. The lightning passed through this maze and hit a person sitting inside the temple and burnt him to a cinder. Reflect; this lightening was a fire that destroyed this person but could do no harm to me because God protected me.

There is another similar incident that also occurred in Sialkot. Once, I was sleeping in a room on the second story of a house along with about fifteen or sixteen other men when I heard, in the middle of the night, a creaking noise from the wooden beam of the roof. I woke up the other men in the room and told them that the beam appeared dangerous and we should vacate the room. They replied that the sound was probably made by a mouse, advised me not to worry, and went back to sleep. After a little while, I heard the same creaking sound again and tried once more to warn the sleeping men but with no success. When I heard the creaking sound for the third time, I woke them up and sternly ordered them out of the room. I was the last person to leave the room and no sooner had I stepped on the second stair than the roof collapsed and, taking the roof of the first floor with it, crashed to the ground. We were all saved. There was a miraculous power from Allah that prevented the beam from giving way until all of us had left.<sup>6</sup>

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6 See following page.

In a like manner, once a dead scorpion was found near the quilt on my bed, and another time, one was caught creeping inside the quilt. Both times, God protected me from their harm. Once, the skirt of my garment caught fire and I was not aware of it until another person, who saw the fire, warned me and the fire was extinguished. God, the Most High, does not just have one way to save a person but many. Fire can cause heat and burning only if several conditions are fulfilled. God, the Most High, has not made known to man all of these conditions. The absence of any one can negate the ability of the fire to burn. Then what is so amazing that the fire was cooled for Abraham?

### **Islam's honor uppermost in contest with *Pundit* Sej Ram**

At his place of work, *Hazrat* Mirza was the embodiment of self-respect and dignity despite his inconsequential position. His competence was unquestionable and even the Deputy Commissioner held him in high esteem. The Superintendent of the District Office was *Pundit* Sej Ram, a bigoted Hindu and an adversary of Islam. He frequently engaged *Hazrat* Mirza in religious arguments under the false impression that his superior position would cow down *Hazrat* Mirza and keep him from speaking the truth. But *Hazrat* Mirza was born only to establish the superiority of Islamic principles and was an unlikely candidate to bow under pressure. A verse from his poem, describes him perfectly:

I am not afraid to take on the world in matters of religion,  
Because my faith is colored in the faith of Muhammad.

When religious discussions took place, *Hazrat* Mirza, courageously and without restraint, presented such powerful arguments to the *Pundit* that he was left speechless and quite embarrassed. He vented his frustration by targeting *Hazrat* Mirza in official dealings and had no compunction in

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6 This incident shows the courage, sacrifice and humanitarianism that were part of *Hazrat* Mirza's character. He did not leave the room until all others had left. After two unsuccessful attempts to awaken the sleeping men, any other person would have left to save his own life, or at least run out of the room first when the panic evacuation began, but not so *Hazrat* Mirza. This is in the best tradition of Islamic character. The Holy Prophet did not leave Makkah until all his companions were safely in Madinah. *Hazrat* Mirza's act was in compliance with this tradition. Such perfect compliance is found only in those who have disciplined their lives in the Prophet's tradition and inculcated his high moral virtues.



stooping to any level to harm him. But whom God protects, no man shall harm. The *Pundit* took his complaints even to the Deputy Commissioner, but there too he was rebuked and accomplished nothing except earning further humiliation and embarrassment for himself.

*Hazrat Mirza* performed his official duties diligently, but considered it below his self-respect and dignity to flatter and play the courtier. His sincere friend, *Lala Bheem Sen*, counseled him to avoid religious confrontations with the *Pundit* because promotion and success, apparently, depended on him. However, persons like *Hazrat Mirza*, do not shy away out of mundane considerations because of their strong faith in the Omnipotent and the knowledge that no gain or loss takes place without His will. *Hazrat Mirza's* sense of honor for Islam is unparalleled in this time. How could an enemy of Islam cow down such an honorable person? This was not possible. The truth is, that those who fear the Creator cannot be afraid of the creation.

Time passed, and *Hazrat Mirza* finally left the service honorably by resigning on his own volition. *Lala Sej Ram* was transferred and posted as head clerk in the Commissioner's office in Amritsar. One day a strange incident occurred which should serve as a warning to those who oppose righteousness. It is best narrated in the words of *Hazrat Mirza*. He writes:<sup>7</sup>

I had an older brother who had taken the entrance exam to join service as a *Tehsildar* (a land administration official) and had passed the exam. He was still living at home in Qadian and was waiting to join service. One day around late afternoon, I was reading the Quran in my room upstairs. When I tried to turn the second page of the Quran, my eyes went into a state of vision and I saw *Sej Ram* dressed in black standing before me in the posture of a humble person with his teeth bared. His manner seemed to be saying, "Please have mercy shown to me." I told him, "The time for mercy has passed." God put it into my heart that this person had just died. There was no prior information about this.

Afterwards I came down from my room and there were six or seven persons sitting with my brother talking about his employment. I told them that if *Pundit Sej Ram* died, the resultant vacant position would be desirable. They burst out laughing and joked,

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7 *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*. Page 296.

“Why are you killing a person who is hail and hearty?” On the second or third day news reached us that Sej Ram had passed away suddenly from this world at exactly the time of my vision.

### ***Lala Bheem Sen invited to accept Islam***

His own experience had sincerely convinced *Hazrat Mirza* that Islam was the only true religion of these times. It was therefore imperative that if he was fond of a non-Muslim, he would invite him to the great blessings of Islam. *Hazrat Mirza*’s relationship with *Lala Bheem Sen* was one of affection and friendship. He, in turn, was fully convinced of *Hazrat Mirza*’s piety and righteousness. Religion was a subject that was discussed on a daily basis, but one day *Hazrat Mirza* wrote him a long letter in Persian. He wrote the letter in Persian because *Lala Bheem Sen* was fond of the language and the intelligentsia of the time corresponded in this language; in much the same fashion, as the intelligentsia of today would use English. In this letter, he used arguments from *Sura Fatihah* to contradict idol worship and the theological system of the Hindus. In this way, he manifested the weaknesses of the Hindu faith and the strengths of Islam and invited *Lala Bheem Sen* to One God, Quran and the tradition of the Prophet. Sheikh Yaqub Ali Turab published the full text of the letter in his biography of *Hazrat Mirza*. The letter was obtained from *Lala Bheem Sen*’s son, *Lala Kunwar Sen M.A.*, former principal of Law College. *Lala Kunwar Sen* sent the letter to Sheikh Yaqub Ali Turab with a note that read:

This article, according to my respected father, was written by Mirza sahib for his friend, namely my father, during the time when they both resided in Sialkot where, besides legal and literary topics, they discussed moral and spiritual problems.

God alone knows why *Lala Bheem Sen* did not apparently accept Islam despite his deep conviction about *Hazrat Mirza*’s piety. *Hazrat Mirza*, however, fulfilled his duty as a friend by inviting him to Islam in an intellectually appealing manner.

### **Considered employment a prison**

*Hazrat Mirza*’s mother once sent a barber by the name of Hayat to deliver four suits to *Hazrat Mirza*. The reason was that *Hazrat Mirza* did not pay attention to his food or clothes. He ate whatever was given and wore whatever was made for him. For years, he did not even know the amount of fabric needed for his shirt. He would only tell the number of

shirts he needed and would pay whatever the tailor, or whoever was getting the shirts made, demanded as a price. Some people took advantage of this and overcharged him on the pretense of using more material than was actually used.

His mother cared greatly for him and acted as a shield for him in all matters in Qadian. She paid special attention to his food and dress for she knew that her son did not pay attention to any matter except God. It was because of her maternal affection that she had these four suits stitched and sent Hayat to deliver them.

*Hazrat Mirza's* nature was extremely generous. He kept three suits and gave the fourth to Hayat. During the conversation, Hayat enquired whether he liked being in service. *Hazrat Mirza's* reply was, "It is a prison."

### **Farewell to Sialkot**

A combination of events brought about his departure from Sialkot. On the one hand, *Hazrat Mirza* was not interested in employment and on the other, his parents, and especially his mother, found the separation hard to bear. His mother fell seriously ill, and hope was lost for her recovery. His father directed him in a letter to resign from service and return to Qadian. Another interpretation of these events is that the Divine plan required him to learn some lessons from employment and these lessons had been learnt. As directed by his father, he resigned and returned to Qadian but his mother had already passed away before he got back.

### **Declines the position of Education Officer in Kapurthalla**

On return from Sialkot, *Hazrat Mirza* was invited to join as an officer in the education department of Kapurthalla state. His father had old connections with this state, and its government expressed an interest in recruiting someone from his family. *Hazrat Mirza's* older brother had taken employment with the British government by this time and hence the invitation was extended to *Hazrat Mirza*. *Hazrat Mirza* sent a note to his father that showed his complete disinclination from worldly pursuits. The note stated, "I do not want to take up employment. Two dresses of coarse cotton and any kind of food would be sufficient for me."

Youth is a time of passions and desires but *Hazrat Mirza's* desire was simply for two suits of coarse cotton per year and any kind of food. This was not the result of a lazy temperament for *Hazrat Mirza* was busy day and night in worshipping Allah, studying the Quran and serving the cause of religion. Everything he did was for God and religion. His entire interest centered on this and he derived all his pleasure from it. This is known

as 'separation from everything except Allah' and *Fanaqil Allah* (lost in the contemplation of Allah). In the Quran, this has been explained as "Nay, whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and does good (to others)" (2:112), meaning that a perfect Muslim is one who turns his whole being to Allah and his actions prove his faith and sincerity.

When *Hazrat Mirza's* father read the note, he was ecstatic and commented to Ghulam Nabi, "I am happy at this. The real path to tread is the one he is walking on."

### **Declines the position of assessor in Sessions Court**

Before closing this chapter on employment, I would like to mention that, at a later period, *Hazrat Mirza* was also offered the position of assessor in the Sessions court but he declined. Time and again, the world tried to entice him with its enchantments but each time he rebuffed it with the same resolution, and thus passed these God sent trials and temptations successfully. He had no interest or attraction for these worldly prizes. In one of his verses, he lays bare his inner self beautifully. He states:

I have no desire for the honors of this world,  
Do not reserve a chair for me because I am appointed to serve.

### **Hazrat Mirza acts as a commission**

When *Hazrat Mirza* was engaged in pursuing his father's litigations, he was once appointed as a commission in a case and perforce had to perform this duty. When he went to conduct the investigation, he asked another person, Miran Baksh, to accompany him. *Hazrat Mirza* took with him a horse to ride and food for himself and his companion and also feed for the horse. They set out on foot with Miran Baksh holding the reins of the horse. On the way, *Hazrat Mirza* asked Miran Baksh to ride the horse and walked the rest of the way himself.

When they reached the site of investigation, the parties in the case tried hard to extend him their hospitality, not only because he was the commission in their case but also because he was the son of a well known personality of Qadian. *Hazrat Mirza* declined their attempts by pointing out that he had with him food for his party and feed for the horse. As such, he needed nothing from them except their statements in the case that he had been charged to investigate. Thus, *Hazrat Mirza* was not only pious and devout but also trustworthy, just and upright in his actions to a degree unmatched in recent times.

## Chapter

# 6

## POST-SIALKOT ENGAGEMENTS

### **‘Mahdi will be a farmer’- prophecy of *hadith* fulfilled**

Sometimes fate propels a person in a direction against his natural inclination. A prophecy in the Books of *Hadith* states that the *Mahdi* (The Rightly Guided One) will be a farmer,<sup>1</sup> and it appears fate repeatedly pushed *Hazrat* Mirza into this occupation so that the prophecy may be fulfilled. Accordingly, on return from Sialkot, he was again assigned to look after the farming operations of the family estate. This work was not very time consuming and so *Hazrat* Mirza was able to devote most of his time to the study of various commentaries of the Quran and the Books of *Hadith*. Sometimes, he read from these to his father. By this time, his spiritual development had reached the stage where he was experiencing visions and revelations with tremendous clarity and regularity. The desire for propagation of Islam, and service of religion was also intensifying within him.

### ***Hazrat* Mirza’s poetry**

Poetry is a true reflection of a person’s emotions. It gives shape to the innermost feelings of a person and brings them out in the form of written and spoken verses. In the later part of the nineteenth century, a person’s literary abilities were judged by the kind of poetry he could write and so most men of learning indulged in it to a lesser or greater extent. *Hazrat*

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1 **Abu Dawud** Sulaiman. *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)*. Vol. 2 Chapter, *Zikar al-Mahdi*, Page 241 line 6.

Mirza also wrote poetry. He used the pen name Farrukh, but unlike the common style of poetry in India where poets often address themselves by their pen name in the last verse of the poem, he did not use his pen name in the last verse. Most of his poetry is in Persian, and relatively little in Urdu. He did not write his poetry for audition at recitals. In fact, he never did that. His poems were merely the expression of his heartfelt emotions, which had been translated by the pen on to pages of paper.

It is not the intention here to review his poetry but merely to state that a reading of the verses clearly reveals his love and knowledge of God, and the fear of the Hereafter. At times, he extols the spiritual excellence of Prophet Muhammad and the verses provide a chain of arguments in his support. At places, he revels in the love of Quran. This last aspect sets him apart from other Islamic poets and saints who have lauded their love for the Prophet, but to *Hazrat* Mirza alone belongs the distinction of extolling the love of Quran. Thus, his poetry of this period is testimony to the purity of his emotions.

### **Request for seclusion**

Love of God and the great desire to serve religion finally compelled him to write to his father with the request to relieve him of worldly responsibilities. His plea to his father was addressed thus:

Respected Father and my master, long may you live,

Most respectfully I beg to state that these days I am observing and experiencing with my own eyes that calamities, which tear asunder friend from friend and relative from relative, descend every year in all countries and towns. I do not see any year in which some such dreadful fire did not blaze and tragic accidents and a din reminiscent of the Day of Judgment did not take place. Keeping in view this situation, my heart has lost all interest in matters of this world and my face has turned pale out of fear for my soul. I remember these two verses of Sheikh Muslehuiddin Shirazi frequently and they bring tears of regret to my eyes:

Do not rely on a transitory life and consider it your support,  
Do not consider yourself safe in this play of life.

In addition, the following two verses of Farrukh Qadiani touch a sore spot:

O young man! Do not fall in love with this contemptible life,  
The time of death can arrive at any instant.

Hence, it is my wish to spend the rest of my life in seclusion away from the company of people and to busy myself in the remembrance of the Eternal Being so that this may excuse the time already spent (on mundane matters) and be a means to amend for mistakes.

Your time has gone by leaving behind nothing save a few days,  
Remembering Someone from night till morn is the way to spend these few days.

Because the foundation of this world is weak and there is no surety of life.

Sensible is he who fears for his soul.  
From the affliction of others.

Peace be with you.

### **Disliked fame**

*Hazrat* Mirza's father agreed to this request and set him free from all responsibilities to pursue the remembrance of Allah in seclusion. This was the cherished desire of *Hazrat* Mirza, who loved seclusion and disliked the pursuit of worldly activities and fame. Once he wrote:

If God gave me the authority to choose between seclusion and companionship, I swear by the Pious Being that I will prefer seclusion. They have forcibly pushed me into the affairs of the world. God alone knows the pleasure that I derive from seclusion. For about twenty-five years, I kept myself in isolation and not for an instant did I feel the desire to go out and seek recognition. My natural inclination is not for socializing but I am compelled to do this by the Ruler's command.

At another time, he wrote:

It is only in fulfillment of God's command that I meet with people, hold discussions, and go out for walks.

With freedom from other responsibilities secured, *Hazrat* Mirza devoted himself entirely to remembering Allah, recitation of the Quran, and the study of religious books. It was during this period that he was given a sign to undertake a great endeavor.

### **The great endeavor of fasting**

The details of this endeavor are best described in the words of *Hazrat* Mirza. He writes in a footnote of his book *Kitab-ul-Bariyya*:

I have not performed difficult religious exercises, nor have I, like some of the current Sufis put myself through violent afflictions. Neither have I secluded myself to undertake specific religious prescriptions, nor have I indulged in monkish acts against the orders of *Sunnat* to which the Book of Allah may have any objection. In fact, I have always abhorred mendicants and innovators of new customs who are involved with any kind of innovation.

However, in the period just before my father's death, it so happened once that I saw a pious, old man in a dream. He told me that it is a tradition of the family of prophets to fast for the purpose of gaining Heavenly guidance and thus indicated to me that I should fulfill this tradition of the family of prophets. It also crossed my mind that it is better to undertake this endeavor surreptitiously. The procedure I adopted was to have the food sent to me in the male sitting room and then I would give that food away to some orphan children who had been instructed to come at the prearranged times. In this way, I spent the whole day fasting and nobody knew about this fasting except God. After two or three weeks, I realized that fasting with one full meal per day was not burdensome at all, and I decided to cut down on the size of this meal. Progressively, I kept on reducing my intake of food until I was down to one piece of bread for the whole day and night. I reduced this still further and reached the stage where my total nourishment in a period of twenty-four hours was only a few grams of bread. I continued this for eight or nine months. Despite my scanty nourishment, which was not even sufficient for a baby of two or three months, God protected me from every kind of affliction.

This fasting gave me the wondrous experience of exquisite and pleasurable visions. I met with some Prophets of the past and also



with some of the great saints of the Muslim *Umma*. Once I saw the Prophet of Allah, peace be upon him, along with Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hussain, may Allah be pleased with them. This took place in a state of wakefulness and it was no dream. In short, I met with many holy personages to go into the detail of which would unduly lengthen the narrative.

In addition, I viewed a spiritual light, so attractive and delightful that it is impossible for words to describe it. A similitude of this spiritual light are columns of shining silver, green, and red light reaching straight up into the sky and having a deep and intimate relationship with the soul which went into ecstasy at their sight. There is no enjoyment in this world that is comparable with the pleasure that the heart and soul felt at viewing this spiritual light. I think that those pillars of spiritual light were allegorical creations reflecting a union of the mutual love of God and man. In other words, it was the fusion of a spiritual light emanating from the heart below with a spiritual light descending from the heaven above that resulted in the production of these columns.

These are spiritual matters that are difficult to understand from a materialistic standpoint because they are so far removed from physical experience. However, there are some in this world to whom these spiritual secrets are revealed. This period of fasting thus enabled me to experience these diverse and wonderful visions.

Another benefit I received from this fasting was that it molded my spirit in a way that I can go without food for long periods if needed. The thought has crossed my mind many times that, if a person of a large stature, who besides his large size is also very powerful, is made to fast with me, he would die before I felt the need for food. I now also have a better appreciation for the limits of human endurance in withstanding hunger. I am convinced that unless the body is taken out of the state of luxurious ease and strengthened to endure such hardships, it will not be fit to experience the highest spiritual stages. But I do not advise this course of action to everybody and neither did I do it out of my own volition. I have seen many illiterate *Dervishes* (mendicants) put themselves through such difficult exercises that in the end they lost

their mind and spent the rest of their life as lunatics or impaired their health by contracting diseases like tuberculosis and consumption. All persons do not have the same mental strength, and these extreme physical endeavors are obviously not for persons with weak abilities who are likely to fall prey to some disease before long. It is advisable that people should not put themselves through these rigorous exercises on their own initiative and should practice the normal dictates of religion. However, if there is a revelation from God commanding an act that is not contrary to the tradition of Islam then it is incumbent to carry it out. However, the severe prescriptions handed out by most of the present day mendicants have unfortunate endings and should be avoided.

### **Love of pious companionship**

In accordance with the directive of the Holy Quran “*kunu ma as sadiqain*” (9:119), which means, “seek the company of truthful and pious people,” *Hazrat Mirza* made special efforts to visit holy persons and to benefit from their company. It has already been mentioned that, in Sialkot, he frequently visited *Maulvi Mahbub Alam*, a virtuous Sufi in the *Nakshbandi* style. Similarly, *Hazrat Mirza* paid several visits to *Mian Sharaf-ud-Din*, a pious person who lived in *Sem Sharif* in district *Gurdaspur*. These visits were never for personal work or material gain. Their only objective was a desire for pious companionship. Whenever *Hazrat Mirza* requested these distinguished personalities for prayers, it was only for the spread of Islam and for nothing else. One such personality he visited several times was *Maulvi Abdullah Ghaznavi*.

### **Meeting with *Maulvi Abdullah Ghaznavi***

*Maulvi Abdullah Ghaznavi* was a highly intellectual, righteous and revered saint. He hailed from the area of *Ghazni* in *Afghanistan* but had been driven into exile by the local clerics who launched a virulent campaign against him and declared him a *kafir* (unbeliever). History provides many instances of the persecution of righteous persons by the unappreciative people amongst whom they lived. In this case, too, the unworthy people of his homeland targeted this pious saint for persecution and did their best to debase him and to turn him out of their community. But those who are respected and revered in the sight of Allah do not consider worldly debasement to be of any consequence. *Hazrat Mirza* expressed the following opinion about this pious man in his writings:

An extremely pious and righteous man of God with whom Allah spoke; a strict follower of the *Sunnat* (Prophet's tradition) and careful in complying with all requirements of righteousness and purity; he was from amongst those truthful and upright persons whom Allah attracts to Himself. He was immersed in the remembrance of Allah and completely lost in His way. His name was Abdullah Ghaznavi.

When *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi came to Amritsar, some people in the city started rumors that he was a *Wahabi* and this aroused the suspicion of the local administration. He, therefore, shifted his residence to Khairdi. *Hazrat* Mirza met with him both in Khairdi and Amritsar. Whenever he visited him, he took along some present, which was generally a choice cut of meat.

#### ***Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi requested to pray**

*Hazrat* Mirza records one of his meetings with him in the following words:<sup>2</sup>

When he was alive, I met him once in Khairdi and a second time in Amritsar. I said to him, "Allah talks to you. I have a desire which I do not want to reveal, but I would like you to pray for it." He replied, "There is blessing in keeping it a secret. I will *Inshallah* pray for it, but the matter of revelation is not in my control." My wish was that the religion of Muhammad, may blessings and peace be on him, was in a state of decline and that Allah may aid it, and be its helper. Shortly thereafter, I came back to Qadian where, a few days later, I received a letter from *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi in which he had written, "This humble person prayed for you and it was revealed: *And grant us victory over the unbelieving people*. It is no mere coincidence that the revelation came so quickly. I consider it to be because of the purity of your character."

This incident shows that the great passion of *Hazrat* Mirza's life was the progress of Islam and this had become the sole objective of his life. If he met with other pious people, it was for the same purpose; if he requested them to pray, it was for the achievement of this goal. In short, this long-

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2 *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*, Pages 239-240.

ing was constantly in his heart. It was a love that had taken complete possession of his life.

### **Visions and revelations of *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi in support of *Hazrat* Mirza**

*Hazrat* Mirza kept in touch with *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi by mail and was informed of other revelations that the latter had received about him. An account of these revelations is found in a letter that *Hazrat* Mirza wrote to *Maulvi* Abdur Rahman Lakhukay-wallay.

*Maulvi* Abdur Rahman, you contend that a person becomes a heretic simply by interpreting Quran against a traditional interpretation. For this reason, you brand me a heretic because I have explained the hidden meaning of certain verses that God revealed to me. What then is your verdict in respect of *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi, who is your acknowledged spiritual leader? He received revelations in which verses in respect of Prophets were used for *Ummatis* (followers).

Twice in his letters, he wrote to me several verses of the Quran that were in respect of the noble Companions of the Holy Prophet and which had been revealed to him about me. These include: 1. *He indeed is successful who purifies himself* (87:14) and 2. *Thou art our Patron, so grant us victory over the disbelieving people* (2:286).

I hold *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi in great respect and have a favorable opinion of him because Allah had revealed to him that this humble person was about to be commissioned with a Divine duty. He wrote several letters informing me of his blessed revelations and also narrated these before several people. He also expressed this desire in his state of vision.

### **Evidence of *Hafiz* Yousaf**

*Hafiz* Muhammad Yousaf, *Zillaidar*, (a petty official of the Irrigation Department) lived in Amritsar, and was very fond of *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi. He made the following statement to *Hazrat* Mirza:

The late *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi, a few days before his death, predicted on the basis of a revelation that a spiritual light had

descended from the heaven towards Qadian but unfortunately, his children will not benefit from it.

Initially, *Hafiz* Muhammad Yousaf had full faith in *Hazrat* Mirza, but later because of his animosity with *Munshi* Elahi Bux, he turned against *Hazrat* Mirza. However, he never denied making the above statement, which was published many times in Ahmadiyya newspapers.

### **Evidence of *Hafiz* Yousaf's Brother**

*Hafiz* Yousaf's elder brother, *Munshi* Muhammad Yaqub, took the pledge to join the Ahmadiyya Movement in the *Eidgah* (open ground used for large congregational prayers), Amritsar, immediately after the imprecation (*Mubalahah*)<sup>3</sup> with Abdul Haq Ghaznavi in 1893. However, seven years earlier in 1886, when *Hazrat* Mirza had not been ordained to accept pledges, he made a statement in Hoshiarpur, where *Hazrat* Mirza was staying as the guest of Sheikh Mehr Ali. This statement was made before *Munshi* Elahi Bux and others and is recorded by *Hazrat* Mirza in his writings as follows:

One day, I (Muhammad Yaqub) heard *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi state in your respect, i.e. this humble person (*Hazrat* Mirza), that "After my death, he would be commissioned by God for a grand purpose."

This statement of *Munshi* Muhammad Yaqub was published in 1891, before he took the pledge, and was never contradicted by him. In fact, on the basis of the above testimony of *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi, he ultimately took the pledge of allegiance to *Hazrat* Mirza.

### ***Hazrat* Mirza meets Abdullah Ghaznavi in a vision after his death**

*Hazrat* Mirza met with *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi after his death in a vision. *Hazrat* Mirza records the account of this meeting as follows:

Once I saw this holy man in a dream after his death. He was standing majestically in a martial manner, fully armed like a soldier. I told him about my revelations and asked him to interpret a

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3 A meeting of contending parties in which the parties state their religious positions and invoke God's curse on the party that is wrong. It has also been referred to as a prayer duel.

dream I had seen in which I was gripping a sword by its hilt but its tip was reaching into the sky. When I struck with it to the right, thousands of antagonists were slain, and when I struck with it to the left, thousands of enemies were killed. *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi was delighted to hear my dream, and his face lit up with joy and an expression of comprehending its import. He said, "Its interpretation is that God will require you to perform many important deeds. The vision of the strike on the right that slays antagonists refers to the work of furnishing arguments based on spiritual signs. The strike that kills thousands of enemies to the left means that God will provide you with logical and intellectual arguments to counter accusations and charges of enemies. In both these ways, God will furnish conclusive arguments to the world." After this, he said, "When I was in the world, I was hopeful that God will certainly bring forth such a person." Then *Hazrat* Abdullah sahib took me to a mansion, in which many righteous persons were seated but they were all armed and sitting in a state of readiness as if in anticipation of an immediate order to proceed to battle stations. Then I woke up.

## Chapter

# 7

## **THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD – DEATH OF HAZRAT MIRZA’S FATHER & SUCCESSION OF BROTHER**

In 1876, *Hazrat Mirza*’s father died after a short illness. *Hazrat Mirza* has described the account of his illness and death in his book *Kitab-ul-Bariyya*. He writes:

I was informed in a dream that the time of my father’s death was near. I was in Lahore at the time and immediately left for Qadian, where I found my father suffering from dysentery. However, his death the very next day was completely unexpected because the illness seemed to have abated somewhat and he was conducting himself with great fortitude. That fateful day, the family was gathered around my father. This was the month of June and the heat was intense. In the afternoon, with great paternal concern, my father told me to go and take some rest. I retired to an upstairs room and lay down. A servant began to massage my feet. I was in a state of drowsiness when it was revealed, “By the heaven and the Comer by night!” (86:1). The ‘heaven’ implied a decree that originated there and the ‘night’ an incident that was to take place after sunset that day. I was made to understand that this revelation was a condolence from the Almighty and the incident referred to was the death of my father after sunset that day ... On receiving this revelation, a human concern crossed my mind that we may

fall on hard times because some sources of our family income were specifically tied to my father.<sup>1</sup> Immediately, a second revelation came, “Is not Allah sufficient for his servant?” (39:36). This revelation entered the core of my being and bestowed peace and tranquility to me. I swear by the Majestic and Glorious Lord who controls my life that He fulfilled the promise in this verse in ways that I could not even imagine. He stood by me like no father could have, and bestowed countless favors on me.

My father died that day after sunset. I had spent about forty years of my life under his tutelage. I had the revelation, *Is not Allah sufficient for his servant?* engraved on the stone of a ring, which I have kept carefully with me. The revelations of that fateful day were the sign of Divine blessing for they augured the start of a vigorous dialogue with Allah, which I feel will not discontinue till the end of my life. I do not know which particular act on my part won this favor for me from Allah. However, I do feel that by nature I am drawn to Allah with an attraction that is sincere and irresistible. In the ultimate analysis, this is His bounty.

### **Test of faith and reliance on Allah**

The Quranic verse, *Is not Allah sufficient for his servant?* has two facets - one of trial and the other of reward. The aspect of trial arises because sufficiency of Allah pre-supposes a complete disregard of worldly gains in the face of having found the greatest treasure of all in Allah. Tribulations, loss and pain are then as naught before this great blessing. A person who genuinely claims to have found God is not the least bit affected even if he looses everything in the world because the real objective of his life and his beloved is Allah, who is sufficient for him. The aspect of reward arises because sufficiency dictates that God underwrite the provision of necessities for his servant. Sustenance then comes to him from unexpected sources and the Divine plan gathers provisions for him. God helps him, even when no person does. In the case of *Hazrat Mirza*, too, both aspects of this verse were manifested, i.e. first of trial and then of reward.

The trials arose from the succession of *Mirza Ghulam Qadir*, his elder brother, in the place of their father. The estate left to them consisted of

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1 *Hazrat Mirza's* father received from the British government a pension and a large gratuity, which was only for his lifetime.





*Final resting place of Mirza Ghulam Murtaza in the courtyard of Aqsa Mosque in Qadian.*

some houses, shops, and agricultural land in Qadian. Under the Islamic and British law, this property should have been divided between the two brothers and *Hazrat* Mirza's share was sufficient for his needs. However, *Hazrat* Mirza did not ask for the division of property and kept himself aloof, as before, from its management, preferring to consider his brother in place of his father. His brother was very materialistic and did not return this generosity. He himself resided at his place of employment in Gurdaspur and in his absence, members of his house, and managers who looked after their property, kept *Hazrat* Mirza in dire straits. It was difficult at times for him to obtain bare necessities and sometimes he had to go without food. Throughout this period of trial, which lasted several years till his brother's death, *Hazrat* Mirza showed patience, steadfastness, sincerity and reliance on God. None of this made any difference in his devotion to Allah.

Aware of the materialistic nature of his brother, *Hazrat* Mirza chose not to ask for his legal share of property, and was content with the provision of food and clothes. His brother did try to fulfill his basic needs and to a certain extent had affection for him, but the two brothers were very different - the one totally materialistic and the other completely divorced from the world. These different philosophies dictated their mutual relations. *Hazrat* Mirza's brother considered him to be devoid of worldly need, lazy, and good for nothing, and, at times, showed his irritation. Once, when *Hazrat* Mirza requested that a small amount be sent to him for subscription to a newspaper, he commented, "This is extravagance. He does not do any work and just lazes around reading books and newspapers." This period of trial continued till his brother's death.

After this, the aspect of reward manifested itself, and Allah showered him with hundreds of thousands of rupees, which came from unexpected sources, and were spent in the way of Allah. God created the means to provide for his needs and gathered for him the provisions of this world and the next. Never again was he in need of anything, and why should there have been any need? He who becomes God's, God becomes his. *Hazrat* Mirza expresses this in one of his verses:

Thou givest Thine lovers the goods of both the worlds,  
But both the worlds are of no consequence because the slave has  
his eyes only on Thee.

## Chapter

# 8

## FREQUENT DIVINE DISCOURSE

*Hazrat Mirza's* righteous nature, pure heart and his devotion, piety, and complete obedience to the Quran and *Sunnah* elevated him spiritually to the level where he started receiving Divine communications. Even at a young age, he was given to true dreams and visions, but, it appears from his writings that the great honor of revelation was granted to him in the years 1868-69 with the Divine message of "Kings will seek blessings from your garments." It is possible that he may have received revelations even earlier, but Divine discourse on a regular basis started from the time of the death of *Hazrat Mirza's* father, which was in 1876.

### **Rationale for frequent Divine discourse**

The great honor of being addressed by Allah and carrying on a dialogue with Him has been bestowed on prophets and saints from the beginning of mankind, and, undoubtedly, it will continue in the future. However, the abundance with which revelation came to *Hazrat Mirza* is unparalleled in the recent history of the Muslim *Ummat* (nation). The reason for this appears to be the strong denial of the phenomenon of revelation at this time. It was to be expected that atheists would repudiate revelation as a natural corollary to their denial of a Supreme Deity but even in the organized religions, there was widespread disbelief and skepticism about the nature and continuance of revelation. Amongst the Hindus, the *Arya Samaj*, a very popular sect at the time of *Hazrat Mirza's* life, believed that revelation was confined to the earliest period of man's history but had ceased since. The *Brahmu Samaj* and *Deo Samaj* sects of

the Hindus denied it altogether. The Christian and Judaic religions also confined revelation to former times and believed that it had now stopped for good. Even among the Muslims, there was a group known as the ‘naturalists’ who did not consider revelation to be an external phenomenon but an inspiration from within a person. Because of these widespread doubts about the existence and nature of revelation, it was necessary that the *Mujaddid* appointed for the guidance of the people during this period be fully conversant with the experience so that he could rebut the atheistic and materialistic viewpoints. Unlike the other saints, *Hazrat Mirza*, therefore, gave wide publicity to his dreams, visions, and revelations so that these may furnish proof against the deniers of the phenomenon.

### **Non-Prophetic revelation**

The recipient of a non-prophetic revelation (*wahy willayat*) is known in the terminology of the *Hadith* as *Muhaddath*. Although Allah communicates with such persons, they are not prophets. This becomes apparent from a *hadith* that states:<sup>1</sup>

There were amongst the people before you, persons who were spoken to (by God) though they were not prophets; if there is such a one among my people, it is Umar.

For the true believers, who achieve a nearness to Allah, the Quran states, “For them is good news in this world’s life,” (10:64) and, “the angels descend upon them,” (41:30). Thus, the Quran and *Hadith* clearly show that Allah speaks with His righteous servants and angels descend upon them. It is only the highest form of revelation or *wahy nabuwat* (prophetic revelation) that has come to an end with the Holy Prophet. In *wahy nabuwat* the angel Gabriel is sent with a message in words and this revelation is peculiar to prophets. The revelation of the saints is brought by angels other than Gabriel and is known as *wahy willayat*.

### **Revelation is the result of complete obedience to Quran and Sunnat**

Allah’s speaking with His servants is a reward given to the true believers for their complete submission to the Quran and the example of the Holy Prophet (*Sunnat*). Revelation furnishes a conclusive proof of the truth of Islam, whose true votaries have achieved this spiritual status in all

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1 Abi Abdullah Muhammad Bin Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*, *Kitab Fazail Ashaab* 62:6.

ages. Other faiths, even if initially from God, have been rendered obsolete and can no longer provide the caliber of spiritual guidance necessary for achieving this closeness with God. These religions are now devoid of spiritual vitality and are dead. Islam is the only true, living religion, which in accordance with the Divine injunction of “yielding its fruit in every season” (14:25) can create the spiritual eminence in its adherents today, as it did at the time of its inception.

*Hazrat Mirza* claimed to be from the ranks of the people in the Muslim *Ummat* who have passed through the stages of spiritual evolution to a position of nearness with Allah where the Almighty discourses with them. Since *Hazrat Mirza* received Divine revelation in abundance, he put forward his contemporary experience as proof to materialistic thinkers and followers of other religions that Islam is the sole, true and living faith. *Hazrat Mirza* claimed that he had found the true, living God by following Islam and he challenged the followers of any other religion, who may make a similar claim, to contend with him. He conveys this point beautifully in one of his poems.

I searched everywhere till fatigued,  
But found no faith, like the faith of Muhammad.

None could show a Heavenly sign,  
I tasted this fruit only in the garden of Muhammad.

Islam, personally, I tested,  
It is light! Awake and see, everywhere I narrated.

In other faiths, I found no light,  
Someone show me, if I am not right.

In vain did I call the opponents,  
None showed up to confront me.

Come hither, O people, you will find the light of God,  
Behold, I show you the way of happiness.

### **Conclusive testimony against the deniers of revelation**

*Hazrat Mirza* put forward hundreds of arguments against atheism and agnosticism but the most convincing way to prove something is to demonstrate it practically. He showed that Islam is the only religion that enables

a person to find the Living, Subsisting God, who speaks with His servants. He put forward his own experience as proof and invited anybody who so desired to test him about the veracity of his claim.

For the followers of other religions, *Hazrat Mirza's* argument is equally effective. If the purpose of religion is to lead man to God, then there is no religion, except Islam, that can accomplish this as evidenced by the fact that revelation is confined to the adherents of this religion alone and none other. This was no hollow claim, he stated, but one born out of his own experience. He stood fully behind his claim and was willing to contest anyone who alleged otherwise.

### **Some signs of the truth of Islam**

From the beginning, *Hazrat Mirza* gave wide publicity to his revelations and visions and in particular announced them to the non-Muslims and deniers of revelation in Qadian. This strategy was meant to convince the *Arya* Hindus and others about the truth of Islam - an objective for which *Hazrat Mirza* was working day and night. *Lala Mallawa Mal* and *Shrampat Rai* were two prominent *Arya* Hindus of Qadian, who frequently visited *Hazrat Mirza*. When Divine discourse started regularly, after the death of his father, *Hazrat Mirza* kept these two informed, and also the public, about the Divine messages he was receiving. By so doing, he hoped to build a large group of people who would be able to bear testimony to the truth of Islam. Later, *Hazrat Mirza* published these signs in his books and challenged *Lala Mallawa Mal* and *Shrampat Rai* to deny the truth of these incidents by swearing on the heads of their sons. Both of them did not have the courage to do so. As examples, I give below a few of those signs.

### **First Sign: Conclusive argument against *Lala Mallawa Mal***

When *Lala Mallawa Mal* was twenty or twenty-two years old, he contracted tuberculosis. *Hazrat Mirza* writes:<sup>2</sup>

By degrees, his disease reached a climax and all hope was lost. One day, he came to see me and wept bitterly at the hopelessness of his condition. I was moved by his plight and prayed to God for his recovery. As recovery was ordained, I received the following revelation after my prayer "We said: O fire, be coolness and peace," (21:69) that is, we ordered the fire of tuberculosis to cool and let him be in peace. I informed *Lala Mallawa Mal* and many

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2 *Barahin Ahmadiyya*:. Pages 227-228

other Hindus, who are still alive and reside in this town, about this revelation. With complete trust in God, I claimed that this Hindu will certainly recover and will not die of this disease. Accordingly, within about a week of this revelation, he recovered.

### **Second Sign: Conclusive argument against *Lala Shrampat Rai***

This incident took place in 1870 C.E. The unnamed Hindu mentioned in it is *Lala Shrampat Rai* and the convict, about whom the prophecy was made, is his brother, *Lala Bashambar Das*. *Hazrat Mirza* writes:<sup>3</sup>

About twelve years ago, a Hindu who is still alive and currently a member of Arya Samaj Qadian strongly refuted the miracles and prophecies of the Holy Prophet. Like the Christian missionaries, he believed, because of extreme enmity, that the Muslims had concocted all the prophecies and in actuality God had not revealed any affair of the future to the Prophet, who lacked this prophetic quality. But Glory be to Allah; how great are His blessings on His Prophet and how great is the grandeur of this innocent and holy Prophet that his truthfulness sparkles as much today as it did in the past times.

It transpired shortly thereafter that a relative of this Hindu, along with another Hindu, were unexpectedly incarcerated for perpetrating a fraud. Their convictions were in appeal before the Chief Court. One day, worried about the outcome of the appeal, this *Arya* said to me that a proof of possessing knowledge of the unseen would be for someone to tell him that very day about the outcome of the appeal. I explained to him that the knowledge of the future is the domain of God and no one has access to the secrets of God, including astrologers, fortunetellers, soothsayers, and ordinary people. However, God, who has knowledge of everything that is destined to be, reveals some secrets of the unknown under His plan and authority to His perfect and holy Messengers. Likewise, when He desires, He sometimes reveals these secrets to those from amongst the Muslims who excel in emulating the example of His perfect Messenger. They are successors to the knowledge of the Messengers, and are foretold some matters as a testimony to the truth of their religion.

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3 *Barahin Ahmadiyya*.: Vol. 3, pages 250-251.

Followers of other religions that are false, such as the Hindus and their pundits, and Christians and their priests, are precluded from this blessing.

As soon as I had made this statement, he started insisting that if the followers of Islam have superiority over that of other religions, then that superiority should be demonstrated on this very occasion. I told him repeatedly that the prerogative (of revealing matters) is with God and man does not have any control over it. However, the *Arya* was insistent in his denial (of revelation). When I saw that he was rejecting the prophecies of the Holy Prophet and the greatness of the religion of Islam, God put a strong desire in my heart to humble this *Arya* and leave him without an argument. I beseeched, “O Magnificent God! This man denies the grandeur and greatness of Thy Prophet and disbelieves in the signs and prophecies that Thou exhibited through the Prophet. If the final outcome of this suit is revealed, he will be left without an argument. Thou hast power over all affairs; Thou dost what Thou desire, and Thy knowledge comprehends the unseen.”

It then transpired that God, who supports His true religion and desires the grandeur and greatness of His Prophet, revealed to me the full details of the suit in a dream that night. I was informed that God had so decreed that the Chief Court would remand the suit to the lower court for review. In the lower court, half his (i.e. relative of the *Arya*’s) sentence will be remitted but he will not be acquitted. His accomplice will only be released after serving his full sentence. When I awoke, I thanked God for not allowing me to be humbled before my adversary. I immediately narrated this dream to a large number of people and also informed that Hindu sahib on the same day.

*Hazrat* Mirza gives the sequel to this incident later in the book:<sup>4</sup>

At this point, I just remembered that I had received a revelation at a very contentious and contradictory moment in the suit of a Hindu whose true dream I recorded in Volume 3 (given above) and it (the revelation) dispelled my regret and anguish. The details are as fol-

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4 *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Vol. 4, page 549-551.



lows: As a result of a demand for a manifest vision (of a future event), this true dream had ascertained that a *Khatri* Hindu by the name of Bashambar Das, who still resides in Qadian, would not be acquitted in a criminal suit but his sentence will be reduced by half. His co-accused, whose name is Khushal and who also resides in Qadian, would have to serve out his original sentence. The tribulation faced in respect of this part of the prophecy was that when the Chief Court remanded the case to the lower court exactly as predicted by the prophecy of this humble person, the accused party took the remand as acquittal and spread the news in the village that both the accused had been acquitted. I remember that this happened late, one evening. I was getting ready to offer my *Isha* (night) prayer in the mosque when one of the persons present remarked that the news was spreading through the bazaar that both the accused had been acquitted and had come back to the village. Since this humble person had announced emphatically among the people that the accused would not be acquitted, the grief, regret and anguish I felt was indescribable. Then God, who is my helper in all conditions, gave me the good news through revelation, either before or in the first part of the prayer. It was revealed, "Do not grieve, your Lord is Great." In the morning, it became known that the earlier news of acquittal was false. The final outcome of the suit was exactly in accordance with the information given to this humble person, and which had been announced to Shrampat, an *Arya*, and many other people, who still reside in Qadian.

### **Third Sign: Another conclusive argument against Shrampat and others**

This incident occurred when *Hazrat* Mirza, in accordance with the wishes of his father, was pursuing litigation relating to their estate. A suit under Section 5 of the Tenancy Act was lodged against Jhanda Singh and others, who were their hereditary tenants, for unlawfully cutting trees without the permission of the owners. It was revealed to *Hazrat* Mirza that the suit would be successful and a decree awarded in *Hazrat* Mirza's favor. He writes:<sup>5</sup>

We had filed a suit against our hereditary tenants in Batala Tehsil of Gurdaspur District. I was informed in a dream that a favorable decree will be awarded to us in the suit. I narrated this dream

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5 *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*. Page 261-262.

before several people, which included a Hindu named Shrampat, who sometimes visited me and is still alive. I narrated this prophecy to him that we would be victorious in this suit.

It so happened that on the final day when the judgment was to be announced there was no one from our side in the court. Only the respondents, numbering fifteen or sixteen, appeared before the court. In the afternoon, they came back from the court and announced in the bazaar that the suit had been dismissed. Then that person (Shrampat) came running to me in the mosque and tauntingly said, "Sir, your suit has been dismissed." I asked him, "Who said this?" He replied, "All the respondents in the suit have returned and are stating this in the bazaar." I was amazed to hear this because those giving the news numbered fifteen or sixteen and some of them were Muslims and some Hindus. My grief and sorrow were beyond words. After saying this, the Hindu went off happily to the market. He had found an opportunity to attack Islam, but I was left in a condition that is beyond the description of words. It was time for the late afternoon prayers, and I sat down in a corner of the mosque. My heart was heavy at the thought that this Hindu would forever be saying that I had prophesied a decree in our favor with great confidence and it turned out to be wrong. Suddenly, I heard a resonating voice, which was so loud that I thought someone had called from outside the mosque. The words of the voice were, "The decree has been given. Be Muslim," i.e. Don't you believe it? I got up and looked all around the mosque but found the area quite deserted. I realized then that the voice was that of an angel. I sent immediately for that Hindu and told him what the angel had said but he showed disbelief.

The next morning, I went to the court in Batala to see the *Tehsildar*, *Hafiz* Hidayat Ali, but he had not yet come to the office. His clerk, a Hindu by the name of Mathra Das, was present and I enquired from him if our suit had been dismissed. He replied, "No. On the contrary, the decree was awarded." I said that the respondents had announced in Qadian that the suit was dismissed. He replied: "In a way, they are right as well. When the *Tehsildar* was writing the judgment, I left his presence to attend to an emergency. The *Tehsildar* is new in this position and he is not fully conversant with the background of the case. The respon-

dents showed him a previous court decision in which the hereditary tenants had been given the right to cut trees without the permission of the owners. On the basis of this judgment, the *Tehsildar* dismissed the suit. When I returned, he gave me the judgment to file. On reading it, I told the *Tehsildar* that he had made a big mistake because the judgment, which he had made the basis for his decision, had actually been set aside on appeal. The respondents had tricked him. I took out the decision of the appellate court, which was in the file, and showed it to him. Without hesitation, he tore up his first decision and awarded a decree.

This was a prophecy that was witnessed by a big group of Hindus and many Muslims. Shrampat, who had so gleefully brought the news to me that the suit had been dismissed, is also a witness. So all praise be to Allah for this. The work of God is exhibited in strange ways. Our absence from the court and the erroneous judgment by the *Tehsildar* became the reasons for the special significance of this prophecy. All this happened under a Divine plan. If this had not happened, the prophecy would be commonplace lacking its current greatness and import.

I have mentioned only a few from the hundreds of signs that were manifested regularly by God's blessings. *Hazrat* Mirza's standard approach was that, wherever he preached and invited people to Islam, he supported his arguments with his own recent experiences and observations. The truth of Islam, he claimed, was evident from these fruits of following Islam. Thus a big group of people in Qadian, which included Hindus and Muslims, became witnesses of these signs.

## Chapter

# 9

## PREACHING AND INVITATION TO ISLAM

On return from Sialkot, *Hazrat* Mirza busied himself in preaching the message of Islam and inviting people to its fold. He taught the intricacies of faith to the Muslims who visited him and exhorted them to lead a life of piety. To the non-Muslims who came to see him, he preached the excellence of the religion of Islam. He remained forever alert to rebut any criticism of Islam, from whatever source. His style of propagation consisted of three elements: exposition, sermonizing and dissemination of religious literature.

### 1. Exposition

In order to propagate Islam, *Hazrat* Mirza educated people on issues of religion for he had an insight, borne out of his knowledge and understanding, that was quite unique. These were matters that were particularly pertinent for the propagation and defense of Islam. A detailed discussion of these issues follows later. These expositions effectively silenced the Christian and *Arya* critics and their efficacy was acknowledged by no less a person than the Reverend Butler, a recognized intellectual and religious scholar. A few instances of this approach follow:

A resident of Sialkot by the name of Murad Beg, who used the pen name Mirza Shakista and later Muwahhid, was fond of debating with the Christian missionaries. To prepare for his debates, he visited *Hazrat* Mirza and questioned him in depth about the issues to be raised in the

debate. He, thus, benefited greatly from *Hazrat Mirza's* religious knowledge.

Another such person was *Patwari*<sup>1</sup> Nabi Baksh of Batala. He visited *Hazrat Mirza* in Qadian and after benefiting from him, was easily able to beat the Christian missionaries. He brought to *Hazrat Mirza* the objections that the missionaries were likely to raise against Islam and learnt from him the facts and the arguments to rebut these charges. *Hazrat Mirza* encouraged Nabi Baksh to question him intensely about these issues so that he may not be at a loss during the debate. Armed with these arguments, Nabi Baksh easily confounded the missionaries. Nabi Baksh stated that *Hazrat Mirza* had a Bible, printed in Fatehpur, which he had studied carefully and had marked in it passages for future reference. He had also made notes from the Bible. In preparing Nabi Baksh for the debates, *Hazrat Mirza* used appropriate passages from the Bible as well. Nabi Baksh either memorized these references or wrote them down for use in the debates.

An ever-vigilant guardian of Islam, *Hazrat Mirza* kept a record of all objections made by the critics of Islam. At this time, the major critics were Christian missionaries and *Hazrat Mirza* had collected about three thousand different objections that they had made against Islam. This collection was later reduced to ashes by a fire under circumstances that are not fully known. *Hazrat Mirza* produced more literature against Christianity than against any other religion because its votaries were the foremost in the attempts to sully the honor and record of the Holy Prophet.

### **Zeal to convert *Maulvi* Qudratullah to Islam**

About this time, *Maulvi* Qudratullah, a resident of Batala, converted to Christianity. When *Munshi* Nabi Baksh brought this news to *Hazrat Mirza*, he was deeply grieved. *Hazrat Mirza* asked him to counsel *Maulvi* Qudratullah and offered to go himself, if needed. Nabi Baksh told him that the conversion was not the result of conviction but stemmed from a desire for some material gain. *Hazrat Mirza* replied, "If he needs financial aid, arrange for a collection and I too will contribute to it. His name has the word *Maulvi* before it, and his apostasy, therefore, creates a bad impression on the public." Nabi Baksh asked, "If I need to, can I use strong language in arguing with him?" *Hazrat Mirza* answered, "Strong language sometimes causes a person to cling even more forcefully to his stand, and closes the avenue of retreat to the earlier position. Use a strategy of kindness and captivate his heart. *Maulvis* are stubborn by nature and their

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1 A petty land administration official

obduracy blinds them to what is right and wrong.” Because *Hazrat Mirza* felt so deeply about this issue, he strongly stressed that no effort be spared to reconvert *Maulvi Qudratullah*. He stated, “Reneging from Islam is a very serious matter and must not be taken lightly. We should really be bringing people into the fold of Islam. Instead, if, through our carelessness, a Muslim apostasies, then we are collectively answerable for this before God.” *Munshi Nabi Baksh* was fully groomed to handle the task, after which *Hazrat Mirza* sent him off with these words, “Go and try your best. I will pray for your success. Meet him in isolation; do not accost him in public because this puts a person on the defensive.” *Nabi Baksh* followed these instructions and *Maulvi Qudratullah* returned to Islam, much to the happiness of *Hazrat Mirza*.

## 2. Proselytizing through speeches

*Hazrat Mirza* extolled the excellence of Islam to all his visitors, whether Muslims or non-Muslims. To praise the beauty of his beloved Islam and to preach and propagate it was now the rationale for his existence.

### Preaching Islam to *Lala Mallawa Mal*

When *Lala Mallawa Mal*, an *Arya Hindu* of *Qadian*, came to meet with *Hazrat Mirza* for the first time, it was just before the *Isha* (late afternoon) prayers. *Hazrat Mirza* explained the excellence of Islam to him and preached in a goodly manner. He then offered his prayer. *Mallawa Mal* stated afterwards that he got the impression from this that it was obligatory on the part of a Muslim to preach Islam to someone before praying the *Isha*. Later, he got to know *Hazrat Mirza* well and began to call on him frequently. According to him:

Since *Hazrat Mirza* was a knowledgeable and gracious person, I enjoyed his company tremendously. He was in the habit of walking to and fro after *Zuhr* prayer right up to the time of *Asar* prayer. I frequently joined him either at that time or in the morning when he went for a walk. The morning walk was about two to two and a half miles long. For the entire time that we were together, our conversation centered solely on intellectual and moral topics. Often we exchanged views on religion.

*Hazrat Mirza* also narrated to *Mallawa Mal* incidents with a proselytizing theme. Often, these narrations were about *Maulana Rume* and *Hazrat*

Mirza stressed the moral principles deducible from them.

*Hazrat* Mirza also preached to other Hindus who visited him, such as Shrampat and Kishen Singh.

### **Kishen Singh escapes conversion to Christianity**

The Reverend Bateman was initially hopeful that Kishen Singh, the longhaired *Arya* of Qadian, would convert to Christianity. Later, when he found that Kishen Singh was on visiting terms with *Hazrat* Mirza, he remarked that *Hazrat* Mirza had distorted Kishen Singh's ideas. What he really meant was that Kishen Singh was not likely to convert because of *Hazrat* Mirza's influence.

### **Christian missionary activity in Qadian**

Some Christian missionaries, including the Reverend Bateman, visited Qadian periodically but none of them would enter into a religious dialogue with *Hazrat* Mirza. They came, sermonized in the bazaar, and went away. The missionaries had effectively given up hope of conversions in Qadian.

### **Debates**

The need to debate on religious issues is a necessary complement of propagation and invitation to Islam. The biggest drawback of debates is that the participants are committed to defending their positions and each participant stubbornly refuses to budge from the stand of his group. Perforce, *Hazrat* Mirza had to debate but his special characteristic was that his objective always remained the search of truth for the sake of God. He detested stubbornness and blind loyalty to party positions. If his opposing party said something that was correct, he would immediately concede it and never for a moment considered how that may cause him to fall in the estimation of ordinary people. I will narrate one incident as an example.

### **Debate with *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain in Batala**

About the time *Hazrat* Mirza came back from Sialkot, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain *Batalvi* finished his education and returned to Batala. At this time, a new schism had developed among the Muslims and it was the subject of a heated controversy. On one side were the *muqallid*, those Muslims that accepted all the four *Imams*, i.e. the great jurists, Abu Hanifa, Hanbal, Malik and Shaafi, and on the other were the *ghair muqallid*, i.e. those who did not accept all the four *Imams*. The latter sect was of

relatively recent origin and was rapidly making inroads in Punjab. *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain was a respected scholar of the *ghair muqallid* group. With his arrival in Batala, the controversy between the two sects started in this town as well.

Most of the Muslims in Batala were *muqallid* and they called *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain a modernist because of his liberal and independent thinking. In search of a champion for their viewpoint, their choice fell on *Hazrat* Mirza. They dispatched a person to enlist his services. *Hazrat* Mirza narrates the account of this debate:<sup>2</sup>

In 1868 or 69, *Maulvi* Abu Saeed Muhammad Hussain sahib Batalvi, who was also at one stage my college mate, came to Batala after finishing his studies. The residents of Batala found his views objectionable and one of them pressured me greatly to debate an issue under dispute with him. Accordingly, on the insistence of this person, I went with him to the house of *Maulvi* sahib and found him and his father in the mosque. To make the story short, I heard the speech *Maulvi* sahib gave at that time and found nothing objectionable in it. Hence, for the sake of Allah, I gave up the idea of debating with him. At night, God addressed me in revelation, and referring to the abandonment of my idea to debate, said, “Your Lord is well pleased with this action. He will bless you greatly and even kings will seek blessings from your garments.” After that in a vision I was shown those kings who were mounted on horses.

The incident is well worth a moment of reflection. The town residents do not see eye to eye with *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi. They bring *Hazrat* Mirza to debate with him. *Hazrat* Mirza listens to his speech and declares that there is nothing objectionable in it. He does not care a whit that those who had brought him would be angry and that he would lose face with them, for they were a people both stubborn and bigoted. Likely, they would say that *Hazrat* Mirza had no reply and therefore he withdrew. He did not care for all this. The only thing that concerned him was that a God-fearing person does not dispute the truth. To admit that your adversary is right is a great example of the complete suppression of one’s ego. This is the reason his behavior found acceptance with God. God values sacrifice, and certainly sacrifice is a thing to be admired.

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<sup>2</sup> Barahin Ahmadiyya.



In short, the sole concern of *Hazrat* Mirza in a debate was to see that the truth prevailed and falsehood was refuted. He detested stubbornness, egotism, and clinging blindly to party positions even though wrong.

### 3. Propagation through publication of religious literature

Since the government of India was British, the Christian missionaries of the time labored under the false notion that they could attack Islam and its founder with impunity without fear of retaliation. They felt that their attacks would facilitate the spread of Christianity. In pursuance of this strategy, they printed highly obnoxious literature against Islam and its founder in such large quantities that, in the words of *Hazrat* Mirza, "If all of it is collected in one place, it will form a high mountain." This literature contained such lies, deception, and slander that the title of *Dajjal* (Antichrist or the great deceiver) was aptly applicable to them. *Ummahat-ul-Momineen* (Mothers of the Believers, a title given to the wives of the Holy Prophet) by Reverend Funder and *Mizan-ul-Haq* (The Balance of Truth) by Reverend Imad-ud-Din are two examples of this virulent literature. The Christians were not the only ones attacking Islam.

*Arya Samaj* was a recent addition to the sects of the Hindu religion. Its founder, Dayanand Saraswati *Ji Maharaj*, had formed this sect by amending and abrogating existing Hindu dogmas. He borrowed heavily from the materialistic philosophy and passed it on as Vedic ideas to his co-religionists, who were largely unfamiliar with the content of the Vedas. He was thus able to influence them and earn their adoration. He took the idea of One God from Islam but mutilated it by alleging that matter and spirit were not created but have coexisted with *Parmeshwar* (God) since eternity. In effect, this amounted to the acceptance of thousands of gods besides *Parmeshwar*. Dayanand was cognizant of the fallacies in his logic and knew fully well that his made-up religion could not stand up against the Unitarianism and pure principles of Islam. He, therefore, found it necessary to use slander and calumny against Islam and its founder, and included the filth collected by the Christian missionaries in his book *Satyarth Prakash* (The Light of Truth). *Arya Samaj* was not the only new innovation in Hindu religion. *Brahmu Samaj* and *Deo Samaj* were two other new sects.

*Hazrat* Mirza closely followed these developments and examined all the literature that was published against Islam. Once, he stated as follows:<sup>3</sup>

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3 3 *Al-Hakam*.

I have studied Christian books and reflected on their criticism of Islam since the age of sixteen or seventeen years. I have collected the objections that the Christians have leveled against the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, and their number has reached close to three thousand. As God is my witness, and we can produce no greater witness, I have studied, as I said, Christian books since the age of sixteen or seventeen, and not for a second have their objections impressed me or created any doubt in my mind. This is entirely the blessing of Allah. As I read through the objections, their vileness revolted me and I found my heart full of love and grandeur of the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. I have noticed that I found a treasure of wisdom and truth in whatever action of the Holy Prophet or the verse of the Quran that the criticism is directed against and where these mistrustful and wicked-natured opponents can see only defects.

This passage shows that Allah had rightly guided *Hazrat* Mirza and put the correct knowledge of Islam into his heart. It is also an eloquent testimony of *Hazrat* Mirza's love for the Prophet. *Hazrat* Mirza was deeply grieved at this situation. At night, in the *Tahajjud* prayers, he wept before the Lord for his beloved Islam, and in the day, though he was alone and unaided, he waged a *jihad* with his pen and speech for Islam, like a true champion of Allah. The pain in his heart is reflected in this poem, whose few verses I reproduce below:

Destitute, forlorn and friendless has become the religion of  
Muhammad,  
Everyone is preoccupied no one cares for the religion of  
Muhammad.

O Muslims! For God's sake cast a glance at faith's condition,  
The calamities my eyes perceive need no description.

O you who claim to be courageous and brave! Fire has touched  
your garments,  
It behooves now not for men of faith to watch idly from a distance.

For the sake of religion, my blood constantly boils in my heart,

Only the great knower of secrets is aware of this condition of my heart.

None but God knows the sorrow that this inflicts on me,  
Of poison we are made to drink but cannot describe it in these terms.

I see religion bleeding as bled the martyrs of Karbala,  
Strange it is that people have no love in their hearts for this Beloved.

In this time of difficulty and friendlessness there exists no resort for us,  
But to pray for help and supplicate at dawn.

O God grant no happiness to the blackguard,  
Who has no concern for the religion of Ahmad.

*Hazrat Mirza* began publishing articles in different newspapers in support of Islam and refuting the allegations made by followers of other religions. These newspapers included *Safeer Hind*, *Hindu Bandu* (Brother Hind), *Vidya Parkashk*, *Aftab Punjab*, *Wakeel*, etc. These articles were acclaimed for their knowledge, wisdom and greatness, and they made *Hazrat Mirza* famous. He then started debating with leaders of other religions using different formats, which included written and verbal debates, and debates through newspapers and handbills.

### **No tolerance in debates for disrespect of Quran and the Holy Prophet**

*Hazrat Mirza* loved the Quran and the Holy Prophet intensely and would not tolerate their disrespect. Once his aunt, the wife of his paternal uncle *Mirza Ghulam Haider*, said something disrespectful about the Holy Prophet. *Hazrat Mirza's* face became red with anger, and although he had great respect for his elders, he was so deeply grieved that he severed all relations with her.

*Hazrat Mirza's* son, *Mubarak Ahmad*, while still a child, once showed disrespect for the Quran. *Hazrat Mirza* was extremely upset and although he was strictly against inflicting corporeal punishment on children, his sense of honor for Islam made him loose control. He slapped the child so hard that his fingers left an imprint on the boy's face and he said to the boy's attendant, "Remove him from my presence. He has become disre-

spectful of the Quran at this age; what will he do in the future?"

*Hazrat* Mirza would say, "It is easier for me to bear patiently the destruction of my property or the cutting into pieces, before my eyes, of my children than to put up with insult or contempt of the Holy Prophet or Islam." It is not surprising, therefore, that *Hazrat* Mirza always made it a precondition of every debate that the opposing party would not attack or insult the Holy Prophet. However, this was a condition that was very difficult for the opposing party to keep because they could not refute the righteous principles of Islam and their only weapon was to attack the Holy Prophet based on unreliable and fictitious stories. Invariably they had to resort to this strategy and, at times, this led to a lot of unpleasantness.

### ***Sardar* Sant Singh converts to Islam**

*Sardar* Sant Singh belonged to a respectable Sikh family of Butar Kalan. He was educated and his family was acquainted with *Hazrat* Mirza's family as both belonged to the landed gentry of the area. He began visiting *Hazrat* Mirza and gradually became so impressed by him that he decided to convert to Islam. *Hazrat* Mirza advised him to preach Islam to his wife as well. When he did that, his family turned against him. However, through *Hazrat* Mirza's prayers, he was able to overcome these difficulties and both husband and wife presented themselves before *Hazrat* Mirza for embracing Islam. *Hazrat* Mirza was not fond of seeking fame or winning praise from anybody. He asked the couple to accept Islam at the hands of *Sahibzada* Syed Zahur-ul-Hassan, a pious ascetic, and dispatched them to him with *Patwari* Nabi Baksh. The document that Syed Zahur wrote about their conversion contains the following passage:

After this, let it be known to all followers of Islam that in this blessed and praiseworthy time, *Sardar* Sant Singh and his wife were blessed by the influence of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, may Allah grant him peace. There is none like him in this era and the light of faith shines brightly in this philanthropic man. "Allah guides to His light whom He pleases," (24:35). My dear Nabi Baksh *Patwari* made an effort (to bring them here) so that this humble person may render them good advise, and by taking their *shahadat* (Muslim confession of faith), induct them into the faith of our forefathers, may Allah bless them. However, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who is spiritually thousand times better than I am, was more deserving of this honor.

23 Jamadi ul Awwal 1301 hijri

Signed: *Khawaja Sahibzada* Syed Zahur ul Hassan *Sajjadah Nashin*,

Batala; written and signed in person.

### **Debate with *Pundit* Kharak Singh**

*Sardar* Sant Singh and his wife accepted Islam and he adopted the Muslim name *Abdur Rahman*. At the same time, *Hazrat Mirza's* newspaper articles created quite a stir by demolishing the structure of the *Arya* faith. Faced with this situation, the *Arya* community of Qadian invited *Pundit* Kharak Singh to hold a debate with *Hazrat Mirza*. *Hazrat Mirza* readily accepted this opportunity and the venue for the debate was chosen near the Government Primary School.

The debate was to focus on the teachings of Vedas and the Quran. By implication, the Hindu belief of transmigration of soul was also to come under discussion. *Hazrat Mirza* had imposed the condition that he would provide evidence and arguments for the excellence and comprehensiveness of the Quranic teachings from the Quran and, likewise, Kharak Singh should do the same for Vedic teachings, using evidence and arguments from the Vedas.

As the debate progressed, *Pundit* Kharak Singh realized that he was going to loose on merit and fell back on the stratagem of insulting the Holy Prophet in his speeches. This grieved *Hazrat Mirza* and his rebuttals showed his anger. To prevent any further unpleasantness, the sponsors stopped the debate.

However, *Hazrat Mirza* issued a challenge, which although directly addressed to Kharak Singh, is indirectly directed to religious scholars of all religions. Its title is "The Disconcerting Question, which if *Pundit* Kharak Singh Refuses to Answer Would Prove Him a Liar." Some passages from that challenge are reproduced below to show the strength of the arguments made:

A very big sign that the Holy Quran is the word of God is that it provides the most complete guidance out of all the spiritual guides and has the potential to rectify all the ills that beset the present condition of the world. A second sign is that, unlike other holy books, the Holy Quran is not just a book of stories but provides a complete rationale for everything. With regards to this second sign, I had issued a handbill offering a reward of five hundred rupees to Kharak Singh or any other *Pundit* who can show

this feature in the Vedas, i.e. that the Vedas contain arguments justifying the articles of faith propounded by it. To this date, nobody has taken up this challenge. I say with all honesty that neither the Vedas or the New Testament, nor the Torah has the strength to refute, conclusively and convincingly, an opposing viewpoint such as that held by atheists, naturalists, materialists, heretics, idolaters, and those that deny religious precepts such as revelation, prophethood, salvation, accountability, and the unity of God. An analogy of these other scriptures is that of a dead person that has no life.

Kharak Singh misleads the youth by maintaining that the Vedas contain complete guidance. If this is true, I will give him five hundred rupees, and am willing to write a promissory note for it on demand. The truth of his statement will be tested by requiring him to write down two or three verses containing rational arguments from the Vedas to refute any contention against comparable arguments on the same issue from the Quran. In the alternative, let him write down the Vedic rationale for God's inability to create and grant eternal salvation versus the Quran's rationale to the contrary and claim the prize money of five hundred rupees. He alleges that the Quran has been derived from the Torah and New Testament. Let him then take the help of these scriptures if he cannot do the needful from the Vedas. If the Torah and New Testament give the arguments that the Quran presents, then too I will give him the reward money of five hundred rupees. I will write a promissory note for five hundred rupees and send it to him and if, even then, he does not have the honor and dignity to respond to this challenge, then know that he is a shameless and dishonorable person to disrespect such a pure and holy Book, which is unrivalled in its wisdom and philosophy.

There is no escape for you. Your use of derogatory language in respect of the Holy Prophet out of sheer mischief and a desire to defame is only a reflection of your vulgar background. In your paper, you have used slanderous language against other prophets as well. God has bestowed on us the honor that we respect all prophets and, as God has told us, we consider the salvation of all people to be in Islam. If you have any criticism of the Holy Prophet, write down your most serious charge in a civilized man-

ner and present it to me. I will put it in writing that, if your charge is correct, I will pay you one thousand rupees... If you fail to respond to this statement by starting a debate on this issue based on the conditions outlined, every just person will understand that your defamation is dishonest.

*Pundit* Kharak Singh was unable to reply to this challenge, but he admitted his defeat through his actions by becoming a Christian. He wrote and published six lectures against the *Arya* sect, and since these lectures were directed against the absurdities of the *Arya* belief, the Christian missionaries printed and distributed these in large numbers. *Hazrat* Mirza narrates this incident in his book *Shahnah-i Haq* in the following words:

I just remembered another *Pundit* by the name of Kharak Singh who came to Qadian to debate in support of the Vedas. The *Aryas* of Qadian proclaimed loudly that their *Pundit* was extremely knowledgeable and had all the four Vedas committed to memory. When the debate started, the *Pundit* was outdone so badly that his discomfiture is better left unsaid and he forgot all praise of the Vedas. He did not accept Islam because there was no material gain in it for him, but soon after going from Qadian, he said farewell to the Vedas and got baptized. He then published articles in the newspapers *Riyaz Hind* and *Chashma-e-Nur Amritsar*, in which he clearly admitted that the Vedas are devoid of Divine knowledge and guidance and therefore cannot be the word of God. He also wrote that the *Arya* claim to the excellence of the Vedic knowledge and philosophy is false.

This statement of *Hazrat* Mirza was published in the lifetime of *Pundit* Kharak Singh. The *Aryas* read it but could not muster courage to contradict it.

### **Dayanand Saraswati punished**

*Arya Samaj*, in those days, was in its formative stage. Its founder *Pundit* Dayanand was alive. He saw that the educated Hindus were disillusioned by their religion and hence he began to reform it by contriving new beliefs and principles. Some of the new fundamentals he introduced were actually based on that period's materialistic and atheistic philosophies that were totally opposed to religion, spirituality and Divine knowledge. However, these ideas were popular among those enamored by mate-

rialistic education and so by a stretch of imagination, the *Pundit* was able to extract these very ideas from the Vedas. He then elevated these ideas by giving them the status of fundamentals, and thus tried to show that his religion was in consonance with science.

One such belief was that matter and spirit are eternal. This idea owes its origin more to materialism than to the Vedas. The only difference was that, whereas materialism considered only matter to be eternal, the *Pundit* also added spirit to the list to give it a religious coloring. In reality, the belief that either matter or spirit is eternal casts serious doubts on the need for God. If the spirit is eternal and *Parmeshwar* (God) has not created it, then it has to be admitted that He has unjustly and oppressively taken possession of it and entangled it in metempsychosis (transmigration).

### **Belief in infinite spirits**

*Pundit* Dayanand had also to contend with another problem. If spirits were not created by God, then ultimately all the spirits would escape their bodily confinements through the process of transmigration of soul. Then what was to become of the lordship of *Parmeshwar*? To overcome this objection, a strange new idea was invented and published by the *Arya Samaj* in the newspaper *Wakeel Hindustan* in its issue of December 7, 1877 in the following words:

The existing spirits are infinite and so numerous that even *Parmeshwar* does not know their number. Hence, salvation in the form of deliverance of the soul from body and exemption from further transmigration will continue always and the process will never come to an end.

*Hazrat* Mirza considered such a belief highly derogatory to the greatness and omnipotence of God because it constrained His attributes and knowledge. Accordingly, he considered it necessary to fully expose the absurdity of this belief and wrote numerous articles that completely destroyed its credibility. These articles appeared in the newspaper *Safeer Hind* in the period between February 9, and March 9, 1878. He was so convinced of the rationality, wisdom, and strength of his arguments that he also announced a reward of five hundred rupees for any person who would rebut his arguments with convincing logic. The announcement of this reward was published in *Safeer Hind* on February 9, 1878, on one of the first few pages of the issue. The summary of the announcement was:



I will give the sum of five hundred rupees as a reward, to any person, including the followers of *Swami* Dayanand Saraswati, who can show that spirits are infinite and *Parmeshwar* does not know their number.

### ***Arya Samaj* becomes concerned**

With the publication of these articles, the *Arya Samaj* camp was thrown into a state of confusion and *Hazrat* Mirza obtained a clear victory over them. The status of Dayanand Saraswati received a serious jolt. *Lala* Jiwan Das, the secretary of *Arya Samaj*, Lahore (the largest and most active chapter of the sect at the time), had to issue a statement disclaiming *Pundit* Dayanand Saraswati's view about the infinite number of spirits as a belief of *Arya Samaj*. The sect did not subscribe, the statement claimed, to all the views of the *Pundit*. The words of the statement, issued by *Lala* Jiwan Das in response to *Hazrat* Mirza's articles, are worthy of some further reflection. His announcement was published in the newspaper *Safer Hind* and it read as follows:

There now remains the issue of whether it is an article of faith with *Arya Samaj* that spirits are infinite and that *Parmeshwar* does not know their number. Let it be known that this issue is not amongst the fundamental principles of *Arya Samaj*. If some member of our *Samaj* (society) maintains this view, then the question should be directed to him and it is incumbent on him alone to give a reply. Because this announcement created the incorrect impression that members of the *Arya Samaj* are the followers and subordinates of *Swami* Dayanand, this statement is issued to remove any doubt or misconception.

Writer: Jiwan Das, Secretary, *Arya Samaj*, Lahore.

### **Dayanand loses supreme leadership**

Consider the above situation. The only response to the powerful articles of *Hazrat* Mirza by the *Arya Samaj* was the apologetic statement of their Lahore Chapter disassociating themselves from the absurd ideas of Dayanand Saraswati so that they may not have to explain them. As for *Pundit* Dayanand, he maintained complete silence and did not respond at all to *Hazrat* Mirza's articles and challenge. However, he quietly modified his original view and conceded that the spirits were not infinite but, nevertheless, the principle of transmigration of soul was correct. He now

maintained that after all souls had achieved salvation, some spirits would be taken out of the state of salvation and circulated back into bodies; thus maintaining the process of transmigration.

Through some *Arya* members, the *Pundit* now challenged *Hazrat Mirza* to a debate, which offer was readily accepted. To prevent *Pundit* Dayanand from backing out of the offer, *Hazrat Mirza* decided to go public with the offer of debate and his acceptance. He had the following announcement published in the July 1878 issue of the newspaper *Hindu Bandu* (editor, Shiv Narayan Agnihotri):

### ANNOUNCEMENT

In response to my arguments, which showed the notion of infinite number of spirits as absurd and thereby proved the 'Fallacy of transmigration and the antiquity of earth,' *Swami* Dayanand Saraswati has sent me messages through three *Arya* members. In these messages, he maintains that although spirits are not infinite, transmigration still continues forever through a process whereby, after all the spirits have achieved salvation, they are taken out of salvation as needed. The *Swami* has now stated that if there is any doubt about this position, then the issue be resolved by a face-to-face debate. He has also written a letter to me on the same subject and expressed his desire for such a debate. Through this announcement, I accept his offer and welcome the opportunity to debate him face to face with all my heart. I sincerely desire that somehow *Swami* sahib should answer my questions. I suggest that the *Swami* should propose a neutral venue for this debate by putting an advertisement in any leading newspaper.

However, a condition for this debate is that it will be held in the presence of a panel of learned judges, composed of three from the *Brahmu Samaj* and three from the Christians. I shall have the first opportunity to speak because I shall be raising the questions that need to be answered. Then *Pundit* sahib may respond as he wishes, keeping within the confines of decency. I will then exercise the right of reply and the debate will end.

I am elated at the request of *Swami* sahib (to debate). I had been saying all along, "How is it that *Swami* sahib is engaged in other tasks and does not respond to such strong criticism that has

silenced the entire *Arya Samaj* community.” However, if *Swami* sahib does not publish an announcement in response, then it should be understood that *Swami* sahib was only interested in wiping the tears of his followers with talk. The contradictions inherent in the belief of returning souls to bodies after salvation have been identified in an article appended to this announcement. Readers may kindly peruse it and judge equitably for themselves.

Announcer:     Mirza Ghulam Ahmad  
                      Squire of Qadian  
                      June 10, 1878

The remarks made on this announcement by *Pundit* Shiv Narayan Agnihotri, editor of newspaper *Hindu Bandu*, are very interesting. They were published in the issue of July 1878. I reproduce below some of the pertinent portions of that article. He writes:

Now it appears from the statement of our contributor, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, that when he proved the issue under discussion to be false, the helpless *Swami Ji* (i.e. *Swami* Dayanand Saraswati) sent a message to Mirza sahib saying that the spirits, in reality, are not infinite but transmigration is still true. Be that as it may, I would like to point out to the readers that, by his admission, four things stand proven against the *Swami Ji*.

1. *Swami Ji* had convinced his followers that, according to the guidance of the Vedas, spirits were eternal and infinite. When this idea was shown to be incorrect, he admitted that spirits are not infinite. By so doing, he has expressed his belief against the book whose guidance is claimed to be the work of God.
2. If it is argued that the Vedas contain the belief as later propounded, then one can only marvel at the ability of the *Swami Ji* to understand and explain the Vedic philosophies to suit the situation. In other words, a particular guidance may be shown to be in the Vedas at one time but, if the situation changes, a diametrically opposed guidance may also be shown to be in it.
3. If, in fact, this issue is not discussed in the Vedas and the *Swami* has only expressed his personal opinion to his follow-

ers, then one wonders at the strange Vedas that *Swami Ji* follows. They have information about the technology of railways and telegraph, but are silent on such an important matter of religion. Thus, while being a follower of the Vedas, in a crucial issue, he has to rely on the true Veda called intelligence.

4. The disposition in *Swami Ji's* personality to change his position on an issue after it has been shown to be incorrect shows that he has the virtue of justice in his character. However, the above-mentioned incident is not the only occasion on which he has switched beliefs. There are numerous other incidents in the past as well. A few years ago, he announced under his signature that God authored the twenty-one *shastrs* (Hindu holy writ). Subsequently, when he saw many defects in them, he abandoned the other *shastrs* but claimed that God authored the four Vedas only. Later, when a portion of the Vedas called *Brahmin*, in his opinion, seemed incorrect, he changed his stand and claimed that only the portion called *Mantar Bhaag* has been revealed. If, on the one hand, this shows a sense of justice in his character, on the other, it also shows his fickle-mindedness. This great shortcoming results in a pattern of behavior where he prejudges an issue and takes a stand on it. Later, when some event shows his position to be incorrect, he abandons his stand. This procedure of searching for the truth is, however, against all established norms of investigative methodology...

### ***Pundit Saraswati refrains from debating***

*Pundit Agnihotri's* remarks above show clearly that the religion invented by *Pundit Saraswati* was of the type that has analogically been described in the Quran as the "web of a spider" (29:41). The strands of the web are made from material produced internally by the spider and when a strand breaks on one side, the spider weaves a compensatory strand on the opposite side. In a similar fashion, *Pundit Dayanand* invented a belief based on his own internally generated ideas but disguised and presented these ideas as of Vedic origin. When this belief was shown to be illogical, he manufactured another belief, based on his understanding of the issues, to compensate for the broken strand in his philosophy. Accordingly, when the idea of infinite spirits did not stand the test of logic and was proven to be absurd, he carved out another belief. In this revised belief, spirits were

no longer infinite, but transmigration of souls continued indefinitely even after all souls had achieved salvation. This was accomplished by the process of removing souls from the state of salvation and sending them back into the world to restart the cycle of birth, life, and death.

*Hazrat Mirza* accepted *Pundit Saraswati's* invitation to debate the issue through an open announcement so that the absurdity of his belief could be exposed. The *Pundit*, however, backed off a face-to-face confrontation despite having initiated the idea. He now opted to remain silent as if he did not exist, but *Hazrat Mirza* wanted this issue to be settled beyond any doubt. Consequently, when *Hazrat Mirza* wrote *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, he made it a point to address the fallacious beliefs of the *Pundit* once more in it. Later, he predicted the death of the *Pundit* within a three-month period as a sign for the followers of the *Pundit*. This prophecy was made known to *Lala Shrampat* and other members of the *Arya* sect. In accordance with the prophecy, the *Pundit* died in Ajmer on October 30, 1883, within the prescribed period.

### **Debate with Bawa Narayan Singh**

In short, *Pundit Dayanand* was so overawed by the truth that, during his remaining lifetime, he did not pick up the courage to face *Hazrat Mirza*. The *Arya Samaj*, Lahore, excused itself from the need to answer any of *Hazrat Mirza's* objections by distancing themselves from the *Pundit's* views on this issue. However, a debate on this issue did take place with *Bawa Narayan Singh*, the secretary of *Arya Samaj* branch of Amritsar. By profession, he was a lawyer and in 1878, he was also the overzealous secretary of the *Arya* branch of the city and published a monthly newspaper by the name of *Vidya Parkashk*. He strongly subscribed to the idea of infinite spirits and decided to take on *Hazrat Mirza* through the columns of the newspaper *Aftab Punjab* published from Lahore.

*Narayan Singh* first raised an irrelevant issue. His contention was that the 'reward' of five hundred rupees announced by *Hazrat Mirza* was in reality a 'fine' and that this word should be substituted in his announcement. He was so convinced of his victory in the debate that he asked *Hazrat Mirza* to send him a promissory note to guarantee the payment. Through a published announcement, *Hazrat Mirza* immediately conveyed his acceptance of all the conditions imposed by *Narayan Singh*. However, he rebutted *Narayan Singh's* argument about changing the word 'reward' to 'fine.' A fine, he argued, is imposed as a punishment for the breach of law. Since there was no breach of law in winning or loosing a debate,

there was no question of paying a fine. As regards the surety for the collection of reward, *Hazrat Mirza* sent him a signed note for the amount and also offered that he was willing to give him the promissory note with legal guarantees if *Narayan Singh* wanted further assurance of payment.

To adjudicate the debate, *Narayan Singh* had proposed a board with two Hindu and one Muslim member. He nominated *Munshi Kanhaya Lal* and *Munshi Indarman* as the Hindu members and *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* as the Muslim member. *Hazrat Mirza* proposed the augmentation of the Board by his three nominees, one Hindu and two Muslims, and proposed the names of *Swami Dayanand Saraswati*, *Hakim Muhammad Sharif Amritsari*, and *Maulvi Abu Saeed Muhammad Hussain Batalvi*. In addition, he proposed having two Christians on the board and suggested the names of *Rev. Rajab Ali* and *Babu Ralia Ram*. He offered that if *Narayan Singh* had any objection to the proposed Christian members, he could nominate one and *Hazrat Mirza* would nominate the other. *Hazrat Mirza* also imposed a condition on the judges that their decision regarding a winner must be supported by a reasoned judgment.

*Hazrat Mirza* wrote the opening article of the debate for the newspaper *Aftab*; *Narayan Singh* replied, and *Hazrat Mirza* answered. With *Hazrat Mirza's* second article, which was a veritable sea of knowledge and wisdom, *Narayan Singh* was vanquished. He fell totally silent after this and history does not record any worthwhile activity on his part after that. Certainly, he made no effort to collect the reward money by announcing that *Pundit Dayanand* was right in his beliefs. On the contrary, he disassociated himself from the *Arya* platform after his encounter with *Hazrat Mirza* and thus put the seal on *Hazrat Mirza's* victory by his action.

### ***Hazrat Mirza's courage of conviction***

By the Grace of God, *Hazrat Mirza's* courage of conviction was extraordinary, the like of which is not to be found in any but pious and God-loving persons. When *Hazrat Mirza* picked up his pen to challenge the belief of eternal and infinite spirits, *Swami Dayanand* was so overawed that he backpedaled from his earlier conviction about infinite spirits. Later, *Hazrat Mirza's* readiness to engage the *Swami* on his new and revised beliefs made him backtrack on his own proposal to hold a debate.

All the pre-conditions for a debate imposed by *Bawa Narayan Singh* were accepted. Even *Swami Dayanand*, the originator of the belief, was included in the panel of judges as *Hazrat Mirza's* nominee because *Hazrat Mirza* wanted that a proof positive be rendered against this false

belief. The payment of the reward money was assured. Even so, Narayan Singh just disappeared from the scene only after the second article. After a long hiatus, when he reappeared, he had disassociated himself from the *Arya* platform.

### **Fourteen arguments against eternal and infinite spirits**

*Hazrat* Mirza put forward fourteen arguments, which were published in different newspapers and magazines, against the spirits being eternal and infinite. In the face of these arguments, the followers of this false belief were left speechless. Not one of his arguments was ever rebutted and even *Pundit* Dayanand Saraswati proved to be completely helpless in the matter. Those who tried to rebut, left the debate at an early stage and it became difficult even to trace their whereabouts.

### **Debate with Munshi Gurdial**

*Munshi* Gurdial, a teacher of Middle School Chinot, published an article in the May 12, 1878, issue of *Aftab Punjab* in which he supported the belief of eternal and infinite spirits. *Hazrat* Mirza responded with such a well-reasoned article that it took the wind out of *Munshi* Gurdial's sails, in much the same way as *Hazrat* Mirza's previous articles had for his two fellow thinkers.

The articles published by *Hazrat* Mirza in response to Bawa Narayan Singh and *Munshi* Gurdial were published in the biography of *Hazrat* Mirza by Sheikh Yaqub Ali Torab and hence I do not consider it necessary to reproduce them here.

### **Lala Shrampat Rai enters the debate**

*Lala* Shrampat Rai, the well-known *Arya* of Qadian, witnessed the *Hazrat* Mirza - Bawa Narayan Singh debate and felt the desire to gain publicity by entering the fray. He wrote an article on transmigration and sent it to the paper *Hindu Bandu*, published from Lahore. The article was so illogical and absurd that the editor's comments criticized the author's work in the following words:

It is not just sufficient to know how to speak? Even animals can produce sounds from their mouth. Similarly, everyone can also shoot an aimless arrow. Irrelevant talk and meaningless writings are similar to picking a bow and shooting an arrow with no particular direction or target in mind.

These comments put an effective end to the debating career of *Lala Shrampat Rai*. Never again did he pick up the courage to write for a newspaper.

### **Debates with the Christians**

*Hazrat Mirza* was engaged, at the time, not only in religious debates with the *Aryas* but was also battling the Christians with his pen. The immediate cause of this latter confrontation was a series of hurtful and indecent articles against the Holy Prophet and Islam, published in the Christian newspaper *Nur Afshan* of Ludhiana. *Hazrat Mirza* selected the newspaper *Manshur Muhammadi*, published from Bangalore, as the forum for his reply to this scurrilous propaganda. This newspaper had especially been founded to provide an outlet for the Muslim rebuttal of charges against Islam. As soon as *Hazrat Mirza's* forceful articles began to appear in the press, the Christian camp became greatly perturbed and agitated. This confrontation soon gained in intensity but its details are left for a later part of the book.

### **Debates with *Brahmu Samaj***

By this time, the *Brahmu Samaj* sect of Hinduism had been founded in Lahore. *Pundit Shiv Narayan Agnihotri*, by profession a drawing master in a Government school and owner and editor of the newspaper *Hindu Bandu*, was a prominent leader of the movement. This movement respected the leaders of other religious groups but denied the existence of revelation. *Hazrat Mirza's* articles frequently appeared in the *Hindu Bandu*. During the course of correspondence with this *Brahmu* leader, a controversy started about the issue of revelation. The exchange of arguments on the subject took place from May 21 to June 17, 1879. This author has read the arguments put forth in the debate but the progression of arguments stops abruptly as the correspondence was not continued to its logical conclusion. When *Pundit Agnihotri* sought to publish the incomplete correspondence, *Hazrat Mirza* demanded that a *Brahmu* and an Englishman be appointed as a judge and the correspondence be published along with their verdict. Simultaneously, he proposed Keshab Chander Sen, a well-known *Brahmu Samaj* leader, as one of the judges. But *Pundit Agnihotri* did not agree to submit the arguments to an official verdict and published the correspondence in its incomplete form.

We are not concerned here with his reasons for doing so. However, *Hazrat Mirza* had argued in the debate that the denial of revelation leads to atheism and later events proved his point. *Pundit Agnihotri* abandoned the *Brahmu Samaj* sect, became an atheist, and founded a new sect called



*Deo Samaj*. The *Pundit* had made the argument that there was no need for revelation because a person's intellect provides all the necessary guidance but in his case, it appears that his intellect bade him farewell and left him in a state of total confusion.

### **A Brahmu visits Qadian for investigation**

After publication of the correspondence referred to above, a person called Tilla Ram, who was a member of the *Brahmu Samaj* sect, came to Qadian to further investigate the issues raised in the debate. He first stayed with some Hindus, but later shifted to *Hazrat Mirza's* house on his invitation. He did not have any dietary restrictions.<sup>4</sup> Conversation with him focused on, amongst other issues, the truth of Islam, prophethood, and revelation. *Hazrat Mirza* wanted him to stay longer with him but he could not. At the time of his departure, he seemed greatly impressed by *Hazrat Mirza's* morals, hospitality and knowledge.

### **Conclusive arguments against *Brahmu Samaj* in *Barahin Ahmadiyya***

*Brahmu Samaj* denied the existence of revelation. *Hazrat Mirza* viewed this belief with grave concern because it implied that the founders of the great religious movements had perpetrated lies against Allah by claiming a Divine origin, through revelation, for their teachings and Books. The claim by *Brahmu Samaj* of respecting these holy personalities was thus belied by the insinuation that they were guilty of passing their own innovations as the work of God, merely to influence people to act according to their precepts. For this reason, *Hazrat Mirza* was especially critical of *Brahmu Samaj* in his book *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. *Hazrat Mirza* was the recipient of non-prophetic revelation himself and this personal experience enabled him to contradict this false belief better than anyone else could have. He was thus able to refute this false belief not only by rational arguments and historical evidence but also by presenting testimony from his own experience and observations in support of this phenomenon.

### **Desire to write a book *Nemat-ul-Bari* (The Creator's Blessings) or *Aalah Allah* (The Bounties of Allah)**

About this time, *Hazrat Mirza* conceived the idea of writing a book that would describe the Divine blessings and favors bestowed on him. He intended to call this book *Nematul Bari*, which means blessings of the

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<sup>4</sup> Many traditional Hindus are very particular about what they eat and who cooks it. - Translator.

Creator. Later, he changed the name of the proposed book to *Aalah Allah*, which means the Bounties of Allah. However, he gave up the idea of writing this book as the result of an unusual incident as follows: When he picked up his pen to start work on the book, all of a sudden, it began to rain. The realization dawned on him that every drop of rain brings with it countless bounties and blessings. Just as it is not possible for him to count all the raindrops, so too is it impossible for him to recount all the favors that the Lord has bestowed on him. Thereupon, he abandoned the idea of writing this book.

## Chapter

# 10

## THE WRITING OF *BARAHIN AHMADIYYA*

### **Inviolable sense of honor for Islam**

Even a cursory look at *Hazrat* Mirza's life reveals that, besides his great passion for Allah and total absorption in His worship from an early age, he loved the Holy Prophet and the Quran with an intensity, the like of which is difficult to find. He considered transgressing even an iota beyond the limits of Quran and *Sunnah* as a big sin. An inviolable sense of honor for his religion made him a front-rank fighter in protecting the honor and reputation of the Quran and the Holy Prophet. His tremendous knowledge, fired by his enthusiasm, made him the ideal person to prove the truth of Islam and to show the astonishing power of the Quran. He missed no opportunity to extol the favors bestowed on humanity by the Holy Prophet, and his sense of honor permitted no compromise on the subject.

The Temperance Society had recently been formed to educate the public about the danger of alcohol and other intoxicants. It arranged meetings and invited leaders from all religions and other influential people to speak on the subject. *Hazrat* Mirza, who was in Ludhiana at the time, also received an invitation to address one of their meetings. A condition of participation was that no particular religion or religious leader was to be projected in the talk, which had to be confined to a general theme. *Hazrat* Mirza responded that it was impossible for him not to mention the name of the Holy Prophet, who established the greatest temperance society in the world. The Holy Prophet's one call was instrumental in making teetotalers

of a people who had been addicted to alcohol for generations. In one go, they gave up drinking, broke the wine pitchers, gave their goblets of gold and silver in charity, and never touched an intoxicant again. It would be the height of ungratefulness not to mention the name of a person who established such temperance. Accordingly, *Hazrat Mirza* declined the invitation.

### **Astonishing gift of God-given knowledge**

*Hazrat Mirza* lived in a village where there was neither the opportunity nor the means to enhance knowledge and to keep abreast of world affairs. However, the astonishing fact is that *Hazrat Mirza's* articles showed complete familiarity with all developments in the religious field. The newly emerging philosophies in Europe were constantly raising new objections against religion. Some of the books containing these new philosophies had not even reached India. Yet, when *Hazrat Mirza* picked up his pen, he answered all the criticisms of these new philosophies and it appeared that he was not only fully aware of these issues but had given them considerable thought.

Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din narrates an example of this. While in England, he was once invited to speak before an atheistic society on the existence and attributes of God. A question and answer session was to follow in which both the questioner and the speaker were assigned five minutes each for the question and the reply. Five minutes are quite sufficient to criticize something but quite insufficient for an adequate defense. However, Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din stated that he had no difficulty in satisfactorily addressing the criticisms of these atheists in the allotted time because he had read the answers to almost all their questions in *Hazrat Mirza's Barahin Ahmadiyya*.

### **Motivation for writing *Barahin Ahmadiyya***

Islam was relentlessly under attack from all sides. Christianity was bent upon using all its strength and power to crush Islam. A Christian clergyman, named Imad-ud-Din, had openly claimed that if the Muslims were not converted to Christianity, then, at the very least, they would not remain Muslims either. The Christian missionaries were portraying the Holy Prophet in the ugliest possible fashion and were systematically criticizing the verses of the Holy Quran.

The newly formed Hindu sect of *Arya Samaj* followed the Christian lead. It took the Christian propaganda, gave it a further twist to make it even more hurtful and then published it to taunt the Muslims. Superficially, the *Brahmu Samaj* sect appeared benign, but its denial of revelation and prophethood struck at the very root of religion.

The Islamic scholars of the time were busy in useless arguments. Their attention was focused on issues like, whether *ameen* (amen) was to be pronounced loudly or silently in prayers, whether the hands were to be raised to the ears every time the *takbir* (Allah is Great) was said in prayers, and whether it was permissible to eat a crow. Disagreements on these trivial matters were viewed very seriously and resulted in mutual pronouncements of excommunication from Islam. Amongst the Muslim intelligentsia, the movement of Sir Syed Ahmad had deprived Islam of its spirituality by denying the efficacy of prayers and claiming that revelation was merely an internal inspiration. At the same time, atheism and materialism were bent on annihilating religion.

Seeing Islam in this dire strait, *Hazrat* Mirza first embarked on a *jihad* with his pen by writing articles in defense of Islam for publication in newspapers. Finding this effort inadequate, he decided to launch a decisive struggle. To this end, he conceived the idea of writing a comprehensive treatise that would refute the false religions; rebut, with logical and rational arguments, the criticism heaped on Islam by its opponents, and present proof of the truthfulness of Islam in the form of Divine support for it. This was the initial motivation for *Barahin Ahmadiyya*.

However, *Hazrat* Mirza was not just satisfied by writing this *magnum opus* (literary masterpiece). His heart was deeply convinced of the truth of Islam, to which he was a witness as a result of his own experience of submitting to it. Therefore, at the time of the publication of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, he announced a reward of ten thousand rupees claimable by any person who could rebut the arguments in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* or come up with counter-arguments from the revealed Book of any other religion in favor of that religion and refuting Islam.<sup>1</sup> The reward conditions stipulated that it was not necessary to produce arguments equal in number to that given in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and the reward could be claimed even if half as many, or even a third, or a quarter, or a fifth of the arguments in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* were adduced.

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1 *Hazrat* Mirza believed that a revealed book could only be considered perfect if it supported its contentions with arguments given in the book. He, himself, also abided by this test. Whenever he made a claim or presented a principle of Islam, he showed it to be from the Quran and gave arguments in its support also from the Quran. When he refuted a false belief, he again produced arguments against it from the Quran. This principle was applied throughout *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. *Hazrat* Mirza required his opponents to argue likewise, using their religious books. He maintained that a revealed book could not be called complete, if the doctrines of that religion were not espoused and supported by it, but were the product of human thinking that was attributed to it. A religion, with such a revealed book, was only the innovation of human mind.

### **The challenge and the reward with *Barahin Ahmadiyya***

This challenge shows the confidence *Hazrat* Mirza had in the incontestability of the arguments and proof that he had compiled from the Quran in his book. He was so convinced of the strength and stability of the rationale adduced in support of Islam that he offered his entire moveable and immoveable property as reward to anyone who rebutted his arguments. His challenge was widely publicized throughout the world but no one had the courage and ability to accept it despite the allurements of a large reward. To this day, *Barahin Ahmadiyya* challenge remains unanswered. A verse of *Hazrat* Mirza, which he wrote in praise of the Holy Prophet, fits the situation beautifully:

This courageous man commands such fear and awe,  
That none dare confront him in the field of Muhammad.

In *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, *Hazrat* Mirza produced clear evidence regarding the truth of the Quran and rebutted conclusively the beliefs of Christians, atheists, and the various sects of Hinduism, such as *Arya Samaj*, *Brahmu Samaj*, *Dev Samaj* and *Sanatan Dharam*. Not a single follower of these religions picked up the courage to respond to the challenge and, thereby, become a claimant for the prize money. No parallels were ever shown between the arguments in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and the Books of other religions, nor was the reasoning in it ever contradicted.

The Muslims of the time considered the publication of this book as a great service to Islam and a clear victory for their religion at a time when the enemy had besieged Islam and was relentlessly attacking it. Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, who later became an arch-opponent of *Hazrat* Mirza and led the movement to declare him an infidel (*kafir*), reviewed the book and commented on it as follows:<sup>2</sup>

Keeping in view the need and condition of the present time, this book is such that the like of it has not been written in the existing history of Islam; about the future, only God knows...The book's author has steadfastly helped the cause of Islam with his life and wealth, his pen and eloquence, his practice and preaching, in a way the like of which has rarely been witnessed among the Muslims before. If somebody considers my statement as a typical Asiatic exaggeration, then show me another book that contends so

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<sup>2</sup> *Ishaat-ul-Sunnah*. Vol. 6.

powerfully against all the opponents of Islam, especially the *Arya Samaj* and *Brahmu Samaj*, and identify for me any individuals who have helped Islam as much with their life and wealth, their pen and eloquence, and who have taken upon themselves the responsibility for the victory of Islam in the present time. And show me another individual who has bravely challenged the opponents of Islam and the deniers of revelation with the claim that if they doubt the phenomenon of revelation they should come to him to witness its demonstration, and has shown to such doubters the truth of his contention.

### **Divine sign about the book prior to its compilation**

A heavenly sign shown to *Hazrat Mirza* also bears testimony to the importance and greatness of this book. *Hazrat Mirza* writes:<sup>3</sup>

In 1864 or 1865, when I was still young and busy in the acquisition of knowledge, I saw the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, in a dream. I was holding a religious book, which appeared to be of my penmanship. The Holy Prophet looked at the book and asked in Arabic, “What have you named this book?” I replied respectfully that I had named it “*Qutbi*” (from the Polar star). The real meaning of this name became apparent to me only at the time when the poster announcing the reward money was published. The name implies that this book is stable and fixed like the Polar star and announcing the reward of ten thousand rupees has publicized its stability and strength.

The Holy Prophet took the book from me and as soon as his blessed hands touched the book, it turned into a pleasantly colored and beautiful fruit, which looked like a guava but was of the size of a watermelon. When the Holy Prophet tried to slice the fruit, honey flowed out of it in such abundance that his arms were drenched by the honey up to his elbows. Then a dead man lying outside the door regained life through the miracle of Holy Prophet and came in and stood behind me. I stood before the Holy Prophet like a plaintiff stands before a judge and he was seated on a chair with great majesty and splendor like a powerful wrestler. The Holy Prophet handed me a slice of the fruit for the purpose of giv-

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3 *Barahin Ahmadiyya*.

ing it to the resurrected person and then dropped the rest of the slices in my outstretched shirt. I gave that one slice to the resurrected person and he ate it right there. When he finished eating, I noticed that the Holy Prophet's chair was considerably elevated from its previous position and his forehead was shining and emanating rays like the sun. This was a sign for the revival and progress of Islam. My eyes were still looking at that shining light when I woke up. All praise be to Allah for this.

In the days immediately after seeing this dream, I narrated it to about two hundred people, which included about fifty Hindus of whom several survive to this day. They know that, at the time, I had no intention of writing *Barahin Ahmadiyya* or any other religious book or offering a reward of ten thousand rupees to prove its mettle. It is apparent now that the dream prophesied a number of things, several of which have already been fulfilled. The stability and strength implied in *Qutabi*, the name given to the book in the dream, became apparent to the world when a challenge, backed by a large reward, was given to show conclusively the truth of Islam. Everyone should await the fulfillment of those parts of the dream that have not yet materialized. Certainly the heavenly decrees cannot be voided.

The precise manner in which different aspects of the dream became a reality is a separate topic, which will be discussed in its proper place in this book.

### **The period of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*'s compilation and publication**

*Hazrat Mirza* practically started sustained work on *Barahin Ahmadiyya* towards the end of 1878 or the beginning of 1879, although posters advertising the book had begun to appear by the end of 1877. This masterpiece, which is a testament to *Hazrat Mirza*'s love of religion, was published in several volumes. The first two volumes came out in 1880, the third in 1882, and the fourth in 1884.

### **Scribes of *Barahin Ahmadiyya***

When *Hazrat Mirza* completed a portion of the book, he gave the draft to Mian Shamsuddin for transcribing it. Mian Shamsuddin was the son of one of *Hazrat Mirza*'s teachers and had beautiful handwriting. His handwritten copy was then given to the scribe *Munshi* Imam-ud-Din,



whose calligraphic style was greatly liked by *Hazrat* Mirza. He remained *Hazrat* Mirza's scribe for a long time and the first three volumes of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* were scripted entirely by him. The fourth volume, however, was partially scripted by Sheikh Muhammad Hussain as well.

### **The press**

*Hazrat* Mirza wanted that the calligraphy and the printing of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* should be of the best quality. A press in Amritsar, called Safeer Hind and owned by a clergyman Rajab Ali, enjoyed a reputation for high quality work. Despite its high price, *Hazrat* Mirza contracted with it for the printing of his book. True to their reputation, they did the work cleanly and with great care. Reverend Rajab Ali engaged Sheikh Nur Ahmad, a reputed printing expert, from Muradabad to supervise the work. The first volume was printed in the clergyman's own press, Safeer Hind.

Shortly thereafter, Sheikh Nur Ahmad established his own printing press under the name of Riyaz Hind, and Reverend Rajab Ali started subcontracting the work to him. The second and third volumes were actually printed in the press Riyaz Hind but bore the name of the clergyman's press on the books. By the time the fourth volume was ready to go to the press, it was common knowledge that the clergyman was subcontracting the work and *Hazrat* Mirza decided to place the order directly with Riyaz Hind. This also resulted in considerable cost economy.

Some delay was occasioned in the printing of Volumes 3 and 4, which irked a few members of the public. The press was solely responsible for causing this delay. For his part, *Hazrat* Mirza never delayed anything.

### **Care in printing**

*Hazrat* Mirza exercised great care and diligence in the printing of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. He took the manuscript to Amritsar personally or he sent it through a courier, such as Lala Mallawa Mal, or dispatched it by registered post. The same care was exercised while sending the proofs. Generally, he preferred to take the manuscript himself. The rail had not yet been constructed to Batala and so the journey to Amritsar had to be undertaken on a horse carriage. Usually, *Hazrat* Mirza walked from Qadian to Batala and then hired a carriage to Amritsar, where he stayed most often with *Hakim* Muhammad Sharif Kalla Nuri. On occasions, he had to stay several days to check the proofs of the book. This work took up almost all his time, but whenever he could, he conversed on religious issues with some people. Amongst them was *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi, a bookseller by profession, who liked to write pamphlets and articles refut-

ing the Christian beliefs. For this reason, *Hazrat* Mirza felt a natural camaraderie with him.

### Care in dispatch

When a consignment of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* was received from the press, *Hazrat* Mirza undertook its distribution personally. Directories did not exist in those days, so the first step was to prepare a list of potential buyers. *Hazrat* Mirza wrote personal letters, sometimes as many as a hundred and fifty a day, in which he introduced the book. Orders received from buyers were entered into a register and books were dispatched in the order of the entries. *Hazrat* Mirza personally packed the books, wrote the addresses, and posted the books, often by registered mail to obviate any confusion about whether or not a book was sent. As a rule, the books were sent postage paid but exceptions were made where the buyer had specifically requested postage due mail.

Certain notable persons and public opinion leaders were sent examination copies of the book. Some niggardly amongst them did not pay for the book nor returned it, thus rendering the whole set unfit for sale. However, *Hazrat* Mirza's objective was not to trade but to serve Islam.

### Difficulties in financing the printing

This was the period when *Hazrat* Mirza's brother, Ghulam Qadir, had complete control over their common inheritance. Although *Hazrat* Mirza's share of this inheritance was easily in excess of ten thousand rupees, he chose not to have the property divided, which would have been necessary if he wanted to control his half. He allowed the management of family lands to continue as usual and, far from seeking any control, he showed complete disinterest in their administration. He was quite content with the simple food and clothes that were provided to him and did not care about other things. Even so, he was willing to give a reward of ten thousand rupees from his share of the property to any person who rebutted the arguments he had written in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* about the truth of the Quran and the Holy Prophet. But the book had to be published first, and *Hazrat* Mirza had no ready cash to undertake its printing. Nevertheless, he was determined to have it printed and had full trust in God that this would be done. He expressed this difficulty as follows:

When I wrote my first book *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, I was confronted with the problem that there was no money for its printing. I was an unknown person with no connections. I beseeched Allah for

help and received the following revelation in reply: “Shake towards thee the trunk of the palm tree, it will drop on thee fresh ripe dates” (19:25).<sup>4</sup> In accordance with this command, I wrote the first letter to Khalifa Syed Muhammad Hussain sahib, a Minister in the State of Patiala. As promised by God, He made his heart to incline towards me, and without any hesitation, he sent me one hundred and fifty rupees, and a similar amount after some time. Some other persons also assisted financially, and so the book was printed despite the earlier despair about its financing. Thus, the prophecy was fulfilled. This situation was witnessed by not just a few but a large number, amongst whom are Hindus as well.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote letters to several notable Muslims, but most of them did not even have the courtesy to reply. Some, however, extended a helping hand; a list of those who sent contributions or advances against the purchase of books is shown below along with the amount received from each:

Khalifa Syed Muhammad Hussain	Rs 500
Mirza Muhammad Alauddin Khan, Chief of Loharu	Rs 40
<i>Nawab</i> Sir Waqar-ul-Umra Iqbal ud Daula Haidabad	Rs 100
Muhammad Afzal Khan	Rs 110
<i>Nawab</i> sahib Malir Kotla	Rs 100
Sheikh Muhammad Bahauddin, Chief Minister, Junagadh	Rs 1000

This amount was not sufficient for the printing of a voluminous book like *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, and so several persons, anxious to help, procured advance prepaid orders to prevent the shortage of funds from causing disruption in printing.

### **The incident with *Nawab* Siddiq Hassan Khan**

An admonitory incident, related to the publication of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, happened with *Nawab* Siddiq Hassan Khan. He belonged to the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect and had a reputation for patronizing the writing and publication of religious literature. Considering him to be a well to do person with the noble intention of serving religion, *Hazrat* Mirza asked for his support in the publication of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Initially, he promised to help, but later retracted. *Hazrat* Mirza narrates this incident as follows:

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4 *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Page 226

5 *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*. Page 337.

A short period ago, I wrote to a *Nawab* sahib for assistance in the publication of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. He is known for his virtue, piety, knowledge and religious learning. If the *Nawab* sahib had written to me in response to my letter that he did not consider the book to have sufficient merit to warrant his assistance, I would not have been hurt. Instead, he first wrote and promised to buy fifteen or twenty books. Later, when reminded of his promise, he replied that buying or giving financial assistance to books containing religious argumentation was against the policy of the British Government, and no hope should be entertained of any financial assistance from his state. I would like to make it perfectly clear that we do not rely on *Nawab* sahib, but that we rely only on God, the Clement, and he is sufficient for us. May God grant that the British Government stays well pleased with him. I would like to respectfully submit, however, that this thinking, which puts the onus on the British Government is distorted because it is not the policy of the British Government to stop any group from proving the truth of their religion, or to forbid help for religious books.

*Hazrat* Mirza was very upset by the manner in which *Nawab* Siddiq Khan reneged on his promise. In accordance with his expressed intention to buy multiple copies of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, *Hazrat* Mirza had dispatched the books to him by post and he had accepted the parcel. When he read the book, he became very agitated because, apparently, something in it did not agree with his outmoded way of thinking. He sent the books back but either tore them deliberately in his rage, or in derision, packed them carelessly so that they were damaged in transit. The net result was that *Hazrat* Mirza received a package of torn and tattered books. *Hazrat* Mirza had toiled and labored to write this book merely as a service to Islam. The sorry remnants of the books, clearly evidencing the ill treatment of his labor of love, greatly grieved him.

Hamid Ali, a servant of *Hazrat* Mirza, gave an eyewitness account of those moments. He stated that *Hazrat* Mirza was pacing back and forth when the books were brought to him. His face turned red with anger and grief at seeing the books in that condition. He continued his pacing, very vexed, but in complete silence until suddenly he uttered the words, "Alright, you go ahead and please your government." God alone knows the pain with which those words rose from his heart to his tongue. *Maulana* Rume expressed this in a verse as follows:

As long as the feelings of a man of God are not hurt,  
God does not disgrace a nation.

A few months after this incident, the *Nawab* fell from grace and hard times followed. The British Government, which he had tried to please by rejecting *Barahin Ahmadiyya* in that nasty manner, became so annoyed with him that he was forced to leave his state. His title of '*Nawab*' was revoked, a political suit was instituted against him, and a veritable mountain of woes descended on him. He tried very hard to extract himself from these difficulties, but without success. When attempt after attempt failed, *Hafiz* Muhammad Yousaf, *Zillaidar*<sup>6</sup> of Amritsar, broached *Hazrat* Mirza on behalf of the *Nawab*. He greatly admired the *Nawab* and, like him, belonged to the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect. *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi also interceded on behalf of the *Nawab* and brought his religious services to the attention of *Hazrat* Mirza.

*Hafiz* Muhammad Yousaf came personally to *Hazrat* Mirza and requested him to pray for the *Nawab*. *Hazrat* Mirza's initial response was to refuse. He narrated the incident of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and said:

The *Nawab* sahib gave precedence to the pleasure of the British Government over the pleasure of God. Let him now please the Government. It is a matter of great shame to lay claim to believing in one God and then to fear an earthly government, and that too which allows all kinds of freedom.

*Hazrat* Mirza spoke at length on this subject. However, as *Hafiz* Yousaf later stated:

*Hazrat* Mirza was extremely kind to me so I persisted with my request and apologized on behalf of the *Nawab* sahib. At last, *Hazrat* Mirza agreed to my request to pray for him. Since the whole purpose of my visit was to get this done, I did not leave Qadian until he told me, "I have prayed. *Nawab* sahib should ask for repentance as well. God accepts repentance and He will have mercy on him. *Nawab* sahib will be acquitted from the government's charges against him." After this, I offered to buy copies of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* on behalf of *Nawab* sahib, but *Hazrat* Mirza did not accept. I repeated my request several times with-

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6 A petty officer of the Irrigation Department

out success. *Hazrat* Mirza said, “I prayed for him out of pity, and by the Grace of Allah, he will be saved from punishment. I did this out of kindness, but I will not give him the books at any price. This is against my self-respect and belief. I had asked for assistance in this work under God’s directions and as an act of mercy for these people because they are negligent in their religious duties. The idea was to give them an opportunity to do a good deed that may prove to be their salvation. Otherwise, I do not look to them for help because I hope for assistance only from God and He is sufficient.”

*Hafiz* Yousaf says that I was afraid to insist any more and returned home. *Hazrat* Mirza’s prayer was accepted. The charges against the *Nawab* by the Government were dropped and his title was restored. But his health had been so badly impaired by worry and anxiety that he died before this good news reached him.

### **Service, not business, the objective**

From a business standpoint, the writing of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* was not a profitable proposition. Revenues and contributions could hardly cover expenses. However, *Hazrat* Mirza’s motive in writing the book was to serve Islam, not to make a profit. In one place, he wrote:<sup>7</sup>

I feel sorry at the understanding of some people who, when they are asked to assist, reply that they will buy the book when it is printed, and not before. These people should understand that this is not a business. The author’s only desire is to aid religion, and he does not harbor any designs against their wealth. The time of help is now, when there are financial difficulties in printing the book. Help given after the book has been printed is similar to giving a patient medicine after recovery; what reward can one expect for such untimely help?

Mir Abbas Ali Ludhianwi, a person of Sufi temperament, worked diligently to find buyers for *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. He utilized every opportunity to generate interest in the book. In a letter written to him on October 28, 1882, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:

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<sup>7</sup> *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Vol. 2.

Respected *Makhdumi* Mir Abbas Ali sahib,

Peace and blessings of Allah be on you. I was delighted to receive your letter. May Allah reward you for it. Your efforts in the way of Allah and His Messenger are so much a part of your nature that you stand in no need of any reminder. This work is being done solely for God and under His Will. While soliciting orders for the book, therefore, kindly bear in mind that you do not include in the list of buyers any person whose interest in the purchase is to merely trade. The purchase is blessed only for those who want to help out of their love for religion because, in fact, this is not a business for profit. In your efforts, trust in God, the Bountiful, and seek assistance only from the ones with pure intentions. If such people cannot be found, then your prayers for the cause are sufficient. We, powerless and abject persons, have neither the means nor the position to accomplish this job, but when He, who has power over all things, wills it, all the resources will come forth. Everything is easy for God.

Once, Mir Abbas Ali Ludhianwi planned a fundraising, but *Hazrat* Mirza directed him to cancel it, and wrote:

Raising funds from the poor is an odious affair. When God wills this matter, He will bring forth, out of nowhere, a person who will be motivated by his strong faith and love of religion to undertake this task to completion. Kindly do not pursue the proposal for a fundraiser.

This attitude towards fundraising was topped by a willingness to give away free copies of his book to those who came to him out of love for religion, but without the means to buy the book. Many copies of the book were distributed free to students of theology. Once he wrote to Mir Abbas Ali:

If there is some Hindu in search of the truth, it is incumbent on us to give him a discount. Actually, if the person is really indigent, we will give him the book totally free. Let me know, if there are such persons, so that the books may be sent to them.

### **Opposition to *Barahin Ahmadiyya***

*Barahin Ahmadiyya* was written at a time when the phenomenon of revelation was extensively refuted. Amongst the Hindus, the newly

formed moderate sect of *Brahmu Samaj* followed the lead of the materialists in denying revelation. Among the Muslims, the writings of Sir Syed Ahmad showed some of the same influence as a result of his effort to ostensibly inject rationality into the Islamic doctrines. Sir Syed Ahmad did not deny Divine revelation outright, but greatly reduced it in status by claiming that it was an inspiration from within a person, thereby equating it with inspirational poetry.

It was under these circumstances that *Hazrat* Mirza made the claim, with all the emphasis at his command, that revelation is an external, and not an internal, inspiration. He invited the doubters to come to him for witnessing and experiencing the veracity of his claim. Accordingly, he wrote:<sup>8</sup>

What I have stated about revelation, namely, that it is still prevalent amongst the perfect followers of Muhammad and is peculiar only to them and not found in any other, is not without proof. Just like hundreds of scientific facts are determined by experiments, so too, examination and experimentation can prove the existence of revelation to all genuine seekers. If somebody is truly searching for the truth, then on us lies the responsibility to prove it to him, provided that the *Brahmu* or the denier of religion becomes a seeker of Islam, declares in writing his intention of accepting Islam with an honest heart, and then sincerely turns to it.

This announcement caused a commotion among those that denied revelation. Their strong opposition was understandable because of their positions on this issue - the *Brahmu Samaj* denying revelation totally, and the *Arya Samaj* believing that revelation ceased with the Vedas a long time ago. Some people, who venerated Sir Syed Ahmad because of his valuable service to the Muslims in the area of education, were upset with this announcement because it contradicted his viewpoint. However, somewhat unexpectedly the clerics of Ludhiana and Amritsar, led by Ghulam Ali Kasuri and others, also came out in opposition. Out of ignorance, these clerics believed only in prophetic revelation but not in the revelation of saints. The statement of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi about these clerics is sufficient to rebut their viewpoint. He stated:

The denial of revelation by the Muslims of Amritsar is because of their lack of intelligence and understanding, and to a certain

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8 *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Vol. 3, footnote 11. Pages 215-216.



extent owing to their prejudice against pious and spiritual personalities.

Around this time, *Hazrat* Mirza received a letter from Mir Abbas Ali Ludhianwi written at the behest of *Munshi* Ahmad Jan Ludhianwi, a well-known Sufi saint. In this letter, the Sufi saint made a respectful plea to *Hazrat* Mirza not to write anything detrimental about Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. *Hazrat* Mirza's reply of November 8, 1882, explained the difference between *Arya* and *Brahmu Samaj* and further stated as follows:

The *Brahmu Samaj* sect purports to follow rational arguments, but their imperfect knowledge leads them to deny the revealed books. Because it is in the nature of man to be quickly impressed by things that are easily understandable, many college students and newly educated are impressed by pseudo-philosophic speeches based on conjectures and devoid of reality. Syed Ahmad Khan is also influenced by this thinking and represents their branch. It is, therefore, necessary to extirpate his poisonous insinuations. The *Brahmu Samaj* of Lahore has started a series of articles in the paper *Rifah* to rebut *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, Volume 3, but in the face of pure truth, they are wasting their efforts. Shortly, Allah will abase and disgrace them, and establish the greatness and truth of His religion.

I do not understand the meaning of the advice rendered by *Munshi* Ahmad Jan sahib that praise should not be carried to exaggeration. My book has praise only for the Quran and the Holy Prophet, and both are rivers without end. If all the sages and intellectuals of the world were to unite to sing their praise, they still would not be able to do justice to the praise they actually deserve. The question of exaggeration just does not arise. However, in some revealed passages gifted to me by Allah, there is some praise, which ostensibly appears to apply to this humble person, but, in reality, is for the Holy Prophet. Such praise can be attributed to someone else only if he is a perfect follower of the Holy Prophet, and deviates not even an iota from that path because such deviations lead to perdition. God's intentions, therefore, in these passages is to show the greatness of His Prophet and His Book.

Dated: November 8, 1882.

### **Opposition by non-Muslims**

In the letter mentioned above, *Hazrat Mirza* referred to a contemplated rebuttal by the *Brahmu Samaj* of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, Volume 3, in which he had strongly asserted the existence of revelation. He had claimed that God would abase such people, and subsequent events proved the truth of his statement. *Pundit Agnihotri*, a prominent member of *Brahmu Samaj*, first wrote a review critical of Divine revelation but then, as God would have it, turned around and laid claim to receiving revelation himself. However, bereft of Divine knowledge and true revelation, he later turned agnostic and founded the *Dev Samaj* sect based on the reverence of cows as gods.

From the Christians, Reverend B.L. Thakardas wrote an incoherent review of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and was then silent after that. *Pundit Lekhram*, an *Arya*, wrote a book, *Takzib Barahin Ahmadiyya* (Contradiction of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*), which had only abusive language but no logical arguments. He then came to Qadian and tried extremely hard to persuade his two *Arya* co-religionists, Lala Malawa Mal and Shrampat Rai, to deny their involvement in the incidents cited about them in *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Both refused to concede to his request to publish a notice refuting *Hazrat Mirza's* account of the incidents. As a result, when Lekhram organized the *Arya* branch of Qadian, he omitted their names from the list of members and also threatened them with loss of social status in the community. Later, when the newspaper *Shubh Chantak* commenced publication from Qadian, pressure was once again brought to bear on these two to refute their involvement in the incidents related in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* but they considered their welfare best served by not conceding to such requests.

In summary, whether it was *Pundit Agnihotri*, or Reverend Thakardas, or Lekhram, no creditable criticism of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* was ever made. No one had the courage to take on *Hazrat Mirza* in accordance with the conditions of his challenge. No contender ever arose to claim the prize money offered to the person who could contradict the arguments in the book.

### **Scientific evidence on the external origin of revelation**

This was the age of materialism. Impressed by this philosophy, Sir Syed Ahmad claimed under its influence that revelation was an internal inspiration. In so doing, he ignored the personal experience of thousands of saints and their unanimous evidence that revelation is not an internal inspiration of a person's heart, but an external message from God that is

received by the soul. The materialists are devoid of spirituality and therefore lack any experience or observation related to it. Their statements on the issue, therefore, are no more creditworthy than that of an inexperienced amateur. *Hazrat* Mirza challenged their opinion and presented his own spiritual experience and observation as proof. He stated that revelation is received from external sources by the soul of a person, provided that the soul is clean and pure and is capable of becoming a recipient of Divine messages. In that age of materialism, this strong stand of *Hazrat* Mirza was very courageous and a mighty achievement.

Strangely, material science is now coming to the same conclusion as was claimed by spiritual science. Recently an American scientist, who is an expert in radio technology, has expressed his opinion on the subject, which I summarize below in my own words.

According to his experiments, the soul of man is like a giant radio. In the same way as the radio receives external signals, the soul receives external messages, which may be earthly or heavenly, satanic or divine. Just like the radio has the capability of receiving signals of many different frequencies, the soul too has a similar capability. Persons with material or devilish interests tune in to messages of the same kind and those with spiritual and godly interests tune in to like messages. The bigger and stronger the radio, the greater is its range and clearer the reception. Similarly, the more expansive, pure and developed the human soul, the greater the clarity and quality of the messages received. Those who deny revelation or its external origin need to reflect on this scientific analogy.

## Chapter

# 11

## CLAIM OF BEING *MUJADDID* (REFORMER)

### Evidence of Quran and *Hadith* on the Divine Mission of Reformers

Allah lays down the following rule in the Quran:

But time was prolonged for them, so their hearts hardened. And most of them are transgressors.

We have made the signs clear for you that you may understand.  
(57:16,17)

In these verses, Allah explains the cyclical progression of spiritual life. After reaching a crescendo in the time of great religious personalities, spiritual life inevitably begins to ebb away after their death with the passage of time. The hearts of men harden as aversion to religion sets in, and negligence in duties to God, impiety, and wickedness becomes commonplace. Then, in accordance with His ancient law, God brings forth a religious leader, who gives life to the dead earth by breathing a new spirituality into the spiritually dead.

In accordance with this rule, we find, in the era before the Holy Prophet, a succession of prophets, who performed the task of restoring spiritual life to people with comatose souls. With the advent of the Holy Prophet, God brought to completion the guidance he had ordained for mankind and so the chain of prophets came to an end. However, the rule of spiritual decay with passing generations still holds, and it is as neces-

sary today as it was in the past for religious personalities to arise and breathe new spiritual life into a people who are spiritually dead. For this reason, the Holy Prophet was given a promise by God that there will be raised, at intervals, among his followers persons who will revive the religion, restore its purity, and bring the spiritually dead back to life. These great religious personalities are the successors of the knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual excellence of the Prophet. Having benefited from his spiritual blessings, they revive the perfect and complete religion brought by the Holy Prophet. Their efforts efface the ravages of time on religion by reforming widespread laxity in fulfilling obligations to God and by uprooting innovations. They defend Islam against attacks by followers of the corrupted religions and, in accordance with the needs of the time, aid, propagate and verify the truth of the religion of Islam. The Quran calls such persons the successors of Muhammad (*Khulafa-e-Muhammadi*). Thus, *Surah Al-Nur* states:

Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will surely make them rulers (*Khulafa*) in the earth as He made those before them rulers, and that He will surely establish for them their religion, which He has chosen for them, and that He will surely give them security in exchange after their fear (24:55).

Through these successors, Allah restores the authority of religion and protects it from all kinds of corrupting influences. These spiritual successors are called *Mujaddids* in the terminology of the *Hadith* (Books of Tradition). A reliable saying of the Holy Prophet reported in *Abu Dawud*,<sup>1</sup> one of the six best-known and authentic books of *Hadith*, states:

Surely, Allah will raise in the Muslim nation, at the turn of each century, a person who will revive the religion.

This *hadith* corroborates the inviolable rule given in the verse at the start of the chapter, namely, that:

But time was prolonged for them, so their hearts hardened. And most of them are transgressors. Know that Allah gives life to the earth after its death.

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1 Abu Dawud Sulaiman. *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)*, Book *Al-Malahim* 36:1, Vol. 2, page 241 (printed at Ansari Press, Delhi, India).

In accordance with this rule of Allah, it is necessary for a *Mujaddid* to appear at the head of each century to breathe new spiritual life in the people by cleansing extant religious beliefs and practices of the corrupting influences that creep in with the passage of time. However, prophethood has irrevocably come to an end because the purpose for which prophets were sent has been achieved, and so the spiritual leaders appointed for reviving religion and restoring spiritual life now will be *Mujaddids*.

### **Authenticity of the *hadith* regarding *Mujaddids***

The *hadith* regarding the coming of *Mujaddids* is in conformity with the Quran, as shown above. Observation, experience, and the operational requirements of God's rule of spiritual regeneration lend further support to the veracity of this *hadith*. Thus, this *hadith* meets all the tests of authenticity; it is exactly in accord with the Quran and the rules of Allah and its content stand validated by historical experience. Some opinions about this *hadith* may also be cited.

*Imam* Jalal al-Din Sayuti writes in *Mirqat al Saud* that scholars of *Hadith* are unanimous in considering the *hadith* about *Mujaddids* as authentic and early authorities, such as Hakim and Baihaqi, and later ones, such as Abu al-Fadal Iraqi and *Imam* Ibn Hajar, are all convinced of the integrity of this *hadith*.<sup>2</sup> Ibn Asakir, too, accepts the soundness of this *hadith* and states that it proves that a *Mujaddid* will appear at the start of a century. Shah Waliullah, in his books *Izalat al-Khifa* and *Tafhimat-i-Ilahiyya* also confirms the validity of this *hadith*.

The claim of certain widely accepted saints of the Muslim *Umma* to be *Mujaddids* further seals the authenticity of this *hadith*. Included among such saints are, Shah Waliullah *Muhaddath* Dehalvi, *Hazrat* Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi also known as *Mujaddid Alf Sani*, and Syed Ahmad Barelvi. All of them claimed, in no uncertain words, to be *Mujaddids*. *Hazrat* Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi writes about his claim:

This knowledge has been obtained from the light of the lamp of prophethood. The possessor of this knowledge and wisdom is the *Mujaddid* of this millennium. Know that a *Mujaddid* has passed at the head of each century but the *Mujaddid* of a century is not the same as the *Mujaddid* of a millennium.

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2 *Mirqat al-Saud* added to *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)* by Abu Dawud Sulaiman. Vol. 2, page 233. Printed by Nawal Kishor, Lucknow, India.

*Hazrat* Mirza's claim to be the *Mujaddid* of the fourteenth century *hijri*, therefore, only validated the historical experience of the Muslim nation. The conditions were also ripe for the appearance of a *Mujaddid*. The start of the century required that a *Mujaddid* should appear as foretold by the *hadith*. Innovations had permeated religious practices. Impiety was rife and negligence towards religious duties had reached the limit. Islam was being brutally attacked by other religions. These conditions cried out for the appearance of not just an ordinary *Mujaddid*, but one with exceptional abilities - a *Mujaddid* who, by virtue of his knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual excellence, could establish the superiority of Islam over other religions and put a new spiritual life in the comatose souls of the Muslims.

### Claim of *Muhaddath*

It was also necessary that God communicate frequently with this *Mujaddid* so that proof positive may be furnished to atheists and deniers of revelation. The terminology used in the books of *Hadith* for such persons with whom God converses but who are not prophets is *Muhaddath*. A saying of the Holy Prophet from the *Sahih Bukhari* states, "Certainly, amongst the people before you, there were persons with whom God spoke although they were not prophets. Among my followers, if there is such a person, it is Umar."<sup>3</sup> Similarly, in the books of *Hadith* by Tirmidhi, Muslim, and Abu Yali, *Hazrat* Ayesha narrates a saying of the Prophet: "Certainly, there have been *Muhaddath* in the nations before you. If there is one among my followers, it is Umar."<sup>4</sup>

The conclusion from reading these two *hadith* together is that Allah honors certain individuals by speaking to them through revelation even though they are not prophets, and such persons are called *Muhaddath*. Accordingly, when *Hazrat* Mirza claimed to be a *Mujaddid*, he also stated that he was a *Muhaddath* i.e. the recipient of abundant Divine communication. In a letter to *Haji* Waliullah, he explained the responsibilities of a *Mujaddid* as follows:

*Tajdid* (revival or renewal) does not mean to delete or add because the proper word for that is *naskh* (abrogation). But *tajdid* means to restore, restate and re-emphasize the religious tenets in

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3 Abi Abdullah Muhammad Bin Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*, *Kitab Fazail Ashaab* 62:6.

4 Al-Shaikh Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttaqi. *Kanz ul Ammal fi Sunani-l-Aqwal wa-l-Afal (Hadith)*. Vol. 11, page 580. Published 1979.

their pristine purity free from defects and superfluities that may have been tagged on; to remove the negligence in performance of righteous acts, and to correctly reiterate the ways and means of achieving nearness to Allah that may not have been fully preserved. Allah, the Most High, says: “Know that Allah gives life to earth after its death” (57:17). Thus it is, that when spiritual death overcomes the hearts of men and love of Allah abates; when pleasure, ardor, and humility is not found in prayers; when worldly pursuits totally engage the majority; when religious scholars become conceited and egoistic, and religious mendicants haughty and mean spirited; when all kinds of innovations are introduced in religion; at such a time, Allah raises a person of great spiritual prowess, who is a sign from Allah. He attracts a multitude towards God and provides conclusive arguments in religious matters against many.

The suggestion that there is no need for a *Mujaddid* in the presence of Quran and the *Hadith* is without merit. Only persons who have never seriously examined their faith and state of submission, and have not gauged their strength of conviction, can make such suggestions. Instead, they were born into Muslim homes by accident and have kept repeating, “There is no God but Allah” as a matter of custom and practice. True conviction and faith cannot be achieved without the companionship of holy personages. The Quran will be there even when the day of doom arrives, but missing will be those righteous persons who understood the Quran and used their spiritual prowess to cast its influence on those ready to receive it from among the people. “None will touch it (the Quran) except the pure” (56:79). It follows then that the only thing holding back doomsday is the presence of righteous persons. The Quran is the spiritual book of God and the righteous persons are its personification. Together, they constitute two significant lights of faith, and unless both are manifested, closeness to God is not possible. So be prudent and reflect.

### **Announces that he is a *Mujaddid***

*Hazrat Mirza* had first claimed to be a *Mujaddid* in the book *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, but the claim was repeated again in a special announcement in 1885. Twenty thousand copies of the announcement were printed in both English and Urdu and distributed widely. I include below the first



portion of the announcement to show that the claim of *Mujaddid* was made solely to serve the cause of Islam. The strong resemblance with Prophet Jesus was expressed even then, although *Hazrat* Mirza did not know, at the time, that he was the Messiah whose coming had been promised to the Muslim nation.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

After being ordained and inspired by God, this author wrote the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* for the reformation and revival of religion and announced a reward of ten thousand rupees with it. The theme of the book may be summarized as follows: The true religion from God is only Islam, which alone inculcates the faith in a person of a pure and perfect God, free from all blemishes and defects. The truth of Islam shines like the sun and its genuineness is apparent like the light of the day. All other religions are self-evidently false; intellectual inquiry does not prove their principles to be correct, nor does adherence to them produce acceptance by God or even an iota of spiritual blessings. On the contrary, following their principles makes a person spiritually blind and evil hearted, and the signs of villainy begin to appear even in this life.

This book proves the truth of Islam in two ways:

1. It adduces three hundred powerful and rational arguments in support of Islam; the grandeur and dignity of these arguments is manifested by the announcement of a ten thousand rupees reward for any opponent of Islam who rebuts them. If someone so desires, the reward announcement can be registered in court to guarantee performance.
2. It documents heavenly signs of support, which are necessary to prove comprehensively and completely that a religion is true. In this connection, the author has put forth three kinds of signs, so that the truth of Islam may become obvious like the light of the sun.
  - i) Miracles that occurred at the hands of the Holy Prophet as the result of his prayer, concentration and blessings, and were witnessed by even his opponents. The author, i.e. this humble person, has stated these in the book with supporting historical proof of great reliability.
  - ii) Secondly, the author has clearly and comprehensively explained in the book for everybody those unparalleled

signs that are eternal and integral to the Quran, so that no objection with respect to these remains unanswered.

- iii) Thirdly, those signs which are given as an inheritance to those who perfectly follow the teachings of the Holy Quran and the example of the true Prophet. In affirmation of which, this humble person, by the Grace of Allah the Omnipotent, has presented much self-evident proof. These have taken the form of true revelation, miracles, prophecies, explanations of earthly mysteries, true visions, and acceptance of prayers. All these signs have emanated from this servant of the faith and have been witnessed by many opponents of Islam, including Hindu *Aryas*, etc.

The author has also been given knowledge that he is the *Mujaddid* of the time and spiritually his excellence is similar to that of Messiah, the son of Mary, with whom he has a strong resemblance and correspondence. And like the top-ranking prophets and messengers, he has been granted, simply as a blessing of obedience to the greatest Prophet, excellence over numerous past saints who have passed away before him. Further, that following in his footsteps is the way to salvation, happiness and blessings, and going against him will result in remoteness from God and disappointment.

This proof is available to the reader in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, which will consist, on completion, of about 300 sections, 37 of which have already been printed. The author is always ready and available to satisfy any seeker of truth in person. This is the grace of Allah; He gives it to whom He pleases and I am not proud; peace be on those who follow the guidance.

Announcer: Sincerely, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (Qadian, District Gurdaspur, Punjab).

### **People turn to *Hazrat* Mirza but he dislikes fame; Invitation to visit Ludhiana**

The third volume of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, which contained *Hazrat* Mirza's claim of being a *Mujaddid*, had now been printed, and with it his fame spread far beyond Qadian. God had prophesied that people would

come from distant places to visit him. In accordance with this prophecy, the stream of visitors to Qadian, desirous of meeting him, kept on increasing but by nature, *Hazrat* Mirza preferred solitude. His circle of admirers and their faith and devotion kept on increasing.

In particular, a number of his admirers in Ludhiana met frequently and functioned as a veritable *jamaat* (party). Prominent among its members were Mir Abbas Ali, *Maulvi* Abdul Qadir and Qazi Khawaja Ali. *Nawab* Muhammad Ali Khan of Jhajar was also a member of the group and Sufi Ahmad Jan was a sympathizer. Buoyed by the enthusiasm of the people of Ludhiana, Mir Abbas Ali, in his letters to *Hazrat* Mirza, repeatedly invited him for a visit. *Hazrat* Mirza planned several times to go, but each time had to cancel his plan. Accordingly, in response to his invitation, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote to Mir Abbas Ali as follows:

Respected Sir: I am in receipt of your kind letter. Although this humble person greatly desires to accept and comply with your repeated invitations, by God's will, circumstances have kept arising that have prevented me from undertaking the trip. I know not what is the will of God, but this humble person cannot take even a step without His pleasure.

Further on, in the letter, he writes about the devotion and goodwill of the people:

Do not be overly pleased by the enthusiasm and goodwill of the people. Real enthusiasm and goodwill, which can be sustained through trials and tribulations, is only to be found in one out of a hundred thousand. The hearts of the majority incline to mistrust and suspicion even on small issues, and then their latter state becomes worse than their former state.

### **Refusal to accept pledge**

The group in Ludhiana wanted to formalize their allegiance to *Hazrat* Mirza by taking a pledge at his hand. Since the timing of *Hazrat* Mirza's visit to Ludhiana was still uncertain, Mir Abbas Ali wrote to *Hazrat* Mirza and expressed the group's desire to travel to Qadian for the purpose. In reply, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote back:

It is better that you do not insist on taking a pledge of fealty right now because this is a time for reflection. This humble person is

not of the same temperament as the ordinary devout and pious persons. On the contrary, I am a stranger and distant from their behavior and manners. Soon will Allah do as he pleases. If God so desires, then He has the power to grant permission (for taking pledges) through a sign.

When *Maulvi* Abdul Qadir communicated his strong desire for taking a pledge to *Hazrat* Mirza through a letter of Mir Abbas Ali, *Hazrat* Mirza replied:

My nature is completely dominated by the Unity of Allah and entrusting everything to Him. God too desires one to desist from embarking on self-willed plans. God has addressed this repeatedly: “And follow not that of which you have no knowledge” (17:36); “And say not of anything: I will do that tomorrow” (18:23). Because I have not been given any knowledge about accepting pledges, it is not permissible for me to venture on this path. “Thou knowest not that Allah may after that bring about an event” (65:1). If *Maulvi* sahib directs his endeavors to expanding the brotherhood of religion and irrigates this plant with the pure water from the spring of sincerity and love, then, God willing, this method will be very efficacious.

This writing shows clearly that *Hazrat* Mirza was so engrossed in seeking the pleasure of Allah that he did not undertake anything without His approval. In particular, after being commissioned by God and appointed as a reformer, he made it incumbent upon himself not to take any step without the command of God. It was precisely for this reason that he refused to accept pledges despite repeated requests made to him by some persons.

### **First visit to Ludhiana**

In 1884, *Hazrat* Mirza finally visited Ludhiana. *Maulvi* Jan Muhammad, Lala Mallawa Mal and his valet, *Hafiz* Hamid Ali, accompanied him. Except for Mir Abbas Ali, none of the others in Ludhiana had seen him. Sufi Ahmad Jan had specifically requested that *Hazrat* Mirza not be pointed out to him on arrival for he wanted to identify him on his own, claiming that a truthful person stands out and can be recognized easily.

It so happened that when the train arrived at Ludhiana, the receiving party completely missed the visitors and started a futile search of the carriages. *Hazrat* Mirza and his companions walked out of the station to wait

outside, where the first person to spot *Hazrat* Mirza was Mir Inayat Ali, the nephew of Mir Abbas Ali. He saw a dignified person standing outside the station, with a countenance radiating piety, and his heart immediately testified that this must be *Hazrat* Mirza. Consequently, he rushed forward to shake his hand. It is also said about Sufi Ahmad Jan that he, too, identified *Hazrat* Mirza without an introduction. On setting eyes on him, he remarked to a companion that *Hazrat* Mirza was the person with the pious face, and so it was. Finally, Mir Abbas Ali arrived and made the introductions. *Nawab* Muhammad Ali, a noble of Jhajar, was desirous that *Hazrat* Mirza stay with him, but Mir Abbas Ali would not hear of it and took him to his house in Khawaja Ali's carriage. They first alighted at the house of *Deputy* Amir Ali in Mohallah Sufian.

It was time for *Asr* prayer and *Hazrat* Mirza did not wash his feet during ablution but just ran his wet hand over his cotton socks, a procedure called *massah*. *Maulvi* Muhammad Musa and *Maulvi* Abdul Qadir, both father and son, were uncertain of the appropriateness of this procedure and enquired if *massah* was permissible with cotton socks. *Hazrat* Mirza replied in the affirmative. *Maulvi* Mussa requested *Hazrat* Mirza to lead the prayers, but he declined and instead asked *Maulvi* Qadir to lead. For the rest of the visit, *Maulvi* Qadir led the prayers.

*Hazrat* Mirza stayed in Ludhiana for three days on this visit. There was a continuous stream of visitors to see him, and when he went for a walk, as was his habit, a big crowd of people accompanied him. Since this visit was at the behest of the people of Ludhiana, *Hazrat* Mirza, as their guest, allowed them to make all arrangements for his stay. However, after the first two visits, *Hazrat* Mirza made it a practice to rent a large house for his stay. Numerous visitors came to see him and a free kitchen was operated for them.

### **Journey to Malir Kotla**

*Nawab* Ibrahim Ali Khan, the ruler of Malir Kotla, had been suffering from some mental malaise for quite some time. His mother sent a message with her servants to *Hazrat* Mirza, requesting him to come and meet with her ailing son and to pray for him. Malir Kotla was not connected by rail in those days, and so *Hazrat* Mirza, accompanied by some companions, left Ludhiana on Khawaja Ali's carriage between 10 and 11.00 A.M. and reached Malir Kotla that same afternoon about 3.00 P.M. They were received as state guests.

The following morning, the *Nawab's* mother instructed her servants to prepare carriages for transporting *Hazrat* Mirza and his party to the

palace gardens for a meeting with the *Nawab*. However, *Hazrat Mirza* declined the transport because he preferred to walk the short distance to the venue of the meeting. A huge crowd accompanied him on this walk. On reaching the palace gardens, he stopped along with his entourage. The *Nawab* stepped out of the Palace, hesitated a little and began to withdraw on first seeing *Hazrat Mirza*, but then came forward to meet him. They exchanged greetings and the *Nawab* enquired if the fourth volume of the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* had been published. *Hazrat Mirza* replied that it was not yet printed but, God willing, its printing was contemplated soon. *Hazrat Mirza* then suggested that they go and sit inside for a talk. It is not known what transpired inside, but after sometime they came out. The *Nawab* left for a walk and *Hazrat Mirza* accompanied by the people who were following him everywhere, left for the central mosque.

On reaching the mosque, *Hazrat Mirza* asked the people to perform ablution, read two *rakahs* and then join him in supplicating for the health of their ruler. After the congregational supplication, he left immediately for Ludhiana, despite great insistence to stay longer in Malir Kotla.

### **The beginning of opposition**

The grand objective of *Hazrat Mirza's* life was to rebut all criticism directed against Islam by opponents and to manifest the truth of Islam through rational arguments and practical experience. All Muslims should have held *Hazrat Mirza* in high esteem for pursuing such a noble objective but that sadly was not the case. Islamic history is replete with vicious religious clerics (*Ulamas*), who opposed the truth merely for the sake of opposition.

In Ludhiana, there were three brothers, *Maulvi Abdul Aziz*, *Maulvi Abdullah*, and *Maulvi Muhammad*, who fitted this description. They were fanatical *Hanafis* and had faced charges of inciting people to rebel against the British during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. They exercised considerable influence in and around Ludhiana. They could not bear to see *Hazrat Mirza's* popularity increasing in the area, and even before he came to Ludhiana, this jealous coterie started attacking him in their speeches. When they learned that *Hazrat Mirza* proposed to visit Ludhiana, their opposition intensified. During his visit, they saw the spontaneous show of affection and respect that had developed among the people for *Hazrat Mirza*, and their rage and fury knew no bound. They resorted to a familiar weapon of attack and declared *Hazrat Mirza* an infidel (*kafir*).

Naturally, Mir Abbas Ali and other well-wishers of *Hazrat Mirza* were greatly perturbed by these developments because they knew very well the

trouble-making potential of these clerics. They conveyed their anxiety in letters to *Hazrat* Mirza. He tried to calm their fears and told them not to be anxious because the opposition was not without a beneficial purpose. The manifestation of many great blessings was contingent upon a strong opposition by enemies. If these jealous, materialistic and dangerous people were not there, then these blessings would remain hidden.

### **Testimony of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain**

About this time, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi reviewed the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* for his magazine *Ishaat-ul-Sunnah*, and included in the review an explanation for the attacks by these evil clerics. A summary of that explanation is as follows:

Actually, the opposition to *Hazrat* Mirza is merely due to jealousy and enmity. These opponents are, in reality, proponents of an armed struggle against the British government. They harbor these rebellious ideas but are afraid to express their views openly. The author of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, on the other hand, does not believe in an armed struggle against the British because the preconditions for such a struggle do not exist. The clerics vent their frustration and manifest this underlying difference by proclaiming him an infidel.

### **Second visit to Ludhiana**

In the same year, 1884, *Hazrat* Mirza paid a second visit to Ludhiana. This visit was not undertaken on the invitation of any particular person, but its purpose was to visit his ailing friend, Mir Abbas Ali. *Hazrat* Mirza was unwell himself, but without any regard for his own health, he set out to visit his friend on hearing the news of his illness. This show of concern and sympathy for an ailing friend was in the best tradition of Islamic brotherhood that requires such conduct as an integral part of the responsibilities of friendship. He arrived in Ludhiana on October 14, and left after staying two days.

### **Extant critics rebutted in *Barahin Ahmadiyya***

The Christian missionaries were producing obscene literature against Islam and its founder. Following their lead, the *Arya Samaj*, under its leader Dayanand Saraswati, had also adopted the policy of making malicious and false attacks on Islam. *Hazrat* Mirza kept responding to these attacks in the newspapers and also presented rational arguments in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* countering these charges.

### Arguments countering the criticism of Christian missionaries

In the newspaper *Nur Afshan* on March 3, 1882, a clergyman by the name of G. Royal Thakardas wrote an article titled 'No Need for a Quran.' He felt so satisfied with his effort that he issued an open challenge to anybody to rebut his arguments, and especially addressed *Hazrat Mirza* by name for this purpose. The response of other Muslims at large is not known, but *Hazrat Mirza* gave him a crushing reply, which exposed the clergyman's ignorance and humiliated him. The reply was published in the newspaper and also included in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Along with the rebuttal, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote a counter-accusatory statement and appealed to the clergyman's sense of honor to come up with a reply. It was pointed out to the clergyman that the reward of ten thousand rupees announced at the time of publishing the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* was still waiting to be collected, and that this should provide him with an incentive to reply. However, neither this clergyman, nor anyone else, had the courage to respond. The reply and challenge mentioned above was published in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, Volume 3, in the footnote-to-footnote number 2, and nobody has had the ability to contest it to this day. The Rev. Thakardas had been boasting of writing a reply to the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, but *Hazrat Mirza's* reply, described above, silenced him for good.

*Hazrat Mirza* wrote a well-known poem on this occasion, a few couplets of which are given below:

Come hither O Christians, come hither,  
See the light of truth, find the path of righteousness.

The degree of excellence to be found in the Quran,  
Show the like of it in the Gospels.

Without the Quran, My friends, listen,  
Man shall never find the truth.

Those who know not of this light,  
On them alights not the Beloved's sight.

His deniers, what they speak,  
Are nothing but absurdities.

Let me see them come to me,  
And say the things, face to face with me.



Let them hear the story from me,  
Let them hear of the beautiful form from me.

If they cannot see, let them hear,  
But if they wish to do neither let them test me.

In the *Nur Afshan* issue of May 25, 1882, a Christian priest wrote about the features of a true savior that would distinguish him from an imposter. *Hazrat* Mirza responded with a comprehensive discussion on the signs and requirements of a true savior. After this reply, no missionary had the courage to speak further on the issue.

One may wonder why Islam was singled out for so much criticism? In reality, this was part of God's plan to manifest some of the hidden beauty of Islam. Whenever God desired to provide mankind with some new insight into Islam, the opponents criticized that aspect of Islam and this caused an intensive scrutiny of the issue by the defenders of the faith resulting in the opening up of new vistas. *Hazrat* Mirza used to say:

We are grateful even to the disbelievers of Makkah. Had they not criticized the Holy Prophet in every conceivable manner, we probably would be without the Holy Prophet's comprehensive responses in the form of rebuttals, arguments and heavenly signs in support of the truth.

He would further add:

Every verse of the Quran that is made the butt of criticism has a hidden treasure of knowledge in it. The criticism of the opponents acts only like the blow of a pickaxe to reveal the hidden treasure.

Soon after the infamous book *Tark-e-Islam* (Abandonment of Islam) by Dharam Pal was published, I was once sitting with *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din when I saw this book with him. I picked it up and glanced through its contents; even this cursory reading was very painful. I mentioned this to *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din and he reassured me:

Such things do not agitate the righteous. Such slander acts only as an incentive for them to act. When God wills that the marvels, wisdom and truth of the Quran be presented to mankind, the criticism of the opponents provides the necessary incentive. By

nature, men do not normally reflect, meditate, and strive hard to discover the hidden truth. However, the pain of the opponent's criticism spurs them to action. Remember, the harsh grinding of criticism only polishes the truths of the Holy Quran and manifests them with greater intensity.

### ***Arya criticism rebutted and conclusive arguments against Dayanand***

In line with this philosophy, *Hazrat Mirza* very convincingly rebutted the criticism of *Pundit* Dayanand Saraswati in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and repeatedly invited the *Pundit* to debate the issues with him, but to no avail. Prior to this, during 1878-79, *Pundit* Dayanand had to abandon his manufactured belief of infinite spirits in the face of *Hazrat Mirza's* rational criticism of his ideas. On April 20, 1883, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote a letter to the *Pundit*, in which he very rationally and logically made the case for Islam as the only true religion and invited him to become a Muslim. *Hazrat Mirza* expressed his willingness to help him see the wonderful powers of God so that the whole truth of Islam may manifest itself to him. Thus, *Hazrat Mirza* did not limit his efforts to just enlightening the *Pundit* with arguments, but also expressed his willingness to prove the same through supporting miracles and marvels. This was the period when the mammoth task of writing the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* was still ongoing and three volumes had already been published. *Hazrat Mirza* offered to send the *Pundit* a free set of the *Barahin* if he requested, and simultaneously invited him to Qadian to come and witness the wonderful power of God. The *Pundit*, however, skillfully avoided any such engagement. *Hazrat Mirza's* letter to the *Pundit* was published in a later volume of the *Barahin*.

*Hazrat Mirza* described the *Pundit's* attitude to these proselytizing efforts in a letter to Mir Abbas Ali. The latter had enquired if the *Pundit* had actually requested a copy of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and how he had responded to *Hazrat Mirza's* letter. In reply, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote on June 15, 1883:

*Pundit* Dayanand did not ask for the book; nor was his reply sincere and honest. Instead, it was like that of persons who consider the carrying on of a mischievous and mocking conversation as their skill. I sent one letter (to *Pundit* Dayanand). Then another one was sent by registered mail whose summary is as follows:

God has blessed me with complete conviction of the truth of Islam and has manifested to me by open and hidden arguments that the

only true religion in the world is the religion of Muhammad. For this reason, I have written the book (*Barahin Ahmadiyya*), motivated only by a spirit of wishing the humanity well. I have proved in it, through numerous arguments, that the only true teaching is that of the Quran. There is no reason for me to come to you personally. On the contrary, you bear the burden to either rebut the strong arguments by which the foundations of your religion have been destroyed or to accept them and become a believer. I am always willing to provide you with a free copy of the book.

I have not received any reply to this letter. In the fourth volume, I will be writing extensively about his religion and principles. You have my permission to publicize this letter, if you wish.

A statement in *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, volume 4, Footnote 11 shows the extent to which *Hazrat* Mirza had proven his arguments against *Pundit* Saraswati. In this footnote, *Hazrat* Mirza clearly states that he had sent two registered letters to the *Pundit*, inviting him to Qadian to verify the heavenly signs. He wrote:

If there is any doubt in the veracity of any one of these two types of proof, then satisfy yourself by coming to Qadian. It was also communicated to *Pundit* sahib that the ordinary expenditure for his fare and the normal expenses of board would be our responsibility. This letter was also shown to some of his *Arya* followers; the receipts signed by him for the two registered letters have also come back. However, the love of this world and temporal fame made him pay no heed to this matter. Ultimately, he had to bear separation from his wealth and leave, with great regret, this finite world that he loved so much and with which he had forged strong ties. The only thing he took with him was the mountainous burden of his remissness, darkness and perdition.

God informed this humble person of his death about three months before it actually occurred on October 30, 1883, and this prediction was communicated to some *Aryas*. Anyway, this is a journey that everyone has to undertake from this temporary abode, some sooner and some later. The great regret, however, is that God gave the *Pundit* a golden opportunity to find the right guidance by causing this humble person to be born in his time. But despite

announcements of all types, regrettably, indeed very regrettably, he departed this life without correct guidance. He was called to the light, but the wretched worldly attractions prevented him from accepting that light and he remained enmeshed in darkness from head to toe. A servant of God called him many times to come for his own good but he did not even take a step in his direction and wasted his life in unplaced prejudices and haughtiness until he ceased to exist like a burst bubble. In fact, the *Pundit* was the prime addressee of the ten thousand rupees reward announcement made by this humble person and precisely for this reason, the announcement was once especially published for him in the periodical *Brother Hind* (Hindu Bandu). However, he never responded and the time came for him to merge with dust or ashes.

The *Arya Samaj* of Qadian witnessed the prediction of *Pundit* Dayanand's death being fulfilled. At various times, they came under great pressure from their co-religionists, living outside Qadian, to contradict and deny the prophecy. However, they preferred to accept their co-religionist's approbation and taunts rather than bear the guilt of denying the truth.

### ***Pundit* Lekhram steps into the arena of false accusations**

*Pundit* Dayanand had refrained from direct contention with *Hazrat* Mirza, but in 1883, another *Pundit* by the name of Lekhram chose to confront *Hazrat* Mirza openly. This was the same Lekhram whose impudence and insolence resulted in a sign that will forever be associated with the truthfulness of Islam, and the falsehood of *Arya Samaj*. This sign motivated *Hazrat* Mirza to write the following verses:

Lekhu's bad mouthing was paid back to him,  
Still they understand not, a mistake and foolishness is this.

See how Lekhu reaped the reward of his actions,  
Ultimately, in the House of the Lord, the punishment of all evil is such.

Whose prayers caused Lekhu to die all slashed,  
Every house was in mourning; this is that Mirza.

Tis not wise to vex and hurt the pure,  
To keep on increasing in insolence, its punishment is this.

In 1883, Lekhram was an employee of the police force in Swabi, District Peshawar, and a member of *Arya Samaj*. He had read in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* of *Hazrat Mirza's* signs and miracles that had been witnessed by the *Aryas* of Qadian along with other Hindus and Muslims. He felt that these signs would become a lasting testimony of the truth of Islam and the falsehood of *Arya Samaj*. He, therefore, tried to persuade the *Arya* members of Qadian to contradict in writing the accounts of the signs as given in *Hazrat Mirza's* books. To this end, he corresponded with the *Arya Samaj* in Qadian, but had no success in achieving his objective. Lala Mallawa Mal and Shrampat Rai were two important founding members of the Qadian *Arya Samaj* who had been mentioned frequently as witnesses of *Hazrat Mirza's* signs and miracles, and at times had an active part in them. It goes to their credit that, despite coming under great pressure from their co-religionists in other parts of Punjab, they did not contradict the veracity of the accounts as stated by *Hazrat Mirza*. Their bravery and courage, whether inspired by the awe of the miracles they had witnessed or any other reason, is very commendable.

*Pundit Lekhram* also pressurized them to contradict the incidents to which *Hazrat Mirza* had named them as eyewitnesses in *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. He was so sure of his ability to convince them to retract from the truth that he made it known that he was writing the rebuttal of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*.

*Pundit Lekhram* believed that it would be an easy matter to get written contradictions from these two *Aryas*, who would oblige him out of a sense of religious loyalty. He then planned to use these contradictions to falsify the signs cited by *Hazrat Mirza* in *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. He went so far as to prejudge this issue and felt no compunction in falsely claiming in a letter to *Hazrat Mirza*: "The *Aryas* of Qadian have exposed the veneer of your spirituality." Thereupon, *Hazrat Mirza* addressed him directly in a letter as follows:

Given the fact that some *Aryas* of Qadian visit me, are still very much alive, and are fully convinced eyewitnesses of my miracles and signs, it is difficult to surmise from whom, and where, you have heard that these folks have denied the same. If you were really seeking the truth, it would have behooved you to come to Qadian and enquire from them before me and in my presence, so that the truth would have become abundantly manifest to you.

However, this strategy is far removed from honesty and justice that you falsely implicate the *Aryas* of Qadian while sitting at a great distance from the scene. Reflect on the fact that I have named these very *Aryas* as witnesses to my miracles in Volumes three and four of the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and by including this in the above-referred-to volumes have propagated these facts to hundreds of thousands of people. If the facts mentioned therein were false and baseless, why would these persons have remained silent till now? It is certain that they would have published the real facts in the newspaper to rebut this patent falsehood and thereby shamed and embarrassed me before the world. A just person can understand that their silence and absence of retort, despite the enmity and opposition, means that the events to which they have been named witnesses are true.

It is now incumbent upon you to come to Qadian, and investigate this matter personally to dispel your false suspicions so that he who is a liar may face disgrace. Kindly reply soon.

Letter addressed to Lekhram, April 6, 1885.

## Chapter

# 12

## A GENERAL INVITATION TO MANIFEST SIGNS FOR NON-MUSLIMS

In *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, Hazrat Mirza used his own example to show the grace, blessings and favors achievable by Muslims if they followed the Holy Prophet perfectly. Accordingly, while commenting on the excellence of the Holy Prophet and his pious influence, he stated in *Barahin Ahmadiyya*: <sup>1</sup>

They (i.e. the true and sincere followers of the Prophet) continue to receive a share of these blessings till now, and continue to drink in abundance the same delicious and tasty elixir that was given to the Messiah and Moses. Glory to Allah! Glory to Allah once more! How grand is the eminence of the Holy Prophet and how magnificent is his spiritual light that even his most insignificant and lowly servants and petty disciples attain the above-mentioned ranks. O Allah exalt Thy Prophet and Thy beloved, the Chief of the Prophets and Foremost among the Messengers and the Best of those Sent and the Seal of the Prophets - Muhammad, and his family and his companions; blessings and peace on them. Let not the clergymen, the *Pundits*, the Brahmins and *Aryas* of this time wonder as to the whereabouts of these blessings and spiritual light...I

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<sup>1</sup> *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Vol. 3. Footnote 11, pages 246-7.

have stated in this Footnote that I take the responsibility for showing the special excellence of Islam to any genuine seeker of truth, who is ready to become a Muslim immediately on seeing it.

Further on in the same book, he writes:<sup>2</sup>

These blessings can be manifested for seekers even now. Anyone who so desires should strive sincerely and see for himself, and thereby safeguard his Hereafter. God willing, every seeker of truth will achieve his objective and every individual with a spiritual sight will see the greatness of this religion. But who can come before us and furnish us with proof that there is spiritual light in any of our opponents and that someone who denies the prophethood and excellence of the Holy Prophet and the Divine origin of the Quran is similarly circumstanced with Heavenly support and spiritual blessings? Is there an individual from anywhere in the world who can compete with the shining spiritual light of the Quran? There is none. Not one.

This announcement was published in the third volume of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* in 1882. *Hazrat* Mirza stood ready to prove the Divine origin of the Quran and the excellence and truth of the Holy Prophet not only by rational arguments but also by corroborative heavenly signs and testimony. However, no one came forth to challenge his statement. He has expressed his conviction in a poem, a few verses of which are:

We ran our imagination in every direction till fatigued,  
But found no religion like the religion of Muhammad.

There is no religion that can show a heavenly sign,  
This is a fruit that we ate only from the garden of Muhammad.

We experienced Islam personally and found,  
Light, it is light; wake up and see, we announced.

When we examined other religions, there was no light,  
Show their light to us, if we are hiding the truth.

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2 *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Vol. 3. Footnote-to-footnote.



We have tired of saying the same things again and again,  
Calling out to people in every direction.

None has come to conduct a trial,  
Though we called every opponent to come confront us.

Come hither, O people, for here you will find God's light,  
Look! What we have revealed to you is a mound of comfort.

Today those lights are in full force in this humble person,  
We colored the heart with every color of this light.

On Mustafa be Your peace and blessings in abundance,  
We got this light from him, O Lord!

Your inspiration turned us to the welfare of the nation, O best of  
Messengers,  
Your going ahead gave us the courage to step forward.

*Hazrat Mirza* did not just stop with publishing in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* the general invitation to show signs, but after receiving permission from the Almighty in 1885, he issued an announcement. This announcement, of which eight thousand copies were distributed, was addressed to leaders of all religions whether in India or abroad; be they *Brahmu* Hindus, *Arya* Hindus, Christian clergymen, naturalists, atheists or Muslim clerics. A few lines from the announcement are given below:

This letter's real objective, which is also the objective of my ordination, is to communicate that the only true religion, completely in accordance with the will of God, is Islam and that only the Quran is the true Book, which is from Allah, fully preserved and worthy of following. Besides rational arguments on the Divine origin of this religion and the truth of Quran, there is also the evidence of heavenly signs (miracles and prophecies), which any genuine seeker of the truth can corroborate with his own eyes by keeping company with this humble person (the author of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*) and practicing self restraint.

If you have any doubts about the divine origin of this true religion, or about the truth of the heavenly signs, then come to

Qadian as a seeker of truth, and stay in the company of this humble person for a year. You will witness these signs with your own eyes, provided your intention is genuine. The characteristic of a genuine person is that he will either accept Islam on seeing the sign right here in Qadian or (at least) bear testimony that he has been ennobled by witnessing a miracle... If you come and do not witness any heavenly sign during the period of one year, you will be paid compensation or fine at the rate of two hundred rupees per month. If you consider that two hundred rupees is below your dignity, you can determine a suitable compensation for your time, or a fine for not fulfilling the contract, and I will accept it, if it is within my means...

### **Lekhram comes out in opposition**

The above announcement, containing the claim to show a heavenly sign during a year's stay in Qadian, was addressed to leaders of all religions but there were no takers. Indarman, from Muradabad, initially showed some readiness to accept the invitation but he backed off after *Hazrat* Mirza had completed arrangements to deposit the claim money of twenty-four hundred rupees. When newspapers reported the Indarman story, Lekhram felt tempted to lay his hands on the claim money. He expressed his willingness to come to Qadian provided a payment of two hundred rupees per month was made to him. In reply, *Hazrat* Mirza stated that Lekhram was neither the leader of any religious group, nor was his income two hundred rupees per month and, as such, he was not entitled to this amount. Lekhram responded on April 16, 1885, with a derisive letter that, in keeping with his style, made little rational sense. *Hazrat* Mirza's reply dated April 19, 1885 stated:

Instead of reflecting equitably and sincerely on my reply, you have resorted to language in your letter that is far removed from the dictates of culture and civility and which, I do not think, any cultured person would use in his correspondence. Then in this same letter, you adopt a mocking and derisive tone to pass insulting and derogatory remarks about the religion of Islam. From this, it is easy to determine the extent to which you are interested in a serious search of the truth. However, I consider it appropriate to patiently put up with your harsh and pungent remarks, and to again inform you of my objective.

A prolonged exchange of letters followed. *Hazrat* Mirza asked Lekhram to establish his credentials by producing a sworn affidavit from the *Arya Samaj* members of Qadian, Amritsar, Lahore, Ludhiana, and Peshawar stating that Lekhram was their acknowledged leader; but he was unable to do so. Finally, in order to settle the issue conclusively, *Hazrat* Mirza conceded Lekhram's demand and agreed to pay him two hundred rupees per month although, in accordance with the conditions set forth in *Hazrat* Mirza's announcement, he was neither deserving of such an honor nor was his worth this much. Nevertheless, *Hazrat* Mirza agreed to pay twenty-four hundred rupees and wrote in his letter of July 17, 1885, as follows:

Although we tried, we found no proof that you are among those respectable and dignified persons, who, by virtue of their well-known public stature, deserve to be paid two hundred rupees per month. However, you insist vehemently that "In reality I am such an honorable person and all the *Aryas* from Peshawar to Bombay consider me respectable, an elder of the community and a leader." If in reality you are such a dignified person, I accept your petition and am prepared to deposit twenty-four hundred rupees wherever you want.

However, *Hazrat* Mirza's sagacity had perceived that Lekhram was not, in fact, a genuine seeker of truth, but was a cunning person who wanted to profit by his craftiness. *Hazrat* Mirza, therefore, imposed an additional condition. If Lekhram did not convert to Islam after seeing the heavenly sign, he would be required to pay a penalty of twenty-four hundred rupees. He was given twenty days after the receipt of *Hazrat* Mirza's letter to deposit the amount with a third party as security. However, the specified time limit passed and Lekhram did not deposit the amount, nor did he express any intentions of doing so after the due date. Instead, Lekhram conceived an alternative strategy. If only he could somehow go to Qadian, he could proclaim that he had come to Qadian to see the heavenly signs but none were shown.

### **Mirza Imam-ud-Din brings Lekhram to Qadian**

Mirza Imam-ud-Din was an atheistic and irreligious cousin of *Hazrat* Mirza, who lived in Qadian and made it a habit to oppose *Hazrat* Mirza in everything. He kept company with drug addicts and their favorite pastime was to mock and ridicule religion, in keeping with the culture of certain mendicants, who considered and argued that forbidden things were

permissible. When Mirza Imam-ud-Din found out that Lekhram was carrying on a confrontational correspondence with *Hazrat* Mirza, he considered this a golden opportunity to use Lekhram in his jealous opposition of *Hazrat* Mirza. Accordingly, in November of 1885, he went personally to invite Lekhram, and brought him to Qadian. From the beginning, the two of them got along very well because their dispositions were so alike. Lekhram was fond of uncouth talk, ridicule and mockery - traits that mirrored those of Mirza Imam-ud-Din.

With Lekhram's arrival in Qadian, the local *Arya Samaj* was revived with the major objective of opposing *Hazrat* Mirza. Some of the Muslim opponents of *Hazrat* Mirza, including Mirza Imam-ud-Din, Murad Ali and Mullah Hussaini, became virtual members of the *Arya Samaj* to assist them in this objective. During his stay in Qadian, Lekhram did not arrange any face-to-face meeting with *Hazrat* Mirza but instead resorted to a written debate in which statements were exchanged through couriers. Bhai Kishen Singh (the long-haired *Arya*) was the primary courier with *Pundit* Mohan Lal stepping in as needed. The families of *Hazrat* Mirza and *Pundit* Mohan Lal had known each other for a long time. Out of regard for this relationship, *Hazrat* Mirza always gave him some gift, such as fruit, brown sugar (which is greatly valued as a gift in rural areas), etc. whenever *Pundit* Lal came to deliver a letter.

*Pundit* Lekhram kept a lookout for Mohan Lal's return and as soon as he saw him coming, he would call out "What have you brought?" Once *Hazrat* Mirza gave Mohan Lal an apple. When Mohan Lal returned, Lekhram asked him what he had brought. Mohan Lal replied that he had brought an apple. Lekhram looked greedily at the apple and said, "Give it to me. Let me eat it." Mohan Lal replied with a laugh "You should not be eating anything from your enemy's house," but Lekhram grabbed the apple and devoured it quickly.

*Hazrat* Mirza and Lekhram continued to correspond, but without any resolution of their differences. Lekhram's style in these letters was derisive and mischievous, introducing some new objection against Islam every time. *Hazrat* Mirza replied with logical and truthful arguments in the hope that Lekhram would become convinced of the truth of Islam. However, Lekhram was not a genuine seeker of truth and in whichever direction *Hazrat* Mirza tried to steer him, he would respond by moving in the opposite direction. He made low and vulgar attacks on Islam. Once he made fun of paradise. This angered Mirza Sultan, the eldest son of *Hazrat* Mirza, so much that he challenged Lekhram to a debate for the honor of Islam. This created a lot of enthusiasm amongst the Muslims. Mirza

Sultan prepared fully for the debate and went to the venue of the debate in the bazaar at the appointed time. However, certain sagacious Hindus realized that a debate would not be to their advantage and they prevented the confrontation by persuading Lekhram not to show up for the debate.

By the beginning of December 1885, it appeared that the correspondence between Lekhram and *Hazrat* Mirza was finally going to yield some result. Lekhram dropped his insistence on receiving two hundred rupees per month because of the fear of suffering a loss himself from the forfeiture of the security if he did not convert on seeing a heavenly sign. The monthly compensation for Lekhram, while he waited for a heavenly sign, was set at thirty rupees per month. *Hazrat* Mirza wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to set up a wider dialogue than just the manifestation of a sign. He tried to convince Lekhram to hold a debate on the fundamental doctrines of Islam and *Arya Samaj*, in which Lekhram would show the *Arya* doctrines to be from the Vedas and provide supporting logic for them only from the Vedas. In turn, *Hazrat* Mirza pledged to abide by a similar condition and promised that any doctrine he put forward would be from the Quran and all supporting arguments would be only from the Quran. This is a very difficult condition because it is impossible for any non-Muslim scholar, however brilliant, to prove the truth of their religion, let alone Lekhram who was a person with extremely limited intellectual capabilities. For this reason, Lekhram avoided a straight answer and resorted to a strategy of jest and ridicule, which pleased his supporters, but left the essential issues unresolved. Finally, on December 13, Lekhram informed *Hazrat* Mirza of his impending departure from Qadian in a day or two. In this letter, Lekhram wrote:

I thought I had caught a whale but it turned out to be a herring.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, you consider your Quranic horse to be a horse and the horse of others to be a mule. I respond to the Vedic criticism through the exercise of intelligence but you respond to the Quranic criticism by merely restating (from the Quran) that which is not rational.

If you are not free, I, too, have a lot to do. If you are not willing to debate with me, then ask the *Rabb-ul-Arsh* (Lord of the

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3 The handwriting in Lekhram's letter is not very clear and it is difficult to make out the expression he uses here. The best guess is that it is a Persian analogy that means literally "I dug up a mountain to get at a little grass."

Throne), *Khair-ul-Makareen* (the Best of Planners),<sup>4</sup> for a heavenly sign in my respect so that our confrontation may be finally settled - Lekhram.

*Hazrat* Mirza replied as follows:

Dear *Pundit* sahib,

I read your letter. I assure you that I have no objection to either holding a debate with you or showing you a heavenly sign. However, your intentions are not to seek the truth and so you keep on imposing unnecessary conditions.

Your impertinent speech never ceases. You write that "If you are not willing to debate with me, then ask the *Rabb-ul-Arsh* (Lord of the Throne), *Khair-ul-Makareen* (the Best of the Planners) for a heavenly sign with respect to me." You jest in this statement and show no faith in God, Who is quite capable of punishing the most dauntless. You imply in your statement that God is sitting on a throne and conceiving some cunning stratagems. However, your statement evidences only your own lack of understanding. The word *makar* means a subtle and secret plan, and the use of the word in this sense is permissible for God. The word *arsh* is used for the greatness of God because He is the most honorable and glorious, and not that He is in need of a Throne for His power like ordinary humans. The Quran clearly states that everything subsists because of Him and He is the Self-Subsisting. When the Quran explicitly states this, it is unjust to ridicule the word *arsh*. You are unacquainted with Arabic and do not even know the meaning of *makar*. There is no imputation in the word *makar* that cannot be implied for God. The name for the subtle and secret ways by which God punishes the mischievous is *makar*. First consult the dictionary and then criticize. If I am, as you claim, unlettered in the Vedas, it is of no consequence because I argue only within the ambit of the accepted *Arya* principles, but you go beyond the accepted principles of Islam to make false accusations. It would have been more appropriate for you to have first

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4 Lekhram had used these Quranic terms derisively to imply a God sitting on His throne and making cunning schemes.

enquired from me about the accepted meaning of the term God on *arsh*, and reserved your criticism for later, if there was still some scope. Similarly, you should have enquired about the meaning of *makar* before criticizing the use of the word.

The signs are with God and He has the power to show them to you.

Peace on those who are (rightly) guided.

Sincerely,

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

After this, *Hazrat* Mirza promised to show a heavenly sign about Lekhram before February 20, 1886. However, Lekhram left Qadian after stating in writing that he considered *Hazrat* Mirza's predictions absurd and that *Hazrat* Mirza was at liberty, and had his permission, to publish anything about him at any time; he was not afraid of such things. *Hazrat* Mirza showed great restraint in the face of these nonsensical statements of Lekhram and did not publish anything against him until Lekhram's digressions and pride had exceeded all limits. The awe-inspiring and great sign which the *Rabb-ul-Arsh* and *Khair-ul-Makareen* then showed in respect of Lekhram are detailed later in Chapter 79, among the events of 1893. For the time being, however, the narration about Lekhram ends here.

## Chapter

# 13

## DEATH OF MIRZA GHULAM QADIR

In narrating the Lekhram incident, the events associated with it were described right up to the year 1885 in order to avoid fragmenting the story. In so doing, however, the chronological narration of other events was put on hold. The natural sequence of events in the life of *Hazrat* Mirza is picked up here from 1883.

The most important event of 1883 was the death of *Hazrat* Mirza's elder brother, Mirza Ghulam Qadir. At the time of his death, Mirza Ghulam Qadir held the influential post of Superintendent in the District Office of Gurdaspur. He was also in possession of the entire family property. Once, while his father was still alive, *Hazrat* Mirza was informed of the death of his brother in what appeared to be a prophecy of an almost inevitable fate (*qadah-e-mubram*), but the event was postponed as a result of *Hazrat* Mirza's prayers. Since this incident is very informative about the real nature of revealed prophecies, it is worth recording it here. In his book *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*, *Hazrat* Mirza writes:

Once I was informed in a dream that there were only a few days of life, no more than fifteen, left for my brother. After this, my brother fell seriously ill and was soon reduced to a mere skeleton. He became so emaciated that when he was sitting on the bed, it was difficult to make out whether there was someone on the bed or whether it was empty. He lost control of his bladder and bowel movements and finally went into a coma. My father, Ghulam Murtaza, who was a skilled native physician, opined that my



brother's condition was hopeless and he was not likely to live for more than a few days.

At that time, I had the vigor of youth and the strength for difficult endeavors. It is in my nature that I consider God to have power over all things and, in truth, who can encompass the full extent of His powers. Nothing is extraordinary for Him except that which is contrary to His covenant, or against His dignity, or opposed to His unity. Accordingly, I started supplicating for my brother's recovery despite his hopeless condition.

I had resolved in my heart that I wanted to enhance my knowledge about three things with this prayer:

First, I wanted to see whether I was worthy enough before the Lord for my prayer to be accepted.

Second, whether it was possible to postpone the adverse predictions of prophecies made known through dreams and revelations.

Third, whether prayer could cure a person reduced to a mere skeleton by the ravages of a disease.

On this basis, I started beseeching the Lord. I swear by Him in whose hands is my life that my brother's condition began to change with the start of my prayers for his recovery. During this period, I saw in another dream that he was walking unassisted in the veranda. His actual condition at the time was such that he had to be turned even in the bed by another person. After fifteen days of prayers, his condition improved enough that he expressed a wish to walk a few steps. He was assisted up and began to walk around, first with the help of a stick and then without it. In a few more days, he regained his health completely. He then lived for another fifteen years before he died. This goes to show that God converted the fifteen days of his life into fifteen years. This is our God Who has the power to change even His own prophecies, but our opponents say that He does not have this power.

When the fifteen-year extension granted by God to the life of Mirza Ghulam Qadir was about to expire, *Hazrat* Mirza was informed about it. He writes in *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*:

There is a prophecy about the death of my brother that was revealed in the form of a lament from one of my sons “O *Umami* (my Paternal Uncle)! Your game (of life) is at an end and I am terribly grieved by it.” Much before its fulfillment, this prophecy was narrated to the *Arya*, Shrampat. The meaning of this revelation was that my brother would suddenly die an untimely death resulting in great grief.

Either on the day I received this revelation or a day earlier, a son was born to Shrampat; he named the boy Umami Chand. When he came and informed me that a son had been born to him and he had named him Umami Chand, I told him “I have just received a revelation - O *Umami*!<sup>1</sup> Your game (of life) is at an end and I am terribly grieved by it. - Although its meaning is still unclear to me, but I am afraid that it may not mean your son Umami Chand. You frequently visit me, and it does happen sometimes with revelation that it pertains to someone with whom one has a connection.” On hearing this, he got scared and no sooner did he return home, he changed his son’s name from Umami Chand to Gokal Chand.<sup>2</sup> That son is still alive...Later, I was given the knowledge that the revelation was an indication about my brother’s death. Accordingly, after two or three days, my brother died suddenly and my son was deeply grieved by his death.

At the time of his death, Mirza Ghulam Qadir was fifty-five years old. He was laid to rest in the family cemetery. All temporal affairs of the family were under his control. *Hazrat* Mirza had no interest in these matters. He had not looked after his lands, nor was he aware of who cultivated it. He

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1 The Persian word for paternal uncle is Umami, i.e. the same word as the name of the child. - Translator

2 This goes to show that *Lala* Shrampat and others, who were frequently cited by *Hazrat* Mirza as witnesses of the truth of his revelation, were completely awe-stricken by *Hazrat* Mirza’s revelations. No wonder that the first thing Shrampat did on returning home was to change the name of his son. After seeing *Hazrat* Mirza’s revelations come true repeatedly, they were inwardly convinced of the truth though their worldly relationships stopped them from accepting Islam. *Hazrat* Mirza printed the prophetic fulfillments of his revelations in his books and gave it wide publicity but none of the witnesses ever dared to deny their veracity even under great pressure to do so from the *Arya Samaj*. The reason was that their hearts were convinced of the truth and they knew that their falsehood would invoke God’s retribution.

knew nothing about how much the income was from their farm and how it was spent. For all practical purposes, he had cut himself off from the world.

Their property was not free of problems. *Hazrat* Mirza's paternal cousins constantly quarreled with his family. They had created several complications regarding their jointly inherited ancestral property and the matter was the subject of a lengthy litigation that was draining the financial resources of the family.

Another problem was that Mirza Ghulam Qadir had no surviving children. A daughter and a son born to him had died at a young age. Mirza Ghulam Qadir's wife was extremely fond of *Hazrat* Mirza's son, Mirza Sultan Ahmad. She let it be known that she had adopted him and this was even entered in the property records. *Hazrat* Mirza had no knowledge of what was going on, but when he found out, he stated clearly that adoption was not permissible in Islam. Mirza Ghulam Qadir's wife had never been kindly disposed and harbored feelings of jealousy towards *Hazrat* Mirza for no apparent reason. Even so, *Hazrat* Mirza, in order to console her, acted according to her wishes and had the title to half of the property transferred to his son, Mirza Sultan Ahmad, while the other half remained in his name. However, even now, *Hazrat* Mirza kept aloof from the management of his lands and as was his habit, stayed busy in the service of religion, free from the wrangling of property disputes. Mirza Ismail Beg, an employee, who had been *Hazrat* Mirza's valet since childhood, and some other persons began to manage *Hazrat* Mirza's property. *Hazrat* Mirza accepted whatever amount they gave him as income from the land. He was busy in writing *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, three volumes of which had been published, and the fourth was under compilation.

## Chapter

# 14

## CONSTRUCTION OF THE MUBARAK MOSQUE

An important event of 1883 was the building of the Mubarak Mosque. Before its construction, *Hazrat Mirza* used to offer his prayers in the Aqsa Mosque. His routine was to go to the mosque well ahead of prayer time. After the late afternoon (*Asar*) prayer, he either went for a walk or paced around in the mosque, returning home only after offering the evening (*Maghrib*) prayer. He then returned to the mosque for the night (*Isha*) prayer. Generally, Mian Jan Muhammad led the prayers, but on occasions *Hazrat Mirza* would perform this task.

Acting on Divine guidance received through revelation, *Hazrat Mirza* made plans to construct a mosque on the top floor of his house adjacent to the room where he did most of his writings. This room is now on the northern side of the Mubarak mosque and is called *Bait-ul-Fikr* (The House of Reflection). There was not enough space next to the room for a mosque so *Hazrat Mirza* had the street adjacent to his house that led to the Aqsa mosque bridged, and included the bridge as additional floored space within the mosque. *Hazrat Mirza's* financial resources were limited. The wood for bridging the street and roofing the mosque was obtained by cutting some trees from his garden and the bricks for the walls were dug out of some old foundations. Despite the financial constraints, by the grace of Allah, the mosque was completed.

The mosque was quite small. It consisted of a small anteroom for the *Imam* and a larger room for the congregation. The small anteroom was at



*The domes and minarets of Agsa Mosque.*



*Mubarak Mosque as it looks now after several extensions.*





*Inside view shot from the western wall of Mubarak Mosque shows the original covered area of the mosque.*

*The curtained door on the left opens into Hazrat Mirza's office, Bait-ul-Fikr.*

*The three doors at the far end lead respectively, from the left, into a passage, stairs and a small room*



*View from Mubarak Mosque of Bait-ul-Fikr and Hazrat Mirza's family quarters beyond.*



the western end of the mosque and had just enough space for two persons to pray. In the beginning, only the *Imam* stood in it for leading the prayers, but later, when the numbers attending the mosque reached its capacity, *Hazrat* Mirza also used to stand there with the *Imam* during congregational prayers. Behind the *Imam's* room was the praying area for the rest of the congregation. This area consisted of a rectangular room with its longer side running east to west. This room had space for six rows with six persons in each row. On the eastern extremity of the mosque was another small room in which the Divine sign of the red drops occurred. The floor of this room was about two feet lower than the rest of the mosque and contained the requirements for performing ablution. Later, the floor of the room was raised to the level of the rest of the mosque and this cubbyhole became the office of *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali. During the summer months, the evening prayers were offered on the roof of the mosque. On the west side of the roof was a balcony in which *Hazrat* Mirza sat after the early evening (*Maghrib*) prayers and the congregation would gather around him for talk and discussions.

*Hazrat* Mirza had received revelation on five different occasions about this mosque stating that "This mosque is blessed and gives off its blessings, and every blessed act will take place in it." These revelations had preceded the construction of the mosque in 1883. After the mosque was built, *Hazrat* Mirza mostly offered his congregational prayers in it. In the beginning, *Hazrat* Mirza gave the call to prayers (*azan*) and also led the prayers, but later he would ask someone else to lead the prayers. In particular, after his claim of being the Promised Messiah, *Hazrat* Mirza did not lead the prayers except on one or two occasions when he was not in Qadian. There was one prayer, however, that *Hazrat* Mirza always led himself, and that was the funeral prayer.

After the death of *Maulana* Abdul Karim, *Hazrat* Mirza, towards the latter part of his life, was unable to come to the mosque in the evening because of extreme weakness. He then led the prayers in his house for the female members of the house and visiting female guests. It was difficult for *Hazrat* Mirza to stand up and so he remained in the sitting posture. His wife stood next to him on his right.

## Chapter

# 15

## PEOPLE FLOCK TO QADIAN

Even before *Hazrat* Mirza started writing his famous book *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, he was widely regarded as a pious and learned man of God. His reputation was further enhanced when this book, published in several volumes over an extended period of time, became available to the public. This fame drew many visitors who were desirous of seeing and meeting with him in person. Among the well-known personalities that visited him during this period were:

*Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani, resident of Sarsawah in Saharanpur District, who belonged to a respected family of hereditary *Pirs* (religious leaders) and was also a *Pir* in his own right.

Chaudri Rustam Ali, a very pious person of Madar in Jullunder District, who worked in the police department and came to visit *Hazrat* Mirza after reading the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*.

*Maulvi* Abdullah Sanori, a resident of Sanor in the state of Patiala, who had heard his pious and scholarly maternal Uncle, *Maulvi* Muhammad Yousaf, praise *Hazrat* Mirza; he, therefore, repaired to Qadian and was so impressed by *Hazrat* Mirza that he gave up the idea of returning home. He stayed in Qadian in the company of *Hazrat* Mirza and started helping with the publication of the fourth volume of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. By nature a sincere and loving person, *Maulvi* Sanori availed this chance of serving *Hazrat* Mirza.

*Hafiz* Hamid Ali, who came to Qadian for a visit but ended up spending his life in the service of *Hazrat* Mirza.

Mention has already been made of several respectable personalities of

Ludhiana who were great admirers of *Hazrat Mirza* and considered it their privilege to visit him and be blessed by his company. Amongst this group were: Mir Abbas Ali, Khawaja Ali, *Maulvi Abdul Qadir*, *Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan* - a noble of Jhajar, and Sufi Ahmad Jan.

### **Visit of *Maulana Nur-ud-Din***

It was during this period that *Maulana Nur-ud-Din*, a scholar of international repute, first visited *Hazrat Mirza*. His full name, inclusive of his scholarly titles, was *Allama Hafiz Haji Maulana Nur-ud-Din*. He hailed from Bhera, but at the time of his visit he was the royal physician to the Prince of Jammu. *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* was an outstanding scholar with mastery over many disciplines, including Quran, Hadith, Islamic jurisprudence, mysticism and philosophy. He was in love with the Quran, and had studied all the major religions of the world. Men of different faiths – Christians, *Arya* Hindus, atheists, Sikhs, *Brahmu* Hindus, and Muslims – sought his company and a wide range of issues were discussed in his gatherings. *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* never ceased to amaze his audiences by the depth of his analysis and the new insights he provided into these issues.

On one occasion in Jammu, an atheist was conversing with *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* and remarked that all the prophets had come in ancient times when the intellectual development of mankind was limited. It was easy for a prophet, therefore, to dupe these simple folks into believing that God spoke to him. This farce cannot be played out now. In this age of enlightenment, the atheist remarked, he would like to see if someone could convince the people that God speaks with him.

Soon after the atheist left, some medicines were delivered to *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* that he had ordered earlier. The druggist had wrapped the medicines in a piece of paper that turned out to be a handbill advertising *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. The title on the handbill caught *Maulana Nur-ud-Din*'s attention and he read through the rest of it quickly. He was amazed to find the author of the handbill forcefully asserting that revelation and dialogue with God are proof positive of the truth of Islam and that the author was a living example of a person who had experienced this. *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* straightaway sent for a set of the published volumes of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. As soon as he read them, he fell in love with the book and its author. This famous scholar had witnessed in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* the spiritual light that he had long sought for.

*Maulana Nur-ud-Din* decided to visit *Hazrat Mirza* without any delay, but first, he sent for the atheist and confronted him with the book. *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* said to him:



*Maulana Nur-ud-Din.*

In this age of enlightenment, this person claims that God speaks with him. He has made a public announcement inviting any genuine seeker of truth to come and stay with him in Qadian for one year and he guarantees that the visitor will witness heavenly signs. He backs this up by promising to pay damages if this does not happen. If you are a genuine seeker of truth, come with me to Qadian and I will bear all your expenses.

The atheist declined the offer and so *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din set out for Qadian alone.

In those days, Qadian was not a very well known place. When *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din reached Batala, he hired a hackney carriage and asked the driver to take him to 'Mirza' sahib's house in Qadian. The 'Mirza' that the driver was familiar with in Qadian was Mirza Imam-ud-Din whose house was frequented by riffraff. The driver had driven many of his previous fares to his house and so he took *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din directly to Mirza Imam-ud-Din's house. When the carriage pulled up before the house, Mirza Imam-ud-Din was sitting outside his house with some people and smoking the *hookah*. The driver pointed him out to *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din as being 'Mirza' sahib. *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din later recalled:

Mirza Imam-ud-Din's face revolted me as soon as I set my eyes on him. My emotions were indescribable - I was shocked, stunned and in spiritual pain. The thought kept flashing through my mind: Dear God! Can this really be the author of that magnificent book? How did my lifetime of experience and ability to judge a spiritual person mislead me so badly? How did this happen? I was so disappointed that I told the driver to wait, as I would be leaving shortly. I proceeded to join the group of people with Mirza Imam-ud-Din, but I was so upset that I sat down on a cot without even greeting the company. Mirza Imam-ud-Din asked for my name. When I told him, he realized that I was in the wrong place and said, "You have probably come to meet Mirza sahib." A great weight rolled off my chest as it dawned on me that there was another 'Mirza' in this place as well. Mirza Imam-ud-Din sent a person with me and he took me to Mubarak mosque. *Hazrat* Mirza was in the house at the time and was probably busy writing the fourth volume of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. A servant took me to the guest quarters and told me that *Hazrat* Mirza will come out for afternoon prayer.

When they met at the afternoon prayer, *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din was delighted. One look at *Hazrat* Mirza convinced him that this was not the countenance of an imposter. *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din thanked God that he had at last found the man he had been searching for - the perfect man to counter the mischief of those tumultuous times and show the superiority of Islam over all other religions.

According to *Maulvi* Sher Ali, *Hazrat* Mirza later said about this meeting, "I had been supplicating to Allah to grant me a helper, the like of Aaron for Moses. When *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din came, I recognized him instantly as the person sent in answer to my prayers." The instant recognition by both men of the caliber of the other was in accordance with the saying "A saint recognizes a saint." We are not privy to the conversation that took place between the two men immediately after the meeting. We do know, however, that *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din told *Hazrat* Mirza at the morning walk:

Once I saw the Holy Prophet in my dream and asked him, "Sir, how is it that Abu Hurairah was able to remember so many of your sayings?" The Prophet leaned forward to whisper the answer in my ear and I was anxious to hear it, but just then, somebody woke me up. Since then I have always wondered what was the answer to my question that the Prophet was about to disclose.

*Hazrat* Mirza responded with a Persian verse:

I am neither the night nor the worshipper of darkness,  
That I may narrate stories to put people to sleep.

I am the sun, I propagate light,  
And awake people thereby.

*Hazrat* Mirza then proceeded to say:

What I am going to tell you is also based on knowledge derived as a blessing from the Holy Prophet. As far as I can fathom, the Prophet was going to whisper in your ear the verse: "Which none touches save the purified ones" (56:79). Whether it is the messages of God or the sayings of the Prophet, they only connect with a person if he has internal purity. The real thing is piety and purity that enable the commands of God and His Prophet to make a home in a person's heart.

Religious discussions in the same vein continued between them. Finally, *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din requested *Hazrat* Mirza to accept him as a disciple by taking his pledge of fealty. *Hazrat* Mirza responded:

I have not been commanded to accept pledges; hence I cannot take your pledge. My affair is not like that of hereditary clerics (*Gaddi Nashin*). I cannot move in this matter without a command from God.

*Maulana* Nur-ud-Din then asked for and was given a promise that his pledge would be the first one to be taken after Allah's permission was received. *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din returned home to Jammu and the two men kept in touch through letters. In 1888, *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din fell ill and *Hazrat* Mirza visited him in Jammu to enquire about his health.

### **The sign of the spray of red drops**

This incident occurred on Friday, the 27th of *Ramzan* in the summer of 1884. After the morning prayer, *Hazrat* Mirza lay down on a bare cot in a small room on the eastern side of Mubarak Mosque. The room had been freshly plastered and was quite chilly. *Hazrat* Mirza had folded his arm under his head since there was no pillow. *Maulana* Abdullah Sanori was sitting by his side massaging his feet. *Hazrat* Mirza saw in a vision a spacious and clean house with a bed on which a person sat with the majesty and authority of a king. *Hazrat* Mirza narrated:

It was inspired into my heart that this is the King of kings, the Lord of the Worlds. I felt that my position was that of a lowly presenter of papers to the King. I approached the august Presence with a file pertaining to the ongoing contention between the enemies of Islam and me. The Lord made me sit very affectionately on the bed with Him. I was overwhelmed by this kindness of the Lord that he had seated me next to him. Then the Lord dipped a pen in red ink and signed the file, but before doing it, He jerked the pen to rid it of excess ink, which splattered on my shirt. Suddenly, I came out of the vision.

Astonishingly, the red drops that splattered *Hazrat* Mirza's shirt in the vision were not only present on his shirt in the real world but they were still wet. *Maulana* Sanori in utter amazement raised a din, wondering loudly where the fresh drops of red ink had come that had stained *Hazrat* Mirza's clean shirt. *Hazrat* Mirza then narrated his vision and said:

It appears that since there is an ongoing argument between the *Arya* Hindus and me whether Allah has the power to create from nothingness, my Lord, who is All Powerful, has created these red drops from nothingness as a sign to strengthen my faith.

*Maulana* Sanori immediately requested that the shirt, which evidenced this great sign from Allah, be given to him. *Hazrat* Mirza acceded to this request but with the condition that the shirt be interred with *Maulana* Sanori at the time of his death. The condition was meant to ensure that a later generation might not adopt any polytheistic practice borne out of sanctity for the relic. Accordingly, when *Maulana* Sanori died, the shirt was buried with him. This incident clearly shows the zeal with which *Hazrat* Mirza guarded the Unity of Allah.



## Chapter

# 16

## SECOND MARRIAGE

When *Hazrat* Mirza's mother passed away in 1868, the control and running of their joint family home was taken over by his sister-in-law, the wife of his older brother, Mirza Ghulam Qadir. After the death of *Hazrat* Mirza's father, she came to completely dominate the household. Although *Hazrat* Mirza had given her no provocation, she bore malice towards him. The major reason for this malice was that she was the sister of Mirza Imam-ud-Din, who was an atheist and an opponent of *Hazrat* Mirza. Her own children having died young, she adopted *Hazrat* Mirza's son, Mirza Sultan Ahmad, and brought him completely under her influence. *Hazrat* Mirza's wife was a simple and straightforward person and did not fully appreciate what was to her benefit or detriment. Under the machinations of the sister-in-law, she too came completely under her influence and was brainwashed against her husband.

*Hazrat* Mirza was engaged day and night in writing his book *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and articles in support of Islam. He did not have much time to spend with his family, and this gave his sister-in-law the opportunity to work on his wife. Under the pretense of being her well-wisher, she completely turned her against him. Ultimately, *Hazrat* Mirza's wife left him and moved in with her sister-in-law, thereby bringing about a separation that ended conjugal relations between them.

The time had come for Allah to appoint *Hazrat* Mirza to the high position of a *Mujaddid* (reformer). It was in God's scheme of things to establish through him an organization for the service of Islam. Many men and women would visit him in this role. It was prudent that there should be a wife in

*Hazrat* Mirza's house to entertain the female guests because it is not proper for respectable women to visit a single man, regardless of his piety. It, therefore, became necessary that *Hazrat* Mirza should marry again.

Sometime before his appointment as *Mujaddid*, *Hazrat* Mirza's attention was drawn in a revelation to the need for a second marriage. However, at the time, he did not have any independent means of livelihood. *Hazrat* Mirza's share of the ancestral property was under the control of his elder brother and *Hazrat* Mirza was dependent on his sister-in-law even for his meals. He was reluctant to intervene in the matter and press for his rightful inheritance because he disdained the unpleasantness that would follow. *Hazrat* Mirza was far above such mundane matters. A second marriage right then was out of the question, but the revelation had promised to bring about the necessary conditions for it.

In 1883, *Hazrat* Mirza's brother died and he started receiving income from his half of the ancestral property. A year and a half after his brother's death, in November 1884, in accordance with the Divine revelation, he married Nusrat Jehan, the daughter of Mir Nasir Nawab. Mir Nasir Nawab was from a well-known family of Delhi and was the maternal grandson of *Hazrat* Khawaja Mir Dard, a famous *Sufi* saint and poet of Delhi. Mir Nasir Nawab was a sub-overseer in the irrigation department and had been posted to a site near Qadian in connection with the excavation of a canal. He had taken up residence, along with his family, in a village called Tatla, near Qadian. *Hazrat* Mirza's elder brother, Mirza Ghulam Qadir, had also worked for some time in the irrigation department and the two were good friends and frequently visited each other.

I reproduce below an extract from the book *Sirat-ul-Mahdi*, Vol. 2, in which Mir Nasir Nawab's wife gives an account of her daughter's marriage. The account is addressed to her maternal grandson, Mirza Bashir Ahmad:

Your grandfather (Mir Nasir Nawab) and your paternal uncle, Mr. Ghulam Qadir, became acquainted when your grandfather was working on the construction of the canal that passes a few miles west of Qadian. As luck would have it, I fell ill and your uncle recommended his father, who was a skilled physician of Indian medicine, to Mir sahib for my treatment. Accordingly, I accompanied your grandfather in a palanquin to Qadian. When we arrived there, your uncle had some company and was sitting with them on the ground floor, and your father (*Hazrat* Mirza) was reading the Quran by the window of a small room also on the ground floor. Your paternal grandfather (Mirza Ghulam Murtaza)

was in the upper story of the house. He examined my pulse, wrote out a prescription, and then chatted for the rest of the time with Mir sahib about his medical studies under the tutelage of *Hakim* Muhammad Sharif in Delhi.

Your paternal grandfather had passed away by the time of my next visit to Qadian. This second visit happened to be on the day of his death anniversary, which was observed in accordance with old traditions and a considerable quantity of food was sent to our house as well. During this visit, your uncle invited Mir sahib to move from Tatla, where we resided, to his house in Qadian. Tatla, he said, was not a comfortable village to live in and its dwellers were reputed troublemakers. Your uncle said that as he stayed most of the time in Gurdaspur and Ghulam Ahmad (*Hazrat* Mirza) rarely came inside the house, we would enjoy complete privacy. Mir Nasir Nawab sahib accepted his invitation and we took up residence in Qadian.

On his visits to Qadian, your uncle brought betel leaves for us and I would cook some good food and send it to him. Once I prepared some *shami* kabobs for him, but learned that he had already left for Gurdaspur. Since the kabobs were ready, I decided to send them to his younger brother. The maid who took the kabobs to your father came back and conveyed his sincere thanks. She reported that he ate the kabobs with great relish and did not even touch the food that had come for him from his own house. After that, I sent him some of my home-cooked food every two or three days, which he ate happily. However, when your aunt (the wife of Ghulam Qadir) learnt about the food I was sending your father, she was very upset because she disliked him intensely. As the running of the house was in her hands, she took every opportunity to inconvenience him, but he bore all the provocations with great patience. Although Mir sahib's contact was mostly with your uncle, he did remark sometimes in the house that the younger brother of Mirza Ghulam Qadir is a very holy and pious person. After some time, we went on leave to Delhi.

By then, your mother was an adult and we began to worry about finding a suitable match for her. Mir sahib expressed this concern in a letter to your father and asked him to pray that we receive

some marriage proposal for her from some pious person. In reply, your father expressed his own wish to marry her and wrote "As you are aware, I do have a wife and children, but for all practical purposes I am single." Mir sahib did not even mention this letter to me for fear that I may take offence. During this period, we received several marriage proposals for your mother but I was not fully satisfied with any of them although some were from affluent persons who expressed great desire for this match.

*Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, a good friend of your maternal grandfather, wrote several letters to him in support of your father's proposal, in which he emphasized Mirza sahib's piety and nobility. However, I was not fully satisfied with this proposal either; first, because of the age difference and second, because the people of Delhi looked down upon the Punjabis.

One day, Mir sahib suggested that we accept the proposal of an individual from Ludhiana who, he said, was a very nice person and also very desirous of the match. I enquired about his caste etc., but found no inclination in my heart to accept the proposal and turned it down. Mir sahib was annoyed, and remarked: "The girl has turned eighteen. Are you going to keep her unmarried for the rest of her life?" I replied: "Compared to this proposal, Ghulam Ahmad is many times better." Immediately, he took out a letter from his pocket and put it before me. "Well," he said, "I have a letter here from Ghulam Ahmad too. We must now make a decision." I then told him to write to Ghulam Ahmad to convey our acceptance of his proposal, and Mir sahib immediately took pen and ink and wrote the letter. Eight days later, your father arrived in Delhi. He was accompanied by some Hindu and Muslim friends and one or two servants.<sup>1</sup>

Our friends and family were generally very unhappy with our decision to accept the proposal of a person advanced in age and a Punjabi on top of that. Some of them expressed their displeasure by not attending the wedding. However, we had made our decision. The marriage was solemnized and the bride left for her new home.<sup>2</sup>

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1 The bridegroom's party included *Lala* Mallawa Mal.

2 *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain of Delhi performed the marriage.

Your father did not bring with him any jewelry or clothes for his bride but gave just two hundred and fifty rupees in cash. This gave our relatives a further opportunity to taunt us. "What kind of a marriage is this," they said, "without any clothes or jewelry?" Our reply was that Mirza sahib did not have an intimate relationship with his family, that the women of his house were against him, and that he came in such a hurry that there was no time for him to get jewelry and clothes made. In short, our family chided and reproached us on this marriage.

On top of all this, we started receiving letters from your mother in Qadian that she was very upset and sad and that she may die from this sadness. These letters gave our family another opportunity to chide us and some said: "Granted the person is pious, but is that a sufficient reason to ruin the life of a young girl?" We also began to worry now, and one month after the wedding, Mir sahib went to Qadian and brought your mother home. When they arrived back in Delhi, I asked the maidservant sent with your mother to Qadian, how my daughter had been treated? She praised your father exceedingly, and said that he had treated his wife with kindness and consideration and that he was a very nice person. Conceivably, the strangeness of the new place was the reason for the agitated letters. Your mother confirmed that Mirza sahib is a very nice person and that she had got upset without any cause. After a short stay, your mother went back to Qadian and did not return to us in Delhi for a long time.

The above narrative has a few noteworthy points:

1. First, it shows that the marriage ceremony was carried out with great simplicity, without any pomp and show, and the customary rituals, ornaments and clothes. A sum of two hundred and fifty rupees was presented so that the bride's family may buy clothes and ornaments according to their liking.

2. Second, it shows that *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi recommended *Hazrat* Mirza wholeheartedly to Mir Nasir Nawab. In his recommendation, he profusely praised the pious character and nobility of *Hazrat* Mirza. This is the testimony of a person who knew *Hazrat* Mirza intimately from the latter's youth. Later, when *Hazrat* Mirza claimed to be the Promised Messiah, *Maulvi* Batalvi became his arch-opponent, but he was never able to repudiate the testimonies given by him earlier.

3. Third, it shows that Mir Nasir Nawab and his wife were fully acquainted with the happenings in the home of *Hazrat* Mirza as a result of their stay in his house. They had met *Hazrat* Mirza's first wife and witnessed how she treated her husband. They had also seen *Hazrat* Mirza's conduct. Women have an extremely keen perception in these matters and if Mir Nasir Nawab's wife had even the slightest doubt about any ill treatment by *Hazrat* Mirza of his first wife, she would not have consented to the marriage of her daughter with him. *Hazrat* Mirza had only his piety to recommend him. There was no other attraction in him that would induce a respectable person to give his daughter's hand to him as a second wife. On the contrary there were many reasons to refuse the proposal; for example, the age difference (*Hazrat* Mirza was around fifty years at the time) and his relative lack of affluence. Thus, the consent of Mir Nasir Nawab and his wife to the match of their daughter with *Hazrat* Mirza is proof that they were fully convinced of *Hazrat* Mirza's piety and his excellent conduct towards his first wife.

### ***Hazrat* Mirza's excellent treatment of his wives**

*Hazrat* Mirza considered it his duty to treat his wife in the best possible manner. The separation from his first wife was not of his doing. His first wife came totally under the influence of his sister-in-law after the latter adopted his oldest son. Ultimately, his wife was brainwashed into leaving *Hazrat* Mirza and taking up residence with his sister-in-law. If reconciliation were a possibility, *Hazrat* Mirza would not have married again. Divine revelation also directed him to a second marriage.

After his second marriage, *Hazrat* Mirza sent a message to his first wife stating that he had put up with their existing relationship in the past, but it could not continue in the future as he had married again. Unequal treatment of his wives would render him guilty in the eyes of God. He concluded the message by asking his first wife that if she wanted to live separately, she should either accept a divorce or release him from conjugal responsibilities. His first wife replied that she did not want a divorce but released him from conjugal responsibilities.

## Chapter

# 17

## HAZRAT MIRZA'S CHILDREN

### Children from first wife

Hazrat Mirza had only two sons from his first wife. The older, Mirza Sultan Ahmad, was born in 1853 and died in 1931. The younger, Mirza Fazal Ahmad, was born in 1855 and died in 1904.<sup>1</sup>

### Children from second wife

Hazrat Mirza had ten children from his second wife - five boys and five girls. These children are listed below in order of their birth:

1. Ismat (daughter), 1886-1891
2. Bashir Ahmad I, (son), 1887-1888
3. Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad (son), 1889-1965
4. Shaukat (daughter), 1891-1892
5. Mirza Bashir Ahmad (son), 1893-1963
6. Mirza Sharif Ahmad (son), 1895-1961
7. Mubaraka Begum (daughter), 1897-1977
8. Mubarak Ahmad (son), 1899-1907
9. Ummatul Naseer (daughter), 1903-1903
10. Ummatul Hafeez (daughter), 1904-1985

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1 The birth and death years of *Hazrat Mirza's* children were checked from family records and the information as provided in the Urdu *Mujaddid Azam* was updated in a few places. The life spans of the various children as shown above are believed to be correct  
– Translator



*Hazrat Mirza with son, Mirza Sharif Ahmad.*



## Chapter

# 18

## GLAD TIDINGS OF A MAGNIFICENT SON

In 1886, Allah gave *Hazrat* Mirza the glad tidings of a son who would be highly exalted in his external and internal qualities, and material and spiritual majesty. Accordingly, on February 20, 1886, *Hazrat* Mirza published a leaflet in which he announced this prophecy. A mysterious part of the revelation prophesying the Promised Son stated that he was the one “who would make three into four.” I refer to this part of the prophecy as mysterious because its real import is still not clear. Perhaps, when the time comes and the Promised Son devotes himself to the service of Islam and the reformation of society, he will explain the real meaning of this mysterious phrase in the prophecy. For now, the meaning can only be conjectured.

Coincidentally, *Hazrat* Mirza’s wife was expecting at this time. In the same year, she gave birth to a daughter named Ismat. *Hazrat* Mirza’s opponents ridiculed him because his recently published prophecy was about a son but the current pregnancy had produced a daughter. This derision was understandable from the enemies of Islam who habitually attacked Islam and Muslims, but the malicious clerics of Ludhiana and Amritsar also joined them in mocking *Hazrat* Mirza. In vain did he protest that the prophecy nowhere stated that the current pregnancy would result in the Promised Son; any such insinuation was of their own making. The girl, Ismat, eventually died of cholera in Ludhiana in 1891.

### **The birth and death of Bashir Ahmad I**

Allah alone knows the precise timing of the promised birth and thus, in the absence of Divine assistance from revelation, an infallible prediction using human faculties alone is not possible. It is possible that 'son' may mean a descendent in the second, third or fourth generation. In fact, the phrase "the one who will make three into four" gives some credibility to the thesis that the Promised Son will be born in the fourth generation; or the term 'son' may have been used as an analogy for a 'spiritual son'. God alone knows the correct meaning of this prophecy.

It is difficult to understand the full import of a prophecy before its fulfillment; even saints and prophets go through a process of deductive reasoning to interpret a prophecy and there is no guarantee that their conclusion would always turn out to be correct. Prophets have been known to err in interpreting prophetic revelations as well, and so an incorrect interpretation by *Hazrat Mirza* was certainly not without precedence. For example, before the actual emigration from Makkah, the Holy Prophet had seen in a vision that he had migrated to a place with much greenery. He understood that place to be Yamama, but later events revealed the place to be Madinah. Similarly, the majority of spiritual leaders and intellectuals amongst the Israelites thought that the promised last prophet was to be an Israelite. They interpreted the phrase 'from amongst the brothers of Moses' to mean the Israelites, but the promised last prophet, Muhammad, turned out to be an Ishmaelite. It became apparent then that by 'brothers of Moses' were meant Ishmaelite who were the descendants of Israel's paternal uncle.

If *Hazrat Mirza* incorrectly interpreted the prophecy to apply to a certain person, it does not follow that the prophecy was not from Allah. On the contrary, it proves that revelation is not the product of human imagination because when a revelation is fulfilled, belying its original interpretation, it proves that the source of revelation and its interpretation is not the same. The origin of revelation is Divine knowledge, which is perfect, but interpretation is based on human knowledge, which is fallible.

After the daughter, a son was born to *Hazrat Mirza* on August 7, 1887. He named the boy Bashir Ahmad. *Hazrat Mirza*, through his own deductive reasoning, concluded that this boy was the Promised Son of the revelation, and he announced it as such through a published pamphlet entitled *Khushkhabri* (Good News). Many of his followers, therefore, came to participate in the *Aqiqa*, a sacrificial rite conducted shortly after the birth of a Muslim child. However, the boy was not destined to live for long, and when he died on November 14, 1888, Allah showed that *Hazrat*

Mirza's interpretation of the revelation in respect of this son was not correct; the Promised Son of the revelation was to be someone else whose identity was known only to God.

### **Excellent example of steadfastness in this tribulation**

There is widespread dearth of knowledge about fate and spiritual matters. The masses do not understand these finer points and the men of religion are blinded by prejudice to their import. As a result, the opponents of *Hazrat Mirza*, which included Christians, *Arya* Hindus and Muslim clerics, exceeded all limits in deriding him. A person without a strong faith in God would have faltered under this barrage of ridicule, but *Hazrat Mirza* was a perfect example of steadfastness, patience and courage. He was completely satisfied with the will of Allah and was the embodiment of 'the soul that is at rest'. It is only during times of tribulation that faith, steadfastness, and claims of connectivity with God are put to test. The righteous man does not flinch even a wit in his faith and steadfastness in the face of the severest trials. On the contrary, such persons reach new heights of sincerity, and loyalty to Allah, and it is this unusual trait that sets them apart as truthful 'men of God'. *Maulana Rume* has expressed these same sentiments in his verses:

I am sincere and happy that it is a time of trial,  
With love and loyalty, will I live thorough it.

Another Divine purpose in putting His chosen servants through such tribulations is to unravel through them mankind's knowledge of the complex and intricate issue of fate and God's will. This was exactly what happened in this instance as well. The writings and speeches of *Hazrat Mirza* on this topic during this time were so profound, and contained such a wealth of knowledge, that even men of intellect were moved to new heights of spiritual ecstasy.

*Hazrat Mirza* had realized before the death of his son that he had made an error in interpreting the Divine revelation in favor of this son. In a letter written to *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* during this time, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote:

It is pertinent to mention here that Allah, all glory and magnificence is His, gave me knowledge before his (Bashir I's) death that this boy had completed his purpose in life and will die shortly. His death, therefore, strengthened and enhanced my faith.

***Haqqani Taqrir* (A Statement of Truth)**

At the height of the opponents' crusade of derision, *Hazrat Mirza* published a pamphlet entitled *Haqqani Taqrir*, which is a beautiful commentary on the tribulations visited on saints and prophets by the will of Allah. I quote below a selection from it for the benefit of the reader:

It should not be concluded from an error of interpretation that the majesty and glory of Divine revelation is diminished in any way, or that revelation ceases to be of much benefit to mankind, or that it damages religion and its votaries. Even if there is an error of interpretation, it occurs only for an intermediate period as a trial. After this, there is such a tremendous display of Divine support and the truth is illuminated with such intensity that all the contentions of the objectors are dispelled, and it appears as if the day has dawned. However, it is necessary, before this day of enlightenment dawns, that those sent by God be put through the severest trials, and that their followers and disciples be also tested and tried so that God may distinguish those that are true and steadfast from those that are weak and faint-hearted.

In the beginning love is rebellious and bloody,  
So that those who are not cut out for it may avoid it.

The trials through which prophets and saints pass during their early period may appear to show these beloved and dear ones of God as contemptible, and abandoned by Him. However, the purpose of these tribulations is not to leave them wretched, friendless, destroyed and forgotten. It is inconceivable that the Glorious and Magnificent God will turn against those who love Him, and will cause His true and faithful lovers to meet a humiliating end. In reality, the chosen nations of God are put through tribulations, which pounce on them like a lion and envelop them like the pitch darkness of night, so as to elevate them for acceptance by God, and to teach them the subtleties of Divine wisdom. This is the tradition that God has employed with all His beloved servants from time immemorial. The humble crying out of David in his early life, reported in the Psalms, manifests this tradition of God, and the meek supplications of Jesus in affliction, narrated in the Gospel, also bears testimony to this practice. The servitude and tribulations of Prophet Muhammad recorded in the Quran and

Hadith is further exposition of this Divine law. Without the blessings of these afflictions, the prophets and saints would not have achieved the high stations they did. Their trials furnished the final proof of their loyalty, steadfastness and devotion. They stood firm through earth-shattering turmoil and showed, thereby, the depth of their devotion and their love of the truth. Storms raged around them, utter hopelessness and turmoil engulfed them and earthquakes rocked them; they were humiliated, dishonored and branded as liars and deceivers. They were left alone and without support. Even Divine assistance, on which they relied heavily, ceased for a time. It appeared that God's patronage had changed suddenly to His displeasure, and they had been left in need and difficulty because they were the targets of Divine wrath. God seemed to have distanced Himself from them as if He had no affection for them, but instead had affection for their enemies. This period of tribulation lasted for a long time, with one affliction succeeding another. Just like it rains the heaviest on a dark night, so too the rain of affliction poured on them copiously. Despite these tribulations, they did not waiver for an instant from their firm resolve, nor did they slow down or become disheartened. On the contrary, as the burden of hardship and tribulations increased, they quickened their pace. The more they were broken, the stronger they became. The more they were warned of the difficulties in their way, the greater became their resolve and personal courage. Finally, their tests were over and they had passed magnificently. They were blessed with success because of their perfect truthfulness. The crown of honor and dignity was placed on their head, and the criticisms of the ignoramuses disappeared and became extinct like a burst bubble. To summarize, prophets and saints are not free of trials and tribulations. On the contrary, they face the severest trials, and it is only the courage of their conviction that allows them to pass through these ordeals.

Just as the general public fails to recognize God, they also fail to identify His holy men. In particular, when these beloved of God are put through trials and tribulations, the general populace often draws the wrong conclusion about them. They get totally carried away and have no patience to await the eventual outcome with respect to these holy men. People do not realize that God will not trim a sapling planted by His own hands to destroy it. The trim-

ming is done only so that the sapling may flower and bear fruit more profusely and its leaves and fruits may be blessed. To summarize, the trials and tribulations of saintly and pious persons are necessary ingredients for their spiritual conditioning and godly perfection. It is almost as if tribulations are the distinctive uniforms by which these spiritual soldiers are identified. If anyone claims to have succeeded counter to this policy of God, then such a claim is a satanic aberration and not real success.

It should also be remembered that it is highly unfortunate for a person to be overly suspicious and to hastily conclude that all those calling to the way of God are frauds, deceivers, and operators of a business for profit. Such a weak faith causes doubts to creep in slowly about sainthood. The denial of sainthood leads to uncertainty about the office of prophethood, and the negation of prophethood creates agitation and anxiety about the existence of God. This develops a deception in the hearts of men that this whole matter (sainthood and prophethood) is artificial, unreal, and built on false superstitions that have been deposited on the hearts of men with the passage of time.

O lovers of truth and searchers of reality! Understand clearly that a belief in sainthood and its perquisites is necessary to rescue faith safely from this turmoil. Sainthood provides credence to belief in prophethood, and prophethood creates certainty about belief in the existence of the Most High God. In short, saints are the nails that hold up the belief in prophets, and the prophets are the pegs that anchor the belief in the existence of God. So, he who has no knowledge about the life of a saint from personal observation does not have full knowledge about the life of prophets, and he who lacks knowledge of prophets is devoid of full knowledge about God, and will certainly stumble one day. His exclusive reliance on logic and ordinary sciences will not help him.

For common benefit, I consider it appropriate to state here that the death of Bashir Ahmad was not unexpected. Before his death, Allah, the Eminently Glorious, had given full knowledge through revelations to this humble person that this boy had done his job (in this world) and will die soon.

During this period of tribulation, *Hazrat* Mirza not only excelled in expounding wisdom and knowledge, a small example of which was given above, but also set a practical example of steadfastness, resolution and contentment with God's will – a clear testimony of his saintly status. In another example of his faith, conviction and inner contentment, *Hazrat* Mirza made a bold announcement at the end of the above handbill: "God has commanded me to accept pledges. So now, those persons who are desirous of taking pledges at my hand can do so." This announcement was made in complete disregard of the air of derision and opposition that prevailed against him. Such conviction and tranquility is surreal.

### **God alone knows the real identity of the Promised Son**

This tribulation, the result of an incorrect interpretation, had made one thing very clear - the real identity of the Promised Son is known only to God. After Bashir I died, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:

God has made known to this humble person that "You will be granted another Bashir, whose name is also Mahmood. He will be resolute in his work. Allah creates what He pleases."

However, *Hazrat* Mirza never claimed that his second son, Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, was the Promised Son of his revelation. On the contrary, at the time of his birth in 1889, he openly stated:

This boy has been named Bashir and Mahmood only as an omen. I will make an announcement after receiving full disclosure. Till now it has not been disclosed to me whether this boy is *Musleh Maoud* (the Promised Reformer) and will live long, or that (boy) is someone else.

This was the last he mentioned about this particular aspect of the subject; nowhere did he state afterwards that God had indicated Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood was *Musleh Maoud*.

It is an established fact that unless revelation from God clearly identifies a promised person, a mere interpretation by the recipient of revelation does not guarantee that the person has been correctly identified. In his book *Hujjat-ullah*, published in 1894, *Hazrat* Mirza addressed his opponents on this subject with reference to this revelation in the following forceful words:<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Hujjat-ullah*. Page 10.

If, in this prophecy, I have written any revelation, which shows that he had been declared the Promised Son on the basis of revelation, then such a revelation should be produced? Since you are unable to produce such a revelation, is the curse of it on you or somebody else?...Even if it is supposed that this was my intention, my words and God's words are not the same. I am a human and it is possible that I may interpret something, and it may be incorrect. I repeat again, which of God's revelation is the one where I had made known that a son will be born from the first conception or that the one born from the second conception will, in fact, be that Promised Son, and then that revelation was not fulfilled? If you have any such revelation of mine, then may you be cursed if you do not publish it.

In the same book, before the above quoted passage, there is another noteworthy statement:

There is no doubt that it was revealed to me that nations would seek blessings from the Promised Son. But in my announcements, there is no revelation that specifies a particular son to be the Promised One. If there is such a revelation then may the curse be on you if you do not produce it.

***Hazrat Mirza interpreted the prophecy of Musleh Maoud in favor of Mubarak Ahmad***

*Hazrat Mirza* did not specify any of his sons to be the Promised One on the basis of revelation. In an announcement on February 20, 1886, he did, however, interpret this prophecy in favor of his fourth son Mubarak Ahmad purely on the basis of his own reasoning. At the time, *Hazrat Mirza's* three sons, Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, Mirza Bashir Ahmad, and Mirza Sharif Ahmad had been born and were alive. *Hazrat Mirza* wrote in the book *Anjam Atham*:<sup>2</sup>

Allah, the Most High, repeatedly gave me the good news about (the birth of) my sons until their number reached three. He revealed this information to me even before there was any sign of their existence. Accordingly, I published those tidings for all prior

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2 *Anjam Atham*. Page 182. Published 1897.



to their birth. You read these announcements, but heed them not because of your prejudice. My Lord, through His Beneficence, has given me the good news of a fourth son, and has stated that He is about to make the three into four.

This passage establishes that after the birth of the first three sons living then, Allah manifested clearly through revelation that the one who will make three into four had still to be born. This determination was made through revelation and there is, therefore, no probability of error in it. This son to be born in the future, who would make three into four, was the same son about whom *Hazrat Mirza* had published a prophecy in a hand-bill on February 20, 1886. Accordingly, *Hazrat Mirza* clarified this matter further in the Supplement to *Anjam Atham*:<sup>3</sup>

There is another revelation published on February 20, 1886, which stated that God would make three into four. At that time my three existing sons were not born. The meaning of the revelation was that there would first be three sons and then a fourth one who will make the three into four. A big part of this revelation has been fulfilled. That is, God has granted me three sons, who are living, from this marriage. Only one more is awaited who will make the three into four.

This revelation establishes beyond any doubt that the Promised One of the February 20, 1886 revelation - the son who would make three into four or, in other words, the *Musleh Maoud* - was not from the existing three sons of *Hazrat Mirza* i.e. Mirza Mahmood Ahmad, Bashir Ahmad, and Sharif Ahmad. That son, who would make three into four, was yet to be born. This determination rests on revelation and not on any interpretation of *Hazrat Mirza*.

After this determination by Divine revelation, Mubarak Ahmad was born in 1899. After his birth, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote very clearly in *Tiryaq-ul-Qulub* (page 43) that this prophecy of 'turning three into four,' which was first published in the announcement dated February 20, 1886, was repeated after the birth of the three boys, i.e. Mahmood, Bashir, and Sharif, in *Anjam Atham* and its Supplement, and God informed that the one to turn three into four, i.e. *Musleh Maoud*, would now come.

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3 Supplement to *Anjam Atham*. Page 14.

How this prophecy was fulfilled is stated in the same book on page 40 under the 25th sign. *Hazrat* Mirza drew attention to the prophecy mentioned in *Anjam Atham* and its Supplement and stated:

There is another prophetic sign about my fourth son, which will, God willing, be a source of enhancing the faith, conviction and knowledge of the readers. Its details are as follows: The revelation, which I published in the book *Anjam Atham* on pages 182 and 183, and also in the Supplement to *Anjam Atham* on page 58, contains a prediction about the birth of a fourth son.<sup>4</sup> On publication in January 1897, about two and three-quarter years from today's date of August 20, 1899, the book was widely distributed to thousands of people. The lapse of this short time was considered by my opponents to be a long period. They began to criticize the non-fulfillment of the revelation, published in *Anjam Atham* on pages 182 and 183 and in its Supplement on page 58, because the son had not been born.<sup>5</sup>... After this, he was born on June 14, 1899. Just as he was the fourth son, by the same token, he was born in the fourth month of the Islamic calendar, i.e. *Safar*, on the fourth day of the week, i.e. *Chahar Shamba*, at the fourth hour of the day after noon. In accordance with the prophecy of February 20, 1886, his *Aqiqa*<sup>6</sup> took place on a Monday.

This passage clearly proves the following two points:

1. The person of the February 20, 1886, prophecy, i.e. the *Musleh Maoud*, was neither Mian Mahmood Ahmad, nor Mian Bashir Ahmad, or Mian Sharif Ahmad. It was after the birth of these three sons that *Hazrat* Mirza received the revelation that the son who would make three into four and was the fulfillment of the February 20, 1886 prophecy, had yet to be born and would come at a future date.

2. After the death of Bashir I, *Hazrat* Mirza interpreted the person of the February 20, 1886, prophecy to be Mian Mubarak Ahmad and none other. Accordingly, he attempted to fit all the details of the prophecy to Mian Mubarak Ahmad's person.

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4 Readers please note that *Hazrat* Mirza states the prophecy in *Anjam Atham* and its supplement to be a revelation. (Author).

5 This is the third time that the prophecy is termed a revelation.

6 A ritual to celebrate the birth of a Muslim child.

### **Prophecies have been misinterpreted by every prophet and saint**

It remains to be discussed whether this interpretation turned out to be correct. I would like to submit that it is not necessary for an interpretation to be always correct. Many prophets, messengers, reformers and God ordained-persons, have erred in the understanding of prophecies. *Hazrat Umar*, in the presence of the Holy Prophet, concluded that Ibn Sayyad was the *Dajjal* (Antichrist or the Great Deceiver) mentioned in the Prophet's prophecies and sought permission to kill him. The Prophet did not contradict *Hazrat Umar*, but merely stated that if Ibn Sayyad was the promised *Dajjal* then Umar was not the person destined to kill him, and if Ibn Sayyad was not the *Dajjal*, Umar would have killed an innocent person.<sup>7</sup> Later, Ibn Sayyad became a Muslim, and it was thus established that he was not the *Dajjal*. Similarly, the Holy Prophet saw in a vision before migration that he had emigrated to a green land with abundant dates. He understood it to be Yamama, but later it turned out to be Madinah.

*Hazrat Mirza* expounded on the possibility of misinterpreting prophecies in his book *Tiryaq-ul-Qulub*:

Yes, according to my interpretation, I did think that Mubarak might be the Promised Son. However, it would be a matter of great regret if some ignorant objector based his objection solely upon my opinion, which springs not from revelation, but is the result of my own deliberation and thinking. The misfortune of such a line of thinking would cause him to fall from the lofty peaks of Islam. He will then not stop at just disbelief and apostasy, but would stagger further down and put his unfortunate soul into the deep abyss of atheism. The fact is that every prophet and messenger, whether in the understanding of prophecies and attributing them to individuals or in other deliberations and jobs, has committed errors of interpretation.

Further on, he wrote:

The announcement of August 17, 1887, will not suffice (as an objection) for an honest person, because it does not contain any prophecy from God about the blessed and heavenly Promised One. Every one of my sons from this wife has been a promised son, and so a mere reference to a promised (son) in a prophecy is

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<sup>7</sup> *Abu Dawud*, Vol. 2, # 36 *Kitab-ul-Mulahim*, Chapter 16, page 247.

not a sufficient argument. The proof they need to furnish is that a definitive claim based on revelation was made in the announcement of August 17, 1887 about the coming of the boy, who would be a manifestation of Divine glory, make three into four, and guide the world to the right path.

The following can be positively concluded from this passage:

1. Unless a revelation positively identifies a son after birth as the *Musleh Maoud*, an interpretation by *Hazrat Mirza* is merely an opinion, which can be fallible. It is a fact that there was no revelation positively identifying any particular son after birth as the *Musleh Maoud*.

2. The necessary attribute and identifying characteristic of the *Musleh Maoud* is that he will be the one who will make three into four. Since *Hazrat Mirza* received revelation after the birth of Mian Mahmood Ahmad, Mian Bashir Ahmad and Mian Sharif Ahmad, that the son who would make three into four would be born in the future, it is conclusively settled that the *Musleh Maoud* son was not from these three.

3. The only claimant to this prophecy could be Mubarak Ahmad, the fourth son of *Hazrat Mirza*; his claim was further strengthened by the repetition of revelation, just before his birth, about the coming of the one who will “make three into four.” However, in his untimely death, God showed that he, too, was not the person of the prophecy, even though *Hazrat Mirza* had interpreted him to be so. The reason for this interpretation was that *Hazrat Mirza* had three living sons. The revelation received by *Hazrat Mirza* once again mentioned the special attribute of the Promised Son to be the one who will make three into four. *Hazrat Mirza* interpreted the meaning of “making three into four” as the increase in the number of his three sons into four, although this was not the meaning of the revelation from God. Because the words so closely resembled the situation with his sons, his mind concluded that the revelation meant the Promised Son would increase the number of his living sons from three to four, but this was an error. What is the real meaning of “making three into four?” Only God knows the answer to this right now, but at the appropriate time, the world will learn its meaning, probably as the result of an explanation from the Promised One of the prophecy.

### **The boy *Musleh Maoud* will be born at some future time**

Some may hesitate to accept this explanation because it would hurt their sensibilities to admit that none of *Hazrat Mirza*’s sons was the *Musleh Maoud*. In my opinion, this is not a problem. God’s revelation and

actions have substantiated that the *Musleh Maoud* will be born in some future generation. Undoubtedly, *Hazrat* Mirza interpreted the first part of the revelation in the announcement of February 20, 1886, to be applicable to Bashir I, but he died. Later, he interpreted it to be applicable to Mubarak Ahmad, but he also died. This shows that the *Musleh Maoud* son will be born in a future generation when God wills. The reference to a son is also applicable to a descendent in a future generation. Thus, in the Quran, it is stated:

And We gave him Isaac and Jacob. Each did We guide; and Noah did We guide before, and of his descendants, David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. And thus do We reward those who do good (6:85).

Note that here the subject is about granting sons to Abraham; Jacob has been mentioned with Isaac although Jacob was not in reality his son but his grandson. Similarly, David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron are mentioned as the progeny of Noah although none of them were his real sons. If one receives tidings of the birth of a son, it does not necessarily mean a real son. *Hazrat* Mirza himself wrote in an announcement entitled *Tabsirah* (Review) published on November 5, 1907.

When Mubarak Ahmad died, God revealed to me, “We give you good news of a forbearing son (*ghulam*), who will be sent in place of Mubarak, as his successor and in his likeness.”

This passage shows two things:

1. The word *ghulam*<sup>8</sup> in these prophecies undoubtedly refers to a boy in some future generation because *Hazrat* Mirza did not have any sons after Mubarak Ahmad, nor did he consider any of his living sons to have fulfilled the prophecy. The revelation on the death of Mubarak Ahmad of the phrase “We give thee good news of a forbearing son,” can mean none other than that the Promised boy will be born in another generation at a future time.

2. *Hazrat* Mirza’s interpretation that Mubarak Ahmad was the one who made three into four was, in a way, correct, if the consideration is only numbers. Consequently, on Mubarak Ahmad’s death, Allah gave the

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8 Recall that in the announcement of February 20, 1886, the same words ‘forbearing son’ (*ghulaman haleem*) are used for the Promised Son.

glad tidings that Mubarak's successor will be born. *Hazrat* Mirza considered Mubarak Ahmad to be the Promised Son, and so Allah, the Most High, immediately consoled him that the true Promised One who is to come in fulfillment of the revelation of February 20, 1886, will be in the likeness of Mubarak Ahmad. However, God knew that the time of the Promised One was not as soon as *Hazrat* Mirza had assumed.

### **Incorrect interpretation resulted from the desire for speedy fulfillment of the prophecies**

*Hazrat* Mirza's incorrect interpretation was analogous to the incorrect interpretation by *Hazrat* Umar about the promised *Dajjal*. *Hazrat* Umar also assumed that the promised *Dajjal* was to appear soon, although God knew that it was to come much later on. Similarly, *Hazrat* Mirza had thought that the son who was to be *Musleh Maoud* would appear soon although in God's knowledge, he was to appear at some unknown future period. One reason for error in understanding prophecies by prophets and pious people is the unusual urge and desire in their hearts to work for the fulfillment of prophecies and to see them speedily realized. They long, day and night, that the words of God may come to pass. In this, they are motivated not by any desire of personal gain, but the gain of others. Their sole objective is the manifestation of God's Glory to all people through the appearance of mighty signs that would solidify their faith, remove the filth of sin, and enable them to come close to God. I present a passage from the writings of *Hazrat* Mirza on this topic. He writes:

A subtle and fine point of wisdom often difficult for everyone to understand is why prophets and men of God harbor an extraordinary desire and urge to fulfill, and to see fulfilled, the prophecies of God? All the prophets and pious people are endowed with a natural desire that makes them ever ready to fulfill the signs of God. Jesus, may peace be upon him, strove hard and made his utmost effort to see the prophecy about the restoration of David's throne fulfilled. He urged those of his followers who did not have swords and arms to even sell their clothes to buy arms.<sup>9</sup> Now if there had not existed that natural desire and urge that prophets have to fulfill a prophecy, then can someone explain to us why

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9 "Then said he [Jesus] unto them: 'But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.'" Luke 22:36.

this was done? Similarly, if our Prophet, on whom be blessings and peace, did not have this innate zeal, then why did he set off towards Hudaibiyah when no duration or time had been specified? The reason is that this group honors and reveres the signs of God. Since the fulfillment of signs enhances faith and knowledge, and manifests the omnipotence of God, they want the signs to be speedily fulfilled. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet prostrated whenever a sign was fulfilled.

In accordance with this generic rule, *Hazrat Mirza* had a natural desire for the speedy realization of the *Musleh Maoud* prophecy because its fulfillment would manifest the omnipotence of God, and increase men in their knowledge and trust of religion. *Hazrat Mirza's* erroneous interpretation and understanding of the revelation about the *Musleh Maoud* was, therefore, a natural consequence of this strong desire and enthusiasm. However, later events and revelations after the death of Mubarak Ahmad not only corrected this error, but also clarified the meaning of the previous revelations on the issue. It thus became apparent that the advent of the *Musleh Maoud* was to take place in another time and another generation.

### **The advent of the *Musleh Maoud* cannot be prior to three centuries**

On reflection, it becomes apparent that the advent of the grand *Musleh Maoud* immediately on the heels of another great Promised One, referred to in the *Hadith* as the Messiah and *Mahdi* (the Rightly Guided), is quite inconceivable. A careful study of *Hazrat Mirza's* writings and revelations shows that the *Musleh Maoud* will be positively identified by his work of guiding people to the right path, resulting in worldwide renown and widespread acceptance of his spiritual leadership by nations who will seek blessings through him. This indicates that his period will coincide with the dominance of *Hazrat Mirza's* Movement. When we examine the writings of *Hazrat Mirza* to determine this time, the clear indication in *Tazkirat-ush-Shahadatain* is that this will happen after the passage of three centuries. At that time, the populace will generally despair of the physical reappearance of Jesus and will join the Ahmadiyya Movement in large numbers. Thus, the fourth century is the century of the Movement's dominance, and probably it will be at this time that someone will appear to guide the people to the right path. In any case, the *Musleh Maoud* cannot appear before that time. If we assume that the *Musleh Maoud* is born today, or has already been born, then he would guide the world to the right path much before the third century, and this will render erroneous the

other assertion of *Hazrat Mirza* that it is after three centuries that people will despair and join his Movement.

It is remarkable that when *Hazrat Mirza* interpreted the prophecy 'one who will make three into four,' he did so with a time dimension. He interpreted it to mean the person who was born in the fourth month, on the fourth day at the fourth hour. Can the real meaning of the 'one who will make three into four' then be a person who will make the third century into the fourth? That is, a person who will appear after three centuries, and come as the *Mujaddid* (reformer) of the fourth century after *Hazrat Mirza*? Moreover, *Hazrat Mirza* has stated that his Movement will become dominant in the fourth century after him, just as the Movement of Jesus did in the fourth century after Jesus. If the advent of the *Musleh Maoud* is accepted before the fourth century, this statement that accords so well with the circumstances will have to be rejected.

The fact is that the advent of the *Musleh Maoud* is destined for some future time. Whatever has been stated above is just an interpretation, and like the earlier interpretations is not infallible.

### **The *Musleh Maoud* is probably a spiritual son**

It is very probable, nay almost certain, that the term 'son' denotes a spiritual son. This is apparent from two early letters of *Hazrat Mirza* published from Qadian. These letters were written in the year 1886, about a year and a half after his marriage in Delhi. *Hazrat Mirza* wrote the first of these letters to *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* on June 8, 1886. The following passage from it is noteworthy. He wrote:

Today, I narrate to you, my sincere friend, the news of a prophecy. About four months ago, it was revealed to this humble person that a mighty and powerful son, perfect in outward appearance and inner qualities, would be given to me. His name will be Bashir. I presumed that the son would be born from my current wife. However, most revelations about this matter now state that I shall have to marry again soon, and a wife of a chaste and pious temperament has been decreed On High for me, and she will bear children. The strange thing is that when this revelation occurred, I was given four fruits in a state of vision. Three of these fruits were mangoes, but the fourth was a big green fruit that bore no likeness to any fruit of this world. Although this is not yet a revelation, my heart says that the fruit that is not of this world, is the blessed son. There is no doubt, that fruits refer to children; since



the tidings of a wife with a pious temperament was given and along with it four fruits were given in a vision, one of which is different in appearance, so this is how it can be understood; but Allah knows best. In my opinion, it appears that before the birth of this son, a third wedding is necessary...

If this vision is interpreted in conjunction with another vision of *Hazrat Mirza*, the matter becomes abundantly clear. This second vision was given in *Sirat-ul-Mahdi*, written by *Hazrat Mirza's* son, *Mirza Bashir Ahmad*. He wrote:

My mother narrated to me that: "When I got married and went back to Delhi after staying in Qadian for a month, I received a letter during those days from the Promised Messiah in which he wrote: 'I saw your three grown-up sons in a dream.'" My mother said that she remembered two, but *Hazrat Sahib* always said: "No, I saw three and also wrote three."

This dream is from late 1884 or early 1885 because *Hazrat Mirza* married his second wife in November 1884. Thus this dream pertains to a period much before the prophecy of the *Musleh Maoud*. It was made known to *Hazrat Mirza* at the time, that three sons from his second wife, the mother of *Mirza Bashir Ahmad*, will survive to manhood. These sons were *Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood*, *Mirza Bashir Ahmad* and *Mirza Sharif Ahmad*.

The later vision of 1886 also showed three fruits of the likeness of mangoes. This proves that the second wife was to give birth to only three sons who would survive. None of these would be the *Musleh Maoud*, because the fourth fruit was shown as separate from the other three, and was not to be from her body. *Hazrat Mirza* had stated this in clear words when he wrote: "I presumed that the son would be born from my current wife. However, most revelations about this matter now state that I shall have to marry again soon, and a wife of a chaste and pious temperament has been decreed On High for me, and she will bear children." This was followed by the vision in which the *Musleh Maoud* was shown as a fruit different from the other three sons. From this, it becomes crystal clear that it was destined that the mother of *Mirza Bashir Ahmad* will give birth to three sons, who will live to adulthood, and will be like ordinary fruits of the world. The fourth fruit, which is the *Musleh Maoud*, would not be from this wife, but from another wife. This fruit does not resemble the

fruits of the world, but is heavenly, indicating that the *Musleh Maoud* will be a heavenly and spiritual person.

The question now arises, what happened to the wife that was to give birth to the *Musleh Maoud*? This matter also gets clarified on reading the second letter of *Hazrat* Mirza to *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din written on June 20, 1886, twelve days after the first one. He writes:

I received your letter. This humble person wrote to you with the objective of informing you, in a spirit of friendship, about some mysterious revelations. It is this humble person's habit to tell his friends some things about matters unknown so that their faith may be strengthened. The real state of this humble person is that since the heavenly indication was given about a third marriage, I have been anxious and worried. There is no room for digression from God's command but my temperament is averse to it. My greatest wish was that this heavenly command be suspended, but persistent revelations and visions make it evident that this is an inevitable decree. Anyway, this humble person has vowed that, whatever happens, unless a clear injunction from God forces me, I should withhold (acting on it)...

This letter makes it evident that *Hazrat* Mirza was receiving some heavenly signs that indicated another marriage was inevitably decreed and the Promised Son would be the result of this union. Thus, the inevitable decree was that the Promised Son would be born to another wife, and not to the existing wife, who had been decreed only three fruits of this world. The spiritual fruit, which was to be bestowed in the form of the Promised Son, was to be born from another wife. This was an inevitable decree. The surprising thing is that this inevitable decree was perfectly clear up to the point that the Promised Son was to be born from another wife. However, the revelation did not clarify when and how this wife would enter into his wedlock and so *Hazrat* Mirza saw some room to exercise his discretion and wait. It was for this reason that he wrote:

Anyway, this humble person has vowed that, whatever happens, unless a clear command from God forces me, I should withhold (acting on it)..."

This shows that although *Hazrat* Mirza was seeing in his visions the pious and virtuous wife that was to give birth to the Promised Son, there was no

clear injunction to take her in marriage. Through the rest of his life, a clear Divine command to marry again was never given to him. The question, therefore, arises: If a clear command to marry again was not to be given then what was the meaning of the visions and Divine indications? Given the circumstances, it is evident that the only purpose was to clarify to *Hazrat Mirza*, and all investigators of truth, that the Promised Son will not be born to the existing wife, and another wife was decreed for his birth. This raises the second question: Why was a command not given to marry again? The reason for this can only be that the wife of the vision was not a woman that could be taken in marriage, but was the spiritual imaging of his *jamaat* or party. In the science of interpreting dreams, if a spiritual leader sees a pious woman in his marriage, it can also be interpreted that he will be given a party of pure character. This is so because a party is influenced and spiritually impregnated by its leader like a wife is by her husband. For a party or nation to be seen as a woman, or to be addressed as a woman, is a commonplace occurrence in scriptures. For instance in the Bible, it is stated:<sup>10</sup>

Sing, O barren one who did not bear:  
burst into song and shout,  
you who have not been in labor!

For the children of the desolate woman will be more  
than the children of her that is married, says the Lord.

In this passage, the Israelite nation is addressed as the married woman, and the Ishmaelite nation as the barren, desolate woman. There are many other similar references in the Bible where a nation or party is addressed as a woman. For this reason, it is well accepted by men of learning that a woman may personify a nation or party in the world of visions and true dreams. Thus, when *Hazrat Mirza* was shown a virtuous and pious woman as his wife who will give birth to the Promised Son, it was probably an indication that he would be given a virtuous and pious party to which the Promised Son would belong. The filial relationship was to be a spiritual one and for this reason, there was no resemblance of this fruit to the fruits of the world because this was a spiritual and not a physical fruit. If this interpretation is not made, then it is difficult to explain why *Hazrat Mirza* was informed of an inevitable decree that he must take another wife for the birth of the Promised Son but throughout the rest of his life no

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<sup>10</sup> Isaiah 54:1

other wife entered into his wedlock. This clearly shows that the pious and virtuous woman of the vision was not, in fact, a physical woman who could be taken in marriage. The woman was only a spiritual symbolism for a virtuous and pious party. In 1888, *Hazrat* Mirza announced the formation of such a party. It is his spiritual marriage with this party that is destined to produce the Promised Son.

This interpretation is by no means novel. Spiritual paternity is an accepted creed in *Sufi* literature as, for instance, in the following verses of *Maulana Rume*:<sup>11</sup>

When the Spirit of the World influences the soul of the individual  
The soul takes a pearl from it and puts it in the pocket

Like Mary, the soul influenced by that Spirit  
Becomes pregnant with a beautiful Messiah

Not the Messiah who is on water and land  
(But) the Messiah who is beyond all measure

So when the soul of the individual is impregnated by the Spirit of  
the World  
The World is filled with such a soul

Then that World gives birth to another World  
This group (the second world) then causes a commotion by manifesting the (virtues) of the first group”

The meaning of these verses is that when the Holy Spirit impregnates a person with Mary’s qualities, a Messiah is born. This Messiah impregnates the world and from the old world, a new world is born.

It is true, though, that when *Hazrat* Mirza did not receive a clear Divine injunction to marry again, he reverted to his original conjecture that perhaps the Promised Son would be born from his existing wife. However, facts always contradicted this assumption. First *Hazrat* Mirza, through his own reasoning, considered his first son Bashir as the Promised Son, but he died. Then in 1889, he named his second son Bashir and Mahmood as an omen, and announced in writing that:

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11 *Maulana Rume, Musnavi, Daftar 2, page 52.*

This boy has been named Bashir and Mahmood only as an omen. I will make an announcement after receiving full exposition. Till now it has not been disclosed to me whether this boy is the *Musleh Maoud* (the Promised Reformer) and will live long, or it is someone else.

After this, in 1897, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote unambiguously in *Anjam Atham*:<sup>12</sup> “Allah has given me the tidings that the Promised Son, who will render three into four, is to come in the future.” This is obvious from the Arabic wording, which rendered into English states, “By His Grace, my Lord gave me the tidings of the fourth, and said, ‘He will make three into four.’” Thus in *Anjam Atham*, *Hazrat Mirza* fulfilled the promise he had made earlier to make an announcement on receiving full exposition about the Promised Son. In this announcement, he made it very clear that none of his existing sons was the *Musleh Maoud*. This also fits exactly the vision that *Hazrat Mirza* had written to his wife that she would give birth to three sons who will live to manhood.

The revelation narrated in *Anjam Atham* merely stated that the one who will make three into four will come in the future, but since Mubarak Ahmad was the fourth son, *Hazrat Mirza*, through his own reasoning, interpreted it in favor of this son. This interpretation was incorrect. *Hazrat Mirza* erred because he was focused on ‘making three into four’ in terms of numbers, but the fact is that only God knows the real meaning of this phrase. Mubarak Ahmad died and the facts turned out to be exactly as God had predicted that the Promised Son was not to be born of the existing wife, but another wife. However, *Hazrat Mirza* did not marry again, and the woman who was to give birth to the *Musleh Maoud* never entered his wedlock. This can only mean that the woman in the vision was not a physical woman that could be married but is a spiritual analogy for *Hazrat Mirza*’s *jamaat* (party) from which the *Musleh Maoud* will come. The *Musleh Maoud* would, thus, be his spiritual son.

I consider it necessary here to give some references from *Hazrat Mirza*’s writings in which he states that prophecies are sometimes fulfilled physically and sometimes in a spiritual sense.

God’s prophecies are sometimes fulfilled literally and sometimes figuratively. No Prophet or Messenger can claim in all cases with certainty that a prophecy will be fulfilled in a particular way.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Anjam Atham*. Page 186.

<sup>13</sup> Supplement to *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Vol. 5, page 94.

How can one ignore the accepted creed of all prophets that God's prophecies are sometimes fulfilled according to the apparent meanings of the words, and sometimes in a metaphorical and allegorical sense.<sup>14</sup>

Sometimes the prophecies are fulfilled overtly, and sometimes they are manifested in a spiritual sense.<sup>15</sup>

### **God alone knows the real meaning of the revelation**

My interpretation of the prophecies narrated above is merely a conjecture based on some logical inferences. This conjecture may or may not be correct. The fact is that when the Promised One will come, he will unveil these mysteries, and the real meaning of these revelations will become clear, just as the meaning of the prophecies about the Promised Messiah became clear with his advent. Interpretations and conjectures about prophecies before their actual fulfillment are always prone to error.

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14 Supplement to the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Vol 5, page 95.

15 *Izala Auham*. 140

## Chapter

# 19

### **THE WRITING OF *SURMA CHASHAM ARYA* (AN EYE OPENER FOR THE ARYA)**

In narrating the facts of the prophecy regarding the Promised Son who was to be the *Musleh Maoud*, the topic was pursued to its logical conclusion at the expense of skipping over chronologically overlapping events. I did this to clarify the contentious issue of the *Musleh Maoud* and to reveal the real facts. This knowledge will prevent people from being misled by the many claimants to the title of the *Musleh Maoud* that have arisen recently, both within *Hazrat Mirza's* family and outside. It was necessary, therefore, to cast light on the real nature of the prophecy, and to distinguish truth from falsehood, so that the seekers of truth may not stumble because of these false claimants.

#### **Spiritual sojourn in Hoshiarpur**

In 1884, *Hazrat Mirza* had considered going to Saujanpur in Gurdaspur district for solitary meditation and prayer, but Divine revelation stopped him from proceeding there and indicated Hoshiarpur as a possible alternative destination. However, it was not until January 1886 that the plan actually materialized. It was *Hazrat Mirza's* practice that whenever he visited Hoshiarpur, he stayed with Sheikh Mehr Ali, a notable of the town, who greatly admired and respected him. Once Sheikh Mehr Ali had invited *Hazrat Mirza* for a wedding in his family, and he had graced the occasion. Since *Hazrat Mirza's* intention on his forthcoming visit was to worship in isolation for forty days, he desired a separate residence for this stay. He wrote to Sheikh Mehr Ali in January



*Exterior view of the house Taweela in Hoshiarpur in which Hazrat Mirza performed solitary meditation.*





*The room in Taweela in which Hazrat Mirza undertook solitary meditation.*

1886, and requested that a secluded house with an attic be arranged for him in the outskirts of the city. Sheikh Mehr Ali vacated one of his houses that fitted the requirements. This house was generally known by its name *Taweela*.

*Hazrat* Mirza traveled to Hoshiarpur in a bullock cart and followed a route along River Beas. After crossing the river, he halted for a day and arrived in Hoshiarpur the next day. Immediately on arrival, *Hazrat* Mirza took up residence in the attic of the house *Taweela*, and made it known through handbills that he would not be receiving visitors or accepting invitations for meals for forty days. At the end of this period, he would make himself available for twenty days to visitors who may be desirous of discussing various issues with him. He instructed his servants to keep the front entrance chained at all times during the forty days, and to ensure that nobody in the house disturbed him. If he called somebody, that person was to respond only to the extent necessary, and no one was to come to him in the attic. His food was to be carried up to him and left in the room. The bearer was to collect the dishes at the time of the next meal. *Hazrat* Mirza would pray alone, but made an exception only for the Friday prayer for which he instructed the servants to find a mosque with a small congregation in which he could pray the compulsory congregational prayer.

Allah blessed him abundantly during those forty days. *Hazrat* Mirza later recounted that, on occasions, Allah conversed with him at great length. If the full conversation were transcribed, it would fill many pages. It was during this time that he was given the good news of a son who was to be the *Musleh Maoud*.

When forty days had passed, *Hazrat* Mirza stayed for another twenty days in Hoshiarpur. Many people visited him to discuss religious issues. Besides the locals of the town, many of his old acquaintances from out of town came to see him and stayed as his guests. During this period, *Hazrat* Mirza also held debates with *Lala* Murli Dhar, a follower of the Hindu religion, and won those debates convincingly.

When the two months were over, *Hazrat* Mirza started back for Qadian by the same route he had arrived. About four or five miles from Hoshiarpur was the tomb of a saint with a garden around it. On reaching the garden, *Hazrat* Mirza alighted from the bullock cart and expressed his desire to spend some time in the garden's shade. He walked to the tomb, opened the gate, and went inside. Standing by the tombstone, he raised his hands and recited the *Fatihah*.<sup>1</sup> After a while, he returned and narrated the

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1 *Fatihah* is the first chapter of the Quran and is traditionally recited when visiting someone's grave.



*The shrine on the outskirts of Hoshiarpur where Hazrat Mirza saw the dead saint in a vision.*





*The grave of the saint buried in the shrine outside Hoshiarpur.*

following incident to Abdullah Sanori, who was his traveling companion:

When I raised my hands for prayer, the saint who lies buried in this grave, emerged from it and sat down on the ground in front of me. If you had not been here, I would have been able to talk to him. He had big eyes and a dark complexion.

*Hazrat* Mirza then went in search of the caretaker of the tomb so that he could find out more details about this saint. When the caretaker was finally located, *Hazrat* Mirza queried him about the saint. The caretaker replied:

He died about a hundred years ago and so I did not see him personally. However, my father and grandfather told me that he was an eminently holy person, who had considerable influence in the area because of his piety.

*Hazrat* Mirza asked him about his appearance. The caretaker replied: "I have heard that he had a dark complexion and large eyes."

### **Debate with Master Murli Dhar**

Master Murli Dhar was a famous *Arya* debater of Hoshiarpur. He was a distinguished and leading figure of the society in Hoshiarpur, and took great pride in his abilities. *Hazrat* Mirza's reputation had spread far and wide as the author of the famous *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, and the writer of powerful religious articles. Murli Dhar was aware that *Hazrat* Mirza's pen was quick to champion the cause of Islam and to contradict the philosophies of the Christian and Hindu religions.

After the spiritual sojourn was over, Murli Dhar came to visit *Hazrat* Mirza and said: "I would like to present to you some of my criticisms about Islam." *Hazrat* Mirza was quick to seize the opportunity, and replied: "If you are fond of religious discussions, I gladly accept. However, it would be appropriate for a full exposition of the two religious philosophies that the participants present questions to each other in writing so that readers of the dialogue may be able to examine and evaluate the two religions. The discussion must continue at least until a reply has been given to the rebuttal of the initial reply to the criticism. The arguments should be written before the audience and then be read out to them." Both the parties agreed to these conditions. The news of this debate spread like wildfire through Hoshiarpur and on the day of the debate, a large and diverse audience gathered for the occasion, consisting

of all sections of the society - the nobles and the chiefs, the gentry and the common folk, Hindus and Muslims. Some of the notable people who attended were: Sheikh Mehr Ali, a noble of Hoshiarpur; Maulvi Elahi Baksh, a lawyer; Dr. Mustafa Ali; *Babu* Ahmad Hussain, Deputy Inspector Police; Mian Abdullah, a physician of Indian medicine; Mian Shahabuddin, a cavalry officer; Lala Narayan Das, a lawyer; *Pundit* Jagan Nath, a lawyer; Lala Ganesh Das, a lawyer; Munshi Gulab Singh, a clerk; Lala Ram Lachman, a headmaster; *Babu* Harkishan Das, second master; Lala Sita Ram, a businessman; Mian Shatrugan, eldest son of Raja sahib of Sakait; Mian Shatranji, younger son of before-mentioned Raja sahib; *Maulvi* Ghulam Rasul and *Maulvi* Fatehuddin, both school teachers.

The debate started on March 11, 1886, with a night discussion at the residence of *Hazrat* Mirza. In his opening written statement, Master Murli Dhar criticized the phenomenon reported in Chapter 54 of the Quran about the rending asunder of the moon. *Hazrat* Mirza rebutted the criticism. Murli Dhar countered the rebuttal. It was now *Hazrat* Mirza's turn to give a reply. When he started writing his reply, Murli Dhar tried to leave the forum on the pretext of the lateness of the hour. *Hazrat* Mirza and the audience countered that it was really not very late, and, in any case, the lateness equally affected both the parties. Murli Dhar was told that it was not right to violate the agreed upon rules of the debate; the reply should be written and heard before he left. Raja Shatru Ganj, in particular, implored Murli Dhar several times to let the reply be written as the audience was not inconvenienced in any way, and would happily wait; indeed, he said, they were looking forward to hearing the reply. Many other Hindus in the audience expressed similar sentiments, but Murli Dhar thought it expedient not to agree, and prepared to leave. Thereupon, *Hazrat* Mirza announced before the audience "If you want to avoid this moment, you may. However, in accordance with the conditions of the debate, I will write a reply, and publish it in the proceedings of the debate." Murli Dhar agreed to this, perhaps willingly or unwillingly, but he was extremely reluctant for *Hazrat* Mirza's reply to be written and read out to the audience at the time for fear of embarrassment. He, therefore, sought refuge in flight.

The second debate took place during the day on March 14, 1886, at the house of Sheikh Mehr Ali, a noble of Hoshiarpur. The same audience as at the first debate, was present. It was now *Hazrat* Mirza's turn to open the debate. He presented a critique of the *Arya Samaj* article of faith that denies the creative power of God and as a corollary denies everlasting salvation of the spirit. *Hazrat* Mirza maintained that this principle runs totally counter to the Unity of God and His merciful nature.

When *Hazrat* Mirza read out this criticism before the audience, Murli Dhar was stunned, and it became obvious to intelligent and perceptive persons in the audience that Master Murli Dhar was at a loss for a reply. As a useless stratagem, Murli Dhar kept objecting for an hour or so that the criticism was leveled at two issues rather than one. It was explained to him that in reality there was only one issue and not two. The real issue was that he who denies the creative power of God must also deny the everlasting deliverance of the soul from the body and its exemption from further transmigration. Salvation can, therefore, only be temporary because, if salvation were permanent, all souls would ultimately earn exemption from further transmigration. If God cannot create new souls, and had, in fact, come by the original set of souls through some unknown means, then the logical conclusion was that God would be left without any souls to send back to earth and His kingdom must come to an end. Thus the denial of the creative ability of God and the denial of permanent salvation are intimately related, and hence part of the same issue.

After considerable clarification, Murli Dhar understood the argument sufficiently to start writing his reply. He struggled for about three hours and put together a partial reply dealing with the first part. After reading this to the audience, he announced that he will write the reply to the second part, dealing with the salvation of the souls, at his house and will send it from there. *Hazrat* Mirza refused to accept such a reply, and stated: "Whatever you have to write, must be written here before this audience. Otherwise, what was the point of this forum?" Master Murli Dhar was adamant, and given his psyched-out condition, it was not surprising. Finally, when Murli Dhar refused to finish his reply, *Hazrat* Mirza asked for his written incomplete reply so that *Hazrat* Mirza could write a rebuttal at least to that part. To this Murli Dhar replied that it was time for him to receive visitors and he could not stay any longer. This was, of course, an excuse because most of the gentry of Hoshiarpur were at the debate. The real reason was that Murli Dhar wanted to save himself from embarrassment. When Murli Dhar got up to leave, *Hazrat* Mirza told him "It was not right for you to break the agreed-upon rules. You neither wrote the complete reply, nor are you giving me a chance to rebut that which you have written. Perforce, I will write a rebuttal and include it in my book (on the proceedings of the debate.) If you do not consider it expedient to stay right now, I am in Hoshiarpur for another two days, and I can devote my days and nights for this purpose." Murli Dhar replied that he had no time, and left in the company of his followers. Master Murli Dhar escaped but all those present, whether Muslims or Hindus, were fully cog-

nizant that Murli Dhar's strategy was only an excuse to save himself from embarrassment.

### **The writing of *Surma Chasham Arya***

That same year, in 1886, *Hazrat* Mirza published the complete proceedings of the debate in a book form, entitled *Surma Chasham Arya* (An Eye Opener for the *Arya*). He included a preface to the book in which he expounded the relationship between the laws of nature and miracles, and the differences between what is contrary to reason or illogical, and what is beyond comprehension or not understandable. This discussion is so exquisite that men of intelligence can only bow down in humble tribute to the sagacity of *Hazrat* Mirza. It is an endless river of knowledge and wisdom from which the searchers of truth can quench their thirst. The real excellence of the book can only be gauged by reading it. He has put forth such powerful arguments in support of the miracle of rending asunder the moon that even an atheist has no way out but to accept it. He has portrayed the greatness and glory of the Holy Prophet in a manner that is unparalleled. He has put forward such convincing arguments against the denial of the creative power of God, finite period of salvation, and the transmigration of soul, that the members of the *Arya* faith have not been able to rebut them to this day. *Hazrat* Mirza announced a reward of five hundred rupees to anyone who could convincingly rebut his arguments. This announcement was included on the last page of the book. No member of the *Arya* faith has ever dared to rebut these arguments. How can they? This is not an ordinary book. It is a masterpiece of *Hazrat* Mirza's knowledge, second only to the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*.

### **The flight of Indarman Muradabadi**

When the above-mentioned reward was announced, Indarman Muradabadi, a Hindu well known for his idle talk and enmity of Islam, expressed his intention to accept the challenge. He demanded that the reward money be put in trust with somebody. When *Hazrat* Mirza's men reached Lahore with the reward money, Indarman disappeared from Lahore.



## Chapter

# 20

## THE WRITING OF *SHAHNAH-I HAQ* (CHIEF CONSTABLE OF TRUTH)

*Hazrat Mirza* wrote the book *Shahnah-i Haq* in 1888 to refute the *Arya* beliefs. The motivation for the book came from the nefarious activities of *Lekhram Peshawari*, and the publication of his book *Takzib Barahin Ahmadiyya* (The Contradiction of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*). *Lekhram's* book, however, did not contain even a single rebuttal of the arguments in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Instead, the book was a barrage of abuses against the Holy Prophet, and totally baseless and false accusations against the religion of Islam. *Lekhram* contrasted the Holy Prophet with *Pundit Dayanand Saraswati*, and tried to show the Holy Prophet as vile and contemptible in comparison. As God would have it, *Pundit Dayanand's* real character was fully exposed by his own Hindu co-religionists through the articles of *Arya Darpan*, the public announcements of *Indarman*, and the fully detailed writings of *Pundit Shev Narayan*. It is not necessary to repeat all those charges here, but suffice it to say that the reality of the false comparison of *Lekhram* became obvious to everyone.

After this, on July 27, 1886, members of the *Arya* sect printed a poster at the Chashma Nur Printing Press in Amritsar in which they prophesied the death of *Hazrat Mirza*, and threatened that he would be finished in three years. Then on December 3, 1886, *Hazrat Mirza* received a letter by post in an unstamped envelope purportedly written by an anonymous *Arya*, but which appeared to be the work of some local, knowledgeable *Arya*. This letter contained a clear threat to kill *Hazrat Mirza*. However,

*Hazrat* Mirza did not care about this one bit, and stated very clearly:<sup>1</sup>

I will not be cowed by these announcements from stating the truth. Let alone one life, if I had a thousand lives to give, my dearest wish would be to sacrifice all of them in the way of truth. I know the identity of the persons writing these statements, and the internal and external conspiracies, consultations, and mutual correspondence after which a local Judas Iscariot or crooked Sikh has issued these (statements) in the hope of a big reward. However, it is not necessary for me to inform the temporal authorities of their evil machinations against me because our Real Ruler has advance knowledge of it... O *Aryas*! Do not try to frighten me with assassination; I am not the kind to be frightened by your worthless threats. I will certainly exterminate falsehood, and fully expose the reality of your Vedas.

After this, in February 1887, the *Arya* community of Qadian, with the help of Lekhram, published an announcement in the form of a magazine called *Surma Chasham Arya ki Haqiqat* (The Reality of *Surmah Chasham Arya*). This magazine was published at Chashma Nur printing press in Amritsar. The announcement specifically addressed *Hazrat* Mirza, and after assailing Islam, attacked him as well. *Hazrat* Mirza was forced to respond to the magazine, and published his reply, which he titled *Shahnah-i Haq*. Although the book was written in a period of four to five hours, *Hazrat* Mirza so comprehensively rebutted the criticisms of the *Aryas*, and exposed the reality of the Vedas, that the book is appropriately named *Shahnah-i Haq*. The name means the ‘Chief Constable of Truth’ because in this book, the truth whips falsehood to the point that it has no place of refuge.

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1 *Shahnah-i Haq*, page 3, marginal note.

## Chapter

# 21

## ALEXANDER RUSSEL WEBB'S CONVERSION TO ISLAM

Alexander Russel Webb was born in 1846 in Hudson, New York. His father was a well-known newspaper editor. Mr. Webb had a natural inclination towards religion, and after completing his college education, he became a minister in a church in St. Louis, Missouri. However, his logical mind soon became disillusioned with the illogical and inequitable Christian articles of faith. In 1876, he resigned from the church position, gave up Christianity, and following in the footsteps of his father, started publishing a weekly newspaper. He became known for his literary knowledge and skills, and was offered the editorship of a daily newspaper, St. Joseph Missouri Daily Gazette. He went on to become the editor of several other newspapers.

### **Correspondence with *Hazrat Mirza***

After many years of staying aloof from religion, Mr. Webb decided to investigate all the religions of the world. He studied Buddhism and Hinduism in detail, but found no satisfaction in them. He examined, to a certain extent, the Zoroastrian and Confucian philosophies, but these, too, did not provide solace to his heart. He had made only a cursory study of the Holy Prophet's teachings when he came across *Hazrat Mirza's* English advertisement of the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. In this advertisement, *Hazrat Mirza* had offered a reward of ten thousand rupees to anybody who could rebut the three hundred arguments he had made regarding the Divine revelation of the Quran and the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet.

Mr. Webb was impressed by this claim, and entered into correspondence with *Hazrat Mirza*.

His first letter reached *Hazrat Mirza* in 1886. *Hazrat Mirza* wrote back a suitable reply, and invited him to become a Muslim. Mr. Webb's second letter was received in 1887. In this letter, Mr. Webb requested English literature on Islam and expressed his intention not only to become a Muslim but also to propagate Islam in United States provided he was fully convinced of Islam's genuineness. *Hazrat Mirza* replied that English literature on Islam was not available but that he was contemplating publishing some magazines on Islam, and he would get these translated and sent to him. Both these letters of Alexander Webb were published in *Shahmah-i Haq*. As a result of this correspondence, Mr. Webb's heart turned to Islam, and he finally accepted Islam in the Philippines capital of Manila.

Alexander Webb was posted in Manila as the United States ambassador to the Philippines. The President of United States had chosen him for this job because of his knowledge and capabilities, which he had exhibited during his editorial career. The editors of major American newspapers are generally men of great knowledge and learning and carry considerable influence with politicians. Mr. Webb's abilities had caught the President's eye and he was given this appointment. There he converted to Islam.

### **The testimony of *Maulvi Hassan Ali***

*Maulvi Hassan Ali*, a resident of Bhagalpur in the Province of Bihar, was a scholar, and a pious, God-fearing, and spiritual person. He was probably the first person to discourse effectively in the English language on Islam, and even the Governor had attended some of his lectures in Madras. He had a pleasing disposition and his speeches, motivated by sincerity and genuineness, were very effective. He was instrumental in the conversion of several hundred Hindus to Islam, and about two thousand Muslim students who had turned agnostic under the influence of Western education and philosophies found their way back to the Islamic creed as a result of listening to his English lectures. *Maulvi Hassan Ali* published a book, *Taeed Haq* (Corroboration of the Truth), in which he narrated the very interesting story of his search for the *Mujaddid* of the era, which culminated in his pledge to *Hazrat Mirza*. In this book, he also gave a detailed account of Alexander Webb's visit to India and of some instances before and after it. At the time of the visit, *Maulvi Hassan Ali* was still in search of the *Mujaddid*, and had not accepted *Hazrat Mirza's* claim. He recounted:<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Maulvi Hassan Ali. Taeed Haq. Pages 81 to 86.*

*Haji* Abdullah Arab is a Memon merchant who traded in Calcutta. When God enabled him to save one or two hundred thousand rupees, he migrated and settled in Madinah. He invested his money in developing orchards in partnership with the Arab Bedouins. As a result, many nice orchards were completed, but he found it difficult to get his share of the fruit from the Arab Bedouins. He fell on hard times, and finally came to Jeddah and started a business with a limited amount of capital. Because of his business connections in Bombay, he sometimes visits India.

This revered person is extremely pious and has innate saintly qualities. I have rarely come across Muslims of such excellence and goodness. His heart is pure from sin like that of a child, his reliance on Allah is total, his courage is great, and his feelings for the Muslims remind one of the companions of the Prophet...I have had the opportunity of living with Abdullah Arab. If I recount his spiritual qualities, the narration will become very long. Thank God that Muslims like him are present in these latter days. His efforts were responsible for collecting donations of four hundred thousand rupees for the repair of the Zubaida aqueduct in Makkah.

In Bombay, Abdullah Arab learned that Alexander Russel Webb, the American ambassador to Philippines, had converted to Islam. Abdullah Arab immediately had a letter drafted in English and dispatched to Mr. Webb. Mr. Webb's reply reciprocated the enthusiasm of Abdullah Arab, and suggested that if he came to Manila, they could discuss how to propagate Islam in United States.

*Haji* Abdullah Arab is a disciple of the saint (*Pir*) Ashad-ud-Din Al-Alam<sup>2</sup>, and reveres him greatly. The praise of this saint that I have heard from Abdullah Arab has kindled a desire in even me to visit him. Whenever *Haji* Abdullah Arab is confronted with a difficult situation, he always seeks advice from his spiritual mentor. Accordingly, he consulted *Pir* Ashad-ud-Din about going to Manila. *Pir* Ashad-ud-Din performed the *Istikhara*, a prayer seek-

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2 This saint lived in *tehsil* Hala, district Hyderabad, and had several hundred thousand disciples. He was greatly respected in the area of Sind, and was recognized for his piety, and noble and excellent deeds. He is dead now.-(author).

ing God's guidance in a matter, and then advised *Haji* Abdullah to proceed to Manila as some good would result from this trip.

In a letter, *Haji* Abdullah invited me to accompany him. He wrote, "Please come to Manila with me. I do not know English, and Mr. Webb does not know Urdu. A translator is needed. We have to meet a new convert. God alone knows what kind of questions he may need to ask." I was in Katak those days, and my commitments to the Muslim community there did not allow me to leave immediately. *Haji* Abdullah waited for me in Calcutta for some time, but then left for Manila with a newly converted Eurasian as his interpreter. *Haji* Abdullah spent in excess of a thousand rupees of his own money on this trip.

In the meeting with Mr. Webb in Manila, it was decided that Mr. Webb should resign from his ambassadorial position after *Haji* Abdullah collects sufficient donations for the propagation of Islam. On his return, *Haji* Abdullah met me and I arranged a gathering in Hyderabad, where six thousand rupees were donated. I advised *Haji* Abdullah not to ask Mr. Webb to resign until sufficient funds had been collected. However, in his enthusiasm, *Haji* Abdullah did not heed my advice, and sent a telegram to Mr. Webb from Bombay stating that everything was all right and he should resign. Accordingly, Mr. Webb resigned and came to India.

I met Mr. Webb in Bombay and accompanied him on his tour of Poona, Hyderabad and Madras. In Hyderabad, Mr. Webb told me, "I am very grateful to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. It is because of him that I have had the honor to join Islam. I would like to meet him." I narrated to him the stories of his ill repute (i.e. his claim of being the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi* – author's comment) that I had heard about him. Mr. Webb dictated a letter for *Hazrat* Mirza and received back an eight-page reply. *Hazrat* Mirza wrote to me to translate the letter word for word when reading it out to him. I did accordingly. Mr. Webb listened to the letter with rapt attention and respect. *Hazrat* Mirza had given detailed arguments in the letter about his claims, and had also mentioned about the opposition of the clerics of Punjab, and the insurrection among the common men. He had also written that he, too, was very desirous of meeting Mr. Webb.

Mr. Webb, *Haji* Abdullah and I met together to decide the course of action. We concluded that it would not be prudent to meet with a maligned person like *Hazrat* Mirza at a time when we needed to collect donations. Such a meeting would hurt the work of propagating Islam. Now, I really regret this unfortunate decision. When Mr. Webb went to Lahore, he did not go to Qadian for this reason. Even more regretful was a reply given by Mr. Webb to a question put to him in Lahore. He was asked why he was not going to Qadian to visit *Hazrat* Mirza? His impertinent reply was "What is there in Qadian?" Some people relayed this rude remark to *Hazrat* Mirza. After touring the major cities of India, Mr. Webb returned to United States and busied himself in the work of propagating Islam.

I stayed with Mr. Webb for about two months. He is in reality a very decent person, and has developed a genuine fondness of Islam. As far as I could, I tried to increase his knowledge of Islam, dispelled some wrong ideas, and gave him instructions on some essential issues. I also gave him his Muslim name, Sheikh Muhammad.

It happened just as I had said. The Muslims of India did promise donations, but the collections were few. *Haji* Abdullah Arab tried his utmost but with little success. The Muslims were ready to spend millions on un-Islamic pursuits but gave nothing for this important task. The only worthwhile collections were made in Rangoon and Hyderabad Deccan. I think the total amount that was sent to Mr. Webb was thirty thousand rupees, out of which *Haji* Abdullah Arab had contributed sixteen thousand rupees. Poor *Haji* was crushed in this undertaking. Steeped in anxiety from the non-receipt of promised donations, *Haji* Abdullah repaired to his spiritual mentor and apprised him of the problem. The *Pir* sahib performed *Istikhara*, and was informed: "The propagation of Islam in the United States is taking place under the authority of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. His prayer can set the work aright." The next day, when *Pir* sahib gave this information to *Haji* Abdullah, he submitted to his mentor, "Sir, the learned religious scholars of Punjab and India have declared Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib to be an infidel, how can he be requested in this matter?" The *Pir* sahib was amazed to hear this and repaired once again to God, and performed *Istikhara*. This time he saw the Holy Prophet Muhammad in a dream who informed him that, "Mirza

Ghulam Ahmad is my assistant in this era. Do as he tells you.” The next morning *Pir* sahib told his disciples: “I will go to Mirza sahib myself, and if he asks me to go to America, I will.” When *Haji* Abdullah Arab and the other disciples heard about *Pir* sahib’s vision, and his resolution to go to Qadian, they did not consider it appropriate for the *Pir* sahib to go to Qadian himself. They suggested that *Pir* sahib not inconvenience himself with going to Qadian, but instead depute someone to go to *Hazrat* Mirza sahib on his behalf. Accordingly, *Pir* sahib’s assistant Abdul Latif and *Haji* Abdullah Arab went to Qadian. They met with *Hazrat* Mirza and apprised him of all the facts. They requested his attention to the matter so that the work of propagating Islam in America may go ahead smoothly.

I heard the foregoing narrative from *Haji* Abdullah Arab himself. As I have mentioned before, I consider *Haji* Abdullah to be a most excellent man of God. Hence, there is no reason to doubt his narration. Given the ill repute of *Hazrat* Mirza, and the reputable stature of the Jhandawala *Pir*, there is no motivation for Abdullah Arab to concoct a narration that can apparently only harm his spiritual mentor. I also learned another amazing thing from *Haji* Abdullah. There lives in Istanbul a very great saint called Syed Fazal, who is very dear to the Sultan of Turkey. There has passed among the ancestors of Syed Fazal a great saint, who was spiritually gifted with revelations and miracles. A book of his sayings mentions that when the *Mahdi*, peace be upon him, comes in the latter period, a large Western nation of white people will join Islam and assist him. And Allah knows best.

### **Additional facts about Mr. Webb**

The book *Taeed Haq* was published in 1897 after the death of its author *Maulvi* Hassan Ali. It is apparent, therefore, that it was written sometimes during the period of 1895 to 1896. The author took the pledge at the hands of *Hazrat* Mirza on January 2, 1894. From this it may be concluded that the visit of Alexander Webb to India took place after 1891 but prior to 1894, i.e. prior to the taking of the pledge by *Maulvi* Hassan Ali. This was the period when *Hazrat* Mirza’s claim of being the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi* had aroused intense hostility against him. It was because of this hostility that Alexander Webb did not come to Qadian to meet with *Hazrat* Mirza. It was a decision that he regretted for the rest of his life.



On return to the United States from India, he launched a very dignified newspaper called the *Muslim World*, and started propagating Islam through it. After a short period of publication, the paper ran out of money and was shut down. As *Maulvi* Hassan Ali has written, the Muslims of India made a lot of promises, but did not deliver on them. Without a flow of funds from India, Mr. Webb was rendered helpless, and the entire effort failed.

In 1906, this humble author was present with *Hazrat* Mirza in Qadian when a recently received letter from Alexander Webb was submitted to *Hazrat* Mirza. It was a long letter, but I remember one or two things from it. Mr. Webb had expressed deep regret and sorrow in it. He had written "Alas! I came to India but did not visit you, although it was through you that I had found the right guidance. In not meeting you, I had tried to please some people so that they would give donations. They did not keep their promises and no donations were made. Now I regret greatly that I deprived myself of meeting a man of God for such people. The West now looks to you for guidance because of the way you explain the crucial aspects of Islam which cannot but impact the hearts of people." In short, the letter expressed Alexander Webb's feelings of goodwill and faith in *Hazrat* Mirza. Alexander Webb and *Hazrat* Mirza continued to correspond.

Once Alexander Webb was asked to give advice about propagating Islam in the United States. He wrote: "It is necessary that someone comes over here who is an excellent exemplar of Islam because, without an example, the Westerners cannot understand Islam. They know nothing about Islam, so how can they understand Islam without an example? The Muslims who live here are themselves strangers to Islam, and so their example cannot be an example of Islam. Their example, far from being beneficial for Islam, is an insult to the religion. It is necessary that any missionary who comes from India is a true exemplar of Islam. The Americans would then be impressed by Islam and, God willing, Islam will spread rapidly." To the very end of Mr. Webb's life, his relations with *Hazrat* Mirza and his party remained brotherly and cordial.

## THE PROPHECY REGARDING MIRZA AHMAD BEG HOSHIARPURI AND MARRIAGE WITH MUHAMMADI BEGUM

In 1888, *Hazrat* Mirza made a prophecy about Mirza Ahmad Beg Hoshiarpuri and his daughter, Muhammadi Begum, which is often quoted by *Hazrat* Mirza's opponents to disparage him. The gentry, as well as the common folks, set aside all logic and rationale, and carp on this prophecy when the objective is to malign *Hazrat* Mirza. These opponents totally ignore hundreds of prophecies of *Hazrat* Mirza that have been fulfilled, and choose only to focus on this one prophecy in which there is some apparent confusion regarding its intent and fulfillment. Such an attitude is not a sign of righteousness, and reflects only their prejudice, bigotry and blind opposition. It is not feasible to enter into a detailed philosophical discussion of prophecies in a biographical work, but I consider it necessary to give a brief summary.

### **Prophecies reflect the Omnipotent and Omniscient attributes of God**

It is accepted by all researchers of Islam that prophecies originate from the Omnipotent (all powerful) and Omniscient (all knowing) attributes of God. The miracle in the prophecy is the manifestation of these attributes. For example, when Moses prophesied the destruction of the Pharaoh, it was a miracle of God's Omniscience, because a humble and

meek person could not, on the basis of his own knowledge, predict the destruction of such a mighty emperor. All men of intelligence can appreciate the Divine knowledge in this prophecy. Along with this, there was the miracle of God's Omnipotence. God allowed a weak and humble nation, including women, children and old men, to cross the sea safely, but He drowned the pursuing Pharaoh, his army and his followers, with all their pomp and grandeur, in the same sea. Such a show of power is beyond human capabilities. It was clearly the Hand of the Omnipotent God that performed this gargantuan task. In a like manner, all prophecies manifest the Omnipotent and Omniscient attributes of God.

### ***Taqdir Mubram and Taqdir Muallaq***

The prophecies originating from God are either *taqdir mubram*, i.e. inevitable or unavoidable destiny, or *taqdir muallaq*, i.e. conditional or avoidable destiny. *Taqdir mubram* is inevitable, and is based on the eternal knowledge of God under which he sees the final destiny of everything. Nothing can ever happen against this inevitability. For example, Abraham was given the good news of a son, and so was Mary. This was Divine knowledge, and was *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny). Nothing could prevent this from happening. Means may be lacking and hindrances may abound in the way, but these difficulties are resolved, the hindrances removed, and what God's knowledge had prophesied comes to pass. *Taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny) is destiny that can be avoided, and, very often, it is action and state dependent. For example, if a person eats poison, he dies; if he does not eat poison, he lives. If proper diet and medicine is taken during an ailment, a person benefits; if improper diet is eaten and treatment is avoided, he suffers. Most of the temporal affairs of the world are dependent upon action and condition, and follow the rules of *taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny). The same is true of prophecies. If the prophecy is about something that falls within the domain of *taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny), then the rules of *taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny) will apply. For example, a nation is warned that if it follows the prophet, it will be saved, but if it opposes the prophet, it will be destroyed. Thus, their safety or their destruction is dependent upon their own actions and condition. The Quran states:

And ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him. He will provide you with a goodly provision to an appointed term, and will bestow His grace on everyone endowed with grace. And if you turn away, I fear for you the chastisement of a great day (11:3).

This verse clearly shows that seeking forgiveness and repentance can avert chastisement. However, persistence in mischief and false accusations brings about early chastisement, and destruction occurs before the normal appointed term. For this reason, all prophecies of destruction are subject to cancellation of chastisement if there is repentance, desire for God's protection, and a change of condition from evil to good. This provision always exists, regardless of whether or not it is specifically stated in the prophecy. For example, Jonah predicted destruction of his people within forty days, and left the doomed area. However, when his nation saw signs of the approaching chastisement, they repented and sought God's protection. The result was that the chastisement was averted although there was no such provision in the plain language of the prophecy. This shows that in prophecies regarding destruction, whether there is a specific mention of repentance or not, the law of God is that if there is a change in the condition of a people, the chastisement is averted. Similarly, if an individual or a nation is promised a blessing based on past good actions, but it changes its condition by abandoning good deeds for cruelty and transgression, then God's promised favors will not be bestowed, and the individual or nation will be rejected by God. For example, the Israelites were promised great blessings and they were even taken towards the Promised Land, but because of their repeated transgressions, the blessings were postponed for forty years. The Quran speaks of this in the verse:

He said: It will surely be forbidden to them for forty years - they will wander about in the land. So grieve not for the transgressing people (5:26).

Because of their transgressions, the Israelite nation roamed the wilderness until the transgressing generation passed away. The promise was then fulfilled with the succeeding generation that had made itself deserving of God's blessings, and they inherited the Promised Land. The inviolability of God's rules and ordinances is worth noting. When the same nation of Israel, after inheriting the blessings of God, turned, once again, to transgression and cruelty, the blessings of God were taken away. This is what is meant by the Quranic verse: "Surely Allah changes not the condition of a people, until they change their own condition" (13:11).

Thus, most prophecies made by prophets, messengers, reformers, and other chosen ones of God, about their nations, are in the nature of *taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny), whether these prophecies relate to oppo-

nents or followers, to chastisement or blessing, or to chastisement of this world or the next. For example, the Holy Prophet prophesied that the infidels of Makkah would be unsuccessful, disgraced and destroyed. This prediction was based on their condition at the time. Those Makkans who persisted in their cruelty, enmity, disobedience and rejection of Allah's messages, were disgraced, frustrated and destroyed. But there were also some from the Makkans who accepted Islam and thereby became heirs to the success and prosperity promised by the Holy Prophet to his followers. Thus, the promise of chastisement was fulfilled in respect of those who did not change their condition. However, for those who changed their condition by becoming Muslims, not only was the destined (*taqdir muallaq*) chastisement averted, but they inherited a new blessed destiny (*taqdir muallaq*).

Another example is the prophecy of the Holy Prophet under which the Makkans were chastised with a seven-year famine. They were reduced to a condition in which some people even ate the leather of their shoes. Finally, Abu Sufyan and others turned to the Holy Prophet and asked him to pray for the removal of the famine. As a result, the chastisement of famine was lifted. Even though the infidels of Makkah had not believed, God gave them the benefit of this partial recourse to the Holy Prophet. The event is reported in the chapter of the Quran entitled *Al-Dukhan* (The Drought). It is stated:

So wait for the day when the heaven brings a clear drought,  
 Enveloping men. This is a painful chastisement.  
 Our Lord, remove from us the chastisement - surely we are  
 believers.  
 When will they be reminded? And a Messenger has indeed come,  
 making clear;  
 Yet they turned away from him and said: One taught (by others),  
 a madman!  
 We shall remove the chastisement a little, (but) you will surely  
 return (to evil).  
 On the day when We seize (them) with the most violent seizing;  
 surely We shall exact retribution (44:10-16).

In these verses, even the small recourse by the infidels of Makkah, i.e. their coming to the Holy Prophet to ask him to pray for them, is referred to as, "surely we are believers." Thus, their condition based upon this small inclination to truth in coming to the Holy Prophet to request him to

pray for the lifting of the famine, is described as: “Our Lord, remove from us the chastisement - surely we are believers.” It is apparent that this prayer referred to their inner condition and the term, “we are believers,” was a manifestation of their inner inclination to belief, because in actuality they had not become Muslims. Another noteworthy point here is that God states that He will remove the chastisement but that they will revert to their opposition and mischief. Thus, knowing fully well that they will revert to their old condition, God gave the infidels the benefit of the change in their present condition, and lifted the chastisement.

### **Abdullah Atham’s turning to God**

The prophecy regarding Abdullah Atham is discussed in detail later in Chapter 59 of this book, but it may be mentioned here that essentially the same situation existed in his case. In his book *Andarun Bible* (Inside Bible), Abdullah Atham had called the Holy Prophet a *Dajjal* (Antichrist or the Great Deceiver), (I seek God’s protection for saying this). *Hazrat Mirza* prophesied that Abdullah Atham would be thrown into the lowest depths of hell called *hawiyah* within a period of fifteen months for this impertinence, unless he repented. When Abdullah Atham heard this prophecy, he turned pale. He grabbed his ear lobes and lolled out his tongue in a gesture of extreme submission and said “God forbid, I did not say this.”

After this for a period of fifteen months, he did not say a single word against Islam. During this period, he was extremely frightened, and given to frequent crying. He told the press that he was being pursued by a trained snake, bent on biting him, and that at night, he saw armed men on foot and mounts that wanted to kill him. His house was totally surrounded by guards, and Abdullah Atham was obviously hallucinating because no one from the rest of the household saw these armed men. At night, he wept loudly and shrieked. In accordance with the principle of the above-stated verses, was this not turning to God in the same sense that the Quran called the coming of the infidels of Makkah to the Holy Prophet for prayer as being internal belief, or, in other words, being synonymous with turning to God? The chastisement of Abdullah Atham was lifted by his gestures of repentance in the same way that the chastisement of the infidels was lifted by their gesture of repentance. Just as the infidels of Makkah were chastised again when they returned to their mischief, so too was Abdullah Atham. When Abdullah Atham paid no heed to *Hazrat Mirza*’s repeated posters asking him to publicly affirm repentance, chastisement overtook him, and he died.

### **The prophecy regarding Mirza Ahmad Beg Hoshiarpuri and Muhammadi Begum**

The matter of the prophecy regarding Mirza Ahmad Beg and Muhammadi Begum was analogous. *Hazrat* Mirza was related to Ahmad Beg through marriages between their respective families.

*Hazrat* Mirza had two paternal cousins, Mirza Nizam-ud-Din and Mirza Imam-ud-Din, sons of his uncle, Mirza Ghulam Mohy-ud-Din. Both brothers were totally materialistic, irreligious, and of an atheistic temperament. They hated *Hazrat* Mirza and spared no effort to malign and harm him. One of Nizam-ud-Din and Imam-ud-Din's sisters was married to Mirza Ghulam Qadir, *Hazrat* Mirza's older brother, and another sister, Umar-un-Nissa, was married to Mirza Ahmad Beg. Mirza Ahmad Beg and Umar-un-Nissa were the parents of Muhammadi Begum. Thus, Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din were the maternal uncles, and Mirza Ghulam Qadir's wife the maternal aunt of Muhammadi Begum. Mirza Ahmad Beg was totally under the influence of his brothers-in-law, Nizam-ud-Din and Imam-ud-Din, and acted on their advise in all matters.

*Hazrat* Mirza was also related to Mirza Ahmad Beg in another way. *Hazrat* Mirza's sister was married to the brother of Mirza Ahmad Beg, but she was widowed at an early age.

There was yet another marriage relationship between *Hazrat* Mirza and Ahmad Beg. Ahmad Beg's sister, Imam Bibi, was married to *Hazrat* Mirza's paternal cousin, Ghulam Hussain, the son of his uncle Ghulam Haider.

At the time of the prophecy under discussion, Ghulam Haider was deceased, and his son, Ghulam Hussain, had disappeared without a trace. Ghulam Hussain was declared missing by the court, and as he was issueless, the question arose as to who would inherit his estate after his wife. Ahmad Beg advised his sister to gift her husband's estate to his son, Muhammad Beg, the older brother of Muhammadi Begum. However, under the prevailing law of the land, such an action was not possible without the concurrence of *Hazrat* Mirza. Out of necessity, Ahmad Beg approached *Hazrat* Mirza, and forcefully pleaded with him to give his consent by signing a no objection on the deed gifting the property. *Hazrat* Mirza was about to concede to the request, but was refrained by the thought that he must perform *Istikhara*,<sup>1</sup> and promised to give a reply after he had prayed for guidance in the matter. Ahmad Beg persisted in his demand for an answer. Accordingly, *Hazrat* Mirza performed *Istikhara*

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1 A prayer to God for guidance and help in making a decision.

and in response received revelations that form the basis of the prophecies regarding Muhammadi Begum.

### **Only a heavenly sign could reform the irreligiousness of this family**

*Hazrat Mirza's* cousins, Mirza Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din, their brother in law, Mirza Ahmad Beg, and all members of their families, whether men or women, were extremely irreligious and of an atheistic temperament. They were united, and of one mind, in their enmity of *Hazrat Mirza* in line with the old maxim of 'The disbelievers are but one body of people' in their confrontation against the good. As a Messiah, *Hazrat Mirza* desired earnestly to reform this irreligiousness of his kinsmen, but this group paid no heed to him. They made it a habit to contradict anything *Hazrat Mirza* said. If *Hazrat Mirza* said "It is day," they were prepared to say, "No, it is night." With such an attitude, advice and admonition could not be effective. They labeled *Hazrat Mirza's* virtue and piety as hypocrisy and deceit, and incessantly showered caustic and satirical remarks about his religiousness, piety and revelations. In spite of their opposition, *Hazrat Mirza's* fame and repute kept spreading rapidly amongst the religious section of the society, and this made them very jealous. Day and night, they poked fun at *Hazrat Mirza's* prophecies and demanded that a heavenly sign be shown to them. This demand of Mirza Ahmad Beg, and the *Istikhara* performed by *Hazrat Mirza*, became the precursors of the signs that were destined for this family.

### **The family's irreligiousness and demand for a sign**

I reproduce below a passage from the writings of *Hazrat Mirza* that details the irreligiousness and atheism of this family, and their demand for a heavenly sign. The original writing is in Arabic, but for the sake of brevity, I give below only its translation:<sup>2</sup>

It so happened that one night I was sitting in my house when a man, weeping loudly, entered the house. I was startled by his crying, and asked him, "Have you brought the news of somebody's death?" He replied: "Actually, worse than that." He then proceeded to say, "I was sitting with these people (i.e. the kinsmen of *Hazrat Mirza* mentioned above) who have reneged from the religion of Allah, and one of them uttered such a filthy abuse directed at the Prophet of Allah, on whom be peace, that I have not

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2 *Ainah Kamalat Islam.*



heard the like of it even from the disbelievers. I saw them put the Quran under their feet, and use such disrespectful language that my tongue cannot even dare to repeat it. They say that God has no existence, and there is no God on this earth. It is only the sayings of fabricators.”

A little further on in the book, he narrates their condition of transgression and unbelief in the following words:<sup>3</sup>

They then wrote a poster in which they abused the Prophet of Allah, on whom be peace, and abused the Book of Allah, and denied the existence of God. Along with this, they demanded signs in the poster to prove my truthfulness, and the existence of God. They circulated this poster extensively, and with it aided the disbelievers of India. They launched an open rebellion, the like of which has not been heard of even in the time of the Pharaoh. This poster was written by one amongst them who exceeded the others in age and wickedness. When this poster reached me, and I saw in it the name of the Holy Prophet abused in a manner that would cause the hearts of the believers to burst and their chests to be rend asunder, and I read the uncivilized, mean, and foolish statements it contained, and I viewed in it the illustrious *shariat* (religious law) dishonored, and the Word of God ridiculed, I was filled with sorrow and anger. I saw that it contained statements that will cause the heaven to rend asunder in the near future...So I shut the doors and cried out to the generous Lord. I threw myself before Him in prostration, and begged and besieged His help most humbly, and did whatever I could do with my tongue, my eyes and my limbs, and none knows this except the Lord of the Worlds. I cried out “O Lord! Help Thy servant, and disgrace and debase Thine enemies. Accept O my Lord; accept my prayer. These are a people who are ridiculing and mocking Thee and Thy Prophet. They are busy in calling Thine Book a lie, and they abuse Thy Prophet. I besiege Thy mercy, O Living, Sustaining, Helping One.”

My Lord accepted my supplications, and replied: “I have seen their transgression and rebellion. Soon I will punish them with

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3 *Ainah Kamalat Islam*. Pages 568-569.

calamities that will visit them from under the Heaven, and you will see what I will do with them. We have Power over everything. I will render their women widows and their children orphans; I will desolate their homes, so that they may taste what they have said and what they have earned. However, I will not kill them all together, but few at a time, so that they may be of those who return and repent. Most certainly, my curse is about to alight on them, on the walls of their houses, on their young ones and on their elders, on their women and their men, and on their guests who enter their houses. All of them are cursed, except those who believe and do good, and sever relations with them, and remove themselves from their gatherings. These are those on whom mercy will be shown.” This is a summary of what my Lord revealed to me.

So I conveyed the message of my Lord to them. They neither affirmed the message (by a change of behavior), nor were they afraid, but increased in their disbelief and rebellion, and resorted to ridicule, like the enemies of the Faith. Then my Lord addressed me and said, “I will show them signs which will make them weep, unique grief and sorrow will alight on them, strange illnesses will visit them; We will straiten their means of subsistence, and send calamities upon them, and there will be none to help them.”

### **The time to show the sign had arrived**

The time had arrived to show this irreligious and anti-Islamic family a heavenly sign. As already described in a previous section, in 1888, Mirza Ahmad Beg had requested *Hazrat* Mirza to accord his permission to the transference of the estate of *Hazrat* Mirza’s missing cousin to Mirza Ahmad Beg’s son. This request became the precursor of the events that followed. *Hazrat* Mirza had no objection to this arrangement but considered it necessary to seek Divine guidance in the matter by performing the *Istikhara* prayer before signing off on the gift deed. He imposed the condition of first performing the *Istikhara* prayer because the decision involved the rights of a missing person and *Hazrat* Mirza did not want to unwittingly be the means of usurping those rights. The revelations that *Hazrat* Mirza received in response to the *Istikhara* prayer can be summarized as follows: He was ordered to seek the hand in marriage of Muhammadi Begum, the elder daughter of Mirza Ahmad Beg. If the proposal was accepted, it would be a sign of mercy for their family and Allah

would shower great favors and blessings on them. However, if they rejected the proposal, then God would punish them with a chastisement that they richly deserved. Calamities and misfortunes would befall them. The father of the girl (Muhammadi Begum) would die within three years of her marriage to another person, and the person to whom she was married would die within a year and a half of the marriage. This was the actual prophecy that was made at that time.

### **The real purpose of the prophecy was to reform the family**

It is evident from this prophecy and the above-related events that the real purpose of the prophecy was to reform the families of Muhammadi Begum's father, Mirza Ahmad Beg, and her two uncles, Mirza Imam-ud-Din and Mirza Nizam-ud-Din. God had appointed *Hazrat Mirza* for the reformation of people, and so it was but natural that God should motivate him with the desire to reform his own family in line with the Quranic injunction of "And warn thy nearest relations" (26:214). When *Hazrat Mirza* turned his attention to reforming his family, he found them to be atheistic and abusive towards God and His Prophet. Far from listening to *Hazrat Mirza's* advice, they made fun of his virtue and prophecies. Their animosity and hatred of *Hazrat Mirza* increased with each passing day and night. It was for this reason that God desired to establish, through marriage, a new relationship between this family and *Hazrat Mirza*. In this way, old animosities and hatreds would be forgotten, and a new environment of love and friendship would be created in which they would listen and act on *Hazrat Mirza's* virtuous advice. In this way, the family would gradually be reformed through their pious association and religious connection with *Hazrat Mirza*.

These were the Divine kindnesses and blessings that God desired for the family through this marriage. However, if they chose not to forge this connection with *Hazrat Mirza*, then their irreligiousness and agnosticism and their mockery and rejection of religion were openly inviting Divine punishment. In the event of the rejection of *Hazrat Mirza's* suit, the sign of chastisement was so ordained that surviving members of the family may learn a lesson and reform themselves. Thus, in either eventuality, the real purpose was to somehow reform the family.

In a *hadith*, the Holy Prophet reported that Allah said: "My mercy predominates my indignation."<sup>4</sup> This family had persistently demanded a

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4 *Al-Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith). Kitab Bada-ul-Khalq, 59:2.*

sign of chastisement but, in line with this *hadith*, Allah offered this family a clear choice between two signs - one of mercy and the other of chastisement. The decision was left to them. They could either consent to *Hazrat* Mirza's proposal of marriage and forge a relationship of love and friendship with him, and thereby decide to see the sign of Allah's mercy; or they could reject the suit and see the sign of chastisement, the nature of which had also been partially disclosed. In other words, this was a *taqdir muallaq* or conditional destiny, and the choice of the alternative was left to *Hazrat* Mirza's relatives.

It has already been narrated that this family was extremely irreligious and totally atheistic. They did not even flinch from making rude and disrespectful remarks about the Quran, the Prophet, and other revered religious personalities. Because of this, they fully deserved to be chastised. Nevertheless, the mercy of Allah did not desire that they should be destroyed without a second chance and a way was left open for them to gain guidance and partake of His blessings. This way was to forge a new relationship with *Hazrat* Mirza in which the old family enmity and hostility would be buried under the new relationship of love and friendship born out of the marriage tie. This association would enable religion to find a foothold in their homes.

In the absence of the above considerations, the match with Muhammadi Begum was not overly desirable. She was neither physically beautiful nor highly educated, or wealthy. Her family was not even close to *Hazrat* Mirza's family in terms of respect and nobility. Three years prior to these events, *Hazrat* Mirza had married a lady from a respectable Syed family of Delhi. A glance at the previous life of *Hazrat* Mirza, and his love of solitude, leads one to conclude that even one wife was more than enough for him. I reproduce below a letter of *Hazrat* Mirza in which he expressed his feelings about a third marriage, and his consternation at receiving revelations that indicated a third marriage for him. This letter was written in 1886 to *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din in Jammu. The translation of the letter follows:

Respected and Honorable brother *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din sahib, may Allah protect you, and may the peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be on you.

I received your letter. What this humble person wrote to you was for the purpose of informing you, in a spirit of friendship, about some mysterious revelations; because it is this humble person's

habit to tell his friends some things about matters unknown so that their faith may be strengthened. The real state of this humble person is that since the heavenly indication was given about a third marriage, I have been anxious and worried. There is no room for digression from God's command but my temperament is averse to it. My greatest wish was that this heavenly command be suspended, but persistent revelations and visions make it evident that this is an inevitable decree. Anyway, this humble person has vowed, that whatever happens, unless a clear injunction from God forces me, I should withhold (acting on it) because the burden and unpleasant consequences of polygamy are tremendous, and there are many ills in it. Only those are protected from its depravity whom Allah, all Glory is His, commissions to bear this heavy burden by His own will, for His own special purpose and through His own announcement and revelation. In such a case, there is only blessing instead of unpleasantness.

I am obviously saddened by your decision to leave your job, but you must have some purpose in mind. *Wasalam*; everything else is fine.

Sincerely,  
Ghulam Ahmad (May God have mercy on me)  
20 June, 1886.

This letter was published in the newspaper *Al-Hakam* in 1903. Does not every word of this letter show what a burden the thought of a third marriage was on the soul of *Hazrat* Mirza? He fervently desired for such an eventuality to pass him by. Is it not the height of injustice then to ascribe a carnal motive to the events of this prophecy? No personal or worldly motive can be discerned at all in the proposed marriage. The fact is that God only wanted to show a sign to *Hazrat* Mirza's relatives because they mocked religion and perpetually demanded a heavenly sign. It was now left to these relatives to see the sign of their own choosing. They could forge a new relationship by accepting the marriage proposal and see the sign of God's mercy, or they could reject a connection with *Hazrat* Mirza and see the sign of chastisement, which would be inflicted as a consequence of their evil deeds. In a letter to *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote in reference to this prophecy:

The foundation of this prophecy was not to make a meaningless proposal for the hand of Mirza Ahmad Beg's daughter. The reason was that Ahmad Beg was a member of an opposition party comprised of this humble person's close relatives, who were strongly opposed to religion. One of them was so advanced in his animosity that he openly abused Allah, all Glory is His, and the Messenger of Allah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and claimed that his religion was atheism. He had also published an announcement in which he demanded a sign. All of them considered me to be deceitful and demanded a sign. They made fun of fasting, prayer and the tenets of Islam. Hence, Allah, the Most High, desired to provide them with a conclusive proof. Accordingly, He chose a way of showing them His sign that would impact all these irreligious relatives.

### **The relatives choose the sign of chastisement**

These relatives chose not to benefit from the mercy of Allah. On the contrary, through their impudence and disrespect, they took steps to invite the sign of chastisement. The two uncles of Muhammadi Begum, Mirza Nizam-ud-Din and Mirza Imam-ud-Din, were extremely upset by *Hazrat Mirza's* proposal. In particular, Muhammadi Begum's mother, Umar-un-Nissa, who was fashioned after her brothers, was extremely displeased, and she and her mother, who was a senior member of the family, both disparaged *Hazrat Mirza*. It was this lady, the mother-in-law of Mirza Ahmad Beg, that *Hazrat Mirza* saw in a vision with her face showing clearly the signs of distress, affliction and mourning, and it was revealed, "O Woman! Repent, repent; certainly misfortunes are on your heels." *Hazrat Mirza* had kept Mirza Ahmad Beg and his relatives informed about these revelations through private letters. In addition, he wrote to them to stop using foul-mouthed language, and advised them to accept his proposal, as this new relationship will open a new era of religious guidance and good deeds for them; they will thus inherit the blessings consequent upon the acceptance of the proposal. However, if they made some other match for this girl, then they will be chastised and different kinds of misfortunes will afflict their homes and their houses will be filled with widows. Ahmad Beg, the father and guardian of Muhammadi Begum, will die within three years of her marriage, and the person to whom she is married will die within a year and half of marriage. After this, this girl will revert to *Hazrat Mirza* in marriage. *Hazrat Mirza* advised them that rather than consenting to marry the girl to him after seeing the sign of chastise-

ment, would it not be better to accept his proposal now and save them this grief?

### **The relatives make the private prophecy public**

*Hazrat* Mirza had communicated these matters to Mirza Ahmad Beg through private letters because this was a family affair about which it was highly inappropriate to make public pronouncements. However, in their rage, the maternal uncles of Muhammadi Begum, Mirza Nizam-ud-Din and Mirza Imam-ud-Din, and also others of their party, not only publicized this matter verbally but also had *Hazrat* Mirza's letters printed in newspapers to ensure the widest publicity. The sole objective of this exercise was to vent their malice and hatred, and their enmity and jealousy. They provided the Christians with an opportunity to jest at him. *Nur Afshan*, a Christian newspaper, published this prophecy in its issue of May 10, 1888, and ridiculed *Hazrat* Mirza. These relatives were atheists and did not believe in prophecies - not just this one, but all religious prophecies. They considered such matters to be idle talk and were positive that this prophecy would not be fulfilled. They were adamant in their resolution not to accept *Hazrat* Mirza's proposal and deemed the deaths of Ahmad Beg and his son-in-law to be absurd. They were happy that *Hazrat* Mirza, whose fame was spreading in the religious world, would be disgraced on a religious issue; this provided the motivation for Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din to convert a purely private prophecy into a public one. *Hazrat* Mirza was therefore also forced to go public in his own defense although he very much regretted this turn of events. In his public announcement of July 10, 1888, he stated:

I had a natural revulsion to publicizing this revelation because it predicted the certain death of the addressee in this revelation...He and his relative, Mirza Nizam-ud-Din, are the ones who gave publicity to the contents of this revelation.

*Hazrat* Mirza further stated in this announcement:

Now, when through the efforts of Mirza Nizam-ud-Din, that letter of mine has also been published in *Nur Afshan*, and the Christians, in accordance with their nature, have started making false accusations, it has become incumbent upon me to expose the reality with my own pen.

It was for this reason that, in this announcement, *Hazrat Mirza* described in great detail all those revelations and prophecies that related to his marriage with Muhammadi Begum. These prophecies have already been described in the preceding sections. Because Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din had published the prophecy in a way that was laced with ridicule and mockery, *Hazrat Mirza*, in his reply, described very clearly and factually the real situation and the actual prophecy. He also appended with this announcement the purpose and objective of this prophecy, which was:

Since some period of time, these people, both men and women, who are from my family and closely related to me, have considered me to be a fraud and swindler in respect of my claims of receiving revelation. They are still unconvinced, even after seeing several signs. Their own condition is such that there is not even an iota of love for Islam in their hearts. They give no credence to Quranic injunctions and discard them so lightly as one would a chaff of straw. They consider their customs, self-made traditions and honor far better than the commands of Allah and His Prophet. Hence, God the Most High, has, for their good, and at their insistence and request, revealed this prophecy, which is included in the announcement, so that they may understand that He is present and nothing else matters besides Him.

### **This prophecy had now become a public prophecy**

It is worth noting here that this prophecy, which was essentially of a private nature, had now shifted into the public domain, and this transformed its very nature. Besides being a prophetic heavenly sign for *Hazrat Mirza's* relatives, this prophecy now entered the ranks of those prophecies that *Hazrat Mirza* presented as a blessing and fruit of the Islamic religion. He would very forcefully put these prophecies forward before the Christians, *Arya Hindus*, *Brahmu Hindus* and atheists with the challenge that these blessings and rewards are the sole preserve of Islam and are not found in any other religion. Only followers of Islam can achieve these blessings by living a life of perfect obedience to the Quran and the Holy Prophet. He used this argument to prove that Islam is the only living religion; that God, who is the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting by Whom all subsist, is present and speaks with His chosen servants, and that Islam is the only religion through which one can reach God. Thus, along with hundreds of other arguments, both intellectual and analogical, advanced by *Hazrat Mirza* in support of Islam, the presence of revelation



in Islam was a powerful practical argument against the proponents of all other religions. In this age, *Hazrat Mirza* was the sole champion of Islam in this field, a fact that was acknowledged by *Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi* himself during his review of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* in his journal *Ishaat-ul-Sunnah*. In this review, he expressed himself very forcefully as follows:

Keeping in view the need and condition of the present time, this book is such that the like of it has not been written in the existing history of Islam; about the future, only God knows...The book's author has steadfastly helped the cause of Islam with his life and wealth, his pen and eloquence, his practice and preaching, in a way the like of which has rarely been witnessed among the Muslims before. If somebody considers my statement as a typical Asiatic exaggeration, then show me another book that contends so powerfully against all the opponents of Islam, especially the *Arya Samaj* and *Brahmu Samaj*, and identify for me some persons who have helped Islam so much with their life and wealth, their pen and eloquence, and who have taken upon themselves the responsibility for the victory of Islam in the present time. And show me an individual who has bravely challenged the opponents of Islam and the deniers of revelation with the claim that if they doubt the phenomenon of revelation they should come to him to witness its demonstration, and he has shown to such doubters the truth of his contention.

In this passage, the terms 'the responsibility for the victory of Islam in the present time,' and 'the deniers of revelation with the claim that if they doubt the phenomenon of revelation they should come to him to witness its demonstration, and he has shown to such doubters the truth of this contention,' show clearly that in this age of atheism and materialism, *Hazrat Mirza* was the sole person who carried the burden for the victory of Islam. Proof of his communion with God was given in the form of prophecies and prayers that found acceptance, which *Hazrat Mirza* published from time to time. Any attempt to frustrate the fulfillment of any of these prophecies was synonymous with trying to prove Islam false because *Hazrat Mirza* was not advocating a new religion, which could be rejected if a prophecy erred. At that time, he had not even claimed to be the Messiah and *Mahdi*, nor did he have his own party or accept pledges from followers or receive any revenues from his religious efforts. His sole purpose in publishing

prophecies was to verify the spirituality of Islam and to support the claim that it was the sole living religion. Hence, if a prophecy turned out to be incorrect, the real damage would be to the religion of Islam.

Thus, if the prophecy regarding Muhammadi Begum turned out to be false, the real blow would be to Islam. Men of other religions could then say that in this age of atheism and materialism, when Islam was completely surrounded on all sides by enemies, there was just one flag bearer of Islam who proclaimed its spirituality, but he turned out to be a fabricator. Hence the claim that Islam was the only true and living religion was just mere talk that had no basis in reality. *Hazrat Mirza*, therefore, tried to reason with his relatives and advised them to desist. He told them:

Now that you have made the prophecy public, it is no longer a matter of my honor, but the honor of Islam. It is better that you agree to this match for there are blessings in it. You will be aiding religion and also doing yourself a good turn.

*Hazrat Mirza* also made efforts to achieve the desired outcome in this matter. He went to Jullunder for this purpose and tried to enlist the help of some relatives of Ahmad Beg to mediate in this affair. He wrote several letters to concerned parties as well, but did not meet with any success. The relatives of Ahmad Beg, whose help *Hazrat Mirza* sought, actually turned out to be duplicitous. They agreed to assist *Hazrat Mirza*, but actually opposed the match.

### **Why should effort be expended in fulfilling a prophecy?**

Some people have criticized *Hazrat Mirza* for making efforts to secure a successful outcome in this matter, and having letters written on his behalf. Such an objection is baseless. Why should it be forbidden for the maker of a prophecy to use physical means and effort for its fulfillment after prophesizing? For instance, if there is a revelation about the recovery of a sick person, does that forbid his treatment? Or if revelation is received about the birth of a son, does that forbid conjugal relations with the wife? Our leader and master, the Holy Prophet, was given the glad tidings of victory and dominance in his conflict with the infidels of Makkah; did he then abstain from making full preparations for war? Did he not stand guard duty at night? Did he not put on his armor? During battles, did he not fight the toughest fights? Do the critics think that the Prophet should have sat back and done nothing? To strive for the fulfillment of a prophecy is the tradition of prophets and saints. Hence, if there

are tidings about a match, then why should issuing a proposal and making efforts for its acceptance be forbidden?

### **Severance of connection with all relatives**

Through the mechanizations of Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din, all the relatives came together in a united front to strongly oppose *Hazrat Mirza's* marriage proposal. Among those taking an active part in the opposition was the wife of *Hazrat Mirza's* brother, Ghulam Qadir, who also happened to be the real maternal aunt of Muhammadi Begum. The most unfortunate involvements in this opposition were those of *Hazrat Mirza's* first wife, and his son, Mirza Sultan Ahmad, who was very much under the influence of his aunt, the above-mentioned wife of Ghulam Qadir. Mirza Sultan Ahmad was also the son-in-law of Imam-ud-Din, and hence he was also under the influence of his wife and father-in-law.

*Hazrat Mirza* did his best to explain to these relatives that by making the prophecy public, they had converted the matter into one in which the prestige of Islam was at stake. He made it clear that where the honor of Islam was concerned, he did not care a whit for any relationships. *Hazrat Mirza* warned his relatives that if they did not desist from their mischief of bringing Islam into disrepute through targeting him, they will be adjudged transgressors in the eyes of Allah, and he will sever all connections with them in the light of the Quranic injunction, "And incline not to those who do wrong, lest the fire touch you" (11:113). However, his relatives paid no heed to him, and betrothed Muhammadi Begum to a person from the village of Patti.

This occasioned the issuing of a public pronouncement by *Hazrat Mirza*, which was entitled "An Announcement of the Victory of Religion and Severance of Connection with Relatives who are Enemies of Religion." In summary, this pronouncement declared:

The religion of Islam is most dear to me, and its victory and dominance takes precedence over all else. I hereby sever all connections with those of my relatives who do not care for the honor of this religion, and who would prefer to see it debased. If they want to maintain a relationship with me, they should desist from all such activities which have the potential of dishonoring religion.

There was more along the same lines in this announcement. *Hazrat Mirza* also addressed himself to his wife and to his son Mirza Sultan Ahmad. He wrote about them:

My son, Sultan Ahmad, who is a *Naib-Tehsildar*<sup>5</sup> in Lahore, and his aunt, who has adopted him as a son, have joined this opposition. They have taken the whole matter into their hands and are part of the plan to marry this girl to somebody on the day of Eid or soon thereafter. If this opposition had come from strangers, there would be no need or reason for me to interfere. It was a fate decreed by the Lord, and He, through his grace and kindness, would have manifested this. However, the prime movers in this opposition are those on whom it is incumbent to obey this humble person. I explained to Sultan Ahmad, and wrote to him, urging him to withdraw from this opposition, along with his mother. In the eventuality of non-compliance, I told him, I will sever relationship with him and he will have no rights against me. They did not even care to reply to my letter, and showed their displeasure with me. If they had wounded me with a sharp sword, by God, I would have borne it patiently. However, by embarking on a religious opposition and confrontation, they have grieved me greatly, and have broken my heart so badly that I find it difficult to express myself. They intentionally desired that I should be humiliated. Sultan Ahmad is guilty of two great sins. First, he has attempted to oppose the religion of the Messenger of Allah, on him be blessings and peace, and has desired that the religion of Islam be attacked by its opponents. He has started this with the hope that I may be shown to be a fabricator, which would humiliate Islam and result in the victory of its opponents. From his side, he has made no distinction in wielding the sword of opposition...(Second,) Sultan Ahmad has held me, his father, to be contemptible and has resolved on my opposition, and by his words and actions has taken this opposition to the limit. He has aided my religious opponents, and with his heart and soul has approved of the defamation of Islam. Because he committed these two sins, he has forsaken his relationship both with his God and with his father. His two mothers have done likewise.<sup>6</sup> Since they have severed all relations with me, I do not want that there should be any connection between us. I fear that any connection with such enemies of Islam may itself be a sin. Hence, on this day, the second of May 1891, I inform everyone through this pronouncement, that

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5 *Naib-Tehsildar* is a land revenue officer.

6 By the 'two mothers' are meant his birth mother and adoptive mother.

if they do not desist from their plan to arrange a match and marry this girl (elsewhere), and do not reject the suitor they propose for her marriage, but instead they carry out their plan to marry her to him, then from the day of such marriage, I disinherit Sultan Ahmad and he shall be deprived of any inheritance from me, and from that same day his Mother shall stand divorced by me.

The above announcement shows clearly that although *Hazrat* Mirza was hurt that his wife and his own son, Mirza Sultan Ahmad, had joined his anti-religious relatives who were bent on defaming him as a fabricator, his biggest bereavement was that this would disgrace the religion of the Holy Prophet and give the opponents an opportunity to attack Islam. The opponents could now allege that *Hazrat* Mirza's claim that spiritual blessings in the form of revelation were only to be found in Islam was incorrect because its strongest proponent had been shown to be a fabricator. *Hazrat* Mirza was not willing to accept that his own wife and son should be guilty of debasing and disgracing Islam. He felt so strongly for the honor of Islam that he was willing to make the biggest sacrifice for it. Hence, through this announcement, *Hazrat* Mirza warned all his relatives, including his wife and son, that if they did not desist from their plan, he was willing to sever all relations with them.

Mirza Ahmad Beg's sister, who was married to a person called Mirza Sher Ali, was terribly foul-mouthed and an inveterate enemy of *Hazrat* Mirza. She had a daughter, very similar to her in temperament, who was married to *Hazrat* Mirza's second son, Mirza Fazal Ahmad. This sister of Mirza Ahmad Beg (the mother-in-law of Mirza Fazal Ahmad) was hand-in-glove with her brother. She made many satirical comments about this matter and said openly: "A match with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is out of the question. We are ready to sever even existing relationships with him. Fazal Ahmad is free to divorce my daughter. We would be happy if he did."

When these remarks reached *Hazrat* Mirza, he wrote a letter to Mirza Sher Ali Beg:

The members of your household (i.e. Mirza Sher Ali Beg's wife) are partners in this plan. You can understand that all the accomplices in this marriage are my bitter opponents. In fact, they are not only my opponents, but also the bitter opponents of the religion of Islam. They want to make the Christians laugh, to please the Hindus, and care not a whit for the religion of the Messenger

of Allah. They have firmly resolved to humiliate me. It is up to Allah to save me...In a fit of emotions, your wife said: "What is our relationship! Izzat Bibi is Fazal Ahmad's wife only in name. He is free to divorce her. We would be happy. We do not know what kind of monster he is (Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)? But we will not act against the wishes of my brother. Why does this person (Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) not die?"...Hence I have written a letter to her that if she does not give up her plan, and if she does not stop her brother (Mirza Ahmad Beg) from his plan, then in accordance with her wishes, my son Fazal Ahmad will not be able to keep her daughter in matrimony.

This letter shows clearly how all of *Hazrat* Mirza's relatives had formed a united front in this matter to disgrace him and were fully prepared to let Islam be debased and dishonored in the process. The irreligious and atheist cousins of *Hazrat* Mirza, Mirza Imam-ud-Din and Mirza Nizam-ud-Din had initiated this whole crisis. They had aroused and inflamed all the relatives to an extent where they showed scant regard for *Hazrat* Mirza's warning to sever all relations with them. On the contrary, they themselves were ready to sever all connections with *Hazrat* Mirza, even to the extent of a mother willingly destroying the marriage of her daughter. In short, these people, who were irreligious, ignorant and steeped in a false sense of family pride and honor, totally rejected *Hazrat* Mirza's announcement, and on April 7, 1892 they married Muhammadi Begum to Mirza Sultan Muhammad. On the occurrence of this event, *Hazrat* Mirza severed all relations with his relatives in accordance with his declared intention in the announcement. *Hazrat* Mirza had stated as follows in the last part of the announcement regarding severance of relationships:

Because they have severed all relationships and are satisfied with this arrangement, so keeping any kind of relationship with them is totally forbidden, dishonorable, and a shameless act, and a true believer is never shameless.

Because one's kith and kin lack honesty and righteousness  
Severing relationship with them is better than their company  
– Persian Verse

In this period of crises, Mirza Fazal Ahmad, the second son of *Hazrat* Mirza, remained obedient and sided with his pious father. Following in

the footsteps of the son of *Hazrat Umar*, who had divorced his wife for certain reasons on the advice of his father,<sup>7</sup> Mirza Fazal Ahmad wrote a decree of divorce and sent it to *Hazrat Mirza*, and authorized him to forward it to the party concerned whenever he wanted.<sup>8</sup> The severance of Mirza Fazal Ahmad's relationship with a family that was in open confrontation with his father was completely natural, and though *Hazrat Mirza* had contemplated such an eventuality, he shied away from separating the husband and wife, in the hope that his daughter-in-law may eventually be reformed. Hence, he did not send the divorce decree to her. The result was that under the influence of his wife, Fazal Ahmad, also rebelled and joined the group of opposing relatives.<sup>9</sup>

### Mirza Ahmad Beg dies

In marrying Muhammadi Begum elsewhere, these anti religious relatives of *Hazrat Mirza* had dared God to inflict His punishment on them. In April of 1892, Muhammadi Begum was wed to Mirza Sultan Muhammad, and hardly three months had elapsed when the punishment of God overtook Ahmad Beg. First, his son and two sisters died, and then

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7 Abu Isa Muhammad ibn Isa **Tirmidhi**. *Al-Jami (Hadith)*. Chapter *Abwab ul Talaq*. Vol.1, page 467 in *Jamay Tirmazi* with Urdu translation by *Maulana Badi uz Zaman*, publisher Zia Ahsan.

8 It is clearly recorded in the *Sahih Bukhari (Kitab ul Anbya # 60, Chapter 8)* that Ishmail divorced his wife because of certain reasons on the advise of his father, Abraham.

9 *Hazrat Mirza's* devotion to Allah was so strong that whenever the honor and dignity of Islam was at stake, all worldly considerations were of no consequence. As narrated above, *Hazrat Mirza's* relatives made his prophecy public and then spared no efforts to falsify it. They did not care that their acts were striking a blow at Islam since *Hazrat Mirza* had presented these prophecies as proof of the truth of Islam. Faced with this situation, *Hazrat Mirza* had no hesitation in severing relationships with all such persons, making no exception even for his wife and son. In a like manner, I submit that if *Hazrat Mirza* were alive today and had seen some of his close relatives author dangerous philosophies like the continuance of prophethood, the declaring of Muslims as infidels, the trampling of his last will and testament, or otherwise indulging in actions that he considered inappropriate, he would certainly have severed all relations with them, even if such a person was his own son. After all, he had resorted to just such an action once before against his wife and son solely for the sake of Allah. Why would he not do it again? Facts are facts. If someone authors wrong and misguided beliefs, or commits improper actions, then in the eyes of a person totally devoted to Allah those actions are equally hateful whether the perpetrator is a stranger or son, the progeny of the first wife or of the second. *Hazrat Mirza* so totally preferred religion over matters of this world that he cared not a whit for the closest ties of kinship if they clashed with matters of religion. (Author's note).

soon thereafter, he contracted typhoid. On September 30, 1892, six months after the wedding of his daughter, he died in a hospital. Muhammadi Begum's mother was left a widow, burdened with the upbringing of five or six children, and with all her former pride and haughtiness totally shattered. The first part of the prophecy was fulfilled with such precision that even opponents like *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi<sup>10</sup> had to concede this point, though perhaps unwillingly. In his magazine *Ishaat-ul-Sunnah*, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi wrote that although a part of the prophecy had been fulfilled, the source of the prophecy was divination, or knowledge of astrology, and not revelation. The charge of using divination or astrology was a complete fabrication born out of malice and prejudice, and totally contradicted his earlier written statements. However, it does become obvious that even he had to concede that the prophecy had been precisely fulfilled.

### **Other misfortunes besides the death of Mirza Ahmad Beg**

The main announcement regarding the prophecy was published on July 10, 1888. In a supplement to this announcement dated July 15, 1888, *Hazrat* Mirza interpreted this prophecy as follows:

On page six of the announcement bearing the same title, I have mentioned the revelation, *Fa-sa-yak-fe-ka-ho-mullah-ho*. After due reflection on the revelation, its detailed meanings have opened up to me as follows. God will inflict calamities and wage a war on all those members of my near and extended family who, because of their anti-religious stance and deviant practices, will create hurdles in the fulfillment of this prophecy. He will entangle them in all kinds of misfortunes, and afflict them with disasters that they are currently unaware of. Not even one of them will escape this punishment because the sole purpose of their opposition is nothing but their irreligiousness.

And so it happened. Besides the death of Mirza Ahmad Beg, there were several other deaths in the family, and many other afflictions. The way in which the punishment of God manifested itself on Mirza Imam-ud-Din and Mirza Nizam-ud-Din, the maternal uncles of Muhammadi Begum and the founders of the united opposition front against *Hazrat* Mirza, is a story replete with warnings for the opponents of the righteous.

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10 By 1892, *Maulvi* Muhammad Husain Batalvi's enmity had reached new heights.



Their family consisted of three brothers and their home was a picture of the hustle and bustle of a lively household. Then God's punishment hit them and they became enmeshed in financial difficulties and other misfortunes. One after another the individuals in the household began to die. They departed from this world even as they were witnessing the rapidly spreading progress and success of *Hazrat* Mirza. A time came when there was just one orphan child left in the whole house, and this child, Mirza Gul Muhammad, later became a devoted disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza. This was perhaps what saved him.

### **Why the prophecy about Mirza Sultan Muhammad was not fulfilled**

When Mirza Ahmad Beg died exactly as predicted by the prophecy, panic and fear gripped the families of Mirza Ahmad Beg and Mirza Sultan Muhammad. Their attitude towards *Hazrat* Mirza changed and they now pleaded with him to pray on their behalf. In a repeat of history, divine power brought about a replay of the same scene as was witnessed when the disbelievers of Makkah presented themselves before the Holy Prophet and requested him to pray for an end to the famine that was afflicting their city. *Hazrat* Mirza's relatives presented themselves before him by way of letters requesting him to pray for them. In the Quranic verse, "Our Lord, remove from us the chastisement - surely we are believers" (44:12), God has expressed the internal condition of the disbelievers, and the prayer given in this verse was the voice of the inner recesses of their beings as manifested by the language of their actions. Likewise, *Hazrat* Mirza's relatives were now beseeching God with all sincerity for the removal of their afflictions. The relatives of Sultan Muhammad and the mother of Muhammadi Begum gave alms, sacrificed animals and made propitiatory offerings. They repented and sought forgiveness.

A relative of Sultan Muhammad by the name of Mirza Rahmat Ullah Beg told this author's respected friend, Syed Amjad Ali Shah, that the mother of Sultan Muhammad spent a big part of the night in prayer, beseeching Allah and seeking His forgiveness and protection. Another relative, Mirza Deen Muhammad, narrated that: "The death of Mirza Ahmad Beg gripped our whole family with indescribable fear and panic. It is not for us to utter even a single disrespectful word against the dignity of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. There is no doubt about his piety." The attitude of Mirza Sultan Muhammad, the husband of Muhammadi Begum, towards *Hazrat* Mirza also became very sincere and humble. Then why should the divine decree not change with the change in condition of this family? Allah, the Most High, has promised in the Quran that "Nor would

Allah chastise them while they seek forgiveness” (8:33). Then how can this divine law change? *Hazrat* Mirza made precisely this point in his announcement of September 4, 1894. Referring to the letters of repentance of Mirza Sultan Muhammad and elders of his family, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:

Seeing their repentance and prayers of forgiveness, I was convinced that the prophesied date for the death of Sultan Muhammad would not hold because such dates, which are meant to threaten and warn, are always in the nature of avoidable destiny (*taqdir muallaq*)... the death of Mirza Ahmad Beg overawed them, and the fear and concern of Divine prophecy enveloped their hearts. Although they were very hard-hearted, the death of Ahmad Beg broke their back and I received letters of penitence and apology from them. When they were so fearful and frightened in their hearts, it was necessary that God, in accordance with His ancient law, postpone the threatened date of punishment to another time - that is, a time when they would return to their former condition of haughtiness, temerity and heedlessness. The deadline for chastisement is an avoidable destiny that can be postponed to another time through repentance and fear. The whole Quran bears testimony to this.

Further on he wrote:

The subtle point of wisdom to note is that this prophecy was meant as a warning for a people whose nature had been overtaken by apostasy and irreligiousness. It was for this reason that God had stated in the opening sentences of this prophecy that “these people reject My commandments and mock My signs.” Thus, since this prophecy was meant as a warning and threat, and the promised deaths were merely meant to chastise, it was imperative that God follow His declared law and practice with regard to chastisement, and postponement of chastisement that have been clearly described in the Quran.

### **Chastisement effected reformation**

I repeat that the real purpose here was not marriage with Muhammadi Begum, but the show of a heavenly sign to this family so that they may reform, accept guidance and incline towards God. One way to accomplish

this was to establish a matrimonial link between *Hazrat* Mirza and this family through a wedding with Muhammadi Begum. This would endear her family to *Hazrat* Mirza and the association would bring religion and godliness to this family. This was to be the blessed sign. The other way for this family to incline towards God was to inflict them with chastisement, which would be their destiny in the eventuality they married Muhammadi Begum elsewhere. It is proven from the Quran that the sole purpose of chastisement is for people to return to Allah and thereby save themselves from the continuation of the punishment. Thus it is stated in the Quran:

And indeed we sent (messengers) to nations before thee then We seized them with distress and affliction that they might humble themselves.

Yet why did they not, when Our punishment came to them, humble themselves (so that the chastisement may be averted)? But their hearts hardened and the devil made all that they did seem fair to them (6:42-43).

These verses show clearly that God's punishment is only a means for people to humble themselves and return to Allah, and if this is done, then the punishment is removed. However, if the heart is hardened to the extent that evil deeds are not given up, then the punishment is imposed fully. In view of this ordinance of Allah, how was it possible that the husband of Muhammadi Begum, Mirza Sultan Muhammad, and his mother humble themselves and appeal to Allah, and the punishment not be averted? In the case of Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din, the maternal uncles of Muhammadi Begum, the situation was different. Their hearts were so hardened that they continued to consider their evil deeds as good. So the Divine punishment alighted on them with such force that their bustling household was left with no occupants save an orphan child. Muhammadi Begum's husband and his mother took advantage of the provision "Yet why did they not, when Our punishment came to them, humble themselves?" With the onset of punishment, their hearts inclined to Allah and they engaged in supplications. For this reason, the punishment was averted, and like Prophet Jonah's nation whose supplications for forgiveness and protection averted the punishment, they too were saved.

The wedding of Muhammadi Begum with *Hazrat* Mirza was not the real objective, but the real objective was to bring this family to the right-

ly guided path through the manifestation of a Divine sign. So a heavenly sign in the form of punishment was shown, but only a part of it had been manifested when these people repented, started supplicating and sought God's protection and forgiveness. Marriage was only a means to an end. Hence, when the real objective was accomplished, the rest of the punishment was averted. The plain wording of the revelation also demanded such an outcome.

### **A discussion about the real revelation**

The real wordings of the revelation were:

*“Kazabu bay aya-tay-na wa kanu bay ha yastah-zay-un. Fa-sa-yak-fe-ka-ho-mullah-ho wa yardoha alaika; la tabdela lay kala-matillah; inna rabbaka fa aalun lay ma-yoreed.”*

Translation: They rejected our signs and mocked at them. So surely Allah is sufficient for you against them (i.e. Allah will inflict them with punishment), and he will return this (girl) to you. The words of Allah do not change. Certainly your Lord does what He pleases.

The ‘Fa’ in the word ‘Fa-sa-yak-fe-ka-ho’ indicates causation, i.e. that there is a cause for the thing that follows. The ‘fa’, therefore, indicates that the reason for the punishment mentioned subsequently was the rejection and mockery of religion by these people. The *wa* before *yardoha* is a conjunction and indicates that the first and second statements that it joins are part of the same transaction. Thus, the manifestation of punishment in the form of the deaths of Ahmad Beg and his son in law, and the return of Muhammadi Begum to *Hazrat* Mirza by way of marriage have the same common cause, namely the rejection and mockery of religion by this family. If the rejection and mockery of religion were maintained, then both these outcomes would necessarily come to pass, but if rejection and mockery were abandoned, then the two outcomes would also be voided.

The punishment was, therefore, conditional, and since the rejection and mockery of religion were given up, the death of Sultan Muhammad and the subsequent marriage of *Hazrat* Mirza with Muhammadi Begum were aborted. The application of the statement, “The words of Allah do not change” was applicable to both scenarios mentioned above. The first scenario was that if mockery and rejection of religion continued, then the consequence would be the death of Sultan Ahmad and the marriage of his

widow with *Hazrat* Mirza. The second scenario was that if rejection and mockery of religion was given up, then Sultan Ahmad would not die and the girl would not become a widow for remarriage to *Hazrat* Mirza. Thus, the meaning of “The words of Allah do not change” was that the outcome contingent on each scenario could not be changed if that scenario was played out because the laws of Allah do not change. Just as it was the unchangeable ordinance of Allah that punishment could not be averted if rejection and mockery of religion continued, so too, it was an unchangeable ordinance of Allah that if the cause of the punishment were given up then the punishment would be aborted.

What actually took place was that Sultan Muhammad and his relatives totally abstained from any objectionable behavior, and even after the death of *Hazrat* Mirza, did not revert to their previous irreligious ways. Not only did they give up mocking religion and calling it a lie but they also began admitting *Hazrat* Mirza’s holiness and truthfulness, and many of them became his disciples. If the punishment of Allah had been inflicted on them despite this radical change in their conduct, then it could be said that the prophecy proved false and the words of Allah changed. However, in the prevailing circumstances, the prophecy was fulfilled completely from both aspects - that of punishment and that of mercy. One cannot help but exclaim spontaneously that in the light of the words of the prophecy and its clear meaning, the prophecy was fulfilled to the letter. As the prophecy had stated, the words of Allah remained unchanged because the words of Allah had stated that the death of the girl’s husband and her reversion to *Hazrat* Mirza in marriage was dependent upon the continued rejection and mockery of religion by her relatives. If they abstained from this behavior, then God would avert their punishment. God is just, and nobody can make Him act unfairly. In the situation that developed, it was but necessary that the girl not be widowed and given to *Hazrat* Mirza in marriage.

### **Opposing clerics ignore the changed circumstances**

The family for which the signs were promised witnessed the fulfillment of these signs, and their hearts bowed down in humble submission before Allah. As a result, the remaining punishment was averted. However, the opposing clerics continued to deny this reality. Is it not a fact that Ahmad Beg’s death took place in accordance with a part of the prophecy, and as a result the attitude of his wife and son-in-law changed to one of humility? Were propitiatory offerings and alms not given? Did they not repent and seek forgiveness? Did they not request *Hazrat* Mirza

to supplicate on their behalf? Then was it not necessary under the immutable law of Allah that the second provision of the prophecy also be fulfilled, i.e. that the punishment be averted from these repentant and penitent people? So it was averted. Then why is there an objection? In fact, there would be grounds for objection if this family, weeping and wailing, repentant and penitent, had been inflicted with punishment. Then it could be said that God had acted contrary to the law given in the Quran, and His law had changed. However, objecting in the face of existing reality can only be put down to prejudice, enmity and ignorance. The prejudice and enmity of these people was so strong that they were not even willing to admit that in the death of Ahmad Beg, at least, one part of the prophecy was fulfilled.

### **Marriage with Muhammadi Begum was dependent upon the death of Sultan Muhammad**

As I have shown above, the marriage of *Hazrat* Mirza with Muhammadi Begum was dependent upon the death of Sultan Muhammad. If he had died then Muhammadi Begum would have been wed to *Hazrat* Mirza. However, his repenting and seeking forgiveness averted his death and the marriage consequent upon that death. I have repeatedly stated that marriage with Muhammadi Begum was not the primary objective of the prophecy. The real objective was to show a sign so that this family may reform and turn to Allah. The prophesied marriage was made a sign of the blessings that were to follow. However, this family chose not to benefit from the blessings promised through the sign of marriage, and by marrying the girl elsewhere, they mocked and jested at the appointed sign through their actions. They, thus, chose to be shown the sign of punishment. Just one part of this sign had been fulfilled, when the real purpose was achieved. This family turned to Allah, and as a consequence the rest of the promised punishment was averted. When the real objective of the prophecy was achieved without the death of Sultan Ahmad and the remarriage of Muhammadi Begum, then it was against the Glory of God and His Divine law to unnecessarily kill Sultan Muhammad for the sake of marrying her to *Hazrat* Mirza. This would be stubbornness and not godliness. God's punishment is not inflicted on a person without reason. When an objective can be achieved without inflicting punishment, then it is against the Glory of God to inflict punishment.

### **The aftermath of the heavenly sign**

Those members of the family who did not benefit from the clear sign

of Mirza Ahmad Beg's death perished. This group included the maternal uncles of Muhammadi Begum, Mirza Imam-ud-Din, Nizam-ud-Din and some others. The male members of the household died one after another, and the house became full of widows. A time came when the only surviving male in the house was a single boy child. This child joined the party of *Hazrat Mirza* on maturity.

The members of the family who took a lesson from the death of Mirza Ahmad Beg by repenting and seeking forgiveness were saved and found guidance. They thus acted, though a little belatedly, in accordance with *Hazrat Mirza's* revelation: "Repent, repent; certainly misfortunes are on your heels..." The mother and aunt of Muhammadi Begum, and Mirza Sultan Ahmad, the eldest son of *Hazrat Mirza*, who had played a major part in marrying Muhammadi Begum elsewhere, ultimately became disciples of *Hazrat Mirza*. The wife of Mirza Sultan Ahmad, whose father, Mirza Imam-ud-Din, was an inveterate enemy of *Hazrat Mirza*, also became a follower of *Hazrat Mirza*, as did the sister of Muhammadi Begum and her husband, Mirza Ahsan Beg. A respected and influential elder of this family, Mirza Mahmud Beg, joined the party of *Hazrat Mirza* with great sincerity. To top the list, the son of Muhammadi Begum also became a follower of *Hazrat Mirza*. Thus, was fulfilled the revelation of *Hazrat Mirza* which said "We will enter their house a bit in the manner of Hassan and a bit in the manner of Hussain."

### **Sultan Muhammad inclines to *Hazrat Mirza***

Sultan Muhammad himself became an admirer of *Hazrat Mirza* during the latter's lifetime and continued so even after *Hazrat Mirza's* death. Although, for some reason, Sultan Muhammad did not formally take the pledge at his hand, his relationship with *Hazrat Mirza* was one of goodwill and sincerity. *Hazrat Mirza* announced this fact publicly many times and he did not contradict it. When some clerics denied that such a relationship of admiration existed, *Hazrat Mirza* made the following announcement in his book *Anjam Atham*:<sup>11</sup>

The matter can be decided quite easily. Ask Sultan Muhammad, the son-in-law of Ahmad Beg, to announce that I am lying. If he does not die within a time to be specified by God, then I am a liar...it is ordained that the prophesied death be held in abeyance until the time that he acts brazenly. So if you want to hasten that

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11 *Anjam Atham*. Page 32.

moment, then rise and ask him to accuse me of lying and to act with temerity, and then see the wondrous hand of God at work.

Sultan Muhammad never made any such announcement. If he had done so, then in accordance with *Hazrat* Mirza's above announcement, he would not have escaped the punishment that had been averted. But why would Sultan Muhammad make such an announcement when at heart he had become a believer in *Hazrat* Mirza? In 1913, many years after *Hazrat* Mirza's death, one of his disciples wrote to Sultan Muhammad seeking information on this subject for his research. The reply he got back showed Sultan Muhammad's deep regard for *Hazrat* Mirza. Sultan Muhammad wrote:

Asalam alaikum. I am in receipt of your letter. Thank you for remembering me. I have considered, and continue to consider, the late Honorable Mirza sahib to be a pious, venerable, God-fearing and noble soul, who served Islam with distinction. I have no quarrel with his disciples. I really regret, that because of certain matters, I was unable to meet him during his lifetime.

Sincerely,  
Sultan Muhammad.

It is obvious that after the death of *Hazrat* Mirza, there was nothing to prevent Sultan Muhammad from acting impudently. The fact that he did not, goes to show that, at heart, he respected and revered *Hazrat* Mirza and was convinced of his truthfulness. Outwardly, for some reason, he did not take the pledge to join *Hazrat* Mirza's party, but he let his son join the party. In the book *Tazkirat-ul-Mahdi*, the author, Mirza Bashir Ahmad, records a meeting of *Hafiz* Jamal Ahmad with Sultan Ahmad. The relevant details of the meeting are presented below:

*Hafiz* Jamal Ahmad went to Patti to meet with Sultan Muhammad. Before him, Sultan Muhammad admitted that, "My father-in-law died exactly in accordance with the prophecy, but God is Forgiving and Merciful, and listens to His other servants as well (that is, God averted my punishment because of my prayers and supplications.)" He then stated "I truly affirm that this prophecy has not been a means of putting any doubt in my mind about the Honorable *Hazrat* Mirza sahib. My reason for not tak-



ing the pledge at his hands is something else.” He did not consider it appropriate to divulge the reason. He then swore by Almighty God and made the statement, “I have no criticism of *Hazrat Mirza sahib*. On the contrary, when I was in Ambala Cantonment, one of my Ahmady relatives enquired about my opinion of *Hazrat Mirza sahib* and you can read my written reply which I wrote to him.” (This reference is to the same letter quoted above - Author). He then said, “You can gauge my true feelings from the fact that I was offered a hundred thousand rupees by the *Aryas*, because of the Lekhrum incident, and a like amount by the Christians, because of the Atham incident, to disparage *Hazrat Mirza sahib*. Had I accepted, I would have been a very wealthy person, but it was my belief and faith that stopped me from such an action.”

### **Muhammadi Begum reverts**

Mr. Jamal Ahmad then enquired from Sultan Muhammad if his wife (Muhammadi Begum) had seen any vision about this affair? Sultan Muhammad said that he was not aware of any, but that Jamal Ahmad could address the inquiry to her through Mirza Ahmad Beg, the head-clerk. When the inquiry was addressed to Muhammadi Begum through Mirza Ahmad Beg, she replied: “When I heard that my husband had been wounded in France, I was greatly perturbed and sick at heart. During this worrisome night, I saw the Honorable *Hazrat Mirza sahib* in a vision. He had a bowl of milk in his hand and he said to me ‘Muhammadi Begum, drink this milk. The covering of your head (meaning your husband) is safe. Do not worry.’ I became convinced then that my husband was safe.” Does this not show the esteem in which Muhammadi Begum herself held *Hazrat Mirza*? Otherwise, why would she be immediately reassured by the good news that she received through him? This author humbly submits that one is amazed at the miraculous blessings of God. The same saint, who had prophesied the news of her husband’s death in case of insolence and rebellion, also gave her, after her repentance from this insolence and rebellion, the news of the safety and survival of her husband. Glory to Allah and His is the praise. Glory to Allah the Great.

### **Declaring marriage with Muhammadi Begum as *taqdir mubram* was an interpretation**

After the family of Muhammadi Begum repented and reformed, there was no need for God to chastise them unnecessarily. Sultan Muhammad

was one of those who changed his former condition, and so the punishment of his death was averted. With it, the fate of his widow's marriage to *Hazrat Mirza* also changed. The marriage was not the real purpose of the prophecy. The real objective was to show this family a sign so that they may reform and become rightly guided. When they reformed, there was no need for the marriage. Hence, the destiny was changed. It is sometimes alleged that *Hazrat Mirza* had referred to the marriage as *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny) at some place. This is not, however, sufficient reason to doubt the veracity of the revelation. If he did make such a statement, then such a statement was not part of the revelation but his own interpretation. And his interpretation was not infallible. In discussing the interpretation of an unrelated, other prophecy, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote:<sup>12</sup>

Even if we assume for the sake of argument that this is what I implied, this implication would be my interpretation and not the word of God. My word and the Word of God are not the same. I am human and it is possible for me to err in interpretation.

Elsewhere, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote:<sup>13</sup>

I do not consider my interpretations to be error-free. To prove me culpable, my accusers should present one of my revelations.

In another place, *Hazrat Mirza* stated:<sup>14</sup>

In fact, this has been the creed of all prophets that they leave the real import of the prophecy to the unbounded knowledge of God...out of a consideration that the prophecy may have some hidden aspects, or may have attached conditions about which they have not been informed.

Hence, if *Hazrat Mirza* stated a matter to be *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny) then that was his interpretation, and not a part of the revelation. It is possible to err in interpretation. However, I consider it necessary here to elaborate a little further on *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny).

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<sup>12</sup> *Hujat-ullah*. Page 10

<sup>13</sup> *Tiryaq-ul-Qulub*. Page 14.

<sup>14</sup> *Izala Auham*. Page 143.

***Taqdir mubram is of two types***

It is the accepted opinion of all scholars of Islam that sometimes certain matters are stated with such vehemence to the person receiving the revelation that the receiver becomes convinced that the matter is *taqdir mubram*, i.e. inevitable destiny, which cannot be averted by any possible means. However, since it is God's law that he averts punishment from those who turn to Him in humble supplication, there is always the hidden condition with any revelation, regardless of the degree of vehemence, that the chastisement can be averted through this prescription. This law has been clearly stated in the Quran: "And thy Lord would not destroy the towns unjustly, while their people acted well" (11:117) and "...nor would Allah chastise them while they seek forgiveness" (8:33). Thus, God does not annihilate those who reform their conduct and seek His protection and He states that the infliction of punishment in such an eventuality is cruel and unjust. Then how is it possible that God will still chastise a person who repents, reforms, and prostrates with fear before his Lord? It is possible that the person receiving the revelation may consider a matter to be *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny) but, in reality, it is *taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny). This is merely an error of interpretation, and even prophets and saints can make such errors. Under certain circumstances, such an error is quite natural because *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny) can be of two types:

1. That which appears to the recipient of the revelation as *mubram* (inevitable) but in the knowledge of God it is not *mubram* (inevitable) but *muallaq* (conditional).
2. That which is *mubram* (inevitable) in the knowledge of God.

***The opinion of Hazrat Mujaddid Alf Sani***

*Hazrat* Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, also known as *Mujaddid Alf Sani* (may Allah's blessings be on him), has written about these two types of destinies in his writings. The translation from his original work in the Persian language is given below:<sup>15</sup>

May Allah the Most High guide you to the right path. Know that there are two kinds of destinies:

1. *Taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny)
2. *Taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny)

In *taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny), there is scope for alteration and change, but in *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny) there

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<sup>15</sup> Epistle number 217. Vol.1.

is no opportunity for such alteration or change. Allah states: “My sentence cannot be changed” (50:29); this pertains to *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny). About *taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny), He states: “Allah effaces what He pleases and establishes (what He pleases), and with Him is the basis of the Book” (13:39). My respected father used to narrate that the respected *Hazrat* Syed Abdul Qadir Mohyuddin Jilani has written in some of his journals that ‘No one has the power to alter *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny) but I do have that power. If I desire, I can alter this as well.’ My respected father was bewildered by this statement and considered it incomprehensible. This impression persisted with this humble person as well until God honored this humble person with its real meaning. One day, I embarked on dispelling a misfortune, which had been ordained for a friend. I supplicated and beseeched with great humility and was informed that in the *lauh-e-mahfooz* (the guarded tablet in which the knowledge of the unseen is preserved) the matter has been decreed without any conditions or provision for suspension. This left me hopeless and in despair. I then recalled the statement of the respected *Hazrat* Syed Mohyuddin, and again resorted to beseeching and supplicating with great humility. It was then that, merely by the Grace and Bounty of Allah, this humble person was made aware that *taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny) is of two types. One is that destiny about which it is made known in the *lauh-e-mahfooz* that it is *muallaq* (conditional) and the angels are informed accordingly. The other is the destiny about which only God knows that it is *muallaq* (conditional) but in the *lauh-e-mahfooz* it is considered to be *mubram* (inevitable). In this second type of *muallaq* (conditional) destiny, like in the first type, there is a possibility of change. Then I got to know that the statement of the respected *Hazrat* Syed pertained to this second type, which has the appearance of *mubram* (inevitable), and not to the destiny which is actually *mubram* (inevitable) because any kind of change or alteration in the latter is impossible from the standpoint of logic as it would be a violation of God’s law. The truth is that if nobody has been informed about the real nature of a destiny, then how could anybody say anything about it? The misfortune and difficulty that had beset my friend was of the second type of *muallaq* (conditional) and I was informed that God would remove it. All Praise and Glory be to Allah for this.

There are some *hadith* that state that *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny) can be averted with prayer and charity, and in these *hadith*, too, the use of the word *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny) is in the sense that fate considered as inevitable in the *lauh-e-mahfooz* may in reality be “changeable” in the knowledge of God. I reproduce below some of these *hadith*.

1. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be on him) said: Supplicate extensively, because supplications can avert even *qadha-e-mubram* (the inevitable destiny).<sup>16</sup>
2. It has been narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) said: Charity averts even the inevitable calamity (*al-bal-laa ul mubram*) that is about to be inflicted from the heaven.<sup>17</sup>

There are two *hadith* in *Tirmizi* on the same subject:

3. It is narrated from Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be on him) said: Nothing can avert destiny except supplication, and nothing can prolong life except goodness.<sup>18</sup>
4. It is narrated from Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be on him) said: Certainly charity cools down the wrath of the Lord and averts a bad death.<sup>19</sup>

From these *hadith*, and from the statement of *Hazrat* Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, it is evident that charity, repentance, supplication and fear of Allah avert tribulations whether it is *muallaq* (conditional) or *mubram* (inevitable). However, only that *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny) is avertable which in the eyes of the recipient of the revelation appears to be *mubram* (inevitable), but in the

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16 *Al-Shaikh* Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttaqi. *Kanaz al-Ummal fi Sunani-l-Aqwal wa-l-Afal* (*Hadith*). Vol. 2, page 63. Published 1979.

17 *Rozul Reeyaheen*, marginal note on *Qasas ul Anbyyah* (Stories of the Prophets), page 264.

18 Abu Isa Muhammad ibn Isa **Tirmidhi**. *Al-Jami* (*Hadith*). *Abwab ul Qadar*, 31:6. Vol. 2, page 36.

19 Abu Isa Muhammad ibn Isa **Tirmidhi**. *Al-Jami* (*Hadith*). *Abwab ul Zakat*, 7:27. Vol. 1, page 84.

infinite knowledge of God is *muallaq* (conditional). Such a destiny appears inevitable, but in the knowledge of God it is conditional, because there is an attached secret condition with it, namely that if resort is taken to charity and supplication, then the otherwise inevitability of the matter would be averted. It is for this reason that certain prophesied events sometimes appear definitive to the recipient of the revelation and are declared as inevitable by them, but in the eyes of God they are not so. If the party or person about whom the prophecy has been made desists from evil ways, the promised punishment is lifted.

*Hazrat Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi* was of the opinion that prophecies of coming events are always conditional, and sometimes these conditions are not even made known to the person who receives the prophetic revelation. When this happens, the recipient of the prophetic revelation may consider the prophecy to be unconditional and announce it as such. *Hazrat Sirhindi* further clarified this issue in his books. He wrote:<sup>20</sup>

It may well be asked why the prophetic visions of saints are sometimes not fulfilled and actual events turn out contrary to what was foretold? For instance, it may have been prophesied that, within a month, a certain person will die or will return home from abroad, but a month passes and both these events do not occur. The answer to this is that the actual coming to pass of the event seen in the vision may have been subject to certain conditions about which the visionary was not informed at that time, and he ruled the event to be inevitable.

Yet another reason could be that a command from the commands of the *lauh-e-mahfooz* (the guarded tablet) is manifested to a saint, and though the command by itself is subject to expunction and is in the nature of an avertable fate, the saint may not be aware that it is a conditional command that stands in need of being confirmed, and if he rules about it on the basis of his knowledge, there is a chance that the command may subsequently be reversed.

In order to further expound this point, *Hazrat Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi* narrated a vision of the Holy Prophet in one of his books as follows:<sup>21</sup>

It is written that one day Gabriel, peace and blessings on him, appeared before the Prophet, peace and blessings on him, and

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<sup>20</sup> *Maktubat*. Vol.1, page 217.

<sup>21</sup> *Maktubat*. Vol. 1, page 217.

informed him in respect of a young man that he would die early the following morning. The Prophet felt very sorry for the young man and asked him "What do you desire from this world?" He replied "A virgin wife, and secondly *halwa*."<sup>22</sup> The Prophet arranged to provide him with both. The young man was sitting in privacy with his wife at night and the dish of *halwa* was before them when a needy beggar appeared before their door and called for alms. The young man picked up the dish of *halwa* and gave it to the beggar. When the morning dawned, the Prophet expected to hear the news of the young man's death. However, when a considerable time had elapsed and there was no news, he asked someone to go and enquire about the young man. The person came back with the news that he was happy and doing well. The Prophet was amazed. Gabriel again appeared before the Prophet and informed him that the young man's charity had averted the misfortune. Later, a big dead snake was discovered under the young man's bed. The snake's belly was stuffed with *halwa*, and it had died from overeating this dessert.

### **The view of Hazrat Syed Abdul Qadir Jillani**

I consider it appropriate to also mention here the view of *Hazrat* Syed Abdul Qadir Jillani, who wrote:<sup>23</sup>

It is permissible for God to make a promise with His servant, and then not to carry it out, i.e. not to fulfill it. This is so because there is no strangeness between God and a man who has totally erased his desires. Hence, the promise that was made with the servant is in the nature of someone who intends to do something for himself, makes the necessary preparation for the task, but then turns his attention to something else.

Thus a promise made by God with a servant who has effaced all desires is not a promise with a separate entity but with Himself. If a person intends to do something for himself but then abandons that intention for some reason and turns his attention to another task, then this is not a breach of promise. It is something that is perfectly permissible.

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<sup>22</sup> A sweet dish made of flour, sugar and shortening.

<sup>23</sup> *Fatwa-ul-Ghaib*. Article 56.

### **The view of *Hazrat Imam Shaafi***

Similarly, *Imam Shaafi* states, “It is not incumbent on God to carry out His promise.”<sup>24</sup> The reason is that the promise may have been conditional but the person receiving the promise may not have been foretold of these conditions.

### **The real reason for calling the prophecy *taqdir mubram***

It is apparent that the promise of *Hazrat Mirza's* marriage with *Muhammadi Begum* was conditional upon the death of her husband. He had been fated to die as a consequence of their families' insolence and rebellion, but when important members of the two families reformed their behavior and resorted to repentance and humble supplications, the requisite conditions for his death ceased to exist. Consequently, the decree of his untimely death was lifted and with it, the decree of *Hazrat Mirza's* marriage with *Muhammadi Begum* was cancelled. In the light of these conditions, it can be safely asserted that *Hazrat Mirza's* statement about his marriage with *Muhammadi Begum* as *taqdir mubram* (inevitable fate) was in the same sense as mentioned in the above referenced citations of *Hazrat Mujaddid Sirhindi*, i.e. sometimes it appears to the recipient of revelation that a fate is inevitably decreed (*taqdir mubram*) but in the cosmic knowledge of God the fate is conditional (*taqdir muallaq*).

In reality, *Hazrat Mirza* had concluded the inevitability of the decree from the phrase “*la tabdela lay kalamatillah*” (The words of Allah do not change) – a phrase appearing in the actual prophesy. However, as explained earlier, the real meaning of the phrase was that the girl would revert to *Hazrat Mirza* in the event that the families persisted in their derision and mockery of religion because this behavior would result in the deaths of the girl's father and husband. However, when her husband and family abandoned their mocking and ridiculing ways as a consequence of her father's death, then this, too, was the word of Allah that a change of offending behavior along with repentance and supplication for God's protection would void the decree of punishment. Thus, the demands of the phrase “the words of Allah do not change” required that, if rejection and mockery of religion persisted, then the deaths of *Muhammadi Begum's* father and husband and her subsequent marriage with *Hazrat Mirza* would be inevitably decreed, but equally that if the mockery and rejection of religion ceased then the decree regarding the death of *Muhammadi Begum's* husband and her subsequent marriage with *Hazrat Mirza* would inevitably

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24 *Kitab Irshad-ul-Fahool*.



be voided. In other words, this *taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny) contained two subsets each of which was *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny) based on the scenario that unfolded.

### **Death was decreed for only one person in the eternal knowledge of God**

There is a fine point that is worth noting in this discussion of *taqdir muallaq* (conditional destiny) and *taqdir mubram* (inevitable destiny). Death was prophesied for both Mirza Ahmad Beg (father) and Sultan Muhammad (husband) but this was conditional destiny since it was associated with their mocking and derisive behavior. If Ahmad Beg had not persisted in his mocking and derisive behavior and married his daughter to *Hazrat* Mirza then he would have completely escaped the clutches of this conditional destiny. Equally, if Sultan Muhammad had behaved in an insolent, derisive and rebellious manner and accused *Hazrat* Mirza of falsehood, he would not have escaped death in the prescribed period. Thus, although death was prophesied for both the father and husband of Muhammadi Begum, it was already known in the eternal knowledge of God that only one of them would die and the other would avoid death by benefiting from the escape clause. In this connection, the vision and revelation mentioned in the footnote of *Hazrat* Mirza's announcement dated July 15, 1888, which was a supplement to the main announcement of July 10, 1888, is presented below:

And in January 1886, while I was in Hoshiarpur, there was a revelation in Arabic regarding Mirza Ahmad Beg. This revelation was disclosed in a gathering, which included *Babu* Ilahi Bux, an accountant, and *Maulvi* Burhan-ud-Din sahib of Jehlum. The vision and revelation was as follows: "I saw this woman (the mother-in-law of Ahmad Beg) in a condition where the signs of crying were apparent on her face. Then I said to her: "O Woman! Repent, repent; certainly misfortunes are on your heels and distress is about to alight on you; he will die and because of him some dogs will be left behind."

The distress against which this woman was warned contained a warning regarding the death of one person only and not two. Thus, in the perfect knowledge of Allah death was ordained only for one, i.e. Ahmad Beg, even though the prophecy contained news of the death of two persons by way of conditional destiny. If death was ordained for two persons, then

the warning should have used the dual form *yamutan* (two deaths) instead of the singular form *yamut* (one death). The use of the singular form clearly shows that although the prophecy predicted the death of two persons by way of conditional destiny, in the eternal and perfect knowledge of God only one of them was to die and the other was to escape death as a result of which some dogs would bark, i.e. some opponents would get the opportunity to indulge in unwarranted criticism. In the Quran, Balaam, Umayyah ibn Abi Salt and others have been likened to dogs for opposing the truth as stated in “His parable is as the parable of the dog...” (7:176). Thus, it is completely in accord with the decree of the Quran if these people, who followed their low desires and opposed the truth merely out of stubbornness and prejudice and mocked and ridiculed this prophesy, were referred to as dogs.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

*Hazrat Mirza* had steadfastly refused to accept pledges of allegiance from his followers because he had not received any directive from God about this matter. However, on December 1, 1888, he announced that Allah, the Most High, had directed him to accept pledges from his followers and to organize a party. This declaration, made shortly after the death of his son, Bashir I, formed part of the same announcement containing the *Haqqani Taqrir*, reference to which has been made earlier in chapter 18. The announcement included the Divine revelations commanding the undertaking of pledges. The first revelation stated: “Trust in Allah, and make the ark under Our eyes and Our revelation” (11:37). He was given to understand that the ark was really symbolic of a party. A second revelation dealt with taking the pledge of allegiance and stated: “Those who swear allegiance to thee do but swear allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is above their hands” (48:10). Both the revelations were in the form of Quranic verses, the latter one especially of great historical importance.

This verse was first revealed to the Holy Prophet at Hudaibiyah, and referred to the famous *Bait Ridwan* (Pledge of Pleasure) in which the Companions swore at the hands of the Holy Prophet to defend Islam at a very critical juncture of its young history. It happened in the sixth year after migration from Makkah when the Holy Prophet set out for Makkah with the intention of performing the *Umrah* (the lesser pilgrimage). On reaching Hudaibiyah, a place in the environs of Makkah, he learned that the Makkans had hostile designs against his party. The Holy Prophet had no intention of fighting and he sent *Hazrat Usman* as an emissary to tell the

Makkans of his peaceful intent and to assure them of his return after performing the *Umrah*. A short while later, a rumor began to circulate that the Makkan infidels had captured *Hazrat* Usman and made him a prisoner. If true, this amounted to a declaration of war by the Makkans. The Holy Prophet and his Companions were unprepared for hostilities and this sudden imposition of war left them encircled by the enemy. This was a moment of great peril for Islam; the enemy, in full strength, was about to fall upon the Muslims from all sides, and the Muslims lacked the strength for an adequate defense. The spirit of sacrifice and devotion of the Muslims was going to be put to the severest test. Consequently, the Holy Prophet received a directive from God to take a pledge of loyalty from his Companions, and the Companions happily and readily pledged to sacrifice their lives for Islam. This pledge found great favor with God and the Quran bears testimony to it in the following words: "Allah indeed was well pleased with the believers, when they swore allegiance to thee under the tree" (48:18). Another verse, prior to this one, stated: "Those who swear allegiance to thee do but swear allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is above their hands" (48:10). Thus, apparently the pledge was made at the hands of the Holy Prophet, but in reality, this was a pledge with Allah by the Companions to sacrifice their life and their wealth for the sake of Islam.

### **Need for a pledge**

Perilous conditions akin to those at Hudaibiyah confronted Islam, once again, during *Hazrat* Mirza's era. The enemies of Islam, like the Christians, *Arya* Hindus and atheists, had beset Islam on all sides with the sole purpose of defaming the Holy Prophet and destroying the religion he had brought. God, therefore, willed that a party of crusaders and devotees be readied who should follow in the footsteps of the Companions of the Prophet and who should take a pledge similar to the one taken by the Companions. Because the Holy Prophet is no longer present in this physical world, God revealed to his vicegerent and deputy, the *Mujaddid* (reformer) of the time, the same verse that was revealed to the Holy Prophet at Hudaibiyah: "Those who swear allegiance to thee do but swear allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is above their hands" (48:10). The purpose was to urge the Muslims to take the same pledge of sacrifice as had been taken by the Companions.

### **The method of taking a pledge**

As a consequence of this revelation, *Hazrat* Mirza started accepting pledges in the name of the Holy Prophet's beauteous name Ahmad. The

person taking the pledge was first asked to recite the *kalimah shahadat*, i.e. the following confession of faith: "I declare that there is no god but Allah, and I declare that Muhammad is His servant and His Prophet." After this, the pledge taker was asked to repent previous sins and to promise to eschew sins in the future. The real spirit of the pledge was a covenant that the pledge maker entered into next. This covenant stated "I will give precedence to religion over worldly matters." This meant that the pledge taker would sacrifice his life, wealth, physical desires and all worldly things for the sake of Islam. This was not the ordinary pledge taken by the *Sufis*, but was in the nature of the pledge taken by the Companions of the Holy Prophet at Hudaibyah, which was so favorably mentioned by God in the Quran. *Hazrat Mirza's* male followers took this pledge by placing their hand on his hand. Women followers simply recited the pledge behind *Hazrat Mirza* without any physical contact. If a person could not be present in person, it was possible to take the pledge in writing by stating and signing the essential elements of the pledge. In addition, *Hazrat Mirza* made it mandatory for his followers to fulfill the following ten conditions of the pledge.

### **The ten conditions of the pledge**

The person taking the pledge promised to abide by the following conditions:

1. Until he (the pledge taker) is laid in his grave, he will shun all forms and shades of *shirk* (polytheism).
2. He will guard against falsehood, fornication, promiscuity, and every form of sin, evil, cruelty, dishonesty, disorder, and rebellion; that in moments of passion, he would, on no account give in, however boisterous that passion may be.
3. Without fail, he will say his prayers five times a day as enjoined by God and His Messenger. He will say his *Tahajjud* (late night) prayer to the best of his power; ask forgiveness for his sins; remember God's favors with a truly loving heart, glorify Allah and invoke Divine blessings on the Holy Prophet.
4. He will do nothing in any way to injure his fellow human beings in general, and the Muslims in particular - neither with the tongue, nor with the hand, nor in any other way.
5. He will show fidelity to God under all circumstances - in prosperity and adversity, in pleasure and pain, and in bliss

and affliction; he will resign himself to God under all conditions and will cheerfully bear all hardships and humiliations in His way; he will not turn his back in a time of peril but will advance onwards.

6. He will eschew observance of evil customs and listening to the promptings of his baser nature; he will fashion his life according to the teachings of the Holy Quran; he will hold the Word of God and of His Messenger as his guiding principle in every walk of life.
7. He will totally abstain from pride and haughtiness, and will live his life in humility, meekness and mildness.
8. He will hold the honor of religion and sympathy for Islam dearer than anything else - dearer than his life, his wealth, his honor, his children, and his kith and kin.
9. He will make it a rule of his life to show sympathy towards all human beings out of love for God, and to the best of his power, he will use his entire God given faculties and blessings for the benefit of humanity.
10. He will bind himself in a fraternal bond with *Hazrat Mirza* to follow the way of Allah; he will obey him in everything good, and will live up to his pledge till his death; he will show such sincerity in this fraternal bond as is not met with even in the case of blood relations or other worldly connections.

The summary of condition number eight is "I will give precedence to religion over worldly matters." This phrase was part of the oral pledge that *Hazrat Mirza* used to take.

### **Pledges were first taken at Ludhiana**

*Hazrat Mirza* announced in December 1888 that Allah had directed him to accept pledges from his followers, but it was not until the beginning of 1889 that the first pledges were taken at Ludhiana. *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din was the first person to take the pledge at the hands of *Hazrat Mirza*. This was the fulfillment of a long-standing promise that *Hazrat Mirza* had made to him that he would be given the first opportunity to take the pledge after God gave the necessary permission. Mir Abbas Ali of Ludhiana followed him and subsequently, many other admirers of *Hazrat Mirza* took the pledge. Notable among them were Qazi Khawaja Ali; Mir Inayat Ali; Chaudry Rustam Ali; Mian Abdullah Sanori; Sheikh Hamid Ali; *Maulvi* Abdullah of Khost; and *Hafiz* Nur Ahmad Ludhianvi. The pledges were

made individually, without an audience and behind closed doors. Each pledge took a considerable time, and so the pledging continued beyond the first day until all those desirous of taking the pledge had done so. A large number of people took this first opportunity to make their pledges. *Hafiz* Fazal Ahmad of Gujrat told this author that the spiritual concentration of *Hazrat* Mirza in those days was so intense during the pledge taking that the pledge taker was shaken to the core of his being and felt an instant transformation in him. Later, as the number of people desirous of taking pledges increased, pledging was done collectively in groups. The process of accepting pledges continued during *Hazrat* Mirza's stay in Ludhiana. *Maulvi* Abdul Karim Sialkoti was present in Ludhiana, but did not take the pledge at that time. He did so a few months later.

This author heard two things from *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din pertaining to taking the pledge that would be appropriate to state here for the benefit of the reader:

### 1. Beneficial aspect of taking the pledge

*Maulana* Nur-ud-Din narrated:

When I was alone with *Hazrat* Mirza and was about to take the pledge at his hand, I respectfully submitted to him that I had studied theology under Shah Abdul Ghani in Madinah. He was a distinguished scholar of religion and a great *Sufi* saint, who hailed from India but had emigrated and taken up residence in Madinah. He accepted pledges from persons desirous of joining the *Nakshband* sect of *Sufism* and many people had taken the pledge on his hand. Many times, I too considered taking the pledge on his hand but did not do so because I could not convince myself about the need for making a pledge. Once I did bring myself to tell him that I wanted to take the pledge. He seemed a little surprised, but extended his hand forward. I extended my hand, too, but then stopped. I said to him, "First tell me though, what is the benefit of taking a pledge?" He replied, "The knowledge for which you are studying will inspire you to ecstasy and you will be able to see with your eyes what now you only hear with your ears." I then asked him to take my pledge, but he said, "Only on one condition that you stay here with me for a considerable period of time." I agreed, and made the pledge. I stayed with him for a long period, and experienced the truth of what he had said. After narrating this, I asked *Hazrat* Mirza, "What is going to be the benefit of taking your pledge?" *Hazrat* Mirza smiled and remarked that by making a

pledge with him, "You will not need to see what you hear." I replied, "Then please take my pledge," and the pledge was taken. It happened just as *Hazrat* Mirza had said. Through the beneficence of *Hazrat* Mirza, my faith strengthened to such an extent that there was no longer any need to see to believe the spiritual things I heard. In other words, in matters of religion, it was sufficient for me to hear and I believed without the need for personal evidence.

*Hazrat* Ali had once made a similar statement. "If all the veils are lifted, my faith has reached a point where the lifting of the veils could not strengthen it any more." This belief shows the high station of piety attained by the really pious where the need for personal evidence is no longer necessary.

## 2. **Wage *jihad* on a continuous basis**

The second thing *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din narrated was:

After taking the pledge, I said to *Hazrat* Mirza, "On the occasion of accepting the pledge from their followers, religious preceptors generally advise their disciples on how to fashion their daily conduct. What is your advice to me, as I would like to act on it?" He replied, "Wage *jihad* on a continuous basis." I was astonished to hear this. I submitted, "Do you mean that I should pick up a sword to fight the British?" He replied, "No one has usurped your religious freedom, so there is no need to fight with the sword. However, the enemies of Islam are trying to kill Islam by arguments, so countering these arguments is the biggest *jihad* of this time. I urge you to write a book refuting the Christian allegations." I submitted, "While refuting the Christian accusations, how should I proceed if I cannot comprehend the meaning of a Quranic verse?" *Hazrat* Mirza replied, "Beseech Allah to enlighten you with its meaning. In addition, write the verse on a piece of paper and hang it in front of the place where you normally sit to work so that you keep looking at it frequently. This, too, is a form of prayer to Allah because your striving is part of prayer. A time will come when Allah, the Most High, will enlighten you with its meaning." Later, I experienced the efficacy of this prescription. During times of such difficulty, I did not hang the verse on the wall but on my heart. It was always in my consciousness. I also prayed for enlightenment. Gradually, a time would come when Allah, through his blessing, would open my mind to its meaning.



*Maulana* Nur-ud-Din further narrated:

I asked *Hazrat* Mirza if it was acceptable to rebut an opponent merely by leveling a counter criticism? He replied, "Without a precise, fully researched rebuttal to the criticism, merely a counter charge would mean that we accept the criticism to be correct. All we would accomplish is to point out that the opponent's side, too, suffers from the same defect, but this will not refute the objection. In other words, both sides have the same shortcoming. The real answer is always a rational rebuttal in which it has to be shown that, either what the opponent is criticizing is, in fact, really not a shortcoming but a thing of merit, or that if it is really a shortcoming, then it is not found in us. However, after making a rational rebuttal, it is permissible to point out to the other side that the alleged criticism really fits their situation."

When I returned to Bhera after making my pledge, I was in a state of deep anxiety about the book that *Hazrat* Mirza had directed me to write against the Christian accusations. I was perplexed about what type of book to write, and worried that I was a very busy person with little time to spare for such an undertaking. After my return to Bhera, it so happened that I ran into an old classmate at a function. He was a *Hafiz* Quran (i.e. had memorized the entire Quran) and the *Imam* of a local mosque. He initiated a discussion on the topic of *Qadr* (fate or predestination) and began to ridicule the concept in my presence. I was amazed, and looked at him in disbelief. When the others had left, I told the *Hafiz*, "It appears to me that you have become a Christian." He replied "Is there a problem if I have become a Christian?" I said "Let me meet your guru, the clergyman who has misled you." He agreed and later he took me to meet with the clergyman who lived in a village called Pind Dadan Khan. When we reached the residence of the clergyman, we were ushered into his drawing room where he joined us. By now, he was a good friend of the *Hafiz*.

I said, "Reverend, the reason for my coming is that this *Hafiz* sahib, who is my old classmate, has become your disciple. I am also desirous of hearing some things from you. Without making a long argument, can you give us a summary of your religion, a summary of our religion, and one criticism, by way of an example, so that we may know about your religion, and your knowledge of Islam?" The clergyman was so overawed that he did not address my question at all, but instead started mak-

ing preparations to serve us tea. I again addressed the clergyman and said, "Please do not bother to serve us tea. I have many friends in this village and we can drink tea with them. Kindly discuss the religious issues with us." However, the clergyman continued to avoid engaging us in a religious discussion. Finally, I asked the *Hafiz* to somehow instigate the clergyman to discuss the issues with us. He took the clergyman aside to talk to him, but the clergyman absolutely refused to discuss anything with us, but said that he would send his criticism later in writing. I told the *Hafiz* not to get baptized until the clergyman had made his written submissions and he, the *Hafiz*, had read my rebuttal. He agreed, and said that he had told the clergyman the same thing.

When we came out of the clergyman's house, I asked the *Hafiz* if he knew of any Muslim in this village who was similarly impressed with Christianity. He replied that the stationmaster was such a person. Accordingly, we went to the railway station and met with the stationmaster. He very boldly asserted that no religion could compete with Christianity. However, he was astonished to hear from the *Hafiz* that the clergyman had refused to engage in a religious discussion.

At long last, the clergyman sent a voluminous criticism of Islam to the *Hafiz*. I asked the *Hafiz*, "Is it possible to reply to this criticism in one day?" He said, "No." I said, "Then why don't you fix a period in which I should provide you with a suitable rebuttal?" He said, "The period is one year. Your rebuttal in the form of a published book must reach me within this time." I agreed. However, I was then about to leave for Jammu, my place of employment, and once there, I was kept so busy that it was difficult to find time to write a book. But when Allah wills a thing, He brings about the conditions for it to be done.

The son of the Raja of Poonch had become traumatized as a result of several earthquakes that had jolted the country during that period and either because of that, or for some other reason, he had become schizophrenic. The Raja of Poonch wrote to the Raja of Jammu that he was in need of a highly competent physician for his son. Accordingly, I was dispatched to Poonch. There I was provided with a residence in the isolated environs of the city. I had to care for only one patient, and was alone for most of the day. I began reading the Bible and the Quran keeping in mind the criticism that had been made by the clergyman, and marked all the relevant passages in the two Books. I then

started work on my book *Faslul Khitab* (A Decisive Discourse) and completed it in four volumes. The book was completed just ahead of the recovery of the Raja's son from his malady.

I now had to worry about finding money to print the book. The Raja of Poonch had given me a reward of several thousand rupees but the amount was not sufficient to cover the cost of printing. When I returned to Jammu, the Raja of Jammu asked me how much I had been paid and I produced before him the entire amount of the reward money I had received. He was very annoyed as he felt that I had not been sufficiently compensated for my services and ordered his treasury to pay me a year's salary and additional reward money. I now had sufficient funds to get two volumes printed and sent the first two volumes of my book along with the money to a press in Delhi for printing. On receipt of the printed books, I dispatched copies to the *Hafiz*, and other persons similarly situated. After some time, the *Hafiz* wrote back, "I have now become a Muslim with true faith and conviction. There is no need for the remaining volumes."

When I visited *Hazrat Mirza*, I narrated the full story to him and he was well pleased with my effort. I asked him, "What should I do now?" He replied "Write a book against the accusations of the *Arya Samaj*." When I returned home from Qadian, I came across Lekhram's book, *Takzib Barahin Ahmadiyya* (The Contradiction of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*). It contained criticism on issues that were the subject of the two unpublished volumes of my book. Thus the material for rebutting these criticisms was already ready, and with minor modifications to my original work, I was able to publish a rebuttal entitled, *Tasdiq Barahin Ahmadiyya* (The Verification of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*).

### **False charge of opposition to *jihad***

I have narrated this episode in such great detail because some people, through ignorance, accuse *Hazrat Mirza* of being opposed to *jihad*. This is absolutely incorrect. In fact, *Hazrat Mirza*'s entire manifesto was *jihad*. However, he maintained that Islamic principles did not allow the use of force, unless force was being used to annihilate Islam, or its propagation was being prevented forcefully. The real *jihad* is to propagate Islam, not by force but by an appeal to intellect and rationality, and in the process to stand ready to sacrifice one's wealth, body and soul. This is the real *jihad*, the possibility for which exists at all times, while *jihad* with the force of

arms is restricted only to periods when oppressive conditions detailed above are present. The *jihad* that is an objective of a righteous person's life and has been commanded in the Quranic verse, "Strive against them a mighty striving with it (the Quran)" (25:52), is the *jihad* to propagate Quranic teachings. This *jihad* was the objective of *Hazrat* Mirza's life. The other thing that becomes obvious from this incident is the inroads that Christianity had made among the Muslim populace before *Hazrat* Mirza came out as the champion of Islam. Christian missionaries had taken advantage of the absurd talk of the clerics to mislead the Muslim public, and had put together a voluminous book of objections against Islam. From time to time, *Hazrat* Mirza rebutted and destroyed these criticisms so that the pious and righteous face of Islam was cleaned of all the dirt and restored to its pristine purity. In addition, *Hazrat* Mirza launched such an aggressive counterattack that it became difficult for Christianity to find a place of refuge. In fact, the mighty pen of *Hazrat* Mirza mortally wounded Christianity and this is the meaning of "breaking the Cross" which is mentioned in the *hadith* as the signature work of the Promised Messiah.

### **Journey to Aligarh**

After initiating the institution of pledges at Ludhiana and accepting several pledges, *Hazrat* Mirza journeyed to Aligarh. This was the early part of the year 1889. In those days, *Hazrat* Mirza was suffering from mental exhaustion, and was unable to put in a sustained mental effort. In fact, he did not even converse much. This was probably the reason for the trip. Mir Abbas Ali Ludhianvi, *Maulvi* Abdullah Sanori and Sheikh Hamid Ali accompanied him on this journey. *Hazrat* Mirza stayed in Aligarh for just a week, after which he returned to Ludhiana. In Aligarh, he was the guest of Tafazul Hussain, *Tehsildar*<sup>1</sup>, who was at the time serving as the Superintendent of the Deputy Commissioner's office. There were a couple of report-worthy incidents in Aligarh.

The first one involved Mir Abbas Ali. *Hazrat* Mirza and his traveling companions had been invited to a party where the food was served on tables covered by tablecloths. Mir Abbas Ali declined to eat, and when *Hazrat* Mirza enquired his reason for not eating, he replied, "This is the western way of eating." *Hazrat* Mirza replied "There is no harm in it. It is not against the *shariah*." But Mir Abbas Ali was not convinced and did not eat.

The second incident involved a cleric in Aligarh by the name of Muhammad Ismail, who was not a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza but had a rep-

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1 An official in the land revenue department.

utation of being independent and liberal-minded. He met with *Hazrat Mirza* and invited him to speak to his congregation the following day, after the Friday prayer. *Hazrat Mirza* readily agreed and told him that his speech would be on "The Truth of Islam," but Divine revelation soon thereafter informed him not to make the speech. Initially, *Hazrat Mirza* thought that the Divine prohibition was perhaps the result of his state of health and God did not want him to aggravate his condition by putting himself through the mental strain of making a speech. However, later events showed that the intentions of this cleric were not good. He had probably planned some mischief in that gathering because he did not accept *Hazrat Mirza's* reason for not making the speech with good grace. Instead, he adopted an attitude of boasting and bragging and made a speech, which was later published as well, in which he claimed that the reason given for cancellation, i.e. a prohibitory Divine revelation, was merely an excuse. He said: "I think that the invitation to speak has been declined because of his weak expression and the fear of cross examination. This man is stupid and has no intellectual merit." There was more silly prattle of the same type in his speech. *Hazrat Mirza* strongly refuted these charges in his book *Fath Islam* (The Victory of Islam).

In one false charge this cleric said: "Syed Ahmad Arab, who is my trusted friend, narrated to me, 'I stayed with *Hazrat Mirza* in the company of a group of his trusted friends...and discovered that he possesses astrological instruments that he puts to his use.'" In response to this charge, *Hazrat Mirza* challenged *Maulvi Muhammad Ismail* of Aligarh to an imprecation (*mubahalalah*). *Hazrat Mirza* wrote: "I have no recollection of any Syed Ahmad who stayed with me for two months. The onus of producing this person is on *Maulvi* sahib so that we can ask him face to face what instruments he has seen with me. There is really no need for an Arab, or non-Arab, to give evidence in this matter. I am still alive, so why don't you, *Maulvi* sahib, come and stay with me for two months and see for yourself?"

Instead of investigating the real situation by coming to *Hazrat Mirza*, this ill-fated cleric wrote a book against him in which he accepted the challenge of imprecation (*mubahalalah*) and prayed for *Hazrat Mirza's* death. The result of the imprecation (*mubahalalah*) was that the cleric died a short while later. His death served the dual purpose of proving his allegations about the use of astrological instruments to be fabrications and also put a seal on *Hazrat Mirza's* authenticity. The cleric had written in his book: "The truth has come and falsehood vanished," (17:81). So his death provided proof of who was false.

## Chapter

# 24

## CLAIM OF MESSIAHSHIP

After *Hazrat* Mirza announced that Allah had directed him to accept pledges, people in large numbers thronged to his side and many pledged to formally join his Movement. By now, his fame had spread far and wide. He was widely recognized as a man of piety and devotion, of knowledge and wisdom, and a saint who had communion with God. In the midst of this great surge of popularity, it was suddenly revealed to *Hazrat* Mirza by Allah that the Messiah, son of Mary had died, and that the Promised son of Mary, about whose coming there were prophecies in the books of *Hadith*, was, in fact, him. The wording of the revelation was: “The Messiah son of Mary has died, and We have made you the Messiah, son of Mary.”

### Similarity of Saints with Prophets

Prior to this revelation, *Hazrat* Mirza was clearly intimated that he had a spiritual likeness with the Messiah, the son of Mary. Accordingly, he stated this unambiguously in his announcement claiming to be a *Mujaddid* (reformer):

The author has been given knowledge that he is the *Mujaddid* of the era, and that in his spiritual excellence he has a strong similarity and likeness with the spiritual excellence of the Messiah, son of Mary.

This claim of affinity with Jesus was not an innovation. For the past thirteen hundred years, similar claims of likeness have been asserted between

the saints and spiritual leaders of this *Umma* (Muslim community) and the prophets of previous times. This has been so because every saint is in the mold of some prophet, as is clear from the *hadith*: “The *Ulama* (scholars of religion) from among my *Ummat* (followers) will be like the prophets of Israel.”<sup>1</sup> The Holy Prophet likened *Hazrat Ali* to Prophet Aaron and said, “You are to me like Aaron was to Moses, except that after me there is no prophet.”<sup>2</sup> In another *hadith* reported by Ibn Asakar, it is stated that *Hazrat Ans* said that he heard the Holy Prophet say:<sup>3</sup>

There are certainly among my followers persons who resemble each one of the Prophets who have passed away. Accordingly, Abu Bakr is like Abraham, Umar is like Moses, Usman is like Aaron, and Ali ibn Talib resembles me. He who wants to see Jesus, son of Mary, should see Abu Zar Ghaffari.

There are many other similar *hadith*. In addition, the great saints of Islam have also used terms in their writings that express the similarity of persons with prophets. For example, *Hazrat Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi*, also known as *Mujaddid Alf Sani*, states:<sup>4</sup>

*Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq* and *Hazrat Umar Farouq* (may Allah be pleased with them) resemble Abraham in their saintliness, while in their status with respect to calling people to righteousness, which is the station of prophethood, they resemble Moses. *Hazrat Usman* resembles Noah in both these respects, and *Hazrat Ali* resembles Jesus in both these respects.

Further, it is stated in the book *Tazkirat-ul-Auliya* about the great saint Bayazid al-Bistami that:<sup>5</sup>

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- 1 Mulla Ali Qari. *Mauzuat*, page 48. This quotation is not a *hadith* but the statement made by the author is correct in its meaning because the quotation is the essence of a famous *hadith* in the collection of *Al-Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari* known as *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. This *hadith* is found in *Kitab al-Ilm*, 3:10.
  - 2 *Imam Abu-l-Husain ibn Al-Hajjaj. Sahih Muslim (Hadith). Kitab al-Fazail*. 43:4. Vol. 2.
  - 3 *Al-Shaikh Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttaqi. Kanaz al-Ummal fi Sunani-l-Aqwal wa-l-Afal (Hadith)*. Vol. 11, page 757, published 1979.
  - 4 *Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi. Maktab*. Volume 1, page 251.
  - 5 *Tazkirat-ul-Auliya*: Page 156.

People said that there are, in this world, certain men of God who have the heart of Abraham, Moses and Muhammad (on them be peace). On hearing this, Bayazid said: "I am all of them."<sup>5</sup>

*Hazrat Imam-ul-Kamlain Khwaja Muhammad Nasir Muhammadi* writes in his book *Nala-yi-Andalib* (Lamentation of the Nightingale):<sup>6</sup>

Among the followers of Muhammad there have been complete and perfect saints who in their internal qualities and external mannerisms have resembled one or other of Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, Jacob, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.

*Hazrat Syed Ahmad Bareilvi*, the *Mujaddid* (reformer) of the 13th century *hijri* (Islamic calendar), is a great and well-recognized leader of the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect. His followers eulogized him in a Persian poem as follows:<sup>7</sup>

To argue and contend with the scholars,  
O Wonder! An illiterate has come.

Like Joseph, when he arrived in Egypt from Canaan,  
Buyers in swarms have come.

A man like Jesus giving life to the dead has come to the world,  
To gaze at him, people in droves have come.

His dignity is such as if Ahmad from the Cave of Saur,  
To teach the *Ansaar* of Medina has come.

Or like Ali Murtaza with his sword Zulfiqar,  
To slay the infidels has come.

Or like Hussain al-Mujtaba with his handsomeness and morals,  
To enlighten the gatherings of the righteous has come.

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6 *Nala-yi-Andalib*: Page 243.

7 *Najm-us-Saqib*: Vol. 2.



To show people the way to martyrdom,  
The example of Hussain has come.

Like the king of faith, Zain-ul-Abideen,  
A chief and leader of the righteous has come.

Like Imam Baqir – a sea full of knowledge,  
A mentor and leader has come.

Even for a people who rejected Imam Jaffer,  
Syed Ahmad in the likeness of Imam Jaffer has come.

With the wrath of Kazim, the Moses of the present time,  
To slay Pharaoh and his mischievous band, has come.

Like Imam Taqi and Imam Naqi is this Imam,  
An inheritor from all the righteous has come.

In this eulogy, Syed Ahmad Bareilvi has been likened to Joseph, Jesus, Moses and Ahmad. Then metaphorically and figuratively he has been called *Hazrat Ali*, *Imam Hassan*, *Imam Hussain*, *Imam Zainul Abedeen*, *Imam Bakir*, *Imam Jaffar*, *Hazrat Musa Kazim*, *Imam Taqi* and *Imam Naqi*.

Perhaps even more remarkable is a verse from an encomium of *Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ismail Shaheed*, a well recognized Muslim saint, in which he refers to *Hazrat Syed Ahmad* as *Khatam-ul-Mursaleen* (the Last of the Messengers) and to his followers as *Sahaba* (companions).<sup>8</sup>

One day Syed Ahmad with his companions came,  
As if the Last of Messengers and his Companions had come.

The term *Khatam-ul-Mursaleen* in its literal sense is used for the Holy Prophet to describe his position as the last Prophet, and the term *Sahaba* is generally used to describe his companions. The use of the terms in this verse of *Hazrat Ismail*, is, therefore, only figurative, and the terms have obviously been used because of the great similarity between the saints and prophets. Saints are not prophets, but have a resemblance to prophets.

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8 *Najm-us-Saqib*: Vol. 2.

### **The opinion of *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad on this issue**

I reproduce below certain passages from *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad's book *Tazkirah* (A Memoir). *Maulana* Azad was an eminent and well-recognized scholar of our time. While discussing the topic of *Mujaddids* (reformers), he explained the need for *Mujaddids* in the following way:<sup>9</sup>

Human systems, like the solar system, have their center and axis, but their particulars are not obvious to man. When it took mankind several centuries just to determine the center of the solar system, it is difficult to hazard a guess at how long it will take man to understand the human system and its center? However, it must be remembered that, in each era, there are a few men of God whose personality becomes the center of people's affection and attention, and the populace begins to gravitate around them, much like the stars gravitate around their center. Just like the motion of the planets of the solar system is solely for the purpose of orbiting around the sun, the existence of the masses is only for the purpose of circumambulating around these men of God - the center of humanity and the fountainhead of guidance. It is not only on this earth, but also in the heavens that such people are remembered.

He then describes the eminence of the *Mujaddid* in the following words:<sup>10</sup>

In brief, the best and the most exemplary group from among them is that of those very special persons, the purifiers of men, that God out of his Beneficence and Graciousness selects to perform the task of reformation. "Surely this is an affair of great resolution" (3:185). The light of their knowledge and their practice is taken from the niche of prophethood, and they walk in the path of and follow the program of prophets. Such special persons are called *Muhaddathin* in the *hadith* according to Bukhari. They are the object of and the proof of the truth of the *hadith* regarding *Mujaddids*. These *hadith* have been narrated from several sources and there can be no doubt about their text. *Mujaddids* are the ones

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9 *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad. *Tazkirah*. Pages 55 and 56.

10 *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad. *Tazkirah*. Pages 93-96.

around whom the system of furnishing true guidance to men is organized and strengthened, and they are the ones to whom the real inheritance of prophets is transferred. Decidedly, this station of calling people to the truth is most eminent and dignified. In each era or period there are but a few exalted souls that withstand the tide of trials and dangers to accomplish this greatest task of their periods - propagation of the truth. The necessary qualifications for this task are not just excellence in knowledge, scholarship and philosophy. Neither is it a life of asceticism and monotheism, nor a position of leadership in a popular university or religious institution. There is no dearth of religious scholars and famous individuals in their era either. Neither is it the case that in their era universities lie deserted and monasteries stand demolished. In fact, scholars and eminent individuals are often their contemporaries, and habitations appear to be filled with men of learning and leadership. However, none of these is granted the resolve to stand up and invite men to righteousness. Some are indifferent to their religion, and others are content in isolating themselves to seek their own salvation. There are those who on hearing the din of mischief on the street consider it sufficient to bolt their doors. Their feebleness of faith strikes them dumb and creates a paralysis of action. Others become enamored with materialism and compromise their faith by indulging in fraud and hypocrisy. In short there is a national paralysis in which people pursue their personal objectives, but are oblivious of the collective good.

Among the religious scholars there are two groups. One is deficient in knowledge and evil in practice. The other group is genuine but reclusive. The biggest act of virtue and piety for the latter group is not to falter themselves. They are content to stand steadfast on the shore while multitudes are drowning before them in a sea of ignorance and mischief. In other words, what was the lowest level of faith, fit only for the common and lazy people, becomes the pinnacle of aspiration for the spiritual elites and leaders of the nation. Sadly, there are none whose strength of faith is strong enough to forego personal conveniences and forge ahead with this mission. However, the character of the most righteous persons must be such that they shrink not from striving continuously to propagate the truth. They care not only for their own sal-

vation, but also for that of the Muslim nation; nay, for the salvation of the whole of mankind. Their courage and determination to forge ahead is not limited to saving themselves from drowning. Such an attitude is for the weak and helpless and there is no excellence or magnanimity in it. Instead, the drowning of each person is a source of mourning for them, and the stumbling of people is like their own death. When the whole world considers it an act of greatness to be safe on the shore, these persons announce that greatness is not to be safe on the shore, but to jump into the ocean to save others. When others are bolting their doors to save themselves from the mischief outside, these persons open their doors and show that greatness lies not in hiding behind closed doors but in stepping out in the open. They show by their example that the time to keep the doors open is precisely when tumult rages on the outside. This difference in attitude is the difference between greatness and mediocrity which was once explained in a Persian verse to Sheikh Shiraz by a sage who dwelt in the solitude of a shrine:

Although the tumult of life has passed me by,  
I still endeavor to pull the drowning man out of the river.

It is at times like these that the Divine tradition to establish the truth and repel evil manifests itself by producing a man of such greatness. Divine guidance motivates this pious and exemplary individual to invite people to the truth, and directs him to walk steadfastly in the footsteps of the prophets. He leaves his contemporary men of learning, scholars of religious institutions and professors of universities wallowing in their narrow-minded and feeble ways and he forges far ahead of them. He is propelled to spiritual eminence and the miraculous essence of perfection with all its wondrous miracles and greatness hastens to welcome him. It is as if the heaven descends for him, and the earth cannot help but elevate him. There is no height to which the courage of this person does not rise, and he considers even the most difficult task doable. The greatest and most difficult task is that of calling people to righteousness. This is a task to which the great authorities of the time did not even dare to aspire, leave alone the humble who did not even conceive of it as a possibility. But his courage and determination makes all this possible. Even as he achieves one pinnacle, he sets his sights to soar even higher.

Further on, *Maulana Azad* writes:<sup>11</sup>

The *Mujaddid* (reformer) and the giver of life to the nation is a special person, or a few special persons, who do not just call to truth, but take practical steps to implement the call. They blow the bugle to call the people with such force that its vibrations reverberate through the nation, and jolt the dead of fate to wakefulness in their graves, and they come out running. The scene is a manifestation of the Quranic verses, “They will go forth from their graves as if they were scattered locusts; hastening to the Invitor” (54:7-8) and “That is the day of coming forth” (50:42). This special status in eminence falls to the lot of just one, or perhaps a few, eminent individuals in each era.

There may be many who may claim to be involved in the propagation of truth, but their work fails into insignificance before the achievements of the supreme reformer. It is possible that from these claimants there may be some who may have special knowledge or expertise in a particular field, but it avails them not in the matter of inviting people to the truth. To be successful, they must bow down humbly before the *Mujaddid* and learn from him like the students of a school learn from their teacher. The keys to the treasures of munificence and blessings of that age are given to him. There is no blessing outside of the *Mujaddid's* circle of goodwill. If someone finds some partial truth through hearsay, chances are it will not be beneficial, and even if it is, the benefit is indirectly attributable to the *Mujaddid* because the blessings of the period are the result of his presence.

If some lover has spoken in the matter of love,  
He must have heard it from me and spoken the truth.

— Persian verse

*Maulana Azad* also discusses the fact that *Mujaddids* implement the program of prophets. It is to be expected, therefore, that they will bear a resemblance and similarity with some historic prophet. Replying to the objection about the need of a *Mujaddid*, when *Ulama* (religious scholars) abound, he writes:<sup>12</sup>

11 *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Tazkirah. Pages 108-109.*

12 *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Tazkirah. Pages 103-104.*

Even in periods that saw the advent of prophets, society was not completely devoid of reformers and pious persons. Why should it be necessary, therefore, for the society to be so devoid at the advent of *Mujaddids*, who are only the successors and followers of prophets? One should never forget the basic principle that the work of reforming a nation, educating it, and propagating the truth is the central notion of prophethood, which is the fountain-head of all such efforts. In whatever era, and to whatever extent this work is carried out, it draws inspiration from and is similar in nature to the work of prophets. Thus the source of all beneficence and felicity is the fountain of prophethood - "A fountain from which the servants of Allah drink, making it flow in abundance" (76:6). No reformer, religious revivalist, or caller to the truth can be successful unless he follows in the path of the prophets, and unless his actions are in consonance with the dictates of prophethood, the practice of the Prophet (*Sunnat*), and the wisdom of apostleship. The degree of success achieved in this work by an individual is approximately proportional to the intensity with which he emulates the above dictates. Just as the difference in rank and degree among the apostles differs based upon the conditions they confronted, the demands of their time, and the fact that "We made some to excel others" (2:253) so, too, among the followers and successors of prophets there are differences in status, success, blessings and conditions in line with "We made some to excel others" (2:253).

These men of Allah follow paths, based upon their ability and the dictates of their environment, which make them resemble one or the other of the prophets. By virtue of this resemblance, they develop a strong similarity with that prophet. Then there is the individual who pursues the perfection of Muhammad's prophethood. This is a status of perfection in which the excellent attributes that were scattered among the prophets were collected together into this grand prophethood. The induction into this status after hard striving is followed by the production of luster and beauty in many hues. Some writers, such as Sheikh Akbar, have expressed this reality in very literal phraseology but in the writings of others, who prefer to allegorize, it is expressed as a simile. This has resulted in altercations because of the use of different terminology under the two approaches. The reality, however, is

the same as expressed in the directive “Our expressions are many but Your goodness is one.” No writer uses a word outside its customary usage, and leaves its meaning hidden behind a veil, if controversy erupts.

Lift the veil so that it may be known,  
Whether friends and acquaintances worship someone else.  
—(Persian Verse)

When prophethood is the source of propagation and reform in the Muslim nation, and the way of calling people to faith must be lifted from its example, it follows that all movements of reviving and resuscitating the Divine laws must be pursued in the same form and manner. In fact, it would be appropriate to say that such movements must fashion themselves from the broad principles to minor details of actions in line with the corresponding conditions and stages followed by the prophets.

Explaining the glory and magnificence of the *Mujaddid* of the time, *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad writes:<sup>13</sup>

Many important persons put forward the excuse that the time is inappropriate or that resources are inadequate. However, the grand *Mujaddid* of the era proclaims that “If the time is inopportune, I will make it opportune; if there are no resources, I will craft them myself; if there is hostility on the earth, I will call on the heaven to help; if people don’t rally round me, then the angels would assist me; if people will not speak out, the stones would cry out. If there are none to walk with me, it is of no consequence, for the trees will run with me. If the enemies are too numerous, the bolts of lightening from the heavens are also limitless. If hurdles and difficulties abound, what has happened to the mountains and storms that they do not sweep them away?” The *Mujaddid* is not a product of the society that he should be subservient to it. He casts his glance on the earth, not to determine what he can get from it but to assess what is missing so that he may supply it. His nature is generous and beneficent, and not demanding and petitioning. The heaven is full of stars, but comets do not appear at all

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13 *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad. *Tazkirah*. Pages 248-249.

times. The situation of these great personalities is akin. They constitute a separate part of the Universe, and it is incorrect to compare the laws and injunctions to which they are subjected with the accustomed behavior on this earth. They are unique in their spiritual powers, their unlimited resources, their limitless progress, and their infinite ways. Allah's wisdom and beneficence selects them from amongst His creation. In accordance with the decree "Allah chooses whom He pleases for His mercy," (2:105) He bestows His special blessings and mercy on them in the form of miracles and wonders. In their affair with Allah, there is none who can equal them, nor can any plaintiff have the same access to Allah as they have.

### **This era is calling out for a great reformer**

In the above passages, *Maulana* Azad vividly portrays the grandeur and glory of the *Mujaddids* (reformers), and their peculiarities and excellence. He states that such persons only implement the program of prophets. In their conduct, they bear a relationship and similarity to some previous prophet. Before I expand on the theme that *Hazrat* Mirza claimed a relationship of similarity with Messiah, son of Mary, precisely in accordance with this rule, it is necessary to express *Maulana* Azad's anxiety about the search for a *Mujaddid* in the present time. In fact, he wrote these passages in the very time in which the advent of *Hazrat* Mirza took place. *Maulana* Azad initiates the discussion by first describing the ignorance and vices of the times in which previous reformers appeared. He then categorically states that the present period has far exceeded all previous eras in mischief, vice and ignorance. The objective conditions of this period, he states, were loudly crying out for the need of a reformer. He writes:<sup>14</sup>

The views that I have expressed on propagation, calling to righteousness, and the need for revival and reform of the Muslim nation, have been stray reflections garnered without any particular design. Perhaps this was not the most opportune place for such an exposition but, nevertheless, I did so in the hope that it may benefit those with a propensity to reform themselves ... perhaps the spiritual sight of someone may discern the reformer of the nation, and cause him to submit to his obedience and emulation.

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14 *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad. *Tazkirah*. Page 250.



Perhaps, some brave and resolute person may respond to the need of the hour, and pioneer the search for the man of the moment. This is the greatest need of this time, and the biggest search of this period.

I wish that the views of Maulana Azad about the grandeur and importance of recognizing the *Mujaddid* would motivate people to search and find the *Mujaddid* of their era. As the *Maulana* put it, if there is any work worth undertaking, this is it, and if there is any search worth conducting, this is it. It is a well observed fact that the more dire the need and the darker the hour, the greater is the status, majesty, wisdom and knowledge of the reformer that appears. *Maulana* Azad expresses the dire need of the hour and the dearth of men to address the problems in the following words:<sup>15</sup>

These narratives (about the dark times preceding the advent of previous reformers) were of eras that pale into insignificance compared to the circumstances of our times. Reflect on the darkness of our time and bemoan the dearth of men who can provide light. There is a dire need of workers in the realm of religion, but despite intense search, none can be found. Insignificant acts of service fetch large rewards, in accordance with the rule that wages skyrocket when supply is constrained. The doors of spiritual treasures have been flung open, and spiritual eminence and status are achievable with little striving. But is there anyone who will aspire to these riches and heights for which, in the days gone by, men of yearning had to shed anxious tears and make entreating prayers?

**This era has given rise to all the evils for the reformation of which the Messiah and Mahdi were promised**

In his book *Tazkirah*, *Maulana* Azad admits that the evil and turmoil predicted in the books of *Hadith* about a latter age are all prevalent in our times. The *Hadith* also predict the coming of a great reformer during this time. In addition, the *Maulana* also refutes the belief that the reformer's advent will take place only a few years before doomsday. I consider it necessary to quote from the *Maulana's* own words here:

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15 *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad. *Tazkirah*. Pages 250-251.

Each one of these prophecies has come to pass. "Islam initiated as something strange, and it would revert to its (old position) of being strange."<sup>16</sup> The period of wretchedness has started long since for Islam, and the prophecies of the *Hadith* have been fulfilled in their minutest details. This is the same era about which it has been foretold that there will be the advent of a great reformer. For those who want to wait further, their waiting is one of ignorance. The displeasure of God with the Jews; the straying of Christians from the right path; the idol-worshipping of the polytheists; and among the Muslims, the abundance of misguided religious leaders; the tribulations caused by the *Dajjal* (Antichrist or the Great Deceiver); the prevalence of innovations; the nonconformity with the *Sunnat* and the *Hadith*; dissensions like those of the Jews; transgressions like those of the Christians; doubts and suspicion like those of the Greeks; lechery like that of the Persians; evils of the iconic civilization; and worship of the graves, are all signs of the time. All of these evils have spread among the Muslims in their most intense and virulent form. The Muslims have followed step by step on the same path that led the "People of the Book" (Jews and Christians) astray. A *hadith* had predicted "If they (the People of the Book) enter the burrow of a lizard, you will enter it too,"<sup>17</sup> and such a time has come to pass. We are watching it with our own eyes. That time too has long come, about which the Holy Prophet said: "Some tribes of my *Ummat* will follow the polytheists,"<sup>18</sup> and "even worship idols,"<sup>19</sup> and "even worship Laat and Uzzah." The Holy Prophet had prophesied that a time would come when the Muslims will

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16 Imam Abu-l-Husain ibn Al-Hajjaj. *Sahih Muslim* (*Hadith*). *Kitab al-Iman* 1:65. The first part of the *hadith* implies that when Islam was first preached at Makkah, people shunned its teaching as strange and unfamiliar. The second part of the *hadith* is a prophecy, which implies that a time will come when Muslims will be so engrossed in other pursuits of life that a large majority of them would not even have a nodding acquaintance with Islam. This note is a summary of the interpretation of this *hadith* by Dr. Mahmoud Matraji.

17 *Al-Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih* (*Hadith*). *Kitab al-Itisam* 97:14.

18 Abu Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Yazid **ibn Majah** al-Qazwini. *Sunan* (*Hadith*). Vol. 3, *Kitab al-Fitan*, Book 36, Chapter 9.

19 Abu Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Yazid **ibn Majah** al-Qazwini. *Sunan* (*Hadith*). Vol. 3, *Kitab al-Fitan*, Book 36, Chapter 9.

become like the polytheists, and their claim of monotheism will ring hollow because they would have imbibed all the characteristics of the idol-worshippers. The world that had been set free from the worship of Laat and Uzzah would find these idols worshiped again. "You went back to where you started."<sup>20</sup> We are seeing these turmoil, which are like "the darkest part of the night"<sup>21</sup> with our own eyes. It has, in fact, come to pass that a person retires at night steeped in faith but loses it by the morning<sup>22</sup> and "people would sell their faith for the benefit of this world."<sup>23</sup> *Hazrat* Huzaifah had reported (the Holy Prophet as saying) that the ordeals would come one after the other like, "reeds in the weaving of a mat."<sup>24</sup> So these tribulations have engulfed us on all sides and more continue to befall. Even that time has come to pass when the righteous were to exclaim: "This tribulation would surely destroy me."<sup>25</sup> It is of a magnitude before which all other ordeals pale into insignificance, and they were to cry out "This is it! This is it!" That time, too, has long since come to pass when "Nations will fall on you one after another like starving persons fall upon a dish (of food)."<sup>26</sup> They will unite and overrun you, and they will invite each other to slay you, like hungry persons call to each other to partake from a dish of food. Has this call not been made? Has not one nation called to another in the manner of hungry vultures that call to one another on seeing a corpse? May our lives and souls be sacrificed for that Spirit of Truth (Holy Prophet) who had stated: "You will not be few that day, but your hearts will become indolent and you will be swept away like

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20 Ahmad **ibn Hanbal**. *Musnad (Hadith)*. Vol. 2 Page 262.

21 *Al-Jami* (Hadith), by Abu Isa Muhammad ibn Isa Tirmidhi. Vol II *Abwab al-Fitan*, Book 32 Chapter 28.

22 *Al-Jami* (Hadith), by Abu Isa Muhammad ibn Isa Tirmidhi. Vol II *Abwab al-Fitan*, Book 32 Chapter 28.

23 *Al-Jami* (Hadith), by Abu Isa Muhammad ibn Isa Tirmidhi. Vol II *Abwab al-Fitan*, Book 32 Chapter 28.

24 Imam Abu-l-Husain ibn Al-Hajjaj. ***Sahih Muslim*** (Hadith). Vol.1 *Kitab al-Iman*, Book 1 Chapter 65.

25 Abu Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Yazid **ibn Majah** al-Qazwini. *Sunan (Hadith)*. Book 36, Chapter 9.

26 **Abu Dawud** Sulaiman. *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)*. Vol 3, Chapter 307, page 330.

straws.”<sup>27</sup> He then explained the meaning of indolent as: “The love of the world, and aversion to death.”<sup>28</sup> How ignorant and spiritually blind are those who read these narrations, but think that they pertain to some future period that will come only a few years before doomsday, and that we have to wait several centuries for that period.<sup>29</sup>

*Maulana* Azad then chides the religious leaders by asking them how much longer will they wait for the fulfillment of these prophecies of the Holy Prophet, when, in fact, the prophecies have already come to pass, and the situation foretold by the Holy Prophet thirteen hundred years ago is staring them in the face. After chiding the religious leaders, he beautifully portrays the true reality in a short statement as follows:

Glory to Allah! The prophecies of the Truthful One are being fulfilled word for word. In fact, this ignorant waiting (by the Muslims for the grand reformer) is also part of the prophecy “You will follow the (wrong) ways of your predecessors”<sup>30</sup> and “My *Ummat* will do the exact same things that the Jews did.” The way of the Jews was that prophecy after prophecy was fulfilled, but they did not cease to wait. They kept saying: The time has not yet come, and to this day they are waiting for the Messiah, and their last kingship. “But time was prolonged for them, so their hearts hardened. And most of them are transgressors”(57:16).<sup>31</sup>

May God bless *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad for bringing to our attention the factual similarity between the behavior of Jews and the current situation with the Muslims. The Jews saw prophecy after prophecy fulfilled, but kept denying them, and insisting that the prophecies had yet to be fulfilled. The Holy Quran describes their condition in the verse: “...but time was prolonged for them, so their hearts hardened. And most of them are transgressors” (57:16). With the passage of time the Jews had become

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27 **Abu Dawud** Sulaiman. *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)*. Vol. 3, Chapter 307, page 330.

28 **Abu Dawud** Sulaiman. *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)*. Vol. 3, Chapter 307, page 330.

29 *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad. *Tazkirah*. Pages 264-266.

30 *Al –Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. *Kitab al-Ambiya* 60:50.

31 *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad. *Tazkirah*. Page 268.

wicked and sinful, and the situation was rife for the advent of a reformer. That reformer came to them in the form of Jesus, but the Jews were so fixated on temporal kingship that they could not accept the spiritual kingship of Jesus, and rejected it. Because of this rejection, the Jewish nation was disgraced and punished with adversity, but even so they still await the advent of the Messiah.

The condition of the Muslims is exactly the same. The Muslim religious leaders are seeing prophecy after prophecy of the Holy Prophet fulfilled, but still keep waiting. The Messiah that was promised for their reform came to them, but these lovers of worldly power and kingdom rejected his spiritual kingship.

### **Some statements of great saints about their similarity with Jesus**

Some past saints who had similarity with Jesus, son of Mary, have made statements expressing this similarity. Khawaja Muinuddin Chishti writes very clearly in a Persian verse as follows:

The Holy Spirit descends upon me incessantly,  
I do not say it, but I have become a second Messiah.

*Hazrat* Maulana Rume described beautifully in one of his poems how a perfectly righteous individual is transformed into Messiah, son of Mary. This Persian poem is to be found in his book *Masnawi*, Volume two. The core message of this poem is as follows:

Like the soul is related to the body;  
Like the sight is related to the eye;  
Like happiness is related to the kidney, and sorrow to the liver;  
Like intelligence is related to the mind and speech to the tongue;  
Like playfulness is related to the soul and valor to the arms;  
Man cannot understand how a non-material thing is related to a material one;  
Yet it cannot be denied that these relationships exist;  
Likewise a relationship develops between the whole (the Spirit of God) and the part (the spirit of man);  
Like a woman receives a small life germ from a man;  
Likewise the human intellect receives a pearl from Him;  
Then the soul of man becomes pregnant from this connection, like Mary;  
And from this pregnancy the Messiah is born;

Thus that man changes from the condition of Mary to the condition of the Messiah, son of Mary;  
 The Messiah that is made is not the Messiah of the past;  
 Instead this is a Messiah whose grandeur is beyond judgment;  
 Then when the spirit of man is impregnated by the Spirit of God;  
 That spirit impregnates thousands of other spirits in the world (i.e. many persons benefit from such an individual);  
 Then he creates a spiritual revolution in the world;  
 That should be called a spiritual resurrection;  
 It is grand beyond explanation.

This poem is really a commentary by *Hazrat* Maulana Rume on the last verse of Chapter *Tahrim*<sup>32</sup> in the Quran, in which God describes righteous persons by giving the example of two women. The first example is that of the Pharaoh's wife. She epitomizes that righteous person who is still not fully liberated from the captivity of his base desires, but like the Pharaoh's wife, keeps praying and exerting himself to be fully liberated. This is the stage of the "self-accusing soul" (*nafs al-lawwama*). The second example given is that of Mary. She epitomizes those righteous persons who have achieved the stage of the "soul that is at rest" (*nafs al-mutmainna*). Such persons totally extricate themselves from the confinement of their desires, and forsake all else for the sake of Allah. In this stage, the Holy Spirit descends upon them, and this is allegorically referred to as their conception in the manner of Jesus' conception. The meaning of this metaphor is that after the descent of the Holy Spirit, these righteous persons are elevated from the spiritual excellence of Mary to that of Jesus.

The subtle wisdom in the use of this terminology, unfortunately, belies the intelligence of some. When *Hazrat* Mirza wrote about himself

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32 The verse that gives the simile of a righteous person is as follows: "And Allah sets forth the example of those who believe - firstly, the wife of Pharaoh, when she said: My Lord, build for me a house with Thee in the Garden and deliver me from the iniquitous people. And, secondly, that of Mary, the daughter of *Amran*, who guarded her orifice (that is, she did not let Satan enter her through the fissures and orifices of her wishes and desires), so We breathed into him Our inspiration (that is, we honored him with our communion), and she accepted the truth of the words of her Lord and His Books, and she was of the obedient ones." (66:11-12).

The masculine gender is used in the Arabic word *fanfakhata*, (We breathed into him) precisely to establish a simile with the righteous person. Thus, God honors any righteous person who achieves this status with His communion. Such a person is not only a living testimony to the truth of revelation, but his existence is also a proof of the truth of the Books of God.

that he first became Mary, and then through conception by the Holy Spirit became Jesus, some persons, through their lack of understanding, made jest that *Hazrat Mirza*, a man, became a woman and then became pregnant. In so jesting, they do not realize that if there were anything wrong with using terminology that compares spiritual development with conception and birth of a new person, then the first person deserving of this ridicule would be *Maulana Rume*, a universally accepted saint of great repute. It is he who has so explicitly described this spiritual conception in his book *Masnavi*. In fact, this criticism (we seek Allah's refuge from saying so) can then also be made against the Quran that has likened the believers to women, and in particular has compared the perfect man to Mary and of breathing into him of His inspiration.

Initially, *Hazrat Mirza* had the impression that his similarity with Jesus was no different from that of some of the previous saints, and that it was no more than that. Accordingly, he expressed the same belief about Jesus in his book *Barahin Ahmadiyya* as was prevalent among Muslims of the time in general. This belief espoused that Jesus was bodily alive in heaven, and would descend back to earth in a later time. However, in 1890, it was clearly revealed to him that "Messiah the son of Mary has died, and We have made you the Messiah, son of Mary." It then suddenly dawned on him that the real Messiah, son of Mary, had died in the same era that saw his apostleship, and the Messiah, whose coming is prophesied in the *Hadith*, was none other than *Hazrat Mirza* himself. When *Hazrat Mirza* was vouchsafed this knowledge that his similarity with Jesus was not just like that of some previous saints, but that he had the distinction of being the Messiah who was promised to the Muslim nation, he first verified this revelation against the Quran and the *Hadith* before making any claim.

When he examined the Quran, he saw it filled with clear and cogent verses about the death of Jesus. It was also obvious from clear verses of the Quran that those who die do not come back to this life. As is clear from the verse "Then He withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death..." (39:42), Allah does not send back to this world those on whom He has passed the decree of death. Other verses of the Quran also clearly state that those who die will not return to this world. When *Hazrat Mirza* was satisfied from the Quran that Jesus, son of Mary, had died, and the dead do not come back to this world, he started researching the Jesus who was to come. He found, on the one hand, that the Quran draws attention to the similarity between Prophet Muhammad and Moses, as stated in Chapter *Muzzammil* in the verse "Surely We have sent to you a Messenger, a witness against you, as We sent a messenger to Pharaoh"

(73:15). Thus, it was in accordance with the revelation of the Quran that the Holy Prophet claimed to be the prophet promised in Deuteronomy 18:18, who was to be the “like” of Moses. On the other hand, the Quran had set up an interesting parallel between the successors of the Holy Prophet and those of Moses. The assurance given in the Quranic verse called *Istakhlaf*<sup>33</sup> to the Holy Prophet in respect of his successor rulers, whether temporal ones like kings or spiritual ones like the *Mujaddids*, promised that they would all be from the Muslim community and not imported from an alien nation (such as the Israelites), though there would be similarities with previous rulers. Accordingly, if the successors of the Holy Prophet had to have a likeness to the successors of any previous prophet, it is logical that it would be with the successors of Moses because of the Holy Prophet’s likeness to Moses. It follows that the prophecy made by the Holy Prophet regarding the coming of Jesus was made in respect of one of his successors who was given this name metaphorically and allegorically because of his strong likeness to Jesus.

### Simile and metaphor

All educated people know that allegory and metaphor are used to show the intensity of similarity and likeness. For example, when we want to praise the bravery of a person, we liken that person to a lion, and say that “he is brave like a lion.” However, when we want to express the intensity of the likeness even more, we say “he is a lion.” This is known as allegory or metaphor. Metaphor is really another form of simile. The difference is that in a metaphor we desire to express an intense similitude and likeness. For example, if we say “her face is like the moon,” that is a simile, but if we want to express greater intensity in the likeness, we say “her face is the moon.” The meaning in both the cases is the same, that is, her face is like the moon, but by eliminating the words that would make the statement into a simile, we have expressed the likeness more forcefully.

Likewise, if it had been stated about a spiritual successor that “A person will be born, who will be like the Son of Mary, or would have a resemblance with the Son of Mary,” the similitude would have been expressed, but not the intensity of the likeness. However, when this was said as “The son of Mary will come amongst you,” the meaning remains the same that a person resembling the son of Mary will come to you, but by eliminating

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33 English translation of the verse *Istakhlaf* is: “Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will make them rulers in the earth as He made those before them rulers, and that He will surely establish for them their religion, which He has chosen for them,...”(24:55).



the words that would express this as a simile, and just stating it as the son of Mary emphasizes the intensity of the likeness between them.

### **Son of Mary has been used as a metaphor**

It is certain that the mention of the son of Mary in the prophesies is only by way of metaphor because over thirty verses of the Quran clearly indicate the death of the Israelite Jesus, and it is established from decisive verses (*ayyat muhkamaat*) of the Quran that the dead do not return to this world. There is, therefore, no alternative but to accept that the son of Mary who has been prophesied to come cannot be the Israelite Jesus, but that, in accordance with the verse *Istakhlaf*, a successor of the Holy Prophet who was to come as a *Mujaddid* has been metaphorically named as the son of Mary.

### **The *hadith* of “your leader from among you”**

*Hazrat Mirza* had before him the evidence of the verse *Istakhlaf*, which clearly established that any person appointed for the majesty of the Holy Prophet’s religion, whether temporal or spiritual, will be a person from his *Ummat* (followers). He also had the *hadith* in *Sahih Bukhari*, which clearly stated about the prophesied son of Mary: “What will be your condition when the son of Mary will descend among you and he will be your *Imam* (spiritual leader) from among yourselves?”<sup>34</sup> In this *hadith*, the Holy Prophet has addressed his followers and said that they will be surprised by the advent of the son of Mary when they see that he is their spiritual leader, and he is an individual from among them. Some persons have interpreted the Arabic words ‘*imam-o-kum minkum*’ to mean that your *Imam* (spiritual leader) will be from among you, and so, the son of Mary will not be your *Imam*. However, this interpretation is untenable in view of another *hadith* from *Sahih Muslim* that states: “What will be your condition when the son of Mary will descend among you and he will be your *Imam*?”<sup>35</sup> Here, one should not be misled by the use of the Arabic word *nazool*, translated as ‘descend’ because the word is also used in the sense of sent, as is apparent from the use of this word in the Quran in respect of the Holy Prophet in the verse “Allah has indeed sent down (*anzala*) to you a Reminder - A Messenger who recites to you the clear messages of Allah”(65:11).

34 *Al –Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith). Kitab al-anbiya, 60:49.*

35 *Kitab al-Iman*

## Chapter

# 25

### ***FATH ISLAM (VICTORY OF ISLAM) AND TAUZIH MARAM (EXPLANATION OF OBJECTIVES)***

#### **Claim announced after verification from the Quran and the *Hadith***

After *Hazrat* Mirza had made sure that the Quran and the *Hadith* supported and verified his revelation declaring him as the Promised Messiah, he wrote two books about his claim in 1890 entitled *Fath Islam* and *Tauzih Maram*. These books were published in the beginning of 1891 from Ludhiana. However, before their publication, he made a public announcement through a poster on March 22, 1891, claiming that he was the Promised Messiah. In this poster, he declared that the Israelite Messiah, son of Mary, had died, and that the prophesy of the Holy Prophet regarding the coming of the son of Mary was really about a *Mujaddid* (reformer) from his *Ummat* (followers), and that he was that *Mujaddid*. The *Mujaddid* of this era, he claimed, had been named the son of Mary because of his great similarity and resemblance to the Messiah, son of Mary. The Messiah, son of Mary, had come as the successor of Moses fourteen hundred years after Moses just as the Promised Messiah had now come as the successor of the Holy Prophet fourteen hundred years after the Holy Prophet. However, an essential difference between the two situations was that while the Messiah, son of Mary, was a prophet, the Promised Messiah, by virtue of the cessation of prophethood, was only a *Mujaddid*, and a follower of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

This announcement, and the publication shortly thereafter of the

books *Fath Islam* and *Tauzih Maram*, initiated a storm of opposition. Many of his pledged disciples deserted him and others, who had not formally pledged but otherwise praised and paid tribute to him, now became his enemies. However, the claim of Messiah was not meant to enhance his status beyond that of *Mujaddid*. The name Messiah, son of Mary, was only figuratively given to the *Mujaddid* of the fourteenth century because of his great similarity and resemblance with the Israelite Messiah. In reality, *Hazrat Mirza* never claimed any station greater than that of a *Mujaddid*. He stated this quite unambiguously:<sup>1</sup>

It should be remembered that the claim of being the Promised Messiah is no greater than that of receiving revelation from Allah, and of being a *Mujaddid* appointed by Allah. Clearly, it is permissible for God to name a person who has achieved the status of communion with Him as the like of Jesus, or the like of Moses... Allah, the Glorious, can give any person, who achieves the most excellent status of discourse with Him and is appointed by Him for the service of religion, any name that is appropriate under the prevailing situation... The naming of the *Mujaddid* of this period as the Promised Messiah appears to be based on the consideration that the great task entrusted to him is that of crushing the dominance of Christianity, defending against their attacks, rebutting their anti-Quranic philosophy with powerful arguments and rationally convincing them about the truth of Islam. Because the biggest evil confronting Islam in this time is the philosophical attack and religious criticism by the Christians, and since this cannot be dissipated without the assistance of Allah, it has become necessary for God to send someone (for this purpose).

Islam is being challenged in this age not by one, but by all religions. To a lesser or greater extent, this has occurred in previous times as well but never before has Christianity, with all its might, launched such a determined attack to totally efface Islam. The previous major conflict between Islam and Christianity was that of the Crusades but it was more in the nature of a territorial war rather than a war to annihilate Islam itself. There is, thus, no historical precedent to the steps taken in this age to efface Islam, and to the limitless resources devoted for achieving this objective. Hordes of missionaries are active in Islamic countries, and free literature against Islam is being extensively distributed. All kinds of temptations are being offered to people

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1 *Ainah Kamalat Islam*: Page 340

to stray from their faith. As publicly stated by the Christian missionaries, these efforts are the result of a realization that, although there are many non-Christian faiths in the world, there is only one faith, namely Islam, which is anti-Christian. In other words, Islam is the only real competitor of Christianity. If the world events are viewed even with a cursory eye, it becomes obvious that, despite the many weaknesses of the Muslims, there is a great ongoing confrontation between the two religions.

Even though in terms of material resources it appears that Christianity has by far the upper hand, it is also plainly visible that the literature produced by *Hazrat Mirza* and his followers has, through reasoned arguments, totally destroyed the Christian faith. Time is presenting before us a strange spectacle in which we behold the principles of Islam gaining ground every day, while those of Christianity are retreating. However, this situation has evolved only recently. At the time when *Hazrat Mirza* stepped into the arena of religious conflict in the latter part of the nineteenth century, Christianity was at the pinnacle of its strength, and its attacks on Islam were vehement. It was for this reason that *Hazrat Mirza* devoted the major part of his time in confronting Christianity. During the period of his employment in Sialkot in 1864, *Hazrat Mirza* regularly debated Christian missionaries. Even afterwards, he kept publishing articles against Christianity. Thus, in a practical sense, *Hazrat Mirza's* disposition led him to confront Christianity many years before he actually claimed, in his announcement of being a *Mujaddid*, that he had a strong spiritual similarity to Jesus. *Hazrat Mirza* harbored a strong passion to spread the light of Islam in the Christian world. This passion kept growing with time and accounted for imparting this as the dominant theme of his party. *Hazrat Mirza* expressed this sentiment in a Persian verse as follows:

Because the light that God has granted me is for the nation of the  
Messiah,  
Hence expediency dictated that I be called son of Mary.

Thus, much before his claim, *Hazrat Mirza* was practically performing the work of the Promised Messiah. According to authentic *hadith* in the Bukhari, the two tasks of the Promised Messiah, stressed over all others, are the 'breaking of the cross' and the 'killing of the swine'.<sup>2</sup> Cross is the

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2 *Al-Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith). Kitab al-Anbiya, 60:49: "I swear by Him Who holds my life in His hand that the son of Mary will descend among you as Arbiter and Judge and shall break the Cross and kill the swine and postpone the war..."*

emblem of Christianity, and by the ‘breaking of the cross’ is meant the vanquishing of the Christian religion; *Hazrat* Mirza accomplished this task by putting forward decisive arguments against Christianity. Swine, in this *hadith*, refers to persons of filthy disposition who were responsible for making scurrilous accusations against Islam and its founder. *Hazrat* Mirza’s arguments effectively destroyed their machinations as well. This destruction by argument is in the spirit of the Quranic verse “That he who perished by clear argument might perish, and he who lived by clear argument might live” (8:42).

### **The optimal resolution of the apparent contradiction in the prophecy regarding the Promised Messiah**

Thus, *Hazrat* Mirza claimed only to be a *Mujaddid* (reformer) who had figuratively been accorded the title of ‘son of Mary’ because of the nature of his mission. However, the Muslim nation was so steeped in the idea of the ‘son of Mary’ being bodily alive in heaven, and in his return to earth in a later period, that the whole nation, whether scholars or illiterates, were shocked to find their erroneous beliefs challenged. In reality, *Hazrat* Mirza’s explanation best resolved the apparent contradiction in the prophecy of the Messiah’s second advent. On the one hand, the finality of prophethood barred the advent of another prophet after the Holy Prophet. On the other, the repeated prophecies in the Books of *Hadith* about the coming of the son of Mary could not be denied. This had resulted in an apparent contradiction: If Jesus, the prophet, came back into this world physically, it would effectively negate a cardinal principle of the Muslim faith that prophethood had ended with the Holy Prophet Muhammad. The only person to successfully explain this apparent contradiction was *Hazrat* Mirza, who declared that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was indeed the last of the prophets, and after him there would be no other prophet, neither a newly ordained one nor a prior one returning back to the earth, because the work for which prophets were raised had been completed. However, the work of renewal and revival of faith remained, and the need for this work would continue till the Day of Judgment. The son of Mary, who was a prophet, had died, as was evident from the Quran, and the son of Mary, who was prophesied to come, was merely a *Mujaddid* (reformer or revivalist), figuratively named ‘son of Mary’ because of certain reasons. This interpretation made eminent sense to persons of rational mind but to those not given to thinking about matters of faith, this was pure heresy in the light of the false beliefs that had become firmly rooted in their minds and hearts over a long period of time. *Hazrat* Mirza’s

rational explanation therefore found few takers and in general only incited the wrath of the clerics of Punjab and the rest of the country. In addition to raising a clamor, they resorted to their familiar weapon of declaring anybody who differed with them as a heretic and an infidel. Accordingly, they started issuing proclamations of heresy against *Hazrat Mirza*.

### **Opposition of *Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi***

*Hazrat Mirza's* claim did not sit well even with *Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi*, till then an ardent admirer of *Hazrat Mirza*. *Maulvi Batalvi* had raved about *Hazrat Mirza's* services to Islam while reviewing his book *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, and had accepted *Hazrat Mirza* as a recipient of Divine revelation. However, when it came to this claim, he turned against *Hazrat Mirza* and told him bluntly: "Before making the claim of being the Promised Messiah, you should at least have consulted me." *Hazrat Mirza* replied: "If I say God has revealed to me that I am the Promised Messiah only after consulting a cleric, then there can be no bigger liar and faithless person than me? I have made the claim as God has commanded me. What scope is there then for consulting with any other person?" *Maulvi Batalvi* was greatly offended by this response, and he became the first person to raise the standard of opposition against *Hazrat Mirza*. He boasted: "I raised him to a position of eminence, and now I shall make him fall from grace." However, it was *Maulvi Batalvi* who fell from grace, and what a fall it was; his name and reputation have been completely effaced by history. Glory be to Allah.

### **Opposition challenged to debate**

As the opposition gathered intensity and its insistence grew that Jesus was bodily alive in heaven, *Hazrat Mirza* challenged the religious leaders of Punjab, and the rest of India to debate him on this issue. *Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi* was the first person to accept the challenge. Details of this encounter will follow in a future chapter.

## Chapter

# 26

## SOJOURN IN LUDHIANA

Occasionally, *Hazrat* Mirza would temporarily shift his residence to towns where his father in law, Mir Nasir Nawab was posted. Amongst the places where he sojourned were Ambala Cantonment, Ludhiana, Patiala and Ferozepur Cantonment. In 1891, Mir Nasir Nawab was stationed in Ludhiana and lived in a house in Mohalla Iqbal Gunj. It was *Hazrat* Mirza's habit that, whenever he visited Ludhiana, he rented the palatial house of Shahzadawala Gohar next to the house of his father-in-law. The families of *Hazrat* Mirza and Mir Nasir Nawab then shifted into the rented house, which became the living quarters of the two families, while the house of Mir Nasir Nawab was used as a guesthouse for male visitors.

### **Commotion created by clerics**

The sojourn in Ludhiana in 1891 took place at a particularly stormy time. The clerics of Ludhiana under the tutelage of their three main leaders, Abdullah, Abdul Aziz and Muhammad Jawas, were up in arms against *Hazrat* Mirza. They spared no effort to incite the populace against him and succeeded in creating a hostile environment in which people hurled abuses at *Hazrat* Mirza and his family members when they ventured out, and resorted to other troublemaking in order to instigate a brawl. Besides the three above named clerics, there was yet another cleric by the name of Saadullah, a convert to Islam, who was overly active in defaming *Hazrat* Mirza. Every day, or every other day, he published flyers filled with abuses and false accusations of theft, sedition and other sundry charges against *Hazrat* Mirza.

One day, *Hazrat* Mirza's opponents pointed out his house to five foreigners from Kabul and told them that there lived in this house a person who abused all prophets and did not believe in Allah or the Holy Prophet. On hearing this, the foreigners were so enraged that they barged into *Hazrat* Mirza's house unannounced. It so happened that at that time, *Hazrat* Mirza was busy explaining the meaning of a particular verse of the Quran to a domestic servant who had asked for some clarification. When these men from Kabul heard the fascinating and insightful interpretation given by *Hazrat* Mirza, full of wisdom and truth, their rage turned into deep respect. They shook and kissed his hand, apologized profusely for their behavior and said: "We were misled by the people outside, but now we know the truth. Anybody who calls you a heretic is himself a heretic. If you are not a Muslim, then nobody is a Muslim." They then went out and confronted the people who had misled them. The reaction of these instigators was: "Mirza is a sorcerer. Whoever goes to confront him becomes his follower; so do not go near him."

Whenever *Hazrat* Mirza went out of the house, he completely ignored the invectives and the vexatious behavior of the people on the street, and proceeded on his way with silent dignity. He advised his friends to do likewise. Accordingly, the behavior of *Hazrat* Mirza's followers was very peaceful and exemplary in the face of severe provocation.

Another problematic cleric of Ludhiana was Shah Din, a disciple of *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad Gangohe and a great source of his strength. Initially, Shah Din publicly kept announcing his desire to debate *Hazrat* Mirza, but when *Hazrat* Mirza challenged the religious scholars to a debate through a public proclamation, these four clerics, namely Abdullah, Abdul Aziz, Muhammad and Shah Din, quietly disappeared from the public eye and did not respond. *Maulvi* Shah Din, who had previously been expressing his profound desire to debate *Hazrat* Mirza, fell totally silent. It was reported from reliable sources that *Maulvi* Shah Din wrote a letter to his mentor *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad Gangohe and sought his advice regarding the subject and strategy for a debate with *Hazrat* Mirza. Back came the reply: "It is not your place to debate with Mirza sahib. In the first instance, try to evade debating him, but if that is not possible and a debate becomes inevitable, do not, under any circumstance, debate him on the topic of whether the Messiah is dead or alive. There is no way that you, or anyone else, can handle this topic. It will be acceptable to debate him about the descent of the Messiah. This is an issue on which we can hold a discussion." However, *Maulvi* Shah Din considered it expedient to evade a debate altogether.



Another cleric of Ludhiana by the name of Mushtaq Ahmad Ambathavi also approached *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad Gangohe for advice on debating *Hazrat* Mirza, and was given the same advice as given to *Maulvi* Shah Din. In short, despite numerous consultations among the clerics in places like Ludhiana, Deoband, Saharanpur and Gangoh, none had the courage to pick up the gauntlet. However, in order to maintain their public image, they pretended as if they were willing to debate *Hazrat* Mirza but in reality they did their best to evade such an eventuality.

### ***Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad Gangohe evades debate**

*Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad Gangohe, a resident of Saharanpur district, was an eminent scholar of theology and the *Hadith*. He was a leader of the *Hanafi* sect in India and occupied the same status and position among this sect as *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain Dehlavi did among the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect. The province of Punjab was peppered with thousands of clerics who had been his pupils and looked up to him as their mentor. When none of the clerics of Ludhiana, Deoband, Saharanpur, and other places could muster up courage to debate *Hazrat* Mirza in response to his challenge, the clerics collectively approached *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad Gangohe and submitted: “Sir, you are an expert of the *Hadith*, an eminent scholar, a theologian, a jurist of Muslim law, and our spiritual guide, so please agree to debate Mirza sahib.” However, *Maulvi* Gangohe, the reputed scholar of the *Hadith*, steadfastly refused to engage in a debate; perhaps he was afraid that his scholarly reputation would be exposed.

*Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani, a devoted disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza, was the brother-in-law of *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad Gangohe. In his book, *Tazkirat-ul-Mahdi*, he has reported in great detail an interesting incident about his brother-in-law. A summary of this incident follows:

*Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani was visiting his mentor, *Hazrat* Mirza, in Ludhiana and broached him with the proposition: “Sir, the clerics have been unable to respond to your challenge personally, and now they are all looking up to *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad sahib to make a move. If you so direct, I can write to him to agree to a debate.” *Hazrat* Mirza replied: “If your letter will convince *Maulvi* sahib to debate with me, then by all means write to him, and convey to him the following message:

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani is in Ludhiana these days and claims to be the Promised Messiah. He says “Jesus has died and will not come back. I am the Jesus about whose coming the Muslim nation was foretold.” The other clerics are reluctant to

debate him. Since you are the leading cleric of the *Ahl-e Sunnat wal Jamaat* sect, there is a large section of the population that is looking up to you to dispel this notion. Kindly agree to debate Mirza sahib on this issue. Because you claim to be a *Sufi* and a scholar of the *Hadith*, it is incumbent upon you to debate and resolve this issue so that the truth may be distinguished from falsehood. In the absence of such a resolution, total confusion will prevail and searchers of truth will be unable to decide what to accept and what to reject. If scholars like you do not step forward to clarify this issue then who will? It is a sad commentary on the present state of affairs that some scholars, even more learned than you, have become his followers. Therefore, I urge you not to delay any more and to immediately consent to participate in a debate about whether Jesus is dead or alive because it is this issue that lies at the root of the controversy. If it is proven that Jesus is alive, then the claim of Mirza sahib is automatically falsified.

Accordingly, *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani addressed a letter to *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad, but before dispatching it, he showed the letter to *Hazrat* Mirza who also affixed his signature on it for authentication. When this letter reached *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad in Gangoh, it caused a furor. After some delay, *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad sent the following reply:

I regret that you have become involved with Mirza despite being from a family that was not in need of anything. I agree to a verbal debate with Mirza but a written debate is absolutely out of the question. The debate will take place before a public audience and the topic will be the “Descent of Jesus,” which is the real issue, and not on “Is Jesus dead or alive?” which is only a side issue.

When *Hazrat* Mirza saw this letter, he directed *Pir* Nomani to reply as follows:

It is not appropriate to focus on the wrong issue in a debate. The debate should be in writing so that even those who are not present in the audience can benefit from the discussions. A written debate keeps the focus on the right issue but it is easy to stray in a speech. The medium of speech is not fully reliable. Afterwards, it is sometimes difficult even to remember what one said. It is also entirely possible in a verbal debate that one may say something, and later

on deny having said it. In addition, after the speeches are over, the followers of each side distort the meaning to suit their own ends, and this creates further confusion in distinguishing between truth and falsehood. This cannot happen in a written debate because there is no possibility of embellishing or distorting the text.

You say that the topic of the debate should be the “Descent of Jesus,” which is the real issue. In this regard, I would like to ask how is it that the “Descent of Jesus” is the real issue and “Is Jesus dead or alive” a side issue? If it is proven that Jesus is alive, then his descent also stands proven. However, if his death is proven then his descent is automatically rebutted. One can only be appointed to a position if it is vacant. My claim is based on the death of Jesus. If it is proven that Jesus is alive, my claim is automatically falsified.

*Pir* Nomani wrote a letter as above and dispatched it to Gangoh after getting it authenticated with the signature of *Hazrat* Mirza. The response was the same:

The “Descent of Jesus” is the real issue. Mirza sahib is making the real issue into a side issue, and the side issue into the real issue. The debate will only be verbal and not in writing. Why should I even bother to get into this discussion?

On getting this reply, *Hazrat* Mirza stated:

These are only excuses to evade a debate. If he is not bothered to enter into this debate, then this means that he is not interested in faith and the religion of Islam. Is it not true that we have usurped their property and plundered their house, i.e. their faith? We have shown Jesus, peace be upon him, on whose descent from the heaven they had pinned great expectations, to be dead. We have interred in the earth him whom they consider to be sitting in the heaven. According to these clerics, we have thus created a schism in Islam, and are rounding up people to lead them astray. If they have any feelings for Islam, and any honor left as the protectors and guardians of Islam, why don't they set everything aside to come out and confront me? If somebody was to usurp their property, wealth and assets, would they not immediately go to court

and not rest until restitution had taken place? In fact, they would be willing to kill or be killed in such a situation. Then do they have even less sense of honor for religion than they do for the inferior wealth of this world? Write to *Maulvi* sahib that: “You claim to have divinely inspired knowledge of the Unseen; if your worldly knowledge does not assist you, why don’t you seek assistance from this divinely inspired knowledge of the Unseen? When would there be a more appropriate time to use this knowledge?”

*Pir* Nomani wrote a letter based upon the above text, and received a reply that reiterated:

I am willing to debate verbally. I will not enter into a written debate. I have received numerous requests from people in Lahore as well to have a debate. Hence, if Mirza desires, he can debate me verbally.

*Hazrat* Mirza then asked *Pir* Nomani to write:

I will compromise and accept a verbal debate, but on the condition that a person will transcribe your speech as you deliver it, and when I respond, my speech, too, will be transcribed by that person. Further, the other party or anyone else will not be allowed to interrupt until a speech has ended. The speeches of both the parties would be printed and published. The debate should be held in Lahore because Lahore is the center of learning, and intellectuals of all disciplines live there.

*Pir* Nomani wrote a letter based upon the above text, and received a reply in which *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad wrote:

The speeches will only be verbal, and no one will be permitted to write the text or make any other notes. Anyone from the audience who desires may interrupt a speech to clarify an issue. I will not go to Lahore. Mirza should come to Saharanpur, and I will come there, too.

On this *Hazrat* Mirza remarked:

It is so silly and cowardly not to provide your written text. There are many benefits of a written text, namely that those present and

those absent, and those near and those far, can all benefit in a like manner. A verbal speech is restricted only to those present. The spoken word dissipates in the air, and makes it difficult for a seeker of truth to reach the right conclusion. Why is *Maulvi* sahib so afraid of submitting his speech in writing? After all, I will also be submitting my speech in writing. Is it his intention to allow the audience to sidetrack the main issue through repeated interruptions so that the ensuing confusion may preclude a definitive conclusion on the issue? Saharanpur is not the kind of intellectual center that Lahore is. Lahore is a center of learning and knowledge. It is a cosmopolitan city where people of many different regions and religions reside. So write to *Maulvi* sahib to come to Lahore, and I will proceed there, too. I will bear the full expense of his travel and his stay in Lahore for the period of the debate. Saharanpur is not the home of intellectuals and there is nothing there except shouting, mischief and violence.

A letter based on the above text was written, authenticated by *Hazrat* Mirza, and dispatched to *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad in Gangoh. However, the same reply was received as before:

I will not go to Lahore. I can only come to Saharanpur, and a written debate is not acceptable to me. I will not write myself, nor can I permit someone else to write.

When *Hazrat* Mirza read this letter, he remarked:

Why have these people lost the power to make a decision, and to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and why has their intelligence deserted them? They teach the *Hadith* and are called scholars of the *Hadith*, but are bereft of understanding and sagacity. Write to them that:

We will come to Saharanpur for the debate. Please make necessary arrangements to hold the debate under the supervision of some British official. After the official arrangements have been made, please inform us and we will come on the appointed date. The debate will be publicized through a public notice so that men of learning and others interested in the debate can come to Saharanpur from Lahore and other places. If you had agreed to

come to Lahore, I would have taken on the responsibility of making the official arrangements. As far as the issue of written or verbal speeches is concerned, let us leave its resolution to the actual time of debate. Let us agree to abide by the wishes of the majority of the audience regardless of whether it is in favor of written speeches or verbal. However, I do urge you to debate, as people's expectations are riding with you.

As usual, *Pir* Nomani communicated the message to *Maulvi* Rashid by letter. In his reply, *Maulvi* Rashid refused to accept any responsibility for making arrangements in Saharanpur for the debate. After this, two or three more letters were dispatched to coax him into holding a debate but the letters went unanswered. There is a saying "One silence wards off hundreds of evils." By following this maxim, *Maulvi* Rashid was able to ward off the debate with *Hazrat* Mirza.

#### **Invitation to two dynastic religious leaders (*Sajjadah Nashin*)**

The incident summarized below is taken from *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani's book *Tazkirat-ul-Mahdi*:

It was during this period that two letters were addressed to two *Sajjadah Nashin*, explaining the claims of *Hazrat* Mirza and inviting them to join his movement. One of these letters was to Khawaja Allah Bux Taunsvi, who, because of his pride and arrogance, did not even bother to reply. Prior to this, *Hazrat* Mirza had sent him a copy of his book *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, and he had returned the book, mutilated and with an inscription on one side stating, "I am not in need of any *Mujaddid* or book; the guidance from the sayings of my ancestors is enough for me."

The other letter was addressed to Khawaja Shah Nizam-ud-Din Hussain Brailvi Chishti. His reply to *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani stated:

This humble person does not have the power to stand up against *Hazrat* Mirza sahib, either temporally or spiritually. This is the work of clerics and religious scholars. You, too, are a *Sufi*, a deeply religious person, and the grandson of two great religious leaders, and I have great regard for you. What Allah desires will come to pass, but I beg to be excused.

When *Hazrat* Mirza read this letter, he was very impressed by the humbleness of the writer.

### ***Hazrat* Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi**

Although there was no dearth of vicious and caustic opponents and evil minded clerics striving to counter *Hazrat* Mirza day and night with all their might, Allah was manifesting *Hazrat* Mirza's righteousness on those with goodness and integrity in their heart. One such person was Syed Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi, a renowned scholar of the Quran, the *Hadith*, and Islamic jurisprudence. In particular, his knowledge of the *Hadith* was exceptional, and for this reason, although he came from the town of Amroha, he was gainfully employed in Bhopal as an advisor to *Nawab* Siddique Hassan Khan. When a flyer in which *Hazrat* Mirza had announced his claim to be the Promised Messiah reached him, his pious soul immediately recognized it as the truth, and he became convinced that the claimant was a righteous person and an appointee of God. He had not even met *Hazrat* Mirza, but was so convinced of his genuineness that he wrote and published a pamphlet entitled *Alaam un Nas*, (Public Announcement) in support of *Hazrat* Mirza's claim. When that pamphlet reached *Hazrat* Mirza, *Pir* Nomani writes that *Hazrat* Mirza asked him to read the pamphlet to him. He read out the first few pages and subsequently two other readers, *Munshi* Zafar Ahmad of Kapurthala, and *Maulvi* Mahmood Hassan of Delhi completed the reading. After listening to the pamphlet in its entirety, *Hazrat* Mirza remarked:

The ideas expressed by *Maulvi* sahib in this article show a remarkable congruity with the ideas in my own writing. Look at his perception and the depth of his knowledge that he has understood that which God explained to me, although I have not yet published any book on the subject, neither put out a flyer laying down all the arguments, nor has he read any of my books on the subject; this cannot be but through the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

A short period after this, *Hazrat* Mirza received a revelation in Persian: "Muhammad Ahsan will have to leave his job for you," and so it transpired. Syed Muhammad Ahsan became the target of people's criticism in Bhopal because of the favorable light in which he had portrayed *Hazrat* Mirza in his writings. However, his righteous soul was not of the type to be cowed by evil. He resigned from service, and proceeded to join *Hazrat* Mirza in Qadian. *Hazrat* Mirza had so much confidence in his knowledge

and virtue that he declared him a *Mufti* i.e. one authorized to give a decree about contentious issues of religion, and said that any opinion expressed by him in a religious debate was to be construed as an opinion expressed by *Hazrat Mirza* himself.

### ***Maulvi Ghulam Nabi Khushabi***

*Maulvi Ghulam Nabi*, a resident of Khushab, came to Ludhiana and joined the crowded field of *Hazrat Mirza's* opponents. He was a great scholar and grammarian. On arrival in Ludhiana, he started delivering speeches in different parts of the town against *Hazrat Mirza*. Soon, his fame became well established in the city, and he came to be known for his knowledge and virtue. People welcomed him with open arms, and arranged for him to deliver speeches in different localities of the city. *Maulvi Ghulam Nabi* spared no effort in denouncing *Hazrat Mirza* and quoted extensively from the Quran and the *Hadith* to support his contention that Jesus was alive.

One day, *Maulvi Ghulam Nabi* delivered a speech in the neighborhood in which *Hazrat Mirza* resided. Thousands of people had gathered to hear him and he delighted his audience with his knowledge and eloquence. Their cheers and applause reverberated throughout the neighborhood and shouts of "Hooray!" and "Well done!" mixed with the noise and clamor of the audience could be heard far and wide. All the clerics of Ludhiana were in attendance at this gathering and vociferously lavished praise on *Maulvi Ghulam Nabi* for his eloquence and knowledge. Among those present were *Maulvi Muhammad Hussain*, *Maulvi Shah Din*, *Maulvi Abdul Aziz*, *Maulvi Muhammad* and *Maulvi Abdullah*. There were also some clerics from out of town who had heard of the fame, knowledge and ability of *Maulvi Ghulam Nabi* and had made the trip especially to listen to him. The rest of the incident is reported in the words of *Pir Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani* who was an eyewitness:

The clamor and din of the audience as they cheered this special speech was clearly audible to us. I sat in the guesthouse of *Hazrat Mirza's* residence along with four or five other men and silently listened to the din outside. Our hearts were vexed, but there was nothing we could do. *Hazrat Mirza* was in the family section of the residence, working on the manuscript of *Izala Auham*. After *Maulvi Ghulam Nabi* had finished his vitriolic speech, he left the meeting place with his crony clerics and a huge crowd trailed them. About this time, *Hazrat Mirza* stepped out on the street on



his way to the guesthouse, and encountered *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi and his party coming from the opposite direction. *Hazrat* Mirza took the initiative and greeted *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi with *assalam alaikum*, and extended his hand for a handshake. *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi replied *wa alaikum assalam*, and shook hands with *Hazrat* Mirza. It is difficult to fathom the spiritual magnetism that must have emanated from that handshake because *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi forthwith went into a stupor, and with his hand clasped in *Hazrat* Mirza's hand accompanied him into the guesthouse. Once inside, he sat down respectfully on the floor in front of *Hazrat* Mirza.

Outside, the clerics and the crowd stood astounded at what had happened, not knowing what to make of it. They started muttering different opinions. One said "*Maulvi* sahib has shown poor judgment in following Mirza into the house;" another said "Mirza has this awe-inspiring personality that completely overawed *Maulvi* sahib;" yet another said "Mirza is very wealthy and clerics are greedy, Mirza must have tempted him with some money;" another said "Mirza has made such a big claim. It is probably not without substance. This is not the claim of an ordinary person." The clerics expressed their annoyance at such lack of faith, and unanimously proclaimed: "*Maulvi* sahib has gone in to take care of Mirza. Just wait and see how he pummels him. *Maulvi* sahib is in no way inferior to Mirza in knowledge. He is not greedy; he is a man of means. He is knowledgeable and virtuous. He will come back after putting Mirza in his place."

Inside, the scene was different. *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi sat in silent contemplation before *Hazrat* Mirza. Finally, when he spoke, he enquired: "Sir! From where did you find out about the death of the Messiah?" *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "I found it in the Quran, the *Hadith*, and the sayings of the saintly scholars." *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi then asked: "Sir, can you quote any verse of the Quran that speaks of the Messiah's death?" *Hazrat* Mirza opened the Quran in two places and book-marked the relevant pages before passing the Quran to *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi. The first marking was on the verse from *Al 'Imran*: "When Allah said: O Jesus, I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence..." (3:55) The second marking was on the verse from the chapter *Māi'da*: "I said to them naught save as thou didst command me: Serve Allah, My

Lord and your Lord; and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die Thou wast the Watcher over them” (5:117). *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi was amazed to see the two verses, but instantly replied: “But the Quran also has *yuwaffi-him ujūra-hum*, (3:57) then what would be its meaning?” *Hazrat* Mirza said: “In the verses that I have submitted to you, *tawaffā* is of the measure of *tafa‘ ‘ala* which, when God is the subject, and the soul is the object, can have no other meaning than death. In the verse you have quoted it is of the measure of *taf‘il*, so its infinitive (*masdar*) is *tawfih*, which means *to give fully*. The measures are different in the two places. You are an expert in grammar; do reflect on my explanation.”

*Maulvi* Nabi was again lost in contemplation. After some time, he raised his head and said: “Please excuse me. I was wrong. What you are saying is absolutely correct. The Quran supports your explanation.” *Hazrat* Mirza said: “If the Quran supports me, who do you support?” *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi was so moved that he began to cry, and said: “This sinner is with you, Sir.” He then took the pledge at the hands of *Hazrat* Mirza.

While this was transpiring inside the house, the people outside had their own ideas about the way things were progressing. The general consensus was “Mirza has been trapped badly. *Maulvi* sahib will surely make him recant today.” After a long period had elapsed without news, the waiting crowd became restless and began calling out to *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi to come out. At first, *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi ignored these calls, but when the insistence of the crowd grew, he sent a messenger to tell them: “You can disperse. I have seen and found the truth. If you desire it, too, come on in and be penitent with me, and by so doing vindicate yourselves in the eyes of God. Accept this religious leader. How can I stay away from this truthful spiritual guide, who was prophesied by the Holy Prophet, and to whom he sent his salutations? That *hadith* is ‘Whoever amongst you finds Jesus son of Mary should give him my salutation.’”<sup>1</sup> After reciting this *hadith*, he turned towards *Hazrat* Mirza and said: “I convey the salutations of the

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1 1 *Al-Shaikh* Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttaqi. *Kanaz al-Ummal fi Sunani-l-Aqwal wa-l-Afal (Hadith)*. No. 14 page 337, published 1979.

Holy Prophet to you, *assalam alaikum*.” *Hazrat* Mirza replied in a voice and tone that was deeply spiritual, “*Wa alaikum assalam*.” *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi was so moved by emotions that he began to tremble. It was a scene that had to be witnessed. *Hazrat* Mirza’s blessed countenance wore a serene look, and the people in the room were in a state of joyful exultation.

Then *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi sent a messenger to the people gathered outside to tell them: “The Israelite Messiah, son of Mary, has died. The one who had to come has come. You can either disperse or come inside and fall down at his feet, like me.” When this message was conveyed to the clerics and the common folk assembled outside, they raised slogans of “Infidel! Infidel!” and shouted other abuses before dispersing.

Those who claimed “Mirza is a sorcerer,” felt vindicated. The clerics felt humiliated, but tried to play down their debacle by saying “Ghulam Nabi is a fool; he has no intelligence. If Mirza ever entangled with us, we will surely defeat him.” After this, the clerics first tried to entice *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi back to their fold. They sent him a message inviting him to talk over a few things with them, but he ignored this message. When this did not succeed, they challenged *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi to a debate, which he instantly accepted. However, this was just a hoax, and no one came forward as a challenger. *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi then issued a public announcement inviting any person who claimed to be a scholar, to debate him, but none accepted. His next step was to issue yet another public announcement offering a reward to any person who presented clear verses from the Holy Quran, or sound *hadith* evidencing that Jesus was alive. The reward was set at ten rupees per verse or *hadith*, and the reward money for this purpose, he announced, would be deposited beforehand in a bank. Even after this second proclamation, no one came forward to pick up the gauntlet.

*Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi became a devoted disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza, and was greatly enamored by his mentor. His eloquence was now used to support *Hazrat* Mirza and he was ever ready to discuss any query or debate any criticism. He was happiest when in the presence of *Hazrat* Mirza, and listening intently to every word he

said. When *Hazrat* Mirza retired to the family quarters, *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi became restless and would cry and seek forgiveness from Allah for opposing *Hazrat* Mirza, and for making rude statements about him. He found peace again only when *Hazrat* Mirza came out of the family quarters and he could be with him.

*Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi was employed elsewhere. A letter arrived from his employer warning him that unless he returned immediately and resumed duty, his services would be terminated. *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi did not pay any attention to this letter and said: "I have taken a pledge to give precedence to religion over the life of this world. I do not care if I lose my job, for I consider it a great blessing to be in the company of the *Imam* (spiritual guide)." When *Hazrat* Mirza got to know of this, he advised him: "To voluntarily leave one's employment is to be ungrateful to Allah. However, if Allah brings about circumstances in which a person's employment is involuntarily terminated, then the situation is different. You should return to your employment right now. Later, you can take leave and return, or Allah may create some other opportunity for you." After receiving this advice, *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi, willingly or unwillingly, agreed to return to his place of employment. When he was departing, *Hazrat* Mirza remarked: "*Maulvi* sahib does not wish to leave - this is what is meant by giving preference to religion over this world." *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi then bid farewell and left, but after a few hours, he was seen returning happily, with his bundle of clothes tucked under his arm. Everyone was amazed. *Hazrat* Mirza was amused and started to laugh. *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi said: "When I reached the station, the train had already left. People advised me to wait at the station for the next train, but I thought that instead of waiting at the station, why don't I return and spend these hours in the company of Your Holiness?" *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "*Jazak Allah* (May Allah reward you for this). Allah does not waste the reward of anyone. There must be some Divine wisdom in this." While this conversation was going on, the mailman arrived with the mail. It contained a letter for *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi from his employer. The letter asked him to either return to his duty immediately or, if he could not do so for some reason, then to apply formally for leave. *Hazrat* Mirza remarked: "This was the Divine wisdom in your missing the train. Now you can apply for leave."

*Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi applied for leave and it was approved. Thus *Maulvi* Ghulam Nabi was able to stay for an extended period of time and benefit from the company of *Hazrat* Mirza.

### ***Nawab* Ali Muhammad Khan of Jhajjar**

*Nawab* Ali Muhammad Khan had been the ruler of Jhajjar, a small state in India, but had lost his fiefdom when he sided with the mutineers against the British in the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He now lived in Ludhiana, where he enjoyed a considerable reputation as a scholar of Islamic law and mysticism. In particular, his knowledge of mysticism was so superb that *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani wrote about him: "Of the thousands of mystics that I have had the chance to meet during my life, there is none who has the same level of knowledge and expertise as *Nawab* Ali Muhammad Khan." The *Nawab* was devoted to all pious men of God, and greatly loved the Holy Prophet, on whom he continuously invoked Allah's blessings by reciting the *Darud* (the prayer invoking the blessings of Allah on the Holy Prophet) whenever not otherwise engaged. His knowledge and expertise of mysticism enamored him to *Hazrat* Mirza as well and he frequently expressed his admiration by stating: "I have not seen a *Sufi* or saint of *Hazrat* Mirza sahib's caliber. Not only are his writings filled with guidance and light, but his face itself radiates spirituality." He was a frequent visitor at *Hazrat* Mirza's residence and *Hazrat* Mirza would return his calls occasionally.

*Nawab* Ali Muhammad Khan died during *Hazrat* Mirza's sojourn in Ludhiana. As he lay on his deathbed, he requested *Hazrat* Mirza, through a messenger, to pray for his salvation. As the time of his demise neared, his requests intensified to the extent that a messenger arrived every half hour bearing his plea for prayers of salvation. In these messages, he told *Hazrat* Mirza: "I am very happy that in my last days you are residing in Ludhiana, as this is affording me the opportunity to ask you to pray for my salvation." He also requested that *Hazrat* Mirza lead his funeral prayer but when he died, the opposing clerics of Ludhiana sent messages to his sons and relatives that they would not attend the burial if *Hazrat* Mirza led the funeral prayer. The clerics also threatened to boycott any future funerals in their family and to declare them as heretics. This blackmail succeeded in frightening *Nawab* Ali Muhammad Khan's family and they did not ask *Hazrat* Mirza to participate in the burial rites. However, *Hazrat* Mirza offered the funeral prayer in absentia at his house and prayed long and intensely for the salvation of the deceased.

*Nawab* Ali Muhammad Khan had recorded in his pocket diary a per-

sonal testimonial to the truth of Hazrat Mirza's prophecy, which he frequently shared with his friends. *Nawab* Ali Muhammad Khan had constructed a market in Ludhiana for the purpose of trading and storing grain but a rival trading facility opened nearby and took away all his business. Understandably, he was greatly perturbed by this turn of events because his enterprise was in danger of financial collapse. He wrote a letter to *Hazrat* Mirza in Qadian, detailing the problem and asking him to pray in the matter. No sooner had the letter left Ludhiana, and many days before it reached Qadian, Allah informed *Hazrat* Mirza about the text of the letter in a vision, and gave him the glad tidings that the problem would be resolved for a period of time, and *Nawab* Ali Muhammad Khan would find relief from his worries. Immediately, *Hazrat* Mirza dispatched a letter to *Nawab* Ali Muhammad Khan informing him that, though his letter had not reached him yet and perhaps would do so soon, he had been made aware that the letter referred to the problem of the market and Allah had given him the glad tidings as noted above. When *Nawab* Ali Muhammad Khan compared the date he had mailed his letter with the dated postal stamp on *Hazrat* Mirza's letter from Qadian, he was stunned. His faith in the genuineness of *Hazrat* Mirza intensified even more as things unfolded as prophesied. He wrote the whole incident in his pocket diary, and took great pleasure in reminiscing about it with his friends as this incident had renewed and revived his faith.

### **A letter from Lahore**

One day, Hazrat Mirza received a letter from a person in Lahore. The letter stated: "What do you have to lose if you agree to believe that Jesus is alive?" After reading this letter, *Hazrat* Mirza dictated the following reply: "What do you have to lose by accepting that Jesus is dead? By accepting Jesus as alive, one has to negate the Quran, and be disobedient to Allah. This also implies disobedience to the Holy Prophet, negation of the finality of prophethood, and hence, also his disrespect. By believing that Jesus is dead, Allah is pleased, the Holy Prophet is happy, and the Quran is verified as true. It is not right for you to ask us to accept Jesus as alive unless you first deny the finality of prophethood of the Holy Prophet; then only can you ask us to believe that Jesus is alive. In this way, you come half way to disbelief, and only then can you try to make us come the other half." It was a long time before the correspondent replied: "After receiving your letter, I have started investigating whether Jesus is, in fact, dead, or is there some way that he could be alive."

### Ghaznavis' visit to Ludhiana

Several members of the Ghaznavi family came to Ludhiana from Amritsar one day to meet with Hazrat Mirza. One of them was probably the son or nephew of *Maulvi* Abdullah Jabbar Ghaznavi of Amritsar. He raised some issues with *Hazrat* Mirza, but was totally left speechless by the replies. One of the interesting questions this group asked was: "How can we abandon the *hadith* which clearly state that 'Jesus will descend'?" In reply to this *Hazrat* Mirza pointed out:

The Quran uses the words *mutawaffeqah* (cause thee to die) and *falamma tawaffaytani* (when Thou didst cause me to die) in respect of Jesus, which clearly refer to his death. And *rafayoka allayya* (exalt thee in My presence) comes after *mutawaffeqah* (cause thee to die). There is no reference to the return of Jesus anywhere (in the Quran), nor is there any verse that indicates he is alive; all the (Quranic) verses (on the subject) show him to be dead. Even the *hadith* do not mention anywhere that Jesus is alive. On the contrary, the *hadith* show that the Holy Prophet saw Jesus and John together during the *Mairaj* (ascension of the Holy Prophet to heaven),<sup>2</sup> which clearly shows that he found Jesus in the same place where the spirits of previous prophets reside. It is a necessary corollary, therefore, that it was the spirit of Jesus which was with the spirit of John. How can we forsake the Quran and these *hadith*? As regards the *hadith* that speak of the descent of Jesus, these are subject to interpretation in the light of the verses of the Quran, the spiritual observations made by the Holy Prophet, and other *hadith*. The clear and decisive verses of the Quran, and the *hadith*, which are in consonance with the Quran, cannot be interpreted in the light of these other *hadith* about the descent of Jesus.

The visitors retorted: "Since the Books of *Hadith* explain the meaning of the Quran, it is the Quran that should be interpreted in light of the Books of *Hadith*; the Books of *Hadith* are detailed and comprehensive, while the Quran is abridged and concise." The irrationality of the reply provoked an amused mirth from *Hazrat* Mirza and others present at the time. *Hazrat* Mirza responded: "You consider it permissible to interpret the Quran

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2 Shaikh Wali al-Din Muhammad Abd Allah. *Mishkat al-Masabih* (Hadith). Page 537 line 7.

which is indisputable and conclusive, while you consider it impermissible to interpret the *hadith* in favor of the Quran, although the *Hadith* is conjectural and has reached us through many narrators. And Allah says: ‘Surely conjecture will not avail aught against the Truth’”(10:36). After this reply, they had no further arguments left in their repertoire and decided to leave, but *Hazrat Mirza*’s graciousness did not allow him to let them depart without fulfilling the normal dictates of hospitality. He had asked for tea and biscuits to be served to his visitors but in view of their abrupt decision to depart, he went into the family quarters himself to expedite the service and came back bearing the tea. His guests were, however, in a foul mood and refused to drink the tea despite *Hazrat Mirza*’s insistence. *Hazrat Mirza* said: “Why are you declining to partake of something which is permissible?” But they paid no heed and departed.

*Maulana Muhammad Ali* narrates another incident that typifies the uncouth manners of the Ghaznavi clan. Once *Maulana Nur-ud-Din*’s son-in-law, *Maulvi Abdul Wahid Ghaznavi*, came to visit him in Qadian and *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* persuaded him to call upon *Hazrat Mirza* with him. During their visit, the Ghaznavi behaved strangely; he did not respond at all to *Hazrat Mirza*’s attempts to make polite conversation but instead stared at him with frightened eyes and kept muttering something under his breath and then blowing on himself. He kept up this behavior for the entire period he was sitting face to face with *Hazrat Mirza*. After they had departed, *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* asked him: “What were you muttering?” He replied: “The *hadith* state that the recitation of the first ten verses of the chapter ‘The Cave’ (Al Kahf) provides protection from the influence of the Antichrist (*Dajjal*).<sup>3</sup> Since *Mirza sahib* is the Antichrist, I was reciting these verses to ward off his influence.” *Maulvi Nur-ud-Din* could not hold back his amusement and burst out laughing.

His amusement was understandable because the incident highlighted the duplicity of *Hazrat Mirza*’s opponents. The signs of the Antichrist (*Dajjal*) mentioned in the *hadith* are well known and include the special characteristics of his donkey,<sup>4</sup> the fact that the Antichrist will be blind in one eye,<sup>5</sup> the Arabic letters *kaf fay ray* will be engraved on his forehead<sup>6</sup>

3 *Imam Abu-l-Husain ibn Al-Hajjaj. Sahih Muslim (Hadith)*. 6:42, and Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith) by Abu Dawud Sulaiman 36:12.

4 Shaikh Wali al-Din Muhammad Abd Allah. *Mishkat al-Masabih* (Hadith). Chapter al-Dajjal, and Kanaz al-Ummal fi Sunani-l-Aqwal wa-l-Afal (Hadith), by Al-Shaikh Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttaqi, Vol. 7, hadith no. 2998.

5, 6 See following page.



and many others. Even the Christian missionaries were aware of these signs and when *Hazrat* Mirza identified them as the Antichrist of the *hadith*, they demanded an explanation in the light of these signs. *Hazrat* Mirza's opponents, too, knew these signs well and harped day and night on them and believed in their literal interpretation, but when they accused him of being the Antichrist, they chose to forget all these signs of the Antichrist. What else can one say but that these people are *mutaf-fa-feen*<sup>7</sup> (cheaters) whose measure when they give is different from the one when they receive?

### ***Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi arrives in Ludhiana**

The highlight of the stay in Ludhiana was the debate with *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi. It began on July 20, 1891, and continued for several days. The circumstances leading up to the debate were as follows:

After his arrival in Ludhiana, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi began to boast: "I have come to Ludhiana in search of Mirza. He is my prey and he will not escape me." Accordingly, he sent a message to *Hazrat* Mirza challenging him to a debate. Some friends of *Hazrat* Mirza advised him: "Sir, you are a man of God and *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi is a venomous snake. He is a wily person and has defeated many *Hanafi* clerics in debates. It is advisable that you do not debate him. It is not the place of men of God to enter into discussion and debate."

*Hazrat* Mirza replied: "*Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain has not yet encountered a man of God. Let the debate take place. God willing, the true extent of his knowledge will be fully revealed, and he will get a taste of what is meant by a real debate. So far, he has encountered only the poor *Mullahs*, and has not met any real man of God with a spiritual insight. Pride has swelled his head, and he will not rest until this swelling is reduced." He was asked: "What will be the topic of the debate?" *Hazrat*

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5 *Al –Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. 77:68.

6 *Al –Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. 93:27

7 [Translator's Note] Arabic term used is found in the Holy Quran 83:1. The text of the first three verses of Chapter 83 is as follows:

Woe to the cheaters!

Who, when they take the measure (of their dues) from men, take it fully,

And when they measure out to others or weigh out for them, they give less than is due.

Mirza replied: "The debate will be about the death of the Messiah because this is the real issue." Someone submitted: "What if he does not agree to debate about the death of the Messiah? It is rumored that he does not want to touch this issue, but instead wants to debate about the descent of the Messiah." *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "The descent of the Messiah is not controversial. I, too, believe in the descent of the Messiah. Unless I believe in the descent of the Messiah, how can I claim to be the Promised Messiah? Without this belief, both my claim and the foundation on which it is based will be falsified. Even if he does not agree to debate the death of the Messiah, and insists instead on the descent of the Messiah, there is no way that the death of the Messiah can be kept out of the discussion. Let the debate with *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain take place, then we shall see."

### ***Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din takes the pledge**

The day after the above conversation, *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din and two or three other people were gathered in the house of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi when *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din asked: "Is there a verse in the Quran that shows the Messiah to be alive? Mirza insists that such a verse be produced as evidence." *Maulvi* Batalvi replied: "There are twenty such verses." *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din queried: "Then should I go and confront Mirza?" *Maulvi* Batalvi replied: "Yes, you can go."

*Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din hurried to *Hazrat* Mirza's house. When he arrived there, he found *Hazrat* Mirza sitting in the company of a large number of his friends. *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din wasted no time in coming to the point: "Sir Mirza, what is your proof that Jesus has died?" *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "The Quran is our proof." *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din then pressed his point: "Will you concede that Jesus is alive if the Quran has a verse showing that he is alive?" *Hazrat* Mirza responded: "Certainly, I will concede." Whereupon, *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din said: "I will bring you not just one or two, but twenty verses showing that Jesus is alive." *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "Leave alone twenty, even if you bring me one verse that shows Jesus is alive, I will accept and abide by it, and will recant my claim of being the Promised Messiah. However, *Maulvi* sahib, let me make it quite clear to you that neither you, nor anyone else, can find even a single verse supporting the view that Jesus is alive." *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din sought further assurance; "Look here! You must abide by your word. You are asking for one verse, but I will bring you twenty." *Hazrat* Mirza reassured him: "Even if you bring one verse, you win, and I loose." *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din was so excited and happy that he left his shoes and shawl at *Hazrat* Mirza's residence and ran barefooted to where his fellow

clerics were gathered. He entered upon them, and announced: "I have defeated Mirza." The clerics congratulated him and then asked: "In what way have you defeated Mirza?" *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din replied: "I have obtained Mirza's consent to recant his claim if I produce the verses that show Jesus to be alive. So make haste; pick out from the Quran those twenty verses and give them to me." *Maulvi* Batalvi asked: "Didn't you present the *hadith*?" He replied: "The *hadith* were not under discussion and, anyways, the Quran is supreme." On hearing this, *Maulvi* Batalvi stood up in a state of agitation, snatched the turban from his head and threw it down, and said: "You have not come after defeating Mirza, but after defeating us, and you have put us to shame. For a long time, I have been pulling Mirza towards the *hadith*, and he has been pulling me towards the Quran. If there was any verse in the Quran about the Messiah being alive, we would have produced it long ago. For this reason, we have been emphasizing the *hadith* because we cannot succeed with the help of the Quran. The Quran vindicates Mirza's claim."<sup>8</sup>

*Maulvi* Batalvi's outburst lifted the veil from *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din's eyes and he retorted: "When the Quran does not support your contention, why did you make such a claim? How can I go back and face Mirza? If the Holy Quran is not with you, and does not support your contention, but is with Mirza and supports his contention, then I, too, cannot side with you. Given these facts, I will now support Mirza. This is not a worldly matter but a matter of religion. Whatever side the Quran is on, I will be on that side, too."

*Maulvi* Batalvi addressed another cleric sitting next to him: "*Maulvi* sahib, this Nizam-ud-Din lacks intelligence. Show him the verse by Abu Hurairah." *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din interjected: "I am not interested in seeing the verse by Abu Hurairah. I will only be satisfied with a verse revealed by Allah." Both the clerics tried to convince him: "O Stupid! The verse has been revealed by Allah, but has been interpreted by Abu Hurairah." *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din responded: "Interpretation is only the view point of one person. I am not interested in the interpretation or opinion of any person. Mirza's demand is for a verse of the Quran. I will only be satisfied with a clear verse of the Holy Quran that says that Jesus is alive." Since no such verse existed, *Maulvi* Batalvi realized that he was about to lose this person. He then addressed *Maulvi* Muhammad Hassan,

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8 *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani has written in his book *Tazkirat-ul-Mahdi* that he states on oath that the dialogue as reported above took place and *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi has been quoted correctly without any exaggeration.

a wealthy and liberal-minded resident of Ludhiana, and said: "You should stop his meals." This remark was a pungent reference to the fact that *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din, a poor cleric, was the beneficiary of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hassan's charity and ate meals at his house. *Maulvi* Batalvi's threat, however, was not going to sway a righteous person like Nizam-ud-Din. He stood up at once, and in a gesture of mock repentance brought the palms of his hands together, and said cynically: "*Maulvi* sahib, I have given up the Holy Quran. Please do not deprive me of my meals." *Maulvi* Batalvi was greatly embarrassed by this remark.

Finally, *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din departed, and came and sat down shamefacedly before *Hazrat* Mirza. *Hazrat* Mirza asked him: "Please say, did you bring twenty, or nineteen, or ten, or five, or a few, or even a single verse of the Quran?" *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din remained silent at first, but then proceeded to narrate the whole incident, and ended by saying: "Henceforth, whatever side the Quran is, I am on that side, too." After this, he proceeded to take the pledge at the hands of *Hazrat* Mirza. The clerics were very upset when they learned of this pledge, and they started directing all their energies into preparing for the forthcoming debate with *Hazrat* Mirza.

**DEBATE WITH MAULVI  
MUHAMMAD HUSSAIN BATALVI  
AND PUBLICATION OF *AL-HAQ*  
*MUBAHSAH LUDHIANA* (THE TRUTH  
– THE LUDHIANA DEBATE)**

After protracted negotiations between the parties, the format of the debate was settled and a date agreed for its start. The format provided for a written debate and barred extempore speeches by either party. Each party had to write its reply to an issue raised by the other in the presence of the opponent party and the completed reply was then to be read out to the assembled audience and a copy provided to the other party for rebuttal. The first encounter was scheduled for July 20, 1891. The residents of Ludhiana and its surroundings had evinced tremendous interest in the debate and an eager crowd turned up to participate in this historical encounter.

On the agreed-upon date, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, accompanied by *Maulvi* Muhammad Hassan, a noble of Ludhiana, *Maulvi* Saadullah, a convert to Islam, and about a half dozen other people, came to the house of *Hazrat* Mirza for the debate. *Maulvi* Batalvi wrote a question on a piece of paper and placed it in front of *Hazrat* Mirza. Urdu scripts in those days were written with reed pens and each reed had to be fashioned with a knife to provide the optimum dimensions for ease of writing. *Hazrat* Mirza directed *Pir* Siraj ul Haq Nomani, who was an expert scribe, to prepare a large number of reed pens and to put them next

to him. He then got busy penning the reply and *Pir* Nomani tried to keep pace with him preparing a copy of every page he wrote.

The debate proceeded according to the format through the first day but at the end of the day, when all the questions and answers for the day had been written and read out, *Maulvi* Batalvi started delivering an extempore speech in violation of the agreed-upon terms of the debate. The central message of his speech was that the doctrine espoused by *Hazrat* Mirza that the Quran took precedence over the *Hadith* was incorrect and the correct position was that the *Hadith* took precedence over the Quran. He maintained that the *Hadith* explained the intricate issues in the Quran, and was thus decisive.

*Hazrat* Mirza protested this violation of the rules but then proceeded with an extempore rebuttal on the grounds that *Maulvi* Batalvi's violation had now given him the right to reply in a like manner. The core of his rebuttal was:

The doctrine that the *Hadith* takes precedence over the Quran is fallacious. The reason is that the Quran is the highest form of revelation (*wahy matluww*)<sup>1</sup>, and the whole of the Quran was collected and written in the time of the Holy Prophet. Quran is the word of God, and the Holy Prophet took great care that it was transcribed and collected in his lifetime. However, this did not happen in the case of the *Hadith*. Further, as the Quran is the word of God, the rank and status awarded to the Quran excels that of the *Hadith*. The *Hadith* were not written during the time of the Prophet, and have reached us through the medium of many narrators. If someone was to take an oath that each and every word of the Quran is the word of God, and if it is not so, his wife stands divorced, then according to the Islamic law, no divorce will result. However, if someone was to make the same oath in respect of the *Hadith*, and says that each and every word of the *Hadith* is the same that was spoken by the Prophet, and if it is not so, then his wife stands divorced, then without a doubt, his wife will be divorced.

The discussion continued in the same vein for several days. *Hazrat* Mirza's written replies absolutely enthralled the audience with the knowledge and

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1 In the terminology of Islam, *wahy matluww*, literally meaning "revelation that is recited," is the revelation containing the messages of Allah which are delivered in words to a Prophet by the angel Gabriel. The Quran was, from the beginning to the end, delivered in this form to the Prophet Muhammad. – Translator's note, mostly copied from the *Religion of Islam*, by *Maulana* Muhammad Ali.

wisdom they contained and as he read his replies the listeners would spontaneously applaud him with slogans of “Excellent!” and “Glory be to Allah!” In fact, even members of the opposing party, with the notable exception of *Maulvi* Batalvi and Saadullah, could not hold back their appreciation, which they voiced with spontaneous exclamations of “Glory to Allah!” Such outbursts of appreciation by members of his own party greatly offended *Maulvi* Batalvi, and he would reprove them by saying: “Have you come to listen or just to exclaim ‘Excellent!’ and ‘Glory be to Allah!’?”

The written statements of both the parties were published in the form of a book entitled, *Al-Haq Mubahsah Ludhiana* (The Truth - the Ludhiana Debate) in October 1891. In his statements, *Hazrat* Mirza carried out a lucid and knowledgeable discussion about the mutual relationship of the Quran and the *Hadith*, and their relative rank and status. The viewpoint he put forward in these discussions is the only one that can be adopted by a righteous and rational Muslim. The readers may be wondering how the discussion gravitated towards the relative precedence of the Quran and the *Hadith* when the actual topic was whether Jesus was dead or alive. The reason was quite simple. *Maulvi* Batalvi realized that he could not prove from the Quran that Jesus was alive because the Quran mentions his death clearly in several verses. His strategy, therefore, was to lure *Hazrat* Mirza into discussing the narrated traditions, knowing fully well that such a ploy, if successful, would create so much confusion that it would become difficult to distinguish the truth from falsehood. By throwing up this smokescreen, he hoped that *Hazrat* Mirza would be unable to prove his point. This was his rationale for initiating the discussion on the precedence of the *Hadith* over the Quran.

*Hazrat* Mirza, on the other hand, put forward, as an article of faith, that he believed in the Book of Allah without qualifications, but accepted the *Hadith* with qualifications. He said:

It is our faith that the Quran takes precedence over the *Hadith*. If some *hadith* appears to contradict a verse of the Quran, we will not interpret the Quran, but will interpret the *hadith* to arrive at a meaning that is in consonance with the Quran, or, at the least, not contradictory to it. However, if this is not possible, even after interpreting the *hadith*, then we will not accept the *hadith*, even though it may be considered reliable according to the rules of narration. The reason is that no word or action of the Holy Prophet can be contrary to the Quran. The narrators can make a mistake, but the Quran, which is the word of God and fully preserved, cannot be wrong, nor

can any word or action of the Holy Prophet be contrary to the Quran. Rationality demands that such *hadith* be rejected.

*Maulvi* Batalvi's strongest argument was that the Quran did not provide certain details that have then to be gleaned from the *Hadith*. For example, the numbers of *rakah* in the five daily prayers are not mentioned in the Quran, and this detail has to be obtained from the *Hadith*. So why should the *Hadith* not be resorted to in determining whether Jesus was dead or alive? *Hazrat* Mirza rebutted this argument rationally and methodically. A full appreciation of the logic and wisdom of his argument is only possible by reading the original text but a brief summary of the main points he made is as follows:

The *hadith* are of two types. The first types of *hadith* describe the practices of the Holy Prophet, and these *hadith* are very reliable because these practices were adopted by the whole Muslim community during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet and have continued unchanged since then. Examples of such *hadith* are, the number of *rakah* in the daily prayers, the way to bow and prostrate in prayer, commandments regarding fasting and charity, the details of the rituals of pilgrimage, and so on. Even before the *hadith* were collected, all Muslims, Arabs and non Arabs, said their prayers, kept fasts, gave charity, and performed the pilgrimage in the same way as is done now, and the collection of the Books of *Hadith* neither added nor subtracted anything from these practices. The *hadith* that represent the practices of the Holy Prophet and the Muslim community dating back to the Prophet's lifetime, carry a seal of authenticity and are very reliable. The second types of *hadith* are those that were not put into practice and were transmitted merely through verbal narration. Examples of such *hadith* are those traditions that contain news, promises and narrations of past incidents. Such *hadith* are no more than conjectures unless the Quran can authenticate them. There is thus a world of difference between the reliability of the two types of *hadith*.

The *hadith* that describe the practices of the Holy Prophet are, in fact, the practical manifestations of the Quran's commandments. For example, the Quran commanded "Keep up prayer" and the Prophet showed how to pray, and the whole community began to act upon it. This is certainly an interpretation, but by actions, and not by words. Even in this practical interpretation, it is incumbent to check if any practice is opposed to a clear commandment of the Quran. For if it is so, then it cannot be the practice of the Holy Prophet. The rule of interpretation is, therefore simple: No meaning must be adopted that is opposed to any clear verse of the Quran. When



it is not permissible to ignore the precedence of the Holy Quran in interpreting even those *hadith* that form part of practice, it is doubly important not to do so when interpreting *hadith* that deal with news, promises and narrations of past incidents. The status of this latter kind of *hadith* is no more than that of conjecture unless found in consonance with the Quran.

This discussion about the relative importance of the Quran and the *Hadith* is especially relevant given the current controversy between the followers of the *Ahl-e Hadith* and the *Chakralwi* sect. The former give precedence to the *Hadith* over the Quran while the latter brand the entire compendium of the *Hadith* as unsound, and discard it as trash. A reading of the book *The Truth - the Ludhiana Debate*, makes it abundantly clear what the right position should be between these two extreme viewpoints. The resolution of this contentious issue in this rational, exquisite and appealing manner is another example of the great service that the *Mujaddid* (reformer) of this era performed for Islam and the Muslims. Many centuries earlier, the Holy Prophet had called the Promised Messiah as 'Hakam' or 'Umpire.'<sup>2</sup> The reference was to the role of the Promised Messiah as an arbiter in a period of misguidance and temptation in which his pronouncements would show the right path because he would follow precisely the guidance of the Quran and *Sunnat*, and his knowledge will be heavenly and not temporal.

For about six or seven days, the debate proceeded at the house of *Hazrat* Mirza but then *Maulvi* Batalvi began to drag his feet about coming there, possibly as an exit strategy from a debate he knew he could not win. He demanded that the debate be shifted now to his place of residence, i.e. the house of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hassan of Ludhiana where he was staying. *Hazrat* Mirza agreed to this demand, and the remainder of the debate took place at this new site. The preliminary wrangling continued for thirteen days and at the end of it, the audience, both local and from out of town, began to tire. They protested through letters and oral demands that the preliminaries be ended and the real issue of whether Jesus was dead or alive be debated so that the public could come to some conclusion. *Hazrat* Mirza also repeatedly drew attention to this, but *Maulvi* Batalvi was reluctant to broach the real topic. He did not have any arguments to support his contention that Jesus was still alive, so he considered it prudent to avoid the topic all together. By the thirteenth day, the audience, which included Christians, Muslims, and Hindus, had swelled to such numbers that *Maulvi* Muhammad Hassan,

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2 *Al -Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*, 60:49.

at the instigation of *Maulvi* Batalvi, had the front door of his house bolted to prevent people from coming in to listen to *Hazrat* Mirza. *Hazrat* Mirza, accompanied by *Maulvi* Abdul Karim and other companions, had entered the house prior to the bolting of the door. However, *Pir* Siraj ul Haq Nomani, who was carrying the original script of *Hazrat* Mirza, from which he had scribed all night to prepare a copy for the opposing party, arrived late. When he reached the residence, the door had been closed, and he found hundreds of people waiting outside for an opportunity to get in. With great difficulty, *Maulvi* Nizam-ud-Din arranged to have the door opened to allow *Pir* Nomani to enter, but the multitude waiting outside also barged in with him. When *Maulvi* Muhammad Hassan saw the crowd pouring in, he turned pale and *Maulvi* Batalvi took out his frustration on *Pir* Nomani by asking him angrily why he had to come in. *Pir* Nomani replied that he had to come in because he was the scribe for the debate.

When *Hazrat* Mirza started reading his written statement that day, *Maulvi* Batalvi's face darkened as he listened to the powerful arguments that were being put forth. He became so mentally distracted that when he picked up his pen to make notes, instead of dipping the pen in the inkpot sitting next to him, he started missing his target and hitting the pen on the ground. After repeated dips, which did little to replenish the ink but damaged the pen at each stroke, the nib of the pen broke, and it was only then that he realized his folly. His behavior was also crass and he kept punctuating *Hazrat* Mirza's speech with rude remarks. In one such incident, he really embarrassed himself. It happened when *Hazrat* Mirza, during the course of his speech, referred to a *hadith* in Bukhari's collection in which the Prophet was reported to have said that *hadith* opposed to the clear verses of the Quran should be rejected, and the Quranic meaning should be adopted.<sup>3</sup> *Maulvi* Batalvi interjected angrily that no such *hadith* existed in the *Bukhari*, and if it did, then both his wives stood divorced. The audience let out a guffaw, much to the embarrassment of *Maulvi* Batalvi, as they were quite amused by an interjection invoking divorce on his wives in what was a serious discussion. Afterwards, *Maulvi* Batalvi backtracked and said that he had not used the word 'divorced' and therefore his wives did not stand divorced. His backpedaling gave further publicity to his crassness.

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3 *Hazrat* Mirza's contention that this *hadith* was from *Bukhari* was based on the book *Tauzih Talweeh* where the author of the book had referenced this *hadith* to be in *Bukhari*. However, this was a mistake of the author of *Tauzih Talweeh* because this *hadith* is not reported in *Bukhari*. Nevertheless, this *hadith* is well known and the books of *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) frequently mention it in support of their opinions. (Translator's note).

In his paper, *Hazrat Mirza* also stated that thirteen days had passed in discussing preliminary issues, and that it was not necessary to prolong this any further. It was appropriate now, he said, to start deliberations on the real issue of whether Jesus was dead or alive. However, since *Maulvi Batalvi* had no arguments to support his contention, he was not disposed to debate this issue. He adamantly refused to proceed ahead unless *Hazrat Mirza* first conceded his point of view that the *Hadith* took precedence over the Quran. This conclusively proves that he did not want the Quran to be the final arbiter of the debate. He further said that he still had many other preliminary issues that needed to be resolved. The audience got thoroughly disgusted with his attitude and demanded unanimously that either the real issue be debated forthwith or there was no point in continuing the debate. *Maulvi Batalvi's* dearest wish now was to somehow extricate himself from this debate, and so he refused to accept their unanimous demand. His refusal perforce ended the debate.

### **Mir Abbas Ali recants**

Mir Abbas Ali had shown signs of a weak character all along. Even during the period he was *Hazrat Mirza's* follower, he took issue over inconsequential things that went against his desires. *Hazrat Mirza* had pointed out several times that his spiritual eye discerned a certain weakness of faith in him, but that he was hopeful that the righteous part of Mir Abbas Ali's self would prevail in the long run. Mir Abbas Ali had found it difficult to accept *Hazrat Mirza's* claim of being the Promised Messiah, but somehow he was carrying on as a follower of *Hazrat Mirza*. He was passionately into alchemy, while *Hazrat Mirza* considered alchemy as an absurd pursuit, and this created further reservations in his commitment to *Hazrat Mirza*. During the debate, Mir Abbas Ali's duty was to collect the copy of *Maulvi Batalvi's* written statement from the latter's residence. These daily visits proved his undoing. *Maulvi Batalvi* and *Maulvi Muhammad Hassan* started stopping him for meals. When Mir Abbas Ali would arrive, they would stand up respectfully for him, and lavish flattery on him by saying: "Mir Abbas Ali sahib, you are a Syed, the offspring of the Holy Prophet. Your status is such that people should pledge allegiance to you, but it is really sad that you have pledged allegiance to Mirza, who is an apostate and has renounced his faith. He even claims to be *Imam Mahdi*,<sup>4</sup> although the *Imam Mahdi* will be from among the Syeds. How

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4 The Rightly Guided Leader prophesied by the Holy Prophet for the Muslim community. - Translator.

has this Mughal tattle tale laid claim to this?" Both the clerics kissed his hands, and gave him a rupee or two as an offering while saying: "Your rank is so high and elevated that you are included in the *Darud*,<sup>5</sup> 'Allah exalt Muhammad and exalt his righteous followers.' What a pity that a person of your high rank and status has become a follower of an apostate." Mir Abbas Ali reveled in this flattery, and his faith was shaken. Till now, the Syed ancestry of Mir Abbas Ali was somewhat doubtful, but when these two clever clerics put their seal of authenticity on his lineage, he was very pleased. The result was that one day Mir Abbas Ali came to *Hazrat Mirza* in a defiant and rebellious mood. He confronted *Hazrat Mirza* and said: "You have made a claim that puts us to shame." *Hazrat Mirza* replied: "Mir sahib, I have not made a false claim. Allah, the Most High, is my witness that He called me the Promised Messiah and the Promised *Mahdi*. I swear by Him in whose hands is my life, and say this, fully cognizant that He is present and witnessing us, that I have been appointed by God, and that I am truthful and honest. During all this period that you have known me, have you ever seen me tell a lie, or practice a deception, or contrive anything?" This statement sent *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* into a stupor, and in that state, he stood up, swiveled around and then took his seat again, but it could evince only a surly denial from Mir Abbas Ali. *Hazrat Mirza* spoke to him gently, but with detailed and forceful arguments, and swore the strongest oaths in an attempt to make him understand. Even as *Hazrat Mirza* continued to address him with gentleness, love and affection, the behavior of Mir Abbas Ali became increasingly insolent and impudent, until he exceeded all limits. *Hazrat Mirza* did not say anything to him, but *Maulvi Abdul Karim* could not restrain himself any longer and lashed out at him: "O Insolent One! The appointee of God, and the Messiah is addressing you with such gentleness and affection, but you are responding with impudence and insolence that has exceeded all limits. Get out of here. Go to those materialistic clerics, who have made you a Syed, and get your hands kissed by them." After this scolding, Mir Abbas Ali stood up and left. With the passage of time, Mir Abbas Ali's attitude hardened and he even published an announcement denouncing *Hazrat Mirza*. Eventually, he came to a sorry end and died in disgrace.

Such was also the fate of the other clerics of Ludhiana who had spared no effort at the time to oppose *Hazrat Mirza*. *Maulvi Shah Din* became insane, and died in that state. The trio of opposing clerics, namely *Maulvi*

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5 *Darud* is the invocation of blessings and peace on the Prophet Muhammad and his righteous followers that Muslims recite in prayers and also at other times. - Translator

Abdul Aziz, *Maulvi* Abdullah and *Maulvi* Muhammad, were arrested and charged with criminal offences and died in disgrace. *Maulvi* Saadullah, the convert to Islam, who was known for his foul language, ultimately died of pneumonia and plague. His son also died and his progeny was totally wiped out. On the other hand, the respect and honor of *Hazrat* Mirza continued to grow by leaps and bounds, and his organization progressed day by day.

### ***Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi expelled from Ludhiana**

The Ludhiana debate was a serious blow to the reputation of *Maulvi* Batalvi, and now his only purpose in life was to start an uprising against *Hazrat* Mirza. *Muharram* was drawing near, and the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana grew apprehensive that the agitation of the clerics may lead to civil disturbances. He therefore ordered the expulsion of *Maulvi* Batalvi from Ludhiana, and deputed Dilawar Ali, Deputy Superintendent of Police, and Karam Baksh, Station House Officer, to serve his orders on him and to ensure that he left the city. *Hazrat* Mirza considered it conceivable that such orders may also be passed against him. He addressed a letter to the Deputy Commissioner Ludhiana in which he pointed out his noble family background and assured him of his peaceful conduct. He also enquired if the Deputy Commissioner had any objection to his continued stay in Ludhiana.

### **Stay in Amritsar**

Notwithstanding this letter, *Hazrat* Mirza decided to voluntarily leave Ludhiana with his family for some time because he was averse to expending the time and effort needed to pursue the District Administration for a speedy and favorable decision. Sheikh Nur Ahmad, owner of *Riyaz Hind* printing press, arranged a rented house for him in Amritsar. It was a small house located near Hal Bazar, adjacent to Kanhia Lal Theater. *Hazrat* Mirza and his family took up residence in a room on the second floor, while three or four of his companions occupied the first floor. The news of *Hazrat* Mirza's arrival spread immediately throughout the city, and a large number of people started visiting him to voice their opinion either in his support or in opposition to him.

In those days, *Maulvi* Ahmadullah was the *Imam* of the Ghaznavi mosque and was responsible for delivering the Friday sermon. He belonged to the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect but differed in many of his views with the Ghaznavi clan, resulting in some tension between them. When *Hazrat* Mirza arrived in Amritsar, the Ghaznavis tried to pressure *Maulvi* Ahmadullah to denounce him as an apostate in his Friday sermon but he

was reluctant to do so. A respectable citizen of Amritsar invited *Hazrat* Mirza, his companions and *Maulvi* Ahmadullah for a meal at his house. During the conversation at the meal, *Maulvi* Ahmadullah told *Hazrat* Mirza that some of *Hazrat* Mirza's writings had created a perception in the public mind that he claimed to be a prophet. *Hazrat* Mirza clarified that his intention in those passages was only to claim that he was a *Muhaddath* (a saint who has communion with Allah). *Maulvi* Ahmadullah asked *Hazrat* Mirza if he would be prepared to give him a written statement to the effect that wherever he had used the word 'prophet', it was not used in the sense of negating the finality of prophethood, but was only meant to denote the status of *Muhaddath*. *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "Certainly, I can give you such a statement." Accordingly, he immediately wrote a statement to this effect and gave it to him. *Maulvi* Ahmadullah kept the statement with him to rebut persons who wanted to declare *Hazrat* Mirza an apostate under the impression that he claimed prophethood.

One day, during this period, some miscreants attacked the residence of *Hazrat* Mirza on the instigation of the clerics. They wanted to force their way into *Hazrat* Mirza's family quarters on the second floor, but *Hazrat* Mirza's few companions took up positions on the stairs and showed great courage in frustrating their plans. The miscreants dispersed only after the police arrived. On hearing of this incident, some of *Hazrat* Mirza's followers rushed to Amritsar, but soon thereafter a letter arrived from the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, stating that *Hazrat* Mirza was free to stay in Ludhiana. The orders of expulsion were only for *Maulvi* Batalvi, who was instigating people to riot. I reproduce below the letter of the Deputy Commissioner:

From: The Court of Mr. W. Chevas, Deputy Commissioner,  
Ludhiana

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib, squire of Qadian, greetings. Your letter dated recently was received, and has been examined and heard. In response, it is stated that in accordance with the rules of the Government, you have the same right to stay in Ludhiana as are available to any other law-abiding citizen of the British government.

Dated: 6 August, 1891

Signed: Deputy Commissioner

After receiving this letter, *Hazrat* Mirza returned to Ludhiana. When *Maulvi* Batalvi learned that he alone had been expelled from Ludhiana

and no orders had been passed against *Hazrat Mirza*, he went to Lahore and complained bitterly to the provincial administration as to why he had been singled out for expulsion, when Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had been allowed to stay in Ludhiana. However, nobody in the administration paid any heed to his complaint.

### Testimony of the Saint Gulab Shah

Even as the storm of opposition was raging against *Hazrat Mirza*, Allah was creating the conditions for righteous souls to gather around him. These righteous souls came to him and entered his Movement by taking the pledge at his hand. Among them was Mian Karim Baksh, a righteous and upright person belonging to the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect. He found *Hazrat Mirza* through the testimony of the deceased saint, *Sain Gulab Shah*. *Maulvi* Muhammad Hassan, a nobleman of Ludhiana, tried hard to persuade him not to reveal this testimony, but Mian Karim Baksh, being a noble and upright soul, was not deterred. *Hazrat Mirza* has cited this testimony in his book *Izala Auham* Vol. II. The reader is referred to that book for details and only an excerpt of that testimony is reproduced here:

I, Karim Baksh, son of Ghulam Rasul, caste *Awan*, resident of Jamalpur Awana, tehsil Ludhiana, occupation agriculturist, age approximately 64 years, sect Unitarian *Ahl-e Hadith*, state on oath that about 30 or 31 years ago, in the year 1917 Samvat<sup>6</sup> (corresponding to 1861 C.E.), which was the year of the well-known famine, a saint by the name of Gulab Shah, originally a resident of Lahore District, came to our village, Jamalpur, and took up residence there. He was widely known for his piety and saintliness, and he became my religious mentor. In the beginning, this pious and devout saint, with his ascetic and mystic ways, spoke of the mysteries of God but with the passage of time, he became completely lost in Divine meditation, and began to exist in a transcendental state. Sometimes, he would begin to narrate about events in the future, and things would transpire exactly as he had spoken...(there is a mention here of some predictions, which came to pass exactly as predicted. -Author). About 30 years ago, this saint told me that Jesus has grown to adulthood, and he will come to Ludhiana, where he will correct the mistakes in the Quran, and

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6 Samvat or more fully Vikram Samvat is a Hindu calendar that began in 57 B.C. and is, therefore, fifty-seven years ahead of the Christian era.

will pass judgment in accordance with the spirit of the Quran. He said that the clerics will deny him, and then repeated, the clerics will deny him. I asked, with great surprise: "Are there mistakes even in the Quran? The Quran is the word of God!" He replied: "Commentaries after commentaries have been written, and the poetic expression has become dominant." (Meaning that exaggerations have hidden the truth, much as reality is hidden by poetic exaggerations - Author.) He then said: "When that Jesus comes, he will judge according to the Quran." He then repeated himself with a slightly different expression and said: "He will judge by the Quran, and the clerics will deny him. When Jesus will come to Ludhiana, a severe famine will descend on the country." Then I asked him: "Where is Jesus now?" He replied: "In the midst of Qadian." I commented: "Qadian is about six miles from Ludhiana. There is no Jesus there." (There is also a village near Ludhiana by the name of Qadian – Author.) He made no reply to this. I was not aware that there is also a village in Gurdaspur district, by the name of Qadian. Then I asked him: "Jesus the prophet of God, ascended to heaven and will descend on the Kabah?" He said: "Jesus, the prophet of God, has died, and he will not come back. I have investigated this thoroughly that he has died. I am a king, and I will not lie." He also said, "Those who are in heaven, do not come again to anybody."

Attested: Mian Karim Baksh at Ludhian,  
Mohallah Iqbal Gunj  
Saturday, 14th June 1891



## Chapter

# 28

### ***IZALA AUHAM* (DISPELLING THE APPREHENSIONS)**

#### **The Publication of *Izala Auham***

*Hazrat* Mirza stayed on in Ludhiana for some more time because he was busy writing the book *Izala Auham* (Dispelling the Apprehensions). The book was finally completed and published in two volumes at the end of the same year, 1891. In this book, he presented thirty clear verses of the Quran regarding the death of Jesus, and put forward a detailed exposition of his claim to be the Promised Messiah. These issues were discussed so comprehensively that all their aspects became crystal clear.

#### **A reward of one thousand rupees announced on the meaning of *Tawaffā***

The Quran uses the word *tawaffā* in respect of Jesus. This word means ‘to cause to die’ or ‘to take away the soul.’ For example: “O Jesus, I will cause thee to die (*mutawaffi-ka*) and exalt thee in My presence...” (3:55). Another example is when Allah will interrogate Jesus about the doctrine of Divinity adopted by his followers, he will say: “...but when Thou didst cause me to die (*tawaffaita-ni*) Thou wast the Watcher over them” (5:117). This latter example makes it abundantly clear that the doctrine of Jesus’ Divinity was manufactured after his death. In the face of these clear verses, there can be no excuse for the incorrect belief of the clerics that Jesus ascended to the heaven bodily; the only way they could sustain their

false dogma was to bend the clear meaning of the word *tawaffā* to suit their end. The clerics, therefore, instead of adopting the clear meaning of the word *tawaffā* as ‘the taking away of the soul,’ interpreted its meaning as ‘to take the full measure,’ even though their interpretation rendered the whole verse meaningless. After careful research, *Hazrat Mirza* announced, simultaneously with the publication of *Izala Auham*, a reward of one thousand rupees to any person who could prove from the Quran, the *Hadith*, or any Arabic book or dictionary that the word *tawaffā*, when God was the subject and a human being was the object, could mean anything other than ‘the taking away of the soul.’ In the beginning, some clerics were quick to point out that the Quran states, “Then every soul will be given in full (*tuwaffā*) of what it has earned” (2:281), and, on the basis of this example, they laid claim to the reward of one thousand rupees. However, they were quite embarrassed at their ignorance when it was pointed out to them that the word *tuwaffā* is of the measure of *taf‘il* whose infinitive is *tawfiḥ*, which means ‘to give in full’ and its active participle is *muwaffī*, meaning ‘the one who gives in full.’ On the other hand *tawaffā*, which means ‘to take in full,’ is of the measure *tafa‘la* whose infinitive is *tawaffā*, and active participle is *mutawaffī*. In this group, when God is the subject, and a human being is the object, the meaning of *tawaffā* could be nothing but ‘the taking of the soul.’

For this reason, the authors of lexicons have written *tawaffā-hu Allah* separately, and given its meaning as ‘Allah took his soul.’ Standard Arabic lexicons like *Taj-ul-Uroos*, may be consulted to check the veracity of this argument. After the first few clerics who came forward to claim the reward were embarrassed, the rest did not pick up the courage to contend the meaning.

## **DAJJAL (ANTICHRIST OR THE GREAT DECEIVER)**

In addition to dealing with the death of Jesus and *Hazrat Mirza's* own claim of Promised Messiah, the book *Izala Auham*, dealt with a third issue - the identity of *Dajjal* (Antichrist or the Great Deceiver). Although this is not the place for an in-depth discussion of prophecies regarding the Antichrist, it is essential to know that in the Books of *Hadith*, the prophecies regarding the Promised Messiah and the Antichrist occur together with such frequency that it is difficult to discuss the one without the other. Fixing the identity of the Antichrist is, therefore, necessary for a full appreciation of the role of the Promised Messiah. Because *Hazrat Mirza* claimed to be the Promised Messiah, it fell to his lot to explain the meaning and significance of *Dajjal* and what it stood for.

### **Antichrist explained**

*Hazrat Mirza* pointed out that *Dajjal* is derived from the word *dajala*, which literally means 'to conceal.' The Arabic lexicon *Lisan al-Arab*<sup>1</sup> states that the *Dajjal* is so named because of its nature to conceal the truth by lies, that is, to put a veil over the truth, or because the earth will be concealed by the sheer number of groups owing allegiance to it. The lexicon

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1 Allamah Abu-i-Fazl Jamal al-Din Muhammad ibn Mukarram, *Lisan al-Arab* (Dictionary)

also gives another meaning for *Dajjal*, namely a group that roams around with its wares for sale, i.e. a group that will cover the earth with its abundant merchandise for sale. All the prophecies about the Antichrist in the *Hadith* are based on various visions and dreams that were shown to the Holy Prophet over a period of time. It is obvious that visions and dreams need to be interpreted. For example, it is mentioned in the Quran that the Pharaoh of Egypt saw seven fat cows and seven lean cows in a dream<sup>2</sup> and it turned out that this was a symbolic representation of seven years of abundant harvest, followed by seven years of famine. Similarly, the Holy Prophet saw in a vision that, out of his wives, the one who will follow him first into the next world was the one with the longest hands.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, all his wives measured their hands in his presence, and the Prophet did not stop them from doing so. *Hazrat Saudah* was found to have the longest hands but when *Hazrat Zainab bint Jahsh* became the first wife to die after the Prophet, it became clear that the ‘longest hands’ was an analogy for the ‘most generous.’ In a like manner, the prophecies about the Antichrist are subject to interpretation, because they are cloaked in figurative and metaphorical symbolism, as is often the case with dreams and visions. It is erroneous to expect a literal fulfillment of these prophecies.

### **How the Companions understood the prophecies about the Antichrist**

It is important to see how the Companions understood the prophecies regarding the Antichrist in the Prophet’s lifetime. Did they take the prophecies literally, or did they consider them subject to interpretation? The incident of Ibn Sayyaad sheds light on this issue. The Companions mistook Ibn Sayyaad to be the prophesied *Dajjal* merely because he possessed an uncanny ability to guess what was in a person’s mind. Even a person of the wisdom and intellect of *Hazrat Umar* swore before the Prophet that Ibn Sayyaad was the prophesied *Dajjal*, and the Prophet did not contradict him.<sup>4</sup> For example, the Prophet did not say: “According to my prophecy, the *Dajjal* is blind in one eye,<sup>5</sup> but Ibn Sayyaad is not, nor

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2 The Quran 12:43

3 Shaikh Wali al-Din Muhammad Abd Allah. *Mishkat al-Masabih* (Hadith).. Kitab al-Ruya

4 Shaikh Wali al-Din Muhammad Abd Allah. *Mishkat al-Masabih* (Hadith). Page 478 line 9 and page 479 line 8.

5 *Al-Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith). 93:27*

are the letters *kaf fay ray* inscribed on his forehead,<sup>6</sup> and where is his donkey which I have described in such detail? And I had told you in respect of the *Dajjal* that he will not enter Makkah and Madinah,<sup>7</sup> and this person lives in Madinah.” This did not occur. The Companions, and the Prophet himself, interpreted these prophecies only to mean someone who will create tribulation in their faith. They did not consider the prophecies to mean more than that. Because they saw Ibn Sayyaad as a source of tribulation in their religion, they took him to be the prophesied *Dajjal*, although, as it turned out, Ibn Sayyaad even converted to Islam later on.

### **The tribulation of *Dajjal* means the tribulation caused by Christianity**

A statement of the Holy Prophet reported in the authentic *hadith* collections provides a clue to understanding the prophecies about the *Dajjal*. The Prophet is reported to have said that the recitation of the first ten and the last ten verses of the chapter ‘The Cave’ (*Al Kahf*) provides protection against the tribulations caused by the *Dajjal*.<sup>8</sup> The first ten verses of this chapter refer to the erroneous Christian doctrine of the sonship and divinity of Jesus, and the last ten verses refer to the materialism and physical progress of the Christian nations. The logical conclusion, therefore, is that the Quran considers the dominance of Christianity as the tribulation of the *Dajjal*. Thus, the tribulation of the *Dajjal* referred to in the *hadith* is synonymous with the tribulations caused by Christianity referred to in the Quran.

### **The description of the *Dajjal***

It is not at all unusual for an entire nation to be portrayed symbolically as a single person in a vision or a dream, especially when the purpose of the symbolism is to emphasize the dominant characteristics of that nation. Accordingly, the Holy Prophet’s prophecies about the *Dajjal* symbolize the characteristics of the European nations in the features of a mythical entity called *Dajjal* and this symbolization is so perfect that it is not possible to improve on it. The composite picture of the *Dajjal* that

6 *Al –Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. 93:27

7 *Imam* Abu-l-Husain ibn Al-Hajjaj. **Sahih Muslim** (*Hadith*). Report narrated by Fatima, daughter of Qais.

8 *Imam* Abu-l-Husain ibn Al-Hajjaj. **Sahih Muslim** (*Hadith*). 6:42. This *hadith* has also been reported in *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)* by **Abu Dawud** Sulaiman, *Al-Jami (Hadith)* by Abu Isa Muhammad ibn Isa **Tirmidhi** and *Musnad (Hadith)* by Ahmad **ibn Hanbal**.

emerges from the different *hadith* narrated in the authentic Books of *Hadith* stereotypes a typical European. Thus, the *Dajjal* is physically described as sparkling white<sup>9</sup>, robust,<sup>10</sup> and with short curly hair. The last named feature perhaps encompasses the fashionable trend among European ladies to have their hair cut short and artificially curled. This is a succinct but apt physical description. The *hadith* also dwell on the spiritual condition of the *Dajjal*. Two features are particularly emphasized and both symbolize the spiritual malaise of the European nations. The first is the blindness of the *Dajjal* in the right eye,<sup>11</sup> and the second is the inscription of the letters *kaf fay ray* on its forehead.<sup>12</sup> While the *hadith* mention the *Dajjal* as blind in the right eye, it also states that its other eye shines like a bright star.<sup>13</sup> *Hazrat* Mirza explained this by stating that metaphorically the right eye stands for religious and spiritual insight, and the left for insight into physical and material matters. The selection of the right eye for spiritual matters follows from the higher rank and importance of spiritual over mundane matters. The blindness of the right eye then signifies the *Dajjal's* inattention to spiritual matters — an apt description of the European nations. The brightly shining left eye represents their unprecedented material progress, which has become the exclusive focus of their attention. In physical and material matters, the *Dajjal* sees things that cannot be seen by others, but in spiritual matters it is quite blind.

The second descriptive feature, also a symbol of spiritual malaise, is the inscription *kaf ray fay*<sup>14</sup> on the forehead. 'Writing on the forehead' is a euphemism for something that is obvious and apparent. This interpretation is further supported by a *hadith* that states that only a righteous person, regardless of whether literate or illiterate, will be able to read the inscription on the forehead of the *Dajjal*.<sup>15</sup> This clearly shows that the inscription does not refer to written words, but is only an external manifestation of the *Dajjal's* internal spiritual condition. Since the righteous

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9 Ahmad **ibn Hanbal**. *Musnad (Hadith)*. Vol. 1 page 240

10 Ahmad **ibn Hanbal**. *Musnad (Hadith)*. Vol. 1 page 374

11 *Al –Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. 77: 68; 92

12 *Al –Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. 93:27

13 Ahmad **ibn Hanbal**. *Musnad (Hadith)*. Vol. 1 page 374

14 *Kaf fay ray* is the root word of the Arabic word for disbeliever.

15 Ahmad **ibn Hanbal**. *Musnad (Hadith)*. Vol. II, p. 228 and 250

person has a well-developed spiritual eye, he will be able to discern the inscription quite easily, but the disbeliever will not be able to do so, being blind in his spiritual eye.

### The conveyance of the *Dajjal*

The *hadith* provide a rather elaborate description of the *Dajjal*'s conveyance. *Hazrat* Mirza was quick to discern that this description fitted exactly the features of a railway train. The whistle of a train can be likened to the braying of the donkey. The distance of seventy outstretched arms (*Ba*) between the two ears of the *Dajjal*'s conveyance<sup>16</sup> is a good description of the intercom system connecting the engine in the front with the guard's compartment in the rear, with the normal length of the train, about seventy yards, intervening in between. The *hadith* describe the speed of the *Dajjal*'s conveyance by saying that the earth will be rolled up for it,<sup>17</sup> and that it will move so fast as if the wind is driving along a cloud.<sup>18</sup> Other references that match a train include the presence of a mountain of smoke in front of it, the association of water and fire, and the sound of thundering clouds in its movement. It is also mentioned in the *hadith* that food will move with it,<sup>19</sup> an apt description of the restaurant coach in the train. In another description, it is stated that the conveyance will travel during the day as well as the night and it will call out for passengers - a clear reference to a system of fared public transport.

The *hadith* also describe the *Dajjal*'s conveyance in the sea. It is stated that the sea will be ankle deep for him,<sup>20</sup> and there will be a mountain of smoke in front of it. This is an accurate description of a steam ship. These descriptions of the train and steam ship were given fourteen hundred years ago when even their concept did not exist, and given the abstraction of the idea at that time, there could be no better description than the one found in the *hadith*.

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16 Shaikh Wali al-Din Muhammad Abd Allah. *Mishkat al-Masabih (Hadith)*. Chapter al-Dajjal

17 Al-Shaikh Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttaqi. *Kanaz al-Ummal fi Sunani-l-Aqwal wa-l-Afal (Hadith)*. Vol. 7, No. 2998

18 Shaikh Wali al-Din Muhammad Abd Allah. *Mishkat al-Masabih (Hadith)*. Chapter al-Dajjal

19 Al-Shaikh Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttaqi. *Kanaz al-Ummal fi Sunani-l-Aqwal wa-l-Afal (Hadith)*. Vol. 7, No. 2110

20 Al-Shaikh Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttaqi. *Kanaz al-Ummal fi Sunani-l-Aqwal wa-l-Afal (Hadith)*

In the beginning, people made fun of *Hazrat Mirza*'s interpretation of the *Dajjal*'s conveyance but today, many Muslims all over the world accept it as a perfectly valid explanation. It is interesting to see that some papers that have consistently been hostile to *Hazrat Mirza*, have referred to the rail tracks as 'the tracks of the *Dajjal*'s donkey.' There can be no better vindication of *Hazrat Mirza*'s interpretation.



## CLAIM OF *MAHDI* (THE RIGHTLY GUIDED ONE)

*Hazrat Mirza* claimed in his book *Izala Auham* that he was also the *Mahdi* (the Rightly Guided One) of the time. He wrote:<sup>1</sup>

It is generally held that a precondition for the coming of the Promised Messiah is the coming of the *Imam Muhammad Mahdi* before him. This idea has originated through a lack of deliberation. If the coming of the *Mahdi* was a necessary precondition for the era of the Messiah, son of Mary, and was part of the scheme for the appearance of the Messiah, then it would not have been excluded from their Books of *Hadith* by the two venerable saints and *Hadith* scholars, namely *Hazrat Muhammad Ishmael*, the collector of the authentic Book of *Hadith*, the *Bukhari*; and *Hazrat Imam Muslim*, the collector of the authentic Book of *Hadith*, the *Muslim*. Their collection of the *hadith* portrays with great accuracy the conditions of this era and to lend credence to this portrayal, the *hadith* also claim when certain events will come to pass. But there is no mention even of the name of *Imam Muhammad Mahdi*. It follows from this that, according to their research, they did not consider as authentic those *hadith* that regard the coming of the *Mahdi* as inseparable from the coming of the Promised Messiah. In fact, it seems quite pointless that there should be a need for the

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1 *Izala Auham*. Vol. 2, pages 518-519

*Mahdi* with the advent of a person whose spiritual excellence and characteristics are such that he should be called Messiah, son of Mary. Is he not himself the *Mahdi*? Has he not come with Divine guidance? Does he not have such jewels, treasures, wealth of knowledge and subtle explanations that people will tire from learning from him, and will be filled to their capacity so that they will not be able to hold any more? If this is true, then what is the need of another *Mahdi* at this time? This is not only the belief of the two venerable collectors of *Hadith* mentioned above, but also of Ibn Maja and Hakim, who, in their authentic collections, have included the *hadith* that states ‘There is no *Mahdi* except Jesus.’<sup>2</sup> We accept the fact that there have been many *Mahdis* in prior times, and conceivably may be in future times as well, and there may even come a *Mahdi* bearing the name *Imam* Muhammad. However, there is no support for the popular conception of the *Mahdi* as it exists in the minds of the populace. This is not only my opinion, but also the opinion of most researchers.

Hazrat Mirza’s statement about the *Mahdi* appeals to a rational person. His argument is further strengthened by the fact that the *hadith* about the *Mahdi* lack the reliability of the *hadith* about the Promised Messiah. The *hadith* about the *Mahdi* have so many contradictions about the tribe or nation in which the *Mahdi* will appear that many researchers have rejected all *hadith* about the *Mahdi* as unreliable. However, it is not right to completely reject a subject that has been reported in multiple sources merely because of some contradictions.

The fact is that the meaning of *Mahdi* is one who has been guided, i.e. a person who is rightly guided by Divine inspiration. Hence, any *Mujaddid* or *Imam* who is appointed by God for the guidance and reform of the Muslim nation has to be, of necessity, Divinely inspired. Otherwise, as the Persian proverb goes, he who is lost cannot show the way. For this reason, any *Mujaddid* or *Imam*, who is appointed for the reformation of the Muslim nation, is entitled to be called *Mahdi*. Thus, the Prophet called the rightly guided Caliphs as *Mahdiyyeen* (plural of *Mahdi*)<sup>3</sup>. It is also for

2 Abu Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Yazid **ibn Majah** al-Qazwini. *Sunan (Hadith)*. Chapter Al-Sharat al-Saah, page 302. Published by Matbah Nizamiyyah, Delhi 1905. Also see ibn Majah, Abwab al-Fitan 36:6.

3 **Abu Dawud** Sulaiman. *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)*. *Kitab al-Sunnan (Hadith)*, by Abu Dawud Sulaiman, Vol. 2 page 387 line 20.

this reason, that people acknowledge Umar bin Abdul Aziz as a *Mujaddid*, and call him a *Mahdi*. In a like manner, scholars of the *Hadith* consider *Hazrat* Abdullah bin Zubair as the person in whom the prophecy of a *Mahdi* who will rule Makkah and its environs is fulfilled. In summary, the apparent contradictions in the *hadith* about the nationality and family of the *Mahdi* stem from the fact that the *hadith* do not all refer to one *Mahdi*, but to several different Divinely appointed reformers and *Mujaddids* who appeared at different times from different families and nations. Hence, all the *hadith* about *Mahdi*, barring a few exceptions that are patently fabricated, are correct in their own way. However, the presence of a separate *Mahdi* in the era of the Promised Messiah is not only logically unsound, as stated by *Hazrat* Mirza, but is also conclusively rebutted by the *hadith*: “There is no *Mahdi* except Jesus.” The unambiguous meaning of this *hadith* is that Jesus himself will be the *Mahdi* for the era of his advent and there will be no other *Mahdi* at the time. This is not merely a conjecture, but can be asserted as a fact since an authentic statement of the Holy Prophet corroborates it. This statement of the Holy Prophet is found in a *hadith* of great reliability reported in the *Musnad* of *Imam* Ahmad bin Hanbal. The *hadith* is traced to Abu Hurairah, who reported that the Prophet said: “It is not far that those of you who will survive will meet Jesus son of Mary, who is *Imam Mahdi* and a just arbitrator.”<sup>4</sup>

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4 Ahmad **ibn Hanbal**. *Musnad (Hadith)*. Vol. 2, page 114.

## Chapter

# 31

## CLAIM OF PROPHETHOOD DENIED

Although the denial of a claim forms no part of the claims of a person, it is nevertheless important to discuss here *Hazrat Mirza's* denial of any claim to prophethood because serious misunderstandings exist on this issue amongst *Hazrat Mirza's* opponents, and also among his followers. It is, indeed, strange that such misunderstandings should prevail when not even a single instance can be found in any of *Hazrat Mirza's* books where he asserts such a claim, but many instances can be found where he categorically denies any claim to prophethood. In spite of this, first his opponents and later a section of his followers declared he had claimed prophethood. The fact is that there is no such claim; not even in ambiguous terms; rather its denial is pronounced in the clearest terms. Even so, extremists on both ends of the spiritual divide persist in ascribing a claim of prophethood to him. This bears a strange resemblance to the history of Jesus. His opponents from among the learned Jews declared that Jesus had claimed Divinity and so must be crucified; his extremist followers corroborated this charge by developing a faith that rests essentially on the assumption of Jesus' claim to Divinity. Only a small section, namely the Unitarians, kept the faith that he never claimed to be God or the Son of God. The Quran, revealed six hundred years after the death of Jesus, confirmed the belief of this small section as true and declared the belief of other Christians and the Jews to be false. History has repeated itself in the case of the Messiah of the Muslim nation. When *Hazrat Mirza* claimed to be the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi* (The Rightly Guided One), his opponents declared him straight away as a

heretic on the wrong assumption that he had claimed prophethood. After his death, a large section of his followers, led by a person who had no Divine authority, adopted the doctrine that he did indeed claim prophethood. However, a smaller group of his followers kept the faith that he never claimed prophethood, and this was factually the correct position. In the case of Jesus, an extremist group raised him to the pedestal of Divinity, and in this age a *Mujaddid* was raised to prophethood by a section of his disciples.

### **The reason for ascribing a claim of prophethood to *Hazrat Mirza***

The reason for ascribing the claims was the same in both cases. Jesus never said that he was God or the Son of God, though he did use the term 'Son of God' in a metaphorical sense. In this sense, the term had been used before and meant only a righteous person. The following passage from the New Testament makes this clear:

The Jews answered him, saying: "For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." Jesus answered them: "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, Ye are Gods?' If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scriptures cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemist; because I said, I am the son of God?"<sup>1</sup>

This shows that the Jewish scholars charged Jesus with blasphemy and unbelief because, in their view, he had claimed Godhood by declaring himself as the Son of God. Jesus' reply was that, in the metaphorical sense, in which he used the term Son of God for himself, the elders of the Jews were called Gods. The clear implication was that the claim of Godhood was different from the mere use of this term in a metaphorical sense and such a use did not render the user as an automatic claimant to that office. Those who impute claims based on metaphorical use of expressions, therefore, do but follow in the footsteps of the Jewish scholars. The founder of the *Ahmadiyya* Movement was unfortunately the target of similar imputation. When *Hazrat Mirza* claimed he was the Promised Messiah in 1891, he gave a suitable reply to his critics who

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<sup>1</sup> John 10-33-36. In some manuscripts the words *a son of God* are found instead of *the son of God*.

maintained that, since the Messiah was a prophet, his like should also be a prophet. In *Hazrat Mirza's* own words:<sup>2</sup>

Here, if it were objected that the like of the Messiah should also be a prophet because the Messiah was a prophet, the reply to this, in the first instance, is that our Holy Prophet has not made prophethood a condition for the coming Messiah. On the contrary, the Holy Prophet has clearly stated that he shall be a Muslim who will be bound by the law of the Quran like ordinary Muslims and that he shall not say anything except that he was a Muslim and their leader. Besides this, there is no doubt that the Most High God has raised this humble servant for this nation in the capacity of a *Muhaddath* (a saint who has communion with God) and a *Muhaddath* is in one sense also a prophet. Though he does not possess perfect prophethood, nevertheless he is partially a prophet, for he is endowed with the gift of being spoken to by God, and matters unseen are manifested to him. Like the revelation of messengers and prophets, his revelations are also made free from the intervention of the devil and the real kernel of the law is disclosed to him. He is commissioned just like prophets, and it is obligatory on him, like prophets, that he should announce himself at the top of his voice, and anybody who rejects him deserves punishment to some extent. This prophethood means nothing but that the above-mentioned characteristics are found in him.

If it is objected that the door of prophethood is closed and a seal set on the revelation that descends on prophets, I say that neither the door of prophethood is closed in all respects nor is there a seal on every form of revelation. On the contrary, the door of revelation and prophethood is partially open for this nation at all times. However, it should be carefully borne in mind that this prophethood, which will continue forever, is not perfect prophethood (*nabuwwat tamah*), but as I have just mentioned is only a partial prophethood (*juz'i nabuwwat*). It is termed, in other words, as *Muhaddathiyyat* (sainthood) and is achievable by following the greatest and perfect of all human beings, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the embodiment of all the excellence of perfect prophethood (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him!)

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2 *Tauzih Maram* (January 22, 1891 C.E.). Pages 9, 10.

In the above passage, *Hazrat* Mirza has countered the objection of his critics who questioned how he, a non-prophet could be the Promised Messiah, or the like of the Messiah (*mathil Masih*), because the original Messiah was a prophet, and a non-prophet cannot be the like of a prophet. Such an objection is, in reality, based on ignorance because it has been clearly implied in the *hadith* that the learned scholars of the *Ummah* will be like the prophets of Israel,<sup>3</sup> and the Quran has also referred to the *khalifahs* (successors) of Islam as resembling the *khalifahs* of Israel who were prophets: “He will surely make them successors in the earth as He made those successors before them.”<sup>4</sup>

*Hazrat* Mirza refuted the above charges in two ways. First, the Holy Prophet himself had not made prophethood a condition for the coming Messiah. Second, as far as the question of likeness (*mumasalat*) was concerned, it was not an obstacle because *Hazrat* Mirza’s claim was that he was a *Muhaddath* and a *Muhaddath* had some resemblance with a prophet. He also explained the grounds for such resemblance, i.e. both a prophet and a *Muhaddath* are spoken to by God, their revelations are free from the intervention of the devil, both are commissioned by God, and their rejection by people does involve some degree of punishment. No one has had the audacity to deny these characteristics of a *Muhaddath*.

However, the words that follow, “the door of revelation and prophethood is partially open for this nation always” and that “a *Muhaddath* is in one sense also a prophet,” form the basis of the allegation that *Hazrat* Mirza’s claim was that of prophethood. The clerics are a difficult breed to deal with. First, they raised the objection that since *Hazrat* Mirza was not a prophet, he could not be the ‘like of a prophet.’ When it was pointed out to them that a *Muhaddath* was in some respects ‘like a prophet’ because he had qualities of partial prophethood, they began to allege that *Hazrat* Mirza claimed to be a prophet and therefore, was an infidel.

Ascribing meaning to words without reference to the context is against all principles of sound interpretation. When in the beginning of the above reply, *Hazrat* Mirza had clearly and decisively mentioned that prophethood was not a condition for the coming Messiah, and that the Messiah would be a Muslim leader of the Muslims, then how can an opposite conclusion be drawn from the other sentences? Nevertheless, intro-

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3 *Al –Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. *Kitab al-Ilam* 3:11. “And that (religious) scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets.” See also *Mauzuat: Mullah Ali Qari*, page 48.

4 Quran, 24:55.

spective reflection even on this part of the statement shows that there is nothing objectionable in it. Is it not a fact that the door of some kinds of revelation and partial prophethood has always been open to this nation? Is it not clearly mentioned in the *Hadith* reports that, “Good visions form a forty-sixth part of prophethood.”<sup>5</sup> *Hazrat* Mirza himself explained this in his Arabic book *Tauzih Maram*:<sup>6</sup>

And you have read in the Books of *Hadith* that true visions are a forty-sixth part of perfect prophethood. Thus when true visions rank so high, what is the position of the communication that is revealed by Allah to the hearts of *Muhaddathin* (saints)? So hear me, and may Allah help you to understand this, that the gist of my contention is that the doors of partial prophethood (*juzi nabuwwat*) are always open. But nothing remains of prophethood except *mubashirat* (good news), *munzirat* (warnings), reports of the unseen matters, deep understanding of the Quran and God given knowledge.<sup>7</sup> We believe that perfect and complete Prophethood that is the recipient of the most excellent form of revelation has terminated from the day this verse was revealed, “Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and seal of the prophets.”<sup>8</sup>

Is there any Muslim who can deny the fact that there have been thousands of Muslim saints gifted with inspiration (*ilham*) and Divine communication besides true visions? Thus, when true visions (*al-ruya*) are an element of prophethood, *ilham* too is a part of prophethood and the recipient of *ilham* can be called a partial prophet (*juzi nabi*). However, the use of the word ‘prophet’ here should only be taken literally, that is, one who is spoken to, and discourses with God. Such a person is called a *Muhaddath*.

The anathema of heresy (*fatwa kufr*) against *Hazrat* Mirza was issued on the basis of this statement. His clear and straightforward explanations were entirely ignored and the meaning of one word was misconstrued against the clear sense of the passage. Thus, a person who recited the

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5 *Al-Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. 92:26.

6 *Tauzih Maram*. Page 19.

7 The Holy Prophet said: “True dreams are a part of the forty-six parts of prophethood,” (al-Bukhari *Kitab al-Tabir* 92:4) and this is the partial prophethood that remains.

8 Quran, 33:40.



*kalimah* (Muslim confession of faith) and was a servant of Islam was branded a heretic. Even if it was accepted that there was some ambiguity in the original statement, the subsequent clarifications made by *Hazrat Mirza* in reply to the anathema of heresy were so definite and clear that had the opponents any fear of God, they should have immediately rescinded the decree. What are these clarifications? In reply to the anathema, *Hazrat Mirza* published a statement from Delhi on 2nd October 1891:

I have heard that some of the leading religious scholars of this city are giving publicity to false charges against me. They allege that I lay claim to prophethood and do not believe in angels, in heaven and hell, in the existence of Gabriel, in *Lailat-ul-Qadr* (The Night of Majesty), in miracles and the *Miraj* (Ascension) of the Holy Prophet. So, to make the truth known to all, I do hereby publicly declare that all this is a complete fabrication. I am not a claimant to prophethood, neither am I a denier of miracles, angels, *Lailat-ul-Qadr*, etc. On the other hand, I profess belief in all those matters that are included in the Islamic principles of faith and, in accordance with the belief of the *Ahl-e-Sunnat wal Jamaat*, I believe in all those things that are established by the Quran and the *Hadith*. I regard any claimant to prophethood and messengership after our lord and master Muhammad Mustafa (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) - the last of the messengers (*khatam-ul-mursalin*) - to be a liar and unbeliever (*kafir*). It is my conviction that apostolic revelation (*wahy risalat*) began with Adam, the chosen one of God, and came to a close with the Messenger of God (*i.e.* the Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him). Let everyone bear witness to my statement that I declare my belief in all those doctrines by the acceptance of which even an infidel becomes a Muslim, and a follower of any other religion too is immediately proclaimed a Muslim. And God All-Knowing and Hearing is the first of all witnesses.

Similarly in a speech on 23rd October 1891 in the Jamia Mosque, Delhi, he declared:<sup>9</sup>

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9 *Din-ul-Haq*. Page 29.

The other charges leveled against me, that I am a denier of *Lailat-ul-Qadr* (the Grand night), miracles and the ascension (of the Holy Prophet), and that I am also a claimant to prophethood and a denier of the finality of prophethood (*khatam-un-nabuwwat*) are entirely untrue and absolutely false. In all these matters, my belief is the same as that of the other *Ahl-e Sunnat wal Jamaat*. The above charges are alleged on the basis of my books, *Tauzih Maram* and *Izala Auham* but are really the result of misunderstandings by the critics. Now I make a plain admission of the following matters before Muslims in this house of God. I believe that prophethood has ended (*khatam-un-nabuwwat*) with the Seal of the Prophets (*khatam-ul-anbiya*), (may peace and blessings of God be upon him), and I consider the person who denies the finality of prophethood to be a heretic and outside the pale of Islam. Similarly I am a believer in the angels, miracles, *Lailat-ul-Qadr*, etc.

Then in his book *Izala Auham* he wrote:

*Question:* In the pamphlet *Fath Islam*, a claim has been made to prophethood.

*Answer:* There is no claim to prophethood but of *Muhaddathiyyat* (sainthood)<sup>10</sup> that has been advanced by God's command. However, there is no doubt that *Muhaddathiyyat* also contains a strong part of prophethood in the same sense that true visions are considered to be a forty-sixth part of prophethood. Thus, if *Muhaddathiyyat*, which is mentioned in the Quran with prophethood and messengership and about which there is also a report in the Sahih Bukhari, is metaphorically called or regarded as a strong part of prophethood, does this amount to a claim to *nabuwwat* (prophethood)?<sup>11</sup>

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10 In both al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, the Holy Prophet has been reported as having said: "Among those that were before you of the Israelites there used to be men who were spoken to by God, though they were not prophets, and if there is one among my followers, it is Umar." (al-Bukhari, *Kitab Fazail Ashab Ambiya* 62:6). In another version of this *hadith* reported in the same chapter, the words, "men who were spoken to by God" is replaced by "*muhaddathin*" which makes the meaning of "*muhaddathin*" clear i.e. that they were righteous followers who had communion with God although they were not prophets.

11 *Izalah Auham*. Pages 421-22.

Further on, in the same book *Izalah Auham*, Hazrat Mirza wrote:<sup>12</sup>

It is true that the Messiah to come has been referred to as a prophet, but he has also been referred to as a follower (of the Holy Prophet). In fact, the information has been imparted that ‘O Followers (of Muhammad) he will be one of you, and your spiritual leader.’ Not only has this been stated in words, but it has also been mentioned that in practice he will be like the other followers (of the Holy Prophet) in doing only what Allah and the Prophet have commanded. He will resolve difficult and intricate religious problems not by apostolic verdicts but by interpretation of Islamic law and he will offer congregational prayers with someone else leading the prayers. It is quite apparent from all these indications that he will not, in an actual and real sense, have the attributes of perfect prophethood but he will imbibe qualities of imperfect prophethood, which, in other words, is called *Muhaddathiyyat* (sainthood) and is one of the many attributes of perfect prophethood. Hence, the fact that he has been called a follower as well as a prophet is an indication that both the qualities of a follower and of a prophet will be found in him - as they are in a *Muhaddath*. A perfect prophet, on the other hand, has just the one quality, that of prophethood. Thus, *Muhaddathiyyat* is colored by both colors. It is for this reason that God Almighty has named this humble servant in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* as both a follower and a prophet.

In the same book *Izala Auham*, Hazrat Mirza argues against the second coming of the Israelite Messiah precisely because of the termination of prophethood:<sup>13</sup>

How can the Messiah come? He was a prophet and the finality of prophethood is a barrier against his coming. So one in his coloring has come and he is not a Messenger (*rasul*) but has a similarity and likeness to a Messenger.

Further on, in the same book, he writes:<sup>14</sup>

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12 *Izalah Auham*. Pages 532.

13 *Izalah Auham*. Page 522.

14 *Izalah Auham*. Page 534.

How is it possible for another prophet, with complete and perfect attributes inherent in perfect prophethood, to come after the Seal of Prophets? Is it not incumbent that the necessary concomitants of perfect prophethood, that is apostolic revelation and the descent of Gabriel be an integral part of his coming? For according to the explanation in Quran, a Messenger is he who has obtained the commandments and beliefs of the religion through the medium of Gabriel. However, apostolic revelation has been sealed since the last 1300 years. Will the seal be broken at that time?

In the year 1892, Dr. Abdul Hakim and *Hazrat* Mirza held a debate at Lahore in which Abdul Hakim charged *Hazrat* Mirza with claiming prophethood. He rebutted this charge in writing on February 3, 1892 and eight witnesses attested his statement. This brought the controversy to an end. I quote below a part of the statement:<sup>15</sup>

From the beginning as God knows best, my intention has never been to use this word *nabi* as meaning a real (*haqiqi*) prophet, but only as signifying a *Muhaddath*, which the Holy Prophet has explained as meaning one who is spoken to by God? Hence, in deference to the sensibilities of my Muslim brethren, I have no objection in expressing the same idea in another form. That other form is that wherever the word *nabi* (prophet) is used in my writings, it should be considered as meaning *Muhaddath* and the word *nabi* should be considered crossed out.

**The word prophet was used only by way of metaphor (*Majaz*)**

*Hazrat* Mirza not only repeatedly denied making any claim to prophethood but also clearly stated that the word ‘prophet’ was only used in the metaphorical sense for *Muhaddath*, which, in fact, was his real claim. His books are full of such references. I quote below a few:

The coming Messiah on account of being a *Muhaddath* is also metaphorically a prophet.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Announcement signed on February 3, 1892 at Lahore.

<sup>16</sup> *Izalah Auham* (1891). Page 349.

If *Muhaddathiyyat* is called a metaphorical prophethood, does this amount to a claim of prophethood?<sup>17</sup>

In a metaphorical sense God has the right to speak of an inspired servant (*mulham*) as a prophet or a messenger (*mursal*).<sup>18</sup>

This humble servant has never laid claim to prophethood or messengership in the real sense of the term. To apply a word in its non-real (*ghair haqiqi*) sense or to use it in conversation in its ordinary literal sense does not amount to heresy (*kufri*).<sup>19</sup>

And in this place, the Divine communication has used the words ‘messenger’ and ‘prophet’ in my respect and stated that he is a prophet and messenger of Allah. This is just by way of metaphor and simile.<sup>20</sup>

To use the word ‘prophet’ or ‘messenger’ for him is not improper but is an eloquent simile.<sup>21</sup>

And God has named me a prophet only by way of metaphor and not by way of reality.<sup>22</sup>

### **The claimant to prophethood was accursed and declared to be an infidel**

These references are taken from various books of *Hazrat* Mirza written between 1891, the year he claimed he was the Promised Messiah, and the last days of his life. This should obviate any doubt that he changed his attitude on this point at any time during his life. Two things are clear from all these references. Firstly, that he emphatically denied any claim to prophethood and, secondly, that he used the word ‘prophet’ for himself only by way of metaphor and simile. Just as Jesus was not a claimant to Godhood but only used the expression ‘Son of God’ metaphorically, similarly *Hazrat*

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17 *Izalah Auham*. Page 422.

18 *Siraj Munir* (1897). Page 3.

19 *Anjam Atham* (1898). Page 27, footnote.

20 *Arbain* No. 3 (1899). Page 25 footnote.

21 *Tuhfa Golarwiyya* (1902). Page 24 supplement, footnote.

22 *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy* (1907). Page 65 supplement *Istifta*.

Mirza was not a claimant to prophethood. If the word ‘prophet’ occurred in some *hadith* about him or in his revelations, the only interpretation he gave was that such a use was by way of metaphor and simile alone. These clarifications should put to rest any doubts about his position. The irony though was that a charge made against him by his opponents in a spirit of enmity was also supported by a group of his followers in the extravagance of their love. The point to remember is whether a charge of prophethood can be substantiated when the charged person repeatedly asserted in his writings:

We also curse the claimant to prophethood and believe that “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger.” We believe in the finality of the prophethood of *Hazrat* Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and in the termination of the apostolic revelation (*wahy nabuwwat*). We accept (however) that saintly revelation (*wahy willayat*) is granted to followers of Prophet Muhammad who follow him perfectly. Anyone who alleges more than this against us strays from righteousness and honesty...hence there is no claim of prophethood from my side but only that of being a saint (*willayat*) and revivalist (*Mujaddidiyat*).<sup>23</sup>

After our lord and master Muhammad Mustafa (may peace and blessings of God be upon him!) - the last of the messengers (*khatam-ul-mursalin*) - I regard any claimant to prophethood and messengership to be a liar and an unbeliever (*kafir*).<sup>24</sup>

I look upon anyone who denies the finality of prophethood (*khatam-un- nabuwwat*) to be a heretic and outside the pale of Islam.<sup>25</sup>

It does not behoove me that I should lay a claim to prophethood and go outside the pale of Islam and join the party of unbelievers.<sup>26</sup>

Can an ill-fated fabricator who lays claim to messengership and prophethood have any faith in the Quran? And can a person who

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<sup>23</sup> *Majmua Ishtiharat*. Page 224.

<sup>24</sup> *Ishtihar* 2nd October, 1891.

<sup>25</sup> Speech *Wajib-ul-Ilaan* at Delhi 23rd October, 1891.

<sup>26</sup> *Hamamat-ul-Bushra* (1903). Page 79.

has faith in the Quran and believes that "...he (Muhammad) is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets" (33:40) is the word of God, can (turn around and) say that I too am a messenger and prophet after the Holy Prophet.<sup>27</sup>

These people speak a great calumny against me who say that this person claims to be a prophet.<sup>28</sup>

Could the writer of these lines simultaneously claim to be a prophet? Or is it possible that, on the one hand, he should curse the claimant to prophethood, declare him to be a liar, an infidel, an ill-fated fabricator and outside the pale of Islam, and on the other, continue advancing claims which he had so vehemently denounced himself? This discussion is concluded with some other relevant passages from various books of Hazrat Mirza:<sup>29</sup>

1. And I swear by the Grandeur and Glory of Allah that I am a believer and a Muslim. And I believe in Allah, His scriptures, and prophets, and angels, and in life after death. I also believe that our Prophet, may peace and blessings be upon him, is foremost among the prophets and is the seal of prophets. These people speak a great calumny against me who say that this person claims to be a prophet.<sup>30</sup>
2. The Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings be upon him, has repeatedly stated that no prophet will come after him, and the *hadith*, 'There is no prophet after me,' is so well known that there is no doubt about its authenticity. In addition, the Holy Quran, each and every word of which is decisive, further corroborated in the verse '...he (Muhammad) is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of prophets,' (33:40) that in fact prophethood has ended with our Prophet, may peace and blessings be upon him.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> *Anjam Atham* (1897). Page 27 footnote.

<sup>28</sup> *Hamamat-ul-Bushra* page 8, 1903.

<sup>29</sup> For further elaboration of this discussion, the reader is referred to the books *Prophethood in Islam* and *The Ahmadiyya Movement*, by Maulana Muhammad Ali.

<sup>30</sup> *Hamamat-ul-Bushra* (1903). Page 8, 1903

<sup>31</sup> *Kitab-ul-Bariyya* footnote page 184

3. I am not a claimant to prophethood. You are mistaken, or is there something else in your mind when you say it. Is it necessary that if someone claims to receive revelation then he also becomes a prophet?<sup>32</sup>
4. In the same way, the Holy Prophet by stating 'There is no prophet after me,' has completely shut the door for the advent of any new or old prophet.<sup>33</sup>
5. The attributes of Allah mentioned in the Quran are that Allah is He who is the Lord of the Worlds, the Beneficent, the Merciful, who made the heavens and the earth in six periods, who created Adam and sent Messengers and Scriptures. Last of all, He sent Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah on him, who is the seal of prophets and the best of Messengers.<sup>34</sup>
6. And then all Jewish scholars, in fact all their prophets, had considered that the last prophet, would be born among the Israelites, but it did not happen so. Instead he was born among the Ishmaelite.<sup>35</sup>
7. The information was imparted only by the God Who sent our Holy Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) after all other prophets, so that he may gather all nations together under his flag.<sup>36</sup>
8. It should be believed with the strongest conviction that prophethood has terminated with the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, as stated by Allah in the verse '...he (Muhammad) is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets' (33:40). To deny this verse or to view it lightly is in reality equivalent to forsaking Islam. Just like he who stubbornly rejects (the true faith) puts himself in a precarious position, so too

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<sup>32</sup> *Jang Muqaddas*. Page 67

<sup>33</sup> *Ayyam-us-Sulh*. Page 152

<sup>34</sup> *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*. Page 141

<sup>35</sup> *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*. Page 161

<sup>36</sup> *Supplement to Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*. Page 44



do those who go to the other extreme and exceed the limits of faith, as is the case with the *shias*. It should be remembered that God has terminated all His prophethoods and messengerships with the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. We have been sent into this world merely as servants of the religion of Islam and not to leave Islam and form a new religion. Always protect yourself from the instigation of the devil, and never forget the greatness of the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. We are the servants of the religion of Islam and this is the objective for our being. The words ‘prophet’ and ‘messenger’ are only by way of simile and analogy...our Book is none other than the Holy Quran and our religion is none other than Islam. We believe that our Prophet, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, is the last of the prophets, and the Holy Quran is the last of the scriptures. So religion should not be made into child’s play, and remember that we have no claim other than that we are the servants of Islam and anyone who alleges contrary to this makes a false accusation. We receive blessings and beneficence via the media of our Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him, and get the bounty of knowledge from the Holy Quran. So it is prudent that no one should harbor anything in his heart contrary to this guidance, otherwise he will be accountable before God for it. If we are not servants of Islam, then all our efforts are in vain, they will be rejected and we will be held accountable.<sup>37</sup>

9. It has been revealed to me that in reality the only religion is Islam, and without a doubt the Messenger is only Muhammad Mustapha, may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him. Just as Allah, the Most High is One and Unique, in the same way the Holy Prophet is one and unique among the Messengers and the one to be obeyed. There is no prophet after him, none is his equal, and he is the seal of the prophets.<sup>38</sup>

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37 Letter of *Hazrat Mirza* published in *Al-Hakam*, Volume 3, No. 29 dated August 17, 1899.

38 *Minan-ur-Rahman*. Page 20. The reader should note that the belief about the finality of prophethood expounded here has been specifically mentioned as a revelation from God. Thus, God imparted this knowledge to *Hazrat Mirza* through revelation, and anyone who states contrary to this utters a lie. - Author.

## Chapter

# 32

## RATIONALE FOR THE CLAIMS OF MESSIAH & MAHDI

Since *Hazrat* Mirza's substantive claim was that of *Mujaddid* (reformer) of the fourteenth century *hijri*, some people have questioned the necessity of making the additional claims of Messiah and *Mahdi* (The Rightly Guided One). One simple answer to this is that authentic *hadith* repeatedly mention the coming of the Promised Messiah and while the various *hadith* about the coming of the *Mahdi* are perhaps not of the same degree of authenticity as the *hadith* about the coming of the Promised Messiah, they nevertheless also occur repeatedly. Hence, it was necessary for the person who was the object of these *hadith* to identify himself in no uncertain way, and to dispel any wrong notions and interpretations that the Muslim nation may be harboring about these *hadith*. This was precisely what *Hazrat* Mirza did.

He announced that Allah, the Most High, had manifested to him that Jesus had died, and that the prophecy about the coming of the Messiah in the Muslim community pertained to a *Mujaddid* of the nation. From a rational standpoint too, it can be asked: What is the need for Jesus to come back when the advent of Prophet Muhammad has obviated the need for another prophet and brought prophethood to an end? There is now no need for another prophet, whether a newly ordained one or a prior one, because the work of prophethood has been done. To allege otherwise is to unnecessarily create trouble. God's work is never absurd or without purpose. It would be absurd and serve no purpose for God to keep Jesus waiting in

heaven for two thousand years and then send him back to earth when there is no need for him because prophethood and religion have achieved perfection with the Holy Prophet. The only work left now is one of reviving the religion for which *Mujaddids* (reformers) come. Hence any person prophesied to come can only be a reviver, and the Promised Messiah, too, can be nothing more than a spiritual leader and reviver from among the Muslim community. Likewise, there is a prophecy for the coming of a *Mahdi* (The Rightly Guided One) in the Muslim nation. *Mahdi* is just another title for the Promised Messiah, given to him because he will prove Islam's superiority over all false religions through reason and arguments, and spread Islam throughout the world. The common notion of a *Mahdi* who will spread Islam by wielding the sword is false and against the teachings of the Quran.

It is a grave error to be misled by these claims. There is no implication in the claim of Promised Messiah and *Mahdi* greater than the claim of a *Mujaddid*. *Hazrat Mirza* himself writes: "Has anyone besides this humble person claimed to be the *Mujaddid* of the fourteenth century?...and it should be remembered that the claim of Promised Messiah is no greater than the claim of being a *Mujaddid* and having communion with Allah."<sup>1</sup> In other words, Messiah and *Mahdi* may be considered as two titles that God and His Prophet have bestowed on the *Mujaddid* of the fourteenth century. Why were these titles granted? The reason was that the *Mujaddid* of the time was entrusted with two great tasks, which were best defined by the two titles of Messiah and *Mahdi*.

On the one hand, Islam was locked in a struggle against Christianity. Both the Quran and the *Hadith* prophesy that Christianity would gain a position of dominance and Islam would face its greatest challenge at Christianity's hands. At the same time, this era would be especially fertile for the spread of Islam among the Christian world. Islam has claimed millions of converts from the adherents of other religions but from Christianity the numbers have been far fewer. It appears that fate has decreed that Islam should first enlighten the east and then bring light to the west. This is analogous to the sun first bringing light to the eastern and then the western hemisphere. The *Hadith* refer to the later spread of Islam in the west as "the sun rising from the west."<sup>2</sup> A saying of the Holy Prophet also further corroborates this thesis. The Holy Prophet is report-

1 *Ainah Kamalat Islam*. Page 340.

2 Sheikh Wali al-Din Muhammad Abd Allah. *Mishkat al-Masabih* (Hadith). Page 472 line 14.

ed to have said: “I have been given two treasures, one tan (eastern nations) and one white (western nations).”<sup>3</sup> Since the task of countering Christianity throughout the world and propagating Islam to the Christian west was to define the tenure of this *Mujaddid*, he was given the name ‘son of Mary’ or ‘Messiah.’ *Hazrat* Mirza stated this idea in a Persian verse:

Because the light that God has granted me is for the nation of the  
Messiah,  
Hence expediency dictated that I be called son of Mary.

On the other hand, this *Mujaddid* was also entrusted with the work of strengthening Islam by removing wrong ideas and practices among the Muslims. These included removing extremist practices, bringing unity among the Muslims by purging the habit of calling other Muslims as disbelievers (*kafirs*), developing brotherhood among them, and restoring to them the great objective of the Holy Prophet’s life, namely taking the light of Islam to everyone. From this standpoint, this *Mujaddid* was given the name *Mahdi*.

Thus, the reality of the *hadith* reports was only that the fourteenth century *hijri* would witness the advent of a perfect *Mujaddid*, who would be resplendent like the full moon of the fourteenth night of the lunar month and would be charged with two special missions — to take Islam to the Christian nations, for which he was given the title ‘Jesus son of Mary’, and to light up the hearts of the Muslims with his spirituality, for which he was given the title *Mahdi*. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet said: “His name will be conformable to my name.”<sup>4</sup> In some religious sources, it is stated that the *Mahdi* is more perfect than Jesus, although Jesus is a prophet of God. The interpretation of this is that the personality of the *Mahdi* is a manifestation of the reality of the Holy Prophet, and the personality of the Messiah is a manifestation of the reality of Jesus. Because the perfection of the Holy Prophet is greater than the perfection of Jesus, the *Mahdi* is greater than the Messiah. In other words, the grandeur of the *Mahdi* dominates the grandeur of Jesus in this perfect *Mujaddid* who combines within him the roles of both the Messiah and the *Mahdi*.

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3 Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal. *Musnad* (Hadith). Vol. 4 page 123.

4 Shaikh Wali al-Din Muhammad Abd Allah. *Mishkat al-Masabih* (Hadith). Page 470 line 6.

### Second reason for making the claim

The second reason for making the claims was that the real objective of the *Mujaddid* of the time was to propagate Islam. *Hazrat* Mirza made this clear in his first book *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. He stated that the real objective for appointing him as the *Mujaddid* was to establish the supremacy of Islam over all other religions. Accordingly, he wrote:<sup>5</sup>

The spiritual dominance of Islam that will take place through incontestable logic and enlightened arguments is destined to be accomplished at the hands of this humble person, whether in his lifetime or after his death. It is true that by advancing truthful arguments, Islam has excelled over other religions from ancient times and its opponents have forever been disgraced and put to shame. However, the manifestation of this excellence on all sects and nations is left to a time when increased communication will result in a global community...God Almighty, by putting this servant on the earth at this time, and by assisting me with thousands of heavenly signs and miracles, by granting me knowledge and true understanding, and by giving me thousands of decisive arguments, has desired that the true teachings of the Quran should prevail in all nations and countries and this matter be settled conclusively.

The first pamphlet *Hazrat* Mirza wrote about this claim was called *Fath Islam* and he described in it a strategy for Islam's global domination. He explained the reason for his advent in the following words:

Do not be surprised that God has manifested, in this time of great need and intense darkness, a heavenly light and has desired to specially send, for the common good, a person to establish the greatness of the word of Islam, to propagate the light of the Holy Prophet, to assist the Muslims and to cleanse their inner selves.<sup>6</sup>

Truth will triumph and the glorious and enlightened age of Islam of yesteryears will return. The sun of Islam will rise again resplendent like it rose before. However, it is necessary that the Heaven should delay this rising until we struggle and strive to our utmost and sacrifice all our desires for the sake of seeing the sun

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5 *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. Page 499 and 501

6 *Fath Islam*. Page 5

rise and we bear every indignity for the honor of Islam. The resuscitation of Islam demands a ransom from us. What is this ransom? It is giving up our lives for this objective. On this death depends the life of Islam and Muslims, and the manifestation of the living God. This striving is the other name of Islam and God desires to bring this Islam back to life now.<sup>7</sup>

The great passion in *Hazrat Mirza's* heart for the propagation of Islam is quite apparent from these writings. As a matter of fact, all his writings during this period bear the same message that the time for the global dominance of Islam had come. It is quite remarkable that *Hazrat Mirza* showed this special interest in propagating Islam to the west, given the facts that he lived in a remote village cut off from the intellectual movements of the time, that he did not have any connection with the Western civilization and that he was not literate in the English language. This passionate desire finally found acceptance with God and *Hazrat Mirza* was given the good news in a vision that Islam would spread in the west. Consequently, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote in *Izala Auham*, the book in which he first published his claim in 1891:<sup>8</sup>

It has been made known in a vision to this humble servant that the meaning of 'The sun will rise from the west,' is that the sun of truth will shine on the Western countries. After straying away from the right path and after a long hiatus in disbelief, they will be given their share of Islam. I saw that I was standing on a pulpit in the city of London and expounding the truth of Islam through logical arguments. After that I caught many small birds that were sitting on the trees. They were white in color with bodily structure like that of partridges. I interpret this to mean that I will not go there personally but that my writings will spread among them and many righteous Westerners will accept the truth.

*Hazrat Mirza's* conviction in this matter was so strong that he mentioned this vision in several places in this book. In the same context, he expressed a desire to author a commentary of the Holy Quran. He wrote:

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7 *Fath Islam*. Page 8 and 9

8 *Izala Auham*. Page 515 and 516

In this critical time, God has raised a person who desires to show the beautiful face of Islam to the whole world and to open its way into the west.<sup>9</sup>

To the utmost of my power, I want to spread literature in Asia and Europe based on the knowledge and blessings that the Holy Spirit of God has bestowed on me...There is no doubt that Europe and America have inherited from the Christian clergy a huge inventory of criticisms against Islam. In addition, their philosophy and temperament have created another store of objections against Islam. My investigations reveal that, in recent times, about three thousand issues have been raised that are considered as criticism of Islam...in order to give an adequate reply to these, it is necessary to have an appointed person whose knowledge is as vast as the sea and whose wisdom has been expanded and made intense by revelation from God...my advise is that...high-quality literature be sent to these countries. If my community supports me heart and soul, I want that a commentary of the Holy Quran be prepared, translated and sent to them. I cannot refrain from saying it explicitly that this is my work and no one else can accomplish it like I can or someone who is my branch and a part of me.<sup>10</sup>

All of these writings pertain to 1890 and 1891 when *Hazrat* Mirza first claimed to be the Promised Messiah. Two years later, he wrote the book *Nur-ul-Haq* in Arabic, with an accompanying Urdu translation. In this book, too, he gave the good news that Islam would spread in Europe and famous personalities and government functionaries would convert to Islam. He wrote:<sup>11</sup>

Likewise, we see that leaders of this government are day by day becoming inclined to the unity of God and their hearts are revolted by the false tenets of their religion...I know that these people are the eggs of Islam from which will soon be born the children of the Islamic nation.

### **Propagation of Islam was a duty imposed by his office**

In brief, from the time of making his claims, there was but one passion that raged within him - to spread Islam to all corners of the world. In par-

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9 *Izala Auham*. Page 769

10 *Izala Auham*. Page 771-773

11 *Nur-e-Haq*, Volume 1. Page 44

ticular, he wanted to propagate Islam in Europe and other Western countries where people had an ugly picture of Islam in their minds. It was the will of God that had put this desire into his heart and this was to be expected because God had decreed and raised him to the office of a *Mujaddid*.

Two great misconceptions stood in the way of achieving this objective of spreading Islam. The first was the notion among Muslims that Jesus was alive and this was a major barrier for the Christians to accept Islam. The second was the idea that the sword was used to spread Islam, and a creed that sanctioned forcible conversions was repugnant to the Westerners.

### **How the first barrier against the propagation of Islam was removed**

There was a widespread belief among Muslims that Jesus was physically alive in heaven and Christians were quick to seize this creed to prove their dogma of Jesus' divinity. They argued that according to the Quranic teaching, prophets were not given bodies that subsisted without food and did not age. The Quranic verse: "Nor did We give them bodies not eating food, nor did they abide" (21:8), was clear on this point. When the clear meaning of this verse was combined with the import of the creed about Jesus' physical presence in heaven, namely that he had survived for over two thousand years without food and without any change in his physical condition, it followed that Jesus was more than a prophet. The suspension of the aging process is a Divine attribute and since Jesus partook of it, he was more than human. It was obvious that as long as the doctrine of a physically living Jesus prevailed among Muslims, the teachings of Islam would fail to make any impression on Christians. On the contrary, Christian dogmas were likely to impress the Muslims. Now that the era had arrived for Islam to make major inroads into Europe, the citadel of Christianity, it became necessary to demolish the central prop of Christianity that Jesus was physically alive in heaven. This was a necessary concomitant for Islam to gain ascendancy over Christianity. Consequently, *Hazrat Mirza* repeatedly referred to this as "The death of the Christian God."

The doctrine of the living Jesus was inextricably tied with the doctrine of the second coming of Christ. Unless the reality of the second coming of Jesus was explained, it was not possible to strike a fatal blow to the doctrine of the living Jesus. When God desired that the religion of Islam should spread among the Christians and achieve dominance over Christianity, He informed the *Mujaddid* of the century that Jesus had died and this information was in accord with the Quran and the *Hadith*. At the same time, *Hazrat Mirza* was also informed that the second coming of



Jesus did not mean the return of the Israelite prophet but of the coming of a *Mujaddid* who through the blessings of Prophet Muhammad is spiritually similar to Jesus, and who will give particular attention to propagating Islam among the Christians. *Hazrat* Mirza has explained this in two verses as follows:

Because the infidels are unjustly worshipping the Messiah,  
Out of a sense of honor God has made me the peer of the Messiah.

Because the light that God has granted me is for the nation of  
Messiah,  
Hence expediency dictated that I be called son of Mary.

### **How the second barrier against the propagation of Islam was removed**

The second criticism of Islam rested on the notion that the rise and spread of Islam was the result of military occupation and forcible conversions rather than the beauty of its guidance. Lending credence to this view was a widespread belief among Muslims that a *Mahdi* was about to come who would forcibly convert the infidels to Islam. The prevalence of this belief was a major hurdle in the propagation of Islam because it created a natural aversion in the non-Muslim mind to such a faith and detracted from its objective study. God willed that this obstacle should be removed and so He made it known to *Hazrat* Mirza that there was no mention in any reliable *Hadith* of any *Mahdi* who would spread Islam by force and that *Mahdi* was just another name given to the Promised Messiah. The *hadith*, "There is no *Mahdi* except Jesus,"<sup>12</sup> bore testimony to this fact.

These were the real reasons underlying the claims of *Hazrat* Mirza to be the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*. Their purpose was merely to remove the two barriers that stood in the way of the general acceptance of Islam.

### **The claims were made by the command of God**

*Hazrat* Mirza knew fully well that these claims would brew up a storm of opposition because this was not a matter that the Islamic world would accept easily. As expected, the resultant opposition was vehement. The person who was looked upon till recently as the best hope of Islam began to be considered its worst enemy. *Hazrat* Mirza had enjoyed a posi-

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12 Abu Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Yazid **ibn Majah** al-Qazwini. *Sunan (Hadith)*, chapter Al-Sharat al-Saah. Page 302

tion of unparalleled fame and was listened to with great respect, but now he was the target of curses and abuses. In the pre-claim period, he had been lauded for his righteousness and piety. His knowledge and wisdom had been acclaimed on all sides. As a combatant against the enemies of Islam, he had been considered the champion of Islam. *Hazrat* Mirza knew that the claims of the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi* would destroy his well-established reputation. If there had been an iota of desire for fame or wealth, *Hazrat* Mirza would never have considered making these claims. A person desirous of fame and wealth does not instigate people but tries to appease them at all cost, even if he has to act the hypocrite. No one wishes to self-destruct. It was the will and plan of God that compelled him to this course. Whatever *Hazrat* Mirza did was done at the behest of God and not by his own volition. How can a human mind comprehend the finesse and wisdom that was concealed in these claims? But Divine knowledge comprehended that there were two great obstacles in the general acceptance of Islam and that these must be removed. If in the pursuit of this objective, the reputation of the *Mujaddid* of the time was sullied, it was of little consequence. Islam required this sacrifice of *Hazrat* Mirza and he willingly gave it. By disclosing the real significance of the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*, he made himself the target of taunts and curses and sacrificed his fame and popularity. However, the widespread propagation of Islam required this sacrifice and he bowed his head before the command of God. He did not stand to gain anything from these claims; on the contrary, he stood to lose.

### **Tried to change the mentality of the religious scholars of the time**

The idea of propagating Islam throughout the world was so far beyond the conception of the religious scholars and Muslims of the time that even a materialistic atheist must concede that such an idea could only be Divinely inspired. The general mentality of the Muslim religious scholars had deteriorated to the extent that they considered bickering over minor doctrinal points as the greatest service to Islam. Even worse than this, they pronounced each other as infidels and considered this a great service to Islam. The grand conception of launching a world-wide movement for the propagation of Islam was meant not only to spread Islam, but also had another hidden objective of changing the mentality of mutual destruction prevalent among the Muslim religious scholars and forging a unity among them to face the external opponents of Islam. *Hazrat* Mirza wanted the religious scholars to stop their internal bickering and to come out and take the field as soldiers of Islam against its enemies. It is obvi-

ous that the person who did away with the abominable objective of mutual destruction that the religious scholars were practicing and replaced it with the grand objective of countering the enemies of Islam performed a great service to Islam. The strength of the Muslims that was being dissipated in mutual wrangling was harnessed to propagate and spread Islam.

### **Propagation of Islam was declared the *jihad* of the time**

*Hazrat* Mirza did not treat the work of propagating Islam as an ordinary matter but declared it to be the best way to cleanse and purify the soul. It was the practice up to the time of *Hazrat* Mirza that when disciples formally pledged their lot with a religious leader, the leader prescribed certain chants and devotional acts for them to purify their soul, in addition to the accepted traditional worship and praise of God. *Hazrat* Mirza gave propagation of Islam the status given by others to special chants and devotional acts. Many of the special hymns and devotional acts of the *Sufis* were not even remotely connected with the traditions of the Holy Prophet. In addition, these innovations had also paralyzed the Muslim's will to act. *Hazrat* Mirza, on the other hand, accorded the highest priority in his conditions of pledge to the crusade of propagating Islam and called this a *jihad* and a holy endeavor. This was the hallmark of all truly righteous persons before him as well. By putting before them the objective of propagating Islam, *Hazrat* Mirza woke up the slumbering Muslim nation and put them to action. He showed them that their desire to purify the soul through hymns and devotional acts could be accomplished more comprehensively by striving (*jihad*) to propagate Islam. In the process, he also clarified the real meaning of *jihad*; namely that *jihad* with the sword was permissible only under special circumstances when aggressors threatened a Muslim community, but the continuous *jihad* that was required of Muslims was the striving with the Quran. As the Quran itself says, "...strive against them a mighty striving with it (Quran)" (25:52).

## **WHY *HAZRAT* MIRZA STRESSED RECEIVING REVELATION FROM GOD**

### **Revelation is the best source of knowledge from God**

It is obvious that the first task of a *Mujaddid* must be to reform the ills within the Muslim society. Western materialistic culture and education, to which the Muslim society was exposed on a large scale for the first time during the nineteenth century, had had an insidious effect on traditional Muslim values and beliefs. It not only bred an indifference to religion but also caused some to deny the phenomenon of revelation – a development so serious that it shook the very foundation of religion. Revelation from God to man is the real foundation of religion because it instills the perfect belief in God, provides information about His attributes and gives the basis of man's relationship with God. However, as a result of the western, materialistic education, many respected Muslims began to deny the existence of revelation. It was, therefore, the first duty of the *Mujaddid* of the time to show that the prophets were truthful and genuine when they claimed to be the recipients of revelation from God. And this reality could not have been proven unless it was first stressed and then demonstrated that God's discourse with man was not an ephemeral phenomenon but was permanent like any of His other attributes, such as Hearing, Seeing and Knowing.

It was for this reason that *Hazrat* Mirza laid great stress on the realism of revelation in *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, his first and longest book. He

proved the genuineness of revelation not only by arguments based on rationality and historical narrations but also put forward his own experience along with corroborating evidence of true prophecies he had made. Although previous *Mujaddids* had also claimed discourse with God, none of them had laid as much stress on this phenomenon in their writings as did *Hazrat Mirza*. The sole reason for this was that the biggest internal problem Islam faced in those days was the denial of revelation. This denial took two forms. One view was that God spoke with His people in ancient times but did not do so anymore. The other view was that God's revelation was not an external phenomenon but simply the internal voice of a person. Both viewpoints had serious implications for the very basis of religion. If Allah used to engage in discourse with people before, why had this attribute of God been suspended? If He spoke to His people before, He should speak to them even now, and if He did not speak to them now, it could not be proven that He spoke to them before. If revelation was merely the internal voice of a person, then the existence of God could merely be a fable, and belief in Him, His attributes, and in all matters pertaining to Him was not based on a solid foundation. Under both viewpoints, the institution of prophethood faced a serious challenge to its genuineness.

The *Mujaddid* of the time therefore stressed, first and foremost, the realism of revelation from God in order to prove the genuineness of the institution of prophethood and to establish true belief in the existence of God. As proof, he put forward his own visions and revelations in which prophecies were made, and produced testimonials of those prophecies coming true. This strategy of adducing proof through presenting a large number of true prophecies was part of a Divine plan for the *Mujaddid* of the century to prove that the institution of prophethood was a reality. In fact, the abundance of prophecies made was another reason why the word 'prophet' was used figuratively and by way of analogy for the *Mujaddid* of the century. The dictionary meaning of 'prophet' is one who informs about the unknown, or the one who prophesies; and making numerous prophecies and providing news about the unseen is an attribute of prophethood. Since a non-prophet who makes numerous prophecies on the basis of communion with God, shares this attribute with a prophet, it becomes justifiable to call a non-prophet figuratively and analogically a prophet. However, such a person is not a prophet in the technical meaning of the word as understood in religious law. This figurative and analogical use of the word is only meant to show that, although prophethood has been terminated, one of its attributes, namely discourse with God, shall keep man-

ifesting itself among the saints in order to preserve evidence of the genuineness of prophethood. Without such proof, the institution of prophethood becomes suspect. Given the prevailing culture of materialism, it was the crying need of the hour for a person who had the attribute of communion with God like the prophets of yore, to step up and prove with his personal example that discourse with God was indeed possible. Such a person would then be an incontrovertible testimony to the truth of the institution of prophethood.

Another reason Hazrat Mirza laid so much stress on the reality of revelation was that perfect belief in the existence of God is also borne out of discourse with God. Because the western materialistic education had severely shaken the belief in God, the first task of the *Mujaddid* of the time was to declare with perfect certainty that there is a God and that He speaks with him. This was meant to establish complete certainty in people's mind about the existence of God and create in their hearts the genuine desire to establish a relationship with Him. The real essence of religion, which is complete certainty in the existence of God, cannot be restored unless a palpable proof is presented to the people about God's discourse with men. This is the real purport of the following *hadith*, reported by Abu Hurairah:<sup>1</sup>

We were sitting with the Holy Prophet when the chapter entitled *al-Jumuah* was revealed to him, and in it are the words "others from among them who have not yet joined them." I asked the Holy Prophet: "Who are these?" He gave no reply until I questioned him thrice. Salman, the Persian, was sitting among us, and the Holy Prophet placed his hands on Salman, and said: "Even if faith were near the Pleiades, a man from among these would surely find it."

The report prophesies a time when belief in the essential articles of faith, like the existence of God and prophethood, would be seriously challenged, and a man of Persian descent would revive faith. The strongest proof of God's existence is revelation and it is for this reason that *Hazrat Mirza*, the man of Persian descent, emphasized his own contemporary experience of receiving revelation to effectively rebut all challenges to the core principles of faith.

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1 *Al-Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith). 65:62*

## Chapter

# 34

## SOJOURN IN DELHI

### Arrival in Delhi

*Hazrat* Mirza went from Ludhiana to Qadian for a brief stay and then returned to Ludhiana. After a week, he left for Delhi. The year was 1891, and Delhi at that time was a great center of religious learning. In particular, *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain Dehlvi, a renowned scholar and the foremost authority among the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect, resided in this city. Because of this premier position, he was known as *Sheikh al-Kul*. Another famous religious personality of Delhi was *Maulvi* Abdul Haq who belonged to the Muqallid (accept all four great jurist Imams) group of Muslims. He had authored a well-known book *Tafseer-e-Haqqani*, and the government had recognized his literary merit by awarding him the title of *Shams-ul-Ulama* (Sun of the Scholars). In addition to these two premier clerics, the city was brimming over with a large number of lesser clerics. *Hazrat* Mirza thought that Delhi may prove to be a fertile ground for his message and that discourse with the religious scholars may yield some favorable outcome. This was the motivation for his visit to Delhi in 1891.

In Delhi, he took up residence in the house of Nawab Loharu situated in Kucha Balimaran. His entourage included *Maulvi* Abdul Karim Sialkoti, *Hakim* Fazal Din Bhervi, Syed Ameer Ali Shah Sialkoti, Ghulam Qadir Fasih Sialkoti, *Munshi* Zafar Ahmad and Muhammad Khan Kapurthalvi. *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani also joined them at a later date. A day prior to *Hazrat* Mirza's arrival in Delhi, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi reached Delhi and immediately began waging a campaign to turn the citizens of Delhi against *Hazrat* Mirza. He first poisoned the mind of

his mentor *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain Delhvi and then incited other religious scholars to spew virulent propaganda against *Hazrat* Mirza from their pulpits to the public. The campaign succeeded splendidly in creating an environment of extreme hostility and religious animosity in which the citizens of Delhi committed hostile acts that exceeded all norms of civilized behavior. *Hazrat* Mirza tried to defend himself against the vile and fabricated accusations of the clerics by publishing, and widely distributing an announcement entitled “Announcement of a Humble Traveler in Delhi.” This announcement read:<sup>1</sup>

I have heard that some of the leading religious scholars of this city are giving publicity to false charges against me. They allege that I lay claim to prophethood and do not believe in angels, in heaven and hell, in the existence of Gabriel, in *Lailat-ul-Qadr* (the Grand Night), in miracles and the *Miraj* (Ascension) of the Holy Prophet. So, to make the truth known to all, I do hereby publicly declare that all this is a complete fabrication. I am not a claimant to prophethood, neither am I a denier of miracles, angels, *Lailat-ul-Qadr*, etc. On the contrary, I profess belief in all those matters that are included in the Islamic principles of faith and, in accordance with the belief of the *Ahl-e Sunnat wal Jamaat*, I believe in all those things that are established by the Quran and the *Hadith*. I regard any claimant to prophethood and messengership after our lord and master Muhammad Mustafa (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) - the last of the messengers (*khatam-ul-mursalin*) - to be a liar and unbeliever (*kafir*). It is my conviction that apostolic revelation (*wahy risalat*) began with Adam, the Chosen One of God, and came to a close with the Messenger of God (i.e. the Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Let everyone bear witness to my statement that I declare my belief in all those doctrines by the acceptance of which even an infidel becomes a Muslim and a follower of any other religion too is immediately proclaimed a Muslim. And God All-Knowing and Hearing is the first of all witnesses. I believe in all articles of faith that are included in the Quran and the authentic *Hadith*...

The announcement also contained a lucid explanation of *Hazrat* Mirza's claims and an offer of dialogue with the leading scholars of Delhi, *Maulvi*

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1 Announcement dated October 2, 1891. Page 1



Nazeer Hussain Dehlvi and *Maulvi* Abdul Haq, to clarify any disputed issue so that truth could be distinguished from falsehood. But the people were interested neither in the truth nor in being reasonable because the fire of hatred and anger consumed them. Consequently, the announcement did nothing to assuage the fire of opposition, which continued unabated. An unruly crowd of ruffians, hurling abuses, cat calling and making obscene gestures, became a permanent feature outside *Hazrat* Mirza's residence. Included in this crowd were also men of advanced age with gray beards who clapped and abused *Hazrat* Mirza in unison with the other hoodlums. It became an ordeal for *Hazrat* Mirza's employees to venture out for provisions because as soon as they stepped out on the street, the crowd would surround them, shout abuses and otherwise harass them.

### **The craftiness of *Shams-ul-Ulama* (Sun of Scholars), *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Dehlvi**

Since *Hazrat* Mirza had invited both *Maulvi* Abdul Haq and *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain for talks to resolve any disputed points, the former became apprehensive that his day of reckoning may be drawing near when he may be openly challenged to confront *Hazrat* Mirza. He, therefore, decided to preempt such an eventuality and paid *Hazrat* Mirza a visit in which he confessed: "Sir, I am like your child and you are my respected senior. How can an inconsequential person like me confront you?" He continued in this hypocritical vein for some more time and then said: "Please delete my name in your announcement from the list of those you are inviting for a debate. I am a hermit, fond of my solitude and isolation, and have no concern with debating." *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "All right, *Maulvi* sahib you can delete your name with your own hands from the Announcement," and *Maulvi* Abdul Haq picked up the pen and scored out his name.

*Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani narrated another interesting incident of this visit. During the conversation, *Maulvi* Abdul Haq made some statements about the death of Jesus and read a verse in Arabic, the full text of which *Pir* Nomani could not recall, but the verse ended in "*Towaffi kullo nafsin*." *Maulvi* Abdul Haq read the Arabic verse and said: "Look at what this ancient poet from the Days of Ignorance in Arabia has to say." *Hazrat* Mirza enquired: "*Maulvi* sahib, what is its subject?" No sooner had *Hazrat* Mirza posed this question, *Maulvi* Abdul Haq, boasting the title of 'Sun of Scholars,' went into a total eclipse. He put his head down and after a long period of silence, said: "Yes, yes, I was mistaken. You are right. Please excuse me. Juniors are liable to make mistakes, it is the job

of the seniors to forgive.” He left after this conversation.

On October 6, 1891, Hazrat Mirza issued an Announcement inviting *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain and *Maulvi* Batalvi for a debate, but left out the name of *Maulvi* Abdul Haq as promised. The Announcement clearly mentioned, however, that “*Maulvi* Abdul Haq has stated to us that he is a hermit who does not like gatherings where there is a possibility of public disagreements, and further that he cannot ensure the peaceful conduct of such a meeting through the presence of official security personnel. Accordingly, we are now not addressing him. However, I extend an invitation to *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain sahib, *Muhaddath* Delhvi, and *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib Batalvi to debate me in accordance with the agreed-upon conditions.” When this Announcement was published, and *Maulvi* Abdul Haq was satisfied that the situation had been averted, he started boasting to his close acquaintances: “Mirza is not capable of confronting me. When I went there, Mirza begged and pleaded with me ‘Respected *Maulvi* sahib, I cannot debate with you; I do not have the capability to confront you. I had put your name down by mistake.’ Well sir! I confounded Mirza with a single question...” Such is the character of the clerics of today. They may be the commentators of the Quran or the ‘Sun of Scholars’ but there is no limit to their lies and hypocrisy.

### **A fictitious debate with *Maulvi* Syed Nazeer Hussain**

Whenever *Hazrat* Mirza had invited *Maulvi* Syed Nazeer Hussain to a debate prior to the announcement of October 6, the *Maulvi*’s standard reply was: “I have hundreds of pupils. You can debate any one of them.” To this, *Hazrat* Mirza would respond: “*Maulvi* sahib you have hundreds and thousands of pupils, how many can I debate? If one is defeated, you will ask another one to stand up. If he loses, you will ask a third one to oppose me and in the same way, a fourth and a fifth and so on. The way to establish the truth is that you should debate the issues yourself. You are like the root and your pupils are like the branches. If the root stays safe, the branches will too, but if the root is uprooted then the branches will wither and fall off. If this is not acceptable, then choose a pupil in whose knowledge and wisdom you have full confidence and complete trust. Send him to debate me, but give me an assurance in writing that his defeat will be your defeat and his win will be your win.” However, *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain was not amenable to this suggestion and kept harping on the same tune: “I have many pupils; you can debate with any one you choose. First prove yourself to be a righteous Muslim and then you can debate with me.” The real persons behind this stonewalling were *Maulvi* Muhammad

Hussain Batalvi and other orthodox pupils who constantly kept their mentor's company and advised him what to say and do.

*Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani was a *Pir* (hereditary religious leader) and he had disciples of his own. Two of his disciples kept constant company with the clerics of Delhi and reported to him whatever they had heard. *Pir* Nomani learned that one day *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain told *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain very clearly: "O Muhammad Hussain, why are you getting me disgraced in my old age and making me guilty before God? Give it up. There is no mention anywhere that Jesus is still alive. Will you answer for me on the Day of Judgment?" Muhammad Hussain struck his hands against the arms on the opposite side in a typical gesture of a wrestler ready to give a fight, and said: "Yes. We will answer for you before God, but remember that if you say such a thing again, you will live to regret it. All of us will turn away from you. Where will you go? Where will you stay?" *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain, who was a frail old man, was cowed down by this threat and continued to remain a puppet in the hands of his pupils.<sup>2</sup>

The Announcement of October 6 generated considerable consternation among the pupils and they got together to devise a face-saving strategy. In a clever ruse, they published a poster accepting the debate and set the following day as the date of the encounter between *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain and *Hazrat* Mirza. At the same time, they ensured that the poster did not reach *Hazrat* Mirza so that he remained unaware of the debate. At the supposed time of the debate the next day, they sent a person to *Hazrat* Mirza with the message to come for the debate as *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain was waiting for him. *Hazrat* Mirza was astonished. He said: "I should have been consulted about the time and venue of the debate and adequate security arrangements made through the government. It is totally dishonest to unilaterally make an announcement without an agreement or knowledge of the second party and without settling the conditions, and to inform the other party only at the nick of time. Despite all of this, I would not refuse and would go for the debate but the hostility in your city is such that hundreds of vagabonds and ruffians remain gathered all the time in the vicinity of my house bent upon making mischief. Not only do responsible persons not stop them, but they actually incite them with provocative words. Consequently, until I can make arrangements for the security of my house and family in my absence, I cannot go with you. In addition, unless arrangements for security are made at the site of the debate and along the way it is not appropriate to go."

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2 See Appendix I.

In the meantime, *Hakim* Abdul Majeed Khan arrived with a buggy and urged *Hazrat* Mirza to accompany him to the debate as *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain was also coming. However, the interesting thing was that even *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain was unaware of the debate, as his pupils had announced the debate on their own volition. *Hazrat* Mirza gave *Hakim* Khan the same reply as he had to the messenger. *Hakim* Khan was not pleased with the reply and said: "Why do you worry? I will be accompanying you." *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "I concede you are a man of influence but you are only a doctor - not a King or a police officer. If a disturbance breaks out we cannot hold you liable. You will either desert us, or if you don't, you will also be assaulted." *Hazrat* Mirza's stand on the issue was entirely correct because the purpose of this public meeting was only to lure *Hazrat* Mirza to the gathering and to kill him. This conclusion was not a mere hunch but was corroborated by the two disciples of *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq who kept company with the clerics and acted as informants. They had reported that the people in the gathering were armed with knives and axes. Their intention was clearly to invite *Hazrat* Mirza and then to kill him. Because of this situation, *Hazrat* Mirza did not go and *Hakim* Khan left in a foul mood.

The consequences of not showing up for the debate were predictable. The whole city was astir with the news that Mirza had run away, and this was the main topic of conversation wherever one turned. *Hazrat* Mirza published a poster explaining the real situation, but the citizenry was in no mood to listen because their ears were tuned only to the propaganda machine of the clerics, which was working very efficiently day and night. The clerics had the whole town gripped in this frenzy, and the already hostile atmosphere of the city further intensified. To add further fuel to the fire, the clerics provoked the ethnic and linguistic pride of the people of Delhi. They argued that if the Messiah had died and a new Messiah had to come from among the Muslims, then he should have been from the residents of Delhi. It was entirely inconceivable that God should bestow this office on a rural resident of Punjab whose language in terms of sweetness and fluency was no match for that of the people of Delhi. This further pumped up and pleased the people of Delhi and their fervor reached such a pitch that thousands of hoodlums and miscreants considered it a religious duty to stand before *Hazrat* Mirza's residence and shout slogans, hurl abuses and to jeer and mock. Some came in a spirit of mockery but others came red with rage and if perchance they saw *Hazrat* Mirza, they would extend their arms almost to his beard and shout: "O you Punjabi! O stupid Punjabi! You have become a Messiah. Do you think God will bypass us to

make you Messiah? We the residents of Delhi are more deserving of this.” *Hazrat* Mirza listened in silence and showed great restraint and patience. If ever one of his disciples harshly rebuked some rude heckler reaching for *Hazrat* Mirza’s beard, he would ask his disciple to desist. On one occasion, several hundred miscreants stormed *Hazrat* Mirza’s house in a concerted attack, and tried to force their way in with the intention of harming him. Syed Ameer Ali Shah of Sialkot thwarted this attack single handedly. The stairs were narrow and the intruders had to climb up single file to reach the door at the top of the stairs that led into the house. But Syed Ameer Ali Shah, who stood at the top of the stairs, checked their forward progress. He was a robust man with a powerful physique, and being a policeman by profession, had learned to handle such situations. Sensing the bad intentions of the intruding mob, he ordered them to stop and not to come up, but the intruders paid no heed. He then grabbed the first person in the line and hurled him at the rest with such force that the whole column of men went tumbling down the stairs. This show of force overawed them and they ran away, hurling abuses even as they dispersed.

### **Mirza Herat Dehlvi’s regrettable behavior**

Mirza Herat Dehlvi, who at a later stage in life became the editor of the newspaper *Curzon Gazette*, was a shallow and vulgar person with an excessive passion for publicity. For a long time, he had been entangling with *Maulvi* Nazeer Ahmad about the latter’s commentary of the Holy Quran. He came to visit *Hazrat* Mirza at his residence one day, dressed in a western suit, with no head covering and sporting an angled hair partition that was in vogue among the British. He had nothing of consequence to say and left after half an hour.

A day or two earlier, he had some flyers printed in which the text was set in two columns - the Arabic text in one column and its Urdu translation in the other. He climbed up to the top of Fatehgarh minaret and started throwing the flyers down to the passersby from his perched position atop the tower. The main message of the text on the flyers was: I am the real Messiah. I have descended from heaven because the Antichrist is visiting Delhi and I have come to kill him. Because this drama was orchestrated in consultation with the clerics and they had approved the text of the flyers, none of them spoke up to reprimand him on this heretical deed. After all, it was the Holy Prophet who had made the prophecy about the second coming of Christ, and mocking the prophecy was tantamount to mocking the Holy Prophet. The clerics just laughed at this buffoonery and felt no revulsion.

One day, Mirza Herat appeared at *Hazrat Mirza's* residence posing as a police officer and told him: "I am a police inspector. The government has ordered that you should leave Delhi immediately otherwise it will not be good for you." *Hazrat Mirza* ignored him and gave no reply. However, Syed Amir Ali Shah was a policeman himself and asked him a few probing questions. Mirza Herat, fearing that his ruse had been revealed, became very nervous and left, never to come back again.

### **The cleric's libelous propaganda**

The clerics of Delhi kept churning out large numbers of posters attributing all kinds of false beliefs to *Hazrat Mirza* in order to discredit him in the public eye. One day, an elderly, white-bearded person came to *Hazrat Mirza's* residence. *Hazrat Mirza* was in his upstairs family quarters so *Pir Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani* entertained the visitor. The visitor asked: "Do you people deny the Day of Judgment?" *Pir Nomani* enquired: "Who says so?" The visitor replied: "This poster does. It gives a precise citation of the book, the page and even the line number on which Mirza sahib has professed that there is no such thing as the Day of Judgment." *Pir Nomani* said: "This poster has been published by the opponents of *Hazrat Mirza*. They have no other work except to make false charges." The visitor said: "The poster references the book *Izala Auham*. Can you please ask someone to bring the book? After all, the authors of the poster are clerics and it is hard to conceive that they would be lying so brazenly." *Pir Nomani* was in possession of a copy of *Izala Auham* and handed the book to the visitor. He examined the book and opened it to the page and line referenced in the poster. The Day of Judgment was not mentioned even on the whole cited page. The visitor then remarked: "Perhaps, the scribe made an error in transcribing the reference." *Pir Nomani* said: "If you have any doubts, feel free to look through the entire book." He examined about half the book while sitting there, and then said: "Can I borrow this book as I would like to examine it thoroughly at home?" *Pir Nomani* agreed and the visitor left with the book. When the visitor returned the next day, he started reviling the clerics, and said: "I am now convinced that the clerics are a bunch of liars."

Similarly, when *Hazrat Mirza* went to the Jamia Masjid in Delhi for a debate, some of the attendees were gossiping that *Hazrat Mirza* and his followers did not believe in, nor recited the *kalimah* (Muslim confession of faith). Some others rebutted this statement by questioning: "If they do not recite the *kalimah*, why would they come to the mosque and why would they possess the Quran, the *Hadith* and their commentaries?" Finally, an

elderly man, who was acquainted with *Pir* Nomani, approached him and asked: "Who are you people?" *Pir* Nomani replied: "We are Muslims." He then asked: "What is your religion?" *Pir* Nomani replied: "Islam." He further asked: "What is your way?" By that he probably meant what school of Islamic jurisprudence did they follow, i.e. *Hanafi*, *Shafi* etc. *Pir* Nomani replied: "Islam." He then asked: "Do you not recite the *kalimah*?" *Pir* Nomani replied: "Why should we not recite the *kalimah*? Of course we recite the *kalimah*." Some of the people listening to the conversation said: "If you recite the *kalimah*, let us hear you recite it now." *Pir* Nomani recited the *kalimah* in Arabic: "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger." The old man then turned towards the gossipmongers and addressed them: "They do recite the *kalimah*, but you were saying that they do not." Some of them muttered: "The clerics had told us that they do not recite the *kalimah*, but now we have listened with our own ears that they do." Some others said: "They have only recited the *kalimah* now under duress, but in reality, they do not." To this, the old man responded: "Perhaps you can look into what is in their hearts but failing that, most of us must accept what they say." The old man again addressed *Pir* Nomani and said: "Do you believe in Prophets, Messengers and saints." *Pir* Nomani said: "Yes. If we did not believe in Prophets, Messengers, and saints, how could we accept *Hazrat* Mirza sahib as a saint and the Promised Messiah." After this, they started arguing and fighting among themselves but the police intervened and separated the belligerent parties.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Maulvi* Muhammad Ahmad's mischief**

*Maulvi* Muhammad Ahmad was a companion of *Maulvi* Bashir Bhopali. One day, *Maulvi* Muhammad Ahmad came to visit *Hazrat* Mirza, accompanied by several other clerics and said: "If your claim had only been that you are a saint, I would have been the first to say that I believe you to be truthful. However, the claim of being the Promised Messiah is bothersome. If you give it up, the whole of Delhi will become your followers." *Hazrat* Mirza smiled and kept quiet after just stating in reply: "If I had invented this claim myself, I would have certainly acted on your advice. However, there can be no human alteration in a matter decreed by God." This cleric, who was apparently willing to accept *Hazrat* Mirza as a saint, later tried to harm him by indulging in activities that were no less serious than those of Muhammad Hussain Batalvi. *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani narrated:

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3 See Appendix II.

This *Maulvi* Muhammad Ahmad said to me one day, “Mirza sahib has certainly claimed to be a prophet.” I refuted it. *Maulvi* Muhammad Ahmad said, “Mirza sahib has written *al-muhaddath nabiiun* (the saint who has communion with God is a prophet).” I replied, “Yes, he has written this statement. The use of the word *muhaddath* proves that the claim is not of being a prophet because further on in this passage, he writes, ‘We believe that prophethood has ended.’ Please read the full passage.” *Maulvi* Muhammad Ahmad had no reply and fell silent. When I narrated this incident to *Hazrat* Mirza, he said, “This was exactly the correct answer; we believe prophethood has ended. These people have not understood the meaning of prophethood and keep harping on one word. They read the Holy *Bukhari* but do not reflect on it. It is stated therein that nothing remains of prophethood except *mubashirat* (good news).<sup>4</sup> Thus, prophethood implies only those *mubashirat* that are part of prophethood and are granted to saints.”

### **The boycott to print or publish posters**

The clerics were busy disseminating misinformation about *Hazrat* Mirza but he persisted in appealing to the people of Delhi. He published two or three posters in which he laid out his case so logically and efficaciously that the fair and rational section of the Delhi society was impressed. This was a cause of concern for the clerics because their smokescreen of lies would dissipate and their hard work would go to waste if similar posters kept appearing. They, therefore, resolved to stop the publication of *Hazrat* Mirza’s posters, and pressured the proprietors of all the printing presses in Delhi to desist from publishing any of *Hazrat* Mirza’s materials. This posed a serious problem; but the last recourse for a man of God is prayer. *Hazrat* Mirza resorted to prayer and Allah, the Most High, instituted His plan.

A cleric belonging to the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect published a poster in which he claimed that having names like Ghulam Ahmad, Ghulam Nabi, Ghulam Muhammad, Ghulam Rasul etc. was a polytheistic practice. The poster was directed against *Hazrat* Mirza, but it had an effect in an unexpected quarter. The poster rankled the religious scholars of Fatehpur, who were *Hanafis*, and in particular grieved one of their leading personalities,

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4 *Al-Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)* 92:5.



*Maulvi* Muhammad Usman. In a retaliatory poster, he stated that the religious scholars of *Ahl-e Hadith* had not only attacked Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, but, in reality, had attacked all the followers of *Ahl-e Sunnat wal Jamaat* because their names were of the same type and they considered it permissible to keep such names. After this, *Maulvi* Muhammad Usman met secretly with *Hazrat* Mirza, and also wrote him a letter in which he stated among other things:

I swear by Allah that I love you like I love my own self. The *Wahabi* clerics are creating this discord; I have no part in it. Although I do not consider you to be the Promised Messiah, I am on your side. You can get whatever posters you want published through me. One of my pupils is a copyist and a very good one, too. He will scribe your posters and they will be printed in a press where another of my pupils is employed.

*Hazrat* Mirza made use of this offer and the clerics were shocked when his poster came out. However, they soon fathomed what had happened, and not only immediately withdrew their poster denouncing the keeping of certain names, but also apologized for it. They pleaded with *Maulvi* Muhammad Usman to stop the publication of *Hazrat* Mirza's posters but it was too late. *Maulvi* Usman stood staunchly by his word.

### ***Maulvi* Syed Nazeer Hussain abstains from debating**

*Hazrat* Mirza realized that his opponents would not desist unless he confronted them head-on. However, they were bent upon stonewalling all his attempts to debate *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain. Finally, on October 18, 1891 *Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement in which he detailed his previous efforts to hold a debate and then went on to say:

I have now been able to make the necessary security arrangements, and will proceed to the Jamia Masjid Delhi at the time of the *Asr* prayers on October 20. *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain should also come to the mosque at that time to debate with me. If he does not want to debate, he should at least agree to the following: I will first make a speech in which I will prove, based on the verses of the Quran and the *Hadith*, the death of Jesus and my claim of being the Promised Messiah. After I have finished, *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain should stand up in the public gathering and say, after taking an oath, that whatever Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani has

tried to prove in this matter from the verses of the Quran and *Hadith* is incorrect and the death of Jesus is not proven from them. After this statement on oath, there will be a waiting period of one year. If during that one year, God's punishment does not alight on *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain, I will burn and destroy my books, and recant my claim to be the Promised Messiah. However, if a punishment like the one that alights on liars and the opponents of truth overtakes *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain, it will be considered as a proof to the whole world that I am true. May Allah curse the person who does not show up at the Jamia Masjid on the appointed date.

*Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain and his disciples were totally confounded by this announcement; the bold and specific challenge contained therein caused great consternation and panic among the opponents. They tried to wriggle out of this tight corner by arguing that *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain was an old man, and his death could not be used as a criterion to prove that *Hazrat* Mirza was true in his claims. Initially, they categorically refused to accept this criterion, but finally, the rational and fair minded section of the society prevailed upon them by arguing: "Trust in Allah; both the disputants are old. Is Allah not capable of saving *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain from death for a year so that the truth may become manifest? There should be a debate, or statement on oath, in the Jamia Masjid." Unable to rebut this argument, the clerics agreed to the debate, but devised another strategy to thwart an intellectual discourse. They started inciting the people against *Hazrat* Mirza, and brainwashed them into believing that killing Mirza was an act of great virtue. They suggested that a disturbance be created in the mosque and Mirza killed during the confusion. It was highly unlikely that the killer could be identified under these circumstances, and even if some people were sentenced to a few years in prison, it was a small price to pay.

On the appointed day and time, people started arriving at the mosque in large numbers. Soon the mosque was filled to capacity and the crowd began spilling over the threshold steps of the mosque. Since the morning of that day, people had been stopping by at *Hazrat* Mirza's residence to advise him not to go to the mosque: "Sir," they suggested, "do not go to the Jamia Masjid under any circumstance. There will most certainly be a riot. What will be gained if, God forbid, you are hurt or killed?" Some of those giving this advice were allies of the clerics, who wanted to scare *Hazrat* Mirza into not going so that they could declare victory and allege that Mirza had run away. However, some of the folks who stopped by to

warn were genuine well-wishers, including Hafiz Muhammad Akbar, a preacher with a melodious voice. He came to see *Hazrat* Mirza and said:

Sir, go if you must, but I am telling you the truth when I say that the people of Delhi are out to murder you. Some of them are carrying knives and daggers in their hands, and some are carrying sharp stones, either in their hands or concealed in their pockets or bosom. There will be a sudden shower of stones followed by an attack with knives.

*Hazrat* Mirza gave the same answer to all of them:

It matters not. God is with us. Allah has stated: "Allah will save you from the people," and Allah's protection is sufficient. I cannot stop from going because I have stated that Allah's curse be on the party that does not turn up, and I cannot become the target of this curse.

### **The events of Jamia Masjid Delhi**

On the fateful day, *Hazrat* Mirza and his party combined the two afternoon prayers, *Zuhr* and *Asr*, and prayed them together at the time of the *Zuhr* before their departure for the mosque. Three carriages were hired; one of the carriages carried *Hazrat* Mirza, Syed Amir Ali Shah, *Maulvi* Abdul Karim and one other person. The other two carriages carried, Ghulam Qadir Fasih, Muhammad Khan Kapurthalvi, *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani, *Hakim* Fazal Din Bhervi and various other people. One or two people were left at home for security. A total of twelve people accompanied *Hazrat* Mirza at this critical time, and the similarity with the twelve disciples of Jesus cannot be lost upon one. However, there was no way that twelve people could provide any protection against the multitude that was gathered in the mosque. It was Allah's protection alone that encompassed *Hazrat* Mirza at every step. The party had hardly left the house when signs of Allah's protection began manifesting themselves. The first incident took place on the way to the mosque. A crowd of vagabonds had gathered at one point on the way. Their plan was to create a disturbance when the carriages approached them, and in the melee to murder *Hazrat* Mirza before he reached the mosque. The carriage drivers were given directions to take the normal route to the mosque, and had the directions been followed, the carriages would have driven straight into the murderous trap. However, God made the minds of the drivers impervious

to any suggestion, and contrary to the instructions, they took a shortcut that bypassed the ambushers. When the party arrived at the mosque, they saw a sea of people filling the mosque and spilling over the stairs into the street. The clerics were strutting around in the crowd in gaudy clothes and inciting them to violence. The pent-up anger and fury of the crowd was apparent from the scowls on their faces and it was obvious that they were ready to turn violent at the slightest pretext.

*Hazrat Mirza* calmly made his way through the crowd with his eyes downcast until he reached the central arch of the mosque building, where he sat down on the ground. *Maulvi Abdul Karim* took a seat next to him, and the other members of his party also sat down near him. The crowd around them was seething with anger and showered them with abuses and catcalls. Some individuals would make their way to *Hazrat Mirza*, and gestured as if to grab him by his beard, but it was a special dispensation from God that they did not pick up courage to actually do so. Seeing the mood of the crowd, *Maulvi Abdul Karim* remarked: "Sir, the people are very agitated." *Hazrat Mirza* looked at him very calmly and said: "*Maulvi* sahib, the dead cannot harm the living."

What an excellent exhibition of peace of mind and complete trust in Allah. Such can never be the lot of a liar. *Hazrat Mirza* had expressed the same idea that thousands of dead people cannot harm even a single living person elsewhere in a Persian poem as follows:

O people who are dead! Harken that I am alive,  
O people akin to the blackness of the night! I am bright and shining.

The two eyes that adorn my face,  
See the Beloved Who is my adored and my friend.

They have bestowed me with thousands of blessings,  
But have kept hidden from my face what is untrue.

The secrets known to me are not known to anyone,  
Their (the opponent's) intelligence is even incapable of finding  
the way to my door.

He who is blessed with a righteous heart,  
Knows well the wonders of God.

God is He Who makes man from a drop,  
And grows a full garden from a handful of seeds.

He grants a sperm a beautiful, shining face,  
And makes a stone into an expensive ruby.

If He makes a person like me akin to the Messiah,  
Or makes a beggar into a king,

This is not such as to be far removed from His blessings and  
largesse,  
He who tries to deny this reality is blind.

Do not despair from that Being so High,  
Be His man and you will get what you want.

When He bestows His favor on someone,  
He raises him from the earth to the sky.

The situation with the seething crowd was arrested by the arrival of a police party over a hundred strong, under the command of a British officer who came and formed a cordon around *Hazrat* Mirza and his companions. Soon afterwards, *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain arrived, accompanied by *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, *Maulvi* Abdul Majeed and other clerics. The clerics accompanying *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain took him to a side verandah and made him sit there, thus avoiding a face-to-face meeting with *Hazrat* Mirza. They were afraid that *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain may succumb to the truth on seeing the blessed countenance of *Hazrat* Mirza, and may utter something that may ruin their plans.

The *Asr* prayer then started in the mosque, but *Hazrat* Mirza and his companions did not join the congregation because they had already offered the *Asr* prayer along with the *Zuhr* prayer at home. A person came and whispered to *Hazrat* Mirza: "Although you have said your prayer, it is proven from the *Hadith* that it is permissible to offer the prayer again with a congregation to earn the greater reward of the congregational prayer." *Maulvi* Abdul Karim replied: "We are well aware of that, but we have already offered our prayer in congregation."

After the prayer had ended, the disciples of *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain encircled him and took him back to the verandah near the north gate of the mosque where he was sitting before. They wanted to ensure that *Maulvi*

Nazeer Hussain stayed far away from *Hazrat Mirza*. Then *Maulvi Abdul Majeed* and several other clerics came to *Hazrat Mirza* and began negotiating the conditions of the debate. Their main point was that the debate should not focus on whether Jesus was dead or alive but on *Hazrat Mirza's* claim to be the Promised Messiah. The response given to them was that it would be futile to break the natural sequence of the argument. The entire confusion had resulted from the mistaken belief in the minds of the people that Jesus was alive in heaven, and would descend before the end of the world. Unless this issue was clarified first, it would be spurious to deal with any other issue.

*Maulvi Abdul Majeed* very cunningly tried to enlist the sympathy of the British police officer. He addressed him and said: "Look here Sir! This man, *Mirza Ghulam Ahmad*, claims to be the Promised Messiah and considers both you and us as erring. He considers Jesus, whom both you and we believe to be alive, as dead.<sup>5</sup> He says that *Maulvi Nazeer Hussain* should debate the issue of whether Jesus was alive or dead, and we say that the discussion should only be on his claim of being the Promised Messiah." *Ghulam Qadir Fasih* responded on behalf of *Hazrat Mirza's* party and said, among other things: "Look here, Sir! Unless a post is vacated, nobody else can occupy it. The eminent title that *Hazrat Mirza sahib* claims is, in the opinion of the populace, not vacant and is very much occupied by its existing incumbent Jesus. Under these circumstances, it is fruitless to discuss the claim of *Hazrat Mirza sahib* because no one can consider it seriously if they believe that Jesus is alive. It is, therefore, necessary to first discuss whether Jesus is alive or dead. If Jesus is proven alive, there will be no need to discuss the claim of *Hazrat Mirza sahib* and it will automatically be rejected. However, if it is proven that Jesus has died, then it will become necessary to discuss the claim of *Hazrat Mirza sahib* to establish whether he is the Promised Messiah or is the Messiah someone else." Although the British police officer was a Christian, he was a reasonable and just person, and agreed with the argument made by *Ghulam Qadir Fasih* and asked *Maulvi Abdul Majeed*: "Why don't you want to discuss whether Jesus is alive or dead?" He firmly rejected the argument that the death of Jesus should be a taboo topic. The discussion then turned to the taking of the oath, and the clerics refused to agree to this condition. They said: "*Maulvi Nazeer Hussain* is old and feeble. We will neither take the oath nor will we persuade him to take it."

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5 Thus in this matter, the clerics are similar to the Christians – Author.

At this point, Muhammad Yousaf, a nobleman of Aligarh, who was an honorary magistrate in Delhi and had accompanied the police contingent as the magistrate on duty to ensure the peace, approached *Hazrat Mirza*. He said: “The people are clamoring that your beliefs are contrary to Islam. If this is incorrect, please write down your articles of faith so that I may announce them to the public in a loud voice.” *Hazrat Mirza* immediately wrote down a statement describing his beliefs. The relevant part of the statement is produced below:<sup>6</sup>

“The other allegations that are leveled against me, that I do not believe in *Lailat-ul-Qadr* (the Grand Night), in miracles and the *Miraj* (Ascension) of the Holy Prophet and that I am a claimant of prophethood and deny the finality of prophethood are false and pure fabrications. In all these matters, my belief is the same as that of the *Ahl-e Sunnat wal Jamaat*. These charges are said to be based on my books *Tauzih Maram* and *Izala Auham* but are really the result of misunderstanding by the critics. In the following matters, I affirm in this House of God before all Muslims that I am a believer in the finality of prophethood that has terminated with the Last of Prophets, may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and I consider any person who denies the finality of prophethood as a disbeliever and outside the pale of Islam. Likewise, I believe in angels, miracles, *Lailat-ul-Qadar* etc.”

The magistrate, Muhammad Yousaf, attempted to read this statement aloud to the gathering, but the clerics, who were completely devoid of all righteousness and harbored only evil intentions and aggression, prevented him from doing so. It was certainly not for lack of trying because Muhammad Yousaf did try very hard, but the clerics raised a clamor and openly shouted that they did not want to hear it. At the same time, they kept inciting the crowd with their provocative talk. When the police officer in charge saw that the clerics did not have any intention to debate, but only to create a disturbance, he passed an order in English to an officer under him to disperse the gathering. Consequently, an announcement was made by that police officer and the magistrate that there would be no debate, and that the people should leave. After this announcement, the gathering began to disperse. *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain and his party were greatly relieved that they did not have to debate or take an oath, and they

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6 *Din-ul-Haq*. Page 29

quickly exited, partly facilitated by their position in the verandah close to the gate. The police then threw a cordon around *Hazrat Mirza's* party and escorted them to the northern gate, with the British police officer walking next to *Hazrat Mirza*. When they exited out of the gate, their carriages were nowhere to be found although the full return fare had been paid to the cabbies, and they had been instructed to wait till the party was ready to return. The disappearance of the carriages seemed to be another instance in a series of mischievous behavior by the Delhi citizenry to cause *Hazrat Mirza* distress. There were no other carriages for hire. When about fifteen minutes had elapsed and there was still no sign of any carriages, the police officer, sensing the hostile and threatening mood of the crowd, offered his phaeton. The phaeton had an enclosed passenger compartment for two and *Hazrat Mirza* and *Maulvi Abdul Karim* rode home in it, while the rest of the party walked home.

*Hazrat Mirza's* enemies were determined to cause him harm on that fateful day, but God's Hand was protecting him every step of the way. The final act of protection took place on the way back home. A section of the crowd, whose nefarious design had been frustrated inside the mosque by the presence of police, now gathered at a point on *Hazrat Mirza's* route home. They were armed with knives and axes and a firm determination to finish their unfinished business. But another of God's miracles was in the making. Had *Hazrat Mirza* been riding in the hired carriages, it is certain that the carriages would have been attacked on their way home. However *Hazrat Mirza* rode right through the murderous mob in the police officer's enclosed phaeton, and the attackers had no idea who was slipping through their hands. They probably thought it was the police officer returning home in his phaeton after his duty. It was only after *Hazrat Mirza* had reached home safely and the assassins' long vigil had produced no results that the realization dawned on the assassins that their prey had slipped through their hands. They then felt extremely disgusted with themselves.

*Hakim Fazal Din Bhervi* narrated this incident to the author and ended his narration with the following statement: "This incident greatly increased my faith, and I could better appreciate how the miraculous exit of the Holy Prophet had taken place when his house was totally surrounded by the infidels of Makkah. He walked right through them without anybody noticing him. We witnessed how God protected a servant of the Holy Prophet. If this was the treatment accorded to the servant, what then of the protection accorded to the Master."



### Appendix I

*Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain was a simple and straightforward old man. He got carried away under the influence of his pupils although by nature he was not a bad person. In the beginning, he had a very good opinion of *Hazrat* Mirza. *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq narrated the following incident in his book, *Tazkirat-ul-Mahdi*: "I asked (*Hazrat* Mirza) 'What do you have to say about *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain, the founder and leader of this sect.' He replied: 'I have a good opinion of *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain. He, too, is a saint.' I said: 'Sir, I have spoken ill of *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain.' *Hazrat* Mirza replied: 'Ask for forgiveness. He is not a bad person. He is not like what people think.' When I took leave from *Hazrat* Mirza, I came to Delhi and went to meet *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain at his residence. I called out at his gate. *Maulvi* sahib sent a boy out to enquire who was calling. I sent him a message that I was a traveler and requested him to please step out as I had some work with him. *Maulvi* sahib came out and greeted me with 'Assalam alaikum,' and enquired about the reason for my visit. I said, 'This is going to take a little time. Please ask for a settee so that you can be comfortable. *Maulvi* sahib asked for a settee and both of us sat down. He asked me: 'Where do you stay?' I replied: 'I am a resident of Sarsawah in Saharanpur district but right now I am coming from Qadian.' He enquired: 'Did you meet with *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad?' I replied: 'Yes. I am coming after meeting him.' He said: 'It is a very good thing that you went to meet him. He is a pious person in the mold of the pious persons that have passed away. Dhoman Shah sahib used to live in Sarsawah. His actual name was Makhdoom Ahmad and he was a disciple of *Maulvi* Fazal Haq Khairabadi.' I interjected: 'I am his grandson.' He enquired: 'What is the name of your father?' I replied: 'Shah Habib ur Rahman sahib.' He shook my hand once again and said: 'I have met Shah Habib ur Rahman sahib. You are his son! What brings you here?' I narrated the whole incident of Qadian and said: 'I have come as directed to seek forgiveness for the disrespect that I have shown you.' *Maulvi* sahib said: 'I forgive you for the sake of Allah. When you go to Qadian again give my sincerest greetings to *Hazrat* Mirza sahib.' Then I left."

### Appendix II

The author recalls a similar incident that would not be out of place to mention here. It took place in Lucknow after the death of *Hazrat* Mirza when *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din was the head of the *Ahmadiyya* organization. Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din and *Maulana* Muhammad Ali had gone to Lucknow to participate in the annual conference of the Nadwatul Ulama

(Muslim Religious Scholars Association) founded by the famous Urdu author Shibli Nomani. Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din's speech was on the 'Character of the Holy Prophet' and when he started his talk, the audience was enthralled. *Maulana* Shibli Nomani was a broad-minded and large-hearted person, and he was mostly responsible for including Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din in the list of speakers. However, the other religious scholars who were narrow-minded and prejudiced could not bear to see Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din's talk so well received. In the middle of the lecture, when the audience was spellbound by the scholarly and eloquent presentation, one of the clerics got up on the stage, climbed a chair and started giving his own lecture. The audience protested at this misbehavior, but the cleric continued to talk and said: "The *Mirzais* are infidels. It is heresy to listen to their speech." The audience responded: "At this time, he is expounding the qualities and perfection of the Holy Prophet in a manner that we have not heard expressed by any cleric." The cleric replied: "Listening to the praise of the Holy Prophet through their mouths is also heresy." The audience responded: "If a Christian Westerner writes even a single sentence in praise of the Holy Prophet, you carry it around with you as a testimonial. These people call themselves Muslims and the slaves of the Holy Prophet." The cleric shot back: "Their disbelief is worse than that of the Christians and the Jews." When the cleric did not desist, the audience requested Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din to accompany them to an open ground and complete his speech there because they very much wanted to hear the rest of it. Consequently, the rest of the speech was delivered outside the premises of the conference venue, and the public listened to it with great rapport. When Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din had finished his lecture, a pious-looking and wealthy notable of the city, who had been very moved by the speech, approached Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din and offered to take him to his residence in his carriage. On the way, he praised Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din's speech and said: "Please can you just clarify one thing for me; did the late *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad believe in the Holy Quran? I want to remove this suspicion from my mind." Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din replied: "Of course he did. He believed in every word of it from the first *Alhamd* to the last *wannas*, but your clerics do not believe in the whole of the Quran." The person was startled and enquired: "How so?" Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din replied: "Your clerics consider five hundred verses of the Holy Quran to be abrogated but *Hazrat* Mirza sahib did not consider even one verse abrogated. He believed each and every word of the Quran was from Allah and must be acted upon." The pious person was very pleased and said: "I am satisfied."

The clerics will go to any length to make false accusations.

## Chapter

# 35

## **DEBATE WITH MAULVI MUHAMMAD BASHIR SEHSAVANI & PUBLICATION OF *AL-HAQ DELHI* (THE TRUTH - DELHI)**

### **Preface**

The citizens of Delhi finally invited *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir Sehsavani from Bhopal to champion their cause against *Hazrat* Mirza. *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir was a staunch believer in the doctrine that Jesus was alive, and, on arrival in Delhi, he had no hesitation in agreeing to debate with *Hazrat* Mirza on whether Jesus was dead or alive. In a pre-debate gathering of the Delhi clerics, where both conservative and liberal viewpoints were represented, he was asked: “Which verse of the Holy Quran do you propose to present to Mirza sahib that shows clearly and unambiguously that Jesus is alive? Can you share it with us?” *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir read the verse: “And there is none of the People of the Book but will believe in this before his death;” (4:159). The clerics replied: “This verse does not provide clear evidence that Jesus is alive. In fact, it does not even provide tangential proof that Jesus is alive. If by some stretch of imagination you are able to deduce some hint from it that Jesus is alive, it will really not amount to much.” But *Maulvi* Bashir was not to be persuaded, and insisted: “This is the verse I will present.” Sensing the weakness of their champion, the clerics declared unanimously that “If this is the best you can do, then we refuse to bind ourselves to the outcome of the debate; we disassociate our-

selves from the result, whether you win or loose.” The clerics then abandoned *Maulvi* Bashir, and at the time of the debate, his party consisted only of *Maulvi* Muhammad Ahmad, a few students, and the general public.

Although the clerics believed in the doctrine of a living Jesus, they were very uncomfortable defending it publicly for lack of supporting evidence. *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir’s confidence fooled the clerics into thinking he knew some verse that conclusively showed Jesus to be alive and this provided them with a glimmer of hope. They now saw that the verse Muhammad Bashir was relying on furnished no definitive evidence on the issue. They, therefore, considered it prudent to disassociate themselves from the proceedings.

The citizens of Delhi wanted the debate to be verbal and open to the public. *Hazrat* Mirza insisted that the debate be in writing and not open to the general public because the public was prone to rioting. An agreement was reached on a written debate, but the citizen committee organizing the debate insisted that two hundred people be allowed to attend the debate. *Hazrat* Mirza did not agree to this and said “The people of this city are quick to brawl and riot, and God knows what disturbance they will create during the debate. This is a written debate and when the statements of the two parties are published, everyone will get a chance to read them. Only ten people should accompany *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir and there will be ten people from our side.” The citizen committee then reduced its demand to a hundred people but when *Hazrat* Mirza did not agree even to this, they began to insist on an absolute minimum of fifty. *Hazrat* Mirza was not willing to consider even this number, but *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani submitted: “Sir, please agree to the stipulation of fifty people. There are only ten or twelve people who will participate from our side. The citizens of Delhi are fond of speaking. They listen to speeches for their oratory. They do not enjoy themselves unless they are speaking or listening. This is a written debate. They will soon get tired of sitting around silently and will stop attending after the first day.” This assessment proved to be quite accurate. The first day fifty people turned up, but soon they got tired of sitting silently. Some started dozing; some yawning and some started fidgeting in their seats. Within about an hour, they got bored and left, and did not turn up for future proceedings. This written debate was held at the residence of *Hazrat* Mirza, just three or four days after the incident at Jamia Masjid Delhi.

### **Citizens of Delhi impose a boycott on giving books**

When the news of this debate spread through the city, the clerics made an immediate and unanimous decision that no one would either sell or

loan any book to *Hazrat* Mirza. *Hazrat* Mirza tried to buy some reference books from booksellers but they refused. He offered them even four or five times the normal selling price, but they still refused to sell any books to him. The clerics had persuaded even Hindu and Christian booksellers to cooperate with them in joining the boycott. A day before the debate, *Hazrat* Mirza called *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani and said: "The books are desperately needed, but despite every effort we have not been able to procure them. Disciples of your father and brother, and even your own, live in this city. Please see if you can get some books through them." *Pir* Nomani submitted: "Sir, people know that I live in your residence. It will be very difficult to get these books." *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "Go with the assistance of Allah. It does not matter if people abuse or beat you for it is the tradition of prophets and saints to be abused and beaten in the way of Allah. Even if they kill you, you would achieve martyrdom. After all, how many days has one got to live? One day everyone has to die." *Hazrat* Mirza continued his wise counsel for some time, and then lifted his hands and prayed for the success of *Pir* Nomani's mission. He then asked him to go. *Pir* Nomani requested a companion, and *Hazrat* Mirza directed *Munshi* Zafar Ahmad Kapurtharvi to accompany him. It was time for the *Maghrib* prayer, and the two offered their prayer in congregation with *Hazrat* Mirza before their departure. The rest of the incident is narrated in the words of *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani:

After mutual consultation, we decided to first try the *Imam* of Jamia Masjid Delhi because, in previous conversations with *Munshi* Zafar Ahmad, he had offered to help covertly, and had said that if *Munshi* Zafar Ahmad needed any books, he could borrow them from him provided he did not tell anyone. I, too, had a passing acquaintance with the *Imam*. When my older brother, Shah Khalil-ur-Rahman, visited Delhi, the *Imam* and his son would call on him to pay their respect. I had been introduced to him during these visits. However, I suspected the *Imam*'s sincerity and had misgivings in my heart whether this acquaintanceship, and his apparent devotion to my brother, would count for much. Nevertheless, at the suggestion of *Munshi* sahib, we went to his house and knocked on his door. As soon as he came out and saw us, his face turned pale and he began to tremble. He managed to blurt out, "What brings you here at this time of the night?" *Munshi* Zafar Ahmad replied, "We need some books. You had offered to loan them to us, and a generous person fulfills what he

promises. Please give us the books and we will return them to you in two or three days.” The *Imam* replied: “What can I do? The scholars and the masses have all agreed unanimously and made a pact that no one will give any books to Mirza sahib or print his posters. Please excuse me for I cannot break away from them, and am helpless in this matter. Kindly leave immediately because your coming here is highly objectionable, not to mention my talking to you.” I said: “There is no one watching us here at this time. Give us the books secretly and we will return them to you secretly.” The *Imam* replied in a trembling voice: “Do you think an act is permissible if done secretly and by stealth?” I said: “This is not an act of stealing or robbery, and you can expound this philosophy from the pulpit. If you are going to give us the books, give them. They are not going to be harmed by our use.” The *Imam* then got really annoyed and abusive and we left.

I remarked to *Munshi* Zafar Ahmad: “Did you see that?” He replied: “Yes I saw it. He is frightened because he fears for his position as *Imam*. That is why he was so rude and went back on his word. Let us go and see *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Faqeer; his son is my friend and I am confident that he will not act in this way.” We then proceeded to this cleric’s house and announced ourselves. He came out and immediately said: “*Munshi* sahib! How have you come here at this time of the night? We don’t want to see your face.” *Munshi* Zafar Ahmad said: “We need some books. It will be very kind of you if you lend them to us.” To this, *Maulvi* Faqeer responded: “We cannot give you the books because tomorrow Mirza has to debate the respected *Maulana* Muhammad Bashir sahib, and the citizens have unanimously decided, and entered into an agreement yesterday, that no one will loan or sell any books to Mirza. And why does Mirza need any books? He can find out the text of the books through revelation.” I replied: “*Maulvi* sahib, everything has not been left to revelation. When the Holy Prophet debated the Jews about whether it is lawful or unlawful to eat camel meat, Allah did not reveal to him the text of any book, but instead Allah stated: Bring the Torah and read it, if you are truthful (3:93). Revelation has its own place and books have their own place. Allah has revealed that Jesus is not alive but has died. However, since you refuse to accept this, the books you accept as true will be used to prove to you beyond any

doubt that this is so.” I continued in this vein for some time and all the while *Maulvi* Faqeer was getting more and more angry. Finally, he burst out and started abusing us; he raised a big clamor and shouted: “Is there anyone in this neighborhood who can take care of these two infidel and heretic Mirzais?” *Munshi* Zafar Ahmad wanted to argue some more, but I urged him to leave because *Maulvi* Faqeer’s loyalty obviously lay elsewhere. At the same time, *Maulvi* Faqeer’s ranting and raving had attracted a few men from the neighborhood with obvious hostile intentions. This convinced *Maulvi* Faqeer to wind up his arguments, and we left.

We found ourselves near the Jamia mosque and stopped to discuss what we should do next. After much thought, we decided to go and try our luck with *Munshi* Muhammad Hussain sahib Tibeti who lived in close vicinity of the mosque. He was a disciple of my father and received a stipend from him. When we reached his house, I told him: “*Munshi* sahib, you are a disciple of my father and have always expressed your sincere devotion to him. We need some books; please help us in getting them from someone.” *Munshi* sahib replied: “I am well aware that you are devoted to Mirza sahib and need books for him. It is near impossible to get these books because a pact has been made in this city that no books are to be given to Mirza sahib. I cannot assist you in this matter. I will request you to please leave immediately and not stay here any longer.”

We returned back to the Jamia mosque and stood under its minaret wondering what to do next. Suddenly God inspired me to think of *Haji* Alimullah, a *Nakshband Sufi* of advanced age, who was devoted to my father and also to me. He lived on Saadullah Khan street near a place called Bahram Khan’s Taraha. I said to my companion: “Let us go to him. It is possible we may be able to get the books from him or through him.” However, there was doubt and fear in my heart that we may meet the same or even a worse fate over there. We went to his house and with a trembling voice called out for him. There was no response. We called again, and yet again a third time before *Haji* sahib came out. He apologized saying: “I was saying my *Isha* prayers and that is why it took me a little time to come out.” He met us cordially and hospitably like he used to previously. He served us beetle leaves and

then enquired: "How have you come at this time of the night? I have not seen you for a long time. Let me call for a settee and do sit down." Since I knew him well, I came to the point directly. "This is not the time to sit. We need some books. If you have any commentaries of the Holy Quran, Books of *Hadith* or grammar, please let us borrow them. We will return them after three days." Haji sahib replied: "I have no books but I can suggest a way you may be able to get them. *Maulvi* Saleem-ud-Din lives near Balimaran Street, and he knows and thinks highly of your father, *Hazrat* Habib-ur-Rahman, may the blessing of Allah be on him, and your paternal grandfather Makhdoom Ahmad Shah. He possesses thousands of books of all types, published and handwritten, old and new, and he also sells them. Go to him and I will give you a letter of introduction for him. I am sure he will give you the books. However, do not make any mention of *Hazrat* Mirza sahib. There is commotion and rowdyism in the city. If you mention *Hazrat* Mirza sahib, he will refuse to give you the books." *Haji* sahib wrote a letter of introduction for me, which stated: "The bearer is Siraj-ul-Haq sahib son of *Hazrat* Shah Habib-ur-Rahman of blessed memory, may the blessings of Allah be upon him. He needs some books. Please give him the books he asks for. You should have no worry about their return. I guarantee it."

With great joy in our heart, we left with the letter and reached the house of *Maulvi* Saleem-ud-Din Khan. We found a huge library there so full of books that they occupied all the space in the house. The books were everywhere, in bookshelves, trunks, niches in the walls, and on the floor with stacks rising up to the ceiling. A few other people were present there buying books. *Maulvi* sahib had just finished his *Isha* prayers and was reciting some incantations. I greeted him with "*Assalam alaikum*" and he replied: "*Walaikum assalam*" and motioned us to sit down. We sat down, but were greatly apprehensive lest some people may walk in who may recognize us, and reveal that we were disciples of *Hazrat* Mirza. If that happened, we would not be able to get the books. Finally, *Maulvi* sahib finished his incantations and I lost no time in giving him the letter of introduction. After reading the letter, *Maulvi* sahib said: "When did you arrive in Delhi? Your father and grandfather, may Allah's blessings be upon them, used to visit Delhi often but you come only infrequently." I replied: "I have been in



Delhi for the last few days.” *Maulvi* sahib enquired: “Are you also fond of religious discussions and debate?” I replied: “Yes, I am very fond of it.” *Maulvi* sahib followed this up with: “Mirza sahib has also come here from Qadian. Tomorrow there is a debate between Mirza sahib and *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir.”<sup>1</sup> I replied: “Yes, they are going to debate tomorrow.” *Maulvi* sahib said: “The truth is that *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir is a religious scholar but not of the caliber of Mirza sahib. There is a great difference between the two. I have seen the writings of Mirza sahib; they are very powerful. You are young; do not under any circumstance make the mistake of debating with Mirza sahib. Neither you nor *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir are his match. In my opinion, there is no scholar today who can compete with him.” I said to myself: “How true. How can an earthly scholar compete with one whose source of knowledge is from on High?” Aloud, I said: “Yes, but may I please have the books.” *Maulvi* sahib asked: “What books do you need?” I named the books that *Hazrat* Mirza had requested. *Maulvi* sahib asked an attendant to give us all the books we needed. He then told me: “Don’t trouble yourself anymore about the books. I will get an employee to deliver them to your house.” I panicked on hearing this because that would mean that the employee would be taking the books to *Hazrat* Mirza’s house and our association with *Hazrat* Mirza would be revealed. I replied, “We are two people. We will be able to carry the books and we can hire a coolie on the way.” *Maulvi* sahib replied: “As you wish.” It was with great difficulty that the two of us managed to lift the books. On the way, we hired a coolie for four paisas. When I presented the books to *Hazrat* Mirza, he laughed and said: “How did you manage to get the books?” We narrated the whole incident. He expressed surprise and then fell silent.

### Debate with *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir Sehsavani

The debate with *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir, originally from Sehsavan but at the time of the debate a resident of Bhopal, was to be on the topic “Jesus – Is he dead or alive?” It had been agreed upon that both sides would write out five statements in reply to the contentions of the other party. *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani was an eye witness to the debate and nar-

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1 Probably *Maulvi* Salim-ud-Din Khan assumed that *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani was planning to debate *Hazrat* Mirza.

rates that on the morning of the day of debate, *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir, accompanied by a few men, arrived at the residence of *Hazrat* Mirza. He first met *Maulvi* Abdul Karim Sialkoti and greeted him in the traditional way by saying *assalam alaikum* and shaking his hand. He then enquired politely the whereabouts of *Hazrat* Mirza. *Hazrat* Mirza was at the time in the family living quarters upstairs and *Maulvi* Abdul Karim sent word to him of the visitors' arrival. When *Hazrat* Mirza came down, *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir greeted him with *assalam alaikum*. *Hazrat* Mirza replied *walaikum assalam* and the two shook hands. After the hand shaking, *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir tried to embrace him as was the local custom of the residents of United Province and Rajputana but *Hazrat* Mirza was not fond of this custom, and so the embrace was only half accomplished. After this, the two of them sat down and so did the rest of the people present. The summary of what *Hazrat* Mirza said to *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir and his companions is as follows:

*Maulvi* sahib, I swear by Allah that my claim of being the Promised Messiah is true. The basis of this claim is that I was informed through revelations and visions for many months continuously that the Messiah, son of Mary and the prophet of God, has died and the Messiah that was promised to come is me. In the beginning, I did not pay attention to this, but when this matter continued and I became certain, I tested it for compatibility with the Book of Allah. As soon as I opened the Quran, I came across the verse *falama tawaffaita-ni* (when Thou didst cause me to die) of chapter *al-Maidah* (5:117). I contemplated this and found my revelations to be accurate for the verse proved that the Messiah son of Mary had died. Then I read the Holy Quran very carefully, and with great deliberation from the beginning to the end, and found only evidence of the death of Jesus, and not even a shred of evidence that the Messiah is still living.

Then I examined this matter in the light of the Books of *Hadith* and opened the *Sahih Bukhari*. As Allah would have it, as soon as I opened the *Sahih Bukhari*, I came across the two verses, firstly *inni mutawaffi-ka* (I will cause thee to die (3:55)) and secondly *falama tawaffaita-ni* (when Thou didst cause me to die (5:117)) in the *Kitab-ul-Tafseer*. In the first verse, the meaning of *mutawaffi-ka* has been taken to be *mamaite-ka* by *Hazrat* Ibn Abbas himself (may Allah's blessings be upon him.) As for the

second verse, the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has made its meanings crystal clear by using this term in his own context. In other words, the Prophet himself has shown the meaning of *falama tawaffaita-ni kunta anta raqee-ba alaihim* to be “When Thou didst caused me to die Thou wast the watcher over them.” In addition, by collecting these two verses, which are from different parts of the Quran, in one place, *Imam* Bukhari has clearly revealed his belief that these two verses prove that the Messiah has died. Then I read every word of *Sahih Bukhari* from the beginning to the end and found in it only evidence of the death of Jesus and not a word, not even indirectly or allusively, suggesting that Jesus is alive. Then I examined each and every word in *Sahih Muslim* and all other Books of *Hadith*, and read every line and word with great attention, but did not find any evidence that Jesus is alive. Whatever evidence I found only indicated that the Messiah has died.

As to the *Hadith* about the *nazul* (arrival or descent) of the Messiah, these do not state anywhere that the arrival will be from heaven. When there is no mention of an arrival from heaven, then the mere use of the term *nazul* does not prove that the Messiah is alive because the word *nazul* has many meanings in the Arabic language. For example, a traveler is called *nazeel* and my sojourn in Delhi will be called *nazul*. Another meaning of *nazul* is “divine mission” and the word is used in this sense in the Quranic verse: “Allah has indeed sent down (*anzala*) to you a Reminder - A messenger...” (65:10-11). One should also give serious thought to how Jesus can return to this *Ummat* (the Muslim nation) when the prophethood of Jesus was specific to a particular nation and time, but the prophethood of Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is universal.

*Hazrat* Mirza had not quite finished his discourse when *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir spoke up nervously: “If you permit, can I sit on one side of the hall and write my statement.” *Hazrat* Mirza replied: “Of course; you can sit where you like.” *Maulvi* Bashir moved to a far corner of the room and started dictating to Mujaddid Ali Khan. *Hazrat* Mirza remarked to his companions: “The agreed- upon condition of this debate was that we would sit together and write simultaneously with our own pens the answers to the questions put forth by the other party.” *Pir* Siraj-

ul-Haq asked: "Should I remind *Maulvi* sahib of this condition?" *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "Let it be. Let him write or dictate as he pleases."

At the time of this debate, *Maulana* Ahsan Amrohi was still residing in Bhopal. *Hazrat* Mirza had received a letter from him that same day. In this letter, *Maulana* Amrohi had written, among other things, that: "*Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir has been working on his statement for six months. The fruit of his exertion is confined to the written statement he is bringing with him. He has no other material." This proved to be exactly true. The dictation that *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir was giving to Mujaddid Ali Khan was from a previously written article although it had been agreed to that the parties would not bring written statements, but would write their statements in the presence of each other. *Maulvi* Abdul Karim drew attention to this violation of the agreement, and *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq submitted to *Hazrat* Mirza: "Sir, if you permit, may I tell *Maulvi* sahib that since he has brought a written statement, he may turn that in so that its reply can be written." *Hazrat* Mirza reluctantly gave his permission to this matter. *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq stood up and said: "*Maulvi* sahib, what is the need of getting a written document copied. It is unnecessarily delaying matters. Please give us the written statement so that its reply from our side can be written." On hearing this, *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir was flabbergasted and replied with a trembling voice: "No! No! I have not brought any statement in writing. These are only notes that I am using for preparing a detailed commentary." *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq wanted to respond to this but *Hazrat* Mirza stopped him and said: "He who is lying deliberately is not going to admit it."

The written debate continued. It had been agreed upon that each side would write five statements. However, *Hazrat* Mirza soon realized that his opponent had used up his entire store of knowledge. He was unable to produce any new arguments, and was reduced to merely repeating old arguments that had been rebutted. *Hazrat* Mirza then made it clear to *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir that, under the circumstances, continuing the debate further would be a waste of time, and called off the debate after three statements had been written from each side. *Hazrat* Mirza did not care that his critics would mock him and make fun of him at curtailing the debate.

The proceedings of this debate were published in the form of a book called *Al-Haq Delhi* in December 1891. The book is available to interested readers.

The basic discussion revolved around the correct grammatical interpretation of the Quranic verse: "And there is none of the People of the Book but will believe in this before his death;" (4:159). *Maulvi*

Muhammad Bashir took great pride in being a grammarian with a specialty in the use of the Arabic letters *laam* and *nuun sakeelah*. His repeated contention was that whenever a verb has *laam* or *nuun sakeelah* on it, the verb always denotes the future tense. *Hazrat* Mirza proved from many different Quranic verses that despite the presence of *laam* and *nuun sakeelah* on a verb, it could denote the present tense only. In such cases it cannot be interpreted in the future tense. He also presented other verses where the verb with *laam* and *nuun sakeelah* denoted the present continuous tense so that both the present and the future were included. The detailed discussion is available in the book *Al-Haq Delhi* for the interested reader. Readers will also see for themselves that *Hazrat* Mirza called off the debate after three statements because *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir had reached the limit of his knowledge and was simply repeating himself for the sake of argument.

### **Divine assistance manifests itself in unexpected ways**

During this debate, there were two incidents of Divine assistance that strengthen a person's faith. These were:

1. It was *Hazrat* Mirza's habit that whenever he was confronted with a difficult issue or had to write an article, he would keep the issue in mind, and read the entire Quran and keep on noting the verses of the Quran that had a bearing on the subject. Accordingly, *Hazrat* Mirza never wrote an article in which he made a claim and did not support his claim with proof from the Quran. *Hakim* Fazal Din Bhervi told this author that when Muhammad Bashir Bhopali built his own argument on *laam* and *nuun sakeelah*, *Hazrat* Mirza, as was his custom read the entire Quran. When *Hazrat* Mirza came out of his study, he was laughing and said: "Last night, *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani had to go through a lot of trouble to find books of commentary and grammar. However, by the Grace of God, when I turned my attention to the Holy Quran, I found the solution to the problem of *nuun* and *laam sakeelah* in such great detail that there was no need for any book of grammar after it." Accordingly, in *Al-Haq Delhi*, *Hazrat* Mirza has presented numerous Quranic verses in support of his claim on the correct interpretation of *nuun* and *laam sakeelah*.

2. The second incident has been taken from *Sahibzada* Mirza Bashir Ahmad's book *Sirat-ul-Mahdi* (Volume 2). The narrator of the incident in the book is *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din:

Once during a discussion, the Promised Messiah was asked to produce the citation for something he had quoted. At that time, *Hazrat* Mirza did not remember the citation, and neither did any of his companions who were with him. There was thus a potential for great embarrassment. However, *Hazrat* Mirza asked for a copy of *Bukhari* and started flipping through its pages quickly one at a time. At one place, he stopped and said: "Write down the citation," and then proceeded to give the citation. The onlookers were astonished and puzzled. Someone asked *Hazrat* sahib and he replied: "When I took the book in my hand and started turning the pages, it appeared to me as if the pages were blank and without text, and so I kept flipping through them quickly. At last, I saw a page on which there was some text and I was convinced that this is the reference that I was looking for." Thus, God so tampered with the book that apart from the place where the reference existed, the rest of the book appeared without text to *Hazrat* Mirza.

Mirza Bashir Ahmad wrote that Mufti Muhammad Sadiq narrated this same incident in a gathering with some more details. His narration was as follows:

This incident took place in Ludhiana and *Hazrat* Mirza probably needed to produce a reference for *nuun sakeelah* or *khafeefah*. To begin with, it was difficult to find a copy of *Bukhari* there, and when one was finally located, it was very difficult to find the citation for the reference. At the same time, it was necessary to provide the desired citation quickly to the cleric who had asked for it. *Hazrat* Mirza took the *Bukhari* in his hand and started flipping the pages. After every few pages, he would say: "Write this." Seeing the way he was rushing through the book, one of his disciples submitted: "Sir, if you examine more leisurely, perhaps more references may be found." *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "No. I am giving you all the references. There are none other in this book because, except for the places where the references occur, I am seeing no text in the rest of the book."

In the opinion of this author, *Maulvi* Mufti Sadiq perhaps erred in stating that the incident occurred at Ludhiana instead of Delhi because the discussion on *nuun sakeelah* took place in Delhi during the debate with *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir Sehnavani, and it was there that great difficulty was

encountered in procuring the *Bukhari*. Besides, *Maulvi* Mufti Sadiq was not present himself at either of the two places, and it appears he was narrating the incident from hearsay. It is also possible that it may just be a lapse of memory. In any case, whether it took place in Delhi or Ludhiana, the incident shows how Allah assists His servants in their hour of need. In this instance, the physical sight was so mixed with the spiritual sight that, apart from the actual references, nothing else was visible.

## Chapter

# 36

## JOURNEY TO PATIALA & RETURN TO QADIAN

### **Journey to Patiala**

After the debate with *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir, *Hazrat* Mirza made preparations to leave Delhi. His father-in-law, Mir Nasir Nawab, had been transferred to Patiala and so *Hazrat* Mirza and his family first went to visit him. Many years earlier, when *Hazrat* Mirza had visited Patiala after the publication of his book *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, Khalifa Muhammad Hussain, a noble of Patiala, had come to receive him at the railway station, along with thousands of other admirers. They had brought along an elephant for *Hazrat* Mirza to ride into the city. But times had changed. There were hardly three or four people, friends residing in the towns of Sanor and Patiala, who turned up at the station this time to receive him. In other words, *Hazrat* Mirza had sacrificed his good name and fame for the sake of his claim of Promised Messiah. Would a seeker of worldly fame destroy his hard-earned reputation in this manner?

*Maulvi* Muhammad Ishaq was a leader of *Hazrat* Mirza's opposition in Patiala. Through a public announcement, *Hazrat* Mirza invited him to hold a debate with him on the topic of whether Jesus was alive or dead. However, he opted not to confront *Hazrat* Mirza publicly, but did pay him a visit in the company of *Maulvi* Ghulam Murtaza Khan Bhervi. Both the clerics conducted themselves in a very uncivil manner during this visit. Once during the conversation, *Hazrat* Mirza emphasized a point by patting a book, and *Maulvi* Murtaza retorted cynically: "For God's sake! Do



not vent your anger on the book.” This provoked *Maulvi* Muhammad Abdullah, who at the time had not pledged his fealty to *Hazrat* Mirza, to respond: “*Maulvi* Sahib, you are not behaving in a civil manner. It does not behoove your status as a cleric to speak in this vulgar fashion.” Later, *Hazrat* Mirza enquired from *Maulvi* Abdullah Sanori: “Who was the person who rebuked *Maulvi* Murtaza? He exudes an aroma of righteousness.” After some time, *Maulvi* Muhammad Abdullah, a professor in Mandir College Patiala, took the pledge and joined the *Ahmadiyya* Movement.

In the nearby town of Sanor lived a saint-scholar, *Maulvi* Muhammad Youssaf, who was devoted to *Hazrat* Mirza. During his stay in Patiala, *Hazrat* Mirza went to visit *Maulvi* Youssaf in Sanor.

In 1903, the humble author of this book went to Patiala to visit the members of the *Ahmadiyya* Movement and met, among others, *Maulvi* Muhammad Abdullah, *Hakim* Abadallah and *Maulvi* Mahmood Hassan, and came away greatly impressed by their saintly personalities. *Maulvi* Youssaf, who was still alive and living in Sanor invited me to visit him. *Maulvi* Mahmood Hassan and the other venerable individuals strongly urged me to go, and said: “When *Hazrat* Mirza came here, he went to Sanor. As his disciple, you should follow in his tradition.” So I went to Sanor, and was greatly impressed by the pious countenance and simplicity of *Maulvi* Youssaf.

Another notable religious personality of Patiala was *Hafiz* Azim Baksh, who held *Hazrat* Mirza in high regard. When the clerics issued the decree of excommunication from Islam against *Hazrat* Mirza, they printed *Hafiz* Azim Baksh’s name as one of the signatories without his knowledge. *Hafiz* Azim Baksh always lamented that his name had been included without his knowledge, and later even wrote a poem decrying the cunningness and deceit of the clerics. Ultimately, he took the pledge and became a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza.<sup>1</sup> This incident is just one example of the dishonesty of the clerics opposing *Hazrat* Mirza.

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1 Another similar example was that of *Maulvi* Abdul Aziz, another scholar-saint of Patiala. He was a devoted and pious person. The opposing clerics went to him to solicit his support for the decree of excommunication but he refused categorically. He warned them that this was a very perilous action and he would have no part in it.

**THE DECREE OF  
EXCOMMUNICATION FROM ISLAM  
(KUFR KA FATWA)  
& PUBLICATION OF FAISALA  
ASMANI (HEAVENLY JUDGMENT)**

**Religious scholar's decree of excommunication from Islam**

Soon after *Hazrat* Mirza's return to Qadian from Patiala, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi prepared a decree of excommunication from Islam (*kufr ka fatwa*) in which he alleged that *Hazrat* Mirza had claimed prophethood. He also falsely attributed other outrageous articles of faith to him, and branded him a calumniator, an unbeliever and an apostate on the basis of these charges. He also alleged that *Hazrat* Mirza was the Antichrist (*Dajjal*). He first obtained the signature of his mentor *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain Dehlvi on this decree, and then toured the whole of India and went to all prominent clerics to get them to sign it. Only a few clerics, who had some fear of God in them, declined to be a party to this shameful declaration, but an overwhelming majority penned their names to the decree. After accomplishing this mission, *Maulvi* Batalvi published this decree in the year, 1891, with much fanfare. *Maulvi* Batalvi was convinced that the decree of excommunication would end *Hazrat* Mirza's religious career, and he felt vindicated in having successfully carried out the threat contained in his statement: "I was instrumental in building

Mirza's reputation and now I will destroy him." However, any humanly effort to thwart a mission commissioned by God is doomed to failure. On the contrary, the mission is only strengthened further.

### **The writing of the book *Faisala Asmani* (Heavenly Judgment)**

In Delhi, *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain had persistently demanded that *Hazrat* Mirza should first become a Muslim and a believer before challenging him to a debate. *Hazrat* Mirza had met his demand by repeatedly pronouncing the *kalimah shahadat*, the Muslim confession of faith - I declare that there is no god but Allah and I declare that Muhammad is His servant and His Prophet. *Hazrat* Mirza also published and distributed handbills in which he claimed to be a Muslim and a believer. Finally, in the Jamia Mosque Delhi, he submitted a written statement in which he stated that he did not claim to be a prophet, nor were his beliefs in any respect different from those of *Ahl-e Sunnat wal Jamaat*, and that he was a sincere Muslim and a servant of Islam. However, when all this protestation fell on deaf ears, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote and published a book called *Faisala Asmani* in December 1891. In this book, he once again invited *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain to debate him, but this time in writing so that the latter could participate from the comfort of his own home in Delhi. *Hazrat* Mirza explained why *Maulvi* Nazeer was being invited by name. He was the leading religious scholar and an influential opinion maker, and as such the outcome of the debate with him should be the final judgment on the issue whether he was a believer to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. In respect of his being a believer, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote: "They have given no credence to my many pronouncements, made in accordance with the *Shariat* (Muslim religious law) that I am a believing Muslim, despite the fact that it is incumbent on every Muslim to accept such a statement." *Hazrat* Mirza argued that faith was something that was hidden deep within a person and could not be directly observed or tested. However, there were overt manifestations of faith that could directly be observed in a righteous person and the Quran and the *Hadith* mentioned these manifestations as the characteristics of a true Muslim. These manifestations, therefore, provided a testable hypothesis of whether a person had faith or not. Since *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain and his associates insisted that he was not a Muslim, he challenged them to enter into a contest with him to determine which of them was stronger in faith. *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Faisala Asmani*. Second edition, page 14.

It has therefore become necessary for *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain and other religious scholars to compete with me in respect of the characteristics of a true Muslim as given in the Quran and the Books of *Hadith* so that what is hidden (faith) may become manifest. These characteristics are four:

First, a true believer receives glad tidings from God. That is, he is informed before an event occurs about matters pertaining to what he seeks or what his friends seek.

Second, a true believer is often given prophetic information not only about matters pertaining to him and his acquaintances, but also about divine decrees that are going to be executed generally in the world, and the changes that are about to come in the life of famous personalities.

Third, most of the supplications of a true believer are accepted and he is frequently informed of the acceptance prior to the actual occurrence of the event.

Fourth, more than anyone else, subtle and incisive meanings of the Holy Quran, totally new and astounding in their import, are manifested to a true believer.

In all of these four characteristics, a true believer will prevail on others.

### **Challenge to manifest belief in accordance with the Quranic and Hadith measures**

After a detailed exposition in his book *Faisala Asmani* of these four characteristics of a true believer, *Hazrat* Mirza challenged *Maulvi* Syed Nazeer Hussain Delhvi, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, *Maulvi* Abdul Jabbar Ghaznavi Amritsari, *Maulvi* Abdur Rahman Lakhukaywallay, *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir Sehsavani, *Maulvi* Rasheed Ahmad Gangoi and all other religious leaders bearing the titles of *Maulvi*, *Sufi*, *Pir* and *Sajdah Nasheen* to compete with him in these four traits of a true believer. *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:

Day and night, you have been clamoring that Mirza should first give evidence of his belief before he says anything. So be it. I will

give you evidence of my belief, and will do so in a manner that is in complete accord with the Quran and the *Hadith*. However, you too will have to prove your belief in accordance with the same measures.

No one accepted this challenge. Hazrat Mirza's opponents were quick to trumpet their belief and to nonchalantly declare others as unbelievers, but when confronted, they failed to summon the courage to prove their own faith. *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi hemmed and hawed around ancillary issues in his magazine *Ishaat-ul-Sunnah*, but neither he, nor anyone else accepted the real challenge - to prove the sincerity of their faith on the touchstone of the Quran and *Sunnat*. A verse of the poet Ghalib appropriately describes this situation: "I used to accuse him but found that the fault was really mine." As for *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain, he did not utter a word after the challenge was given and he pretended to be in blissful ignorance.

## Chapter

# 38

## ANNUAL GATHERING

*Hazrat Mirza* started the tradition of the Annual Gathering (*Jalsa Salana*) in 1891. The first Annual Gathering was held in Qadian December 27-29, 1891. *Hazrat Mirza* published an announcement on December 30, 1891, in which he stressed the importance of continuing this tradition and also explained the purpose and objectives of such gatherings. This announcement, which was later included in his book *Faisala Asmani* (Heavenly Judgment), states:

Because it is not feasible for everyone to come and stay for some time in my company or to visit me a few times each year...hence it appears expedient to appoint three days in a year for a Gathering in which all sincere friends, God willing, can present themselves provided health, leave, and absence of other impediments permit. In my opinion, the most suitable dates would be December 27-29. The date today is December 30, 1891; let us resolve therefore that if ever the date December 27 comes again in our life, all friends would try their utmost to assemble on this date to listen to godly discourse and to participate in supplication. This gathering will focus on disseminating truth and knowledge that are essential for the advancement of faith, (deepening of) conviction and (acquisition of) wisdom. In addition, special supplication will be made for these friends and particular attention paid to them in prayers. And the utmost effort will be made in the Court of the Beneficent and Merciful that God, the Most High,

may pull them in His direction, accept them for Himself and bring about a pious change (in their life).

Another temporary benefit of these Gatherings will be that by coming on the appointed dates, all the new brothers who have joined the *Jamaat* (party) in the preceding year will meet and recognize their older brothers, and in this way the feelings of kinship and familiarity will continue to develop. And prayer will be offered in this Gathering for the protection of any brother who has departed this temporary abode during the year. Efforts will be made in the Court of the Most Honorable, all Glory is His, to unify all the Brothers spiritually and to remove their aloofness, alienation and differences. There will also be many other spiritual benefits and profits of these gatherings that shall, God willing, become manifest from time to time.

It will be prudent for friends with limited means to plan ahead for participating in this Gathering. With foresight and careful control of expenditures, they should put aside small sums every day or every month to bear the expenses of the journey and when the time comes, the capital for the sojourn will be available to them and it will be as if the journey were free...

*Hazrat Mirza's* speech was a central attraction in these Gatherings because it was a river of knowledge, wisdom and spirituality that watered the soul and spirit of those seeking the truth. Seventy-five people participated in the first Annual Gathering.

### **Account of an early Annual Gathering**

*Pir Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani* has rendered an account of one of the initial gatherings, which I summarize here in my own words. A large number of *Hazrat Mirza's* disciples came to Qadian for the Annual Gathering; additionally, there were other sympathizers of the Movement, as well as opponents of the Movement. In those times, a large carpeted wooden dais was used in place of the stage. *Hazrat Mirza* came on the dais to make his speech and he was flanked by the stalwarts of the Movement, including *Maulana Nur-ud-Din*, *Maulvi Burhan-ud-Din* of Jehlum, *Maulana Syed Ahsan Amrohi*, *Pir Siraj-ul-Haq Nomani* and others who were also seated on the dais. The scene was reminiscent of the moon surrounded by stars.

*Hazrat Mirza's* speech dealt with the section of his book *Tauzih Maram*, where he had covered the issue of angels, an issue which the clerics had criticized because of their ignorance. He explained the subject comprehensively, and his speech was so illuminating that *Maulana Syed Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi* was moved to tears and wept openly. The mood was catching and members of the audience, too, felt themselves gripped by strange and wonderful emotions. Those who had harbored any doubts before now became true believers.



## Chapter

# 39

## STAY AT LAHORE

In January 1892, *Hazrat* Mirza went to Lahore and stayed in the house of “Mahboob Rayun” located in Hira Mandi. On January 31, 1892, he addressed a public meeting at the residence of *Babu* Miran Bux. The audience at this meeting was huge and an estimate of the attendees ran well over ten thousand. *Hazrat* Mirza’s address focused on presenting evidence in support of his claims. Lahore had its share of *Hazrat* Mirza’s opponents, but the situation in the meetings here never deteriorated into the chaotic uncivilized behavior witnessed in Delhi. However, one unfortunate incident did take place. A person, who claimed that he was the *Mahdi*, grabbed *Hazrat* Mirza as he was passing through the Bazaar and dragged him for some distance, all the while shouting: “How have you become the *Mahdi*? I am the *Mahdi*.” Sheikh Rahmatullah, who was accompanying *Hazrat* Mirza, was incensed and made ready to beat the assailant, but *Hazrat* Mirza stopped him, and the man was let off without a reprimand. According to *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din, the assailant died a natural death not long after this incident.

### The Lahore Debate

The most notable event in Lahore was the debate with *Maulvi* Abdul Hakim Kalanuri, who argued that the use of the word ‘prophet’ to describe any person after the Holy Prophet was objectionable to most Muslims regardless of the sense in which the word was used. His major grouse against *Hazrat* Mirza was that he had used this word to describe himself in his writings even if he had done so with the clarification that the word

was used metaphorically and meant a *Muhaddath* (saint) only. In response, *Hazrat* Mirza made a written signed declaration, witnessed by the signatures of eight persons, which brought the debate to an end. This declaration, dated February 3, 1892, read as follows:

“It is humbly submitted for the information of all Muslims that in my books *Fath Islam*, *Tauzih Maram* and *Izala Auham*, all expressions, such as ‘*Muhaddath* (saint) is a prophet in one sense,’ or ‘*Muhaddathiyyat* (sainthood) is partial prophethood’ or ‘*Muhaddathiyyat* (sainthood) is imperfect prophethood’ are not used in the real sense but only in the sense of their dictionary meaning. God forbid, I have no claim to real prophethood and in fact, I have stated on page 137 of my book *Izala Auham* that it is my belief that our lord and master Muhammad Mustafa, on him be peace and blessings of Allah, is the seal of prophets. Hence, I want to make it clear to all my Muslim brothers that if they are offended and their hearts are burdened by these words, they should consider these words amended by me to *Muhaddath*. It is unacceptable to me under any circumstance to create dissension and disunity among Muslims. It was never my intention from the very beginning, which the Most High and Glorious Allah knows fully, to use the word *Nabi* (prophet) in the sense of prophethood. I only used it to mean *Muhaddathiyyat* (sainthood), which has been interpreted by the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, as *Mukallam* (one spoken to). Thus, it is stated in respect of *Muhaddath*, ‘Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated: The Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) said, ‘Among the nation of Bani Israel who lived before you, there were men who used to be inspired (*yokalaymuna*) with guidance though they were not prophets, and if there is any of such persons amongst my followers, he is Umar.’<sup>1</sup>...then why should I have any objection to express this idea in another style so as to please my Muslim brothers? The other style is that the word *Muhaddath* (saint) be considered everywhere in place of *Nabi* (prophet) and this word (i.e. *Nabi*) be considered deleted.”

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1 *Al-Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. *Kitab Fazail Ashab Ambiya* 62:6.



*Hazrat Mirza with companions: R to L sitting – Unknown, Munshi Abdullah Sanori, Munshi Aroray Khan, Munshi Karam Ali, scribe, Chaudry Fazal Din; R to L chairs – Munshi Abdul Aziz of Delhi, Dr. Muhammad Ismail of Gorian, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Dr. Muhammad Yaqub Beg, Mirza Niaz Beg; R to L standing – Unknown, Sheikh Yaqub Ali, Hafiz Nabi Baksh, Chaudry Maula Baksh of Chawinda, Unknown and Faiz Ali Sabir (Photo courtesy Dr. Ayesha Beg).*



*Dr. Mirza Yaqub Beg (Photo courtesy AAII.org).*

### **Dr. Mirza Yaqub Beg and Mirza Ayub Beg join the Movement**

It was during this stay at Lahore that Mirza Yaqub Beg, a young medical student in Lahore from the town of Klanwar, first came to meet *Hazrat* Mirza. Mirza Yaqub Beg enjoyed a reputation of being a simple, pious and gentlemanly person. Dr. Abdul Hakim Patialwi accompanied him on this visit and first introduced him to *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din who gave him a warm embrace. Mirza Yaqub Beg used to recount later that this embrace gave him a strange sense of peace that he had never experienced before. The remaining details of this visit are best narrated in his own words:

I witnessed a strange incident after entering the drawing room where *Hazrat* Mirza was sitting. He was deeply engrossed in conversation with a group of people when suddenly a man barged in and started abusing him verbally. *Hazrat* Mirza bowed down his head and listened silently to the man's vitriolic outburst. When the abuser finally ran out of steam, *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "Brother, if you have anything further to say, feel free to say so." The man was totally taken aback, felt penitent and sought forgiveness. An educated Hindu who happened to be present at the time remarked: "I had read about the forbearance of Jesus in the Bible but saw an example of it only today." He also added: "This man (*Hazrat* Mirza) is going to be successful." These incidents had a strong impact on me and I took the pledge. The following day, without my knowing, my brother Mirza Ayub Beg, also took the pledge. Because of the strong opposition, we kept our actions secret even from each other and were unaware that the other had taken the pledge. It was only later that we found out. The pledge had such a strong impact on us that any inclination towards religious waywardness that we may have harbored disappeared. Along with the five daily prayers, we started praying *Tahajjud* (late night optional prayer). I was a student in the medical college those days and my brother and I spent all of our spare time in prayer and the study of the Quran – time that was spent by my other fellow students in sports and play. My father had previously been very disappointed in our lack of interest in religion and was astonished at this sudden transformation. When he learned the truth, and had the honor of meeting *Hazrat* Mirza, he too took the pledge.

## STAY AT SIALKOT

### Arrival in Sialkot

From Lahore, *Hazrat* Mirza went to Sialkot. In those days, the claims of *Hazrat* Mirza were the talk of every town and every gathering. This humble author was a student at Scotch Mission School at the time and lived in the Sadar Bazar area of Sialkot. I was tired of listening to the incessant criticism of the Christian missionaries in my school who asserted that even according to Islam, Jesus was bodily lifted up to heaven and supported their assertion with the Quranic verse: “O Jesus, I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence...” (3:55). I felt secretly embarrassed and could not help but think: “Why didn’t God bodily lift up our Prophet to heaven? By lifting Jesus alive into heaven, we have been unnecessarily embarrassed before the Christian missionaries.” When I read *Hazrat* Mirza’s book *Fath Islam* (Triumph of Islam), my hopes revived. His assertion that Jesus, the Israelite Prophet, was dead appealed to me instantly, but the elders of my family silenced me saying: “You are just a kid. You have not been exposed to the scholars of our religion.”

Although my family subscribed to the *Hanafi* school of thought, I preferred to do my own religious research. Right from childhood, I was very fond of reading religious books, sitting in the company of religious scholars and listening to their talk. My religious research had made me favorably inclined to the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect, and consequently, I offered my Friday congregational prayers in an *Ahl-e Hadith* mosque where *Maulvi* Abdul Karim Sialkoti was the *Imam* (leader). The congregation was shocked to hear one day that their *Imam*, *Maulvi* Abdul Karim, had taken

the pledge to join *Hazrat Mirza's* movement. He was further quoted as having said: "This person (*Hazrat Mirza*) is the Promised Messiah." Even more startling was the news that the *Imam* of the Jamia (Central) mosque in Saddar Bazar, *Maulvi Mubarak Ali*, had also taken the pledge and joined *Hazrat Mirza*. *Maulvi Mubarak Ali* was a very knowledgeable scholar and the scion of *Maulvi Fazal Ahmad* (deceased), the erstwhile tutor of *Hazrat Mirza*. These two high-profile cases caused a host of other people to come forward and take the pledge to join *Hazrat Mirza's* movement. Among those who took the pledge from the *Ahl-e Hadith* group were *Hakim Hissam-ud-Din* and Sheikh Maula Bux, a shoe merchant. These events threw the city and the cantonment into a state of turmoil. It was under these conditions that *Hazrat Mirza* arrived in Sialkot as the guest of *Hakim Hissam-ud-Din*, and his arrival at once electrified the atmosphere of the city.

On the afternoon of the day *Hazrat Mirza* arrived, I went to the city with a friend to see him. When we reached the alley in which *Hakim Hissam's* house stood, we found it crowded with people. Since my friend and I were youngsters, we managed to shove and push our way through the group that was standing just in front of the main entrance of the house. *Hazrat Mirza* came out of one door of the house, crossed the alley and went into the door of another house. I felt as if a radiant spiritual light had passed before my eyes and disappeared. I had frequently tried to conjure in my imagination what the face of a really holy person should look like, and his face was just what I had imagined and perhaps even more stunning than what I had imagined. I was so moved that I remarked to my friend: "Such a spiritual face cannot be that of an imposter. This person is genuine." After this, we went into the Sheikh Hissam-ud-Din mosque and said our *Asr* prayers, which were led by *Hazrat Mirza*.

After the prayer, *Hazrat Mirza* sat down in the middle arch of the mosque, with his back leaning against the southern column. The inside of the mosque and its courtyard were full of people. Towards the front of the courtyard was a dais on which I found a seat with *Maulvi Abdul Karim*. My eyes were riveted on the countenance of *Hazrat Mirza* and I heard *Maulvi Abdul Karim* remark: "See how his face is alight with a spiritual glow." I replied: "Without a doubt, I have never seen such a spiritual countenance before." A question and answer session had started. Individuals in the congregation asked various religious questions and *Hazrat Mirza* responded with reasoned replies that were instinctively appealing. I was amazed by the clarity of his exposition because I had never heard such reasoned logic from a religious personality. A person in

the audience requested *Hazrat* Mirza to pray for someone who was suffering from epilepsy, and *Hazrat* Mirza lifted his hands and supplicated for him. Then *Maulvi* Abdul Karim worked his way close to *Hazrat* Mirza and enquired: "Sir, what is *arsh*?"<sup>1</sup> *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "It means 'the realm', and is also used in the sense of 'ordering an affair', but in the view of religious philosophers, this is that station where the limits of all creation, material and spiritual, come to an end, and beyond which only the being of the Most High God is present." *Hazrat* Mirza gave such a fine speech on *arsh* that the audience was enthralled. The day passed into evening and after offering our *Maghrib* prayer, my companion and I returned to our homes, both fully convinced of the genuineness of this person.

Both of us went again to see *Hazrat* Mirza the next day around noon. He addressed the congregation after the *Zuhr* prayer and interpreted the verses of the chapter *Fatihah* in such an exquisite and knowledgeable manner that his stature was greatly enhanced in our eyes. We had never heard such wisdom before; I had listened to numerous sermons of clerics, but this was in a class of its own. His talk also provided us with a new perspective in another direction as well. In those days, the *Arya Samaj* was a very popular movement, and young students like myself, were somewhat intellectually intimidated by it. During the course of his speech, *Hazrat* Mirza totally demolished the philosophical underpinnings of this movement, and thereby dissipated the awe that we had felt in confronting it. The grandeur and magnificence of Islam was once again manifested before our eyes. After the speech, some provincial folks surrounded *Hazrat* Mirza and started talking to him loudly, but because of the noisy atmosphere, I could not follow the conversation. Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, the famous poet, was my classmate and he had been following the proceedings in the mosque from a perched position on the roof of the mosque's vestibule. When he saw me, he remarked: "See how the lovers are attracted to the beloved." In those days, he was a great admirer of *Hazrat* Mirza. When a local poet of Sialkot, who wrote under the pen name Jalwa, wrote a satirical poem about *Hazrat* Mirza, Iqbal responded with a poem in praise of *Hazrat* Mirza.

Soon after *Hazrat* Mirza's arrival in Sialkot, while he was engaged in the propagation of Islam and inviting people to the truth, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, who was considered the leading *Ahl-e*

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1 Dictionary meaning of *arsh* is the empyrean (as throne of God); high seat; the highest sphere.

*Hadith* scholar in Punjab, also reached Sialkot. He went to mosques making speeches in which he made all sorts of false accusations against *Hazrat* Mirza. Today, when I reflect on what he said, I am ashamed and astonished at how a religious leader could be so deceitful and misleading. I was present during his sermon in the main mosque of Saddar Bazar and witnessed how he quoted *Hazrat* Mirza's writing out of context to instigate the audience. When I remember that, I wonder how someone who claims to be a religious leader can stand in a house of God and indulge in such slander. Besides his defamatory sermonizing in mosques, *Maulvi* Batalvi also started distributing equally defamatory handbills directed at *Hazrat* Mirza. *Hazrat* Mirza responded with handbills of his own clarifying his position. *Maulvi* Batalvi was in no mood for a reasoned debate, but his mudslinging succeeded in converting the peaceful atmosphere of the city into one in which there was a real danger of riots. Despite the efforts of *Maulvi* Batalvi, many people in Sialkot took the pledge to join *Hazrat* Mirza's movement. The reason for this appears to be that Sialkot was the city in which *Hazrat* Mirza had lived for some time in his younger days. The people there were aware of his earlier life and were greatly impressed by his piety and godliness. After staying for a few days in Sialkot, *Hazrat* Mirza left for Jullunder.



## Chapter

# 41

## ***NISHAN ASMANI (HEAVENLY SIGN)***

### **Visit to Jullunder and Ludhiana**

From Sialkot, *Hazrat* Mirza went to Jullunder, a city reputed as the center of atheists and pantheists, and after staying there for a few days proceeded to Ludhiana. Karim Bux Jamalpuri, a disciple of the saint Gulab Shah, lived in the environs of Ludhiana. The saint Gulab Shah had made several prophecies pertaining to the advent of the Promised Messiah, which were narrated previously in chapter 26 ‘Sojourn in Ludhiana.’ *Hazrat* Mirza sent for Karim Bux so that he could personally hear and record the prophecies of the saint from one of the saint’s disciples who had heard them first-hand from the saint himself. Karim Bux narrated on oath many prophecies of the saint that had been fulfilled with great exactitude, and then went on to detail the prophecies of the saint regarding *Hazrat* Mirza. According to the previous testament of Karim Bux, reported in chapter 26 ‘Sojourn in Ludhiana,’ the saint had prophesied that the Israelite Jesus had died and the birth of the Jesus who was to come had already taken place in Qadian. In addition to his previous statement, he further added this time that the people were perplexed on hearing this prophecy because there was a village of the same name close to Ludhiana and they knew of no Jesus there. They, therefore, asked the saint to shed more light on this prophecy. The saint remained silent for a long time, and then replied that the Qadian he had referred to was a different Qadian, which was near Batala, and the name of this Jesus was Ghulam Ahmad. The full details of this prophecy can be found in the book *Nishan Asmani*.

### The writing of *Nishan Asmani*

On his return from Ludhiana, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote a book called *Nishan Asmani* in which he included the prophecies made about him by persons who were known to be recipients of Divine revelation. The book was published on May 26, 1892. Amongst others, it included the prophecy of saint Gulab Shah and an especially noteworthy prophecy of Shah Niamatullah, which is in the form of a poem. The poem begins as follows:

I am seeing the great workings of God,  
And am seeing the condition of the times.

I say this not through the power of astrology,  
But (say it on the basis of) seeing it from God.

After describing with great clarity the conditions of the prevailing times, he went on to mention the coming of the Promised One whose name he related as 'Ahmad':

I see *alif hay meem* and *daal*,<sup>1</sup>  
I see the name of that celebrated person.

His countenance and morals are akin to that of a prophet,  
I see him as scholarly and forbearing.

*Hazrat* Mirza expanded on the meaning of this prophecy in his book *Nishan Asmani* and explained that the reason for giving the Promised person the name Ahmad was that the qualities of the Holy Prophet that were defined by his name Ahmad would be manifested in him. Thus, the name Ahmad had been used in its attributive sense. The Promised One would not be a prophet but would be colored in the traits of prophets and his real mission would be to manifest through knowledge and wisdom the superiority of Islam over all other religions.

In order to discredit the clear and specific prophecies of Shah Niamatullah about the Promised One, the clerics forged poems with contradictory messages and attributed their authorship to Shah Niamatullah. However, these poems can easily be picked out as forgeries because their Persian grammar is often defective. These poems are merely inventions of this period without any historical validity.

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1 *Alif, hay, meem* and *dal* are Urdu letters that together spell Ahmad

There are numerous other narrations of prophecies about the Promised Messiah in *Nishan Asmani*, and the interested reader is encouraged to read it.

## SEVERAL PROMINENT PERSONALITIES MIGRATE TO QADIAN

### ***Maulana* Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi's migration to Qadian**

Several prominent personalities migrated to Qadian in the year 1892. The most outstanding of these personalities was *Maulana Maulvi* Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi. He had written an article in the magazine *Alaam un Naas* supporting the claims of *Hazrat* Mirza and as a result had fallen out of favor with his employers and the general populace in the state of Bhopal. Persecution followed, but *Maulana* Amrohi was a man of integrity and not likely to be cowed down. Rather than compromise his faith, he resigned and migrated to Qadian. Even before these events unfolded fully, *Hazrat* Mirza had received a revelation: "Am seeing Muhammad Hussain leaving his livelihood for you." He was thus given foreknowledge of the impending migration.

*Maulana* Amrohi was a great scholar and, in particular, an expert of *Hadith*. He left behind all manner of worldly luxuries to come and live in Qadian. He was given a small room in the house of *Hazrat* Mirza next to the Masjid Mubarak, and that sufficed him for an abode. One of his great virtues, observed personally by this author, was that he wished everybody well and never spoke ill of anybody to *Hazrat* Mirza. In all that he said, he always had the welfare of others in his mind.

### ***Maulvi Abdul Karim's migration to Qadian***

*Maulvi Abdul Karim* migrated from Sialkot to Qadian towards the end of the same year 1892. He was a teacher of Persian and Arabic in the District Board School, Sialkot, and was also versed in English. He resigned his job in Sialkot and took up abode in Qadian because he could not bear to be away from *Hazrat Mirza*. In Sialkot, he had been the *Imam* of the *Ahl-e Hadith* mosque where this humble author also frequently offered his Friday congregational prayer. His sermons were magnificent, his recitation of the Quran was forceful and he also explained and interpreted the Quran well to the masses. Initially, he was enamored by Sir Syed Ahmad and was under the influence of his naturalistic interpretation of the Quran. Despite this early influence of naturalism, *Hazrat Mirza's* spiritual magnetism attracted him. He had taken the pledge as early as 1889 but the remnants of the naturalistic philosophy still lingered within him. He described his final weaning from this philosophy in the following words:

In 1892, I was living in the drawing room below *Hazrat Mirza's* house. He was writing the book *Ainah Kamalat Islam* and I was translating its Arabic portions into Persian. *Hazrat Mirza* did not like naturalism and I got into a discussion with him almost daily on this subject. I argued my point forcefully, and sometimes inadvertently raised my voice in the heat of discussion. *Hazrat Mirza* always responded calmly and said: "It's alright *Maulvi Sahib*; with time you will understand everything." Accordingly, it came about that gradually I lost all interest in naturalism. Now, when I remember my heated arguments, I pray for protection and forgiveness from Allah.

*Maulvi Abdul Karim* was the *Imam* of a mosque in Sialkot, and *Hazrat Mirza* asked him to perform the same function in Qadian. Consequently, he regularly led the prayers in Masjid Mubarak. Because of his prowess in writing Persian prose, he was asked to translate *Hazrat Mirza's* Arabic book *Ainah Kamalat Islam* into Persian. The major purpose of the book was to invite all the *Sheikhs* and *Sufis* of India, Afghanistan, Egypt and all other Islamic countries to join *Hazrat Mirza's* Movement. In keeping with this objective, the book was published in Arabic, with the Persian translation of the text appearing below on each page.

*Hazrat Mirza's* influence on *Maulvi Abdul Karim* was profound. *Maulvi Abdul Karim's* speech became more eloquent, his writings more



*Maulana Abdul Karim of Sialkot  
(Photo courtesy AAIIIL.org).*

forceful, and his discourses more touching and attractive. But the greatest change took place in the quality of his Quranic recitation, which was now so melodious and impacting that it would cast a spell on the listener, move his soul to ecstasy and impel him uncontrollably to tears. Since I used to frequently pray behind *Maulvi* Abdul Karim in Sialkot, I was familiar with his Quranic recitation, which was enthusiastic but not particularly meritorious. However, when I went to Qadian for the first time in 1902 and took the pledge,<sup>1</sup> I had the opportunity to offer my *Fajr* prayer behind *Maulvi* Abdul Karim. As I stood listening to his recitation, I had the feeling as if the Quran was being revealed anew and the angels were reciting it in their melodious voices from heaven. My heart was greatly affected and my soul was moved. I could not help but wonder at the transformation that had taken place in *Maulvi* Abdul Karim.

### Migration of *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din to Qadian

*Maulana* Nur-ud-Din was a native of Bhera but had moved to Jammu on taking employment as the personal physician of the Maharaja of Jammu. He was a great scholar of the Quran and the *Hadith* and his discourses on these sacred books were widely respected. Thousands of scholars and laymen had benefited by drinking from this fountain of knowledge. After *Hazrat* Mirza put forward his claims to be the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*, *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din wrote a letter to him expressing his desire to spend the rest of his life in the company of *Hazrat* Mirza. He requested permission to resign from his position and to come and settle in Qadian. However, *Hazrat* Mirza replied that resignation from employment was tantamount to refuting a blessing of Allah and advised him against resigning. As luck would have it, *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din earned the ire of *Pundit* Suraj Kohl, an influential personality of the State of Jammu, and the *Pundit* persuaded the Maharaja to discharge him from

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1 As I have mentioned earlier, the pious face of *Hazrat* Mirza got etched into my heart the very first time I saw him in 1892. However, the slandering attacks of Muhammad Hussain Batalvi did create some doubts in my mind. Fortunately, it was my habit from an early age to examine religious literature. Christians, *Arya Samajis* and atheists leveled all kinds of criticism in those days against Islam, and I could find satisfactory answers rebutting these criticisms only in the writings of *Hazrat* Mirza. When I heard the speech of *Hazrat* Mirza read by *Maulvi* Abdul Karim in the famous Inter-faith Gathering of 1896 and experienced that moving spectacle, my great admiration of *Hazrat* Mirza turned into faith and belief in his mission. However, to formally pledge allegiance to *Hazrat* Mirza in that period of great opposition to him was tantamount to jumping in a fire. Therefore, I had to postpone this final act of faith until such time that I got employed and became independent.

employment. *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din returned to Bhera and started work on the construction of a house that would also contain his clinic. This building was still under construction and a sum of seven thousand rupees had already been spent on it when *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din had to go to Lahore for some work. This was the year 1893. The rest of the incident is narrated in the *Maulana's* own words:

I came to Qadian because I felt a strong urge to meet with *Hazrat* Mirza. Since the construction work was in full swing in Bhera, I rented a carriage for a round trip to Qadian. On coming here, I met *Hazrat* Mirza and fully intended to request permission to leave at the end of the meeting. However, during the course of the conversation, *Hazrat* Mirza said: "So you are not doing anything now." I replied: "Yes Sir, I am not doing anything much now." It then appeared rude to leave immediately so I released the coachman, and decided that I would ask for permission to depart in the next one or two days. The next day, *Hazrat* Mirza commented: "You will not be entirely comfortable if you live alone; you should ask one of your wives to join you here." In accordance with this instruction, I sent for my wife and in the letter also directed that further work on the construction be halted as I may not be able to return soon. After my wife arrived, *Hazrat* Mirza said: "Since you are very fond of books, I think it advisable if you have your library shipped here." After a few more days, he said: "Your other wife knows your temperament well and has been with you longer, you must send for her as well." The reason for these suggestions became obvious when *Hazrat* Mirza told *Maulvi* Abdul Karim that he had received a revelation pertaining to Nur-ud-Din. The revelation, which was in the form of a fine verse stated:

Do not return to the native land,  
Therein is disgrace and misfortune.

Strange are the ways of the Almighty. After this, I never thought or even dreamed of returning to my hometown; we became permanent residents of Qadian.

After some time, the Maharaja of Jammu realized his mistake and requested *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din to return to his former position, but the *Maulana* replied: "I cannot leave Qadian now even if you were to offer me a king-



dom.” The *Maulana* took up residence in adobes he had built on the bank of the village moat, and started giving lessons in the Quran and the *Hadith*. His discourses on the Quran were in particular so enlightening and rational that they had an impact on people of all inclinations, whether modern or conservative. These discourses healed the spiritual diseases of men, and he also set up a clinic and started a medical practice to heal their physical diseases as well. The benefit of this medical practice soon spread beyond Qadian and people from far-away places came to seek cures for their diseases, and went back healed - not only physically but also spiritually.

Besides the above-mentioned personalities, many others left their homes and hearth, their relatives and dear ones, and came to settle in Qadian to benefit from the company of *Hazrat Mirza*. *Hazrat Mirza* had a guesthouse built made of unfired, mud bricks. The people migrating to Qadian were initially housed in this guesthouse. Those who were single often became permanent residents in the guesthouse, but those who had families would build mud-houses and move into them. However, *Maulvi Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi* and *Maulvi Abdul Karim* were provided rooms in *Hazrat Mirza*’s house.

## Chapter

# 43

## ANNUAL GATHERING 1892

The Annual Gathering of 1892 started on December 27, and was attended by about five hundred people of whom approximately 325 had come especially for the convention from outside Qadian, some from very distant places. The details of this convention were included in the book *Ainah Kamalat Islam*. A brief summary follows:

The highlights of the first day included a speech by *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din in which he gave a commentary on those verses of the Holy Quran that mention Mary and Jesus. He enthralled the audience with a profound rendering of facts and wisdom in the verses dealing with the chastity and virtue of Mary and the death of Jesus. He also explained very clearly the meaning of the second coming of Christ. Next, Syed Hamid Shah of Sialkot rendered a laudatory poem and then *Hazrat* Mirza followed him with a brief speech in which he replied to some charges by current Muslim scholars on the basis of which they had declared him a heretic. He also supported his claim of being the Promised Messiah based on Heavenly signs.

The following day, distinguished members of the audience presented their views on ways to propagate Islam in Europe and America. As a result of these deliberations, a consensus emerged to publish a magazine that would expound, in a very rational way, the beauty of Islam and present its essentials to the target audience. It was also decided to actively propagate and support Islam in India, and for this purpose to start the publication of a newspaper. *Maulvi* Syed Muhammad Ahsan was appointed as the chief spokesperson of this effort and given a mandate to tour the

various provinces of India. A proposal was approved to establish a printing press in Qadian, owned and operated by the Movement, and a list was prepared of those people who agreed to support this project financially. It was further agreed that the aims and objectives of the Annual Gatherings in the future would remain the same, namely:

1. To search for the best ways to propagate Islam and support converts in Europe and America.
2. To find ways for the moral uplift of humanity through the development of good character, good intentions, righteousness and piety, and by reining in material and worldly habits and customs.

A committee was formed for the implementation of these objectives with *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din as the chair and Mirza Khuda Bux as the secretary. The convention ended with an invocation asking God to bless these efforts.

### **Mir Nasir Nawab**

The convention had a tremendous spiritual impact on all those who attended, but of special note was the affect on Mir Nasir Nawab, the father-in-law of *Hazrat* Mirza. Despite their relationship, Mir Nasir Nawab, who was a conformist and greatly under the influence of Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, had serious reservations about *Hazrat* Mirza's views, and had even written satirical poems about him. However, he had consented to come to the convention of 1892, and when he listened to the speeches, a new light dawned on him. *Hazrat* Mirza's speeches at the convention, one of which was delivered in the morning session and another in the evening - the latter being a substitute speech in place of a speech by *Nawab* Muhammad Ali Khan - were so effective that all doubts in the mind of Mir Nasir Nawab were removed. In addition, the affection with which *Hazrat* Mirza received him, despite his obvious hostility, impressed him greatly.

After the *Fajr* prayer, someone narrated a vision of *Maulana* Abdullah Ghaznavi in which he saw Muhammad Hussain Batalvi wearing a long cloak that turned into one that was totally shredded. The *Maulana* had interpreted the cloak to stand for knowledge. The meaning of the vision was obvious – Muhammad Hussain Batalvi's cloak of knowledge would be ripped apart. The combined impact of these events dissipated Mir Nasir Nawab's reservations and he joined the Movement.

## ***AINAH KAMALAT ISLAM* (MIRRORING THE EXCELLENCE OF ISLAM)**

*Hazrat Mirza* started writing the book *Ainah Kamalat Islam* (Mirroring the Excellence of Islam), in 1892, and published it in February 1893. In the humble opinion of this author, this book, in its intellectual prowess, is second only to *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, and these two books along with *Surma Chasham Arya* are clearly in a league of their own as compared to the rest of *Hazrat Mirza's* works. *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and *Surma Chasham Arya*, have already formed the subjects of Chapters 11 and 19 respectively. This chapter is devoted to the third of this trio.

As the name *Ainah Kamalat Islam* indicates, this book expounds the excellence of Islam. The intellectual merit of this book can be gauged from the fact that there are literally hundreds of pages of commentary on just one verse of the Quran from the Chapter *Al-Baqarah* (The Cow):

“Nay, whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such nor shall they grieve.” (2:112)

The book focuses on the meaning and teachings of Islam and the elevated status that can be achieved by acting on its precepts. As the reader follows this beautiful exposition, he cannot help but be wonderstruck by the vast knowledge, wisdom, and truth encapsulated in each and every verse

of the Quran for a person who applies his mind. The discussion leads into the development of spiritual excellence in a man through the stages of *fana* (death), *baqa* (life), and *laqa* (meeting), and explains this difficult topic of mysticism with such clarity that even a person of ordinary understanding can benefit from it. Other verses of the Quran are referenced and interpreted to support the argument, and the knowledge and wisdom found in each one is fully exposed. The doctrine of naturalism is strongly refuted in many different places in the book. A full appreciation of the true theological excellence and merit of this work can only be gauged by reading the book itself. The book ends by reproducing all of the announcements and invitations that *Hazrat Mirza* had issued on various topics up to the time of the publication of this book. Some of the important announcements are reviewed below:

### **A challenge to the scholars of all false faiths**

One of the announcements appended with the book is entitled: "In Respect of All Clergymen, Hindus, *Aryas*, *Brahmusmajis*, Sikhs, Atheists, Naturalists, Etcetera." In this announcement, *Hazrat Mirza* invited scholars of all other faiths to Islam and asked them to come and learn the teachings of Islam and hear testimonials to its truth from him. In addition, he said, they will witness heavenly blessings and signs that will prove that Islam alone is the true and living religion, adherence to which leads a man to God. God responds to the prayers of such a person and communicates with him. He receives information about the unseen, and religious secrets are revealed to him. *Hazrat Mirza* challenged the adherents of all other faiths to show that they could do likewise. He asserted that they will not be able to produce similar evidence about the truth of their religion, nor will they be able to show that their religion has any life so that by adhering to it, one could find God. If anyone claims to the contrary, he said: "Let him confront me and prove from oral and practical testimony, like I will, the truth of his contention."

This announcement laid down a procedure for conclusively testing the various religions for genuineness and thus provided a way to end the ongoing argumentation with Christians, *Aryas*, atheists and others about the respective merits of each faith. The test was simple – whichever religion could lead man to God as evidenced by the show of heavenly signs should be accepted as the true religion. *Hazrat Mirza* invited scholars of all faiths to hear his testimony regarding the truth of Islam and to observe heavenly signs in support. He gave them an open challenge to do likewise, but no one accepted. Announcements like this were made

repeatedly but no one responded. Accordingly, in this book *Ainah Kamalat Islam*, Hazrat Mirza also penned a powerful poem based on the same theme. A few verses of the poem are translated below as a sample:

I raced my thoughts in all directions till I tired,  
But found no faith like the faith of Muhammad.

There is no religion that can show a sign.  
This fruit I have eaten only from the garden of Muhammad.

I tested Islam by practicing it myself,  
'It is nothing but light,' wake up and see, I beckoned to others.

When I examined other faiths, I found no light in them,  
Let anyone confront me if I have hidden the truth.

No one came forward to take the challenge,  
Though I invited every opponent to confront me.

Come on people for here alone you will find the light of God,  
Accept it, for what I tell you is the path of contentment.

May Your blessings and mercy be abundantly on Mustafa,  
Through him have we obtained this light O Lord God.

### **The publication of *Al-Tabligh* (The Propagation)**

Along with this book *Ainah Kamalat Islam*, Hazrat Mirza published an announcement in Arabic addressed to all Indian and foreign Muslim religious leaders, both genuine ones and pretenders, in which he drew their attention to their imperfect ways and innovations. He urged them to give up innovations and to hold firmly to the ways of Allah and His Prophet. He invited them to join the appointed spiritual leader of the time, and to engage themselves in the service of religion. Hazrat Mirza also gave testimonials about the genuineness of his claims. Perhaps the term 'announcement' is an improper characterization of this publication for it is really in the nature of a book in Arabic with its Persian translation meticulously completed by *Maulvi* Abdul Karim, appearing alongside.

Apart from the theological merits of *Al-Tabligh*, the literary quality of the Arabic prose is outstanding, thanks to a miracle of God. When Hazrat Mirza resolved to invite scholars and hereditary religious leaders to return

to the pristine purity of Islam, he consulted his companions about the proposed publication. *Maulvi* Abdul Karim advised him that, given the target audience, the publication would best serve its purpose if it were in Arabic. *Hazrat* Mirza agreed with the suggestion but remarked that this would be problematic because his Arabic was not very good. He therefore proposed that he would write the document in Urdu and then they could all collaborate in translating it. After this conversation, he went to his private quarters and when he came out next, he brought with him a partly finished Arabic text of the proposed publication. When *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din and *Maulvi* Abdul Karim read the manuscript, they were amazed at the quality of the language used. In fact, *Maulvi* Abdul Karim remarked that he had studied Arabic literature extensively but had never come across a composition of such high quality. Addressing their amazement, *Hazrat* Mirza said: "I supplicated to Allah at great length in this respect and was taught forty thousand root words of the Arabic language by God." The literary merit of *Hazrat* Mirza's Arabic compositions bears ample testimony to the truth of his statement. *Hazrat* Mirza even challenged Arabic linguists to produce a book of similar quality in comparable time and win a prize from him but no one dared to accept the challenge.

This supernatural command of the Arabic language was solely the result of supplication and the munificence of God because *Hazrat* Mirza's formal schooling in Arabic literature was very limited. At a young age, he had studied Arabic textbooks with his teacher up to the intermediate level, but did not reach an advanced stage of proficiency. In fact, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, who received some of his schooling with *Hazrat* Mirza, would deride him by writing the word "*Munshi*" (clerk) before his name rather than "*Maulvi*," which signified a learned man of religion. *Maulvi* Abdul Karim, who had a keen sense of honor, requested *Hazrat* Mirza numerous times to write and publish even a small poem in Arabic to counter the chiding of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain, but *Hazrat* Mirza would just smile and respond that his Arabic writing skills were limited. In the current situation, however, Arabic skill was not a matter of personal ego but a dire religious need, and so he turned to God, as was his custom. The result was a miraculous mastery over the Arabic language, so complete that he could successfully challenge both Arabs and non-Arabs to compete with him in the quality of Arabic composition. His Arabic books achieved a level of literary excellence that was acknowledged by all fair-minded people, and his opponents could never again challenge him on this score.

It is fair to ask as to why *Hazrat* Mirza did not even write a small

poem when urged on by *Maulvi* Abdul Karim? Why did he not do then what he did now? The answer lies in knowing that God-appointed individuals do not act out of their own inclinations and desires. There was no great religious compulsion to act when *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain was chiding him. It was merely the wish of his disciples to produce and publish a poem so that their mentor may gain in stature and not appear inferior to *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain. On the face of it, there is nothing objectionable in this, but the status of God-appointed individuals is far above such petty considerations. They never perform any act merely to show off their greatness. Unless they perceive a dire religious need, their heart does not feel the urge, and their mind does not generate the intensity to take the matter to the court of On High. When there was a dire need for Arabic skill to compose *Al-Tabligh*, *Hazrat* Mirza's full attention focused on the matter and the urge that arose in his heart made his mind receptive to the Arabic skills that God sent his way.



## CLERICS ALLEGING HERESY CHALLENGED TO AN IMPRECATORY DEBATE (*MUBAHALAH*)

### **Under what conditions is an imprecatory debate permissible?**

*Mubahalah* or imprecatory debate is a well-recognized way of settling religious disputes in which the contending parties invoke the curse of Allah on the lying party.<sup>1</sup> Initially, *Hazrat* Mirza was averse to challenging his opponents to an imprecatory debate because of reasons expounded in great detail in a letter to Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan in 1891. The text of the letter was later published in the newspaper *Al-Hakam* on March 24, 1902. In this letter, he wrote:

I would like to make it clear that I have not categorically rejected participating in an imprecation. If the disputed matter is such that it is permissible, according to the Quran and the *Hadith*, to have an imprecation about it, I will be the first to participate in it. However, an imprecation is definitely not allowed when the contending parties differ only in respect of the interpretation or understanding of

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1 "Whoever then disputes with thee in this matter after the knowledge that has come to thee, say: Come! Let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our people and your people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and invoke the curse of Allah on the liars." (3:61)

an issue, and there is no deliberate calumny or falsehood on the part of either party. Regardless of who is right and who is wrong, if imprecation was permitted on every trivial issue in which people differed in sincerity and good faith, and God was to bring about a calamity on the party that was in the wrong, Islam would have been wiped off the face of the earth. There is no doubt that the objective of imprecation is to invoke God to send a calamity on the wrongdoer. In matters of interpretation, it is conceivable that the *Hanafis* may be correct on some trivial issues, and likewise the *Shafai* may be correct on others and the *Ahl-e Hadith* on yet others. If all sects of Islam were to resort to imprecation to settle their differences, and the calamity of God was to overtake each one for the issues in which they were incorrect, all sects would have been destroyed. It is obvious that a process that is so self-destructive to Islam cannot be permissible in the sight of Allah, Who is a supporter of Islam and Muslims...

Now I would also like to explain the conditions in which an imprecation is permissible. Let me state it clearly that there are only two kinds of people with whom imprecation is allowed. First, with an unbeliever who claims that he knows for a fact that Islam is not a true religion, and that he is absolutely certain of the facts when he ascribes Divine attributes to others besides Allah. Second, with a tyrant who unreasonably slanders a person by making false accusations. For example, he says about a chaste woman that he knows for a fact that she is an adulteress because he has seen her committing adultery with his own eyes or about (someone who abstains from alcohol) that I know for a fact that he drinks because I have seen him drinking with my own eyes. In these circumstances, too, an imprecation is permissible because the dispute is not about interpretation but about an attempt, allegedly based upon conviction and observation, to slander the good name of a believing brother. A case in point is the allegation made by *Maulvi* Ismael when he said that his friend had observed with his own eyes that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, i.e. this humble person, secretly keeps some instruments of astrology with the help of which he foretells some matters, but announces to the public that the matter was revealed to him. In this instance, there is no dispute about interpretation, but instead there is a direct allegation of *Maulvi* Ismael about my honesty and trust, based on a

friend's observation. However, if the basis of the dispute is solely interpretation, and someone calls a believer an apostate or an unbeliever based upon his interpretation, then this is not slander because the person making the decision did so to the best limitations of his knowledge and understanding. In short, imprecation is only permissible with such people who claim their statement to be definitive and certain, and on that basis allege that the other party is a liar, or an adulterer, etcetera...

An imprecation will only be permissible for those who are with us when the opposing party makes an announcement that they do not consider the plaintiffs as merely being in error in the same way that sects disagree on some issues, and can be right on some and wrong on others. Instead, they allege with complete conviction that they consider the person to be a liar and that in the matter under dispute, they do not have to defer the final judgment to God but that they can proceed in the matter based upon full knowledge and certainty...

It is also necessary before an imprecation that the participants should listen to the opposing viewpoints. It is incumbent upon a God-appointed person to first make those who reject him to understand his claims by putting forward clear arguments, and by showing them signs of his truthfulness. If after listening to the evidence, they do not desist from calling him a liar and claiming complete certainty in the matter, then imprecation may be resorted to for final arbitration. Imprecation must never be used as the first strategy of choice when the issues have not yet been thoroughly aired and understood. When our Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, requested an imprecatory debate, it was at a time when the revelation of the Quran had been going on for several years and its propagation had taken place thoroughly. However, this humble person does not ask for several years, but does desire that a conference of scholars be convened that includes those desiring an imprecatory debate. In the tradition of the prophets, this humble person will satisfy the requirement of giving them advice and impress upon them with clear arguments the truthfulness of his contentions. When my sermon is finished, those desiring an imprecation should rise up and say: "I have heard the sermon but I still know for sure that this person is a liar

and fabricator. I say this with complete certainty without any scope of doubt just as I would be certain of a matter that I saw with my own eyes. I am further convinced that I have understood the matter clearly and that I have no doubts about it.” After this, the imprecation will begin.

### **Clerics alleging heresy challenged to an imprecatory debate**

It was only after the clerics opposing *Hazrat Mirza* exceeded all limits in vilifying him as an apostate that he challenged them to an imprecatory debate. It was a matter of daily routine for them to call him an unbeliever, a renegade from Islam, the Antichrist and a liar. They issued decrees nullifying marriages in which one of the spouses had become a disciple of *Hazrat Mirza*, and they forcibly prevented the burial of his disciples in Muslim cemeteries. Notwithstanding the fact that *Hazrat Mirza* explained the articles of his faith to them repeatedly through books and announcements, they did not desist from calling him an unbeliever and a fabricator of lies against Allah. On the contrary, they showed such certainty about their pronouncements that they began airing the idea of an imprecation with him. It was only then that Allah gave him permission to challenge those who had signed the decree of excommunication from Islam against him to an imprecatory debate. This challenge was published in an announcement on December 10, 1892. In that announcement, he stated:

I give them a period of four months. If during the period of four months, these people do not hold an imprecatory debate with me in accordance with the above mentioned conditions and also do not desist from calling me an unbeliever, then the argument of Allah against them will be complete...However, it must be remembered that a necessary condition for the imprecation is that I will first be given the opportunity to remove any misunderstandings of the signatories to the anathema by adducing clear arguments against what they have stated. If even after that they do not desist, then the imprecation should proceed in the same assembly.

The last-mentioned condition was put in to safeguard those who may have signed the decree of excommunication from Islam on the insistence of other clerics without fully understanding the religious tenets of *Hazrat Mirza*. The merciful and generous nature of God is such that it does not want to punish a person for inadvertent mistakes. To obviate such a possibility, it is mandatory before an imprecation that the religious tenets

under dispute be clarified to the opposing party so that, if there is any misunderstanding, it may be removed. If even after this, the parties maintain their original position and one party insists on calling the other an unbeliever, then all the conditions of imprecation are satisfied, and it is permissible to proceed.

The clerics who had signed the anathema had been clamoring for an imprecatory debate with *Hazrat* Mirza for some time, but when they were actually challenged, they fell silent and the wind dropped completely out of their sails. With the sole exception of *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi, no one stepped forward for the imprecation. The case of *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi is narrated later.

### **The prediction regarding Lekhram**

The visit of Lekhram, the Hindu priest, to Qadian was mentioned earlier in Chapter 13. During this visit, he had tauntingly demanded *Hazrat* Mirza to show him a heavenly sign. When his chiding exceeded all limits of decency, *Hazrat* Mirza published a declaration about him in his book *Ainah Kamalat Islam* and preceded the declaration with a laudatory poem in praise of the Holy Prophet. This poem began with the following couplet:

There is a marvelous light in the person of Muhammad,  
There is a wonderful and rare ruby in the mine of Muhammad.

The verses at the end of the poem contained a clear reference to the demise of Lekhram. Since these verses are relevant, they are reproduced below before the text of the actual declaration. Not only does the reading of these verses makes it abundantly clear that the person referenced therein is Lekhram, but also the figure of a hand, inserted immediately after the poem, with its finger pointing to the declaration leaves no doubt about the identity of the intended person in the poem. The poem and the text follow:

Beware O foolish and misguided antagonist,  
Fear the sharp edged cutting sword of Muhammad.

Those who have lost the way of God,  
Should seek it in the lives of the followers and supporters of  
Muhammad.

Beware O denier of the glory of Muhammad,  
Denier of those who manifest the light of Muhammad.

Although no sign of a miracle may be apparent,  
But come and see it performed by the servant of Muhammad.



### **A Prophecy Regarding Lekhram of Peshawar**

Let it be known that in a public announcement dated February 20, 1882, appended to this book, this humble person had asked Lekhram of Peshawar and Indarman of Muradabad for permission to publish some prophecies about their fate if such was their desire. Indarman avoided a response to this announcement and died shortly thereafter. However, Lekhram wrote me a postcard in which he recklessly gave me permission to publish whatever prophecy I desired. When I supplicated about this matter, the Glorious Allah revealed to me: "*Ajalun jasadu lahu howaar. Lahu nasabun wa azab,*" which means that he is just a lifeless calf, emitting a disgusting noise, and certainly punishment, sorrow and calamity are fated for him because of his impertinence and foul language. Today, which is Monday, February 20, 1893, when I beseeched Allah for the timing of the punishment, God informed me that within six years from today, terrible calamities will befall him because of his abusive language, i.e. the disrespect that he has shown to the Messenger of Allah, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him.

By publishing this prophecy, I want to make it clear to all Muslims, Christians, *Arya* Hindus and members of all other faiths that if an awesome and supernatural calamity of a magnitude that makes it clearly distinguishable from random acts of misfortunes that befall people is not inflicted on him within a period of six years from today, then they should consider that I am not on the side of God and that this prophecy is not from Him. If this prophecy turns out to be false, I am willing to accept any punishment, including being hanged on the cross...It should be remembered that this person has committed such acts of extreme disrespect towards the Messenger of Allah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, that one trembles even to think about them. Scorn, contempt and abuse fill his books, and there is no Muslim whose heart does not suffer

when listening to them. Despite his coquetry and shamelessness, this man is an ignoramus. He has no skill in Arabic and does not even have the ability to write good Urdu. This is not an accidental prophecy, but the result of special supplications made by this humble person in this matter. This prophecy is also a sign for the Muslims - would that they understand this fact and open their hearts to it. I now end in the name of that same Glorious God in whose name I had started. And praise be to Allah and salutations and peace be on His Messenger Muhammad Mustafa, the best of Messengers, the most affectionate, my master and the master of all who are in the earth and the heavens.

Sincerely, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, Gurdaspur District.  
February 20, 1893

The narration of the rest of this incident is taken up in Chapter 79, but suffice it to say that *Hazrat* Mirza's claim that the gift of true prophecy is a miracle that is given to every righteous follower of Prophet Muhammad was fully vindicated. A month and a half later, *Hazrat* Mirza published a supplement elaborating the above prophecy based upon further revelations received from God. The supplementary announcement is given below:

### **More News About Lekhram of Peshawar**

The date today is April 2, 1893, which corresponds to the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Ramzan 1310 Hijri. I saw in a state of semi-drowsiness this morning that I was sitting in a spacious house along with some friends when a robust man with a grim and angry face came and stood before me. I glanced up at him and saw that he is not from our creation but is an avenging angel. I was still looking at him with awe when he asked me: "Where is Lekhram?" He also asked me about another person. I realized then that he was appointed for the punishment of Lekhram and this other person. I do not know, however, who the second person is...The day of this vision was Sunday and the time 4:00 am. Praise be to Allah for this.

This vision clearly indicated that Lekhram's demise was to be the result of an assassination. *Hazrat* Mirza published this supplementary announcement in his book *Barakat-ud-Dua* to support his argument against Sir Syed that supplications are accepted.

## Chapter

# 46

### ***BARAKAT-UD-DUA*** **(BLESSING OF PRAYERS)**

#### **Repudiation of the Theory of Naturalism**

No one can doubt Sir Syed Ahmad's abilities nor underestimate his role in the emancipation of Indian Muslims. His service in the field of education and politics is worthy of being written in golden letters. In the same spirit of philanthropy, he also tried to mentor Muslims in their faith, but this was probably one field he should have steered clear of because he lacked the necessary credentials of spirituality and communion with God needed to provide the right guidance. The prevailing philosophy of materialism had made great inroads into the Muslim psyche, and the situation was desperately crying out for the services of a person of great spiritual eminence who could counter the pernicious influence of this thinking. However, Sir Syed Ahmad was not that person. Because of his weak spiritual foundation, he could not withstand the onslaught of the new philosophy and conceded that revelation was not an external phenomenon but had its origin within man, being only a voice of his own reflections. He denied the acceptance of prayers, and maintained that it was just a way to console the heart because God carried out His will without regard to the entreaties of man.

These two contentions strike at the very foundation of religion. If revelation is not external, then its status is no greater than a pious and righteous reflection of man, and if prayer is not accepted, then worship is meaningless because worship is just another form of prayer. As a corollary, there appears to be no reason to establish a connection with God



because there is no point in worshipping a deity that shows no mercy and renders no help or benefit.

*Hazrat Mirza* detested these principles of naturalist philosophy. He was a strong proponent of the articulate reception of revelation from an external source, and had conclusively proven this point in his book *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and subsequent books by evidencing rational arguments, written traditions, and his own observation and experience. Accordingly, in his book *Barakat-ud-Dua*, he wrote:

If a physical analogy of revelation is to be given, it will probably be that of a wireless (radio) that responds to external stimuli. I have seen that, at the time of revelation, which I receive in the form of saintly revelation (*wahy willayat*), I feel possessed by a strong, external force, and sometimes its influence is so strong that I am totally in the grip of a spiritual light that draws me to it and I am powerless to resist. In this state, I hear vivid and clear words. Sometimes, I see angels and experience the effect and awe that arises from witnessing this reality. At times, the speech conveys information about the unseen. The possession and impact of this external force is such that it renders clear evidence of the existence of God. To deny it would be to refute a clear truth. Note: Not only do I sometimes see angels but also, at times, they indicate in their conversation that their status is only of an intermediary.

### **The writing of *Barakat ud Dua***

*Hazrat Mirza* had strongly refuted the philosophy of naturalism with cogent arguments in his book *Surma Chasham Arya*. He continued this theme in *Ainah Kamalat Islam*, and in addition discussed the topic of acceptance of prayers. However, he felt the need for a comprehensive discourse on the subject of acceptance of prayer. Accordingly, after the publication of *Ainah Kamalat Islam*, he wrote the book *Barakat-ud-Dua* covering this topic in great detail and published it on April 20, 1893. He put forth convincing arguments to show that prayers are accepted, and offered his own experience as testimony to the truth of the proposition. He gave a detailed rendering of the ways in which man could elevate himself to the status where his prayers would be accepted. Although the book was written for the benefit of the general readership, it was quite obvious that its main objective was to rebut the views espoused by Sir Syed Ahmad. If there was any doubt that he was the primary addressee, a poem at the end of the book made this quite clear. The last three verses of this poem are reproduced below:

Heal with prayer the pain caused by those who deny the efficacy  
of prayer,  
Like with wine is treated wine induced intoxication and provocation.

O you who say: "Where is the proof that prayer is efficacious?"  
Hasten to me and I will show it to you as clear as the day.

Yes! Do not deny the secret powers of God,  
Let us end this matter here for you can see with me proofs of  
accepted prayers.

In *Baraka-ud-Dua*, Hazrat Mirza provided many instances of prayers that had been accepted, and the prophecy regarding the fate of Lekhram was one of them. Then, he invited Sir Syed Ahmad, in the poem quoted above, to come and witness for himself how prayers are granted. Sir Syed Ahmad did not respond to this book. He may have either considered silence as the best strategy under the circumstances or may have secretly converted to Hazrat Mirza's viewpoint. Allah knows best.

### **Printing press in Qadian**

A resolution at the annual convention of 1892 had called for the establishment of a printing press, owned and operated by the Ahmadiyya Movement, to meet the growing demand for publications. With the financial support of Hazrat Mirza's followers, the press was set up and began operations in 1893; this solved many of the problems previously encountered in the publication of materials. The press was named *Zia-ul-Islam* (Light of Islam).

### **Maulvi Batalvi invited to write a commentary of the Quran**

*Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi was very proud of his scholarship and knowledge of the Arabic language, and contemptuously referred to Hazrat Mirza as a scribe. When his boasting became excessive, Hazrat Mirza challenged *Maulvi* Batalvi to compete with him in writing a commentary of the Quran. A comparison of the two commentaries would then reveal each participant's skill in Arabic and his understanding of the Quran. When this challenge was delivered in writing to *Maulvi* Batalvi on April 1, 1893, he was stunned. Considering discretion to be the better part of valor, he chose to totally ignore the challenge despite repeated reminders. He considered his interest best served by silence and so silent he remained.

## ***HUJJAT-UL-ISLAM*** **(UNDENIABLE PROOF OF THE TRUTH OF ISLAM)**

### **Convincing arguments advanced against the Christians**

*Hazrat* Mirza published the pamphlet *Hujjat-ul-Islam* on May 8, 1893. Its major objective was to draw the attention of Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke and other Christians to the great truth that Islam was the only religion that was blessed, living, and contained Divine guidance. Signs of its truth could be witnessed today just as they had been witnessed in previous times. In comparison, the Christian religion was engulfed in darkness and had none of the characteristics of a living religion. Cogent arguments given in the pamphlet supported these assertions.

### **Preamble to the Holy War**

In addition, *Hazrat* Mirza delved into the rationale and conditions for his forthcoming debate with Christians on May 22, 1893 in Amritsar, and formally accepted to participate in it. An excerpt from his statement on the subject follows:<sup>1</sup>

Let it be known that the abovementioned Doctor (i.e. the clergyman Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke) has made it clear in some of his letters that he is preparing for a holy war against the scholars of

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<sup>1</sup> *Hujjat-ul-Islam*. Second edition, page 4.

Islam. He has also stated his intention in a letter to conduct this war so as to achieve a decisive outcome, and has warned that if the scholars of Islam do not take the field of battle, or lose decisively, they will forfeit the right ever again to challenge the Christian clergy, or to claim the truth of their religion, or to raise any kind of protest against the Christian community.

Because this humble person has been appointed by God for the purpose of conducting spiritual wars, and knows as a result of revelation from God that victory will be ours in every field, the invitation of the Doctor is accepted without any hesitation. The Doctor has been advised through a letter that it is my earnest desire to engage in this battle so that truth and falsehood are clearly distinguished. Not content with just sending the letter, I also sent some respectable friends as emissaries to personally convey to the Doctor in Amritsar that I accept the call for the holy war. The names of these emissaries are Mirza Khuda Buksh,...Sheikh Rahmatullah, *Maulvi* Abdul Karim, Munshi Ghulam Qadir Fasih, Mian Muhammad Yousaf Khan, Sheikh Nur Ahmad ...etcetera.

As a result of negotiations between the Doctor and my emissaries, who were acting as my spokespeople, it was unanimously agreed that this debate would take place in Amritsar. The Doctor proposed that the champion from his side would be Mr. Abdullah Atham, formerly an Extra Assistant Commissioner. He also proposed that three advisors each may assist the primary contestants. The agreement gives a period of six days to each party to adduce arguments and objections against the religion of the other. The format will be that for the first six days we will have the right to question the religion, teachings, and articles of faith of our opponents. For example, we may ask for proof of the divinity of Jesus, peace be on him, or of his being alive, or to question any other aspect of the Christian faith. Similarly, our opponents will have the right to question the Muslim faith for six days.

It was also decided to have a presiding officer who will conduct the administrative affairs of the debate and ensure orderly proceedings without heckling, uncalled for interruptions, and acts against the approved conditions of the debate by members of the opposing party. It was also mutually agreed and decided that nei-

ther party will bring more than fifty supporters to the debate. A total of a hundred tickets will be printed and each party will get fifty tickets. No one will be allowed to enter without a ticket. Finally, the Doctor specifically requested that this debate start on May 22, 1893, and it was so agreed. The selection of the debate hall and other associated administrative arrangements were made the responsibility of the Doctor.

After all these details had been worked out, an agreement detailing all the above conditions was written and signed by the Doctor and *Maulvi* Abdul Karim. It was agreed that the parties should publish the conditions of debate by May 15, 1893. My emissaries then returned to Qadian. Because the Doctor has named this debate as a holy war, I wrote a letter to the Doctor on April 25, 1893 and informed him that the conditions accepted by my emissaries were also acceptable to me.

#### **Christians invited to have a *Mubalahah* (imprecatory debate)**

*Hazrat* Mirza also sent by registered mail to Dr. Clarke a supplementary proposal requesting that the debate end with an imprecation. According to the proposal, the imprecation would take the form of each party asking God to show a heavenly sign in support of their religion within a period of one year. An acceptable sign would be one that clearly showed its origin to be beyond human ingenuity and left the opposing party without a response in the form of a similar sign. If God vindicated one party with such a sign, it would be incumbent on the vanquished party to convert to the religion that had been supported by God, or in lieu thereof to turn over half their property to the other party to aid in the propagation of the victorious religion. However, Christians did not accept this proposal.

#### **A prophecy about *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi**

The pamphlet *Hujjat-ul-Islam* also contained a prophecy in Arabic about *Maulvi* Batalvi. On the basis of a vision, *Hazrat* Mirza prophesied on May 4, 1893, that:

“I saw that this person (that is, *Maulvi* Batalvi) would believe before his death that I am a believer and I saw as if he had given up calling me an infidel, and repented.”

Some people at the time interpreted the prophecy to mean that *Maulvi* Batalvi would openly become a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza. This, however, was an erroneous interpretation because the second part of the prophecy qualified what was stated in the first part. The words “as if” clearly indicated that *Maulvi* Batalvi’s reassessment of *Hazrat* Mirza as a believer would be in the form of a cessation of accusatory charges of infidelity and a halt to all such future actions. The prophecy was fulfilled precisely in this manner. After the death of *Hazrat* Mirza and during the period of *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din’s leadership, *Maulvi* Batalvi gave a sworn statement in the court of Judge *Lala* Devki Nandan of Gujranwala District that the followers of *Hazrat* Mirza were Muslims. This clearly showed that he had recanted his former position of calling *Hazrat* Mirza’s followers unbelievers. More details of this incident are given in Chapter 104.

## ***SACHAI KA IZHAR*** **(MANIFESTATION OF TRUTH)**

### **Rationale for writing the pamphlet *Sachai ka Izhar***

Soon after *Hazrat* Mirza had published the pamphlet *Hujjat-ul-Islam*, circumstances developed that necessitated the writing of another pamphlet, *Sachai ka Izhar* (Manifestation of Truth). The events leading up to the writing of this pamphlet began with an agreement between the Muslim and Christian residents of the town of Jandiala to hold a religious debate. The Muslims of Jandiala invited *Hazrat* Mirza to be their champion while the Christians extended a similar invitation to the clergyman Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke. Thus, a confrontation that first began at the level of the local religious leaders escalated into a clash of the titans, and culminated in an agreement to hold this debate in Amritsar as described in the previous chapter. Dr. Clarke passed the mantle of the Christian champion to Abdullah Atham, a retired Extra Assistant Commissioner, who was not only very proud of his own knowledge, but was also the pride of the entire Christian community, and looked upon as a man of exceptional knowledge.

Dr. Clarke began to have second thoughts about the wisdom of debating *Hazrat* Mirza even before the ink was dry on the agreement to hold the debate. Since it would have been embarrassing to ask for a more convenient adversary directly, Dr. Clarke resorted to a devious ploy. He regularly published a magazine called *Nur Afshan*, and in its issue dated May 12, 1893, he inserted an announcement designed to incite the Muslims of Jandiala against *Hazrat* Mirza. The announcement mocked them for selecting a

champion who had been anathematized as an infidel and heretic by *Maulvi* Batalvi and many other members of the ‘Muhammadan’ clergy, and suggested that they change their champion to one who was a Muslim. However, the Muslims of Jandiala under the leadership of Muhammad Baksh Pahindha did not take the bait and refused to change their choice. They replied that there was no religion, including Christianity that did not have internal schisms, and Islam was no exception, but they considered such members of the Muslim clergy who declared a person professing Islam as an infidel, to be trouble-mongers. Further, they pointed out that there was no dearth of Muslim scholars of repute who were on the side of *Hazrat* Mirza as well, and they reiterated that their champion would be none other than *Hazrat* Mirza. Dr. Clarke’s ploy failed and now there was no choice but to drink the bowl of bitter drink that he was trying so hard to avoid.

### **Dr. Clarke addressed**

In the book *Sachai ka Izhar*, *Hazrat* Mirza narrated the above incident and addressed Dr. Clarke as follows:

All the authoritative scholars of Islam who have been blessed by Allah, the Most High, with knowledge, sagacity and piety, are with me and their number is around forty. The party opposing me is comprised mostly of individuals who are clerics only in name, but are bereft of excellence in knowledge or action.

Further on, he wrote:

Shortly, on June 15, 1893, there is going to be a public debate between my opposing party, championed by *Maulvi* Ghulam Dastgir and assisted by all like-minded clerics of Lahore, and one or two scholars to be nominated from my side. This will be an opportunity for the respected clergyman to see with his own eyes which side has the real religious scholars and authoritative intellectuals and which side has a confused and largely titular clergy.

*Hazrat* Mirza also included three letters in Arabic from Arab scholars and intellectuals in which they had lauded his knowledge and scholarship, commended his knowledge of Arabic, and testified to the truth of his claims. Thus *Hazrat* Mirza effectively rebutted the criticism of the Christian clergy by producing these testimonials from Arab scholars. After this, *Hazrat* Mirza reproduced the undertaking of Abdullah Atham



in which he had agreed to accept Islam if he was vanquished in the debate – a promise that he did not subsequently keep.

### **Maulvi Ghaznavi's challenge for imprecation accepted**

*Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi, a cleric of Amritsar, had challenged *Hazrat* Mirza to an imprecatory debate (*mubahalalah*) through a published announcement. At the end of the book *Sachai ka Izhar*, *Hazrat* Mirza included his response and accepted his challenge. The response showed how *Hazrat* Mirza went to great lengths to convince the clerics of the truth despite their having labeled him an infidel. The response read as follows:

This announcement is in response to an announcement for an imprecatory debate (*mubahalalah*) published on *Shawwal* 26, 1310 *Hijri* (May 13, 1893) by Abdul Haq Ghaznavi. I accept an imprecatory debate with this person and with any other person who is known as a scholar or cleric but brands us as infidels.

God willing, I hope to arrive in Amritsar by 3rd or 4th *Zul Qida* 1310 *Hijri* (May 19 or 20, 1893) and agree to an imprecatory debate on 10th *Zul Qida* (May 26) with a backup date of 11th *Zul Qida* (May 27) in case inclement weather or some other emergency prevents a meeting on the first date. Under no circumstance will there be a postponement beyond this date. The site of the imprecatory debate will be the Eidgah in the proximity of the Khan Bahadur Muhammad Shah (deceased) Mosque. I will be engaged in the first part of the day up to about noon for twelve straight days in a debate with the Christians on the “Truth of Islam,” but I will be free from 2:00 pm till the evening. Therefore, any person who declares us as infidels and wants to engage in an imprecation with me can do so during this time on 10th *Zul Qida* (May 26), or if a meeting on that day is not possible, then on the backup date of 11th *Zul Qida* (May 27).

The date 10th *Zul Qida* (May 26) has been selected to allow sufficient time for other scholars who brand this humble person as an infidel despite being a reciter of the *kalimah* and one facing the *Kiblah* in prayer, to come and participate in the imprecation. Included in this list of scholars are: Mohyuddin Lakhokaywallay; *Maulvi* Abdul Jabbar; Sheikh Muhammad Hussain Batalvi; *Munshi* Saad Ullah – teacher at Ludhiana high-school; Abdul

Aziz, preacher of Ludhiana; *Munshi* Muhammad Umar of Ludhiana, retired; *Maulvi* Muhammad Hassan - nobleman of Ludhiana; Mian Nazir Hussain Dehlvi; *Pir* Haider Shah; Hafiz Abdul Manan of Wazirabad; Mian Abdullah of Tonk; *Maulvi* Ghulam Dastgir of Kasur; *Maulvi* Shah Din; *Maulvi* Mushtaq Ahmad - teacher at Ludhiana high-school; *Maulvi* Rasheed Ahmad of Gangoh; Muhammad Ali, preacher and resident of Bupraan, Gujranwalla District; *Maulvi* Muhammad Ishaq and Sulaiman, from Patiala; Zahur ul Hassan, a hereditary religious leader of Batala; *Maulvi* Muhammad Mulazim, publisher of Karam Baksh Lahore, etcetera.

If these persons, even after receiving registered copies of this announcement that I have sent to them, choose to absent themselves from the field of imprecation, then it will be construed as an admission on their part that their act of branding us as infidels is false, tyrannical and unjust. First and foremost, it is incumbent upon Sheikh Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, publisher of *Ishaat-ul-Sunnah*, to come to Amritsar and take the field of imprecation because it is he who first demanded an imprecation.

I wish it to be clearly understood that I am averse to holding such imprecations as a matter of routine because imprecation is not something to be taken lightly. Therefore, this is the moment of truth for all those who call us infidels. If after the publication of this announcement, they choose not to participate in the imprecation on the announced date, then they shall forfeit the right to ask for an imprecation at a later date, and shame on them if they continue to call us infidels behind our backs. Just so that these prefects of infidelity do not have any excuse later on, this announcement is being dispatched (to them) by registered mail. If they do not come for imprecation, our argument against them shall stand proven even if they do not desist from calling us infidels. In the end, it should be noted that we reserve the right, before the imprecation begins, to present in an open forum to those calling us infidels the reasons for why we are Muslims. Peace on him who follows the guidance.

Announcer: Mirza Ghulam Ahmad  
*Shawwal* 30, 1310 *Hijri*  
 (May 17, 1893)

## Chapter

# 49

### ***JANG MUQADDAS*** **(THE HOLY WAR)**

The debate between the Muslims and Christians of Amritsar, which was termed by Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke as a ‘holy war,’ took place in Amritsar from May 22, 1893 to June 5, 1893. *Hazrat* Mirza represented the Muslims and Deputy Abdullah Atham (Retired) represented the Christians. The ground rules governing the debate had been decided several weeks earlier in a meeting between Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke and *Hazrat* Mirza’s representatives as discussed in Chapter 47.

#### **Rules and conditions governing the debate**

The rules and conditions governing the debate were as follows:

1. The debate was to be held in Amritsar.
2. Each party was allowed a maximum of fifty supporters in the audience and entry was to be permitted only to ticket holders.
3. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was to represent the Muslims and Deputy Abdullah Atham was to represent the Christians.
4. These two representatives were to be the only spokespersons but they had the option to choose up to three advisors to assist them. However, the advisors had no right to address the audience.
5. The opposing parties had to keep accurate notes so that the proceedings could be published.
6. The spokespersons were not permitted to speak more than one hour at a time.

7. The ruling of the presiding officer in all matters of procedure was to be final.
8. There were to be two presiding officers, one representing the Christians and the other representing the Muslims. The nomination of the presiding officers was to take place at the site of the debate just before it began.
9. Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke had to make arrangements for a suitable hall for the debate.
10. The debating hours were to be from 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. each day.
11. The total debating period would be divided equally among the opposing parties as follows:
  - i) In the first period of six days, from May 22 to 28, *Hazrat Mirza* would initiate discussion on the issues of his choice, and he would be at a liberty to include in these topics his claim that the production of heavenly signs was a conclusive measure of a religion's truth as alleged in his letter of April 4, 1893, to Dr. Clarke, and the issue of Jesus' divinity.
  - ii) In the second period of six days, from May 29 to June 3, Mr. Abdullah Atham would exercise the right to initiate discussion on the issues of his choice, which would include:
    - a) Mercy without retribution
    - b) Conversion through coercion
    - c) Compulsion and predestination
    - d) Proof of the Divine origin of Quran
    - e) Proof that Prophet Muhammad was the Messenger of Allah
12. Violation of any of the above conditions by any party was to be construed as an admission of failure in the debate.

### **Debate - the first period**

The debate began in the residence of Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke on Monday, May 22, 1893, at 6:15 a.m. *Munshi Ghulam Qadir Fasih*, Vice-President of the Municipal Committee of Sialkot, and Dr. Clarke were nominated as the co-presidents of the meeting on behalf of the Muslims and Christians respectively. *Hazrat Mirza* selected *Maulvi Nur-ud-Din*, *Hakim Syed Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi* and *Sheikh Allah Deea* as his advisors, and Deputy Abdullah Atham selected Rev. J.L. Thakur Das, Rev. Abdullah and Rev. Thomas Howell as his advisors. The agreed-upon modus operandi of the debate did not allow for any written statements to be brought in with the spokespersons. Instead, the initiating spokesperson

for the day was allowed one hour to dictate his speech to scribes and then the written speech was read out to the audience. The opposing spokesperson then exercised his right of rebuttal and dictated his response for the next hour, at the end of which it, too, was read out to the audience. The presiding officers then signed the written speeches of both the parties and this concluded the proceedings of the debate for the day.

### **A perfect book supports its claims with arguments**

The proceedings of this debate were published in the form of a book entitled *Jang Muqaddas* (The Holy War). Since the detailed arguments made by both sides are available for the interested reader in this book, there is no great necessity to reproduce them here. However, it must be stated that had Abdullah Atham abided by the conditions imposed by *Hazrat* Mirza at the start of the debate, he would have had no difficulty in deciding whether the perfect guidance being debated was to be found in the Quran or the New Testament. In fact, it was quite obvious that the reason Abdullah Atham did not abide by the conditions was precisely because he did not find the New Testament an adequate source of guidance.

*Maulvi* Abdul Karim of Sialkot described his sentiments on the opening day of the debate to this author in these words:

On the first day of the debate, I sat next to *Hazrat* Mirza and was experiencing the normal human emotions of anxiety and nervousness. However, when I read *Hazrat* Mirza's proposal for the rules of argument (appearing below) in his opening statement, I realized immediately that he was going to be successful. My anxiety disappeared and I felt a light heartedness that made me want to sing and dance.

The rules of argument proposed by *Hazrat* Mirza in his first speech were:

It is imperative to ensure during this discussion that any question I ask and any response that Deputy Abdullah Atham gives is based not on our personal thinking, but is rooted in the revealed scripture of that party so that it is considered as a conclusive argument by that party. The same consideration should govern any argument or claim made by either party. In other words, no party should transgress beyond the narration of their revealed scriptures when its narration can be used as an argument.

*Hazrat Mirza* adhered strictly to this condition, as a full reading of the proceedings would make clear. Every criticism that he leveled against Christianity was taken from the Quran and whatever claims he made on behalf of Islam were also taken from the Quran. Similarly, the arguments he adduced to support his claims were taken from the Quran and the rebuttals he gave to the Christian criticism were also taken from the Quran. It was *Hazrat Mirza's* position, fully validated by the Quran, that the perfect and complete Book of God was one that not only made claims but also provided all supporting arguments for those claims. A book that merely laid claims but depended on the skills of its votaries to prove these claims with their own arguments could not be considered a perfect book. However, Deputy Abdullah Atham was unable to abide by this condition that any claim he made should be from the New Testament and its supporting argument should also be from the New Testament, or that his criticism of the Quran should be from the New Testament and the rebuttal of the Muslim criticism of Christianity should also be from the New Testament. On the contrary, whatever claims and arguments he adduced were the creation of his own mind. Accordingly, *Hazrat Mirza* drew attention to this fact in his written speech of May 25 and stated:

I write this with regret that this has been an exercise in futility. I had made it a condition that if a party desired to say something about its scripture, it should be governed by the rule that the claim being made should be from its scripture. And if the claim was such that it required a rational explanation then the scripture itself should provide the rational explanation, and not be silent about it so that others may have to aid it with an explanation out of sympathy.

However, Deputy Abdullah Atham was unable to abide by this condition, and how could he abide by it when there is neither a claim, nor an argument about the Divinity of Jesus and related articles of Christian faith in the New Testament? What else could Atham do but resort to his own conjectures? Similarly, since the New Testament, unlike the Quran, has no criticism of other faiths, what could he do but invent his own criticism? There was really nothing that any Christian could have done after being constrained to stay within the ambit of their scripture.

### **The first period finished in seven days**

On May 27, Abdullah Atham became indisposed. He sent in a written statement and asked it to be read by somebody on his behalf. The Muslim

co-president objected to this as it was against the terms of the written agreement. After much discussion, it was decided to extend the first period of the debate by one day so that it would now end on the Monday of the next week instead of the Saturday of the current week as it was supposed to. Abdullah Atham's period would then start from Tuesday of the following week and run to the Monday of the week after. However, Abdullah Atham ran out of material in five days and so the actual days of debating numbered thirteen, but if the two Sundays on which the Christians took the days off were included, the debate extended over fifteen days. It was also decided that Abdullah Atham would give the final speech of the first period and *Hazrat Mirza* would give the final speech of the second period.

On May 29, Abdullah Atham again became indisposed and did not come for the debate and by mutual consent, Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke took his place; the co-presidency for the Christians was given to Rev. Ahsanullah. Thus, Dr. Clarke had the last say on behalf of the Christians instead of Atham, and the response he wrote was so unbelievably absurd and pompous that it appeared as if there was a Divine plan to fully expose the absurdity of the Christian faith under which the mantle of writing the last Christian response had been passed on to Dr. Clarke.

### **Second period of the debate**

The second period of the debate, in which the initiative passed on to the Christians to raise issues about Islam, began on May 30. It is always easier to criticize than to rebut criticism, and perhaps for this reason, Abdullah Atham recovered from his indisposition and took his position once again as the spokesperson of the Christians. The second period spanned seven days, which included six days of actual debate and a day off on Sunday. The debate ended on June 5, with the final written speech of *Hazrat Mirza*.

At the conclusion of the debate, Khawaja Yousaf Shah, Honorary Magistrate, gave a brief speech on behalf of the audience in which he thanked the presiding officers, especially Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke, for conducting the proceedings with fairness and great administrative skill. He praised the way in which disagreements among the parties were resolved in a mutually acceptable manner so that the discussions could proceed peacefully and be successfully concluded.

### **An interesting incident**

On May 26, the Christians unfolded a crafty plan to embarrass *Hazrat Mirza*. They assembled three persons with disabilities, a maim, a lame and

a blind, in Dr. Clarke's house, and in the middle of the debate produced them before *Hazrat* Mirza and demanded: "The Messiah could cure the maim, the lame and the blind. Since you claim to be the Messiah, show us that you, too, can cure cripples; we do not have to go far for this either because cripples with the three afflictions are present right here." The audience was stunned, and the Muslims in the audience waited with great anxiety and suspense to see how *Hazrat* Mirza would react. The Christians, on the other hand, were exuberant; secure in the knowledge that they had the makings of a great embarrassment for *Hazrat* Mirza before the full house. However, their exuberance was short lived for *Hazrat* Mirza's answer turned the tables on the Christians and left them wallowing in their shame. All those present could not help but admire the sagacity and rationality of the response. He said:

Curing such cripples is a claim that is made in the New Testament. We do not subscribe to such claims but believe that the miracles of Jesus were of a different nature (i.e. the cures Jesus effected were of spiritual diseases). It is the New Testament that claims Jesus cured such cripples physically without the intervention of prayer or medicine merely by passing his hand over them. It is also stated in the New Testament that if you have faith even as little as a grain of mustard seed, you can perform even greater miracles. In another place, Mark 16:17-18, it is stated: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Presenting these sick people here is, therefore, not something that you should be doing; we should be doing it. We are grateful to you that you have assembled these cripples and so we present them to you and say: In accordance with the statement of the Bible, put your hand on these sick people and cure them "if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed." If they are cured, we will believe that there is still some faith in you; otherwise we will be forced to conclude that neither you have any faith nor is there any life in your religion.

Let it be clear, however, that we cannot be judged by this standard because the Glorious God has not said for us in the Holy Quran that the sign of your faith is that when you put your hand on sick



people, they will be cured forthwith. Instead, we have been told that God will accept our prayers in accordance with His desire and wishes. If a prayer is unworthy of acceptance because of its inexpediency in the knowledge of Allah, then God may, if He wills, inform the suppliant accordingly. Nowhere is it stated that we have been given the power to do what we want. Jesus, however, gives his followers the power to cure the sick.<sup>1</sup> Now if you have faith even the size of a mustard grain, put your hand on these cripples and cure them.

When the Christians realized they had been humiliated, they quickly whisked away the handicapped persons; what was meant to be a great victory turned into an extreme embarrassment.

### **A prophecy about Abdullah Atham**

In the concluding speech, on the last day of the debate, *Hazrat Mirza* included the following prophecy about Abdullah Atham:

When I supplicated to God tonight with great humility and sincerity and beseeched His intervention in this matter, for we, His humble servants, can do no more than to ask for His judgment, I received glad tidings as a sign. It was revealed to me that the party in this debate guilty of deliberate falsification by turning away from the One true God and elevating a humble person to godhood will be disgraced and dispatched to hell soon after the debate, i.e. within a period of one to fifteen months provided he does not incline to the truth. This will vindicate the honor of the one who is truthful and believes in the True God.

Further on, he wrote:

Now I ask Deputy sahib that if this prophecy is fulfilled, will it or will it not meet his requirement of an accurate prophecy, and will it or will it not be considered a prophecy from God, and will it or will it not be a proof positive about the truthfulness of the Messenger of Allah, whom you refer to as the Antichrist in your book, *Andarun Bible* (Inside the Bible).

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<sup>1</sup> See Mathew chapter 10.

On hearing this prophecy, Abdullah Atham turned pale with fear. He grabbed his earlobes and stuck out his tongue in a gesture of repentance and said, "God forbid! When did I call the Prophet an Antichrist?" Thus, he regretted his insolent behavior there and then, but at the time the significance of his gesture went unnoticed.

The fact of the matter was that in keeping with the habit of the Christian clergy, Abdullah Atham behaved impudently throughout the debate and was guilty of heaping scorn on the Holy Prophet. The proceedings of the debate published under the title *Jang Muqaddas* (The Holy War) showed clearly that he did not put forward a single claim or argument from the New Testament. Whatever he presented was the product of his own thinking and lacked rationality. This was not surprising because a case for the divinity of Jesus could not be made rationally, neither then nor now. The strategy of the Christians had always been, therefore, to make unwarranted and baseless charges against Islam and its Founder to divert attention from their own untenable faith. Abdullah Atham followed a similar strategy. Prior to the debate, he had referred to the Holy Prophet as the Antichrist in his book *Andarun Bible*.

On the other side, *Hazrat Mirza* felt very strongly about safeguarding the honor of the Holy Prophet and was deeply committed to this task. It was from this sense of commitment that *Hazrat Mirza* supplicated with great intensity, and the response was the prophecy, upon hearing which Abdullah Atham turned pale and before the entire audience caught his earlobes, lolled out his tongue and said: "God forbid! When did I call the Prophet an Antichrist?" After this, he did not say a word against Islam or its founder for the next fifteen months and lived in a state of constant fear. A police guard stood outside his house, but nevertheless he would wake up the whole house at night with his shrieks and claim that assassins, either mounted or on foot, had come to kill him. His wife, daughters and son-in-laws would enquire from him about the whereabouts of the assassins for they saw no one, and he would reply: "You do not see them but I see them." With time, his delusional state worsened and he would constantly utter: "Mirza sahib has hypnotized a serpent that follows me everywhere." Once during his fits of ranting, he said with tears in his eyes: "Woe on me! I have been caught." The statements reported above were published in the Christian newspaper *Nur Afshan* by Abdullah Atham's relatives.

This state of Abdullah Atham's mind was further corroborated by this humble author's paternal uncle, Inayat Ahmad, who was a police officer in Ferozepur at the time of Abdullah Atham's stay in that city. Since Inayat Ahmad was a bitter opponent of *Hazrat Mirza* and his organization

and therefore had no axe to grind, his testimony is very credible. He narrated the following story to me:

During these days, Abdullah Atham was staying at the residence of his son-in-law in Ferozepur. I was in charge of the police guard that was posted at night at his house. It is absolutely true that every night he would shriek and shout at us: "Look over there; mounted horsemen armed with swords have come to kill me." Sometimes he would say: "Sword-wielding people on foot have come to kill me. Why don't you remove them?" We would reply in amazement: "How can we remove somebody who is not there?"

My aunt, the wife of my paternal uncle, went to school with Abdullah Atham's daughter, and she told me that Abdullah Atham's daughter would say to her: "Mirza Qadiani has hypnotized a serpent and sent it after my father. He can see it, but we can't."

Thus, Abdullah Atham lived in a state of constant fear for fifteen months. His condition was pitiable, and the Merciful God too took pity on him and gave him a reprieve under the provision of the prophecy: "...provided he reverts to the truth." The calamity that was his fate was averted for a time and thereby God fulfilled the part of the prophecy that said: "...provided he reverts to the truth." The other part of the prophecy was also fulfilled soon enough, but if the punishment had not been averted for a time because of his repentance, the prophecy in its entirety would not have been fulfilled. The final events in the prophecy of Abdullah Atham and its detailed analysis are given in Chapter 59: The Fate of Atham.

### **Result of the debate**

The fallout from the *Hazrat* Mirza-Abdullah Atham debate was far-reaching. The Christian clergy realized that Islam had a powerful champion in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani and that their Cross was not going to withstand the blows of the literature produced by his powerful pen. Never again did they pick up the courage to challenge him in a debate. In fact, a secret memorandum was circulated among the Christian clergy advising them not to debate with Mirza or his followers. On several occasions, it transpired that Christian clergymen left in the middle of a debate when they discovered that their Muslim opponent on the other side was a follower of *Hazrat* Mirza. Their excuse was that they were not permitted to engage in a debate with any of Mirza's followers. The Christian clergy was now forced to play defense and this had the effect of greatly dampening their proselytizing activities.

### **Imprecation with *Maulvi Abdul Haq Ghaznavi***

*Hazrat Mirza* and his party lodged at the house of Khan Muhammad Shah during their stay in Amritsar. Although the immediate party was small, supporters and sympathizers swelled their ranks. Disciples from neighboring towns had made their way to Amritsar to listen to this historic debate, and in addition, open-minded Muslims of Amritsar, not associated with *Hazrat Mirza*, took a lot of interest in this debate. Khawaja Yousaf Shah, honorary magistrate, and other respectable members of the Kashmiri Muslims of Amritsar held *Hazrat Mirza* in high esteem, and attended the debate regularly.

The imprecation with *Maulvi Abdul Haq* had also been scheduled in the same period as the debate with Abdullah Atham. On the afternoon of *Zul Qida* 10th, corresponding to May 27, 1893, *Hazrat Mirza* along with his followers proceeded to the Eidgah in Amritsar. Earlier, in a published announcement dated *Shawwal* 30, 1310 *Hijri*, *Hazrat Mirza* had called upon all the clerics of India opposing him to present themselves at the Eidgah on *Zul Qida* 10th so that their mutual differences could be settled through imprecation. On reaching the Eidgah, *Hazrat Mirza* found that *Maulvi Abdul Haq Ghaznavi* was the only one to show up out of all the clerics he had challenged in his announcement of *Shawwal* 30, 1310 *Hijri*. *Maulvi Ghaznavi* was waiting for him in the company of his students and followers and the imprecation proceedings got underway.

A friend of this author, who was not a member of *Hazrat Mirza's* organization, was present at the imprecation and later narrated an eyewitness account of the proceedings as follows:

Both the parties were present in the Eidgah. *Maulvi Nur-ud-Din* was so overwhelmed with the emotions of the moment that he swooned. When the proceedings reached the stage of making the imprecations, *Maulvi Ghaznavi* raised his hands and gave vent to his feelings by cursing *Hazrat Mirza* in the harshest possible language. *Hazrat Mirza*, however, did not curse *Maulvi Ghaznavi* at all, but only supplicated in his own respect as follows: "If I am a liar and a fabricator, may Allah curse and punish me in a manner the like of which has not been experienced by any disbeliever and dishonest person since the beginning of this world."

A day before the imprecation, i.e. on May 26, 1893, *Hazrat Mirza* had publicly announced through a poster that he would not curse his opponents, but only pray about himself in the manner indicated above. Thus,

all reasonable men can appreciate that *Hazrat* Mirza did not invoke any curse on *Maulvi* Ghaznavi, but only prayed for his own destruction and ruination if he was a liar and fabricator. No time had been specified in the imprecation for Allah's curse to descend upon the transgressing party so that the truth could be distinguished from falsehood. Since *Hazrat* Mirza was the target of the curses supplicated by both the parties, it remains to be seen how he fared in the period following the imprecation. It is a well-established fact that the success of *Hazrat* Mirza's mission in the period following the imprecation was nothing short of spectacular. Does God assist a liar and cheat in this way after an imprecation? Is this not a powerful sign of *Hazrat* Mirza's genuineness?

*Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi also made an appearance at the Eidgah where the imprecation took place. He did not have the courage to participate in the imprecation himself, but as was his habit, he started prattling in support of *Maulvi* Ghaznavi after the imprecation was over. Finally, the police persuaded him to leave, which he did in anger.

## Chapter

# 50

### ***KARAMAT-US-SADIQEEN* (MIRACLES OF THE RIGHTEOUS) & *TUHFA BAGHDAD* (A GIFT TO BAGHDAD)**

#### ***Karamat-us-Sadiqeen (Miracles of the Righteous)***

In 1893, *Hazrat* Mirza published two books in Arabic titled *Karamat-us-Sadiqeen* and *Tuhfa Baghdad*. The motivation for writing *Karamat-us-Sadiqeen* was the need to counter *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi's propaganda that *Hazrat* Mirza and his followers were heretics. One of *Maulvi* Batalvi's favorite ploys was to portray himself as a great scholar of the Arabic language and *Hazrat* Mirza as a complete ignoramus in the language who could not even write a single correct sentence in Arabic. As a response, *Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement in which he challenged *Maulvi* Batalvi to compete with him by writing a commentary on one chapter of the Quran and a poem of a hundred verses lauding the Holy Prophet, so that people may judge which one of them had been blessed by God with a greater knowledge of the Quran and Arabic. He also invoked disgrace on the party that shied away from this challenge. However, *Maulvi* Batalvi kept on making excuses and did not accept the challenge.

Finally, *Hazrat* Mirza unilaterally wrote and published the book *Karamat-us-Sadiqeen*. In it, he wrote a commentary on the Chapter *Al-Fatihah* of the Holy Quran and four laudatory poems in Arabic honoring the Holy Prophet. He wrote and published the book in one week but per-

mitted *Maulvi* Batalvi, or any other *Maulvi* who wanted to compete with him in writing a commentary of the Quran and in Arabic literary skills, to write and publish their manuscripts in a period of one month from the publication of his book. He offered a reward of one thousand rupees to anyone who could write a commentary on the Chapter *Al-Fatihah* that was comparable to his work in terms of the truths revealed, the wisdom expounded and the eloquence with which the subject was expressed. The commentary was also to be accompanied with laudatory poems devoted to the Holy Prophet and containing a like number of verses to his effort in *Karamat-us-Sadiqeen*. *Hazrat* Mirza also announced that if his adversaries did not respond to this challenge, they would forfeit the right to claim any kind of expertise in Arabic literature or language, or to claim that they are scholars of the Quran.

In the words of *Hazrat* Mirza:

If *Mian* Batalvi and his associates publish within a period of one month an originally authored commentary of *Al-Fatihah* and a set of laudatory poems, I sincerely promise to pay them a thousand rupees in cash, provided a panel of judges rules that their odes are better and their commentary is more profound in expounding the subtleties, the hidden mysteries and the truths of the Surah than my work on the same subject...it must be remembered though that the work must be original and not a plagiarism and the exposition must not be incompatible with the Book of Allah or the sayings of the Messenger of Allah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

There was no response to this challenge, not in a month or a year from the publication of the book, nor during the entire remaining life span of *Maulvi* Batalvi and his associates. Neither singly nor collectively were they able to produce a commentary in Arabic of the *Al Fatihah* or a set of odes in the Arabic language. It is one thing to boast about being a scholar of Arabic and the Quran but quite another to enter into a competitive discussion designed to expound the wisdom and knowledge of the Quran in the Arabic language. "That is the grace of Allah; He gives it to whom He pleases. And Allah is the Lord of mighty grace." (57:21)

### ***Tuhfa Baghdad* (A Gift to Baghdad)**

Sheikh Abdur Razzaq Qadri, a former resident of Baghdad, addressed

a letter and a public announcement in Arabic to *Hazrat* Mirza from Hyderabad, Deccan. In these documents, he attacked *Hazrat* Mirza and called him an Antichrist and a heretic, who deserved to be killed. In response, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote the book *Tuhfa Baghdad* and had it published in Arab countries so that the Arabic-speaking population of these countries may understand the right position and benefit from it. In this book, he puts forward detailed arguments on the death of Jesus, the second coming of the Messiah and the finality of prophethood, and presents his own claims in a comprehensive and logical manner. He shows that revelation from God continues and the system of *Mujaddids* (revivalists) exists in the Islamic *Ummat* (nation). He asks the readers not to be misled by the proclamation of heresy issued by the clerics but to come and personally experience his company. That way, the truth and falsehood will become abundantly clear to them. He ends the book with a heartfelt prayer in the form of an ode in which he expresses his grief about the condition of the Muslim nation.



## Chapter

# 51

### ***SHAHADAT-UL-QURAN*** **(TESTIMONY OF THE QURAN)**

In addition to *Karamat-us-Sadiqeen* and *Tuhfa Baghdad*, the book *Shahadat-ul-Quran* was written in 1893. In August of 1893, Sheikh Atta Muhammad wrote a letter to *Hazrat Mirza* in which he enquired: “Why is it necessary to believe in the coming of the Promised Messiah and what is the proof that you (*Hazrat Mirza*) are that Messiah?” The writer professed in the letter that Jesus had died and also acknowledged that the Books of *Hadith* contained prophecies about the coming of a Messiah, but he expressed doubt about the reliability of such *hadith*. *Hazrat Mirza* wrote the book *Shahadat-ul-Quran* in response to this letter. In light of the doubts expressed, *Hazrat Mirza* formulated three issues for discussion.

1. Is the prophecy about the advent of the Promised Messiah found in the Books of *Hadith* not trustworthy on account of the *hadith* being unreliable?
2. Does the Quran make any similar prophecy?
3. If the prophecy is true, what is the evidence that *Hazrat Mirza* is the person mentioned in the prophecy?

He then proceeded to discuss these issues separately, and for each one, adduced rational and powerful arguments in support of his contentions. A full appreciation of the discussion can only be gauged by reading the entire text but, since it is not practical to reproduce the whole book in this

biography, the following summary will give the reader an idea of the main arguments adduced.

### First issue

Discussing the first issue, *Hazrat* Mirza shows that the rejection of the entire Books of *Hadith* on the grounds that some of the *hadith* are unreliable would deprive religion of many of its essential details and is tantamount to throwing away the baby with the bathwater. For example, the Holy Prophet's biography and his life, so worthy of emulation, would be lost to us. Further, if such a stringent test is applied to world history, then it, too, would fail the test and be rejected. Reason, therefore, dictates that those *hadith* be accepted which are sound in their chain of narration, can stand the test of reasoning, and do not contradict the Quran. It is wrong to assume that the test for the reliability of a *hadith* merely consists in determining if one or two of the narrators are reliable, and if that is the case, the narration is considered to be the saying of the Holy Prophet. The reality is that the compilers of *Hadith* developed the chain of narrations *a posteriori* to show how long-standing practices and customs in the Muslim communities can be traced back to the earliest Islamic times. The compilers, therefore, did not invent anything new but merely authenticated existing practices and sayings.

For example, the compilers of *Hadith* saw that millions of people pray three *rakahs fardz* (obligatory) in the *Maghrib* (sunset) prayer and two in the *Fajr* (morning) prayer; in every *rakah* they recite the *Fatihah*, and stand and bow and prostrate and sit; while in the sitting posture they offer the *al-tashshahud* prayer and *darud*, and while bowing and prostrating extol Allah, and finally end the prayer by turning their head to each side and saying *salam*. Seeing this form of worship, the compilers of *Hadith* became interested in factually tracing the method of prayer back to the Holy Prophet. Now the institution of prayer has existed in the Muslim community right from the time of the Holy Prophet and it cannot be claimed that these compilers laid the basis of prayer many centuries after the Holy Prophet's time. Therefore, the manner in which prayer is offered also existed from the time of the Holy Prophet and was not instituted on the basis of a few *hadith* reports. To assume otherwise is totally erroneous, and only someone who has not rationally reflected on the reason for the tremendous uniformity and unanimity that exists in the Islamic form of prayer and worship can hold such an incorrect view. The unanimous practice of the nation is a very satisfactory proof of the unadulterated transmission of the mode and manner of prayer used today. For

instance, did the people not pray the two *rakahs* in the morning and the three *rakahs* in the sunset prayers before the *Hadith* were compiled? They certainly did. Even if we suppose that the whole system of *hadith* reports and their authorities did not exist, the prevailing practice of the Muslim nation would still prove, definitively and conclusively, that the Islamic teachings about prayer have remained the same from age to age and generation to generation. It is true, however, that the tracing of the highly reliable, continuous transmission of *hadith* reports lends further authenticity to what is already a fact. This is the reason why the compilers of the *Hadith*, like Bukhari and Muslim, included, for the most part, only those reports in their compilations that were either already well-known to the people with a complete chain of narration or were supported by prevalent practice.

The same analogy is applicable to the prophecies regarding the coming of the Promised Messiah. These prophecies were prevalent among the Muslims with complete chains of narrators right from the advent of Islam. In fact, these prophecies were well known and formed an integral part of the Muslim psyche, almost as if they had been part of their belief. The contribution of the compilers of the *Hadith*, such as *Bukhari*, to these prophecies is only to the extent that they used their research methods to trace and establish the authorities of the reports that were already on the tongues of millions of Muslims and formed part of their prevalent belief. From authentic, highly reliable, and continuously transmitted traditions, they traced these traditions through the chain of reliable narrators to the Holy Prophet and recorded their work in the Books of *Hadith* for posterity.

The prophecies regarding the Promised Messiah are not without a contextual reference, and are part and parcel of a set of prophecies about the present times. These other prophecies, of which the prophecy about the Promised Messiah is one, have been fulfilled with such precision that greater accuracy is not possible. For example, it is mentioned that in this latter age the *ulama* (religious scholars) of Islam will become like the Jews, devoid of sympathy, righteousness and fear of God; the Christian religion will gain ascendancy and its rule would spread over a large part of the world; rails and cars will replace camels as a means of transport and so on. When a substantial number of these inter-connected prophecies have been fulfilled with such precision, it follows that the remaining prophecies too must have proceeded from the lips of the Holy Prophet because it is only prophets who are given such abundant knowledge of the future - a fact clearly stated in the Quran in the following words: "...so He makes His secrets known to none, except a messenger whom He choos-

es” (72:26-27). Thus, the reliability of the prophecies regarding the Promised Messiah, which are an integral part of this set of prophecies, stand proven beyond all doubt.

*Hazrat Mirza* assiduously collects the prophecies regarding this latter age from the Books of *Hadith* and reproduces them in this book *Shahadat-ul-Quran*. A reading of these prophecies not only convinces one of the genuineness of the prophecies regarding the Promised Messiah but also reinforces one’s faith in the greatness of the Holy Prophet who was given such a clear vision of this latter age by God.

### Second issue

Addressing the second issue, *Hazrat Mirza* refers to Allah’s promise mentioned in the Quran that when the earth becomes parched and dead, rain descends from the heaven and brings it back to life. Likewise, when the earth becomes spiritually dead, it is incumbent under this promise of Allah that spiritual rain must follow. Accordingly, Islamic history is replete with the mention in all ages of saints who have been instrumental in reviving spiritual life in the people of their era. Next, *Hazrat Mirza* proves from the Quran that the Holy Prophet is in the likeness of Moses, and it is well established from the verse of the Quran referred to as *Istakhlaf* (24:55) that the successors of the Holy Prophet would be like the successors of Prophet Moses. Just like the Messiah came in the fourteenth century after Moses in the Judaic dispensation, the successor of the Holy Prophet in the fourteenth century after him must also be in the likeness of the Messiah. Thirteen hundred years ago, the Quran predicted with great accuracy the conditions of our time and mentioned the signs that would be the harbinger of doomsday. These include the world domination of the European nations, referred to in the Quran as Gog and Magog; the emergence of many sects; the abandonment of camels as a means of transport; the development of irrigation networks; the abundant publication of books and newspapers; and many other similar signs. *Hazrat Mirza* explains these predictions in a manner that makes it quite obvious to any seeker of truth that the evils which beset these times, and which were predicted centuries ago, were calling out for the appearance of the prophesied Messiah. A reading of the discussion in its totality is necessary for a full appreciation of its rationality and soundness.

### Third issue

Next, *Hazrat Mirza* discusses in detail how the prophecies of the Promised Messiah find fulfillment in his person. He first establishes that

the Israeli Messiah died and that the Promised Messiah has to be a successor of the Holy Prophet, in other words, a *Mujaddid*. He then shows that the period for the advent of the Messiah is upon them. In support of this contention, he points out that the Israelite Messiah had come in the fourteenth century after Moses, and the Muhammadan Messiah should likewise come in the fourteenth century after the Holy Prophet. Further, the prevailing spiritual degeneration, and the fulfillment of the prophecies connected with the latter period in which the advent of the Messiah has to take place, establish clearly that the time of the Promised Messiah has come. He then draws attention to his life, which is a model of righteousness, truth, honesty and trustworthiness, and the same virtues of righteousness and purity pervade his preaching. He records that Allah blessed him with several signs among which are the acceptance by Allah of his prayers, prophecies given to him, and his special understanding of the Quran. He records his service to Islam, which includes establishing the supremacy of Islam over false religions; his great passion for the propagation of Islam, which even motivated him to invite Queen Victoria, the Prince of Wales and Prince Bismarck to Islam; and his involvement, day and night, with matters concerned with the welfare of Islam. Thus, he proves convincingly that he fulfils all the prophecies regarding the Promised Messiah.

The above narration is only a brief summary of the major points in the argument and should not be considered a substitute for reading the entire book, which will likely provide great joy and pleasure to the reader. The interested reader is referred to it for further details.

### **Exoneration from disloyalty to the government**

At the end of the book, *Hazrat Mirza* appends an announcement entitled, "For the Attention of the Government." In it, *Hazrat Mirza* recounts the services rendered by his family to the British Government and lauds the religious freedom allowed under its rule – a freedom that even tolerates the severest criticism and contradiction of the official state religion. He states that disloyalty to such a benevolent government is tantamount to rejecting a blessing.

*Hazrat Mirza* saw the chaos and killing of Muslims under the Sikh rule and the British rule appeared to him to be infinitely more civilized. Thus, while *Hazrat Mirza* severely criticized the religion of the British Government, branding the Christians and their clergy as Antichrist because of their beliefs, and spared no pains to give the widest publicity to these charges through published advertisements, he praised the good governance and religious freedom allowed under their rule, and held the

view that rebellion or disloyalty to the government under these circumstances was an act of ungratefulness and the denial of a blessing.

It is important to put this announcement in its proper perspective. *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi had taken his case to the British Government as part of his orchestrated campaign against *Hazrat* Mirza and pleaded with it as follows:

This man claims to be a *Mahdi* and you should be well aware that a *Mahdi* is a dangerous person. Witness the carnage and bloodshed caused by the Sudanese *Mahdi*. At the present moment, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is not powerful but he is in the process of organizing a party. When he has gathered enough people, he will announce a holy war and the Government will be faced with a dangerous situation. It is advisable to take preemptive action and to root out this potential threat in its infancy.

It thus became necessary for *Hazrat* Mirza to correct this misunderstanding and to let the government know that his mission is not to spread Islam by the sword, but to show by reason and arguments, in a peaceful and harmonious manner, the superiority of Islam over all other religions. Why should he and his followers rebel against a government that allows full freedom of religion, and the freedom to propagate Islam as they wished without any hindrance?

This humble author would like to point out that those chosen by God, and those who achieve nearness to God have a very just and grateful disposition. I am reminded of an interesting incident here. *Hazrat* Mirza greatly disliked the hookah but since smoking the hookah was a widely prevalent custom, a hookah had been provided in the guesthouse for use by guests. Knowing his great dislike for the hookah, someone wrote a poem in which he flayed the hookah. *Hazrat* Mirza listened to the poem and at the end of the recitation smiled and said: "There is an essential difference between the word of man and the word of God. This person (the poet) finds no redeeming feature in his criticism of hookah smoking. Yet in respect of intoxicants, which are forbidden and much worse than hookah-smoking, God states in the Quran that intoxicants are forbidden because their evils are greater than their benefits. Thus, it is conceded that there are some benefits, but since their evils outweigh the benefits, they are forbidden."

So it is that men of God who are imbued with godly virtues have no hesitation in admitting the good qualities of even those whose faith they

fault publicly under Divine guidance. They abstain from a parochial mentality of criticizing everyone and everything that differs from their faith. They affirm the truth and contradict the false. Accordingly, *Hazrat Mirza* considered the Christian religion of the British rulers false and incorrect, and fearlessly attacked it in a manner that even the so-called *jihad*-expounding clerics do not dare to do. At the same time, he found the rule of law and religious freedom under the British government exemplary, and did not hesitate in acknowledging it as such. Some people have needlessly criticized him for this. Factionalism, stubbornness and unfair criticism may be good politics but it is not good faith. The true religion of Islam preaches righteousness whose first step is justice.

### **Postponement of the Annual Gathering**

*Hazrat Mirza* postponed the annual gathering scheduled for December 27, 1893, and an announcement was made to this effect. This announcement was also appended at the end of the book *Shahadat-ul-Quran*. There were two reasons for the postponement. First, there was a shortage of accommodation during the previous year's gathering, and some people had misbehaved over this issue. *Hazrat Mirza* was deeply grieved by the incident and he postponed the annual convention of 1893 stating that the purpose of the annual gathering was lost if it resulted in uncivil behavior by the attendees. In this announcement, *Hazrat Mirza* severely admonished those who had misbehaved and said that the spirit of religion lies in the excellence of manners. The announcement also contained other useful guidance for a person's moral development. The second reason for the postponement was lack of funds. The year 1893 had seen the publication of numerous books and announcements. The cost of these publications had depleted the resources of the organization and the additional financial burden of holding a gathering was beyond its available means.

## **HAZRAT MIRZA'S MIRACULOUS ACHIEVEMENTS**

*Hazrat Mirza's achievements are truly amazing. In the year 1893 alone, he published eight books, namely Ainah Kamalat Islam, Barakat-ud-Dua, Hujjat-ul-Islam, Sachai-ka-Izhar, Jang Muqaddas, Tuhfa Baghdad, Karamat-us-Sadiqeen and Shahadat-ul-Quran. Some of these books are very voluminous. All of Tuhfa Baghdad and Karamat-us-Sadiqeen and half of Ainah Kamalat Islam are written in eloquent Arabic. These achievements are even more amazing when one considers his age at the time. He was fifty-five years old when Allah ordained him as the Promised Messiah. Incidentally, this was the same age at which the employees of the British Indian Government were retired and sent home to relax for their remaining life on the assumption that neither their minds were as sharp nor their physical prowess as strong and steadfast as in their younger days. Even hardened controversialists mellow down and stop generating controversies at this age, and intellectuals with fertile and rich minds retire to seek peace and solitude. This is a time in one's life when hard work and striving gives way to a desire for ease and seclusion. It was at this age, when a person's faculties begin to weaken, that Allah ordained Hazrat Mirza as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. With the ordainment came a storm of opposition from the full spectrum of the religious divide consisting of Sikhs, Christians, Arya Hindus, atheists and even the Muslim clerics, and Hazrat Mirza was left to face these trials and tribulations at this advanced age. Allah's command called upon him to forego*



his existing reputation and fame and to face this extensive opposition for the sake of truth.

A majority of Muslims turned against him when he declared that Jesus had died and he was the Promised Messiah. The British Government began to view him suspiciously when he claimed to be the *Mahdi*; followers of other religions became his enemies when he asserted that he was ordained to show the superiority of Islam over all false religions. Despite the opposition on all sides, *Hazrat Mirza* single-handedly waged a spiritual and literary war with great steadfastness and wisdom. One could not help but wonder how a man of this advanced age, who was continuously occupied from morning to evening in many different engagements, showed no signs of tiredness, worry or apprehension. To any onlooker, his countenance always appeared to be that of a happy and healthy person, at peace with himself and with the rest of the world.

He prayed the *Tahajjud* prayer with great regularity and those who knew him well testified that his supplications and lamentations in this prayer were so lengthy and intense that great tiredness and fatigue should have been the natural consequence. However, he came to the mosque immediately on finishing the *Tahajjud* for the *Fajr* prayer. After the *Fajr* prayer, *Hazrat Mirza* retired to his house for a short while, probably to have breakfast, and then came out to go for a walk. Many of his followers accompanied him on the walk, some walking a little ahead, some behind and some with him. However, there was always great crowding in his vicinity as the people vied for positions from where they could listen to his talk. He would be hemmed in, the dust would be flying, but he continued to discourse patiently. Someone from his accompanying party would ask a question and *Hazrat Mirza* would respond with a lengthy speech on the subject. When he finished his answer, someone else would ask a question and he would launch into another speech. A walk of three or four miles was the normal routine and throughout this time he was continuously discoursing. On his return, sometimes he would stand on the street outside his house for half an hour or more to finish his discourse. After this, he would go inside his house and say the *Ashraq* prayer. At noon, he came out of his residence and had lunch with his disciples. A brief interlude in the house followed for ablution and praying the *sunnat* and then he would be back in the mosque for *Zuhr* prayer. Even at this time, if there was a new visitor or someone asked a question, *Hazrat Mirza* would start a speech. He would then retire to his house and then come back to the mosque for *Asr* prayer. At this time, too, he would talk with those who wanted to meet him and then returned to his house. At

*Maghrib*, he came back to the mosque and then stayed there till *Isha*. During this time, there would be talk and speeches that contained profound knowledge and wisdom from the Quran. After *Isha*, he retired to his house for the night.

It is difficult to conceive when he found the time to write all these books. He also replied to all the correspondence himself. It was only much later when the correspondence increased substantially that a person was appointed to write replies on his behalf. In addition to the personal correspondence, he also wrote open letters and announcements that were published from time to time. During his lifetime, he wrote over ninety books consisting of approximately ten thousand pages; about one thousand of these pages were written before he claimed to be the Promised Messiah and about nine thousand pages were written after the claim, i.e. after the age of fifty-five. When did he find the time to pen down these intellectual masterpieces? He probably had some time between the morning walk and noon prayer, between *Zuhr* and *Asr*, and *Asr* and *Maghrib*, but he was a married man and needed some time for his family as well. He spent a good portion of the night in prayer and so he must have needed some time in the day to compensate for the foregone rest at night. After all this is accounted for, there probably was very little time left for any writing, let alone writing that was a sea of knowledge and wisdom.

A steady stream of original articles kept flowing from his pen containing profound insights into the issues of the time based on evidence from the Quran and the *Hadith*. He expounded fresh and modern interpretations of the Holy Quran, full of facts and wisdom, which were a source of pleasure and joy for those in search of the truth. New and varied objections and criticisms were rebutted on a daily basis. Despite these extensive engagements and continuous mental effort, he exhibited not even the slightest hint of fatigue and tiredness. There were no signs of mental exhaustion and irritation frequently associated with old age and intellectual effort. Whenever he came out, his face was radiant and smiling. Even when he was abused and maligned, not a frown would appear on his face. If somebody came to him crying, that same person would leave smiling after having spent some time with *Hazrat* Mirza. He exhibited the same excellence of conduct inside the house as he did outside.

*Hazrat* Mirza's opponents subjected him to all kinds of mental and physical harassment. He received abusive letters, threats of assassination, and foul and vile allegations almost on a daily basis. Plots were constantly being hatched to harm him in every way possible. He was even accused of murder and dragged through the courts of law. Despite these vexations,

his countenance never showed any signs of dejection, nor was his daily routine affected. He was an ideal example of a soul at rest whose peace and steadfastness was not ruffled even momentarily. When one combines the factors of his age, the busy schedule of his life, the extraordinary intellectual effort, the mountain of tribulations, the mounds of publications, the overflowing river of knowledge and wisdom emanating from his pen, the day and night supplications, sermonizing and propagation, and on top of that his contentment, happiness and joy, one is amazed how all of this could come together in one person. Without the assistance of God and the permeation of His Holy Spirit through the soul of a man, it is not possible to achieve this knowledge and wisdom, this strength and steadfastness, this zeal and enthusiasm and this excellence of morals and the state of the soul at rest.

## TWO FAMOUS MUSLIM MISSIONARIES PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE

### ***Maulvi Hassan Ali***

Mention of *Maulvi* Hassan Ali was made earlier in chapter 21 while discussing the conversion of Mr. Alexander Webb. This chapter narrates *Maulvi* Hassan Ali's search for the *Mujaddid* of the time and how he achieved this objective.

Born in 1852, *Maulvi* Hassan Ali became the headmaster of a school in 1874 in his native city Bhagalpur, in the Province of Bihar. He was imbued with religious fervor from an early age, was a pious and well-informed person, and had authored a book, *Miraj-ul-Momineen* (The Spiritual Ascent of the Believers). One evening, all of a sudden, he felt that Allah had called upon him to give up his employment and become a missionary of Islam. He acted on this impulse despite the advice of his friends to the contrary. He started publishing a monthly magazine, *Nur-ul-Islam* (The Light of Islam), and also undertook a tour of Patna and Calcutta to lecture on Islam. His Calcutta lecture, which was delivered in English, was much liked and widely acclaimed. He spoke in Dacca as well. His popularity continued to grow both locally and in distant parts of the country. In Madras, his lectures, again in English, became so popular that even the Governor came to listen to him once. When some people suggested that he might be the *Mujaddid* of the century, he rejected the idea outright. In Lahore, he remarked to some friends:

Allah has made known to me that a great *Mujaddid* is about to appear among the Muslims. In my opinion he should have the following attributes:

1. Be of a noble family.
2. Be of independent means so that he is not dependent on others for his livelihood.
3. Have an impressive countenance.
4. Be a good speaker.
5. Be a scholar of Arabic.
6. Be well versed in western disciplines and fluent in the English language.
7. Be blessed with heavenly signs so that he may be able to refute with these signs the present atheistic and false philosophies.

I do not know whether I will live to see this holy person appear. However, if anyone of you is alive, please give him my salutation.

When some educated persons opined that Sir Syed Ahmad was the *Mujaddid* of the present time, he replied: "There is no doubt that Sir Syed is highly intellectual but his spiritual and mystical insight is weak." *Maulvi* Hassan Ali visited many religious scholars and ascetics throughout India but did not find any that satisfied him. In his book *Taeed Haq* (Corroboration of the Truth), he described his search for the *Mujaddid* in great detail. The book is very interesting and well worth reading. His philanthropic leanings had made him an active fundraiser for the *Anjuman Hamayat Islam* and he frequently toured the country to raise funds for this organization. In 1887, he went to attend the convention of this organization in Lahore. He recounted the events of this trip as follows:<sup>1</sup>

When I went to Amritsar, I heard about a saint named Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who lives in a village of Gurdaspur District and has a reputation for ably confronting Christians, *Brahmu* and *Arya Samajs*. I was told he has written a greatly acclaimed book called *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and one of his major claims is that he receives revelations. Although I have never personally experienced revelation that is vouchsafed to saints after the Prophet, I was not surprised to hear this claim because I knew that besides

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1 *Taeed-e-Haq*, pages 53-55.

the prophets, there have been many servants of God who have been blessed by communion with Him. I felt a strong desire to meet Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and a few of my friends in Amritsar agreed to accompany me. I took a train to Batala and after staying a day there, took a horse carriage to Qadian the next day.

Mirza sahib met me with great love and affection. I gave a sermon at Mirza sahib's house and raised some funds for *Anjuman Hamayat Islam*. The people who accompanied me did not believe that Mirza sahib received revelation and considered him to be a deceitful person and a fraud, but after meeting him, their opinion changed and they apologized to Mirza sahib in my presence for their former mistrust. I was surprised by Mirza sahib's hospitality. I will recount a small incident from which the reader will get a good idea of his hospitable nature. I had developed the unfortunate habit of chewing betel leaf. I was able to get betel leaf in Amritsar but not in Batala and had to resort to chewing cardamom to satisfy my addiction. My companions from Amritsar, I know not when, took the liberty to mention my habit to Mirza sahib. Mirza sahib dispatched a person to Gurdaspur, and the following day, after I had finished my lunch at about 11 a.m., I was served with betel leaf, brought especially for me from a great distance.

Mirza sahib gave me Alexander Webb's letter to read. The letter was written in English and Mr. Webb had iterated in it his enthusiasm for religious research and the fact that he had given up his carnal desires. I also made some religious inquiries from Mirza sahib and met with residents of Qadian including a relative, probably a paternal uncle of Mirza sahib, who was very much opposed to him. I asked this old gentleman about his opinion of Mirza sahib. He replied: "I consider his claim of receiving revelation as false, but I must say that this lad (i.e. Mirza sahib) has been moral and studious from the beginning. From an early age, he has taken great pleasure in worshipping Allah."

When I took leave from Mirza sahib, he very graciously presented this humble person with a copy of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and *Surma Chasham Arya*. On reading these books, I realized Mirza sahib's greatness as a writer. In particular, when I read his commentary on *Surah Fatihah*, I was amazed at his intellectual abili-

ty. However, the revelations mentioned in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* did not convince me, but as I had met Mirza sahib in person, God forbid, I did not for a moment entertain the idea that he was deliberately misleading people. Instead, if any evil suggestion came to my mind at all, it was that perhaps Mirza sahib himself was deluded. (As mentioned above) I had a notion in my mind about the *Mujaddid* of the century and since I found Mirza sahib lacking in some aspects of this notion, I did not think he was the *Mujaddid* of the century.<sup>1</sup>

After his visit to Qadian, *Maulvi* Hassan Ali continued his work of sermonizing, lecturing, propagating Islam, and assisting the *Hamayat Islam*. Several hundred people embraced Islam at his hands and hundreds of students who had drifted away from religion under the influence of western education and philosophy returned back enthusiastically to Islam as a result of listening to his lectures. He was instrumental in opening orphanages in many cities. Further on in his book, he wrote:<sup>2</sup>

Up until that time I had not pledged my allegiance to any holy person. I had frequently asked Qazi Syed Raza Hussain sahib of blessed memory: “Sir, please advice me to whom should I pledge my allegiance?” His reply was always: “Given your picky nature and the picture that has developed in your mind of the Holy Prophet’s morals, I doubt very much that there is a saint in India who will fulfill your expectations of what is required in a vicegerent of Allah’s Messenger. If you find one excelling in mysticism, you are likely to fault him for lacking a sense of honor and ardor for Islam; if you find another with great knowledge, you will likely reject him as a mentor because you consider him lacking in Islamic morality and ethics.” Thus in the opinion of Qazi sahib, it was impossible that I would find a mentor.

Further on in the same book, *Maulvi* Hassan Ali wrote:<sup>3</sup>

When I was in Madras, my esteemed friend Abdur Rahman ibn *Haji* Allah Rakha Seth, who is a vociferous reader of the latest Urdu books and newspapers, told me: “Have you heard that Mirza

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2 *Taeed Haq*, page 61.

3 *Taeed Haq*, page 63.

Ghulam Ahmad, a noble of Qadian, has made a strange claim? He says he is the Messiah, son of Mary, who was promised by the Prophet for the assistance of Muslims in the latter ages. The Muslim religious scholars of India are greatly agitated by this claim and are preparing to declare Mirza sahib a heretic.” On hearing this news, I told my kind friend: “I am returning from a meeting with Mirza sahib; he is not a fraudulent or deceitful person. Perhaps he is mistaken himself. It is not uncommon to come across such incidents when one is overcome by the love of Allah. There are some saints who even begin to proclaim that they are the Truth (God). The religious scholars are unjust in branding him a heretic.”

The incident with Mr. Alexander Webb, narrated earlier in Chapter 21, took place after the above event. It may be recalled that *Haji* Abdullah Arab’s fundraising campaign for Mr. Webb did not evoke an enthusiastic response from the Muslims of India. Unable to raise sufficient funds, *Haji* Arab repaired for advice to his religious mentor, Syedda Ashaduddin, a saint in the Province of Sind. Syedda Ashaduddin told *Haji* Arab that the Holy Prophet had appeared to him in a dream and directed him as follows: “Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is my vicegerent in this era; do as he says.” *Haji* Abdullah Arab and the son of Syedda Ashaduddin then went to Qadian to request Hazrat Mirza to supplicate in the matter. *Maulvi* Hassan Ali was not with them. However, he narrated the subsequent events in his book as follows:<sup>4</sup>

In 1893, I attended the annual convention of the *Anjuman Hamayat Islam* in Lahore. There I met *Maulvi* Hakim Nur-ud-Din, a scholar and commentator of Quran, unparalleled in excellence not only in India but internationally. During my tour of Punjab in 1887, I had heard people praise him lavishly. In his speech during the convention, *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din recited a few verses of the Quran and then delved into their meaning and purport. I find it difficult to explain the effect his speech had on me. When Hakim sahib finished, I stood up and said: “I am honored that I have seen such a great scholar and commentator with my own eyes, and it is a matter of great honor for the followers of Islam that such a scholar is present among us in this time.”

I was sharing my lodging with a well-known lecturer. When I

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4 *Taeed Haq*, pages 64-65.



returned home at night, I found many people present there to meet him. They were discussing Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claim of being the Messiah. With the exception of a few supporters, most of those present were opposed to Mirza sahib. The opponents put forward many charges against Hazrat Mirza sahib and I just listened to them quietly. When I got up to pray at night, I supplicated: "O God! I am unable to understand Mirza sahib's claim." While supplicating, I fell asleep and saw a saintly person come to me in a dream and ask me: "Are you inquiring about Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib?" I replied: "Yes." He said: "*Aik taway ki roti kya chotti kya motti*" (Bread of the same oven whether thick or thin).<sup>5</sup> On hearing this, I woke up. In the morning, I narrated this dream to my friends who gave me their interpretations, all of them very different. One said, the meaning is that the essential make of your soul and that of Mirza sahib's soul is the same; the difference is only of degree. Another said that Mirza sahib and his opponents are both Muslims and the decree of heresy is unjustified. According to this interpretation, bread stands for Muslims and thick or thin is only a reference to differences in status. Yet another interpretation was that Jesus and the one who is the 'like of Jesus' are from the same mold, i.e. are bread of the same oven. Thus, the claim of Mirza sahib is correct. Allah alone knows its correct interpretation.

I wanted very much to call upon *Maulvi* Hakim Nur-ud-Din but instead he very graciously came to visit me. When we were alone, I asked him: "Have you gained any benefit from pledging your allegiance to Mirza sahib?" He replied: "There was a sin that I could not give up. After pledging allegiance to Mirza sahib, not only did I rid myself of the sin but I began to detest it thoroughly." This answer made a deep impression on me. Hakim sahib invited me to Qadian but I did not go."

After narrating this incident in his book, *Maulvi* Hassan Ali discussed the standard that has to be met for a person to be recognized as a saint (*wali*). He rejected man-made standards and preferred to rely on the standards

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5 The literal meaning is "Bread of the same oven whether thick or thin." However, this is an allegorical phrase meaning they are members of the same family and apparent differences in status and countenance are of no significance.

laid down in the Quran. He extracted these standards from the meeting of Moses with a perfect saint as narrated in the Chapter *Al Kahf* (The Cave). This man was not a Prophet or Messenger but only a saint, and hence the qualities attributed to him were a guiding beacon for us. The relevant verse that gave his attributes, stated: "Then they found one of Our servants whom We had granted mercy from Us and whom We had taught knowledge from Ourselves" (18:65). Thus, this verse, according to *Maulvi Hassan Ali*, furnished conclusive evidence that a perfect saint was one who first became a servant of God by completely submitting himself to His will. By giving up his base desires and forsaking all else except Allah, he forged such a strong connection with Him that he became the recipient of His mercy and spiritual blessings, and God Himself became the fountainhead of his knowledge. Once people asked a saint named Junaid, who lived in Baghdad: "Where do you get the knowledge that you impart in your sermons because it is not to be found in the pages of any book?" He replied: "My knowledge comes from the same source from which all of the knowledge of the world has come." In truth, a person who reproduced only the sayings of others was at best only a dictionary and no more. Blessed were those whose hearts Allah had opened so that spiritual light entered them and illuminated their being.

Further, the Quranic description of the Holy Prophet was given in the following words: "He it is Who raised among the illiterates a Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His messages and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom," (62:2). Discussing this verse, *Maulana Hassan Ali* said:<sup>6</sup>

Now if there has to be a successor to the Holy Prophet, it is imperative that Allah should grant him a measure of the disposition of the Holy Prophet. His speech should be moving, his prayer and spirituality should have the power to cleanse his followers of sin so that they become fit to appreciate the matters of knowledge and wisdom that are disclosed to them. I am not a denier of miracles. I accept the miracles performed by saints, but I consider the biggest miracle to be the reformation of stray souls. My conviction is:

May someone be the son of Mary,  
May he heal my pain.

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6 *Taeed Haq*, pages 68-69.

If *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din sahib had tried to convince me by narrating the miracles and prophecies of Mirza sahib, it would have had no effect on an unintelligent person like me, but what he said went straight to my heart.

Despite his great knowledge and oratory, *Maulvi* Hassan Ali was conscious that he had some practical shortcomings. Addressing these, he wrote:<sup>7</sup>

I had been invited to attend the annual convention of *Anjuman Hamayat Islam* in Madras, and on my way I stopped in Bombay. There I met Mr. Abdul Rahman Haji Allah Rakha who informed me that the convention had been postponed for a month. He invited me instead to join him on a tour of the important cities of India, which would also take us to Qadian where he intended to pledge allegiance to Mirza sahib. I first made excuses to save myself the inconvenience of the journey, but Mr. Allah Rakha was insistent. He liked me, and so he got hold of me firmly and said: "Come and see for yourself whether Mirza sahib is a truthful person or a liar." I replied: "All praise be to Allah the Most High Who has blessed me with the ability to discern the spiritual condition of a person from his countenance. Nothing is impossible for a person; pious become evil and evil become pious. If Mirza sahib has changed from the way I saw him in 1887 and has become worldly and deceitful, then I would be able to make it out from his countenance." Mr. Allah Rakha said: "That is precisely why I want you to accompany me." Thus I set out for Qadian with him. On the way, we stopped in Aligarh to attend a conference and also stopped in Amritsar. In Amritsar, I had a dream in which I saw a bed, which was the personal bed of Mirza sahib. Mirza sahib said to me: "Go and lie in it." I replied: "Sir, I cannot be so impertinent as to lie in your bed." He smiled and said: "Don't stand on formalities. This is really inconsequential." From Amritsar we went to Qadian and arrived there on January 2, 1894.

As was his wont, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib met us cordially, talked to us with great love and sincerity and made arrangements for our stay. My dear companion Mr. Allah Rakha became total-

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7 *Taeed Haq*, pages 71-75.

ly enamored by the *Imam* of the age almost from the moment he set eyes on him at the first meeting. Later, he asked me: "Tell me how did you find Mirza sahib?" I could find no words to reply because I was in a daze myself. This was not the Mirza sahib I had seen in 1887. Yes, his voice and features were the same, but he had undergone a radical transformation. My goodness! From head to toe, he was emanating a spiritual light. To a certain extent, Allah colors the faces of all pure persons who weep and supplicate in the wee hours of the night with His spiritual light that even those with a weak spiritual eye can discern. The spiritual transformation in the case of Mirza sahib was, however, much more intense, and it appeared as if the hands of God had personally wrapped him with a cloak of His affection.

I stayed in Qadian for thirteen days, and each day I met Allah's beloved and appointed *Imam* both in the morning and in the evening. This was the best time of my life. I got the opportunity to examine the incomparable books of Mirza sahib. I cursorily examined *Ainah Kamalat Islam*, *Fath Islam*, *Tauzih Maram*, *Izala Auham*, *Shahadat-ul-Quran*, *Barakat-ud-Dua* and others. Mr. Allah Rakha was kind enough to buy a complete set of Mirza sahib's books for my perusal. I still have these books as a cherished memento of my friend and have benefited from them greatly. After reading these books, I realized that the *Mujaddid* of the time I was searching for was in reality none other than Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib. It was him that Allah had raised to establish the domination of Islam by countering the tribulations of the present age.

I knew that the thoroughly unfair and cruel propaganda of a cleric from Punjab had turned the religious scholars of Punjab and India into the bitter enemies of Mirza sahib. This cleric had imputed and alleged beliefs to Mirza sahib that he had not even dreamt of, and by publishing such beliefs, this cleric had obtained a decree of heresy against Mirza sahib. It is a pity that the scholars who signed this decree of heresy did so without investigating the reality or applying their mind. The decree had made Mirza sahib the most infamous person in the whole of India.

I was in a conundrum. The alternatives were clear. I could become a follower of this glorious and majestic *Imam* but that would entail

bearing the unjust burden of being cursed and branded as a heretic. My national reputation and good name as a meritorious lecturer would have to be sacrificed at the altar of truth, and instead of being lauded, I would be excommunicated and become a pariah. The other alternative was to adopt a policy of hypocrisy, which would entail supporting Mirza sahib in his presence but opposing him in the presence of his enemies to win their adulation. I was struggling with this dilemma for several days during my stay in Qadian. Every night I supplicated tearfully to God and asked Him to show me through a dream, as He had done many times before, if His pleasure was in my accepting and following Mirza sahib. However, I received complete silence as a reply from the Lord. It was God's will that I should apply my God-given faculties and act in a manner that best served my interests. This was even more difficult a decision than leaving the post of headmaster in the school at Patna. The time had come to make a supreme sacrifice. Great persons have sacrificed far more precious things for the sake of the truth; but I was hardly a man of consequence and my courage was wanting. I would take one step forward and then one backwards. Satan was telling me that if I wanted to avoid destruction, ruin, ignominy and disgrace, I should quietly slink out of Qadian. The Angel was telling me, 'O wretch! Have you not read in the *Hadith* that he who does not recognize the *Imam* of his time dies the death of ignorance? Your intellectual faculties are telling you that Mirza sahib is the *Imam* of his time; then where will you go if you turn away from him? Will you sacrifice your eternal reward for the sake of a few days of this world's life and your false prestige? O shortsighted person! God has sent you the remedy for the illness of your soul. Even a candid scholar like *Maulvi* Hakim Nur-ud-Din has given you evidence on the basis of his personal experience regarding the efficacy of this remedy. What ill fortune has befallen you that you have become an enemy of your spiritual health and want to keep wallowing in your internal filth and hypocrisy?' Harken O people! I listened to the Angel and on the evening of Friday the eleventh day of January 1894, I pledged my allegiance to the *Imam* and *Mujaddid* of the time, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib of Qadian and accepted him as my *Imam*. All praise be to Allah for this.

I stayed in Qadian for three days after the pledge. When I stood with the congregation for prayer during those last three days, I

realized the real meaning of prayer and felt a strange sweetness and pleasure in prayer that I had not felt before. On January 13, 1894, I took leave from my *Imam* and went to Lahore. I gave a very forceful lecture in English in which I extolled all the spiritual benefits that I had received through Mirza sahib. Finally, after my tour of Punjab, I reached Madras and was confronted by events that have confronted every lover of truth in every age and in every country. I was stopped from sermonizing in mosques, and flyers were distributed in all mosques warning people not to listen to my sermons because I was no longer a member of *Sunnat wal Jamaat*. A report was even lodged with the police that I was about to incite a riot. The man who till recently had been introduced to audiences as ‘The Sun of the Preachers, His Excellency *Maulana Maulvi* Hassan Ali sahib, preacher of Islam’ now came to be known simply as ‘Hassan Ali, lecturer’. Previously, I had been elevated to the status of a saint among preachers, but now there was none more Satanic than me. Wherever I went, there was finger pointing. If I greeted people by saying *salam*, there was no response; people were afraid to meet me - I had become a wild animal.<sup>8</sup> When the pulpits of the mosques were barred to me, I rented the Pachia Hall from the Hindus and gave a speech in which I explained the life and mission of the *Imam* of the time. I gave this speech in English on the first day and in Urdu on the next. These talks had a salutary effect on the audience.

Further on in his book, *Maulvi* Hassan Ali wrote:

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8 *Maulvi* Hassan Ali has narrated an interesting incident about his persecution. He wrote: Once, after my pledge with Mirza Sahib, I was prevented from giving a sermon on the *Darud* in the Wallajahi mosque, Madras. When I departed from there, I was followed by a Muslim who kept jeering at me: “He is an infidel; he is an infidel. He is *Dajjal* (Antichrist); he is *Dajjal*.” It crossed my mind that this person was really corroborating our claim. (I did not fit any of the description of the *Dajjal* in the *Hadith*) for I was neither one eyed, nor was I mounted on a donkey seventy yards long, neither had I the power to make the living die nor to make the dead come alive, yet this good man was calling me *Dajjal*. It was only because he thought I had strayed by becoming a follower of Mirza sahib and that I wanted to lead others astray as well. Now, if he considered it permissible to call someone as *Dajjal* who recited the *kalimah*, prayed facing the *Kabah*, and who wanted to recount the blessings of *Darud* after the Friday congregational prayer, then how could we be faulted for calling the Christians *Dajjal* who were a nation that had no equal in leading people astray. (*Taeed Haq*, page 136)

During the month of Ramzan, I returned to my native town of Bhagalpur. There I received a letter from one of my like-minded cleric friends who wrote: "You made a big blunder. You should have examined the beliefs of Mirza sahib carefully before taking the pledge. Your hasty action has hurt the cause of Islam because your efforts were a source of great benefit to the followers of Islam." Another cleric, who had read *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and accepted Mirza sahib as a *Mujaddid* of the time, wrote: "Given the dictates of time, your action was not expedient." There was just one letter that brought solace to my heart as it showed that, among the religious scholars of Bihar Province, there was at least one scholar, and a great one at that, who did not consider me to be foolish. His name was *Maulana* Hakim Ahmad Hassan Sufi.<sup>9</sup> His letter is reproduced below:<sup>10</sup>

Pride of the Preachers, May the Peace and Security of Allah the Most High be with you and your family,  
*Assalam alaikum:*

Mirza sahib is a saint of such high status that I find it difficult to portray him in a brief pen sketch; nevertheless I consider it conducive to send you something in writing about him that would be useful for the reformation of all people. If I mention all his noble qualities, perhaps a book of several volumes would not be enough. You are fortunate to have put your hand in his and given him your devotion. May Allah bless your deed, and may He grant the religious scholars of this nation the ability to discern what is just. Do not despair because of the censure of people; continue doing your work and ignore their barking. From time immemorial, this is how it has been. Let me tell you about a dear friend of mine whose truthfulness I can vouch for with my life, but since I do not have his permission, I will not divulge his name. He told me something very strange:

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9 *Maulvi* Hassan Ali was of the opinion that *Maulana* Hakim Ahmad Hussain Sufi was such a great scholar that compared to him, the knowledge of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi was that of a school student. In addition *Maulana* Hakim Ahmad Hussain Sufi was a very spiritual person.

10 *Taeed Haq* pages 76-77.

“I have met Mirza sahib, and when I set my eyes on him, I had a clear vision in which I saw my late mentor saint in purgatory. I have never had this experience before although I have been, and continue to be, in the company of religious scholars and divines. After that I saw my mentor saint in dream for two nights in a row. He was in a grand house that belonged to Mirza sahib in which my mentor saint was staying as Mirza sahib’s guest.” I asked: “Perhaps you may have prayed for guidance (*Istikhara*) or may have gone to sleep thinking about Mirza sahib?” He replied: “This is what makes this so strange; I had absolutely no thought of Mirza sahib when I went to sleep.” He also said: “There is no doubt that Mirza sahib, may his blessings continue, is a saint of such high stature that it is doubtful that there is another like him in the whole of India, and perhaps, I think, not even in the whole of the world.” (I end with the quote:) “He whom the lover desires is the beloved.” I send my salutations to all members of your family.

Sender: Ahmad Hussain Sufi (May God remit my sins)  
Tuesday 8 Zul-Qida 1310 Hijri

Further on *Maulvi* Hassan Ali wrote:<sup>11</sup>

Do you ask how I profited by meeting Mirza sahib? I am not deranged that I would accept ignominy and put myself in straitened circumstances for no purpose. What can I tell you how I profited? I was dead; I became alive. It is not prudent to mention the sins (that I obtained salvation from)...I now have an appreciation of the magnificence of the Quran and the Holy Prophet that I never had before. All this is because of Mirza sahib. Even though I may physically be in Bhagalpur or Bengal but my soul is always in Qadian. All praise is due to Allah for this.

### **Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din**

Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din, who later became famous as a Muslim missionary in England, was on the verge of converting to Christianity but *Hazrat* Mirza’s influence saved him from this fate. At the time, he was a

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<sup>11</sup> *Taeed Haq*





*Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din*  
(Photo courtesy AAJIL.org).



*Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din*  
(Photo courtesy AAJIL.org).

student at the Forman Christian College in Lahore and had become greatly distanced from Islam because of the way it was practiced and preached by the clerics. In his heart, he had turned atheist and was sure that religion was of no consequence, but since it was beneficial for worldly advancement to socialize with the Christians, he toyed with the idea of converting to Christianity. Reverend Ewing, the principal of Forman Christian College, became very favorably disposed towards him when he saw his leanings towards Christianity. In turn, Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din expressed his intention to be baptized and the Christian missionaries began frequenting his house. During the Bible study hour, Reverend Ewing called upon Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din to support him in anything he said in favor of Christianity or against Islam, and Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din was quick to oblige.

Strange are the ways of Allah. It was destined that the Khawaja who was about to accept Christianity at the hands of a European should instead convert thousands of Europeans as the emissary of the Messiah of Muhammad. Somehow, a copy of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* found its way to Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din and it totally revolutionized his life. As he progressed through the book, his transformation to a true Muslim proceeded apace, and by the time he was finished, the transformation was complete. He was now not only convinced that God existed but also that Islam was the only true religion. He turned away from his previously held atheistic and Christian beliefs. Now when Reverend Ewing turned to Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din during the Bible study hour to collaborate his viewpoint, he was astonished to find the Khawaja contradicting him vehemently. The shocked Reverend asked the Khawaja to meet him privately. After this meeting, the Reverend became convinced that his hopes of winning the Khawaja to the cause of Christianity were doomed to failure.

Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din then went to Qadian and pledged his allegiance to *Hazrat* Mirza. Unfortunately, I have not been able to determine the date and year in which he took the pledge. I do know that I met him in 1894 on the train while traveling from Lahore to Amritsar. Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din was going to Qadain with some fellow members of the Ahmadiyya organization to which he belonged already. From this it appears that he took the pledge in 1893 or 1894. During the journey, there was a discussion on the issue of prophethood and Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din argued that partial prophethood, which was also known as *muhaddathiyyat* (station of a person who has communion with God), was still found in the Muslim nation.

## Chapter

# 54

### ***HAMAMAT-UL-BUSHRA*<sup>1</sup> (GLAD TIDINGS)**

The book *Hamamat-ul-Bushra* was written and published in 1894 at the behest of Muhammad bin Ahmad, an Arab scholar residing in Makkah. He had come to Qadian where he pledged his allegiance to *Hazrat* Mirza, and after staying for some time, returned to his native Makkah. After his return, he wrote a letter to *Hazrat* Mirza and requested him to write and send him a book in Arabic so that he could propagate his mission in Saudi Arabia. He undertook the distribution of the book in Makkah and Madinah. *Hazrat* Mirza wrote the book *Hamamat-ul-Bushra* in response to this request and presented his beliefs and claims along with rational and reasonable arguments in their support. He specifically denied any claim of being a prophet and stated: “It does not behoove me to expel myself from Islam and join the disbelievers by claiming prophethood.” He reaffirmed in no uncertain terms that his beliefs were the beliefs of the followers of *Sunnat wal Jamaat*. Out of all of *Hazrat* Mirza’s Arabic books, this was in a class of its own because of the lucidity and rationality with which the arguments were marshaled. It gained great popularity among the Arabic-speaking public.

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1 Literal meaning of *Hamamah* is dove.

## Chapter

# 55

## THE SIGN OF THE SOLAR AND LUNAR ECLIPSES IN *RAMZAN*

### **Holy Prophet's prophecy fulfilled**

In 1894, the month of *Ramzan* straddled the months of March and April. During the month of *Ramzan*, there was a lunar eclipse on the thirteenth day, followed by a solar eclipse on the twenty-eighth day. Both these eclipses were visible throughout India and other countries of the eastern hemisphere. The Holy Prophet had prophesied thirteen hundred years ago that the occurrence of this event would herald the advent of the *Mahdi*, and as such this phenomenon was a powerful sign in support of *Hazrat* Mirza's claim of being the *Mahdi* (Rightly Guided One). *Imam* Muhammad Baqir had narrated this prophecy in the Book of *Hadith* called *Dar Qutni* as follows: "Certainly for our *Mahdi* there are two signs that have not occurred for anyone else since the creation of the heaven and the earth, and those signs are that the moon will eclipse in its first night and the sun will eclipse in its middle day."<sup>1</sup> A similar narration by *Imam* Bahaki can also be found in the Books of *Hadith*. Thus, the eclipses of the moon and the sun on the specified dates of the month of *Ramzan* was a sign that had never occurred in support of any claimant to the title of *Mahdi* since the creation of the earth. The dates for the two eclipses specified in the prophecy as, "the moon will eclipse in its first night and the sun will eclipse in its middle day," require a little explanation.

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1 Dar Qutni (Hadith): *Kitab Salat al-Khauf*, Chapter 2.

Astronomically, it is well established that the lunar eclipse can only occur on the thirteenth, fourteenth or fifteenth nights of the lunar month and the solar eclipse can only occur on the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth or twenty-ninth days of the lunar month. Thus, the lunar and the solar eclipses took place exactly as predicted by the *hadith*. In the *Ramzan* of 1894, the moon eclipsed on the first of the three nights that a lunar eclipse could take place, i.e. the thirteenth night, and the sun eclipsed on the middle of the three days that the sun could eclipse, i.e. the twenty-eighth.

The fulfillment of the prophecy with such great precision lent so much credibility to *Hazrat Mirza's* claim that it broke the back of the opposition. However, the opponents were determined not to give up and resorted to foolish arguments. They claimed that the prophecy required that the moon should eclipse on the first night of *Ramzan* and the sun on the fifteenth day of *Ramzan*. This argument had no merit because even a person with a rudimentary knowledge of Arabic knows that the new moon that appears on the first of the lunar month is called *hilar* and not *qamar*. As a matter of fact, the new moon for the first three nights of the lunar month is called *hilar* in the Arab countries. The prophecy contained the word *qamar* and therefore the interpretation advanced by *Hazrat Mirza's* opponents was not tenable.<sup>2</sup>

From a scientific standpoint, a lunar eclipse is only possible when the moon is in the east and the sun is in the west so that there is a chance of the earth's shadow falling on the moon. Consequently, a lunar eclipse is astronomically only possible on the thirteenth, fourteenth or fifteenth nights of the lunar month. Similarly, the solar eclipse can only take place when the sun and the moon are on the same side of the earth and the three become aligned along a straight line so that the moon intervenes in the line of sight between the earth and the sun. For this reason, a solar eclipse is astronomically only possible on three dates, which are the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth day of the lunar month. Hence it is absurd to interpret the *hadith* to mean that the moon will eclipse on the first day of *Ramzan* and the sun on the fifteenth day of the month. Such an interpretation is the result of either prejudice or gross ignorance of the basics of astronomy. The correct meaning of this *hadith* can only be that in the month of *Ramzan*, the lunar eclipse will take place on the first night out of the possible nights of lunar eclipse, which is the thirteenth, and the

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2 *Hazrat Mirza* challenged the clerics with a reward of one thousand rupees to produce any Arabic text where the word '*qamar*' was used for the new moon on the first night of the lunar month. Needless to say, no cleric took up the challenge.

solar eclipse will take place on the middle day out of the possible days of solar eclipse, which is the twenty-eighth. This is precisely how it happened and these occurrences have set a seal of authenticity on the genuineness of the *Hadith* and have also validated the above interpretation.

The interesting fact is that in the following year, 1895, exactly the same phenomenon was repeated in the western hemisphere and the lunar and solar eclipses in the month of *Ramzan* were witnessed in the United States and some other western countries. The moon and the sun eclipsed precisely on the same dates of *Ramzan* as they had a year earlier in the eastern hemisphere. Thus, the heavenly sign heralding the arrival of the *Mahdi* was first seen in the eastern hemisphere and then in the western hemisphere. This clearly indicates that the *Mahdi's* mission to invite people to Islam is for both the east and the west. The occurrence of the lunar and solar eclipses in the same lunar month, first in the eastern hemisphere and then in the western hemisphere, was such a strange and unique phenomenon that newspapers like the *Pioneer* and the *Civil and Military Gazette* commented that such an event had never occurred before.

## ***NUR-UL-HAQ I & II*** **(LIGHT OF TRUTH PARTS I & II)**

### **Motivation for writing the book**

*Hazrat* Mirza wrote the book *Nur-ul-Haq* in Arabic. Its first part was published in February 1894 and the second in May 1894. The debate between *Hazrat* Mirza and Abdullah Atham had left the Christian community feeling beleaguered and embarrassed. Not only had *Hazrat* Mirza systematically dismantled the framework of their Christian religion but also their hapless champion, Abdullah Atham, had been unable to launch an effective counterattack. Rev. Imad-ud-Din of Amritsar, therefore put on the mantle of the Christian champion and wrote a book titled *Tauzin-al- Aqwal* in which he defamed the Holy Prophet and questioned the eloquence of the Quran. He tried to incite the British Government by reminding them that *Hazrat* Mirza referred to their nation as *Dajjal* (Antichrist) and warned them that someday, after gaining enough strength, he would launch a rebellion.

The Reverend gave a copy of his book to *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq during a trip to Surmava, and the latter promptly dispatched it to *Hazrat* Mirza for his perusal. After about a couple of weeks, *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq visited *Hazrat* Mirza and found him strolling outside his house. The conversation turned immediately to Reverend Imad-ud-Din and while they were conversing, a carriage pulled up and Chaudry Rustam Ali, Inspector Police, emerged from it and joined them. *Hazrat* Mirza was pleased to see him and mentioned the Reverend's book. Chaudry Rustam Ali remarked: "I have brought that book too. I am shocked and grieved to read the false and baseless things that Reverend Imad-ud-Din has written in this book

against Islam.” *Pir* Siraj-ul-Haq added: “Reverend Imad-ud- Din states that there are no saints in Islam.” On this, *Hazrat* Mirza replied: “He has no idea of who can properly be described as a saint and who should be the beneficiary of this title. But he should see, and see well, what a saint looks like because one is now present.”

### ***Nur-ul-Haq Part I***

In *Nur-ul-Haq* Part 1, *Hazrat* Mirza cogently and rationally rebutted the allegations made in *Tauzin-al-Aqwal* against the Holy Prophet and the eloquence of the Quran. He then challenged Reverend Imad-ud-Din in the following words:

You who dare to criticize the eloquence and rhetoric of the Quran, if you can write a reply to this Arabic book *Nur-ul-Haq* in equally eloquent Arabic within a period of two months,<sup>1</sup> I swear by God that I will give you a reward of five thousand rupees. I am prepared to deposit this amount of five thousand rupees in a government bank. You may seek assistance in the completion of this task from Christian clergymen or Islamic clerics, and you may, if you wish, call on your Lord God Jesus for help because you are totally ignorant of the Arabic language and cannot even string two words of Arabic together to form a sentence. Despite this gross ignorance of the Arabic language, you attempt to criticize an eloquent and rhetorical book like the Quran. If this is not an exhibition of your ignorance, what else is it? Now pick up the gauntlet and publish a reply to this book in Arabic within two months of its publication and get your reward of five thousand rupees. If you do not take the challenge then a thousand curses be upon you.

Accordingly, *Hazrat* Mirza enumerated a thousand curses at the end of this book and stated that he who withdrew from the challenge was deserving of these curses.

*Hazrat* Mirza then strongly refuted the beliefs of the Christian faith and informed the British Government that: “We do refer to the European nations as Antichrist when it comes to religion because the Christians have practiced gross deception in the matter of religion and have spared no effort in spreading serious misconceptions about the Holy Prophet and Islam. However, when it comes to governance, we are very grateful to the

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1 *Hazrat* Mirza wrote *Nur-ul-Haq* in a period of under two months.



British Government for the freedom of religion and the peace we enjoy. We do not consider it permissible to rebel or wage *jihad* with the sword against such a peaceful government.” He then embarked on a very fine discussion of *jihad* and stated that the Quran required the Muslims to, “enjoin the right and forbid the wrong and call towards that which is good.” Thus, the work of a Muslim was to enjoin the right, forbid the wrong, and invite people to Islam. Nowhere was a Muslim commanded to kill the disbelievers. However, when an enemy tried to exterminate Muslims with the sword, as happened during the early period of Islamic history, it became incumbent on Muslims to pick up the sword as well. Killing disbelievers for no good reason was not the teaching of Islam. He then stated: “Our work is to invite non-Muslims to Islam with reasoned arguments and proof.” He went on to say: “I consider the truth-seekers among the Western nations as the embryos of Islam.” It was in this book too that he invited the Empress of India, Queen Victoria, to embrace Islam.

*Hazrat* Mirza sent this book by registered mail to many members of the Christian clergy and challenged them to debate the issues with him. None of them responded; even the originator of the present confrontation, Reverend Imad-ud-Din, did not utter a response and shamelessly chose to accept the thousand curses. However, *Hazrat* Mirza was not ready to let matters rest quite yet, and continued the pursuit to expose Imad-ud-Din.

### ***Nur-ul-Haq Part II***

*Nur-ul-Haq* Part II was published on May 18, 1894, and the motivation for writing this book was clearly spelled out on its title page as follows:

This book, along with its earlier companion Part I, has been written specifically for the purpose of exposing the scholarship of Reverend Imad-ud-Din, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi of *Ishaat-ul-Sunnah* and their helpers and associates. A reward of five thousand rupees comes with this book and it can be deposited (with a trustee) in advance, if they like. They must accept to write a book and request an advance deposit no later than the end of June 1894. After that date, it will be construed that they ran away (from the contest) and no further application in the matter will be entertained.

In *Nur-ul-Haq* Part II, *Hazrat* Mirza discussed his claims and emphasized the recent lunar and solar eclipses as Divine signs in support of his claims. He included a very comprehensive and convincing rebuttal of the cleric’s

objection against this prophecy. After this, he lamented the ignorance of Christians, particularly Europeans and Americans, about Islam and emphasized the need to propagate Islam in these countries by sending missionaries and literature containing the right teachings of Islam.

*Hazrat Mirza* had demanded in this book that his opponents accept his challenge within a month of the publication of the book. The book was published in May 1894 and the month of June passed without even a single Christian clergyman or Muslim cleric stepping forward to pick up the gauntlet. This was not the only time *Hazrat Mirza* had challenged the Christian critics. In fact, he had been doing this from the start of his career as a champion of Islam. Some verses from a poem by *Hazrat Mirza* in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* Volume III are reproduced below to show the confidence and courage of conviction with which he challenged the Christian critics:

Come hither O Christians,  
See the light of Truth and find the way of Truth.

The Quran is so full of excellence,  
Can you show the same in the Bible?

How long will you be infatuated with a lie?  
Put the truth to some work too.

Listen O Dear Ones without the Quran,  
Never shall man find the Truth.

Those who are ignorant of this light,  
Are far removed from this Friend's sight.

That which its detractors say,  
Amounts to nothing but absurdities.

I challenge them to come to me,  
And face to face have their day.

Let them hear from me the real story,  
Let them hear from me its beauty and elegance.

If you cannot see, use your hearing.  
But give it a try anyway.

## ***ITMAM-UL-HUJJA*** **(THE FINAL PROOF)**

### **Motivation**

*Hazrat* Mirza wrote the book *Itmam-ul-Hujja* in Arabic and published it in June 1894. *Maulvi* Russal Baba, an accomplished scholar of Amritsar, was at the forefront of the opposition against *Hazrat* Mirza and wrote a book called *Hayat-e-Masih* (Jesus is Alive) in which he stressed that Jesus was bodily alive in heaven. *Hazrat* Mirza responded with this book *Itmam-ul-Hujja* in Arabic and in a detailed exposition proved the death of Jesus beyond all doubt.

Russal Baba had announced a reward of one thousand rupees in his book *Hayat-e-Masih* to anyone who proved that Jesus was dead. *Hazrat* Mirza accepted this challenge and tested the seriousness of the offer by proposing in *Itmam-ul-Hujja* that “*Maulvi* Russal Baba sahib should deposit the sum of one thousand rupees by the end of June 1894 with a committee of the following three noblemen of Amritsar, Sheikh Ghulam Hassan, Khwaja Yousaf Shah and Mir Mahmud Shah. After depositing this amount, he should inform me and enclose a signed statement from the members of the committee stating ‘We have received the amount of one thousand rupees and we undertake to give this amount without any hesitation to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in the event that his arguments prevail, and Russal Baba will have no right to object.’” Further on in the book, he wrote:<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Itmam-ul-Hujja* page 68.

To decide the contest, it will be considered sufficient that Sheikh Batalvi (Muhammad Hussain Batalvi) reads *Maulvi* Russal Baba's book and similarly examines my book from the beginning to the end and then takes an oath in a public gathering. The text of the oath will be: "O all ye present! By Allah I have read both the books from the beginning to the end and I swear by Allah, the Most High, that the book of Russal Baba conclusively and definitely proves Jesus to be alive and the arguments advanced in his opponent's book do not negate his arguments. If I have lied or there is anything in my heart contrary to this, then may I be struck with leprosy or blindness or otherwise die as a result of a calamity." All present will then say 'Amen' three times in a loud voice, and the gathering will then disperse. If no calamity befalls the oath-taker within a period of one year, the committee referenced above should honorably return Russal Baba's one thousand rupees to him. Then, we, too, will publish a declaration that, in truth, Russal Baba has proven Jesus to be alive. However, for this period of one year, the appointed committee will keep the reward money. If *Maulvi* Russal Baba does not deposit one thousand rupees within a period of two weeks from the publication of this book, then his lie and falsehood will stand proven. In that case, people should seek Allah's protection from the evil of such liars and shun them.

*Hazrat* Mirza also stated in this book:

When the abusive language of these clerics and their anathema of heresy produced no result, they started cursing me, and when the curses proved useless, they began carrying false tales to the government. In short, they have opposed me in every way they could to the utmost of their ability but the blows from their mouth will not extinguish the light that has been lit by God.

After the publication of this book, *Maulvi* Russal Baba went into hibernation and neither uttered a word about the controversy nor about the one thousand rupees reward money. However, he kept abreast of the other clerics in opposing *Hazrat* Mirza and persecuting the Ahmadis of Amritsar. When the plague epidemic spread through the province of Punjab, some ignorant friends of *Maulvi* Russal Baba claimed that they were immune from the disease and started citing their immunity as a sign

of their righteous stand. “Why do we not get afflicted by the plague and why does Russal Baba not get afflicted by the plague?” they asserted. But they spoke too soon for Russal Baba contracted the dreaded plague and died from the disease on December 8, 1902. Thus does God protect the honor of His righteous servants!

## ***SIRR-UL-KHILAFAH*** **(THE STORY OF THE CALIPHATE)**

***Hazrat Abu Bakr's caliphate was the perfect representation of the Quranic verse Istakhlaf***

*Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, published in July 1894, was another of *Hazrat Mirza's* books written in the Arabic language. It discussed the succession issue that arose during the early Islamic Caliphate and arbitrated justly between the opposing viewpoints of the *Shia* and the *Sunni* sects on this issue. *Hazrat Mirza* stated that there was no doubt that the first four Caliphs, *Hazrat Abu Bakr*, *Hazrat Umar*, *Hazrat Usman* and *Hazrat Ali* were all individually very suitable, qualified and pious. They were all great servants of Islam but it could not be denied that the description given in the Quranic verse known as *Istakhlaf* applied most perfectly and completely to the caliphate of *Hazrat Abu Bakr*. *Hazrat Mirza* supported his statement with a detailed exposition of the verse *Istakhlaf* and showed how each and every word of this verse put a seal of authenticity on the caliphate of *Hazrat Abu Bakr* in a way that it did not for the caliphate of the others.

Great fear and commotion gripped the nascent Islamic religion immediately following the death of the Holy Prophet and Allah delivered the Muslims from this state through the Caliphate of *Hazrat Abu Bakr*. The authority of religion was reestablished and the state of fear was replaced by peace. The Religion of Unity became strong and solid once again, allowing Islam to spread quickly through the rest of Arabia and even to

some countries abroad. In contrast, the Caliphate of *Hazrat Ali* was one of turmoil. Despite his piety and righteousness, he was unable to fully establish the authority of religion and internecine wars tore asunder the peaceful fabric of the Islamic society. Peace changed to fear and the very foundations of religion were shaken. One must conclude with great regret, therefore, that the caliphate of *Hazrat Ali* did not exhibit any characteristics of the Holy Prophet's vicegerent as mentioned in the verse *Istakhlaf*. The conditions specified in the verse *Istakhlaf* were fulfilled most perfectly only in the caliphate of *Hazrat Abu Bakr* and it alone could claim to be the complete manifestation of the verse: "...and that He will surely establish for them their religion, which He has chosen for them, and that He will surely give them security in exchange after their fear" (24:55).

### **Cursing the first three Caliphs is contrary to the Quran**

Drawing on explicit statements made in the Quran, *Hazrat Mirza* showed that it was against the edict of the Quran to curse the first three Caliphs. He quoted the Quranic verse: "And if two parties of the believers quarrel, make peace between them," (49:9) to prove that the Quran considered even the rebellious group as believers and did not brand the rebels as infidels or transgressors. As a matter of fact, in the very next verse, the Quran declared that those who indulged in name-calling, such as referring to believers as infidels or transgressors, were themselves iniquitous. The verse states: "Neither find fault with your own people, nor call one another by nick-names. Evil is a bad name after faith; and whoso turns not, these it is that are the iniquitous" (49:10). Thus, the Quran makes it very clear that those who call believers as transgressors, infidels or other bad names are themselves guilty of iniquity and deserving of censor. Although the schism in Islam is most regrettable, it must be remembered that the quarrel, which resulted in the schism, was between partisans who enjoyed the venerable status of being the companions of the Prophet. Hence it is the height of impertinence and totally against the teaching of the Quran to denigrate members of either party even if their disagreements resulted in hostilities between them.

### ***Hazrat Abu Bakr* and *Hazrat Umar* had no ulterior motives**

*Hazrat Mirza* rebutted the accusation that *Hazrat Abu Bakr* and *Hazrat Umar* were tyrannical usurpers. It behooves one to reflect that if they had any expectation of worldly gain from their caliphate, they would not have lived like paupers when their positions were that of mighty emperors. Neither would they have left the issue of succession open and

instead would have nominated their own sons as successors, as is the wont of worldly kings. This book is a scholarly exposition of this controversy, replete with rational arguments and supporting evidence. On the basis of knowledge vouchsafed to him by God, *Hazrat* Mirza stated in this book that the rank and stature of *Hazrat* Abu Bakr excelled that of all other Companions. He highlighted from the Quran and the *Hadith* the outstanding service of *Hazrat* Abu Bakr to Islam and his absolute devotion to the Holy Prophet.

After this, he discussed the virtues of all the Companions in general, and of *Hazrat* Umar in particular. He then compared the tranquility during the caliphate of *Hazrat* Abu Bakr with the sedition and fighting during the period of *Hazrat* Ali. He mentioned the excellence of both *Hazrat* Abu Bakr and *Hazrat* Ali and stated that although both were chosen ones of God and dear to Him, this should not confuse the issue of who should have been the first caliph. The verse *Istakhlaf* was the arbiter on the issue and it was clear that the criteria laid down in the verse was never fulfilled so completely as it was during the caliphate of *Hazrat* Abu Bakr.

The prophecy regarding the coming of the *Mahdi* has a special significance in the *Shia* sect. Hence in the second part of the book, *Hazrat* Mirza discussed all aspects of this prophecy and his own claim of being the promised *Mahdi*. He put forward clear and rational arguments to prove his claim. This book is another of *Hazrat* Mirza's masterpieces and its high quality can best be gauged by reading it.



## THE ABDULLAH ATHAM EPISODE

### **Abdullah Atham benefited by repenting**

On June 5, 1893, *Hazrat* Mirza had prophesied during his debate with Abdullah Atham that Atham would die and go to hell within a period of fifteen months for labeling the Holy Prophet as the *Dajjal* (Antichrist), provided he did not incline to the truth. The circumstances and conditions under which *Hazrat* Mirza had prophesied this evil fate for Abdullah Atham were described earlier in Chapter 49. By simply reading the prophecy's text it becomes abundantly clear that this was a conditional prophecy as evidenced by the phrase, "...provided he does not incline to the truth." It remains to be seen whether Abdullah Atham's conduct subsequent to the prophecy qualified him to benefit under this exemption and the exact manner in which the prophecy played out.

When *Hazrat* Mirza announced the prophecy during their debate, there was an immediate change in Atham's behavior. On hearing the prophecy, he stuck out his tongue and grabbed his earlobes in a gesture of repentance and said: "God forbid; when did I call him a *Dajjal*?" He thus made immediate amends for his culpable act, but this subtlety largely went unnoticed at that time.

Later, he became totally consumed by the awesome import of the prophecy and was as terrified as is humanly possible of a very real and genuine danger. All the security arrangements made for his safety did not buy him even a moment of peace and he lost his mind contemplating the fearful truth. He began to imagine a poisonous snake pursuing him with its fangs ready to strike, and feared for his life from its venomous bite. He

was convinced *Hazrat* Mirza had hypnotized the snake to seek him, and decided to escape the serpent by fleeing from Amritsar to Ludhiana where he felt he would be safe in the house of his son-in-law. In Ludhiana, he started hallucinating that armed men, sometimes mounted and sometimes on foot, had breached the perimeter of his residence on a mission to kill him. He never actually charged anyone with assault but the look of a hunted animal was always apparent on his face, and he frequently broke down and cried in the confines of his residence. With the passage of time, his fear and depression intensified, and even his house, which was guarded by the police, began to haunt him. He, therefore, left Ludhiana and went to stay with another son-in-law in Ferozepur, but even there, he did not escape the hallucinatory armed men waiting to assassinate him with spears and swords. Despite the police guard, the armed men, appeared to him at night, and he would shriek in fear, much to the amazement of his relatives and the police guards who wondered why he was shouting when no one was about, and what could possibly be the matter with him?

What was the matter with him? It was quite obvious that neither a snake nor armed men were in pursuit to kill him. Had there been any reality to his perceptions then his family or the police guards would also have seen or sensed something, but they were totally baffled and amazed by his behavior. Atham himself had spent a lifetime in law enforcement and was fully conversant with the criminal and penal codes. He could have filed a complaint at any police station accusing Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of plotting his death by sending a snake and armed men to kill him, and demanded his arrest. Why did he not do that? The explanation was quite simple. He knew that this phenomenon was not mundane but occult, against which physical protection was of no avail. Precisely for this reason, he used to break down and cry after seeing these scenes. Although he did not lodge a legal complaint, he did publish a narration of these experiences in the newspaper *Nur Afshan*.

There can be only one of two possible explanations for the scenes Atham witnessed. Either this was an occult phenomenon in which God's avenging angels appeared to him in the form of a snake and armed intruders, or he had lost his mind and become a raving lunatic. Those who knew him best, firmly believed that he was not a lunatic, and this eliminated one of the two possibilities. The only other possible explanation then was that his heart and mind were so gravely stressed by the prophecy that he lived in constant fear from which there was no place of refuge. It is worth reflecting on whether such a state of fear was possible unless he was firmly convinced of the truth of Islam? A mere fear of assassination does not

provoke visions of armed intruders and a hypnotized snake that are invisible to everyone else. It would also be hard to explain why Atham did not lodge a report with the police to investigate and arrest his pursuers if he considered his perceptions to be real. One must conclude therefore that Atham was well aware that his visions were supernatural. This occult phenomenon was born out of an overwhelming terror caused by the certain belief in the truth of the prophecy; this certain belief could not have come about unless he was convinced of the truth of Islam. Thus, his state of terror was indicative of an internal belief regarding the veracity of Islam. It is against the age-old tradition of Allah to punish a person or people if they revert to belief after a warning and so Allah chose not to kill Atham while he was in this condition. Additionally, his death would have been contrary to the specific provision of the prophecy.

In an analogous situation, Jonah had prophesied Divine punishment on his nation within a period of forty days, but they repented and sought forgiveness, and so Allah forgave them even though there was no specific provision for the aversion of the punishment. A grand prophet like Jonah had to suffer embarrassment and tribulation but this was of little consequence because the overriding attribute of Allah is mercy and He does not want to kill His people unjustly. As a matter of fact, the warning of punishment is precisely meant to make people desist from their evil deeds and to make amends so that the punishment may be averted. Thus prophecies of punishment always have an escape clause regardless of whether explicitly stated or not. In the case of the Atham prophecy, there was an explicitly stated escape provision, which stated that: "...provided he inclines to the truth," and the aforementioned events show clearly that he had internally become convinced of the truth. There were overt signs of this as well. His past record had been one of venomous attacks on Islam, but after the prophecy he neither wrote nor uttered a single word against Islam for fifteen months.

On one occasion, this humble author visited Depalpur in the Sahiwal District and met an officer of the irrigation department who was not a follower of *Hazrat* Mirza. At one point, the conversation turned to Atham and he said: "Mr. Atham was a revenue officer in this District and whenever he came here on tour, he would engage in religious discussions and pour out his venom against Islam. I had an occasion to meet him during the last fifteen months since the prophecy and he did not utter a single word about Islam." Thus in the period of fifteen months following the prophecy, Atham neither wrote nor spoke a word against Islam, and lived in a constant state of fear – not just ordinary fear but a state of terror that

was not possible unless he was internally convinced of the truth of Islam.

Allah averted Atham's punishment because of Atham's inclination to the truth, and the prescribed fifteen-month period of the prophecy elapsed without his death. The Christians, because of their ignorance and lack of understanding of the prophecy, took this as a sign of their victory. They were overjoyed and festive and celebrated the occasion by parading Atham in a grand cavalcade in Amritsar on September 6, 1894. Atham was seated in a horse carriage but he did not wave cheerfully or smile for the onlookers; in fact, there was no joy on his countenance. He looked very dejected and depressed and his body was motionless like a corpse. Because the debate between *Hazrat* Mirza and Atham had taken place in Amritsar, the prophecy regarding Atham had been the talk of the town. Based on the demeanor of Atham, a rumor spread through the town that Atham had died in accordance with the prophecy but that the British had stuffed his body and were parading around the stuffed corpse. The rumor gained so much credence that when I, this humble author who happened to be in Amritsar in those days, went to a *Hanafi* mosque for *Asr* prayer, I overheard the following remark in a conversation among a group of worshippers:

"Hats off to the cunningness of the British; they paraded a stuffed corpse in the procession by propping it in a carriage."

"Who is the dead man whose stuffed corpse was paraded?" I asked.

"Don't you know? The missionaries took Atham out in a procession today. Actually, Atham died within fifteen months in accordance with the prophecy of Mirza sahib of Qadian but today, on completion of fifteen months, the British stuffed his body and took his corpse out in a procession to show the people that he is still alive," they said.

"How do you know that it was a stuffed corpse? Isn't it possible that he may be alive?" I enquired.

"How so Sir! Do you think that we cannot distinguish between a dead and a living man? The lifeless statue of Atham was clearly visible. It never spoke or talked or even batted an eyelid," they replied.

I was amazed to hear this since these persons were not the disciples of *Hazrat Mirza* but were diehard *Hanafis*.

“Where is he now?” I asked them.

“The Christians are holding a big celebration at the bungalow of Reverend Henry Martyn Clarke and his corpse must be there, too.”

After saying my prayers, I hurried to the residence of Reverend Clarke, which was located some distance from the city. When I reached it, I found a lively tea party in progress with a large number of Christians in attendance. The tables and chairs had been arranged under a marquee in the courtyard and Atham was seated in a chair at the head of the gathering, looking like a statue devoid of any motion or emotion. I stared at him long and hard and after a time also began to feel that this could be a corpse propped up in a chair. He neither spoke nor made any motion, and did not even blink his eyes. I was really intrigued now to see him at close quarter and conveyed my request to a person who seemed to be in authority. He took me to a chair and sat me in front of him. From up close, he looked even worse than a corpse, but I was able to determine that he was in fact alive. Interestingly, Atham opened his conversation with me by remarking: “Have you heard there is a rumor in the town that I have died and have been propped up in the chair after being stuffed.” I replied: “Yes; I have heard the rumor and actually came to see you after hearing it.” In my mind, however, I was thinking: “How true; he does look like a stuffed corpse from a distance.” I left after a brief chat.

Meanwhile in Qadian, members of the *Ahmaddiya* organization had gathered in large numbers a day prior to September 5, 1894. Up until that time, the phrase “...unless he inclines to the truth,” was interpreted to mean that Atham must either accept Islam or die. However, the prophecy did not specify that he must become a Muslim, and the phrase “...unless he inclines to the truth” could also mean to desist from behavior warranting punishment out of fear instilled by a conviction of Islam’s truth. This interpretation, however, had escaped general notice till then. As a consequence, on the night between September 4 and 5, which was the last night of the prescribed fifteen-month period, the gathered disciples supplicated for the conversion to Islam or the death of Atham in the *Tahajjud* prayer with such emotion and grief that the stillness of the night was rent asunder by their wailing and lamentations. On hearing the tumult, *Hazrat Mirza* came out of his private abode into the mosque and addressed the

congregation in the following words: “Shouting and clamoring in prayers is against the tradition of the Messenger of Allah and is forbidden in Islamic law. Address your supplications, whatever they are, in a murmur or inaudibly. Allah, the Most High, I seek His protection from saying so, is not deaf. He knows the secrets of the heart and listens even to the most inaudible murmur.”

The next day, September 5, brought the prescribed fifteen-month period of the prophecy to an end, and when the sun set on that day, *Maulvi* Abdul Karim was in a state of daze, and the other disciples were also bewildered and confused because they had no idea what to make of the situation. On the following morning, *Hazrat* Mirza dressed leisurely, applied fresh henna to his hair and beard, and came out of his residence looking perfectly peaceful and happy. He immediately proceeded to address the waiting gathering and told them that he had supplicated in the matter and received the revelation: “Allah took note of his grief and distress and you will never find any change in Allah’s tradition.” It was thus made clear that Allah’s time-honored tradition did not allow for punishment while a person was fretting and grieving at the prospect of being chastised. In fact, this overwhelming fear indicated a secret acceptance of the truth by a person in his heart. *Hazrat* Mirza then proceeded to deliver a profound speech expounding the philosophy of prophecies that predict punishment. The core message of his speech was:

Allah does not wish to kill His servants and the whole purpose of warning them is to make them desist from their evil actions. Accordingly, if they take even a small step towards reformation, the threatened punishment is withheld, as was the case with Jonah’s nation. However, if they make no effort to reform and continue in their evil ways, then the threatened punishment, which is their just due for the evil deeds they refuse to give up, overtakes them. In the present case, too, Abdullah Atham has refrained from the evil actions that were the rationale for his punishment, and his excessive fear has manifested clearly that he is convinced in his heart of the truth of Islam. Otherwise why is he so terror-stricken? The truth is that he has taken advantage of the escape provision in the prophecy and therefore the victory is clearly that of Islam because the veracity of the escape provision has been established. God has desired that the prophecy should be fulfilled in both its aspects. Now, if Atham denies inclining to the truth then the promise of punishment will also be fulfilled. Atham

will now be asked through a public announcement to state on oath whether in his heart he has been convinced of the truth of Islam or not. If he accepts, then all is well, but if he denies, then a *mubalah* (mutual imprecation) will be offered to establish the truth.

This profound speech provided solace and comfort to the hearts of the audience. Some in the audience suggested that the knowledge and wisdom they had just heard regarding the real purport of prophecies should be made available to a wider audience. *Hazrat Mirza* agreed to publish a book on the subject.

Some people had come to take the pledge but *Hazrat Mirza* refused to accept their pledges because, he said, this was a time of trial to test the faith and sincerity of the people. Until this period of trial was over, he would not accept pledges. Of the people who came to take the pledge the following day, *Hazrat Mirza* accepted the pledge of *Khalifa Rajab Deen* only because he assured *Hazrat Mirza* during the morning walk that he harbored no concern about the Atham prophecy and considered him truthful in every eventuality. In general, pledges were not taken until *Hazrat Mirza* had cornered the fabricators and made it quite obvious, through repeated announcements, as to who the liars were.

### ***Anwar-ul-Islam* published and convincing proof furnished against Atham and the Christians**

Immediately on expiry of the prophecy's prescribed period, *Hazrat Mirza* published a book called *Anwar-ul-Islam* (Light of Islam) on September 6, 1894, in which he described the entire Atham episode in detail. In the fifteen months since the prophecy, Atham had been fleeing from place to place out of fear of the prophecy's consequences, a situation he had himself admitted in the Christian newspaper *Nur Afshan*. This was a covert admission on the part of Atham about the genuineness of Islam and *Hazrat Mirza* pointed out that it would be to his benefit if he admitted this fact openly as well. But if he did not, then he was duty bound to establish the truth of the matter through an imprecatory contest with *Hazrat Mirza*. The following details about the imprecation are quoted from his book:<sup>1</sup>

If the Christians still dispute and consider their crafty conduct to be of some consequence, or if some other person harbors any

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1 *Anwar-ul-Islam*. Page 8.

doubt about whether victory belongs to Islam, as is the fact, or to Christianity, as they unjustly claim, then I am willing to expose their deceit by participating in an imprecation that will adjudicate the issue. If they do not desist from their deceit and cunningness, then the imprecation will proceed in the following manner: On a specified date, we the disputants will gather in an open area and Mr. Abdullah Atham will make the following declaration three times: "In the period since the prophecy I have not been overawed even for an instant by Islam and I considered, and still consider, Islam and its Prophet to be untrue, and the notion that it is true did not even cross my mind. I believed, and I believe, in the prophethood and divinity of Jesus in conformity with the beliefs of the Protestant sect of Christianity. If I have stated contrary to the facts, then Almighty God may I receive the punishment of death within a period of one year." At the end of this supplication, we will say 'Amen.' If no punishment befalls (him) within one year as a result of the prayer, then I will give a sum of one thousand rupees to Mr. Abdullah Atham by way of restitution. If he wants, the money can be deposited at some place beforehand. If he does not make such a supplication, then be assured that he is a liar and will be punished for his transgression. I have been clearly informed through revelation that the punishment of death has thus far been postponed because Abdullah Atham has to a certain degree emulated those who incline to the truth through his terror-stricken behavior that implies acceptance of truth. It was necessary therefore that he should get some benefit of the escape provision. There is another point as well, which can easily be appreciated by those who are familiar with his plight and the extent of his perturbation. Was his condition not a veritable hell or was it something else? To those who do not understand this and choose to deny it, I have given the means above to make a final adjudication.

The book *Anwar-ul-Islam* was published on September 6, 1894, and Atham was given a period of one week to accept an imprecation. The period elapsed with no response from Atham or the Christians, and so *Hazrat Mirza* made a public announcement on September 20, 1894, and again asked Atham to accept an adjudication by imprecation. The statement Atham was required to make was curtailed to "In this period of fifteen months, I have not inclined to the truth covertly," and the restitution amount was raised to two thousand rupees. The second challenge went



unheeded, too, but Atham did admit in the Christian paper *Nur Afshan*: “I do not subscribe to the generally accepted Christian belief regarding prophethood and Divinity, nor do I condone the behavior of those Christians who misbehaved with him (*Hazrat Mirza*).”<sup>2</sup> Let all fair-minded persons judge whether this fulfills the condition of his punishment being averted: “...if he does not incline to the truth.” It was on this very issue of prophethood and divinity of Jesus that he had debated with *Hazrat Mirza* for fifteen days in Amritsar. His admission now of not subscribing to the conventional Christian viewpoints on this subject, and his refusal to take an oath validating his original belief and negating a change therein, provided clear and convincing testimony of his inclination to the truth. The Christian criticism of Atham’s brief statement quoted above was so severe that Atham fell silent again and abstained from explaining the true position further.

On October 5, 1894, *Hazrat Mirza* published yet another public announcement demanding Atham to make a statement under oath, and increased the amount of restitution to three thousand rupees. In reply, Reverend Henry Martyn Clarke published a vulgar and abusive poster in which he claimed emphatically that the taking of oaths was forbidden for Christians, just as eating pork was forbidden for Muslims. *Hazrat Mirza* responded with a published announcement on October 27, 1894, in which he proved by quoting passages from the Old and New Testament that it was commonplace to take oaths in these scriptures and hence there was no sanction against it. Famous religious leaders of Christendom had taken oaths and even Saint Paul, whose interpretations and traditions constitute modern Christianity and a rejection of which amounts to disbelief, was not immune from taking an oath.<sup>3</sup> Saint Peter, too, once took an oath, and the Psalms state that it is the liar who does not swear.<sup>4</sup> Besides, it was a matter of common knowledge that it was not only permissible, but also required, for Christians to take oath in certain proceedings. Thus the British Courts, which did not mandate any action contrary to a person’s belief, had not exempted Christians from providing statements under oath in the courts. Persons in high positions of public responsibility were required to take the oath of office and even the King of England had to take an oath at his coronation, and the person administering the oath was none other than

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2 *Nur Afshan*. September 21, 1894.

3 See Corinthian Chapter 15, verse 31.

4 Psalms Chapter 63, verse 11: “But the king shall rejoice in God; everyone that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speaks lies shall be stopped.”

the highest priest in the realm. Then why was it forbidden for Abdullah Atham to make a statement on oath especially since he had made two sworn depositions in court on previous occasions? If he had the audacity to deny having made sworn depositions in court, *Hazrat Mirza* offered to procure copies of his sworn statements from the court. The Christians had no response to this announcement and tried to downplay it by shouting and clamoring that they were under no compulsion to take an oath.

### **Muslim clerics opposed to *Hazrat Mirza* shamefacedly supported the Christians**

One of the most poignant aspects of this episode was the behavior of the Muslim clerics opposed to *Hazrat Mirza*, who had earlier been instrumental in labeling him as an infidel. They shamefully sided with the Christians and joined them in their shouting, jeering and mocking. In his book *Anwar-ul-Islam*, *Hazrat Mirza* sternly addressed these clerics who were bent upon belying the sign of Islam's truth for the sake of supporting the Christians and challenged them in the following words:<sup>5</sup>

If any cleric says that it (i.e. Atham's inclination to truth) is not proven, then, if he is honest and legitimate in his opinion, he should prevail upon Abdullah Atham to take the oath I have specified. If Abdullah Atham takes the oath, I will give him a promissory note for one thousand rupees, in fact two thousand rupees now, without any hesitation. If he does not die within a period of one year, the clerics will be justified in calling me whatever they choose. However, till its final resolution, anyone who does not accept this clear victory is unjust, regardless of whether he is from Amritsar, or Ghazni, or Ludhiana, or Delhi or Batala and he should beware that the curse of Allah is on the unjust ones and the liars.

Opposition and prejudice to the truth erode a person's moral values to the point where he becomes blind even to the honor and best interest of his religion. Such was the case with these clerics. They were so intent on their opposition to *Hazrat Mirza* that they did not even care about the purpose of *Hazrat Mirza*'s prophecy, which was to show the ascendancy of Islam over Christianity. The Christians considered Atham's survival through the prophecy period as a victory of Christianity over Islam. Did the honor of Islam not mandate that if these clerics chose not to oppose and contradict

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<sup>5</sup> *Anwar-ul-Islam*. Page 24

the Christians, they should have at the very least refrained from taking their side?

Where have those Muslims gone whose sense of honor for Islam transcended their personal differences? When *Hazrat* Ali and Muawiyah were locked in their mutual struggle for the caliphate, the Roman Caesar, who was a Christian, contemplated taking advantage of the internecine quarrel to attack the Islamic Empire. Muawiyah forthwith dispatched him a message stating: "If you dare to come this way, I will be the first person to come out under the flag of Ali to oppose you, notwithstanding our differences." On receiving this message, the Roman Caesar backed away and abandoned his plans to attack the Islamic Empire.

Compare this with the way these honorable Muslim clerics behaved following a debate whose purpose was to establish whether Islam or Christianity was the true religion. The debate with Atham was conducted through written statements. Under the influence of his Islamic zeal, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote in one of his statements supporting Islam that God had informed him: "In every contest that is conducted for spiritual blessing and heavenly support, I will be with you and you will prevail." Based upon this, he proposed an easy test that both Atham and he could take to settle their opposing contentions. His suggestion was: "I will supplicate to the Living and Perfect God for a sign and you supplicate to Jesus." The Christians conceived a clever ruse to make a mockery of this statement. They brought three handicapped men, a maim, a lame and a blind, into the debating hall and demanded *Hazrat* Mirza show them a sign by healing them. *Hazrat* Mirza replied that there was no provision in Islam under which any Muslim could claim to change events that had been decreed, and in any event, he had not made any claim to show such a sign. However, the ability to show such signs was the hallmark of a Christian's faith as stated in the New Testament:<sup>6</sup>

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

He challenged the Christians to show the genuineness of their faith and heal these disabled persons by laying their hands on them. If they were

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6 Mark 16:17-18

successful, he would readily concede that they were true, honest and saved. But this was not an accepted test for the genuineness of Islam. The way of showing a sign in Islam was to supplicate to Allah on a particular matter and if Allah so willed, He would accept the supplication and give information about the outcome of the matter before it actually occurred. He said he was prepared to enter into such a contest. The Christians had no answer and were effectively checkmated. Much embarrassed by the incident, they quickly ushered the handicapped persons out of the debating hall. Following this incident, *Hazrat Mirza*, in the concluding statement of the debate on June 5, 1893, stated:<sup>7</sup>

When I supplicated to God tonight with great humility and sincerity and beseeched His intervention in this matter, for we, His humble servants, can do no more than to ask for His judgment, I received glad tidings as a sign. It was revealed to me that the party in this debate guilty of deliberate falsification by turning away from the One true God and elevating a humble person to godhood will be disgraced and dispatched to hell soon after the debate, i.e. within a period of one to fifteen months, provided he does not incline to the truth. This will vindicate the honor of the one who is truthful and believes in the True God...Now I ask Deputy sahib that if this prophecy is fulfilled, will it or will it not meet his requirement of an accurate prophecy, and will it or will it not be considered a prophecy from God, and will it or will it not be a proof positive about the truthfulness of the Messenger of Allah, whom you refer to as the Antichrist in your book *Andarun Bible* (Inside the Bible)."

Is it not crystal clear from the plain words of the prophecy that its purpose was to furnish a sign of the truth of the Holy Prophet who had been referred to as Antichrist (*Dajjal*) by Atham in his book *Andarun Bible*? Even the Christians were fully aware that *Hazrat Mirza* had made the prophecy to establish the truth of Islam. Accordingly, the Christian newspaper *Nur Afshan* presented this incident as an irrefutable argument against the Muslims. The paper wrote in its edition of September 20, 1894:

"Mirza sahib's debate with the Christians was not to show that he receives revelations or that he is the like of Messiah but to prove

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7 *Anwar-ul-Islam*. Page 22

that Islam is the religion of truth, that the Quran is the word of Allah and to refute the Christians. The prophecy he made at the end of the debate was to prove that Islam is the religion of truth and is from Allah.”

Despite this announcement by the Christians, witness the shamelessness of our Muslim clerics who put out posters trumpeting the Christian’s alleged victory merely to debase *Hazrat Mirza*. He expressed his anguish at this behavior of the Muslim clerics in the following statement:

Some Muslims by name, who should really be called half Christians, felt elated that Abdullah Atham did not die within fifteen months. They could not hold back their exuberance for long and ultimately put out posters in which they, as is their wont, leveled odious charges. Their personal enmity with me even led them to attack Islam because my debate was to uphold Islam and not to advance my claim of being the Promised Messiah. In their opinion, I may be an infidel, a devil or an Antichrist (*Dajjal*) of the most extreme form, but the debate was about the truth of the Messenger of Allah, Peace be upon him, and the excellence of the Quran. The distinguishing criterion between a true and a false person is the prophethood of *Hazrat Khatam-ul-Anbiya* (Seal of the Prophets), may Allah’s blessing and peace be on him, because anyone who sincerely denies his prophethood is false. The revelation was presented to adjudicate on this issue.

I have to say with great regret that my opposing clerics conceded that I had been defeated merely to show me as a fabricator and did not care for its implications for the honor of Allah and His Messenger. They showed no fear of the clear consequences that would accrue at the hands of the opposing party. When Mian Sanaullah, Saadullah, Abdul Haq etcetera have accepted that the Christians won, then why are they bemoaning the fact in their posters that the Christians are using this argument to claim that Islam is a false religion? Since the argument was about the truth or falsehood of Islam and Christianity, and not about my personal belief, it follows that if I am vanquished, may Allah forbid it, then the enemy is justified in claiming that Christianity is the true religion. See the debate not the debater. For example, even if a sweeper or a cobbler from our side, who is totally divorced from

religion, takes on the Christians in a contest of mutual imprecation, it is not possible for Christianity to prevail. God, the Most High, will not see that he is a sweeper or a cobbler but will preserve the honor of His religion and will never allow Islam to be humiliated.

You must be aware that some infidels and idol worshipers entered into pacts with the Holy Prophet and fought other infidels. Since in that capacity they were the helpers of Islam, they were victorious over the enemy. Assume that I am worse than an infidel in your eyes...but even so, it is worth reflecting, that the issues on which you dub me as an infidel, an apostate and an Antichrist were no part of the discussion, but the issues under discussion were those for which every Muslim must have a sense of honor.

#### **Additional conclusive arguments against Atham and Christians**

It has been shown above that the debate with Atham and the prophecy emanating from it, in whatever way it may be interpreted, exhibited only the heartfelt desire of *Hazrat* Mirza to prove the truth of Islam. Accordingly, the announcement of October 15, 1894 inviting Atham to an imprecation and increasing the amount of restitution to three thousand rupees showed a courageous readiness on the part of *Hazrat* Mirza to take an oath that Islam was the true religion. He wrote:

You should take an imprecatory oath in a public meeting so that the matter between us is finally adjudicated and the public is not left in the dark. If you want, I will also take an oath for one or two or three years (as the period of punishment) because I know that the truthful will most certainly not perish, and only he will die who has already been killed by lies. If you ask me to take an oath on the truthfulness of revelation or the truthfulness of Islam, I will not seek restitution of even one penny from you, but will give you three thousand rupees in cash or as a legal promissory note obtained beforehand, at the time you take the oath. If I show any hesitation in giving this amount, I will be considered a liar in that public gathering. Your trustees will hold the money for a period of one year and if you survive this period, it will be your property. In addition, if the death penalty is proposed for me in the event that I am false, by God, I am willing to accept that, too.

It may be noted here that in making this offer *Hazrat* Mirza was willing to give three thousand rupees to the opponent merely for stating on oath that his faith was true, but despite this generous offer, his opponent refused to take the oath. On his part, *Hazrat* Mirza was willing to take an imprecatory oath, without any restitution, to prove the veracity of Islam and the genuineness of his communion with God. This behavior is the hallmark of a person who has certainty of conviction referred to in the Quran as '*haq ul yaqeen*' (certainty by realization), and it is not achieved by any except those who are spiritually elevated and close to Allah.

When Atham did not respond to the above announcement, another announcement was published on October 27, 1894, in which Atham was called upon to take the oath and the restitution amount was increased to four thousand rupees. In this announcement, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:

If Mr. Atham takes the oath, then the promise (of punishment) within one year is definite and without any conditions because it is a fate decreed. If he does not take the oath, God will never leave such a criminal unpunished who tried to deceive the people by hiding the truth. The day of his death is near and not far.

### **Publication of the book *Zia-ul-Haq***

*Hazrat* Mirza kept the pressure on Atham to take the oath so that the controversy could be conclusively resolved. This pressure was applied through a series of public announcements and finally by the publication of a book, *Zia-ul-Haq*, in May 1895, which dealt with this subject. In this book, *Hazrat* Mirza stated clearly that Atham's subterfuge of refusing to take the oath would not now halt the visitation of punishment. He wrote:<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, the tactics of escapism (that is, refusal to take the oath) will be of no avail because God, the Most High, does not leave a criminal unpunished. The responsibility for the inane babble of the foolish clergymen rests squarely on the shoulders of Atham. Atham's lamentation and oath dodging clearly indicates his inclination to the truth and his complaint of the three attacks and the manner in which they were conducted clearly show that these attacks were not orchestrated by men. Even so, Atham is not cleared of the charge of not announcing the truth with his tongue.

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<sup>8</sup> *Zia-ul-Haq*. Page 16.

### ***Hazrat Mirza prophecies Atham's death for refusing to take the oath***

The original prophecy regarding Atham stated that the party in the debate that had intentionally and deceitfully abandoned the true God and taken a humble human for God would be dispatched to hell. There was no specific mention of death. It should be quite obvious to any rational and discerning person that in reality Atham was in a state of hell right from the day he began hallucinating about attacks by serpents, and armed men. He fled from city to city for fear of his life and frequently broke down, cried and lamented. Is this state of extreme terror and sorrow not an example of a living hell? There is no doubt though that *Hazrat Mirza* had interpreted hell to mean death, but the only thing that prevented this interpretation from coming true was the advantage Atham had taken under the escape clause of 'inclining to truth.' *Hazrat Mirza* invited him repeatedly to either admit his inclination to the truth, in which case he would be saved, or to deny it under an imprecatory oath. In the latter alternative, he reminded Atham that the punishment for a false oath would be his certain death within one year, which would then become a fate decreed. *Hazrat Mirza* offered these choices to Atham repeatedly through a series of seven public announcements, by publishing books, and by announcing a reward whose initial amount of one thousand rupees was raised gradually to four thousand rupees. When Atham did not agree to take the oath even after all these efforts and inducements, *Hazrat Mirza* published the following announcement on December 30, 1895:

The real objective of Mr. Atham in not taking the oath is to ensure longevity of his remaining life but he will never be able to achieve this objective if he refuses to take the oath. Given his bold demeanor, he will not survive long after his refusal.

Thus by evading the oath, Atham was adjudged guilty of hiding the truth and the decreed punishment for this was death; it had been postponed for a period but was now imminent. The normal period for punishment in such cases is one year but not even seven months had elapsed after this announcement when the threatened punishment overtook him. On July 27, 1896, Atham was dispatched to the greater hell as predicted in the prophecy.

### **The prophecy also indicated the fate of other Christian opponents**

The use of the word 'party' in the prophecy contained a subtle hint about its wider import. The prophecy had predicted punishment for "the



party in this debate guilty of deliberate falsification,” and this included not only Atham but also his accomplices. Although the main addressee of the prophecy was Abdullah Atham, the other clergymen in his ‘party’ who were the pillars of his strength also became victims of this prophecy. The first to perish was Dr. Jonah, the resident missionary of Jundiala, who had played a significant role in initiating this Christian-Muslim confrontation from his home village. He was a major force in the Christian missionary movement and had been assigned the responsibility for printing the proceedings of the debate. He died within the prescribed fifteen-month period of punishment in the prophecy.

Reverend Wright, who worked in an honorary capacity in the mission, followed next. By virtue of his rank and status, he was the effective leader of Atham’s party. His unexpected death at a young age shocked Dr. Clarke and the rest of the Christian community and sent them into mourning. In the memorial service held for Reverend Wright at Amritsar, Reverend Imad-ud-Din eulogized him with the following words: “We were clubbed tonight by the wrath of God and His secret sword slaughtered us while we were unaware.” The Christian community of Amritsar called Reverend Wright’s death a ‘manifestation of God’s chastisement’ and a ‘sign of his anger.’

Reverend Imad-ud-Din was also a member of the ‘party’; he had strongly criticized the Quran in his book, *Tauzin-al-Aqwāl*, which had prompted *Hazrat Mirza* to write the book *Nur-ul-Haq* to dispel the web of deceit weaved by Imad-ud-Din. *Hazrat Mirza* challenged him to a debate and stipulated a thousand curses on the party that backed off from accepting the debate. Imad-ud-Din was in no mood to accept a debate and embarked on a strategy to evade a face-to-face confrontation; this ruined his reputation and dispatched him to a living hell of humiliation and disgrace. All of this occurred within a period of fifteen months.

The threatened punishment of Abdullah Atham was postponed for a short while in accordance with the time-honored tradition of Allah to give sinners a reprieve if they show signs of repentance, such as fear, grief and supplications for protection. However, this reprieve was short-lived because he transgressed again by not revealing the truth and refusing to take the oath; the result was that the punishment, which had been held in abeyance, overtook him as foretold in the second prophecy. The purpose of the prophecy was to adjudicate between the two disputants. As the above events unfolded, it became amply clear that Christianity was the religion that had been deliberately falsified by its proponents, whereas Islam, the religion in support of which the prophecy was made, was the true religion.

### **Arguments in support of this prophesy from the Quran and the *Hadith***

It would be conducive to analyze the Atham prophecy and the subsequent reprieve in the light of the Quran. While discussing the Muhammadi Begum prophecy in Chapter 22, it was mentioned in some detail that the prophecy of punishment is always conditional. Punishment is only a consequence of man's actions. God is not desirous of punishing His servants but man brings it upon himself through his own evil actions. The sole purpose of forewarning him about the punishment is to give him a chance to desist from evil and save himself. The Quran states:

And ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him. He will provide you with a goodly provision to an appointed term, and will bestow His grace on every one endowed with grace. And if you turn away, I fear for you the chastisement of a great day (11:3).

It is abundantly clear from this verse that sincere repentance as evidenced by abandoning evil actions and seeking Allah's protection from sins opens the doors of Divine mercy, resulting in a postponement of punishment. However, if one does not desist from wickedness and deceit then the threatened punishment follows and the person dies before the normal time of death. Thus, all prophecies of punishment have an escape route through repentance and forgiveness, regardless of whether this provision has been specifically mentioned or not. The prophet Jonah had predicted punishment for his nation after forty days if they did not repent. On the expiry of forty days, he was so sure of the punishment that he migrated from that place. However, when his nation saw signs of the impending punishment, they repented and sought forgiveness. The result was that the punishment was averted although the plain text of the prophecy had made no such provision.<sup>9</sup> In the case of Abdullah Atham, however, the prophecy contained a clear stipulation "...provided he does not incline to the truth." Atham took advantage of this provision and his punishment was averted in accordance with the eternal principles of God. The prophecy regarding Atham was, therefore, fulfilled. It would not have been fulfilled if Atham had been punished despite his repentance.

A valid question at this point is whether an internal inclination to the truth, even though proven by the changed behavior, is sufficient to avert

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<sup>9</sup> This principle is clearly enunciated in the Holy Quran: "When they believed, We removed from them the chastisement of disgrace in this world's life..." (10:98)

punishment. The evidence from the Quran and the *Hadith* presented below shows clearly that even an internal inclination to the truth is sufficient. Thus, in accordance with a prophecy of the Holy Prophet, the infidels of Makkah were smitten for a period of seven years with a severe famine. So severe was the famine that the starving people ate even the leather of their shoes. Finally, Abu Sufian and his infidel cronies approached the Holy Prophet and asked him to pray for an end to the famine. As a result of the Holy Prophet's supplication, this chastisement of the Makkans was removed. The infidels of Makkah were given the benefit of this inclination towards the truth even though they did not convert to Islam. The Chapter *Al-Dukhan* (The Drought) mentions this incident:

So wait for the day when the heaven brings a clear drought, enveloping men. This is a painful chastisement. Our Lord remove from us the chastisement - surely we are believers. When will they be reminded? And a Messenger has indeed come, making clear; Yet they turned away from him and said: One taught (by others), a madman! We shall remove the chastisement a little, (but) you will surely return (to evil) (44:10-15).

It should be noted here that the mere act of asking the Holy Prophet to supplicate is equated with an act of belief as is apparent from the use of the term "we are believers," although overtly these infidels had not become Muslims. When the Quran states "Our Lord, remove from us the chastisement - surely we are believers," it is referring to the supplication of the infidels not by their tongue but by their attitude and behavior; the phrase "surely we are believers" is, therefore, a reference to their internal inclination to the truth although overtly, they had not converted to Islam.

Another point worth noting is that the Quran states that Allah will remove their punishment but they will revert to their mischief and opposition. Thus, despite the knowledge that the infidels will revert to their previous behavior, they were given the benefit of their current changed attitude and the punishment was lifted. The fact is that Allah is Merciful and Generous and His mercy takes precedence over His wrath as stated in the *hadith* "My mercy overpowers My anger."<sup>10</sup> He gives the benefit of repentance to man even if that repentance is temporary, or covert in the form of fear and anxiety. This is precisely what happened in the case of

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<sup>10</sup> *Al -Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith). Kitab Bada-ul-Khalq 59:1.*

Abdullah Atham. Atham's state of fear and grieving, coupled with his cessation of attacks on Islam were a clear indication of his internal inclination to the truth. God Almighty, therefore, gave him the benefit of his changed behavior, in accordance with His eternal principles, even though this put *Hazrat* Mirza and his followers through a great trial. The revelation from God to *Hazrat* Mirza at the end of the fifteen month period prescribed for punishment sums up this matter succinctly: "Allah took note of his grief and distress and you will never find any change in Allah's tradition."

### **A prophecy of the Holy Prophet fulfilled**

When Allah desires to impart new information about a subject to mankind, He creates the environmental conditions for the new information to develop and thrive. There is no doubt that a subtle objective in the Atham episode was the creation of a better understanding about prophecies among the general public. If the prophecy had been fulfilled as interpreted without the additional complications, the knowledge and wisdom that Allah made available to men through *Hazrat* Mirza as a result of his involvement in this episode would have remained hidden. This episode was of such significance that the Holy Prophet made a prophecy about it, which has been narrated in the books of *Hadith* as follows:<sup>11</sup>

Naeem bin Hammad has narrated from Jaffer Sadiq (On him be peace): A cry will emanate from Heaven that the truth is with the family of Muhammad while a voice from the Earth will shout that the truth is in the family of Jesus (Abbas has further stated that a controversy will ensue about the truth). However, it must be remembered that the voice from the Earth is the word of Satan and the cry from above is the word of God, which is always dominant.

In his book, *Zia-ul-Haq*, *Hazrat* Mirza described the elements of the Atham episode - the prophecy, Atham's continual state of fear for fifteen months, his reprieve by inclining to the truth, and his refusal to take an oath despite repeated demands – and then analyzed this prophecy in great depth and detail. He showed that the major elements of the Atham episode took place exactly in accordance with the predictions of the above-quoted *hadith*. Thus, the prophecy was set in the background of a great debate that was to take place between the party of the Promised Messiah, who was to appear in the latter times, and the Christians. The 'cry from Heaven' stood for the

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<sup>11</sup> *Nawab Siddiq Hassan Khan. Iqtarabat al-Saat. Page 104.*

heavenly signs, omens and evidence, which would show conclusively that the truth was indeed with the ‘family of Muhammad,’ i.e. the Holy Prophet’s followers who were his spiritual family and inheritors. The Satan, on the other hand, would allege that the truth was with the ‘family of Jesus,’ and the term ‘Satan’ was used here as a euphemism for satanic tricksters who would try to fool the people by insisting that the truth was with the Christians. In the end, the Heavenly cry, which asserted that the truth was with the followers of Muhammad, would prevail and victory would belong to the religion of Islam. *Hazrat Mirza* wrote in this context:<sup>12</sup>

“This *hadith* shows clearly that those who side with the Christians during this time of tribulation are the family of Satan and their words are the words of Satan. The *hadith* also indicates that during this period, the moon and the sun will eclipse during the month of *Ramzan*. Accordingly, a lunar and solar eclipse took place after the debate, and now a lunar and solar eclipse has taken place in the month of *Ramzan* in the United States. This repetition of the lunar and solar eclipse is a sure sign of the appearance of the *Mahdi* because this sign has never occurred in support of any other claimant since the origin of the Earth. And this is the heavenly cry that validates the genuineness of the Promised *Mahdi*.”

Indeed, this was a period in which many heavenly signs were manifested in support of the Promised *Mahdi*, *Hazrat Mirza*, and these signs provided clear proof of his truth and that of the followers of Muhammad. One such major sign was the eclipse of the sun and the moon. According to a prophecy in the Books of *Hadith*, the era of the true *Mahdi* would be discernible by the occurrence of a lunar and a solar eclipse on specified dates during the same month of *Ramzan*. The fulfillment of this prophecy during the lifetime of *Hazrat Mirza* was a powerful verification of his claim. Signs like this, along with Divine revelations, were the cries from heaven mentioned in the *hadith* as evidence that the truth was with the followers of Muhammad. The powerful impact of the physical signs was meant to derive all doubts from the minds of people not well versed in religious knowledge and Allah’s traditions.

**The publication of the books *Anjam Atham* and *Zamima Anjam Atham***  
*Hazrat Mirza* wrote the book *Anjam Atham* (The Fate of Atham)

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<sup>12</sup> *Zia-ul-Haq*.

immediately after the death of Atham. He started work on the book in 1896 and published it in January 1897. Later that year, he published *Zamima Anjam Atham* (Supplement to The Fate of Atham). The purpose of these books was to intellectually demolish the framework of Christianity and they achieved this objective admirably. It must be conceded, however, that without the additional complications in the fulfillment of the Atham prophecy, books of this caliber to refute Christianity may never have been written. One can see God's hand in molding the affairs of the Atham episode in a manner that would ensure the production of these magnificent refutations of Christianity through the scholarship of *Hazrat Mirza*. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that with the death of Atham, Christianity itself died, for such, indeed, is the meaning of the verse in the Holy Quran that states: "That he who perished by clear argument might perish, and he who lived by clear argument might live" (8:42). Besides refuting Christianity, *Hazrat Mirza* penned a detailed description of Atham's fate in these two books and then gave an open challenge to Christians in these words:<sup>13</sup>

If there is a Christian who still harbors any doubt about Atham's false charge (that he was attacked four times), then he should get this doubt removed through heavenly evidence. Atham died in accordance with the prophecy. The doubter, acting as an agent of Atham, should state on oath that Atham was not afraid of the greatness of the prophecy but his fear was the result of four attacks orchestrated against him. If the person taking the oath survives for one year, I promise right now that I will publish with my own hands that my prophecy was incorrect. The oath, however, must be unconditional. The verdict will be clear and unambiguous and the falseness of the one who is false near Allah will become manifest.

After the publication of this announcement, the Christian missionaries fell silent and not one of them had the courage to confront this champion of God. Their actions thus put a seal of authenticity on the righteousness of *Hazrat Mirza* and confirmed their own falseness.

### **Christian clergy challenged to a contest of mutual imprecation (*mubahalah*)**

Not content with merely making the above announcement, *Hazrat*

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<sup>13</sup> *Anjam Atham*

Mirza challenged the Christian clergy in his book *Anjam Atham* to a contest of mutual imprecation for deciding whether Islam or Christianity was the true religion. The challenge was addressed to the Christian clergy in general but Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke, Rev. Imad-ud-Din, Rev. Hasam-ud-Din, Fateh Masih, Safdar Ali and Thomas Howell were especially singled out by name. *Hazrat* Mirza proposed the following procedure for making a determination:

The disputants along with their followers should assemble in an open area and supplicate to God for a verdict in their dispute as to which one is in reality deceitful and the object of wrath in God's eyes. May Allah, as His Honor demands, inflict the deceitful party with His wrath as He has always inflicted on liars and deceitful nations like that of Namrud, the people of Noah, and the Jews.

He then wrote:

If the verdict of God is not in my favor, then I will give my entire property, movable and immovable, valued at no less than ten thousand rupees to the Christians, and I am prepared to deposit three thousand rupees with them in advance.

He further added:

If within two months of the publication of this magazine no one comes out to confront me and only diabolical excuses and explanations are forthcoming, then the clergymen of Punjab and India would stand exposed as liars.

*Hazrat* Mirza made every effort to dispatch his book containing this imprecatory challenge to all the clergymen of India. The clergymen preferred to be called liars rather than risk their lives in an imprecatory duel. It was one thing to verbally make unwarranted criticism and be insolent, but quite another to stand before God, the All Knowing, and ask for a decisive verdict. Those who follow falsehood have never willingly presented themselves for such a verdict.

## Chapter

# 60

### ***MINAN-UR-RAHMAN* (RECALLING THE FAVOR OF THE BENEFICENT)**

For the purpose of continuity, the incidents relating to the Atham episode were narrated up to the year 1897, but many other noteworthy events took place at the same time. The clock is, therefore, now set back to 1895 to report on some of the other major events of the period.

#### **Arabic is the mother of all languages**

In 1895, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote a seminal book *Minan-ur-Rahman*, in which he theorized, based upon his research, that Arabic was the mother of all languages. He claimed that the first language taught by God to man was Arabic and as mankind spread to different corners of the earth, this common language evolved in divergent directions and gave rise to the present diversity of tongues. In a flyer to promote this book, he wrote in 1895:

This is a marvelous book whose central theme is motivated by certain profound verses of the Holy Quran that first drew my attention to the fact that among the great blessings of the Quran to humanity is an explanation of the diversity of languages. The Quran provides us with an insight into the origin and sources of languages and has shown us that those who do not accept the Divine genesis of human languages are misguided. From a lin-



guistic standpoint, this book proves that the Quran is the only book to be revealed in the language that is the mother of all languages, i.e. the origin and fountainhead of revealed and other languages. It is obvious that the full elegance and excellence of God's Book are the result of it being in a language that is from God's mouth, excels all other languages and is perfect in its structure. When we find perfection in a language that is beyond the ability of human strength and man's endeavor, and we see eminence that is deficient or devoid in other languages, and witness particulars whose only source can be God's ancient and exact knowledge because their ingenuity is beyond human intellect, then we have to admit that such a language has a Divine source. Intensive and decisive research has proven that language to be Arabic. Many people have spent a lifetime researching these issues and expended considerable energy to find out the mother of all languages, but their efforts have been unsuccessful because they were not on the right path and because God did not guide their exertions. Another reason was their cursory focus on Arabic so that their prejudicial attention failed to catch this reality.

Now I have been guided by the pure and holy word of God, the Holy Quran, to the realization that the revealed language and the mother of all languages is in reality Arabic. The Zoroastrian, Jews and Hindus have been separately advancing the claim of their respective languages, but their claims, and all other such claims, are false and erroneous. I have not put forth this opinion on the basis of superficial observation, but have conducted careful research. After comparing thousands of words of Sanskrit and other languages, consulting the books of expert lexicographers and conducting a thorough scrutiny, I have concluded that the merit of Sanskrit and other languages is in no way comparable to the excellence of Arabic.<sup>1</sup> In fact, in comparison with Arabic, the words of the other languages are akin to the lame, crippled, blind, deaf, and lepers who have something lacking in the natural order of things. These other languages also lack a rich stock of morphemic words, which are necessary for a perfect language.

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1 *Maulvi Abdul Haq Vidhiarthi*, an eminent scholar of the Sanskrit language, fully supports and confirms this theory of *Hazrat Mirza*.

If in the opinion of some Arya Hindu or Christian clergy I have erred because I do not have familiarity with their languages, then my reply in the first place is that the way in which I have arrived at my conclusion does not require me to become an expert in the orthography and composition of Sanskrit and the other languages. I needed only to verify the morphemic and lexical stock of Sanskrit and other languages and so I gathered an ample corpus of the vocabulary of these languages and, as far as possible, when I had any doubts about their meanings, I verified them through a panel of experts comprising pundits and scholars of European languages. The books of English researchers were also carefully considered and all doubts clarified through discussion. I had everything certified by linguistic experts of Sanskrit and other languages. My conclusion, reached only after this effort, was that, in fact, the Sanskrit of the Vedas and other languages lack the excellence found in Arabic.

My second reply (to such criticism) is that if my research is unacceptable to any Arya Hindu or other person, then I inform them through this publication that I have provided detailed evidence in this book regarding the excellence, perfection and superiority of Arabic over all languages. This evidence may be categorized as follows:

1. The system of Arabic morphemes is perfect.
2. The system of nomenclature in Arabic is extraordinary.
3. The Arabic system of sequencing material is complete and perfect.
4. The Arabic composition can express more meaning with fewer words.
5. The Arabic language has the power to comprehensively describe all human ideas.

Once the book is published, everyone is at liberty to advance, if they can, similar qualities of excellence of Sanskrit or of any other language. Alternatively, after receiving this flyer, they can inform me of the way and manner in which I can dispel any misgivings they may have. If they have any criticism of the criteria of excellence (mentioned above), or if they want to describe some specific merits of Sanskrit or some other language, they can do so,

and I will give it my best attention. However, in every nation, there are some doubters who remain skeptical that perhaps there may be some hidden merit in Sanskrit and in other languages that are known only to those who are scholars in those languages. For this reason, I have announced a reward of five thousand rupees with this book. This five thousand is not merely a verbal promise but will be deposited in advance at a place satisfactory to the Arya Hindu or other petitioner so that he may feel fully confident in receiving the money without any argument if he is successful. It must be noted, however, that the petition to deposit the money must be made after this book on linguistic research is published. The petitioner must also give an affidavit that if he backs out of the contest or is unable to pursue his boast to its conclusion after the five thousand rupees is deposited, then he must pay damages equivalent to what is the norm on blocked funds in a commercial transaction. Peace be on those who are guided.

### **Arabic is a perfect language**

Additionally, this book also proved that Arabic alone was that perfect and comprehensive language that contained the technical terms and phraseology needed to fully describe the unity and attributes of God and the characteristics of the physical and spiritual worlds. It was for this reason that God taught this language to man so that he may properly gain knowledge of God.

### **Thoroughness of research**

During the period *Hazrat* Mirza was conducting research on this book, he spent long hours discussing his research with all educated visitors to Qadian. He also devoted much time in collecting the uncompound words of Arabic and other languages, and additionally asked for assistance from others in this work. His most important helper was Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din who assisted him in collecting the uncompound words and in discussing various aspects of this research. I have it on the reliable testimony of my friend Babu Nabi Baksh who participated in these discussions, that *Hazrat* Mirza had collected over one and a half million uncompound words of Arabic and the process of collection was still continuing. *Hazrat* Mirza had identified thousands of words of Sanskrit and English with Arabic derivation and even a cursory examination of this work was enough to convince one of the gigantic scope of this research. Unfortunately, more pressing engagements diverted *Hazrat* Mirza's atten-

tion from this work and the original manuscript and the stock of uncompounded words were lost. It appears that they were inadvertently and completely destroyed.

### **Publication of *Minan-ur-Rahman***

*Minan-ur-Rahman* was published after the death of *Hazrat* Mirza in its unfinished form. Even the partial work that has become available through publication shows the strength of its arguments. Had this book been completed, it certainly would have revolutionized the study of linguistics. *Hazrat* Mirza's disciples were grieved to see the work of their master in this incomplete form. This motivated Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din, who was the chief assistant and the main discussion partner of *Hazrat* Mirza in this research, to write a book called *Ummul Al-Sina* (Mother of Languages) based on the principal research theme of his master. Although this latter book is not as comprehensive in its deliberation and evidence as the book conceived by *Hazrat* Mirza, Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din was eminently successful in proving Arabic to be the mother of languages. These books, *Minan-ur-Rahman* and *Ummul Al-Sina*, are highly recommended for reading to scholars of linguistics.

## Chapter

# 61

## ***NUR-UL-QURAN* VOLUMES I & II (LIGHT OF THE QURAN)**

### **Motivation for writing the book**

The book *Nur-ul-Quran* was also written in 1895. *Hazrat* Mirza actually wanted this to be a monthly magazine but because of his other involvements, the magazine did not progress beyond the first two issues - *Nur-ul-Quran*, Volume I, published on June 15, 1895, and *Nur-ul-Quran*, Volume II, published on December 20, 1895. Both books are considered to be among the classics of *Hazrat* Mirza's scholarship. These books reveal the extent of his knowledge and the power of his pen in establishing the veracity of the Quran and the Holy Prophet. Even the most prejudicial criticism disappears before the force of his knowledge and the power of his writing, and in its place treasures of wisdom and learning burst forth from the very spot where the critics had been pointing fingers. A full appreciation of the true greatness of these magazines is only possible by reading them. *Hazrat* Mirza explained the objective of these magazines as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Because the objective of these writings is to inform people about the wisdom and truth of the Word of God, this magazine will never put forth any claim or evidence originated by man himself, but only those made by the Quran, which is the word of God, and sent to dispel the darkness of the world. The purpose of this strategy is to make people aware that it is the distinctive and exclusive

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1 *Nur-ul-Quran*, Part 1

characteristic of the Quran to explain its own claims and arguments. A prime evidence of the Quran's Divine origin is that all the necessary proof from every angle is provided within it. The Quran makes a claim and then substantiates it with arguments. We have desired to adopt this distinctive characteristic of the Quran in this magazine so that the followers of other religions may realize that they are advocating books against Islam that do not have the power to prove their claims with arguments.

It is obvious that a book claiming Divine origin is recognizable by the depth of its knowledge. It is impossible for such a book to lack in any essential component of religious faith or be inferior in any way to a book of human endeavor. The foremost purpose of a Divine Book is to explain the faith rationally and thereby support the prophet who espouses it. If it fails to rationally address its claims and leaves man in doubt, then it will not be accepted except by edict or force...no rational person can suggest the use of edict or force in religion. It is for this reason that Allah, the Glorious, has stated: "There is no compulsion in religion" (2:256). When we reflect truthfully on the qualities of a Divine Book, our spiritual consciousness strongly testifies that such a book must be self-explanatory in its philosophies and practices, and should create perfect spiritual insight leading to spiritual tranquility akin to a life in paradise. The only living miracle of a Divine Book is its ability to be the teacher of knowledge, wisdom and all true philosophies. In pursuit of this, it must contain all spiritual truths that rational men may seek and that are within the realm of their understanding. Further, its claims must not be mere allegations but must be substantiated beyond doubt. The Book may be subjected to the most intense scrutiny but it always remains obvious that it has the miraculous property of being a guide in all spiritual matters and is the best proponent of its own methods.

The above introduction is followed by illuminating and decisive arguments about the light of the Quran and the truth of the Holy Prophet. These marvelous arguments light-up the soul and enhance the reader's faith and knowledge.

### **No disrespect shown to Jesus**

*Hazrat Mirza* published an announcement on the reverse side of the title page of *Nur-ul-Quran*, Volume II, entitled "Important Information

for the Reader.” This announcement was made the basis of a malicious charge accusing *Hazrat* Mirza of being impertinent to Jesus. To dispel this charge, the full text of the announcement is reproduced below:

We announce with great regret that this volume of the *Nur-ul-Quran* is being published at a time when a certain individual has abandoned the norms of civilized discourse and resorted to abusing our lord and master, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. In his depravity, he has leveled such calumnies against this ‘leader of pious men’ and the ‘chief of the pure’ that their mere mention is sufficient to send chills down the spine of a good-hearted person. It has become imperative, therefore, to pay such scoundrels in their own coins. We would like to emphasize to the reader that our belief in Jesus, on him be peace, is a pious belief. We sincerely accept him as a true prophet and a beloved of God, the Most High. In accordance with the teachings of the Quran, we maintain that he wholeheartedly believed in our lord and master, Muhammad Mustafa, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, for his own salvation and that he was one of the many pious servants in the Mosaic dispensation. In short, we grant him the highest respect and consideration in accordance with his status.

However, the Jesus of Christianity is a Jesus who claimed Divinity and considered all humanity from the beginning to the end, with his sole exception, as accursed because of committing sin. We, too, consider such a person to be devoid of God’s blessings. The Quran gives us no information about such an impertinent and rude Jesus. We are amazed at the character of such a person who considered it appropriate for God to die, claimed Divinity, and abused pious personalities that were thousands of times better than him. So we have referred everywhere in our writing to this imaginary Jesus and not to that humble man of God, Jesus, son of Mary, who was a prophet and is mentioned in the Quran. We have resorted to this technique after listening to the abuses of the Christian clergy for forty years.

Some foolish Muslim clerics, who should really be called blind and without sight, consider the Christian clergy blameless and hold that the poor Christian ministers do not say anything disrespectful of the Holy Prophet. However, the fact is that the Christian preachers are unequaled in their use of contempt, scorn and abuses. We have a

store of such books in which the Christian clerics have filled their manuscripts with abuses, and any Muslim cleric who desires to examine them is welcome to do so. It should be remembered however that any Christian minister who abstains from abusive conduct and resorts to civilized discourse would find us responding with the same civility. The onus for the attacks on their Jesus lies on them because they just do not abstain from their abusive conduct. We have reached the limit of our patience. If someone's father is abused, does it not give that aggrieved person the right to do likewise? What I have said is entirely factual. 'The deeds depend upon the intentions.'<sup>2</sup>

Sincerely,  
Ghulam Ahmad  
December 20, 1895

### **The tomb of Jesus in Sirinagar, Kashmir**

It was in this issue of *Nur-ul-Quran*, Volume II, that *Hazrat* Mirza wrote an article *A Measure of Religions*, in which he compared different religions from the standpoint of the nature of man. While reviewing the Christian religion, he perused the research of Dr. Bernier<sup>3</sup> and the statements of *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din thoroughly, and after further research and study, he made the new and historical disclosure to the world that the tomb of Jesus was in Mohallah Khan Yar, Srinagar, Kashmir. *Hazrat* Mirza first showed that the people of Kashmir were of Israelite descent and cited the research of Dr. Bernier in support of his hypothesis. He reiterated that after Nebuchadnezzar enslaved and oppressed two of the tribes of Israel, the remaining ten tribes migrated towards the east and settled in the area of Afghanistan and Kashmir. There is a striking similarity between the facial features, habits, customs, architecture and names of towns and places of the Jews, and the people of Kashmir. Based upon this anthropological evidence, all researchers have concluded that the people of Kashmir are the descendents of the Israeli tribes who migrated towards Afghanistan and Kashmir during the time of Nebuchadnezzar.

Jesus had clearly stated: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, after he had fulfilled the dictates of his

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2 *Al-Imam* Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail **al-Bukhari**. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. *Kitab Bada-ul-Wahy* 1:1

3 Bernier, Francois. *Travels in the Moghul Empire*. Constable, London, 1891.

4 Matthew 15:24



ministry towards the two Israeli tribes that had remained in Palestine, and was crucified in the process but saved alive by God, he migrated towards the east in search of the lost ten tribes - the Biblical "lost sheep of the house of Israel." He arrived in Afghanistan by way of Nasibain and then traveled on to Kashmir where he lived up to the age of one hundred and twenty years as mentioned in a *hadith*. He continued preaching to the Israeli tribes in the area and after completing his ministry, he died like all other prophets had died before him, and was buried in Mohallah Khan Yar, Sirinagar. His tomb is known as the tomb of Yuz Assaf or Issa sahib<sup>5</sup> and the people of Kashmir hold, in accordance with their ancient tradition, that it is the tomb of a prophet. It is apparent that if Issa sahib was a prophet, then it could be none other than Jesus because Muslims do not accept a prophet after the Holy Prophet. Therefore, the tomb has to be that of a prophet before the Holy Prophet. History records only one prophet by the name of Issa before the Holy Prophet - the well known Israelite prophet Jesus. He was the last of a long line of Israelite prophets and had come to Kashmir in search of the lost sheep of Israel. The name Yuz Assaf is a distortion of Yussu<sup>6</sup> Asaaf. The word *Assaf* means sorrowful and it appears that when Jesus arrived in Kashmir, he was much affected by the recent events of his life; he grieved at the fate of his people who were now cursed and excluded from God's favors for their role in his crucifixion. Probably it was for this reason that he came to be known as Yussu Assaf, which later was distorted to Yuz Assaf.

Further corroboration for this narration is provided by the discovery of some old copies of the New Testament by the British in Tibet. The people of Tibet, it appears, must have also benefited from the teachings of Jesus. Some of the facts narrated here were reported in the second issue of *Nur-ul-Quran* and some were reported in a later book written by *Hazrat Mirza, Masih Hindustan Mein* (The Messiah in India), published after his death.

### **Team to research the tomb**

In 1895, *Hazrat Mirza* sent a team of his disciples to Sirinagar to investigate the tomb in more detail and to prepare a report for him. It was after the preparation of this report that *Hazrat Mirza* wrote the book, *Masih Hindustan Mein*, details of which are provided later in its correct chronological place. However, suffice it to say here that *Hazrat Mirza* provided convincing evidence in this book to show that the people of

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<sup>5</sup> Issa is the Arabic name of Jesus

<sup>6</sup> Yussu is the Hebrew name of Jesus

Kashmir were of Israelite descent and that Jesus had come to them after the episode of crucifixion to preach and reform them. Further, that the tomb in Mohallah Khan Yar, Sirinagar was that of none other than Jesus.

Apart from this book, *Hazrat Mirza* and his disciples wrote several research articles in the magazine *Review of Religions*, in which they showed that the tomb in Mohallah Khan Yar, known as the tomb of Yuz Assaf, was in reality the tomb of Jesus, the Israelite prophet. This research created a commotion among the Christian and Muslim opponents of *Hazrat Mirza*, and put before the researchers a new dimension of a historical problem. The impact of this research can be gauged from the fact that when Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India known for his open mindedness, visited Kashmir, he specifically went to Mohallah Khan Yar to see the tomb of Yuz Assaf.

## THE ISLAMIC ROOTS OF SIKHISM & SAT BACHAN (A TRUE STATEMENT)

### **Evidence from the life of *Baba Nanak* about his Islamic faith**

Because the mission of *Hazrat Mirza* was to show the superiority of Islam over all religions, he was constantly surveying the scriptures and literature of other religions. A perusal of the biographies of Sikh religious leaders (*Janam Sakhis*) and other books on Sikhism led *Hazrat Mirza* to conclude that *Baba Nanak*, the founder of Sikhism, was in reality a Muslim. There were several clues that led him to this conclusion. *Baba Nanak* stayed with *Baba Farid Shakar Gunj* to benefit from his influence (in fact he pledged allegiance to him), and accompanied him on several journeys. In Sultanpur, *Baba Nanak* offered prayers in the company of Nawab Daulat Khan and the Judge of the area. He bore the travails of a tiring journey to Makkah for pilgrimage. Several sayings of *Baba Nanak* articulated his belief that no blessing was possible without first reciting the *Darud*, i.e. sending salutation on the Holy Prophet; his poetry was strongly influenced by the Quran, with many of his poetic verses precisely reflecting the meaning of Quranic verses. In one of his verses, he referred to the calling out of the *takbir* (Allah is Great) in the Muslim funeral prayer and mentioned his own helplessness at the time of death. When *Baba Nanak* died, Muslims of the *Hanafi* sect prayed the ritual Muslim funeral prayer for him.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See following page

Western researchers have also provided evidence about the Islamic faith of *Baba Nanak*. Mr. Hughes described him as a disciple of *Baba Farid Shakar Gunj*.<sup>2</sup> Mr Berg, another European, stated that *Baba Nanak* studied the major books of Islam at a tender age from a person called Syed Hussain.<sup>3</sup> Yet another European, Dr. Trump has a verse in his English translation of the holy Sikh scripture *Granth* in which *Baba Nanak* stated that only those with good deeds will not be chastised on the Day of Judgment, and salvation will only be for those who will be under the protection of the Holy Prophet.<sup>4</sup>

The *Granth* also contains a saying of *Baba Nanak* to the effect that there is no good fortune without first reciting the *kalimah* (the Muslim confession of faith), and there are no blessings in the hereafter without reciting the *Darud* (sending salutations on the Holy Prophet.) The *Janam Sakhi* (biography) of *Baba Nanak* also contains his saying that those who do not pray are accursed. When *Baba Nanak* was accompanying *Baba Fareed* on his journeys, they would frequently go into villages for preaching. The place they sat was considered as defiled by the Hindus who would plaster it after they left with cow dung to purify it. These and many other pieces of evidence showed clearly that *Baba Nanak* was a Muslim.

### ***Chola Sahib* (The cloak of *Baba Nanak*)**

In addition to the above evidence, the *Janam Sakhi* of *Guru Angad* was emphatic in stating that *Baba Nanak* frequently wore a cloak received from heaven and bearing some heavenly inscriptions. After his death, the cloak was preserved as a relic in Dera Nanak, and Sikh religious leaders

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1 1 According to the *Hanafi* school of thought, there can be no funeral prayer unless the body of the deceased is present where the prayer is held. Hence, one is forced to conclude that the *Hanafis* who said the funeral prayer must have somehow obtained custody of *Baba Nanak*'s body. Some have alleged that instead of the body, the *Hanfis* had procured a shawl of *Baba Nanak* and buried it after saying the funeral prayer over it. Such a story is patently false for two reasons. First, nowhere in Islam is there a provision to bury a shawl in lieu of the body; second, the shawl would have been a valuable relic and there was no point in burying and destroying it. The saying of funeral prayer for *Baba Nanak* by Muslims shows that he was a Muslim. If he had not been a Muslim, Muslims would never have said his funeral prayer because Muslims as a nation are so strict that if they have the slightest doubt about the Islamic creed of a person, they abstain from saying the funeral prayer for such a person.

2 Hughes, Thomas Patrick. Dictionary of Islam. Rupa, New Delhi.

3 Berg. *Seeral Mutakhareen*: Vol. 1, page 110.

4 Trumpp, Ernest. *Adi Granth*. Page 42.

of consequence considered it a matter of great blessing to view the cloak and make offerings at the temple where it was kept. It was also stated that whenever Sikhs were beset by difficulties, they supplicated with their head on the cloak and God removed their difficulties. These descriptions aroused *Hazrat* Mirza's curiosity, and he decided to investigate the reality behind these assertions.

*Hazrat* Mirza formed a team of his disciples to visit Dera Nanak. The team consisted of four people, Mirza Yaqub Beg, *Munshi* Tajuddin, Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din and Mian Abdur Rahman. The team reached Dera Nanak from Qadian and went to the temple where the cloak was housed. The custodians of the cloak, who were the descendants of Kabli Mal, received them hospitably and showed them the cloak. The team found the *kalimah tayyibah* "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah," and many verses of the Quran inscribed on the cloak. They came back and reported their findings to *Hazrat* Mirza, who remarked: "This cloak is the last will and testament of *Baba* Nanak left for the Sikhs, and I must see it for myself."

### Visit to Dera Nanak

As was the wont of the Holy Prophet prior to making an important decision, *Hazrat* Mirza supplicated to God for guidance about his proposed visit and then set out on Monday, September 30, 1895 for Dera Nanak. His party consisted of ten people comprised of *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din, *Maulvi* Syed Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi, *Munshi* Ghulam Qadir Fasih Sialkoti, Sheikh Abdur Rahim, *Maulvi* Abdul Karim Sialkoti, Sheikh Rahmatullah Gujrati, Mirza Ayub Beg, Mir Nasir Nawab, Syed Muhammad Ismail and Sheikh Hamid Ali. They reached Dera Nanak at ten in the morning.

While travelling, *Hazrat* Mirza accorded himself no special privileges, and there was such egalitarianism in his party that it was very difficult for outsiders to make out which one in the group was *Hazrat* Mirza. On reaching Dera Nanak, the party, including *Hazrat* Mirza, sat down on some sheets spread on the ground under a banyan tree. When the people of Dera Nanak heard that *Hazrat* Mirza was in their town, they started coming out and gathering at the site where the party was seated. The first few people who arrived mistook *Maulvi* Muhammad Ahsan for the Promised Messiah and after shaking his hand, sat down next to him. After three or four more people repeated this process, it became apparent that these people were mistaken about the real identities of the members in the party and subsequently, *Maulvi* Muhammad Ahsan began directing the attention of all arrivals to the Promised Messiah.

### Viewing the cloak

Thanks to the concerted effort of a sincere mediator, arrangements for viewing the cloak were wrapped up by 11:00 a.m. and *Hazrat* Mirza and his party were accorded viewing privileges reserved for just a few. The cloak was fully opened for examination and *Hazrat* Mirza was allowed to examine all the inscriptions at leisure. The cloak was stored wrapped up in over three hundred shawls, some of which were very fine and expensive. The shawls were variously made of cotton, silk and fine wool, and some of the more expensive shawls had the name of the presenting raja or chief woven in the fabric. The large number of shawls of various ages, going back almost to the time of *Baba* Nanak's death, was a measure of the reverence in which the cloak was held right from the beginning of Sikhism. It took almost an hour to peel off all the shawls before the original fabric of the cloak was exposed. *Hazrat* Mirza has described this viewing in his book *Sat Bachan*:<sup>5</sup>

In reality, this is a blessed garment on which Quranic verses are inscribed in place of gold embroidery. Accordingly, I am including in this magazine a sketch of the cloak with the Quranic verses that I saw written on it. It became quite apparent at the time of viewing the cloak that its custodians are somewhat embarrassed to exhibit it. To the extent possible, they do not want people to learn about the reality of the cloak because the creed that *Baba* Nanak has exhibited on the cloth of this cloak is diametrically opposed to the Hindu faith. For this reason, the custodians of the cloak take great care not to exhibit it fully and feel very nervous if someone wants to see the hidden reality. However, since they are totally illiterate, they can be persuaded with a gratuity.

When we wanted to see the cloak, they first showed it to us in a folded state turned inside out. Only a small corner of the cloak showed its outer surface but the inscription on it was partly erased and unreadable. A fine cloth lined the underside of the cloak and we were told that the yarn for this lining was spun by the wife of Arjun Sahib; she then had it woven into cloth and stitched the lining on the cloak herself. The old man showing us the cloak and providing this commentary claimed to be a descendant of *Baba* Nanak. He also told us that whatever was written on the cloak was not the work of man but of a divine power.

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5 *Sat Bachan*: Pages 32 to 34

We then insisted that we wanted to see those divine words written by the hand of God, and it was for that very purpose that we had come from very far. The old man then partly lifted one fold, and the inscription “In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful,” was exposed, written in a beautiful hand on the cloak. The old man then quickly tried to put the fold back in its place but we insisted on seeing more. By now, there were about twenty of us, including some gentry of the town who had come to see us, and all these respectable persons were clamoring for a more detailed viewing. The old man then parted another fold and a corner of the cloak was revealed on which the inscription “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger,” was written very conspicuously with a thick pen in a beautiful script. The old man once again tried to refold the cloak but Sheikh Rahmatullah Gujrati quickly gave him three Rupees, of which he had contributed two Rupees and *Maulvi* Muhammad Ahsan one. Sheikh Rahmatullah had previously also given him four Rupees. The old man then lifted another fold and I saw written in a corner, the inscription “Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam” (3:18). The old man once again seemed reluctant to proceed and Sheikh sahib passed him another two Rupees, contributed this time by *Maulvi* Hakim Nur-ud-Din; in addition, to please the old man further, he gave him another four Rupees from his own side and one Rupee from another sincere friend. Having thus received fourteen Rupees in all, the old man was happy and allowed us to examine the cloak freely.

We were able to unfold many layers of the cloak ourselves. While examining the cloak, we found an inscription in one place “I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger.” Sheikh sahib noticed some dirt and fluff on the cloak and told the old man that the cloak needed to be cleaned and it should be done right away. He then proceeded to open the rest of the folds and it was confirmed that the cloak had nothing but Quranic inscriptions on it. If it was the chapter *Fatihah* in one place, it was the chapter *Ikhlas* at another, and at yet another the Quranic verse stating that the Quran was the pure word of God and should not be touched by impure persons, and so on. It appears that God had opened *Baba Nanak*’s heart to Islam in a way that had made him a lover of Allah and His Messenger.

Thus, the cloak provides strong testimony of *Baba Nanak's* devotion to Islam and it is apparent that he left this cloak as his last will and testament so that all people, present and future, may bear witness to his real faith. Regretfully, some people have totally fabricated the story that the cloak also has Sanskrit and Shastri words and some verses from the Book of David written on it. This is a complete lie and a loathsome calumny. It can only be the work of some trouble-monger and not of any respectable person. We examined the cloak thoroughly and the entire cloak has only verses from the Quran, the *kalimah tayyibah* and *kalima shahadat*. In some places, the Quranic verses are written only in numerals but there is no trace of Sanskrit or the Book of David. There is nothing on it but the verses of the Quran and the attributive names of Allah found in the Quran. It appears that this lie has only been fabricated to make people believe that, just as the cloak has Quranic verses, it also has passages from the Vedas written on it. What else can we say but "May the curse of Allah be upon the liars."

*Baba Nanak* has left us with clear testimony that all religions besides Islam are false and impure. Why would he then write anything complementary about the Vedas? The cloak is present and anyone who desires may go and see it. We are willing to offer a reward of three thousand rupees to anyone who can show any reference to the Vedas on the cloak, or can show that any religion besides Islam has been complimented on it, or that verses of any book besides Quran are written on it.

We have to admit that the survival of the cloak is a miracle. It has stayed in the hands of people who do not believe in Allah and His Messenger, and has passed through a time when the ruling power was so prejudicial that the mere call to prayers was grounds to kill. The cloak is a relic of the time when the Mogul Empire existed; the Empire has disappeared long since but the cloak has survived to this day. If it had not been under God's protection, it would have been destroyed long ago. It was decreed that it should survive to our time so that we may restore the dignity of *Baba Nanak* by refuting the baseless allegations against him and making his real faith known to people.<sup>6</sup>

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6 See Appendix 1.



### **Publication of the book *Sat Bachan***

On his return from Dera Nanak, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote a book called *Sat Bachan*<sup>7</sup> in which he clearly laid out all the evidence, some of which I have referred to above, of *Baba* Nanak's Muslim faith. A picture of the cloak was prominently displayed in the book, and it supplemented *Hazrat* Mirza's compelling arguments that *Baba* Nanak was a Muslim. It was only the influence of later gurus over an extended period of time that morphed the teachings of *Baba* Nanak and gave to Sikhism its present character. However, the evidence of *Baba* Nanak's Islamic faith is compelling and it is only prejudice and stubbornness that prevents the Sikh nation from accepting this fact.

### **Secluded period of mystic communion in Multan**

*Baba* Nanak spent a period of solitary communion (*chilla*) in the famous shrine of Wali Shah Shams in Multan and this episode finds a place in *Hazrat* Mirza's book. In the southern wall of the shrine there is a structure with an arched door, over which the words *Ya Allah* (O Allah) are inscribed with an impression of an open hand below it. The people of Multan, regardless of whether Hindu, Muslim or Sikh, believe that *Baba* Nanak himself wrote the words *Ya Allah* and drew the sign of the open hand. To the left of this structure is a platform, about a meter and a half long and about a meter wide, pointing in the direction of the Kaba. The local populace unanimously accepts this to be the site where *Baba* Nanak sat for forty days in solitary meditation. Hindus and Sikhs, too, revere this site and consider it an act of virtue to visit it. There is also a mosque in close proximity of the platform. It appears that the platform was constructed facing the Kaba for ease of offering voluntary prayers, and in the proximity of a mosque for offering the five daily obligatory prayers in congregation. The custodians of the shrine, who are the descendents of Wali Shah Shams, state that *Baba* Nanak stopped in this shrine for meditation on his return from Haj. From the attributive names of Allah, *Baba* Nanak chose the attribute *Ya Hu* as his incantation during his period of mystic communion. This was also the mantra of Wali Shah Shams.

### **Secluded period of mystic communion in Sarsah**

The shrine of Shah Abdul Shakoor is located in Sarsah. *Baba* Nanak spent forty days in solitary meditation there as well. Once again he select-

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7 The dictionary meanings of the words in the title are *Sat* meaning true and *Bachan* meaning speaking, talking or pledge. Accordingly, the title is translated as True Talk – Translator.

ed a modest place in the vicinity of a mosque and had a simple structure built, facing the Kibla, where he could pray and meditate in seclusion, venturing out only to offer his obligatory prayers in the mosque. The site of this secluded meditation is now called *Chilla Baba Nanak* (Place of secluded meditation of *Baba Nanak*). Sikhs from Punjab and Sindh come to visit this place and donate considerable sums as offerings; the beneficiaries of these offerings are the Muslim custodians of the shrine. It is also reported that *Baba Nanak* spent time in solitary meditation in Ajmer and Pakpattan, but because of time constraint, these reports could not be investigated.

### ***Pothi Sahib* (The Revered Book)**

Hazrat Mirza did investigative research on *Pothi Sahib*, another revered relic of *Baba Nanak*, in April 1908 and the findings were published in his book *Chashma Marifat* (Fountain of Knowledge) in May of 1908. However, since the evidence regarding the Islamic faith of *Baba Nanak*, of which the cloak is the centerpiece, has been presented here, it is conducive in the interest of continuity to mention also the findings about *Pothi Sahib*. The narration that follows is based upon information provided by members of the research team sent by *Hazrat Mirza* to *Guruharsahay* in the Ferozepur district to find out the truth about *Pothi Sahib*. The members of the team who provided information for this report included *Mufti Muhammad Sadiq*, *Maulvi Muhammad Ali* and others.

*Hazrat Mirza* had received reports that there was a relic of *Baba Nanak* called *Pothi Sahib* in the village of *Guruharsahay*. The relic was in the hands of the descendants of *Guru Ram Das*, the fourth guru of the Sikhs, after whom the famous Golden Temple of Amritsar was also named. The descendants of *Guru Ram Das* first resided in the village *Muhammadipur* near *Chunian* in Lahore district, but then an elder of the family by the name of *Guru Jiwan Mal* moved away from *Muhammadipur* and founded a village—their present place of residency—which he named after his son *Guruharsahay*. At the time of the research instituted by *Hazrat Mirza*, *Guru Bashan Singh* was the head of the family and the custodian of the relic that had been passed down to him by his forefathers.

On inquiry, it was learned that the Sikhs believed the *Pothi Sahib* to be a book that *Baba Nanak* revered so much that he wore it around his neck at all times, took every opportunity to read it, and considered its reading to be an act of devotion. Sikh devotees came from great distances to pay homage to this relic and made offerings amounting to thousands of rupees at the temple where it was housed. Among the famous devotees

who had come to view the book was the Maharaja of Faridkot. Normally, the book was kept wrapped in many scarves and was exhibited with the wrappings to the devotees who would place their forehead on the wraps and depart. Very few people had been privileged to actually see and examine the book. The reason was that an uncovered viewing of the book required an offering of one hundred and one rupees to the custodian guru, who then had to bathe one hundred and one times before he was considered fit to touch this pure and holy book. Therefore, on rare occasions when a very affluent Sikh devotee with a strong desire to see the book came and made the offering, the actual book was taken out for viewing after the requisite baths had been taken by the custodian *guru*.

On getting this information, *Hazrat Mirza's* enlightened soul at once perceived that *Pothi Sahib* would furnish some additional evidence about the Islamic creed of *Baba Nanak*. Accordingly, he dispatched a delegation of his disciples to *Guruharsahay* for this investigation. Coincidentally, Syed Amir Ali Shah, a disciple of *Hazrat Mirza*, was a sub-inspector of police in Jalalabad, Ferozepur district, and the village of *Guruharsahay* fell under his jurisdiction. On reaching Jalalabad, the delegation went straight to him and sought his help in the matter. He replied: "You have come at a very opportune time. There has been a theft in the house of this *Guru* in *Guruharsahay* and I am going there to investigate it. You can come with me." The delegation then accompanied him to *Guruharsahay*.

*Guru Bashan Singh* received them hospitably. A member of the delegation said: "Guru Ji! The greatest gesture of hospitality for us would be to view the *Pothi Sahib*." *Guru Bashan Singh* replied, undoubtedly with an eye to winning the favor of the sub-inspector: "You are in luck! A devotee has only today left an offering of one hundred and one rupees with me. Tomorrow I will bathe one hundred and one times and will open the *Pothi Sahib* for him. You can view the *Pothi Sahib* at the same time that he does, and that way you will not have to make a separate offering."

The next day, which was April 4, 1908, *Guru Bashan Singh* started taking the ritual one hundred and one baths, and it was many hours before he was done because the taking of so many baths is no small matter. Finally he was ready to touch the pure book. When the *Pothi Sahib* was brought, it was wrapped in layers of expensive scarves just like the cloak of *Baba Nanak*. One by one the wraps came off and finally the book was revealed from underneath its many coverings. When the book was opened, the delegation was astonished to see that the *Pothi Sahib* was a copy of the Holy Quran. Starting from the Chapter *Fatihah* and ending with *wannas*, the last word of the Quran, the *Pothi Sahib* was the Quran

in its entirety. It was a hand-written, pocket-sized version of the Quran, with the text on each page bordered by golden lines. *Guru* Bashan Singh said: “The language in which it is written is unknown to us. It is some heavenly language that *Baba Nanak* alone could understand.” His statement was correct because the current guru was illiterate in Arabic. Had he known the *Pothi Sahib* to be the Quran, he would never have allowed an investigating team of Muslims to see it. The delegation returned home after the viewing, their faith refreshed by what they had seen. They thanked Allah and sent salutations on His Messenger all the way on their journey home. When they narrated the details of their trip and their findings to *Hazrat Mirza*, his happiness knew no bounds. He said: “This latest evidence has put the final seal of authenticity on our finding that *Baba Nanak* was a Muslim.” Accordingly, he prominently announced these findings in his book, *Chashma Marifat*. Whether the Sikhs accept it or not, there is no doubt that *Hazrat Mirza* has provided convincing evidence of *Baba Nanak*’s Islamic creed.

### Appendix 1

In 1902, this humble author was on plague duty in Shakargarh, Gurdaspur district. One of my colleagues was a Hindu Arya doctor, who was otherwise a decent person but had very fanatical views. He was an ardent reader of *Baba Nanak*’s *Jupji*, which he read every morning. On several occasions, I had remarked to him that he was wasting his time reading *Jupji* because *Baba Nanak* was a Muslim. During our discussions, the topic of *Baba Nanak*’s cloak came up and I told him that *Hazrat Mirza* had seen the cloak with his own eyes and the *kalimah tayyibah* and the *kalimah shahadat* were inscribed on it. His only response was to show disbelief. Finally, we agreed to go and view the cloak ourselves. Accordingly, both of us went to Dera Nanak. A friend of mine, who was a disciple of *Hazrat Mirza*, also accompanied us.

It was with great difficulty that we convinced the custodians of the cloak to permit us a viewing. Their first response was to refuse our request on the grounds that the Sikh community had taken them to task for showing the cloak to *Hazrat Mirza*. I asked them: “Why did they take you to task?” They replied: “*Mirza* took back with him a picture of the cloak and wrote a thick book about it in which he published the picture and showed that *Baba Nanak* was a Muslim. The Sikhs admonished us for showing the cloak to Muslims.” On this, I asked the Arya doctor to plead forcefully with them and also to offer them some money. He then told them: “Sir, I am from the Hindu faith and have come from a great distance to view the

cloak. Please accept my offering and show us the cloak. You can search us and see that we have no camera to take pictures.” When the word ‘offering’ fell on their ears, the old men softened their attitude. My friend and I chipped in a rupee each and handed it to them, whereupon they took us inside the temple dedicated to the cloak. We did not have to wait long before they carried in a cot with a huge bundle of wrapped shawls on it and placed it on the floor of the temple. Some people with drums and other musical instruments appeared and a lively music session ensued. In tune with the music, the shawls of the bundle began to be unwrapped one at a time. There were some very expensive shawls, the offerings of Sikh rajahs and chiefs. One of the shawls was an offering of Sham Singh Atariwalay. I became apprehensive that if the shawls were taken off one at a time, it would be nightfall before the cloak was revealed. I signaled to the Arya doctor to speed up the process by peeling several shawls at a time in quick succession. Accordingly, after seeking permission from the custodians, he started taking off five or six shawls at a time. Even so it took about an hour before the cloak was revealed.

It had been folded inside out and the inscribed surface was inside. The custodians asked for more offering before they would allow us to view the inscribed surface. I gave them another rupee and they turned over a hem of the cloak. As *Hazrat Mirza* had written, Quranic verses, *kalimah tayyibah* and *kalimah shahadat* were inscribed all over the cloak. The chapter *Fatihah* and *Ikhlas* were among the Quranic inscriptions on the cloak. One particular Quranic verse inscribed in several places on the cloak was “There is no God but Thou, glory be to Thee! Surely I am of the sufferers of loss” (21:87). It appears that, since *Baba Nanak* kept his Islamic faith a secret in the beginning, he probably repeated this verse “There is no God but Thou, glory be to Thee! Surely I am of the sufferers of loss,” often after he announced his faith to atone for his previous conduct. In other words, this was an admission that keeping his Islamic faith a secret was an error. Some verses of the Quran were written in numerals and some amulets were also drawn on the cloak. I saw the names of the five revered persons (*panjtan*), Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hussain, inscribed around one circular amulet. Having examined the main body of the cloak, we had to give another offering before the sleeves of the cloak were shown to us.

As the examination of the cloak proceeded, I ventured a glance at the Arya doctor and saw that his face had turned pale and his legs were trembling. It was obvious that he was in the throes of a great shock because the Islamic faith of *Baba Nanak* was written all over this cloak. At last he

asked: "Sir, how is it that the cloak is covered just by inscriptions from the Quran and there is no passage from the Vedas on it; nor is there any inscription in Gurmukhi?" They replied: "There is no Gurmukhi because the word Gurmukhi is a compound word made up of *guru* meaning 'master,' and *Amukhi*, meaning 'from the mouth of.' Thus whatever language comes out from the mouth of the Master is Gurmukhi. As for the Quranic verses, Sir, *Baba Nanak* was a lover of monotheism and so wrote verses pertaining to the unity of God." I said: "This proves at least one thing: that *Baba Nanak* could not find verses depicting the unity of God from any other book besides Quran; not from the Vedas, neither from the Book of David or from any other Book. Otherwise, he would certainly have balanced the writing of Quranic verses with some passages from the Vedas. The fact that he did not do so shows that he either did not believe in the Vedas, or at the very least considered them devoid of monotheism. Another point is that the inscriptions on the cloak are not only verses pertaining to the Unity of God, but the *kalimah tayyibah* and *kalimah shahadat* are also written on it. In these *kalimas*, there is a confession of faith not only in the Unity of God but also in the apostleship of Prophet Muhammad. Then there is also an inscription giving the names of the 'Five Revered Persons.' Why is that there? What is the purpose of writing the verse: "Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam?" The Sikhs had no answer. The only thing they could say was: "Sir, you are very fortunate that you got to see the cloak. Hundreds of people come to see the cloak but return without viewing it." The Arya doctor was on the verge of fainting and I had to assist him out of the temple as we started our journey back to Shakargarh. It was evening by the time we left. The night was dark and throughout the return journey the Arya doctor stayed quiet and mournful.

## THE DISCIPLE'S OINTMENT OR JESUS' OINTMENT

### Jesus' Ointment

When God, the Most High, selects a perfect man for a particular purpose, He creates in that man's heart a burning desire and enthusiasm for his mission that never leaves him day or night. God appointed *Hazrat Mirza* to break the Cross - to refute the Christian dogma - accordingly, God put a passion in his heart that matched his mission. Since the death of Jesus was central to refuting the Christian doctrine, *Hazrat Mirza's* attention was constantly focused on this issue. So great was his absorption in this matter that once a Muslim cleric, who had just taken the pledge, asked him: "I teach the Quran, can you give me some advice on how best to teach it?" *Hazrat Mirza* said: "Explain to your students that where the Quran states '*Ya Isa inni mutawaffi-ka*,' (3:54) the meaning of *mutawaffi-ka* is *mumitu-ka* as has been stated by *Hazrat Ibn Abbas* in the *Bukhari*. Thus the meaning is 'O Jesus, I will cause thee to die.' For the rest, teach as you think best."<sup>1</sup> Commenting on this incident at a later date, *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* said: "If he had asked me the same question, I would perhaps have told him a score of other things but probably missed this point." However, the burning desire in the heart of a person appointed by God for a mission does not allow him to forget his duty even momentarily. Establishing the death of Jesus was central to the success of *Hazrat*

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1 Ibn Abbas says that the significance of *mutawaffi-ka* is *mumitu-ka* i.e. I will cause thee to die. See *Bukhari* 65:12

Mirza's mission and it was for this reason that he considered the most important pedagogical advice for teaching the Quran to be creating clarity in the minds of pupils about the death of Jesus.

As part of the effort to establish the death of Jesus, *Hazrat* Mirza searched the books of medicine extensively to find an explanation for the name of an ointment called the 'Disciple's Ointment' or 'Jesus' Ointment'. His research proved successful, and he was able to show that this ointment was so called because the disciples had used it to dress the wounds Jesus suffered as a result of his near-death experience on the cross. The famous book of medicine *Qarabadin Qadri* clearly stated that this ointment was prepared by the disciples of Jesus to dress his wounds. In addition to this book, *Hazrat* Mirza found many other books of medicine that contained mention of the 'Disciple's Ointment' or 'Jesus' Ointment' and an explanation for the name similar to the one reported in *Qarabadin Qadri*. The authors of these books included not only Muslims but also Christians and Magians and their sources of information were ancient Greek and Roman books written in the period immediately following Jesus' time. *Hazrat* Mirza announced his findings in the book *Sat Bachan* and included a bibliography of his references.

*Hazrat* Mirza argued convincingly in his announcement that the existence of this ointment showed that Jesus was alive when he was taken down from the cross and his disciples prepared this ointment to dress his wounds. As a result of this treatment, he was healed and soon thereafter migrated to Kashmir to preach to the other ten tribes of Israel that had settled in the area of Kashmir and Afghanistan. After completing his mission, Jesus died in Sirinagar and was buried in the part of the town known as Mohallah Khan Yar where his grave can still be found, referred to by the locals as 'the tomb of Prophet Yuz Assaf' or 'the tomb of Isa sahib.'

Since the existence of this ointment shed light on the events of crucifixion and the death of Jesus, *Hazrat* Mirza announced his findings forcefully to the world. This research joined the battery of evidence that *Hazrat* Mirza had collected to prove that Jesus did not die on the cross but died a natural death afterwards.



## Chapter

# 64

## **ARYA DHARM (THE HINDU ARYA FAITH)**

The Hindu *Aryas* borrowed a page from the strategy of the Christian priests and started hurling foul, baseless and derogatory charges against the blessed personality of the Holy Prophet. When Christian accusations had exceeded all limits of tolerance, *Hazrat Mirza* gave a scathing reply in *Nur-ul-Quran* Volume II by critiquing the Jesus of Christianity and totally dismantling false Christian doctrines. The Christian critics were dumbfounded and fell silent. When the Hindu excesses similarly became intolerable, *Hazrat Mirza* decided to pay them back in kind and wrote the book *Arya Dharm* (The Hindu Arya Faith) with its central focus on the issue of *neog*, a custom sanctioned by the Hindu religion of getting a woman inseminated by a high caste man with the permission of an impotent husband. Using the custom of *neog* as an example, *Hazrat Mirza* showed the gross immorality of the Hindu faith in such a powerful exposition that for once the Hindu *Aryas* realized that they were up against a mighty force.

Since the *Aryas* always countered the issue of *neog* by bringing up the permissibility of polygamy and divorce in Islam, *Hazrat Mirza* clarified and explained the true Islamic position on these matters in this book. He used the real life example of *neog* to show all the dimensions of its immorality with such brilliant success that any rational man would be revolted by a faith that permits such filth. The example was taken from *Pundit Dayanand's* book *Satyarth Prakash* in which the *Pundit* stated that according to the teachings of the Vedas, a widow was barred from

marrying again. The essence of what he wrote was that the widow should adopt a son from her own caste and in this way the family name would survive and the woman would save herself from cohabiting with a man outside of marriage, that is, there will be no need for *neog*. However, if it was not possible for her to be celibate then it was permissible for her to satisfy her carnal lust through *neog* and in the process also conceive a child.<sup>1</sup> Although this by itself would be considered a morally reprehensible act in most societies, more was to follow later on. *Hazrat Mirza* expressed this in the following words:<sup>2</sup>

I said read on; until the part came where the Arya Vedas advise even a childless married woman with a living husband to commit adultery (for obtaining an issue). On reading this statement, one of the persons present hung down his head in shame and everyone expressed shock at the existence of religious philosophies which, instead of teaching civilized behavior and purity, corrode even the existing moral fabric of their votaries and erode their moral behavior. My heart grieved with sorrow and I was about to burst out with an anguished tirade at the thought that a people whose book advocated such practices could (have the gall) to criticize the pure teachings of Islam. They were okay with their adulterous teachings but objected to the provision of polygamy that allowed exceptions to the constraints of (a single) marriage precisely to cater for situations that had reduced these other nations to an adulterous way of life. To criticize and mock a pure way but to be satisfied with immorality and shamelessness; to falsely claim a child conceived from another's sperm as one's own; is this not the cold blooded murder of all that is truthful, dignified and honorable? However, I kept this sorrow to myself.

### **Reward of one hundred rupees**

Prior to publishing the book *Arya Dharm*, *Hazrat Mirza* published an announcement addressed to the Hindu *Aryas* on July 3, 1895, on the issue of *neog*. In this announcement, he expressed the hope that the *Aryas* did not condone such shameful teachings. If *Pundit Dayanand* had misrepresented the teachings of the Vedas, they should contradict him and shun him for propagating such filth, and set the record straight by publishing

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1 Dayanand *Pundit*. *Satyarth Prakash* second edition. Page 113.

2 *Arya Dharm*. Page 6.

the real teachings of the Vedas. However, if *Pundit* Dayanand was correct and *neog* was, in fact, the teaching of the Vedas, then they should give up the Vedas because no book of God could teach such filth.

The response to this was a fuzzy and abusive announcement published by the organization *Sat Dharm Parcharak*, Jullunder. The announcement abused *Hazrat* Mirza and accused him of misrepresentation, but at the same time quietly admitted the legitimacy of *neog*. For this reason, when *Hazrat* Mirza published his book *Arya Dharm* on September 22, 1895, he also announced a reward of one hundred rupees for anyone who proved he had misrepresented the matter. He wrote:<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, I announce a reward of one hundred rupees with this book if it is shown that I have factually misrepresented *Pundit* Dayanand's statements from his book *Satyarath Prakash* in which he cites the Vedas as sanctioning not only the cohabitation of a widow with a man without marriage, but also the obtaining of semen by a childless married woman from other than her husband. This other man can cohabit with the childless married woman without any objection until she is able to bear a few male children. If anyone shows this announcement to be false, we will pay one hundred rupees in cash to the publisher of such an announcement and will deserve the abuses hurled at us therein.

The Hindu *Aryas* had no response to this and did not comment on the factual issues, but did protest that they had been treated very harshly. Not surprisingly, the Muslim clerics who held *Hazrat* Mirza as an infidel joined them, and held him responsible for unnecessarily provoking the *Aryas* and Christians and for making them retaliate with derogatory remarks against the Holy Prophet.

### **Announcement about the motivation for writing the books *Arya Dharm* and *Sat Bachan***

When the nonsensical prattle of the Muslim clerics continued unabated, *Hazrat* Mirza issued an announcement on November 15, 1895, entitled 'Motivation for Writing *Arya Dharm* and *Sat Bachan*'. He clarified in this announcement that he had never been the initiator but always the responder, and had felt it necessary to respond so as to pay the foul-mouthed *Aryas* and Christians in their own coins. All he had done by way

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3 *Arya Dharm*. Page 13.

of response was to strip the veneer of blind faith and ancestral conformity and to expose the reality of their religion. This reality was so dirty and repulsive that it made them very upset and they complained of being treated harshly. In fact, there was no unwarranted aggression but merely an exposition of the facts. To this day, Muslim clerics and others level the same charge against *Hazrat Mirza*. Hence, to set the record straight, the full text of the announcement is reproduced below:

Everyone is aware that we did not respond to the *Aryas* for many years. It is almost fourteen years since I wrote something about the Hindu Vedas in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* in response to the impertinent and filthy writings of *Pundit Dayanand*, *Indarman* and *Kanhaya Lal*. However, I confined myself only to a few obvious issues in the teachings of the Vedas and did not indulge in any unwarranted criticism. Only those who have read *Dayanand's Satyarath Parkash*, *Indarman's* books, and *Kanhaya Lal's* writings, can fully appreciate the impertinence of these writers and how they have defamed Islam. In particular, *Dayanand's* abusiveness and rudeness in *Satyarath Parkash* can only emanate from a person who is neither God-fearing nor has any intelligence, imagination, thinking or shame. Despite the calumnies of these ignoble opponents, I wrote only a few pages in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* about the philosophy of the *Aryas*. After that *Lekhram* and others, motivated by their evil nature, put out a lot of filth and defamed our religion but we remained totally silent. Yes, *Surma Chasham Arya* and *Shahnah-i Haq* were written nine years ago but this was on the instigation of the *Aryas* to respond to their questions. Thus, *Murli Dhar Arya* was the reason for the writing of *Surma Chasham Arya*. At his insistence, we debated in *Hoshiarpur* in March 1882, and this book is a record of the questions asked and answers given at this debate. After writing these books, we remained silent to this date. Thus, we were silent for fourteen years but if the debate in *Hoshiarpur* is counted, then for nine years. During this time the *Aryas* published many filthy magazines and abusive books and newspapers but we just turned our back, remained silent and did not retaliate. It was only when the transgressions of the *Aryas* exceeded all bounds and their impudence surpassed all limits that this book *Arya Dharm* was written.

Some of our clerics hold us guilty in every matter. They are forgiving of the *Aryas* and Christians and put the blame for the harsh

language squarely on us. What can I say or write about them? The poison of jealousy and envy has killed them, and their malice towards us has even made them enemies of Allah and His Messenger as well. O Blackguards! Who has taught you to lie patently and to always say the opposite of what is the reality? It is true that I wrote a little about the Vedas in *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, but only after Dayanand had abused the Holy Prophet profusely and defamed Islam in his book *Satyarath Parkash*, and even Hindu children in every alley and street were spitting in the face of Islam. Was it not incumbent on us to expose the reality of the Vedas and to please our Lord by acting on the Quranic verse “And those who, when great wrong afflicts them, defend themselves”? (42:39) Subsequently, we remained silent till now, but during this period, the *Aryas* published so many filthy and defamatory books and newspapers about Islam that these publications would form a mountain if collected in one place. What kind of an evil nature allows you to call yourselves Muslims while you unjustly regard those people as righteous who have for years falsely and mischievously defamed Islam? O blight on the name of religious scholars! What does the Quran command? Is it permissible to stand by while Islam is being derided? Does faith permit that we keep sitting silently while the Holy Prophet is being abused? We did remain silent for years but what was the consequence? We were tortured and we bore it patiently, but our relentless enemies did not desist.

Do you think the Christians and *Aryas* are deriding our religion because we have instigated them, that otherwise they are very mild mannered and tolerant of Islam, and that they do not disrespect or defame our religion nor have they been abusive of it in the past? If this is what you think, then let us debate this point. If it is shown that we were the first to transgress and initiate the high handedness and that we were the first to abuse the personalities they hold in high regard, then we are deserving of any punishment that is proposed. However, if the enemies of Islam are proven to be guilty, then is it not necessary to punish these evil-tempered clerics who have thrown Islam to the beasts just because of their enmity with me? The reality of any matter is known only after a thorough investigation. If they are right, let them organize a debate, and if we are proven to be false, then let them burn my

books to show their support of the Hindus and the Christians. They will never organize such a debate because the hearts of these accursed people are diseased and they know that they are making these false accusations merely out of spite.

However, in my book *Sat Bachan*, I have not used even a single defamatory word about *Baba* (Nanak) sahib. On the contrary, the book praises and eulogizes him and we consider the censure of such a pious-natured and praiseworthy person as wicked and unholy. It is our opinion that he was sincerely devoted to God and was blessed by Him.

Peace be on the rightly guided,  
The writer is humbly Ghulam Ahmad

## ATTEMPTS TO IMPROVE THE TENOR OF RELIGIOUS DEBATES

### **Announcement regarding civility in religious discourses**

*Hazrat* Mirza detested the foul-mouthed and rude language used by the *Arya* Hindus and Christians in inter-religious discourses. On September 22, 1895, he addressed a public announcement to *Arya* Hindus, Christian missionaries and members of all other opposing religions, pleading for civility in religious debates. He also requested the government of India in this announcement to frame rules for the regulation of religious discourse and to make their violation punishable. This was necessary, *Hazrat* Mirza said, because people were not exercising voluntary restraint in the use of language and felt free to say what they liked without any consideration for the sentimentalities of others. I give below some excerpts from this notice:

If we do not turn to our beneficent and kind government to redress our grievance, then who else can we turn to? Our grievance is that our religious opponents hurt our sensibilities with criticism based solely on groundless traditions and unfounded tales that are not proven by our authentic and accepted books, but are merely the lies of hypocrites. They use this material to defame our chief and master the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and even use abusive language. Their accusations have no trace in our reliable books....And who (the Holy Prophet), on the basis of our

thorough investigation, we regard as the leader of sinless persons, the chief of pure ones born to a woman and the seal of prophets because prophethood, purity and perfection reached their pinnacle with him. It is in the land of this just government that our Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is abused and our sacred religion defamed in different ways...Their groundless calumnies are distressing to the loyal Muslim subjects of the British Government. Very respectfully we request the British Government to...approve legislation, or issue administrative orders in respect of all future debates, contentions and argumentation between Muslims, Christians, *Aryas* and members of all religions that the following two rules must be adhered to at all times:

- 1) No criticism be leveled by any critic of a kind that would equally apply to the book or books, that the critic believes in and considers revealed, that is, the matter constituting the basis of criticism is also found in the books that the critic believes in.
- 2) If any party publishes a list of their books that are considered acceptable and admissible, then no critic should use material from outside these books. Any criticism of the religion should be based on the material found in these books and no extraneous material should be used from any books that are not on the list of acceptable and admissible books. Contravention of this condition should be punishable under Section 298 of the Indian Penal Code.

This is our petition that we would like to see implemented either by the passage of an act or an official circular.

After making the above plea, *Hazrat Mirza* published a list of the books that he considered acceptable, admissible and reliable in the Islamic faith. He set forth this list along with explanatory comments about their relative priorities and use as follows:

- 1) The Holy Quran: However, it must be remembered that the correct and reliable meaning of any Quranic verse acceptable to us is one that is also corroborated from other places in the Quran because some verses of the Quran provide an explana-



tion of other verses. If a comprehensive and certain understanding of a Quranic verse is not achieved because of lack of corroboration from other parts of the Quran, then an additional requirement is that a relevant, reliable *hadith* with a continuous chain of narrators can be used as an explanatory aid. Thus, our religion does not permit interpretation based on personal opinion. It will be incumbent, therefore, on every critic not to go beyond the ambit of this methodology.

- 2) Other acceptable books: The first among these is *Sahih Bukhari*, and from our viewpoint, all the *hadith* narrated therein constitute acceptable proof provided they do not contradict the clear meaning of the Quran. The second among these is *Sahih Muslim* and we accept the *hadith* in it provided there is no contradiction with the Quran and the *Sahih Bukhari*. The third place goes to *Sahih Tirmidhi*, *Ibn Majah*, *Muttaqi*, *Nasai*, *Ibn Dawud* and *Dar Qutni* books of *Hadith* and we accept the *hadith* narrated in them provided there is no contradiction with the Quran and the first two books of *Hadith* referred above.

These are the books of our religion and they lay down the rules on which we act. According to the spirit of these rules, we ask you to abstain from criticism that is equally applicable to your books and your religion because the dictate of justice, which forms the basis of this enunciation, does not consider such a criticism to be in good faith. We also ask you to abstain from criticism that is not based on the books and the rules mentioned in this announcement because such an act is also contrary to the spirit of investigating the truth.”

Discussing this issue further, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote in the announcement:

All of you also have the right to announce the acceptable and admissible books of your faith. After you have done this, any Muslim critic who violates the constraints of your announcement by basing his criticism on material not in the books that you have announced as acceptable, or criticizes you on a matter that is also part of the teachings of Islam, will be equally culpable under Section 298 - the same section whose benefit we seek to obtain.

Signatures of support were obtained from thousands of respectable Muslim gentlemen below this announcement. The signatories included not only members of the *Ahmadiyya* community but also outsiders who were from the unprejudiced, rational and educated section of the society.

### **Petition**

Through a published circular letter, *Hazrat* Mirza requested all Muslims to sign this announcement so that the Government may know that this was the unanimous demand of the Muslims. Accordingly, thousands of Muslims belonging to the respectable and gentlemanly section of the community affixed their signatures below this announcement. After obtaining this support, a petition was addressed to the Government in words almost identical to the text of the announcement. The Government did not pass any legislation at that time in response to the petition, but many years later, the Government did enact a law that satisfied the spirit of the petition. In order to maintain harmony among the many diverse communities of India, the Government enacted a law that made abusing or defaming the founder of any religion culpable under section 153 B of the Indian Penal Code.

### **Protest against the statute prescribing medical examination**

The British Government had allowed brothels in the military cantonments to service the needs of British soldiers. In order to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, the prostitutes were required to undergo medical examinations periodically. Later, under pressure from the puritanical elements of the British society, the compulsory medical examinations were made illegal. With the change of government in London, a movement was started to restore the medical exams and the London Times wrote several articles in its support. When *Hazrat* Mirza learned of this, he published a notice in which he drew the attention of the government to the fact that it was only in Islam that fornication had been declared wrong and sinful under all circumstances. He petitioned the government to find ways to maintain the morals of its soldiers and to stop them from fornicating, but if this could not be done, then the government should import British prostitutes for the Britons. Indian women should not be used to satisfy the lasciviousness of the British soldiers.

## MOVEMENT TO DECLARE FRIDAY AS A HOLIDAY

### **Petition to the Viceroy**

On January 1, 1892, *Hazrat* Mirza sent a petition to the Viceroy requesting that Friday should be declared as the weekly holiday for Muslims. The petition was signed by a large number of people both from within and without the *Ahmadiyya* community. A summary of the major reasons adduced for the request is as follows:

- 1) Friday is a day of prayer and obligatory religious service for Muslims just like Sunday is for Christians and Hindus. Since the government has declared Sunday as a holiday to enable Christians and Hindus to fulfill their religious obligations, the Muslim community, which forms a large section of the population, also deserves similar rights. The government should, therefore, declare Friday as a holiday for Muslims.
- 2) Friday is not just a day of special prayer and religious ritual for Muslims but the Quran and the *Hadith* admonish strongly against its nonobservance. There is a special chapter in the Quran called *Al-Jumuah* (The Congregation) to emphasize the importance of the congregational prayer on Friday. Consequently, every conscientious Muslim considers himself a grave sinner if he is unable to observe the compulsory con-

gregational prayer. For this reason, the Muslims are strongly desirous that the British Government should declare Friday as a holiday for them in India.

- 3) Currently, the Islamic religious holidays are less than half the Hindu religious holidays. Declaring Friday as a holiday for Muslims will remove this disparity.
- 4) During the period of Muslim rule in India, Friday was observed as a holiday and even now the official day-off in Muslim states is Friday. If the government declares Friday as a holiday for Muslims, it will greatly enhance the loyalty of the Muslims to the government because it will revive the importance of this holy day for Muslims that is currently being ignored. In this way, the British government will earn the undying gratitude of the Muslims.

Many additional reasons were put forward in support of this demand. *Hazrat* Mirza went so far as to offer that the Muslims would be willing to trade Friday for Sunday as their day-off.

This petition was sent to the Viceroy but unfortunately the Muslim clerics and the people influenced by them not only ignored it, but actively opposed it for the simple reason that the petition was written by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and sent by his organization. *Hazrat* Mirza had taken the initiative in this task only for the sake of Allah and was not desirous of any laurels or accolade. His only wish was that this essential religious task be done without regard to who does it. In fact, he had written to *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi prior to sending the petition that if he wanted to take the initiative in the matter, he was not only most welcome to do so but could also make use of all the preparatory work already done by *Hazrat* Mirza. Sadly, *Maulvi* Batalvi neither did this work himself nor could he see anyone else doing it. The inability to put up a united front resulted in the movement to declare Friday as a holiday to fail at the time.

However, the effort and the movement started by this man of God were not entirely wasted. After *Hazrat* Mirza died, *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din succeeded him as the leader of the *Ahmadiyya* community, and during his time, the Movement was revived. Since most of the Muslim intelligentsia backed the demand this time, the British government agreed to allow all Muslims to take a break from work at the time of the congregational prayer to fulfill their religious obligation. Standing orders were issued to

all officers instructing them not to stop a Muslim subordinate from taking a break on Friday for prayers.

Sadly, most of the Muslim government employees did not take advantage of this concession to offer their Friday prayers. Only a small minority of Muslims left work to go and pray. The rest were oblivious to this religious duty. This author recalls meeting an outspoken Muslim officer who was quite unhappy at the government's recent decision to allow Muslims to take a break on Friday for prayers. He complained that we had exposed him and his kind by putting pressure on the government to allow a Friday break for prayer. When I asked him: "How so?" he replied: "We neither offered the Friday prayer before nor are we going to offer it now. However, we had an excuse before; we could say that we did not pray because the government did not allow us time off from work for prayers. Now we have no excuse. If we do not attend the Friday service now, the whole world becomes aware of our weakness and lack of attention to prayer. Thus, we have been exposed."

### **Nonobservance of the Sabbath**

Maulana Nur-ud-Din was strongly of the opinion that a major reason for the disgrace and downfall of the Israelites was the nonobservance of the Sabbath. Similarly, a major reason for the disgrace and downfall of Muslims is the nonobservance of their Sabbath, which is on Friday. May Allah grant that Muslims learn to observe the sanctity of Friday as stressed so forcefully in the Quran.

## **INTERFAITH CONFERENCE ON RELIGIOUS BELIEFS & THE PUBLICATION OF *ISLAMI USOOL KI PHILOSOPHY* (THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM)**

### **Proposal to hold an interfaith conference**

In 1896, a memorable interfaith conference was held in Lahore under the auspices of *Anjuman Himayat Islam* to research the rationale for the beliefs of different religions. This conference was in fact a tournament of religions in which each sent its best champions to prove the superiority of their faith with rational arguments. *Hazrat* Mirza's paper in this conference scored a resounding intellectual victory for Islam by comprehensively addressing all the issues under discussion with reasoned arguments from the Quran. The details of this conference are as follows:

*Hazrat* Mirza had long advocated that religious discussions should focus on presenting the best in each religion rather than indulging in mutual criticism. Unfortunately, he did not find much support for his view. He even petitioned the Government to formulate a law prescribing civilized behavior in religious discussions, but his pleas fell on deaf ears. To further his objective of having healthy religious discussion and debate, he proposed a conference in which the speakers would expound on what is best in their religions without criticizing any other religion. Although

this proposal did not reach fruition at the time, his wish did not remain unfulfilled for long.

In 1896, some intellectuals of Lahore put forth the idea of holding a religious conference in which the participants would articulate the beauty of their religion without attacking any other religion. *Swami* Shogun Chandar, one of the principal sponsors of the conference, went personally to Qadian to request *Hazrat* Mirza's participation, and he gladly accepted the invitation because this conference closely resonated the format he had proposed earlier. *Hazrat* Mirza laid no store by who got credit for the idea and who was in charge of the show; his only wish was to inform the world about the beauty of Islam and to show everyone the radiant face of Islam by removing the veil that covered its beauty at the time. He therefore lent the conference his full support, and assured Shogun Chandar of his wholehearted cooperation. In fact, *Hazrat* Mirza had the first set of flyers announcing the conference printed in Qadian for Shogun Chandar. In this announcement, *Swami* Shogun Chandar called upon the Muslims, Christians, *Arya* Hindus and followers of all other religions to send their leading religious scholars to present papers in the conference. *Hazrat* Mirza also agreed to write an article for the conference. In addition, he appointed one of his disciples to help *Swami* Shogun Chandar with organizational matters.

### **The issues to be addressed in the articles**

Each presenter was required in his paper to address five issues in the light of their respective religions:

1. The physical, moral and spiritual conditions of man
2. Life after death
3. Object of man's existence and how it can be fulfilled
4. Effect of one's actions on his earthly and heavenly life
5. Sources of knowledge

The choice of these issues was specifically designed to bring out the kernel and essential philosophy of each religion.

### **Some details of the conference**

The intelligentsia of all faiths evinced a strong interest in this conference right from the time of its announcement. The conference was scheduled for December 26th to 28th, 1896, and six moderators were appointed for its conduct. They were:

1. Rai Bahadur Partool Chander, Judge, Chief Court of Punjab
2. Khan Bahadur Sheikh Khuda Baksh, Judge, Small Causes Court, Lahore
3. Rai Bahadur *Pundit* Radha Kishan, Pleader, Chief Court and former Governor of Jammu
4. *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din, Royal Physician
5. Rai Bahadur Bhawani Das, M.A., Settlement Officer, Jhelum
6. Sardar Jawahar Singh, Secretary, Khalsa College Committee, Amritsar

The leading luminaries of all religions accepted invitations to participate in the conference and this greatly stoked the interest of the populace. The excitement continued to mount and when the conference finally started, there was a large and enthusiastic audience of both intellectuals and commoners present to hear the speakers. Each member of the audience had a strong desire to see their champion victorious. Learned speakers representing Christianity, Sanatan Dharam, Hinduism, Arya Samaj, Brahmu Samaj, Dev Samaj, Sikhism, Judaism and Islam read their articles dealing with the five issues on the conference's agenda. Besides *Hazrat* Mirza, there were several other Muslim scholars who read their papers as well, but neither these Muslim scholars nor any of the other speakers gave full satisfaction to the questing minds of the audience. The biggest drawback in their presentations was that they mostly presented constructs of their own imagination and either did not draw upon their sacred scriptures at all, or used them very sparingly.

*Hazrat* Mirza's paper was the sole exception. His brilliant exposition enthralled the audience, and forced them to admit that this was the only paper that had comprehensively answered the issues on the agenda. The framework of his paper was solidly rooted in Quranic ideas - none of which were his brainchild. His original contribution, if it can be called that, was the interpretation of the Quranic verses that formed the framework of his paper. This interpretation was so magnificent in its import that it captured the minds of all rational thinkers. Even the Muslims in the audience swayed with joy as they listened to his exposition.

*Hazrat* Mirza was scheduled to present his paper on December 28, the last day of the conference, but an indisposition precluded his personal appearance. *Hazrat* Mirza was prone to two chronic conditions – one of which affected the upper part of his body in the form of severe headaches, and the other affected the lower part of the body and took the form of either polyuria or dysentery. Interestingly, a *hadith* had indicated that the



Promised Messiah would have certain maladies. This *hadith* mentioned the Promised Messiah as being wrapped in two yellow sheets, and in the literature of interpreting visions and dreams, a yellow sheet is a metaphor for illness. One sheet was to cover the upper part of the torso and this corresponded with an affliction in the upper part of the body. This predicted malady took the form of attacks of severe headache accompanied by a low heart rate and cold hands and feet. The other sheet was for the lower part of the body, and the corresponding malady manifested itself as either polyuria or dysentery. These maladies flared up whenever *Hazrat Mirza* had to make a major intellectual effort, such as writing an article on an issue of great importance. As a matter of fact, there was such a good correlation between these indispositions and the production of works of great religious merit that people began to look upon the onset of these maladies as a sign that a major intellectual effort was underway. Accordingly, whenever *Hazrat Mirza* was indisposed by an attack of one of these illnesses, expectations began to soar that a new river of knowledge and wisdom was about to sally forth.

True to form, as soon as *Hazrat Mirza* started writing the paper for the conference, he became indisposed, but he persisted and completed the article despite his illness. During the course of this intellectual effort, he received glad tidings from on High: "The article excelled," and this was a Divine affirmation that his article would excel over all other presentations at the conference. He also saw a vision in which he was in a palace and a hand touched the palace; the palace began to emanate a bright light that lit up the surroundings and also fell on his hands. At this, a person standing next to him said in a loud voice: "*Allah o Akbar! Kharaybat Khaibar*,"<sup>1</sup> (God is Great! Khaibar is destroyed). *Hazrat Mirza's* interpretation of this vision was that the palace stood for his heart where the Divine enlightenment alighted, and the light that radiated from it was Quranic wisdom. *Khaibar* stood for all false religions that had become polluted with polytheistic and false beliefs. Then it was made known to him that the widespread dissemination of this article would expose the fallacy of false faiths and would enable the Quranic truths to spread and encompass the whole world.

On December 21, 1896, *Hazrat Mirza* had flyers, which detailed his revelation and vision, affixed on the walls and alleyways of Lahore. He

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1 *Al-Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith). Kitab al-Salat* 8:12. Khaibar was a Jewish fort captured in 6 AH by the Muslim forces. According to this *hadith*, the Holy Prophet on entering the town of Khaibar said "God is Great! Khaibar is destroyed; whenever we approach near a (hostile) nation to fight, then evil will be the morning of those who have been warned."

announced with great confidence in these flyers that his article would excel all others, and put this forth as an open challenge to all other presenters. *Hazrat* Mirza's opposition in the city of Lahore was so intense that the opponents made it a point to tear down his posters as soon as they spotted them. Perforce these flyers were put up clandestinely at night throughout the city, and some were also passed out to the public by hand. People were amazed by this bold claim. The fact was that the public was not even willing to give him the time of the day, let alone to listen and appreciate his lecture; his claim, therefore, that his lecture would excel over all others seemed to be nothing more than wishful thinking.

### ***Hazrat* Mirza's article presented at the conference**

*Hazrat* Mirza's speech was scheduled for December 28, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Because of indisposition, he was unable to attend the conference personally, and he entrusted *Maulvi* Abdul Karim Sialkoti with the task of reading his paper. Just like the paper was unique, the firebrand oratorical style of its presenter was also one of a kind. The audience at the convention ran into thousands and comprised representatives of many diverse religions. On the face of it, there was every reason to expect a hostile audience. *Hazrat* Mirza had made an open claim to be a man appointed by God for the mission of proving the ascendancy of Islam over all other religions. To this end, he was involved day and night in combating proponents of other religions. Their constant humiliation at his hands had created enmity in their hearts and hostility in their manners. The majority of Muslims detested him as they had fallen prey to the vicious propaganda of the clerics who had proclaimed *Hazrat* Mirza a heretic. It appeared, therefore, that the audience would be at best inattentive, if not outright hostile.

However, God had willed otherwise. Only a short while after *Maulvi* Abdul Karim started speaking, the paper began to weave its magic and the audience became transfixed. The knowledge and wisdom expounded in the discourse created a surreal impact on the audience and it appeared as if the angels were descending with platters of heavenly enlightenment and inexorably drawing the hearts and minds of the people into a trance. In this state of trance, the assembly lost all sense of time, and when the Chairperson announced the end of the allotted time, the audience was disappointed because the argumentation on even the first question had not been concluded. *Maulvi* Mubarak Ali Sialkoti was scheduled to take the rostrum after *Hazrat* Mirza but this venerable person deferred in favor of *Hazrat* Mirza's speech and voluntarily gave up his time. It was heart-warming to see the spontaneous burst of elation that greeted this

announcement. *Maulvi* Abdul Karim continued with *Hazrat* Mirza's speech until 4:30 p.m., the closing time of the convention, but the arguments of the first question had not been concluded even by then. The audience demanded that the speech be read in its entirety and the organizers agreed to let the speech continue without any time constraint. By the time the arguments on the first question concluded, it was already 5:30 p.m. and the short winter day had given way to the darkness of the night. However, the audience was adamant that the speech should continue, and bowing to this popular demand, the organizers decided to extend the conference by one more day. So instead of concluding on December 28, the conference continued on December 29, as well. Because of this extension, representatives of other religions also demanded some extra time and it was decided to start the proceedings of the conference at 9:30 a.m. on December 29, instead of the usual 10:30 a.m. start.

It had been the pattern on the previous days of the convention that people were slow to come in the morning, and the convention proceedings would start late and with less than a full house. However, on this day, December 29, *Hazrat* Mirza's speech was first on the program, and people of all faiths began to arrive in droves much before the scheduled time. By opening time, the house was chock-full and the proceedings started punctually. The organizers had allotted an hour and a half for *Hazrat* Mirza's speech, but the time was insufficient and invariably had to be extended at the insistence of the audience. Finally, after a marathon seven and a half hours, spread over two days, the speech was concluded.

I (this humble author) witnessed this convention and saw with my own eyes the happiness and elation that showed on the countenances of the Muslims in the audience. In their enthusiasm, some were jumping out of their seats with joy, some were moved to tears and some tenderhearted souls were crying unashamedly. As I listened to the speech, I felt myself on an intellectual elevator that was carrying me to new perspectives of faith, and a deeper understanding of the infinite wisdom of God. Each subtle point of wisdom and each nicety of knowledge were like the nurturing water that sustains life. In particular, when *Hazrat* Mirza expounded on the philosophy of heaven and hell and explained that these were the direct creation and consequence of a person's own actions, a great veil lifted from my eyes and I could visualize a clear picture of the Hereafter while still on this earth. This perspective was totally new for my generation, and it comprehensively rebutted the arguments of the naturalists and materialists that portrayed heaven and hell as impossible physical constructs. *Hazrat* Mirza's explanation, therefore, proved invaluable in

strengthening the faith of the believers. The speech was replete with Quranic verses and their rendition by *Maulvi* Abdul Karim in his melodious voice was enough to melt hearts and put souls in a trance.

### “The article excelled”

*Hazrat* Mirza’s speech became the talk of the town and everyone, whether organizers or attendees, conceded that “The article excelled.” The editor of *Paisa Akhbar*, Mahbub Alam, was an inveterate opponent of *Hazrat* Mirza but during the presentation of this article, he was so moved and joyous that he kept jumping out of his seat to give ovations. All the newspapers that reported on the proceedings of the conference, even those generally hostile to *Hazrat* Mirza, conceded that his speech excelled all others. The semi-official newspaper of Lahore, The Civil and Military Gazette, admitted in plain language that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s article topped all others in this religious convention. The actual text of its report is as follows:

In the Religious Conference of Lahore held at the Muhammadan College Building on the 26th, 27th and 28th of December 1896...particular interest centered in the lecture of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, a master of apologetics of Islam, an immense gathering of sects far and near assembled to hear the lecture, which as the Mirza himself was unable to attend in person, was read by one of his able scholars *Maulana* Abdul Karim of Sialkot. The lecture on the 28th lasted about three and a half hours, and was listened to with rapt attention, though so far it dealt only with the first question. The speaker promised to treat the remaining question if time was allowed. So the President and the executive Committee resolved to extend their sitting to the 29th.

The newspaper *Observer* reported in a similar vein and added that *Hazrat* Mirza’s article should be translated into English and widely distributed in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of this lecture, *Hazrat* Mirza’s knowledge and scholarship became widely recognized by both friends and foe. People of different faiths congratulated Muslims on the victory of their religion and some even remarked that, had it not been for this article, Islam would have cut

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<sup>2</sup> By the Grace of Allah, this work was undertaken and completed by *Maulana* Muhammad Ali.

a sorry figure because of its poor portrayal by Muhammad Hussain Batalvi. Even the inveterate Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, willingly or unwillingly, conceded the efficacy of this speech and commented that Islam had won a significant victory because of it.

### **The philosophy of Islamic teachings**

*Hazrat Mirza* published this speech in a book form under the title *Islami Usool ki Philosophy*, and *Maulana Muhammad Ali* translated it into English under the title *The Teachings of Islam*. The English translation became especially popular in Britain and America and enamored the hearts of all Westerners who read it. This book has played an important role in propagating Islam in the West.

### **The prevalence of Islam over all religions**

The significant victory of Islam in this conference brings to mind the Quranic prophecy "...that He may make it (the religion of Truth) prevail over all religions" (48:28). A complete account of this conference, including all the papers presented by the speakers, was published in a book called "Proceedings of the Grand Conference on the Investigation of Religions." A scrutiny of these papers makes it quite obvious that the speeches of all other presenters were like smoking oil lamps whose flickering light totally vanished before the solar luminescence of *Hazrat Mirza's* speech. A reading of the book lifts the soul into ecstasy, and the book remains a living testimony to the truth of Islam.

### **Three stages in the evolution of the soul**

In response to the first question poised in the conference's agenda, *Hazrat Mirza* showed that the Quran distinguishes three stages in the spiritual evolution of man. The first stage is that of the physical man; this transforms into the moral man and then progresses into the spiritual man. In the terminology of Quran, these stages are called *nafs al-ammara*, (the soul prone to evil), *nafs al-lawwama* (the self-accusing soul) and *nafs al-mutmainna* (the soul at rest). *Hazrat Mirza* then described these stages with such finesse that his audience remained spellbound throughout his exposition. In brief, *nafs al-ammara* is the condition in which a person follows his passions and desires, just like the lower animals. *Nafs al-lawwama* is the stage when a person uses his reason and conscience to conform his desires and passions to the Divine dictates, solely to please God. By treading the path of Divine guidance, he develops the highest moral virtues, and can properly be called a civilized man. However, he

still has not attained complete mastery over his desires and passions but remains locked in a continuous struggle for the control of his soul. In this struggle, he is successful at times but succumbs at others. However when he falters, his conscience inevitably rebukes him, and it is for this reason that this stage is called *nafs al-lawwama* or the self-accusing soul. The *nafs al-mutmainna* is the stage when man finally successfully masters his desires and passions for the love of Allah. His mastery over his soul is now complete and perfect, and the struggle he has been waging for his soul has come to a successful conclusion. He thus earns the pleasure of Allah and feels a tremendous sense of peace and tranquility. In this state, he is fully content with all the commandments of Allah, whether religious edicts or decrees of faith, and this state of contentment creates a condition in his heart that is akin to paradise - a full manifestation of which will take place after death. This state is the zenith of man's spiritual evolution.

The purpose of the guidance revealed in the Quran is to move man from the state of *nafs al-ammara*, in which the focus of his existence is physical, to the next stage of *nafs al-lawwama*, in which man begins to strive for moral excellence, and finally to take him to the stage of *nafs al-mutmainna*, which is the pinnacle of his moral and spiritual evolution. Using a slightly different terminology, it may be said that the purpose of Divine guidance is to transform man from a bestial creature to a cultured and moral person, and then to evolve him further into a godly man.

*Hazrat Mirza* did such a masterful and detailed job of explaining the three stages in the evolution of the soul that his work is regarded as a major contribution to the literature on the subject. The beauty of his exposition lies in the fact that it is entirely taken from the Quran and is thus a powerful testimonial to the knowledge and wisdom of the Quran - before which even the greatest philosophers and intellectuals must bow their head. Precisely for this reason, many intellectuals in Europe became convinced of the Quran's greatness after reading this book and accepted Islam.

### **The concluding presidential address of *Maulana Nur-ud-Din***

*Maulana Nur-ud-Din* was the presiding officer on the last day of the conference, December 29, 1896, and when the speeches were over, he delivered the concluding presidential address in which he stated:

We have heard the articles of faith, and the philosophies of different religions. Some of these are true and some false. Therefore, I recite the last chapter of the Holy Quran entitled, *Al-Nas* (The

Men) in which protection is sought from the evil suggestions of the devil. This chapter is a prayer whose function is to seek protection in Allah from the doubts that are created in a person's heart from listening to false beliefs.

He proceeded to interpret and expound on the meaning of this chapter in a way that cast a spell over the audience. He took the phrases *Rab bin-nas* (Lord of men), *Malik kin-nas* (King of men) and *Illah-hin-nas* (God of men) from the chapter and showed their correspondence with the three stages of the development of the soul: *nafs al-ammara*, *nafs al-lawwama* and *nafs al-mutmainna*. *Rab bin-nas*, or Lord of men, revealed the Quran to nurture man to perfection by freeing him from the bondage of his passions and desires. *Malik kin-nas*, or King of men, taught man all those principles in the Quran that make him into a civilized and cultured man and without which he could not rule the creation civilly and morally, and with knowledge and wisdom. Finally, *Illah-hin-nas*, or God of men, laid down in the Quran all the ways necessary for man not only to become civilized and moral but also to evolve into a godly person. In this condition, there is but one ardent desire of man, just one dear objective of his life, and that is God, who is his only deity and his beloved.

After this speech, the convention came to a ceremonial end but the memory of Islam's grand victory in this struggle of the titans continued to warm hearts and strengthen faith for a long time. Indeed, a glimpse of the ultimate triumph of Islam contained in the Quranic prophecy "...that He may make it (Islam) prevail over all religions," (48:28) was manifested with such clarity that it left no doubt about its eventual fulfillment.

## Chapter

# 68

## **AN ANNOUNCEMENT MADE WITH FULL FAITH IN REVELATION FROM ALLAH THE ALL POWERFUL**

### **An open challenge to Christian clergy of the world**

On January 14, 1897, *Hazrat* Mirza issued a written public announcement titled, *Al Ishtihar Mustekaynan Ba-Wahy Allah Al-Qahar* (An Announcement Made with Full Faith in Revelation from Allah the All-Powerful) in which he refuted the Christian doctrines, and invited the Christian clergy of the world specifically, and the scholars and leaders of all other religions generally, to conclusively determine the true religion by the following process:

I give glad tidings to the whole world that this living God is the God of Islam...The real purpose of this announcement is to emphasize that a religion which is true cannot change its color. As it was in the beginning, so will it be at the end. A true religion can never become a lifeless tale. In accordance with these criteria, Islam is the true religion. I invite everyone, whether Christian, Arya, Jew or Brahm, to come and experience this truth. Is there anyone there who seeks a living God? We do not worship those who are dead. Our God is the living God who assists us with revelation, speech and signs. If there is a single Christian in the



whole world who is desirous of seeking the truth, let him test our living God against his dead God. I say it truthfully that a mere forty days will be sufficient to conduct such a joint test.

What a challenge and what a forceful announcement of the truth of Islam! However, not a single opponent of Islam came forward to seek the truth by accepting this challenge. *Hazrat* Mirza expressed this succinctly in a verse:

None showed up for the test ever,  
We called every opponent to confront us.

## **MAULVI GHULAM DASTAGIR'S MALEDICTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCE**

### **Challenge to participate in mutual imprecation according to the tradition of the Prophet**

*Maulvi* Dastagir was a staunch opponent of *Hazrat* Mirza and played a leading role in the movement to declare *Hazrat* Mirza a heretic. Reveling in his clerical power, he presumptuously challenged *Hazrat* Mirza to a contest of mutual imprecation (*mubahalah*), but imposed a stipulation that *Hazrat* Mirza must afflict him with a calamity instantaneously at the contest to show his truthfulness. On January 15, 1897, *Hazrat* Mirza responded to *Maulvi* Ghulam Dastagir through a public announcement and pointed out that such a stipulation was against the tradition of the Holy Prophet. When the Holy Prophet offered a contest of mutual imprecation to the Christian delegation of Najran, he did not promise immediate punishment but prescribed a period of one year for the visitation. If the Holy Prophet had asked for a period of one year, how could he, a mere slave of the Holy Prophet, be expected to bring down an instantaneous calamity upon *Maulvi* Dastagir. *Hazrat* Mirza reminded *Maulvi* Dastagir that if he, *Maulvi* Dastagir, believed that the true measure of distinction between truth and falsehood was the affliction of instantaneous punishment then he should, in accordance with his belief, afflict *Hazrat* Mirza with a calamity at the contest. As to the charge that *Hazrat* Mirza claimed to be a Prophet and hence he should be the one to bring

down the instant infliction, *Hazrat* Mirza denied the premise of this statement. The relevant passage from *Hazrat* Mirza's statement follows:

His (*Maulvi* Dastagir's) saying that "I do not claim to be a prophet so I do not have to bring down instant punishment," is not correct. Let him be quite clear that we, too, curse anyone who claims prophethood and are convinced that "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger," and believe in the finality of prophethood of *Hazrat* Muhammad, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him. We acknowledge the continuation of saintly revelation, as distinct from prophetic revelation. The former is granted to saints under the auspices of the prophethood of Muhammad and as a result of perfect obedience to the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Anyone who alleges more than this against us strays away from honesty and righteousness. If a person becomes an infidel by receiving Quranic verses in revelation, then the charge of infidelity should first be levied against Syed Abdul Qadir, may Allah be pleased with him, because he, too, claimed to have received Quranic verses in revelation. Hence there is no claim of prophethood on this side either, merely the claim of being a saint (*Willayat*) and a revivalist (*Mujaddidiyat*).

However, *Maulvi* Dastagir chose not to adopt the tradition of the Holy Prophet in the contest of mutual imprecation. Instead, he resorted to an imprecation used by a learned savant of God, *Hazrat* Muhammad Tahir,<sup>1</sup> against an imposter *Mahdi* of his time. In 1315 Hijri (1897 CE), *Maulvi* Dastagir wrote a book titled *Fath Rahmani*, in which he penned down a prayer on pages 26 and 27 as follows:

O Allah! The Lord of Glory and Honor! O the Owner of the Kingdom! Just like Thou destroyed the imposter *Mahdi* and the counterfeit Messiah (who appeared during the time of *Hazrat* Tahir) through the prayer and endeavor of Thine learned savant *Hazrat* Muhammad Tahir, likewise is the supplication and plea of this savant Kasuri. To the best of my ability and with a true heart, I entreat Thee in support of Thine religion that Thou grant guidance to Mirza Qadiani and his followers to repent sincerely, and

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1 *Hazrat* Muhammad Tahir was the author of *Majma Bahar-ul-Anwaar*

if this is not fated, then Thou make them the object of this Quranic verse that lays down how truth is distinguished from falsehood – “So the roots of the people who did wrong were cut off. And praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds” (6:45). Amen.

Then on page 26, he wrote “May he and his followers perish.”

### ***Maulvi Ghulam Dastagir perishes***

Glorious are the ways of God. *Maulvi* Dastagir had sought a dispensation in accordance with the dictates of the Quranic verse that the roots of the wrongdoer should be cut off, and God did cut off the roots of the tyrannical party. *Maulvi* Dastagir died a few days after his imprecation. On the other hand, God granted *Hazrat* Mirza and his followers outstanding success as their numbers grew day by day. It is worth reflecting on the outcomes of the two imprecations - one by *Hazrat* Muhammad Tahir and the other by Ghulam Dastagir Kasuri. In both cases, the party in the wrong perished. In the case of *Hazrat* Muhammad Tahir, the imposter *Mahdi* died and in the case of *Maulvi* Dastagir, it was *Maulvi* Dastagir who perished.

## **OPPOSING CLERICS INVITED BY NAME TO PARTICIPATE IN A CONTEST OF MUTUAL IMPRECATION (*MUBAHALAH*)**

In his book *Ainah Kamalat Islam*, *Hazrat* Mirza had invited the clerics who called him a heretic to enter into a contest of mutual imprecation (*mubahalah*) with him. *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi of Amritsar responded to this call, and a contest of mutual imprecation took place between him and *Hazrat* Mirza in Amritsar on January 22, 1897. However, this contest did not follow the normal format for imprecation in which the contending parties curse each other. *Hazrat* Mirza was so charged with the love of humanity that he did not desire to supplicate ill for anyone. While *Maulvi* Ghaznavi cursed *Hazrat* Mirza, the latter only called for God's punishment on himself if he was false, but did not ask for any punishment for his opponent. In the days immediately following the contest, there was a big surge in Divine help and assistance to *Hazrat* Mirza and it became obvious that *Maulvi* Ghaznavi's imprecation had resulted in quite the opposite effect of what he had desired. Because *Hazrat* Mirza's nature was filled with love and kindness towards the whole of humanity, it was his wont initially not to curse his opponents but to pray ill only for himself if he was a fraud. A Persian poem of *Hazrat* Mirza exemplifies this, a few verses of which are reproduced below:

O Omnipotent Creator of the earth and the heaven,  
O Merciful and Kind Guide.

O the Being that sees the heart,  
O the Being from which nothing is hidden.

If You see me as sinful and mischievous,  
If You see me as having bad morals,

Then smash my unholy being into smithereens,  
And bring happiness to the alliance of my enemies.

Shower Your mercy on their heart,  
And with Your blessings fulfill all their wishes.

Rain fire on my abode,  
Be my enemy and make my efforts in vain.

But if You see me as one of Your own,  
And find my turning is to Your threshold.

If You see Thine love in my heart,  
And if from this world this secret You have hidden,

Then solve my problem with Your love,  
And reveal this secret a little bit.

O Who goes out to meet every seeker,  
And knower of the wish of every desirer.

For the sake of the relationship that I have with You,  
For the sake of the love whose seed I have sowed in my heart;

Come Yourself for my exoneration,  
Only You can grant me refuge and asylum.

The fire that You have lit in my heart,  
Has consumed everything except Your Being.

Light my face with that fire,

And change the darkness of my night into day.

Open the eyes of this blind world,  
O the One severe in requital, manifest Your power and strength.

Demonstrate from heaven the sign of Your light,  
Show a blossom from your garden of flowers.

I see this world so full of sin and wickedness,  
And the people unmindful, having forgotten the time of their  
death.

They are remiss and estranged from reality,  
Like children inclined only to petty stories and narrations.

Their hearts are cold; devoid of the love of their Real Friend,  
Their hearts have strayed from the alley of the Friend.

Floods and storms rage and the night is pitch dark,  
Let the sun rise by Your Grace.

These verses are a resounding testimony of *Hazrat Mirza's* sincerity and truthfulness. It will also be noticed that the only curses contained therein are directed at his own person in the eventuality he was guilty of espousing false claims. *Hazrat Mirza* stayed with this principle in his contest with *Maulvi Abdul Haq Ghaznavi* and did not invoke any curse on his opponent. The outcome of the imprecation can, therefore, only be judged by the post-contest events in the life of *Hazrat Mirza*, and not by whether any ill fortune affected *Maulvi Ghaznavi*. The fact is that *Hazrat Mirza* and his Movement experienced an enormous surge of popularity and new adherents in the wake of this contest; in addition, abundant manifestations of other heavenly signs in this period bore further testimony to *Hazrat Mirza's* truthfulness.

### **A second call to opposing clerics**

The opposing clerics, whose only aim was to defame *Hazrat Mirza* by calling him a liar and an unbeliever, remained undeterred. If anything, they stepped up their campaign of vilifying *Hazrat Mirza* and claimed victory for his adversary, *Maulvi Ghaznavi*, simply because he did not die after the contest. Tired of their unrelenting opposition, and after obtaining

permission from God, *Hazrat* Mirza issued a second call to his opposing clerics to settle their differences with him through a contest of imprecation. This call, published in his book *Anjam Atham*, was addressed by name to his leading opponents. In it, he made it clear that he had refrained from supplicating ill for *Maulvi* Ghaznavi because *Maulvi* Ghaznavi lacked the intelligence to understand the issues at stake, but that in future he, too, would ask for his persecutors to be punished. *Hazrat* Mirza laid down the challenge in the following words:<sup>1</sup>

I impose a condition that my prayer should be considered efficacious only if a calamity from the (aforementioned) calamities afflicts all those who oppose me in the imprecation within a period of one year. Even if one of them escapes an affliction, though their number may be one thousand or two thousand, I will consider myself a liar and repent at their hands; if I die, my death will be of a wretch whose departure from this world will restore its tranquility and peace. However, I do impose one requirement for the imprecation, namely that at least ten of the below-mentioned individuals present themselves for the contest. Their number must not be fewer than ten although my desire and wish is that the more the better because the encompassment of a large group in divine wrath will create a powerful sign that will vitiate all doubts. O earth and heaven! Remain witness that God's curse be on the person who after receiving this book chooses not to decide the matter by imprecation, but persists in defaming us by calling us infidels and participating in assemblies that ridicule us. And O Believers! For God's sake, say amen all together.

Although this challenge was general, and any cleric who desired was welcome to enter the contest, *Hazrat* Mirza listed those clerics and hereditary religious leaders to whom the challenge was specifically addressed. A partial list of the famous names on this list of clerics is given below:

*Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain of Delhi, Sheikh Muhammad Hussain of Batala, *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad of Gangoa, *Maulvi* Abdul Haq of Delhi (author of *Tafseer-e-Haqqani*), *Maulvi* Abdul Aziz of Ludhiana, *Maulvi* Muhammad of Ludhiana, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hassan (a noble of Ludhiana), Saad Allah (a new convert of

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1 *Anjam Atham*, page 67.



Ludhiana), *Maulvi* Ahmad Allah of Amritsar, *Maulvi* Sanaullah of Amritsar, *Maulvi* Ghulam Rasul alias Russel Baba of Amritsar, *Maulvi* Abdul Jabbar Ghaznavi, *Maulvi* Abdul Wahid Ghaznavi, *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi, Preacher Muhammad Ali Bopari, *Maulvi* Ghulam Dastagir of Kasur, *Maulvi* Abdullah Tonki, *Maulvi* Asghar Ali Roohi, Hafiz Abdul Mannan of Wazirabad, *Maulvi* Muhammad Bashir of Bhopal, Sheikh Hussain Arab Yamani, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hassan (author of *Tafseer Amrohia*), *Maulvi* Ain ul Qazat of Lucknow Farangi Mahal, *Maulvi* Muhammad Farooq of Kanpur, *Maulvi* Abdul Wahab of Kanpur, *Maulvi* Dildar Ali Sahib, *Maulvi* Ahmad Hassan Shaukat of Meeruth (editor of the newspaper *Shahnai Hind*), *Maulvi* Ahmad Ali of Saharanpur, Qazi Abdul Ahad of Khanpur in Rawalpindi district, *Maulvi* Haji Abid Hussain of Deoband ...

A total of sixty names appeared on the list of clerics. There was a second list of *sajada nasheens* (hereditary religious leaders tracing their ancestry to a saint) with fifty-five names on it. A short sample of the names included in this second list is given below:

Ghulam Nizamuddin, Niaz Ahmad Bareilvi, Mian Allah Baksh of Taunsa, Mian Ghulam Farid Chishti of Chachran, Muhammad Hussain of Gangoh, Zahur ul Hassan of Batala, Sadiq Ali Shah of Rattar Chattar, Pir Mehar Shah of Golra, Qazi Sultan Mahmood of Aiwanwalla, Pir Haider Shah of Jalalpur Kekran, Shah Ashraf Shah of Pehlwarei in the Patna District ...

In addition, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote an open letter in Arabic addressed to all clerics and scholars in India and the Islamic world in which he clearly spelled out his claims and supporting arguments so that there may be no misconception or rush to judgment through ignorance. This letter was included in the book *Anjam Atham*.

## TESTIMONY OF KHAWAJA GHULAM FARID - THE PIOUS SAINT OF CHACHRAN

### Letter of Ghulam Farid - the pious saint of Chachran

The clerics and scholars of India and the rest of the Islamic world largely ignored Hazrat Mirza's challenge for imprecation. They neither came out in support of *Hazrat* Mirza nor did they accept his invitation for the imprecation to signal their continued rejection of his truthfulness. The only notable exception was that of Khawaja Ghulam Farid, *Sajjadah Nashin* of Chachran, who claimed among his adherents the Nawab of Bahawalpur. This venerable man wrote a letter of support in Arabic to *Hazrat* Mirza. The translation of the letter is given below:

From the beggar at the gate of Allah, Ghulam Farid, *Sajjadah Nashin*;

To Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian;

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful; All praise is for God, Who is the Lord and the Master, and salutations be on the beloved Messenger, who is the intercessor on the Day of Judgment, and also on his true followers and companions; peace be on you and upon all those who are exerting themselves in the path of goodness. Let it be known after this that I have received

your book in which you have called for an imprecation. Although I was very preoccupied, I did find the time to read a portion of the book, which was elegant in style and censoring in content. O my most beloved! I want you to know that I have held you in great respect from the very beginning because I want to be of those who are rewarded. I have never spoken about you but with respect and honor, and in accordance with the dictates of the best etiquette. And now I want to inform you that I am aware, without any misgivings, about your goodness and am convinced that you are from among the pious men of God, and your effort in the way of Allah is praiseworthy and deserving of a reward. You are blessed by God, the Forgiving; so pray for my forgiveness in the Hereafter as I, too, pray for a most excellent and happy end for you. If I were not worried about making this letter too long, I would have written more. Peace...

Seal

Dispatched from Chachran

This strong assertion in support of the truth at a time when there was a paucity of men with such courage created a very favorable impression on *Hazrat Mirza*. He included this letter in the Supplement to *Anjam Atham* with the following comment:<sup>1</sup>

I am including this letter so that other religious leaders may at least follow in his (Khawaja Ghulam Farid's) footsteps and emulate his thinking even if they are unable to render greater assistance. I say in all honesty that God will include whoever supports this humble person even to the extent that Khawaja Ghulam Farid has done in his letter among those who did not want to reject the truth.

In his reply, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote a long poem in Persian to Khawaja Ghulam Farid in which he expressed his pain at the opposition of the clerics who had branded him an infidel. He also stated his articles of faith in the letter. The poem is a masterpiece of wisdom. A translation of a few sections of the poem is given below:

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1 Supplement *Anjam Atham*. Page 32.

O the Peerless Man of this Time, pious and pure,  
May your righteous disposition be aided by that Being called God.

May the blessings of that Eternal Friend shower upon you,  
May the light of that Eternal Beloved shine in you.

O one with a righteous disposition, I am well pleased with you,  
I see in you a real man when real men are rare in these times.

.....

My message of love, I send to you,  
I sense the aroma of love emanating from your alley.

None from the multitude paid attention to me,  
But you are fortunate for it was fated for you.

The whole world reproaches me,  
Their cruelty and ruthlessness breaks my heart.

There is none to testify my genuineness by casting a friendly eye,  
Out of fear of being labeled an infidel in the stranger's eye.

An infidel, Antichrist and accursed they call me,  
And every reprobate lies in wait to kill me.

Look at these players when they initiate their plan,  
Their hatred makes them willing to lay down their lives.

A believer, they brand as an infidel,  
They consider it a plaything and realize not its gravity.

For he who wrongfully accuses another of heresy,  
The charge reverberates on him and lo, he is an infidel.

Despicable is he and really sunk in heresy,  
But speaks he of other's infidelity.

Was he but aware of his own internal infidelity,  
He would know he is the lowest of the low.

.....

We are Muslims by the Grace of God,  
And Mustafa is our chief and leader.

Our mothers gave us birth in this faith,  
Steadfast will we hold to it till this world we depart.

This true Book, the name of which is the Quran,  
Our goblet is filled with its mystic wine.

The Messenger, whose name is Muhammad,  
Forever we will cling on to him.

With (mother's) milk has his affinity entered our bodies and  
become our life,  
It will depart only when from the body is severed this life.

From all Messengers and other creation, he is superior,  
All prophethood has ended with him.

He is the fountain from which we drink,  
All those who bloom, are watered by him.

What I receive of revelations and signs,  
Are not from me but from the same source.

We receive all light and excellence from him,  
Without him, meeting with the Eternal Beloved is difficult.

His word is an integral part of our life,  
And all traditions proven as his are part of our faith.

Of Angels and the Day of Judgment,  
In respect of which the Messenger of the Lord of Men has stated.

Is all true and from that One Being,  
Whoever rejects it deserves to be cursed.

All his miracles are true and genuine,

And their deniers deserve to be cursed.

The miracles of past prophets,  
Mentioned unequivocally in the Quran;

We believe them with our life and our heart,  
Whoever denies them is from people, callous and wretched.

Any separation from that Book full of light,  
Is surely a deprivation and a thing of great loss.

*Hazrat Mirza* has expressed his faith with the utmost clarity in the last verses of the above poem. Could there be any other reason after this to doubt his Islamic faith except ignorance, obduracy, prejudice and jealousy?

### ***Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi journeys to Chachran***

When *Maulvi Batalvi* read the letter of *Khawaja Ghulam Farid*, he forthwith repaired to Chachran, determined to obtain a negation from *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* of his letter to *Hazrat Mirza*. It so happened that a disciple of *Hazrat Mirza* was simultaneously visiting *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* and was a witness to the brazen attempt by *Maulvi Batalvi* to mislead *Khawaja Ghulam Farid*. The disciple watched anxiously to see how the situation would play out, but *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* reassured the disciple and said: "Just watch the finesse with which I will give him the slip." *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* told *Maulvi Batalvi*: "I am not of the same mold as ordinary clerics. I am neither argumentative nor do I give edicts. You have explained your viewpoint and thereby fulfilled your obligation to deliver the message. This is the end of the matter. Please do not pressure me any further." However, *Maulvi Batalvi* was insistent and demanded that either *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* should debate him or give him an edict denouncing *Hazrat Mirza*. When it became clear that *Maulvi Batalvi* would not take no for an answer, *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* quietly got up and went inside his private quarters. He then had some money delivered to *Maulvi Batalvi* through a disciple and *Maulvi Batalvi* left without a whimper. *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* later remarked: "This is the most efficacious way I know of shutting up such clerics."

### **Record of the life and sayings of *Khawaja Ghulam Farid***

It was the practice in India that disciples recorded incidents and sayings of their saint in a book called *Mal'fuzat* (Enunciations). After the

death of Khawaja Ghulam Farid, his son had his father's *Malfuzat* published under the title *Isharat Faridi* (Notes of Farid). The book is in Persian and an English translation of the portions of the book pertaining to *Hazrat Mirza* is given below:<sup>2</sup>

The discussion turned to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani and the arguments and invectives of his opponents. A knowledgeable person in the audience praised his fine qualities and praised him. Respected Khawaja sahib was happy and delighted at these remarks and said: "Mirza sahib spends his entire time in the worship of God, the Glorious and Exalted - he is praying, reading the Quran, or engaged in other similar activities. He has so relentlessly devoted himself to Islam and its propagation that he has invited the Queen in London to the religion of Muhammad, and has also invited the Kings of Russia, France and other countries to the religion of Islam. His entire effort and striving is devoted to the end that these people, namely the Christians, should give up the concept of Trinity and the Cross, which is a clear heresy, and accept the Unity of Allah. But the clerics of today are focused not on the followers of false religions, but on hounding this pious person and branding him as an infidel although he is from the *Ahl-e Sunnat wal Jamaat*, is on the right path himself, and guides others to it. The excellence of his Arabic writings is beyond human ability and every one of his writings is full of truth, wisdom and guidance. For sure he does not reject any of the tenets of *Ahl-e Sunnat wal Jamaat* or the necessary articles of religion."

After this, Khawaja Ghulam Farid said:

"Mirza sahib has drawn attention to many signs in support of his claim of being the *Mahdi*, but there are two signs in particular that he has written about and explained in his books that provide testimony of a high quality. The first is that he says there is in the books of *Hadith* a saying of the Holy Prophet that the *Mahdi* will appear in a village called Qadah,<sup>3</sup> and Qadah is in reality the Arabic version of Qadian. The second is that he says that there is a *hadith* narrated by *Imam Muhammad Bakir* in the book, *Dar*

2 *Isharat Faridi*. Extracts from pages 69 to 72.

3 Sheikh Ali Hamza Ali Malik Al Tusi. *Jawarul Asrar* published 1435.

*Qutni*, which states ‘There are two signs of our *Mahdi* that have never appeared in support of any claimant since the time when Allah created the heaven and the earth. These are that in the month of *Ramzan*, a lunar eclipse will take place on the first night (of the possible nights of lunar eclipse), and a solar eclipse will take place on the middle day (of the possible days of solar eclipse). Accordingly, when the lunar eclipse took place on April 6, 1894 followed by the solar eclipse, Mirza sahib published and widely distributed an announcement that the prophecy of the Holy Prophet about the *Mahdi* has been fulfilled. He put this forward as a proof positive of his veracity and demanded that it is now incumbent on everyone to accept his claim of being the *Mahdi*. In response, the clerics of our time raised a childish objection that the meaning of the *hadith* appears to be that the lunar eclipse will take place on the first night of *Ramzan* and the solar eclipse in the middle of *Ramzan*. In actuality, the lunar eclipse took place on the thirteenth of *Ramzan* and the solar eclipse on the twenty-eighth of *Ramzan* and this is contrary (according to the clerics) to what is stated in the *hadith*. It is a different lunar and solar eclipse (according to them) that will take place in the time of the true *Mahdi*.’

After this, Khawaja Farid said:

“Glory be to Allah! Mirza sahib’s interpretation of this *hadith* is excellent and his reply to the clerics very effective. Hearken! Mirza sahib says that there are two signs appointed for the identification and acceptance of the *Mahdi* and these two signs have never appeared in the time of any claimant since the inception of heaven and earth. These two signs are that during the period of the Promised *Mahdi*’s claim, the lunar eclipse will take place on the first of the three nights that the moon can eclipse, i.e. the thirteenth night of *Ramzan*, and the solar eclipse will take place on the middle day of the days in which the sun can eclipse, i.e. the twenty-eighth day of *Ramzan*.” After this His Highness stated: “There is no doubt that the meaning of the *hadith* is exactly as explained by Mirza sahib because the lunar eclipse always takes place on the thirteenth, fourteenth or fifteenth night and the solar eclipse always on the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth or twenty-ninth night. Hence the lunar eclipse that took place on April 6, 1894 was on the thirteenth night of *Ramzan* i.e. the first of the



possible lunar eclipse nights and likewise, the solar eclipse took place on the middle day (of the possible days of solar eclipse).”

In another place, the reference in *Isharat Faridi* to *Hazrat Mirza* is in the following manner:

During this period, *Hafiz Gammu*, a resident of Garhi Ikhtiar Khan, started discussing Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani in derogatory and disrespectful terms. The bright countenance of His Highness (Khawaja Farid) faded, and he scolded the *Hafiz* in a raised voice. The *Hafiz* submitted: “Sir! When we do not find the qualities and particulars of Jesus son of Mary, on him be peace, and the attributes of the Promised *Mahdi* in Mirza sahib, how can we accept that he is Jesus and *Mahdi*?” His Highness, Khawaja sahib replied: “The attributes of *Mahdi* are hidden and concealed and are not as people have imagined. It would not be strange at all if this Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani is the *Mahdi* because according to a *hadith* there are twelve Antichrists<sup>4</sup> and so likewise there are an equal number of *Mahdis*. There is also a *hadith* that Jesus and the *Mahdi* are one and the same.”<sup>5</sup> After this, he said: “It is not necessary that all the signs of the *Mahdi* appear exactly in the form that people have imagined in their minds. O *Hafiz*! The facts are against this happening. If things happened exactly as people have imagined them then the entire populace would know him as the *Mahdi* and believe in him. However, we see even with the prophets that their nation splits into groups. Some are able to discern the real situation of the prophet and they believe; some continue to harbor doubts, and yet others are totally unable to fathom his status - they disbelieve and are called infidels. If the real status of a prophet would become manifest to the entire nation then everyone would submit. Just consider the events in the life of the Holy Prophet; his attributes and signs were present in writing in the previous scriptures, but when the Holy Prophet appeared, people did not find some of the signs in accordance with their thinking and understanding. Those who discerned his condition

4 The Translator was unable to locate a *hadith* mentioning twelve Antichrists (*Dajjals*), but there is a reference to thirty Antichrists. See Ahmad bin Hanbal, vol. 2 page 104, line 3.

5 *Kanaz al-Ummal fi Sunani-l-Aqwal wa-l-Afal* (Hadith), by Al-Shaikh Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttaqi, vol. 14, page 363.

believed in him, but those who were unable to do so rejected him. It is the same way with the *Mahdi*. If Mirza sahib is the *Mahdi*, it is not a matter of any great impediment.”

The following extract is from page 75 of this book:

Mirza sahib was being discussed in the gathering. One person remarked that Mirza sahib was determined to crush the Christian belief of Trinity but the religious scholars of the day had turned on him, branded him an infidel and were waging a war against him. Khawaja Sahib said: “Truth will triumph and the side with the truth will triumph.”

In other words, the venerable saint’s view was that the religious scholars could wage their war all they wanted, but the truth will triumph because the side with the truth always triumphed. In a similar vein, the *Malfuzat* contained a comment Khawaja Farid made immediately after a reference to the letter he had written in Arabic (to *Hazrat* Mirza): “Mirza sahib is a pious and holy man. He sent me a book of his revelations, which clearly manifest his high stature and piety.” These words clearly show that Khawaja Farid accepted the Divine origin of *Hazrat* Mirza’s revelations. Another incident was also recorded in this book. It happened when some clerics started vilifying *Hazrat* Mirza and denied his righteousness. Khawaja Farid said: “No! No! He is a righteous man. He is not a liar or fabricator.”

In short, wherever there was a reference to *Hazrat* Mirza in this book, Khawaja Ghulam Farid testified to his righteousness and Divine appointment. As the above passages show, his favorable view of *Hazrat* Mirza was not merely an act of politeness, but based on a knowledge of *Hazrat* Mirza’s external and internal situation. He exhibited a deep understanding of *Hazrat* Mirza’s claims and their supporting arguments, and also the reasons put forward by the opponents for rejecting these claims. It was not just his pious nature that had guided him to accept *Hazrat* Mirza’s claims but also a thorough examination of these claims with their supporting arguments, and the awareness that the objections of the opposition were immature and childish.

### **The visit of two Sufis to Qadian**

In 1906, this humble author took a long leave of absence from work and went to Qadian to spend time in the company of *Hazrat* Mirza. During this period, two disciples of Khawaja Ghulam Farid came and stayed in

Qadian for some days. Khawaja Ghulam Farid had passed away by then. His two disciples had heard their spiritual mentor speak so highly of *Hazrat* Mirza that they had decided to come and see the *Mahdi* for themselves in Qadian. The *Sufi* code of conduct does not allow multiplicity of spiritual guides although the *Sufis* are not averse to accepting good influences from other sources as well. For this reason, they did not take the pledge,<sup>6</sup> but whenever they entered the presence of *Hazrat* Mirza, they showed great reverence, much to the surprise of everyone else. Their arms would be folded low across their chest as if in prayer, their eyes would be downcast and they would stand respectfully in quiet humility. Their actual names were something different, but out of humility they had adopted the nicknames *Shaitan* (Satan) and *Iblis* (Devil). *Shaitan* had a very melodious voice and whenever he gave the call to prayer, he would break down and weep on reaching the part "I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." In short, they were a very interesting pair. While in Qadian, they spent most of their time sitting around with *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din. Both were devout individuals, and spent the greater part of the night invoking the name of God.

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6 Another example of this code of conduct was the father of Qazi Amir Hussain. He was a *Sufi* scholar and respected *Hazrat* Mirza so much that when he came to Qadian, he would walk barefooted from where he saw the minarets of the Mubarak mosque. However, since he had already taken a pledge at the hands of some other holy person, he did not take the pledge with *Hazrat* Mirza.

## THE THIRD CALL TO CLERICS AND SHEIKHS FOR AN IMPRECATORY CONTEST

In response to the challenge for an imprecatory contest published in the Supplement to *Anjam Atham*, there were but a mere handful of righteous persons like Khawaja Ghulam Farid who testified to *Hazrat Mirza's* truthfulness. The rest neither accepted the challenge nor confirmed his uprightness. Therefore, *Hazrat Mirza* issued a third call for an imprecatory contest in yet another Supplement to *Anjam Atham*. This time he prescribed such a simple process for the conduct of imprecation that all clerics, regardless of where they resided, could easily participate in the contest. The process he prescribed in the Supplement was as follows:

A necessary condition is that there must be at least ten imprecators and not just one. Since the call for an imprecatory contest is addressed to all, regardless of whether they reside in Punjab, India, the Arab countries or Iran, it is unfair to require the opponents to travel great distances to the site of the contest. Hence in conformity with the dictate "...and (Allah) has not laid upon you any hardship in religion" (22:78), and "Allah desires ease for you and He desires not hardship for you" (2:185), it is proposed that every individual should participate in the imprecation through a published announcement. However, it is a mandatory requirement that he should write down all the revelations that I have given in

*Anjam Atham* on pages 51 to 62 in his announcement. It would not be considered sufficient to merely refer to those revelations; all the revelations must be transcribed in totality and then followed by the below-mentioned supplication in writing:<sup>1</sup>

Supplication:

O Allah! All Knowledgeable and All Knowing; I, so and so, son of, so and so, resident of, such and such place, do consider this person whose name is Ghulam Ahmad as false, a liar and an infidel with respect to his claim to be the Promised Messiah. All the revelations that I have copied in this Announcement from pages fifty-one to sixty-two of *Anjam Atham* are in my opinion deceptions or satanic suggestions, and not from Thee. Hence, O All Powerful God! If Thou knowest that I am true in this assertion, and he has made this claim without Thine sanction, and these revelations are not from Thee, and he is in fact an infidel, then grant a favor to this blessed nation, and put him to death within a period of one year so that people may become safe from his harm. And if he is not a liar, and is Thine appointee, and these revelations are the pious words of Thine mouth, then impose upon me, who considers him a liar and an infidel, a painful and ignominious calamity within a period of one year. Amen.

When a contestant sends an announcement, without in any way altering the specified text above, someone will be asked to read out the announcement to the members of my organization, and when the reading is finished, all present will say "Amen." It will then be considered as if the imprecation had taken place face-to-face. On receipt of the announcement, I will also publish a statement of imprecation in which I will include all the revelations included in *Anjam Atham* from pages fifty-one to sixty-two and will then write the following supplication:

O Allah! All Knowledgeable and All Knowing; If Thou knowest that I have invented the claim of Promised Messiah myself, and these revelations quoted in this announcement are not from Thee, but are of my own making or satanic suggestions then, within a period of one year from today's date, cause me to die or send

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1 Supplement to *Anjam Atham*. Footnote, pages 33-35.

upon me a calamity that is worse than death. However, if Thou knowest that my claim is based on your revelation, and all these revelations written in this announcement are Thy revelations, then impose on this contestant, who by virtue of this imprecation falsifies me and considers me a liar, a painful infliction. Amen.

When my announcement reaches my opposing imprecator, it should be read in an assembly, and when the reading is complete, all those assembled should say "Amen." This format for the imprecation is for those persons who reside beyond a distance of fifty leagues (about 150 miles). However, if they reside within fifty leagues as for example (is the case with), Sheikh Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, Sanaullah Amritsari, Abdul Haq Ghaznavi and Mian Abdul Jabbar Ghaznavi, then the best method for them is to have a face-to-face imprecation. I will traverse half the distance and they should traverse half the distance, and the imprecatory contest will be held midway. This offer of imprecation is my final argument against them. If someone chooses not to give up his tyrannical ways even after this, then God, the Most High, has concluded his arguments for such a person. Peace be upon the followers of guidance.

### **Clerics abstain from the test of imprecation**

No cleric picked up the gauntlet by agreeing to participate in the imprecatory contest. They may boast, brag and make false claims afterwards, but the fact remains that no cleric was willing to participate in the contest prescribed by the Quran and the *Hadith* for deciding between truth and falsehood. They rolled over and played dead; their refusal to participate in a contest sanctioned by God as the final arbiter between truth and falsehood proved that their slander against *Hazrat* Mirza was false.

## TESTIMONY OF SYED ASHAD-UD-DIN AL-ALAM

### Testimonial letter of Syed Ashad-ud-Din

The Supplement to *Anjam Atham* also contained the testimony of Syed Ashad-ud-Din Al-Alam, a religious leader of Sind, who was both pious and scholarly. He was previously mentioned in Chapter 21 regarding the narrative of Alexander Webb. At the suggestion of *Maulvi* Abdullah Arab, he had performed *Istikhara* - a prayer seeking guidance from Allah in a particular matter. As a result of the Divine response he received, he decided to proceed to Qadian in person, but later changed his plan at the instigation of other people and instead sent a testimonial letter written in Arabic to Hazrat Mirza. The letter was sent with Syed Ashad-ud-Din Al-Alam's son Khalifa Abdul Latif, and Sheikh Abdullah Arab. A translation of the letter follows:

I saw the Messenger of Allah in a vision. I respectfully submitted to him: "O Messenger of Allah! Is this man, who claims to be the Promised Messiah, a liar and a fraud or is he genuine?" The Messenger of Allah replied: "He is truthful and has been appointed by God." I understood then that you are righteous, and henceforth I will entertain no doubt about your claims nor have any uncertainty about your dignity. I will do whatever you command. If you ask me to go to America, I will go there because I have given myself over to you, and God willing, you will find me obedient.

Commenting on the letter, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:<sup>1</sup>

Khalifa Abdul Latif, now deceased, and Sheikh Abdullah Arab communicated these matters (mentioned in the letter) verbally to me as well. Even now, when my good friend Seth Saleh Muhammad Haji Allah Rakha visited him (Syed Ashad-ud-Din) from Madras, he found him true to his word. As a matter of fact, he stood up in a gathering and, staff in hand, declared in a loud voice: “I consider his (*Hazrat* Mirza’s) claim to be true and state this on the basis of information given to me in a vision.” And his son told me: “When my Father has borne testimony, then I, too, will not be of those who reject you.”

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1 Supplement to *Anjam Atham*. Page 60



## Chapter

# 74

## ISLAM IS THE ONLY LIVING RELIGION

### **Conclusive arguments against Christians and other non-Muslims**

In the Supplement to *Anjam Atham*, Hazrat Mirza asserted with great passion and vehemence that Islam is the only living religion. This assertion showed not only his great confidence and conviction in the truth of Islam but also evidenced his genuineness and breadth of knowledge. It was also a definitive proof against those who continued to reject this truth. He asserted:<sup>1</sup>

In the end, I would again like to remind a seeker of truth that the signs of a true religion, and the heavenly testimony of Islam's veracity that have been given to me, are beyond the knowledge of our blind clerics. I have been sent to prove that Islam is the only living religion and have been bestowed with miracles that confound not only nonbelievers but also our internal blind adversaries. I can prove to all opponents that the Quran is a miracle in its teachings, the wisdom of its philosophies, the excellence of its knowledge and the perfection of its language. A miracle that is greater than the miracle of Moses and hundreds of times greater than the miracles of Jesus.

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<sup>1</sup> Supplement to *Anjam Atham*. Pages 61 to 63.

I say repeatedly and emphatically that true love and strict obedience of the Quran and the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, enables a person to perform miracles. Such a perfect person is granted knowledge of the unseen, and the followers of other religions in this world cannot compete with him in spiritual blessings. I am a person who has experienced this. It is plainly visible to me that, with the exception of Islam, all other religions are dead, their gods are dead and so, too, are their followers. It is just not possible to develop a living relationship with God except by accepting Islam. It is just not possible.

O ignorant ones! Why do you love the worship of the dead so much? And what is the enjoyment in feeding off the dead? Come, let me tell you where the living God is and with which nation (He is)? He is with Islam. Islam is now the mount Sinai of Moses where God is speaking. The God who spoke with the prophets and then fell silent is today speaking in the heart of a Muslim. Is no one of you desirous of testing this and accepting the truth on finding it? What do you have in your hands? Is it a corpse wrapped in a shroud? Then what else is it? Is it a handful of dust? Can this corpse be God? Can he reply to you? Come hither! And, yes, a curse be on you if you don't come and compare this putrid corpse with my God.

Look here, I tell you that a period of forty days will not come to pass before He will show you some heavenly signs that will put you to shame. Impure are those hearts that reject without an honest trial, and defiled are those persons that incline to wickedness rather than the search of truth. O, my adverse clerics! If you are in any doubt, come and stay in my company for a few days, and if you do not see the signs of God, catch me and expose me as a liar in any way you choose. I have put forward my arguments and now you have no reply unless you rebut them. God's signs are pouring down like rain. Is there no one among you who will come to me with an honest heart? Is there not a single one? A warner came to this world but the world did not accept him. But God will accept him and manifest his genuineness with powerful onslaughts.

Regretfully, there were no seekers of truth, neither among the Muslim opponents nor among the non-Muslim ones. Consequently, not even a

single person stepped forward to put *Hazrat* Mirza's claim to the test, not even just by way of trial. *Hazrat* Mirza related this very poignantly in these verses:

Nobody came to verify our claims,  
Though we invited every opponent to try us.

Slumbering thus in shrouds of ignorance,  
They wake not though we roused them a hundred times.

Come hither, O people, for here you will find the light of God,  
Lo! What we tell you is the way of satisfaction.

We have veritably tried Islam for ourselves,  
Rise and see, what we narrate to you is truly a radiant light.

## Chapter

# 75

### **CONTEST PROPOSED BETWEEN THE MIRACLES OF THE BIBLICAL JESUS AND MUHAMMADAN MESSIAH**

#### **Reward offered for a contest between the Biblical Jesus and the Muhammadan Messiah**

On January 28, 1897, *Hazrat* Mirza published a poster entitled, “Announcement of a Reward of One Thousand Rupees.” This announcement made another convincing argument in the clearest terms against the Christians. The text of the announcement read as follows:

I publish this announcement with a firm promise of giving a reward of one thousand rupees to any Christian who can show that the miracles of Jesus, considered as proof of his Divinity, are greater in the strength of their proof and abundance of occurrence than my signs and supernatural miracles. I say with all sincerity and truth that I will not retract from this promise. I can even deposit this sum in advance with an arbitrator who enjoys the trust of both parties. Persons belonging to other religions will judge the contest. Those desirous of participating in the test should send their applications at an early date.

The writer is a sincere well-wisher of the Christians,  
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani  
January 28, 1897

The Christian clergy was dumbstruck, and not even one clergyman stepped forward to test the mettle of his faith by this standard. A few individuals responded with foolish comments in the newspaper *Christian Advocate*. These comments stated, in summary, that it was entirely possible for false prophets and false Messiahs to show great signs so as to mislead true believers. *Hazrat* Mirza rebutted this argument effectively in an announcement dated January 28, 1897, in which he pointed out the inconsistency of their logic. They had accorded Divinity to Jesus, he argued, on the basis of certain signs, but when another person showed them the same signs, or even more powerful signs, they rejected this other person as a false Messiah and were not even willing to accord him the status of someone who received revelation. This was strange logic indeed! Then what was the proof that Jesus was the true Messiah? Their argument could be used equally to label him as an imposter. *Hazrat* Mirza also shed light on the miracle of Jesus bringing the dead to life. He used both historical facts and rational arguments to show that these stories were mere fables and not based on reality. He also showed from the Quran that a person who had really died could not return back to earth, and therefore, the reference in the Quran to prophets bringing the dead back to life was an analogy for revival of dead nations or spiritually dead people. He then proved from the Bible that in the New Testament, Jesus categorically refused to show miracles, and in his anger dubbed those who insisted on seeing a miracle as “adulterers.”<sup>1</sup> *Hazrat* Mirza’s reply was so comprehensive that it silenced the Christians completely and none picked up the courage to respond in writing or in person. By their silence and helplessness, however, they conceded their defeat.

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1 Matthew 13:38-39.

## **SHEIKH MUHAMMAD RAZA TEHRANI NAJAFI'S OPPOSITION**

### **Reply to the criticism of Sheikh Muhammad Raza Tehrani**

Sheikh Muhammad Raza Tehrani Najafi was a *Shia* jurist who came out in opposition against *Hazrat* Mirza. He published an announcement in which he wrote many frivolous things supporting the view that Jesus was still alive, and about the advent of the *Mahdi* (The rightly guided one). He boasted that he could show a sign in a period of forty seconds, and suggested a novel method of deciding between truth and falsehood. He proposed that *Hazrat* Mirza and he should simultaneously jump from the minaret of the Badshahi Mosque in Lahore, and the one who was true would survive and the other would die. The *Shia* community reveled in the talk of their Sheikh and some members even wrote letters to *Hazrat* Mirza to face off in a debate with him. *Hazrat* Mirza responded by publishing an announcement in Persian on February 1, 1897, in which he asked Sheikh Najafi to communicate with him directly and followed this up by advancing clear and cogent arguments from the Quran and the *Hadith* regarding his claims. Because Sheikh Najafi had boasted that he could show a sign in forty seconds, *Hazrat* Mirza responded:

I ask you to show a sign and you may take even forty hours to do so, let alone forty seconds. On my part, I promise to show a sign within forty days, i.e. Allah will manifest a clear and evident sign in support of my truthfulness within a period of forty days. I also

give Sheikh Najafi the same period of forty days. If within this period, he shows a sign then I will abandon my claims. However, if the Sheikh is unable to show a sign, but a sign is manifested in my support, then it would be conclusive proof of my genuineness and also of the fact that he is a liar. With regard to the demand of Sheikh Najafi to jump from the minaret of the Badshahi Mosque, such a method of settling disputes is not to be found in the Quran and *Hadith* and is an innovation.

It is interesting that the devil had made a similar demand of the Israeli Messiah and had asked him to jump from the pinnacle of a temple. If the Messiah survived, he was genuine and if the Messiah died he was a pretender. What a coincidence that Sheikh Najafi is making a similar demand from the Muhammadi Messiah, namely me. Today, I give Sheikh Najafi the same reply that the first Israeli Messiah gave to the devil. Read the reply in the New Testament.<sup>1</sup>

### **Manifestation of a Divine sign within forty days**

Sheikh Najafi remained silent for a while, but then sent a printed letter, written partly in Arabic and partly in Urdu, to *Hazrat Mirza* on March 6, 1897. There was nothing new in the letter and its contents merely reiterated the nonsensical views expressed by him earlier. However, on March 7, 1897, God manifested a great sign that vindicated the genuineness of *Hazrat Mirza* and the falseness of Sheikh Najafi. This sign was the fulfillment of *Hazrat Mirza's* prophecy regarding *Lekhram's* death. *Hazrat Mirza's* announcement of February 1, 1897, had promised a sign to Sheikh Najafi within forty days, and precisely thirty-five days later, *Lekhram* was assassinated. This grand sign sent Sheikh Najafi into moral oblivion and effectively produced the same result as if he had jumped from the minaret of Badshahi Mosque. On March 10, 1897, *Hazrat Mirza* addressed an announcement to Sheikh Najafi reminding him of the announcement of February 1, 1897, in which he had promised a sign within forty days. He called upon the Sheikh to repent his past behavior if he had even an iota of goodness in any corner of his heart, but nothing more was heard from Sheikh Najafi.

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1 Matthew 4:5-6.

## FUNDRAISING FOR A NEW GUESTHOUSE

### **Donations requested for new guesthouse**

Membership in *Hazrat* Mirza's movement was growing rapidly and the old guesthouse had run out of capacity to lodge all the visitors who came to Qadian. Realizing the inadequacy of the existing facility, *Hazrat* Mirza appealed for donations from members to build a new guesthouse. This appeal was made in an announcement dated February 17, 1897. In this announcement, he wrote:

Some time back, I received a revelation: "Expand your house because people from distant lands will come to you." Accordingly, I have seen this prophecy fulfilled with people coming here from Madras to Peshawar. However, even after this, I received the same revelation again and it appears from this that this prophecy will be fulfilled even more forcefully and with greater numbers. And Allah does what he wants and no one can prevent what He wills. It is incumbent on everyone to donate for this cause in accordance with his means.

The members of the organization donated generously and the new guesthouse was constructed on the land between *Hazrat* Mirza's house and the big mosque. During the lifetime of *Hazrat* Mirza, this building was used exclusively as a guesthouse because it was built with organization funds for the purpose of housing guests.



## GOD'S CURSE AND THE BREAKING OF THE CROSS

### **Announcement regarding the breaking of the Cross**

God had appointed *Hazrat* Mirza specifically for breaking the Cross and so he worked diligently to fulfill this mission of annihilating Christianity. To this end, *Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement on March 2, 1897, entitled "God's Curse and the Breaking of the Cross," which truly destroyed the Christian doctrine of atonement, and thus broke the Cross. In this announcement, *Hazrat* Mirza explained that the word '*laan*' (curse) was common to Arabic and Aramaic, and all authoritative dictionaries, whether compiled by Muslim authors, such as *Lisan al-Arab*, or by Christian authors, such as *Qatar al Moheet* and *Aqrab al Mawrid*, had stated the meaning of '*laan*' in the same way. The announcement explained:

The word *laanti* (cursed) is used for a person who is devoid of any goodness, is totally lacking in personal ability and knowledge of God, is deprived completely of God's mercy and has been thrown into everlasting punishment. In other words, there is no virtue left in him whether large or small, and the person has turned into a veritable Satan whose inner soul is mutilated ...and Shamakh has referred to a cursed person as a wolf in one of his verses because a cursed person's soul metamorphoses into a lower animal species. Even in common parlance, when it is stated that "God's curse is on such a person," everyone from the highest to the low-

est (intellectual levels) understands that the person has a defiled soul, is without belief, and is a Satan in God's eyes. God is disgusted with him and he is turned away from God.

After explaining the dictionary meaning of the word 'cursed' and also the sense in which it was used in common parlance, *Hazrat* Mirza posed a question to the Christian clergy:

You subscribe to the doctrine that Jesus was cursed after crucifixion. Is it your belief then that the meaning of 'cursed' as explained above is a true description of Jesus at the time, since no word can be separated from its connotation? Is it then a fact that (We seek God's protection from making such an assertion) he came under God's curse and wrath, lost all goodness and turned away from God? I consider anyone who makes such an allegation against a holy man of this grandeur as being cursed himself.

Concluding the discussion on this, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:

If, God forbid, Jesus was cursed for a few days, how could his prophetic relation with God and the title of Son of God remain intact? Let alone being a son, even just being dear (to God) is against the meaning of curse. Calling a beloved of God a Satan, even for a moment, is itself the work of Satan and not of a human. I cannot conceive that any moral person will consider it permissible to apply these names that constitute the spirit and essence of curse to Jesus even for a second. If it is not permissible, then the entire structure of the doctrine of atonement crumbles; the Religion of Trinity dies and the Cross is shattered. Is there anyone in this world who can give a reply to this?

In fact, no one was able to give a reply. Although the Christian clergy and its followers were engulfed in a pall of gloom, they were unable to come up with an answer then or since then. This was not surprising because the doctrine of atonement cannot stand even for a second in the light of the real meaning of 'curse.' No Christian can say that Jesus was cursed, and if he was not cursed, then there was no atonement. Being cursed and dying on the cross are inseparable parts of the Christian doctrine. If Jesus was not cursed, then he did not die on the cross. By showing the illogical premise on which this essential article of Christian faith rests, *Hazrat* Mirza shattered the Cross and dealt Christianity a mortal blow.

## **THE PROPHESED DEATH OF LEKHRAM & THE *ISTIFTA* (REQUEST FOR A LEGAL OPINION)**

In response to *Hazrat* Mirza's epic work, *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, *Pundit* Lekhram wrote the book, *Takzib Barahin Ahmadiyya* (Rebuttal of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*), that relied not on arguments, but on villainous and vulgar ridiculing of Islam and the Holy Prophet. The author had not the least hesitation in using vile and abusive language against the person of the Holy Prophet. Soon afterwards, in 1885, this insolent man came to Qadian at the invitation of Mirza Imam-ud-Din and stayed with some local Hindu *Aryas*. During his stay in Qadian, *Pundit* Lekhram exchanged some correspondence with *Hazrat* Mirza, ostensibly for the purpose of holding a debate with him. However, Lekhram was an extremely ignorant person and had no serious intention of debating. Consequently, he did not agree to any reasonable conditions for the conduct of the debate, used all stratagems to avoid a confrontation, but kept boasting and lying that *Hazrat* Mirza was afraid to face him. In fact, the only condition *Hazrat* Mirza imposed was that Lekhram base his arguments on his religious book, the Vedas, and *Hazrat* Mirza would base his arguments on the Holy Quran. However, Lekhram was a complete ignoramus and lacked the ability to support his arguments with passages from the Vedas. He cleverly kept side-stepping the real issue in his correspondence, and in a mocking and derisive style, repeatedly demanded to be shown a sign. Finally, he wrote the following letter:

My only purpose in coming to Qadian from Peshawar, and the only reason why I am still here, is the hope that I will be able to witness and bear testimony to your miracles, supernatural acts, revelations and heavenly signs. Before we discuss any other conditions, let us first resolve this matter in an assembly of respectable people ...

Some more letters were exchanged after this in which the derisive and mocking style of *Pundit* Lekhram continued.

### **Lekhram asks for a heavenly sign**

Finally, Lekhram wrote the letter that was reproduced in full in Chapter 12. Its last part is repeated here since it was the basis of the prophecy to follow. He stated in a very pompous way:<sup>1</sup>

At least show me a heavenly sign. If you are not willing to debate with me, then ask the *Rab-ul-Arsh* (Lord of the Throne), *Khair-ul-Makareen* (the Best of the Planners) for a heavenly sign with respect to me so that our contention is finally settled.

In reply to this letter, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote the letter that was reproduced in Chapter 12. It bears repetition in full because of the exquisite knowledge and wisdom it contains. *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:<sup>2</sup>

Dear *Pundit* Sahib,

I read your letter. I assure you that I have no objection to either holding a debate with you or showing you a heavenly sign. However, your intentions are not to seek the truth and so you keep on imposing unnecessary conditions.

Your impertinent speech never ceases. You write that “If you are not willing to debate with me, then ask the *Rab-ul-Arsh* (Lord of the Throne), *Khair-ul-Makareen* (the Best of the Planners) for a heavenly sign with respect to me.” You jest in this statement and show no faith in God, Who is quite capable of punishing the most

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1 *Istifta*. Page 7.

2 *Istifta*. Pages 8 and 9.

dauntless. You imply in your statement that God is sitting on a throne and conceiving some cunning stratagems. However, your statement evidences only your own lack of understanding. The word *makar* means a subtle and secret plan and the use of the word in this sense is permissible for God. The word *arsh* is used for the greatness of God because He is the most honorable and glorious, not that He is in need of a throne for His power like ordinary humans. The Quran clearly states that everything subsists because of Him and He is the Self-Subsisting. When the Quran explicitly states this, it is unjust to ridicule the word *arsh*. You are unacquainted with Arabic and do not even know the meaning of *makar*. There is no imputation in the word *makar* that cannot be implied for God. The name for the subtle and secret ways by which God punishes the mischievous is *makar*. First consult the dictionary and then criticize. If I am, as you claim, unlettered in the Vedas, it is of no consequence because I argue only against the accepted principles of the *Aryas*, but you make false accusations about that which is not even a part of the principles of Islam. It would have been more appropriate for you to have first inquired from me about the accepted meaning of the expression ‘God is on the *arsh*,’ and reserved your criticism for later, if there was still some scope for criticism. Similarly, you should have inquired about the meaning of *makar* before criticizing the use of the word.

The signs are with God and He has the power to show them to you.

Peace be on those who are guided.

Sincerely,

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

### **An agreement between *Hazrat Mirza* and *Lekhram***

The correspondence between *Hazrat Mirza* and *Lekhram* culminated in an agreement between them that was published in full detail by *Hazrat Mirza* in his book *Istifta* (Request for a Legal Opinion). The title of this agreement, which was written by *Lekhram* in his own hand, stated:

O God! Truth is beautiful; enlighten us with the truth and destroy the untruthful so that Your truth and methods are manifested to the entire world.

A summary of this lengthy agreement is that if Lekhram was informed about a prophecy made by *Hazrat* Mirza and it did not come to pass then this would be taken as a sign of the genuineness of the Hindu religion. It would then become incumbent upon the party making the prophecy to either convert to Hinduism or pay a sum of three hundred and sixty rupees to Lekhram. This amount was to be deposited beforehand as a trust with Shrampat Rai in his shop in Qadian. If the prophecy maker turned out to be correct, then this would be a proof of the genuineness of Islam and it would be incumbent upon *Pundit* Lekhram to accept Islam.<sup>3</sup>

In a footnote appearing on the same page of *Istifta* as the above agreement, *Hazrat* Mirza explained: “The condition that Lekhram should accept Islam was imposed when the nature of the prophecy to be revealed by God was not known.”

On February 20, 1886, *Hazrat* Mirza requested Lekhram through a published announcement to clarify whether a prophecy that may be traumatic for him should be published or not? In reply, Lekhram sent a signed postcard in which he boastfully and with great bravado stated: “I consider your prophecies to be absurd; you can publish whatever you like. You have my permission and I am not afraid.” *Hazrat* Mirza published the contents of this postcard before he made the prophecy about Lekhram’s death.

### **A prophecy about Lekhram**

Even after receiving Lekhram’s postcard, *Hazrat* Mirza waited to publish the prophecy. One reason for this was that God had not revealed the period within which the prophecy was to be fulfilled, and Lekhram was insistent that the prophecy be published with a time limit for its fulfillment. Finally, after a period of intense supplication and prayer in the matter, it was revealed on February 20, 1893, that within six years, a great calamity would befall Lekhram resulting in his death. A part of this revelation was in Arabic and stated: “*Ajal jasada la hu khawar. La hu nasab wa azab.*” Although the original Arabic text is subject to several interpretations, its literal translation into English would be: “This is a lifeless calf making meaningless noises. A painful infliction and a great punishment await him.” *Hazrat* Mirza published this prophecy about Lekhram the same day it was revealed. The following passage, appearing on pages two and three of the announcement, is especially noteworthy.

By publishing this prediction, I want all Muslims, Hindus,

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3 *Istifta*. Page 9.

Christians and followers of other sects to know that, if within six years from today, i.e. February 20, 1893, a frightening and unusual calamity, different from normal mishaps, does not befall him, then it may be considered that I am not from Allah and have no connection with Him. If I am proven a liar in this prediction, then I am ready to bear any punishment and have no objection if a rope is put around my neck and I am strung on a Cross.

*Hazrat Mirza* made this prophecy a definitive test of his truthfulness or falsehood, thereby willingly risking certain humiliation and disgrace in the event the prophecy was not fulfilled. No normal person would want to undertake such a risk, except a man of God whose behavior is governed by a firm conviction that everything takes place according to God's plan, knowledge and will.

### **A sample of the prophecy**

*Hazrat Mirza* published the prophecy regarding Lekhram once again in *Ainah Kamalat Islam*. A tribute lauding the Holy Prophet preceded the prophecy. The tribute started with the verse:

There is an amazing light in the person of Muhammad,  
There is an astonishing ruby in the mine of Muhammad.

The tribute ended with some powerful verses at the end of which *Hazrat Mirza* drew a picture of a hand with a finger pointing to a line that read "A Prophecy Regarding Lekhram," indicating that the references in the poem were to Lekhram. An English translation of the last few verses is given below:

What a tremendous awe has been vouchsafed this man,  
That none can challenge him in the field of Muhammad.

Beware O foolish and misguided enemy,  
Fear the cutting sword of Muhammad.

The Divine path that has been forgotten by man,  
Seek it among the followers and helpers of Muhammad.

Beware O denier of the majesty of Muhammad,  
Beware O denier of the light of Muhammad.

Although miracles appear lost and extinct,  
Yet come hither and see them among the slaves of Muhammad.



A Prophecy About Lekhram of Peshawar  
(*Aina Kamalat Islam*)

This poem contained a clear prophecy of Lekhram's doom, which was now his fate because of his impertinent behavior towards the Holy Prophet. That the subject of the poem is Lekhram is obvious from the illustration – a hand with the finger pointing to a line of text stating, "A Prophecy About Lekhram of Peshawar." The warning contained in the verse "Fear the cutting sword of Muhammad," is indicative of the manner of punishment. Thus, both the text and the illustration left no doubt that the poem is a narration of the fate in store for Lekhram.

**The second revealed prophecy about Lekhram**

After the first prophecy, *Hazrat* Mirza saw in a vision how the verse "*Tabaras az tegh barran Muhammad*," (Fear the cutting sword of Muhammad), would actually be played out in reality. He published this prophecy on the last page of his book, *Barakat-ud-Dua*. Writing under the title "Another News about Lekhram of Peshawar," he wrote:

This morning, that is the morning of April 2, 1893, corresponding to the 14th day of Ramzan 1310 Hijri, I saw a vision in a state of semi-drowsiness. I saw that I was sitting along with some friends in a spacious house when a robust man with a grim and angry face came and stood before me. I glanced up at him and realized that he was not of our creation but was an avenging angel. I was looking at him with awe when he asked me: "Where is Lekhram?" and he also mentioned the name of another person and asked where he was. I realized then that he was appointed for the punishment of Lekhram and this other person. I do not however remember the name of this second person...<sup>4</sup>

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4 See next page.



All these prophecies were declaring loud and clear that Lekhram's life was fated to end by assassination.

### **The third revealed prophecy about Lekhram**

The matter did not end here. *Hazrat* Mirza published a third prophecy on August 24, 1893, as follows:<sup>5</sup>

God gave me the glad tidings of a sign and said: "Soon you will know the day of rejoicing and it will be very close to the Muslim festival of Eid." God promised me that He had heard my prayer about the evil enemy of God and His Prophet, namely Lekhram of Peshawar, and informed me that he would be killed. This person has made a habit of abusing the Holy Prophet and uttering filth in his respect, and so I cursed him; God heard my supplication and informed me that this person will die within a period of six years. His death will be an example for all those who search for the truth.

### **Lekhram is killed within the prophesied period**

These prophecies were published one after the other and provided an insight into what was to occur. They indicated that Lekhram was going to meet his end by assassination with a dagger on a day that would be very close to the festival of Eid. There was also a subtle implication in one of the Arabic phrases of the revelation, *Yaqda amray-hi sittan* (His fate is decreed in six). In addition to its apparent meaning that Lekhram would be killed in six years, there was also a hint that the incident would have a special association with the number six. So it was that Lekhram was killed within six years, on March 6, 1897, and the killer struck him in the sixth hour of the day. The day was Saturday (sixth day of the week) and the date

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4 In *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*, which was published in 1907, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote the following commentary on the identity of the second person: "I still do not know the identity of that other person about whom the avenging angel inquired but whose name has slipped my mind. If only I remembered, I could have warned him and perhaps nudged him towards repentance through goodly advise and counseling. Circumstantial evidence, however, suggests that he has the persona of Lekhram or, shall I say, he is the mirror image of Lekhram and his equal in abusive and insulting talk. And Allah knows best." Subsequent facts revealed this person to be Rajpal who, like Lekhram, published a filthy and abusive book about Prophet Muhammad and was assassinated in Lahore by Ilm-ud-Din.

5 *Karamat-us-Sadiqeen*. Page 54 and the back page opposite the title page.

according to the Islamic calendar was Shawwal 2, the day after Eid-ul-Fitr. This was exactly in accordance with the prophecy “Soon you will recognize the day of rejoicing and it will be very close to the Muslim festival of Eid.” Thus, Eid-ul-Fitr was celebrated on Shawwal 1 and the following day, on Shawwal 2, which corresponded with March 6, 1897, Lekhram was fatally wounded in the sixth hour of the day and died the following day, on Sunday. His body was burned and the ashes thrown in the river. The interesting thing is that this day was also meant to be a day of great rejoicing for the Hindus because the first *shuddi* (reconversion and purification of a Muslim) was to be performed on this day.

### **Details of the assassination**

A summary of the events leading up to the assassination is as follows: Lekhram was the first person to introduce the concept of *shuddi* or *ashuddi*. The Hindu faith recognizes only persons born into the faith as Hindus and conversions are neither solicited nor accepted. However, Lekhram put forward the concept of *shuddi* under which persons who had earlier converted from Hinduism to Islam could be accepted back in the Hindu faith. His rationale was that the conversions from Hinduism to Islam had taken place under duress as a result of persecution by Muslim rulers. Lekhram’s charge against the Muslim rulers was totally false because the Muslim rulers had never forcefully converted anyone.

Such allegations are only baseless propaganda. Some Hindus have gone so far as to allege that the Emperor Aurangzeb razed Hindu temples, and every day burnt one and a quarter maund (approximately 46 kilograms) of sacred threads worn by Hindus to warm water for his ablution. Had this been the case, it would have been impossible to find a Hindu in Delhi and its environs because it would have required the massacre or conversion of several thousand Hindus to collect one and a quarter maund of the sacred thread. The fact, however, is that the population of Hindus is significantly more than that of Muslims in the Delhi area. Bengali-Hindu research scholars have discovered edicts issued under the Emperor’s seal granting estates to Hindu temples. In Benares, the banks of the Ganges River are crowded with stores selling idols. Given the might of the Moghul Empire, it would have been easy for this monotheist ruler to raze these stores to the ground. However, he did not do so. The only thing he did was to construct a mosque in the same vicinity, so that if a monotheist ever found himself in this locale, he may at least find a place to prostrate.

In short, the charges of forceful conversions are false propaganda but nevertheless Lekhram used the allegations as a basis to justify the concept

of *shuddi*. He advocated this concept forcefully and finally succeeded in finding a Muslim who wanted to reconvert. This person claimed that his forefathers were Hindus who had converted to Islam under the influence of Muslims and now he wanted to revert to the Hindu faith. Lekhram was delighted. He introduced him to the Hindu society and its religious leaders, and boasted that this was just his first prey.

Since this was the first conversion, it was decided to celebrate the occasion with great pomp and show, replete with speeches before a large audience. It was a joyous occasion for the Hindus and they made preparations for its celebration on a scale comparable to the Muslim preparations for celebrating Eid. March 7, 1897 was the appointed day for the conversion ceremony. During those fateful days, Lekhram was staying in a fellow *Arya*'s house located in Mohallah Vacho Wali in Lahore. The house was on an alley that did not provide any throughway so that there was just one possible entry or exit point into this closed cluster of houses.

The facts of the incident, as narrated after the assassination are as follows: On the morning of March 6, 1897, Lekhram was on the top floor of the house where he performed the ritual Hindu morning worship wearing only a loin cloth. After finishing his worship, he raised his hands and yawned as a result of which his potbelly bulged out still further. The would-be convert was huddled in a blanket close to Lekhram, and with lightning speed he plunged a dagger into Lekhram's belly and ripped it open from side to side so that his entrails spilled out. Lekhram bellowed loudly like a bull and his stricken call brought his mother and wife rushing to his room, but the assassin had fled by then. They were totally distraught on seeing the wounded Lekhram and ran out to seek help and raise a hue and cry. People who talked to them later said that they did see the assassin going down the stairs but the whereabouts of the assassin after that became a mystery. The alley in which Lekhram resided was closed on one side and all the houses on it belonged to Hindus. A wedding function was in progress in a house near the entrance of the alley, and the alley was chock-full of people sitting around makeshift stoves on which food was being cooked. None of the Hindus present there reported any suspicious person fleeing or passing through the area. Where did the assassin disappear then? Did the earth swallow him up or was he lifted to the heaven?

The mysterious disappearance of the assassin gave birth to rumors in some quarters that the murder was actually an honor killing by some enraged husband or father. Even the newspaper *Paisa Akhbar* reported this story and alleged that the would-be convert was falsely accused. Be that as it may, there is no reason not to accept the official version that the

assassin was the potential Hindu convert, but to this day, the mystery of where and how he disappeared has not been solved. The facts are baffling. There was no way to flee the scene except through the single exit of the alley that was crowded with people at that time. All the residences on that alley belonged to Hindus and it is inconceivable that he could have sought refuge in any of them.

The Hindu populace was outraged and vociferous at this murder, and buckling under their unjust pressure, police began searching the premises of Islamic organizations in Lahore, and even the houses of some leading Muslims, including that of *Hazrat* Mirza in Qadian. None of this activity yielded any clues. The Hindu nation was so crazed in those days that they had many Muslims wrongly arrested on the basis of suspicion. Since the wife and mother of Lekhram were in a position to positively identify the assailant, they traveled to far-flung places for identification, and invariably the arrested man turned out to be innocent and was released. During this period, rumors also started circulating that Hindus were giving out poisoned candies to Muslim children resulting in several fatalities. When such rumors persisted and multiplied, the Muslims came together and raised sufficient funds to open Muslim-owned grocery and candy stores, and many Muslim vendors regularly started plying through Muslim neighborhoods to sell their products. The Muslims thus cut themselves off from the Hindu community and this gave a big economic boost to the burgeoning Muslim businesses. When the emotions of the Hindu community cooled down, they realized that they had made a big mistake, and they made overtures to restore normal relations. Their condition for doing so was to restore the status quo by shutting down the newly opened Muslim stores and stopping the Muslim vendors from plying their trade. This condition was obviously rejected. However, a modicum of normalcy did return. The Hindu businesses then banded together and did their utmost to put the Muslim stores out of business. They did succeed in this to a considerable extent, but some Muslim businesses did survive in Lahore and can still be seen as a memento of this period.

Let us return to Lekhram. The police took him immediately to Mayo Hospital, but by the time they got him there it was evening and Dr. Perry, who happened to be the best surgeon in town, had gone home. Lekhram was wheeled into the operation room and Dr. Perry was sent for. As Lekhram lay on the operation table anxiously awaiting the arrival of the surgeon, he bemoaned his ill fate, "Woe! Even the doctor is not coming." Dr. Perry arrived as soon as he could and sutured the abdominal wound. Dr. Mirza Yaqub Beg of blessed memory was a house surgeon in Mayo

Hospital at that time. Before the operation, Dr. Perry gave him instructions about the operation, addressing him as Mirza sahib. On hearing the name “Mirza sahib” Lekhram was startled and looked all around; no doubt the thought must have crossed his mind that Mirza Qadiani had pursued him even there. Every time Dr. Perry addressed Mirza sahib and the words fell on Lekhram’s ears, he would writhe in spiritual agony.

Dr. Perry prohibited the police from talking with Lekhram because he felt the strain of giving a statement might prove fatal. Thus, no statement was recorded and Lekhram died early on the morning of the following day. Strange are the ways of the Lord! That Sunday was to be a day of festivities for the Arya Hindus because the first conversion or *shuddi* was to be performed that day. Instead, an autopsy was performed on Lekhram and his body was cut up for that purpose. Subsequently, his bier was carried to the crematorium where his face was exposed and a final photograph taken before the funeral pyre was lit. His ashes were scattered in the waters of the River Ravi.

### Some finer points of the revelation

In this way, the revelation was fulfilled with great accuracy that stated “*Ajal jasada la hu khawar. La hu nasab wa azab*” and which was translated as: “This is a lifeless calf making meaningless noises. A painful infliction and a great punishment await him.” However, in Arabic, the words often have more than one meaning, and another translation of the Arabic revelation can be: “He is a lifeless calf who will bellow at the time of his slaughter; he has no life and a painful infliction and a great chastisement await him.”

*Lisan al-Arab*, one of the most authoritative lexicons of the Arabic language, gives several meanings of the word *nasab*. One of the meanings it lists is that “*Nasaba flanun la flarin*,” means that a person attacked another person with the intention of killing him and in so doing exerted maximum effort to remove the other person from the path of his enmity.<sup>6</sup> The word *khawar* in Arabic lexicon is used for the bellowing of a calf, but when used for a human, it denotes the cry of a victim on receiving an assassin’s fatal blow. There is obviously a great similarity between the sound emitted by an assassin’s victim and the bellowing of a calf. No wonder then that Lekhram had bellowed like a bull as the assassin’s dagger ripped through his abdomen. In support of this meaning, *Lisan al-Arab* mentions the following *hadith*: “When Abi bin Khalaf was assassinated, he was

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6 See *Lisan al-Arab*. Page 258.

emitting a sound like the bellowing of a bull.” *Lisan al-Arab* also states that sometimes the word *khawar* is used to indicate the sound that a weapon makes when in use.<sup>7</sup> Thus, it is established from *Lisan al-Arab* that the words *khura* or *khawar* is used for human sounds emitted on being mortally wounded and also for the sound of a weapon when it is being used.

Thus, the Almighty by the choice of words in the revelation “*Ajal jasad la hu khawar; La hu nasab wa azab*,” had revealed a wealth of information about the way things were to unfold. The Hindus respect and worship the calf. Thus, the use of the word ‘calf’ indicated that the calf-worshipping Hindu nation had accorded Lekhram the respect and worshipping status of a calf, but he was really a lifeless body totally devoid of spirituality and knowledge. His absurd and foolish talk made as much sense as the mooing of a calf. At the same time, the use of the word *nasab* indicated that he would be assaulted with a dagger and would bellow like a calf or bull. In fact, it was this beastly sound that had alarmed his wife and mother, and caused them to run to his room. The swish of the dagger as it made its mark on his belly was also alluded to in the use of the word *khawar*.

The reference to Lekhram as a lifeless calf was also significant because of many parallels between the fate of Lekhram and the calf molded from gold by the Israelites under the influence of Samri. Just like the golden calf was destroyed on a day that was to be a “feast for the Lord” and thus a special day for the Jews,<sup>8</sup> Lekhram was killed on a Saturday, a day devoted to the remembrance of the Lord by the Jews. Just like the golden calf was burned and its ashes strewn upon the water, Lekhram’s body was burned and the ashes strewn upon the waters of River Ravi. Finally, just like an outbreak of plague occurred soon after the ashes of the golden calf were strewn upon the water, so too there was an outbreak of plague soon after Lekhram’s ashes were strewn upon the waters of River Ravi.

### **A sign worthy of the ‘best of planners’**

In his book *Istifta*, Hazrat Mirza explains a fine point about Lekhram’s demand for a sign from the *Khair-ul-Makareen*, the best of planners.<sup>9</sup>

In demanding a sign here, Lekhram named God Almighty as *Khair-ul-Makareen* (best of planners). The word *makar* when used in relation to God signifies the fine ways in which God leads

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7 See *Lisan al-Arab*. Page 345.

8 See Exodus 32:5.

9 *Istifta*. Footnote on page 7.

the guilty to their destruction or disgrace. Thus, Lekhram's own choice of words necessitated that the sign be none other than his (untimely) death and that it be occasioned by a masterful combination of events. Such are the grand workings of the Lord that this was precisely how his death was brought about. The work of the assassin does not cease to surprise. Why did he commit the murder in broad daylight? How come he did it when there were other occupants in the house? How did he escape so cleanly from the house after the assassination? Why was he not caught in the totally Hindu-populated street despite the hue and cry raised by the victim's survivors? When we reflect deeply on this chain of events, the immediate conclusion is that this is precisely the kind of work that can be attributed to *Khair-ul-Makareen*.

We have already stated that the Quran uses *Khair-ul-Makareen* as the name of God when He chastises those deserving of punishment through a finely crafted scheme. Under this scheme, God utilizes the very same resources for punishing the guilty that they have accumulated with some other purpose in mind. Thus, the resources that were supposed to be a means of their well-being and status become instead a means of their destruction and humiliation. The law of nature bears testimony that God sometimes punishes shameless and hardened criminals through their own actions. These people gather the means of their infamy and destruction by their own hands, but are unaware of it until the Divine fate is revealed. It is with reference to this surreptitious assembly of the means of punishment that God is named *makir* or planner. There are thousands of examples of such instances in this world.

The plan of God in the matter of Lekhram was first to make him say with his own mouth that he desired a personal sign from the *Khair-ul-Makareen*. Thus, the manner of his demand required a chastisement by secretive means and that is how it happened. He had scheduled the conversion ceremony for Sunday among a large gathering of Hindus whose joyous festivities were to match that of the day of Eid. As it turned out, the rationale for this festivity became a source of grief for him and his nation, and God made the *Arya* nation understand fully well the significance of *Khair-ul-Makareen*.

***Hazrat Mirza's house is searched***

The prophecies regarding Lekhram's demise, the manner of its occurrence, the period in which it would occur, and its close proximity to the Muslim festival of Eid were all fulfilled with such precision that many *Arya*-owned newspapers raised a big hue and cry that Lekhram's assassination was the result of a 'Mirza Qadiani' conspiracy. The authorities investigated these charges thoroughly and searched *Hazrat Mirza's* residence. On April 8, 1897, police suddenly surrounded *Hazrat Mirza's* residence without any warning and searched the premises thoroughly. The District Superintendent of Police, who was an Englishman, led the search himself, accompanied by several other police officers. *Hazrat Mirza* turned over all documents in his possession to the District Superintendent and took up his station in a corner of the room so as to not impede the examination. Whenever the District Superintendent had a question about any document he was examining, *Hazrat Mirza* would go over, reply to the query and then return to his previous station. The District Superintendent got suspicious of *Hazrat Mirza's* return to the same corner of the room. He thought that perhaps *Hazrat Mirza* had something to hide in that part of the room and so he directed his attention to a thorough search of the area and even had the floor in that part of the room dug up. However, when nothing was found, he was quite shamefaced.

One of the first papers that attracted attention from the documents under scrutiny was a telegram sent by one of *Hazrat Mirza's* disciples congratulating him on the fulfillment of Lekhram's prophecy. The District Superintendent separated this telegram from the other papers. Thereupon, *Hazrat Mirza* took out many other congratulatory telegrams from the same stack of documents and showed them to the District Superintendent and said: "Our friends are very pleased that God's word has been fulfilled and that is the reason for these congratulatory telegrams. This is not to say that we are happy about the murder of any person. On the contrary, if I had been near Lekhram at the time of the assassination, I would have definitely helped him because that is my duty as a human being. The only reason for our happiness is that the genuineness of Islam has been established in accordance with the terms of the agreement made between Lekhram and myself."

As the examination of the documents proceeded, all of Lekhram's letters to *Hazrat Mirza* were found; as also the agreement under which the conditions were established for showing a heavenly sign, and under which both parties had consented to accept a true prophecy as the measure of truth or falsehood of their opposing contentions. This agreement was read



to the District Superintendent. A summary of the agreement was as follows: The prophecy about Lekhrām would provide a conclusive judgment between the religion of Islam and the *Arya* faith. If the prophecy proved correct, it would evidence that the religion of Islam was true and the Hindu faith was false. If it proved false, it would evidence the opposite. This condition was included in the agreement at the insistence of Lekhrām and *Hazrat* Mirza had consented to it because he had full faith in Allah's promises and the genuineness of Islam.

When the District Superintendent and his investigative team became fully convinced after their searches and investigation that the conspiracy being alleged by the *Aryas* was mere propaganda and had no basis in fact, they departed. The District Superintendent left through the door that opens into the Mubarak Mosque. This door was not very high and required a person to bend down to pass through it. When the District Superintendent was passing through the door, he misjudged his position and straightened up before he had cleared the door. The result was that his bare head hit the upper frame of the door with such force that he sat down, quite stunned. *Hazrat* Mirza hastened to his side and expressed profound regret and sympathy. He offered to have some milk fetched immediately for the District Superintendent as a drink of milk would ameliorate the symptoms but the offer was refused.

The District Superintendent's report to the government completely exonerated *Hazrat* Mirza and stated that all accusations were completely groundless. There was neither a conspiracy nor evidence of a plan to harm Lekhrām and the propaganda implicating *Hazrat* Mirza was patently false. *Hazrat* Mirza would later comment on a positive aspect of the search. Some clerics had spread rumors that *Hazrat* Mirza had astrological instruments that he used for making prophecies. The search did not find any instruments of astrology or any other paraphernalia used by astrologers and fortune-tellers. The lies of the clerics were thus fully exposed.

### **A message for Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and a prophecy about him**

Sir Syed Ahmad's views about the acceptance of prayers differed markedly from the popular Muslim belief that God accepts prayers. He had expressed his views in a pamphlet called *Al-Dua Wa al-Istajabat* (Prayer and its Acceptance) and *Hazrat* Mirza forthwith published a rebuttal called *Barakat-ud-Dua* (The Blessing of Prayer) in which he not only argued very forcefully that prayers are accepted, but also cited the prediction about Lekhrām on the title page of the pamphlet as an example

of an accepted prayer. He repeated the same on the title page of *Karamatus-Sadiqeen*. When the prophecy regarding Lekhram was fulfilled, *Hazrat Mirza* published an announcement on March 12, 1897, in which he addressed Sir Syed Ahmad and stated that Sir Syed Ahmad had now witnessed an example of how prayers are accepted, and suggested that he recant his erroneous beliefs. Earlier, on February 20, 1886, *Hazrat Mirza* had published an announcement in which he had made a prophecy about Sir Syed Ahmad. The prophecy was “At one stage of your life, you will experience severe worry and grief.” *Hazrat Mirza* also drew Sir Syed’s attention to this prophecy of February 20, 1886, and wrote:

Some of your friends were really upset by this prophecy and denounced it in newspapers. But you are aware that the said prophecy was fulfilled in an awesome manner when you suffered a grievous loss through the unexpected embezzlement of Rs.150,000 by a wicked person. You know fully well the sorrow your heart experienced at the wastage of this wealth of the Muslims. One of my friends, Mirza Khuda Baksh, quoted (your son) Mr. Syed Mahmood as saying: “If I had not been in Aligarh at the time of this loss, I am sure that my Father would have died from grief at this loss.” Mirza Khuda Baksh also reported having heard that you did not partake of food for three days and that you were so overcome by the loss of national funds that you fainted once. So, O Syed Sahib! It was this incident that was prophesied so clearly in my announcement. Accept, if you like. *Wassalam*.

### ***Hazrat Mirza* challenges *Arya* lies about Lekhram’s murder**

The Hindu *Arya* community was vociferous in alleging that Lekhram’s murder was the result of a conspiracy by *Hazrat Mirza*. In response to these allegations, the police raided *Hazrat Mirza*’s house on April 8, 1897, but found no evidence of any complicity. However, *Hazrat Mirza* was a spiritual leader, and even before the police raid, he had put forward a proposal sanctioned by God for the resolution of the problem. This proposal was announced to the public through a poster entitled “*Arya* thinking about Lekhram,” on March 15, 1897. After explaining the background of the Lekhram incident in detail, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote:

I put forward a proposal that will resolve this entire issue. I propose that any accuser should take an oath in the following words in my presence: ‘I know it for a fact that this person is part of the

conspiracy to commit murder or that the murder was committed on his orders. If this is not true then, O, Almighty God, inflict me with an awful calamity within one year that is not of the making of any man or in which human planning has any part.' If this man does not suffer the effects of imprecating me for one year, then I am a criminal and deserve a punishment fit for a murderer. Now is there any brave *Arya* with enough guts to put the world out of all doubts by following this method. This method is simple and the way of the righteous.

### **Ganga Bishan flees**

There were no brave *Aryas* with enough guts to accept this proposal except a solitary person named Ganga Bishan. He announced in the newspaper *Punjab Samachar* dated April 3, 1897, that he was willing to take the oath provided the following three conditions were fulfilled:

1. If the prophecy is not fulfilled, the maker of the prophecy should be hanged.
2. A sum of ten thousand rupees should be deposited in advance and given to him in case the prophecy was not fulfilled.
3. When he goes to Qadian to take the oath, *Hazrat Mirza* should ensure that he is not murdered.

*Hazrat Mirza* accepted these conditions immediately and informed Ganga Bishan accordingly through a public announcement on April 5, 1897. However, Ganga Bishan now began to sense his death looming in front of him and began to procrastinate. In the issue of the newspaper dated April 12, 1897, he put forward another condition. He now wanted that when *Hazrat Mirza* was hanged for non-fulfillment of his prophecy, his body should be handed over to him so that he could burn it and strew the ashes in the river. *Hazrat Mirza* accepted this condition immediately through a public announcement dated April 12, 1897. He added in the announcement that he was not an astrologer or a fortune-teller but a religious leader whose sole purpose in asking for the oath was to establish his innocence and the truth of Islam. He further clarified the wording of the oath that Ganga Bishan would be required to take as:

For certain, Lekhram has been killed as a result of a conspiracy and complicity of Ghulam Ahmad; likewise, I know with complete certainty that this prophecy was not from God, but was a human plan that was implemented under the guise of a prophecy.

If my statement is false, then O, God Almighty, manifest the truthfulness of this other person by showing the following sign: Cause me to die within one year as a result of reasons that are not of a man's making. If I die within one year, then the whole world should remember that my death confirms the Divine origin of this revelation and negates it as a human conspiracy. Further, it factually shows Islam as the true religion and all other religions, including the *Arya* faith, *Sanatan Dharam*, Christianity, and so on, as distorted faiths.

*Hazrat* Mirza further imposed a condition of his own and included the following in his announcement:

Along with this, I also impose a countervailing condition. Just as I am to be hanged and my body handed over to Ganga Bishan in the eventuality that my prophecy is incorrect, I require that if Ganga Bishan dies within the prescribed period of one year, his body should be handed over to me. To ensure performance of this condition, he should deposit a sum of ten thousand Rupees in any public-sector bank and this deposit will stand forfeited in my favor if his next of kin refuse to hand over his body.

Ganga Bishan considered the imposition of the ten thousand rupees deposit condition as a blessing because it provided him with an excuse to exit the confrontation. He announced that he did not have ten thousand rupees to deposit beforehand in a bank. *Hazrat* Mirza responded with an announcement on April 27, 1897, in which he stated:

Since the *Arya* Samaj is making such strenuous efforts to apprehend Lekhram's murderer and they consider me to be his accomplice, why don't they facilitate this easy way to resolve the opposing contentions by depositing ten thousand rupees in a bank? They can save their money by handing over the body or forfeit the deposit. And if I am a liar, then in addition to their money they will be receiving another ten thousand rupees. This is a profitable bargain for them because they will get both my body and ten thousand rupees. This condition has been imposed only in response to your condition of demanding my body. If you forgo your condition, then my condition will automatically not be enforced."

However, Ganga Bishan realized that his salvation lay in refusing to deposit the money and simultaneously demanding the body. His objective was to save himself by creating an entanglement that would result in a stalemate. It is obvious that the condition itself was not onerous for a person who had an honesty of purpose.

If Ganga Bishan really considered *Hazrat* Mirza as an accomplice in the murder, he should have stepped forward boldly to seek a resolution according to the method set forth by *Hazrat* Mirza. He should have taken the oath in a straightforward manner instead of imposing complicated conditions. This is not the way of a righteous person. A righteous person seeks the victory of truth as his sole objective and does not set frivolous conditions like demanding ten thousand rupees or that someone should be hanged and the body given to him. Such chicanery is the mark of a deceitful person who seeks temporary publicity and fame but deep down is afraid, and constantly looks for an excuse to extricate himself from an untenable position. This is what Ganga Bishan did and sought refuge in flight.

#### ***Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi also flees**

*Maulvi* Batalvi was one of those unfortunate persons who always sided with the opponents of Islam whenever *Hazrat* Mirza confronted them. In this instance, too, he came to the aid of Ganga Bishan and announced in his support that “The prophecy regarding Lekhram has not been fulfilled and I am willing to take an oath. However, the punishment (for the false oath) should be instantaneous. A period of one year (for the punishment) is not acceptable.” *Hazrat* Mirza responded with an announcement on May 1, 1897, in which he strongly rebuked *Maulvi* Batalvi and said “I am appointed by God and cannot diverge from His commandments. The period of one year is by the command of God. Further, this is also the tradition of the Holy Prophet. If you want, you can take the oath in place of Ganga Bishan in accordance with the conditions I have specified.” However, *Maulvi* Batalvi’s objective was just to seek publicity by opposing *Hazrat* Mirza; he, too, found an excuse and sought refuge in flight.

#### **Publication of the book *Istifta***

*Hazrat* Mirza published the book *Istifta* on May 12, 1897 in which he described the Lekhram episode in full detail. He sent this book by post to a large number of intellectuals and unprejudiced Hindus, Christians and Muslims, and asked them to decide in the light of all the events whether

the prophecy had been fulfilled or not? In response, many of these intellectuals and non-prejudiced individuals who belonged to all sections of the society – Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims and Christians - and were not disciples of *Hazrat Mirza*, wrote back and testified that the prophecy had been fulfilled in every detail. The persons so testifying numbered around four thousand, and *Hazrat Mirza* listed the names of 289 of them in his book *Tiryaq-ul-Qulub* (A Remedy for the Heart). All of them were from respectable and noble families. For fear of making the list too long, *Hazrat Mirza* abbreviated the list.

Following is a partial list of the names from this list: Khan Bahadur Syed Fateh Ali Shah, Deputy Collector Anhar; Sheikh Fazal Elahi, Honorary Magistrate Bhera; Sheikh Ghulam Nabi, Minister of state Lasbela; Alauddin and Muhammad-ud-Din, both doctors of eastern medicine and residents of Sheikhpura and Bhera respectively; Khalil-ur-Rahman, noble and spiritual leader of Sarsawah; Chaudry Nasrullah Khan, headman of village Sarsawah and disciple of Sain Tawakul Shah. Followers of the Hindu religion whose names appeared on the list included: Prem Das, banker of Rohtas; Mallawamil of Lahore; Veer Bhanan of Badomalli; Dooni Chand of Badomalli; Nihal Chand; Haqiqat Ram; Lachandas; Thakar Das; Birbal and others. Some of the names of the followers of the Sikh religion who were included in the list are: Jeewan Singh, village headman; Atma Singh of Badomalli; Jawala Singh, village headman, and others. Those desirous of seeing the whole list can do so in *Tiryaq-ul-Qulub* pages twenty-four to thirty.

### **Maulana Maulvi Muhammad Ali takes the pledge**

On the one hand, this was a period of uncivilized aggression by the Arya Hindus. Evidence gleaned from several letters indicated that they were actively plotting to murder *Hazrat Mirza* and were collecting donations for the purpose. On the other hand, this was also a period when a group of truth-seekers were being irresistibly attracted towards *Hazrat Mirza*. The fulfillment of Lekhram's prophecy with such precision had provided the final impetus for them to join *Hazrat Mirza*. Among them was *Maulana Muhammad Ali*. He had become convinced of *Hazrat Mirza's* truthfulness in 1891. He and his older brother, *Maulvi Aziz Baksh*, were high school students in Kapurthalla at the time. One of their contemporaries at school was Abdul Aziz Dehlvi who had entered the discipleship of *Hazrat Mirza*. The two brothers obtained a copy of *Izala Auham* from Abdul Aziz and on reading it, immediately became convinced of *Hazrat Mirza's* truthfulness. In the same year, they met *Hazrat*

Mirza in Lahore during one of his visits to the city and were greatly impressed by him. When they went to their village during the holidays, they talked about *Hazrat* Mirza with their father, who was a very devout and pious person, and gave him the copy of *Izala Auham* to read. He, too, became convinced of *Hazrat* Mirza's truthfulness on reading the book.

In 1897, *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali was working as a professor in Islamia College, Lahore, where Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din was his colleague. After the murder of Lekhram, *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali accompanied Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din to Qadian at the latter's suggestion to meet with *Hazrat* Mirza. There he took the pledge at *Hazrat* Mirza's hand and entered into his discipleship. His brother *Maulvi* Aziz Baksh and his father then followed him into the discipleship of *Hazrat* Mirza.

## Chapter

# 80

## ***HAZRAT MIRZA RECEIVES THREATS OF ASSASSINATION***

### ***Hazrat Mirza took no security steps against plans to assassinate him***

After the assassination of Lekhram, the *Arya* community became very vociferous and aggressive. The fire of hate so consumed their hearts that they started making secret plans to assassinate *Hazrat Mirza*. Many well-wishers informed *Hazrat Mirza* of these plans and advised him to hire bodyguards but he refused. The Hindu-owned newspaper *Aftab Hind* published an article, “Mirza Qadiani Beware,” on March 18, 1897 by a Hindu correspondent named Bashishar Das. He wrote:

Mirza Qadiani’s time is limited. For how long can a lamb marked for slaughter save himself? The Hindu community harbors malicious intentions towards Mirza Qadiani; in fact, against the whole Muslim community. Mirza Qadiani should take care that he does not become a sacrificial sheep of *Bakra Eid* (the Muslim festival of *Eid ul Adha*).

The newspaper *Rahbar* wrote on March 15, 1897:

It is being said that Hindus will assassinate the man in Qadian and rumor has it that the Old Man of Aligarh (that is, Sir Syed Ahmad) will also be finished off.



As a concession to the doctrine of using resources to counter environmental threats, *Hazrat Mirza* published a memorandum on March 22, 1897, in which he informed the British government of the developing situation, but other than that he did not let these threats influence his daily routine. He neither posted sentries nor hired bodyguards, but continued with his ascetic lifestyle, going for walks, giving counsel and sermonizing. All manner of men, friends and strangers, Muslims and non-Muslims, continued to visit him and he met them without any reservation, not for a moment feeling threatened or in danger. His smiling face and radiant countenance continued to reflect his great inner peace despite the fact that enemies surrounded him on all sides.

*Arya Hindus* were not his only enemies. Christians were his mortal foes too, and did ultimately succeed in bringing fictitious charges of murder against him. The Muslim clerics had pronounced him an apostate deserving to be killed and many illiterate Muslims were looking for an opportunity to carry out this bidding. No one could know for sure whether there was a disguised assassin among the large number of visitors who came to meet *Hazrat Mirza*. However, he appeared totally dauntless; his radiance and peace of mind was unperturbed – as it was before, so was it now. These are things that do not happen unless someone has a connection with God and has been promised His protection. A person who truly fears the Creator has no fear of the creation. Worldly men in such situations do not take a step, whether in private or public, without sentries and bodyguards and are afraid to sleep at night. One has only to look at the past dictators of Europe, the leaders of the Bolshevik Movement, and other religious leaders to appreciate how their real personalities were hidden behind walls of security cordons and bodyguards. In strange contrast, there were neither any security arrangements nor any signs of worry with *Hazrat Mirza* despite the threats poised to his life. His countenance continued to exhibit the same cheerfulness and happiness as before and his attacks on false religions continued unabated. Not even an iota of difference occurred in any of these matters. The reason for this was the previously mentioned connection with God and the promise of Divine protection as contained in a revelation from God: “Allah will protect you from the machinations of people.”

### **Divine promise of protection from the machinations of the Freemasons**

It was during this period that *Hazrat Mirza* was informed by Divine revelation that the Freemason Society had passed a resolution to harm him

but that God would safeguard him from their machinations. The actual words of the revelation, which was published on October 10, 1901, were: "The Freemasons will not be allowed to impose (their will) so that they may kill him." At the same time, *Hazrat* Mirza's wife was informed in a dream: "The issue of Jesus has been resolved. God says that when I cause Jesus to descend, I remove the ladder."

The Freemason Lodge is a secretive society. Its origin, according to some researchers, can be traced to the time when Nebuchadnezzar captured the Israelites and took them back as slaves to Babylon where he put them to work as masons. He persecuted and humiliated them to the point where they entered into a secret pact with the Emperor of Persia and Media. The pact called for the Israelites to rebel from within when the Emperor attacked Babylon and in return, the Emperor promised them their freedom. The scenario played out exactly as planned. The Emperor of Persia attacked from the outside and the Israelites rebelled from within. The result was that Babylon was destroyed and the Israelite nation got its freedom.

In order to successfully implement this conspiracy, the Israelites had to form a secret society where everything was done clandestinely. As Nebuchadnezzar's spies were everywhere, the conspirators took great care in safeguarding their secret plans and stopped using verbal communication altogether in all matters relating to the conspiracy. They developed a system of nonverbal communication in which they used their tools of masonry as symbols to communicate with co-conspirators. This secret society was very successful and the Israelite nation became free. The resounding success of the society created the motivation to continue the organization even after its immediate objectives had been met. The society was appropriately named after its genesis as: "The Society of Freemasons." Later, when the name was translated into English, it came to be known as Freemason Lodge. From the Middle East, the society was transplanted into Europe where it progressed and gained great popularity.

The real powers behind this society have organized it according to a two-tier membership system. The first tier is of novice members who are unaware of the inner workings of the society and are kept under the impression that it is only a brotherhood of love, social exchange, mutual help and cooperation. Some of these first tier members are then identified for induction into the second tier on the basis of their usefulness, depth of commitment, and their ability to operate secretly. These members are then slowly and progressively inducted into the inner workings of the society where, rumor has it, the nonverbal system of communication using tools of

masonry is still operative. There is no verbal communication and all resolutions are passed and understood using the masonry tools as symbols.

The dream seen by *Hazrat Mirza's* wife in which she had been informed that "When I cause Jesus to descend, I remove the ladder," is an enigma needing resolution. A book written by Mr. Dewey, an American who claimed to be a prophet, resolved this enigma. In this book, he exposed the inner working and functions of Freemasonry. When this book reached Qadian, it was read to *Hazrat Mirza* in small installments. The book claimed that the real reason for secrecy was to provide cover for the commission of politically unpalatable acts. The Freemason society commits these acts so clandestinely that the job is performed without anyone ever knowing who did it. Communication in this clandestine activity takes place using the Freemason symbols. When a person has been identified to perform a certain act and has to be informed that he must commit the act without fail, he is made to climb a ladder to the roof and the ladder is pulled away. This symbolism is meant to tell the person that he cannot come back the same way he went up and now must travel another route that will take him to the desired mission. The way back is only by successfully completing the mission. Thus, the symbolism of 'pulling the ladder' means the making of a firm resolve to commit an act.

Given this explanation, the interpretation of the dream becomes clear. The meaning is that although the Freemasons have made a firm resolve to harm *Hazrat Mirza* as symbolized by pulling the ladder, God has also pulled the ladder and made an equally firm resolve to protect His Messiah. Therefore they would not be able to harm him in any way and their resolve is of no consequence in front of God's resolve. This is exactly what happened. God protected *Hazrat Mirza* against the evil machinations not only of the Freemasons, but also of Christians, *Arya* Hindus and other enemies, and none of them was ever able to harm even a hair on his head.

## Chapter

# 81

### ***SIRAJ MUNIR*** **(LIGHT GIVING SUN)**

#### **The writing and publication of *Siraj Munir***

Despite the turmoil raging around him, *Hazrat* Mirza's literary endeavors continued unabated. On March 24, 1897, he published his famous book *Siraj Munir*, a compilation of thirty-seven heavenly signs manifested by him. The book also further elaborated the prophecies regarding Lekhram and Abdullah Atham and included three letters from Khawaja Ghulam Farid, a spiritual leader residing in village Chachran in the state of Bahawalpur, in which he expressed his sincere devotion to Hazrat Mirza.

## ANOTHER DECISIVE ARGUMENT AGAINST THE SIKHS

An examination of *Hazrat Mirza's* life makes one marvel at his fervor and desire for the success of Islam, and the courage and bravery with which he pursued this objective. The death of Abdullah Atham had left Christians fuming and they intensified their attacks on Islam and *Hazrat Mirza*; this kept him constantly engaged in rebutting these charges. The assassination of Lekhram had thrown the Hindus into an abnormal frenzy and they spared no opportunity to attack *Hazrat Mirza's* life, honor and religion. Atheists for their part were displeased with him. Sikhs, *Brahmu Samaj* and *Deo Samaj* were also unhappy. Muslim clerics, along with millions of their disciples, were bent upon opposing him. Quite undeterred by these confrontations, *Hazrat Mirza* fought bravely on all fronts without the least perturbation or fatigue. He wielded his pen on all sides with great success. There was a constant theme in all his writings, namely that Islam was the sole true and living religion and the only religion capable of leading one to the living God. He substantiated this claim by citing his own experience, and maintained that all his assertions were tried and proven. He invited any doubters to come to him and experience the genuineness of his claims. He expressed this theme poetically in the following verses:

We have veritably tried Islam for ourselves,  
Rise and see, it is truly a radiant light we tell you.

Come hither, O people, for here you will find the light of God,  
Lo! What we tell you is the way of satisfaction.

*Hazrat Mirza's* writings are replete with this theme. There can be no greater *jihad* than this and yet there are those who ignorantly raise the issue that *Hazrat Mirza* stopped people from *jihad*. This charge is completely baseless. There was no greater holy warrior than *Hazrat Mirza* in his time. However, since *jihad* with the sword was not the requirement of the time, he advised Muslims against pursuing this course and instead directed them to the kind of *jihad* that was the crying need of the hour, i.e. *jihad* with the pen. He spent his entire life waging this *jihad*.

### **Rajinder Singh challenged**

In the midst of these battles with Christians and Hindus that kept him busy day and night, a Sikh by the name of Sardar Rajinder Singh jumped into the fray. The Sardar felt slighted at *Hazrat Mirza's* claim in his book *Sat Bachan* that *Guru Baba Nanak* was a Muslim. The Sardar retaliated by writing a book *Khabat Qadiani* (Crazy Man of Qadian) in which he levied impertinent and vile charges against the Holy Prophet and stated that a holy person like *Guru Nanak* could never accept him as the Messenger of God. *Hazrat Mirza* was greatly pained by the impertinent and vile allegations, and immediately responded with a public rejoinder published on April 18, 1897, entitled "Listen Carefully Sardar Rajinder Singh Sahib!" In this announcement, addressed to Sardar Rajinder Singh directly but indirectly to all Sikhs, he adduced powerful arguments against the beliefs of the Sikhs. In one place, he addressed the Sardar as follows:

Although every nook and cranny is home to a different faith, and the disciples of each narrate the miraculous tales and stories of their prophets and spiritual leaders, and relate the miracles mentioned in their scriptures and holy books, the question is where is the proof substantiating these stories? And which ones should we consider to be true and which ones false? And if these stories were true, then how did this calamity come about that all that remains in the hands of these people are stories? The light of those who are true is eternal. In all fairness, can the truth of past events be established just by talk? Whether somebody likes it or not, I must say with complete honesty that the only true religion out of all these religions is the one that is blessed by the hand of

God, and the only acceptable religion is the one whose light is resplendent in all ages; not one whose claim rests on the past. So hearken! I bear witness that Islam is that shining religion that has the support of God at all times. How pious and honorable is that Prophet who is a constant source of light and how holy is he whose love causes the Holy Spirit to reside in us. Because of this, our prayers are accepted, and marvels occur at our hands. This is the only way to witness the reality of the living God; all others merely deify the dead.

Where are the worshippers of dead deities? Can these deities speak? Where are the worshippers of the created? Can they take the field against us? Where are those people who said maliciously that our Prophet, may peace and blessings be upon him, never made any prophecy and never showed any signs? Listen! I tell you that they will be put to shame and will soon be looking for places to hide. That time is not far, in fact it is here, when the truth of the light of Islam will be like a slap on their faces and they will not know where to hide.

It should also be remembered that I have seen Baba Nanak in a vision twice and he professed that his light had been obtained from the same source. Frivolous and false talk is the act of carrion eaters. I say only that which I have seen. For this reason, I view Baba Nanak with great respect because I know that he drank from the same fountain from which we drink. And God knows that I speak from the knowledge that has been bestowed on me.

If you reject the notion that Baba Nanak was a Muslim and in addition you insist that our Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was, and I seek refuge in Allah from making this statement, an evil man, then I do not want to merely prove my point with the above arguments alone. Instead, I would like you to experience the final verdict of God by a way that I will describe shortly. I do not rely merely on the arguments adduced above because you will find them difficult to accept, not having had the benefit of hearing the opinions of those who are qualified to comment. You have heard only the criticism of ignorant Christian clerics and other similarly vulgar and uninformed persons. You accept it as the truth because of your innate rancor, and you then start maligning

our Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, without any independent inquiry and investigation. I know fully well that this haste to judgment, mixed with ignorance and prejudice, has thrown the world into a destructive turmoil, and a slanderous tradition has emboldened these people to try and spit on the sun. How great would be their regret if they had eyes, and how much would they weep at their folly if they had the true vision?

Further on, *Hazrat* Mirza proposes the method by which the contention with Rajinder Singh, and indirectly with the whole Sikh community, could be resolved:

This is the method by which I propose to produce a divine verdict against you: Your contention is that Baba Nanak sahib was not a Muslim while I say that in reality he was a Muslim...Secondly, you claim (and I seek God's protection from saying it) that our Prophet, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, was an evil and sinful person, and that Baba Nanak sahib was averse to him...The matter can be resolved in the following way. If you are convinced of your stand, then take an oath before a general assembly of men to the effect that 'In reality, Baba Nanak was averse to the religion of Islam and thought ill of the Prophet of Islam and also, in reality, the Prophet of Islam, (and I seek God's protection from saying it), was sinful and evil and not a true Prophet of God. If both of these things are against the facts then, O Almighty God, punish me with a terrible affliction within one year for this blasphemy.' If you agree to take this oath, I will deposit five hundred rupees with anybody you trust. If you are truthful, not a hair on your head will be harmed and you will become the beneficiary of five hundred rupees while disgrace and infamy will be my lot. However, if you are inflicted by a calamity, then the entire Sikh community will be reformed. I know that Sikhs have a relationship with Islam that Hindus do not, and therefore, Sikh's will be able to recognize a heavenly sign more easily. You are not cowardly like the Hindus but are a brave community, and, therefore, I hope that you will accept this method of judgment. First, you will have to publish in a newspaper that you are ready to take an oath of the form mentioned above. Then, after you have received our printed statement, you will have to come to Qadian and take the oath three times in a public gathering.



I hope that you will accept this proposal without any hairsplitting. Listening to these never-ending abuses has bruised our hearts. If we are false, then infamy and disgrace will be our lot and we will die an accursed death. If we are truthful, then our God will do justice. I implore you in the name of *Permashar*<sup>1</sup> to whom you consider Baba Nanak was close, and beseech you by the honor of Baba Nanak to accept this test. If you do not accept the challenge to take an oath as elucidated above and resort to ignoble excuses, then let the whole world witness that these few lines have proven your book to be false.<sup>2</sup>

Those lacking full comprehension of these matters often ask why prophecies of calamity and death are made repeatedly? What kind of tidings do those who abuse the holy men of God deserve? This is what transpired in the days of the prophets and this is also what is written for the Promised Messiah: “The unbelievers will perish by his breath,” which means that his supplications will bring down calamities on them. So if these prophecies of calamity are a reason for infamy then this infamy has fallen to my lot by the word of God.

Hazrat Mirza appended a Persian verse at the end:

People malign my reputation,<sup>3</sup>  
If this displeases You, then change this situation.

Sarder Rajinder Singh chose not to engage *Hazrat Mirza*, and this refusal furnished the ultimate proof of his falsehood. The reader should consider *Hazrat Mirza*’s announcement and appreciate the strong and firm conviction that he had in the truth of Islam. Not for a moment did he have any misgivings about his stand. The Quran likens such persons to a tree

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1 Hindu name for chief god.

2 (*Note in original document*) I promise you that any loss you suffer at the hands of a human will not be considered a result of my supplication. I will be vindicated only if, without human intervention and merely as an act of God, you are inflicted within one year by an untreatable disease, a calamity or disaster that will ultimately prove fatal. If this does not happen, then I am a liar and you are entitled to receive five hundred rupees.

3 The literal translation is: “My passage through the alley of good reputation has been blocked.”

“whose root is firm and whose branches are high” (14:24). *Hazrat* Mirza begged and pleaded and invoked the honor of Baba Nanak to induce Rajinder Singh to enter the contest, and even offered a reward of five hundred rupees. It was as if *Hazrat* Mirza saw the living God before him Who would cause the truth to prevail and destroy the evil if the opponent dared to take the oath. On the other hand, one does not see the same degree of faith exhibited by Rajinder Singh and others like him among the *Arya* Hindus and the Christian and Muslim clerics; these opponents were constantly procrastinating and evading a confrontation. Their faith was reminiscent of the Quranic analogy that compared such people to “an evil tree pulled up from the earth’s surface; it has no stability” (14:26), indicating that such people merely talked but lacked solid foundations. They did not have the moral courage to take the field against *Hazrat* Mirza and to state their stand on oath. The firm belief, faith and conviction as exhibited by *Hazrat* Mirza are the typical hallmarks of spiritually elevated individuals. Such strength and firmness is a source of astonishment for all.

## ATTEMPT TO STOP THE PRACTICE OF BRANDING MUSLIMS AS HERETICS

*Hazrat Mirza's* fervor for the progress of Islam and its domination over false religions was matched equally by his desire to end sectarianism in Islam and the practice of branding Muslims as heretics. It was his objective that no person who recites the *kalimah* (the Muslim confession of faith) should be called a heretic. He felt that this was the only basis of forging unity among the different sects of Islam. Although differences of temperament and ideas cannot be totally eliminated, there was unanimity on the basic principles of Islam among the various sects, and the only way to forge unity among the sects was to agree that anyone who believed in these principles was a Muslim and no one had the right to call such a person a non-Muslim.

*Hazrat Abu Imam Hanifa*, the great Islamic jurist, maintained that if there were ninety-nine reasons for calling a person an infidel, and only one for calling him a Muslim, then that person should not be called an infidel. According to *Hazrat Mirza*, this one reason was the recitation of the *kalimah*. Thus no one has the right to call anyone an infidel who professes faith by reciting: "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." In contrast to *Hazrat Mirza's* stand, the Islamic clerics of present times are ever ready to declare Muslims as infidels and it is common knowledge that this practice has destroyed the unity of Muslims.

*Hazrat Mirza* was a constant victim of this unsavory practice of the

Muslim clerics. *Hazrat* Mirza tried all possible means to explain his beliefs to them but to no avail. He wrote books, made public announcements and, in short, used all available means to expound his beliefs so that the clerics may put an end to their practice, but the clerics were unaffected. When this did not work, *Hazrat* Mirza challenged the clerics to a contest of mutual imprecation (*mubahilla*) so that a clear judgment may be rendered between right and wrong. On January 8, 1897, *Hazrat* Mirza invited the leading clerics by name to a contest of mutual imprecation. This invitation was extended in his book *Zamima Anjaam Atham*, details of which have been given in Chapter 68.

### **An announcement for a final verdict**

A period of approximately five months had elapsed but no cleric had stepped forward to accept the invitation of mutual imprecation. Instead of obtaining a clear verdict by this method, they chose to continue with their practice of calling *Hazrat* Mirza an infidel and inciting sectarianism. On May 19 1897, *Hazrat* Mirza published a notice titled “An Announcement for a Final Verdict” that was specifically addressed to the four leading clerics of India, namely *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, *Maulvi* Abdul Jabbar Ghaznavi, *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi and *Maulvi* Rashid Ahmad Gangoi. In this announcement, he wrote:

If you are not willing to enter into a contest of mutual imprecation, then let us seek a verdict in the following manner: You should supplicate that if you are in the right, then Allah, the Most High, should manifest a powerful sign in your favor within a period of one year. On my side, I will supplicate that if I am in the right, then Allah, the Most High, may manifest a powerful sign in my favor. The party in whose favor a powerful sign is manifested within one year shall be considered as the one in the right and the other party will seek repentance at the hands of the other.

He reiterated that: “I want to settle this daily strife so that we can all unite to face the enemies of Islam.”

*Hazrat* Mirza was so concerned with this dissension that, in this notice, he appealed to the Muslim gentry of Amritsar and Lahore to rise up in the name of God and judge the issue equitably. He urged them to show mercy on Muslims and Islam by assisting in the resolution of mutual differences, and thereby create the basis for unity and harmony. Unfortunately, the Muslim clerics did not accept the proposal nor did the

Muslim gentry feel concerned to step in and stop this infighting by supporting this proposal. It is precisely this weakness on the part of the Muslim intelligentsia that has emboldened the clerics to initiate the infighting among Muslims and thereby weaken Islam.

## THE TURKISH COUNCIL'S VISIT TO QADIAN & SOME PROPHECIES ABOUT THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

### **Hussain Kami visits Lahore**

In May 1897, Hussain Kami Bak, the Turkish Council at Karachi, visited Lahore. This was the period of Sultan Abdul Hamid II's caliphate and the Muslims of India were in love with the Turks. As a result, the Muslims of Lahore, including the gentry, turned out in large numbers to welcome Hussain Kami Bak at the railway station. I, the humble author of this book, was a student in those days at the Medical College in Lahore and I also went to the railway station to see him. Mr. Bak was seated in a first class compartment on the train. He was a handsome man with a fair complexion, sporting a magnificent brown beard and wearing a fez and a long frock coat, normally worn by Turks in those days. His demeanor had the effect of immediately winning the admiration of the large assemblage. During his stay, he was lavishly entertained, and honored with a processional through the city of Lahore. He resided with Deputy Barkat Ali Khan Shahjehanpuri, President of Anjuman Islamia, in his house outside Mochi Gate, Lahore.

In those days, the disciples of *Hazrat* Mirza were burning with fervor to spread his message and as a result of their missionary efforts directed at Hussain Kami, he agreed, with some political motive in mind, to visit Qadian. He wrote a respectful and sincere note to *Hazrat* Mirza seeking permission to visit him. *Hazrat* Mirza gave Hussain Kami permission to visit him and he visited Qadian on an agreed-upon date. He arrived late at the time

of the *Isha* prayer but an immediate meeting with *Hazrat* Mirza was precluded because of the latter's sudden indisposition. *Hazrat* Mirza had been sitting on the pulpit in the mosque when he suffered a severe attack of migraine. The pain was so intense that he got off the pulpit and lay down on the floor of the mosque. *Maulvi* Abdul Karim's recitation of the Holy Quran in the Egyptian style was extremely melodious and acted as a palliative for *Hazrat* Mirza's pain. *Hazrat* Mirza, therefore, asked him to start reciting the Quran and after listening to the recitation for some time, he began to feel better.

At Hussain Kami's request, *Hazrat* Mirza met him privately the next day. The exact nature of the dialogue between them is unknown. However, from *Hazrat* Mirza's public announcement later on, it appears that Hussain Kami tried to persuade *Hazrat* Mirza to a particular affair and ostensibly wanted him to supplicate in the matter, but *Hazrat* Mirza was averse to his proposal. The result was that Hussain Kami was not able to achieve his objective and returned to Lahore without success.

Hussain Kami's visit to Qadian was not viewed favorably in Lahore, and many people were very upset. On Hussain Kami's return, the editor of the newspaper *Nazim ul Hind* wrote him a note and asked him his opinion about Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani. In a confidential reply, Hussain Kami expressed an unfavorable opinion, but the editor did not keep the reply confidential and gave it the widest publicity by printing it in his newspaper without permission. This was a God-given opportunity for the Muslim clerics; in order to make the most of it, they first trumpeted the purity, honesty and integrity of the Turkish council. They then bestowed upon him the designation of vice caliph of Muslims and finally portrayed his reply as a heavenly decree.

Initially, *Hazrat* Mirza did not consider it appropriate to state his position publicly, but when *Nazim ul Hind* and other newspapers exceeded the limits in their malicious attacks, *Hazrat* Mirza felt compelled to make a public announcement, which he did on May 24, 1897. This statement partially lifted the veil of secrecy from the real discourse that had taken place. *Hazrat* Mirza stated in his announcement:

However, when he came to me, I discerned from his countenance that this person was not honest, pure and trustworthy. At the same time, my God revealed to me that the Ottoman Empire was in danger through the actions of these people. They have been appointed to perform the critical functions of the state because of their nearness to the Sultan, but they are not discharging their functions honestly and do not have the best interest of the state

near their heart. They want to weaken this Islamic empire, which is the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and a prized treasure of the Muslims. After this revelation, I became averse to Hussain Bak merely because of the Divine inspiration – not out of any malice towards the Ottoman Empire, but as its well-wisher.

Referring to his meeting with Hussain Kami Bak, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote: “The Empire of the Ottoman Sultan is not in a good condition and in my visions, I see its members as unfit. To me, this does not auger a good end.” *Hazrat Mirza* then stated in this announcement that he had given good advice to the Turk and had indirectly pointed out to him that he was the primary target of his vision, and that according to the revelation, his (moral) condition was not good. Part of the revelation was: “Repent to receive a goodly reward.” This clearly meant that if his present state persisted, he would be deprived of the good reward and come to a sorry end. Further, he wrote in this announcement: “It would have been better for him (the Turkish Council) not to have come to me. It is his grave misfortune that he has returned to spread this slander.” The meaning of this was obvious. By attempting to slander *Hazrat Mirza*, he had created the conditions for his own disgrace because Allah had revealed to *Hazrat Mirza*: “I will disgrace him who attempts to disgrace you.” Further on in the announcement, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote: “Allah, the most Glorious, about Whom any fabrication is sure to bring a curse on the fabricator, knows that He, the Great Knower of the Unseen, had informed me beforehand that this man was hypocritical by nature.”

The publication of this announcement sent the people of Lahore into an angry frenzy. Portraying Hussain Kami Bak as an angel, they abused and slandered *Hazrat Mirza*, and they further inflamed the public opinion by alleging that he had attacked the person of the Ottoman Sultan. In reality, the prophecy had nothing to do with the person of the Sultan, but stated that certain Ministers and workers of the state were not honest and trustworthy and Hussain Kami was one of them. The Ottoman Empire had been referred to as “the custodian of the Two Sacred Mosques” and the Empire itself had been called “a prized treasure of the Muslims.” It was precisely because he was a well-wisher of the Empire that *Hazrat Mirza* was not favorably disposed towards Hussain Kami.

### **The idle prattle of the newspaper *Chaudveen Sadee* and its reply**

In those days, there was a newspaper called *Chaudveen Sadee*, published from Rawalpindi. In its issue of June 15, 1897, the newspaper print-



ed an article favoring the Turkish council Hussain Kami and strongly attacking *Hazrat Mirza*. The article quoted that one venerable person on reading *Hazrat Mirza's* announcement regarding Hussain Kami had recited the following Persian verse:

When God desires to expose someone,  
He inclines him to accuse virtuous persons.

The insinuation was that by attacking a man of God, *Hazrat Mirza* had merely lifted the veil from his own self. *Hazrat Mirza* was greatly pained by the tenor of this article and the verse attributed to the venerable man. Other newspapers were also publishing similar articles, and *Hazrat Mirza* decided to respond by publishing an announcement on June 25, 1897, in which he addressed the venerable man of *Chaudveen Sadee*. The announcement was titled: "Can he who is from God be destroyed by the slander and enmity of the people?" and used as a subtitle the following verse of Maulana Rume:

As long as compassion remains in the hearts of God's men,  
God does not disgrace the nation.

Rebutting the slander published in the newspaper *Chaudveen Sadee*, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote:

Our opponents have grasped another excuse these days to vilify us by distorting the meaning of one of our announcements, and publicizing that we are against the Ottoman Sultan, his kingdom and his government, and desire his downfall. It is alleged that we are extreme sycophants of the British and pray for the prosperity of their government. This propaganda has been given wide publicity in Punjab and other parts of India through slanderous advertisements and newspapers. In order to dupe the masses, some passages from my announcements have been tampered with, changed, and then incorrectly quoted so as to instigate and excite the passions of the ignorant...

Let every intelligent, respectable and virtuous Muslim, who is willing to accept the truth out of the goodness of his nature, listen to this statement very attentively: We bear no malice towards even the most unimportant Muslim who recites the *kalimah*, let

alone have malice towards a person under whose shadow and patronage millions of Muslims live their lives and under whose guardianship God, the Most High, has put His sacred houses. As far as the personality and personal affairs of the Sultan are concerned, I have neither discussed them before nor do I do so now. In fact, Allah, the Most Glorious, knows that I hold this Sultan in a more favorable light than I did his father and grandfather. It is true that I wrote in my previous announcements about the influential and corrupt inner circle of officials, dignitaries and ministers of the Turkish Government, but it was not a criticism of the person of the Sultan. I had penned certain facts based upon the God-given light, perception and revelation that has been given to me, and the fact is that my heart is overawed and pained by the awful impact of its meaning. So my referenced announcement was not the result of my own emotions, as those with ill intentions think, but the product of that fountain of light with which God has blessed me.

Further on in the announcement, he wrote:

Is it not possible that what I have written about the internal organization of the Ottoman Empire is correct, and that the fabric of the Turkish government may in fact have threads that are likely to break at the critical juncture, and reveal their traitorous nature?

### **Hussain Kami exposed**

The narration of the incident between *Hazrat* Mirza and the venerable man of *Chaudveen Sadee* will follow later after a description of the fate of Hussain Kami and the Turkish Empire has been completed.

Because of deep-rooted prejudice against *Hazrat* Mirza, there was little likelihood that the above announcement would ameliorate the agitation against him. In fact, the public took strong exception to *Hazrat* Mirza's statements that Allah had informed him that Hussain Kami was not honest in his dealings with the Turkish government and that by temperament he was hypocritical. (It was for this reason that *Hazrat* Mirza had stated while addressing him: "Repent to receive a goodly reward.") These statements incited the public so much that it was unwilling to accept any explanation. In newspapers and announcements, in statements and speeches, and at every function, Hussain Kami was portrayed as a righteous and holy person with an angelic character, while *Hazrat* Mirza was criticized

and abused in the most uncivilized language. In these circumstances, there was not much else that could be done but to be patient. But as *Maulana Rume* has so aptly stated:

When God desires to expose someone,  
He inclines him to accuse virtuous persons.

Finally, the time arrived when the continuous volley of taunts and abuses on the holy man of God, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, were fated to end with an exposure of Hussain Kami and his supporters. In other words, the time had come for the fulfillment of God's promise made in the revelation: "I will disgrace him who attempts to disgrace you."<sup>1</sup> Hussain Kami was publicly exposed and disgraced and the clerics and newspapers supporting him were consequently embarrassed and humiliated.

The events leading up to this situation occurred in the following manner: In 1897, Greece captured the island of Crete from the Turks and ruthlessly massacred its Muslim inhabitants. The entire Muslim world cried out against this barbarism and the Muslims of India collected a large sum to aid the victims of this atrocity. This amount was sent to Hussain Kami Bak, the Turkish council in Karachi, for the purpose of forwarding it to the Sultan. Having entrusted the money to a responsible official, the donors were convinced that the amount must have reached its intended destination. However, in 1899, *Hazrat* Mirza learned through a respectable Turkish gentleman that Hussain Kami had been removed from his position because of criminal embezzlement, and his property had been confiscated. Without corroboration, however, this report from just one individual could not be fully relied upon, but the corroboration was not long in coming.

On October 12, 1899, the newspaper *Nayyer Asafi* of Madras reported that Hussain Kami had been dismissed from his job as a punishment for embezzling the money donated for the victims of Crete, and that his personal property had been confiscated and auctioned. The word of God was thus fulfilled. Hussain Kami had been warned: "Repent to receive a goodly reward," but he paid no heed and at last, had to pay for his wrongdoing.

The full text of the news item reported in the October 12, 1899, issue of *Nayyer Asafi* of Madras was as follows:

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1 We witnessed the fulfillment of this prophecy in so many instances that if all of them were collected together, it would constitute another book.

## Donations for the Victims of Crete and India

We have received in our foreign mail today from one of our learned and respected correspondents a report entitled 'The Istanbul Letter,' which we publish below for the information of our readers. We are extremely saddened to do this because it entails something that we do not expect - a criminal embezzlement most mercilessly committed by the vice council of the most civilized and well- organized Muslim country. We are sorry that we had to listen to such a story and now have to inform the public. The report from Istanbul by *Maulvi* Hafiz Abdur Rahman *Al-Hindi* proves clearly that Hussain Kami Bak has shamelessly embezzled the donations made for the victims of Crete without even batting an eyelid. The managing committee for the donations had to work hard and with great sagacity to get him to cough up the money. However, it has not been determined whether the vice council was prosecuted in the Ottoman courts. In our opinion, such an embezzler should be prosecuted and given exemplary punishment by the courts. In any case, we hope that this is the only case of embezzlement that took place in connection with these donations, and that the donations from Madras and Hyderabad dispatched through the Turkish council in Madras by Mullah Abdul Qayyum, first administrator of Langasgor, and Mr. Abdul Aziz Badshah, reached the donations committee in Istanbul without embezzlement.

### The Istanbul Letter

It appears that the donations made by the Muslims of India over the last two years for the refugees of Crete and the injured soldiers of the Greek war and handed over to the Turkish council in India did not reach Istanbul at all. The reason for this belief is that the sum of approximately one thousand and six hundred rupees collected by *Maulvi* Inshallah, editor of the newspaper *Wakeel* of Amritsar, and *Maulvi* Mahbub Alam, editor of the newspaper *Paisa Akhbar* of Lahore, from various places and given to Hussain Kami Bak, vice council of Turkey, was embezzled by Hussain Kami Bak. Not a single cent of this money reached Istanbul. Thank God, that when Saleem Pasha of the working committee for donations came to know of this, he pursued the matter diligently and effected recovery by having Hussain Kami's property auctioned. He also

informed the higher authorities of the embezzlement and had him removed from service. For this reason, all the newspaper owners are requested to consider it their national duty to publish this announcement four times consecutively in their newspapers. Whenever they learn that a sum of money has been sent through a certain person, they should publish all the details including the name and position of the person so that, if deemed necessary, correspondence can be carried on with that person. A copy of the paper should also be sent to me in Cairo at the following address:

Hafiz Abdur Rahman Al-Hindi Al-Amritsari, Sikah Jadida, Wakala Salih Afandi, Cairo, Egypt.

When this news was published, the embarrassment and humiliation of the clerics and newspaper editors, who had made Hussain Kami a saint and put down *Hazrat Mirza*, was beyond description. This humble author, too, was astonished because the countenance of Hussain Kami Bak indeed appeared to be angelic. By looking at him, the thought just did not cross one's mind even for a moment that, by temperament, as *Hazrat Mirza* put it, he would be hypocritical, and that he was a dishonest and perfidious person. I was one of those who were very surprised and harbored some misgivings about *Hazrat Mirza's* announcement and wondered how he could state that Hussain Kami was hypocritical and untrustworthy. However, when the news mentioned above broke in the papers, this incident strengthened my heart and increased me in faith, and I had to admit that the sagacity with which *Hazrat Mirza* had recognized his temperament was indeed from God. It was impossible to have discerned this from his countenance merely by the use of one's faculties. His appearance fooled thousands of well-educated and intelligent Muslims, but the man whose eyes had been blessed by God with the light of understanding, and heart with the wisdom of revelation, made no mistake. He recognized the base nature of Hussain Kami, and every word he wrote about him proved correct. Not only with respect to Hussain Kami, but everything he wrote about the Turkish government also came true exactly as written.

### **The prophecy regarding the breaking of threads in the fabric of the Ottoman Empire and the exposure of traitors**

The following statement of *Hazrat Mirza* bears repetition:<sup>2</sup>

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2 Announcement dated June 25, 1897.

Is it not possible that what I have written about the internal organization of the Ottoman Empire is correct and that the fabric of the Turkish government may in fact have threads that are likely to break at the critical juncture and reveal their traitorous nature?"

Another statement of Hazrat Mirza had stated:<sup>3</sup>

The Empire of the Ottoman Sultan is not in a good condition and in my visions, I see its members as unfit. To me, this does not auger a good end.

Is it not true that, after the death of *Hazrat Mirza*, Sultan Abdul Hameed II was deposed and imprisoned by members of his government in 1909 thereby validating the prophecy that threads will break in the fabric of his government and traitorous elements will be exposed? Is it also not true that *Hazrat Mirza's* prediction that these conditions did not auger a good end was fulfilled word for word? As a result of this coup, Sultan Muhammad V was put on the throne, but he was a puppet Emperor in the hands of kingmakers. The condition of the Turkish Empire was a source of great pain and grief for *Hazrat Mirza* as witnessed by his statement: "the fact is that my heart is overawed and pained by the awful impact of its meaning." The reason for this concern was that *Hazrat Mirza* considered the Turkish Empire as an "Islamic Empire," "the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques" and "a prized treasure of the Muslims."<sup>4</sup>

### **Heartfelt supplications for the Turkish Empire and predictions of its final victory**

The amount of supplications *Hazrat Mirza* made as a result of the pain and grief occasioned by the condition of the Ottoman Empire can only be surmised. In response to these prayers, he received the revelation: "The Ottomans are vanquished; In a near land, and they after their defeat, will gain victory."<sup>5</sup> *Hazrat Mirza* published this revelation without delay. There were actually two prophecies in this revelation. The first was that

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3 Announcement dated May 24, 1897.

4 Ibid.

5 The wording of the revelation is exactly the same as that of the Quranic verses 30:2&3. The word *al-rume*, however, is used both for the Romans and the Ottomans. In the Quran, the reference was to the Romans but in *Hazrat Mirza's* revelation, the reference is clearly to the Ottomans. – Translator's note.

the condition of the Ottomans, i.e. the Turks, would become even worse than what it was during the life of *Hazrat* Mirza, and a time would come when they would be comprehensively defeated. The second was that, after this comprehensive defeat, with despair engulfing them on all sides, they would miraculously recover and dominate again.

This is exactly how history unfolded itself. The condition of the Turkish Empire continued to deteriorate until it ceased to exist during the First World War. This was the nadir of the Turkish national existence and its defeat was complete. Its capital Istanbul was occupied by European powers and their plan was to give all of Asia Minor to Greece. In actuality, the Greek troops were already in occupation of the area. Faced with this condition, the Turkish nation held a day of national mourning in Istanbul to lament their lost Empire. It was time for the second part of the prophecy to be fulfilled, and God set in motion a miraculous chain of events. It happened in the following way:

God put courage and resolution in the heart of Mustafa Kamal and a band of similarly nationalistic Turks. They left Istanbul secretly and went to Asia Minor. There they rallied the dispersed elements of the Turkish army and started counter attacking the Greek forces. Despite the fact that Italy, Britain and France were backing Greece, the Turkish forces won successive victories and the Greeks had to withdraw from the area. In this way, the most important part of Europe, including Istanbul, Adrianople and the Straits of Dardanelles that were vital for the Turkish state, were restored to Turkish sovereignty. The capital was shifted to Ankara and a new Turkish Republic emerged that was more organized and stronger than its demised predecessor.

This remarkable success from the depths of defeat was merely due to the blessing of God and the result of the supplication of that man of God whose aching heart had prayed for these blessings. On the face of it, the resuscitation of the state of Turkey was the result of the efforts of Mustafa Kamal Pasha. Nobody can deny this, but every Muslim knows that nothing happens on the earth unless it is first decided in the heavens. The blessing of God, under which the dead Turkish nation was given a new life, was in fact the result of the prayers of that perfect man, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Messiah from among the followers of Prophet Muhammad. He had made these supplications to God on perceiving the destruction towards which the Turkish kingdom was headed and God had reassured him, much before the actual events came to pass, with the revelation: "The Ottomans are vanquished; In a near land, and they after their defeat, will gain victory." The striving of Mustafa Kamal and his men was undoubtedly the overt reason, but the real reason for the miraculous

change of fortune was the supplication, made behind the scenes, by the Revivalist of the Fourteenth Century. This supplication was the reason for the Divine blessing.<sup>6</sup>

**The repentance of the venerable man of *Chaudveen Sadee***

The ‘holy’ man of *Chaudveen Sadee* had recited the following verse on reading the statement of *Hazrat* Mirza about Hussain Kami:

When God desires to expose someone,  
He inclines him to accuse virtuous persons.

The *Chaudveen Sadee* newspaper had used this verse to good effect in its article of June 15, 1897. It has already been mentioned that *Hazrat* Mirza was greatly pained by reading this verse, and the result was his announcement of June 25, 1897. This announcement was in part addressed to the Muslim community as a whole. In it, *Hazrat* Mirza had reiterated that he respected the Ottoman Emperor and was desirous of the welfare of the Turkish state with all his heart. His criticism had been directed at dishonest and traitorous Turks like Hussain Kami. Another part of the announcement addressed the venerable man of *Chaudveen Sadee* directly. In this, *Hazrat* Mirza had written:

I find it necessary to mention here a strange thing. When the newspaper *Chaudveen Sadee* (article) was read out to me, my spirit moved to make a malediction at the point where it was stated that a venerable man on reading this (that is this humble person’s announcement) spontaneously recited the verse:

When God desires to expose someone,  
He inclines him to accuse virtuous persons.

I tried to stop and suppress this spiritual urge and repeatedly made efforts to get it out of my spirit but to no avail. I understood then that the urge was from God and made a prayer for that person who had been referred to as venerable by the newspaper. I know that my prayer was accepted. That prayer is as follows: O God! If You

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6 There are many examples in Islamic history substantiating the truth expressed in the verse: “The prayers of a man of perfect faith can change the tide of fate.” See appendix 1 for examples.



know that I am a fabricator and not from You, and as has been said about me that I am cursed and rejected, and that I have no connection with Thee and Thee with me, then I make a humble plea to be killed. But if You know that I am from Thee and sent by Thee, and am the Promised Messiah, then expose this person who has been referred to as 'venerable' in the newspaper. However, if during this time, he comes to Qadian and repents in a public gathering then forgive him because Thou are the Most Merciful, the Most Bounteous.

This is the prayer that I made with respect to that venerable man. I do not know who he is or where he lives, or his religious denomination, or his nationality, but he judged me a liar and predicted that I would be exposed. I have no need to know his identity but his statement hurt me and moved me to make this prayer and I have asked God for a decision during the period between July 1, 1897, and July 1, 1898.

Further on in the announcement, *Hazrat Mirza's* statements showed that his overriding concern was for the truth to be revealed rather than for any personal satisfaction. He wrote:

If I am truthful, I request God to expose this venerable person in a way that is a sign and will help the truth. Otherwise it is better for me to die an accursed death. This is the final test of whether I am true or false and should be considered as a definitive judgment.

After the publication of this announcement, the venerable man of *Chaudveen Sadee* saw some signs that made him apprehensive of being exposed. He was a righteous person by nature, and as he readily admitted in his letter, he had spontaneously uttered that verse because of some misunderstandings. On seeing the signs of exposure, he heeded the warning, and in a letter full of humility, he apologized and beseeched *Hazrat Mirza's* forgiveness. He wrote this letter on October 29, 1897, and mailed it to *Hazrat Mirza*. I present below some excerpts from this letter. He first gave a title to his letter as follows:

The Criminal from the Newspaper *Chaudveen Sadee*

Then he wrote:

Respected Sir – May the peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you,

A wrongdoer admits the guilt of his wrongdoing (through this letter) and beseeches your forgiveness (as if) presenting himself at the blessed place Qadian. This sinner was given respite from July 1, 1897, to July 1, 1898, and I admit in the heavenly court that I am your criminal. (Just now I had this inspiration that, in the same way as your prayer was accepted, my plea and humility has been accepted, and your holiness has forgiven and set me free.) Now I do not feel the need to apologize further but I do want to say that, right from the beginning, I have reflected and inquired about your invitation. My research was honest and unprejudiced and I was ninety percent convinced (in view of the following facts):

1. The *Arya* opponents of your town have given testimony that you were truthful and pure from your childhood.
2. Since becoming an adult, you have devoted all your time in worshipping the One God, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting. Certainly, Allah does not waste the reward of the doers of good.
3. The beauty of your writings sets them apart from the writings of all other religious scholars.
4. Your mission does not promote violence and rebellion against the existing government, (which given all the circumstances is deserving of loyalty and thanks.) Certainly Allah does not love those who make trouble in the land. Some of my kind friends with whom I used to discuss matters pertaining to you...introduced me to your speeches.”

After this, the venerable man explained those misunderstandings that he had temporarily harbored about *Hazrat* Mirza, and as a result of which he had uttered the fateful verse. However, he stated that those misunderstandings had been removed by his reading of *Hazrat* Mirza’s books and the explanation in his announcements. For this reason, this venerable man at once repented. Accordingly, he wrote:

It was not just a feeling, but I began to see signs of its physical manifestation. Some external factors began to arise which...(I seek God’s protection) provided me the proof (namely some signs of fear manifested themselves). Fourteen hundred years are about to pass when a holy man of God uttered these words about our

people 'scattered like dust.'<sup>7</sup> Once again I have heard the same words from a Beloved of God. Should I allow nature to repeat itself by not listening to him? As I write this letter, I sense the physical dangers dissipating. (I will provide their details at another time.) At this time, I only stand before you as a criminal and a sinner, and seek your forgiveness. (I have no objection to coming in person but because of certain circumstances, I request to be excused from physical presence.) Perhaps I may be able to come before July 1898. I hope that you will also receive some urging from the Court of the Most Holy to forgive me because: "and We found in him no resolve (to disobey)" (20:115). It is also a principle of law that a crime that is not committed deliberately and purposely can be forgiven and compromised. Forgive and overlook; Allah loves those who do good to others.

I am your criminal,

Signature of the venerable man  
Rawalpindi  
October 29, 1897

*Hazrat* Mirza published this letter on November 20, 1897, in the form of an announcement titled, "The Repentance of the Venerable Man of *Chaudveen Sadee*." He gladly forgave the venerable man and wrote in the announcement:

May God, the Most High, forgive the error of this venerable man and be pleased with him. I am pleased with him and forgive him. Let every person in our organization pray for his welfare.

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7 Even after getting to know the name of the venerable man of *Chaudveen Sadee*, *Hazrat* Mirza did not make his identity public in the best tradition of forgiveness and righteousness. However, since he passed away a long time ago, I have no qualms about revealing his name. He was Raja Jahandad Khan, Chief of the Ghakkar tribe. The reference to, 'these words about our people,' pertain to a prophecy of Prophet Muhammad about the Chosroes of Iran, in keeping with which Chosroes was killed, his nation destroyed and his people exiled out of Iran. The Ghakkar tribe in the district of Rawalpindi claim to be the descendants of those exiled Iranians. Raja Jahandad Khan here refers to the same incident and comments that their ancestors and the King of Iran had reaped an ill harvest by opposing a Beloved of God. Then why should he condemn himself to certain death by opposing another Beloved of God?

In this announcement, *Hazrat* Mirza compared this incident with that of Abdullah Atham. He wrote:

It is worth mentioning here that the conditional statements made regarding Atham were similar to the statements made regarding this venerable man. In other words, just as there was a condition in that prophecy of calamity, there was a similar condition in this prophecy. The difference between these two men is that the venerable man had the light of faith in him and the love of truth was part of his nature. Hence, on seeing the frightful signs and receiving inspiration from God, he did not try to hide it but, with great humility and sincerity, as much as a man can muster, he wrote down all the facts openly and sent his apology. Atham, on the other hand, was devoid of the light of faith, and an auspicious nature, and so despite his fearful and harassing experience, he did not have this good fortune (to repent).

The announcement is worth reading in full and can be found in *Hazrat* Mirza's book, *Ayyaam-us- Sulh*.

## APPENDIX 1

There are many examples in Islamic history substantiating the truth expressed in the verse: "The prayers of a man of perfect faith can change the tide of fate." When the famous conqueror of this same Turkish nation, Sultan Muhammad II, laid siege to Constantinople, there appeared to be no way that the city would capitulate. However, a pious man, Shah Shamsuddin who had accompanied the Sultan and his army, was totally engrossed in prayer in an isolated tent surrounded by guards with orders not to let anybody enter. All of a sudden, the battle intensified and the Turkish position became critical. It appeared that the battle may be lost, and the Sultan dispatched a soldier to quickly escort Shah Shamsuddin to a safe place. The pious man was in prostration, and totally ignoring the Sultan's messenger, continued to supplicate in that position. When he lifted his head up from prostration, he said: "All praise is due to Allah, the city is conquered." The messenger was surprised because he had left the battlefield on the verge of defeat and here Shah Shamsuddin was saying that victory had been achieved. Just then a second messenger arrived from the Sultan and said: "The city has fallen and the Sultan requests that you come inside the city and give the sermon in Hagia Sophia." Shah Shamsuddin

replied: "Tell the Sultan, 'I am going; my work is finished. The Holy Prophet had prophesied that the conqueror of Constantinople would be his namesake. Thus, the conqueror of this town is Sultan 'Muhammad'. I do not have permission to enter this city.'" The holy man then left. The world knows Sultan Muhammad II as the conqueror of Istanbul and overtly this is correct but the real cause of the victory, which was hidden from the physical eye, was the supplication of Shah Shamsuddin.

Another similar instance took place in the battle between Prithvi Raj and Shahabuddin Ghori. When Prithvi Raj turned his lines of elephants on the army of Shahbuddin Ghori, Khawaja Muinuddin Chishti, who was present on the field of battle, realized that the only force that could stop this stampeding storm of black beasts was God. The handful of Muslims would not be able to stop the assault. He went to an isolated place, fell down in prostration and started supplicating. The result was that the elephant on which Prithvi Raj was riding got stuck in a quagmire and he had to get down to change mounts. When his soldiers saw his howdah empty, they thought that he had been killed and took to their heels. In the ensuing panic, the elephants that had been brought to crush the Muslim troops under their feet, strode over their own soldiers in a disorderly retreat. The Muslims achieved a great victory.

The victory of Somnath was also the result of Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi's supplications. When a huge force put together by combining the armies of many Hindu Rajas opposed him at Somanth, it appeared that each and every Muslim soldier in his small force would be put to the sword that day. Realizing the gravity of the situation, Sultan Mahmud got down from his horse and fell down in prostration. He supplicated to God, long and hard, and with all his heart, and the result was that the old animosities of the Hindu Rajas that had been temporarily set aside came back to the forefront again. Their united front disintegrated and their subsequent infighting destroyed them. God granted the Muslims a grand victory. That night, Sultan Mahmood saw his spiritual mentor *Hazrat* Abul Hassan Khurqani in a vision. He said: "Mahmud, it is a pity that in your overwhelmed state when prayers were being accepted you asked for so little from God (meaning just your victory). I wish you had prayed that the whole of India should become Muslim and that would have happened, too."

Similarly, the end of the Sikh rule in Punjab was ostensibly brought about at the hands of the British but the real, behind the scenes reason for it was the supplication of *Hazrat* Syed Ahmad Barelvi, the Revivalist of the thirteenth century.

**MESSAGE OF ISLAM SENT TO  
QUEEN VICTORIA & PUBLICATION  
OF *TUHFA QAISARIYYA* & *SITARA  
QAISARIYYA*  
(GIFT FOR THE EMPRESS &  
STAR OF THE EMPRESS)**

Since the Holy Prophet was sent as a Messenger to all nations and for all times, he sent letters with the message of Islam to the Caesar of Rome and the kings of Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia and Ghassan, and other rulers, and invited them to accept Islam as their religion. Since *Hazrat* Mirza claimed to be the servant and caliph of the Holy Prophet, he too longed to send the message of Islam to all nations. Out of all the rulers of that time, *Hazrat* Mirza in particular wanted to invite Queen Victoria, Empress of India, to Islam. *Hazrat* Mirza had expressed this desire very clearly in his book, *Nur-ul-Haq*, published in 1894 in the Arabic language. The reason for this desire was that *Hazrat* Mirza was a subject of the British Empire. He had lived through the rule of the Sikhs in which lawlessness, cruelty and injustice were the order of the day and religious freedom was nonexistent. The British rule that followed was a complete contrast to the Sikh rule. Peace, justice and religious freedom prevailed, and *Hazrat* Mirza considered this a great blessing and viewed it very favorably. Under the Quranic injunction: "Is the reward of goodness aught but goodness?" (55:60) *Hazrat*

Mirza considered it his duty to invite Queen Victoria, Empress of India, who was the Queen of the British Empire, to Islam. In addition, Queen Victoria was blessed with a righteous nature.

In 1897, she was to complete sixty years of her reign and plans were afoot to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of her reign with great pomp and show. The British government of the time viewed with great suspicion any subject who did not participate in their festivities, and doubted their loyalty. The British government was wary of *Hazrat* Mirza because of his claim of being the *Mahdi*, and had posted a plain-clothes policeman in Qadian to watch *Hazrat* Mirza's activities. The name and address of any person who came to visit him was recorded and reported to the government. However, *Hazrat* Mirza did not harbor any thought of rebelling against the government because he did not believe in forced conversions, and considered the charge that Islam had been spread by force and violence as a great calumny against his religion. He viewed the plain-clothes policeman in a positive light because he felt that his reports would help to allay the government's suspicion. It was *Hazrat* Mirza's practice that whenever he called a meeting of his disciples for important consultations, he also invited the plain-clothes policeman so that the policeman may be satisfied that *Hazrat* Mirza was not practicing any hypocrisy or duplicity. As part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, every Muslim and non-Muslim organization and party in India held meetings to commemorate the occasion. Under these circumstances, *Hazrat* Mirza also considered it appropriate to hold a commemorative meeting.

### **Publication of the book *Tuhfa Qaisariyya***

It was *Hazrat* Mirza's practice to inject an aspect of propagation and invitation to Islam in every affair. *Hazrat* Mirza considered the Diamond Jubilee celebrations as a good opportunity to send the message of Islam to Queen Victoria and for this purpose, he wrote a book *Tuhfa Qaisariyya* (Gift for the Empress), and published it on May 25, 1897. In this book, he felicitated Queen Victoria on her Diamond Jubilee and wrote that just as his lord and master, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, had complimented the reign of Naushervan, the just Emperor of Iran, during his time, *Hazrat* Mirza, too, would like to take this opportunity to compliment the reign of the just queen of his time, Queen Victoria. He then introduced himself and his family, and then followed it up by laying down the message of Islam in the most appropriate manner.

The first principle he established was that all prophets had come with the same message of Divine Unity. It was inconceivable that any prophet

would preach polytheism, but with the passage of time, polytheistic ideas had been introduced into their pure messages. The second principle he established was that God did not grant respite to false prophets. Hence all the prophets accepted by significant sections of the world's population had to be from God. An international and pacifist religion must accept that prophets had been sent to all nations. As a corollary, its adherents were not required to reject the accepted spiritual personality of any nation. This principle was essential to establishing love and unity among the nations of the world and for laying the foundations of universal brotherhood. The only revealed book that taught these lessons was the Holy Quran, and therefore this was the only book that included the essential principles of a universal religion as integral articles of its faith.

The third principle he established was that a man of God was distinguishable by the Divine succor he received on a perpetual basis. This system of Divine assistance had aided the Holy Prophet throughout the ages. In this age, God's support for Islam was continuing through him. If the Queen desired, he could show her a sign, but the sign would not be one of her or anyone else's choosing, but it would be up to God to show whatever sign He wanted. However, the sign would take the form of some good news. After the sign was shown, it would be necessary for Queen Victoria to accept his message and to administer the country in a way conformable with his message. This message was in actuality not from him but from Jesus, the Messiah, and had been given to him in a vision. Jesus had informed him in the vision that he was disgusted with the concept of Trinity in Christianity, and that the belief in atonement, Trinity, and his being the son of God was a calumny attributed to him. The passage in the book that relayed the message of Jesus read:<sup>1</sup>

One of the many marvelous things God has given me is that I have had many meetings with Jesus, the Messiah, in a state of wakefulness, which is known as *kashfī baydari* (wakefulness during a divine inspiration). By talking to him, I have ascertained the nature of his real claim and message. It is important to note that Jesus, the Messiah, considers the beliefs of atonement, Trinity, and his being the son of God as repulsive and a great calumny against him. The testimony of this vision is not without corroboration. I believe that if a seeker of the truth comes and stays with me in good faith for some time, and is desirous of meeting the

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1 *Tuhfa Qaisariyya*, page 16.



Messiah in an inspired vision, he would be able to do so through the blessing of my prayer and attention. He can talk to him and obtain his testimony about me because I am the person whose spirit is a mirror image of the spirit of Jesus and in that sense his spirit resides in me.

*Hazrat Mirza* then showed the Christian belief that Jesus was “cursed,” was filthy and dangerous. Jews had in hostility and through animosity, described Jesus as “cursed,” but Christians had adopted the same word “cursed” out of excessive love and exaggeration, and used it to manufacture the theory of atonement. In doing so, they had not appreciated the implications of using this word for Jesus because its meaning implied that he was rebellious, far removed from God, dishonest to the core, an enemy of God and that God was his enemy. Precisely because of these meanings, this word was used for Satan. It was therefore highly inappropriate to employ this word for a pious man of God such as Jesus regardless of whether it was done by the Jews or the Christians. The very idea was enough to send a chill through a person. This was an egregious mistake whose rectification was the responsibility of the Queen, so that the honor of Jesus, a pious man of God, could be saved from the imputation of this impious belief. On the occasion of this sixty-year Jubilee, he urged Queen Victoria to leave the Jesus about whom the Christian priests erroneously said that he was cursed to atone for their sins, and instead to accept the Messiah presented by Islam who was a pious man of God, near to Him and was never cursed. This was the real way to honor Jesus.

After this, *Hazrat Mirza* presented the teachings of Islam and showed its superiority and excellence over the teachings of Christianity. He stressed that the picture of Islam painted by the Christian priests to Europeans was totally incorrect. He described the books they had written about Islam with the following analogy:

The books that Christian priests have written about other religions are like a sewer whose water is mixed with dirt and rubbish. The Christian priests are not interested in revealing the truth but in hiding it. Their books are so colored by prejudice that it is not just difficult but almost impossible to convey the true reality of religions to England.

He then stated that the Christian priests had unfairly portrayed Islam as having been spread by the sword when in fact the sword was never used

to spread Islam nor would it ever be spread with the sword in future. Precisely for this reason, the belief that a *Mahdi* would spread Islam by the sword was incorrect. Whenever Muslims had picked up the sword, it was to defend Islam and not to propagate it. Islam had always spread because of its rationality and spirituality, and in the future, too, it would spread because of the same reasons. In order to manifest this reality, he requested Queen Victoria to call a conference in London to which all religions of the world should be invited and the representatives of each religion should be asked to present just the excellence of their religion without attacking any other religion. The superiority of Islam would then become apparent to Her Majesty. *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:

If it takes place, this conference will be a lasting spiritual memorial to our great Queen. England, which has only heard about Islamic events after great distortions, will be given a true map of Islam. In fact, the people of England will learn about the true philosophy of every religion.

In the end, he showed the distinction between the teachings of the Quran and the New Testament in the following words:

The Quran is full of profound wisdom and in every aspect exceeds the New Testament in preaching real piety. In particular, the light for seeing the True and Everlasting God can only be obtained from the Quran. If the Quran had not been revealed, only God knows how much the practice of worshipping His creations would have spread. One has to be thankful that it restored the unity of God, which had been lost to the world.

### **The Diamond Jubilee gathering and presentation of *Tuhfa Qaisariyya***

A commemorative gathering was held on June 20, 1897, in Qadian to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. People from outside Qadian also attended the gathering. According to the instructions of the government, a resolution congratulating the Queen was passed and sent telegraphically to the Viceroy of India. A few copies of *Tuhfa Qaisariyya* were beautifully bound for presentation. Out of these, one was sent to Queen Victoria, Empress of India, care of the Deputy Commissioner of the Gurdaspur district, and a copy each was sent to the Viceroy of India and the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab. A special prayer was offered at the gathering for Queen Victoria, and its text was published as a handbill on June 25, 1897.

A noteworthy section of the prayer supplicated as follows:

O All Powerful God! We take the liberty to make another supplication to you since you have power over all things; let our beneficent Empress of India find a way out of the darkness of worshipping a created and let her end be on: 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.' O, the One with Astonishing Power! O, the Provider of Deep Succor! May it be so.

Nobody knows whether this had any effect on Queen Victoria but *Hazrat Mirza* did not give up preaching to her.

### **The writing of *Sitara Qaisariyya***

*Hazrat Mirza* waited for two years and then wrote another book, which he called *Sitara Qaisariyya* (Star of the Empress). This book was published on August 24, 1899. He repeated the same message in this book as he had in his earlier book *Tuhfa Qaisariyya*. In fact, this book was a sort of reminder of his earlier message, and was also sent to Queen Victoria.

### **Kaiser William of Germany bears testimony**

As a result of *Hazrat Mirza's* zeal for propagation, his literature reached Kaiser William, Emperor of Germany. On hearing *Hazrat Mirza's* claim of receiving revelation, he expressed his belief that pious people of God do receive revelation and that there was no reason to doubt the revelation of *Hazrat Mirza*. *Hazrat Mirza* acknowledged this in the Arabic section of his book *Tazkratul Shahadatain* and commended the Kaiser on his views.

### ***Hazrat Mirza* explains his claims to the King of Afghanistan**

*Hazrat Mirza* also wrote a letter to Amir Abdur Rahman, King of Afghanistan, in which he explained his claims in detail. The reason for writing this letter was that a native of Afghanistan by the name of Abdur Rahman had pledge allegiance to *Hazrat Mirza* and joined his movement. The influence of the clerics in Afghanistan was very strong and they, too, like their brethren in India, had issued a decree declaring *Hazrat Mirza* as an infidel. However, the situation in Afghanistan was much more serious because apostasy carried with it the death penalty. When Abdur Rahman was ready to go back to his native country, *Hazrat Mirza* considered it desirable to write a letter to Amir Abdur Rahman in Persian explaining his claims so that the misunderstanding created by the clerics may be

removed. Abdur Rahman hand carried the letter to Afghanistan but it is uncertain whether the letter ever reached the Amir. Either the clerics prevented the letter from reaching Amir Abdur Rahman or, if it did reach him, he chose to ignore it as a result of the clerics' indoctrination. The unfortunate result was that Abdur Rahman, the letter carrier, was killed under a decree of the clerics.

## ***HUJJAT-ULLAH*** **(TESTIMONY OF GOD)**

### ***Hazrat Mirza accepts to debate Maulvi Ghaznavi in Arabic but Maulvi Ghaznavi flees***

The clerics opposing *Hazrat Mirza* had spread the rumor that he was merely a scribe and ignorant of the Arabic language. After *Hazrat Mirza* had established his scholarship in the Arabic language by publishing several books, he challenged his opponents to write a similar book in comparable time that matched or exceeded his work in eloquence and scholarship. When *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, Abdul Haq Ghaznavi, the *shia* scholar Sheikh Najafi, and others realized that they were incapable of responding effectively to this challenge, they tried to escape the test by stating that the Arabic of *Hazrat Mirza*'s books was juvenile and that it had no literary or scholastic merit to warrant a competition. *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi went so far as to state that the books published under *Hazrat Mirza*'s name were actually written by others. Accordingly, *Maulvi* Ghaznavi published an announcement in which he wrote:

Arabic scholars translate the books that he publishes in Arabic, and I know for a fact that he has no competency in the language. If he claims competency, let him argue in Arabic with me among a gathering of scholars. Our relative competencies will become apparent. After this, a panel of scholars will adjudicate, and if they decide in his favor, then it will be accepted that he has writ-

ten the Arabic books. The arguments will be in writing and take place face to face. If you are unable to argue then let the curse of Allah be on the liars.

Further on in this announcement, *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi described *Hazrat* Mirza in the following words:

Sinner, Satan, Accursed, taunts and curses be on your head, dishonorable and disgraceful, miserable wretch, enemy of Allah the Everlasting and Glorious, enemy of Abdul Haq, the friend of Allah.

He then prophesied: "Soon will the wrath of Allah descend upon you." In response to this, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote a forceful reply in *Anjaam Atham* and stated: "I accept a face to face argument in Arabic." When *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi read this acceptance, he was petrified and went into hibernation because of his inability to argue in Arabic. However, this did not prevent him or his other Ghaznavi clansmen from writing abusive letters to *Hazrat* Mirza. A small part of one letter is given below as an example:

Ten thousand curses on you, accursed, accursed, accursed, accursed, accursed, infidel, great infidel, Antichrist, Satan, Pharaoh, Korah, Hamaan, beast of the valley, mad dog.

### **Publication of *Hujjat-ullah***

When the stream of abusive letters and announcements continued, *Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement on March 17, 1897, in which he stated that he would write and publish a book in Arabic and challenged his opponents to write and publish a reply to it in the same number of days that he had taken to write the book. Accordingly, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote the Arabic book *Hujjat-ullah* in forty-one days and published it on May 26, 1897. He then challenged all the clerics, and in particular *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi and Sheikh Najafi, to publish an equal or better reply in the same number of days if they had any sense of honor and were truthful. *Hazrat* Mirza suggested the following way to determine if the challenge had been met:

*Maulvi* Abdullah, Professor of Arabic, or some other Professor that the opponents may suggest, will be required to state on oath and under threat of Divine punishment that their composition is better than or equal in eloquence and literary merit to the one I

submitted. If the judge states this on oath and is not involved in a Divine calamity within forty-one days after my supplication, then I will burn all the books in my possession written by me and will repent at their hand. In this way, the daily quarrels will be settled. After this, if someone does not come out for this contest, then the public should understand that such a person is a liar.

To preempt possible false charges by his opponents that he had received assistance in the writing of his book, *Hazrat Mirza* stated categorically that he had received no such assistance, but that his opponents were at liberty to seek assistance if they wished from Arabic scholars in their endeavor. He urged them to go and beg some Arabic scholar to put together a composition for them; perhaps he may take mercy on them and do so. *Hazrat Mirza* explained the rationale for asking his opponents to write a book in Arabic:

I have stated several times that I have not written these Arabic books so that people may consider me a cleric and a scholar of Arabic. I have repeatedly stated in these books that this (eloquence in Arabic) is a sign from God and has been given to me as a miracle so that it may be another testimonial to the truth of my claim. When and where have I stated that the purpose of my Arabic books is to vanquish people so that they may accept me as an Arabic scholar? However, it must be acknowledged that if a person like me, who according to your announcement has no competency in the language, vanquishes you, with your claims of superiority and Arabic scholarship, then you must accept this sign, and be convinced fully that it is a miracle of God. You should then repent and take the pledge at my hand.

This book *Hujjat-ullah* was published on May 26, 1897, and many periods of forty-one days passed but no cleric had the courage to write even a line of Arabic in its reply. The major theme of the book was a discussion of the promise made in the Quranic verse, *Istakhlaf* (24:55), about raising caliphs, i.e. successors to the Holy Prophet. *Hazrat Mirza* showed himself to be the successor to the Caliphate of Muhammad. Because the *shia* scholar, Sheikh Najafi, was one of the persons addressed in this book, *Hazrat Mirza* put forward strong arguments justifying the legitimacy of the righteous caliphates of *Hazrat Abu Bakar* and *Hazrat Umar* while discussing the successors of the Holy Prophet. In this way, he refuted the

arguments of the *shia* sect with great finesse. He also included in this book arguments and Divine signs in support of his claims. This book comprised one hundred and eight pages out of which about two-thirds was prose and about one-third was Arabic poetry. Without a doubt, the eloquence and literary merit of the Arabic used in this book was a miraculous sign.

### **A new way to corner Muhammad Hussain Batalvi**

In this book, *Hazrat* Mirza suggested another way to adjudicate *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi's charge that he lacked competence in Arabic. An easy way to decide this, he suggested, was as follows: *Maulvi* Batalvi would be given compositions of several Arabic scholars and also that of *Hazrat* Mirza without disclosing the names of the author for each work. He would be asked to pick out the composition of *Hazrat* Mirza from the others. If he were successful in doing this, then *Hazrat* Mirza would give him fifty rupees as a reward or penalty, and accept his criticism as correct. *Maulvi* Batalvi was asked, if he was disposed to this method of settling the contention, to publish this fact in a newspaper and also to inform *Hazrat* Mirza accordingly. *Maulvi* Batalvi did not accept this method; while totally lacking the courage to take on *Hazrat* Mirza openly, he continued his enmity from afar.

### **Fakir Muhammad's testimony of the truth**

Fakir Muhammad was a saintly person who lived by a stream in Sialkot; he was well known and respected in his area. *Hazrat* Mirza also included in this book an announcement that this dervish had published. The announcement read:

A necessary notification:

By the grace of Allah and His revelation; by the spirit of the Beloved Messenger, peace be upon him; by the spirit of all the martyrs; by the spirit of saints; by the spirit of all the friends of God who are on the earth; and by those spirits who keep track of what happens in the heavens and the earth; I have received testimony and revelation from all of them that Mirza sahib has been sent by Allah, the Glorious. The religion of our Beloved Messenger was beset by tribulations and terribly weakened; thousands of cursed sects like the Nazarene and Rafazi<sup>1</sup> were born to mislead the people. It became necessary, therefore, to send the

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1 A dissenting Shiite sect.



Promised Messiah. It was the work of a great prophet to reform the frightful wickedness born in this time. Since no prophet can come after our Beloved Messenger, God the Most High sent Mirza sahib, who is the Prophet's blessed emblem. Those who think that Jesus was bodily lifted to the heaven are false. No one has ever gone to the next world bodily without tasting death. O heirs to scholars! O heirs to saints! O heirs to the Prophet's household! Listen! Soon the Heaven will show a majestic sign in support of the truth of this movement. God Himself will provide forceful evidence and then you will be disgraced and put to shame because of your opposition. My announcement is true. It is a copy of the Divine tablet of fate. I can see that God, the Most High, is very angry with you because of your opposition and the Beloved Messenger is extremely disgusted with you.

***SIRAJUDDIN ESSAIE KAY  
CHAR SWALON KA JAWAB***  
**(THE FOUR QUESTIONS OF THE  
CHRISTIAN SIRAJUDDIN  
ANSWERED)**

**Motivation for writing**

Sirajuddin was a professor in Mission College, Lahore. A Christian by faith, he asked *Hazrat* Mirza to answer four questions. Although he disguised the questions in a very philosophical tone, they effectively required a comparison of the personalities and teachings of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah upon him, and Prophet Jesus. *Hazrat* Mirza's response was so effective and concise that no summary could do justice to it. A full appreciation of the book is only possible by reading the full text. The reply was published on June 22, 1897 in the form of a book titled, *Sirajuddin Essaie Kay Char Swalon ka Jawab* (The Four Questions of the Christian Sirajuddin Answered). The book was forty-eight pages long.

**Christians challenged**

For the sake of brevity, only the last few lines of the book are reproduced below:

If faith is a blessing then it must manifest some signs. Is there a single Christian who has the signs of spirituality identified by Jesus in the Bible? It follows that either the Bible is wrong or Christians have failed to achieve spirituality. The signs of a true believer mentioned in the Quran are found in all ages. The Quran states that righteous persons receive revelation, that they hear the voice of God, that their prayers are accepted more than that of anybody else, that they are given knowledge of the unseen, and that the assistance of God is with them. Just as these signs were manifested in the previous eras, so, too, are they manifested now. This proves conclusively that the Quran is the word of God and the promises of the Quran are the promises of God.

Arise Christians! If you have the strength, come and debate with me, and if I am a liar, kill me. Otherwise, know that you are guilty in the eyes of God, and treading the path to hell fire. Peace be on him who follows true guidance.

Not a single Christian came forward to confront *Hazrat* Mirza but the fire of revenge kept smoldering in their hearts. It caused them to fabricate a baseless accusation of attempted murder against him but, once again, God disgraced them, and their suit ended in failure. The details of this suit are discussed further on.

Chapter

88

## MIRZA BASHIR-UD-DIN MAHMUD FINISHES THE READING OF THE QURAN

### *Hazrat Mirza's love of the Quran*

*Hazrat Mirza's* love for the Quran has been mentioned before. If some disciple brought his child along, the first thing *Hazrat Mirza* enquired was whether the child had finished the Quran. It was therefore not surprising that he paid special attention to the Quranic learning of his children. Accordingly, Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud, his eldest surviving son from his second wife, was made to read the Quran at a young age. He completed the reading in June 1897, and in the same month, *Hazrat Mirza* invited his friends to a gathering in which the ceremonial ending of the reading of the Quran, known as *Ameen*, was celebrated. *Hazrat Mirza* wrote a poem especially for this occasion, which was read out in the gathering and later published on June 7, 1897.

## **HAZRAT MIRZA'S PLEA TO THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF INDIA**

### ***Hazrat Mirza* abhorred the practice of declaring Muslims as infidels**

The unity of Islam had been rent asunder by the cleric's practice of passing decrees of infidelity against Muslims. This practice was seriously compromising *Hazrat Mirza's* efforts to serve, defend and propagate Islam, and this greatly saddened him. *Hazrat Mirza* was constantly on the look-out for ways to settle doctrinal differences so that sectarian hatred and charges of infidelity may be put to an end before their dissensions totally destroyed the fabric of Islamic unity and stopped its propagation. Accordingly, *Hazrat Mirza* had suggested a framework for the resolution of differences on several occasions but it was not in the nature of the clerics to accept any judicious method for deciding between right and wrong.

### **An easy way to decide**

On July 15, 1897, *Hazrat Mirza* issued an announcement under the title: "A Plea in the Name of God, the Glorious, to Religious Scholars, Saints and Righteous Persons of Punjab and India." This plea, which was addressed to all religious leaders of India, began with the following statement:

O, venerable men of religion and righteous servants of Allah! I present before you a petition in the name of Allah, the Most Glorious, and charge you with considering it for the sake of dispelling dissension and discord. You possess shrewdness and intel-

ligence and you act not merely out of conjecture but aided by a light from God. There was no need to invoke the name of Allah in a matter that all Muslims view sympathetically, and that is designed to remove a major dissension in Islam. However, there are some people who think that speaking the truth will incur the opprobrium of the general populace, but falsehood is a sin. They, therefore, prefer to stay silent as a matter of expediency. It is to get the attention of such people that it has become necessary to invoke the name of Allah.

*Hazrat Mirza* then provided evidence substantiating the claims he had made of being the *mujaddid* of the fourteenth century and the Promised Messiah. He went on to prove that Jesus had died, and then mentioned the signs manifested at his hands. After this, he proposed a method which could decide between truth and falsehood, and which would put an end to the present dissension. He wrote:

Therefore, I have conceived another idea to arrive at a definitive answer and I hope that God, the Most High, will bless it, and this dissension that has created so much strife and enmity among thousands of Muslims will be resolved. My suggestion is that all the religious scholars, saints, righteous and pure persons of Punjab and India be entreated in the name of God the Glorious to pray, supplicate and ask God for guidance about me and my claim. They should then publish under oath any revelations, visions and true dreams that they experience in response. If the majority of these experiences indicate that this humble person is a liar and fabricator, then by all means everyone can call me a reprobate, an accursed, a fabricator, a liar, and curse me as much as they want without the fear of sinning. In such a case, it will be incumbent on every honest person to shun me and this suggestion will make it easy for divine vengeance to befall my party and me.

However, if the majority of visions, revelations, and true dreams indicate that this humble person is from Allah, and is true in his claims, then it will be incumbent on every God-fearing person to follow me and abstain from calling us infidels and accusing us of falsehood. It is obvious that everyone has to die one day. Even if one has to bear some disgrace in accepting the truth in this world, it is better than being disgraced in the Hereafter.

Therefore, I call upon all religious scholars, saints, and righteous men of Punjab and India in the name of God, the Glorious – in whose name it is incumbent on all religious men to sacrifice even their lives – to supplicate about me to God for at least twenty-one days, that is if there is no indication before that. They should ask God to disclose to them who I am? Am I a liar or am I from Allah? I ask over and over again the venerable men of religion to supplicate in the name of Allah, the Glorious, for an end to this dissension and to continue their supplications for twenty-one days if no knowledge is given before that. I know for sure that to ignore a call made in the name of God is not the work of the righteous and I also know that all persons, pure of heart and fearing the Majesty of God, will focus on this matter because the plea invokes God's name.

After all the Divine evidence has been collected, the Divine verdict will be considered in favor of the side that has the preponderance of supporting evidence. If I am in reality a liar and an Antichrist then it is indeed a great misfortune of the Muslim nation that at a time of such need, and during such a stormy period of discord, religious innovations and dissensions, an Antichrist has been born at the head of the fourteenth century instead of a reformer (*Mujaddid*).

Let it be remembered that my announcement is addressed to every person who is considered to be righteous and pure-hearted by any group of discerning Muslims. Let it also be remembered that I do not consider righteous persons whose reputation is less well known to be in any way inferior because it is possible that they may be better in the eyes of Allah than those with famous reputations. In the same way, I do not consider chaste and pious women in any way inferior to men; it is possible that they may be better than some reputable and pious men. However, it will be incumbent on anyone who sends any dream, vision or revelation about me to do so under a signed statement of oath so that these documents can be collected and later published for the benefit of those who seek the truth. God willing, this suggestion will benefit many persons; the hearts of Muslims will rest easy after looking at the evidence and knowing the majority verdict; thus they will be able to rid themselves of this discord...Hence, O respected and vener-

able persons! Turn to God, the Knower of the unseen; I ask you in the name of Allah, the Glorious, to accept my plea, and I put you under the oath of the Most Powerful and the Most Glorious not to reject the petition of this humble person.

Regretfully, a slumbering nation, quite oblivious of its fate, was not likely to give any serious consideration to this equitable method of decision. Barring a few exceptions, there was no pain in the hearts of Muslims for the condition of Islam, no strong desire to remove dissension and no appreciation for the negative influence of passing decrees of infidelity. With such indifference, it was unlikely that people would give this proposal the attention it deserved, and this suggestion, too, turned out to be a cry in the wilderness. *Hazrat* Mirza expressed the indifference of the Muslim nation poignantly in the following verse of one of his poems:

They slumber wrapped in covers of indifference,  
They wake not though we aroused them hundreds of times.



Chapter

90

## FUNDRAISING FOR THE EXTENSION OF *MUBARAK* MOSQUE

### **Announcement requesting funds to extend the *Mubarak* mosque**

The mosque adjacent to *Hazrat* Mirza's house was known as *Mubarak* mosque. A description of the mosque was provided in Chapter 14. *Hazrat* Mirza routinely offered his five daily prayers with the congregation in this mosque. Because of the shortage of space, the worshippers were inconvenienced and the overflow had to be accommodated in some rooms of the house or on the roof outside. It therefore became necessary to extend this mosque and the project was estimated to cost five hundred rupees. *Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement on July 29, 1897 entitled "And Help One Another in Righteousness and Piety," (5:2) in which he requested contributions to cover the proposed cost of the expansion.

**REV. CLARKE ACCUSES HAZRAT  
MIRZA OF CONSPIRACY TO  
MURDER & PUBLICATION OF  
KITAB-UL-BARIYYA (AN ACCOUNT  
OF EXONERATION)**

**Reason for the suit**

*Hazrat* Mirza had taken the offensive to crush the false doctrines of the Christian faith and was feverishly working to achieve this objective. This onslaught had driven the Christians to the wall. The prophecy regarding Abdullah Atham's death added further fuel to the fire. When Atham died, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote the book *Anjaam Atham* along with its supplement in which he gave such powerful and rational arguments against Christianity that the demolition of its doctrinal framework was total and complete. His criticism of the life of Jesus as portrayed in the Gospels said much about the personality of the Biblical Jesus. In the announcement *Kasar Saleeb* (Breaking of the Cross) *Hazrat* Mirza cast light on the meaning of the word 'accursed' and completely exposed the pernicious nature of the doctrine of atonement under which Jesus was cursed and then sacrificed to atone for sins. Unable to withstand this constant barrage of doctrinal attacks, Christians decided to incapacitate him through a legal strategy. Lekhram had been murdered not long ago. Christians and *Arya* Hindus had tried to pin the murder on *Hazrat* Mirza but had failed miser-

ably both on legal and propaganda fronts. The Christian clergy now devised a bold new plan to charge *Hazrat Mirza* with attempted murder, but first they had to manufacture evidence so *Hazrat Mirza* would not escape the noose.

### **The waywardness of Abdul Hameed**

Abdul Hameed, a nephew of *Maulvi Burhanuddin* of Jehlum, was a vagabond with an immoral character who had changed his religion several times, becoming first a Christian and then converting back to Islam. His immoral lifestyle had affected his physique, which was thin and weak, and left him suffering from gonorrhea. After a transient existence, he arrived in Qadian in 1897, and introduced himself to *Maulvi Nur-ud-Din* as the nephew of *Maulvi Burhanuddin* and expressed a desire to join the *Ahmadiyya* Movement. He requested *Maulvi Nur-ud-Din* to facilitate his pledge-taking at the hands of *Hazrat Mirza*. When *Maulvi Nur-ud-Din* broached the subject, *Hazrat Mirza* was uncomfortable with the suggestion, his spiritual insight sensed some insincerity, and he replied: "I do not want to accept the pledge of a person with dubious character until we have some assurance of his sincerity." Frustrated in his attempt to join the Movement, Abdul Hameed left Qadian but returned back after a period of roaming around. This time his Uncle, *Maulvi Burhanuddin*, was also in Qadian and warned *Maulvi Nur-ud-Din*: "He is a very bad person; make him leave Qadian immediately as he is sure to disappoint you." *Maulvi Nur-ud-Din* replied: "It is possible that he may reform," but *Maulvi Burhanuddin* was insistent: "I know him better than you; he is not going to reform. On the contrary, he is likely to cause trouble." When *Hazrat Mirza* learned about this, he ordered Abdul Hameed out of Qadian.

After leaving Qadian, Abdul Hameed went to Amritsar and contacted a Christian preacher, Nur-ud-Din, and gave him the following story: "I was a Hindu hailing from Batala; Mirza Qadiani converted me to Islam and named me Abdul Majeed, but now I want to become a Christian." There was a good reason he hid his real identity. Formerly, he had been a Christian and was expelled from the Gujrat Mission for immoral conduct. He was afraid that his past may come back to haunt him and make it impossible for him to join the Amritsar mission. Nur-ud-Din sent him to Reverend Gray, the leader of the mission and his immediate superior. Abdul Hameed gave Reverend Gray the same story: "I was a Hindu and my name was Ralia Ram. I became a Muslim and spent some time as a disciple of Mirza Qadiani; my name currently is Abdul Majeed but I now want to become a Christian." Reverend Gray sensed he was a vagabond

and told him: "Very well; stop by daily or twice weekly and I will teach you the Christian faith." Abdul Hameed asked him how he would subsist in the meantime? Reverend Gray realized that he was a vulgar person who had come solely for the sake of money and told him in no uncertain terms that he would not get any money from him. Disappointed by this source, Abdul Hameed returned to the Christian preacher, Nur-ud-Din, for advice. Nur-ud-Din now recommended that he go to Reverend Henry Martyn Clarke, the head of another mission in Amritsar, as he may accept him and arrange for his meals and sustenance.

### **The Christian conspiracy**

Thereupon Abdul Hameed repaired to Reverend Henry Martyn Clarke with the same story and was turned over to his assistant, an Indian Christian named Abdur Rahim. When Abdur Rahim learned that Abdul Hameed had come to Amritsar directly from Qadian after being a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza, his diabolical mind realized the potential of this find. His dearest wish, and that of his fellow Christians, was on the verge of being fulfilled. The time had come to launch the plan, conceived much earlier, to trap *Hazrat* Mirza. Abdul Hameed had come from Qadian; if only he could be made to give a statement that suited their purpose, the plan could be launched. To accomplish this, Abdul Hameed was given employment in the mission health center in Amritsar. Later, he was sent to Beas and put under the tutelage of two Indian Christians, Premdas and Waris Din, who had been given secret instructions to befriend and ingratiate him. This phase was accomplished successfully. After a few days, Rev. Clarke made a trip to Beas with a few attendants to photograph Abdul Hameed. The photographs taken at Beas were group photographs and had other employees in them as well. Abdul Hameed was therefore telegraphically summoned two days later to Amritsar for a portrait photograph. He was received at the railway station by Muhammad Yousaf, a Christian, and taken straight to Rev. Clarke's residence, where the Reverend himself photographed him. The photograph however did not come out right and so Abdul Hameed was taken to a commercial photographer for a portrait photo.

After the photograph was taken, he was sent to the health center on some pretext where Abdur Rahim, Rev. Clarke's assistant, broached him and began harassing him to confess his real mission. He was told that they knew already what his real mission was, but Abdul Hameed continued to maintain that he had merely come to become a Christian. Unable to extract a false confession, he was sent back to Beas. After a few days, Rev. Clarke,

along with Abdur Rahim, Waris Din and Premdas, paid him a visit in Beas. Rev. Clarke sat on a chair and all the other mission employees sat before him on the floor. Abdul Hameed was again confronted there and told bluntly that they knew he was on a mission to murder Rev. Clarke at the behest of Mirza Qadiani, but he denied it. Their efforts to force a false confession continued, but Abdul Hameed steadfastly denied any charge that *Hazrat* Mirza had sent him to murder anyone, and maintained that he had merely come to become a Christian. Unable to obtain a false confession through harassment, they openly threatened him. Abdur Rahim warned him of grave consequences unless he gave a statement that he had come to kill Rev. Clarke by hitting him over the head with a rock at the behest of Mirza Qadiani. He was told that his photograph had been taken, and even if he fled he would be caught. If he did not give the statement, he would be handed over to the police anyway on charges of being an agent of Mirza Qadiani for the murder of Rev. Clarke, and then he would be in serious trouble. However, if he did give a statement as directed, then the Rev. Clarke would see to it that he came to no harm. Finally, Abdul Hameed succumbed to their pressure and threats and agreed to give them the statement they desired. He wrote the following statement:

I am Abdul Hameed, son of Sultan Mahmud, resident of Jehlum, presently living in Beas. I was sent from village Qadian by Mirza Sahib Ghulam Ahmad Qadian to harm Dr. Clarke, that is, to kill him. For this work, I have come. I was told this verbally in a bathroom in Qadian.

He wrote this note in grammatically incorrect Urdu and gave it to them. In the first version of this note, Abdul Hameed only wrote: "...to harm Dr. Clarke," but did not write: "to kill him." Abdur Rahim told him to substitute "to kill" for "to harm." Consequently, Abdul Hameed rewrote the statement and inserted: "...that is, to kill him" in the text. When he had finished writing the note, those present, all of whom were Christians, said: "We thank you. You have fulfilled our heart's desire." After this, Abdur Rahim, Waris Din and Prem Das made out a detailed statement and gave it to him with the instructions to use it as the basis for his evidence in court.

### **The suit is filed in Amritsar**

Rev. Clarke returned to Amritsar and filed a complaint against *Hazrat* Mirza, accusing him of conspiracy to murder. Abdul Hameed told the court that he had come to Amritsar to kill Rev. Henry Martyn Clarke with a rock

on the order of Mirza Qadiani. His statement is reproduced below so that the reader may appreciate the extent of the deception practiced by the Christian clergy in the name of religion. This is apparent from the lies they manufactured and from their coaching of Abdul Hameed to render it as his testament. The statement of Abdul Hameed, given in the Court of A. E. Martineau, Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar district, was as follows:

I am the son of Sultan Mahmud who lived in Jhelum. I came to Amritsar about 19 or 20 days ago. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib of Qadian, Gurdaspur district, called me to his house and talked to me. He asked me to go to Dr. Clarke in Amritsar and kill him somehow or other. He knew me already but spoke to me about this affair on that particular day. I agreed that I would do just as he had asked. I did this because I am a Muslim and Dr. Clarke is a Christian. Mirza sahib had told me that it was permissible for a Muslim to kill a Christian. Then I went to Amritsar with this intention. I went to Dr. Clarke and said that I was first a Hindu, then I became a Muslim and now wanted to become a Christian. I also told him that I had been sent by Mirza sahib. Dr. Clarke sent me to the hospital where Christians live and receive education. I stayed in Amritsar for four or five days. Then Dr. Clarke sent me to another hospital, which is in Beas. Yesterday, Dr. Clarke asked me why I had come to Amritsar. Then I disclosed the real truth and said that I had been sent by Mirza sahib to kill Dr. Clarke, but I had now changed my mind. I feel sorry and repent. I have had this statement written of my own free will. I was a follower of Mirza sahib for two or three months at Qadian, prior to his asking me to go to Amritsar. Before going to Qadian, I was in Gujrat where a Christian clergyman used to teach me. He wanted to send me to Rawalpindi but Muslims took hold of me and sent me to Mirza sahib. My father was a farmer and a *Maulvi*. He was not a follower of Mirza sahib. After my father's death, my paternal uncle, Burhanuddin, brought me up. He lived in Jhelum and was a follower of Mirza sahib. I had another paternal uncle, Luqman. He married my mother after the death of my father. No one was present when Mirza sahib instructed me to go to Amritsar. He took me to a separate room in his house and said this to me. While I was with Mirza sahib I only studied the Quran. *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din taught me. Before that particular day when he asked me to do this job, Mirza sahib liked me very much. But before that, he never said anything to me about the murder of Dr.

Clarke. Nor did *Hakim* Nur-ud-Din do so. I do not know if any other man came from Qadian after me. Mirza sahib asked me to kill Dr. Clarke with a stone when I got an opportunity to find him alone. My paternal uncle, Burhanuddin, was a zealous Muslim. Mirza sahib had told me to come to Qadian after murdering Dr. Clarke. I would be quite safe there. I am *Gakhhar* by caste. I am sixteen or seventeen years old.

*Read and accepted correct.*

*Signature:*

A.E. Martineau  
District Magistrate  
Amritsar  
1st August 1897

After this, Rev. Henry Martyn Clarke gave his statement in court. The evidence of a famous Christian leader in this false suit is worthy of reading. Notice the artfulness with which he lies:

### **Statement of Doctor Martyn Clarke**

I am a medical missionary and live in Amritsar. On 15<sup>th</sup> July, Abdul Hameed came to me and said: "I am a Brahmin of Batala. Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani made me a Muslim. I remained with him as a student for seven years, and arrived at the conclusion that he was a very bad man. Now I want to leave him and become a Christian." I admitted him. His story did not appeal to me. I started making investigations about him. I came to know that this story was absolutely false. His name was Abdul Hameed, not Abdul Majeed as he had stated. Nor was he a Brahmin of Batala. In fact, he was a born Muslim of the Jhelum area. His paternal uncle, Burhanuddin Ghazi, is a well-known religious fanatic. His entire family is zealous followers of Mirza Qadiani. This young man had lived in Gujrat, like those seeking the Christian religion. He stole forty rupees from his paternal uncle and wasted them in vice. Thereupon his uncle sent him to Mirza Qadiani. I personally went to Beas. Then I enquired from him. He openly admitted before five witnesses that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had sent him to

kill me. He was looking for an opportunity to smash my head with a stone or something similar when he found me asleep or in some other condition. He wrote all these events of his own accord. I produce this written paper, which he signed in the presence of eight witnesses.

I have known Mirza sahib since the time of the debate, which took place in the summer of 1893. I had taken a major part in the debate. This debate took place between him and a very important Christian, Abdullah Atham, who is dead. I presided over the meeting and on two occasions had acted as debater in place of Mr. Atham. Mirza sahib was deeply aggrieved. Afterwards, he predicted the death of all those who had participated in the debate, and my contribution had been tremendous. Since then, his attitude towards me has been very hostile. After the debate, the center of special attention was Mr. Atham. Four separate attempts were made to kill him. During the last two months of the period fixed for his death, a special twenty-four-hour police guard was posted at Ferozepur. Mr. Atham had to flee from Amritsar to Ambala and from Ambala to Ferozepur, because of the attempts made on his life. These attempts have been generally attributed to Mirza sahib.

After Mr. Atham's death, I have been their focus. In many a veiled manner, I have been reminded of this prophesy in Mirza sahib's books. The greatest effort has been the one explained by Abdul Hameed. After Lekhram's death in Lahore, which everybody attributes to Mirza sahib, I had special reason to believe that some sort of an attempt would be made to kill me. I had gone on leave of absence for three months. On my return, Mirza sahib at once came to know about my arrival and Abdul Hameed reached me. I have sufficient reasons to believe the statement of Abdul Hameed and also to believe that Mirza sahib intends to do harm to me. It has always been the technique of Mirza sahib that he predicts the death of his opponents.

*Read out. Accepted.*

*Signature:*

A.E. Martineau,  
District Magistrate, Amritsar.



Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke was very influential in Amritsar. There was also the obvious bias of a European magistrate hearing the complaint of another European against an Indian. The result was that the District Magistrate proceeded to pass his order without applying a judicial mind to the complaint, and issued a warrant for the arrest of *Hazrat* Mirza. The order of the District Magistrate is reproduced below:

### Order

The statements of Abdul Hameed and Dr. Clarke indicate that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian incited Abdul Hameed to kill Dr. Clarke, resident of Amritsar. There are reasons to believe that the said Mirza Ghulam Ahmad will commit the said breach of peace or a cognizable act, which will result in a breach of peace in this district. It has been requested that he should be asked to give surety for maintenance of peace. Circumstances are such as make it necessary to issue warrant of his arrest under Section 114 of the Criminal Code. Consequently, I issue the warrant for his arrest and direct him to appear here and explain why, under Section 107 of the Criminal Code, two separate sureties for maintenance of peace for one year be not taken from him, a personal surety of twenty thousand rupees and other of twenty thousand rupees.

*Signed:*

A.E. Matineau, District Magistrate, Amritsar

1st August 1897

### The warrant is issued but gets lost

When this warrant was issued, Christians, *Arya* Hindus, and the opposing Muslim clerics of Amritsar were delighted. They had a field day spreading this news, and from the very next day, *Hazrat* Mirza's opponents could be seen standing around, with an air of expectation, at the Batala and Amritsar railway stations and around the court in Amritsar. Nothing else would give them greater pleasure than to see *Hazrat* Mirza in handcuffs. However, the warrant disappeared mysteriously and its disappearance is a mystery to this day. It was dispatched from the court in Amritsar addressed to the Deputy Commissioner Gurdaspur, but it never reached its destination. Somewhere in between, through Divine intervention, the warrant disappeared without a trace. One week after the warrant was issued, the Deputy

Commissioner Amritsar realized that he had no jurisdiction to issue the warrant because the accused lived in another district and the jurisdiction belonged properly to the Deputy Commissioner Gurdaspur.<sup>1</sup> He, therefore, sent a telegram on August 7, to his counterpart in Gurdaspur to stop the implementation of the warrant. The Deputy Commissioner Gurdaspur was very surprised to receive the telegram and inquired from his Reader, Raja Ghulam Haider Khan, whether he had received such a warrant. He expressed his ignorance; Raja Ghulam Haider in turn inquired from other members of the court staff and none of them had any knowledge of the warrant either. While this general state of astonishment and confusion was persisting in the Gurdaspur court, the Deputy Commissioner Amritsar sent the case file to his counterpart in Gurdaspur with the following note:

I have stopped the execution of the warrant since the case is not in my jurisdiction. See Indian Law Report No. 11, Calcutta: 713, 12; Calcutta: 133 and 6; Allahabad: 26.

Should be sent to District Magistrate Gurdaspur for action.

*Signed:* A.E. Martineau, District Magistrate

### ***Hazrat Mirza forewarned through Divine communication***

In Qadian, meanwhile, *Hazrat Mirza* was forewarned through Divine communication about the impending events. This was how he described it:

In a dream on July 29, 1897, I saw a bolt of lightning approaching my house from the west. It was neither accompanied by sound nor did it cause any damage, but it was like a bright star that was proceeding deliberately towards my house. I was viewing it from afar, but when it came close, I continued to feel in my heart that it was a bolt of lightning but my eyes saw only a small star, even as my heart considered it to be lightning. After this vision, my heart was transformed into the state for receiving revelation and it was revealed to me: "There will be no impact of what was seen except an attempt to warn by the rulers." There will be nothing more than this. Then it was revealed: "Visitation of a misfortune on the believers." That is, your party will pass through a trial as a result of this suit. After this, it was revealed: "So that Allah may know those who strive among you and may know those who are liars."

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1 This realization was, in my opinion, a second instance of Divine intervention. - Author

This is addressed to my party that God decreed this to happen so that He may make known to you those who strive in the way of His appointee with a true heart and those who are falsely pretentious in their pledges... Then it was revealed: "A righteous person is he who lives through difficult and troublesome times with love and faith," that is, in the eyes of God, a true person is he who is loyal and loving during periods of adversity. After this, an agreeable statement was put in my heart. This statement was not in the form of an external revelation but instead in the form of an internal inspiration that filled my heart with its import. This is what it was:

"If under a Divine decree a true lover of God is imprisoned, he kisses the shackles that bind him because he thinks that this, too, is from his Beloved."

That is, if perchance a lover is incarcerated, he kisses the shackles because their *raison d'être* is the paramour. After this, it was revealed: "'He who has made the Quran binding on thee will surely bring thee back to the Place of Return.' (28:85) I will arrive suddenly with my army and reach you with my support. I am the Beneficent, the possessor of Glory and the Most High." The meaning is that the Omnipotent God who has made the Quran binding on you, will bring you back, that is, the end will be safe and happy. I will come with my forces (made up of angels) to you from where you do not expect. I am the Beneficent. I am the Most High and Most Holy, i.e. My Word will prevail. After this, it was revealed: "Disunity among the opposition and an opponent's disgrace, insult and public censure," (and then finally the order of exoneration) that is, a finding of not guilty. After this, it was revealed: "And in it is something," that is, the exoneration will be qualified, (and this was an indication to the notice written after the exoneration requiring greater civility in debates.) Along with this, it was also revealed: "My signs will be clear, and more and more evidence will manifest this." (This is exactly how events unfolded. In the suit decided in September 1899, in the court of Mr. G. R. Drummond, the accused Abdul Hameed once again admitted that his original statement was false.) Then it was revealed: "The flag of victory," and after it was revealed: "The law for Our affairs is that when We desire a thing, We say to it *Be* and it is." It should be clarified that about five hundred people

were informed about these prophecies before the events occurred. Among those who can evidence this are Brother *Maulvi Hakim* Nur-ud-Din sahib, Brother *Maulvi* Abdul Karim sahib, Brother *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali sahib M.A., Brother Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din sahib, Brother Mirza Khuda Baksh sahib, Brother *Maulvi Hakim* Fazal Din sahib, and others whose number is so large that several pages would be required if all of their names were to be written. All of these people were informed ahead of time that a misfortune was on its way and that in the near future, such a suit would be filed, but in the end, everything will turn out all right through the blessing of God and there will be no disgrace.

### **The first Divine sign – disappearance of the warrant**

The first Divine sign manifested in this suit was the disappearance of the warrant issued on August 1, 1897, by the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar. His counterpart in Gurdaspur never received the warrant. It was only one week later that the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar realized that he had acted without jurisdiction by issuing a warrant for the arrest of a person resident in another district. Most men of God would consider it an honor to be handcuffed in the way of Allah even though they are innocent. Nevertheless, it is true that had the warrant been executed, *Hazrat Mirza's* opponents would have delighted in seeing him handcuffed, and considered it a sign of disgrace. Later, even if the Deputy Commissioner had expressed regret, the disgrace inherent in the act of being arrested would not have been vitiated in the eyes of the opponents. The apology on the part of the Deputy Commissioner would have been akin to what one poet describes in the following verse:

After my murder he forswore violence,  
O the expeditious repenting of that repentant.

However, through Allah's grace, the warrant disappeared. Finally, the telegram arrived from the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar to his counterpart in Gurdaspur to stop execution of the warrant, but it was of no consequence because God Himself had already stopped its execution.

### **The second Divine sign – transfer of the case to the court of the District Magistrate of Gurdaspur**

When the case was transferred to the court of Captain Douglas, District Magistrate of Gurdaspur, Allah put it into his heart to issue only a summon rather than a warrant. The text of the summon was:

*In the court of Captain Douglas, District Magistrate*

To: Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, son of Mirza Ghulam Murtaza, caste Mughal, resident of Qadian Mughlan, sub-division Batala, District Gurdaspur

Your presence is essential in order to make reply to the accusation under Section 107 Criminal Procedure Code. Hence you are ordered through this document to present yourself in person or through a duly authorized attorney or as the case may be, at Batala, before the District Magistrate on 10th August 1897. Be strictly enjoined of this.

*Signed:* Magistrate, District Gurdaspur

**Particulars of the suit**

*Hazrat* Mirza gave the details of the case, including the court attested statements of the plaintiff and the witnesses, in his book, *Kitab-ul-Bariyya* (An Account of Exoneration) published on January 24, 1898; hence it is not necessary to reproduce them again here. The reader who is interested in perusing the details of the court proceedings is referred to the original book.<sup>2</sup> The statements of Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke and Abdul Hameed as given in the court of Captain Douglas, District Magistrate of Gurdaspur, although essentially the same as given in the court of the District Magistrate of Amritsar, were embellished, and in the case of Abdul Hameed there were some contradictions as well.

**Statement of the plaintiff**

The hearings in the case commenced on August 10, 1897. On the first day, only the statement of Dr. Clarke could be recorded, as it was very lengthy. The crux of the statement was the same as the one he had given in Amritsar although he embellished it with some more attacks on Islam and *Hazrat* Mirza, and included some additional false statements. He stressed two points. First, that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a danger to the British government, and second, that any prophecy Mirza Ghulam Ahmad made about Dr. Clarke, whether about his death or any other kind of loss, should also be treated as a breach of public peace. The recording of Dr.

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2 *Hazrat* Mirza's book *Kitab-ul-Bariyya* has been translated into English under the title, "An Account of Exoneration" - Translator

Clarke's statement and subsequent cross-examination continued on August 12, 1897. On August 13, 1897, a supplementary statement by Dr. Clarke was recorded. After this, a brief statement by *Hazrat* Mirza was recorded in which he stated that he had made no specific prophecy about the death of Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke.

### **Statement of Abdul Hameed**

The statement of Abdul Hameed was recorded next, on August 13, 1897. He essentially repeated the text of his statement at Amritsar; namely that Mirza sahib had sent him to kill Rev. Henry Martyn Clarke by striking him with a big rock at an opportune time, and that he had been asked to flee to Qadian after the murder. This time around, though, he embellished his statement greatly with details and explanations. After completing his statement, the Christians prevailed upon him to state in the court that he was fearful for his life because he had candidly given all the details of the plot. Dr. Clarke, therefore, told the court that he would like to keep Abdul Hameed in his custody to prevent any harm from coming to him. The court granted permission for the witness to stay with Dr. Clarke. This was a clever ruse by the Christians to ensure that Abdul Hameed stayed under their influence and did not forget his carefully tutored lessons or divulge the real facts.

On the next day of court hearing, Abdul Hameed was recalled to the witness stand and the magistrate asked him some further questions. He embellished his statements some more, and also mentioned a person named Qutubuddin who owned a store in Amritsar and was a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza. Abdul Hameed alleged that he had been told to flee after the murder to Qutubuddin who would arrange for his safe return to Qadian. He also said that Qutubuddin had told him to go and see the residence of Dr. Clarke and then he would show him the rock that he could carry to kill him.

### **Statements by plaintiff's witnesses**

The next witness on behalf of the plaintiff was Abdur Rahim. Besides other things in his statement, he stated that he had gone to Qadian to investigate Abdul Hameed and that Mirza sahib himself had told him that Abdul Hameed was a born Muslim and not a convert from Hinduism; that Abdul Hameed was a resident of Jehlum and the nephew of *Maulvi* Burhanuddin; that he had converted to Christianity in Rawalpindi but had become a Muslim again and had now left Qadian about eight days back. For the rest, Abdur Rahim repeated the story that these people had made

up, and that had been recorded in Dr. Clarke's statement earlier. Prem Das followed Abdur Rahim to the witness stand and repeated the same story.

### **Statements by defense witnesses**

Two defense witnesses followed. *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din was the first of them. He narrated all the events that were stated at the start of this chapter; namely, that Abdul Hameed had come to Qadian, stayed there, and had been treated for gonorrhea by him; that Abdul Hameed wanted to take the pledge into Ahmadiyyat but *Hazrat* Mirza refused to accept his pledge; that when he came for the second time, *Hazrat* Mirza ordered him out of Qadain, and so forth.

Sheikh Rahmatullah, a resident of Gujrat, took the stand next. He, too, recounted the history of Abdul Hameed in detail as best as he knew it. He also stated that there was no bathroom in Qadian of the description that Abdul Hameed had given where *Hazrat* Mirza had allegedly asked him to commit the murder.

### ***Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain's evidence and his disgrace**

Next *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain gave his evidence. Unfortunately, this Muslim cleric had come to give evidence against *Hazrat* Mirza in support of the Christians. As if the shame of providing false evidence to further the Christian cause was not disgraceful enough, his jealousy of *Hazrat* Mirza brought him further disgrace. This is how the events unfolded:

When *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain entered the court to give evidence, he expected to see *Hazrat* Mirza handcuffed and standing in the dock for the accused. Instead, he saw that Captain Douglas, the District Magistrate had provided him with a chair on which he was seated comfortably. It was another example of God's grace on *Hazrat* Mirza that Captain Douglas always offered *Hazrat* Mirza a chair with great deference whenever he appeared in court. When *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi saw *Hazrat* Mirza sitting with great dignity on a chair, the fire of jealousy consumed him. Instead of giving evidence, he asked the presiding officer for a chair. The District Magistrate told him: "You cannot be given a chair. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib is from the aristocracy; his father was also entitled to a chair and so I have given him a chair. I cannot give you a chair." *Maulvi* Batalvi was not satisfied and tried to respond but the District Magistrate lost patience with him, and gave him such a dressing down that he began to tremble. This put the question of the chair out of his mind and he began to give evidence. The essence of his evidence was that Mirza was a trouble-maker who instigated fights between Christians and



*Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian  
(Photo courtesy AAIIIL.org).*



Muslims; if Dr. Clarke died, his reputation among his disciples would be enhanced; Mirza was not a Muslim but an atheist. In short, his statement was so absurd and nonsensical that the District Magistrate stopped him before he had finished and recorded a note under it stating: “The witness has enmity with Mirza sahib as a result of which he has done his very best to give testimony against him. There is therefore no need to record his evidence any more.”<sup>3</sup>

### Other statements

After *Maulvi* Batalvi’s evidence, Par Bhadial, a Hindu owner of an Indian confectionary store in Qadian, came to give evidence. Although appearing for the plaintiff, he admitted that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib was an aristocrat of Qadian and was respected by Hindus. The statements of other witnesses that had been listed were then recorded. A discussion then began on the written documents that had been submitted into evidence. It was focused on some passages taken from the debate between *Hazrat* Mirza and Abdullah Atham that were alleged to be incriminatory. Since these passages were in Urdu, it was proposed to appoint a commission to translate these passages into English so that the full import of their meaning may become clear to the court. After discussion, Lala Taluk Chand, the *tehsildar* (a land revenue officer) of Pathankot, was appointed to translate.

### The third Divine sign – God influences the magistrate’s thinking

The court was moving to Gurdaspur the next day, and it was decided that the judgment would be announced there on August 20. Raja Ghulam Haider, who was Court Reader to the District Magistrate, accompanied Captain Douglas to Gurdaspur. He narrated an interesting incident that took place enroute:

When we reached the Batala railway station, the train was late. The Deputy Commissioner was restlessly strolling back and forth on the platform. Seeing him in this anxious mood, I plucked up my courage to comment: “Sir, you appear to be very anxious today.” He replied: “I am very perplexed by this case. Wherever I turn, I see Mirza sahib and he keeps telling me: ‘Justice is a distinctive trait of your nation; don’t let go of it.’ Apart from this, I suspect malice and enmity in this plaint. I do not know what I can do to

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3 A rather lengthy footnote is given here in the original Urdu text. Because of its length, the footnote has been added as an appendix to this chapter.

reveal the real situation.” I suggested to him that if Abdul Hameed was taken from the custody of the Christians and questioned alone, he might reveal the truth. The Deputy Commissioner liked my suggestion and forthwith went to the railway office and wrote some instructions on a form for the Superintendent of Police. I did not read those instructions but in all probability they were: “Take Abdul Hameed in your custody immediately and try to ascertain the truth from him.” He ordered me to translate the passages under dispute myself and to give the translation to him because he did not like Taluk Chand for the job. I took the help of Chaudry Sardar Khan, Extra Assistant Commissioner, and completed the translation in less than a day. When I presented the translation to the Deputy Commissioner, he read it and remarked: “This is really enlightening.” After we had reached Gurdaspur, the Deputy Commissioner’s orderly came to me one morning with the message that he desired my presence. When I reached his office, I learned that the Superintendent of Police, Lemarchand, had arrived the previous night and brought with him Abdul Hameed and a detailed statement by him that required attestation by the Deputy Commissioner.

### **The statement of the Superintendent of Police**

Accordingly, Abdul Hameed recorded a new statement in court on August 20, but before reproducing it, it would be appropriate to first give the Police Superintendent’s court statement:

On the 13th the District Magistrate told me that he was not completely satisfied with Abdul Hameed’s statement and it was necessary to enquire further. Before Dr. Clarke left, I enquired from him as to how I could call Abdul Hameed. He gave me the address of *Munshi* Nihal Chand and said that I should write to him to call the man. On the 14th, Muhammad Bakhsh, Deputy Inspector, Batala, returned to Batala from Masanian and I sent him to Nihal Chand with a letter. When the Deputy Inspector brought Abdul Hameed, I was very busy. I ordered Muhammad Bakhsh, Deputy Inspector, to keep the boy in his supervision outside under the tree. I also ordered Inspector Jalaluddin to guard him. I know that both these officers are certainly not followers of Mirza sahib of Qadian. When I finished my work I called Abdul Hameed. I could see where they were sitting under the tree. It was after about two hours

that I called Abdul Hameed. The two officers brought him to me. Before bringing Abdul Hameed, the Inspector had come to ask: "If you are not free, Abdul Hameed may be sent back to Anarkali, because he wants to go, and is not disclosing the truth of the case." Then I said: "Bring him before me." When he came, he told the same story as he had deposed earlier about Mirza sahib sending him to Amritsar for the murder of Dr. Clarke. I wrote two pages and said to him: "I want to know only the truth. Why are you wasting my time for nothing?" As I said this, Abdul Hameed fell on my feet and burst into tears. He seemed to be very repentant and said: "I shall now state what truly happened." Then in my presence he made the statement which I wrote word for word as he spoke, and which is before the court. Then I sent a telegram to the Deputy Commissioner and brought the witness (Abdul Hameed) to Gurdaspur. Ever since the statement was written, Abdul Hameed lives in my compound, and comes and goes as he likes. This morning, Abdul Hameed said to me: "A man, Abdul Ghani, has told me that I should again give the same testimony as the first testimony, else I would be arrested." My servants had seen that man. When Abdul Hameed came to tell me, it was found that Abdul Ghani had left the compound. I inquired from Dr. Grey, and he wrote me a letter, which is submitted as an exhibit.

### **Abdul Hameed's true statement**

Below is the final statement by Abdul Hameed that totally changed the course of the suit, by the Grace of God, and fully exposed the deception of the clergymen. This was the testimony that, in the words of the Christian clergy: "Crushed the head of the Satan," and made the truth triumph. The testimony follows:

*English translation of the statement by Abdul Hameed, on the basis of the statement made by Abdul Hameed, before the District Superintendent of Police. Abdul Hameed was again called to testify as a Government witness. His statement was recorded again.*

Statement of witness Abdul Hameed on solemn affirmation, 20th of August, 1897, on the request of the court:

"I had made a statement at Batala before the Police Captain. The station house officer (SHO) of the police station took me to the

Captain. I do not know his name. At that time, I was at Anarkali (Batala). We were three persons in the carriage – the SHO, the driver and myself. At that time, I was in the custody of the Christian, Waris Din, Bhagat Prem Das, and two police constables. The SHO had taken me straight to the Captain. First of all I had gone to Nur-ud-Din, the Christian, at Hall Gate, Amritsar. After coming from Qadian, the deponent had stayed for two days at Ghulam Mustafa Printing Press. I had stayed there in connection with service at the printing press. But no work was available there. Then I went to Nur-ud-Din at Amritsar. Nur-ud-Din had given me a letter addressed to the Rev. Grey. I had gone to Nur-ud-Din as a seeker of Christianity. I had certainly not gone to Qutbuddin. My earlier statement where I had said that I had gone to him was not true. The deponent is not even acquainted with him. I had submitted to Rev. Grey to make me a Christian. He sent me back to Nur-ud-Din and said: “Bear your own expense, then we shall teach you Christianity.” I accepted this condition and went back to Nur-ud-Din. He said to me: “Go to Dr. Clarke. He will give you food, and also teach you Christianity.”

I went to Doctor sahib and told him that I had become a Muslim from a Hindu. I had said this to Nur-ud-Din also. Also I said that I had come from Qadian. Doctor sahib said: “All right. I shall find out.” I said: “Find out after I am baptized.” Then Doctor sahib sent me to the Hospital. The Christian Abdur Rahim was there. He inquired from me. I told him also that I had come from Qadian. The second or third day, he took me to Doctor sahib’s residence. Doctor sahib had called me. Doctor sahib said: “*Maulvi* Abdur Rahim says that you have come to commit murder.” I said: “No.” Doctor sahib said: “He is a child. How can he do such a thing?” Then I was sent to Beas. Abdur Rahim said this to me two or three times: “I have come to know for what purpose you have come.” I said: “I have come only to become a Christian, and not for any other purpose.” Then I went to Beas.

After two days, Abdur Rahim came there. He came at 4 o’clock in the day. He met me at the hospital where I was studying. He said to me: “Tell me why you have come, for we have found out. Tell the truth or we shall hand you over to the Captain of Police.” I said, “I have come to become a Christian. There is no other pur-

pose.” He said, “You have come to commit murder,” but he did not say to murder whom. Then he went away. On the second or third day, Doctor sahib came along with Yusuf Khan and another oldish man. Doctor sahib photographed me and went to Amritsar. At that time other servants were also photographed. Till that time, Doctor sahib did not mention anything to me.

Two days later, came a telegram that Doctor Sahib has called me to Amritsar. A snake was killed; Bhagat Prem Das had killed it. He said to me: “Take this dead snake with you. Show it to sahib.” From the railway station, Muhammad Yusuf took me to the residence and I was photographed there. It came out to be defective. Then Doctor sahib sent me to the market along with Muhammad Yusuf and I was photographed there. Then I went to the market to eat. After eating, Muhammad Yusuf took me to the residence. The shop was in the same market where Yusuf was. Yusuf paid for the food. Then I went to the residence, from where I was sent to Beas. Before going to Beas, I had been sent to the hospital and from there I had been sent alone to carry papers to the station. Abdur Rahim was there. He said: “Tell the truth about what you have come for. I have found out. Otherwise you will be arrested.” After this, I was photographed and went to the residence. Then Yusuf bought me the ticket and I went to Beas.

After two days, Doctor sahib, Abdur Rahim, Waris Din, Bhagat Prem Das and another Christian, a young man, came there. In front of all of them, Waris Din and Abdur Rahim said to me: “Now say what you have come for.” I said, “I have come to become a Christian.” They said: “You have been sent by Mirza.” I said: “No, he has not said anything to me.” Abdur Rahim was sitting besides me. He said to me: “Say that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has sent you to kill Dr. Clarke with a stone.” He showed me my photograph and said: “You will be caught wherever you go, or else say this.” I said as he had asked me to say. Then Doctor sahib and others said: “Give us this in writing.” I wrote it out. I wrote: “cause harm,” but Abdur Rahim said: “Write also the word *kill*.” He whispered it in my ear. He was sitting side by side with me. I wrote the confession twice. The first time I wrote only the word “harm.” When I was writing the second time, then according to what he had said I also wrote the word “kill.” Then when I was signing they called the

postmaster etc. They asked me (if I was giving this statement of my free will). Out of fear, I said: "Yes, I am writing this of my own free will." When I wrote it out, the Doctor sahib and others said: "Good, our heart's desire has been fulfilled."

Then Doctor sahib and the others brought me to Amritsar by the 6 o'clock train and took me to the residence. Waris Din, Abdur Rahim and Bhagat Prem Das were accompanying us. In addition to Abdur Rahim, on the day I wrote the confession, Bhagat Prem Das and Waris Din also were saying to me, "Say it like this. Get Mirza entangled. No harm will come to you because Doctor sahib has pardoned you." They took me to Sultan Vind at night. I was kept at the house of Doctor Khairuddin. They kept tutoring me: "You say this, that Mirza has sent you to kill the Doctor with a stone." Out of fear I said: "This is what I will say." At night, I was very restless and sleepless because I was being asked to tell a lie. In the morning, they brought me to the residence in a carriage and kept saying: "No harm will come to you. Make that statement." I gave the testimony in the presence of the Deputy Commissioner. I had given my name as Ralya Ram myself. There was a man with Nur-ud-Din, Hindu or Muslim. On his behest, I had said: "He converts people to Christianity." When I went to Doctor sahib first of all, I had not said that I had been sent by Mirza sahib. My address as Khajoori Darwaza was also given by me myself. I had done these things because previously I was with the Scotch Mission Gujrat, and had been turned out because of bad conduct. For this reason, I pretended to be a Hindu, so that my earlier history not be known. I had definitely written a letter to *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din from Beas saying that I liked the Christian religion. Waris Din, Bhagat Prem Das and Abdur Rahim had said to me, "You say about this letter that Mirza sahib and *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din are one and the same. Hence, I had written him a letter so that they are kept informed of my news." Abdur Rahim, Prem Das and Waris Din had taught me in Anarkali to say that I had left after abusing Mirza sahib. There had surely been an altercation between me and two of the men of Mirza sahib on account of their admonition, but I did not at all abuse Mirza sahib. I have no knowledge at all of the two persons who have been stated to have been seen at Beas. At Sultan Vind, Abdur Rahim and others had said to me: "You say that your intention to commit murder had changed on seeing Doctor sahib."

After my testimony was over, I was taken to and shut up in the residence at Amritsar. Abdur Rahim, Waris Din and Prem Das used to say: "Some man of Mirza sahib will kill you." Two sweepers had been shut up in the house along with me. They also kept tutoring me. As for Qutubuddin, I had been asked by Waris Din, Abdur Rahim and Prem Das to mention his name. The lawyer (Lala Ram Bhaj) had asked me in Anarkali: "Did you have an accomplice or not? Until someone else is not involved, you are not a bird to have killed and flown away. The court will not believe." On this, Waris Din and others instructed me about the involvement of Qutubuddin. I did not give to the lawyer the address of Qutubuddin. Prem Das had written on my hand Karmon Deorhi and the address of Qutubuddin, saying: "remember this when you give testimony." He had written it in pencil. It was Waris Din's pencil, the same pencil that is just now in the lawyer's hand. With the very same it had been written. (Note: Admitted that the pencil belonged to Waris Din.) There were many other pencils in the school. Waris Din and others used to describe Qutubuddin's features. But I do not know him at all. They had mentioned to me Qutubuddin's features etc. at night. I did not mention the features etc. to the lawyer.

On being instructed by Bhagat Prem Das, Waris Din and Abdur Rahim, I had said that I used to press Mirza sahib. I had never been to the house of Mirza sahib. I had seen him only once, that was in the mosque. Only on these people's instigation, I have made all the statement. Only on their instigation, I had stated that I, the deponent, had slept in the Khairuddin mosque, Amritsar. This was also taught to me at Batala. They have been making me write the first testimony falsely, by intimidation. When the SHO had gone to call, he was inside. Outside, Waris Din said to me: "Be careful, do not alter your first statement. The Doctor sahib has promised you pardon." There were two Sikh policemen. They had also said to me: "Be careful, do not change the testimony." A teacher Nihal Chand had also said the same. This morning, Abdul Ghani, the Christian, came to me and said: "Shaikh Waris Din and Yusuf say that if you give the earlier testimony they will get you pardon from Doctor sahib and you will remain safe." I had informed the Captain about this affair. The sahib was taking a bath. The cook, the sweeper etc. all those in the enclosure, know that they had seen him. I have never seen any room of Mirza sahib, nor am I aware

of the bathroom. Only on the tutoring of these people, I had mentioned a room adjacent to the upper portion of the mosque. I had been making all the statements out of fear. Christian Nur-ud-Din had said to me: “You will not be able to get on with me. Go to Doctor sahib.” Hence, I had gone to Doctor sahib. Otherwise, I had no prior acquaintance with him. Abdur Rahim had told me the substance of the confession and I had written it. He had also told me the words. They had taken from me my earlier writing and torn it up. The statement that I have given now is entirely correct and true. The first statement was given out of fear and persuasion. The statement that I have made now is of my own accord. I have not done so on anyone’s persuasion or any inducement.

This was followed by the lawyer’s cross-examination, which it is not necessary to reproduce here. Suffice it to say that as the cross-examination proceeded, the facts became clearer and clearer and the lies of the Christian clergy unraveled. It became quite clear to the court that the whole suit was based on fabrication and lies. After Abdul Hameed’s statement, the Christian witnesses were recalled and cross-examined further. This further exposed their lies and made the truth crystal clear.

#### **The fourth Divine sign – the District Magistrate’s judgment and *Hazrat Mirza*’s exoneration**

On August 23, 1897, the District Magistrate, Captain Douglas, announced his judgment in which he exonerated *Hazrat Mirza* of all charges. This totally deflated the opposition that had gathered in a festive atmosphere on the day of the judgment in large numbers outside the court expecting to see Mirza Ghulam Ahmad led to jail in handcuffs. There were some who were even expecting that the involvement of the European clergy would result in the suit being committed to the Session Court for a trial of attempted murder and subsequent sentence of hanging or exile for Mirza. When they heard that *Hazrat Mirza* had been exonerated, their faces drooped from sadness and they quickly disappeared from the court premises. The judgment of the District Magistrate was very lengthy; *Hazrat Mirza* has included it in his book *Kital-ul-Bariyya* and those interested in reading the full text can find it there.

#### **Reasons for the exoneration**

The reasons that the District Magistrate gave for exonerating *Hazrat Mirza* were many and were discussed in great detail in his judgment. Only



a few of those reasons are paraphrased here:

1. Abdul Hameed was not daring enough or responsible enough for such a task. He was an overgrown youth lacking in courage, and totally unfit for a daring deed like murder.
2. He stayed with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib for just two weeks and this period was insufficient for enough familiarity to be developed to trust a person with a sensitive job like murder.
3. The manner of murder that Abdul Hameed had described was crude and stupid, and could never have been successfully executed. Dr. Clarke could easily have disproved Abdul Hameed's statement that he was a Hindu from Batala.
4. Mirza sahib himself admitted in his statement that Abdul Hameed had stayed in Qadian for two weeks. If Mirza sahib had been a party to this conspiracy, he would have never made such an admission and put himself in jeopardy.
5. It was proven that the young man first went to Dr. Grey in Amritsar. He would have stayed with him if Dr. Grey had promised him food and lodging. If, in fact, he had been sent to Dr. Clarke, then there was no explanation why he went to Mr. Grey, a Christian of the American Mission. It had become clear that he was given the address of Dr. Clarke just by chance.
6. If Abdul Hameed had come from Qadian to commit murder, he should have kept the name of Qadian a secret. His declaration that he was a Hindu from Batala had no similarity with the murderer of Lekhram. This action was motivated merely by the desire to hide his expulsion from the Christian Mission at Gujrat on grounds of bad conduct.
7. If the statement of Abdul Hameed made at Beas was true, then there was no reason why he withheld details after having admitted the important fact that he had come to kill Dr. Martyn Clarke. It was clear that many details were made known at a time when the young man was under the care of Waris Din, Prem Das and Abdur Rahim at Batala.

Consequently, Abdur Rahim, Waris Din and Prem Das were accountable for the first story and all of them had probably been misleading him. Abdul Hameed's statement before the District Magistrate of Gurdaspur was different from the statement before the District Magistrate of Amritsar. Additionally, his manner of deposing evidence did not instill any confidence in his veracity. It was strange that, as long as he remained with these employees of the mission in Batala, his statement continued to grow longer and provided more and more details. It was apparent from this that he was either being tutored or that he knew more than he had revealed so far. For this reason, the District Superintendent of Police was directed by the District Magistrate to take Abdul Hameed out of the mission compound, place him in police custody and then to take his statement. The Superintendent of Police took him out from the custody of the mission. When the Superintendent of Police started taking Abdul Hameed's statement, Abdul Hameed first gave his original testimony. After writing two pages, the Superintendent of Police said to him: "Do not waste my time by lying, we need to have the truth." Abdul Hameed fell down at the feet of the Superintendent of Police, broke down and began to cry. He said that he had been lying in this suit as a result of a conspiracy by Abdur Rahim, Waris Din and Prem Das, employees of the mission, in whose custody he had been. He also revealed that he had been closely guarded for several days, had been in great distress and had contemplated committing suicide. The Superintendent of Police neither threatened him nor offered him any kind of amnesty.<sup>4</sup> It was true that the demeanor and condition of the young man indicated that he had remained in distress and difficulty. In his statement of August 20, he stated very clearly that Mirza sahib had not sent him nor did he have any connection with him. His evidence against Mirza sahib was the result of a conspiracy by the Christians Abdur Rahim, Waris Din and Prem Das, and was given under their pressure. The reason for embellishing the statements was that

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4 Abdul Hameed was successfully prosecuted by the Government for perjury and convicted. Even during this trial, he maintained that his first statement was false; it was made up by the Christians and was given under pressure; Mirza sahib had categorically given him no orders to kill anybody.

he was tutored every evening to make up any shortcomings found in the evidence tendered during the day.

8. Abdul Hameed also stated that he had not heard the name of nor did he recognize Mirza sahib's disciple who was supposed to provide him with refuge after the murder. He had been tutored his name and address, and for fear that he may forget the address, it was written on his hand with a pencil.
9. Abdul Hameed also stated that when he first wrote down the statement against Mirza sahib, the Christians were overjoyed and said, "Now our wish has been fulfilled." (i.e. now we will trap Mirza sahib.)

These were the reasons on the basis of which Captain Douglas exonerated *Hazrat Mirza*.

### **Captain Douglas shows greater courage than Pontius Pilate**

Captain Douglas, Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur, showed greater moral courage in this suit than Pontius Pilate had under similar circumstances. The only gesture that Pilate had made regarding the innocence of the Israelite Messiah was to wash his hands in the court and declare: "I am innocent of the blood of this just person,"<sup>5</sup> but he was unable to save him from the clutches of the Jewish priests – the Pharisees and the Sadducees. But Captain Douglas courageously declared the exoneration of Mohammad's Messiah and thereby wrecked the carefully crafted plan of the Christians. This was all Allah's Grace that guided Captain Douglas to the straight path of truth. It was He who created in his heart the courage to ignore the kinship of religion for the sake of justice and equity. In so doing, Captain Douglas exonerated a person who claimed to be a Messiah and whose person was a threat to the Captain's own Christian faith.

However, he shielded his own British clergyman, Rev. Henry Martyn Clarke, and blamed Prem Das, Abdur Rahim and Waris Din for misleading Rev. Clarke. It is difficult for a reasonable man to accept this because the suit ran for several days, and during this time, Rev. Clarke and the rest of the conspirators were in constant discussion in furtherance of their conspiracy. Dr. Clarke himself photographed Abdul Hameed to cow him into joining the conspiracy. How can it be accepted then that Dr. Clarke was bliss-

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5 Matthew: 27:24

fully unaware of what was going on? Facts do not show him to be that innocent. He was so consumed by the desire to entrap *Hazrat* Mirza that he personally invited Raja Ghulam Haider Khan, Reader of the District Magistrate, to help him in “Crushing the head of Satan.”<sup>6</sup> He purchased from his own pocket the train ticket for *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi to be a witness for the plaintiff, knowing fully well his hatred of *Hazrat* Mirza. Abdul Hameed received daily tutoring in the compound of Rev. Clarke’s residence while Rev. Clarke was present there; he sat in the court and listened to the burgeoning details of his star witness’s statement even as pencil marks on Abdul Hameed’s palms told the tale of tutoring; he heard and relished the false testimony of his other witnesses. In spite of all this, he was declared totally without fault. The practical implication of which was that three Indian Christians had completely fooled him. Be that as it may, Dr. Clarke had to return back to Amritsar a humiliated, disappointed and failed man. The District Magistrate told *Hazrat* Mirza: “You can bring a suit against these Christians,” but *Hazrat* Mirza replied: “Our suit against the Christians is proceeding in the heavenly court and the heavenly court is enough for us. We do not want to pursue suits in the earthly courts.”

### **An example of *Hazrat* Mirza’s righteousness**

The reader has perused a tale of lies, fabrications and false accusations by the Christian clergy and their followers. In contrast, it is worthwhile to examine the righteousness and honesty of *Hazrat* Mirza in this suit. *Maulvi* Fazal Din, a famous lawyer of Lahore, generally represented *Hazrat* Mirza in court proceedings. In the Henry Martyn Clarke case, too, *Hazrat* Mirza took him as his counsel. The following incident is taken from a meeting during which Lala Deena Nath, editor of the newspapers *Hindustan* and *Desh*, narrated the following incident to Sheikh Yaqub Ali Torab, editor of *Al-Hakam* Lahore:<sup>7</sup>

I (Lala Deena Nath) consider Mirza sahib a great saint and spiritually a very elevated person...this belief is the result of an incident. Some of my friends used to meet in the evening at the residence of *Hakim* Ghulam Nabi, doctor of oriental medicine, and I too would frequently join them. One day, some friends were gathered there and incidentally the talk turned to Mirza sahib. One

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6 See appendix to this chapter for the full story from which this reference is taken.

7 *Al-Hakam*, November 14, 1934.

person began to criticize him in words that are not used in civilized and polite conversation.

On hearing this, *Maulvi* Fazal Din sahib (deceased) became very passionate, and in an emotional outburst said: "I am not a disciple of Mirza sahib. I do not believe in his claim for whatever reason, but I acknowledge his great personality and moral perfection. I am a lawyer and my clients come from all walks of life and I have seen thousands of others through my interaction with other lawyers. Many righteous persons, about whom one could not even begin to suspect that they would act out of pretense or hypocrisy, have no qualms about changing their statements under legal advise, if the situation so dictates, while pursuing a suit. In my entire life, I have only seen Mirza sahib who has never budged from the position of truth. I was his counsel in one case (the reference is to the suit filed by Henry Martyn Clarke) and I prepared and submitted a legal brief to him. He read it and said: "There is falsehood in it." I replied: "The statement of the accused is not under oath and he is allowed by law to state whatever he pleases." On this, he said: "The law has allowed him to say what he likes, but God, the Most High, has not given him permission to lie; nor is it the intent of the law. I will never be persuaded to make a statement that is against the facts. I will present the affair correctly as it is." *Maulvi* sahib told him, "You are purposely putting yourself in jeopardy." He replied: "Not *purposely putting into jeopardy* means displeasing my God by giving a legal statement to get an unwarranted advantage. This I cannot do, no matter what." *Maulvi* Fazal Din said that Mirza sahib made this statement with such emotion that his face had a strange grandeur and passion. On hearing this, *Maulvi* Fazal Din said: "In that case, you will not be able to derive any benefit from my legal service." Mirza sahib replied: "Not for a moment have I considered that your legal service will benefit me or for that matter the effort of anybody else. Nor do I think that anybody's opposition will destroy me. My trust is in my God Who is aware of what is in my heart. I have engaged you as a counsel because it is incumbent to make full use of physical means, and since I know that you are conscientious in your work, I have engaged you."

*Maulvi* Fazal Din tried once more: "My advice is that we file my brief," but *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "No. Without regard to conse-

quences or results, file the statement that I will write without changing a single word. I tell you with full confidence that it will be more efficacious than your legal brief, and the consequence that you are afraid of will not occur. God willing, the result will be good. Even if we assume that the result will not be good in the eyes of the world, i.e. I get convicted, I am not concerned about it because I will be happy then that I did not disobey my Lord.”...

Thus, *Maulvi* Fazal Din defended Mirza sahib with great passion and sincerity. He stated that Mirza sahib wrote his own statement in his free-flowing style and, just as he had said, he was exonerated on the basis of that very statement. Strange are the ways of the Lord! By detailing Hazrat Mirza’s righteousness, and expounding his courage and bravery to bear any difficulty in the way of righteousness, *Maulvi* Fazal Din captivated and exhilarated his audience. Some of those present asked: “Why don’t you become his disciple then?” He replied: “This is my personal business and you have no right to ask about it. I consider him to be perfectly righteous and I have great respect for him...”

This was the true face of righteousness and honesty. The Christians and their clergy had accused *Hazrat* Mirza of conspiracy to murder and were desirous of seeing him incarcerated. *Hazrat* Mirza’s life, his comfort, his fame and his honor were all in grave jeopardy but he would not accept an iota of falsehood nor its euphuism ‘legal strategizing’ to save all of this. For the sake of the truth, and for the pleasure of God, he was willing to bear any difficulty, but falsehood was not acceptable under any circumstance. Can such a righteous and honest person falsely attribute his claims to God?

### **Fifth Divine sign – the revelation ‘in it is something’ fulfilled**

The revelation that had informed *Hazrat* Mirza ahead of time about his exoneration had also stated: “in it is something,” i.e. there will be some qualification to the exoneration. That ‘something’ was an admonishment in the last part of the District Magistrate’s judgment asking him not to publish books that would instigate other segments of the society. This admonishment was really the result of ignorance on part of the District Magistrate about the real facts. The inflammatory statements written by the Christian clergy - which they continue to write to this day about the beloved leader of the Muslims, the Holy Prophet, and about the Quran - were not before him. Otherwise, he would have seen that *Hazrat* Mirza’s writings, which

were in response to the abuses, vilification and the filthy statements of the Christian clergy, were not even a drop in front of an ocean.

### **Publication of the announcement ‘A Necessary Disclosure’**

*Hazrat Mirza* disliked the use of harsh language in religious discussions. If ever he adopted a harsh tone, it was always by way of retaliation and even then he would not diverge from the facts. He very much desired that the Christian clergy and the *Arya* Hindus should abandon their incriminatory style of writing. For this purpose, he published an announcement on September 20, 1897, titled, “An Announcement to Make a Necessary Disclosure,” in which he thanked the District Magistrate of Gurdaspur for his equitable judgment and responded to the accusation made by Rev. Clarke in his testimony that, “This person is a danger to the British government.” *Hazrat Mirza* exonerated himself of the charge and mentioned the loyalty of his family and the peaceful and law-abiding nature of his party. He also wrote:

If we are stopped even from writing something in response to the Christian clergy, then we expect that the Government would take adequate action against those who attack us, or our Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, or the Quran, or Islam in a defamatory and abusive manner.

In addition, Christians and *Arya* Hindus were admonished in the following words:

We attempted to forgo the use of harsh language even as retaliation because it has been our intention since a long time that all parties should not use harsh language during discussions. It is because of this intention that we have obtained signatures of Muslims on a petition that we intend to send shortly to the Governor General. Accordingly, religious opponents are informed through this notice that, after this decision, they too should change their behavior in discussions, and in the future should definitely not use harsh and inflammatory words and defamatory language in their newspapers and magazines. If even now, after the publication of this notice, they do not abandon their former ways, then they should remember that we collectively and individually reserve the right to seek redress through the court...and it will be the responsibility of the court to provide remedy in the interest of maintaining peace.

In addition, *Hazrat* Mirza advised his followers not to use harsh language in any of their religious arguments either.

**The Viceroy is sent a petition to institute reforms in the conduct of religious disputes**

*Hazrat* Mirza was cognizant that the use of coarse language had progressively increased in religious debates for some time. In particular, *Arya* Hindus and Christians had exceeded all bounds in abusing and defaming the Holy Prophet. As he had indicated in his announcement, "A Necessary Disclosure," *Hazrat* Mirza prepared a petition in September 1897, which was signed by a large number of Muslims, and sent to the Viceroy of India, Lord Elgin. It was also published and distributed to the public. In this petition, *Hazrat* Mirza pointed out that religious disputes were a major cause of discord and dissension in the Indian society. The resulting bitterness was responsible not only for sectarian violence and disturbance of peace, but also provided an opportunity to some miscreants to sow sedition against the Government in the smoke screen of these issues. He suggested that the statute regarding sedition that had been passed earlier that year should be amended to include the use of intemperate language in religious discourses as an act of sedition. The petition made three suggestions to implement this:

1. A statute should be enacted that allowed followers of all religions to state the merits of their religion, but prevented them from attacking any other religion. Such a statute would neither restrict religious liberties nor would it be discriminatory to any religion. There was no reason why any religious denomination would be unhappy on account of being debarred from attacking other religions.
2. If the above method was not acceptable, then at the very least, people should be stopped from attacking another religion on issues that they themselves could be attacked on, i.e. they should not state things against a religion that were also present in their religion.
3. If the above methods were not acceptable, then the Government, in consultation with the representatives of every religion, should prepare a list of authentic and universally accepted books of each religion and enact a statute that prohibited attacks on a reli-



gion on the basis of material outside their accepted books. When objections were based on mere ideas, or on false traditions that were not accepted by the followers of a religion, their use could only result in hatred and enmity and nothing else.

Unfortunately, the Government did not pay any attention to this petition at that time. However, when bitter and tormenting attacks propelled sectarian tensions and violence beyond all limits, the Government finally acted in 1908, and passed legislation against those responsible for inciting sectarian hatred. However, by then the train had left the station and the damage had been done.

### **Publication of *Kitab-ul-Bariyya* (The Book of Exoneration)**

During this period, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote *Kitab-ul-Bariyya*, published on January 24, 1898. The book contained a detailed account of the above-mentioned case of Rev. Henry Martyn Clarke. *Hazrat* Mirza reproduced in it a small sample of the abusive lies that the Christian clergy had written from time to time about the Holy Prophet. These abusive writings were so numerous, so filthy and so dirty that it was impossible for a Muslim to read them without making his blood boil. Comparing *Hazrat* Mirza's writings with those of the Christian critics, a just person would surely come to the conclusion that whatever *Hazrat* Mirza wrote against the Christian clergy was only retaliatory, and by comparison very mild. *Hazrat* Mirza explained this issue with great clarity in this book. He wrote: "When the literature of the Christian clergy is so full of filthy attacks, abuses and defamatory statements against the Holy Prophet, the Quran and Islam, it makes no sense to admonish us merely because our response, which is based on facts, shows some harshness of language that is a natural result of a vexatious heart. Why is the clergy not stopped?"

*Hazrat* Mirza again drew the attention of the Government towards the excesses of the Christian clergy. Their rudeness and filthy abuses directed at the Holy Prophet had exceeded all bounds and the patience of Muslims had run out. *Hazrat* Mirza stated that when he wrote something in retaliation, it was factually based on the New Testament and yet he was the one who was accused of harsh words. The Christian clerics were mindful of small blemishes on other people's faces but were unmindful of the scars on their countenance. He said he had no words to describe the heart-renting pain and vexation that he had to suffer from the pens and speeches of the Christian clergy and the *Arya* Hindus who were following their lead. He urged the Government to take effective steps to control this dirty mentality.

## APPENDIX

(Refers to footnote 3 of this chapter)

Raja Ghulam Haider was the Reader in the court of Captain Douglas, District Magistrate of Gurdaspur, at the time of the Rev. Henry Martyn Clarke case. Subsequently, he retired as a *Tehsildar* and settled in Rawalpindi. When he was terminally ill, he wrote the following narration and sent it to the author of this book. He was not a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza and therefore had no reason to misrepresent the facts. His narration follows:

I was the reader of the Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur at the time of the Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke case. I had gone on leave for five or six days to my home in Rawalpindi. On my way back, when I reached Amritsar and was waiting in a second-class coach for the train to leave, two Europeans entered the coach. One of them was Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke himself and the other was Mr. Clarke, the lawyer. After a little while, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi also joined us and sat down on the seat besides me. I knew Dr. Clarke from the days when I was working in Sialkot, and I also knew *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib well. As a result, we started conversing freely. I learned that *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib Batalvi and Dr. Clarke were traveling together and that Dr. Clarke had purchased *Maulvi* Batalvi's ticket. Because Dr. Clarke had known me when I was a court Reader in Sialkot, he enquired where I was working now. I replied that I was now the Reader of the Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur. He said: "Oh! Then you will be very useful in crushing the head of Satan." Because I knew the three gentlemen well, I understood at once what Dr. Clarke was hinting at, but pretended not to understand. I replied in a noncommittal fashion: "Certainly it is the duty of every pious person to crush the head of Satan, but I do not understand what you are trying to imply." Then Dr. Clarke mentioned Mirza sahib's name and said: "He is a big Satan and this *Maulvi* sahib and I are working to crush the Satan's head. Promise that you will help us." I did not want to extend this conversation any further and replied: "I know that you and Mirza sahib Qadiani have a contention that is before the court. Therefore, you must excuse me from discussing this matter further. The process will automatically crush the head of whoever is the Satan." I do not remember if there was any further conversa-

tion after this. I returned to Batala because the Deputy Commissioner was resident there, and resumed my duty.

Next morning, when I went for a walk, I met several associates of Mirza sahib on the road through Anarkali.<sup>8</sup> The walk took us in front of the house in which Dr. Clarke was staying, and we saw *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib sitting next to Dr. Clarke at a table outside the main door. *Maulvi* Fazal Din, counsel for Mirza sahib, remarked in a tone of wonderment: "*Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib has to give testimony in the suit today and right up to this moment he is not letting go of Dr. Clarke." Abdul Hameed who was allegedly nominated by Mirza sahib for the murder of Dr. Clarke could also be seen sitting on a cot in the compound of the house. Ram Bhujdat, the *Arya* lawyer, and a few policemen were sitting around him. We also saw that some pencil marks were being made on Abdul Hameed's hands. The counsel for Mirza sahib noted this and when the hearings started, he confronted Abdul Hameed with these two facts: "Were you sitting in the compound of Dr. Clarke's residence surrounded by Ram Bhujdat and some policemen? Were they instructing you about the evidence you had to give against Mirza sahib and did they make some markings on your hands?" Abdul Hameed was at a loss for a reply. He admitted the presence of Ram Bhujdat and others, and when his palms were examined, many markings with blue and red pencils were found. God best knows the affairs for which those markings were meant to be reminders.

*Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din was called to give testimony prior to *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib Batalvi. His simplicity was impressive. His turban was loosely wrapped, his shirt was unbuttoned at the collar and the delivery of his statement was clear, straight and effective. Even the Deputy Commissioner was so impressed that he remarked: "By God! If this person was to claim that he was the Promised Messiah, I will be the first person to consider his claim seriously." *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din enquired from the court: "Am I permitted to leave the court or should I stay inside?" Captain Douglas replied: "*Maulvi* sahib, you are at liberty to go wherever you like." Next, Sheikh Rahmatullah sahib gave his testimony...*Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib Batalvi followed him.

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8 Anarkali is the name of the Christian Church and Mission in Batala.

When *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi entered the courtroom, he looked left and right but did not find a vacant chair. The first words he spoke were: "Sir! Chair." The Deputy Commissioner asked me: "Is *Maulvi* sahib entitled to a chair when called by the authorities?" I presented him with the list of persons entitled to a chair and said: "The name of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib or his respected father are not on the list, but on the occasions that he does meet Government officers, they generally give him a chair because of his status as a religious scholar and the leader of a party." At this, the Deputy Commissioner told *Maulvi* sahib: "You are not authorized to receive a chair; stand up straight and give your evidence." Then *Maulvi* sahib said: "Whenever I go before the Governor, I am asked to sit on a chair. I am the leader of the *Ahl-e Hadith*." The Deputy Commissioner reprimanded him harshly and said: "If the Governor gave you a chair to sit on unofficially, it does not mean that you will be given a chair in the court as well." When *Maulvi* sahib's testimony got underway, he accused *Hazrat* Mirza of everything a man can conceivably accuse another of. During cross-examination, *Hazrat* Mirza sahib's counsel countered, after due apology, with an aggressive interrogation that questioned *Maulvi* sahib's character. All present were amazed to see that *Hazrat* Mirza sahib got up from his chair and put his hand on the mouth of Fazal Din sahib and said: "I have neither given you instructions nor given you permission to pursue this line of interrogation. If you want to ask these questions, you can do so with the permission of the court but on your own responsibility." The Deputy Commissioner's natural curiosity was aroused and he asked me: "Do you know anything about this affair?" I replied in the negative but added: "If you desire to know about it, I can try to find out something when you break for lunch."

Accordingly, when it was time for the *zuhar* prayer, and the Deputy Commissioner rose for lunch, I asked Sheikh Rahmatullah to find out from *Hazrat* Mirza sahib about the matter being referred to in the court. *Hazrat* Mirza sahib informed Sheikh Rahmatullah with great sorrow that he had in his possession a letter from *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib's father that narrated some objectionable behavior of *Maulvi* sahib in his marital affairs. However, *Hazrat* Mirza said that: "I certainly do not want this to become a matter of public record nor do I want the Deputy Commissioner to

be influenced and form an opinion based on it.” On getting this information from Sheikh Rahmatullah, I went to the lunchroom and told the Deputy Commissioner what I had found out in the presence of Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke who was lunching with him. Dr. Clarke seemed to be very amused and laughed heartily. The Deputy Commissioner remarked: “It is in my power not to put this matter on record but I cannot help being influenced by it.”

After lunch, the cross examination of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi sahib resumed. The counsel, *Maulvi* Fazal Din sahib, asked him, “Were you sitting today with Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke sahib at his residence?” and he blatantly denied it. I was startled by this reply. The Deputy Commissioner asked me the reason for my surprise and I pointed him in the direction of Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke. He addressed the same question to Dr. Clarke and he frankly admitted: “Yes he was sitting with me and conversing about the suit.” The counsel’s next question was: “Did you recently travel from Amritsar to Batala with Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke? And did Dr. Clarke buy your ticket?” *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib again blatantly denied it. Sometimes one speaks out one’s mind spontaneously and that is what happened to me. Unwittingly I blurted out: “This is a clear lie.” The Deputy Commissioner again directed the question to Dr. Clarke, and he admitted: “*Maulvi* sahib did travel with me and I bought his ticket.” The Deputy Commissioner was astonished and at the end of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib’s testimony, he wrote the following note: “The witness has enmity with Mirza sahib as a result of which he has done his very best to give testimony against him. There is therefore no need to record his evidence any further.”

When *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib came out of the court after giving his evidence, he sat down on an easy chair on the verandah. A police constable asked him to leave because the Superintendent of Police had ordered that the witnesses should not sit there. Then he found a cloth spread out on the ground and went and sat on it. The owners of the cloth pulled out the cloth from under him with the remark: “Being a Muslim and calling yourself a leader you spoke such brazen lies; do not pollute our cloth.” Then *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din sahib got up and took his hand and said: “Come and sit with us; there is a limit to everything.”

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF *MADRASAH TALIM-UL-ISLAM* (SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION)**

### **Proposal for the establishment of a school**

A God-ordained religious leader is always fully cognizant of societal needs. Although *Hazrat* Mirza was living in an isolated village away from the economic, political and social mainstream of the country, his perception was very sharp. He sensed the growing tide of materialism and atheism, and felt concerned not only about the spiritual welfare of the present generation, but also of future generations. He, therefore, moved to establish an English-medium high school in Qadian, with curricula that embraced university-required subjects in combination with Islamic subjects. The objective was for Muslim children to learn about their Islamic heritage and the greatness of their religion, and to be fortified against the deceitful, false and dishonest attacks against Islam.

*Hazrat* Mirza issued a poster on September 15, 1897, announcing plans for the establishment of such a school in Qadian. The school would initially be an English- medium middle school but would shortly be upgraded to a high school. It was also proposed to provide boarding arrangements for the students of the school. *Hazrat* Mirza appealed for funds to put the plan into action. *Hazrat* Mirza was very keen to see this venture succeed. In his speech at the annual gathering of the members in 1897, he drew attention to this project, and asked members to enroll their children in this school so that the new generations may be protected from

the effects of materialism, be fully aware of their religion, and become true servants of Islam. He stressed that present-day Muslims should be equally cognizant of the faith and actions of the coming generations as they were of their own.

## JOURNEY TO MULTAN

### ***Hazrat Mirza summoned to give evidence***

In October 1897, *Hazrat Mirza* traveled to Multan to give evidence in a court case. *Maulvi* Rahim Baksh, private secretary to the Nawab of Bahawalpur, had sued the the newspaper *Nazim-ul-Hind*'s editor, a strong opponent of *Hazrat Mirza*, for defamation. Interestingly, the editor requested *Hazrat Mirza* to appear on his behalf as a defense witness. Earlier in the affair of the Turkish Counsel, Hussain Kami Bak, he had savagely criticized *Hazrat Mirza*, but despite this past hostility, he respected *Hazrat Mirza*'s righteousness and honesty, and asked him to appear in the court on his behalf. *Hazrat Mirza* willingly obliged and gave the court his honest opinion.

Some companions accompanied *Hazrat Mirza*. Notable among them were *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din, *Maulvi* Abdul Karim, *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali and Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din. *Hazrat Mirza* had foretold some events regarding the suit and these turned out exactly as predicted, which greatly enhanced the companions' faith. In early October 1897, *Hazrat Mirza* narrated to his companions a dream in which he saw himself giving evidence before a British judge. The judge asked him for his father's name, but contrary to normal court procedure, he was not sworn in. Another dream followed on October 18, 1897, in which a police constable visited him in connection with the above-mentioned suit. Events unfolded accordingly. Shortly thereafter, a police constable came to deliver a court order summoning *Hazrat Mirza* to appear as a witness before a judge in Multan. As a consequence, he had to travel to Multan. When *Hazrat*



Mirza appeared before the court, the judge forgot to administer him the oath, and the oversight was not discovered until after the evidence had been recorded. The oath was then administered ex-post to fulfill the legal requirement.

On his way back, *Hazrat* Mirza stopped in Lahore as the guest of Sheikh Rahmatullah, proprietor of the store Bombay House. Lahore in those days was a hotbed of opposition, and ruffians would hurl abuses and jeers at him as he passed through the streets, but he remained oblivious to them and unruffled. Chaudry Muhammad Ishmael, a retired extra assistant commissioner, narrated an interesting event of this stay in Lahore as follows:

*Hazrat* Sheikh Rahmatullah's residence was located behind the old site of his Bombay House store. On the occasion of *Hazrat* Mirza's visit, the gathering in the house was the envy even of heaven. It was the winter season and *Hazrat* Mirza had taken his seat in an arched doorway of a vast room that faced the front of the house. Given the prevailing conditions, his seating was not without danger because an attack could easily come from that side, but *Hazrat* Mirza sat unperturbed even though there were no security guards.

The city's gentry and his disciples packed the room. Non-members of the *Ahmadiyya* Movement grilled him with many different questions and *Hazrat* Mirza responded to each one. Finally, criticism was voiced on behalf of the Christians that, "the historical narrations in the Quran have been taken from the Bible." It is not certain whether a Christian made this criticism or someone did it on behalf of the Christians, but the issue was important, and *Hazrat* Mirza's voice would not have carried to all in the large audience had he responded while sitting. He, therefore, stood up and gave such an enthralling speech that not only members of his Movement but also non-members relished it and applauded. I can never forget the moment when *Hazrat* Mirza, after making several arguments, said: "Hence, just like grass, hay and fodder is transformed into blood after going into the stomach of a cow and then into milk in its udder, the stories and narrations of the Old and New Testament after coming into the Quran have become a source of light and knowledge." On hearing this, the whole room erupted with cries of: "May God reward you!" and "May God

bless you!” Whenever I visit that place and see the arched doorway, the whole scene replays before my eyes and my emotions are indescribable. Had we followed the tradition of our Sikh brothers, we would have constructed a magnificent building at this site and named it “Lecture Sahib.”

## Chapter

# 94

## SOME EVENTS OF EVERYDAY LIFE

### Letters and correspondence

The time needed for correspondence was burgeoning because the work of propagation was carried out not only by publishing books and posters, but also by writing letters. An accurate count of the letters received and dispatched is difficult but it is estimated that approximately twelve thousand letters were written in 1897 to friends and opponents of the Movement. The key individuals shouldering this task were *Maulvi* Abdul Karim Sialkoti, Mirza Khuda Baksh and *Hakim* Fazal Din Bhervi. In 1897, this task was specifically assigned to *Maulvi* Abdul Karim.

### Guests

The year 1897 was also noteworthy for the large number of guests that visited Qadian compared to the previous years; their number was no less than one thousand five hundred. The guests came from all sections of the society and included adults, children, literates, scholars, respected government officers, *hafizes*, and opinion builders. Their visits fulfilled the prophecy revealed to *Hazrat* Mirza: “They will come to you from every distant corner.”

### Guesthouse and hospitality

The guesthouse where visitors stayed was a mud structure. Initially, when the number of guests was limited, *Hazrat* Mirza had the food prepared in his house; it was then brought out and everybody ate together. It was a memorable period when the disciples ate with *Hazrat* Mirza, all of

them squatting around the same dish-laden cloth spread out on the ground. From time to time, *Hazrat* Mirza forayed inside (the house) and returned with warm bread or pickles and jams, and placed them before his disciples. He was ever mindful of the needs of those eating with him, and as soon as he noticed any kind of shortage of food anywhere, he moved quickly to rectify it. Sometimes, he would pick pieces of meat from his plate and place it on the plates of the disciples. If an employee gave him a plate containing more food than in the plate of a guest, he would quietly put his plate in front of the guest and take his. In short, he boarded the disciples with great love, politeness and humility. Since he ate very little himself, much of his time was spent in looking after the others. He crafted each morsel that he ate himself by taking a small piece of bread and dipping it in a little gravy; he crumbled any leftover bread into tiny particles so that the cloth when dusted outside would provide crumbs for the birds.

When the number of guests increased, a community kitchen was inaugurated. *Hazrat* Mirza still made it a habit to eat lunch with his friends. The food came from the community kitchen as well as *Hazrat* Mirza's house, and they all ate together. The number of guests continued to rise, and at the same time, *Hazrat* Mirza's advancing age and ill health necessitated a medically controlled diet. It was no longer possible for him to eat regularly with his guests, and the community kitchen took over the exclusive responsibility for their board. He, however, appointed his special employee, Hamid Ali, as supervisor of the guesthouse, and gave him standing instructions to leave no stone unturned in looking after the guests.

## Chapter

# 95

## THE ANNUAL GATHERING OF 1897

The Annual Gathering of 1897 was held with great dignity during the Christmas vacation.

### **Publication of the newspaper *Al-Hakam***

Sheikh Yaqub Ali joined the Movement in 1892. At the time, he was the editor of a newspaper in Amritsar. In 1897, he moved to Qadian and started a newspaper named *Al-Hakam*. There was a dire need to apprise the burgeoning community about *Hazrat* Mirza's speeches and other events. The members felt this dearth acutely as well. The publication of *Al-Hakam* filled this gap to a large extent. The community benefited greatly from *Hazrat* Mirza's speeches reported in the newspaper by Sheikh Yaqub Ali. The entire proceedings of the Annual Gathering of 1897 were transcribed and published separately by Sheikh Yaqub Ali in a special issue titled "Report of the Annual Gathering of 1897." The report is worth reading to appreciate the high quality of speeches that were delivered at this Convention.

### **Details of the Annual Gathering of 1897**

The Convention started on December 25, 1897, and continued till January 1, 1898. The Convention was well attended and members came from great distances to participate. *Hazrat* Mirza made several speeches to the huge gathering exhorting them with good advice and counsel, and imparting profound knowledge and wisdom. The efficacy of his speeches in bringing about a pious change in the congregation was greatly

enhanced by his personal example of a righteous life and pious actions. If there was one objective of this convention, it was to manifest the essence of Islam through devotion to God and a display of godliness. The first speech on December 26, 1897, was a long address by *Hazrat* Mirza that was a brilliant mixture of knowledge, wisdom, exhortation and advice. *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din spoke on December 27, 1897, and his speech was also full of profound truth and wisdom.

On December 28, 1897, *Hazrat* Mirza delivered his second address that was equally as grand and profound as the first. On December 29, 1897, *Maulana* Abdul Karim Sialkoti addressed the gathering. He was a great orator. He spoke with so much passion and eloquence that he transfixed the audience and left them wonderstruck. On December 30, 1897 *Hazrat* Mirza gave his third speech, and on December 31, 1897, *Maulana* Abdul Karim delivered his second speech.

There was profound knowledge and wisdom in the addresses of these three pious persons. It is impossible to summarize their speeches here but the text is preserved in a printed form, and the reader is advised to read the full text and benefit from the spirituality and light contained therein. In addition to the speeches, the audience listened to two poems by *Maulvi* Qaimuddin Sialkoti and *Maulvi* Mubarak Ali Sialkoti in Arabic and Persian respectively, in which they praised *Hazrat* Mirza.

## **HAZRAT MIRZA OFFERS TO PAY A PENALTY IF ANYONE PROVES JESUS WILL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN**

### **A bold announcement about the descent of Jesus**

It has already been mentioned in Chapter 91 that *Hazrat* Mirza published the book *Kitab-ul-Bariyya* on January 24, 1898. In a footnote on pages 179 to 193 of this book, he discussed in great detail the belief that Jesus was physically alive in heaven and would descend at a later date. He showed that this belief contradicted the teachings of the Quran in four ways, and then discussed the meaning of the word *nuzul* (descend) as used in the *hadith* about the Promised Messiah. The new insight he gave to this debate is as follows:

In short, by adopting this belief, these people have contradicted the Quran in four ways. Then if it is asked: What is the proof that Jesus, on him be peace, has ascended to heaven with his physical body, they can neither produce any verse (of the Quran) nor show any (supporting) *hadith*. All they do is to add the word *heaven* from themselves to the word *descent* (*nuzul*) and thereby mislead the public. But it must be remembered that the word *heaven* is not to be found in any reliable, uninterrupted *hadith* report, and the word *nuzul* is used in connection with a traveler in Arabic idioms,

a traveler being called *nazil*. Similarly in our country also the same idiom is used, that a visitor to the city is asked by way of respect, where has he descended? In such talk, no one imagines that the man has descended from heaven. If you go through the books of *Hadith* of all the sects of Islam, to say nothing of an authentic report, you will not find even a fabricated report in which it is written that Jesus had gone up to heaven with his physical body and then will return to the earth at some time. If anyone can produce such a *hadith*, I am prepared to pay that person a penalty of up to twenty thousand rupees, and furthermore I shall repent and burn all my books. Let them satisfy themselves however they like.

No *hadith* was ever presented by any cleric despite the announcement of this penalty. The clerics remained ever-ready to hurl abuses and pass verdicts of apostasy, but were not willing to accept this reasonable challenge based on facts. How could they, when they had nothing concrete in their hands?



## THE PROPHECY ABOUT THE PLAGUE

The plague epidemic started in India in 1896. Infected rats on ships arriving from Hong Kong brought the disease to Bombay and it spread rapidly through the city. The Department of Health tried hard to confine the plague to Bombay but Hindu pilgrims carried it to Hardawarah, and the lines of containment had to be redrawn. It appeared that Bombay and Hardawarah were distant places and Punjab was safe, but an infected pilgrim from Hardawarah brought the disease to the village of Khatkarkalan in Julundar. The government of Punjab moved expeditiously to quarantine the village, burn items suspected of infection and disinfect the houses. For a time, it appeared that the spread of the disease had been arrested, and there were no more outbreaks during the summer and first half of the winter.

### **Prophecy regarding the spread of the plague in Punjab**

On February 6, 1898, *Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement in which he stated:

My emotions of sympathy compel me to write about another affair although I am fully cognizant that those devoid of spirituality will look upon it with laughter and jest. However, out of human sympathy, it is my duty to reveal the affair, which is as follows. Today, Saturday, February 6, 1898, I saw in a dream that God's angels were sowing black plants in different parts of Punjab. These trees

were very ugly, black colored, awe-inspiring and short. I asked some of the planters: "What kind of trees are these?" and they replied: "These are trees of the plague that is about to spread in the country." I am not sure whether they said that the disease would spread extensively during the coming winter or the one after, but the vision was terrifying. Prior to this, I had also received a revelation about the plague as follows: "Surely Allah changes not the condition of a people, until they change their own condition (13:11). He will protect this village after some distress."

After stating this prophecy, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote strongly in support of the defensive measures adopted by the Government to stop the spread of the disease. He decreed that it was permissible in Islam to leave villages and take up habitation in fresh air on open ground. This position was counter to that of most Muslim clerics who maintained that it was forbidden to leave one's village during a plague epidemic. However, *Hazrat Mirza* held that what was forbidden was to flee to other villages. This was exactly the position taken by the Government as well. It had issued an advisory to the villagers not to flee to other villages but to leave their houses and take up habitation in their own village fields. *Hazrat Mirza* also stated that the plague was a punishment from God, but was a fate that could be suspended. People should, therefore, bring about a real change in their life, repent and seek forgiveness, supplicate to God and create a real connection with Him so that He may have mercy on them and withhold this calamity.

### **Opponents scoff at the prophecy**

When this announcement was published, clerics and newspaper editors who rejected *Hazrat Mirza* and called him a liar, scoffed and jeered at his prophecy. In particular, *Paisa Akhbar*, considered to be a leading Muslim newspaper, was very abusive and accused *Hazrat Mirza* of making it a habit of frightening people. The paper predicted that *Hazrat Mirza* himself would become a victim of the plague.

### **The plague epidemic sweeps Punjab**

*Hazrat Mirza's* prophecy was fulfilled to the letter. The following winter, the plague broke out in the districts of Jullandar and Hoshiarpur and spread like wild-fire. Hindu shopkeepers then carried the disease to the districts of Gurdaspur and Sialkot, and in no time those districts were ravaged as well. Soon the situation got out of government control because of several factors. The government recommendation was for villagers to

leave their homes and take up habitation in sheds constructed in open fields by the government free of charge. However, the cold winter weather made living under sheds very uncomfortable. Secondly, the grains, brown sugar and other stored goods of those who left their houses perished as a result of negligence and carelessness or dishonesty of government functionaries. Third, the people involved were uneducated, ignorant farmers who viewed government actions with suspicion. A rumor gained ground that the government was behind the spread of the disease. Fourth, the greed of the Hindu shopkeepers proved detrimental to the efficacy of preventive measures. As soon as they learned of government plans to disinfect a village, they secretly moved their infected goods from the warehouse in that village to other villages. The result was that when one village was disinfected, plague broke out in other villages. Fifth, a common misconception about the plague vaccination was that it caused impotency and weakened the eyesight.

The combination of these factors destroyed all chances of collaboration between the government and the masses. Objections were raised about every preventive measure instituted by the government, and the resultant public non-cooperation ensured its failure. The situation deteriorated rapidly and mass protests and riots broke out; a revenue officer (*Tehsildar*) was killed, doctors were injured, and an English assistant commissioner was assaulted. Troops had to be called out from the Sialkot Cantonment and rushed to Zafarwal to assist the harassed government officers. The frustrated government decided to give up its proactive policy and just sit on the sideline. Orders were issued to government functionaries to assist those who asked for help, but to adopt a policy of non-interference with others. The result was that the plague spread through Punjab like wildfire through dry brush. There was not a single town or village spared by this calamity. Hundreds of families were wiped out, bustling villages turned into ghost villages, and for years, this punishment from God stayed in the land.

### **Convention in Qadian to check the spread of the plague**

*Hazrat Mirza* was saddened by the breakdown of collaboration between the government and the masses, which had caused a failure of all government policies to stop the spread of plague. The clerics made a bad situation worse by insisting that anyone who left the house and died would not receive salvation. This attitude increased the incidence of death among Muslims and was a matter of special concern for *Hazrat Mirza*. He published an announcement on April 22, 1898, in which he requested the government not to abandon its

proactive plague control policy because of disgust with the behavior of ignorant people, and to persist with steps necessary to control the disease. He also announced a convention in Qadian whose objectives were stated as follows:

It is advisable to hold a convention in Qadian regarding the plague instructions. Members of the Movement will be made to understand the medical benefits of the plague instructions given by the British Government and the religious injunctions that reinforce them. This announcement is being made for the said purpose and all members of the Movement should try their utmost to participate in this convention to be held on the day of the *Eid ul Adha*.

The convention was held as scheduled, and the attendees were told that not only was there no religious injunction against people leaving their homes to take up habitation in the open fields but, in fact, such an action was religiously mandated. Emphasis was also laid on cleaning the house and strictly following the steps recommended by the government to stop the spread of the plague. The proceedings of the convention were published in the form of a pamphlet on May 4, 1898.

### **A plague antidote**

*Hazrat* Mirza's sympathy for the victims of the plague motivated him to research *Ayurvedic* medicine. His father was an expert physician of Indian medicine and had instructed him in this field. After considerable research, *Hazrat* Mirza prepared an antidote for the plague, which he named *Tariaq Elahi*. This medicine was originally meant for diabetes, loss of memory, weakness of nerves and muscles, and chronic stomach ailments. In fact, Divine revelation had drawn *Hazrat* Mirza's attention to the beneficial effect of this medicine for these ailments. In addition, this medicine was also effective for tuberculosis, coughs and colds. *Hazrat* Mirza decided to try this medicine on plague patients because of its beneficial effects on the brain and the heart. This reasoning was consistent with the observation that plague fatalities were mostly caused by heart failure. When put to the test, the medicine proved to be beneficial in most cases. The medicine was, however, expensive and *Hazrat* Mirza asked for donations through an announcement on July 23, 1898, so that the medicine could be mass-produced for free distribution. The announcement also contained many other instructions about the plague and its remedies. The donations collected in response to the appeal amounted to two thousand five hundred rupees, and this money was used to prepare medicine for free distribution to plague

patients. It was a longstanding habit of *Hazrat Mirza* to provide indigent patients with free medicines. In addition to *Tariaq Elahi*, *Maram Issa*, or the ointment of Jesus, was also prepared and distributed to plague patients for use as a dressing on the swelling and sores caused by the plague.

## Chapter

# 98

## TWO MEMORANDUMS ADDRESSED TO THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF PUNJAB

### First Memorandum

*Hazrat* Mirza's opponents were continuously inciting the British Government against him and his party. Since a major objective of *Hazrat* Mirza's mission was to discredit Christianity, the opponents were not lacking in opportunities to instill doubts in the minds of government functionaries about him. Those engaged in this activity included not only Christians but also Muslim clerics opposed to him. Rev. Henry Martyn Clarke had openly accused *Hazrat* Mirza in court of being a threat to the government. In short, the situation was deteriorating daily and the government was becoming increasingly suspicious.

Under these circumstances, *Hazrat* Mirza considered it conducive to write a memorandum to the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab informing him of *Hazrat* Mirza's and his party's affairs and real beliefs. *Hazrat* Mirza sent a published memorandum to the Lieutenant Governor on February 24, 1898, giving a full explanation of these subjects. He expressed his peaceful intent and his revulsion at the idea of rebelling against a government that was just and allowed religious freedom. The loyalty of *Hazrat* Mirza to the British Government is discussed comprehensively later in this book.

### Second Memorandum

On May 4, 1898 *Hazrat* Mirza sent another memorandum to the

Lieutenant Governor of Punjab. The event prompting the second memorandum was the publication of the book *Ummahat-ul-Mominin* (Wives of the Holy Prophet)<sup>1</sup> by the Christian doctor, Ahmad Shah, in which he had pummeled the Holy Prophet with abusive and insolent invectives. He had one thousand copies of his book delivered unsolicited to Muslim households. The *Anjuman Himayat Islam* in Lahore reacted by requesting the government through a memorandum to confiscate this book.

*Hazrat* Mirza did not like this strategy and addressed a separate memorandum to the government in which he pointed out that the Christian clergy had written not just this one book, but also millions of other similar books and distributed them throughout the world. *Hazrat* Mirza stated:

One thousand copies of this book have deliberately been sent to ordinary and distinguished Muslims only for the sake of hurting them. How much must this have wounded them and what must have passed over their hearts? Although this is not the first abusive book - the number of such books by Christian clergy having reached millions - the distribution of these books without solicitation to the houses of unsuspecting and uninformed people is a novel attempt to inflict pain. This is the reason for the clamor about this book, although the books of Rev. Imaduddin and Rev. Thakardas, and the articles in the twenty-five-year history of *Nur Afshan* are equally abusive.

*Hazrat* Mirza pointed out that there were hundreds of abusive books against Islam written by Christian critics. How many of these books could the government confiscate? The entire environment of discourse was corrupted. If the government was serious about this matter, it should focus on reforming the current manner of debate and discourse and legislatively ban the use of hurtful and impious language that had no basis in the accepted scriptures of the religions.

*Hazrat* Mirza impressed upon the government that it was not very helpful to confiscate copies of the book *Ummahat-ul-Momineen* now that a thousand copies had already been distributed free to Muslims. The strategy of confiscating the book would only have been efficacious if the book had been confiscated before it was distributed and not after. When a book had been extensively distributed and its poison had done its work, there

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1 *Ummahat-ul-Mominin* literally means 'Mothers of the Faithful' but is a euphemism for 'Wives of the Holy Prophet.'

was no great benefit in confiscating the few remaining copies. On the contrary, there was definite harm because the right of reply to this book was forfeited with the confiscation of the book and this would prevent the aggrieved party from writing a reply to neutralize the pernicious effects of the impious and deceitful book. The failure to respond would create doubts in the minds of people. The appropriate post-distribution strategy was to give an effective reply to the book to save the public from the poisonous effects of the book. Hazrat Mirza reminded Muslims that their responsibility at this stage was not to ask the government for the confiscation of the book but to “give effective and courteous responses to their criticisms which were raised based on either ignorance or deceit—responses that would show them our reality and culture.”

*Hazrat Mirza's* objective in writing this memorandum was to stress that neither the government nor the Muslim public should consider their responsibility discharged if a few books were confiscated. The responsibility of the government was to initiate serious reforms in this mode of debate and discourse, and forbid the use of hurtful and impious language. The responsibility of the Muslims was to rationally and comprehensively rebut these criticisms that were based on falsehood and to widely propagate the pious and correct picture of the Holy Prophet so that the deceit and lies of the Christian clergy and the Hindu *Aryas* would be exposed. This exposure would restrain them from making such charges in the future. In addition, petitioning the Government to ban this filthy mode of writing for the future was also appropriate. This was the reason why *Hazrat Mirza* sent a separate memorandum to the Government.

So far as responding to criticisms is concerned, *Hazrat Mirza's* modus operandi throughout his life had been not to rest until he had given a resounding reply to any denigration of the Holy Prophet or the Quran. Commenting on the effect that this book, *Ummahat-ul-Momineen*, had on *Hazrat Mirza*, *Maulvi Abdul Karim* wrote:<sup>2</sup>

He (*Hazrat Mirza*) had frequently remarked that, “The loss of my property and the dismemberment of my children before my eyes would be easier on me than to see my religion defamed and vilified.” In the days when the noxious and wicked book, *Ummahat-ul-Momineen*, which was full of hurtful statements but contained nothing of merit, was published, *Hazrat Mirza* was so grieved on reading it that he remarked, “I cannot rest easy.” It was as a con-

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2 *Maulvi Abdul Karim. Seerat Masih Maud.*



sequence of that sorrow and supplications that Allah gave him the weapons, namely the ointment of Jesus and the sign of Jesus' tomb in Kashmir, to demolish the greatest bastion of evil and polytheism (i.e. the concepts of atonement and the Divinity of Jesus). The time is near, certainly not very far, that the tomb of Jesus will bring a visitation of grief to the homes of these worshippers of evil, and the hearts of Muslims will be comforted, and they will forget the grief caused by the publication of this unholy book.

*Hazrat Mirza* frequently said that a treasure of knowledge and wisdom lay hidden in everything that the opponents targeted for criticism in the Quran and the Holy Prophet. An evil-natured person did not see this treasure because of shortsightedness and ignorance, and therefore raised objections, but his criticism was nothing more than a pickaxe blow that helps to unearth the secret treasure. Hence a believer should never be upset by criticism. This was the era of *jihad* (striving) with knowledge and the pen. When an opponent attacked, the correct response was to face the onslaught bravely and to respond effectively. God always helped those who endeavored in this manner and graced them with correct knowledge and understanding. The need of the hour was to spread the right picture of the Holy Prophet and the correct interpretation of the Quran throughout the world so that the opponents did not pick up the courage to hurl criticisms. It was the darkness of ignorance that gave them the courage to strike; when this ignorance is removed by the light of knowledge, they would not have the nerve to attack the Quran and the Prophet.<sup>3</sup>

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3 Unfortunately the government paid no heed either to the memorandum of the *Anjuman Himayat Islam* or to that of *Hazrat Mirza*. Many years later, the government enacted Section 153 b in the Penal Code that made it an offence to defame the founder of any religion and thus vindicated, to a certain extent, *Hazrat Mirza's* position on the issue.

## SELECTED ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR MEMBERS OF *HAZRAT MIRZA'S* MOVEMENT

During this period, *Hazrat Mirza* published several announcements for his party. Two of these warrant special mention and are briefly described below:

### **Moral reform is of paramount importance**

In an announcement on May 29, 1898, *Hazrat Mirza* advised his party to abstain from politics and anti-government activities. He advised them to concentrate on reforming their morals and behavior, and to respond to people's harshness with softness. He stressed the importance of exhibiting the highest moral standards and emphasized the quality of party's members over their quantity. He maintained that a mere increase in the size of a party, whether political or religious, was of no real benefit without moral excellence.

### **Importance of finding spouses from within the party**

In another announcement on June 7, 1898, *Hazrat Mirza* advised members of his party to seek spouses from within the party; not because marrying outside the party was forbidden but because matrimonial ties within the party would enhance love and unity among the members. There had been instances in which women married to non-member Muslims were mistreated because of their religious affiliation with his party, and

such incidents could be avoided if both spouses were from the same party. *Hazrat* Mirza asked members to furnish him with the names of their eligible boys and girls desirous of finding matches. He promised to keep the list in his personal custody to ensure confidentiality. He urged members who were unable to find suitable matches themselves in their own circle of relatives and friends, to approach him so that he could arrange matches for them from within the party.

## **ZARURAT-UL-IMAM (NEED FOR THE IMAM OF THE AGE)**

In September 1898, *Hazrat Mirza* published the book, *Zarurat-ul-Imam* (Need for the *Imam* of the Age)<sup>1</sup>. He started the book with the well-known *hadith*, “Whoever dies without recognizing the *Imam* dies a death in (a state of) ignorance.”<sup>2</sup> There is also a similar reliable *hadith* in the compilations by *Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal* and *Tirmidhi* that states, “Whoever dies and does not have over him an *Imam* of the community, his death is the death of ignorance.” These *hadith* draw our attention towards the very important truth that he who rejects the *Imam* of his time deprives himself of the knowledge that is vouchsafed to the *Imam* by Allah. In addition, the spiritual journey of such a person remains incomplete because the *Imam* of the time is like the moon that captures the rays from the spiritual sun, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and reflects that spirituality to enlighten the world around him. He who does not develop a relationship with the *Imam* suffers a great deprivation by missing out on the heavenly knowledge and spiritual blessings with which the *Imam* is sent. Death in this situation is a death of ignorance because the person dies bereft of the knowledge and wisdom that the person should have had.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Some portions of the translation in this chapter have been taken from the English translation of *Zarurat-ul-Imam*, Need of the *Imam* of the Age, by Kalamazad Mohammad and revised by Dr. Zahid Aziz.

2 Ahmad **ibn Hanbal**. *Musnad (Hadith)*. Volume 4. Page 96.

3 See following page.

The question that arises here is how can one recognize the *Imam* of the time. A seeker of the truth must be knowledgeable about how to recognize the *Imam* and cannot merely accept every claimant at face value.

### Ways to recognize the *Imam* of the time

In *Zarurat-ul-Imam*, Hazrat Mirza identifies six virtues that *must* be present in an *Imam*. The six virtues constitute the proof of the *Imam's* genuineness. Unless these virtues are present, the claimant cannot be the *Imam* of the period. A summary of these virtues is given here and the reader is referred to the original text for more details.<sup>4</sup>

1. The first virtue is the presence of high morality. The *Imam* has to interact with all kinds of people including those that are bad, vulgar, and foul-mouthed. Because of these diverse interactions, he must possess the highest moral qualities so that he does not act in a fit of passion or in blind rage, thereby depriving the people of his moral influence. It is a matter of great shame if a person is called a friend of God but exhibits bad morals. In fact, the Quranic verse, "You indeed possess the most sublime morals," (68:4) must clearly be seen in the *Imam's* personality.
2. The second virtue is leadership (*Imamat*), which implies the desire to excel in all pious discourses, righteous deeds, Divine knowledge, and love of God. The *Imam's* spirit is not content with any deficiency nor is satisfied with any inferior state and remains restless if its spiritual progress is impeded. These qualities of leadership are inborn because *Imamat* is not a tem-

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3 Maulana Abul Kalam Azad writes in praise of the *Imam* of the age as follows:

The keys to the treasures of munificence and blessings of that age are given to him. There is no blessing outside of the circle of goodwill of the *Mujaddid*. If someone finds some partial truth through hearsay, chances are it will not be beneficial, and even if it is, the benefit is indirectly attributable to the *Mujaddid* because the blessings of the period are the result of his presence. How beautifully has he spoken who said:

If some lover has spoken in the matter of love,  
He must have heard it from me and spoken the truth.

4 The English translation of the book *Zarurat-ul-Imam* has been published under the title, "Need of *Imam* of the Age," published by the *Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam* Lahore Inc. Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A.

porary office that is granted as an afterthought. In fact, this ability to excel in all matters of religion is as much an innate quality of the *Imam* as is the ability of seeing and hearing. The use of the word *Imam* draws our attention to this meaning.

3. The third virtue is extensive knowledge, which is an essential and necessary condition of an *Imam*. During his lifetime, there is no one who is his equal in knowledge of Quranic insights, power of benefiting others, and presenting arguments to perfection. His sound judgment corrects the knowledge of other people. He influences the knowledge of those who keep his company with his own profound knowledge, and steadily increases them in faith and insight.
4. The fourth virtue is firm resolution by which is meant the ability to strive tirelessly, without feeling hopeless or disheartened. Sometimes the *Imam* is faced with such problems that it appears as if God has deserted him, but he is never disheartened by these trials and forges ahead through each tribulation until the help of Allah arrives.
5. The fifth virtue is *Iqbal al-Allah* (going before Allah) which means that in times of trial and tribulation, and in times when an implacable foe has to be faced and a sign may be demanded or a victory may be needed, or when it may be a duty to show sympathy for someone, the *Imam* inclines only to God, the Most High. He turns to Him with such submission that his prayers, full of truthfulness, sincerity, love, faithfulness and unbreakable resolve, causes a tumult among the higher angels. The passionate fervor and intensity of his supplications changes destinies and dissipates insurmountable difficulties. The *Imam's* supplications are swifter in result and more efficacious as compared to that of other saints.
6. The sixth virtue is the presence of a system of visions and revelations. The *Imam* of the time frequently receives knowledge, truth and wisdom from God through revelation. The quality and frequency of his revelations is the best that can be achieved in saintly revelation, and as such it cannot be compared with the revelation of others. These revelations open up

vistas of knowledge and Quranic wisdom, solve complex religious conundrums and controversies and provide prophecies of a high degree that can impress other nations.

*Hazrat* Mirza then mentioned signs to identify true revelations and in the end, declared very forcefully that he was the *Imam* of the age. Anyone who desired to test the veracity of his claim could do so based upon the above-mentioned conditions.

#### **Four distinctive signs given to the *Imam* of this age**

*Hazrat* Mirza then mentioned four signs that had been given to him:

1. As a reflection of the miracle of the Holy Quran, I have been gifted with the sign of eloquence in the Arabic language and nobody can compete with me in this.
2. The sign of elucidating deep truths and spiritual insights of the Holy Quran has been bestowed on me and no one can compete with me in this.
3. The sign of abundant acceptance of my prayer has been given to me and no one can equal me in this.
4. I have been blessed with the sign of receiving news of the unseen and no one can match me in this.

#### **The rationale for writing this book**

*Hazrat* Mirza wrote this book in just one-and-a-half days. *Hazrat* Mirza gave the rationale for writing this book towards the end of the book as follows:

In the month of September 1898, which corresponds to *Jamadi-ul-Awwal*, 1316 A.H., a friend of mine whom I know to be a good, righteous, God-fearing and abstinent man, and of whom I have held a very favorable opinion from the very beginning -Allah is his Reckoner- undertook the rigors of a journey and came to me in Qadian accompanied by another dear friend of mine. However, I believe him (the first friend mentioned above) to be in error as regards some of his views and am concerned about him because of the harm that this error may cause him. He related to me many

revelations he had received. It brought great joy to my heart to know that God, the Most High, had honored him with revelation. Among his revelations, he also related to me a dream of his in which he had said about me, “Why should I enter into his pledge? Rather, he should enter into my pledge.” From this dream, it appears that he does not accept me as the Promised Messiah and that he is also unaware of the concept of the true *Imamat*. Consequently, my compassion demanded that for his sake, I should write this pamphlet in order to explain the true *Imamat* and to dilate on the nature of the pledge (*baiat*). So concerning the rightful *Imam*, I have written much in this booklet.

### **The truth about the pledge**

As to the concept of pledge, the word *baiat* is derived from *bai*, a mutually agreed-upon transaction in which one thing is given in exchange for another. So the purpose of the pledge is that the one entering into the pledge sells himself and all his faculties into the hands of a guide so that in return, he may receive true spiritual knowledge and blessings to perfection, which will lead to spiritual insight, salvation and the pleasure of Allah, the Most High. It is clear from this that a pledge does not mean mere repentance because a man can make such repentance all by himself, but what is aimed at is that kind of spiritual knowledge, blessings and signs which draw a person to true repentance...

Further on he wrote:

My dear inspired friend should not remain under an illusion because he receives revelation frequently. I say truly, absolutely truly, that there are in my Movement so many recipients of revelation of this kind that the revelations of many of them can fill a book. Every week, Sayyid Amir Ali Shah sends me one page of his revelations...I am very surprised, too, that compared to yours (inspired friend), his (Sayyid Amir Ali Shah) revelation contains fewer mistakes...But can such revelations exempt a person from taking pledge at the hands of the *Imam* of the age? I have no objection to entering into the pledge of anyone, but the purpose of the pledge is to increase spiritual knowledge and strengthen faith. So, please tell us what knowledge you will teach in your pledge and which Quranic truths you will expound? Come and show us



the accomplishment of *Imamat* and we shall all take the pledge at your hands. I am proclaiming loudly and publicly that whatever God has bestowed on me has all been intended as evidence of the position of *Imam*...According to this revelation, God has bestowed upon me the knowledge of the Quran and given me the title, "first of the believers." He has filled me with deep knowledge and truths like an ocean, and He has revealed to me again and again that in this age, no one can equal me in knowledge and the love of Allah. So, by God, I am standing ready in the field of combat. Whoever does not accept me will soon be brought to shame after death, and Allah has furnished His argument against him.

## THE INCOME TAX SUIT

*Hazrat Mirza's* opponents had tried to frame him on murder charges, but Allah protected his life and honor. Having failed in their attempt, the desperate opponents now tried to harm him financially, but God desired otherwise. Previously, God had shown a sign to *Hazrat Mirza's* opponents by protecting his life and honor; God now desired to furnish them with yet another sign by protecting his assets as well.

The opponents initiated their move by reporting to the government that *Hazrat Mirza* received large sums of money from his disciples and that this amount was taxable, but no taxes were being paid. It was true that *Hazrat Mirza* at the time was not paying any income tax, but this was because he was a landowner and paid the customary land revenue tax. Income from his property was not sufficient to put him in the taxable bracket, and the tax code exempted money collected and spent for religious purposes from taxation.

### ***Hazrat Mirza* is asked to pay income tax**

The efforts of the opponents finally succeeded and in 1898, the income tax authority assessed *Hazrat Mirza's* income at Rs. 7,200 and issued him with a demand notice to pay Rs. 187.50 in income tax. The whole process was carried out in an ad-hoc manner without any judicial inquiry. The person responsible for this action was a Hindu *Arya Tehsildar* (a middle level revenue officer) who was very jealous of *Hazrat Mirza* and had gone to great lengths to impose this tax. *Hazrat Mirza* filed an appeal against the assessment of this tax but in order to argue the

appeal successfully, it was necessary to produce accurate books of account in support of the contention. However, all of Hazrat Mirza's dealings had been on trust and no written records were maintained. In order to submit accounts to the court, *Hazrat Mirza* considered it necessary to estimate the income from his memory and recollections of others.

### **A prophecy about the tax**

*Hazrat Mirza* was sitting by the window of *Masjid Mubarak* along with some companions including *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali, Khawaja Jamal ud Din and *Maulvi* Abdul Karim, and was examining the papers of income and expenditure that had been prepared for him, when he went into a visionary trance. He saw that the Hindu *Tehsildar* of Batala, in whose court his appeal was pending, had been transferred and a Muslim *Tehsildar* now sat in his chair. Besides this vision, certain other affairs were manifested that were indicative of a successful outcome and gave news of victory. *Hazrat Mirza* narrated the vision immediately to his companions and assured them that the suit would end favorably and the appeal would be entrusted to a Muslim judge who would investigate it judiciously.

Events unfolded as predicted. The Hindu *Tehsildar* was suddenly transferred and was replaced by a Muslim *Tehsildar*, Tajuddin. A summary of the report that he wrote to the Deputy Commissioner after the hearing with *Hazrat Mirza* is as follows:

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has stated that his income is derived from the ownership of an estate, a farm and an orchard. The income from the estate is estimated at eighty-six rupees and ten annas annually, from the farm at three hundred rupees annually and from the orchard between two to five hundred rupees annually. He does not have any other personal income. He also stated that he had received approximately Rs. 5,200 from his disciples this year, but in the previous years such donations had averaged around Rs. 4,000. The donated sums are used to meet the expenditures under the following five categories of accounts as mentioned by him in his book *Fath Islam*.

1. Guesthouse: Visitors who come to meet with *Hazrat Mirza* are provided food; travelers, orphans and widows are also assisted from this account.
2. Printing press: This is used for printing religious books and

posters; and some of the books are distributed free among the public.

3. School.
4. Annual Convention and other gatherings.
5. Correspondence: All correspondence pertaining to religious research and investigation is also paid for from these donations.

All donated sums are spent on the above-mentioned accounts. No formal records of accounts have been kept and the estimates have been constituted from memory. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad also stated that his income from the estate, the farm and the orchard is sufficient for his personal needs, and there is no requirement for him to use donated sums for personal expenses. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has no income besides that from the estate, the farm and the orchard that would be taxable. Witnesses corroborated his statement. Six witnesses were his disciples, and seven others were non-disciples who had no relationship with him and belonged to the trading community. Secret investigation was also conducted and some of the people did say that his income was more than stated but could furnish no proof. In short, there is no proof that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's income is more than what he has declared.

The *Tehsildar* then gave his assessment of the evidence as summarized below:

If the position is accepted, as appears from the evidence, that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's personal income is from the estate, the farm and the orchard, and the donations are charitable contributions, then the levy of tax cannot be maintained. On the other hand, if it is considered that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is the scion of a respectable and well-known family, that his forefathers were chiefs with a good income, and that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad himself has been employed and is of good means, then it does appear that he is wealthy and subject to tax.

**Exemption from income tax**

Tajuddin, the *Tehsildar* of Batala, sent his report on August 31, 1898, to Mr. Dixon, Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur, who rendered his judgment and order on September 17, 1898. His verdict was as follows:

This tax has been investigated afresh and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has claimed that his entire income is not spent on his personal business, but rather on the expenses of the sect he has established. He admits that he has other property as well, but he stated before the *Tehsildar* that even that income, which by virtue of being from agriculture and farming is exempt from income tax under section 5 (b) of the Income Tax Statute, is used for religious purposes. We find no reason to doubt the honesty of this person and therefore exempt under section 5 (e) the income from donation that he states to be Rs. 5,200 because it is used solely for religious purposes.

The judgment of the Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur was based on facts. The donations received by *Hazrat* Mirza in 1898 were precisely in the amount reported by him in his statement. Additionally, all donations received for religious purpose and spent for the said purpose were tax-exempt by law. To treat such sums as personal income was against all dictates of equity. *Hazrat* Mirza was so disinterested in such materialistic matters that in 1905, when the donations reached one hundred thousand rupees, he assigned all fiduciary responsibilities to an organization he had set up to succeed him as part of his will. He announced repeatedly through the newspaper that only donations for the public kitchen should be sent to him and all other donations should be sent directly to the organization. If the donations were personal income, why would he have turned over the management of such a large sum of money to this organization? A worldly person would never have done it.

*Hazrat* Mirza retained the financial responsibility of the public kitchen only. From a financial standpoint, this was a most problematic operation because the expenditure on visitors was so high that even *Hazrat* Mirza worried at times how to meet the necessary expenses with the donations. Frequently, he did not have a cent on him and the supervisor of the public kitchen would be making insistent demands for money. Several times, *Hazrat* Mirza was so perplexed that he wanted to close down the public kitchen, but Divine revelation prevented him from doing so. It was almost as if Divine intervention kept the kitchen functioning by meeting shortfalls from some Divine treasury.

Hazrat Mirza realized that the financial stress of keeping the public kitchen open was so great that a normal worldly person would drown in anxiety and spend sleepless nights wondering how to bridge the gap between income and expenditure. This was the reason why *Hazrat Mirza* did not transfer this responsibility to the Organization because he felt it would be unable to cope with the constant frustration, and would probably end up closing the kitchen. That the kitchen was running at all was in large part to *Hazrat Mirza's* trust in Allah and miraculous Divine assistance from hidden sources.

***Hazrat Mirza's actions prove his innocence***

*Hazrat Mirza* published the Deputy Commissioner's judgment in his book *Zarurat-ul-Imam* and his candor in the matter clearly indicated that his conduct in the suit was honest. Had there been any dishonesty, he would have kept the whole affair secret and avoided undue publicity. Everyone knows that once an affair becomes a matter of public knowledge, it is fair game for criticism by friend and foe. Since *Hazrat Mirza's* dealings were always honest and lawful, he was never in the habit of hiding anything. Even during judicial proceedings, confidential consultations initiated by *Hazrat Mirza's* counsel in hushed tones became matters of public knowledge because *Hazrat Mirza* would respond in a loud tone so that even a passerby could hear. The fact is that anyone who has no ill intention and whose affairs are completely honest has no hesitation in bringing any affair before the public.

## ***NAJM-UL-HUDA*** **(THE STAR THAT GUIDES)**

*Hazrat Mirza* published the book *Najm-ul-Huda* (The Star that Guides) on November 20, 1898. The book was written in three languages simultaneously: Arabic, Urdu and Persian. Each page of the book was comprised of three columns, each column contained the same text, but in the three different languages.

### **Rationale for the two names – Muhammad and Ahmad - of the Holy Prophet**

The book begins with a tribute to the Holy Prophet Muhammad - a tribute so rational, reasonable and complete that it enraptures the reader and gives him the feeling that he is drinking a life-sustaining elixir, which is watering and nurturing the love of the Prophet in his heart. A short translated passage from the start of the book is reproduced below:

And may salutations and peace be upon His unlettered Prophet who is named Muhammad and Ahmad. When Adam was informed of the names of things, these two names were the first ones to be presented to him because they are the ultimate rationale for creation, and in the knowledge of Allah these names are the noblest and foremost. Hence, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings upon him, by virtue of these names is first among all the prophets, upon them be peace, and also because all prophetic

knowledge ended with him, and perfect and comprehensive revelation was granted to him, and (he was given) the ultimate in knowledge, and everything given to the first and last was given to him. For all these reasons, he is the “seal of prophethood.” He was sent to all, black and white, and was chosen for the reformation of every blind, deaf and mute. God, the Most High, bestowed on him the fragrance of His blessings as never before on any other prophet or messenger. God gave him of His knowledge, and granted him understanding from His own knowledge, and imparted him His own wisdom, and purified him from His own piety, and taught him manners from His own manners, and bathed him in the water of saintliness from His own piety. Hence it became incumbent on the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, to praise that God Who had taken charge of all his affairs...and he took the praise of Allah to perfection, losing his own identity in His remembrance. It was the result of praising extensively and considering God to be so praiseworthy, that God continuously and incessantly bestowed His blessings on him, and favored him with such circumstances that did not render him dependent on his own effort and striving even for the twinkling of an eye. Until finally Allah caused his heart to be rent asunder and entered into it and made him unequalled in His love. Hence his heart overflowed with the desire to praise his Benefactor and His praise became his dearest wish; this rank of honor was not granted to any messenger, prophet, devotee or saint except him because the others had acquired some of their knowledge and learning and blessing through the courtesy of intellectuals, forefathers and largesse of others. But whatever our Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, received was received from God, and whatever was given to him was also from this fountain of grace and favor. The hearts of others did not develop a desire to praise God like the desire that developed in the heart of our Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, because God was the trustee of all his affairs. Hence, because of this, no other prophet or messenger from the previous prophets and messengers was called by the name Ahmad (He who praises)...and when the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, was praised because he had chosen God, the Most High, and forsaken all physical desires so as to turn to God and had run to Him with sincerity, honesty and belief in His unity, so God returned these praises back to him



as a reward. This is His practice with all kindred friends that He turns “him who praises” into “one who is praised.” Hence our Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has been praised in the earth and in the heaven...

In short, a full appreciation of the way in which *Hazrat* Mirza has praised the Holy Prophet can only be gauged by reading this book. After the tribute to the Holy Prophet, *Hazrat* Mirza presented his own claims and narrated that God had raised him as the *Mujaddid* (reformer) and *Imam* (spiritual leader and exemplar) because Islam was passing through a critical period and facing relentless attacks from its opponents.

Chapter

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## ***RAZ-I-HAQIQAT*** **(THE HIDDEN REALITY)**

### **A short biography of Jesus**

*Hazrat* Mirza published the book *Raz-i-Haqiqat* on November 30, 1898. This book was in effect a short biography of Jesus with special emphasis on his death and burial in the tomb located in Mohallah Khan Yar in Sirinagar. A sketch of the tomb was also included. The book ended in an announcement, which was published separately as well on November 30, 1898. Details of this announcement can be found in the next chapter, which details the affairs of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi.

**MAULVI BATALVI'S DIABOLICAL  
BEHAVIOR, HIS DISGRACE,  
& RECANTING OF INFIDELITY  
CHARGES & PUBLICATION OF  
KASHF-UL-GHITA & HAQIQAT-UL-  
MAHDI (UNCOVERING THE  
WRAPPING & REALITY OF THE  
RIGHTLY GUIDED ONE)**

***Maulvi Muhammad Hussain foments mischief***

*Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi was so obsessed with his enmity of *Hazrat* Mirza that this animosity became the great passion of his life. He had no other interest in life but to single-mindedly pursue this objective and busied himself day and night in fomenting schemes to torment, hurt and damage *Hazrat* Mirza. He had an early victory when he successfully petitioned many clerics of India to sign off on a decree declaring *Hazrat* Mirza an infidel. He first forced *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain of Delhi, a frail old man, to sign the decree of infidelity (*kufr ka fatwa*) and then personally took it to every cleric and *sajda nasheen* (dynastic religious leaders) for their signature. Having gathered as many signatures as he could, he published the decree with great pomp and show, and thought he had won the battle and fulfilled the threat he had made – “I elevated Mirza

and now I am going to bring him down.” However, *Maulvi* Batalvi was in no way responsible for *Hazrat* Mirza’s fame and wielded no power to defame him. The fact was that God had elevated *Hazrat* Mirza, and he whom God elevates none can bring down.

Earlier, *Maulvi* Batalvi had been so badly discomfited in a debate with *Hazrat* Mirza in Ludhiana that he realized scholarly debate was not going to be his forte. He, therefore, focused his energies on issuing decrees of infidelity but even this strategy failed to stem the tide of people going over to *Hazrat* Mirza. He then began stalking *Hazrat* Mirza to towns he visited and stirred-up trouble there by inciting people with all kinds of lies. This author recalls vividly *Hazrat* Mirza’s visit to Sialkot in 1892, when *Maulvi* Batalvi gave a sermon in the main mosque of Sadar Bazar, and openly stated that, “Mirza Qadiani says that there is a verse in the Quran, ‘We revealed it near Qadian,’” and this was a patent lie. He then quoted some passages allegedly from *Izala Auham* that were totally out of context and distorted their meaning. For instance, he quoted from somewhere, “The Quran is full of abuses,” and from somewhere else, “Four hundred prophets lied,” and so on. Many people, who previously held a favorable opinion of *Hazrat* Mirza, became disgusted and felt that such a person could not even be called a Muslim, let alone be considered the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*. Little did they realize that the top cleric of Punjab was quoting dishonestly, and telling lies while standing in the house of God. Thus, through speeches and writing, he tried to bring *Hazrat* Mirza into disrepute. His newspaper *Ishat al-Sunnah* used coarse and filthy language in respect of *Hazrat* Mirza, and *Maulvi* Batalvi felt no qualms in manufacturing false and malicious propaganda and publishing it in his newspaper.

When *Hazrat* Mirza challenged *Maulvi* Batalvi and other clerics who had declared him an infidel to a contest of mutual imprecation (*mubahilla*), *Maulvi* Batalvi did not have the courage to accept the challenge and excused himself by saying that he would only enter the contest if God’s punishment was made to descend on him immediately following the contest. *Hazrat* Mirza responded that the tradition of the Holy Prophet had set the period of punishment as one year, but *Maulvi* Batalvi was not to be persuaded, and cleverly diverted the issue. He chose to stay away from the imprecation contest between *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi and *Hazrat* Mirza in Amritsar, but appeared immediately afterwards to jest around with the public. Finally, the police asked him to leave.

When Abdullah Atham escaped death within the prescribed period of fifteen months by repenting, *Maulvi* Batalvi was ecstatic and spared no effort to abuse *Hazrat* Mirza in his newspaper. But when Lekhram was

killed in the prophesied period, he accused *Hazrat* Mirza of complicity in the murder and despite his position as a leading cleric, he felt no hesitation or fear of God in making mischievous and false statements. When Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke filed a suit charging *Hazrat* Mirza with conspiracy to commit murder, *Maulvi* Batalvi aided Dr. Clarke and appeared as his witness. On entering the court, he was stunned to see *Hazrat* Mirza, despite being the accused, seated on a chair. The fire of jealousy consumed him and he, too, demanded a chair on the grounds that he was the leading cleric of the *Ahl-e Hadith*. The court declined his request because he was not officially entitled to a chair. *Maulvi* Batalvi tried to argue the point but was rebuffed by the court with a stern warning to stand up and give his testimony. During the testimony, he lied and cursed so openly that the court stopped his testimony and noted that the witness was inimical and prejudiced, and the continuation of such testimony was without purpose. He thus had to leave the court in disgrace.

In January 1898, *Hazrat* Mirza published the book *Kitab-ul-Bariyya* describing in full detail the proceedings of the suit filed by Dr. Clarke, and of necessity giving an account of *Maulvi* Batalvi demanding a chair and the court's rebuff. *Maulvi* Batalvi was furious when he read the incident in this book and proceeded to shamelessly deny the whole affair in a letter he wrote on March 1, 1898. *Hazrat* Mirza responded by publishing an announcement in which he repeated the entire incident and followed it with evidence from court officials and 103 respectable persons who verified the truth of his statement. Despite this embarrassment, *Maulvi* Batalvi was unfazed and continued hurling abuses and creating trouble.

### **Reward offered for a contest of mutual imprecation**

Finally, fed up with the trouble-making of *Maulvi* Batalvi, some of *Hazrat* Mirza's disciples published an announcement on October 1, 1898, in which they decried the prevailing atmosphere of daily quarrels, hostilities and fighting, which was proving so inimical to Muslim unity and harmony. They, therefore, appealed to the entire Muslim community to persuade *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, the leader of the opposition and the main instigator of the movement to brand *Hazrat* Mirza an infidel, to enter into a contest of mutual imprecation (*mubahilla*) with him. Their proposal called for an acceptance of the contest by the end of November and for the contest to take place in Batala. The period for palpable manifestation of the consequences was to be one year as established by the tradition of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings on him. If the imprecation did not produce clear consequences supporting their con-

tention, they offered to pay the sum of two thousand five hundred and twenty five rupees and eight annas as reward money to *Maulvi* Batalvi.

### **Obnoxious behavior of Abul Hassan Tibti and Jaffer Zatali**

The poster did not persuade *Maulvi* Batalvi to enter the contest but it did produce a couple of retaliatory posters ostensibly by two irate disciples, Abul Hassan Tibti and Muhammad Baksh Jaffer Zatali, but it could well have been *Maulvi* Batalvi himself publishing these posters using the name of his disciples as a cover up. These two underlings responded on behalf of *Maulvi* Batalvi, one after the other. *Maulvi* Tibti published a poster from Simla on October 31, 1898, in which he abused *Hazrat* Mirza extensively and wrote that *Maulvi* Batalvi was ready to participate in a contest of imprecation but without any condition for the period of consequence. If immediately following the imprecation there was no ill consequence on *Maulvi* Batalvi, then in lieu of the reward money that they did not want, "Mirza Qadiani's face would be blackened, he would be paraded sitting on a donkey and would be hit 825 times with a shoe on his head." More abusive and obnoxious statements, written in such indecent language that one feels ashamed even to reproduce them, followed.

A few days later, on November 10, 1898, the second disciple, Jaffer Zatali, published a similar poster hurling more abuses at *Hazrat* Mirza. He supported *Maulvi* Zatali but made one amendment to the prescribed punishment for *Hazrat* Mirza. "The Qadiani *Dajjal's* (Antichrist's) head," he wrote, "will not be able to bear 825 hits with the shoe, therefore, his disciples should share the hits with him to make the number complete." This was meant to be a concession.

### ***Hazrat* Mirza's announcement, "We leave the decision to God."**

The abusive and indecent language of the above posters was without parallel and *Hazrat* Mirza was greatly saddened by it. In response to these posters, *Hazrat* Mirza made just one announcement on November 21, 1898, titled, "We Leave the Decision to God." The announcement opened with the following passage:

Those who have seen the issues of Sheikh Muhammad Hussain sahib Batalvi's paper *Ishat al-Sunnah* spanning the last few years can bear witness, if they so choose for the sake of Allah, that the said Sheikh sahib has spared no effort in scorning, defaming and abusing this writer. There was a time when his paper *Ishat al-Sunnah* abstained from libel and was a promoter of righteousness

and virtue, and maintained that a single item of faith negated ninety-nine items of disbelief. That same paper today is decrying a person as infidel and *Dajjal* (Antichrist) who is a follower of the *kalimah* (Muslim confession of faith), 'There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger,' who considers the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, as the last of the prophets, believes in all the pillars of Islam and is of those who face Makkah in prayer. On hearing this statement, Sheikh sahib and his like-minded fellows reply that you people are in reality infidels, reject Islam and are atheists and you only show your Islam to fool Muslims; as if Sheikh sahib and his friends had opened our chests, looked inside and determined that they are full of disbelief. God, the Most High, has even shown signs in support of His servant but even those signs were viewed with disdain and disparagement.

After this, *Hazrat* Mirza dwelled on the facts narrated above, and recounted how some members of his organization had invited *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi for a contest of mutual imprecation with a one-year period for the manifestation of consequence, as was the practice of the Holy Prophet. It was also stated in the announcement that if *Maulvi* Batalvi believed that the effect of imprecation was instantaneous, he was at liberty to bring the consequences down upon them immediately. However, such was not *Hazrat* Mirza's and his party's belief and they considered one year as a necessary period for the effects to materialize. The opposing party must not therefore pressure them to their point of view. Instead of entering the contest honestly to settle the issue, *Maulvi* Batalvi adopted the strategy of publishing posters under the names of *Maulvi* Tibti and Jaffer Zatalli to hurl abuses at *Hazrat* Mirza to his heart's content. Further on *Hazrat* Mirza wrote:

Right now, that poster is lying in front of me, and I have beseeched God, the Most High, to be the judge between Muhammad Hussain and me. My supplication was: O my Glorious Cherisher! If I am contemptible, a liar and a trouble-maker as Muhammad Hussain Batalvi has made me out to be in his magazine *Ishat al-Sunnah* by repeatedly calling me a liar, the Antichrist and a trouble-maker, and if I am as despicable as he and Muhammad Baksh Jaffer Zatalli and Abul Hassan Tibti have painstakingly portrayed me to be in this poster published on

November 10, 1898, then O my Lord, if I am really this contemptible in Your eyes, inflict on me a disgraceful punishment within thirteen months, i.e. between December 15, 1898, and January 1900. And increase these people in honor and dignity and settle this daily strife.

Further on *Hazrat Mirza* wrote:

I made this supplication and in response, it was revealed, “I will dishonor and disgrace the oppressor and he will cut his own hands,” i.e. wring his hands with regret.

After this, *Hazrat Mirza* mentioned some of his revelations in Arabic; one particularly noteworthy among them was, “The reward of evil is its like and they will be overwhelmed with disgrace.” This revelation contained an important prophecy, namely that the unjust party would be disgraced just like it tried to disgrace the innocent party, and the disgrace would be of the same type as the oppressor had tried to inflict on the innocent party.

### **The announcement of November 1898**

Another announcement followed on November 30, 1898, titled, “Certainly Allah Is With the Righteous and Those Who Do Good.” This announcement was also published separately in *Hazrat Mirza’s* book, *Raz-i Haqiqat* (The Hidden Reality). In this book, *Hazrat Mirza* addressed the criticism of his opponents regarding the prophecy about Abdullah Atham, and advised his party to clearly distinguish themselves from others by excelling in righteousness and purity so that God, too, may distinguish between them and help and aid them against others. He asked them not to argue, debate or quarrel with the followers of *Maulvi Batalvi* until God, the Most High, renders His judgment between truth and falsehood in the next thirteen months, i.e. by January 1900.

### **How the Divine judgment was rendered**

Glory to Allah! Much before the passage of thirteen months, *Maulvi Batalvi* was thoroughly humiliated in an awe-inspiring and exemplary fashion that was a clear admonishment for all men of understanding. There is a *hadith* that the charge of being an infidel reverts to a person who calls a believer an infidel. This *hadith* proved literally and figuratively true in the case of *Maulvi Batalvi*. The events leading up to his abasement are narrated below in their chronological sequence.



### ***Maulvi* Batalvi becomes a government informer**

Prior to *Hazrat* Mirza's announcement of November 21, 1898, requesting a Divine judgment between truth and falsehood, *Maulvi* Batalvi had issued a special edition of his magazine *Ishat al-Sunnah* dated October 14, 1898. This special issue, prepared in English, was secretly presented to important officials of the British government and was meant for their eyes only. *Maulvi* Batalvi had alleged in this magazine that *Hazrat* Mirza's claim of being the *Mahdi* made him more dangerous than the Sudanese *Mahdi*. His apparent declaration of loyalty to the British government was a mere stratagem to allay suspicion and in actuality he was biding time to build up strength; when he would be sufficiently strong, he would suddenly revolt against the government. He alleged that these events were a necessary corollary to the universally accepted Muslim belief that the *Mahdi* would slay the infidels and spread Islam by the sword. He argued that the British government would be well advised to arrest him.<sup>1</sup>

He then proceeded to describe his own position: "Since I do not believe in the coming of any *Mahdi* (The Rightly Guided One) and deem all the *hadith* (traditions) about the *Mahdi* defective, I consider this person claiming to be the *Mahdi* a liar and oppose him consistently. In fact, I am struggling day and night to wipe out the wrong belief of a promised *Mahdi* from the hearts of Muslims and am constantly preaching loyalty to the British government to them." Having thus ingratiated himself as a well-wisher of the government, he asked the government to grant him an agricultural estate in the area of Lyallpur<sup>2</sup> as a reward. All the preceding remarks were just a build up to this request, which was the real purpose of this special issue.

This issue was part of an ongoing attempt by *Maulvi* Batalvi to secure an agricultural estate. He had been humiliating himself at the doors of English officers for a long time to get such largesse. His strategy to achieve this end was to ingratiate himself by harping on his loyalty, and simultaneously poisoning the officers with misinformation about *Hazrat*

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1 Prior to this *Maulvi* Batalvi had been verbally reporting false information about *Hazrat* Mirza to the government. Once he went to Simla and while residing with a friend named Ghulam Muhammad, he told him in confidence, "I have been unable to take down Mirza with decrees of heresy but today I will get him arrested. The way I propose to do this is that the Governor is my friend and I will convince him that Mirza is a secret rebel and he will be arrested." In the strange course of events, *Hazrat* Mirza was not arrested but *Maulvi* Batalvi's friend Ghulam Muhammad became so disgusted with this behavior and so impressed by *Hazrat* Mirza's arguments that he took the pledge on *Hazrat* Mirza's hand.

2 The city of Lyallpur was later renamed Faisalabad - Translator.

Mirza. *Maulvi* Batalvi's story for the English officers was that *Hazrat* Mirza's claim of being the *Mahdi* was for a purpose, namely to revolt against the British government; he was waiting for the right opportunity to strike and this would come as soon as his party had achieved a critical mass; in fact, he told them that *Hazrat* Mirza was in secret communication through his disciples in Afghanistan with Amir Abdur Rahman, the ruler of Afghanistan.

The British were generally very gullible but when it came to the *Mahdi*, they were even more easily misled because of their bad experience with the revolt of the Sudanese *Mahdi*. There was now a new aspirant to the title of *Mahdi*, this time in India, and the British viewed this development very suspiciously. Consequently, when *Maulvi* Batalvi went to them with tales of a brewing rebellion, he found a very attentive and appreciative audience, which began to view him with favor for his loyal services. The result was that he got the agricultural estate he wanted in Lyallpur and a secret inquiry was instituted against *Hazrat* Mirza. *Hazrat* Mirza was unaware of these developments because this special issue of *Ishat al-Sunnah* had been surreptitiously given to the government and not made public.

### Police raid

The month of October, 1898, had not yet ended, and the evening prayers were still held on the roof of *Mubarak* mosque. One evening, a police posse, which included Inspector Rana Jalal-ud-Din Khan, arrived in Qadian under the command of the Superintendent of Police and surrounded *Hazrat* Mirza's house. The Superintendent and the Inspector then climbed up to the roof of the mosque much to the consternation of *Maulana* Abdul Karim Sialkoti who was present on the roof and witnessed this police action.<sup>3</sup> *Hazrat* Mirza was informed of these developments and when he came out on the roof, the Superintendent told him: "We have come to search your house because we have received a report that you are in secret communication with *Amir* Abdur Rahman, the ruler of Kabul, and correspond with him." *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "This is totally incorrect. We truly appreciate the equity, justice, peace and religious freedom under the British government. We consider the charge that Islam was spread by the sword as a grave calumny against Islam, but if you are not convinced, you may search my house by all means. He whose account is clean has nothing to fear. However, we are about to start our prayers and will greatly appre-

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3 The details of the police raid are taken from the narration by Inspector Rana Jalal-ud-Din Khan.

ciate if you can wait until we are finished.” The Superintendent expressed his willingness to wait and took a seat in one corner of the roof.

### **The impact of *Maulvi* Abdul Karim's recitation of the Quran**

*Maulvi* Abdul Karim used to lead the prayers. Since his migration to Qadian, his voice had acquired a magical touch and his recitation of the Quran during the prayers truly weaved a spell. In Sialkot, he was the *Imam* of the *Ahl-e Hadith* mosque and this humble author, who also followed the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect at the time, used to go there for the Friday congregational prayer. *Maulvi* Abdul Karim gave a good sermon and recited the Quran with passion, but his recitation was neither melodious nor moving. However, after migrating to Qadian, a miraculous transformation took place in his recitation; it became so melodious that it moved a person to tears and reached into his very core and touched his being. He recited the Quran with great passion in the Egyptian accent. This humble author has heard many melodious readers recite the Quran in the Egyptian accent, but *Maulvi* Abdul Karim's recitation was in a class by itself and left the listener dumbstruck with amazement. Its impact made a person feel as if he had been transported thirteen hundred years back and was listening to the Quran being revealed for the first time. Hearing *Maulvi* Abdul Karim's recitation was truly a moving experience.

His *azan* (call to prayer) was also very melodious and passionate, but since a separate person was given this responsibility, he did not get the opportunity to give the *azan* frequently. On this evening, the sudden arrival of the Superintendent of Police had stirred strange emotions in his heart, and under their influence he gave the call to prayer himself with such passion and melody that it enraptured all those who heard it. After that, he led the prayer and in the first *rakah* recited the last section of the Chapter 'The Cow'. He read it with such passion and melody that the Superintendent was dumb-founded and when he saw the entire congregation sobbing with tears in their eyes as the prayer in the last part was recited, "Our Lord, punish us not if we forget or make a mistake," (2:286) the Englishman had a total emotional meltdown. At the end of the prayer, he stood up and addressed *Hazrat* Mirza as follows:

I am convinced that you are a righteous and God-fearing person and what you have said is the truth; you people are incapable of lying. This action was the result of false propaganda about you by your opponents. There is no need to carry out a house search. I will now beg leave.

He left after this and reported to the government that he had investigated the matter and found the information to be mere propaganda against *Hazrat Mirza*.

The interesting thing was that *Hazrat Mirza* was not aware till that time about the English issue of *Maulvi Batalvi's* magazine and his activities as an informant. It was in this same state of unawareness that he published his announcement of November 21, 1898, for a Divine judgment. It was not until December 1898, that a copy of the English issue of *Maulvi Batalvi's* magazine perchance came into his possession. On reading it, *Hazrat Mirza* deemed it necessary to inform the British government about the true beliefs and the true philosophy of his organization.

### **Publication of *Kashf-ul-Ghita***

With this objective in mind, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote the book *Kashf-ul-Ghita* (Uncovering the Wrapping), which was published on December 28, 1898. In it, he recounted the loyalty of his family, and the help they had rendered to the government in the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He mentioned the philosophy of his organization and its loyalty, and expounded his beliefs in great detail. He threw light on the death of Jesus, and the real meaning of *Hazrat Mirza's* claim of being the Messiah. He explained that his organization did not believe in a violent *Mahdi*; and although he certainly claimed to be the *Mahdi*, his weapon, if there was one, was the pen. His organization considered the charge that Islam had been spread by the sword or will ever be spread by the sword as utterly false and a grave calumny against the pious and rational teachings of Islam. Islam was the truth and did not require any help from the sword for its propagation. After this, he discussed *Maulvi Batalvi's* magazine and showed how he had deliberately deceived the government for obtaining the agricultural estate, and used falsehood and hypocrisy to satisfy his worldly greed. He wrote:

And Muhammad Hussain writing in this magazine that he does not accept a *Mahdi*, which all the other clerics of his genre are awaiting, and in whose support, according to them, the Messiah will descend from the heavens, is a totally hypocritical statement that is not in his heart. And hundreds of clerics of Punjab and India can bear witness that he accepts such a bloody *Mahdi*, but hypocritically states contrary to this belief to the government. If the clerics of his genre, like *Maulvi Ahmad Ullah Amritsari*, *Maulvi Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi*, *Maulvi Abdul Jabbar Amritsari*, *Maulvi Muhammad Sher Bhopali*, *Maulvi Abdul Haq Dehlvi*, *Maulvi*

Ibrahim Arah, *Maulvi* Abdul Aziz Ludhianvi, and in particular *Maulvi* Nazeer Hussain Delhvi, the teacher of Muhammad Hussain, are asked on oath, "What do you people believe about the Promised *Mahdi*? Is he coming to fight wars or not? And further that: Is Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, editor of *Ishat al-Sunnah*, one of you, does he have the same beliefs as you or is he different? And does he propose the caliphate of current times for any other than the Quraish?" Then from these witnesses the entire hypocritical affair of Muhammad Hussain will be revealed to the government like the carcass and filth are revealed on digging a white and beautiful grave. I assure my wise and enlightened government that this person has the same belief about the *Mahdi* that his friends belonging to his genre, i.e. the other clerics of Punjab and India, have. The government can understand that it is not possible for Muhammad Hussain to differ from other clerics in such a consensual belief and yet be their friend and ringleader. There is also another testimony against him, namely that he has clearly written in volume twelve, page 380, of his *Ishat al-Sunnah*, "The caliphate was granted only to the Quraish. A person belonging to any other nation cannot be the caliph." Now one should consider how could this person propose that Jesus will be king when he comes again because he was not from among the Quraish but was an Israelite? And without a caliph how would there be wars? Hence all these clerics had to concede that at the time of the second coming of the Messiah there would be a Quraish caliph who will also be the temporal ruler. Thus, the denial of the Promised Messiah creates chaos in their beliefs and makes the descent of the Messiah from the heavens absurd because there would be no rightful caliph on earth with whom the Messiah, on him be peace, would align to fight the infidels. For this reason, Muhammad Hussain believes with all his heart that when the Messiah descends, a *Mahdi* will come from the Quraish who will be the caliph of the time. The Promised Messiah along with those who pledge allegiance to the *Mahdi* would then proceed to accomplish their task.

In the end he wrote:

Given this situation, it is a matter of great shame that this person tells one thing to the British government but has a different belief at home...It is not appropriate for anyone to lie so blatantly to the

government. If this person had rejected the coming of a caliph from the Quraish, also known in other words as the *Mahdi*, and had believed like me in a Messiah who will neither fight nor shed blood, then, without a doubt, a decree of heresy would have been written about him, as it was for me. I assure the government that, in this matter, this person is exhibiting one thing while being quite another. With the clerics of his genre, he professes a belief in consonance with their views, and when he writes for the eyes of the government, he says, "I do not believe that any *Mahdi* will come and conduct wars," so as to please the government. But if he does not believe in the *Mahdi*, then how is he the ringleader and advocate of those clerics who do? It is up to the government to decide this issue equitably. In my opinion, the government can easily gauge our true reality by putting both of us in the witness box in a judicial inquiry with both the administration and the other clerics present. The hypocritical person will expose himself at that time. It is respectfully requested that such adjudication be made. When he has lied so patently in this, how can one trust the veracity of the other information that he feeds the government?

#### ***Hazrat Mirza's comments about the book Kashf-ul-Ghita***

While taking a walk on January 2, 1899, *Hazrat Mirza* made the following remarks about this book *Kashf-ul-Ghita*:

If these difficulties and vexations that the opponents inflict upon us, sometimes by the use of foul language and issuing posters full of lies and calumnies, and sometimes by reporting incorrect facts or just plain lies to the government to make it suspicious, had been confined and limited to my person, then God, the Most High, knows best that I would not have cared for them because I am always ready in the way of Allah like the lamb earmarked for sacrifice. However, the whole community feels the impact of this and there are some who are weak and cannot bear such trials. Therefore, I considered it appropriate to publish a full account of the situation and to send it to the government. Our opponents are continuously making mischief and if we stay quiet, it will create a very negative effect on the government.

#### **Announcement dated December 27, 1898**

In addition, *Hazrat Mirza* published an announcement on December 27, 1898, which came out independently first but was later included in

the book *Kashf al- Ghata*. In it *Hazrat* Mirza stated that the prophecy regarding the deceitful party made in his announcement of November 21, 1898, stood fulfilled. The revelation stated: "The reward of evil is its like and they will be overwhelmed with disgrace." This revelation clearly stated that, of the two parties, the one that was unjust and the transgressor would be inflicted with disgrace that would be of the same type as the oppressor had tried to inflict on the innocent party. The injustice inflicted by *Maulvi* Batalvi on *Hazrat* Mirza was to brand him a heretic, an infidel and the Antichrist for not subscribing to the conventional collective belief of the Muslims about the coming of the Messiah and the *Mahdi*. This was also the rationale for the decree of heresy that many clerics signed. As a result of *Maulvi* Batalvi's English issue of the magazine dated October 14, 1898, published for the purpose of obtaining an agricultural estate from the government, it had become obvious to the clerics and all Muslims in general that he, too, denied the collective belief of all Muslims about the coming of the Messiah and the *Mahdi* – a belief that held that the Messiah would descend from the heavens to assist the reigning Caliph, who would be a Quraish and a descendent of *Hazrat* Fatima, and the two would then convert the infidels by force. The refutation of this belief had irked *Maulvi* Batalvi into calling *Hazrat* Mirza an Antichrist, an infidel and a heretic. His statement in the English issue of his magazine revealed quite clearly that he had hoodwinked the Muslims and, in fact, he held a belief similar to that of *Hazrat* Mirza in this matter. Hence, his own decree and that of his like-minded clerics put him in the category of an infidel, a heretic and an Antichrist. Thus, the prophecy: "The reward of evil is its like and they will be overwhelmed with disgrace," had been fulfilled with great precision.

### **Decree of death against *Hazrat* Mirza**

In this announcement, *Hazrat* Mirza also drew the attention of the government to the ever-increasing hostility of *Maulvi* Batalvi. In addition to persistently instigating and inciting his followers, he had given a decree published in his magazine *Ishat al-Sunnah*<sup>4</sup> in which he declared that *Hazrat* Mirza deserved to be killed.<sup>5</sup>

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4 *Ishat al-Sunnah*. Vol. 18 No. 3. Page 95.

5 *Maulvi* Batalvi did not merely pass a decree stating *Hazrat* Mirza deserved to be killed, but also participated in conspiracies to have him killed. For full details of these conspiracies see the Appendix to this chapter.

### **The clear fulfillment of the prophecy “The reward of evil is its like”**

In his announcement of November 21, 1898, *Hazrat* Mirza had mentioned a period of thirteen months starting from December 15, 1898, for the fulfillment of the prophecy, “The reward of evil is its like and they will be overwhelmed with disgrace,” but hardly thirteen days had passed when the prophecy was fulfilled with great precision. As mentioned earlier, *Hazrat* Mirza declared the prophecy fulfilled on December 27, 1898, consequent upon the coming to light of *Maulvi* Batalvi’s English magazine, especially prepared and secretly given to the government for the purpose of obtaining an agricultural estate. From this magazine, it became obvious that *Maulvi* Batalvi denied belief in a *Mahdi* who would be from the Quraish and in whose support Jesus would descend from the heaven; the two together would then wage wars against the infidels and convert people to Islam by force. *Hazrat* Mirza then argued, “The same reasons for which he levied the charges of heresy against me, and on the basis of which he and other clerics had declared me an infidel, have now been found in him so he falls within the ambit of the same decree.” *Hazrat* Mirza’s reasoning was very logical and certainly brought disrepute to *Maulvi* Batalvi through a process of intellectual reasoning, but a more palpable disgrace based on factual events was yet to take place. However, it was not long in coming.

### ***Istiftah* or advise on a point of religious law**

Dr. Muhammad Ismail Khan was a sincere disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza. He hailed from the village of Jhajar in Rohtak district and was a Pathan by race. Towards the end of 1898, he returned to India after completing a tour of duty in East Africa, and came to visit *Hazrat* Mirza. The annual convention of the organization during the Christmas holidays could not be held that year for some reason and so it was not a particularly busy period when Dr. Ismail arrived in Qadian. When he read the English magazine published by *Maulvi* Batalvi, he decided to perform some service for his religion and asked *Hazrat* Mirza to write an *Istiftah*, which is a petition for a religious edict. The text of the *Istiftah* was as follows:

#### *Istiftah*

What say religious scholars and judges competent to give decrees on important religious issues about a person who totally denies the *hadith* about the coming in later times of a Promised *Mahdi* from the house of Fatima - a rightful Caliph both in outward



appearance and inward (qualities) - and who considers this democratic article of faith, believed wholeheartedly by the entire *Ahl Sunnat*, as absurd and foolish and thinks that believing in such a creed is a sort of deviation from the right path and heretical? Can we consider such a person to be from the *Ahl Sunnat* and on the right path or is he a liar, a renegade from the consensual belief, an apostate and an Antichrist? Explain and earn a reward (from God).

Written on December 29, 1898, corresponding to *Shaban ul Mubarak* 15, 1312.

The petitioner holds firmly to Allah, the One  
 Mirza Ghulam Ahmad  
 Allah be the protector and helper

After removing *Hazrat* Mirza's name as the petitioner, Dr. Muhammad Ismail took this petition requesting an edict to almost all the religious scholars who were signatories to the decree of heresy against *Hazrat* Mirza. Opposition of the truth and support of falsehood results in fuzzy thinking. All these religious scholars who were approached by Dr. Ismail did not realize that the creed expressed therein was the same as professed by *Maulvi* Batalvi to the British in his English magazine issued for the purpose of obtaining an agricultural estate. Either they were unaware of the magazine or if they were aware, their gut feeling, in the absence of the petitioner's name, was that this could only be the creed of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, and the petitioner desired an edict against him. Accordingly, all of them stated forcibly that the holder of such a creed was an infidel, a heretic and an Antichrist. Some of the opinions expressed follow:

1. *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi wrote the following verse in reply: "And whoever acts hostilely to the Messenger after guidance has become manifest to him and follows other than the way of the believers, We turn him to that to which he (himself) turns and make him enter hell; and it is an evil resort" (4:115). Thus according to *Maulvi* Ghaznavi, such a person was an inmate of hell. Further on in his statement, he also referred to the holder of such a creed as one who was misguided and misled others.

2. *Maulvi* Abdul Jabbar Ghaznavi wrote “There are successive *hadith* (sayings of the Holy Prophet) about the descent of the Promised Messiah and Jesus, son of Mary, and the appearance of the Antichrist (*Dajjal*). The *Ahl Sunnat wal Jamaat* are unanimously agreed on the authenticity of these *hadith*. Anyone who denies these *hadith* about which there is a consensus is an infidel and an enemy of the *Ahl Sunnat wal Jamaat*. Such a person is an innovator, a deviant and one who misleads others.
3. *Maulvi* Ghulam Rasul of Amritsar, better known as Russel Baba, opined that such a person introduces an innovation into religion and is not of the *Ahl Sunnat wal Jamaat*.
4. *Maulvi* Ahmad Ullah of Amritsar agreed with *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi and added that all social intercourse with such a person should be eschewed. Since *Maulvi* Ahmad Ullah was the leader of the *Anjuman Taa'eed Islam*, he put the official seal of the organization on the decree, thereby making it the official verdict of the *Anjuman*, comprising about three hundred religious scholars and notables.
5. Ghulam Muhammad al-Bugwee, also known as Bugga walay *Maulvi*, was a famed cleric of Lahore and the *Imam* of the Shahi mosque. He expressed unanimity with the afore-mentioned clerics and wrote that without a doubt such a person was misguided and misled others and was not of the *Ahl Sunnat*.
6. *Maulvi* Muhammad Abdullah Tonki, professor of Oriental College in Lahore, wrote a lengthy decree expounding that the denial of the coming of *Imam Mahdi* was a clear error and deviated from the *Sunnat wal Jamaat* school of thought.
7. The greatest irony was that *Maulvi* Batalvi's mentor, *Sheikh ul Uqal* Syed Muhammad Nazeer Hussain of Delhi, judged that the person referenced in the petition was a slanderer, a confirmed liar and one who was misguided and misled others and did not belong in the *Ahl Sunnat*. This decree by the *Sheikh ul Uqal* was supported by the signatures of other

authoritative clerics of Delhi, for example, *Maulvi* Muhammad Yaqub, *Maulvi* Hamzatul Naqvi, *Maulvi* Syed Muhammad Abdul Salam and *Maulvi* Syed Abul Hassan.

8. The famed cleric of Ludhiana, *Maulvi* Abdul Aziz, declared in his decree that such a person was misguided and misled others and was an Antichrist.
9. Fateh Muhammad, the head cleric of Fatehpuri mosque in Delhi, also wrote a similar decree.
10. Other famous religious scholars who gave similar edicts holding such a person an infidel, an Antichrist, in error and leading others astray, and not from the *Sunnat wal Jamaat*, included *Maulvi* Muhammad Waseeat Ali, *Maulvi* Muhammad Shah, *Maulvi* Muhammad Younas, *Maulvi* Abdul Ghafur, *Maulvi* Muhammad Abdul Ghani, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hadayat Ullah, *Maulvi* Abdullah Khan Bacharwani, *Maulvi* Muhammad Abdur Razzak and others.

When Dr. Muhammad Ismail Khan returned to Qadian after obtaining these decrees, *Hazrat* Mirza published them in an announcement on January 3, 1899, and wrote:

The prophecy “The reward of evil is its like and they will be overwhelmed with disgrace,” published in the announcement of November 21, 1899, has now been fulfilled by factual events. Is the creed expressed in the *Istiftah* not the same that *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi professes in his English magazine written for obtaining an agricultural estate from the British, and which has been judged by so many good scholars as infidelity and heresy? Is there still any doubt whether this decree of infidelity and heresy given by the scholars applies to him or not? Or is there something else left to be done? Has this unjust man not been punished for his injustice in the same manner that he used to disgrace me in accordance with the prophecy, “The reward of evil is its like and they will be overwhelmed with disgrace”? In other words, the creed he presented to the scholars to obtain their decree of heresy against me can now be found as his professed creed written by his own hand in his English magazine, and have

the scholars not branded him as an infidel in the same way? Has the unjust been punished in a like manner or not? Out of regret and shame is he not cutting his hands – the hands with which he wrote this creed in his magazine?

*Hazrat* Mirza also drew the attention of the government to the false statements *Maulvi* Batalvi had made for securing the agricultural estate.

In addition to the above announcement, *Hazrat* Mirza published another announcement on January 2, 1899, addressed to all religious scholars. In this announcement, he reviewed the above events and asked the scholars to determine from *Maulvi* Batalvi his true creed. Was his true belief about the *Mahdi* the one he had written and secretly passed on to the government or did he just fabricate it for obtaining the agricultural estate? If he was not fabricating, then these clerics, if they possessed even a modicum of honesty, faith and righteousness, should sever all social intercourse with him in accordance with their decrees. “It would be the height of injustice, dishonesty and faithlessness,” wrote *Hazrat* Mirza, “that when I denied the coming of such a *Mahdi* who would spread the faith by force...I was branded an infidel and all social intercourse with me was severed, but when the same creed was professed by *Maulvi* Batalvi, the relationship with him remained unaltered and all the previous decrees were just ignored.”

### **The announcement of January 7, 1899**

A pall of gloom descended on the clerics when they learned that the *Istiftah* pertained to *Maulvi* Batalvi and not *Hazrat* Mirza as they had mistakenly assumed. They acknowledged openly that they would never have used the terms infidel, heretic and Antichrist had they known they were giving a decree against *Maulvi* Batalvi. They claimed shamelessly that they were the victims of a scam and had been deceived into giving a decree without revealing the identity of the person against whom the decree was sought. In other words, if person ‘A’ holds a certain creed, he was an infidel, but if person ‘B’ held the same creed, he was a Muslim. Thus, in the religion of these clerics, a decree was based not on the creed but on the person involved. Anyone opposed to them was an infidel regardless of belief, and any person who befriended them was a Muslim even if he had the same creed judged heretical in the case of an opponent. This behavior was typical of the fourteenth-century *Hijri* clerics who were ever ready to dispense decrees of heresy.

In an announcement on January 7, 1899, *Hazrat* Mirza decried the double standards of the clerics and exposed their dishonesty and injustice.

He cautioned Muslims against following such religious leaders who had no integrity and gave diametrically opposed decrees based on the same set of facts.

### **An announcement made by Dr. Muhammad Ismail Khan**

The outcry of the clerics who had written decrees of heresy continued unabated. They protested the anonymous nature of the person referenced in the petition and admitted that the only person with such a creed according to their thinking was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. They had, therefore, issued the decrees of heresy; had they known that the person referenced was Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, they would never have passed such a decree. When these clerics showed no remorse about their dishonest and unjust pronouncements and openly admitted that they would have given two conflicting decrees on the same set of facts based on personalities, Dr. Ismail Khan, who had taken the *Istiftah* to these clerics, issued a public announcement. In it he wrote: "This outcry is dishonest. A decree is given on the nature of the issue and the particulars of the question. It is not necessary to mention the name of the petitioner or the name of the person about whom the decree is requested." He then wrote: "Is there no truthful and honest scholar among them who will state courageously that, 'Yes; the decree I wrote was without regard to friendship or enmity and was based solely on the nature of the issue and the particulars of the question?'"

### **A second *Istiftah***

After this, Dr. Ismail Khan petitioned the religious scholars with another *Istiftah* seeking a decree on behalf of "A Well-Wisher of the Righteous." The petition read as follows:

#### *Istiftah*

*Asalam alaikum.* In accordance with the tradition of scholars, old and new, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib of Qadian through his disciple Dr. Ismail, a military employee stationed in Africa, humbly submitted to you gentlemen on the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Shaban al Mubarak*, 1312 *hijri*, a general *Istiftah* without reference to any person. There is no need to repeat the full text of the *Istiftah* but the only question it posed was: What do the scholars have to say about a person who denies the coming of a Promised *Mahdi*, and provides certain proof of his creed by stating in written testimonials that all the *hadith* in Islam written about the *Mahdi*, on him be peace, are

totally fabricated and absurd? Well-known scholars of Punjab and India, using their best judgment, declared that a person with the creed as mentioned in the *Istiftah* was an infidel, someone who had gone astray, was outside the pale of Islam, etc. They affixed their signatures and stamps on their decrees. That *Istiftah* has been published and distributed and has even been sent to the government. Now a cleric, Abdul Haq (Ghaznavi) by name, whose seal or signature is affixed on his decree declaring such a person as an infidel, has announced through a poster that he had been taken in, i.e. the decree had been given about A (*Zaid*) and not about B (*Umr*). Wringing his hands in helplessness, he has unreasonably accused the presenter and the initiator of the petition of practicing deception, fraud, dishonesty, cheating and so on, on the grounds of obtaining the decree indirectly and not mentioning the name of the person about whom the decree was sought. Consequently, desiring justice and equity, it is petitioned: Were you also deceived, like the cleric mentioned, into affixing your signatures and stamps on the decree of heresy or did you consider generally, in consonance with the connotation of Quranic verses, that whoever, whether A or B, keeps a creed contrary to the accepted doctrine of *Ahl Sunnat wal Jamaat* is an infidel, and accordingly affixed your signatures and seals? And is a cleric of the type mentioned above qualified to give a religious decree?

### **Some just testimonials about the *Istiftah***

Only two clerics replied to this *Istiftah*; the rest did not have the moral courage to speak the truth. The two clerics who had the courage to stand up for their conviction were Mufti Abdullah Tonki and Ghulam Muhammad, alias Bugga Walay *Maulvi*, *Imam* of the Shahi Mosque, Lahore. The replies of these two clerics are given below:

First Reply: The *Istiftah* mentioned in this petition was also presented to me. The replies given in response have been published and are well known. I had given the following reply:

“The appearance of *Imam Mahdi*, peace and blessings on him and his ancestors, near the Last Day and the establishment of a just and equitable order in the world by him are proven from well-known *hadith*. The Muslim masses accept this. Rejecting the appearance of this celebrated *Imam* is clearly erroneous and deviates from the creed of the *Ahl Sunnat wal Jamaat*.”

I was neither taken in nor deceived, and I still consider the answer to this *Istiftah* to be the reply I gave earlier. And even now I regard the person referred to in the *Istiftah* as deviating from the creed of the *Ahl Sunnat wal Jamaat* whether he is A (Zaid) or B (Bakr).

Sincerely,

Mufti Muhammad Abdullah Tonki

Professor, Oriental College Lahore

President *Anjuman Hamayat Islam*, Lahore

Secretary, *Anjuman Mustashar al-Ulama*

Second Reply: A printed *Istiftah* dated December 29, 1898, corresponding to *Shaban* 15, 1316, was presented to me care of Dr. Muhammad Ismail Khan. It had previously been answered and affirmed by the seals and signatures of the religious scholars of Amritsar. I wrote the following statement on it: "The reply of the grand scholars is correct. Without a doubt the person referred to in the petition is misguided and misleads others and is not from the *Ahl Sunnat*." This reply is correct given the nature of the question regardless of whether it affects A (Zaid) or B (Umru) as the decree is not specific to a person. The creed of the *Ahl Sunnat* was written down generally and there was no deception by anyone.

Fakir Ghulam Muhammad al-Bugwee

*Imam Shahi Mosque*, Lahore

January 20, 1899

*Hazrat* Mirza published these equitable replies in an announcement on January 21, 1899. *Maulvi* Batalvi's disgrace was now well publicized to the whole world because of these events. However, two other aspects of disgrace had been fated for *Maulvi* Batalvi in the prophecy of November 21, 1898, and are yet to be narrated.

### **Disgrace by the exposure of his intellectual caliber**

There are four ways in which a person can be disgraced in this world:

1. Bodily disgrace, which is generally faced by criminals. This type of disgrace is not under discussion here.
2. Intellectual disgrace, which follows when the shallowness of a scholar's knowledge is exposed and soils his reputation. This

type of disgrace also fell on *Maulvi* Batalvi and it occurred in the following way: The last line of page two in *Hazrat* Mirza's announcement of November 21, 1898, contained a Divine revelation in Arabic, *Aatajjab lay amri* (Do you wonder at my affair?) *Maulvi* Batalvi objected that the phrase was grammatically incorrect and hence could not be a Divine revelation. He said that the mistake in the phrase was that the words *lay amri* should have read *min amri* because the relative particle of *ajjaba* is *min* and not *lam*. *Hazrat* Mirza gave a detailed response to this objection in an announcement dated November 30, 1898, that totally destroyed the scholarly reputation of *Maulvi* Batalvi and made it common knowledge that he was not well versed in Arabic. Righteous people realized that *Maulvi* Batalvi had been divested of his knowledge because of his opposition to a man of God. Earlier, *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi had seen *Maulvi* Batalvi in a vision wearing a long, shredded robe. He interpreted the vision to mean that the shallowness of *Maulvi* Batalvi's knowledge will be exposed. In his announcement of November 30, 1898, *Hazrat* Mirza proved that *lam* frequently occurred as the relative particle of *ajjaba* and this usage was common in the writings of scholars and men of literature. Accordingly, he produced five verses from *Diwan Hamasa*, an authoritative and popular book of poems considered a reference in matters of eloquence and rhetoric, in which the relative particle of *ajjaba* was *lam*. I quote only one of those verses here:

*Aajibtoe lay masraha wa anni takhalasat*  
*Aay lyaa wa babus sijnay doonee moghullaq*

The meaning of the verse is: My beloved came to me in my state of imagination; I wondered how she reached me behind the closed doors of the prison where I am jailed. *Lam* is present as the relative particle of *ajjaba* in *lay masraha*. There were four other verses that put the final nail in the coffin of *Maulvi* Batalvi's knowledge.

3. Moral disgrace, which occurs when a person is proven to be a liar and a hypocrite before the respectable and noble section of the society. As already narrated, this kind of disgrace also



fell manifestly on *Maulvi* Batalvi. The English issue of his magazine in which he denied the *hadith* and the appearance of the *Mahdi* for purposes of obtaining an agricultural estate, and which he wanted to keep secret was discovered, and brought to light his lies and hypocrisy for the sake of worldly greed.

4. The disgrace of failure and disappointment. This was also fated for *Maulvi* Batalvi in the most unusual circumstances. The old adage: "The hunter caught in his own trap," properly describes these events. *Maulvi* Batalvi instigated litigation against *Hazrat* Mirza to disgrace him but ended up disgraced himself. All his effort and struggle was in vain. The narration of these events follows:

#### **Suit requiring security for maintenance of peace**

It has already been narrated that *Maulvi* Batalvi had prepared a magazine about the prophecy of the *Mahdi* to deceive the British government and had shamelessly accused *Hazrat* Mirza in it of conspiring against the government. This attempt backfired and *Maulvi* Batalvi was thoroughly humiliated as predicted by *Hazrat* Mirza in a prophecy. For the leading cleric of Punjab to be caught red-handed in a web of lies and deceit was a shame that was enough to send any self-respecting person to his grave, but *Maulvi* Batalvi's disgrace and exposure was not at an end. More was to follow:

In the announcement of November 21, 1898, *Hazrat* Mirza had prophesied only disgrace and not death for the party in the wrong, as is apparent from the text that states: "disgrace will overwhelm them." However, in a cunning move, *Maulvi* Batalvi teamed up with another enemy of *Hazrat* Mirza named Muhammad Baksh, who was Deputy Inspector of Police in Batala, and filed a report with the government. The report alleged that in violation of the instructions given by Captain Douglas in the Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke suit restraining *Hazrat* Mirza from publishing prophecies of death, he had published a prophecy of *Maulvi* Batalvi's death and thereby put his life in jeopardy. It requested the government to proceed against *Hazrat* Mirza under Section 107 of the Criminal Procedure Code and to ask *Hazrat* Mirza to furnish a security for the maintenance of peace. The report was filed on December 1, 1898, and sent to the Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur on December 3, 1898. Simultaneously, *Maulvi* Batalvi filed an application for an arms license alleging that he needed to keep a dagger for self-defense; otherwise his

life would be in danger given the above circumstances. He chose to lie in this cold and calculating manner despite knowing fully well that *Hazrat Mirza* was not that type of a person. Moreover, *Hazrat Mirza* had directed his organization in an announcement dated November 30, 1898, that members of his party should not enter into any conversation or debate or have anything to do with *Maulvi Batalvi* or persons of his party. The sad fact is that one loses all traces of morality when one begins to oppose the truth, and this was the case with *Maulvi Batalvi*.

When the report reached the Deputy Commissioner, he started proceedings against *Hazrat Mirza* under Section 107 of the Criminal Procedure Code, but the facts were such that similar proceedings under Section 107 were also started against *Maulvi Batalvi*.

### **Journey to Pathankot**

The hearings in the suit were to begin on January 5, 1899, but the Deputy Commissioner was transferred, and the hearing was postponed till January 11, 1899. The suit got underway on this date in the court of Mr. Dewey, the new Deputy Commissioner. During the pendency of this suit, *Hazrat Mirza* had to make trips to Pathankot and Dhariwal. An interesting incident, conducive to strengthening one's faith, took place on the way to Pathankot.

On this journey, *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* and *Maulvi Abdul Karim Sialkoti* and others accompanied *Hazrat Mirza*. Many members of the movement from out of town had also joined them. Coincidentally, the house in which *Hazrat Mirza* and his companions stayed was in close proximity to the site where the new Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Dewey, was camped. Raja Ghulam Haider Khan, who was the reader of the Deputy Commissioner during the Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke case, was now the *Tehsildar* (a land revenue officer) of Pathankot and was actively involved in making arrangements for *Hazrat Mirza's* stay. Between the camp of the Deputy Commissioner and *Hazrat Mirza's* temporary residence there was an open ground that was used by the sojourning party to offer their daily prayers in congregation. The sun had set and it was time for the *Maghrib* prayers. *Hazrat Mirza* came out on the ground to join the congregational prayer and *Maulvi Abdul Karim Sialkoti* took his customary place at the head to lead the prayer. Soon his loud and melodious recitation of the Quran filled the air in all directions and fell on the ears of Mr. Dewey as he sat in his camp. He came out and stood transfixed listening to the Quran. When the prayer ended, he called Raja Ghulam Haider Khan, the *Tehsildar*, and enquired if he knew the people who were praying. On

receiving an affirmative reply, Mr. Dewey said: "I heard the Quran being recited in their prayer and it has affected me greatly. I have never heard such melody or felt so moved in my life. Will they pray again? And can they give me the opportunity to listen up close?" Raja Ghulam Haider Khan went to *Hazrat* Mirza and conveyed the Deputy Commissioner's request to him. *Hazrat* Mirza replied, "When we say our prayers again, the *sahib bahadur* is welcome to sit by us and listen to the Quran." At the next prayer, a chair was placed near the congregation for the Deputy Commissioner and he came and sat on it. When the prayer started and *Maulvi* Abdul Karim began reciting the Quran, the Deputy Commissioner was enraptured by the recitation and kept swaying from side to side as if bewitched. After the prayers, he praised the recitation profusely.

### **Journey to Dhariwal**

*Hazrat* Mirza had to travel to Dhariwal also for a hearing in this suit. The hearing was set for January 27, 1899, and *Hazrat* Mirza arrived a day earlier. He stayed as the guest of a local land owner, Rani Eshar Kaur, at a place called Khanda about one mile from Dhariwal. Many members of his party from Kapurthala, Jullandar, Jehlum and Lahore came there as well, and on January 28, 1899, the day of the hearing, the Friday congregational prayer was offered in an open ground with great dignity.

*Maulvi* Batalvi was also in town and said his prayers separately with his few followers. He expended a lot of energy shouting at the top of his voice and exhorting people to join his congregation if they were Muslims, but with the exception of a few, no one joined him. On the other hand, the attraction of *Hazrat* Mirza was so strong that people kept coming as if attracted by a magnet. There were more than two thousand people in his congregation that day who offered their Friday prayer with him. *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din gave the Friday sermon, which was very inspiring. During the sermon, workers from the local Dhariwal factory comprising Hindus and Muslims, the old and the young, men and women, came and surrounded the congregation as spectators. Thus, the prayer was conducted amongst a throng of people vying with each other for a better glimpse of the congregation. The British managers of the plant and their wives also came to see *Hazrat* Mirza, and at their request, he stepped forward towards them so that they could get a better look at him. His countenance was radiant and tranquil, and the British men and women kept gazing at him in fascination. Even otherwise, the crowd of those wishing to see him had become so thick that it became difficult to remain seated and perforce *Hazrat* Mirza got up and started strolling.

### **The proceeding in the suit**

The noteworthy development in the suit during that day's hearing was that the new counsel for *Maulvi* Batalvi argued that recent amendments in the law prohibited the concurrent hearing of the two suits of *Hazrat* Mirza and *Maulvi* Batalvi. In deference to this objection, the Deputy Commissioner postponed further hearing till February 14, 1899, on which date the suit against *Hazrat* Mirza was to be taken up first.

### ***Hazrat* Mirza's defense in English**

*Hazrat* Mirza prepared a very rational and detailed defense statement that was translated into English. He pleaded innocent to all the accusations that had been made against him. The first few lines of his statement are reproduced below:

I want to state first of all that I did not make any prophecy in my announcement of November 21, 1898, that endangered the life, property or reputation of Muhammad Hussain or any of his associates, nor was there any intention to cause such endangerment. My announcement of mutual imprecation dated November 21, 1898, was composed after the opposing party had made several printed requests for an imprecatory contest and sent many handwritten letters asking for an imprecation. The same applies to my second announcement dated November 30, 1898. Both announcements clearly show that the word 'disgrace' in this prophecy, i.e. in the Arabic revelation given in the announcement of November 21, 1898, means the disgrace of the false party. The disgrace is further qualified as being of a type that the false party has inflicted on the other party through some of its actions. This is the interpretation of the revealed sentence included in the announcement of November 21, 1898, i.e. the sentence, "The reward of evil is its like and they will be overwhelmed with disgrace." The literary meaning of this sentence is that the punishment for evil is disgrace but a disgrace that is like and similar to the disgrace that the transgressing party has inflicted on the innocent party. This revealed sentence is a reflection of the design and intention of the recipient of the revelation, and if careful and prudent thinking is applied, it becomes manifestly self-evident that this sentence means no more than that the transgressor is about to be disgraced in the same way as the disgrace actually inflicted by his hands on the innocent party.

Further on, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote that *Maulvi* Batalvi suffered an exemplary humiliation and the word of God was fulfilled. In other words, just like *Maulvi* Batalvi had exploited *Hazrat* Mirza's denial of the popular notion about the creed of Messiah to have a decree of heresy issued against him by some clerics, in a like manner a decree of heresy was issued against *Maulvi* Batalvi at the hands of the same clerics for denying the creed of the Messiah. *Hazrat* Mirza then went on to state in his defense:

I have been accused in the court as if I have an old habit of spontaneously prophesying about the death or disgrace of a person and then secretly endeavoring through my party to somehow fulfill that prophecy. In other words, that I am a type of dacoit, murderer or bandit and that my party is made up of similar vagabonds and dangerous men who are professional criminals. However, I would like to make known to the court that this accusation is totally false and a slanderous defamation of my party and me.

In defense of his party and himself, *Hazrat* Mirza then discussed the prophecies relating to Abdullah Atham and Lekhram, and the suit of Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke, and informed the government that the prophecies were not from him but from God. He asked the government to test his truthfulness and stated:

I wish that the government would demand of me to show some heavenly sign or a prophecy strictly within the confines of peace and safety in support of my truthfulness. Then the reality of the false allegation that portrays me almost like a dacoit would become manifest. There is a God in Heaven whose powers makes all this possible. Hence there is no better way to determine the truth of a person who claims to receive revelation than to ask him to make a prophecy.

Further on he stated:

It has been over a year since I printed and distributed my resolve that I will not publish any prophecy regarding death or harm etc. to anyone. If this prophecy in the announcement for imprecation dated November 21, 1898, had been for the death or similar other disgrace, I would have never published it. The condition in my revelation of a 'like disgrace' is such that after examining it there

is no need for the authorities to dwell further on the matter. God is fully aware of my good intentions, and the conscience and fair-mindedness of any person who will carefully read this prophecy and see its interpretations, which I published before the suit, would certainly bear evidence that I am not at fault. I will give proof to the court that I wrote the announcement for imprecation after listening for a long time to words that shatter a person's heart.

After this, *Hazrat Mirza* provided quotes and references of the unholy and instigating posters, and the dirty and filthy statements of *Maulvi Batalvi*, his disciples and his followers. He also referred to the decree issued by them claiming that *Mirza Qadiani* was an infidel and deserved to be killed. The newspaper *Al-Hakam* had carried an article about *Maulvi Batalvi* and the article had been entered as evidence in the suit. *Hazrat Mirza* commented about that article in his defense as follows:

One of my disciples wrote an article about Muhammad Hussain in the newspaper *Al-Hakam*, which is included in the case file. Keeping in mind the manner of religious debates, it is certainly not what it has been made out to be, but nevertheless it is a proven fact that I have no connection with this newspaper.

The long and short of it was that the statement of the defendant was submitted to the court and the court appointed February 24, 1899, as the date to announce the judgment.

### ***Hazrat Mirza* prophesies the decision**

Strangely, the announcement of November 21, 1898, *Hazrat Mirza's* prophecy predicting disgrace for *Maulvi Batalvi*, *Jaffer Zatalli* and *Abul Hassan Tibti*, had mentioned, "the oppressor will cut his hands." Prior to the announcement of the judgment in this suit, *Hazrat Mirza* received a revelation in Arabic on February 21, 1899, in which this sentence, along with an additional word, was repeated. With the addition of the new word, the revelation now stated, "The oppressor will cut his hands and his mischief mongering will be stopped." *Hazrat Mirza* included this revelation along with its meanings in his book *Haqiqat-ul-Mahdi* (Reality of the Rightly Guided One) that was scheduled for publication on February 21, 1899, and this book was handed out to people in the court premises before the announcement of the decision. When the decision was announced in Gurdaspur, *Hazrat Mirza's* counsel, Mr. Brown, and all fair-minded people who had

received the book spoke out spontaneously: "Without a doubt, God's word has been fulfilled." How this occurred is narrated later in this book.

### **Mr. Dewey's judgment – the suit is dismissed**

When Mr. Dewey, the District Magistrate, read the entire case file, he was amazed at the abusive articles that Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, Jaffer Zatalli and Abul Hassan Tibti had published in the newspapers. In contrast, the police as the initiator and prosecutor of the suit could not produce even a single similar statement by *Hazrat Mirza*, despite its best efforts. Mr. Dewey, therefore, dismissed the suit, but did tell *Hazrat Mirza* that a response to such posters by resorting to the court would be more appropriate than a direct confrontation.

### **Maulvi Muhammad Hussain's hands are tied**

As already mentioned, the suit against *Maulvi Batalvi* was to be heard separately after the suit against *Hazrat Mirza* had been decided. However, strange are the ways of God! The prophecy of disgrace had to be fulfilled, and fate brought *Maulvi Batalvi* to court. There was no requirement for him to be there when the judgment in the suit against *Hazrat Mirza* was to be given, but he came nevertheless, merely to watch the show. When the magistrate saw him in court, he decided to cut short his work by deciding the other suit as well. The way he did it was to write a statement and ask both *Maulvi Batalvi* and *Hazrat Mirza* to sign it. The statement read:

In future no party in respect of its opponent will prophesy about death etc. or make hurtful statements; no one will call the other infidel, Antichrist, liar or fabricator; no one will invite the other for mutual imprecation; Qadian will not be written with a small *kaf* nor Batala with *toay* and *alif*;<sup>6</sup> the parties will use gentle language in respect to each other; rude and abusive language will be shunned; and each party will, as far as possible, bind their friends and disciples to the same conditions. Further, the same conditions should be adhered to not only among the Muslims but also with the Christians.

### **An announcement for the information of the disciples**

After the decision in the above suit, *Hazrat Mirza*, in fulfillment of the pledge he had made, published an announcement on February 26,

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<sup>6</sup> *Kaf*, *toay* and *alif* are letters of the Urdu alphabets. This part of the order was meant to stop the deliberate distortions of names to give them a derogatory meaning. – Translator.

1899, in which he exhorted the members of his party to abide strictly by the terms of the agreement. He also asked *Maulvi* Batalvi to similarly caution the *Ahl-e Hadith* and other unrestrained individuals who were his friends, to desist from calling them infidels, Antichrists and liars, and hurling hurtful abuses at them. *Hazrat* Mirza wrote that if this did not happen, not only will the government proceed against them but also *Hazrat* Mirza's party would reserve the right to take them to court for breach of agreement, and use of abusive and hurtful language.

### ***Maulvi* Batalvi's disgrace completed in all aspects**

*Maulvi* Batalvi had instituted this suit against *Hazrat* Mirza to disgrace him, but his attempt boomeranged. In trying to disgrace him, he disgraced himself. The end result of the suit was that his carefully crafted decrees of heresy against *Hazrat* Mirza were effectively nullified. In accordance with the statement he had signed in the court, he could no longer call *Hazrat* Mirza an infidel, nor could he present decrees declaring *Hazrat* Mirza an infidel and the Antichrist to the masses and lead them astray from righteousness. Thus he demolished with his own hands the edifice of heresy that he had built with so much effort. There could be no greater failure or disgrace. *Hazrat* Mirza described *Maulvi* Batalvi's state of infamy and disgrace in his book, *Tiryaq-ul- Qulub* as follows:

The District Magistrate of Gurdaspur in his order of February 24, 1899, made *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sign a pledge that in the future, he would not call me an Antichrist, an infidel and a liar...Now see where has his *Istiftah* gone that he had prepared by traveling as far as Benares. If he was in the right in giving this decree, he should have stated before the magistrate, "I certainly consider him to be an infidel and that is why I call him so."...In particular, given the fact that, by the Grace and Blessing of God, I stand by the same creed now and will do so till the end of my life that Muhammad Hussain declared as heresy. What kind of integrity is it that he destroyed all his decrees out of the fear of the magistrate?...What greater disgrace can there be that this person demolished his building with his own hands.'

It is certainly true that I, too, have signed this notice but there is no opprobrium on me in the sight of God and those who decide justly; neither does such a signature constitute any disgrace for me because it has been my creed from the beginning that no one



becomes an infidel or Antichrist as a result of denying my claims.<sup>7</sup> Such a person is misguided and has deviated from the correct path, but I do not call him faithless. It is true that I do consider all such people who deny the truths that God has made known to me, as being astray and far from the path of truth and rectitude. There is (also) no doubt that I deem any person who has deviated from the truth and what is right, to be misguided to a degree, but I do not call any person who recites the *kalimah* (Muslim article of faith) an infidel, unless he makes himself an infidel by calling me an infidel and accusing me of falsehood.

From the beginning, my opponents have taken the initiative in this matter by calling me an infidel and preparing a decree for me. I never took any initiative to prepare a decree for them, and they will themselves admit the fact that, if Allah reckons me a Muslim, then by making me an infidel, the decree of the Messenger of Allah, blessings of Allah and peace be upon him, against them is that they themselves are infidels. So I do not call them an infidel but by calling me an infidel they themselves come within the purview of the Prophet's decree. Hence, if I pledged before Mr. Dewey that I would not call them infidels then, in fact, this is my creed that I do not consider any Muslim an infidel.

The conclusion from this passage was very clear. *Hazrat* Mirza did not call anyone an infidel merely for denying his claims. He called *Maulvi* Batalvi an infidel only after *Maulvi* Batalvi had called him an infidel and obtained decrees of heresy against him. Even this was done under the authority of the *hadith* that cautions against calling a Muslim an infidel because the charge of infidelity reverts back on the caller. In a way, this was a punishment prescribed by the Holy Prophet for accusing a Muslim of heresy. *Hazrat* Mirza was fully justified, therefore, to call *Maulvi* Batalvi an infidel under the punitive provisions of this *hadith* because *Maulvi* Batalvi had called a Muslim an infidel. However, when *Maulvi* Batalvi pledged before the magistrate that, he would not in the future call

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7 This point is worth remembering that calling a person an infidel for denying one's claim is the business only of those prophets who bring a revealed law and new orders from God. However, apart from (denial of) prophets with revealed law, the denial of all other recipients of revelation and saints (*muḥaddath*), regardless of how highly eminent they may be before God and elevated by the investiture of Divine discourse, does not make a person an infidel. – Footnote *Tiryāq-ul-Qulub*.

*Hazrat* Mirza an infidel, then *Hazrat* Mirza, too, no longer had the right to call him an infidel because the mere denial of claims was not a sufficient basis for this grave charge.

In short, when *Maulvi* Batalvi pledged not to call *Hazrat* Mirza an infidel, he did so against his creed, out of fear of the magistrate, but when *Hazrat* Mirza pledged reciprocally, he did so according to his creed, which was that when a person who recites the *kalimah* did not call him an infidel, he had no right to call him one. *Maulvi* Batalvi certainly had the duty to tell the magistrate: "When I consider him an infidel then why should I not call him one? My creed makes it incumbent on me to call him an infidel." However, out of fear of the magistrate, he wrote under great duress that he would not call *Hazrat* Mirza an infidel. This was a moment of great humiliation for him, and he must be wringing his hands with regret and wishing he had not instituted this suit that had tied his hands and negated the decrees for which he had endeavored so much. In contrast, whatever *Hazrat* Mirza wrote were rebuttals of *Maulvi* Batalvi's charges, for he never initiated any opposition or charges of heresy against him. Hence when *Maulvi* Batalvi abandoned calling him an infidel, what was the need for *Hazrat* Mirza to call a reciter of the *kalimah* an infidel? This was not his creed.

In fact, he was strongly opposed to calling persons who recite the *kalimah* infidels. Hence the pledge that the magistrate asked him to take was totally in harmony with his desire. He had addressed the religious scholars many times in writing and pleaded with them in the name of God to abandon for some period their charges of heresy against him, and to wait and see how God decided his affair. He begged them to see his work, and if they found it to be useful for religion, to admit it. Otherwise, God, Who is the enemy of liars and fabricators, would deal with him and he would die in vain. However, the scholars did not refrain from hurling charges of heresy at him. Now when the chief hurler of these charges had been bound and gagged, *Hazrat* Mirza's wish was fulfilled. There was no need for him to call *Maulvi* Batalvi an infidel nor did he have any right to do so now. When a court decision was exactly according to a person's wishes, was he victorious and esteemed or was he disgraced?

### **Publication of the book *Haqiqat-ul-Mahdi***

As already stated, *Hazrat* Mirza had drawn the government's attention to the fact that *Maulvi* Batalvi was a liar. He refuted the information *Maulvi* Batalvi had provided to the government in which he had alleged that *Hazrat* Mirza's claim of being the *Mahdi* was part of a nefarious design to

revolt against the government at an appropriate time after gathering sufficient force, and that he was even more dangerous than the Sudanese *Mahdi*. *Hazrat* Mirza also told the government that *Maulvi* Batalvi's assurance about not believing in the coming of a *Mahdi* who would fight and kill infidels was false and hypocritical. If he was genuine in his assurance, then he should declare his creed openly before the clerics of Punjab and India. In fact, he should have no hesitation in presenting his creed anywhere, whether in Arabia or elsewhere, because a believer was never shy to reveal his creed. Accordingly, *Hazrat* Mirza said he had no hesitation in announcing his belief that no *Mahdi* would ever come to spread Islam by force and kill the infidels merely for rejecting Islam, because such a violent creed was a calumny and slander against the pious teachings of Islam. Islam was such a reasonable religion and so totally in harmony with human nature that it did not need the sword to manifest its truth, or for its propagation and domination. During the time of the Holy Prophet, and the later period of his companions, the sword was lifted only because it was required for the defense of Islam. Those were purely defensive wars.

No blood-shedding *Mahdi* was going to come to spread Islam by the sword. It was true, however, that every reformer and person commissioned by God was a *Mahdi* in the sense of being Divinely guided because the word *Mahdi* meant 'one who is guided'. During the era of such a person, the world was steeped in moral darkness and was rife with misguidance; since this person was Divinely guided, his path was the path of guidance and the title of *Mahdi* was therefore very appropriate for him. In the period of the Promised Messiah especially, there was no need for another *Mahdi* because the Promised Messiah himself would be the *Mahdi*, i.e. Divinely guided. The *hadith* of Ibn Maja, "There is no *Mahdi* except Jesus," provided clear testimony in support of this assertion.

In order to prove the truth of this claim, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote the book *Haqiqat-ul- Mahdi* in Arabic and gave its Persian translation between the lines of the Arabic text. The book was published on February 21, 1899. In this book, he conducted a comparative analysis of his creed and that of the *Ahl-e Hadith* about the *Mahdi*, and posed the proposition that if *Maulvi* Batalvi was the highest representative cleric of the *Ahl-e Hadith*, then perforce his creed was that of his sect as given in the book. In that case, he had brazenly lied to the government about his creed of *Mahdi* to hypocritically obtain an agricultural estate. If, however, his actual creed was as expressed before the government, then it was proper for *Maulvi* Batalvi to admit and announce it openly as *Hazrat* Mirza had done. The publication of this book left *Maulvi* Batalvi speechless. He chose to ignore it and not issue any reply.

### **The nadir of *Maulvi* Batalvi's humiliation**

The court stopped *Maulvi* Batalvi from resorting to his decrees of heresy, and there could have been no greater failure or disgrace for him. He was the main architect of the opposition against *Hazrat* Mirza, and after the court silenced him, his followers and disciples such as Abul Hassan Tibti and Jaffer Zatalli also fell silent. Abul Hassan Tibti disappeared from the public eye without much ado. Jaffer Zatalli stayed in the public eye for some time but his life work mirrored the meaning of his last name, which means "idle talker or narrator of false and idle stories." He just specialized in idle and false stories, and therefore the respectable section of society always looked down upon him. No one considered him particularly religious or worthy of attention, and after an insignificant period in which he just added to his scroll of misdeeds, he too faded from the scene.

*Maulvi* Batalvi was considered to be the leading cleric and spokesperson for the *Ahl-e Hadith* sect. Whenever he came to Lahore, there would be large crowds at the railway station to receive him, but after this incident, people did not want to have anything to do with him. Not only did the crowds disappear, but his comings and goings became non-events. He went around alone, a forlorn and pitiable figure. This humble author once saw him strolling alone among the waiting public at the Batala railway station like an ordinary cleric. His like-minded *Ahl-e Hadith* clerics stopped associating with him, and soon he was at loggerhead with them. There was a time when he was their leading cleric and commanded their respect, but now the same clerics spoke to him rudely and insulted him on trifling matters. His magazine *Ishat al-Sunnah* went out of business and things deteriorated to the point where clerics of his own genre refused to publish his articles in their newspapers. In a state of great helplessness, he roamed around with his articles but could find no one to script them. On hearing his circumstances, *Hazrat* Mirza sent him a message inviting him to Qadian and offering to have his articles scripted and even printed in Qadian. Shame and regret prevented him from accepting this offer. His children turned out to be good for nothing. His failure was complete in matters both temporal and religious. After the death of *Hazrat* Mirza, and during the period of Maulana Nur-ud-Din as the head of the organization, Dr. Mirza Yaqub Beg brought one of *Maulvi* Batalvi's sons to Qadian and enrolled him in *Madrassah Talim-ul-Islam* where he studied for free for some time.

### ***Maulvi* Batalvi recants his decree of heresy**

The word of God is always fulfilled. In 1893, *Maulvi* Batalvi's opposition of *Hazrat* Mirza had reached new heights and his statements and

speeches contained nothing but abuses and charges of heresy against *Hazrat Mirza*. This was the period when his opposition even encompassed plans on *Hazrat Mirza's* life. With the fire of opposition raging so strongly, *Hazrat Mirza* made an announcement on May 1893, in which he wrote with respect to *Maulvi Batalvi*:

I saw that this Muhammad Hussain will accept before his death that I am a believer and I saw as if he had abandoned calling me an infidel and returned (from this position). And this is my vision and I hope that Allah, the Most High, will make it come true.

Everyone was astonished to read this announcement, including *Hazrat Mirza's* own disciples. Was it ever possible that such a dangerous and hardened enemy, who was the architect of the entire opposition, would ever abandon calling *Hazrat Mirza* an infidel, retract his decree of heresy and consider him a believer? *Maulvi Batalvi*, too, laughed at the absurdity of this announcement, which only spurred him on to greater opposition. He intensified feeding misinformation to the government and resorted to all means possible to oppose *Hazrat Mirza* even to the extent of secretly participating in assassination plans. However, *Hazrat Mirza* repeatedly stated that one day, *Maulvi Batalvi* would abandon the charge of heresy. This led some of *Hazrat Mirza's* disciples to ask him: "Then should we consider him our friend and not our opponent?" *Hazrat Mirza* replied: "Dealings with a person are conducted according to the current position. What will happen in the future should be left to God."<sup>8</sup>

Towards the end of *Hazrat Mirza's* life, *Maulvi Batalvi* softened somewhat, and the intensity of his opposition declined. Some people

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8 Once the prophecy about *Maulvi Batalvi* was under discussion and *Hazrat Mirza* said, "There is no doubt that I have forcefully claimed that he will return (to the right course) and Allah has fated it as such. Actually, Muhammad Hussain was a shrewed person but I could see from the beginning that he was self-conceited. Hence, Allah desired to purge him in this way; this is an emetic for him..." *Hazrat Mirza* further stated, "Allah knows best but he has at least done one (good) thing; he wrote the review of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* with great sincerity because at the time, his condition was such that he would sometimes pick up my shoes, dust them and put them in front of me. Once he took me inside his house so that it may be blessed and once he insisted on pouring water for my ablution. In short, he used to show great sincerity. Several times he expressed the intention to come and live in Qadian but I advised him that this was not the right time. Then he faced this trial. It would not be strange if God brings him to a good end because of this sincerity." A brother asked, "What should we consider him now?" He replied, "The present decisions have to be made on the current situation. He is an enemy of this

thought he was tired but, in fact, he was having a change of heart. He had seen that despite his best efforts to oppose *Hazrat* Mirza, God was granting *Hazrat* Mirza success and his Movement was growing continuously. *Maulvi* Batalvi, on the other hand, was facing failure and disappointment on all sides. *Hazrat* Mirza's reputation was growing exponentially while *Maulvi* Batalvi's considerable reputation at the start of his campaign against *Hazrat* Mirza had totally eroded, and disgrace and humiliation had embraced him on all sides. The final act of this change of heart came in the year 1913, after *Hazrat* Mirza had passed away and *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din was the head of the movement.

A lawsuit was filed in the court of Lala Devki Nandan, Civil Judge First Class, Gujranwala in 1913, which was identified as case #300, Ms. Kareem Bibi daughter of Muhammad-ud-Din Lohar (Plaintiff), versus Rahmat Ullah, son of Abdullah, caste Lohar, resident of Nizamabad (Respondent). *Maulvi* Batalvi appeared as an expert witness and gave a statement on oath in which he declared members of the *Ahmadiyya* sect as Muslims and affirmed openly that they were not infidels. A portion of his statement is reproduced below. Giving evidence about the creed of his sect *Ahl-e Hadith*, *Maulvi* Batalvi said:

The first sect was Hanafi; it was followed shortly thereafter by the Maliki sect that is attributed to *Imam* Malik; after that was the Shafai sect and after that was the Hanbali sect that is attributed to *Imam* Ahmad ibn Hanbal. In the beginning, all the followers of Islam had the same religion and it was an era of peace with no internal contentions. There was peace in the period of the Messenger of Allah because of his presence, and after him peace prevailed because of the presence of his Companions and those who followed them. There were no major disputes to cause mutual recrimination or opposition. This period gave way to an era of selfishness and innovations and people began turning to the *Imam* they loved and in whom they had faith. They became his followers and the sects were established. All these sects consider the Quran to be the word of God, and like the Quran, these sects accept the *Hadith*.

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Movement. See, as long as a life-germ stays as such, it is called a life-germ although it can become a person. As it changes states, its name also changes and it becomes a clot (*alaqa*), a lump of flesh (*mudghah*) etc. and finally becomes a person at the appointed time. The same applies to him. At present he is an opponent and an enemy of this Movement, and this is how he should be considered." – *Al Hakam*, January 17, 1903.

One sect, the *Ahmadiyya* has been born recently since Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib of Qadian claimed to be the Messiah and *Mahdi*. This sect too accepts the Quran and the *Hadith* alike...our sect does not consider any of the sects mentioned above as entirely heretical.

The court's understanding of this statement, which was reflected in the judgment, was as follows:

And likewise in the opinion of *Maulvi* Abdul Hakim sahib, witness for the plaintiff, members of the *Ahmadiyya* sect, who are followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, are infidels although in the opinion of the witness *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain they are not infidels.

It is conducive to reflect on the circumstances of the case. A woman filed a suit in the court of a judge for dissolution of her marriage. The grounds were that her husband had become a member of the *Ahmadiyya* organization; since the scholars considered members of the *Ahmadiyya* movement as infidels and a Muslim woman could not remain married to an infidel, the suit requested an injunction dissolving the marriage. Scholars were called as witnesses. *Maulvi* Abdul Hakim testified that members of the *Ahmadiyya* organization were infidels but *Maulvi* Batalvi did not declare them as infidels. On the contrary, in unambiguous terms he stated in his sworn deposition that they were not infidels. The person, who had devoted his whole life to calling *Hazrat* Mirza an infidel and in fact declared even those persons as infidels who had any social contact with him or his party, now, before his death, stated on oath in court that the disciples of *Hazrat* Mirza were not infidels. Can there be any clearer recanting of the decree of heresy?

Further testimony about this change of heart was provided in a statement of *Maulvi* Umar-ud-Din. The following passage from his statement provides a good summary of the full text:

Once during the period of *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din sahib, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib came to Simla for fundraising and asked for donations from our *Ahmadiyya* branch in Simla. When we refused to give him any donations, *Maulvi* sahib said, "Even *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din has given me a donation for this religious work and this work is for the welfare of the Muslims generally."

We then inquired from Qadian and *Hazrat Maulana* Nur-ud-Din wrote back, “The donations should not be given individually; a collective donation from the party may be given.”

Two years after this, probably in 1911, *Maulvi* Batalvi called the members of the *Ahmadiyya* party of Simla to meet with him in Sanjoli where he was staying. He met with all of us *Ahmadiyya* members very cordially, shaking hands with some and embracing others. He happily gave us permission to pray in congregation in the town’s *Ahl-e Hadith* mosque – the same mosque in which he prayed. When *Maulvi* Batalvi was embracing me, I said, “*Maulvi* sahib now you too have become an infidel because your decree was that whoever exchanges greetings with or talks to members of the *Ahmadiyya* organization is also an infidel, and today you yourself are shaking hands and embracing.” *Maulvi* sahib replied, “Be quiet; do not talk of such things. I do not consider you people as infidels.” Consequently, after this in a sworn deposition before Judge Deoki Nandan, he stated the same thing that, “We do not call the members of the *Ahmadiyya* organization infidels,” i.e. he considers them as believers.

A short period after that, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib visited Simla again and came to visit my brother-in-law *Mistry* Muhammad Ismail sahib Jullandri at his store located in Lukkar Bazaar. Present at the occasion were *Babu* Abdur Rahman sahib Shimlawi, *Mistry* Muhammad Ismail and *Babu* Muhammad Yousaf, Superintendent in the Department of Meteorology. *Babu* Muhammad Yousaf said to *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi: “*Maulana* you have now seen that *Hazrat* Mirza sahib was truthful; now you should accept him.” *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib replied, “If *Hazrat* Mirza sahib were alive, I would have pledged myself to him but he has passed away.” *Babu* Muhammad Yousaf then said, “*Maulana*, his successor *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din is present and you can take the pledge on his hand.” *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain sahib replied, “Nur-ud-Din does not know more than I do; he is not even my equal. I cannot give my pledge to him. Yes, if Mirza sahib had been alive I would have pledged myself to him.”

This shows that *Maulvi* Batalvi before his death had not only recanted his decree of infidelity against *Hazrat* Mirza and considered him a believer



but had become so convinced of *Hazrat Mirza's* knowledge and truthfulness that if he had been alive, *Maulvi Batalvi* would have pledged himself on his hand and become his disciple.

## APPENDIX

### Footnote 5 in detail

*Maulvi Batalvi* not only decreed death for *Hazrat Mirza* but also participated at times in the conspiracies of individuals planning to assassinate him. The following narration is taken from the account of *Maulvi Umar-ud-Din*:

Once I was in Simla searching for a job. This was the time when *Hazrat Mirza sahib* had published a poster announcing a reward of five hundred rupees. The poster was addressed to all religious scholars and challenged them to identify even a single individual who had survived for twenty-three years after claiming falsely to be Divinely appointed and presenting false revelations. If they identified such a person and provided proof of it, they would be given a reward of five hundred rupees. *Hazrat Mirza* sent this poster by registered mail to *Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi* and *Hafiz Muhammad Yousaf sahib Amritsari*. One day, *Maulvi Muhammad Hussain sahib*, *Hafiz Muhammad Yousaf sahib*, *Maulvi Abdur Rahman sahib Amritsari Siah* and I were sitting in the Jamia Mosque Simla when the postman brought this poster. In terms of a response, two strategies were deliberated and discussed at that time.

1. The first was to ask *Mirza sahib* to debate the issue at the soon-to-be-held convention of *Nudwat-ul-Ulama* in Amritsar. This was a deliberate ruse because *Maulvi Batalvi* himself was convinced that giving a satisfactory answer to *Hazrat Mirza's* challenge and winning a contest was very difficult. *Maulvi Batalvi* maintained: "The benefit of challenging *Mirza sahib* to a debate is that in his book *Anjam Atham*, he has vowed by God to not debate religious scholars and so he will not come to the *Nudwa* convention for a debate. This will give us a victory and enhance our reputation among the public because we invited *Mirza sahib* for a debate at the *Nudwat-ul-Ulama* convention but he refused to come. We

will then be able to claim victory.” Accordingly, this was the reply that was given on behalf of *Hafiz* Muhammad Yousaf sahib Amritsari through a published poster.

2. The second response discussed at this meeting was my suggestion, “Why not kill such a person who is the cause of so much dissension in Islam? When the scholars consider his existence to be so destructive for Islam then he should be destroyed as soon as possible.” Initially, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain tried to side step this proposal and said: “You are still a child. Do you think that we have not done anything in this matter so far? We have sent many persons to assassinate Mirza but either his network of spies is so good or he possesses knowledge of some occult sciences, because invariably he finds out about it. In fact, most of the times the assassin ends up becoming his devoted disciple. God alone knows what magic he possesses. (Beware) you may not go the same way.” I replied, “Sir, I am not such a novice. There is no way that the spies can make me admit anything until the deed is done. As far as the magic is concerned, you can be assured that I am immune to Mirza’s magic.” Thus, when he saw such courage on my part, he became very happy and expressed approval of my plan and promised to help me in its implementation. Since I considered this work to be a service for my religion, I resolved to undertake it.

In those days, I was a favorite of *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain. He was my religious mentor and had taken the responsibility of completing my religious education. But after the plan (of assassination) had been finalized, I became privy to some ugly facts about *Hafiz* Muhammad Yousaf Amritsari that made me leave in disgust and I came to Jullandar. However, I told *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain that I would complete on my own the work he had delegated to me. After reaching Jullandar, I was faced with some circumstances as a result of which I had to go back to school. During this time, I met Dr. Basharat Ahmad through the courtesy of an *Ahmadi* dervish. A few days in his company changed my entire thinking and I went to Qadian – not with the intention of committing an assassination but to become a disciple. When I was

returning after taking the pledge at the hands of *Hazrat* Mirza, I met *Maulvi* Batalvi in Batala. He was very saddened to learn that I had become an *Ahmadi*. I told him, "God Himself severs the life artery of a person who falsely attributes things to Allah as is apparent from the verse *Qata teen* (69:46). Then why is it that a period of twenty-three years has elapsed since the claim of receiving revelation, and God has not severed Mirza sahib's life artery nor has any person succeeded in doing so? You have made many attempts in this matter yourself but have always been unsuccessful. You sent me specially to cut Mirza sahib's life artery but I have become his slave. Do consider sometimes whether this constitutes clear proof for a fair-minded person that Mirza sahib has communion with God and is truthful?" But *Maulvi* Batalvi quickly disengaged himself and went his way.

***AL-BALAGH (THE COMMUNIQUE)  
OR FARIAD DARD  
(GRIEF-STRICKEN PLEA)***

The insolence and abuse that the Christian clergy heaped on the Holy Prophet grieved *Hazrat* Mirza greatly. He was a very tolerant and forgiving man, and the traits of mercy and kindness were deeply ingrained in his nature. Even his cursory acquaintances testified to this. There were times when people sat and abused him at his face but his patience, forbearance and forgiveness were unruffled. However, he was deeply affected by any affront to Islam or to the Holy Prophet. He used to say: “The loss of my property and the dismemberment of my children before my eyes would be easier on me than to see my religion defamed and vilified.” When the Christian clergyman, Rev. Ahmad Shah, published his obnoxious and filthy book, *Ummahat-ul-Mominin* (Wives of the Holy Prophet), which reviled and disparaged the Holy Prophet without a shred of reasoned argument, *Hazrat* Mirza was deeply grieved along with the rest of the Muslims.<sup>1</sup> *Hazrat* Mirza’s grief was expressed succinctly in the phrase: “My comfort has been shattered.” As a result of this sorrow and supplications, Allah gave him a couple of new weapons to demolish the two greatest bastions of evil and polytheism, namely the creed of atonement and the creed of Jesus’ divinity. The first weapon was the discovery of the oint-

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1 Details of this book and its impact on *Hazrat* Mirza as narrated by Maulvi Abdul Karim were given in Chapter 98.

ment of Jesus in ancient books of medicine. This was the ointment that the disciples of Jesus had applied to his wounds after he was taken down alive from the cross. The second was discovering signs of the tomb of Jesus in Kashmir. Both of these signs cast a pall of gloom on the houses of these worshippers of evil – the Christian clergy. It was under these circumstances that *Hazrat Mirza* wrote the book *Al-Balagh* (The Communiqué) or *Fariad Dard* (Grief-Stricken Plea) in 1898. He wrote the book in Urdu with the intention of translating it into Arabic and Persian also. He had the book translated into English by *Maulana Muhammad Ali* so that it could be distributed widely in India and abroad.

### **A plea to the Muslims**

In the book, *Fariad Dard*, *Hazrat Mirza* drew the attention of the Muslims of the world to the grave situation they faced from the Christian clerics, the *Aryas* and the Hindus, who had launched a united attack of unholy accusations against Islam, either as a result of gross ignorance or malicious falsification. There was real danger that the current younger generation or future generations of Muslims may get poisoned by this propaganda and become disgusted with their religion. Rev. Imam-ud-Din had made these intentions quite clear when he wrote: “If we are not able to convert Muslims to Christianity, then at the very least we will not let Muslims remain Muslim.” Hence, Muslims should not just contend themselves by asking the government to confiscate malicious books but should unite to answer the accusations so that the present and future Muslim generations may be saved from this murderous venom. *Hazrat Mirza* solicited advice from the Muslims on how best to counter this situation and presented his own suggestion as follows:

The accusations from all the books of the opponents should be collected and answered in the form of a book. About 50,000 copies of this book should be printed and widely distributed throughout the country. In this way, the present Muslim generation can be saved from this murderous venom. This entire work can be done at a cost of Rs. 50,000... because this is a financial matter, there is a need right at the onset to carefully check and research (the following questions): Who are the individuals capable of undertaking this work? Whose writing can attract the heart of the world to Islam? Who is the person whose beauty of expression and strength of arguments and manner of reasoning is easy to understand and satisfactory? Who has the speech to disburse and completely erase all

objections? With these thoughts in mind, I have written ten requirements that I consider necessary in such a writer.<sup>2</sup> However, it is not necessary to follow my suggestion. Every person should reflect fully and suggest independently the appropriate person to whom this service should be delegated and who, in their opinion, is best suited to perform this work with ease and elegance. I am willing to undertake the following responsibility: Every person should write down their suggestion and send it to me and I will collect these suggestions. When all the suggestions have been collected, I will publish them in the form of a magazine. Then, the proposal that has the support of the majority would be adopted, and it shall be incumbent on everyone to follow the majority decision with sincerity and assist financially according to their ability.

*Hazrat* Mirza's plea to the Muslims of the world to collect all past and present objections against Islam for the purpose of formulating responses was a measure of the pain he felt at the sully of Islam's good name and a measure of his worry to save the offspring of Muslims from the attacks of the infidels and disbelievers. His plea included the need to identify a person who had the ability to reply to these objections, and he outlined what he considered to be the essential requirements of such a person. These requirements were so reasonable that it was difficult to disagree with them, but the only person in the whole world during that period who had these qualifications was *Hazrat* Mirza himself. Yet he did not give any priority to his suggestion but clearly mentioned that all Muslim broth-

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2 These ten requirements were given in the book, *Fariad Dard*. The gist of these conditions was that, apart from being an expert scholar of religion, the person should meet the following requirements: 1) A scholar of the Arabic language and complete familiarity with its lexicon 2) His religious knowledge should be such that he had a God-gifted ability to research, get into details and finer points, and make convincing arguments 3) He should be knowledgeable in the natural sciences, medicine, astronomy and geography 4) He should know the relevant portions of the Bible to confront the Christians 5) He should have a real connection with God, be truthful and faithful in the love of God, be sincere and internally pure, have a virtuous disposition and be totally devoted to Allah, because the knowledge of religion is part of the Heavenly sciences 6) He should be familiar with history 7) He should be familiar with logic and the art of the dialectic 8) In order to argue these points, he should have a large number of books on all these topics 9) His life should be devoted to the service of religion so that he would have enough time at his disposal 10) His speech and writings should be supplemented with the power of miracles, because to obtain real enlightened and full satisfaction, a person is dependent upon seeing miracles, i.e. Heavenly signs.

ers should send in their proposals, and the matter would be decided by the majority opinion as to who was the fittest person to take on the responsibility of this undertaking, and how the money would be collected. This was an eminently reasonable proposal formulated on the most equitable rules to allow all Muslims to come together and cooperatively strive against a common enemy.

The English edition of this book *Fariad Dard* was published immediately after its translation but because of the Muslims' apathy, remissness and predisposition to oppose *Hazrat Mirza* in all affairs, the Urdu edition was not published until after his death. The English edition was published immediately in the hope that the western educated section of the Muslim society may pay greater attention to this problem because of their pretension to open-mindedness, but even with them, this grief-stricken plea proved only to be a cry in the wilderness. Given this response from the more liberal section of the society, it was obvious that much could not be expected from the narrow-minded, parochially educated section of the society. In light of these circumstances, the following elegy written by *Hazrat Mirza* was so appropriate:

Destitute, forlorn and friendless has become the religion of  
Muhammad,  
Everyone is self-preoccupied, no one cares for the religion of  
Muhammad.

Floods of corruption are sweeping away men by the thousands,  
Alas even on seeing this, people are quite unconcerned.

O owners of Divine grace! Why are you so remiss?  
Are you asleep or is it that the fortune of faith is not awake?

O Muslims! For God's sake cast a glance at faith's condition,  
The calamities my eyes perceive need no description.

O you who claim to be courageous and brave! Fire has touched  
your garments,  
It behooves now not for men of faith to watch idly from a distance.

For the sake of religion my blood constantly boils in my heart,  
Only the Great Knower of Secrets is aware of this condition of my  
heart.

None but God knows the sorrow that this inflicts on me,  
Of poison we are made to drink but cannot describe it in these  
terms.

Everyone worries about his family and near ones,  
Alas there is none to worry about this destitute (Islam).

I see religion bleeding as bled the martyrs of Karbala,  
Strange it is that people have no love in their hearts for this  
Beloved.

It amazes me greatly when I behold they spend only on them-  
selves,  
In the way of Allah their generosity and munificence is none.

O you who have the means and the resolve to help the faith,  
Perform the favor and I do not see whether it is big or small.

Behold the religion being interred by the cruelty of the outsiders,  
Is the religion the like of which exists not under the heaven.

In this time of difficulty and friendlessness there exists no resort  
for us,  
But to pray for help and supplicate at dawn.

O God grant no happiness to the blackguard,  
Who has no concern for the religion of Ahmad.

O Brother! This life of ease and enjoyment is short-lived,  
There is no permanence to a life of luxury and to blooming gar-  
dens.

If the ordinary Muslims paid no attention to the service of Islam, they themselves were the losers, but *Hazrat* Mirza and his party were fully devoted to this objective. Despite their small numbers, limited resources, poverty and helplessness, the excellent literature produced in a short period of time by his party in support of Islam and comprehensively rebutting the charges against it by the opponents, is a glowing tribute to their dedication to this objective.



### ***Hazrat Mirza was not the initiator of hostility against the Christians and Arya***

It is a matter of great regret that the newspapers *Observer* and *Paisa Akhbar*, two Muslim-owned newspapers published in English and Urdu respectively from Lahore at that time, took the position that *Hazrat Mirza* had instigated the abusive attacks on the Holy Prophet and Islam of the Christians and *Arya* Hindus by his aggressive attitude towards them. In fact, such an accusation was baseless and the result of their hostility and enmity. In this book, *Fariad Dard*, *Hazrat Mirza* showed that long before he wrote anything, the Christians had made thousands of accusations against Islam. Books by Rev. Funder and Imaduddin were so full of filthy and hurtful attacks that a British writer commented that if another mutiny, like that in 1857, occurred in India, it would be the result of the books of Rev. Imaduddin. Following the example of the Christians, people like Inderman Muradabadi, Kanhia Lal Lakhdari and Dayanand Saraswati among the Hindus, started making such vile charges against Islam that the less said about them the better. *Hazrat Mirza* lifted his pen only in response to this mountain of vile and hurtful literature published by the Christians and the Hindus containing thousands of filthy accusations against Islam. It is therefore unjust and patently false to say that *Hazrat Mirza* first stirred the nest of the Christians and the Hindus and then they attacked Islam.

The Quranic injunction is: “And let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably. Be just; that is nearer to observance of duty.” (5:8) Unfortunately, this is one of the many Quranic injunctions that Muslims have ignored. For no good reason, they had taken *Hazrat Mirza* as their enemy and disliked everything he did. The services he performed for Islam were of no consequence to them. If he wrote something in support of Islam, these people called it instigation; if he presented some Islamic issue in a rational way, they called it infidelity and heresy; if he raised funds for the service of Islam, they labeled it as trade and storekeeping. For how long can this enmity and distrust continue? Finally, one has to die and stand before God; won’t these secret enmities become manifest at the time of explaining one’s conduct? *Hazrat Mirza* expressed this poetically in a verse:

Do not think that this distrust is forgiven,  
It is but a loan and the debt will be paid back in full.

## ***AYYAM-US-SULH*** **(THE DAYS OF PEACE)**

*Hazrat Mirza* published the book *Ayyam-us-Sulh* in both Persian and Urdu. The Persian edition was published on August 1, 1898, but the Urdu edition was not published until January 1, 1899, because of the need to provide answers to some additional questions in the book. This book was another of *Hazrat Mirza's* masterpieces. It was named *Ayyam-us-Sulh* for two reasons as given in the book. First, Islam was under attack in those days, not by the sword but by the pen and by reasoned arguments, and hence the need of the day was not to assist Islam with the sword but with the pen and reasoned arguments in a very gentle and peaceful manner. Second, humanity had exceeded all limits of sin and wickedness at that time, resulting in visitations of calamities from God in the form of earthquakes, epidemics, wars and so on. It was therefore necessary for man to make a pious change in himself, and to make true peace with his Lord by seeking His forgiveness and protection.

### **The philosophy of acceptance of supplications**

Someone pointed out an apparent contradiction in *Hazrat Mirza's* pronouncements. This contradiction was stated as follows: "On the one hand, you tell us to adopt certain devices and take particular medicines to ward off the plague, and on the other, you state that the spread of the disease is a punishment for bad deeds and so we should resort to supplications and seek the Lord's protection. There is a contradiction in these two

statements.” *Hazrat* Mirza answered this objection at the outset of the book by explaining the conformity between physical effort and prayer, and the philosophy of acceptance of supplications. He explained these two points so comprehensively that even diehard atheists, materialists and naturalists had to laud his reasoning. A full appreciation of the argument can only be gleaned by reading the book, but a small passage is presented here by way of a sample to whet the appetite of a seeker of truth and to motivate him to read the entire book.

Hence when our spirit reaches out with great earnestness and ardor to the fountainhead of all bounty in search of something, and considering itself helpless, seeks light from another source through reflection, then this state of ours is in actuality a state of supplication. It is through this supplication that all the worldly sciences are manifested. The key to any subject is prayer and there is no knowledge or wisdom, however small, that is manifested without it. Our thinking, our reflection, the wandering of our imagination in search of hidden things, are all matters included in prayer. The difference is that the supplication of the devout is associated with their knowledge of God, and their spirit reaches out to the fountainhead of all bounty knowingly after having identified Him. The supplication of a researcher is directed at removing confusion, and manifests itself in the form of reflection, deliberation and search for motives. Even those persons who have no connection with God and do not believe in Him, desire that their reflection and thinking may result in some external stimuli that will lead them to success. And a devout suppliant, too, desires from his God the manifestation of the way to success. However, a researcher who has no relationship with God is not aware of the fountainhead of all bounty, though his nature, too, like that of the devout person, desires help from outside when engaged in resolving confusion through reflection.

The difference is that the devout person sees this fountainhead, but the researcher walks in darkness and does not realize that whatever inspiration he gets after reflection and meditation is from God. And God, the Most High, considers the reflection of a meditator as supplication, and by way of acceptance of supplication puts the knowledge into his heart. Thus, whatever point of wisdom and knowledge is put in the heart as a result of reflection

also comes from God. The person reflecting may not know it but God, the Most High, knows that he is asking from Him. So finally he is granted what he desires by God. And as I have just stated, this method of searching for enlightenment, if accompanied by the identification of the Source of All Light and the Real Spiritual Guide, is the supplication of the devout. And if the enlightenment is sought only by reflection and meditation from some unknown source without a focus on the Real Source of Light, then it is a researcher's supplication.

Thus *Hazrat Mirza* threw light on all facets of supplication and its acceptance in a manner that was captivating. He then explained that a devout person searched for a course of action through prayer as well. After this he discussed the acceptance of prayer and stated:

The Supreme Sage helps and aids us in two ways after our prayers. First, He removes the calamity under which we are being crushed to death. Second, He not only grants us supernatural strength to bear the calamity but also bestows pleasure in it and provides clarity of purpose.

Why had Islam made supplication incumbent on a believer? *Hazrat Mirza* mentioned four reasons for it.

1. First, to turn to God at all times and in all conditions so that the Unity of God is firmly established, because beseeching God is a confession of the fact that He alone is the granter of wishes.
2. Second, so that faith is strengthened by the acceptance of prayers and the granting of wishes.
3. Third, if the favor of God is granted in some other form, then it enhances knowledge and wisdom.
4. Fourth, if the acceptance of prayer is promised through revelation or vision, and the fulfillment takes place accordingly, then one's knowledge of God is improved, and knowledge leads to certainty, and certainty to love, and love leads to abandonment of sin and of those besides Allah, and this is the real fruit of salvation.

### **Commentary of the Chapter *Al-Fatihah* (The Opening)**

After this, *Hazrat* Mirza explained the philosophy of supplication by using the most comprehensive prayer of the Quran contained in its first chapter, *Al-Fatihah*, as a case study. In the process, he gave a beautiful commentary on the attributes of Allah mentioned in this chapter, namely Lordship (*Rabubiat*), Beneficence (*Rahmaniat*), Mercy (*Rahimiyat*) and Mastery on the Day of Requit (Malikyat Yaum Addin). This commentary was an ocean of knowledge and wisdom before which even the most hardened atheist had to bow his head. Since prayer led to an increase in faith, *Hazrat* Mirza next described faith, and discussed how a believer traversed from faith to the stage of certainty and knowledge.

### **Discussion on the truth of his claim**

After this, *Hazrat* Mirza provided arguments about his own claim in the context of a discussion on Divine inspiration and revelation (*ilham* and *wahy*). He proposed that four tests should be applied to determine the truth of his claim beyond all doubt:

1. Is there a definitive verse of the Book of God or an authentic *hadith* with an uninterrupted chain of narrators extending to the Holy Prophet that gives the exact signs of the one who has to come, and states the time and omens of his appearance? Further, does it resolve the dispute regarding the death or continued physical existence of Jesus?
2. Is there rational proof and scientific evidence that is based on definitely established knowledge, and leaves no room for denial?
3. Is there heavenly corroboration manifested in the form of signs and miracles as a result of the supplication of the true claimant, so that heavenly signs may bear living testimony to his truthfulness?
4. Is there testimony of holy and virtuous men, given after obtaining inspiration from God at a time when there was no sign of the claimant, because such a testimony, being a prophecy, would be a sign from God?

After mentioning these four tests, he proceeded to prove the truth of his claim by applying these tests to himself. He delved in great detail into the

supporting arguments, and in the process, brilliantly illumined the vexatious issue of the death and second coming of the Messiah.

### **Discussion on safeguarding the Quran**

During the discussion about the truth of his claim, *Hazrat* Mirza stated that the necessity to safeguard the Quran dictated that in every era there should be persons through whom the facts and knowledge of the Quran were manifested on a continuing basis. He wrote:

And there is a promise in the Quran that God, the Most High, will safeguard Islam in times of turbulence and danger as stated in, “Surely We have revealed the Reminder and surely We are its Guardian.” (15:9) By virtue of this promise God has safeguarded His Word in four ways:

1. First, through those who memorized the Quran. Through them, he preserved its wording and arrangement. In every century, He made hundreds of thousands of people to safeguard the sacred text through memorization, and their memory was such that if they were given a word, they could recite the text before and after it. And in this way the Quran was protected against any distortion of words.
2. Second, through such scholarly and great men in every century who were granted a special insight into understanding the Quran. With the help of the *Hadith*, they provided commentary where the Quranic passages were terse, and thereby safeguarded God’s pious Word and sacred teachings from any distortion of their meaning.
3. Third, through scholastic philosophers who showed the Quranic teachings to be in consonance with rationality and thus safeguarded the Quran from ridicule by shortsighted philosophers.
4. Fourth, through the recipients of spiritual rewards who safeguarded the sacred Word of God against attacks by deniers of miracles and Divine knowledge.

While discussing this issue in detail, *Hazrat* Mirza also discussed those verses of the Quran that indicated the coming of the Promised Messiah.

### The beliefs of *Hazrat Mirza*

*Hazrat Mirza* then openly discussed his beliefs. As it may remove many misconceptions, it is conducive to reproduce the relevant portions:<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, it must be remembered that, however much our adversary *ulama* (religious scholars) incite hatred against us among the people by declaring us *kafir* and devoid of faith, and try to convince the Muslim public that I, along with all my followers, hold beliefs that are repugnant to Islam and the principles of the Islamic religion, these are such fabrications of those jealous *Maulvis* (clerics) which no one would make who had even a modicum of the fear of God in his heart. We believe in the five fundamentals upon which Islam is based, and we abide by the word of God, i.e. the Holy Quran, which it is incumbent upon us to follow. Like the *Farooq* (*Hazrat Umar*), may Allah be pleased with him, we say that “the Book of Allah is sufficient for us,” and like *Hazrat Aishah*, may Allah be pleased with her, when a disagreement and conflict arises between the Quran and *Hadith* we give precedence to the Quran, especially in matters of stories which, as generally agreed, are not even subject to abrogation.

We believe that there is none to be worshipped but God the Most High, and our leader Muhammad *Mustafa*, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, is His Messenger and the Last of the Prophets (*Khatam-ul-anbiya*) and we believe that angels, raising of the dead, the Day of Resurrection, and heaven and hell, are all truths. We believe that whatever Allah, be He glorified, has said in the Holy Quran, and whatever our Holy Prophet has said, is true, in accordance with our statement above. And we hold that any person who removes even one jot from the *Shari'ah* of Islam, or adds even an iota to it, or discards what is obligatory and permits what is forbidden, is without faith and turned away from Islam.

I enjoin upon my followers that they should have wholehearted faith in the *Kalima Tayyiba*: *La ilaha illAllah, Muhammadur rasulullah* (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah), and should die in that faith. They must

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1 *Ayyam-us-Sulh*. Pages 86 and 87.

believe in all the prophets and all revealed books, whose truth is proved from the Holy Quran. And they must adhere to Islam, properly and correctly, by considering obligatory upon themselves *Salat* (prayer), *Saum* (fasting), *Zakat* (charity) and *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Makkah), and all duties laid down by Allah and His Messenger; and by considering as unlawful all that is prohibited. To conclude, it is obligatory to believe in all those matters, relating to faith and practice, on which the past righteous religious elders of Islam were agreed, and which, by consensus of opinion of the *Ahl asSunna*, are held to constitute Islam. And we call heaven and earth to bear witness that this is our religion. Whoever attributes to me anything contrary to this religion, he is forsaking fear of God and honesty, and committing slander against me; and on the Day of Judgment I shall have my claim against him as to when he cut open my bosom and saw that instead of my above profession I am actually at heart opposed to these statements. Beware, indeed the curse of Allah is on the liars and fabricators.

It should be remembered that there is no disagreement between these people and us except on one issue, namely that they set aside definitive statements of the Quran and the *Hadith* to believe that Jesus is alive, while we, by virtue of the above-mentioned definitive statements of the Quran and the *Hadith* and the consensus of the past religious leaders possessing great insight, hold that Jesus is dead. We consider the word *nuzool* (descent) to have the same meaning as that inferred by Jesus regarding the second coming and descent of the prophet Elijah. "So ask the followers of the Reminder if you know not" (16:43). And by virtue of the definitive statement of the Quran apparent from the verse "Then He withholds those on whom He passes the decree of death," (39:42) we believe that those who pass away from this world are not returned to inhabit it again.

### **Coming of a prophet to testify the truth of another prophet is not correct**

The reply of another objection is worthy of attention and the objection along with its answer are reproduced below:

**Objection:** The truth of a prophet has always been testified to by another prophet.



**Answer:** This is only a homemade creed that is not supported by any clear injunction of the Quran or the *Hadith*. If it is true, then it follows that, when Jesus descends from the heaven, some other prophet should come to provide testimony about him because otherwise how will it be known whether he is Jesus or not?<sup>2</sup> The world is the abode of belief in the unseen. There is always some degree of obscurity when someone is commissioned. Then some prophet should come to verify this prophet. This will result in an unending chain, which is absurd, and a matter that is founded on absurdity is itself absurd; but the clear injunctions of the *Hadith* and Quran consider the verification by saints and pious men of God (literally: possessors of supernatural powers and miracles) as a substitute because a sign shown by a saint (*karamat*) is itself the miracle of the Messenger he follows. And according to an authentic *hadith*, the Divine inspiration (*ilham*) of a saint (*Muhaddath*) is also known by the term *wahy* (revelation), and like the revelation of the prophets it is clear of the influence of the devil and is the speech of God, and as it is also the revelation of God, then the testimony of what proceeds from the mouth of God is like the testimony of the prophets.

Then it should also be considered whether any Muslim in the world subscribes to the creed that until the Promised Messiah comes, the prophethood of the Holy Prophet is in doubt because it is dependent upon verification by the Promised Messiah? And suppose the Messiah does not come and provide the testimony, then will the prophethood of the Holy Prophet stay doubtful and suspect? I seek the protection of Allah from such nonsense and heresy. What an absurd idea that almost borders on heresy! The Promised Messiah will come not because the prophethood of the Holy Prophet is not proven and needs to be confirmed by his testimony (I seek the protection of Allah from this statement) but so that he may appear as a *Mujaddid* (reformer) and manifest the glory of monotheism and the monotheistic faith by demolishing the mischief of the Cross.

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2 Particularly, when the traditions of the Holy Prophet indicate that the *Mahdi* and his entire party and the Promised Messiah etc. would be declared infidels. Under these circumstances, according to your declaration, there is a great necessity for another prophet to come so as to affirm the clerics as liars and declare Jesus as genuine.

### **It is not necessary for someone like a prophet to be a prophet**

The answer to another objection is also very exquisite and important:

**Objection:** One resembling a prophet is a prophet.

**Answer:** The entire Muslim nation agrees that a non-prophet, by way of reflection, stands in the place of a prophet. This is the meaning of the *hadith*, “The scholars from among my followers are like the Israelite prophets.” Note, the Holy Prophet declared the scholars to be like prophets; another *hadith* states that scholars are the successors of prophets; yet another *hadith* states, “There will always be among my followers forty persons who will have the soul of Abraham.” In this *hadith*, the Holy Prophet has declared them to be like Abraham. And Allah states in the Quran, “Guide us on the right path; the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favors,” (1:5-6) and all the commentators are agreed here that the advice, “The path of those upon whom,” means the like of prophets, which is the quintessence of obedience. It is the creed of the Sufis that belief is not perfected, and a person does not become righteous, unless he develops a likeness to the prophets - in his faith, actions and morals - to the extent of becoming one with them. It is highly unjust and dishonest, therefore, to advocate a self-made tale as is done in worldly lawsuits before examining the books of religion. God has sent prophets in the world precisely so that other persons like them may arise in the world. If this is not so, then prophethood is absurd. Prophets do not come so that they may be worshipped, but they come so that people may follow their example and become similar to them.<sup>3</sup> And by molding themselves exactly like them, (literally perishing themselves) they become as if one with them. Allah states, “Say: If you love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you.” (3:30) There is no blessing that God will hold back from whom He loves. And by a “follower”, too, is meant the stage of perishing that takes one to the rank of similarity (with the prophets). And this issue is one accepted by all.

### **Objection about not performing the pilgrimage (*haj*) and its reply**

To this day, there are many people who ask: Why did *Hazrat* Mirza not

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3 *Maulana* Abul Kalam Azad has also explained the issue of similarity with prophets in his book *Tazkarah*. Please see the appendix to this chapter for his explanation.

perform the pilgrimage (*hajj*)? Shahzada Wala Gohar also raised the same question and asked: Why did *Hazrat* Mirza not go for the pilgrimage despite having the means to do so? *Hazrat* Mirza replied to this as follows:

This objection exposes your knowledge of religious law. It appears as if you consider the only impediment to performing the pilgrimage to be provisions for the journey. Because you wasted your life in worldly struggles, you remained unaware of such an easy and simple issue that is written in the Quran, and in the Books of *Hadith* and in Islamic law. The meaning of impediment for pilgrimage is not only provisions for the journey, but also includes many other affairs that are considered genuine excuses by Allah for not performing the pilgrimage. Accordingly, these include ill health, and also conditions in which there is no peace on the way, or in Makkah itself. (Thus) Allah, the Most High, says, "...whoever can find a way to it" (3:97). This is a strange situation in which the malicious clerics bring a decree from Makkah that this person is an infidel, and then say, "Go for pilgrimage," knowing fully well that now that those in Makkah have issued a decree of heresy, Makkah is not free from tumult. And God says to abstain from a place where there is tumult. I fail to understand this kind of objection. These people also know that the Holy Prophet did not perform the pilgrimage when there was strife in Makkah. And it is proven from the *Hadith* and the Quran to abstain from places of strife. What manner of mischief is this to spread the allegation that I am a heretic among the Makkans and then to repeatedly object about (not performing the) pilgrimage? I seek protection in Allah from their mischief.

It is worth reflecting upon why these people are so worried about my pilgrimage. Is there any other secret in it except that their hearts harbor a plan about me that when I go to Makkah some mischievous men will follow me there and raise a clamor that this man is an infidel and should be killed? So when the order of God comes, these precautions will not be cared for; but until that happens, it is necessary to follow the law as laid down in the tradition. And safeguarding oneself from villages in which there is conflict is a tradition of the prophets. The reins of government in Makkah are in the hands of persons who have the same creed as those issuing the decree of heresy. When these people (issuing the decree) consider us deserving of death, would they (the rulers) act any differently in this

oppression? And Allah states, “and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands...” (2:195). Hence we will be sinners if we deliberately take steps towards perdition and go for pilgrimage. And taking steps against the injunctions of God is a sin. (The injunction) to perform pilgrimage is conditional, but to safeguard against (senseless) violence and perdition is a definitive injunction with no condition. Now you think about it; should we follow the definitive injunction of the Quran or the injunction for which exceptions are granted despite knowing that the condition for those exception hold.

Apart from this, I ask you people to answer this question: When the Promised Messiah appears, should his first duty be to save the Muslims from the dangerous mischief of the Antichrist, or should he immediately on appearance proceed for pilgrimage. If according to the clear injunctions of Quran and the *Hadith*, the first duty of the Promised Messiah is to perform the pilgrimage, and not to destroy the evil of the antichrist, then present those verses of the Quran and the *Hadith* so that they can be acted upon. And if the first duty of the Promised Messiah for which he is commissioned according to your belief is to kill the Antichrist, and which, according to our interpretation, is overwhelming the followers of false faiths by arguments and signs, then this is the work that should be done first. If you have any honesty and righteousness, then do answer this question: Which duty will the Promised Messiah perform first after coming into the world; will the performance of the pilgrimage be his first duty or will he first put an end to the mischief of the Antichrist? This is not a very complex problem. The answer to it can be found by looking at the *Sahih Bukhari* or *Muslim* (Books of *Hadith*). If it is proven from the testimony of the Holy Prophet that the first task of the Promised Messiah is to perform the pilgrimage, then we will go for pilgrimage, whatever the conditions and whatever the consequences. But if the first task of the Promised Messiah is the eradication of the Antichrist’s mischief, then proceeding for the pilgrimage before we are free from this task will be against the prophecy of the Prophet.

### **Objection against not printing the remaining portion of *Barahin Ahmadiyya***

One of Shahzada Wala Gohar’s major objections was: Why had the remaining portion of *Barahin Ahmadiyya* not been printed, and given this

situation, why had the advance payments received for the book not been returned? *Hazrat* Mirza replied to this objection as follows:

**Answer:** To present this delay as an objection is absurd. Even the Quran, despite being the Word of God, was revealed over a period of twenty-three years. Then if the wisdom of Allah has considered it appropriate to delay the completion of the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, what is the harm in it? And if the idea is that money was taken from the buyers in advance, then such a thought is foolish and probably the result of ignorance, because most copies of the printed portion of the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* were distributed for free. And some were charged only five rupees and some only eight annas; there are not many people who were charged ten rupees, and those that were charged twenty-five rupees are very few. These amounts are not very large considering the portions of the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* that have already been printed and given to the buyers; on the contrary, the amount received is reasonable (for the deliveries already effected.) It is absolutely mean and stupid to make this objection.

Even so, taking into consideration the unwarranted clamor and noise by some ignoramus, we have announced twice that anyone who desires a refund on *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, can give back our books and receive a full refund of the amount paid. Consequently, all those people who harbored such ignorance sent their books back and received a full refund. Some sent the books back in very poor condition but even so we refunded the price. And we have written many times that we do not want to put up with such ignoble people, and are willing to refund their money anytime. So thank God that He has given us respite from such mean-natured persons. However, once again we write these few lines as an announcement to revive the offer. If there is present, even now, any buyer who has any complaint about the delay in the (printing of the) *Barahin*, then he should immediately send our books back, and we will dispatch to him the amount paid as proven by his statement. And if anyone, despite our announcement, does not desist from making objections, then he is accountable to God. And Shahzada sahib may please answer us: what books did he buy from us which we have not delivered to him in full till now and (for which we) have also not refunded the price? It is the

height of ungodly behavior to hear an unsubstantiated thing from some spiteful clerics and to then present it as an objection.”

This book, so full of knowledge, ended with the profound replies countering the opponent’s objections.

## APPENDIX

### (Refers to footnote 3)

#### **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on similarity with prophets<sup>4</sup>**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has explained this concept of “similitude to prophets” in his book *Tazkira* as follows:

This basic principle must never be forgotten that the real fountain and source of the work of inviting to and instituting the truth, and reform and nurture of the *Ummah* is the station of prophethood. In every age and era, whatever work is done in this regard, it is all related to and connected with this very station. All obtain and derive light from this sun, and this fountain of prophethood is the source and font of all graces and virtues: “a fountain from which the servants of Allah drink, making it flow in abundance” (76:6). No one who seeks to institute the truth, bring about reform and make known spiritual verities, can be successful unless he follows the model of prophethood, and all his deeds follow the example of the Holy Prophet and are subject to the *Sunnat* and the rule of prophethood. A caller to the truth attains the apparent and invisible fruits and blessings according to the stage he reaches in this path of following the prophetic example and of similitude to the prophets. There is a variation of rank and degree among the prophets according to their circumstances and the requirements of the time, and the case of “We made some of them to excel others” (the Holy Quran, 2:253) applies to them. Similarly with the followers and the heirs of the prophets, the words “We made some of them to excel others,” apply to them, and there is a variation of rank, fruits, excellence of circumstances and blessings among them. This fact is known in the terminology of Muhayy-ud-Din Ibn Arabi as *khusus* (special characteristics) and in the terminology of some spiritual divines as *nisbat* (relationship), meaning

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4 Dr. Zahid Aziz kindly translated this passage due to its complexity.

that a saint of God is following the model of a certain prophet according to his capacity and needs of the time, while another saint follows the model of another prophet, so that due to possessing overwhelming special characteristics he has a special relationship with that prophet ... Because the station of prophethood is the source and origin of the work of calling the *Ummah* to the truth and reform, and all its essential affairs are derived from this source and follow its path, it is necessary that all matters relating to the realm of the renewal and the revival of the *Shariah* follow the same method and mode. In fact, one should say that everything, from principles and fundamentals to secondary matters and details of actions, must bear an exact resemblance to the affairs of this very rank and appear as its shadow and image.

## **MAULVI MUHAMMAD ALI MIGRATES TO QADIAN**

It has been mentioned earlier that *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali took the pledge at the hands of *Hazrat* Mirza in March 1897. He held a Master of Arts degree in English and was employed as a professor in Oriental College, Lahore. He visited *Hazrat* Mirza frequently in Qadian and translated his memorandums and other correspondence that needed to be sent to the British government into English for him. During this period, *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali passed the law exam that earned him an LLB degree and the right to practice law. He decided to open his law office in Gurdaspur so that he may be in close proximity to *Hazrat* Mirza while pursuing his legal practice. Accordingly, in June 1899, *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali rented a house in Gurdaspur, bought furniture and other household effects, and hired a legal assistant. He then proceeded to Qadian to spend a few days in the company of *Hazrat* Mirza. There he got busy translating some memorandums and other materials into English. Partly as a result of this preoccupation, and partly as a result of the powerful spiritual attraction of *Hazrat* Mirza, he spent the next two months, July and August, in Qadian.

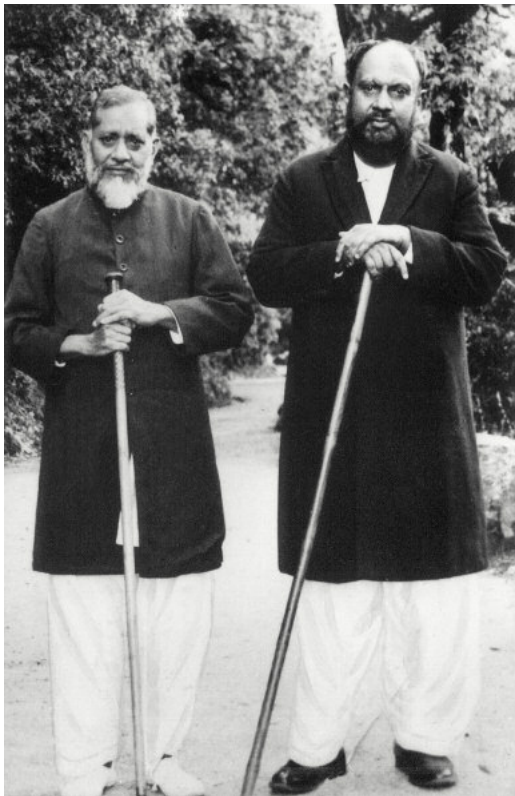
### ***Hazrat* Mirza places a matrimonial advertisement for *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali**

*Hazrat* Mirza had placed a matrimonial advertisement for *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali earlier that had elicited some responses, but these letters





*Maulana Muhammad Ali  
(Photo courtesy AAIIIL.org).*



*Maulana Muhammad Ali on the left  
with the author, Dr. Basharat Ahmad.*

were misplaced. Hence *Hazrat* Mirza advertised a second time soliciting proposals from parties desirous of making a match with *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali. Part of the text of this advertisement is reproduced below to show *Hazrat* Mirza's opinion about him, and to rebut the vicious and malicious propaganda of character assassination against *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali being waged relentlessly by some impudent persons. *Hazrat* Mirza made the following announcement on August 19, 1899:<sup>1</sup>

Among the most sincere friends in our community is *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali, M.A., who, besides his other qualifications, has also just now passed his law examination. For the past few months, foregoing his own professional work at a considerable financial loss, he has been staying with me in Qadian to perform a service to religion by translating some of my writings into English. ...

During this period that he has spent with me, I have been observing him, both openly and discreetly, to assess his moral character, observance of religion and goodness of behavior. So, thanks be to God, that I have found him to be a most excellent man in every way in regards to religion and behavior. He is unassuming, modest, of a righteous nature, and pious. He is to be envied for many qualities. ... It is obvious that such promising young men, possessing these qualities, who are also able and honorable, cannot be found by searching.

In the same vein, *Hazrat* Mirza stated in an announcement, *Al-Ishtehar al-Ansar* (Announcement - The Helpers) issued on October 4, 1899:<sup>2</sup>

I am very happy that another good young man, having found the grace of God, has joined our community, that is *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali, M.A., Pleader. I have very good expectations of him. For a long time he has borne a worldly loss in order to stay in Qadian to serve the religion, and he is learning the deep knowledge of the Holy Quran from *Hazrat Maulvi* Hakim Nur-ud-Din.

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1 *Majmua Ishtiharat* . Announcement dated 9 August 1899. Vol. 3. Page. 137. Number 206.

2 *Majmua Ishtiharat*. Announcement dated 4 October 1899. Vol. 3. Page 157–158. Number 208.

I am sure that my foresight will not go wrong in this that this young man will make progress in the path of God, and I am sure that by the grace of God he will prove to be so firm in righteousness and love of religion that he will set an example worthy to be followed by his peers. O God, let it be so! Amen, again Amen.

### **Permanent migration**

*Maulvi* Muhammad Ali had stayed on temporarily in Qadian for the purpose of translating some memorandums of *Hazrat* Mirza into English that had to be sent to the British government, and also some other compositions, including *Faryad-i Dard* (A Grief-stricken Plea). *Hazrat* Mirza acknowledged this service in *Al-Ishtehar al-Ansar*: “*Maulvi* Muhammad Ali sahib is the translator into English of all the books issued by us.” In the meantime, Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din proposed starting an English magazine for the propagation of Islam, and the need arose to appoint a capable editor with good skills in the English language. *Hazrat* Mirza asked *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali: “It would be very nice if you stay on in Qadian and serve religion in this capacity.” *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali had no objection. In fact, he considered this opportunity as a stroke of good fortune.

He paid the landlord of his house in Gurdaspur two months’ rent to release him from the lease on the house, auctioned the furniture and other household effects, and terminated the services of the legal assistant. He had been cleared to take the entrance exam for Extra Assistant Commissioners, but he declined the opportunity and instead settled down to an austere life in Qadian. Involvement with other activities, and the preparatory work needed to start the magazine delayed its publication. Finally, the magazine came out in 1902 under the name, *The Review of Religions*; the glorious debut of this magazine is described later in this book in its appropriate chronological sequence.

## **BRITISH GOVERNMENT REQUESTED TO HOLD A DECISIVE RELIGIOUS CONVENTION**

### **Islam preached to the British Government**

On the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee celebration of Queen Victoria's reign, *Hazrat Mirza* had sent the book, *Tuhfa Quaisariyya* (Gift for the Empress) to Queen Victoria, Empress of India, by way of preaching Islam to her. On August 24, 1899, *Hazrat Mirza* followed this with a second book, *Sitara Quaisariyya* (Star of the Empress), to reinforce the earlier message. However, *Hazrat Mirza* felt that it was not adequate just to preach to the Queen, but that it was also necessary to draw the attention of the entire British government to Islam. In pursuance of this objective, *Hazrat Mirza* sent a memorandum to the government on September 27, 1899, in which he drew the government's attention to the prevalent struggle for domination between all kinds of faiths in India and in the rest of the world. He called upon the British government to arrange a religious convention for furthering the interest of world peace, love and brotherhood, and for ascertaining the true religion. A similar conference had been scheduled in Italy, and one was planned for Paris. "When the other European Empires and governments are inclined in this direction, why should our government lag behind?" asked *Hazrat Mirza*. In his proposal for holding such a convention, he wrote:

Our courageous government should announce such a religious convention and fix a date for holding the proposed convention

that should not be more than two years away. The leading religious scholars, dervishes, and intellectuals of all nations should be invited to attend this convention for the purpose of furnishing proof regarding the genuineness of their religion on the following two points:

1. First, they should present a teaching that is better than all other teachings and is capable of irrigating all branches of the human tree.
2. Second, they should give evidence that their religion has the same spirituality and lofty power as claimed by it in the beginning.

The notice announcing this convention should give explicit instructions that the leaders of the various sects should be prepared with these arguments when they step into the convention arena. After asserting the excellence of their teachings, they should present such great prophecies as can come only from Divine knowledge and which, in addition, should be fulfilled within one year. In short, the signs should be such as would prove the religion's spirituality. And then after one year, the full circumstances of the victorious and vanquished should be published. I think if our wise government complies with this course of action and tests in which religion, and in which person, spirituality and Divine power are to be found, then the government would be doing a big favor to all the nations of the world. And in this way, by presenting the true faith with all its spiritual life to the world, it would bring the whole world to the straight path. All the noise and clamor made on behalf of a religion that is not supported by living supernatural signs and depends only upon legends, does not count for much because without signs, no religion can bring a person close to God or create abhorrence of sin.

*Hazrat Mirza then wrote:*

And the true religion is the one that has a living example. Can any heart or conscience accept the proposition that a religion is true, but that its glitter of truthfulness and its signs of genuineness are not ahead, but have been left behind and the lips of the sender of

this guidance have been sealed forever? I know that every person who thirsts and hungers to find God will never entertain such an idea. It is necessary for him that the mark of a true religion be the fresh presence of living examples of a living God, and of the shining light of His signs. If our great government decides to hold such a convention, then this would be a very blessed intention and it will prove that this government is a supporter of the truth. And if such a convention is held, then every person who so desires may gladly participate in this convention. There is no better way to test the holiness of various sectarian leaders, who have embezzled millions of rupees of their community under the garb of their holiness, than to ask them for living proof of their relationship or the relationship of their religion with God.

*Hazrat* Mirza was moved to make such suggestions by the overwhelming desire in his heart to propagate Islam. In so doing, he was putting into effect the Quranic injunction, “So remind. Thou art only one to remind. Thou art not a warder over them” (88:21-22). In whatever way he thought best, he took the message of Islam to the people of every religion and sect, and even to the government. He was not responsible, however, for whether anyone heeded the message or not.

## ***MASIH HINDUSTAN MAIN*** **(THE MESSIAH IN INDIA)**

When God appoints a person, He gives him special zeal to pursue the specific purpose of his appointment. The Holy Prophet had predicted that the special mission of the Promised Messiah would be to break the Cross. Accordingly, when Allah appointed *Hazrat Mirza* to the offices of *Mujaddid* (reformer) and the Promised Messiah, He granted him a special ardor for demolishing the Faith of the Cross, i.e. Christianity. One by one, *Hazrat Mirza* began to take down the Christian creeds about Jesus, many of which, following the example of Christians, had also been adopted by Muslims. In particular, the death of Jesus on the Cross, and his subsequent resurrection and ascension, are the basic principles of Christianity on which the creeds of atonement and the divinity of Jesus are based. *Hazrat Mirza* completely demolished these two foundation stones of Christianity that supported its entire superstructure. *Hazrat Mirza* proved with categorical arguments that Jesus was alive when taken down from the Cross; that he did not ascend to the heaven but died a natural death, and was interred in the ground. These arguments were so powerful that the Cross was broken for good.

Shortly thereafter, the discovery of Jesus' tomb in Srinigar, Kashmir, lent further credence to *Hazrat Mirza's* arguments. *Hazrat Mirza* at once started researching the find, and his investigative enquiry led to the start of a book in 1899, titled, *Masih Hindustan Main* (The Messiah in India). Using the Bible, books of history, and the work of European researchers



*Tomb of Jesus in Sirinagar, Kashmir.*

as source documents, *Hazrat* Mirza showed that Nebuchadnezzar, after defeating the Israelites, took ten of their twelve tribes in captivity back to Babylon. He subjected them to great hardship there, but ultimately these tribes migrated to the East and settled in the area of present-day Afghanistan and Kashmir. Accordingly, researchers have found a remarkable similarity between the people of Afghanistan-Kashmir and the Israelites in their facial features, stature, habits, national and family customs and rites, and in their way of living. Even the names of many towns in Kashmir and Afghanistan are the same as found in Palestine. The “lost sheep” in the Biblical statement of Jesus, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel,”<sup>1</sup> refers to the ten tribes of Israel that were lost. Jesus had come in search of these lost tribes, and after escaping death on the Cross, he migrated from Palestine and ultimately found them in Afghanistan and Kashmir. He spent the rest of his life preaching and guiding them, and lived, as stated in the Books of *Hadith*, to the age of 120 years.<sup>2</sup> Finally, he died in Sirinagar, where he was interred, and his tomb, which is known as the Tomb of Prophet Yuz Asaf or Isa (Jesus) sahib, can

1 Matthew 15:24

2 Al-Shaikh Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttagi, *Kanaraz-al-Ummal fi Sunani-l-Āqwal wa-l-Afal* (Hadith) Vol II page 479.



still to be found in Mohalla Khan Yar. *Hazrat* Mirza discussed this issue at great length in this book and proved that the Tomb of Prophet Yuz Asaf or Isa sahib could be of none other than that of Jesus'.<sup>3</sup> This scholarly research can be read in full in the book *Masih Hindustan Main*.

However, *Hazrat* Mirza considered it essential for the completion of the book to investigate the route that Jesus took to reach India. Some historical documents indicated that after the event of the crucifixion, Jesus first journeyed to Nasibain, a town in Iraq, before migrating to Kashmir by way of Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, he had stayed for some time in a place called Koh Laghman, where a platform known as the Prophet's Platform still memorializes his visit. Hence, *Hazrat* Mirza decided to send an investigative team of three persons under the leadership of Mirza Khuda Baksh, author of the book *Assal Mussaffa*, to Nasibain. The expedition required funding and so *Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement titled, *Al-Ishtihar al-Ansar* (Announcement - the Helpers) on October 4, 1899. In this announcement, he discussed the expenditures being incurred for the guest-house, and the printing and publication of books, and specifically mentioned all those friends who were aiding him in this effort. He urged other friends also to assist in meeting these expenditures. After this, he requested donations to finance the mission to Nasibain in the following words:

The third branch of expenditure whose need I felt recently is (also) very necessary, in fact, extremely necessary, and that is (as follows): I have been sent to reform the evils of the Trinity. For this reason, this tragic scene that there are in the world somewhat in excess of four hundred million people who consider Jesus as God, pains my heart so much that I do not believe a greater sorrow has ever afflicted me in my entire life. If it had been possible for me to die of worry and grief, then this sorrow would have killed me. Why have these people forsaken the One God without partners to worship a meek man, and why do these people not believe in the Prophet who came to the world with the true guidance and the

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3 The newspaper *Al-Hakam* published a written statement of Salman Yousaf Yashaq dated June 12, 1899, under the heading, "Testimony of an Israelite Scholar of Torah about the Tomb of the Messiah," in its issue of October 24, 1902. The statement read: "I testify that I have examined a map in the possession of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani and ascertained it to be correct. The tomb is an Israelite tomb and it is the tomb of an elder of Israel. I examined this map on this date and recorded this testimony on June 12, 1899." Signed: Salman Yousaf Yashaq. The signatures of two witnesses were also affixed on this testament, namely that of *Mufti* Muhammad Sadiq and Syed Abdullah Baghdadi.

right path? The thought has always been with me that the shock of this sorrow may kill me. Along with this, there is the difficulty that traditional arguments have no effect on their hearts, and old polytheistic ideas have so overwhelmed their hearts that despite studying astronomy, philosophy and natural sciences, they are impervious to reason. Their example is similar to that of an eighty-year-old Hindu man who knows very well in his heart that the (water of the) Ganges is just water that can neither benefit nor harm anyone, but this does not stop him from asserting that the water from the Ganges possesses tremendous strength and power. However, when asked to provide proof, he has none except to say that the proof is in his heart and cannot be shaped into words. This is no proof but just old ideas that have solidified in the heart. Similar is the condition of these people (i.e. the Christians).”

Further on he wrote:

For a long time, I have supplicated five times a day beseeching God to enlighten them so that they may start believing in His Unity, recognize His Prophet and renounce the creed of Trinity. As a consequence of these supplications, it is now proven that Jesus did not die on the Cross and also did not ascend to the heaven. Instead, he survived the Cross, regained his health through the use of *Maram Issa* (Ointment of Jesus) to heal the wounds suffered on the Cross, and then came to Afghanistan traveling through Nasibain. From Afghanistan, he went to Koh Laghman where he stayed for a considerable period, and where even now there exists a platform known as that of the *Shahzada Nabi* (The Prince Prophet). From there he came to Punjab, and after visiting several places, finally reached Kashmir. He lived to the age of 125 years, died in Kashmir and was interred in Sirinagar near the area of the town known as *Khan Yar*.

I am writing a book based on this research called, ‘*Masih Hindustan Main*.’ For this purpose, I had sent the sincere and beloved *Khalifa* Nur-ud-Din, mention of whom was made above, to Kashmir for conducting a full onsite research into the tomb of Jesus. Accordingly, he stayed there four months, researched all aspects, made a sketch onsite of the tomb and obtained the testimony of 556 persons on it to the effect that this is the tomb of Jesus

known popularly as *Shahzada Nabi ki kabir* (The Tomb of the Prince Prophet), and also by some as the Tomb of Prophet Yuz Asaf, or the Tomb of Isa Sahib. He returned to me on September 17, 1899. So the Kashmir problem was satisfactorily resolved and the 556 testimonies proved that the tomb in Sirinagar located near *Mohallah Khan Yar* is in effect the tomb of Jesus.

However, one thought remains, which, if fulfilled, will shed further light on this light. It is made up of two things: First, I have heard that the Platform of the Prince Prophet in Laghman has an estate attached to it in the Kingdom of Kabul. It appears, therefore, highly beneficial for some friends to go to Koh Laghman, and some friends to go to Kabul, and to obtain copies of the estate papers from the offices of the Kingdom. Second, it has been established that Jesus came to Afghanistan by way of Nasibain, and it appears from the book *Rozatul Saffa* that at the time of the mischief of crucifixion, the King of Nasibain had invited Jesus. There is also the testimony of an Englishman who states that it is certain Jesus received a letter from him (the King of Nasibain), and in fact the Englishman has reproduced that letter in his book. Under these circumstances, it is definite that there must be some memorabilia in Nasibain pertaining to the journey of Jesus and it would not be surprising to find some inscriptions or graves of his disciples that may be well known (locally). Hence, I consider it expedient to send three wise and resolute persons of my party to Nasibain.

Most members contributed generously in response to this announcement. This enabled *Hazrat Mirza* to issue a second announcement on October 10, 1899, titled "The Farewell Gathering," in which he proposed a farewell gathering on November 12, 1899, for *Mirza Khuda Baksh* and his two companions who were proceeding to Nasibain and invited the members of his Movement to attend.

### **Propagation through the phonograph**

The phonograph had recently been invented and people were very fond of listening to this novelty. Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan of Malirkotla had bought a phonograph along with its recording device and he brought it with him to Qadian. *Maulvi Abdul Karim Sialkoti's* recitation of the Quran was exceptional, and the last section of Chapter 21 of

the Holy Quran, The Prophets, was recorded in his voice and played for *Hazrat Mirza*, who was very gratified.

The *Arya Hindus* of Qadian heard about the phonograph, and since this invention was both new and rare at the time, they expressed their desire to *Hazrat Mirza* through *Lala Shrampat Rai* to listen to it. *Hazrat Mirza* very willingly gave them permission, but at the same time instructed *Maulvi Abdul Karim* as follows: "We consider listening to the phonograph a waste of time unless some useful purpose is served. Why not preach to these *Arya Hindus* with the phonograph?" Along with this proposal, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote down a few verses and asked *Maulvi Abdul Karim* to record them in his melodious voice. Since the recording apparatus was also available, these verses along with two other poems of *Hazrat Mirza* were recorded. The party of *Arya Hindus* who came to listen to the phonograph included *Lala Shrampat Rai*, the Secretary of *Arya Samaj* of Qadian, and others. They were full of excitement when they sat down to listen to the phonograph, but their enthusiasm evaporated and the color drained from their faces because of what they heard. The first sound that came off the phonograph was a poem in Persian that began as follows:

Water the saplings of love with the tears of your eyes,  
So fruit, sweet and delicious, is brought forth some day.

This was followed by the impromptu poem that *Hazrat Mirza* had written expressly for this occasion. A few translated verses of the poem are reproduced below:

The voice emanating from the phonograph says,  
Search God with your heart and not in frivolous ways.

What manner of faith is it that shows no signs from God,  
Truth supports it not nor Heaven comes to its aid.

Religion is a game unless there is conviction,  
That which is void of light is not a faith from God.

The religion of God is only that which is a river of light,  
Whoever is far from it is also far from God.

The religion of God is the one that shows God,  
Of what use is that faith that unties not all the knots.

Those inexperienced in the knowledge of God,  
May have abandoned idols but are still their slaves.

The next thing that the phonograph played was the well-known poem of *Hazrat Mirza* in praise of the Holy Prophet that starts with the couplet:

There is a marvelous light in the person of Muhammad,  
There is a wonderful and rare ruby in the mine of Muhammad.

This was followed by *Maulvi Abdul Karim*'s recitation from the Quran. In short, the phonograph was used effectively to preach Islam to the *Arya Hindus*. *Hazrat Mirza* liked this method of propagation so much that he suggested: "The delegation that will go to Nasibain should carry with them, besides the Movement's Arabic literature, a phonograph in which I will record a speech in Arabic explaining my claims so that it can be played in the country of Iraq. In this way, the people there will be able to hear my message in my own voice. One of the meanings of 'Messiah' is 'he who travels,' and it would not be strange if it comes true in this way."

### **The departure of the delegation is postponed**

Unfortunately, the departure of the delegation had to be postponed because of some unexpected travel problems to Koh Laghman and Nasibain. *Hazrat Mirza* had almost finished work on the book 'The Messiah in India' except for the information from Nasibain. Consequently, the book was held back from publication and remained unpublished till the death of *Hazrat Mirza* in 1908. It was only after his death that the book was published.

## SOME ANNOUNCEMENTS AND LETTERS OF 1899

### **Announcement of a revealed prophecy**

*Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement on October 22, 1899, titled, “An Announcement Regarding a Revealed Prophecy,” in which he stated that on September 14, 1899, it was revealed to him: “A title of honor; a title of honor; for you a title of honor; a grand sign will be with it.” In interpreting this revelation, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote that the grant of a title to someone by God was not without meaning, unlike the titles of worldly governments where the title of *Khan Bahadur* (Brave Khan) may be given to a person who was cowardly. Consequently, some sign was about to be manifested that would be a sign of honor. After this, *Hazrat* Mirza also penned a vision that gave the same indication. *Hazrat* Mirza interpreted this revelation and vision as follows:

Hence, through the exercise of my own judgment, I understand its meaning to be that for the purpose of rendering a final decision in this matter, which in some aspects is very old and in which charges of being a phony and a heretic have exceeded all bounds, God will manifest a sign so auspicious, so blessed, so bounteous, and so conciliatory that it will exceed human ingenuity and ability.

### **Prayer for a Heavenly decision**

After this, *Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement on November 5,

1899, titled “A Prayer of this Humble Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani for a Heavenly Testimony and a Plea to the Most Honorable (God) for a Judgment about Me.” In this announcement, *Hazrat* Mirza beseeched God with heartfelt pain and great feeling to render a decision about him in the following words:

I swear by Thine Honor and Glory that Thy decision is acceptable to me. So if within a period of three years, from January 1900 to December 1902, Thou showest not a Heavenly sign in my support and verification, but (instead) refute this person in the manner of those who are mischievous, unholy, faithless, false, Antichrists, cheats and troublemakers in your eyes, then Thou art my witness that I will not consider myself truthful.

### **A communication for the party**

On the same date, he published an announcement for his party titled, “A Communication for My Party.” In this announcement, he urged members of his party to lead righteous and pure lives, seek forgiveness and resort to prayer. He also asked them to show patience in the face of provocation, not to retaliate when abused, and to exhibit exemplary tolerance and patience so that God may make a clear distinction between them and others by showing His support for them.

### **Hussain Kami’s embezzlement exposed**

As narrated in Chapter 84, the Turkish counsel Hussain Kami was disgraced after the public exposure of his dishonesty, and thus *Hazrat* Mirza’s prophecy published in his announcements of May 24, 1897, and June 25, 1897, came to fruition with great precision. The newspaper *Nayyer Asafi* of Madras was the first to publish the news about Hussain Kami’s dishonesty in its issue of October 12, 1899. Based on this report, *Hazrat* Mirza announced the fulfillment of his prophecy in a printed poster on November 18, 1899. The incident has been narrated in detail earlier in this book.

### **A grand prophecy fulfilled**

*Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi was badly humiliated as a result of Mr. Dewey’s judgment and the agreement he was made to sign. His humiliation was obvious to everyone except to some of his diehard disciples, who insisted that the events did not reflect badly on him at all. This prompted *Hazrat* Mirza to issue an announcement on December 17, 1899, titled “The

Fulfillment of a Grand Prophecy and also a Reply to Those Who do not Accept the Fulfillment of the Prophecy through Lack of Proper Understanding.” In this announcement *Hazrat Mirza* provided all the details regarding the fulfillment of the prophecy and explained in great detail all the ways in which *Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi* had been humiliated. The effect of this announcement was that even those who were previously unaware of *Maulvi Batalvi*’s humiliation now came to know about it.

### **The Boer War**

In 1899, hostilities broke out between the British and the Boers in Transvaal and the fighting continued till 1900. At the behest of the government, money was collected by various organizations throughout India to aid the wounded war veterans. Hence, on the occasion of *Eid ul Fitr* on February 2, 1900, *Hazrat Mirza* also asked members of his party to donate money for assisting the wounded war veterans. This appeal was also published in a poster issued in the same month.

### **A decisive letter on the issue of prophethood**

Someone addressed the following question to *Hazrat Mirza*: The clerics who have declared you an infidel charge that you claim to be a prophet; is it true or false? *Hazrat Mirza* wrote the reply to this query in August 1899 with his own hands and the newspaper *Al-Hakam* printed it in full in its issue dated August 17, 1899.<sup>1</sup> The reply is reproduced below so that the truth may be fully illuminated:

My dear Brother,

Peace be with you and the mercy and blessings of Allah. I received your letter. The fact is that for the last twenty years this humble person has been receiving revelations. Many times, these revelations have contained the word *rasul* (messenger) or *nabi* (prophet) as for instance it was revealed, “He it is who sent the Messenger (*rasul*) with guidance and the true religion,” and it was revealed, “Allah’s valiant and from among the prophets (*al anbya*)” and similarly it was revealed, “A prophet (*nabi*)<sup>2</sup> came to

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1 Al Hakam No. 29 Vol. 3 dated August 17, 1899.

2. There is also another reading of this revelation to the effect, “A warner (*nazeer*) came to this world,” and this is how the revelation is recorded in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*. The other version was not recorded to preempt any conflict.



this world but the people of the world did not accept him.” There are many other similar revelations in which the words “prophet” and “messenger” have been used in respect of this humble person. However, whoever considers this prophethood or messengership to mean real prophethood or messengership that gives a person the authority to dispense Divine law is in error. By the word “messenger” is just meant “one who is sent by God” and by “prophet” only “one who prophesies based on knowledge from God” or “explains hidden truths.”

Since even the metaphorical use of such words leads to strife among Muslims, - a most reprehensible outcome - these words should not become part of the ordinary parlance and day-to-day phraseology of the Movement. And one must believe with firm conviction that prophethood has terminated with the Holy Prophet as Allah has stated, “...but he (Muhammad) is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of Prophets.” (33:40) To negate this verse or to look upon it lightly is in fact to part company with Islam. A person who exceeds the bounds in denial puts himself in a dangerous situation in the same manner as the *Shias* who exceed the limits of faith. It should be clearly understood that God has terminated all His prophethoods and messengerships with the Quran and Holy Prophet Muhammad. I have come into this world, and I have been sent into this world, just to serve the religion of Islam and not for the purpose of leaving Islam to form another religion. Always protect yourself from the Devil’s insinuations, maintain true love of Islam, and never forget the greatness of the Holy Prophet. I am the servant of the religion of Islam, and to serve Islam is the real reason for my appearance.

The words “prophet” and “messenger” are only in the nature of metaphor and figure of speech. In the Arabic lexicon, the word “*risalat*” means “one who is sent” and “*nabuwat*” means “to explain hidden truths and knowledge after receiving knowledge from God.” So keeping only this meaning of these words in one’s mind, and believing accordingly in one’s heart is not blameworthy. However, in the terminology of Islam, the meaning of “prophet” and “messenger” is one who brings a comprehensive revealed law, or abrogates parts of previously revealed law, or who is not a follower of another prophet but has direct commun-

ion with God without the advantage of another prophet. Hence, one should remain alert that this latter meaning is not understood in the present context; for our Book is none other than the Quran, and our religion is none other besides Islam, and we believe that our Holy Prophet is the seal of prophets, and the Quran is the final revealed Book. Religion should not be made into a children's plaything. Remember, that my claim is nothing besides that of being a servant of Islam, and whoever imputes anything besides this, fabricates against me. I receive grace and blessing through our Holy Prophet and I get the bounty of knowledge from the Quran. It is proper that no one should keep anything in their heart contrary to this guidance, otherwise he would be answerable to God. If I am not a servant of Islam, my entire work is of no avail, God would reject it and I would be held accountable.

May your welfare increase;

Peace be with you,

Dated: August 17, 1899

## ***HAZRAT MIRZA STRESSES THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING ARABIC***

### ***Hazrat Mirza considered it necessary for a Muslim to learn Arabic***

*Hazrat Mirza* attached great importance to the learning of Arabic by all Muslims, and in particular, by members of his party so that they do not remain ignorant of their religious language. Because the Quran is in the Arabic language, it is not possible to gain a full understanding of its wisdom and truths without mastering the language in which it was revealed. For this reason, *Hazrat Mirza* frequently drew attention to the learning of the Arabic language. He would say: “Just like it is necessary these days to learn the English language for employment, business etc., similarly it is necessary for a Muslim to learn Arabic so that he can do full justice to understanding his religion, to have feelings of love for his faith and to stay connected with it.”

At his urging, numerous persons, including some advanced in age, started learning Arabic towards the end of 1899, and in a short while became literate in Arabic. This humble author remembers an incident from a visit to Qadian, when a convert from the Sikh religion, who had converted not so long ago, corrected the Arabic of a person born in the Muslim faith. I could not help but be pleased with the transformation that had taken place in this former Sikh who had now become a master of the Arabic language. But this was the blessing of Islam and of the *Imam* (the religious leader). Those were the days when the atmosphere of Qadian was replete with the knowledge of religion and that of the Arabic language.

## Chapter

# 112

### ***MADRASAH TALIM-UL-ISLAM* (SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION) UPGRADED TO HIGH SCHOOL**

#### **Establishment of the High School**

*Madrasah Talimul Islam* (School of Islamic Education) was initially set up as a middle school, but even at its inception, it was hoped that it would ultimately be upgraded to a high school. This was done in February 1900. The school was accomplishing its objective admirably of imparting a normal school education, but with an additional Islamic component in its core curriculum. The students were required to attend the classes of Quranic lessons given by *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din. These classes were very helpful in increasing their knowledge about the religion of Islam. In March 1900, it was also proposed to open a new branch of the school specializing in Islamic Studies.

#### **Expansion of *Jamia Masjid* (Principal Mosque) Qadian**

During this period, the *Jamia Masjid* Qadian was expanded and an appeal was made to donate funds for the purpose.

## **OPPONENTS BLOCK THE WAY TO THE *MUBARAK MOSQUE* AND THE SUIT TO DEMOLISH THE BLOCKING WALL**

### **The malicious behavior of *Hazrat Mirza's* relatives**

It had earlier been mentioned in Chapter 22 that Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din, *Hazrat Mirza's* paternal cousins who shared property rights with him in their common inheritance, were his bitter opponents and extremely envious and jealous of him. They were the polar opposites of *Hazrat Mirza*. *Hazrat Mirza* excelled in all things religious while they excelled in things irreligious. Imam-ud-Din, in particular, was a confirmed atheist. *Hazrat Mirza* had two kinds of ownership rights in his landed property in Qadian. He was the sole proprietor of some land, and also joint owner in some common property. All the joint owners of a common property had the right to enjoy its use, but Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din always created hindrances to prevent *Hazrat Mirza* from exercising his rights over the common property. Whenever there was any occasion for *Hazrat Mirza* to derive some benefit from the use of the common land, Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din did their best to frustrate his attempt and to torment him in all possible ways.

For example, there was a well in the common property from which all the owners had the right to draw water, but whenever *Hazrat Mirza's* men, or members of his Movement, drew water from it, Imam-ud-Din and

Nizam-ud-Din would jeer and abuse them, and would get their hired thugs to initiate fights with those drawing the water. Another example was the forcible prevention of the right to use the moat surrounding the town of Qadian, which was common property, and from which everyone was allowed to excavate earth. *Hazrat* Mirza's following was growing rapidly and many of his disciples decided to take up residence in Qadian to be near him. *Hazrat* Mirza generously gave them a piece of land from his exclusively owned property to make a house. However, when it came to getting earth from the moat for construction, there was trouble. Imam-ud-Din, Nizam-ud-Din and their hoodlums would immediately reach the scene, start a confrontation and confiscate the pickaxes and shovels of the excavating party. If the matter was reported to the police, Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din would apologize to *Hazrat* Mirza, and he would drop the charges. *Hazrat* Mirza was a very forgiving and merciful person, and whenever someone apologized, he would back down out of modesty and kindness, and forgave his transgressor.

### **A wall is constructed to block the way to the mosque**

It so happened once that earth was excavated from the moat while Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din were out of town. When they returned and found out what had happened, they were very angry. Oppression and harassment was their second nature, and after much reflection, they crafted a new plan to harass *Hazrat* Mirza. On January 7, 1900, they constructed a wall across the narrow alley that led to the Mubarak mosque. Their contention was that the alley crossed their land and they would not let anyone pass on it. The Mubarak mosque was, in fact, a part of *Hazrat* Mirza's residential quarters, and the blocked alley was its access route from the place where the horse carriages dropped off passengers who were visiting *Hazrat* Mirza, and also from the guesthouse and the part of Qadian where the members of the party resided. Those who wanted to come to the mosque now were greatly inconvenienced because they had to travel a very circuitous, stony and treacherous route that ultimately passed through the bazaar before reaching *Hazrat* Mirza's quarters and the mosque. *Hazrat* Mirza did not like confrontations and he first tried to settle the matter amicably through negotiation using some mediators.

The following details of this incident are narrated in the words of Chaudry Hakim Ali:<sup>1</sup>

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1 Taken from *Serat-ul-Mahdi* volume 1.



*The alley between the houses of Hazrat Mirza and Mirza Imam-ud-Din that was blocked. The people in the picture are going to the stairs that lead up to Mubarak Mosque.*

When Mirza Imam-ud-Din and Mirza Nizam-ud-Din started constructing a wall to block the alley leading to the Mubarak mosque, *Hazrat Mirza* asked a few persons, including me, to go and, “request them very politely not to block this alley because it would greatly inconvenience my guests; if they desire, they can find and take possession of some other part of my property.” *Hazrat Mirza* insisted that no harsh words be used. When we went to visit them, the two Mirzas were sitting together in the company of some other people and smoking the hookah. We gave them *Hazrat Mirza*’s message, conversing with them very politely, but as soon as we finished, Mirza Imam-ud-Din retorted angrily, “Why did he (meaning *Hazrat Mirza*) not come himself? I don’t care two hoots for you.” Then he remarked cynically, “It is unfathomable what has happened to him since he started receiving revelation from the Heaven,” and passed some more similar comments. We returned back unsuccessfully.

Then *Hazrat Mirza* requested some of his visiting guests to join our delegation and instructed us to go and explain the situation to the Deputy Commissioner, and to tell him, “We come here from distant places for the sake of religion, and we would be seriously inconvenienced by the action that is being taken because the way to the mosque will be blocked.” During those days, a serious crime had been committed in a village near Qadian and the Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police had come to the village. Accordingly, we went there, and after stopping our carriages at a little distance, got down and proceeded on foot. The Deputy Commissioner was standing outside on open ground and conversing with the Superintendent of Police. One of us stepped forward and said that we had come from Qadian and began to explain our situation. The Deputy Commissioner responded in a very angry tone, “You have come together as a large crowd to frighten me. I know you people well, and I understand fully why this party is being formed. I am not unaware of your affairs, and I will be taking you to task very soon, and then you will come to know what happens when such a party is formed,” etc. etc. We returned back helpless and unsuccessful, and narrated the events to *Hazrat Mirza*.

The opposition (to *Hazrat Mirza*) in those days was very strong, and even the British rulers were very suspicious of his organiza-



tion, and thought that a political party was being formed for some intrigue. The police officers in Batala also were very hostile and antagonistic, and did everything in their power to make things difficult. Within Qadian itself, Mirza Imam-ud-Din, Mirza Nizam-ud-Din and company, and at their instigation the Hindus, Sikhs and non-Ahmadys of Qadian were bent upon causing harm. Thus, the Ahmadys in Qadian had to live under difficult and undignified circumstances. The number of Ahmadys in Qadian was also very small, and consisted, other than the members of *Hazrat Mirza's* family, almost exclusively of outsiders who had migrated to Qadian for the sake of religion or were guests.

When *Hazrat Mirza* assessed this situation and saw the difficulties being faced by the party, he gathered the male members of his Movement and sought their counsel. He said, "The situation here has become such that it has become difficult to live here. We have to work; if not here, then somewhere else, and migration is a tradition of prophets. Hence, it is my intention that we migrate outside somewhere." On hearing this, *Hazrat Khalifa Awwal* (The First Caliph i.e. *Maulana Nur-ud-Din*) stated, "Sir! Migrate to Bhera; my houses are at your disposal, and there will be no inconvenience of any type." *Maulvi Abdul Karim* extended an invitation for Sialkot and Sheikh Rahmatullah said, "Please come and reside with me in Lahore."...Finally, I also said, "Sir! Migrate to my village. The whole village belongs to us and there is no interference from anyone. Our houses are present ..." *Hazrat Mirza* asked, "Are the necessities of life available there?" I replied, "We produce enough rations for ourselves but there is a town at a short distance from where all necessities can be obtained." *Hazrat Mirza* said, "Very well, we shall see when the time comes; wherever Allah takes us, thither we shall go."

Mian Bashir Ahmad too has mentioned *Hazrat Mirza's* intention to migrate:

This humble person states that once in 1887, too, *Hazrat Mirza* had expressed an intention to leave Qadian and migrate somewhere else as mentioned in his book, *Shehnahey Haq* (Chief Constable of Truth).<sup>2</sup>

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2 See following page.

In short, when Imam-ud-Din refused to negotiate, and the Deputy Commissioner not only offered no assistance but also tried to browbeat the Ahmady delegation, a civil suit was filed in the court of Sheikh Khuda Baksh, District Judge, Gurdaspur. Considerable time had already been expended in trying to find a negotiated settlement before the suit was filed. In addition, remedy from a civil suit traditionally takes a long time. The result was that the entire year 1900 passed and eight months of the year 1901, before the final judgment was rendered on August 12, 1901. On August 20, 1901, the wall was pulled down by order of the court and the same cruel hands that had constructed the wall had to tear it down.

### **Journey to Gurdaspur**

During the course of this litigation, the court moved to Gurdaspur and *Hazrat Mirza* had to travel there for a court appearance. Details of this trip follow:

*Hazrat Mirza* left Qadian on the morning of July 15, 1901, and reached Gurdaspur by 3:00 p.m. the same day. On the suggestion of *Maulvi Muhammad Ali*, he stayed as a guest in the palatial house of *Munshi Nabi Baksh*, a noble of Gurdaspur. The conversation during this stay turned to the civil suit, and someone remarked that people of all other religions had banded together to assist the respondents and this unholy alliance was planning a very vicious cross-examination. *Hazrat Mirza* replied:

I do not care about this thing at all. The believer always has the upper hand, "The hand of Allah is above their hands" (48:10).

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- 2 The fact is that *Hazrat Mirza* had received a revelation, "The calamity of migration." For this reason, the thought repeatedly crossed his mind that at any time, he may have to leave Qadian. Hence, whenever he saw his party persecuted, he thought that perhaps the time had come to migrate from Qadian. However, in the knowledge of Allah, this time was destined to arrive, in a spiritual sense, six years after his death, when his mission of propagation and service of Islam would migrate from Qadian to Lahore. This prophecy came to fruition in the same way as the vision of the Holy Prophet where he had seen the keys to the treasures of Cesar and Chosroes in his hands but they actually came into the hands of Caliph Omar. In a like manner, the prophecy of, "The calamity of migration," was fulfilled through *Maulana Muhammad Ali* when he migrated from Qadian to Lahore. In fact, the meaning of this revelation was just this that the migration of *Hazrat Mirza* would be spiritual, i.e. his mission of propagation and publication of Islamic literature will migrate from Qadian to Lahore. This is how it actually happened and *Hazrat Mirza's* work of propagation of Islam and publication of Islamic literature was transferred from Qadian to Lahore.

The plan of the unbelievers always recoils back at them, “And (they) planned and Allah (also) planned. And Allah is the best of planners” (3:54). I am fully aware that these people have a personal enmity and grudge against me, and the reason is that I have been appointed to refute and destroy the creed of the followers of false faiths. I know, and I am certainly not exaggerating, that the passion given to me to reject the false creeds is so great that my heart testifies, that if the desire for the refutation and falsification of the false creeds of all the Muslims of the world is put on one side of the scale, and mine alone on the other side of the scale, then my side of the scale will be more weighty. When my passion is so great against the false creeds of *Arya* Hindus and Christians, then who else but me will these people have a grudge against?

In the evening, *Hazrat* Mirza went for a walk. Many members of his party had come from other cities; Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din, who was *Hazrat* Mirza’s lawyer in this case, also arrived in the evening from Peshawar. Later in the evening, *Hazrat* Mirza developed a slight fever and suffered an attack of diarrhea. Despite his indisposition, he instructed the members of his party to retire and go to sleep. In compliance with these instructions, everyone repaired to the houses where they were lodged and went to sleep, but *Munshi* Abdul Aziz and two or three other friends stayed back in the house where *Hazrat* Mirza was residing. *Hazrat* Mirza had a very restless night and was not able to sleep a wink because of the high fever and the need to use the restroom frequently. Later, *Hazrat* Mirza commended the care *Munshi* Abdul Aziz gave him during his indisposition with the comment: “I am amazed at *Munshi* Abdul Aziz. Either he did not sleep the whole night or he slept so lightly that as soon as I lifted my head from the pillow, he would get up and in no time be present with a jug of water. In short, this good fellow was up that whole night and also the following night.” He then remarked: “In fact, respect and service of the religious mentor creates a deep bond between the mentor and the disciple that results in nearness to God and assists in the achievement of the objective.”

### ***Hazrat* Mirza’s court appearance**

*Hazrat* Mirza had to appear in court on July 16, 1901. Despite the indisposition of the previous night, he sat with his disciples, counseling and advising them, from the end of the Morning Prayer till 10:00 a.m. At 10 o’clock, he went to the court and a rug was spread on the ground near the southeastern corner of the lined water pond in front of the courthouse for

*Hazrat* Mirza to sit on. Hardly had he sat down when the multitude that normally mills around the premises of the court got wind of his arrival, and began to gather around him. In no time there was a human wall around the rug and the crowd of onlookers kept increasing by the minute. However, soon thereafter the suit was called for hearing, and Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din and *Maulvi* Muhammad Ali went inside the court to plead in the suit.

The statement of two witnesses, Burh Singh and Sant Singh, were recorded first before *Hazrat* Mirza was called to the witness stand. By this time, the courtroom was packed, and among those present were three extra-assistant commissioners of Gurdaspur, Gunga Ram, Mirza Zafarullah Khan and *Munshi* Abdul Shakoor, who had adjourned hearings in their courts for the opportunity to sit in the court of the District Judge to hear *Hazrat* Mirza's evidence. *Hazrat* Mirza's statement was very precise, and after recording his testimony, he came out of the courtroom very happy and satisfied. The afternoon and late-afternoon prayers were combined and offered together, and then he returned to his place of residence. When he went for a walk later in the evening as was his wont, Dr. Faiz Qadir asked: "Sir, *Tehsildar* Mahdi Hassan and some of his friends want to ask you something; if you give permission, may I bring them to you in the evening?" *Hazrat* Mirza replied: "Yes; by all means call them." On return from the walk, the evening and night prayers were offered together. Later, *Mahdi* Hassan *Tehsildar*, Mirza, Reader of the District Judge, and Faiz ur Rahman, Treasury Clerk, and others, arrived. *Hazrat* Mirza conversed with them, and explained his claims to them in great detail.

### **Judgment in the suit for the demolition of the wall**

The next hearing was set for August 10, 1901, and on this date, the witnesses of the respondents recorded their statements, and the counsels for both sides presented their closing arguments. The decision was rendered on August 12, 1901. The District Judge ordered the demolition of the wall, and barred any new construction in Safayd Maidan (the disputed area) ever. He also ordered the respondent to pay one hundred rupees in punitive damages to the plaintiff, and the cost of the suit. When news of the decision reached *Hazrat* Mirza on the evening of August 12, 1901, he remarked: "It is as if there was *Ramzan* (fasting) for one year and eight months and today is the day of *Eid* (festivity)."

### **The wall is demolished**

On August 20, 1901, around 4:00 p.m., the same persons who had constructed the wall demolished it. Imam-ud-Din and Nizam-ud-Din had

to demolish the wall in compliance with the court order, but then they shamelessly requested *Hazrat* Mirza to forgive them the punitive damage and court costs. Despite being seriously inconvenienced for close to two years, *Hazrat* Mirza, in a gesture of great magnanimity and generosity, forgave them the monetary considerations.

### **Heavenly sign manifested in the suit**

*Hazrat* Mirza has recorded in his book *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy* (The Reality of Revelation) the Heavenly sign manifested in this suit. The following narration is taken from this book:<sup>3</sup>

In 1900, it so happened that one of my paternal cousins, Imam-ud-Din, was my ardent opponent. In a mischievous act, he constructed a wall in front of our house and located the wall at a site so that it blocked the way into and out of the mosque. It also blocked the way of my guests who wanted to come and see me in my sitting room or who wanted to go to the mosque. Members of my Movement and I were greatly inconvenienced, and it was as if we were besieged. Perforce, a civil law suit was filed in the court of District Judge Khuda Baksh. After the suit had been filed, it was discovered that the suit was not winnable. The problem was that the file of a previous suit established that the respondent, Imam-ud-Din, had for a long time been in possession of the land on which the wall was constructed. This land, in fact, belonged to another partner (in the joint ownership) named Ghulam Gillani, but (somehow) he lost its physical possession. Ghulam Gillani then filed a civil suit in Gurdaspur against Imam-ud-Din since the land was now in Imam-ud-Din's possession. However, due to proof of adverse possession, the suit was dismissed, and since then, the land had been in the possession of Imam-ud-Din. Now Imam-ud-Din had constructed a wall on this land claiming, "This is my land." Thus, after the suit had been filed, the examination of this old file revealed an insoluble difficulty that made it certain that our suit would be dismissed because, as I have mentioned, an old file proved that the land was in the possession of Imam-ud-Din.

In the face of this severe difficulty, even our lawyer, Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din, advised us that it would be better to seek a nego-

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3 *Haqiqat-ul-Wahy*. Page 266.

tiated settlement in this suit, i.e. to placate Imam-ud-Din by paying him some money. Perforce I agreed to this suggestion, but he was not the kind of person to be placated. He had personal animosity with me, and in fact with the religion of Islam, and he had become aware that the door to pursuing a successful suit was completely barred to us. This further increased him in his perverseness. Finally, we left this matter to God. But as far as my lawyer and I could conceive, there was no chance of success because the old file did prove the possession of the land by Imam-ud-Din.

And Imam-ud-Din was so malicious that he took every opportunity to resist the passage of, and hurl abuses at the members of the Movement when their carriages stopped in the open space in front of our house. And this was not all, for he had also planned, as soon as the suit was dismissed, to build a long wall in front of the doors of our house to incarcerate us like prisoners, unable to emerge from the house or to go outside. These were days of great anxiety, and our situation was aptly described by, “Until the earth, vast as it is, became strait to them” (9:118).

This adversity overtook us most unexpectedly, and so we prayed to God and sought His help. Then after the supplication, the following revelation was received, and this revelation did not come piecemeal but was revealed all together. I remember that at the time (of the revelation) Syed Fazal Shah of Lahore (was with me), and Brother Syed Nasir Shah, overseer posted at Baramula, Kashmir, was massaging my feet. And the time was past noon when I began to receive a series of revelations about the wall. I told Syed *sahib* that, “this revelation is about the suit pertaining to the wall; write down the revelation as it comes.” Accordingly, he got hold of a pen, an inkpot and paper. So it happened that a condition of drowsiness occurred every time, and one sentence of revelation from God, as is the tradition of Allah, came down on my tongue, and when one sentence was revealed and written down, the drowsiness returned and the second sentence of Divine revelation would issue forth from my tongue. This continued until the entire Divine revelation was received and written down by the pen of Syed Fazal Shah. I was given to understand that this revelation pertained to the wall built by Imam-ud-Din about which

there was a pending suit in the court. And I was (further) given to understand that eventually, there would be victory in the suit. Accordingly, I narrated this Divine revelation to a large section of my party and informed them of its meaning and the circumstances of its revelation. I had it published in the newspaper *Al-Hakam* and told everybody that although the present situation of the suit was critical and the situation hopeless, but God will create certain conditions that will make us victorious, for such was the gist of the revelation.

After this, *Hazrat* Mirza reproduced the entire Divine revelation in Arabic, which started with the following sentences:

The millstone will turn and the Divine decree will be revealed. Certainly it is a blessing from Allah and none has the power to refute it. Say: I swear by my God that this matter is the truth. There will neither be any change in this affair nor will it be kept secret. And what will be revealed in it will amaze you. A revelation from the Lord of the Worlds, the Most High; certainly my Lord deviates not nor does He forget. A clear victory, but it may be held back till an appointed term.

He then paraphrased the revelation in Urdu:

“The millstone will turn and the Divine decree will be revealed,” that is, the condition of the suit will change like the revolving millstone whose front part moves out of sight and the part that was out of sight comes to the forefront. This means that the current status of the case that presents injurious and detrimental facts about us before the judge, will not persist and a new and beneficial situation will emerge ... In a like manner, secret and hidden facts will become visible by coming to the forefront, and that which is visible now will be deemed unworthy of attention, and will disappear. And after this, it was stated that this promise is a blessing of God that will certainly come to pass and none has the power to refute it...And then it was stated: Say, I swear by my God that this matter is the truth; there will neither be any change in this affair nor will this affair be kept secret, and a new issue will emerge that will amaze you. This is the revelation of that God Who is the Lord of the High Heavens. My Lord digresses not

from the straight path in respect of promises made to His holy persons, and He forgets not His slaves who are deserving of help. So you will be granted a clear victory in this case, but this decision is held in abeyance till the time decreed by God.

Further on he wrote:

This prophecy was made when the opponents were stating categorically: “For sure the suit would be dismissed,” and said about me: “We will make a wall before every door of his house, and cause him great suffering for he would be in a veritable jail.” And as I have just written, God informed me through this prophecy that He would manifest an affair that will make the defeated into the victorious and the victorious into the defeated...

Then the day of decision arrived. Our opponents were very happy, fully expecting the suit to be dismissed on that day, and were remarking: “From today we will be able to torment (him) as we please.” This was also the day when the secret affair was to be revealed at the very last moment, as mentioned in the prophetic statement, and provide a turning point in the suit. Accordingly, it so happened that our attorney, Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din, got the idea to check the index of the file pertaining to the old suit, i.e. the index containing a summary of the important orders. A most unexpected discovery was made on examining the index; namely, an attested order of the judge was found stating that this land was in the possession of not only Imam-ud-Din but also Mirza Ghulam Murtaza, i.e. my father. On seeing this, my attorney knew that we had won the suit. The judge was apprised of this fact and he immediately sent for the index. On examining it, he became convinced of the real facts, and had no hesitation in passing a decree about the land against Imam-ud-Din with cost. If those papers had not been presented, the judge had no choice but to dismiss the suit, and we would have been left to suffer at the hands of a malicious enemy. These are the works of God; He does what He pleases.

This prophecy was, in fact, not one but two prophecies because there was first a promise of victory and second, there was a promise to reveal a secret affair hidden from everyone’s eyes...Despite



several hearings, our attorney did not present this irrefutable argument. It was only in the last stages of the case that this knot was unraveled solely through the grace of God. Accordingly, anyone who looks at the judgment of Sheikh Khuda Baksh will realize immediately that for an extended period, our attorney relied solely on verbal evidence that carries little weight against a judicial judgment. This was so because the file that the respondent, Imam-ud-Din, had presented to show his exclusive possession contained only his name, and had no mention of my father's name. The secret here was that Ghulam Jillani, the real owner of the land, had filed a suit only against Imam-ud-Din, who was listed as the sole respondent in the complaint of the plaintiff. On learning about the pendency of this suit, my father, acting through his attorney, had his name included as a respondent and this implied that the land was in the joint possession of both the respondents. These papers had been lost, and only the name of Imam-ud-Din was left as a respondent as given in the original petition of the plaintiff. This created the misunderstanding that Imam-ud-Din was in sole possession of the land.

So this was the hidden secret not known to us that became apparent through the index at a time decreed by God, and it made the millstone, as stated in the prophecy, turn in an instant. It is obvious that the circular motion of the mill causes the part of the mill that is hidden from the eyes to come in front of the eyes, and that in the front to disappear behind. That is what came to pass with this suit. The reasons that were previously in the sight of the judge, namely, that the plaintiff Ghulam Jillani had shown only Imam-ud-Din as the sole possessor of the land in his plaint became invisible with the production of the index, and like the hidden side of the mill, a new set of facts came to the forefront. Thus, the secret matter God had promised to reveal at the very end, as stated in the prophecy, was revealed. The point is that Ghulam Jillani's suit was very old, a period of almost forty years had passed since then, and the litigation had taken place during the time of my father and I had no knowledge of it.

## THE REVEALED SERMON

The festival of *Eid-ul-Adha* in the year 1900 (corresponding to 1317 *hijri*) was celebrated on April 11 - a day that came to have special significance in the history of *Hazrat Mirza's* Movement. It was on this day that *Hazrat Mirza* delivered in the Arabic language the famous sermon known as the *Khutbah Ilhamia* or the Revealed Sermon. It was *Hazrat Mirza's* heartfelt desire that party members should visit Qadian frequently to cleanse their souls, and purify their hearts under his influence. Accordingly, he repeatedly urged members of the party to visit Qadian for this purpose. In particular, he tried to have party congregations at least three times a year, i.e. on the occasions of the two *Eids*, and during the Christmas holidays. It was probably Divine inspiration that impelled *Hazrat Mirza* to invite members to congregate in Qadian especially on the occasion of *Eid-ul-Adha* in the year 1900. Although *Eid* was to be on April 11, the guests started arriving on April 10. They came from many cities including Amritsar, Batala, Lahore, Wazirabad, Sialkot, Jammu, Peshawar, Gujrat, Jehlum, Rawalpindi, Kapurthala, Ludhiana, Patiala, Sanoor, Lucknow and Bombay. The number of guests exceeded 300, with the largest contingent coming from Sialkot.

### **The day of Arafat**

On the day of Arafat (the day preceding *Eid-ul-Adha*), *Hazrat Mirza* wrote a note to *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* expressing his intention to spend that day and part of the night supplicating for his followers. He asked him for a list of the names and abodes of the members gathered in Qadian so

that he may pray for them. *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din gathered the members of the party, and after a brief address informed them of *Hazrat* Mirza's desire. Accordingly, a list was prepared and sent to *Hazrat* Mirza. He spent that day and a major portion of the night in supplication. A large number of party members had gathered for this occasion, and all of them fervently desired personal audiences with *Hazrat* Mirza, but such interviews would have distracted him in his supplications. He, therefore, sent another note to *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din requesting that no messages be sent to him so that he will not be distracted. *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din again assembled the party members and passed on these instructions. The evening and night prayers were combined and offered together. After the prayers were over, *Hazrat* Mirza excused himself by stating: "Because I have promised God to spend today and part of the night in prayer, I beg your leave so that the promise is not broken."

### **The day of *Eid***

*Maulana* Abdul Karim had made it a tradition to pay *Hazrat* Mirza a visit either on the evening before *Eid* or the morning of *Eid* to request him to address the congregation after *Eid* prayers. In his humble way, *Hazrat* Mirza would remark: "My speech is nothing much. When there is a large congregation of friends, I have an eye on their (spiritual) illnesses, and my prescriptions for their individual (spiritual) illnesses become my speech." However, *Hazrat* Mirza had been indisposed for some time before this *Eid*, and it seemed improbable that he would be able to address the gathering.

Nevertheless, in keeping with his tradition, *Maulvi* Abdul Karim went to see *Hazrat* Mirza and said: "I have come especially to request Your Honor to make a speech, even if it is just a few sentences." *Hazrat* Mirza responded: "God has commanded me similarly. It was revealed to me this morning: 'Give your speech in Arabic to the gathering; you have been granted this power.' My initial thinking was that this revelation was perhaps meant for some other gathering, but maybe this is that gathering. It has also been revealed to me: 'God has blessed you with eloquence in this speech.'"

### **The *Eid* prayer**

The expansion of *Jamia* Mosque in Qadian had been underway for a considerable time and a significant portion of the work was complete. *Hazrat* Mirza therefore instructed that the *Eid* congregation be held in this mosque. By eight o'clock, the mosque, including its courtyard, was almost full. *Hazrat* Mirza came at half past eight and the *Eid* prayer was completed by quarter past nine. *Maulana* Abdul Karim led the prayer.

After the prayer, *Hazrat* Mirza came and stood in the middle arch of the three arches that formed the entrance from the courtyard into the main hall of the mosque. He first spoke in Urdu on the subject of Islam as a complete and living religion, and the speech was full of knowledge, wisdom and truth. *Hazrat* Mirza was about to finish this speech when *Maulvi* Abdul Karim requested him to say something about unity and love among the party members. *Hazrat* Mirza expounded on this topic for some time, and then in accordance with the command of Allah, he expressed his intention to continue his sermon in Arabic. He instructed *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din and *Maulvi* Abdul Karim to sit near him, and to write down the sermon as he spoke.

### **The Revealed Sermon**

When the two *Maulanas* were ready, *Hazrat* Mirza started his Arabic sermon with "O Servants of Allah." *Hazrat* Mirza's total engrossment and absorption in this Arabic sermon was beyond description. It was apparent from his face and demeanor that at that moment, he was out of this world, and his speech was not in his control but Divinely guided. His half closed eyes made it appear as if he was in a trance. He spoke with such eloquence and fluency that even a learned Arabic scholar and scribe like *Maulvi* Abdul Karim had difficulty, at times, to keep up with him. *Maulvi* Abdul Karim would then request that a sentence be repeated, and *Hazrat* Mirza would repeat the exact same words. Later, while commenting on this sermon, *Hazrat* Mirza described this experience by saying that it appeared to him as if a scroll of words was passing before his eyes from which he was reading. Whenever *Maulana* Abdul Karim would interrupt to seek clarification about some sentence he had missed, the requisite sentence would jump back before *Hazrat* Mirza's eyes, and he would read it again. In short, *Hazrat* Mirza had stood up to say a few sentences in Arabic to fulfill the command of Allah, but actually delivered a long and eloquent Arabic sermon, full of truth, wisdom, and a healing prescription for the purification of the soul. *Hazrat* Mirza had said: "Write these words now, otherwise they may be forgotten." In this Arabic sermon, *Hazrat* Mirza discussed the philosophy of sacrifice, and brought out such fine points that those in the audience who were literate in Arabic were enchanted and enthralled.

### ***Maulvi* Abdul Karim rendered the Urdu translation of this sermon**

When *Hazrat* Mirza finished the sermon and sat down, there was a popular demand from the congregation to hear its translation. *Maulvi* Abdul Karim rendered the translation in his usual oratorical and eloquent style.



*The arch in Aqsa Mosque where Hazrat Mirza stood to deliver the revealed sermon.*

### **Prostration of thanks**

*Maulvi* Abdul Karim was still reading out the translation when *Hazrat* Mirza prostrated himself as a mark of gratitude. The entire congregation joined him in performing this prostration of thanks. When *Hazrat* Mirza raised his head from prostration, he remarked that he had just seen the word *mubarak* (blessed) written in red letters and this was a sign of acceptance. He said: "This sermon had been appointed as a sign of the acceptance of the supplications I had made on the Day of Arafat and the night of *Eid*. If I was able to give the sermon extempore in the Arabic language, then the supplications were to be considered as accepted. So all praise be to Allah for this."

### **The afternoon and late afternoon prayers**

By the time the translated sermon had been read out, it was time for the afternoon prayer. The afternoon and late afternoon prayers were then combined and offered together.

### **This was a magnificent sign from Allah**

*Hazrat* Mirza had not received much formal schooling in Arabic. For this reason, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi and his like-minded clerics derisively called him a *Munshi* (clerk). At one point, *Maulvi* Abdul Karim had suggested that *Hazrat* Mirza write an article in Arabic, appropriate for propagation in Arabic speaking countries, but *Hazrat* Mirza had responded with great simplicity and humbleness: "It is a good suggestion, but I will not be able to write in Arabic. It will be better if I write the article in Urdu and then *Maulana* Nur-ud-Din, you and I can collaborate to translate it into Arabic." After this, *Hazrat* Mirza supplicated in the matter, and the command came from on High: "Write it yourself in Arabic. We will give you knowledge of the Arabic language, i.e. We will help you with Arabic words and vocabulary." *Hazrat* Mirza's first endeavor in Arabic occurred in this manner - an article entitled *Tabligh* (Propagation) was published in the book *Ainah Kamalat Islam*. Those who read the article, including *Maulvi* Abdul Karim and people whose mother tongue was Arabic, were amazed at its eloquence and literary caliber. After this, God so helped *Hazrat* Mirza with the Holy Spirit and blessed him with such exceptional abilities in the Arabic language that he wrote many books in Arabic. He challenged scholars from India and Arabia to write books of comparable merit in Arabic within a similar period of time. It is a fact that no one picked up the courage to accept this challenge. This Divine assistance had so far been exhibited in the area of writing Arabic, but not in speaking Arabic.

Until then, there had not been an opportunity to give a speech in Arabic nor was there any promise of Divine assistance in this respect. The ability to speak Arabic would have certainly constituted a far more convincing sign of Divine assistance than the ability to write Arabic because in writing there was time to reflect and ponder but this was not the case in extempore speech. For this reason, many seasoned public speakers bring with them a written speech, or at least some written notes, to refer to during their speech. For those who are not used to public speaking, the experience of giving a speech can be quite an ordeal; they become tongue-tied even in their mother tongue, experience loss of memory, and forget things they know very well. *Hazrat Mirza* was not a great orator and the eloquence seen in his powerful writing was not present to the same degree in his speech. Although his speeches captivated the audience with their knowledge, wisdom and truth, the words he chose were very simple, and his delivery was conversational rather than oratorical. Thus, as *Hazrat Mirza* was not a great orator even in his mother tongue, any expectations of an eloquent speech in Arabic could only be considered far-fetched.

It was under these circumstances that the Divine commandment was given to deliver a speech in Arabic to the congregation. In fulfillment of this command, he stood up to speak in Arabic but was perplexed about what to say, and how to say it. In his heart, however, he was convinced because of the revelation that some supernatural Divine power was going to assist him, and for this reason, he directed *Maulvi Nur-ud-Din* and *Maulvi Abdul Karim* to transcribe the sermon. And so it happened; Divine assistance aided him with Arabic words and vocabulary in a manner that even surpassed the assistance he received while writing. There was an inspiration of both ideas and words. Whatever aspect of a particular subject *Hazrat Mirza* wanted to speak on, line after line of the most appropriate and eloquent words began to scroll before his eyes like a written document. All of this occurred before a large congregation. What the audience saw was *Hazrat Mirza* speaking extempore without a written text before him; yet it felt as if he was reading a text because of the effortless way in which the words were coming out of his mouth, or as if a prerecorded message was playing on the gramophone. Allah had promised assistance to *Hazrat Mirza* with the Arabic language, and hundreds of people saw this Divine sign being fulfilled with their own eyes. No longer did these people have to accept God on the basis of blind faith, but the existence of God had become a sure fact for them, and the supernatural example of Divine help they had witnessed filled their hearts with faith and wisdom.

### **This sermon was not a revelation**

It must be emphasized that this Arabic sermon was not a revelation that came from on High to *Hazrat* Mirza, but it was an eloquent and learned sermon whose eloquence and wisdom was bestowed on him supernaturally by God. This is evident from the revelation: “An eloquent speech from near the Bountiful Lord,” received by *Hazrat* Mirza before the sermon. In other words, the eloquence of this sermon was a blessing of the Bountiful Lord. *Hazrat* Mirza wrote his revelations in many places, but never included this Arabic sermon among them. However, it is true that the eloquence and lessons of this sermon were from Allah, and were given to *Hazrat* Mirza as a sign. This miraculous Divine assistance that provided eloquent and appropriate words from the lexicon during the course of this extempore sermon was no different from Divine assistance already being provided to *Hazrat* Mirza in his Arabic writings.<sup>1</sup> However, the truth is that the sign of Allah’s assistance became much more apparent from this sermon than from the writings. In the course of penning down a text, there is time to pause and reflect, but in an extempore speech there is no such luxury, and what has to be said must be said without delay. For this reason, a supernatural sign of assistance cannot be manifested in the same way with writing as it can be with speaking. The abundance of Divine support during this sermon was such that in whatever direction *Hazrat* Mirza’s thoughts turned, a bevy of appropriate words would jump out in front of him, and this supernatural phenomenon created the impression that he was seeing an Arabic text scrolling before his eyes. This magnificent and supernatural sign was manifested before a large congregation, and furnished clear proof of the existence of God, and the veracity of *Hazrat* Mirza.

### **Publication of the Revealed Sermon**

*Hazrat* Mirza later published this sermon in the form of a book. The subject matter of the actual sermon was confined to the philosophy of sacrifice, but when *Hazrat* Mirza published it in the form of a book on October 17, 1902, he added two more chapters in Arabic focusing on his claims. The size of the book, therefore, increased to 204 pages, exclusive of the footnotes and announcements, out of which the actual sermon comprised only the first thirty-eight pages. The rest of the book consisted of

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1 *Hazrat* Mirza has described in his book *Nazul-ul-Masih* the way in which Allah assisted him with words and meanings during his Arabic writings. The relevant portions of which are reproduced as an appendix to this chapter.



later writings. *Hazrat* Mirza named this book, *Khutbah Ilhamia* (The Revealed Sermon) because this sermon was delivered with the assistance of Allah after the *Eid* prayers in fulfillment of a Divine revelation. The word revelation was not meant to imply that the sermon was a revelation but that it was delivered as the result of a revelation. It is true, however, that its eloquence was a supernatural sign from Allah.

## APPENDIX

### (Continuation of Footnote 1)

*Hazrat* Mirza described the manner in which Allah assisted him in his Arabic writings as follows:<sup>2</sup>

It is worth mentioning here that I especially see God's miraculous signs during my writings because when I write in Arabic or Urdu, I feel as if someone within is tutoring me. My writing, whether in Arabic, Urdu or Persian, can be divided into two types:

1. In the first type, a succession of words and meanings keep coming effortlessly before me, and I keep writing them down. Although this writing is not very taxing on me, the matter is such that it is not much beyond my mental capabilities. That is, the words and meanings are of a kind that even without God's special assistance, it may have been possible for me to write the article with the blessing of His ordinary support, and the use of natural human abilities, albeit after some effort and spending a lot of time. And Allah knows best.
2. The second type of my writing is purely supernatural, and it occurs as follows. When I am writing a passage, say in Arabic, and am at a loss for words to express an idea, revelation from God guides me, and the Holy Spirit inspires the word into my heart (*wahy matluww*), and issues it forth from my tongue, and at that time, I am devoid of my own senses. For example, during the writing of an Arabic text, I needed to use the exact Arabic equivalent of 'large family,' - a word that I did not know, but which was necessary to express the idea in the passage. Immediately, the word *dafuf ayyal* was inspired into my

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<sup>2</sup> *Nazul-ul-Masih*. Pages 56 and 57.

heart and it means exactly 'large family.' In another instance, I needed to use in a passage the Arabic equivalent of the phrase, 'to become silent from sorrow and anger,' and I did not know the word. Immediately, the word *wojum* was inspired into my heart. While writing Arabic passages, hundreds of complete sentences are inspired into my heart or an angel shows me the sentences written on a piece of paper.

Care should be taken here not to consider the use of the word *wahy matluww* (inspiration) to mean that the entire article was inspired or revealed by God. *Hazrat* Mirza's use of the term *wahy matluww* was only meant to indicate that whenever he was at a loss for a meaning, word or phrase during the course of his writing, he would receive it either as a revelation in his heart, or it would issue forth from his tongue, or it would be shown to him in writing. This did not imply that God revealed the article he was writing, but only that Divine inspiration would assist him from time to time with words and meanings. This was analogous to a situation in which a student writes an article and the mentor assists him with occasional words that are not in the student's vocabulary. This does not mean that the teacher dictated the article written by the student. In fact, the teacher's help was only literary and nothing more; this was the case with the revealed sermon as well.

## BISHOP LEFROY OF LAHORE CHALLENGED

When God appoints a person for a specific mission, He grants him special zeal to pursue the purpose of his appointment. The objective of *Hazrat Mirza's* appointment was to break the Cross and so God bestowed him with a special ardor for accomplishing this task. To achieve this objective, he left no stone unturned to comprehensively rebut the Christian doctrines. As soon as any clergyman dared to criticize Islam, *Hazrat Mirza* would challenge the criticism and invite the critic to debate him.

### **Bishop Lefroy lectures on 'The Innocent Prophet'**

Bishop George A. Lefroy, third Bishop of Lahore, had just arrived from Europe and was unaware of this champion of Islam. Soon after arriving in Lahore, he made it a point to confront Muslims. He was aware of some weaknesses in the prevalent creeds among the Muslim clerics. One of these was that they considered Jesus to be alive in heaven, and their own Prophet dead. The second was that they considered the birth of everyone, except that of Jesus and his Mother, as tainted with the touch of Satan. In other words, these clerics had conceded the highest pinnacle of chastity to Jesus alone. The Bishop was unaware that *Hazrat Mirza* had proven both of these beliefs incorrect and thereby restored the fair face of Islam by removing these blemishes that were the handiwork of the clerics. In this state of unawareness, the Bishop made arrangements to give two lectures in Lahore on the topics of, 'The Innocent Prophet' and 'The

Living Apostle,’ and with great bravado challenged Muslims to respond in defense.

The first lecture in this series was on ‘The Innocent Prophet,’ and was delivered before a gathering in the Forman Chapel in Anarkali, on May 18, 1900. Bishop Lefroy used references from the Gospels, some unreliable traditions prevalent among certain sections of Muslims, and a few substandard translations of the Quran to prove that Jesus was the only innocent prophet. In the process, he left no stone unturned to defame the other holy and righteous prophets and messengers of God by proving them sinners. At the end of his lecture, he invited the Muslims to respond. There were many Muslim clerics among the audience, but none of them had the ability to rebut the Bishop’s arguments.

It is unfortunate that *Hazrat* Mirza did not know about this lecture beforehand, but a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza, *Mufti* Muhammad Sadiq, happened to be present among the audience. On seeing the helplessness and insensitivity of the Muslim clerics, he could not restrain himself and stood up at his seat, and said in a firm voice: “Providing sundry references about the chastity of Jesus can be of no avail. Lucas and Mathew were his disciples and if they wrote something complimentary about Jesus in their gospels, it can have no credibility in the eyes of a researcher in the face of the clear statement of Jesus himself. In response to a question by his disciple, Jesus said, ‘Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.’<sup>1</sup> In other words, Jesus has denied being good in no uncertain terms.” Next, *Mufti* Muhammad Sadiq turned to Bishop Lefroy’s criticism of the Holy Prophet based on the use of the words *istighfar* (protection) and *dhanb* (sin or shortcoming) in some Quranic directives addressed to the Holy Prophet, and proceeded to explain the real significance of these words. *Mufti* Sadiq said that, in fact, the Quran had stressed the moral purity of the Holy Prophet to the exclusion of all other prophets as was apparent from the Quranic verse, “And Allah will protect thee from sins from among all people” (5:67).<sup>2</sup> In other words, the Quran has stated here that, from among all the people, God guarantees only the innocence of the Holy Prophet. The Bishop was nonplussed by this response.

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1 And when he was going forth into the way, there came one running and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God – Mark 10:17,18.

2 The translation of the verse used here is based on *Ruh al-Maani* (Commentary), by Abu-l-Fadl Shahab al-Din al Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi as given in footnote 5:67 of *Maulana* Muhammad Ali’s commentary.

An Indian clergyman sitting next to him prompted that the translation of the verse as quoted was unusual, and differed from the commonly accepted translation of the verse. The Bishop asked the clergyman to locate the referenced verse in the Quran for him. The clergyman found the verse, put his finger on the page as a placeholder, closed the Quran over his finger and held it out for the Bishop. The Bishop grabbed the Quran with such haste that the finger slipped out from the page with the verse in question. Unaware of this, the Bishop mistook another bookmark placed in the Quran for an unrelated purpose as the site of the referenced verse. He opened the Quran at this bookmark, and started reading it out aloud. It soon became apparent to the audience that the Bishop was reading a totally unrelated text, and they burst out laughing much to the mortification of the Bishop. In his embarrassment, the Bishop pointed to the Indian clergyman and said, "This brother deceived me," and then left. Brimming with joy, the Muslims picked up *Mufi* Muhammad Sadiq and raised him over their heads in a gesture of triumph.

### **The Bishop of Lahore challenged to a debate on the 'Innocent Prophet'**

When *Hazrat* Mirza learned about the above incident, he felt that the honor of Islam and its Prophet had not been fully vindicated. He forthwith published an announcement on May 25, 1900 entitled, "A Plea to the Bishop of Lahore for an Honest Decision," in which he forcefully challenged the Bishop to debate him on the issue of 'The Innocent Prophet.' I copy below some extracts from the announcement so that the reader may get a sense of the majesty of this challenge. He stated:

I have heard that the Bishop of Lahore has invited Muslims to show, if they want, the innocence of their Prophet compared with that of Jesus. I consider it commendable on the part of the Bishop to desire a verdict as to which of the two venerable prophets is the one whose life is (more) pure and holy. However, I fail to understand what his purpose is in requiring that the innocence of a prophet should be proven, that is, the public should be shown that this prophet never committed a sin in his life. In my opinion, such a method of discussion will not have any good outcome because there is no consensus among nations that a certain precept or action is a sin, while a certain other speech or behavior does not constitute a sin. For example, some sects consider it a cardinal sin to drink wine while according to the creed of others, a person is not fully certified as religious unless bread is broken, dipped in wine

and the bread eaten, and the wine drunk by the new disciple as well as religious preceptors. Similarly, according to some, staring with lust at a woman who is a stranger is fornication. Certain others follow a creed where it is not only permissible, but also commendable for a married woman who has despaired of having children, to go to bed with an unrelated person. It is allowed for the woman to keep this adulterous relationship going until she has had ten or eleven children...hence the method suggested by the Bishop cannot be efficacious in determining the truth for different sects.

However, an effective method (in settling the superiority of the prophet) would be to compare and contrast the excellence of Jesus, peace be on him, and *Hazrat* Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings be on him, from the standpoint of their knowledge, actions, morals, holiness, blessings, efficacy, faith, mysticism, goodness and way of living. That is, a determination is made as to whose excellence and supremacy in these matters is established and whose is not; when the reasons for the excellence of a prophet are expounded keeping all these perspectives in view, it would be permissible for us at that time to narrate whatever reasons we have for his righteousness, holiness, purity and innocence.

Further on he wrote:

Suppose that all nations agree upon a common definition of innocence, i.e. a complete consensus emerges about the acts that are sinful, abstinence from which qualifies a person to be called innocent. Even with this assumption, however unrealistic, a person cannot be called a perfect man or possessor of any real and great virtue simply because he did not commit acts like drinking wine, highway robbery, dacoity, killing or perjury. For example, if someone tries to show he has done another a good deed by stating, "I had many chances to set your house on fire and choke your infant child, but despite the opportunity, I did not set your house on fire nor choke your infant child," it becomes immediately obvious that this is not a big act of virtue, nor can a person, presenting such facts and rationale, be considered a good man. Likewise, suppose a barber tries to put us under his obligation by saying, "During the course of the hair cut or trim, I had the opportunity to strike you with the razor on your head, neck or nose, but I acted virtuously and did

not.” Would such a person be considered our great benefactor? Certainly not. In fact, he is guilty of a kind of crime, and a wise judge would require him to post a surety for good behavior because of harboring such (violent) tendencies. Hence, it is no great virtue simply to abstain from committing evil acts because the fear of punishment, too, may have acted as a deterrent.”

Further on he wrote:

Moreover, there are many other reasons for abstaining from wrongdoing, which, in other words, is called innocence. Everyone does not have the ability to get up alone at night, take the instruments of burglary in their hand, gird their loins, go into an alley, then tunnel their way into a house at the precise location, take the loot and escape. These kinds of exercises are not for the prophets... Who can say, for example, that a person who passes by a garden and abstains from picking fruit without permission from its laden trees has done so because he is a virtuous man? Is there any reason why we cannot say that he did not pick the fruit because it was daytime, fifty guards were present in the garden, and if he had picked the fruit, he would certainly have been caught, beaten and humiliated? It is unbecoming and disrespectful to describe prophets in this manner where their innocence is repeatedly presented as a function of not having committed crimes. However, if this is presented in the course of describing (their) many excellent attributes, then it is not objectionable ...

The way to identify a perfect man is to look at the goodness he achieves, i.e. what real virtues does he manifest, and what are the real marvels present in his heart, mind and conscience, and what are the most excellent attributes present in him. So this is the affair that should be before us in evaluating all aspects of the personal excellence and the manner of goodness of Jesus, and the personal excellence and goodness of our Prophet, peace and blessings on him. For example, (the evaluating criteria should be) generosity, kindness, sympathy, real tolerance for which the ability to be intolerant is a necessary condition, real forgiveness for which the ability to take revenge is a necessary condition, real bravery for which confrontation with terrifying enemies is a necessary condition, real justice for which the ability to be tyrannical is a necessary condi-

tion, real mercy for which the ability to punish is a must, a high degree of intelligence, a great memory, extreme beneficence, great steadfastness, lavishing of favors for which citable examples and quotations are a must. Thus, the contest and the comparison should be in the accomplishment of these attributes, and not just in forgoing evil, which the Bishop names as innocence; it is a sin to even think about prophets in this manner i.e. that they refrained from theft, dacoity etc. in the face of the opportunity to commit them, or that such crimes were never proven against them. In fact, the saying of Jesus, “Why callest me thou good?”<sup>3</sup> is an advice that the Christian clergy should have acted upon.

If the Bishop is, in fact, desirous of investigating the truth, then he should publish an announcement to the effect: We want to carry on a discussion with Muslims as to which of the two prophets is the more distinguished and superior from the point of view of the excellence of their beliefs, manners, and blessings, their efficacy, their sayings and actions, their faith and mysticism, their knowledge and their holiness, and their way of living. If he (the Bishop) does so, appoints a date, and informs us accordingly, then we promise that someone from among us will be present on the appointed date before the gathering.

This announcement was widely distributed in Lahore and other cities. It was translated into English<sup>4</sup> for the benefit of the Bishop and a copy was sent to him with the fervent plea to agree to a debate for the sake of the Messiah. But the Bishop was confounded, and refused to engage in a debate on the grounds that he had no time. This transformation of the Bishop from a lion to a pussycat was the result of a couple of factors. The first was the strength of the arguments, and the conditions imposed in the announcement. The second was a taste of the things to come if he accepted the challenge. This tasting occurred on May 25, 1900, the same day as the publication of the announcement, when the Bishop listened to an article by *Hazrat* Mirza in a gathering, and realized that he had met more than his match. Details of this gathering follow:

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3 Matthew 19:17.

4 Despite efforts, the original English translation could not be found. The translation given here is done de novo – Translator.



### Debate on 'The Living Apostle'

It has already been mentioned that Bishop Lefroy was bent upon confronting Muslims on the issues of 'The Innocent Prophet' and 'The Living Apostle.' He was confident of discomfiting Muslims on these topics as a result of some false creeds prevalent among them. On May 18, he had spoken on 'The Innocent Prophet' and the second lecture in this series on 'The Living Apostle' was announced for May 25, 1900. He challenged the Muslims of Lahore to respond after his talk. The Islamic organizations of Lahore could not find a local cleric who was able and willing to confront the Bishop. They then turned to *Maulvi* Sanaullah of Amritsar and invited him to be their champion but he, too, lacked the courage to take on the Bishop. *Maulvi* Sanaullah did not just decline, but also proposed that the Muslims should boycott the lecture. This was not acceptable to the opinion leaders among the Muslim community who rightly argued that to not confront the Bishop was tantamount to admitting defeat, and would be a disgrace to Islam. Finally, they concluded that the only suitable person for confronting the Bishop was either Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian or a person from his Movement. They realized their clerics would be unable to confront the Bishop on the topic of 'The Living Apostle' because of their belief that Jesus was bodily alive in heaven and Prophet Muhammad was dead. This humble author begs to state that the following two verses of *Hazrat* Mirza so appropriately depicts this quandary of the Muslims:

They think the Christian Messiah lives till the Day of Judgment,  
But attribute not the same excellence to the One buried in Medina  
(i.e. the Holy Prophet).

With this creed, they provide succor to the Christians,  
And give courage to them who deify a dead.

In the face of this difficulty, the Muslims of Lahore broached *Hazrat* Mirza. Time was scarce, but *Hazrat* Mirza wrote an article on 'The Living Apostle' in the space of just two hours and gave it to *Mufti* Muhammad Sadiq for presentation. The greatness of this article became apparent when it was read out on May 25, 1900, immediately following the lecture of Bishop Lefroy, because there was not a single argument made by the Bishop whose comprehensive rebuttal was not included in *Hazrat* Mirza's article. The contents of the Bishop's lecture were not public knowledge prior to May 25, and the fact that a response to each and every argument of the Bishop was included in an article written prior to the event was a

clear indication of Divine support and inspiration in its composition. It was a race against time to have printed copies of the article ready for distribution to the audience at the time of the presentation. Thanks to the efforts of *Mufti* Muhammad Sadiq, the printed copies arrived at the venue from the printing press just as Bishop Lefroy finished his speech. This debate was held on the evening of May 25, 1900, in Rang Mahal High School and was attended by over 3000 persons. *Mufti* Muhammad Sadiq read out *Hazrat* Mirza's article immediately after the lecture of Bishop Lefroy.

### ***Hazrat* Mirza's article on 'The Living Apostle'**

Because the theme of the article was 'The Living Apostle,' *Hazrat* Mirza first proved that Jesus was dead. He marshaled arguments from the Gospels and the Quran and invoked rationality to weave such a strong case that the hearts of all those present, whether Muslims or Christians, cried out, at least momentarily, that Jesus was dead. The Bishop and other Christians present in the gathering were flabbergasted, and the color drained from their faces as they realized that the article was ringing the death knell of the Divinity of Jesus. However, it was difficult for the Bishop to order *Mufti* Muhammad Sadiq off the stage because he had accepted him as the representative of the Muslims. In this state of perplexity, he burst out: "Our debate was with the Muslims and not with the *Mirzais*.<sup>5</sup> The *Mirzais* are not considered Muslims by the clerics." The article had created such an impact and wove such a magical spell that all rational and thinking Muslims, with the exception of a few clerics and their blind disciples, shouted in unison: "We consider *Mirzais* Muslims and he (*Mufti* Muhammad Sadiq) is our representative at this time. Let the article continue." This stratagem of the Bishop failed and he was left with no choice but to let the article continue. Two brief portions of the article are presented below:

When neither rationality nor the Gospels and the Quran substantiate the bodily ascension of Jesus, and in fact such a creed is subject to severe criticism, then I consider it shameful even to advocate such an idea. It is true that we do not elevate our Holy Prophet into the heavens in this manner, nor is it a necessary condition for spiritual nearness. However, from the standpoint of spiritual life, we consider our Prophet to be living at the highest spiritual level from among all the prophets. Indeed, the Quranic

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5 *Mirzai* (plural *Mirzais*) is a name derisively given to a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza by his opponents.

verse, "And from others among them who have not yet joined them" (62:3), refers to such a life because its meaning is that just as the Companions obtained spiritual bounties from the Holy Prophet, so would the Promised Messiah and his party in a later period, as is currently being manifested. Another major proof that only our Prophet and none other is at the pinnacle of spiritual life, lies in the perpetual continuation of his spiritual effects and blessings. We find that true Muslims who faithfully follow the Holy Prophet, establish communion with God, supernatural miracles emanate from them, angels talk to them, and their supplications are accepted. I am an example of such a person. No other community can compare with us in this. This proves that the Holy Prophet is alive but what is your proof about Jesus? Not even this much that if some clergyman cries out, "O Jesus! O Jesus!" a voice may issue forth from the heaven on behalf of Jesus that can be heard by all. And if even this level of proof is not available, then a mere assertion is not worthy of consideration.

Further on, towards the end of the article, he wrote:

For fear of making the article too long, I conclude here and assure all people that there is now under the heaven just one superior and perfect living prophet, namely Muhammad Mustafa, may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him. I have been sent by God as Messiah precisely to prove this, and if there are any doubters, I can furnish them with proof of this superior life at their convenience and leisure. If I had not come, there might perhaps have been some excuse, but now there is none because God has sent me to furnish proof of the fact that the living Book is the Quran, the living religion is Islam and the living Messenger is Muhammad Mustafa, may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him. Listen! I say this keeping the earth and the sky as witnesses, that these things are true and the only God is the One God presented in the (Muslim) article of faith, "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah," and the living apostle is just that one Messenger in whose footsteps the earth is coming alive again; signs are being manifested, blessings are becoming visible, and fountains of hidden knowledge are bursting forth. Blessed is he who extricates himself from darkness. May peace be with those who follow the guidance.

The faces of the Muslims among the audience were radiant while those of the Bishop and the clergymen with him were crest-fallen. The Bishop had nothing by way of a response; some cries of “*Mirzais* are infidels,” from the audience shouted by a few ignorant clerics and their blind disciples did give him the courage to say: “I have heard these things today for the first time, and had not heard them before. What can I say about them? I do not want to increase the conflict among Muslims.” The magnitude of this victory for Islam and the complete discomfiture of Christianity were not lost on friend or foe.

### ***Hazrat Mirza’s challenge***

This encounter stymied the Bishop’s aggression and dissipated his courage. *Hazrat Mirza’s* announcement challenging the Bishop to a debate on the topic of ‘The Innocent Prophet’ was published the same day as this encounter, but the Bishop had no courage left for a confrontation. He now realized the strength of his opponent, and understood that his best strategy was to ignore the announcement, but *Hazrat Mirza* was not ready to let him go. *Hazrat Mirza* wrote a challenge on behalf of Muslims and obtained many signatures on it from members of his Movement as well as other Muslim intelligentsia. A delegation of Muslim notables then called on the Bishop and hand-delivered the challenge to him on June 8, 1900. The challenge stressed the need for a debate on the issues of ‘The Innocent Prophet’ and ‘The Living Apostle’ so that the Muslim and Christian communities may decide which of the two prophets, Jesus or the Holy Prophet Muhammad, was more deserving of these titles. The challenge nominated the Bishop to represent the Christian viewpoint and *Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani* to represent the Islamic viewpoint. Explaining the rationale for the selection of the Bishop as the champion of Christianity, the challenge addressed him as follows:<sup>6</sup>

Since we have heard of your lectures in Lahore on the subject of ‘The Innocent Prophet’ and ‘The Living Apostle,’ we are of opinion that among the Christians of this country you are unrivalled in religious learning. It has since occurred to us that no one can better

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6 The entire correspondence between the representative committee of Muslims acting on behalf of *Hazrat Mirza* and Bishop Lefroy was published in the September 1902 issue of *The Review of Religions* under the title “The Promised Messiah & Dr. Lefroy,” with the sub-title “Islam and Christianity.” The full text of this correspondence is reproduced as an appendix to this chapter. This appendix is not part of the Urdu book, *Mujaddid Azam*.

represent the Christian faith than yourself on account of your vast and practical knowledge, your acquaintance with Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages and your amiable and polished manners.

The issues on which written arguments would be adduced in the debate were listed as follows:

1. Which of the two prophets, Jesus or Muhammad, may peace and blessings of God be upon them, can be shown, from his own book or by other arguments, to be perfectly *masum* (innocent)?
2. Which of them can on the same authority as above be deservedly called the Living prophet and possesses Divine power?
3. Which of them is on like authority entitled to be the intercessor?
4. Which of the two religions, Christianity or Islam, can be called the Living faith?
5. Of the teachings inculcated in the Holy Quran and the Bible, which is the more excellent and natural? Discussion on Unity and Trinity falls under this head.

Some conditions specified for the debate were as follows:

1. The controversy shall take place at Lahore and will be conducted in writing.
2. One day shall be dedicated to the discussion of each question, and thus the controversy will come to an end in five days.
3. Each party shall bring forward proof in support of his own prophet or book and shall not be allowed to attack the book or the prophet of the opposite party. For such attacks are not conducive to any good and often injure the feelings of the party attacked.

4. After the close of the controversy either or both of the parties shall publish the speeches of both the parties in the form of a pamphlet. No addition or alteration shall be made by either party.

The challenge was signed by a large number of honorable and educated Muslims. The English newspaper *Pioneer* published the following comment about this challenge:

The letter has a great many signatures, of which the first few names will be sufficient to indicate the widespread interest and expectation with which the Muhammadan community are looking forward to the encounter. <sup>7</sup>

The delegation that called on the Bishop consisted of noble and respectable Muslims from within and without the Movement. The Bishop was under the impression that his opponent in the debate would be a cleric, and to annihilate a cleric was child's play for the Bishop. For this reason, he met the delegation very cordially, expressed great delight at the proposed encounter, and accepted the invitation to debate. When the delegation left and walked out of his residence, the Bishop got a chance to read the invitation carefully, and it was then that he realized that the Muslim champion opposing him would be Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

The Bishop was in no frame of mind to take on *Hazrat* Mirza and he quickly dispatched an employee after the delegation to call them back. When the delegation returned, he said: "I will not be able to debate because I am very busy. I am leaving for Simla." The members of the delegation tried to impress on the Bishop that, as a religious leader, there could be no work of greater importance to him than to settle this disagreement between the two religions, but the Bishop was unmoved, and repeatedly put forward the excuse that he had to go to Simla. To negate this excuse, the delegation proposed that the venue of the debate could be shifted to Simla, and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad would journey there to meet with him. The Bishop was still not willing to commit, but in order to get rid of the delegation promised to think the matter over, and to respond from Simla.

The fact is that the Bishop was mindful of the lesson he had just learned in his debate on 'The Living Apostle,' and realized that a con-

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<sup>7</sup> The quote is reproduced from the article 'The Promised Messiah and Dr. Lefroy' in the periodical *The Review of Religions*, Vol. 1, No. 9, September 1902, page 353.

frontation with *Hazrat* Mirza was the death knell of Christianity and his reputation. Salvation, therefore, lay in fleeing from such a confrontation. On June 12, 1900, he responded from Simla and expressed his inability to accept the challenge on the grounds summarized below:

1. I am not willing to debate Mirza Ghulam Ahmad because he has usurped the title of Messiah that belongs to our Lord Jesus, whom I worship, and by so doing, he has insulted him greatly.
2. Mirza sahib has severely criticized the doctrines of Christianity.
3. I cannot accept Mirza sahib as an advocate of Muslims because many Muslims consider him an infidel.
4. I am the Bishop of this diocese and am constantly engaged in works for the welfare of the Christian community. I, therefore, have no time to debate.

*Maulvi* Muhammad Ali replied to this letter on July 10, 1900 from Qadian, and rebutted each one of these objections with well-reasoned arguments. His reply is summarized below:

When the signatures of a large number of respectable and intellectual Muslims are present, your objection that some clerics consider Mirza sahib an infidel is not acceptable. You are welcome to satisfy yourself as to whether the entire intellectual and respectable section of the Muslim community is fervently desirous of this debate or not. And when you yourself have issued a challenge to Muslims to debate these issues, is it not desirable that these issues be resolved satisfactorily without regard to who your opponent is? The real objective is to resolve these issues. And Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has been nominated because it is only befitting that a person of your learning and scholarly merit be opposed by someone of an equal caliber. To bring an ordinary cleric against you would be an insult to you. And even if you consider Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to be an enemy of Christianity, it is stated in the Bible that Jesus said, 'Love thy enemy.' It is a matter of great regret if you cannot love your enemy. Further, there is

no reason to be apprehensive because the rules of the debate do not allow any attacks on the religion of the opposing party.

In short, *Maulana* Muhammad Ali tried very hard to bring the Bishop around, and pleaded with him in the name of the Messiah to accept the debate so that a final determination could be made between truth and falsehood, but the Bishop was adamant. He wrote back to say that he stood by his initial decision and would not engage in a debate.

### **Comments of the English newspapers about this challenge**

This challenge and the entire correspondence with Bishop Lefroy were published and became a matter of public record. The opinions expressed by English newspapers of the time on the Bishop's refusal to debate would be of interest to the reader. The opinions expressed by three respectable English newspapers whose editors were Englishmen are reproduced below. One of the comments pertains to the challenge and the other two to the challenge and Bishop Lefroy's refusal to debate.<sup>8</sup>

1. The newspaper Pioneer when publishing the challenge in its columns headed it with the significant remark: "Undoubtedly great interest will attach to the meeting if Dr. Lefroy does decide to enter the controversy."
2. The Indian Daily Telegraph had the following to say in its issue of June 19, 1900:

We reproduce on another page a most interesting religious challenge from the school of Islam in this country which follows Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian to the Bishop of Lahore. It is interesting because it seems to be put forward in an earnest and sincere spirit. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani is the Chief of Qadian, and, according to the wording of the challenge, "not only lays claim to the Promised Messiahship but has made good that claim by strong and conclusive arguments, and has proved himself to be the promised one whose appearance has been foretold in the Holy Quran and the Bible." It seems that the following of

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<sup>8</sup> The newspaper quotes are reproduced from the article 'The Promised Messiah and Dr. Lefroy' in the periodical *The Review of Religions*, Vol. 1, No. 9, September 1902, pages 361-63.



this somewhat remarkable personage numbers about thirty thousand "in different parts of the world," and his friends and disciples are anxious that he should hold an elaborate and learned argument on the respective truth of Christianity and Islam with the Bishop of Lahore, whose lectures at that place have convinced the Muhammadans that he is "unrivalled in religious learning in this country. His vast and practical knowledge, his acquaintance with Arabic, Persian and Urdu and his amiable and polished manners," are also enumerated as further reasons why he should be asked to enter into a controversy with this champion of Islam. The challenge throughout is worded in conciliatory terms and an evidently keen desire for a formal and set controversy *in fair terms to both parties* on the "comparative merits and excellences of Christianity and Islam" (not Islam and Christianity) and the challengers who are great in numbers and hail from all parts of India, hope by adjuring the Bishop in the name of Jesus Christ to gain his consent to a controversy.

We are of opinion that the Bishop would do well to accept the challenge. To assume a superiority that cannot stoop to controversy would be a mistake, as the challengers would be entitled from their point of view to say that the case being undefended went by default and to claim the victory. Also the fact that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani is not the "promised one whose appearance has been foretold in the Holy Quran and the Bible," ought not to influence the learned Bishop towards a refusal to enter into argument with him. This question is not to be discussed in the proposed controversy, but the Bishop may possibly convince his opponent of error if the challenge is accepted. The fact that the Muslims desire to pit their 'Messiah' against the Bishop is the highest compliment they could desire to pay to his learning; they wish to intimate that they recognise him the first authority in India. Again, we do not see how the Bishop can plead that such an elaborate controversy would take up too much of his time. He should on no account lose an opportunity of refuting, silencing and convincing such opponents, especially where he is desired to prove, "which of the two religions, Christianity or Islam, can be called the living faith?" and "of the teachings inculcated in the Holy Quran and the Bible, which is the more excellent and natural?" We should like to see the challenge accepted because we think it would prove highly interesting.

3. The well known newspaper, Indian Spectator, made the following comments on the Bishop's refusal to debate:

The Bishop of Lahore seems to have retired with more haste than dignity from a challenge which he had himself provoked. His Lordship sometimes back, set before himself the task of proving to Muhammadan audiences that Christ was the true Messiah and the challenge was taken up by Mirza Ahmad of Qadian to whose claims of Messiahship we referred sometime ago in these columns. Now, Mirza Ahmad may, for aught we know be a rank impostor, or he may really believe himself to be what he claims to be. In either case we do not see why the Bishop should decline to argue with him. His Lordship speaks of Mirza Sahib as offering "a grievous insult and dishonour to Christ by venturing to call himself the Messiah." The Jews of two thousand years ago crucified Christ for the self same reason. They felt insulted by his venturing to call himself the Messiah. What is even more strange is the Bishop's pointing to the fact of Mirza Ahmad's claims "being treated with ridicule and contempt by an overwhelming majority" of Punjab Muhammadans, as conclusive proof of the falsity of those claims. When Pilate asked assembled Jews as to whom they would like to be liberated on the day of the Passover – Christ or Barabbas? – they unanimously voted for the impenitent thief. Did that prove that Christ's claims to Messiahship were unfounded? We are not among the followers of Mirza Ahmad and have no intention of upholding his claims in preference to those of Christ, but we object to the logic of the hustings being introduced in discussion on religion. If the whole Muslims had acclaimed the Mirza, would the Right Reverend prelate of Lahore have altered his opinion of his mission. Religious beliefs in this country are in a state of dissolution just now. It behooves those who are anxious to see them crystallize round the truth, not to employ arguments which are not of the purest temper.

It is obvious from the above-mentioned correspondence, and the opinions expressed by the newspapers, that Bishop Lefroy's opponents as well as his coreligionists tried to persuade him to participate in the debate, initially proposed by him, but he steadfastly refused. The public opinion was solidly behind holding such a debate, and the initiators of the challenge did their utmost to get the Bishop to participate, but he was not to be

moved from his position. Even a cursory glance at the reasons advanced by Bishop Lefroy for refusing to debate shows his objections as absurd and infantile. If the Bishop was truly moved to reveal a great truth when he lectured initially at Lahore, one wonders why he did not take advantage of such a golden opportunity to carry his message to a larger audience? His initial foray at Lahore was one-sided, and without the expectation of an effective rebuttal, but his refusal to debate the same questions decisively in a more equitable way constituted proof positive of his ignominious defeat.

After the Bishop's flight from the contest, *Maulana* Muhammad Ali conducted a detailed analysis of the Bishop's reasons for not participating in the debate, and exposed them as puerile and absurd. This exposé was widely distributed among the public, and also published later in the *Review of Religions*,<sup>9</sup> but the Bishop remained mute and uttered not a word in his defense. Shortly thereafter, the Bishop left India and moved his base of operations to the Persian Gulf area.

### **Christians advised against debating *Hazrat* Mirza and his disciples**

As a proof of Divine support for Muslims, the Quran states: "We will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve" (3:151). This is what transpired in this case. The case of the Bishop was not unique; all the Christian clergymen were in so much terror of *Hazrat* Mirza that every Christian missionary was secretly warned not to debate him or his disciples. Accordingly, a strange phenomenon began manifesting itself throughout India. Whenever and wherever Christian debaters discovered during debates that their opponent was a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza, they discontinued the debate with the statement, "You are a *Mirzai* and for this reason, we will not debate with you."

The tactics of a wily and experienced clergyman of Rawalpindi by the name of Rev. Anderson are illustrative of this strategy. He was an experienced debater, and fluent in Punjabi. Whenever he was checkmated in a debate, he would guess that his opponent was a disciple of *Hazrat* Mirza because only they had the ability to corner even the most argumentative clergyman with no room to escape. Faced with such a situation, he would ask: "Are you a *Mirzai*?" If the answer was in the affirmative, he would gather his books and leave with the remarks: "You are an infidel. First go and get a certificate from the *Golra Pir* that you are a Muslim, and then come for the

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9 The *Review of Religions*, September 1902, Vol. 1, No. 9, "The Promised Messiah & Dr. Lefroy, or Islam and Christianity."

debate.” On several occasions, he was told: “Why should it matter to you whether we are Muslims or not? Just provide straight answers to the questions posed to you.” His standard reply was: “We do not give answers to *Mirzais*.” When asked why, he would reply: “You are liars.” He was then told: “Are all the non-Christian people you argue with truthful, and is that the reason you argue with them?” This would confound him, but not weaken his resolve to avoid debate with the disciples of *Hazrat Mirza* at all cost.

The Christian missionaries used to put up camps at the various Muslim fairs and festivals to propagate Christianity, but if a disciple of *Hazrat Mirza* turned up and engaged them in an argument, they would break camp and disappear as soon as they learned about their opponent’s religious affiliation. Once a disciple of *Hazrat Mirza* asked a clergyman in an affable way: “What is the matter that you take flight as soon as you see our faces?” He replied: “We have been specifically instructed not to engage in an argument with *Mirzais*, and whoever violates this directive is subject to immediate termination of employment with the mission. For heavens sake, do not try to engage us in arguments, and leave us alone to earn our livelihood.” The name of this clergyman was Rev. Fazal Elahi, and after serving as a Christian missionary for many years, he finally converted to Islam and joined the ranks of *Hazrat Mirza*’s disciples. He narrated the following incident in one of his talks:

We had been secretly directed that under no circumstance should we debate with *Mirzais*. The Christian missionaries had rented a house in Anarkali where we gathered every evening for propagating Christianity. People would come there to listen to our sermons. When the awe of *Hazrat Mirza* sahib and his disciples began to cast its shadow on the missionaries, the Principal of Mission College Lahore, Rev. Ewing, directed that the doors of the hall be closed when the sermons were given. I asked him, “Then what would be the benefit of the sermon?” He replied, “If the door is open, which one of you can take the responsibility that some *Mirzai* would not come in?”

Praise be to Allah; this was the terror cast into the hearts of the disbelievers and this was the crumbling of the Cross in the real sense.

### **A speech about the Holy Prophet as the Living Apostle and about his living miracles**

In the context of the present discussion about the Holy Prophet being a ‘Living Apostle,’ it would not be out of place to mention here a speech

given by *Hazrat Mirza* on December 28, 1899, on the topic, "The Holy Prophet as a Living Apostle and his Living Miracles." This speech was published in *Al-Hakam*, newspaper issue of March 10-17, 1901. An extract from this powerful speech is reproduced below:

Ignorant and malicious opponents of the Holy Prophet have criticized his miracles without ever seriously considering the facts. Alas! These blind critics do not realize that the number of miracles manifested by the Holy Prophet, and I say this with all honesty, is quantitatively more than the combined number of miracles of all other prophets. Quite apart from the fact that the Quran is full of the prophecies of the Holy Prophet, extending right up to the Day of Judgment and beyond, the biggest proof of his prophecies is that in every period, there is a living person who provides testimony of this ability. Accordingly, in this period, God has raised me as a proof, and has given me the grand sign of prophesying so that I may show clearly to those who are bereft of the truth and deprived of Divine knowledge, how permanent and everlasting the miracles of our Holy Prophet are. Is there anyone among the (present day) Jews, the vestige of the (original tribes of the) Children of Israel, or among the Christians, beseeching Jesus with "O Lord! O Lord!" who can compete with me in this sign? I say at the top of my voice that there is none. Not even one. This is, therefore, a powerful proof of the strong miracle-performing ability of our Holy Prophet because it is an established axiom that the miracles manifested by a disciple are in fact the miracles of the prophet he follows. Thus, the supernatural signs given to me, and the magnificent sign of prophesying granted to me are in reality the living miracles of the Holy Prophet. It is not given to the follower of any other prophet now to boast that he, too, can openly announce beforehand, and then show a miracle as a result of the holy power of the prophet he follows. This honor belongs only to Islam and it evidences that the living prophet for all times to come can only be Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), whose pure soul and holy strength makes it possible for a man of God in every era to manifest God.

## APPENDIX

The correspondence reproduced in this appendix has been taken from the article "The Promised Messiah & Dr. Lefroy, or Islam and Christianity," appearing in *The Review of Religions* issue of September 1902.

The challenge from the representative committee of Muslims to Dr. Lefroy, Bishop of Lahore ran as follows:

Reverend Sir,

We, the undersigned, respectfully beg leave to submit the following proposal to you. As our transient worldly life is passing away like a summer cloud and the time draws near when it shall pass away into eternity and leave not a rack behind, it is our deepest concern that the pilgrimage of life should come to a close in true righteousness and heavenly bliss, and that we may breathe our last as professors of a faith which shows the path to Divine Will. If we are not on the right path, we are ready heart and soul to accept the truth provided it is elucidated to us with clear and cogent arguments. If any one can pluck up courage to come forward and prove to us the truth of the Christian religion, he shall lay us under the greatest obligation. It is our hearts' inmost desire and we are always anxious that an inquiry be made into the comparative merits and excellences of Christianity and Islam, and that on the result of the investigation we should bow submission to the Holy Prophet who transcends the whole world in the purity of heart, excellence, Divine power and moral rectitude. Since we have heard of your lectures at Lahore on the subject of '*The Innocent Prophet*' and '*The Living Apostle*,' we are of opinion that among the Christians of this country you are unrivalled in religious learning. It has since occurred to us that no one can better represent the Christian faith than yourself on account of your vast and practical knowledge, your acquaintance with Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages and your amiable and polished manners. On the other hand, when we cast a glance on the learned men among the Muslims, we are convinced that the best representative of Islam is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani, the Chief of Qadian who not only lays claim to the Promised Messiahship but has made good that claim by strong and conclusive arguments, and has proved himself to be the Promised one whose appearance

has been foretold in the Holy Quran and the Bible. About thirty thousand persons living in different parts of the world have a staunch belief in his doctrines and admit him as their spiritual leader. In short, among the learned Christians in the Punjab and India your presence is of the utmost importance, and among the Muslims that of the Mirza whom God has chosen and anointed with His own Hands. Fortunately for us, therefore, we may avail ourselves of your abilities on the one side, and of God's Messiah on the other. On these considerations we humbly request you to hold a controversy with the Promised Messiah on several contested points. The Messiah has kindly given his consent to discuss the following five questions:

1. Which of the two prophets, Jesus or Muhammad, may peace and blessings of God be upon them, can be shown, from his own book or by other arguments, to be perfectly *masum* (innocent)?
2. Which of them can on the same authority as above be deservedly called the Living prophet and possesses Divine power?
3. Which of them is on like authority entitled to be the intercessor?
4. Which of the two religions, Christianity or Islam, can be called the Living faith?
5. Of the teachings inculcated in the Holy Quran and the Bible, which is the more excellent and natural? Discussion on Unity and Trinity falls under this head.

The controversy shall be regulated by the following conditions:

- I. One day shall be dedicated to the discussion of each question, and thus the controversy will come to an end in five days.
- II. Three hours shall be allowed to each party every day.
- III. Each party shall bring forward proof in support of his own prophet or book and shall not be allowed to attack the book or the prophet of the opposite party. For such attacks are not conducive to any good and often injure the feelings of the

party attacked. The public on a comparison would be able to know the strength or the weakness of the arguments brought forward by each party. Each party shall, however, have the right to refute attacks which could in all likelihood be made by the other.

- IV. The controversy shall be conducted in writing and each party shall be attended by an amanuensis who shall write whatever is dictated to him. Each party shall also be attended by a person who shall read aloud to the audience the contents of the writing. After this a copy of the writing duly signed shall be furnished to the opposite party.
- V. The controversy shall take place at Lahore. The fixing of the place of the meeting and other necessary arrangements shall be in your power.
- VI. After the close of the controversy either or both of the parties shall publish the speeches of both parties in the form of a pamphlet. No additions or alterations shall be made by either party.

The Promised Messiah, the leader on the Muslim side, has given his consent to these conditions and as they are very plain and equitable, we hope they will meet also with your approval and that you would kindly inform us at your earliest convenience as to the time when you are prepared for holding such a controversy. We also humbly beseech you not to reject this proposal but to accept it in the name and for the honor of Jesus Christ. We hope that for the sake of that beloved and chosen prophet of God, you will intimate to us your acceptance of our proposal by means of a printed letter. In this request there are no absurd conditions or terms from which reason may recoil. The controversy is to be conducted on entirely civilised principles and is based on good wishes and a search after truth. Moreover, when our request to an eminent person like yourself is accompanied with an adjuration in the name of Jesus Christ, we are quite certain that you will accept this proposal, although the time at your disposal may be short, without any alteration or amendment for the honour of Jesus' name. For we know that if a similar request had been preferred to



us by any body in the mane of Jesus Christ, we would have looked upon its rejection as a deadly sin and an affront to Christ's dignity. How can it be expected then of you who lay claim to an unbounded love for Jesus Christ, of judging which we have got this first opportunity.

The reply should be addressed to Maulvi Muhammad Ali, M.A., L.L.B., Pleader, Qadian, who is the Secretary of this Committee.

In reply his Lordship wrote:

Harvington, Simla,  
12th June 1900.

Dear Sir,

I have received a printed letter, signed by yourself and a number of other gentlemen, asking me to appoint a time and place for a public discussion with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, on certain tenets of Christianity and Islam. I am sorry that I cannot accept the proposal which you make, and this chiefly for the following reasons:

1. I decline to meet Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in any friendly relationship as the discussion which you propose would involve. The Mirza Sahib, in venturing to call himself the Messiah, assumes with no shadow of authority that name by which we Christians are called and which we regard with profoundest reverence, and offers in my opinion a most grievous insult and dishonour to Him Whom I worship as my Lord and Master. How then can I possibly consent to meet him in a friendly way?
2. You refer in your letter to my own desire in all controversy to conduct it with entire courtesy and with respect for the feelings of those with whom in matters of belief I am compelled to differ. I can honestly say that it always has been my sincere wish to conform to this rule, and to utter nothing which could legitimately hurt the feelings of those who hold views differing from my own. When, however, I read what the Mirza Sahib has from time to time written on the subject of the Christian Faith, and see with what bitterness and scurrility he refers to incidents in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ as nar-

rated in the four Gospels which we Christians receive and reverence as part of God's Holy Word, I can only draw the conclusion that he does not set before himself the same standard of courtesy and respect for the feelings of an opponent in controversy as that at which I have always aimed. On this ground, therefore, again I am not willing to meet him on a common platform.

3. The Mirza Sahib may, as you assure me, have a considerable number of followers, but no one can deny that his claim to be the Messiah is entirely rejected and indeed treated with ridicule and contempt by an overwhelming majority of Muhammadans in this Province; therefore while I, however unworthy I may personally be, am in some sense truly representative of the Christian community by virtue of the office which I hold, the Mirza is not, in any sense whatever, representative of the Muhammadan community. Why then should I consent to meet him on an equal platform?
4. It is necessary to remember that, since my appointment as Bishop of this Diocese, my *primary* work must necessarily be that of attending to the wants of the Christian Church, and doing my utmost to strengthen it and build it up from within in the true faith of God and in holiness of life, and that consequently the work of a simple evangelist (*i.e.*, of one who devotes his time to preaching to, and in various methods striving to bring to a belief in the Christian faith, those who are at present outside of it) can only occupy a secondary place in my time and thoughts. It is indeed a work to which I am greatly attached, and in which I engage with much pleasure, but when God has called me to serve Him in another way, I must obey His voice. I cannot, therefore, in any case give up from my primary work the amount of time which you desire for the purpose of controversy of this kind.
5. Lastly I think it very important to emphasise a great difference of standpoint between yourself and me as regards the possible results to be obtained from such religious controversy. In your letter you express your desire that "on the result of the investigation we should bow submission to the Holy Prophet who

transcends the whole world in the purity of heart, excellence, Divine power, and moral rectitude.” In other words you consider it possible to ascertain the path of true religion and prove conclusively the superiority of one religion over another by purely intellectual controversy. I believe that this view is fundamentally wrong and contrary to the teachings of God’s Holy Word; and that its prevalence in the minds of many in this country is doing enormous injury. I cannot, therefore, consent to give countenance or support to it by any action of mine. We believe that religion appeals not to the reason only but to the whole man, his will, his feelings, his moral desires, his capacity of faith, in short to his heart as well as to his head. In the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, the knowledge of God and of His true Faith is connected not so much with acuteness of intellect as with purity of heart and humble obedience to Him in the actions of life. Thus on one occasion Christ says: “Blessed are the pure in heart for *they shall see God*.” (St. Matthew, v. 8). And again in another place, which is, I think, of immense importance in this connection, He says: “If any man willeth to do His will (that is, God’s will) he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself” (St. John VII:17). My own firm belief is, that no man can be brought to a living knowledge of the true God except by the help of His Holy Spirit, and that such help is given as I have already indicated to the penitent and pure in heart and the humble and upright in life rather than to those men of acute intellect, who are best able to sustain well a part in religious controversy. It is quite true that I do think it very desirable for the members of the two faiths (Christians and Muhammadan) to come to know each other, and to understand each other’s beliefs much better than has been the case in the past. This is why I am myself glad, on the one hand, at times to study those writings of your faith which may best enable me to understand its true contents and doctrine; and, on the other, to give lectures such as those recently delivered in Lahore, thereby affording an opportunity for questions to be asked by which those who are present may, perhaps, come to a truer and clearer understanding of the doctrines of the Faith than they previously possessed. But this, I think you will see, is very different from joining in a controversy the professed result of which

is to be the acceptance by those who take part in it, of that religion, the claims of which to be divine should seem at such a time to have been most conclusively demonstrated. It is not, therefore, possible for me at any time to engage in a discussion on this condition. Although this letter is not in print it is entirely open to you to have it printed, or to make such use of it as you deem desirable. I assume that I am dealing with Muhammadan gentlemen, and that, therefore if printed at all, it will be printed in its entirety and without any variation.

I beg to remain, Sir, your most obedient servant.

(Sd.) G.A., Lahore.

The Committee of the Muslims requested the Bishop to reconsider his decision and wrote:

Qadian

*Dated the 10th July 1900.*

Right Reverend Sir,

Your Lordship's reply refusing to enter in a fair controversy with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Chief of Qadian, was intimated to the Committee and received with deep regret. The reasons on which your Lordship's refusal is based are the result of certain misconceptions and errors, and I have been directed to deal with them at full length in a pamphlet which will shortly be published in case the reply to this request is as disappointing as to the former. Before sending the proposed pamphlet to print, however, it has been thought advisable once more to urge to your Lordship the necessity of such a controversy as a large majority of the Muslim public is anxious to hold.

The Muslims and the Christians equally longed to see the proposal accepted and many of the foremost Anglo-Indian papers not only expressed an interest in it but clearly stated their opinion that the proposal, from whatever point of view one may look at it, - from the high repute, learning and influence of the proposed champions, the quarter from which the challenge came, the questions that were to be discussed, the fairness of the terms and last though

not the least from the highly beneficial result that was expected to come out of it – deserved your Lordship's unqualified acceptance. The members of the Muslim community who ventured to address you on this point hailed from all parts of the country and were all men of good position and high education whose request deserved a deeper consideration. The proposal was made in an earnest and sincere spirit to lead, if possible, the public out of the sea of doubt in which it floated as to the true religion. The terms were as fair as could be desired, for hostile attacks were excluded from the pale of the controversy. Your Lordship's work as a Missionary for many years in this country, your acquaintance with the manners, creeds and language of the Eastern people, the toleration with which you allowed the Muslims to refute your arguments in the lectures delivered by you at Lahore – to which facts immense importance was added by your present exalted position - , all combined to convince the Muslims that you would be the best representative of Christianity in the fair field of controversy. Your initiative in calling upon the Muslims to prove the innocence and life of their own Prophet against those of Jesus Christ – a sort of controversy in which one side was quite unprepared and unrepresented – was a further inducement to the Muslims to offer to Your Lordship a field of discussion in which the merits of both the religions and their founders could be more properly and fairly tested. It is also noticeable that the representative whom they proposed to bring into field against your Lordship was no *Mulla* or preacher of ordinary degree, for in offering such an opponent they would have made light of your abilities. To do justice to your position and talents, therefore, an adversary was proposed who occupied no mean position but whose claims to the high spiritual rank of the Promised Messiahship had attracted the attention of the whole Indian continent for several years past, and whose sect made a marvelous progress notwithstanding the bitterest opposition from within and without. With two such remarkable personages as the champions of the two great religious systems of the world, the public should not be left in the dark as regards the solution of a question that has occupied the greatest minds of every age. Although your Lordship deems the reparation of the Christian Church from within as your primary duty, yet it cannot be denied that the primary duty of every good Christian must be that of bringing light and life to those who in his opinion have fallen into

the pit of death and darkness and who are therefore in a much more dangerous state than those who have received baptism. The latter at any rate are saved from hell while the former shall, according to the Christian belief, be doomed to everlasting fire and punishment. As to which is the business of first importance, whether ministering to the needs of those who are already out of all danger or taking those by the hand who are falling into the pit of death and darkness, I leave to your Lordship's conscience to decide. Could the proposal be rejected on the ground that your Lordship cannot set apart five days out of your whole life for such a good deed?

Again your Lordship has declined to meet Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in any friendly relationship for his having assumed a name which the Christians honour and worship as their Lord and Master. Had it been even as your Lordship thinks, it could not have been a good ground for hatred and the cessation of friendly relations, for the Holy Bible inculcates love towards enemies. Treatment of this nature towards an adversary cannot be expected from the followers of any religion, not to say anything of a Christian and especially of a Church dignitary whose duty it is not only himself to act upon Matthew V, 44, but also to teach that doctrine to the laity and to preach it to the non-Christians. But I may assure you that the Mirza Sahib does not assert that he is actually Jesus Christ but one coming in that Prophet's spirit and character and preaching after his manner, as John came in the spirit and power of Elias. Moreover, the Muslims honour Jesus as a true and eminent prophet and the Mirza Sahib, being the foremost Muslim of his day, pre-eminently does so, whereas millions of people who do not profess the Christian or Muslim faiths do not look upon him even as a prophet and thus offer the greatest affront to his dignity, and your Lordship must often, I suppose, have come into contact with such persons. Yet I do not think that your Lordship has ever expressed the same feeling of hatred towards them as you express towards Mirza Sahib in your letter to me.

Here, however, I must state another point of material importance for your Lordship's consideration. When this matter was referred to the Mirza Sahib and he was asked whether, as your Lordship declined to meet him in a friendly way, he also was disposed to entertain similar feelings towards your Lordship, he gave the following reply:

I do not look upon any one in the world as my enemy. I hate not individuals but the false beliefs they entertain. As regards individuals, my feelings towards them are of the utmost sympathy and good wishes. How can I then regard any one as my enemy who enjoys respectability among his own co-religionists and is moreover honoured for his position and learning. I love him though I do not like his doctrines, but my hatred towards these doctrines extends only so far as the attributes of God are ascribed to human beings and human faults and weaknesses to the Lord of the Universe. I am not averse to meeting his Lordship in a friendly way for it is possible that either party may reap some advantage from the other, as the seed of sincerity must bear fruit. It is the first requisite in the performance of a man's duties as a reformer or preacher that he should receive those who hold views differing from his own, in the most cordial and cheerful manner. In truth, I would not only be departing from my function as a reformer but dealing at the same time a death-blow to all moral laws if I regard as my enemies, persons who deserve compassion for having unfortunately fallen into errors. Such a step on my part would only deprive a large majority of those noble and holy truths which it is my duty to preach to all." And further added –

"Nobody can do any good to a person whom he regards as his enemy but I say truly that if ever an opportunity offers itself when I find it in my power to do both good and evil to his Lordship, I will do him a good that will surprise the world. The power to call people to the path of righteousness and a zealous desire for their transformation grow in true love. Enmity obscures wisdom and extinguishes sympathy. The Holy Quran says: 'We have sent unto you a Prophet whose heart is full of sympathy for you so much so that all your cares and anxieties grieve him in the same manner as if they had actually happened to him, and he is always anxious for your comfort and happiness' (9:128); and again, 'Shalt thou, O Prophet! put an end to thy life on account of grief that these people do not accept the truth' (18:6). The last verse contains a reference to the true sacrifice of life which the Prophets of God make for the reformation of the people. These are the verses upon which I act and one can easily understand from this the nature of my feelings towards those who regard themselves as my enemies."

Before I close this letter let me also assure your Lordship that the proposal although signed by a few followers of the Mirza Sahib is one of whose acceptance the Muhammadan public is in general anxious to learn. The Mirza Sahib does not differ from other Muslim sects in the essential points of faith, but the points of difference are only secondary such as exist in the different sects of every great religious system, Christianity being no exception. If your Lordship attaches any importance to this point, thousands of educated Muslims who do not follow the special doctrines of the Mirza Sahib, will be glad to put their signatures to the proposal.

With the copies of the translation which your Lordship asked for, I take the liberty to send to you the *Indian Daily Telegraph* of the 19th ultimo, which contains some remarks on this challenge.

I hope your Lordship will on reconsidering your reply come to a different conclusion and not disappoint so many anxious hearts that await its acceptance.”

(Sd) M. Muhammad Ali, *Secretary*.

But his Lordship could not be moved to acceptance, and wrote in reply:

Harvington, Simla,  
12th July 1900.

Dear Sir,

I have received your letter of the 10th instant, but I have nothing to alter in, or add to, the reasons assigned in my former letter for declining the controversy with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to which you invited me.

Thank you for the spare copies of your previous letter which you have kindly sent me.

(Sd) G.A., Lahore.



## THE MEASURE OF A VIRTUOUS PERSON

There lived in the city of Lahore a person named *Babu* Elahi Baksh who was an accounts clerk by profession. He was a disciple of *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi and claimed that he received revelations, and had been receiving them for a long time. Over this long period, his revelations and dreams supported the claims of *Hazrat* Mirza. He kept a record of his revelations in a register, and in one place he had recorded: “The thought once crossed my mind that God had granted many elevated positions to Mirza sahib but there was nothing for me; then it was revealed, ‘This is the grace of Allah; He gives it to whom He pleases.’” In short, *Babu* Elahi Baksh and a retired civil servant chum of his, *Munshi* Abdul Haq, remained supportive and convinced of *Hazrat* Mirza’s genuineness for a considerable period.

These two gentlemen once came to visit *Hazrat* Mirza in Qadian and showed him the register of revelations. *Hazrat* Mirza found many of the entries of questionable merit and also sensed an air of exaggerated self-importance on the part of the author. Out of a sense of kindness, *Hazrat* Mirza explained to them the reality of revelation and how sometimes it could get polluted by a person’s own desires and Satan’s deceptions. He told them the difference between the revelation of a common man and those chosen by Allah – a subject he later expounded on at great length in his book *Zarurat-ul-Imam* (Need for a Spiritual Guide), which was inspired by this encounter with *Babu* Elahi Baksh. This advice was not

taken kindly, and *Babu* Elahi Baksh left Qadian in this state of displeasure. Subsequent events bore testimony to the warning given by *Hazrat* Mirza that the revelations of ordinary men, other than those appointed by Allah and men of spiritual perfection, can be distorted by Satanic and personal suggestions.

*Babu* Elahi Baksh's previous revelations were supportive of *Hazrat* Mirza, but now under the influence of his desires, he started receiving revelations against *Hazrat* Mirza. In this frame of mind, he even forgot that his mentor *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi had publicly acknowledged the genuineness of *Hazrat* Mirza by announcing a vision in which he saw an illuminating light descending upon Qadian, and had stated that alas his progeny would not benefit from it. *Babu* Elahi Baksh and his chum *Munshi* Abdul Haq had always considered this vision to be genuine. Additionally, *Babu* Elahi Baksh's own previous revelations verified *Hazrat* Mirza as a truthful person. So what had transpired now to change the character of his revelations from supportive to antagonistic? It is quite obvious that *Hazrat* Mirza's kindly advice had hurt his ego, and thus made him vulnerable to Satan's insinuations. The fact is that the soul of an ordinary person is not fully cleansed of Satanic influences and it is possible for Satan to breach his defenses with Satanic inspirations. For this reason, the revelation of an ordinary person is not protected from such influences.

In this changed role, *Babu* Elahi Baksh shifted his loyalty and aligned himself with *Maulvi* Abdul Jabbar Ghaznavi and his likeminded clerics – the same group of people who initially ridiculed his revelations and once satirically commented: “Even the clerks have now started receiving revelations.” One of them had even written a very strongly worded letter to *Babu* Elahi Baksh as a result of which he received a revelation: “What does a monkey know about the taste of ginger.” Thus, it was the height of folly for him to align himself with a group that his own revelation had termed as a monkey.

Besides *Munshi* Abdul Haq, *Babu* Elahi Baksh had two other very good friends, *Hafiz* Muhammad Yousaf of Amritsar and Fateh Ali Shah. This group of four initially praised *Hazrat* Mirza and frequently visited him in Qadian, but delayed formally taking the pledge. The result was that with the passage of time, their hearts hardened, and finally the temptation of *Babu* Elahi Baksh proved their undoing.

### ***Hafiz* Muhammad Yousaf testifies to the truth**

*Hafiz* Muhammad Yousaf was a minor official in the Irrigation Department. He and his brother, *Munshi* Muhammad Yaqub, were devout-

ed disciples and companions of *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi. Once *Hafiz* Yousaf made a statement on oath before about two hundred witnesses as follows: “One day, *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi told me, ‘I saw in an inspired vision that an illuminating light had descended from the heaven towards Qadian, and my progeny had been left bereft of it.’” In other words, *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi’s children would not accept this light, and would meet their end while condemning and opposing it.

### ***Munshi* Muhammad Yaqub testifies to the truth**

In the same vein, *Munshi* Muhammad Yaqub had also testified to the truth. It happened following the contest of mutual imprecation (*mubahilla*) in Amritsar between *Maulvi* Abdul Haq Ghaznavi and *Hazrat* Mirza. *Munshi* Muhammad Yaqub stood in an open field near Muhammad Shah mosque, and stated before approximately two hundred people that *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi had told him: “A light will be born that will illuminate the four corners of the world and that light is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who resides in Qadian.” Later, in reply to a query by *Munshi* Zafar Ahmad of Kapurthala, he wrote in a letter dated April 30, 1900:

I stated this in the context of a dream seen in my house in which the moon fell out of the firmament and during its descent broke into four pieces between the heaven and the earth and the four pieces fell in the corners of the earth with a powerful flash of light. I narrated this dream to *Maulvi* Abdullah (now deceased) early in the morning and asked for an interpretation. He said, “Shortly, Allah will raise a person who will be the means of advancing the religion in all four corners of the world.” He also stated that, “Perhaps this will be manifested through Mirza of Qadian.” That is, the manifestation of this light will be through Mirza Qadiani.

### ***Hazrat* Mirza writes to *Babu* Elahi Baksh**

When *Babu* Elahi Baksh started narrating his revelations against *Hazrat* Mirza to the public with no regard for the vision and interpretation of his mentor, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote him a letter on June 16, 1899, in which he stated:

You receive revelations, and I also receive revelations, but the two are contradictory. Muslims are in a quandary as to which

ones to accept and which ones to reject. I beseech you in the name of Allah to take mercy on Islam and the Muslims by printing and sending me your revelations directed against me before June 30, 1899. I will then publish my revelations, which form the basis of my claim, and the two of us will then pray to God for a Heavenly judgment that will put the Muslims out of their quandary.

*Babu* Elahi Baksh chose not to reply, and remained silent publicly, but privately continued to narrate his anti-*Hazrat* Mirza revelations to his friends and kept branding him a liar.

### **An announcement titled, ‘The Measure of a Virtuous Person’**

Finally, *Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement on May 25, 1900, titled, ‘The Measure of a Virtuous Person.’ He included the testimonies of *Hafiz* Muhammad Yousaf and his brother, *Munshi* Muhammad Yaqub, and drew *Babu* Elahi Baksh’s attention to the following: “The visions of your mentor, whom you regard as an eminently holy person, portray me as truthful. If you have any fear of God, you should not give much importance to your revelations, whose status is no greater than wishful murmuring of your soul, against that of such a holy person (i.e. *Maulvi* Abdullah Ghaznavi). In fact, you should bow your head before the decision of your mentor. However, if you insist on the genuineness of your revelations, then publish those revelations in which I have been called a liar, as requested in my letter of June 16, 1899, and also state openly that you place no value on the vision and revelation of your mentor in this matter, and give precedence to your revelations. After this, both of us will publish our revelations and seek a decision from God to distinguish between the one who is truthful and the one who is a liar.”

### **Elahi Baksh’s book *Asa-i-Musa* (The Rod of Moses)**

*Babu* Elahi Baksh did not have the courage to publish his revelations and seek a Divine judgment as proposed by *Hazrat* Mirza, but following in the footsteps of some other clerics who had adopted the same strategy, he wrote a book, *Asa-i-Musa* (The Rod of Moses), in which he refuted and contradicted *Hazrat* Mirza. The book was a medley of rubbish. In one section, he lauded the victory of *Pir* Mehar Ali Shah Golravi,<sup>1</sup> in another he made false and unjust accusations against *Hazrat* Mirza, in yet another he put forward some absurd and clerical arguments to disprove *Hazrat*

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1 The incident of *Pir* Mehar Ali Shah Golravi is narrated later in this book.

Mirza's claims, and finally he penned some of his revelations,<sup>2</sup> which indicated that *Hazrat* Mirza was a liar and would die of plague within his lifetime. In summary, the purpose of the book was to bestow the mantle of Moses on *Babu* Elahi Baksh, and that of Moses' rod on his book. *Maulvi* Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi wrote a reply to this book called, *Ayat-ur-Rahman* (The Sign of the Beneficent) and effectively broke this rod. This by itself constituted sufficient proof that *Babu* Elahi Baksh's book was not the rod of Moses, otherwise it would not have broken so easily, but the Heavenly judgment was yet to be rendered and it was not long in coming.

### **God's practical testimony manifests the true Moses and receiver of revelation**

God especially disdains the rejection of the truth when it is done with haughtiness and maliciousness. When *Babu* Elahi Baksh joined the ranks of the opponents, he became fanatical in his opposition, and did everything possible to scorn and disgrace *Hazrat* Mirza. In addition to making many unwarranted attacks and using impudent language, *Babu* Elahi Baksh, in his book, *Asa-i-Musa*, published his revelations implying that *Hazrat* Mirza would die of plague in his lifetime. Verbally, too, he narrated similar prophecies to his friends and acquaintances. He also wrote a threatening letter to *Hazrat* Mirza stating: "God has manifested to me that you are a liar, and you would meet your downfall at my hands, i.e. the hands of

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2 The issue of the newspaper *Al-Hakam* dated May 17, 1901, contained an entry in its daily chronicle section to the effect that the religious scholars of Lahore had questioned Elahi Baksh as to whether his revelations were free from the deceptions of Satan, and he had replied that his revelations were not free from the influence of Satan. *Hazrat* Mirza used the opportunity offered by this news item to give a speech full of great wisdom. An excerpt from the speech follows:

"There is a direct correlation between the extent to which a person abandons sins and draws near to God, and the extent to which his dreams and visions are free from the influence of Satan. Finally, when he closes all the doors from which Satan could come in, then there remains within him nothing but God. So if you hear that someone receives revelation, do not first focus on his revelation. Revelation by itself means nothing unless the person has purified himself from the interference of Satan and cleansed himself from improper prejudice, envy, jealousy and every act that displeases God. Listen! An appropriate analogy is that of a tank fed by several pipes of water. Even if only one of the pipes is discharging polluted water into the tank, will that not pollute the entire tank? This is the secret about the Holy Prophet that has been revealed in the verse, "Nor does he speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed." (53:3-4)

Moses.” Thus, *Babu Elahi Baksh*’s own actions made it imperative that Divine judgment be rendered expeditiously. By publishing his so-called revelations contradicting *Hazrat Mirza* and accusing him of falsehood, he had exceeded all limits of propriety. If *Hazrat Mirza* was genuine and these revelations contradicting him were false, then it was necessary for God to verify the genuineness of *Hazrat Mirza* and the falsehood of *Babu Elahi Baksh*. Since both parties claimed their revelations to be genuine, it was most appropriate if the same medium of revelation was used as a discriminating sign. And so it happened. *Hazrat Mirza* published a revelation about *Babu Elahi Baksh* in *Arbain* Vol. 4 that stated: “They desire to show your impurity and Allah desires to show you His blessings continually.” Thus, the revelation meant that *Babu Elahi Baksh* and his cohorts desired to expose, as they claimed, *Hazrat Mirza*’s impurity and filth, but God would shower him with His blessings, which will be continuous. After this, *Hazrat Mirza* received another revelation about *Babu Elahi Baksh* on March 15, 1907, that was forthwith published in the newspapers, *Badar* and *Al-Hakam*. The revelation was as follows:

There is a Moses whom I will manifest and bestow honor upon before the people. But he who has sinned against me, I will drag him and show him hell. My signs will become manifest. My enemy has perished (i.e. will be killed). Now his account is with God.

This was an unambiguous revelation in which God had clearly stated that, in His knowledge, there was only one Moses whose identity would be revealed very shortly. The other was a liar and by wrongly usurping the identity of Moses, he was guilty of sin. He would be dragged in hell and would perish. And so it happened. *Elahi Baksh*, the author of *Asa-i-Musa*, contracted the plague and died in Lahore on April 7, 1907, and by his death provided testimony to the identity of the true Moses, i.e. the one who was the genuine recipient of revelation and with whom God spoke, namely *Mirza Ghulam Ahmad*. *Babu Elahi Baksh*’s death was also a testimony to the fact that his revelations were merely the inspirations of Satan motivated by his own desires. So consider that! O people with spiritual insight!

Chapter

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***LUJJAT-UN-NUR***  
**(VAST EXPANSE OF LIGHT)**

In the year 1900, *Hazrat* Mirza wrote a book in eloquent Arabic called *Lujjat-un-Nur*, primarily for the purpose of conveying his message to the scholars and religious leaders of the Arabic-speaking countries. In this book, *Hazrat* Mirza provided clear and convincing proofs of his claims of being the Promised Messiah and *Mahdi*. His arguments, therefore, left no excuse for the reader to plead ignorance. Unfortunately, *Hazrat* Mirza's attention was diverted towards some other books and so this book could not be published during his lifetime. The book was published after his death in February 1910.

## ***MINNARAT UL MASIH*** **(MINARET OF THE MESSIAH)**

*Hazrat Mirza* had a great desire to see the prophecies of the Holy Prophet fulfilled and for this end, he was willing to do whatever he could. A *hadith* in the *Sahih Muslim*<sup>1</sup> mentions a minaret in the east of Damascus as the site where the Messiah would descend. *Hazrat Mirza* had shown in his books that this *hadith* was not reliable because it was open to criticism both on grounds of narration and rationality. As far as reliability of narration was concerned, suffice it to say that this *hadith* had failed the test of *Imam Bukhari* and was, therefore, not included in his collection. From the standpoint of rationality, this *hadith* was not acceptable because it failed the test of consistency with the Quran. When thirty Quranic verses provided conclusive proof of Jesus' death, there could be no question of any descent on a minaret because those who die do not return to earth. Besides, there was another *hadith* found in both *Bukhari* and *Muslim* in which it was stated that the Promised Messiah "will be your *Imam* (leader) from among you."<sup>2</sup> The intention here was clearly to let Muslims know that the Promised

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1 Imam Abu-l-Husain ibn Al-Hajjaj. *Sahih Muslim (Hadith)*. *Kitab al-Fitan, Baab: Zikar ud Dajjal*, 54:23. Vol. 2. Page 401, Kutab Khana Rashidia, Delhi.

2 *Al-Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari*. *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*. *Kitab al-anbiya*, 60:49, "What will be your condition when the son of Mary will descend among you and he will be your *Imam* from among yourselves," and *Al-Sahih* of Muslim as quoted in *Kanz al-Ummal*, vol. 7, page 220, "What will be your condition when the son of Mary will descend among you and he will be your *Imam*."



Messiah would be from among them. This reliable *hadith* thus contradicted a descent in Damascus, and in the face of the evidence from this stronger *hadith*, how could the weaker one about the descent in Damascus be accepted? At the same time, it was *Hazrat* Mirza's creed that if some *hadith* lent itself to an interpretation that was consistent and non-contradictory then it should not be discarded. Accordingly, *Hazrat* Mirza provided an interpretation of this *hadith* that appeared to be perfectly correct and was the only way it could be interpreted without creating inconsistencies.

The interpretation was as follows: This *hadith* described a vision seen by the Holy Prophet and subsequently narrated to his Companions. It is an established fact that dreams and visions frequently require interpretation to be properly understood. The descent of the Promised Messiah in east Damascus meant that the Promised Messiah's advent would be in a place that lay east of Damascus, and it may be noted that Qadian lies exactly to the east of Damascus. The minaret in the vision stood for the seat of light and the reference was that, in the time of the Promised Messiah, his place of advent would become the source from where the light of Islam would be beamed to the entire world. Such was indeed the case during the period of the Promised Messiah when Qadian became the center of Muslim renaissance. Similarly, interpretation was needed to understand the meaning of another *hadith* that stated the Holy Prophet saw the Promised Messiah dressed in two yellow sheets. According to the literature on interpretation of visions, this signified that the Promised Messiah would continually nurse two chronic ailments, and in actuality this happened. *Hazrat* Mirza frequently had attacks of severe headaches and polyuria.

In spite of these reasonable interpretations, *Hazrat* Mirza was of the opinion that efforts should be made to translate visionary scenes into reality as far as possible. His opinion was rooted in certain *hadith* that advocated such actions. In addition, *Hazrat* Mirza had received revelation to the effect that his eloquent speeches and literature had placed Muslims on a high minaret where they were free from the danger of attacks by disbelief and evil. The mention of a minaret in the *hadith*, and also in his revelation, led *Hazrat* Mirza to conclude that there was no harm in building a physical minaret to reflect these references. This was the genesis of the plan conceived by *Hazrat* Mirza to build a minaret whose existence was metaphorically associated with the person of the Promised Messiah.

### **An announcement about the minaret of the Messiah**

Accordingly, *Hazrat* Mirza published an announcement on May 28, 1900, in which he gave the rationale stated above for building such a

minaret, and appealed to the members of his party for donations. Besides the symbolic significance, he also mentioned three practical benefits of building such a minaret. First, the minaret will be constructed in the courtyard of the Main Mosque (*Jamia Masjid*) from where the call to prayers will be made, so that the caller will be able to climb up to the top of the minaret and issue the call from there. Second, a large clock will be embedded at the top of the tower that will benefit the caller to prayers, those coming for prayers, and the community at large, by making them aware of the time. Third, a lantern will also be embedded at the top and will benefit the community by lighting the area at night.

*Hazrat* Mirza followed the first announcement by a second one on July 1, 1900, in which he appealed to the affluent section of his party to give donations and also answered the critics who claimed such a project was absurd and wasteful. *Hazrat* Mirza stated:

It should be remembered that the real purpose of constructing such a minaret is to fulfill the prophecy of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. For this purpose, twice before, minarets were constructed in East Damascus but fires consumed both of them. The intention here is similar to that of *Hazrat* Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, who made a Companion wear gold bracelets from the booty of Chosroes so that a prophecy may be fulfilled. And the clock on the tower will aid the worshippers and the community to know the time and this is decidedly an act of goodness, not of sin. The reality is that these clerics do not want the prophecy of the Holy Prophet fulfilled...they should read carefully the footnote of *Hafiz* Ibn Kathir on the Minaret of the Messiah given on page 306 of *Ibn Majah*.

### **Reward of one thousand rupees**

In the same poster, *Hazrat* Mirza announced a reward of one thousand rupees for anyone who produced a *hadith* that mentions the bodily ascent of Jesus or a bodily descent. *Hazrat* Mirza laid emphasis on 'bodily transmigration' as a necessary condition for the reward because the words 'descent from' and 'ascent to' Heaven are always spoken in a spiritual sense. Hence, unless there is a specific mention of a physical ascent and a physical descent, the words 'ascent' and 'descent' must be interpreted as spiritual. *Hazrat* Mirza's claim was that no *hadith* mentions a bodily ascent to Heaven or a bodily descent from Heaven of Jesus, and if anyone produced such a *hadith* then he was willing to pay a reward of one thou-

sand rupees to such a person. There was not even one cleric who accepted this challenge to produce even a single *hadith* that referred to the physical transmigration of Jesus from the voluminous Books of *Hadith*.

### **Foundation stone of the Messiah's minaret laid**

Some donations were received for the construction of the Messiah's Minaret, but inadvertent delays prevented the work from starting till 1903, when *Hazrat Mirza* finally laid its foundation stone. The construction had hardly progressed a few feet above the ground level when *Hazrat Mirza's* opponents, and some members of his extended family, moved the Deputy Commissioner to halt the construction of the minaret on the grounds that it would invade their privacy. The Deputy Commissioner deputed the *Tehsildar* of Batala to conduct an on-site inquiry. He met with *Hazrat Mirza* in the room next to the Mubarak Mosque. Some locals of Qadian, who were among the complainants, were also present at this meeting. During the course of conversation, *Hazrat Mirza* told the *Tehsildar*: "Budhamal is sitting here. Ask him if right from my childhood till now there has ever been an opportunity where I could benefit him and I did not do my utmost to assist him, and then ask him if there has ever been an occasion when he had an opportunity to harm me, and he did not do his utmost to hurt me." Budhamal's face turned red from embarrassment, and not a word escaped his lips in response. He simply kept sitting with his head bowed in shame. This *Lala Budhamal* was a prominent member of the *Arya Hindu* organization of Qadian, and a virulent enemy of Islam and the Muslims.

In spite of listening to this conversation, the *Tehsildar* put in an adverse report because of his own prejudice, and stated that the minaret was likely to become a place of gathering for the people, resulting in a loss of privacy for the residents of the neighborhood. In response, it was pointed out to the Deputy Commissioner that the minaret was part of the mosque and would only be used for calling the people to prayer. Thus, access to the tower would be restricted to the caller and it would not be open to the public. When the Deputy Commissioner was satisfied, he allowed the construction to proceed, but despite getting this permission, *Hazrat Mirza* did not give orders for the construction to resume. Subsequently, he paid no further attention to the matter and passed away from this world without pursuing this project further. It is obvious that the stoppage of construction was not for financial reasons because the organization had grown tremendously as had the amount of donations. If he had wanted, he could have had many such minarets constructed.

### The spiritual minaret

It appears that some Divine sign or inspiration turned his attention to the spiritual minaret being constructed by his eloquent speeches and abundant literature. It was by planting their feet on this minaret of knowledge, wisdom, beneficence and spirituality that Muslims would be able to safeguard their religion, and protect and solidify the foundations of their missionary work against all attacks by evil. It was on this minaret of knowledge and wisdom that the Holy Prophet had seen the descent of the Promised Messiah, and about which *Hazrat* Mirza had received the following revelation in Persian:

March (ahead); for your time is nigh,  
And the steps of the Muslims are firmly rooted on the minaret  
most high.

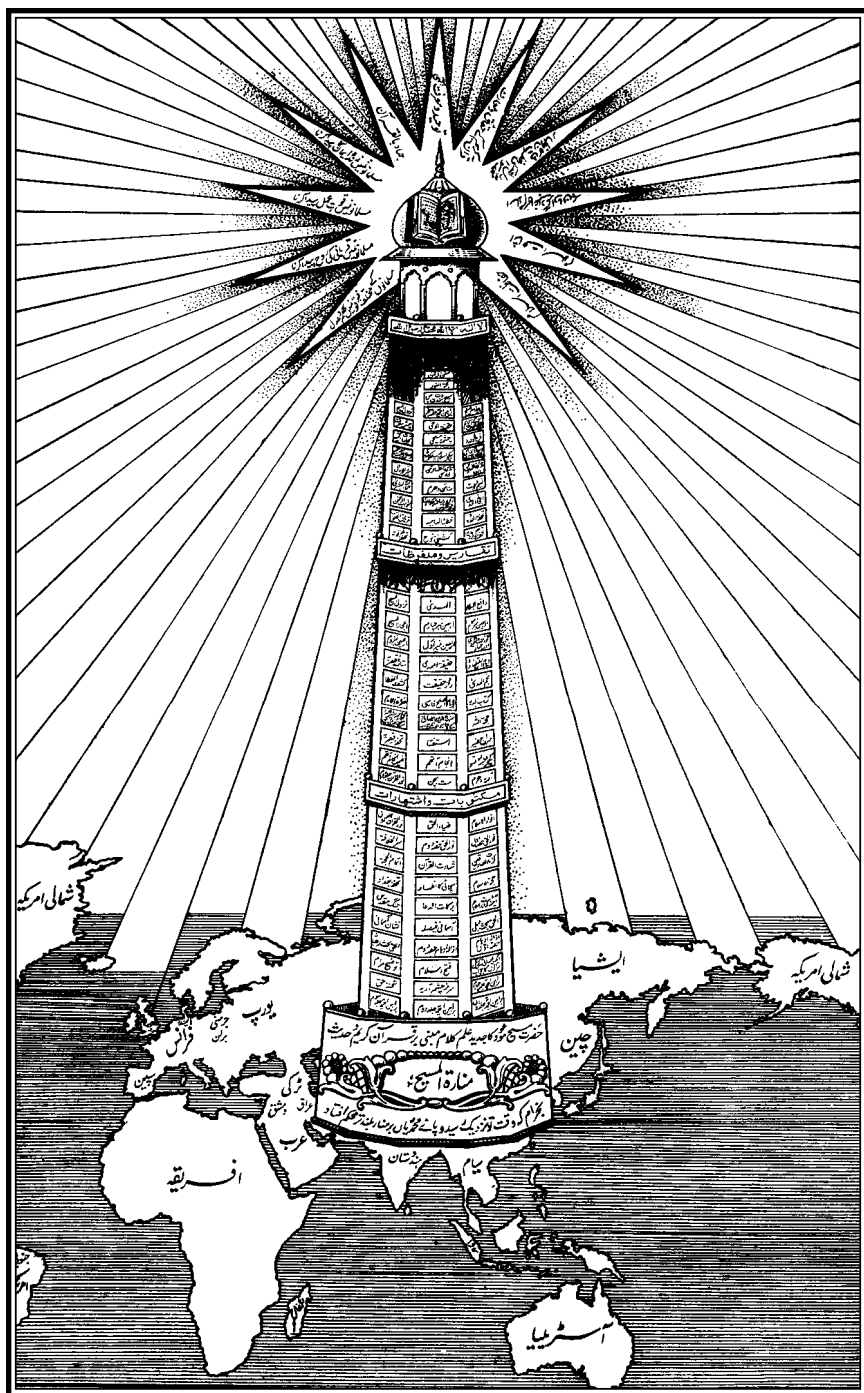
It is worth reflecting on the nature of the minaret mentioned in this revelation. It was a minaret built through the aegis of *Hazrat* Mirza and had the characteristic that it steadied the tottering gait of the Muslims when they planted their feet on it. Can such a minaret be a construction of brick and mortar? Such an idea is absurd and laughable and one which no intelligent person will accept even for a second.

The strength of a religion always lies in the strength of the arguments supporting its creed. Thus, if there is such a minaret that will afford Muslims safety from fear and protection from all dangers when their feet are firmly planted on it, then this minaret can be none other than a metaphorical reference to eloquently laying down strong and irrefutable evidence and arguments. It follows therefore, that the minaret mentioned in this revelation was the spiritual and educational minaret that *Hazrat* Mirza constructed for the safety of Islam, and to show its dominance over all religions of the world. It was a minaret built not of brick and mortar, but by the eloquent expositions of *Hazrat* Mirza based on the Quran and the *Hadith*.<sup>3</sup> With this God-gifted knowledge, truth prevailed, falsehood was crushed, and *Hazrat* Mirza was able to establish the dominance of

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3 *Maulana* Qureshi, editor of the newspaper *Emaan* and a prominent member of the *Seerat* committee, Patti, made a beautiful reference to such a 'minaret for the propagation of Islam' in his editorial dated November 15, 1939.

First understand that the propagation of Islam is neither a tale nor a fantasy but is a firm minaret of the Quran and Islam. It is a living reality and an irrefutable fact. *Hadith* states that all the good deeds of the world when compared with *jihad* in the way of Allah are like a drop in front of a river. But *jihad* when compared to the



An artist's rendition of the Spiritual Minaret of the Messiah. For a complete description, and larger reproduction see the endsheet at the back of the book.

Islam over all other religions. This was not all; his example, influence and spirituality also inspired his followers to firmly believe in the truth of Islam, and developed in them a spirit of sacrifice and selflessness for the service of Islam. God enlightened their minds and hearts in such a way that they became capable of producing the best possible literature for the propagation and dominance of Islam. Stepping on a minaret of brick and mortar could not have brought about this state of affairs.

The Quranic statement, “teaching them the Book and the Wisdom” (3:164), lends further support to this interpretation. This was a spiritual minaret of knowledge based on the teachings of the ‘Book and Wisdom.’ This is the correct interpretation of the minaret in *Hazrat Mirza*’s revelation, and in the vision of the Holy Prophet where he saw the Promised Messiah atop a minaret. The clear implication of the Holy Prophet’s vision was that through the aegis of the Promised Messiah, Muslims will plant their feet firmly on such a high minaret that Islam will be out of reach of any attacks by all false religions. Like a minaret, the majesty of Islam will become evident to all, and its spiritual and educational light will enlighten the whole world. God willing.

### **The inheritors of the physical and spiritual minarets**

After *Hazrat Mirza*’s death, his son, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, completed the physical minaret of bricks and mortar. However, the disciples of *Hazrat Mirza*, who set up their center in Lahore, worked on further elevating the real minaret of the Messiah – the one mentioned in his revelation, and the one with which the Holy Prophet had associated the Promised Messiah. Following in *Hazrat Mirza*’s footsteps, his disciples in Lahore made it the objective of their life to produce literature for safeguarding and propagating Islam, for countering all attacks on Islam from whichever direction, and for carrying the message of Islam to the four corners of the world. The minaret of bricks and mortar did not rise beyond a certain height, but this spiritual minaret, which is the real minaret of Messiah, is reaching new heights every day by the Grace of Allah, and it will keep on getting higher until, God willing, its light will enlighten the

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propagation of Islam is like a droplet of dew in front of an ocean. From this explanation, you can understand the status of propagation in the Islamic system.

Is it not true that in this period, the first person who invited the Muslims to this firmest minaret of Islam was *Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad*, may the blessings of Allah be upon him? Not only did he invite them but he also ensured before he died that the steps of Muslims were firmly planted at the pinnacle of this highest minaret of Islam. Let him who has a clear sight and a clean heart benefit from recognizing this truth.



*The Messiah's Minaret in Qadian.*





*View of the Messiah's Minaret from the Bahishti Makbra cemetery.*



souls of all the people in the world. And with Allah is this ability.

It appears that God afforded another distinction between these two minarets. After *Hazrat* Mirza's death, his body and physical associations stayed in Qadian, but the spirit and spiritual blessings moved to Lahore. This interpretation is further supported by his revelation, "The calamity of migration."

## JIHAD AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT

On May 22, 1900, *Hazrat* Mirza published a booklet, *Government Angrezi aur Jihad* (The British Government and Jihad) in which he clearly spelled out his attitude towards the British Government. The book was also a treatise on the Islamic concept of jihad and removed the extant misunderstandings about the concept. This was not the first time *Hazrat* Mirza had addressed this issue, for he had expressed his views on the subject many times before in his writings. What necessitated the writing of this book, however, was the suspicion and mistrust with which the British Government had begun to view *Hazrat* Mirza. It, therefore, became necessary to clear the air by a full exposition of the Islamic concept of jihad, and *Hazrat* Mirza's position vis-à-vis the British Government. Many critics, even today, claim that *Hazrat* Mirza annulled the Quranic injunction of jihad, and declared jihad against the British Government as unlawful, merely as an act of sycophancy. Nothing could be further from the truth. This chapter discusses the issue comprehensively to dispel this wrong notion.

### **Why *Hazrat* Mirza expressed loyalty to the British Government**

When *Hazrat* Mirza claimed to be the *Mahdi*, the British Government was alarmed. The concept of *Mahdi* in their minds was that of a sword-wielding fanatic, bent on forcefully converting or killing infidels, and waging wars against infidel empires as a first act of duty. The British had

not forgotten their experience at the hands of the Sudanese *Mahdi*, and the violence and fighting that ensued was still fresh in their minds. Consequently, the government had little tolerance for anyone who claimed the dangerous persona of *Mahdi*.

Not surprisingly, *Hazrat Mirza's* claim of *Mahdi* drew a swift response from the government. He was put under surveillance, and personnel of the secret police in plain clothes were posted in Qadian to watch every move he made. A record was kept of all visitors who came to see him in Qadian, and their names were submitted to the government for further investigation. *Hazrat Mirza's* opponents further fuelled the government's fears by continuously putting in false reports, which alleged he was about to revolt. In particular, *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi was very active in conveying these concocted stories to the government. The major purpose of his life had become the need to convince the British government that *Hazrat Mirza* was even more dangerous than the Sudanese *Mahdi*, and was just waiting for an opportune time to act. *Maulvi* Batalvi alleged that as soon as *Hazrat Mirza's* party membership grew beyond a critical mass, he would declare jihad and revolt against the British government. This campaign of misinformation was part of a coordinated strategy by the opponent clerics and the Christian clergy to extract revenge for the reverses they had suffered at the hands of *Hazrat Mirza*. Their plan was to put an end to his mission by alarming the government into jailing him.

Accordingly, Rev. Henry Martyn Clarke stated in court on oath during his statement in the trumped-up case against *Hazrat Mirza* of conspiracy to murder that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a grave threat to the British Government. The British Government was after all Christian. When their own British cleric, who moved and socialized with them day and night, fed them this information and even had no hesitation in making such a statement on oath in court, it was to be expected that the attitude of the government would become biased. It was commendable that the Deputy Commissioners Douglas and Dewey kept a neutral stance, but the Deputy Commissioner who succeeded them, and was holding office at the time of the case for the demolition of the wall was strongly influenced by this false propaganda. He stated in no uncertain terms that he would finish Mirza Qadiani and his organization once and for all.

It must also be remembered that this was a period in close juxtaposition with the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Although both the Hindus and the Muslims had participated in this rebellion, the Hindus cleverly exonerated themselves in the aftermath, leaving the Muslims to bear the full blame

for the rebellion. The Hindus were able to avoid culpability because the titular sovereignty of Delhi vested in a Muslim king - the last of the Mughal rulers. His control over Delhi and its environs was at best weak, but during the Mutiny, his government was totally hijacked by the rebels. Although the Emperor was completely powerless and all actions were taken by a rebel command made up of Muslims and Hindus, the poor Emperor became the target of the British wrath after the Mutiny had been quelled. The Hindus cleverly put the blame on the Muslims by stating that the entire strife was the doing of the Muslims who wanted to reestablish their Empire. The British accepted this explanation, and vented their anger on the Muslims. Thousands of Muslims were hanged, their estates were confiscated, and they were denied employment in the government. The effects of the Mutiny were far-reaching, and the Muslims had to bear its consequences for a long time - almost to the end of the British rule in India.

### **Modus operandi of Sir Syed**

Sir Syed spent a lifetime trying to remove doubts and suspicions in the minds of the British. He advised Muslims against joining the Congress Party because its objectives reeked of rebellion. On behalf of the Muslims, he assured the British that the Muslim community was loyal to the British Government. It is well recognized that this policy of Sir Syed was in the best interest of Muslims because the British mentality of that time was not the mentality of today. India was firmly in their grip, Congress was considered a rebellious party, and the British did not look upon it kindly. Sir Syed's policy, therefore, was to discourage Muslims from joining Congress, and to win over the trust of the British with a strong expression of Muslim loyalty.

### **Sir Syed and *Hazrat* Mirza's policies coincided on this issue**

Sir Syed and *Hazrat* Mirza were contemporaries, and lived through the same times and faced the same events. Not surprisingly, therefore, the two adopted similar policies on the issue of the Muslim-British relationship because, given the realities of the time, these policies were best designed to serve the interests of Muslims. However, *Hazrat* Mirza had to contend with two additional difficulties that Sir Syed did not face. First, under Divine injunction, *Hazrat* Mirza had claimed to be the *Mahdi*, but in the eyes of the British, this was only a guise to organize a rebellion. Second, *Hazrat* Mirza carried the same Mughal title, and in fact shared the same family tree as the Mughal family whose rule the British had recent-

ly ended in 1857. Under these circumstances, the British viewed the claim of *Mahdi* as a mere ruse to reestablish the lost empire of the family. It was, therefore, necessary for *Hazrat Mirza* to allay British fears with a clear exposition of his thinking on the subject.

*Hazrat Mirza* repeatedly reminded the British of services rendered by his forefathers to them during the Mutiny of 1857 in the form of a detachment of fifty armed horsemen. The purpose of doing so was to dispel from the British mind the notion that the claim of *Mahdi* was a mere ruse to reestablish a lost Empire. Had that been the case, why would his family have afforded help to the British at the most critical juncture of their rule when their hold on the country was so tenuous?

*Hazrat Mirza* considered it his moral and civic responsibility to dispel all doubts about his intentions. This in no way reflected any weakness on his part because he knew that God was helping him, and he had full faith in this. Had that not been the case, he would not have announced loudly his claim to be the *Mahdi* while residing in the British Empire at a time when the British were so suspicious of Muslims. Thus, it was not fear, but the obligation to make use of all physical resources in achieving an objective that provided the impetus for this explanation. The explanation was designed to accomplish the following: First, to provide the correct significance of his claim of *Mahdi*; second, to impress upon the British that he and his party did not harbor any idea of rebellion; third, to assure the British of their loyalty as subjects; fourth, to impress upon them that, under the present circumstances, they did not consider it lawful to wage jihad with the sword against them; fifth, to inform them that, given the present climate of peace and religious freedom, they considered the British Government to be a blessing from God.

### **The expression of loyalty had no element of sycophancy**

Some critics have labeled *Hazrat Mirza* a sycophant because he praised the British Government for its just and peaceful rule and for its policy of religious freedom. This criticism is unfair. It has already been mentioned that *Hazrat Mirza's* policy towards the British was akin to that of Sir Syed. This was a critical period in the history of the Muslim community of India because the British Government viewed them with suspicion, and was grinding them down, much to the delight of Hindus who were the major beneficiaries of such a policy. In these circumstances, the approach of Sir Syed and *Hazrat Mirza* was best suited to enhance the welfare of Muslims. However, *Hazrat Mirza's* praise was not hypocritical because he had lived through the period of Sikh rule that immediately pre-

ceded the British, and was able to appreciate the qualitative difference between the two regimes.

The Sikh rule in Punjab had been absolutely disastrous for Muslims. Their religion, culture and identity were trampled upon with impunity, and *Hazrat* Mirza had witnessed these excesses first-hand. During the Sikh rule, Muslims were prohibited from giving the call to prayers (*azan*) from the mosques. Many tombs and mosques of Muslims were forcefully converted into Sikh places of worship (*Gurdawaras*) and community centers (*Dharamsalas*). Even today, the Sikhs of Qadian are in possession of a former mosque turned into a community center in which the arch and pulpit of the former mosque still stand. The Shaheed Gunj mosque of Lahore was another testimony of these excesses. In the predominantly Sikh villages around Qadian, and throughout Punjab, Muslims were not allowed to give the call for prayers even long after the Sikh rule ended. In one incident, a Muslim who gave the call to prayer in a Sikh village was severely beaten. The charge against him was that their water, food and women had all been polluted by the call to prayer. Such excesses intensified after the death of Ranjit Singh.

Some Sikh chiefs tried to erase Muslim culture totally from their fiefdoms and estates by not allowing Muslims literate in Arabic and Persian to reside in areas under their control. Such persons were either expelled or killed; even if someone pleaded, "Sir, I have no knowledge at all of Persian or Arabic," the plea was rejected with the reprimand, "If you have no knowledge of these languages then how come your dialect is so chaste." It had become impossible to find Muslim religious books. There was a Muslim saint whose supplication for many years was, "Dear God! Grant me that I may at least see the *Sahih Bukhari* once before I die," and then overcome by despair, he would breakdown and cry. *Hazrat* Mirza's family also suffered immensely at the hands of the Sikhs. Their estates were confiscated, Qadian was attacked and captured, and *Hazrat* Mirza's family was expelled from the town. They sought refuge in the state of Kapurthala, and lived in a town called Bugowal for a considerable period of time. *Hazrat* Mirza had witnessed this systematic destruction of Muslim culture, the humiliation of his faith, and the ill treatment of Muslims with his own eyes. Is it any wonder that he considered the British rule to be a blessing of God? *Hazrat* Mirza described the woes of this period of Sikh rule in his booklet, *Government Angrezi aur Jihad* as follows:

There are still many people alive who have seen some part of the Sikh rule. Let them vouch for the condition of Muslims and Islam

during the Sikh period. A necessary custom of Islam, which is the call to prayer, was considered a crime. No one dared make the call to prayer in a loud voice and be safe from the lances and spears of Sikhs. Now did God do a bad thing that he rescued Muslims from the madness of the Sikhs, and put them under the peaceful rule of the British government? And as soon as the new government came, Muslims of Punjab were veritably converted to Islam anew. Because goodness must be returned with goodness, we should not discard this blessing of God that has been granted in lieu of the Sikh period after thousands of supplications.

Expanding on the same subject in a speech that was published in *Al-Hakam* of June 17, 1901, *Hazrat Mirza* stated:

Those ignoramuses, who are unacquainted with the rule of showing gratefulness for the goodness of a benefactor, term my statements and writings of this type as sycophancy. My God knows best that I am incapable of toadying to any person in this world. I do not have this ability. However, being appreciative of a good turn is in my nature. It is His grace that He has not put in me any trait of ingratitude and treachery. We appreciate the goodness of the British government and consider it a blessing of God that He has sent a government from thousands of miles away to save us from the oppressive Sikh period, and to govern us justly. I say with all honesty that, if this government had not existed, we would not have been allowed even to think about the criticism of the opponents of Islam, let alone to rebut them. Now, we can reply to these criticisms without any hindrance. Then if we do not appreciate this blessing of God, we would certainly be considered unthankful and ungrateful...

In summary, this is the land where we have to wage battles against the Christian clergy, and for this reason, we should not be idle for a moment. But remember that we must fight a like fight. We should come out to meet them armed with the same weapon that they have brought against us, and that weapon is the pen. This is the reason why Allah, the most High, has named this humble person as the Sultan of the Pen and has called my pen the Sword of Ali. The point in this is that this era is not an era requiring wars and fighting for the sake of religion, but is the era of the pen.

When this is the case, then you must also remember that a necessary condition for the doors of knowledge and wisdom to be opened is righteousness. So be righteous...Victory is granted to the one with whom God is pleased. Hence, it is of the utmost importance that we improve our morals and actions, and become righteous so that we may be granted the blessing of God's help and love. Then with the help of Allah, it is our duty, and it is incumbent on each one of us who can do something, not to fall short in replying to these attacks. The intention in formulating the response however must only be to manifest the Glory of God, the Most High.

### ***Hazrat Mirza's speech and action were never hypocritical***

*Hazrat Mirza* detested hypocrisy. It was not his style to say one thing openly, and to believe another secretly. His expression of loyalty to the government was genuine, and he actually considered it unacceptable to wage jihad with the sword against the British Government for reasons that follow. He detested the style of those religious scholars and leaders of India who secretly condoned jihad with the sword against the British, but sang hymns to their faces. Accordingly, *Hazrat Mirza* commented in this book:

When these people meet the current rulers, their bows of greeting are so deep as to give the impression that they are about to prostrate, but when they sit among their own kind, they repeatedly insist that this is a land under enemy occupation, and consider it a duty in their hearts to wage jihad. There are but a few who do not subscribe to this thinking. They are so staunchly entrenched in their interpretation of jihad, which is totally incorrect and against the spirit of the Quran and the *Hadith* that they name anyone who does not accept this creed as *Dajjal* (Antichrist) and fair game to be killed.

Was this not an accurate description of those scholars and leaders who flattered the Government to its face, but secretly preached jihad with the sword, and stated that India was a land under enemy occupation? Truth and honesty demanded that, if this was really a land under enemy occupation, then they should have arisen, picked up the sword, and fallen upon the British, or alternatively migrated from this country, but they were not willing to do either. In the period immediately following the fall of the



Ottoman Empire, and the abolition of the Caliphate by the British, many Indian Muslims left their home and hearth and migrated to Afghanistan as part of a movement to live under Muslim rule. But not one of these clerics and leaders who were the torchbearers of jihad, joined the émigrés, but instead preferred to stay behind comfortably in their own homes. The impact of this mass migration, which was totally unwarranted by Islamic dictates, was disastrous for the Muslims of India. It did, however, highlight the fact that the decrees and poetic verses of these clerics and leaders about 'a land under enemy occupation,' and jihad were mere verbirosities on which they were too afraid to act. They were men of words, not of action; otherwise, there was no reason for not implementing something that they considered a dictate of their faith. On top of this, they shamelessly sang the praise of the British to their faces but secretly considered India to be a land under enemy occupation.

This was not the style of *Hazrat Mirza*; he detested hypocrisy. If he considered it unwarranted to wage jihad with the sword against the British, given the circumstances of his time, he did so with conviction, and if he praised the religious freedom enjoyed under the British rule, he did so fairly and honestly, and not as an act of sycophancy.

### **Dr. Iqbal's expression of loyalty to the British**

During the period of the First World War, which was many years after *Hazrat Mirza's* death, the famous poet of India, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, wrote a poem praising the British and expressing his loyalty to them. This poem was published first in the newspaper *Akhbar Haq* of Lahore, and later published in the magazine *Zamana* of Kanpur. In fact, Dr. Iqbal himself recited this poem melodiously at a function in the University Hall, Lahore. This author remembers a stanza from the poem that ran as follows:<sup>1</sup>

O the Ruler of the heavenly land of India,  
Thine luminous light brightens the braves of India.

Mighty is your pen that rules the land of India,  
Thine liver-piercing, mighty sword is the protector of India.

In this turbulence and tumult, my head do accept,  
This humble offering of a loyalist do accept.

1 This poem was written in 1918. The author quoted all but one line of the above poem in the original Urdu text of his book from memory and apologized for not remembering the missing line. The original poem was located and the full poem is reproduced here.

It is obvious that Dr. Iqbal's sentiments in this stanza about the British Emperor George V, were expressions of his loyalty. In fact, while including himself among the loyalists, he went so far as to offer his head for the struggle although this war was by no means an Islamic jihad. If on the one hand this was a war against Germany, it was also on the other a war against Turkey — a Muslim state — and the ultimate consequence of Turkey's defeat were disastrous for Muslims. Their holy sites in the states of Iraq and Palestine were lost to the British, and shots were fired even within the precincts of the holy city of Makkah. But can anyone allege that this poem was an act of sycophancy? Certainly not. Can anyone assert that Dr. Iqbal's characterization of the British sword as the guardian of India, and his offer to sacrifice his head in their service was only a hypocritical act of sycophancy? By no means, because every reasonable man would conclude that, given the circumstances of the time, Dr. Iqbal's sentiments were honest and his expression of loyalty to the government was sincere.

### **Sycophancy was not the style of *Hazrat Mirza***

*Hazrat Mirza's* praise of religious freedom and peace under the British rule was not an act of sycophancy. His decree against waging a violent jihad with the British in the name of religion was based on Islamic traditions, and was given sincerely; not as a means to please the British. There are only two reasons for sycophancy – fear or favor, and both were characteristically missing from *Hazrat Mirza's* psyche.

### ***Hazrat Mirza* did not expect any benefit from the British Government**

*Hazrat Mirza* never sought any favors from the British Government. Consequently he never felt the need to cultivate contacts by visiting British administrators, and showed no interest in socializing with them. After he had decreed against waging war with the British, he neither asked them for the grant of an estate, as *Maulvi* Muhammad Hussain Batalvi did, nor did he seek a title or peerage. He said what he had to say for the sake of Allah, and made no effort to cash in on it. Accordingly, he wrote:<sup>2</sup>

We do not praise the government out of fear or any expectation, but only to fulfill the command of the Holy Prophet to praise and thank those who do favors.

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2 *Nur-ul-Haq*. Volume 1.

### ***Hazrat Mirza was not afraid of the British***

*Hazrat Mirza* was not afraid of the British. Had he been afraid, he would not have proclaimed himself as the *Mahdi* and the Messiah, nor would he have labeled the British and all other European nations as Antichrist (*Dajjal*). The following facts bear testimony to this statement:

1. *Hazrat Mirza* knew fully well that the British were sensitive to the title of *Mahdi*. They considered the *Mahdi* as a sword-wielding, bloody fanatic, who would wage war to seek a kingdom. They had recently put an end to the Mughal Empire, and it was obvious that they would consider the claim of *Mahdi* by a person of Mughal pedigree as an ominous attempt to regain the lost Empire under the garb of religion. How could a person who was afraid of the British make such a claim, and arouse the suspicions of the British against him?
2. The British adhered to the Christian faith. They worshipped Jesus as God, and held that he had ascended alive to the heaven. They considered their salvation to lie in his sacrificial death on the Cross, and believed in his second coming. How could a person, who was afraid of the British, claim that salvation through sacrifice was totally fallacious? That their God, Jesus the Messiah, had died, and far from ascending to the heaven, had been interred in the ground; that if they harbored any doubt, they could view his tomb in Sirinagar? That he was the Messiah whose coming had been promised, and that there was a high degree of resemblance and similarity between Jesus and him; in fact, that his excellence was a degree above that of Jesus? And that he had come to annihilate their religion, to break their Crosses and to depose their God from His throne of Divinity? Was this systematic shredding of the state religion, and the destruction of the Divinity of a powerful ruler's deity, an act of cowardice or of great courage and bravery? Did he not consider that his action of deposing their deity from the throne of Divinity, while living in their strong and powerful realm, was likely to cause serious personal consequences? No, not at all.

*Hazrat Mirza* did not hesitate for a moment to state forthrightly what he considered to be the truth. Consequently, his

intense writings to shatter the false Divinity of Jesus led to charges of defaming Jesus, not only by the Christian clergy, but also by the Muslim clerics. *Hazrat* Mirza explained that he considered Jesus mentioned in the Quran as a pious prophet of God, but that his criticism was directed only at the Jesus of the New Testament who claimed to be God, and the Son of God, and who said that all those who came after him would be liars, thieves and robbers. It was obvious that this explanation may have assuaged the Muslim clerics, but not so the Christian clergy. The charges against their Jesus still stood. Although *Hazrat* Mirza's criticism of the Biblical Jesus was nowhere near the insolence and rudeness of the Christian clergy against the Holy Prophet, the way in which *Hazrat* Mirza shattered the Divinity of Jesus sat heavy on their hearts. *Hazrat* Mirza not only never apologized for this, but also fortified this position further by making it the centerpiece of his argument against Christianity. Was he not frightened that the Christian government would be inflamed at this, and make every effort to harm him? The fact is that those appointed by God are not fearful of those in temporal power, and no earthly power can stop them from the objective of their mission.

3. Not only did he axe the Divinity of a powerful Christian Empire's deity, but he also accused Christians of being Antichrist (*Dajjal*) in their beliefs. *Hazrat* Mirza enjoys the distinction of being the first person in the world to announce openly that the mischief of the Antichrist, against which the Holy Prophet and, in fact, all the prophets had warned, was none other than the Christian creed of the British and European nations. The Antichrist was considered a fiend in Christian tradition, and generally thought to be a manifestation of Satan. In Islam, too, the Antichrist was looked upon as the worst possible creature, even worse than Satan. It was a grave insult to refer to anyone even metaphorically by this name, and such a charge would probably have provoked a physical assault if the insulted person had the means to retaliate. Despite all these negative connotations of the Antichrist, *Hazrat* Mirza loudly proclaimed to the world that the mischief of the Antichrist, against which all the prophets of the world had warned their

nations, was none other than the Christian creed of the British and European nations. A *hadith* mentions the donkey as the mount of the Antichrist, and *Hazrat* Mirza pointed out that the donkey was a characterization for the rail and other modes of transport used by the British and Europeans to traverse the globe. The whole world was astonished at this charge of labeling the Christians as the Antichrist, and in particular the subjects of the British realm held their breath, fully convinced that the retaliation against Mirza would now be swift and severe. In fact, some clerics and newspaper editors further tried to ensure this retaliation by mocking the British with this interpretation, and calling the interpretation truly amazing. However, *Hazrat* Mirza did not retreat even a step from his position, and continuously kept elaborating and clarifying his charges, until finally all Muslims of the world were convinced, and conceded to the truth of his arguments.

Can there be any greater disgrace and humiliation of the British with respect to their religion? Can this be the work of someone who is afraid of the British? Such courage and bravery could not be exhibited by anyone except one who was appointed by God. Did the clerics and other leaders, who claimed India was a land under enemy occupation, and privately espoused jihad, have the courage to launch such dangerous attacks on the British religion, their god, and their nation, and to bring forth the most defamatory charges against them? This can only be the work of someone who was on a mission from God. *Hazrat* Mirza very appropriately expressed these sentiments in a Persian stanza:

I am not afraid of the world in performing my duties of religion,  
Because I am colored in the coloring of the faith of Muhammad.

He expressed similar sentiments in an Urdu stanza as well:

My heart is not afraid of anyone in the way of my beloved,  
Beware O World! This is a demented one.

***Hazrat* Mirza's jihad was against the British religion and not against their government**

Simultaneously, *Hazrat* Mirza made it very clear that his jihad was against the religion of the British, and not their government. He stated:

“Because the British rule is characterized by peace and religious freedom, I consider it against the canons of Islam to take up arms against it while these conditions prevail. However, since their religion has aggressed against Islam, I regard it my duty, and the duty of every Muslim, to defeat and annihilate their religion by waging jihad, and fighting against them with the same weapons that they have brought against us.” Accordingly, he published the following announcement in bold letters in his book:<sup>3</sup>

However, we wish to inform the government very clearly that it is not our creed to spread Islam by war and jihad in the present times; nor is it our creed to rebel against a government that affords us peace and security, and allows us to freely propagate our religion. Do we not live in peace and security under this British government? Can we not propagate our religion in accordance with our wishes? Have we been stopped from practicing any tenet of our religion? Definitely not. Without a doubt, the truth is that the freedom and security with which we can preach and propagate Islam in the streets and bazaars of this country, and thereby deliver the message of truth to all nations is such that similar activity is not possible even in the holy city of Makkah, let alone any other place. Then is it incumbent upon us to give thanks for this blessing or to start a violent rebellion? For this reason, although we consider this government to be gravely mistaken in the choice of its religion and entrapped in a shameless creed, we think it evil and very sinful to even consider the idea of rebellion against such a beneficent government.

From a religious standpoint, it is certainly true that we see this nation plainly in error and following a man made creed. Under these circumstances, we desire its reformation through prayer and supplication. We ask God, the Most High, to open their eyes and to fill their hearts with light so that they may realize that it is wrong to worship a human. Who was Jesus, on him be peace? Only a humble human! And if God, the Most High, desires, He can create millions like him in an instant; nay even thousands of times better than him. He has power over all things; He does what he pleases and is doing so...

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3 *Itmam-ul-Hujja*. Pages 27 and 28.

O worshippers of the dead! A Living God exists; if you seek Him, you will find Him. If you walk with the followers of the truth, you will reach Him. It is unmanly and effeminate for a human to worship another human. If you see excellence in someone, then strive to emulate him, but do not worship him. But he who exemplified ultimate excellence, and demonstrated it in knowledge and practice, and in sincerity and constancy, and was called 'the perfect man' on account of his nature, attributes, conduct, deeds and the abundance of his spiritual and holy power was, by God, not Messiah, the son of Mary. The Messiah was an ordinary prophet. Yes! He was one of the millions of favored persons, but belonged to a common group, and was nothing more than ordinary. This can be seen from the Bible, which states that he was a disciple of John and was baptized like the other pupils. His appointment was for a specific nation, and it is a pity that the world received no spiritual benefit from his person. He left behind a legacy of prophethood that proved to be more detrimental than beneficial. His coming became a source of additional trials and mischief that resulted in a large portion of the world falling into perfidy. But there is no doubt that he was a true prophet, and one near to God.

However, the person of highest excellence, the perfect man, and the perfect prophet - whose perfect blessings created a spiritual reawakening that manifested the first Day of Judgment on earth, and brought a dead world to life - was the Seal of the Prophets, the Leader of the Righteous, the Last of the Messengers, the Pride of the Prophets, the Honorable Muhammad Mustafa, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. O Beloved God! Shower such blessings and salutations on this beloved Prophet as Thou hast not showered on anyone since the beginning of the world. If this magnificent Prophet had not come, we would have lacked proof about the genuineness of the many lesser prophets who came into this world such as Jonah, Job, Messiah son of Mary, Malaki, John, Zechariah and others. Although all of them had commanding personalities, and were trusted and beloved servants of God, their rightful place in the world as righteous servants was secured only by the Holy Prophet, and for this he is owed a debt of gratitude. O Allah! Exalt him and send peace and blessings on him, and on his family, and on his companions, all of them. "And the last of their cry will be: Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds" (10:10).

Note how *Hazrat* Mirza labeled the British nation unmanly and effeminate for being devotees of a dead person, and worshippers of a human. Did any other so-called cleric or leader have the courage to criticize the state religion, and censure the British for conforming to such a religion at a time when they held complete control over the country? It was true, however, that *Hazrat* Mirza did not support the notion of going to war against the British. The reasons for this position are given next.

### **The real meaning of jihad**

The concept of jihad had taken on a distorted meaning in the minds of Muslims, partly because of the stupidity of the clerics, and partly because of the Christian propaganda. *Hazrat* Mirza considered it necessary to correct the common misconception about jihad. Jihad had been misinterpreted to mean the spread of religion with the sword, and this wrong notion furnished lethal ammunition to the Christian clerics and other opponents in their propaganda war against Islam. The result was that the intelligentsia developed an aversion to Islam because they felt, and rightly so, that truth should not be dependent on violence, force or duress for its acceptance, but should spontaneously capture the heart. The acceptance of truth was the end result of a process in which reason and evidence first convinced the heart. The sword was an ineffective means of convincing anyone that a particular creed was true. Even if someone were cowed into accepting a creed under the threat of violence, the heart would remain unconvinced. Force and duress could lead to hypocrisy but not faith. For this reason, the Quran had clearly stated: "There is no compulsion in religion" (2:256). Elsewhere, the Quran stated: "Wilt thou then force men till they are believers?" (10:99). Thus, the Quran was very clear that duress could not create faith. When the Quran itself did not condone such a strategy, there could be no basis for espousing forced conversions with the sword.

It is true that in the early period of Islamic history, Muslims had to pick up the sword, but it was in defense of the religion and not for its propagation. For a period of thirteen years, the infidels of Makkah relentlessly tortured Muslims in all possible ways to force them to abandon the true faith that the Holy Prophet had brought. To achieve this objective, they resorted to all kinds of atrocities – so cruel and brutal in their conception and commission that a mere reading of that barbarity is enough to make one cry. Without any mercy, these barbarous beasts hacked to pieces persons who were faithful servants of God and the pride of humanity; they ripped the bodies of some by pulling apart their legs in opposite directions, and openly slaughtered orphan children and helpless women who



had no protection. They repeatedly stoned and bloodied the pure and pious Messenger of Allah, may the blessings of the heaven and earth be on him. In spite of these provocations, the injunction of God was not to oppose aggression by force for He did not like fighting and violence. These atrocities continued without a break for thirteen years. For a period of three years, these brutes resorted to a total boycott of the Muslim community, refusing to sell them supplies, and thereby reducing Muslim men, women and children to writhe with pangs of hunger and starvation. The town of Makkah, where this band of righteous people was patiently bearing these hardships for the sake of Allah, now became impossible to live in. Many plans were formulated to murder the Holy Prophet. Things had to reach this stage before God gave the injunction merely to migrate; the injunction to fight was still not given.

When the Holy Prophet and his small band of followers migrated to Madinah, it dawned on the Makkans that Islam had so thoroughly permeated the beings of its followers that it was going to be an impossible task to root it out. They, therefore, decided to wipe this creed off the face of this earth by annihilating the founder of the religion and all his followers once and for all. To achieve this objective, they readied a large force and marched on Madinah. It was then that God gave the injunction to Muslims to fight in defense of their religion. The revelation came: "Permission (to fight) is given to those on whom war is made, because they are oppressed. And surely Allah is able to assist them – Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause..." (22:39-40). In other words, God had heard the supplication of these oppressed people who had been killed and expelled from their homes unjustly, and permission was now being accorded to them to fight. But two constraints were placed on the conduct of hostilities. The first was: "And fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, and be not aggressive; surely Allah loves not the aggressors" (2:190). The limitation imposed here was that fighting was only permissible in self-defense. Hence, permission to fight was given only against those who fought Muslims. Fighting against those who did not fight Muslims was tantamount to exceeding the limit, and Allah made it clear that He did not like those who exceeded the limit. The second constraint was a specification of the conditions under which hostilities were to seize. "And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah" (2:193). In other words, hostilities must seize when full freedom of conscience and religion was secured, and people could believe and practice their faith without fear or duress – a condition euphemistically referred to as, 'religion should be only for Allah'. In sum-

mary, Islam permitted fighting for the sake of religion in special circumstances, and under special conditions. In the absence of these conditions, jihad or fighting in the name of religion was not permissible and to do so was aggression, i.e. exceeding the limits, which God does not like.

***Hazrat Mirza did not abrogate the injunction regarding jihad***

*Hazrat Mirza* did not abrogate the injunction regarding jihad, and anyone who alleges this is guilty of a calumny against him. The Muslim clerics held the view that verses of the Quran could be abrogated, but *Hazrat Mirza* did not hold any such view. He believed it was incumbent to obey each and every word of the Quran, and that the addition or deletion of even a jot from the Quran was disbelief and heresy. Two relevant passages from his writings are presented here:

With regard to these allegations, I have given repeated explanations, and told people the meaning of what I wrote in my books, and explained that there is no heretical statement in them. I make no claim to prophethood or of being outside the *Umma* (Muslim Nation), nor do I deny miracles or the existence of angels or *Lailat-ul-Qadr* (The Night of Majesty). I acknowledge that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the *Khatam-un-nabiyyin* (The Seal of the Prophets). I know with full certainty, and firmly believe that our Holy Prophet Muhammad is the *Khatam-ul-anbiya* (Seal of the Prophets), and after him no prophet shall come for this *Umma*, neither new nor old. Not a jot or iota of the Holy Quran shall be abrogated. Of course, saints (Arabic singular: *muhaddath*) will come who will be spoken to by God, and possess some attributes of full prophethood by way of reflection (*zill*), and in some ways be colored with the color of prophethood. I am one of these.<sup>4</sup>

He then stated in his book *Mawahib-ur-Rahman*, published in January 1903 as follows:

God speaks to, and communicates with, His saints (*auliya*) in this *Umma*. They are given the color of prophets, but they are not prophets in reality because the Holy Quran has completed all the requirements of the *shariah* (Islamic law). They are given nothing

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4 *Nishan Asmani*, May 1892. Page 28.

but the understanding of the Quran; they do not add to the Quran, nor remove anything from it. And whoever adds to it, or removes anything from it, is from among the devils and the evildoers.

In the presence of such clear statements, to calumniate that *Hazrat Mirza* abrogated the Quranic injunction of jihad is simply unjust and malicious. To accuse such a person, who did not believe in the abrogation of even a jot from the Quran, that he abrogated an important injunction thereof is the height of unfairness and a grave slander.

### ***Hazrat Mirza removed the misconception about jihad***

*Hazrat Mirza* claimed to be a revivalist and a reformer. He was acutely aware that the Christian clergy were vilifying Islam day and night by claiming that it had been spread by the sword. Taking a cue from them, the *Arya* Hindus were also doing their bit in giving currency to this misconception. Unfortunately, the ignorant clerics also held this belief; as a result incidents took place with some regularity where Frontier *Pathans* murdered British people engaged in harmless pursuits, such as playing tennis. On being apprehended, they demanded to be put to death quickly so that their passage to heaven may be expedited. In one such incident, a *Pathan* murdered an English woman in broad daylight in Anarkali Bazaar, Lahore, and thought he had performed an act of great virtue. Such acts only helped to reinforce the relentless propaganda of Christian clerics and others portraying Islam as a violent religion, and made the intelligentsia and the thinking public wary of Islam. There was a similar misconception about the Promised *Mahdi*. Muslims generally believed that when the *Mahdi* came, he would spread Islam at the point of the sword. These were blemishes on the fair face of Islam, and it was incumbent on a reformer to remove them.

*Hazrat Mirza* declared that it was forbidden in Islam to kill a person of another faith without reason, and to consider such an act as jihad was a travesty. The Quran stated: "And from among you, there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful" (3:104), but nowhere did it state that there should be a party among you who should kill the unbelievers, and force them to join the Islamic religion.<sup>5</sup> Undoubtedly, there was an injunction to remain in a state of readiness for self-defense against the enemy. However, it was one thing to have an army and weaponry for defensive

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5 *Nur-ul-Haq*. Volume 1. Page 47.

action, but another to force people to accept Islam or to kill them for their disbelief. The Holy Quran did have injunctions to fight the disbelievers in the way of Allah, but only if they forcibly stopped the free choice of religion, plotted to exterminate Islam, and put themselves in the position of an enemy. In other words, war was not an objective espoused by the Quran, but there were certain circumstances, as narrated above, that sometimes made it necessary to wage war.

The issue, therefore, boiled down to whether or not, given the circumstances that prevailed during the time of *Hazrat Mirza*, waging war against the British fulfilled the conditions of jihad. *Hazrat Mirza*'s reply to this question was: "The conditions for jihad do not exist in this country at this time."<sup>6</sup> *Hazrat Mirza* did not say that the injunction of jihad was now abrogated, but only that the conditions for jihad with the sword were not to be found in the country at that time. When Gandhi made the same statement and espoused nonviolence as the correct way to proceed, many Muslim religious scholars joined him. Again, when *Maulana Muhammad Ali Khan* made the same statement, he received approbations from all over India. But when *Hazrat Mirza* made the same statement, much earlier than those mentioned above, the populace was riled and resented it greatly. This was a classical example of prejudice and animosity. There was no other reason why the same viewpoint was accorded such different treatments. If *Hazrat Mirza* expressed it, it was bad, but if a Hindu said it, he was praised to the heaven, and if some other Muslim said it, he was hailed as a genuine leader and supporter of the nation.

### **Three reasons why Hazrat Mirza prohibited jihad with the sword against the British**

*Hazrat Mirza* prohibited jihad with the sword against the British for good reasons. He provided the rationale for this decision in several of his books. His arguments from these books are summarized below:

1. The first reason he adduced was that the British rule had established peace and religious freedom. This made it possible to follow religious injunctions, to freely propagate religion, and to even criticize the faith of the rulers without any let or hindrance from the government. Consider the following sequence of events that reveals the full extent of this freedom. A person stood up and told the British openly: "I am the

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6 *Tuhfa Golarwiyya*, (supplement).

Messiah and the Messiah you consider as God is dead; do not beguile yourself that he will return because I am that person who was promised to come; the Messiah was a man like me, and I have a strong resemblance with him; in fact, in some aspects, I am better than him. From a religious standpoint, you are the Antichrist and I am the Messiah who was promised to come and kill the Antichrist. I am the one who has come to kill the Antichrist and break the Cross. This does not mean killing by the sword but annihilation of the Christian faith with reasons and arguments.” Would any government tolerate such a person who was bent on destroying their religion in this fashion?

Was it not true that three disciples of this person were brutally murdered on the orders of the King of Afghanistan on a seemingly minor difference of interpretation? The only point of contention was that the clerics of Afghanistan believed, like Christians, that Messiah son of Mary – the same Messiah who Christians had taken for God - was alive in the heaven and would physically return to earth. In contrast, the persons who were martyred believed that the Messiah, son of Mary, had died, and the Promised Messiah, who was a slave of the Holy Prophet and the reformer (*Mujaddid*) of that period, had come. He had been called the Messiah in the prophecy merely as an analogy and a metaphor because of his similarity with the Messiah, son of Mary. The martyrs held that this interpretation was the death of Christianity and a great triumph for Islam. However, the Islamic government of that country could not bear even this minor difference of opinion and had these poor souls brutally murdered.

Compare their actions with that of the Christian-British government that permitted the mentor of these murdered disciples to freely wield the axe against their religion and to shatter the Divinity of their God, and did not act to forcibly prevent it. Their own clergymen, British and Indian, white and black, were strongly opposed to this person claiming the mantle of Messiah. Their animosity was so great that on one occasion, they conspired to initiate criminal proceedings alleging an attempt to murder. The British District Magistrate who

tried the case was so familiar with one of the key conspirators that he ate his meals with him. On top of this, the trumped-up case was put together with such care and precision that on paper the charges appeared genuine. But the District Magistrate found himself in a quandary and confessed to his Reader, Ghulam Haider Khan, during a distraught stroll on the Batala Railway Station that wherever he looked, he saw Mirza Ghulam Ahmad before him saying: "Do not refrain from being just." He then directed his Reader to convey his message to the Superintendent of Police to interrogate the accused Abdul Hameed, away from the influence of his Christian conspirators. During this interrogation, Abdul Hameed broke down and confessed that his accusations against Mirza Ghulam Ahmad were false, and made on the instigation of the Christian clergymen. After this confession, that British District Magistrate acquitted Mirza Ghulam Ahmad honorably. Could there be a better example of religious freedom? This was a perfect opportunity for that Christian-British magistrate to incarcerate Mirza Ghulam Ahmad – the archenemy of his Christian faith - and to keep him rotting in jail for a long time.

It would have been the height of ungratefulness to fight against such a blessing of Allah - a just government, which allowed full religious freedom to all its subjects. It was precisely for this kind of religious freedom to prevail that Allah had commanded the Muslims: "And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah" (2:193). It followed that there was no need to wage war when religious freedom already prevailed.

2. The second reason *Hazrat* Mirza advanced for not fighting against the British, even if conditions had warranted, was the complete absence in the Muslim community of organizational capability, a fighting force, monetary resources and arms. Without these tools of organized conflict, opening hostilities would have been tantamount to suicide, and suicide is prohibited in Islam. The Quran had clearly commanded: "...and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands" (2:195). Accordingly, *Hazrat* Mirza presented this rationale in a beau-

tiful poem included with his decree calling for the cessation of hostilities. A few stanzas of this poem are presented below:

Thus spoke Mustafa the chief of the two worlds,  
That Jesus the Messiah shall bring wars to a close.

Visible signs show that times have rolled,  
Our nation is bereft of the power and ability of old.

You do not have the strength and endurance of yore,  
That Empire, that awe, that dignity is no more.

That fame, that renown, that wealth is no more,  
That spirit to challenge, that resolve is no more.

That ache, that pathos, that tenderness is no more,  
Affection and mercy for the creatures of God is no more.

Love of the Beloved is not in your hearts any more,  
Your state no longer attracts assistance any more.

That knowledge, that intelligence, that sagacity is no  
more,  
That thinking, that conception, that wisdom is no more.

Neither worldly nor religious proficiency is there any-  
more,  
You have no advantage over other nations anymore.

Hundreds of evil pollute the heart; purity is not to be  
found anymore,  
No desire exists to perform acts of righteousness any-  
more.

The tray lies empty; those blessings are not there any-  
more,  
Religion is but an empty shell; there is no substance in it  
anymore.

The love of the Lord is not there in you anymore,

The hearts are dead; there is no power to do good anymore.

Misfortune hovers over all for there is no unity anymore,  
Discord is rife and no affection exists anymore.

Why have you not the power to wield the sword anymore?

The secret lies in that there is no need anymore.

The religious and political leaders, who called India a land under enemy occupation but then chose not to resist the occupation by force, had no excuse for their inaction except to plead that they did not have the means to conduct an armed struggle. This was exactly what *Hazrat* Mirza had said as well, but he had also added that the absence of means appeared to be part of a Divine plan since peace and religious freedom had made war for the sake of religion redundant. Had there been a necessity for war, then God, who is the guardian of the religion of Islam, would have furnished Muslims with the means to wage an armed struggle. However, was it not true that every cleric who decreed the country to be under enemy occupation, and every leader who verbally expressed loyalty to the British but privately espoused *jihād* for the sake of religion and only refrained from it because of paucity of means, led a life of hypocrisy? Islamic law and tradition prohibited such a hypocritical life. If there was a need to wage war for the sake of religion then either one should have fought or migrated. Such duplicity was not befitting of a Muslim.

3. The third reason *Hazrat* Mirza put forward rested on a prophecy of the Holy Prophet found in a *hadith*, according to which the Promised Messiah was to end the wars.<sup>7</sup> This *hadith* could not mean that he would abrogate the injunctions relating to war because anyone who tampered with the revealed law was a sinner and a Satan. The *hadith*, therefore,

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7 Abi Abdullah Muhammad Bin Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami al-Musnad al-Sahih (Hadith)*, *Kitab al Ambiya* 60:48. The operative wording of the *hadith* is *Yadah ul harb*.



could only mean that the Promised Messiah would issue a temporary decree to stop wars because the circumstances of the time would not sanction a war under the revealed Islamic code. This was precisely what *Hazrat* Mirza did. He stated very clearly: "The reasons for waging a war do not exist at the present time in this country."<sup>8</sup> *Hazrat* Mirza made it a point to always reference this *hadith* of the Holy Prophet in support of his 'no war' decree so that the common man may know for sure that this decree of *Hazrat* Mirza was completely in consonance with the prophecy of the Holy Prophet. Thus, the Holy Prophet's decree about the times of the Promised Messiah was the same as that of the Promised Messiah himself, namely that in that period it would not be right to pick up the sword in defense of Islam because the necessary conditions of jihad would not exist.

### **The strategy of Syed Ahmad Barelvi**

The *Ahl-e Hadith* sect of Muslims is the most vociferous proponent of jihad with the sword. One of the prominent leaders of this sect was Syed Ahmad Barelvi, the reformer of the thirteenth century. The events of his life have been published in the book *Twareekh Ajeeb* (An Astonishing History). The book shows that although he waged jihad against Sikhs, he did not do so against the British, despite the fact that he resided in their realm. Someone once questioned him about this dichotomy, and he replied that jihad against the British government was not permissible. In fact, he took care to wage jihad even against Sikhs strictly outside the British realm. He first traveled to the Tribal Area, the land of the Pakhtoons, from whence he made his way to Hazara where he launched a jihad against the repressive rule of the Sikhs. The Sikhs prevented the Muslims from freely practicing their religion, and carrying out their Islamic injunctions; in addition, they abducted *Pathan* Muslim women and took them to Punjab. For these reasons, Syed Ahmad Baralvi fought relentlessly against Sikhs until an act of betrayal brought his campaign to an end. The *Pathans* secretly colluded with the Sikhs, and this treachery resulted in his martyrdom, and that of his devoted disciple, Shah Ismael. Although he was martyred and his physical sword was unable to crush the Sikhs, the sword of his spiritual concentration and supplications brought the Sikh rule in Punjab to an end. Even a pious saint like Syed Ahmad

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8 *Tuhfa Golarwiyya*.

Barelvi who gave his life, and thereby proved his commitment to jihad, did not consider it permissible to wage jihad with the sword against the British for the simple reason that the conditions did not warrant it.

### **The decree disallowing jihad with the sword was temporary**

*Hazrat Mirza* ruled against a violent jihad with the British because the objective conditions for such a struggle were lacking. However, if at any time, the preconditions for jihad with the sword reemerged, jihad would again become incumbent. *Hazrat Mirza* made this point clear in the following statement:<sup>9</sup>

It should be known that the Holy Quran does not arbitrarily give the command to fight. It gives the command to fight only against those who prevent people from believing in God, and stop them from obeying His commandments and worshipping Him. It gives the command to fight against those who attack Muslims without cause, expel them from their homes and countries, force people to enter into their religion, try to annihilate the religion of Islam, and prevent people from becoming Muslims. These are they with whom God is wroth, and Muslims must fight them if they do not desist.

*Hazrat Mirza* made it crystal clear here that it was incumbent on the Muslims to fight those who were guilty of actions specified in the passage above. Thus, the injunction to wage jihad was not abrogated, but only the conditions in which it was justified were spelled out, and these conditions did not exist at that time.

### **Decree applicable only to religious wars but no judgment passed on other wars**

*Hazrat Mirza's* decree prohibiting wars was confined in scope and timing. It applied only to waging wars in the name of religion only at a particular time and a particular place because the conditions did not warrant it. He did not pass any judgment prohibiting political wars. This humble author happened to be in the company of *Hazrat Mirza* when a *Pathan* chieftain from the Tribal Areas said: "We have to resist British incursions into our territory ever so often. What should we do? If the British attack us, should we just sit back, and accept defeat and humiliation, and sue for

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9 *Nur-ul-Haq*. Volume 1. Page 46.

peace?” *Hazrat Mirza* replied by quoting the famous *hadith*, “You understand your worldly matters better than I do. Act as the situation demands.”<sup>10</sup> Thus, the scope of *Hazrat Mirza*’s decree was confined to acts of violence conducted in the name of religion. It was meant to send a clear message that spreading Islam by force or murdering an innocent unbeliever was not in the spirit of Islam. He did not give any decree with respect to wars waged for temporal matters.

***Hazrat Mirza dispelled charges that the Mahdi would kill and plunder***

*Hazrat Mirza*’s correct interpretation of jihad helped dispel the notion that the *Mahdi* (Rightly Guided One) who was promised to come, would spread Islam at the point of the sword. *Hazrat Mirza* claimed to be the *Mahdi* but yet did not advocate violence, as the conditions did not warrant it. By this, he made it known to the world that Islam had not been spread by the sword in the past nor would it ever be in the future. Islam was the natural religion of man as stated in the Quran: “So set thy face for religion, being upright, the nature made by Allah in which He has created men. There is no altering Allah’s creation. That is the right religion – but most people know not” (30:30).

This verse clearly states that Islam is the natural religion of man. Since human nature cannot change, the true and abiding religion can only be one that is consistent with human nature. Unfortunately, many in the world remain unaware of the excellence of Islam and how consistent it is with human nature. The way to rectify this situation is to dissipate information about Islam in all corners of the world, and as the fog of ignorance starts to lift, people will begin to accept it. For a religion that is so totally consistent with human nature, there is no need to wield the sword or use duress to make people accept this true faith. In reality, every righteous soul who will hear its message will exclaim: “This is an echo of the yearning in my heart and a fulfillment of my soul’s desire.” A verse of the famous Indian poet Ghalib expresses the kernel of this process:

Behold the deliciousness of his speech, for what he said,  
Made me realize that this is the same thing that is also in my heart.

The truth is that reason and argument are the only weapons that can be efficacious in discomfiting a religion. The Quran bears testimony to this

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<sup>10</sup> See *Ahmad bin Humble* Vol. 6, page 124 and *Kanzul Amal* Vol. 11 *hadith* no. 32176 to 32178 page 464 for different versions of this *hadith*.

when it states: “That he who perished by clear argument might perish, and he who lived by clear argument might live” (8:42). This is a beautiful exposition of the manner in which the truth will prevail, namely that those who die will die by argument and those who live will live by argument.

In keeping with this philosophy, the task assigned to the *Mahdi* was to prove the superiority of Islam over all false religions using reason and arguments, to establish its claim of being a living religion, and to demolish other religions with the strength of arguments. It was precisely for this reason that *Hazrat Mirza* was given a pen to achieve this objective instead of a sword.

In today’s world, the genuineness or falseness of a philosophy is gauged by examining its literature. *Hazrat Mirza* was fully cognizant of this, and he repeatedly stressed the importance of the peaceful propagation of Islam, both in prose and poetry. Samples from both forms of his writings are reproduced below. First the prose:<sup>11</sup>

In the early days of Islam, another reason for defensive wars and physical battles was that those who preached Islam in those days were answered back, not by reasons and arguments, but by the sword. So it became unavoidable to use the sword in reply. But in these times, the sword is not used in reply, but instead the pen and arguments are used to criticize Islam. This is the reason why, in this age, God has pleased that the pen will do the work of the sword, and the opponents will be routed by challenging them with writings. Hence, it is not befitting now for anyone to answer the pen with the sword; in fact, to do so is a great disservice to Islam.

It should be understood that the need of the hour is, without a doubt, not of the sword but of the pen. Our opponents have created doubts about Islam, and have tried to attack the true religion of God by invoking scientific principles, and by other fraudulent schemes. This has impressed upon me the need to don on the armor of the pen, and to enter this battlefield of sciences and emerging knowledge so that I can demonstrate the miraculous spiritual valor of Islam, and its inner strength. I would have lacked the ability to enter this field were it not for the grace of Allah and His largesse that He desires to manifest the honor of His religion at the hands of a humble person like myself. At one time I counted the objections and attacks that our opponents had

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<sup>11</sup> *Malfuzat*.

made against Islam, and by my estimate and thinking, there were about three thousand. I believe that this number must have increased by now. Let no one have any illusion that the teachings of Islam are so weak that three thousand objections can be raised against them. No, this is definitely not the case. These objections appear to be criticisms only to those who are shortsighted and foolish. But I tell you truly that even as I counted these objections, I saw many valuable truths hidden behind them that the critics cannot see because they lack insight.

A few verses of poetry expressing the same idea are reproduced below:

On Mustafa may Your bounteous blessings and mercy alight,  
From him, O Lord God we derive our light.

My beloved Ahmad I swear by you,  
This burden we bear is just for you.

All traces of our entity we have wiped in love of you,  
Every atom of ours we have spent just for you.

With arguments, the enemy's defenses we have gored,  
With pen, we have done the work of a sword.

Your light we showed to all – the wretched and the accused,  
Their hearts, over the burning fire, we fused.

Beholding You was beholding a light so bright,  
Many a Satan did we burn with your light.

O, Best of Messengers, because of you we are the best nation,  
Your forward march gave us the courage to step ahead from our station.

***Hazrat Mirza drew the attention of Muslims to the real Islamic jihad***

When *Hazrat Mirza* pointed out to the Muslims that jihad with the sword was only prescribed under certain conditions, he also informed them of the greater jihad that had to be waged on an ongoing basis according to the command, “striving (*jahadu*) hard with their wealth and person” (9:44). This relentless jihad was to be waged with the help of the Quran. In support

of this contention, *Hazrat Mirza* cited the Quranic injunction, "...strive against them a mighty striving with it" (25:52). The greatest jihad was thus stated here to be with the Quran. Drawing on Quranic material, *Hazrat Mirza* also showed the manner in which this jihad was to be conducted:

1. Individual jihad that must be waged against the evil desires of one's soul: As the Quran states, "And those who strive hard for Us, We shall certainly guide them in Our ways" (29:69). This refers to those individuals who strive hard against the evil desires of their souls (*nafs al-amara*), seeking thereby the pleasure of Allah. They ultimately succeed in purifying their souls and finding God.
2. Collective jihad that has been ordained on the Muslims as a community: The injunction for this is given in the verse, "And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful" (3:104). This is the jihad of taking the message of the Quran to others and inviting them to the way of truth. It thus encompasses propagation and defense of Islam, and is a duty that has been collectively imposed on the Muslim community, with clear instructions to be relentless in its performance. Islamic history is a witness to the fact that as long as Muslims waged this jihad, their progress was unimpeded and other nations of the world bowed down before them. However, when they gave up on this jihad, they began to slip. God's help deserted them and their downfall started. The rationale for having a reformer (*Mujaddid*) and his party is a natural corollary of this verse. In fact, it is the fulfillment of the injunction contained therein.

One of the biggest contributions of *Hazrat Mirza*, the reformer of the fourteenth century *hijri*, was to draw the attention of Muslims towards this jihad. He emphasized that this jihad had brought Divine aid and assistance to Muslims during the early Islamic period, and that it could do so again. He lauded this way of jihad in a Persian verse as follows:

Protecting and guarding the religion resulted in the former glory,  
To obtain the same glory and height again, the same way must be  
adopted.

*Hazrat Mirza* waged this jihad day and night, wielding his pen skillfully, like a master warrior would a sword, spear, arrow or musket, in the defense of Islam. He also urged his party to remain focused on this issue. The following episode illustrates this point. When *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* took the pledge at the hands of *Hazrat Mirza*, he enquired: "Every mentor sets before his disciple an objective that then becomes the focus of his pursuit; what objective do you give to your disciples?" *Hazrat Mirza* replied, "Jihad." *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* was stunned, and sought clarification: "Do you mean I should take up arms against the British?" *Hazrat Mirza* replied: "Do not fight the British Government, but fight the religion of the British, and do not fight with a sword but fight with a pen. In other words, write a book refuting the Christian religion." In fulfillment of this advise, *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* wrote the book, *Faslul Khitab*, published in two volumes. It contained rebuttals of one hundred and fifty objections raised by the Christian clergy against Islam, and a powerful refutation of Christianity. When the book was finished and published, *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* once again came to *Hazrat Mirza* and asked him: "What should I do now?" *Hazrat Mirza* replied: "Jihad." *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* enquired: "With whom?" *Hazrat Mirza* replied: "With the Arya Hindus; write a book refuting their religion." Accordingly, *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* wrote and published the book *Tasdeeq Barahin Ahmadiyya* (Verification of the Arguments Supporting Islam), which was a rebuttal of *Lekhram's* book, *Takzeeb Barahin Ahmadiyya* (Falsification of the Arguments Supporting Islam). In this book, too, *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* effectively answered about a hundred and fifty further criticisms of Islam.

In summary, *Hazrat Mirza's* objective was jihad, but jihad with the Quran, and he made this the objective of the organization he founded. His disciples, too, who were members of this organization, became veritable *mujahideen* or holy warriors who struggled day and night with their wealth and person to protect and propagate Islam.

By the Grace of Allah, this same objective dominates this organization (*Ahmadiyya Organization for the Propagation of Islam, Lahore*) even today, and there is no power but Allah's that has made this possible. Anyone, who is fond of Islamic jihad – the jihad that is incumbent on all Muslims at all times, should come and join this band of holy warriors and wage jihad alongside them. After the travails and perils that beset Islam in the early part of its history, there has never been any other period that compares with the difficulties and problems that have overwhelmed Islam now. Islam is under attack from all sides today, not by guns and arrows, but by written and verbal objections that rain down on it like a shower of arrows. Is it not incumbent on the Muslims to defend Islam with the same

weapons with which it is being attacked? Should they not take the field bravely for an all-out jihad with their wealth and their persons by joining this party of holy warriors engaged in this jihad day and night?

*Hazrat Mirza* had very poignantly described the condition of Islam at this time in a Persian poem. The first few verses of this poem are given below:

Every believer must shed tears of anguish,  
At the grave crisis Islam faces and the dearth of true Muslims.

The religion of Islam is passing through a dangerous and terrifying phase,  
Unbelief and hard-heartedness have filled the world with turmoil.

Even people who are devoid of any form of goodness,  
Take the liberty to criticize the person of the 'Best of Prophets.'

He who is himself trapped in the dungeons of impurity,  
Hurls objections at the Chief of the Pure.

Evil natured and wicked people attack that 'Sinless One,'  
Heaven should rain stones on the earth.

Islam is crumbling to dust before your eyes,  
O men of wealth! What excuse do you have before God (for not spending in His way)?

The forces of unbelief are surging with power on all sides like the army of Yazid,  
And the true religion is sick like Zainul Abideen.

Exert with your soul and wealth, as far as you can, for the service of Islam,  
So that the Lord of the Throne bestows His pleasure upon you.

When Islam is under attack from all sides and the situation is one of such great peril, it is strictly prohibited in Islam to sit back and relax in the comfort of one's home. The blood-curdling warning given to those guilty of this conduct can be found in the chapter entitled *Al-Barat* (The Immunity) of the Holy Quran:



Those who were left behind were glad on account of their sitting behind Allah's Messenger, and they were averse to striving in Allah's way with their property and their person, and said: Go not forth in the heat. Say: The Fire of hell is fiercer in heat. If only they could understand (9:81).

The consequences of such inaction for those who fail to act can be studied further in the Quran. This humble author does not want to expand on it further for fear of distressing the reader.

## THE GOAL *HAZRAT MIRZA* SET BEFORE THE MUSLIMS

*Hazrat Mirza's* advent took place at a time when Western colonialism was at its height. The dominant issue engaging the attention of nations and individuals in the colonized world was how to get rid of the colonial yoke and to establish their own realm. In the Muslim mind, too, the progress of Islam had become synonymous with the achievement of a kingdom. Accordingly, Muslims were disappointed, and perhaps even disgusted, when *Hazrat Mirza* stated that the emotive factors in the progress of Islam had historically always been reason, argument and its spirituality, and this would continue to be so in the future. The use of force in gaining adherents for Islam, he maintained, was totally absurd.

This disappointment and disgust was perhaps all the more severe because Muslims were under the mistaken notion that the mission of the Promised Messiah and the *Mahdi* was to convert infidels at the point of the sword and establish an Islamic kingdom. This wrong notion was a major reason why the Muslims at large saw no great benefit in accepting a Messiah and *Mahdi* who was not going to fight and win them a kingdom. If the intention was not to establish a kingdom, they asked, then what alternative goal was *Hazrat Mirza* setting for the Muslims? This is a valid question that deserves a full reply.

### **History repeats itself with respect to the two Messiahs**

History sometimes has a strange way of repeating itself. A major hur-

dle for Muslims in accepting *Hazrat* Mirza as the Messiah was the false notion that the Promised Messiah will win them a kingdom. They, therefore, reasoned that if he was genuinely the Messiah, why did he not establish for them a kingdom? This mistaken notion of Muslims was exactly akin to the mistaken notion of Israelites with respect to their Messiah. Jews also believed that, when the Messiah would come, he would restore to them the kingdom of David. However, when the Messiah came, he came only with a humble and mystic majesty, and not the worldly trappings and grandeur that the Israelites were expecting. The result was that the Israelite nation rejected him for they desired a Messiah who would set up a kingdom for them. In fact, when Jesus was being led to the site of crucifixion, they jeered him by placing a crown of thorns on his head and shouting, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." Essentially, history repeated itself with the second Messiah. When Muslims saw that *Hazrat* Mirza was only advocating reason, arguments and spirituality as the means for advancing Islam, they rejected him because they desired a kingdom. Their argument was: "If Mirza *sahib* is the Messiah and the *Mahdi*, why does he not get us a kingdom?"

### **The example of Moses**

It is a fact that the mission of a Divinely appointed person, whether a prophet, messenger, reformer (*Mujaddid*), or religious leader (*Imam*), cannot be separated from the situational and environmental conditions prevailing at the time of his advent. The mission of Moses is a case in point. A major objective of his mission was to free the Israelites from the bondage of the Pharaoh but Moses did not call for a jihad against him. The only thing he did was to enter a plea with the Pharaoh to allow him and his nation to migrate from that country. Jihad was ruled out at the time, because Moses had neither the financial nor the physical resources, and his nation lacked the traits of bravery and courage. It may be recalled that his nation was comprised of the same individuals who, at a later point in their history, when asked in the wilderness to conquer a city said, "O Moses, therein are a powerful people, and we shall not enter it until they go out from it; ...Go therefore thou and thy Lord, and fight; surely here we sit" (5:22, 24). Given these objective conditions, Moses had no choice but to migrate with his nation to another country. Thus, his choices were limited by the reality that confronted him, and he could not act outside of those situational constraints.

The reality of *Hazrat* Mirza's times was similar. If the Muslims of India had been united and not lacked strength, courage and resources, why

would they have lost their empire in India in the first place? Then how can any person, even if he is the Messiah and *Mahdi*, carve out a kingdom when all he has by way of human resources is a nation totally lacking in the essential qualities needed for empire-building? These people were completely incapable of standing up to the power of the enemy. The opportunity for migration did not exist either because there was no vacant land large enough to absorb millions of émigrés. At a slightly later point in history, the Muslims of India did experiment with a policy of migration to a neighboring Muslim country, but the consequences thereof were disastrous. Given these objective conditions, the only strategy left to a reformer was to eradicate those shortcomings and weaknesses in his people that were responsible for the decline of their empires, and to replace these defects with qualities that create empires. In other words, he had to rebuild the moral fabric of his nation. This is a world in which resources are needed to achieve objectives. There is no getting around this. Those appointed by God really come to sow a seed, which, if watered, sprouts and grows into a large tree whose shade reaches out to provide shelter to the humanity at large.

### **The example of Jesus**

Before we delve into the strategy of *Hazrat Mirza*, it is instructive to consider the strategy of Jesus, with whom he claimed a likeness. Jesus came as a Messiah under exactly the same conditions as *Hazrat Mirza*, the second Messiah. Jesus came at a time when his nation was under Roman rule. He did not forthwith announce a jihad against the Roman Government but embarked on a strategy of moral uplift to rebuild his nation. His nation, however, was oblivious of its debased condition and depraved morals, and was just focused on one issue, i.e. how to obtain a kingdom. The fact is that no nation can acquire a kingdom unless it has the necessary qualities needed to attain one. However, Israelites were hasty in rejecting Jesus, and as a result, were cursed by a long period of enslavement. Did *Hazrat Mirza* not come under the same conditions as Jesus? His nation was living as the subject of the British, and like Jesus, he did not forthwith announce a jihad with the sword but embarked on a program of building the moral fiber of the nation. But the Muslims hastily rejected him just like the Jews had done earlier.

### **The goal of Messengers and Appointees of God**

Those seeking to rebuild a nation always have a goal. For political leaders who seek only this world, the most important goal is to obtain a

kingdom. But do appointees of God and spiritual reformers also have the same goal? A glance at the history of Messengers and Appointees of God makes it abundantly clear that this is certainly not the case. As a matter of fact, to allege that they pursue such a goal is to insult them because, for them, the only goal worthy of pursuing is God; even to consider any other goal is tantamount to setting up an equal with God, and this runs against the grain of their strictly Unitarian beliefs. Their only goal in life is to see the name of God glorified in this world and to spread in it the teaching of “there is no god but Allah.” In other words, the kingdom they seek to establish is the kingdom of God and not the kingdom of man. This is the only political philosophy that can rightly be called an Islamic political philosophy.

### **The kingdom of God is established in the heart**

It must be remembered that the kingdom of God is established in the hearts of men. It is superfluous to establish God’s kingdom physically because his kingship already encompasses the heavens and the earth, as clearly stated in the Quran, “His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth” (57:2). Jesus and his disciples supplicated earnestly for the kingdom of heaven to be established on earth but it was not until the time of the Holy Prophet, and through his efforts, that the kingdom of heaven, in its unparalleled splendor, was established on this earth. It was the kingship of God, in fact, that took hold of the hearts and minds of the Holy Prophet’s disciples, and their obeisance to God’s kingship and adherence to its laws was so perfect that it remains unrivalled in the annals of history. This Unity of God and his kingship is the goal of the prophets and messengers, and full obeisance to this goal is called *Al-Islam* (complete submission). It is this goal that is before them as they go about the task of rebuilding their nation.

### **The example of the Holy Prophet**

*Hazrat* Mirza was the slave of and the caliph of the Holy Prophet and, as such, he could not have a goal other than that of his master. It needs to be determined then, what was the goal of the Holy Prophet? As mentioned above, the goal of all prophets and messengers is to establish “there is no god but Allah,” and all their efforts are directed at establishing the Unity and kingship of God. It is obvious, therefore, that the goal of the Holy Prophet could have been none other than this. It is true that certain inimical members of the Christian clergy and others have accused the Holy Prophet of coveting a worldly empire, but every researcher and student of

history knows that this is a mere fabrication and a grave calumny. The residents of Makkah offered him wealth, women and a kingdom, if only he abandoned the propagation of One God, but he rejected their offer with contempt, and did not abjure the goal of establishing the Unity of God and His kingship even for a moment. This goal is so lofty that it totally dwarfs all worldly goals.

All worldly goals are tainted to some degree by self-interest and desires, whether of an individual or a nation. Those who pursue such goals are never free from the bondage of their souls and that of Satan, even if they are successful in obtaining a worldly kingdom. However, pursuing the goal of propagating God's Unity and His kingship releases a person completely from the bondage of the self and its desires. The rebuilding of the nation that takes place under these circumstances develops a national character that is so pure and lofty that no worldly program of nation-building can match it in excellence and perfection. By the same token, all worldly cultures and civilizations pale by comparison with the godly culture and civilization that emerges from following the goal of God's Unity and His kingship.

Although those who seek to establish the kingship of God do not chase after worldly kingdoms, worldly kingdoms come looking for them, and prostrate themselves at their feet. The example of the Holy Prophet and his nation is before us. His sole objective was to glorify the Name of God in the world, and to establish His Unity and kingship in the hearts of men, but in the process, the change that took place in the character of the nation was truly amazing. An ignorant, iconoclastic, uncivilized and barbarous nation turned into a highly civilized and godly nation before which worldly kingdoms could not stand and kept collapsing at their feet. This success was the result of their character that gave them the Divinely ordained right to be the caliphs of God on earth in accordance with the Quranic verse: "...that my righteous servants will inherit the earth" (21:105). The meaning of the verse is that when a nation has been rebuilt and its character transformed, then it deserves to inherit God's earth.

The Holy Prophet's opponents allege that his aim was merely to obtain a worldly kingdom. Such an allegation is a clear insult and an utter misrepresentation. The goal of a God-fearing benevolent person cannot be so inferior. His heart is a temple in which God alone is worshipped and there is no place in it for the idol of a worldly kingdom. His goal is only to establish the Unity of God and His kingship in the hearts of men. However, when the kingship of God is established in the hearts of men, an overt consequence of it is that worldly kingdoms also fall under the sway of such men. It is only if a kingdom is inhabited by such a nation

that it can rightly be called the kingship of God on earth, and it is only such a kingdom that can be called an Islamic kingdom. In such a kingdom, the kingship of God and the sanctity of his laws are so sacrosanct in the hearts of its citizens that their obedience totally dominates any individualistic, expedient or political consideration. A Muslim ruler cannot be called an Islamic ruler unless he is obedient to the paramount kingship of God, and relegates considerations of expediency, politics and self to the sanctity and respect for the Divine laws.

### **The means for establishing the kingship of God**

Thus, the real goal of all prophets, messengers, and of our Master, the Holy Prophet, was the establishment of God's kingship in the hearts of men. What is implied by 'God's kingship in the hearts of men?' The history of religions and our understanding of the Quran tell us that this means a belief in the living God, i.e. the creation of a conviction in the hearts of men that there is a God, Whose will dominates the affairs of men, and that success can only be achieved by following His guidance and laws. This living belief provides the emotive power for the actions of men, and as belief intensifies in the promises of God, the spirit of sacrifice and selflessness also intensifies within them. This is the essential process that shapes the national character. When the establishment of God's Oneness and His kingship becomes the goal of men, a necessary corollary of this lofty goal is a cessation of personal disputes and wrangling, and the development of real unity and discipline, which is the foundation of not only spiritual progress but also of material advancement. When the process of nation-building is complete, and a nation has developed national character, unity and discipline, empires of the world automatically become their destiny.

### ***Hazrat Mirza's strategy for establishing God's kingship***

It needs to be determined whether *Hazrat Mirza* followed the strategy of his Master, the Holy Prophet, for establishing the kingship of God and to what extent he used the above-mentioned means to build his nation. When *Hazrat Mirza* was appointed to the station of *Mujaddid* (reformer) and Messiah, the condition of Muslims was pathetic. The loss of faith in a living God had led to an erosion of a sterling national character, and a lack of confidence in the promises of God had resulted in a state of hopelessness. These are conditions, which if they develop in a nation paralyze its will to climb out of the abyss of degradation and adversity, and ultimately result in its destruction. It is instructive to review in detail *Hazrat Mirza's* strategy to counter these traits.

### **1. Built national character by restoring faith in a living God**

The term 'national character' here is synonymous with 'Islamic character'. The reason is that Islam is not confined to one geographical or ethnic nation and, in fact, it levels geographical and ethnic barriers to create a new nation of its own whose nationals are called Muslims, and whose citizenship is the world. Hence, the 'national character of Muslims' and 'Islamic character' are interchangeable terms.

Muslims were devoid of national character at the time of *Hazrat Mirza's* advent. This was a serious shortcoming, for without national character, a nation can obtain neither sovereignty nor respect in the eyes of other nations, let alone work for the spread of its religion. The common trait underlying the success of the western imperial nations and the great respect in which they were held was the spirit of their citizens to sacrifice everything for their country; these individuals could never be persuaded to do anything against the interest of their country. In sharp contrast, the price of an Indian Muslim's faith and integrity was no more than a few acres of land, an estate, a title or a position. There was no dearth of Muslims in any area of India willing to slit the throats of their brother Muslims for a paltry sum of money. Can such a nation ever hope to be free and self-governing, or command respect of others? To associate the noble ideas of freedom, governance and respect with such people is to insult these lofty ideals. Generally, the condition of Muslims even today is that they put their self before the interest of Islam; killing of Muslims and selling out their nation are commonplace and have become a means to accumulate wealth and prestige. Have the events of the recent past not shown that the most serious shortcoming among the Muslims is the absence of national character? Weren't many respectable members of the society exposed as dishonest, treacherous and self-serving when entrusted with power for a short period? Did not the hope created by various movements for instilling life and vigor in the nation dissipate like burst bubbles? And did the self not win every time whenever there was a clash of self versus the nation? This state of affairs results from a loss of genuine faith in God in the hearts of Muslims.

The foundation of the Muslim nation rests not on any geographical territory or ethnicity but on a religion – Islam, whose essence is obedience to the kingship of God. When Muslims' faith in God weakened, the importance of religion in their life diminished, their national cohesiveness came unglued, and their feeling of oneness and unity began to dissipate. The kingship of God lost its hold on their heart, and they became individuals motivated by desires and worldly objectives. The result was that their



national, i.e. Islamic, character became badly mauled. The need of the hour was to strengthen the same foundation on which the Holy Prophet had built the edifice of the glorious Islamic nation fourteen centuries ago. The building block of this foundation was a living faith that cemented the kingship of God in the hearts of Muslims. Once the foundation was strengthened, the Islamic nation could be reeled in towards the culture and civilization necessary for the kingship of God to flourish and for the Islamic character to be nurtured. This national character is the distinctive feature of the Islamic nation and the emotive force in all aspects of its material and spiritual development.

It is only a living faith in God that establishes His kingship in the hearts of men, and results in complete obedience to His commands. Unless the rule of God is firmly entrenched in a person's heart, he is not likely to obey His commands. It was for this reason that the foremost thing *Hazrat Mirza* stressed in his public pronouncements was faith and conviction in the living God. He strongly emphasized that there is a God, and He is a living God Who even today, as He did in ancient times, provides evidence of His Being by speaking with humans, and provides proof of His dominant will by showing Heavenly signs. *Hazrat Mirza* claimed that he had personally experienced the veracity of this statement and gave glad tidings to all seekers of truth to come to him, and experience a connection with the living God that will refresh their faith, and make their life fruitful. Accordingly, the living God began to dwell in the hearts of those who heeded his call and established a connection with him, and the kingdom of God took hold of their hearts so firmly that they submitted completely to God and thereby joined the elite rank of His servants. Their pious actions and sacrifices were reminiscent of the early righteous Muslims, and distinguished them from their contemporary Muslims, who were sadly lacking in similar actions. It is this living faith that enables this party (*Ahmadiyya* Organization for the Propagation of Islam, Lahore) to forge ahead steadily despite its small size and stiff resistance from the opposition. By the grace of God and by His power, every step that this party takes moves it forward and never backwards.

There is no doubt that acts of righteousness, and a spirit of sacrifice are corollaries of a living faith in a person's heart, but in order to make assurance doubly assure, *Hazrat Mirza* required every disciple to pledge, "I will give precedence to religion over matters of this world." In practical terms, this means that whenever there is a conflict between personal interests or desires and Islamic interests, the individual will sacrifice everything personal for the larger Islamic interests. It is this spirit of sac-

rifice that develops and sustains life in a nation; without it, the superstructure of a nation rests on a sand dune and is likely to collapse with a single gust of wind.

By way of an example, one can look at the German nation. After World War I, the German nation was so thoroughly humbled and humiliated by the victors that it appeared Germany would never again be an economic and military world power, but in a few years, it not only drew level with its rivals, but surpassed them in many fields. The reason was that the victors of World War I could not destroy the root from which nations sprout, i.e. national character. The German nation rose from the ashes of its destruction by acting on the maxim, "Give preference to national interest over personal interest." This was the one maxim that the German government drilled into the thinking of every man and woman - young and old. In every aspect of their national life, it was emphasized that individual status was of no consequence and collective and national interests must reign supreme; individual interests must be sacrificed to national interests. Thus, the secret of the German nation's strength and vitality was concealed in this maxim.

As already stated, the origin of Muslim nationhood lies in religion, which must take precedence in a Muslim's life over his individual desires and wishes for things of this world. Given this premise, the national character that needs to be developed in the Muslim nation must be based on the envelopment of the heart with the kingship of God and on its corollary, "I will give precedence to religion over this world." This implies that every individual of the Muslim nation must stand ready to sacrifice personal desires and worldly aims in obedience to the dictates of God's kingship. In other words, a Muslim must have no hesitation to sacrifice this world for his religion. This was the pledge *Hazrat* Mirza took from his disciples and the one he wanted to take from all Muslims. He desired to drill this maxim into the minds of all Muslim men and women, young and old, so that their lost national or Islamic character— the character responsible for the birth and rise of nations both materially and spiritually - may once again be restored.

If Muslims had hearkened the call of this Heaven-appointed leader, the world would have seen the development of a magnificent national character among Muslims. Their lost respectability would have been restored and they would have become heir to kingdoms in a short period of time. If only Muslims had worked to develop this character, then the mighty naval armada, and the air prowess of the British would not have been any match for them; nor would the Congress and the Hindu

*Mahasabah* have been able to harm a hair of their head. Gandhi had told the Indian nation to wear homespun cloth, and he would guarantee them self-rule. *Hazrat* Mirza presented a more elaborate code of conduct to the Muslims that fitted their peculiar situation better. He advised them to develop an Islamic character and to wholeheartedly accept the kingship of God by giving Islam precedence over their person and self-interest or, in other words, to become true Muslims. If they made this transformation, then their lost respectability in the comity of nations would be restored and they would become heir to kingdoms. This was also the promise *Hazrat* Mirza had received from God in the following revelation:

As in the time of (Amir) Khusro,  
The Muslim was made a Muslim again.

Alas! A majority of Muslims did not heed this call. They wanted to reach the roof but without a ladder; they desired a kingdom but without paying attention to the necessary means for its acquisition. They did not understand that a kingdom founded on the basis of national character is durable and a means of mercy and blessing, but one obtained by force is unstable and frequently a source of evil and misfortune for the world. A kingdom for the sake of kingdom is meaningless unless it is also good, and enhances the welfare of its citizens.

## **2. Strengthened the faith of Muslims and gave them news of the spiritual dominance of Islam and its great future at a time of Muslim political decline**

In the period immediately preceding the advent of *Hazrat* Mirza, the Muslim political power had suffered a serious decline. Most of the Islamic kingdoms had been lost to the colonial powers one after the other or were in the process of being lost. In India, the Mughal Empire had ceased to exist, and had been replaced by British rule. Egypt, too, had passed into British hands. In Sudan, the British had quelled the revolt of the Sudanese *Mahdi* and annexed that country. The French had conquered large tracts of Northern Africa, including the countries of Algeria, Tunis and part of Morocco. Spain had occupied the rest of Morocco and Italy had taken over Tripoli. The Islamic kingdom of Zanzibar had been divided between Germany and Britain. Turkmenistan had been swallowed by Russia, and Iran was gasping in Russian clutches. Afghanistan had been reduced to a client state of the British, who had a stranglehold over its politics. The Ottoman Empire, which was the pride of Muslims and had the honor of

being the guardian of the Two Sacred Mosques, was gasping like a sick person. Weakened by repeated Russian attacks and European political intrigues, political pundits predicted its demise in the near future. Sultan Tippu, the ruler of Mysore in Deccan - the only remaining Muslim kingdom in India, bravely confronted the British in these difficult times, but he was defeated and martyred by the British. The kingdom of Mysore then passed into British and Hindu hands, and with it the decline of the Muslim power was complete. A British commentator wrote on this occasion: "The death of Sultan Tippu has effectively brought the Muslim power in the world to an end." The person who composed the eulogy for the tombstone of Sultan Tippu reflected the sentiments of all the Muslims when he wrote: "Today the greatness of India and Turkey has come to an end." In short, this was a period when the Muslim political power had hit its nadir and Muslims everywhere were in a state of despair.

Unfortunately, the Muslims of the time were laboring under the delusion that political power was an essential prerequisite for religious ascendancy. Since Muslims had lost political power, they felt there was no way Islam could be a dominant religion in the world again. A survey of contemporary literature, both prose and poetry, and the statements of Muslim leaders and scholars of the time bears ample testimony to the doom and gloom that enveloped the Muslim psyche. The general impression was that Islam had staged a last stand with the valiant but unsuccessful effort of Sultan Tippu, and his failure had closed all avenues for reemergence of Islam. *Maulana* Altaf Hussain Hali, a famous poet of India during this time, most poignantly portrayed this sense of hopelessness and despair in an elegy called *Musaddas Hali*. A reading of this elegy fills one with sorrow and brings tears to the eyes. A few verses of his poem are translated below:

You have heard the tales of the rich in full,  
The ways of the intellectuals have also been narrated in full.

The condition of the nobles is evident to you in full,  
They are all sitting ready to stray at the lightest pull.

This dilapidated house, any moment could be falling,  
The column below its center of gravity has shifted from its calling.

It is only a small sample, that which has transpired,  
Of events in which our friends will be mired.

He who has fallen from his perch so high,  
Is doomed by history in the dirt to lie.

Although not much remains in this nation so totally stalled,  
Tis not the end; it is going to be further mauled.

In short, Muslims, like Jews before them, felt that they had become a nation doomed to live in perpetual subjugation and humiliation. Confronted by a hostile world and finding no savior descending from heaven to assist them, many Muslims became disillusioned with their religion. The despair and hopelessness that gripped Muslims at this time had no comparable precedent in Islamic history; not even at the time of the devastation of the Ommeyyades, the destruction of the Abbassides and the decline of Muslim power in Spain had the Muslim nation felt so dejected. This sense of hopelessness was universal and, as any knowledgeable individual is aware, this condition is very dangerous because it paralyses the will, and stifles the motivation to act. Such persons or nations then have no expectation and continue in a state of limbo, waiting to die.

At a time like this, it was crucial for someone to appear who would dispel this pall of despair and restore the same faith, hope and conviction that had propelled the Muslims, bearing the message of God's Unity, from the desert of Arabia to Spain in the west and China in the east. This was a time when a heavenly reformer or a messiah was needed to diagnose the illnesses of Muslims and to prescribe appropriate remedies, and whose holy personality would breathe a new spiritual life into the dead hearts of Muslims. At this moment of universal doom and gloom, Allah, in accordance with His promise: "Surely We have revealed the Reminder, and surely We are its Guardian" (15:9), sent Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian as a *Mujaddid* at the head of the fourteenth century *hijri*. He immediately proceeded to reassure the Muslim nation, mired in despair, with the following message: Harken! The God of Islam is a living God; He exists today as He did fourteen hundred years ago and, in fact, has existed forever. He is the same God Who revealed the Quran and chose Islam as the religion of humanity for all times to come. This same God has sent me so that I may demonstrate that this religion excels all others in accordance with the promise contained in the Quran - "He may make it (the religion of Islam) prevail over all religions" (48:28). Although the apparent political dominance of Islam is at an end, the moment has come for its spiritual dominance; this is the time for the fulfillment of the Divine promise: "He may make it prevail over all religions." God, the Most High, will

make Islam prevail over all other beliefs whether these are the faiths of the Christians, Jews, Hindus, Sikh, Buddhists etc., or the superficially attractive philosophies of materialism, Bolshevism, Fascism and Nazism. The following inspiring statement of *Hazrat Mirza* is a sample of this theme:<sup>1</sup>

In this struggle, know for sure that Islam is not in any need of suing for peace like a defeated and helpless enemy. In fact, this is the period when Islam will show its spiritual sword just like it showed its physical prowess in the past. Mark well this prophecy: "In this struggle, the enemy will soon suffer a disgraceful defeat and Islam will be victorious." Regardless of the forceful attacks modern science may launch, and whatever new armament it may use in these attacks, the result will always be the same - its complete rout. I make the following statement only to acknowledge the great blessing conferred on me. I have been given knowledge of the great strengths of Islam, and on the basis of this knowledge, I state that Islam will not only defend itself successfully against the attacks of modern philosophies, but will prove the fallacies of all modern opposing ideologies...the captain of this ship is God, the Most High...He will always save it from storms and opposing winds as He has promised, "Surely We have revealed the Reminder, and surely We are its Guardian" (15:9).

Once *Maulana Nur-ud-Din* addressed the following comment to *Hazrat Mirza*: "Sir, you wish to propagate Islam in Europe and America, but the people there are becoming averse even to the name of religion." He replied: "That is good; the slate is being wiped clean, and this will make for a strong new impression. Let the idol representing the divinity of Jesus, son of Mary, fade so as to make place for Islam." He then continued: "*Maulvi* sahib, the new moon on the first night is visible only to those with a sharp eye; everyone cannot see it, but the whole world sees the moon when it shines in full resplendence on the fourteenth. In the same way, my eyes have spotted the thin sliver of the new moon heralding the dominance of Islam. God willing, the day will come when it will shine like the full moon, and the whole world will see it then."

*Hazrat Mirza* focused his attention on establishing faith in the living God in the hearts of the Muslims so that the promise given in the Quran, "...and you will have the upper hand if you are believers" (3:139), may

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1 *Ainah Kamalat Islam.*

be fulfilled. He gave Muslims the glad tidings of God's help and protection, and thereby lifted the pall of doom and gloom that had enveloped the hearts of Muslims; this restored their will to act. In order to convert faith into action and foster the spirit of sacrifice, he asked his disciples to take the pledge, "I will give precedence to religion over the affairs of this world." It is ideals like these that build national character, and provide the underpinnings of living nations. He called upon Muslims to forget sectarianism, and unite against the enemies of Islam under the banner of, "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His prophet." He urged them to focus, once again, on this ancient goal that had lost its central importance in Muslim life. A corollary of this goal was to wage jihad for the establishment of God's kingship, but *Hazrat Mirza* made it clear that the sword could not achieve this objective. While other Muslim religious and political leaders were paying lip service to jihad with the sword, *Hazrat Mirza* clearly saw the looming battle as a fight between Islamic and non-Islamic cultures where the weapon of choice would be the Quran on one side and western materialistic philosophies on the other. The West was bent upon settling all the old scores against Islam. It had almost totally annihilated the Islamic kingdoms, and was now determined to erase Islamic religion, culture and civilization from the face of this earth. The time had come to counter the western materialism with Islamic spiritualism, and this could only be accomplished by waging a mighty jihad with the Quran. The Holy Quran itself suggested this strategy in the verse "Strive against them a mighty striving with it (Quran)" (25:52).

Muslims at this critical juncture confronted a situation similar to that faced by Muslims in the Makkan period during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet.<sup>2</sup> The overwhelming superior power of the ruling infidels had been countered then with a policy of patience and prayer, and striving peacefully to take the message of Islam to the infidels. The need of the hour was to follow a similar policy. God willing, just as the weakness of the Makkan period had given place to spiritual and temporal dominance in the Madinan period, similar results may now follow.

Thus, *Hazrat Mirza* dissipated the pall of gloom that had enveloped Muslims and was dragging them down into a bottomless pit of degradation and despair. His statements and speeches and, above all, his momentous books portrayed such a beautiful face of Islam that hope, which had

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2 A British commentator has expressed the same opinion in the well-known Christian magazine, *Muslim World*. His exact words are, "The early Meccan attitude has now become general in Islam."

almost died, sprouted again in the hearts of Muslim intellectuals that Islam would once more prevail in this world. The spirituality of Islam was acknowledged even by European writers as the following quotation from the book, *Wither Islam*, shows: "The current materialistic culture of Europe can only survive if it rectifies its shortcomings by blending with the spiritual culture of Islam."

To summarize, Allah, the Most High, started a new period of Islam's domination on the heels of a period in which the Muslim power had declined. This new period was initiated with the advent of a spiritual doctor who transformed the pall of doom and gloom into a new era of hope and assurance. The hearts of those who took the pledge at the hands of *Hazrat Mirza* were filled with such hope, assurance and certainty that they considered it a pleasure to bear all kinds of trials and tribulations for the fulfillment of this goal, and felt a spiritual joy in sacrificing their wealth and life for this purpose. This trait continues even now in the disciples of *Hazrat Mirza*. Physical hurdles do not deter them from carrying the message of Islam to every corner of the world. They do not tire or lose hope because of the faith and confidence that has been instilled in them by God through the *Mujaddid* of the time. And their faith and confidence is renewed by the assistance of Allah that comes to their succor from the most unexpected sources.

The fallout of the great Movement started by *Hazrat Mirza* benefited even those Muslims who did not establish a direct relationship with him by making them shed their sense of despondency and hopelessness. Thus, the impact of *Hazrat Mirza* was twofold. First, he produced the magnificent literature that caused Islam to prevail against all other religions, philosophies and atheistic doctrines in the world. This literature was published in the form of books, magazines, newspapers and posters, and was distributed throughout the east and the west. Second, as a result of the supplications and prayers of this man of God, the Muslim nation as a whole was able to replace its sense of despair and despondency by thoughts of Islamic renaissance and domination; this newfound optimism spread through the Muslim nation like a wildfire. Thus, the spiritual bounty of this Divinely ordained, religious mentor became the harbinger of God's blessings or as the Quran puts it: "good news before His mercy" (25:48), which set in motion a wave of optimism about Islam's future. The current sign of activity and striving among Muslims is the result of this newborn confidence. Thus, the credit for pulling a nation out of despair and gloom, and setting it squarely on the path of nation-building rightly belongs to *Hazrat Mirza*, and this was by no means a small achievement. However,



this was not an accidental result but one preordained by God for He had informed *Hazrat* Mirza in the following revelation that this was the objective of his advent:

March (ahead); for your time is nigh,  
And the steps of the Muslims are firmly rooted on the minaret  
most high.

Is this accomplishment not sufficient proof to convince men of intelligence of his genuineness?

Allah has provided a test in the Quran that can be used to test the genuineness of anyone claiming to be a caliph or successor of the Holy Prophet. This test is contained in the verse known as *Istakhlaf*, "...and that He will surely establish for them their religion, which he has chosen for them, and that He will surely give them security in exchange after their fear" (24:55). Thus, the Quran states that the distinctive sign of a true successor of the Holy Prophet is the establishment of religion, and the transformation of the state of fear into one of tranquility. The Caliphate of Abu Bakar first fulfilled this criterion of true succession in the early history of Islam, and *Hazrat* Mirza fulfilled it in this later period. Using this criterion, if *Hazrat* Mirza does not qualify as a caliph of the Holy Prophet, who else can? One may close one's eyes to reality, but the fact is that all the signs of a true caliph of the Holy Prophet were fulfilled in their entirety.

### **3. United the nation by providing a lofty goal**

In addition to hope and faith, the other essential ingredients for the ascendancy of a nation are unity and organization. *Hazrat* Mirza made it clear to Muslims that their goal was only, "There is no deity worthy of worship but Allah." This implies the establishment of the kingship of God and His glorification by accepting the over-lordship of Allah in all matters. This is such a lofty goal that if Muslims start acting on it, all internecine quarrels and strife would come to an end, and the Muslim nation will become one and united. In the words of the Quran, they could then, "...fight in His way in ranks, as if they were a solid wall" (61:4). Those Muslims who took the pledge on *Hazrat* Mirza's hand adopted the goal of establishing the kingship of God by engaging in jihad through preaching and propagation. Consequently, all their internecine differences disappeared and they all came together to form one brotherhood; forgotten was the factionalism based on being *Shia* or *Sunni*, and *muqallid* (disciple) or *ghair-muqallid* (liberal or independent and not following any-

one). This is the miracle of a true spiritual doctor. He diagnoses the disease correctly and prescribes such an efficacious remedy that it does not fail through the blessings of God.

The goal *Hazrat* Mirza prescribed for the Muslims can unite the whole nation and erase all schisms if it is acted upon. It can make them realize the absurdity of quarrelling over trivial matters when the real goal of establishing the kingship and grandeur of God is so grand by comparison. Differences of opinion on some secondary issues will persist until the end of this world, but such differences should not be used as a basis for badmouthing others and calling them infidels. The best way to handle these differences is to develop a healthy tolerance for other viewpoints, and to resolve issues through friendly discussion and debate. Against the enemies of Islam, Muslims should present a united and unanimous stand so that Islam may prevail. In this way, the curse of sectarianism, which keeps Muslims ready to slit each other's throats, can easily be eliminated. The present situation results from a loss of focus on the real objective and from the pursuit of multifarious inferior goals. Instead of glorifying the majesty and name of God in this world, Muslims by and large have started worshipping their own selves to such an extent that anyone who disagrees with them is immediately branded an infidel. The common belief of Muslims in One God, the same Quran, the same Messenger and the same Sacred Mosque of Makkah that they face in prayer, forms a strong basis for unity. It is really unfortunate, therefore, that Muslims call each other infidels because of differences on minor points, and this is the root cause of sectarianism, disunity and division among Muslims.

It was precisely for this reason that the Holy Prophet had stated in a *hadith* that if a Muslim calls another Muslim an infidel, then the charge of infidelity reverts back and applies to the caller.<sup>3</sup> This extreme penalty was instituted precisely so that Muslims may avoid the accursed habit of calling each other infidels, which results in disunity and division. But unfortunately, Muslims paid no heed to this warning of the Holy Prophet and had to suffer the consequences. When *Hazrat* Mirza put forward this lofty goal before Muslims and tried to establish unity and organization among Muslims, he enforced the implementation of this *hadith* as part of his policy and ordered a boycott of Islamic relations with those who indulged in calling other Muslims infidels until such time they desisted from such behavior. *Hazrat* Mirza reiterated the opinion of *Imam* Abu Hanifa that if

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3 *Imam* Abu-l-Hussain ibn Al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim (Hadith)*, Vol. 1 *Kitab al-Iman* 1:25.

there are ninety-nine reasons for calling someone an infidel and only one for calling him a Muslim, even then such a person should not be called an infidel. The adoption of this opinion was meant to effectively put an end to the obnoxious practice of calling Muslims infidels. *Hazrat* Mirza sagaciously suggested the adoption of this principle as the only way to root out sectarianism in Islam. Had Muslims acted on this principle, there would neither be disunity nor division and the practice of calling Muslims as infidels would have come to an end.

### **The real reason for forming an organization**

Given the above discussion, one can legitimately ask: Why did *Hazrat* Mirza form a separate party? The reason for forming this party was to wage the great jihad mentioned earlier for which *Hazrat* Mirza had invited all Muslims to gather under one flag, and present a united front against the enemies of Islam.<sup>4</sup> Could such a jihad be waged without an organization? Has there ever been a jihad without an organization and a leader? Whether the jihad is of the sword or the pen, and whether for physical or spiritual domination, an organization is necessary. It is not possible to fight a war without an army. The establishment of an organization to wage this jihad cannot be classified as sectarianism. If this organization appears as a separate sect to people outside this party, it is only because their scholars have branded its members as infidels. If the notion that members of this party are infidels is dispensed with, then this party is not a separate sect for its members follow the beliefs of *Ahl Sunnat wal Jamaat* as announced repeatedly by *Hazrat* Mirza. Thus, it is only the critic's own prejudice that makes *Hazrat* Mirza's party appear as a separate sect to the critic. Undoubtedly, the soldiers of this party are equipped with all the latest armament of knowledge that is necessary to wage this spiritual, cultural and literary war. To be critical of this is akin to being critical of a Muslim army today that uses the modern armament of war like tanks, cannons, airplanes and guns instead of swords, shields, bows and arrows as used by the Muslim armies in the early days of Islam. If anyone accuses a party of *mujahideen* (holy warriors) as being sectarian, then the fault lies in the thinking of the accuser. Instead of joining this party of holy warriors, such a person is content with criticizing from the sidelines those who have joined the party. Is there any jihad that can be waged without an army, whether it is for the physical or spiritual domination of Islam?

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4 *Hazrat* Mirza's publication *Fariad Dard* (A Grief-stricken Plea) may be perused for further details.

And is there any missionary work that can be carried on without an organization? The Holy Quran itself ordains the forming of such a party: “And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful” (3:104).