

“Call to the path of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation,  
and argue with people in the best manner.” (Holy Quran, 16:125)

# *The Light*

## AND

### ISLAMIC REVIEW

Exponent of Islam and the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement  
for over ninety years

January - June 2021

In the spirit of the above-cited verse, this periodical attempts to dispel  
misunderstandings about the religion of Islam and endeavors to  
facilitate inter-faith dialogue based on reason and rationality.

Vol. 98

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احمدیہ انجمن اشاعت اسلام لاہور

◆ Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore Inc., U.S.A. ◆

**The Light** was founded in 1921 as the organ of the AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHA'AT ISLAM (Ahmadiyya Association for the Propagation of Islam) of Lahore, Pakistan. **The Islamic Review** was published in England from 1913 for over 50 years, and in the U.S.A. from 1980 to 1991. The present periodical represents the beliefs of the worldwide branches of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, Lahore.

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The main objective of the A.A.I.L. is to present the true, original message of Islam to the whole world — Islam as it is found in the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, obscured today by grave misconceptions and wrong popular notions.

Islam seeks to attract the **hearts and minds** of people towards the truth, by means of reasoning and the natural beauty of its principles.

**Hazrat** Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), our Founder, arose to remind the world that Islam is:

**International:** It recognizes prophets being raised among all nations and requires Muslims to believe in them all. Truth and goodness can be found in all religions. God treats all human beings equally, regardless of race, nationality or religion.

**Peaceful:** Allows use of force only in unavoidable self-defence. Teaches Muslims to live peacefully under any rule which accords them freedom of religion.

**Tolerant:** Gives full freedom to everyone to hold and practise any creed or religion. Requires us to tolerate differences of belief and opinion.

**Rational:** In all matters, it urges use of human reason and knowledge. Blind following is condemned and independence of thought is granted.

**Inspiring:** Worship is not a ritual, but provides living contact with a Living God, Who answers prayers and speaks to His righteous servants even today as in the past.

**Non-sectarian:** Every person professing Islam by the words **La ilaha ill-Allah, Muhammad-ur rasul-ullah** (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) is a Muslim. A Muslim cannot be expelled from Islam by anyone.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad taught that **no** prophet, old or new, is to arise after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. However, **Mujaddids** will be raised by God to revive and rekindle the light of Islam.

#### About ourselves

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore has branches in many countries including:

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| <b>U.S.A.</b>    | <b>Australia</b>    |
| <b>U.K.</b>      | <b>Canada</b>       |
| <b>Holland</b>   | <b>Fiji</b>         |
| <b>Indonesia</b> | <b>Germany</b>      |
| <b>Suriname</b>  | <b>India</b>        |
| <b>Trinidad</b>  | <b>South Africa</b> |
| <b>Guyana</b>    | <b>Philippines</b>  |

#### Achievements:

The Anjuman has produced extensive literature on Islam, originally in English and Urdu, including translations of the Holy Quran with commentaries. These books are being translated into other languages, including French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Russian, Chinese, and Arabic. The Anjuman has run several Muslim missions around the world, including the first ever in Western Europe.

#### History:

**1889:** **Hazrat** Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founds the Ahmadiyya Movement.

**1901:** Movement given name **Ahmadiyya** after Holy Prophet Muhammad's other famous name **Ahmad**.

**1905:** Hazrat Mirza appoints central body (Anjuman) to manage the Movement.

**1908:** Death of Hazrat Mirza. Succeeded by Maulana Nur-ud-Din as Head.

**1914:** Death of Maulana Nur-ud-Din. Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam founded at Lahore as continuation of the original Anjuman. Maulana Muhammad Ali elected as Head.

**1951:** Death of Maulana Muhammad Ali after fifty years of glorious service to the cause of Islam. Maulana Sadr-ud-Din (d. 1981) becomes Head.

**1981–1996:** Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan, an eminent medical doctor and religious scholar, led the Movement, at a time of intense persecution.

**1996–2002:** Prof. Dr Asghar Hameed, a distinguished retired University Professor of Mathematics, and learned Islamic scholar, served as Head.

**2002:** Prof. Dr Abdul Karim Saeed Pasha elected Head.

## Introduction to Special Issue

By the Editor

The Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society has an over 30 year tradition of hosting an annual convention for its members, the highlight of which is a symposium in which a specific topic that is often misunderstood is examined and thoroughly addressed. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the 2020 conference was presented as a special virtual course which brought an informative and engaging program to members in the comfort of their own homes.

The course addressed the widespread allegation that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, claimed to be a prophet. Although every member of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Jamaat understands the falsity of this notion, it is also appreciated that responding to arguments and out-of-context quotations presented by those advancing such a claim is not always easy. Hence, the program focused on strategies to effectively structure the points to be made when engaging in discussions to clarify Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claims (and denials). In addition, a presentation was included in memory of Maulana

Hafiz Sher Muhammad (ra), the great Lahore Ahmadi missionary who brilliantly presented evidence on Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claims in the historic South Africa Case. And the program ended with two presentations contextualizing the true objectives of the Ahmadiyya Movement, an important reminder for all whenever engaging in debating such theological issues.

This issue ends with the English translation of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's booklet *Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala*, in which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad explains the method by which one should respond to the allegation that he claimed prophethood and presents a summary of the ways in which he defined the word "prophet" in his earlier writings.

The papers presented from the online program are presented here in this special edition issue of The Light and Islamic Review. The video recordings of the presentations are available on the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society's YouTube page: [youtube.com/watch?v=CD1JEDr4vcM&t=6136s](https://youtube.com/watch?v=CD1JEDr4vcM&t=6136s). ■

# The Alleged Claim of Prophethood

*Effective strategies to clarify*

*Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claims*

Virtual symposium from

October 24, 2020 @ [youtube.com/watch?v=CD1JEDr4vcM&feature=youtu.be](https://youtube.com/watch?v=CD1JEDr4vcM&feature=youtu.be)



## Introduction to 2020 Annual Convention

Bismillah ir Rahman ir Raheem. My dear elders, brothers and sisters, and children: *assalamu aleikum*.

I would like to welcome each one of you to the USA Jamaat's 2020 virtual annual conference. Although this year has presented us all with many challenges and changes in lifestyle due to the impact of the coronavirus, we are very grateful to still have the opportunity and resources to hold our annual convention, albeit in a new and different format.

As most of you are aware, the USA Jamaat – which domestically goes by the name “Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society” – has been holding an annual convention for over 30 years. Over the past dozen years or so, we have included a symposium in our annual convention tailored for the education of non-Muslim guests – which includes clergy, academics, interfaith leaders and community activists. In our symposium, we address a topic concerning Islam that is relevant to current events so that we may offer an educational opportunity to dispel misinformation about the religion of Islam and also effectuate an appreciation for the valuable lessons to society that is available from Islam's teachings. As a result, masha Allah, our symposiums have become a much admired and anticipated event by the local interfaith community. And, these symposiums also offer our members information that they are then able to utilize in their own engagements with others in their respective locales. And, just as a reminder, we have made available the presentations from symposiums over the past several years on our YouTube page, and we encourage you to make use of them and share them with others.

Now, because of the particular circumstances we face, being in the midst of a pandemic, we felt it advisable early on in the year to make the decision to not have the normal annual convention physically in a hall in Columbus, Ohio with a lot of guest attendees as we normally do. And we thought it was a good opportunity to have an online program focused specifically for our members. Hence, the title of the program today: *The Alleged Claim of Prophethood: Effective Strategies to Clarify HMGA's Claims*. Today's program will be more like a workshop for our members, an opportunity to learn from presentations about a topic that is very well known to each of you, but perhaps with some new insight and perspective.

As you are all aware, there is a great misunderstanding prevalent about HMGA and the status that he actually claimed for himself. It is generally believed that HMGA claimed to be a prophet and that such a claim is in vio-

lation of the entrenched Islamic belief in Prophet Muhammad being the seal or last of the prophets. We see the phrase “who claimed to be a prophet” commonly found after the name Mirza Ghulam Ahmad – in religious, academic and lay literature alike. Every Lahore Ahmadi knows the falsity of this view. And there is much literature available from the Lahore Ahmadiyya Jamaat explaining what HMGA actually claimed (and what he denied).

What we would like to do today is to provide some perspective on how to structure points when discussing this issue with those who advance the belief that HMGA claimed to be a prophet. It is important to appreciate the *assumptions* that are relied upon by those with opposing views so that one is able to address the specific issues causing misunderstanding.

As an example, the following is a valid argument form:

- Premise 1: All birds fly
- Premise 2: An ostrich is a bird
- Conclusion: (Therefore) An ostrich can fly

This is a valid argument for purposes of logic, but the conclusion is untrue because the premise that “all birds fly” is incorrect. Similarly, simply addressing the “conclusion” regarding whether HMGA claimed prophethood is not always sufficient without clarifying the incorrectness of the premises upon which the opposing argument is based.

Another point is that there are numerous denials of a claim of prophethood in HMGA's writings, but for some people such quotations are not convincing because they believe there are also quotations from his writings in which he affirms being a prophet (or at least some type of prophet). And it is this perception of HMGA espousing conflicting positions that has caused people to view him as being (God forbid) confused or, even worse yet, purposefully deceptive. So, simply pointing to HMGA's denials of prophethood, without providing a basis by which those misinterpreted quotations may be understood correctly, does not fully address the matter for most people.

So, what we would like to do today is address three *false assumptions* (or premises) that often lead to the incorrect conclusion that HMGA claimed to be a prophet. The presentations by **Sadar ud Dean Sahukhan, Esq.**, **Fazeel S. Khan, Esq.** and **Dr. Noman Malik** will each address one of these false assumptions. Being cognizant of these false assumptions and being able to present points to correct them is imperative to effectively address the issues that are barriers for many to understand what HMGA actually claimed. In addition, we will have a presentation that offers selections from HMGA's writings on the Holy

Prophet Muhammad, showing the status he afforded to him and the deep love he had for him (and this will be presented by **Dr. Haleema Saeed**). We will also have a presentation on the great Lahore Ahmadi missionary, Hafiz Sher Muhammad, whose sacrifices in the Ahmadiyya Case in South Africa through his scholarship as an expert witness provided us a gold mine of material from which everyone – scholars and students alike – is able to present accessible information regarding HMGA claims in an easy manner (and this will be presented by **Mr. Ebrahim Mohamed**).

We will end with two presentations about the dual primary objectives of the Ahmadiyya Movement that should never be lost sight of whenever engaging in these types of theological debates, as a reminder that the purpose of the Movement is never to simply win an argument nor should simply having the correct belief on any particular matter in and of itself satisfy the larger goal of religion or the Movement (the first of these presentations will be by **Dr. Mohammed Ahmad** and the second will be by **Mrs. Samina Malik**).

And, we will begin with an introductory presentation on the subject of *Finality of Prophethood*, so that we are aware of the importance of the topic being addressed and why it is so fundamental to the religion of Islam (and this presentation will be by **Dr. Ayesha Khan**).

But first, before starting the formal program, we would like to begin with a recitation of the Holy Quran (and this will be done by our dear brother from Egypt – **Dr. Hussein Aly** – who is currently completing another doctorate degree in Islamic Studies in Indiana). ■

## The Significance of “Finality of Prophethood”

By **Dr. Ayesha Khan**

*[Dr. Ayesha Khan is an Emergency Medicine physician at Stanford University. She devotes much time to non-profit work to better healthcare systems in developing countries. She is also an active member of the U.S. branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement and a frequent presenter at its annual conferences.]*

### Introduction

Muslims have differences in the interpretation of many issues in Islam. However, almost universally, all Muslims believe that the Prophet Muhammad was the last of a dispensation of prophets sent by God to guide humanity. The principle of the finality of prophethood is central to the Muslim identity, and the reason for this centrality succinctly conveyed in 33:40,

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets.

Three foundational truths are conveyed in this verse as follows:

1. That he (Prophet Muhammad) is a messenger of God, a continuation of the dispensation that has come before to other nations through their messengers.
2. That with him the religion is complete (the seal). So rather than like the messengers prior him, who brought a message to a certain people at a certain time, the Prophet Muhammad brought the guidance for all people for all times. Nothing more is to be added to it, it is “sealed.”
3. The fatherhood of the Prophet Muhammad is a spiritual one, such that his children are all those to whom he brought the message and making humanity one family.

### Prophethood (and Messengership)

To adequately examine the ideas conveyed in this verse, we must first look at the idea of prophethood (and messengership). Prophets of God were not merely holy persons who received revelation from God. Rather, the real object of a prophet of God was to give his followers the guidance they need to identify, understand and emulate the divine characteristics of God— so that they may evolve our souls to be closer to God. In the story of Adam, we are given a parable of the human condition:

And He taught Adam all the names then presented them to the angels; He said: Tell Me the names of those if you are right (2:31)

In this verse, Adam stands for humanity and the teaching of the names is humankind’s scientific mind. A person can name, categorize, and study their environment so that they acquire a deep understanding of it and can even control and manipulate it to suit their comfort. With this ability to conquer the forces of nature, comes a God-like arrogance, a hubris that makes a person weak— indeed that can make one drunk on one’s abilities and a slave to the comforts and power we think we can control. This arrogance is what causes human beings to “fall from grace,” or to fail to recognize that it is through the grace of God and closeness to Him that a person can reign over their environment, and not through their own greatness. The guidance brought by a Prophet to his people is the way in which a person can use the abilities they are given to cultivate the bond with the Divine through the service of humanity and thus escape this material bondage to comforts. The guidance allows us to strengthen our spiritual selves so that our

life is spent gaining spiritual stature rather than material dominance. The guidance that a prophet brings is in two forms: 1) the letter of the law – that is the revelation of God Almighty through the angel Gabriel, and 2) the example of the life of a prophet in implementing this revelation.

Prior to the prophet Muhammad the Quran tells us that messengers were sent to a particular nation for a particular time. Their message was fine tuned for the needs of their people at that time. For example, verse 7:59 says Noah was sent to “**his people**,” as were Hud, Salih and Shuaib. The objective of Moses was to “bring forth **thy people** from darkness to light.” Jesus is spoken of as a “messenger **to the children of Israel**.” Each one was a specific national prophet at a time when geography restricted the ability to travel and spread the message, and effective communication limited the ability to preserve and distribute the message *en masse*. It is also possible that the development of the human mind was not such that it could comprehend the message in its ambitious aim to unify humanity. Civilizations took centuries to arrive at the idea that the things we use to divide us, race, nation, wealth, tribe, are social constructs that vanish in the spiritual world. We all have equal opportunity to achieve greatness: As Jesus said, “There is much I could tell you but the burden would be too great for you now ... However, when he comes who is the spirit of Truth (Prophet Muhammad), he will guide unto all truth.”

Unlike the claims of the previous prophets, the Quran makes no distinction between the people for whom it was sent. Repeatedly the Quran stresses that this is “a reminder for all nations,” that the Prophet is “a warner to all mankind,” “the messenger of God to you all,” and so forth.

### The Seal (of prophethood)

Furthermore, the message brought by the Prophet, intended for all people, is also the *seal*. A thing is sealed when there is no more to be added to it, and it is complete. It is intended for all times. With this prophet and his message, the way and the guidance is sealed. The significance of one last message that is complete is that it unifies humanity. In this vein, chapter 5, verse 3 of the Quran states, “This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor to you and chosen for you Islam as a religion.” A universal prophet has to deliver a universal message, one equally intended for all humanity. In order to not be divisive, a unifying message must acknowledge all the true principles sent to nations. Within the religion of Islam, are contained all the pure teachings of the prophets that have passed:

Say: We believe in Allah and (in) that which has been revealed to us, and (in) that which was revealed to Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord, we do not make any distinction between any of them and to Him do we submit (2:136).

The Prophet Muhammad beautifully stated, “My likeness, and the likeness of the prophets before me, is the likeness of a person who built a house and he made it complete, except for the place of a brick in the corner. So people began to go round it and to wonder at him and say: ‘Why have you not placed this brick?’ So I am that brick and I am *Khatam al-Nabiyyan* (the seal of the prophets).”

So we find that the significance of the seal of prophethood is not simply that prophethood had come to an end, but that it had reached its culmination in a state of perfection. That is, the object for which this guidance was instituted, to know God and grow closer to the Divine being, could be accomplished in its highest form.

### Oneness of Humanity

By establishing the relationship of the Prophet Muhammad with his followers, this verse indicates the relationship a person has with their fellow human. The grammar in this verse is very interesting because it sets up the idea of the messengership of Prophet Muhammad as a rebuttal to the idea that he does not have any biological sons. The indication is that though he is not the biological father of sons, being the seal of the prophets, he is the spiritual father of mankind – a guide for all humanity. Other prophets too have been called the spiritual fathers of their nations, but when a new prophet came, the people were expected to follow in the footsteps of the new prophet. Prophet Muhammad, though, is the seal, no prophet is to come after him. None is needed because the Prophet’s life was one in which he was a laborer and a king, he was a general and a soldier, a legislator and a magistrate, a father, a husband, and a friend. In all these roles he modeled the divine attributes revealed in the message. He showed his persecutors mercy, his followers beneficence and love, traitors to Islam forgiveness, justice against oppression in the defensive wars he fought and so on. Both the message and the example of his life are recorded and available in their original form to all—even now some 1400 years after his advent.

By following his example, we may nurture the of the part of us that is unwaveringly eternal – our soul. In following him, we are united in one mission, one goal, to

manifest the divine attributes as best we can on this earth. His spiritual children will never be cut off; his light will shine equally on generation after generation. Each of us united in our humanity and goal.

And so we come to the to the sum and substance of our religion: the *shahaddah*, which is the way in which a person professes to be a Muslim, “There is no God but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God.” These are the two basic principles that establish the basis of Islam, the unity of the Godhead and the finality of prophethood.

Some may object to the mention of Prophet Muhammad’s messengership with the unity of Godhead. However, what this doctrine of faith actually establishes is that with the unity of Godhead, there should be unity in the human race as well. When God perfected the faith, he taught that if the object of faith is to establish the worship of one God, one Truth, the unity of the human race is essential. The first of these can be established by affirming one’s faith. For the second, affirmation of the complete, and final messengership of the Holy Prophet is essential.

### Finality of Prophethood

Though there will be no new prophets appearing (new or old) after the Prophet Muhammad, it does not mean that God has stopped speaking to humans. While there will be no new law, communication with God, one of whose attributes is *kalam* or speaking, will continue. As Prophet Muhammad explained:

Verily messengership and prophethood have been cut off. Thus there is no messenger after me nor prophet ... but there will be *mubashirat* (receiving of good news) which is one of the forty-six parts of prophethood.

The high spiritual state at which God communicates with a person is separate from the office of prophethood. Such communication has precedence in divine communication in the Quran to non-prophets, for example to the mother of Moses when she was told to float Moses down the river, or in the example of Mary when she was given good news of Jesus. There is precedence in the Sufi literature as well where *zill*, or being a shadow of the Prophet is the state of emulating the Holy Prophet such that God communicates with that person. Such communication is not due to the person alone but rather due to emulation of the Holy Prophet. These are the ways in which the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement claimed to communicate with God, as a *zilli* (spiritual reflection) or *baruz* (spiritual manifestation) of Prophet Muhammad.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad reiterates that he is not bringing a new law, but rather his principle objective is a return to the Quran. This return to the Quran is the basis of the two-fold aim of his message: to dispel misunderstandings, hollow rituals and myths that were woven into the fabric of the Islamic community, and to present the peaceful teaching of the Quran with rationality and tolerance to non-Muslims. In neither of these do we find a deviation in the final message brought by the Prophet Muhammad. In his own words, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad stated,

O brethren! I have not come with a new religion or a new teaching. I am also a Muslim like you, and for us Muslims there is no other book except the Quran which we should follow, or guide others to follow.

Contrary to the widespread allegation that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad undermined the fundamental Islamic belief in the finality of prophethood, his teachings espouse the belief that no prophet, new or old, will appear after Prophet Muhammad and that only saintly personalities will arise who attain the highest of spiritual states through following Prophet Muhammad, the final and most perfect of all prophets. His clarion call was “back to the Quran,” and his work entailed presenting Islam to the masses, both non-Muslims and Muslims alike, in its pure, universal form. ■

## Prophethood versus Prophecy (Revelation)

By Sadar-ud-Dean Sahukhan, Esq.

[Mr. Sadar-ud-Dean Sahukhan is the President of the Australian branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. He is recently retired from his many years of work as a Senior Prosecutor. He is also a prominent interfaith figure in Australia.]

In determining the effective strategies to clarify Hazrath Mirza Ghulam Ahmed’s claims, my task is to speak on Prophethood versus Prophecy (Revelation). The theme of this conference is ‘*The Alleged Claim of Prophethood*’. To remove the allegation of prophethood ascribed to Hazrath Mirza Sahib it becomes vital to both understand and appreciate the terms *prophethood* and *prophecy* (revelation). The reason why the allegation of prophethood was made against Mirza Sahib was because he declared that God still speaks to His saintly people. The misconception arose because it was commonly misunderstood that God speaks to Prophets only.

## Defining Revelation

The Arabic word for “prophet” is *nabi* and is literally defined as “an announcement of great utility” or “imparting knowledge of a thing.” The word is further understood as describing a person “who gives information about God.” The word *nabi* is associated with the word *rasul*, which means messenger”, or literally “one sent.” The two words, *nabi* and *rasul*, are used interchangeably in the Holy Qur’an. It appears these two words describe the two capacities of a prophet: *nabi* is used to signify being a recipient of information from God and *rasul* is used to indicate being the conveyer of that message to mankind.

Revelation, accordingly to Islam, is a universal phenomenon and is very broad in its applicability. There are verses in the Holy Qur’an stating revelation is granted to the earth (99:1-5) and other inanimate objects (41:11-12), indicating a type of revelation through which Divine laws are established for the operation of the universe. There are verses stating revelation is granted to lower life forms, including insects like the bee (16:68-69), implying instinct in animals is a type of revelation.

Divine revelation (*wahy*) is central to the function of a prophet in the Islamic tradition. Commonly, it is presumed that prophethood and revelation are tantamount to the same thing, in that only prophets receive revelation from God. However, there are forms of revelation also experienced by spiritual personalities who are not regarded as prophets. Concerning revelation to man, the Holy Qur’an in chapter 42:55 classifies three types:

It is not vouchsafed to a mortal that God should speak to him except by revelation, or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases.

The first type of revelation is the simplest form and signifies an “inspiration of an idea into the heart,” distinguished from hearing actual words. This class of revelation is referred to as *wahy khafi* or “inner revelation.” The second type – “from behind a veil” – is a higher form of revelation and includes dreams (*ru’ya*), visions (*kashf*) and hearing actual words of inspiration (*ilham*). The third type – via a “messenger” – is the highest and most developed form of revelation. This is the type of revelation prophets receive through the messengership of Angel Gabriel. This class of revelation is referred to as *wahy matluww* or “revelation that is recited in words” and is what forms the basis of the revealed scriptures of the prophets. It is only this third type of revelation that is restricted to prophets.

The Holy Qur’an demonstrates the different types of revelation to man by presenting accounts in which spiritual personalities who are not considered prophets also

receiving revelation. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is stated as receiving revelation on multiple occasions [3:41, 3:44, 19:25]. The mother of Moses is also stated as receiving revelation. [28:7] The disciples of Jesus too are stated as being recipients of revelation from God. [3:111]. There are other examples but I am mindful of the allocated time for this presentation.

In the context of the theme of this conference, the Holy Qur’an specifically addresses the issue of continuity of non-prophetic revelation by stating that the *auliya* are given *bushra*:

Now surely the friends of God (*auliya*) – there is no fear upon them nor do they grieve. Those who believe and guard against evil, for them are good news (*bushra*) in this world and the hereafter. [10:62-64]

The *auliya* (plural for *wali*) is a term that refers to saintly figures among the Muslims who have developed a strong connection to God. The term *bushra* was explained by Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, in the following way:

He said: Nothing remains of prophethood except *mubashshirat* [same root word as *bushra*]. The people asked: What is *mubashshirat*? He said: True dreams. [Sahih al Bukhari, Hadith 6990.]

Similarly, Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, explained:

“The good dream (*mubashshirat*) of a righteous believer is one of the forty-six parts of prophethood.” [Sahih al Bukhari, Hadith 6983]

Revelation in the form of good or true dreams received by saints, therefore, is considered a *part* of prophethood. Since it is only one of the many aspects of prophethood, its continuity does not undermine the complete or actual prophethood that ended with Prophet Muhammad. Imam Raghīb (eleventh century Muslim scholar of Quranic exegesis and Arabic language) explains in *Al-Mufradat fi Gharaibi-l-Quran*:

The Messenger of Allah is reported to have said that revelation has been cut off and nothing remains except *mubashshirat*, which are true visions a believer sees or is shown to him.” Fakhr al-Din al-Razi states in his classic commentary *Al Tafsir al-Kabir*: “The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that *bushra* is a true vision which a believer sees or which is shown to him, and it is also reported from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that prophethood has gone but *mubashshirat* remains.

Reports in Sahih al Bukhari further clarify this point. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) explained that revelation in the form of words of inspiration from God to saintly persons is also a *part* of prophethood that continues:

Among the nations before you, there used to be muhaddathun, and if there is one of them in my nation, it is Umar. [Sahih al Bukhari, Hadith 3469].

He further clarified who the *muhaddathun* are by defining the term in an almost identical report from the same source by replacing “*muhaddathun*” with a description:

Among the Israelite people before you, there used to be men who were spoken to by God although they were not prophets. If there is such a one among my followers, it is Umar. [Sahih al Bukhari, Hadith 3689]

A *muhaddath*, therefore, is a person who is spoken to by God but is not a prophet. Consequently, the term *wali* in the Qur’an and the term *muhaddath* in Hadith signify the same thing: a saintly person who receives “non-prophetic” revelation. In the famous Commentary of the Quran, *Ruh al-Ma’ani*, the following is presented in reference to Quran 42:51:

In this verse, God has referred to people in general, and not prophets as such, because revelation is not confined to prophets. In previous times, there is the example of Mary and the mother of Moses, who were not prophets but God spoke to them. In our religion, that will be the position of muhaddathun of the nation. They will receive revelation.” Similarly, in Aini, a popular Commentary on Bukhari (vol. vii, p. 614), it is stated: “By muhaddath are meant persons to whom God speaks, without them being prophets.

Classic Muslim theologians, like Shaikh Ahmad of Sirhind, wrote:

Know, O truthful brother, that the speaking of God with man is sometimes face-to-face. This is for the prophets, and is also for some of their perfect followers due to obedience and as inheritance. When a follower receives Divine speech abundantly and frequently in this manner, he is called a muhaddath, as was Umar, the chief of the Muslims.” (Maktubat, vol. iii, part vii, p. 2, letter no. 51). Likewise, Shah Wali-ullah of Delhi wrote: “The rank of muhaddath is such that when a muhaddath arises, he does not have to follow conclusions derived by human reasoning, just as the sun eliminates the need for ordinary lamps. For he comes with revelation and the knowledge given to prophets. (Tafhimat, p. 136).

This principle of continuity of non-prophetic revelation to saintly personalities is explained in renowned traditional commentaries of the Holy Qur’an and Hadith and is a prominent theme in the writings of classical Muslim theologians. For instance, Al Ghazali explained in his popular work *Ihya al-Ulum* (Vol. III, p. 67):

Know that the men of the heart are shown the secrets of the worlds through inspiration [into the mind], or through true dreams, or through visions while awake. This is one of the highest grades of the degrees of prophethood, as a true dream is one of the forty-six parts of prophethood. So beware of denying this knowledge through lack of understanding.

Abdul Qadir Jilani similarly argued in *Al-Fath ar-Rabbani* at page 153:

Woe unto you, O innovator! Does God not have the power to say: ‘I am God.’ Our God, great is His glory, is a speaker, and not dumb. His word is heard and understood.

Ibn Arabi further elaborated in *Futuhat Makkyya* (Part II, p. 90, question no. 82):

It is impossible that revelation from God can stop. For if it were to be cut off, there would not remain for the world any spiritual food by which it continues to subsist.

Similar sentiments are found in the writings of Jalal-ud-Din Rumi, Shaykh Ahmad of Sirhind, Imam Shi’rani, Shah Wali-ullah of Delhi, Imam Ja’far Sadiq and many others.

The points outlined above establish three important principles:

1. The Holy Qur’an identifies spiritual personalities that received revelation but were not prophets;
2. These spiritual personalities received the first two classes of revelation (i.e. non-prophetic revelation);
3. These two classes of revelation continue among saintly personalities and does not end.

As a result, only that one form of revelation that is granted to prophets – that which is communicated through Angel Gabriel and which forms the basis of a revealed scripture – is what has discontinued with the finality of prophethood in Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). If prophethood has ended, *prophetic* revelation is no longer possible. But the other two forms of revelation, the types that are available to saintly personalities who are not prophets, remains.

### Mirza Ghulam Ahmad on Revelation

Having established this background, attention may be directed to the views of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Consistent with his belief in the finality of prophethood in Prophet Muhammad, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad maintains that prophetic revelation (*wahy nabuwwaat* or *wahy rasilat*), that form of revelation that is transmitted via the agency of Angel Gabriel, has ended:

“It is obvious that if it is supposed that the angel Gabriel can now descend with even one sentence of prophetic revelation (*wahy nubuwwat*) and remain silent thereafter, this would still contradict the finality of prophethood, for when the seal of finality is breached and revelation granted to messengers (*wahy risalat*) again starts to descend, it matters not whether the amount is little or much.

Every wise person can understand that if God is true to His promise, and the promise given in the *khatam an nabiyyin* verse – which has been explicitly mentioned in the Hadith, that now, after the death of the Prophet of God, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, Gabriel has been forbidden forever from bringing prophetic revelation (*wahy nubuwwat*) – if all these things are true and correct, then no person at all can appear as a messenger (*rasul*) after our Prophet, peace be upon him.” *Izala Auham*, p. 577 (RK, vol. 3, pp. 411-12).

Similar examples of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s belief in the termination of prophetic revelation are as follows:

A seal has been put upon prophetic revelation (*wahy nubuwwat*) since thirteen hundred years ago. (*Izala Auham*, p. 534; RK, vol. 3 p. 387);

Further he stated:

It has just been shown that revelation granted to a messenger (*wahy risalat*) has been terminated till the Day of Judgment. (*Izala Auham*, p. 614; RK, vol. 3 p. 432);

In addition, he asked a rhetorical question:

How could it be permitted that, despite the fact that our Holy Prophet Muhammad is the last of the Prophets (*khatam al-anbiya*), some other prophet should appear sometime and prophetic revelation (*wahy nubuwwat*) commence?” (*Ayyam as-Sulh*, p. 47; RK, vol. 14, p. 279).

Moreover, in harmony with views of classical Muslim theologians, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad also explains that a type of revelation, that *part* of prophethood granted to saints, however, remains:

The Messenger of Allah is reported to have said that ‘there is nothing left of prophethood except good news (*mubashshirat*).’ That is to say, from the parts of prophethood only one part remains, namely *mubashshirat*, which comprises true dreams, genuine and true visions, and revelation which descends on the chosen ones from among the saints (*auliya*) ...” *Taudih Maram*, p. 9-10 (RK, vol. 7, pp. 60-61).

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad further clarifies the distinctive nature of prophetic revelation in the following way:

... the Hadith proves that perfect prophethood (*haqiqi nabuwwat*), which contained the revelation of the law (shariah), has certainly been cut off. But prophethood which contains nothing except *mubashshirat* (good news) shall exist until the Day of Resurrection and shall never cease. As you know and have read in the books of Hadith, true visions are a forty-sixth part of perfect prophethood.

By contrasting *prophetic* revelation with *saintly* revelation in this manner, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad distinguishes the two not only in form but also in content. In form, only prophetic revelation is transmitted via the agency of Angel Gabriel. In content, only prophetic revelation contains laws. This distinction of only prophetic revelation containing laws is, again, in uniformity with the understanding of classical Muslim theologians. Ibn Arabi, for example, wrote extensively on the subject of the relationship between prophethood and sainthood, and he too identified revelation containing laws (*shariah*) as the distinguishing criterion:

All the forms of revelation we have explained here are to be found in men of God, from among the saints. The revelation that was exclusive to the prophet, and not for the saint, is the revelation containing the laws (shariah).” (*Futuhat Makkiiyya*, Part II, p. 376)

Others, like Imam Abdul Wahhab Shirani, confirmed the same:

The door of prophethood is closed after the Holy Prophet Muhammad and shall not be opened for anyone until the Day of Judgment. However, revelation which does not contain laws (shariah) in it remains for the saints.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad distinguished the two grades of revelation in his writings by classifying them as *wahy nabuwwat* (prophetic revelation) and *wahy wilayat* (saintly revelation). Consequently, a determination of how Mirza Ghulam Ahmad described the revelations he received is indicative of whether he considered himself

a prophet in the theological sense. If he claimed to be a prophet (*nabi* or *rasul*) as opposed to a saint (*wali* or *muhaddath*), he should refer to his revelations as *wahy nubuwwat*. Consistent with his conviction in the finality of prophethood in Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and belief in prophetic revelation having ended, he refers to the revelations he received as *wahy wilayat*, not *wahy nubuwwat*:

I believe that it is not *wahy nubuwwat* (prophetic revelation) but *wahy wilayat* (saintly revelation) that the saints receive through the Prophethood of Muhammad due to their perfect following of him. If anyone accuses me of claiming anything beyond this, he departs from honesty and fear of God.

I have noticed that at the time of revelation, which descends upon me in the form of *wahy wilayat* (saintly revelation), I feel myself in the hands of an extremely strong external force.”

### Conclusion

To summarize:

1. Revelation in Islam is a universal phenomenon, very broad in its scope, and is granted to inanimate objects, lower life forms and to humans;
2. With regard to humans, there are three forms of revelation. The first type is that of “inner revelation” and consists of an inspiration of an idea into the heart. The second type is a higher form of revelation and includes dreams, visions and hearing actual words of inspiration. The third type is the most developed form of revelation and entails receiving a revelation through the messengership of Angel Gabriel.
3. Only the third type of revelation – through the messengership of Angel Gabriel – is restricted to prophets. The first two types of revelation are also granted to people who are not prophets.
4. The Holy Quran and authentic Hadith explain that revelation to saintly persons continues in the form of “mubasshirat” (i.e. good news).
5. The respected saintly Muslim personalities of the Classical Period have further clarified that *wahy nabuwwaat* (prophetic revelation, which contains laws and is delivered via the Angel Gabriel) has terminated with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, but that *wahy wilayat* (saintly revelation, that does not contain laws and is not delivered by Angel Gabriel, but nonetheless is communication from Almighty Allah) remains for those who have developed a close relationship with God.
6. Hazrat Mirza Sahib, consistent with these established principles, argued that *wahy nabuwwaat*

(prophetic revelation) has ended with the Holy Prophet Muhammad and that the revelation he receives is only *wahy walayyat* (saintly revelation).

I hope this information will help address the false assumption that many people have concerning revelation, and will help remove an obstacle in the way of people understanding Hazrat Mirza Sahib’s true claims. ■

## Defining the Word “Prophet”

### Acceptable Meanings and Uses

By Fazeel S. Khan, Esq.

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### Introduction

The underlying issue that will be addressed in this presentation is that simply presenting quotes from Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s writings in which he denies claiming prophethood is normally insufficient to convince an opposing party that Hazrat Mirza Sahib didn’t claim to be prophet. And this is because opponents are usually familiar with other quotes from Hazrat Mirza Sahib’s writings in which he does attribute the word “prophet” (or the related word “messenger”) to himself. For instance, in his booklet *Ek Ghalti ka Izala*, Hazrat Mirza Sahib states very forcefully: “I have never denied being called a prophet in this sense.”

So, opponents argue that even though Hazrat Mirza Sahib denied claiming prophethood in some instances, he did claim at least some form of prophethood in others. And the implication for them is that Hazrat Mirza Sahib, God forbid, was either confused about his own status (and that is why there are these seemingly conflicting views presented in his writings) or that, even worse, he was intentionally being deceptive (claiming prophethood when it suited his purpose and denying it when the circumstances did not benefit him).

This issue of how to respond to the allegation that Hazrat Mirza Sahib claimed prophethood is what prompted him to write the booklet *Ek Ghalti ka Izala* (or “A Correction of an Error”). And he explains in the opening words of the book that, despite good intentions, simply denying the use of the word prophet being attrib-

uted to him in his writings is “incorrect.” I’ll read to you the opening two paragraphs from *Ek Ghalti ka Izala*; Hazrat Mirza Sahib writes:

Some people in our Movement who are not well-acquainted with my claim and the arguments relating to it — not having had the occasion to study my books carefully, nor having stayed in my company for a sufficient length of time to complete their knowledge — in some instances in response to an objection of the opponents give a reply which is entirely against facts. So, despite being on the side of truth, they have to face embarrassment.

Thus it happened a few days ago that a person faced from an opponent the objection that “the man whose pledge you have taken, claims to be a prophet (*nabi*) and a messenger (*rasul*)”. This was answered by only a denial, while such an answer is not correct. The fact is that the holy revelation of God Almighty which descends upon me contains words such as *rasul*, *mursal* and *nabi*, not once but hundreds of times. So how can the reply be correct that such words are not present?

So, Hazrat Mirza Sahib explains that although being on the side of truth by arguing that he did not claim prophethood, a more detailed response is required to satisfactorily address the allegation being made. And the remainder of the book is devoted by Hazrat Mirza Sahib to summarize what he had explained in his previous books about the different meanings of the word “prophet” and its acceptable uses.

### Three Definitions of the Word “Prophet”

Anyone who has ever used a dictionary knows that every word has multiple meanings or significances or connotations. This is not some novel concept. And so, the same goes for the word “prophet”. The word “prophet” has multiple meanings and may be used in different ways.

If you review all of Hazrat Mirza Sahib’s writings, you will find that he uses the word “prophet” in three distinct ways:

1. In a **theological manner**, in accordance with Islamic religious doctrine;
2. In a **metaphorical style**, as employed in Sufi literature;
3. In a **literal sense**, to convey the lexiconic meaning of the word.

Simply keeping these three meanings in mind when reading the word “prophet” in Hazrat Mirza Sahib’s writings reveals there is no contradiction at all:

- Whenever he denies claiming prophethood, it is in the context of the word being used in a **theological manner** (i.e. in accordance with Islamic religious doctrine);
- And whenever he attributes the word to himself, it is in the context of when the **metaphorical sense** of the word is used (as is commonly employed in Sufi discourse) or when the **literal sense** of the word is being utilized (to convey its lexiconic meaning).

Accordingly, Hazrat Mirza Sahib was consistent in holding that the word “prophet” cannot be applied to anyone after the Holy Prophet Muhammad when the term is understood in accordance with Islamic theology (or what Hazrat Mirza Sahib refers to as according to the “terminology of Islam”), and that is because the Holy Prophet is the *khatam an nabiyyinn*. Notwithstanding, he consistently clarifies that the word “prophet” may be used in a metaphorical sense or according to its literal significance, which is different from the meaning in Islamic theology and, therefore, does not in any way undermine the belief in finality of prophethood in Prophet Muhammad.

### Acceptable Use of the Word “Prophet” for a Muhaddath

I’d like to now provide some perspective, albeit briefly, on how it was perfectly acceptable for Hazrat Mirza Sahib to have used the word “prophet” in reference to himself in both a metaphorical sense and according to its literal meaning.

In order to appreciate the metaphorical use of the word “prophet” by HMGA, one must understand the concept of *muhaddath-iyyah*. The spiritual position that Hazrat Mirza Sahib claimed for himself was that of a “muhaddath”, and he would particularly emphasize this status when denying any claim to prophethood, thereby making a clear distinction between the two. For instance, he wrote:

I firmly believe that our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is *khatam al anbiya* (seal of the prophets) and after him no prophet, neither old nor new, shall appear for this *ummah*. Of course, *muhaddathun* (saints) 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. [*Nishan Asmani*, p. 28 (*RK*, vol. 4, pp. 30-31)].

By definition, a *muhaddath* is not a prophet as the word is understood according to Islamic religious doctrine. A *muhaddath* is defined as “one with whom God speaks, but who is not a prophet”. Aside from the type of revelation granted to prophets and *muhaddath-thuun* being

different (as was explained in the previous presentation), *muhaddath-thuun* are dependent on following a prophet in order to attain their high spiritual state. As Hazrat Mirza Sahib explained:

God bestowed the honor of His full, perfect, pure and holy, communication and revelation to some such persons who reached the stage of *fana fir rasul* to the highest degree, so that there remained no separation. The concept of *ummati* (being a follower) and the meaning of following was found in them to completion and perfection, so that their very being did not remain their own selves, but rather, the person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad was reflected in the mirror of their state of engrossment. On the other hand, they received Divine communication and revelation in the fullest and most perfect sense like prophets. **So, in this sense, some persons, despite being *ummati* (followers), received the title of *nabi* (prophet).** [*Al-Wasiyyat*, pp. 29–30 (RK, vol. 20, pp. 311-12)]

And it is because of this concept of *fana fir rasul*, that the term “prophet” can be applied to *muhaddath-thuun* in a metaphorical manner. Hazrat Mirza Sahib explained this concept (which is common in Sufi discourse) by expounding on how prophets personify the display of Divine attributes on earth, and how, by following a prophet’s example perfectly, one may attain this level of nearness to the Divine. This form of discipleship entails losing one’s own identity to the extent of merging with the personality of the prophet. And it is in this sense, when one reaches this spiritual stage of becoming one with a prophet in a spiritual sense that the title “nabi” (or “prophet”) can be attributed to such person in a *metaphorical* manner. As Hazrat Mirza Sahib further clarifies:

The fact that our Holy Prophet is the *khatam an nabiyyin* prohibits the coming of any other prophet. However, a prophet who obtains light from the lamp of the prophethood of Muhammad, who in other words is also called a *muhaddath*, is exempt from this restriction because, due to his obedience to the Holy Prophet and due to his being *fana fir rasul*, he is included within the person of the Last of the Messengers, just as a part is included in the whole. [*Izala Auham*, p. 575 (RK, vol. 3, pp. 410-411)].

This metaphorical use of the term “prophet” is also exemplified by the *qualified* and *conditional* terms used when attributed to a *muhaddath*. In addition to referring to it as “metaphorical” prophethood, Hazrat Mirza Sahib also refers to it as “partial” or “imperfect” prophethood, as opposed to “real” or “full” or “perfect prophethood” when referring to the word’s meaning

according to Islamic theology. Similarly, the terms “baruz” (meaning manifestation) or “zill” (meaning reflection) are also used to describe the metaphorical prophethood attained by a *muhaddath* due to achieving the state of *fan fir rasul*.

But if one is unaware of these spiritual concepts and the metaphorical language that is used in the Sufi tradition to describe them, it will be difficult for him or her to appreciate how the term “prophet” may be applied to a saintly person who is not a *real* prophet according. As Hazrat Mirza Sahib explained:

The fact is that when spiritual and heavenly concepts are made public, people have difficulty comprehending them. Eventually, they distort them somewhat and take metaphor to be reality, thus resulting in serious error and misguidance.” [*Government Angrezi aur Jihad*, p. 26 (RK, vol. 17, pp. 26-27)].

#### Literal Application of Word “Prophet”

Now, in addition to the metaphorical use of the word “prophet”, Hazrat Mirza Sahib explains that the term can also be applied to a *muhaddath* according to its literal meaning. And, in particular, Hazrat Mirza Sahib explains that it is in this literal sense that the word “prophet” appears in the revelation he receives from Almighty Allah (not in the sense of the word’s meaning according to religious doctrine). He writes:

However, being an appointed one of God (*mamur*), I dare not conceal the word ‘prophethood’ and ‘messengership’ that occur frequently in the communications I receive from God Almighty. But, I declare repeatedly, in such revelations (*ilhamat*), the words *mursal*, *rasul* or *nabi* that occur are not to be taken in their real sense ... [*Anjam Atham*, p. 22 (RK, vol. 11, p. 27).]

The “real sense” referenced by Hazrat Mirza Sahib is the Islamic theological sense. Hazrat Mirza Sahib further explained that the words “prophet” and “messenger” included in his revelations were only meant to describe the functions in the descriptive sense of the words; he writes:

There are many such revelations in which the word *nabi* or *rasul* has occurred regarding me. However, that person is mistaken who thinks that by this prophethood and messengership is meant real prophethood and messengership ... in fact, by the word *rasul* is only meant ‘one sent by God’, and by the word *nabi* is only meant ‘one who makes prophecies having received intimation from God’, or ‘one who discloses hidden matters’. However, in the terminology of Islam, *nabi*

and *rasul* mean those who bring an entirely new *shariah*, or those who abrogate some aspects of the previous *shariah*, or those who are not called followers of a previous prophet, having a direct connection with God without the benefit from a prophet. Therefore, one should be vigilant to see that the same meaning is not taken here.” [*Al-Hakam*, 17 August 1899, page 6]

So, Hazrat Mirza Sahib makes clear here that the words “prophet” and “messenger” in Islamic theology have a distinct meaning, distinguishable from the broad etymological applicability of the words. In the literal sense, for purposes of describing the function of “one who is sent” and “one who expounds hidden truths through knowledge from God,” the words *rasul* and *nabi* categorically apply to a *muhaddath* as well. The literal meaning of the word *muhaddath* is different and simply does not describe these two functions. As Mirza Ghulam Ahmad stated:

If one who receives news of the unseen from God is not to be called *nabi*, tell us what should he be called? If it is said that he should be called *muhaddath*, I say that in no lexicon is the meaning *tahdees* (root word of *muhaddath*) ‘making known the unseen’.

### Conclusion

To conclude, in order to fully address the issue of whether Hazrat Mirza Sahib claimed to be a prophet, it is necessary to acknowledge the three different ways in which Hazrat Mirza Sahib uses the word “prophet” in his writings. Simply providing his denials of claiming prophethood does not resolve the underlying basis upon which opponents advance their argument.

In order to provide a satisfactory response (as Hazrat Mirza Sahib indicates in the opening words of *Ek Ghalti ka Izala*), the conversation should entail pointing out that Hazrat Mirza Sahib uses the term “prophet” in three ways: whenever he denied attributing the word to himself it was in the sense of the theological meaning of the word; and whenever he attributed the word to himself, it was only in the metaphorical sense or the literal sense, the two ways that it is perfectly appropriate to apply to a *muhaddath*.

I’ll end my presentation here – and thank you for listening. ■

## Mujaddid, Messiah and Mahdi

### Titles Depicting the Work of Reform

By Dr. Noman Malik

[Dr. Noman Malik is on the board of Directors for the USA branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. He is a retired pathologist, but also an invaluable wealth of knowledge on Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement. He has also devoted most of his time for the past thirty years to advancing the publication work of the Movement.]

The intent of my lecture is to correct the false assumption that many people hold concerning the title Promised Messiah that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad attributed to himself. It is commonly misunderstood that the term Promised Messiah is necessarily synonymous with being a prophet (i.e. if Hazrat Mirza Sahib claimed to be the Messiah, that is tantamount to a claim of prophethood).

Although classifying himself among the hundreds of *auliya* and *muhaddathun* (as explained by previous speakers), Mirza Ghulam Ahmad does make a distinction for himself. He claimed to be the *Mujaddid* (Reformer) of the fourteenth century of the Islamic calendar (which period corresponds approximately to the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century). He further stated that the *mujaddid* of this century was given the titles *Promised Messiah* and *Mahdi*, which were descriptive of the mission entrusted to him. The claims of being *Mujaddid* and *Mahdi* were not used by his opponents to attribute a claim of prophethood to him, as there was a longstanding tradition of saintly persons claiming to be *mujaddids*, and the *Mahdi* was always expected to be a person from among the *ummah of Muslims*. But many interpreted Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s claim of being the Promised Messiah as a *de facto* claim of prophethood. Since Jesus the Messiah was a prophet according to the Quran, it was argued that claiming to be the return of Jesus must necessarily entail a claim of a similar status, especially since the hadith report that mentions the second coming of Jesus refers to the coming Messiah as a prophet (*nabi*). It is noteworthy that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad only used the word “claim” (*dawa*) when proclaiming to being the *Mujaddid* of the era, the Promised Messiah and the awaited *Mahdi*. Whenever he used the word “prophet” in reference to himself, it was always in a descriptive manner, never by way of announcing some type of “claim”.

## Defining Mujaddid

To understand the significance of HMGA claiming to be the Messiah, one must first understand what a “*Mujaddid*” is. A *mujaddid*, is a “reformer” and is given the mission of correcting certain things that are an obstacle to the progress of Islam and to achieving closeness to God. The concept of a *mujaddid* is based on the universally accepted Hadith in Abu Dawud which states:

Most surely Allah will raise for this community at the head of every century one who shall revive for it its faith.

With the advent of Islam, Allah the Most High has sent the Holy Quran, the last revealed book, which will provide guidance in any age or society, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad the final prophet, after whom there will be no prophet, as he has brought prophethood to perfection. It is Allah the Most High’s promise that he will guard the Holy Quran from any change or interpolation. However, although no change occurs in the text of the Quran, with the passage of time, interpretations of the Quranic verses or Hadith which run counter to the teachings of the Quran and Hadith creep into the practice of Islam.

To correct this situation, Islam has introduced the system of *Mujaddids*. The appointment of a *mujaddid* in the hadith indicates the raising of a particular person who has been gifted with saintly inspiration and communication (i.e. a *muhaddath*), for the specific purpose of removing any errors which may have crept into the faith and pose a danger to Islam. A *mujaddid* does not make changes in the Quran or Hadith; he simply removes the misconceptions. Throughout the Islamic centuries people have made a claim of being a *mujaddid*. Prominent examples of *mujaddids* are Imam Ghazzali (5<sup>th</sup> century), Abdul Qadir Jilani (6<sup>th</sup> century), Moinuddin Chisti (7<sup>th</sup> century), etc.

It is in accordance with this concept, that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed to be the *Mujaddid* of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century *Hijra* (late 19<sup>th</sup> century). The purpose of his being raised as *Mujaddid* was to spread of the true essence of Islam in the world. He writes:

The spiritual triumph of the Religion of Islam which would be brought about by conclusive arguments and shining proofs is destined to be accomplished through this weak mortal... Its conquests over different sects and nations depended on the coming of the time which, by opening the ways of communication, would turn the whole world into a kind of a united states... Thus God intends... by giving me knowledge of hundreds of sure arguments to spread and propagate knowl-

edge of the true teachings of the Quran among all nations and all countries. [Brahin Ahmadiyya pp 498-502]

As *Mujaddid* of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century of the Islamic Calender, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had a two-fold mission. One was to defend against the attacks being carried out on Islam by the dominant Christian faith and the other was to correct beliefs Muslims themselves held that impeded the understanding of the spirituality of the faith.

## Defining (Promised) Messiah

About two years later, God revealed to him that the original Jesus Christ was dead, and therefore would not return to earth, and that he was the Promised Messiah. He further clarified that the original Jesus had not died on cross, but had been taken down while in a swoon, appearing to be dead. After he revived, he travelled to India where he preached to the Kashmiris and Pathans who were descendants of the lost ten tribes of Israel. He died in Kashmir at the age of 120 years and the grave is located in Srinagar. Hazrat Mirza Sahib explains the meaning of the term “messiah” as follows:

In the great dictionaries of the Arabic Language *Lisan alArab* and *Qamus*, the Messiah is he who has been touched (*mas-h*) with good, and that is, good and blessing have been placed in his nature, so much so that his very touch gives blessings. This was given to Jesus and is given by God to whom He pleases. (*Masih Hindustan Main*, p. 71)

Hazrat Mirza Sahib further explains why the 14<sup>th</sup> Century *Mujaddid* was given the the title of Promised Messiah:

God... has sent me in the likeness, and with the qualities, of Jesus in order to remove the Jewishness [i.e., Pharisaical attitude and behaviour of Muslims] of the latter days. Hence, I am the promised son of Mary in a metaphorical sense, who had been promised to appear at a time of ‘Jewishness’ and supremacy of Christianity. I have come devoid of material means, with spiritual power and weaponry, as opposed to the wrong conception of physical warfare that prevailed among the Muslims about [the second coming of] Jesus. My war is spiritual and my kingdom is not of this world. I have nothing to do with the battles and offensives of the world. My life is one of humility and meekness, like that of Jesus. I have come to re-establish humility, meekness, righteousness, civility, and inner purity in the Muslims, and to teach the path of high morals. If Muslims do not accept me, I shall not be grieved at all

because before me the Israelites did not accept Jesus. (*Majmu'a Ishtiharat*, vol. i, pp. 232–233)

The name promised Messiah, which has been given to me from Heaven, means nothing more than that God has made me to follow the example of Jesus in terms of moral conditions, so that I may breathe spiritual life into people by peace and gentleness..." (*Kashf-ul-Gita*, p.12)

In reply to the accusation that by claiming to be the Promised Messiah he was claiming to be a Prophet, Hazrat Mirza Sahib repeatedly denied this false equivalency and argued that his claim was that of a *Muhaddath* (i.e. a non-prophet who receives saintly, but not prophetic revelation). For instance:

Here if it be objected that the like of the Messiah should also be a prophet because the Messiah was himself 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, but has clearly stated that he shall be a Muslim and bound by the law of the Qur'an, like ordinary Muslims. He shall not say anything except that he was Muslim and their leader. Besides this, there is no doubt in it that this humble servant has been raised by the Most high God for this nation in the capacity of a *muhaddath*..." (*Taudih Maram*, pp 9,10)

I believe in all those things that are recorded in the Holy Quran and authentic Hadith. I do not claim to be Jesus, son of Mary, nor do I believe in reincarnation. I only claim to be the like of the Messiah. In the same way as sainthood in Islam (*muhaddasiyyat*) bears a resemblance to prophethood, my spiritual condition bears a similarity of the highest degree to the spiritual condition of Jesus. I am a Muslim...I have come from the Lord of the heavens and the earth as Reformer (*mujaddid*) of the religion, for the fourteenth century, having the characteristics and disposition of Jesus. (*Majmu'a Ishtiharat*, vol. i, p. 231)

People often interpret his claim of being promised Messiah as making a claim that somehow is greater than that of being *Mujaddid*. This assumption has been refuted by Hazrat Sahib himself in his book *A'inah Kamalat Islam*. He states:

And this must be remembered that the claim of being the Promised Messiah is not in any way greater than the claim of being a recipient of divine communication (*mulham min Allah*) or a *Mujaddid* from God..."

This interpretation of the hadith of the descent of Jesus by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as meaning that a follower of Islam, a servant (*Ghulam*) of the Holy Prophet of Islam (*Ahmad*) was the promised Messiah, and not the Prophet Jesus who had died as al 2000 years ago like all prophets, had far reaching effects. It completely negated the arguments that the Christian missionaries were using to great effect to try to convert Muslims to Islam. Jesus Christ, being viewed as a God-like figure seated in Heaven who would come down to save the Muslims (whereas Prophet Muhammad was accepted as dead and buried in Madinah) became just another prophet who had died and could not be understood as a son of God. Jesus' fainting and not dying on the cross and his subsequent migration to Kashmir where he died a peaceful death completely does away with the theory of atonement of sins that was being promoted by the Christian missionaries. This is what is meant by the "breaking of the cross" by the Promised Messiah in hadith reports. The end result is that these obstacles for the correct understanding of Islam in Christian countries is removed.

#### Defining "Mahdi"

At about the same time that he was informed by Allah (swt) that he was the Promised Messiah, he was also informed that He was also the long awaited *Mahdi*, thus attesting to the truth of the prophetic Hadith in Ibn Majah "There is no Mahdi but Isa". The word Mahdi is defined as: "*Mahdi* is a title given to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, meaning rightly-guided by instinct, heir to all guidance, and the full reflection of the Divine attribute *Guide*." (*Zameema Jihad*, p. 6). A *muhaddath* also receives this title of Mahdi when, by his perfect following of the Holy prophet he becomes his *Zill* (reflection).

While discussing the Hadith of the Mahdi, Hazrat Mirza Sahib writes:

... those hadith which are authentic, ...indicate and even state clearly that he shall not have worldly kingship and rule, nor would he fight or shed blood or have an army, but that he would re-establish faith in the hearts by spirituality and power of the heart, as is the hadith '*There is no Mahdi except Jesus*' recorded in the Hadith book of Ibn Maja. . . This hadith means that no Mahdi shall come except the man who shall come with the temperament and disposition of Jesus, that is, he shall be the Promised Messiah as well as the Mahdi. He shall come with the temperament of Jesus, following his technique of teaching, that is, he shall not return evil for evil, nor shall he fight; rather, he shall spread guidance by means of a pure example and heavenly signs. . . His teaching shall be: do not fight for the faith, but spread it by

means of the light of truth, and the miracles of good morals. (*Haqiqatul Mahdi*, pp. i-iii).

The popular concept of Mahdi among Muslims was that of a war-like leader who would conquer city after city from the East to the West and offer the alternatives of death by the sword or conversion to Islam. By the metaphorical interpretation of the conquests of the Mahdi, the Mahdi himself removes the great obstacle for people to accept Islam as they would now not consider Islam to be a violent and cruel faith.

### Significance of Claims: Upholding Finality of Prophethood

Another great service that Hazrat Mirza Sahib did by claiming to be the Promised Messiah was that he safeguarded the honor and status of the Holy Prophet and more importantly, the finality of prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

The descent of the original Jesus Christ and his saving Islam was an insult to the being of the Holy Prophet Muhammad as it implied that the Prophet Muhammad, could not bring about the victory of Islam but needed another prophet to accomplish that task. But if Hazrat Mirza Sahib as a *Mujaddid* is the Promised Messiah then any spiritual conquest is not his because he can only attain to the state of *Mujaddid* by becoming *Fana fil Rusool*, so any spiritual excellences or achievements he has are due to the Holy Prophet and not his. In this way the victory is of the Holy Prophet.

Along the same lines, if the original Jesus (upon whom be peace) was to return to earth, he would receive prophetic revelation (as he is a prophet of God), and that would definitely breach the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad argues this point:

The title ‘prophet of God’ for the Promised Messiah found in Sahih Muslim etc. from the blessed tongue of the Holy Prophet is meant in the same metaphorical sense as it occurs in Sufi literature as an accepted and common term for a recipient of Divine communication. Otherwise, how can there be a prophet after the khatam ul anbiya? [*Anjam Atham*, footnote, pages 27–28 (RK, vol. 11, p. 28)].

If the same Messiah, the Messenger of Allah and the possessor of a Book (sahib-i-kitab), on whom Gabriel used to descend, would reappear, then he would never be a student of anyone for learning the laws of the shariah of Muhammad (pbuh) but, as is the practice of God, divine revelation would descend on him through Gabriel and all the laws and commandments of the shariah of Muhammad

(pbuh) would be revealed to him afresh in a new way, new shape and new language and, as compared with this new book which would be revealed from Heaven, the Quran would be abrogated. (*Izala Auham*, p. 585; RK, vol. 3, p. 416).

Hazrat Mirza Sahib’s identification with the Promised Messiah removes this great danger to the Finality of Prophethood.

### Conclusion

These interpretations of the *Mujaddid*, *Messiah* and *Mahdi* as exemplified by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad are powerful reformatory concepts for the correct understanding and appreciation of the original Islam as a religion of peace and reconciliation, and of the Holy Prophet Muhammad as a man of peace, love and justice. This reformatory work can only be done by a “mujaddid” (as prophets may not appear after Prophet Muhammad) and the titles “messiah” and “mahidi” simply describe the two different functions of the work of this particular Mujaddid.

I will end my talk here. Thank you for listening and assalamu aleikum. ■

## A Tribute to Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad

By Ebrahim Mohamed

[Mr. Ebrahim Mohamed is the President of the South Africa branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. He established a strong foundation for the organization in South Africa, collaborating with the USA Jamaat, and continues to be a pillar of strength for the Movement internationally. He is a prolific writer and a great resource of knowledge on a multitude of religious issues.]

In 1980, a year after the death of the Founder of the Lahore Branch of the Ahmadiyya Movement, South Africa, namely Dawood Sydow, we embarked on an ambitious plan to raise funds to build much needed missionary and prayer facilities for our Jamaat. However, to raise such public funds required municipal approval, which required publishing our intentions in two local newspapers to give the public an opportunity to respond if needs be. A local Sunni clerical body, the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC), objected to our application on the grounds that because of our association with Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad whom they alleged was not a Muslim because he allegedly claimed to be a prophet, we did not have the right to build an Islamic Centre.

Strangely, they did not object to us raising public funds *per se* as long as it was not for an Islamic Centre.

The irony of the matter was that the overwhelming Christian majority together with members of other faiths did not object except for this self-appointed body of clerics claiming to speak on behalf of Muslims. But that was not all; they went on a nationwide anti-Ahmadi hate campaign using the pulpits in all their mosques to spread false propaganda about the Founder of the Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, calling him by all sorts of dirty names. Since the country was experiencing political turmoil and unrest at the time, they saw it opportune to agitate the already inflamed sentiments of unwary followers who believed every word that emanated from the pulpits. Out of fear for our safety and security, after much deliberation, we finally decided to seek relief from the courts.

Thus, in 1982, we filed for an interdict asserting our legal rights as Muslims and calling for the prohibition of the spread of malicious and defamatory matter directed at Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and members of our Movement. This action, we soon realised, required an expert witness to deal with the theological arguments raised by our opponents especially rebuttal of the false allegations made against Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who now became the central figure in the dispute.

This led to our first encounter with Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad who was informed of our dilemma. He sent us a very comforting telegram from Fiji where he served as a missionary for many years. His telegram was like manna from heaven that removed our fears and restored our confidence. It was later confirmed that despite his frail health he was determined to come to South Africa for the trial to exonerate the name of Hazrat Mirza Saheb.

Because of the exaggerated frenzy created by the clerics, the Ahmadiyya Case soon hit the headlines in South Africa and other parts of the world. Several High Court judges and government officials and clerics from Pakistan were listed as being seconded to come to South Africa to assist the local clerics who had by then already garnered the support of all the local ulema bodies in the country. Representing us was the single, slightly built Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad. The situation depicted a replay of the legendary David and Goliath encounter and for a while we had a taste of what the Muslims at Badr must have felt when they faced the might of the Quraish.

From a position of relative obscurity the name Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad, brave and valiant defender of the dignity and honour of the Mujaddid of the Age, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, soon became the buzz

amongst religious scholars, academics, and the media here in South Africa and abroad. We could not help sensing a Divine Hand at play that pointed to a mission far greater than the court case itself. It was indeed Providence that restored the Maulana's health that gave him the strength and made it possible for him to travel to distant South Africa to carry out his mission to the best of his ability, a feat we now all know he achieved *par excellence*.

In fact, when we look back at the career of this noble soldier of Islam, we see such providential intervention steering the young Sher Muhammad in a very specific direction towards the Mujaddid of the Age. Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad hails from the little town of Khushab, situated at the foothills of a mountainous range in the Punjab Province of Pakistan. His ancestors were seriously engaged in imparting religious instructions to the Muslims residing in that area. They were from the Ahle Hadith, Deoband School. They built their own mosque and were highly respected in the area for their learning and piety. Sher Muhammad started memorizing the Holy Quran from the early age of four years. He was schooled in religious matters by his father and grandparents in their mosque.

When he used to visit the local shop as a child, he always used to see the shopkeeper reading books. Out of sheer youthful curiosity he enquired from the shopkeeper what he was reading. The shopkeeper, an Ahmadi Muslim of the Qadian Jamaat, told him it was from the writings of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. When he was about twelve years old, he asked the shopkeeper to lend him some of the books to read. The shopkeeper refused, but offered him a space at the back of the shop where he could read the books. On reading these books, Sher Muhammad became convinced that the traditional belief that the prophet Jesus was alive in the heavens and will return to earth was not true according to arguments presented by the Promised Messiah from the Holy Quran. It is said he convinced his grandfather and his father of this.

At the age of fifteen, Sher Muhammad passed the Maulvi Fazal examination in Arabic and literature at the Punjab University. He then went to study at the Dar al Uloom in Lahore where he completed the Darsi Nizami course. At the time this was considered the highest course to study in religion and religious philosophy that qualifies a person to teach post graduate students. Now, well schooled in Islamic studies of the highest available rank, he kept studying the works of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and was soon convinced of his claims as Mujaddid of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Hijra, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi; but was still uncertain about 'prophethood' as expounded by his Qadiani friends. He

once attended their Jalsa in Qadian. Not satisfied by their explanations of prophethood, Hafiz Saheb told his friend, the shopkeeper, that he will not join their Jamaat till someone gives him a satisfactory explanation for the word *nabi* and the doctrine of *nubuwwat* as followed by them.

On his way back from Qadian, Hafiz Saheb was waiting for a connecting train at the Lahore railway station where it just so happened that he met a Lahori Ahmadi from his village whom he knew who was also waiting for the same train with his family. On his enquiry as to what he was doing there, Hafiz Sahib told him the story of his visit to Qadian. That gentleman advised him to go seek an explanation of his queries from Maulana Muhammad Ali. Both postponed their homeward journeys and went to see Maulana Muhammad Ali at Muslim Town, Lahore. On Hafiz Sahib's enquiry, Maulana Muhammad Ali explained in detail the concept around *nubuwwat*, the finality of prophethood and the context in which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad used the word in relation to himself. In a few minutes the whole matter became crystal clear to him. With this clarity of mind, he retired to the guest house for the evening. During the night he lay awake thinking about the logic and rationale of Maulana Muhammad Ali's explanation and by the next morning he had made up his mind what to do. That day, without anyone making any suggestions to him, he took the pledge at the hands of Maulana Muhammad Ali and joined the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore. He returned to Khushab and announced it to his family members and friends.

M H Sher Muhammad served under Maulana Muhammad Ali and held many roles in the Anjuman as editor and author of several booklets and articles. He served as a missionary in Fiji for several years. In the end he served as the vice-president of the Central Anjuman before returning to his Maker, *Inna lil lahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon!*

Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad came to South Africa in 1983. Despite huge logistical problems, he managed to bring with him a large amount of books and journals needed for the compilation of the monumental theological evidence. As soon as people came to hear of his presence in Cape Town, he received many visitors. Despite the enormity of the task that lay ahead, he never turned a visitor away and would welcome them with a pleasant smile accompanied by warm, jovial comments. Our greatest disappointment was the language divide. None of us knew any Urdu and could not communicate freely with him and we had so many questions to ask him. A good friend of the Jamaat that knew a bit of Urdu came to our rescue in the initial stages. It was much better when later Dr Zahid Aziz arrived as the official inter-

preter. Everywhere Hafiz Saheb went he was a veritable beacon of light and knowledge. He removed many misconceptions and doubts people had about Islam, the Ahmadiyya Movement, and its Founder. He exuded an excellent blend of knowledge, confidence, humility and sainthood and everyone that met him simply loved his company and talks.

However, preparing for the trial was an arduous task that involved many late nights and often working throughout the night. Hafiz Sher Muhammad had a unique yet a very effective style that he adopted in his defence of H M G Ahmad. His approach was to directly explain the writings of Mirza Saheb according to Mirza's own interpretations and not rely on some self-styled third party interpretations taken out of context that caused so much misunderstandings and confusion. This gave him the advantage over his learned opponents in the South Africa Case, none of whom it later emerged had studied all if any of the actual original works of Mirza Saheb. Hafiz Saheb's extensive knowledge even transcended what was contained in the standard works of the Anjuman. He proved that the writings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad encompassed all branches of Islamic theology, philosophy and metaphysics. Thus, the challenges presented by the South Africa Case, no doubt brought out the best in Hafez Saheb that most probably would have been lost to the world. His prized evidence has been captured in an encyclopaedic book entitled *The Ahmadiyya Case* compiled by Dr Zahid Aziz for all to see; especially invaluable for religious and legal scholars.

Due to the tireless efforts of Hafiz Saheb, the world now has clarity at their fingertips of contentious issues with regard to specific Islamic doctrines that have come into international spotlight with the rise of an extremist culture in the form of terror groups such as ISIS and others we are all too familiar with. These extremists thrive on sectarian divisionist ideologies which the ulema that opposed us are still struggling with and unable to provide clear guidance on except to succumb to the enlightened interpretations of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as espoused by the Maulana during the trial. At last, we have a clear legal definition of who is a Muslim and the true meaning of Jihad - that it does not mean aggressive, unprovoked violence with the aim to convert or punish!

After months preparing for the trial, the clerics on the morning when the trial started decided to throw in the towel and walked away in a state of self-inflicted, abject humiliation, on the grounds of a belated *fatwa* (legal opinion) that a secular court cannot determine who is a Muslim. A few years later they dismissed the validity of their own *fatwa* in a second case as we will see. However, although now not required by the Court to do

so, Hafiz Saheb nevertheless decided to deliver his full evidence, for the record, in the Supreme Court of Cape Town South Africa that now also served as an ideal open public forum for anyone to come and listen to his explanations of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's writings – that he did NOT lay claim to actual prophethood, period!

In the end, the Court ruled against the clerical body and others. I will read only the relevant part of the judgement: 'As against all three Defendants, Second Plaintiff (i.e. Ismail Peck) is declared to be a Muslim and as such to be entitled to all such rights and privileges as pertain to Muslims.' The Judge went further and declared that the 'First defendant (i.e. the clerical body) is interdicted from disseminating, publishing or otherwise propagating false, harmful, malicious and defamatory matter of and concerning members of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore South Africa, including second Plaintiff (i.e. Ismael Peck), to wit, that such members are non-Muslims, disbelievers, kafir, apostates, mur-tads, that they reject the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad, that they are non-believers and as such are to be denied admittance to mosques and to Muslim burial grounds, and that marriage with an Ahmadi is prohibited by Muslim law.'

The Judge, Justice J. Williamson had the following to say about Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad: 'In my estimation the witness is a man of great learning and integrity. He gave evidence before me for some six days and created an extremely favourable impression. I accept his evidence without hesitation.' – Judgement, 20<sup>th</sup> November 1985, Case 10058/82, in favour of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

In the second Case, a local Sunni Sheikh, Muhammad Jassiem brought a charge of defamation against the same clerical body and its president Sheikh Nazim Mohamed. Sheikh Jassiem was defamed because he refused to debar Ahmadis from attending his mosque. This time the defendants, contrary to their own *fatwa* produced in the first Case, approached a secular Court to determine whether Jassiem who refused to call Ahmadis kafir was a Muslim. This time they brought an expert witness namely Professor Ghazi from Pakistan to testify on their behalf against the teachings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Professor Ghazi was from the International University of Islamabad, Pakistan. And was later appointed as judge of the Shariat Appellate Court and still later became Federal Minister of Religious Affairs of Pakistan.

Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad was again approached to defend the beliefs of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad though no Ahmadi was a direct party to the case nor was the Court required to determine whether Ahmadis were Muslims or not. He was pitted against the best the oppo-

sition could present. On this occasion he gave extensive evidence from July to September 1987 under hostile cross-examination. In the end the Judge determined that it was not necessary to rule whether Jassiem was a Muslim or not as it was a clear cut case of defamation that he was subjected to by the head of the clerical body and for which he was awarded damages. However, in summing up the two expert witnesses the Judge had the following to say:

As a witness Professor Ghazi has the disadvantage that he correctly concedes that where the government of the day supports an idea – that idea flourishes...Of possible interpretations put on Mirza's words and actions, he always chose the worst...his evidence was often illogical inferences, unjustified.

Sher Muhammad who had to break down prejudice perhaps, not any identifiable opponent, impressed as more reasonable and tolerant (being interested in the spiritual advancement of Islam rather the Ahmadiism as such) than Ghazi whose interest lie in politics rather than spirituality... (Trial Court Judgement, Case 1438/86, page 94).

If we now compare the respected Judge's assessment of M H Sher Muhammad's testimony with the following words of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who said:

Our religion is the same Islam. It is not new. These are the same prayers, the same fasts, the same pilgrimage, and the same zakaat. But there is this difference that these duties had by now assumed outward forms only, **without any true spirit in them; we want to infuse in them the spirit of sincerity.** (*Ruhani Khaza'in*, no. 2, vol. ix, p.312).

We see the great moral victory Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad achieved.

So, to Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad of blessed memories we say, Dear Sir, you have been an Excellent Ambassador of the true spirit of Islam as revived by the Mujaddid of the Age, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in such a way that you deservedly attracted the admiration of an unbiased Supreme Court Judge and will continue to draw the admiration of all honest, fair-minded people around the world. We applaud you, Hafiz Saheb. You deserve a post-humous standing ovation. May Almighty Allah, the Best of Judges, reward you abundantly! May your life's work be an everlasting charity and nourishment for your soul, Ameen! ■

## The Servant of Ahmad

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's Love  
for the Holy Prophet Muhammad

By Dr. Haleema Saeed

[Dr. Haleema Saeed is an active member of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, currently residing and working in Pakistan. She devotes much time and effort in various programs for the Movement, both in Pakistan and for the USA branch. She is by profession a pediatric oncologist and dedicates time for service of others in humanitarian projects.]

He is our guide and leader, the source of guiding light;

His name is Muhammad, He is the dearest to my heart.

This verse from the poetry of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is a true reflection of the love and respect that he had for The Holy Prophet Muhammad. He considered him a guide in all affairs. Just as you need light in order to see in the physical world, he considered the Prophet Muhammad's shining example to be the source of spiritual light and guidance.

It is unfortunate that such a devoted follower of the Holy Prophet Muhammad has been misunderstood by so many people to the extent that many consider him a false claimant to prophethood. This is partly due to misconceptions about the concept of "*fana fir rasul*". *Fana fir rasul* means to be so totally absorbed by the example of the Prophet that you become a complete reflection of his personality. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed that due to his love and dedication to the Holy prophet, he had followed his example to such an extent that he had become like a living example or reflection of the Holy prophet. This is not a novel understanding. Khawaja Zia-Ullah Naqshbandi wrote:

The rank of *fana fir-rasul* is attained when all the characteristics and qualities of the Holy Prophet are to be found in one, and all one's deeds, movements, habits, devotions and meditations are exactly according to the manner of the Holy Prophet" (*Maqasid as-Salikeen*, p. 46, Lahore).

Thus, this is a commonly accepted concept amongst Islamic scholars and not something new that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad introduced.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad explains in his book *Ainah Kamalat Islam*:

At the end of every century, especially a century in which people have departed from faith and honesty, and one which is full of darkness, God raises someone who is a substitute for a prophet and whose nature reflects the image of the prophet. That substitute-prophet shows people, through his own being, the qualities of the prophet whom he obeys.

He attributed all his achievement and his communication with Allah to following the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. In his book, *Haqiqat-ul-wahi*, he writes:

All I am is through following the Perfect Prophet. It is through his guidance that I have found spiritual light and communication with Allah. He is the sun and we merely reflect his light. We remain aglow only as long as his guidance shines through.

His poetry reflects the same insights:

I am passionately in love with that spiritual light and I have given myself to him;

He (Prophet Muhammad) is of the essence, I am naught, and this is final.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad believed that The Holy Prophet Muhammad was a living prophet, meaning that his teachings and example are just as relevant in today's world as they were fifteen centuries ago and that even today it is possible to attain a close relationship with Allah through following the example of The Holy Prophet Muhammad. Through his lectures and writings, he emphasized that the blessings of former prophets have come to an end and Prophet Muhammad is the last prophet for all nations. Dr. Basharat Ahmad in his biography, *Mujadid-e-Azam* writes that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad believed that The Holy Prophet Muhammad is "the living and final prophet whose spiritual strength and blessings of prophethood continue today as they will continue till the end of time. After the advent of Prophet Muhammad, it is only among his followers that people have been born who through the blessing of following him perfectly have achieved nearness to God and have been blessed with communion with Him. It was his firm belief that there is no other living religion, besides Islam, and there is no other living prophet besides Prophet Muhammad (whose blessing of prophethood continues till today)". He expressed these thoughts in his poetry also.

We have tirelessly pondered along all avenues of thought;

Yet we have not found a Faith like the faith of Muhammad.

There is no other faith that can show true signs;  
This fruit we tasted only from the orchard of  
Muhammad.

We have veritably tried Islam for ourselves;  
Rise, we tell you that it is truly a radiant light.

O God! May Your unbounded peace and mercy be  
upon the Prophet;

Our Lord, we have taken this illumination from  
him.

These were not just words. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad dedicated his life to proving the truth of this concept. He repeatedly invited people to come and visit him in Qadian to see from his practical example the blessings of following the example of The Holy Prophet Muhammad. He wrote over eighty books and pamphlets about The Holy Prophet Muhammad and Islam. *Barahin Ahmadiyya* is a book from this stock of literature in which Hazrat Mirza produced such powerful arguments and irrefutable reasons for the truthfulness of the Quran and the prophethood of Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), that he offered a reward of ten thousand rupees to anyone who refuted even a single argument.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad could not bear to hear any disrespect for The Holy Prophet Muhammad. Whenever he engaged in interfaith discussions he set the condition that respect for leaders of all religions would be maintained. Whenever, he came across any book defaming the Holy Prophet Muhammad he immediately wrote a response. When he came across a book called *Umhat-al-Muminin* which contained false allegations against the honor of Prophet Muhammad and his pure wives, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was very hurt. He stated:

My peace has been shattered. It is easier for me to bear patiently the loss of my wealth or the slaughter of my children before my eyes rather than to see and be patient at the disparagement and defamation of Prophet Muhammad and his religion.

He wrote the book *Chashma Marfat* in response (and in defense of the Holy Prophet). He was so dedicated to this mission that he established a *Jamaat* (organization) for the sole purpose of propagation of the true concept of the religion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was truly a servant of The Holy Prophet Muhammad. His every action was in accordance with the Sunnah for The Holy Prophet Muhammad and he dedicated his life to serving the religion of The Holy Prophet Muhammad. I will end with the translation of a few verse from his own poem that

summarize his feeling for The Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Speak to me neither of heaven, nor of hell;

I spend my life like a man who is deranged with  
sorrow and concern for the religion of  
Muhammad.

Whenever the task of the restoration of the Faith  
is turning through my mind;

I become completely oblivious to the joys and sorrows  
of this temporal world.

May my very existence be sacrificed, in the love  
of Prophet Muhammad.

This then is my intention, my prayer and my  
heartfelt wish. ■

## Inner Reformation of the Individual

### True Objective #1

[Dr. Mohammed Ahmad is the President of the USA branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. In this paper, Dr. Ahmad shares Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's views on the primary objective of his mission being to facilitate the inner reformation of the individual – that is, to provide for the spiritual development of the soul. The lesson being, the objective of the Movement is not to simply win theological arguments or academic debates, but rather to achieve closeness to God.]

My dear brothers and sisters, assalamu aliekum. It is a pleasure to participate in this year's annual convention once, despite it being in a different format.

As you all know, Hazrat Mira Ghulam Ahmad was the Mujaddid (or Divinely-appointed Reformer) of the 14<sup>th</sup> century hijra. The work of such Reformers is to facilitate inner spiritual reform of individuals. That is, it is to facilitate human beings developing a closer connection or relationship with God. This is an important lesson that must not be forgotten. Certainly, Reformers clarify matters of belief and practice, but that is only a means to the end.

For instance, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad clarified many matters concerning Hazrat Isa (as), but the objective was not to simply win an argument regarding the correctness of certain beliefs. Indeed, he proved the belief in Hazrat Isa being alive for 2000 years in heaven, which is beyond the capacity of a human, is incorrect. He also proved the belief in Hazrat Isa (a prophet

of God) returning to earth after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, which would violate the entrenched principle of finality of prophethood in Prophet Muhammad, is incorrect. But these clarifications concerning Hazrat Isa have much deeper implications. By clarifying the matters concerning Hazrat Isa, Hazrat Mirza Sahib provides for a purer understanding of and appreciation for the Unity of God and the status of Prophet Muhammad. These clarifications are not meant to simply be accepted for arguments sake, but rather are to be a means for achieving a closer and purer connection with the Divine.

The true objective of inner spiritual reformation for the Jamaat is seen from the 10 Conditions of the *Baiyat* (or Pledge). To summarize, the 10 conditions of this covenant are as follows:

1. That till the last day of my life, I shall abstain from shirk (associating any partners with Allah).
2. That I shall keep away from falsehood, cruelty, adultery, dishonesty, disorder, rebellion and every kind of evil.
3. That I shall offer prayers five times daily.
4. That I shall not inflict injury on any of Allah's creatures.
5. That I will bear every hardship for the sake of Allah.
6. That I shall not follow vulgar customs and guard against evil inclinations.
7. That I shall discard pride and haughtiness, live in humility & meekness.
8. That I shall hold my faith, dignity, and the welfare of Islam dearer than my own life, wealth and children.
9. That I shall have sympathy for all of God's creatures, and devote my talents to their welfare.
10. That I shall establish brotherhood with Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, obeying him in all good things, and firmly adhere to these rules until the last breadth of my life.

Hazrat Mirza Sahib explains in his book *Kishi-e-Nuh* how these 10 conditions are meant to cause a spiritual change in the person. He writes:

Let it be clear that to affirm the covenant of *Bay'at* with the tongue alone amounts to nothing unless it is practiced with full, heartfelt resolve. Thus, whosoever fully acts upon my teachings enters that house of mine, concerning which God Almighty has promised in His Word: I shall pro-

tect everyone who is within the four walls of your home. This should not be taken to mean only such people who dwell in my house made of brick and mortar; rather, this also refers to all those who follow me completely and dwell in my spiritual home. To follow me, it is necessary for them to believe that they have an Omnipotent, Self-Sustaining God, who is the Creator of all things, and whose attributes are eternal, everlasting and unchangeable. He has no father and no son. He is above suffering, being crucified and killed. He is such that despite being far, He is near; and despite being near, He is far. Despite being One, His manifestations are diverse. For a person who brings about a change in himself, He becomes a new God for him and deals with him by means of a new manifestation. Thus, such a person experiences a change in God according to the change in himself. Yet no change takes place in God, for He is eternally unchangeable and possesses complete perfection, but when a person undergoes a transformation and begins to move towards virtue, God manifests Himself to such a person in a new way. At the time of every improved condition that manifests itself in a person, the manifestation of God Almighty's power also reveals itself to a greater extent. He manifests His might in an extraordinary way only when an extraordinary change takes place in a person. This is the root of all extraordinary happenings and miracles. The God so described is the fundamental bedrock of my community. Believe in Him and give precedence to Him over your own souls and comforts and over all your relationships; show sincerity and loyalty in His cause by exhibiting courage in your practice. Worldly people do not prefer Him over their means, and their kith and kin, but you ought to, so that you may be counted in heaven as belonging to His community.

In the same book, Hazrat Mirza Sahib provides an emotion appeal to transform one's ways to living a righteous life, as then only is one truly worthy of being in his community. He writes:

O ye people who consider yourselves members of my community! You will be counted as such in heaven when you truly tread upon the ways of righteousness. So, offer the five daily prayers in such fear and with such complete attention as though you were actually beholding God Almighty. Sincerely observe your fasts for the sake of God. Let everyone who is liable to pay the Zakat do so and anyone upon whom the Hajj has become obligatory and who face no hindrance ought to perform the pilgrimage. Do good in a

handsome manner and discard vice with disgust. Bear well in mind that no action of yours, which is empty of righteousness, can reach God. Righteousness is the root of all goodness. No action that is rooted in righteousness will go in vain. It is inevitable that you should also be tried with various forms of anguish and misfortune, just as the faithful before you were tried. Be on your guard, lest you should falter. So long as you have a firm relationship with heaven, the earth can do you no harm. Whenever harm befalls you, it will be from your own hands and not from the hands of your enemy. Even if you lose all honour on earth, God will bestow eternal honour upon you in heaven. So do not forsake Him.

He then goes on to write of the inner spiritual transformation that is the true purpose of the Movement; he states:

Be careful lest a few accomplishments delude you to think that you have sufficiently fulfilled your purpose. For God desires a complete transformation in your being and He demands from you a death whereafter He should revive you. Hasten to make peace with one another and forgive your brethren their sins. For he who is not inclined to make peace with his brother is wicked and will be cut off, because he is the cause of dissension. Part with your ego in every way and do away with mutual grievances. Be humble like the guilty, though truth be on your side, so that you may be forgiven. Do not feed your vanity, for those who are bloated cannot enter the gate to which you have been called.

Hazrat Mirza Sahib has written volumes on how to facilitate this transformation and progress on the path of spirituality. His paper *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam* is a prime example. He provides in detail an understanding of the nature of the soul, the various stages of the soul, the significance and purpose of trials and hardships, and the method by which base/animal desires can be transformed into high moral attributes. So, he has not simply lectured about the objective to be attained, but provided the detailed guidance needed to achieve it.

I will end my presentation here. May Almighty Allah help each of us in our journeys to achieve the moral and spiritual transformation required to truly be a part of Hazrat Mirza Sahib's Movement. And may He help us always remember this true objective, and not lose sight of it whenever engaging in debate about the correctness of theological views or religious interpretations. Thank you for listening, assalamu aleikum. ■

## Practical Work to Educate about the True Nature of Islam

### True Objective #2

*[Mrs. Samina Malik is the Vice-President of the U.S. branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement and is the Director-in-Charge of Translations and Publications. In this capacity, she has instituted the Movement's primary printing function for over 30 years, established a pipeline for the Movement's publications in the U.S. and U.K. markets, facilitated the distribution of the Movement's publications in all corners of the globe and brought several translation projects of Maulana Muhammad Ali's translation and commentary (as well as numerous other books by the Movement) to completion. In this article, Mrs. Malik provides a report on an important aspect of the Movement's objective to promote the true nature of Islam to the world – that is, to collaborate with like-minded organizations in the distribution of our publications in local regions.]*

Dear brothers and sisters, assalamu aleikum. I will be presenting to you today a report on the work being done by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society (which is the name of the USA branch of the international Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement) to continue the legacy of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's mission of reform.

### Review of Mission and Work of the USA Jamaat

The primary focus of our work is on publication. This includes, translation projects, coordinating printing in various parts of the world, and developing strategies for distribution on the ground. Another aspect of our work concerns establishing centers, to assist in the book distribution, and holding and participating in Conferences, seminars and lecture presentations which address the needs of local populations.

Our work also entails two approaches. One, is to educate non-Muslims about the religion of Islam – as a spiritual and inspiring faith distinct from the radical interpretations from extremist groups – so as to build bridges of understanding and commonality in multi-faith societies. And two, is to bring about reform in some Muslim societies where lack of proper understanding about Islam is giving rise to radical views and acts of violent extremism.

This idea of literature being the primary vehicle to bring about the correct understanding of Islam among both the Muslims and non-Muslims was advanced by Hazrat

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad himself and cannot be overestimated. He writes in his book *Izala-e- Auham*:

... So my advice is that ... writings of a good type should be sent into those countries. If my people help me heart and soul, I wish to prepare a commentary of the Holy Qur'ān as well, which should be sent to them after it has been rendered into the English language. I cannot refrain from stating clearly that this is my work and that no one else can do it so well as I, or he who is an offshoot of mine, and thus is included in me.

This was also the lifelong desire of Maulana Muhammad Ali, who fulfilled Hazrat Mirza Sahib's wish to translate the Holy Quran into English. Maulana Muhammad Ali expressed this desire on his death bed when he said: "Our work is to take the Quran into the World, after that, the Quran would do its own work."

Pre-World War II, the Holy Quran was translated into English, Dutch and German and together with other books of the Jamaat distributed through centers established by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in England (The Working Mosque) and Germany (Die Moschee), to facilitate their spread. The work however languished after Maulana Muhammad Ali's death in 1951, and came to a halt when the draconian Anti-Ahmadiyya laws were put into place by the Government of General Zia-ul-Haq in Pakistan. The Central Anjuman under the leadership of Dr. Saeed Ahmad of blessed memory then decided to shift the publication and translation work from Pakistan to the USA Jamaat. I was put in charge of the publication and translation work of the USA Jamaat in 1987, and since then, Alhamdulillah, our publication and translation work has increased by leaps and bounds.

The full complement of our English books including Maulana Muhammad Ali's incomparable English translation of the Holy Quran are now available worldwide, in print, e-book, App, and in the case of the English Quran in audio format as well. The advent of the digital age has increased the exposure of our books manifold. By the Grace of Almighty Allah, most of our literature has been translated into the world's major languages. Maulana Muhammad Ali's English translation of the Holy Quran has been translated into, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Chinese, Tagalo, Hebrew, Albanian, Turkish, and the commentary of the English Holy Quran has been translated into Arabic.

The most recent addition to the published Qurans is the Chinese translation of the Holy Quran. The translation and typesetting costs been paid by Dr. Mohammed Ahmad and Sister Lubna Ahmad. May Allah Almighty Bless and Reward them for their donation.

These Quran translations combined with those of our major books such as The Religion of Islam, Manual of Hadith, Muhammad the Prophet, Early Caliphate, Teachings of Islam, the New World Order etc. form a treasure trove of the healing message of Islam for a world wracked by conflict and bloodshed. We have distributed free, hundreds of thousands of copies of the Holy Quran to libraries, professors of theology and Islamic studies and individuals in Russia, Germany, India, the United States and Australia.

Besides distributing our literature, we hold conferences, symposia and lectures in different countries such as France, Holland, Turkey, Philippines, South Africa, USA, Egypt, Russia, Nigeria, Ghana and Kyrgyzstan. One very significant development in our efforts to promote a better understanding of the Ahmadiyya Movement has been the presentation of a paper titled *An Assessment of the Claim of Prophethood Attributed to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement* by Fazeel S. Khan at a conference held at the Faculty for Comparative Study of Religions and Humanism in Belgium. This paper – much of which forms the basis for our conference today – will be accessible to researchers throughout the world as it has been published by an academic journal and will be available on academic research databases. Insha Allah it will be very helpful in producing the correct understanding of Hazrat Mirza Sahib's claim and open the door for people to read his books without bias and prejudice.

#### **Current Practical Work by the USA Jamaat**

In this presentation, I would like to focus on the current work being done in Africa, especially in Mali, which is an example of the type of practical work in which we should be engaged.

Maulana Muhammad Ali once had a dream in which he saw that he was packing his suitcase to go to Africa. That trip, however, never took place. However, as events are unfolding, it appears that the significance of the dream was, that although, he himself would not go to Africa, his books would find wide acceptance there. In Mali, we have partnered with the Grand Sufi Sheikh Bilal Diallo, who is the religious leader of millions of people spread over several countries in French speaking West Africa.

On our first trip in 2018, I presented him a copy of the French Holy Quran and Religion of Islam. After reading Maulana Muhammad Ali's French Holy Quran translation, he has become a great admirer of Maulana Muhammad Ali, and is determined to make his Quran translation as the most widely read Quran translation in French speaking West Africa.

In February 2019, we again visited Mali to attend a jalsa sponsored by Sufi Cheick Bilal to introduce Maulana Muhammad Ali's Holy Quran French translation to his members. Sufi Cheick Bilal was very happy to receive the Qurans, and in the Jalsa, he held the Quran aloft and talked about the excellence of the translation in front of an audience of 1000 people.

In July 2019, we visited Mali for the opening ceremony of the *Maulana Muhammad Ali Center for the Holy Quran Distribution* which Noman and I had helped complete for storing the Holy Quran and other books of our Movement that the USA jamaat was shipping to Mali. It was a joy and pleasure to see people from Bamako and other parts of Mali receiving their share of the French Holy Qurans.

In November 2019, Noman and I were invited as guests of honor by Grand Cheick Sufi Bilal to attend a *moulud* conference marking the birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhammad in Bamako, Mali. In the conference we witnessed Cheick Sufi Bilal Diallo's love for Maulana Muhammad Ali's French translation of the Holy Quran. One of the main events in the three-day conference was to introduce Maulana Muhammad Ali's French Quran to the conference attendees. During his entry into the Stadium, the venue for the event, and throughout the proceedings, he held aloft the translation and praised it in front of the 40,000 strong cheering crowd. He gave a lecture on *Surah Al-Alaa* using Maulana Muhammad Ali's Holy Quran French translation. Noman and I also gave short speeches praising his wise leadership and his support of Maulana Muhammad Ali's French Holy Quran translation. On the last day of the jalsa which was on Sunday, I was asked to give a lecture for twenty minutes. I spoke on the Ahmadiyya Movement, the service rendered to Islam by Hazrat Mirza Sahib, and that we firmly believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the last and final Prophet. Everyone was very happy to listen to me.

To date, the USA jamaat has shipped the following books to Mali: 42,000 French Holy Quran, and six thousand each of the Religion of Islam, Manual of Hadith, Muhammad the Prophet, The Early Caliphate, Teachings of Islam, Introduction to Islam, True conception of Jihad, Islam the Religion of Humanity, Prophet of Islam, Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad, Introduction to the study of the Holy Quran, Message of Peace and the History of the Prophets. May Almighty Allah Reward and Bless all the members and Jamaats who have contributed to this project of distributing our literature in West Africa. Next year, inshallah, we will be sending them the following books: The Ahmadiyya Movement, Muhammad in World Scriptures, Muslim

Prayer Book, The Ahmadiyya case, Islam My Only Choice and Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

On our own we do not have the logistics to distribute our literature in such a vast area, but the Grand Sufi Cheick Bilal does. He has hundreds of Sufi centers scattered in these countries and these are being used as distribution outlets for our books.

Noman and I have also built a large 12,000 square foot, two storey building named the "Cheick Maulana Muhammad Ali Institute for Quran Studies". In this institute, Maulana Muhammad Ali's books will be utilized for the Islamic education of students which can serve as a prototype for how an entire generation of students in the region can be equipped with the knowledge to rebut the extremist ideologies being infiltrated into the region by Jihadist elements. (Please watch the video that will be played at the end of the conference). Sufi Cheick Bilal also arranged our visits to Dakkar and Touba in Senegal and sent his assistants, Cheick Sadjo and Khalifa Aly, to accompany us to these places and introduce us to the leading Cheick's in the area. Likewise, the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society has sent 10,000 copies of French Holy Quran to the Ivory Coast, where they have been distributed by the Grand Sufi Cheikh Bilal's deputy Sufi Cheick AbuBakr Konate who heads the Sufi organization in that country.

In March 2019, Noman and I had attended a Jalsa organized by Sufi Sheikh Abu Bakr Konate introducing the Maulana Muhammad Ali's French Holy Quran translation. At that time, we also met with the late president of the Ulema Council of the country Sheikh FoFano who was very pleased to receive the French Holy Quran translation. We donated 300 copies of the French Holy Quran to him for free distribution.

In addition to supplying our books to the French West African Countries, we have sent a large number of the English Holy Quran and other books of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement to the English-speaking countries in West Africa. We have sent tens of thousands of the English Holy Quran to the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Nigeria, which holds the same views as the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a Mujaddid (Reformer), but not a Prophet after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. The USA jamaat has also donated thousands of Holy Qurans to another liberal organization, The Islamic Education Forum in Lagos Nigeria.

In Ghana, by the Grace of Almighty Allah, we have been fortunate to find Dr. Hakim Wemah, a retired Veterinary doctor and high government official, who greatly admires Maulana Muhammad Ali's English Holy Quran translation and is passionate about spreading it in Ghana.

To date we have shipped him almost 30,000 English Holy Quran which he has distributed. May Allah Taala reward him and his son Rashid Wemah for the sacrifice of their time and resources they expend in arranging the Quran distribution. Inshallah, we will also supply them with other major books of our movement.

### Conclusion

In my concluding remarks, I would like to remind everyone about the precious gift that Allah, the Most High has bestowed on us in the form of Maulana Muhammad Ali's English Holy Quran translation and how important it is for us to share that gift with the rest of humanity if we are to fulfill our pledge to give preference to religion over worldly matters and bring peace to a troubled humanity.

Jazak Allah to those who have contributed towards this great striving in the way of Allah. May Almighty Allah Reward and Bless you for your sacrifice. Ameen. Thank you for listening to me. May Allah Taala Bless you all and keep you safe. Ameen! ■

## A Correction of an Error

By Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

[The following is an English translation (rendered by Dr. Zahid Aziz) of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's Urdu booklet *Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala*. In this booklet, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad corrects the error of one of his followers who was not well acquainted with his writings. The error by the follower was that he simply denied the word "prophet" was used by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in response to the allegation that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed prophethood. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad points out that such a response is insufficient, and that the follower should have rather explained the different significances of the word "prophet" and how Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad denied attributing the theological significance of the word to himself but has attributed to himself in his writings the metaphorical use of the word (as is common in the Sufi tradition) and the literal meaning of the word (to convey its lexiconic meaning). There is nothing new that is presented by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in this booklet, it is simply a summary of the three definitions he provides of the word prophet in his previous books (and the acceptable and unacceptable ways in which it may be attributed to him). Detailed explanatory notes of this booklet is available at: [muslim.org/no-claim/gh-notes.htm](http://muslim.org/no-claim/gh-notes.htm).]

Some people in our Movement who are not well-acquainted with my claim and the arguments relating to

it — not having had the occasion to study my books carefully, nor having stayed in my company for a sufficient length of time to complete their knowledge — in some instances in response to an objection of the opponents give a reply which is entirely against facts. So, despite being on the side of truth, they have to face embarrassment.

Thus it happened a few days ago that a person faced from an opponent the objection that "the man whose pledge you have taken claims to be a prophet (*nabi*) and a messenger (*rasul*)". This was answered by only a denial, while such an answer is not correct. The fact is that the holy revelation of God Almighty which descends upon me contains words such as *rasul*, *mursal* and *nabi*, not once but hundreds of times. So how can the reply be correct that such words are not present? In fact, at this time these words occur more clearly and explicitly than in the earlier days. And in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya* too, published 22 years ago, these words are not few.

Thus, in the Divine communications published in *Barahin Ahmadiyya*, one revelation from God is as follows: "He it is Who sent His messenger (*rasul*) with guidance and the true religion in order to make it prevail over all other religions" (see p. 498, *Barahin Ahmadiyya*). Here, this humble one has been clearly addressed as *rasul*. Then after this, in the same book, is the following Divine revelation regarding myself: "The messenger of God in the mantle of the prophets" (p. 504). Then quite near this in the same book is the following revelation: "Muhammad is the messenger of God; those with him are firm against disbelievers, compassionate among themselves." In this revelation I have been given the name "Muhammad" as well as *rasul*. Then there is the following Divine revelation noted on page 557 of *Barahin Ahmadiyya*: "A warner came into the world." Another version of it is: "A prophet (*nabi*) came into the world." Similarly in many other places in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* the word *rasul* has been applied to this humble one.

If it be said that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*, so how can another prophet come after him, the reply is that there certainly cannot come any prophet, new or old, in the way in which you people consider Jesus to descend in the latter days and believe him in those circumstances to be a prophet. In fact, it is your belief that *wahy nubuwat* [revelation exclusive to prophets] shall then continue for forty years, exceeding even the term of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Such a belief is undoubtedly a sin, and the verse "he is the Messenger of God and the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*" [the Quran, 33:40] along with the hadith "there is no prophet

after me” is conclusive proof of the absolute falsity of this view.

I am strongly opposed to such beliefs, and have true and full faith in the statement “he is the Messenger of God and the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*.” This verse contains a prophecy which our opponents know not. It is that God Almighty says in this verse that, after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, the doors of prophecies have been closed till the Day of Judgment, and it is not possible now for a Hindu or a Jew or a Christian or a nominal Muslim to apply the word *nabi* to himself. All the windows of prophethood have been closed, but one window, that of the path of *Siddiq*, is open, viz., *fana fir-rasul*. The person who comes to God through this window is made to wear, by way of *zill*, that same mantle of prophethood which is the cloak of the prophethood of Muhammad.

His being a prophet, therefore, is not a violation of sanctity because he gets all this, not from his own person, but from the fountain of his Prophet, and it is not for himself but for the glory of that Prophet. It is for this reason that his name in heaven is *Muhammad* and *Ahmad*. It means that the prophethood of Muhammad was in the end given only to Muhammad, though in the manner of *burooz*, but not to anyone else. Hence the verse: “Muhammad is not the father of any man from among you, but he is the Messenger of God and the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*” means: Muhammad is not the father of anyone from among the men of this world, but he is a father to men of the other world because he is the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*, and there is no way to the graces of God except through his mediation.

In short, my prophethood and messengership is in my capacity as Muhammad and Ahmad, not on account of myself. And I received this title in the position of *fana fir-rasul*. Hence, it makes no difference to the meaning of *Khatam an-nabiyyin*. However, the descent of Jesus would certainly make a difference.

It is also to be remembered that the meaning of *nabi* according to the lexicon is one who gives the news of matters unseen, having received it from God. Wherever this meaning applies, the word *nabi* will also apply. And a *nabi* must necessarily be a *rasul*, for if he is not a *rasul* he cannot receive news of the holy, unseen realm, the following verse being a bar against it: “He [God] does not make His unseen known to anyone except a messenger (*rasul*) whom He chooses.” [the Quran, 72:26-27]. If, after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the coming of a prophet according to this meaning is denied, it implies that one should believe that this *Umma* is destitute of Divine communication and revelation, because the person through whom news of the unseen from God is manifested, to him the meaning of *nabi* shall apply

according to the above verse. Similarly, he who is sent from God will be the one we shall call *rasul*.

The difference is that, after our Holy Prophet Muhammad till the Day of Judgment, there is no prophet to whom a new *shariah* is to be revealed, nor one who is granted the title of prophethood without the mediation of the Holy Prophet and without attaining to such a stage of *fana fir-rasul* that he is named Muhammad and Ahmad in heaven. And whoever makes such a claim indeed commits heresy.

The real secret in this is that the meaning of *Khatam an-nabiyyin* requires that, so long as there remains a veil of separation, if a person is called *nabi* he would be breaking the seal which is upon *Khatam an-nabiyyin*. If, however, a person is so lost in that *Khatam an-nabiyyin* that, due to a complete union and absence of difference, he has received his name, and the face of Muhammad is reflected in him as in a clear mirror, he will be called *nabi* without breaking the seal, because he is Muhammad, though in the manner of *zill*. Hence, despite the claim to prophethood of the person who has been given the names Muhammad and Ahmad by way of *zill*, our master Muhammad still remains *Khatam an-nabiyyin* because this second Muhammad is the image and the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him. Jesus, however, cannot come without breaking the seal because his prophethood is a separate one.

And if no person can be a prophet and messenger in the sense of *burooz*, then what is the meaning of the following: “Guide us on the right path, the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours.” [the Quran, 1:5-6]<sup>1</sup>

It should be borne in mind that, according to this sense, I do not deny prophethood and messengership. It is in this sense that the Promised Messiah has been called *nabi* in the *Sahih Muslim*. If one who receives news of the unseen from God is not to be called *nabi*, tell us what he should be called? If it is said that he should be called *muhaddas*, I say that in no lexicon is the meaning of *tahdees* ‘making known the unseen.’ The meaning of *nubuwwat* is, however, making known matters of the unseen. *Nabi* is a word which is common to Arabic and Hebrew. In Hebrew this word is *naabi*, and is derived from *naabaa* which means “to prophesy, upon receiving intimation from God. And it is not a requirement for a *nabi* that he should be a bearer of *shariah*. This is a mere gift by which matters of the unseen are disclosed. As I have received up to this time about 150 prophecies from God, and seen with my own eyes that they were fulfilled clearly, how can I deny the application of the word *nabi* or *rasul* to myself? And when God Almighty has himself given me these titles, how can I reject this, or fear someone other than Him?

I swear by God Who has sent me — and about Whom it is the work of the accursed to make fabrications — that He has sent me as the Promised Messiah. And just as I believe in the verses of the Holy Quran, similarly, without an iota of difference, I believe in the clear and open revelation of God which I receive, the truth of which has become evident to me by its repeated signs. I can swear on oath in the House of God that the holy revelation which descends on me is the word of the same God Who sent His word to Moses, Jesus and Muhammad *mustafa*, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him. The earth testified for me, and so did heaven. So also did both heaven and earth proclaim that I am the *khalifa* (appointed one) of God. However, according to the prophecies it was necessary that I should be denied, so those upon whose hearts are veils do not accept me. I know that God will certainly succour me, as He has ever been helping His messengers. None can stand against me, as he has not the aid of God.

Wherever I have denied prophethood and messenger-ship, it is only in the sense that I am not the independent bearer of a *shariah*, nor am I an independent prophet. However, in the sense that, having gained spiritual graces from the Messenger whom I follow, and having attained for myself his name, I have received knowledge of the unseen from God through the mediation of the Holy Prophet, I am a messenger and a prophet but without a new *shariah*. I have never denied being called a prophet in this sense. In fact, this is the sense in which God has addressed me as *nabi* and *rasul*. Nor do I now deny being a prophet and messenger in this sense. And my statement, “I am neither a messenger nor bearer of a scripture,” means only that I am not a possessor of *shariah* (*sahib-i shariah*).

Nonetheless, it must be imperatively remembered, and never over-looked, that despite being addressed as *nabi* and *rasul*, I have been informed by God that all these graces have not been bestowed upon me without mediation, but that there is a holy being in heaven, namely, Muhammad *mustafa*, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, whose spiritual benefit I have received. On account of this mediation, and by having submerged in him and having received his names Muhammad and Ahmad, I am a *rasul* and *nabi*, i.e., one who has been sent and one who receives news of the unseen from God. In this way, the seal of *Khatam an-nabiyyin* is preserved because I have received the same name in the sense of image and reflection, through the mirror of love.

If anyone is indignant at this Divine revelation, as to why God Almighty has called me *nabi* and *rasul*, it is his own folly because the seal set by God is not broken by my being a prophet and messenger.<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious that, just as I say about myself that God has addressed me as *nabi* and *rasul*, so do my opponents assert about Jesus, son of Mary, that he shall return to the world after our Holy Prophet, and as he is a prophet the same objection applies to his coming as the one levelled against me, namely, that the seal of finality of *Khatam an-nabiyyin* will be broken. But I say that after the Holy Prophet, who was actually the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*, my being called by the words *nabi* and *rasul* is not a matter for objection, nor is the seal of finality broken by it. For I have explained over and over again that, in accordance with the verse “others from among them who have not yet joined them” [the Quran, 62:3] I am that same prophet, the *Khatam al-anbiya*, in the sense of *burooz*, and twenty years ago in *Barahin Ahmadiyya* God named me Muhammad and Ahmad and declared me to be the very embodiment of the Holy Prophet. Hence, in this way, the Holy Prophet’s being the *Khatam al-anbiya* does not suffer at all by my prophethood because a reflection is not separate from its original. And as, in the sense of reflection (*zill*), I am Muhammad, the seal of *Khatam an-nabiyyin* does not break because the prophethood of Muhammad remained limited to Muhammad. In other words, Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, is the Prophet and no one else. As I am Muhammad in the sense of *burooz*, and all his attainments including his prophethood are projected as an image by way of *burooz* in my mirror of reflection, who is the other person that has made a claim to prophethood separately?

If you do not accept me, then understand it in this way that the promised Mahdi is to be akin to the Holy Prophet in creation and nature, and his name is to correspond to that of the Holy Prophet, i.e., his name too shall be Muhammad and Ahmad, and he is to be from his line (*ahl bait*).<sup>3</sup>

In some hadith reports, it is said that “he shall be from me.” This is a profound indication of the fact that, from a spiritual view-point, he shall be an offspring of the Prophet and an image of his spirit. A very strong evidence supporting this is that the words in which the Holy Prophet has described the relationship — so much so that the names of the two have been made into one — clearly show that he wanted to convey that this promised one would be his *burooz*, just as Joshua was a *burooz* of Moses. It is not necessary for the *burooz* to be a son or maternal grandson of the original person. However, it is necessary that, in terms of spiritual relationship, the *burooz* must be his offspring, and from the very beginning there must be mutual attraction and connection between them. It is, therefore, totally derogatory to the status of the Holy Prophet’s knowledge to think that he would leave aside the description which is nec-

essary to express the significance of *burooz*, and instead declare that he would be his maternal grandson. What has being a maternal grandson conceivably got to do with *burooz*? If such a connection was necessary for being a *burooz*, why was the imperfect relationship of being merely a maternal grandson required? It should have been son. However, God Almighty in His Holy Word has negated the Holy Prophet being a father of anyone, but has given the news of a *burooz*. If *burooz* is not meant, how could the comrades of this promised one have been considered as companions of the Holy Prophet in the verse “others from among them”? Denial of *burooz* implies a rejection of this verse.

People who think in physical terms have variously considered this promised one to be a descendant of Hasan, or of Husain, or of Abbas. But the Holy Prophet only meant that, like a descendant, he would be his heir — heir to his name, heir to his nature, heir to his knowledge, and heir to his spirituality — displaying his image within himself from every aspect. Not of his own self but from the Holy Prophet would he acquire everything, and would reflect his face through annihilation in him. Just as he shall receive his name, his nature and his knowledge in the sense of reflection (*zill*), in the same manner shall he receive his title *nabi*, because the *burooz* image cannot be complete if it does not possess the qualities of its original in every respect. Hence, as prophethood also is a quality of a *nabi*, it is essential for it to be manifested in the *burooz* image. All prophets have held that the *burooz* is a perfect image of its original, so much so that even the name becomes one. Therefore, it is obvious that, just as by being named Muhammad and Ahmad in the sense of *burooz*, there are not two Muhammads and two Ahmads, similarly by using *nabi* and *rasul* in the sense of *burooz* is not meant that the seal of *Khatam an-nabiyyin* has been broken, because the *burooz* does not have a separate existence. In this way, the prophethood bearing the name Muhammad remains limited to Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him.

All prophets, peace be upon them, have agreed that there is no duality in *burooz*, for the station of *burooz* is as described in the following saying:

“I become thou and thou become me, I become the body and thou become the soul, So no one can thereafter say: I am one and thou art another.”

If, however, Jesus returned to the world, how could he do it without breaking the seal of *Khatam an-nabiyyin*? In other words, the term *Khatam an-nabiyyin* is a Divine seal which has been put upon the prophethood of the Holy Prophet. It is not possible now that this seal could ever break. However, it is possible that the Holy Prophet, not only once but a thousand times, come into

the world in the sense of *burooz* and express his prophethood in the manner of *burooz* along with his other qualities. And this particular *burooz* was a confirmed promise from God, as He says: “Others from among them who have not yet joined them.”

The prophets do not feel their dignity violated by their *burooz* because such a one is their very form and image, but they would certainly feel it in case of someone else. Consider how Moses, when he saw the Holy Prophet Muhammad on the night of *miraj* rise higher than his station, wept to show his sense of self-esteem. So, considering that God has said that “no other prophet shall come after you”, if He were to send Jesus against His own word, how very hurtful would this act be to the Holy Prophet!

In brief, prophethood in the sense of *burooz* does not make any difference to the finality of prophethood, nor is the seal broken. But the coming of another prophet does undermine Islam, and it is a big insult to the Holy Prophet Muhammad that the great task of slaying the *Dajjal* (Anti-Christ) be accomplished by Jesus and not by him. And the holy verse “but he is the Messenger of God and the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*” is, God forbid, falsified by it. There is a hidden prophecy in this verse, namely, that a seal has been put upon prophethood till the Day of Judgment. And except for a *burooz*, which is the being of the Holy Prophet himself, none has the power to receive knowledge of the unseen from God in a clear and open manner like prophets. As the *burooz* of Muhammad which was promised of old is myself, prophethood in the sense of *burooz* has been bestowed upon me. The whole world is now helpless in the face of this prophethood because a seal has been put upon prophethood. A *burooz* of Muhammad, having all his qualities, was destined for the latter days, and therefore he has appeared. Except for this window, there is no other window left for obtaining water from the fountain of prophethood.

To summarise, the seal of finality is not broken by prophethood and messengership in the sense of *burooz*. But the concept of the descent of Jesus, which implies denial of the verse “but he is the Messenger of God and the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*,” does break the seal of finality. There is no trace of this meaningless and contradictory belief in the Holy Quran; and how could there be, as it is clearly opposed to the above verse. However, the coming of a *burooz* prophet and messenger is established from the Holy Quran, as is clear from the verse “others from among them.”

One subtlety of expression in this verse is that that group has been mentioned here which is considered as being included among the Companions of the Holy Prophet. But there is no explicit mention here of the

*burooz*, i.e., the Promised Messiah, through whom these people came to be considered as the Companions and regarded, like them, as being under the guidance of the Holy Prophet himself. This omission of reference is meant to indicate that the *burooz* does not have an existence of his own, and hence the seal of finality is not broken by his *burooz* prophethood and messengership. Therefore, in this verse he is treated as a non-existent being, and the Holy Prophet is mentioned in his stead.

Similarly in the verse “We have granted thee *al-kausar*” [the Quran, 108:1] there is the promise of a *burooz* in whose time *kausar* (abundance) will appear, i.e., fountains of spiritual blessings shall flow forth, and an abundance of people in the world shall become true followers of Islam. In this verse also, the necessity for physical progeny is belittled, and a prophecy is given of *burooz* offspring. And although God has bestowed upon me the privilege of being an Israelite as well as a Fatimi, having a share of both stocks, I give precedence to the spiritual relationship which is the *burooz* connection.

Now by all of this writing, I mean to say that ignorant opponents accuse me of claiming to be a prophet and messenger. I make no such claim. I am neither a prophet nor a messenger in the sense which they have in mind. However, I am a prophet and a messenger in the sense which I have just explained. Hence the person who maliciously accuses me of claiming prophethood and messengership is a liar and evil-minded. It is the form of *burooz* which has made me a prophet and a messenger, and it is on this basis that God has called me *nabi* and *rasul* again and again, but in the sense of *burooz*. My own self does not come into it, but that of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him. It was on this account that I was called “Muhammad” and “Ahmad”. So prophethood and messengership did not go to another person. What belonged to Muhammad remained with Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. ■

#### Author's Footnotes:

1. Remember that this *Umma* has been promised every blessing which was bestowed upon the earlier prophets and the truthful ones (*siddiq*). Among those favours are the prophecies and predictions on account of which the prophets were called *nabi*. But the Quran closes the door of the knowledge of the unseen to all except a *nabi*, or in fact a *rasul*, as is clear from the verse: “God does not make His unseen known to anyone except a *rasul* whom He chooses.” So to attain knowledge of the holy unseen, it is necessary to be a prophet. The verse “on whom Thou hast bestowed favours” testifies that this *Umma* is not deprived of the holy unseen which, according to the verse quoted, implies prophethood and messengership. But the direct path of attaining it is closed, and hence it must be acknowledged that, for this gift, the way of *burooz*, *zill* and *fana fir-rasul* is open.

2. What a fine point it is that, in this way, neither does the prophesied seal of *Khatam an-nabiyyin* get broken, nor are all the members of the *Umma* deprived of that sense of prophethood which corresponds to the verse “God does not make His unseen known to anyone ...”. But by bringing down Jesus, whose prophethood was established 600 years before Islam, nothing at all remains of Islam, and the *Khatam an-nabiyyin* verse is clearly falsified. The opponents will only abuse me for this, so let them. “The unjust shall know which final destination they will return to.”
3. It is known from the history of my ancestors that a grandmother of mine belonged to the noble family of *Saadat* and the *Bani Fatima*. The Holy Prophet has also confirmed this, and said to me in a dream: “Salmaan is from the people of my house, having the disposition of Hasan.” He named me Salmaan [a companion of the Holy Prophet, of Persian descent], which means “two *salm*”. *Salm* in Arabic means *reconciliation*, and thus it is destined that two kinds of reconciliation will take place at my hands. One is internal which will remove the internal enmity and discord, and the other is external which, by eliminating the causes of external opposition and demonstrating the greatness of Islam, shall incline the followers of other faiths towards Islam. It appears that by the Salmaan mentioned in Hadith is also meant myself, for the prophecy of two reconciliations was not fulfilled by Salmaan himself. I say, having received revelation from God, that I am of Persian descent, and according to the hadith in *Kanz al-Ummal* the Persians are from among the Israelites and the Holy Prophet's household. In a vision, Hazrat Fatima put my head upon her lap, and showed me that I was from her lineage. This vision is in *Barahin Ahmadiyya*.

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