

“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

October – December 2013

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. 90

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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.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.

## Rebutting Obsession (Part 2)

**Historical Facts Topple Film's Premise That Violent Muslim Fundamentalists are Nazis' Heirs, Expose its Fear-mongering**

**By Rabbi Haim Dov Beliak, Eli Clifton, Jane Hunter and Robin Podolsky**

*[This article was originally published in November 2008 by JewsOnFirst, an organization dedicated to the protection of the separation of church and state under the First Amendment. The article is a devastating critique of the 2005 film titled "Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West", which was delivered to people for free with local newspapers in various swing states leading up to the 2008 Presidential election. As the non-profit interfaith coalition Hate Hurts America argued, the film "cast[s] a wide net of suspicion against Muslims by blurring the line between violent radicalism and mainstream Islam." In this article, the authors (who are presumably all Jews) meticulously dismantle the fear-mongering objective of the film by presenting an historical account as to what led to current day conditions as well as identifying logical fallacies in the film's approach. Although the article deals with rebutting the film specifically, it is a valuable educational tool for rebutting the "clash of civilizations" theory in general. Produced below is Part 2 of article; Part 1 was published in the July-Sep 2013 issue]*

### Obsession: The Movie

*Obsession* opens with a quote from the conservative philosopher Edmund Burke: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." We are shown an image of a masked gunman, then offered the assurance that since "most Muslims are peaceful, this film is not talking about them"—after which what looks like a bloodstain becomes the traditional Islamic symbol, the Star and Crescent, to which is slowly added a gun. (The reader is invited to imagine how a clip of film made by a Muslim director, purporting to tell the "truth" about the West and opening with a similarly sinister image of a Christian Cross or Star of David would be received.) At this point the scary music, which has been keening quietly in the background, rises to a crescendo, and we are off.

The first commentator we see is Walid Shoebat. Shoebat now earns a living speaking and writing as an evangelical Christian who used to be a Muslim Palestinian terrorist. However, a report in the *Jerusalem Post*<sup>17</sup>, a publication not usually noted for sympathies that might lead it to go easy on terrorism, questions whether Shoebat has ever been involved with any violent terrorist act or, as he claims, a practicing Muslim. Shoebat's narration paints a picture of Americans going

about their daily lives in innocent ignorance when, suddenly, we are plunged into trauma-recalling images of the Twin Towers in flames. In rapid succession, hideous pictures of the carnage in New York are juxtaposed of equally horrific footage from bombings in Madrid, London, Bali, and of the school hostage crisis in Beslan, Russia, during which hundreds of people died in the course of a government raid.

The inclusion of Beslan in this initial whirlwind tour of terrorist violence exemplifies the lack of careful analysis that characterizes *Obsession*. First of all, in contrast to the deliberate bombings first mentioned, there is no doubt that the way in which the raid on the school, occupied by armed Chechen rebels, was handled by the Russian government, is responsible for the enormous loss of life. Second, the conflation of a nationalist movement that arose out of a fight for sovereign independence, and against the annexation of its country into Russia, with the internationalist Al Qaeda, which fights for a worldwide Muslim Caliphate<sup>18</sup> is an example of the failure of *Obsession's* makers to put the events it considers into their own particular socio-economic context. Instead, the film's director, Wayne Kopping said in an interview that this sequence is intended to show that these attacks are all fronts in the same war.<sup>19</sup> (It will be interesting, as relations between the United States and Russia become more strained, to see how this simplified narrative plays out. Currently, the militarist right wing in the United States is pushing for NATO's inclusion of Georgia and the Ukraine. This is a move that could oblige us to war with Russia if that nation attacks a NATO country. What then? Would not the Chechen rebels become our brave allies, as did fundamentalist forerunners of the Taliban in Afghanistan?)<sup>20</sup>

The introductory section of the film establishes the motif that will recur throughout: the double move in which we are assured that Muslims are not, in the main, sympathetic to terrorists — and are then confronted with stock images of praying Muslims accompanied by that same haunting music, which has, by now, become marked as a signifier for the alien menace, juxtaposed with violent leaders of Hezbollah and Hamas and angry young men destroying American flags. We are reminded pointedly that there are approximately a billion Muslims in the world. We are invited to wonder what percentage of them supports "radical Islam." Then we are assured by Daniel Pipes that the figure is about 10 percent, maybe 15 percent. A few things need pointing out. First of all, 10 or 15 percent is nothing close to a majority. Second, we are not told what "support" means or what evidence backs this statistic. Is Pipes discussing armed fighters or people whose only show of support lies in expressing angry sentiments to a pollster?

It may be useful here to interject some recent polling data that serves to render Arab and Muslim attitudes

toward the West and United States at once more complicated and more explicable than the way they are presented in this film. According to polls conducted this year by the Pew Global Attitudes Project, majorities in seven out of ten Muslim countries do indeed disapprove of terrorism (Jordan and Egypt are divided, although the sharp upward trend in the last two years in Jordan (32 percent increase) is to reject terrorism, as it is in Pakistan (23 percent increase). Only in Nigeria, in sub-Saharan Africa with its own preoccupying inter-religious dynamics, did a majority show sympathy for terrorism.) The vast majority of Western Muslims reject terrorism altogether. However, even within those populations in the Muslim world that reject terrorism and/or Osama bin Laden, negative opinions of the West remain high. It does not seem to be the case that disapproval of the West necessarily indicates sympathy for violent fundamentalism, although it is true that violent Islamic fundamentalists utilize anger at what is perceived as Western aggression as a means to recruit. Nor is disapproval of the West necessarily motivated by religion. Another recent poll, taken in Iran by WorldPublic Opinion.org, demonstrated a strong differentiation among many Iranians between Europe, which they tend to view favorably, and the United States, of which, at least as far as its policies go, they tend to disapprove. This same poll points to a significant plurality that would welcome negotiations with the United States and, also, a peace agreement to establish an independent Palestinian state — neighboring, not erasing, the state of Israel. This complicates the idea promoted by *Obsession*, that, for all Muslims, “the West” is seen as a monolith.

It does remain the case that, as anti-intuitive as it may seem to most Americans, Israel is still regarded throughout much of the Arab world, and other Muslim countries, such as Iran, as a provocative extension of the United States’ hegemonic power in the Middle East. Furthermore, the war in Iraq has driven down approval of the United States.<sup>21</sup> *Obsession* promotes a “clash of civilizations” perspective. It’s as though all geopolitics comes down to a contest between two internally unified opponents: “the Muslim world” and “the West.” The film makes no mention of the intricacies of national, sectarian and cultural interests that intersect in both groupings and around which alliances have shifted in the past and will, certainly, shift again. Here is a small list of examples of the complicating factors that are not discussed in *Obsession*:

The convulsion of armed conflict among Sunni, Kurdish and Shia Muslims in Iraq following the deposition of Saddam Hussein’s regime and the extent to which separation into walled ethnic districts has been necessary to diminish the violence;

- The extent to which conflicts between Islamic sects influence politics among Muslims generally;

- The delicacy with which the (mostly Shia and Persian, not Arab) Iranian government at first abjured criticizing the initial U.S. invasion of Iraq, because that incursion resulted in the destruction of a ruthless enemy with which it had fought a war during the period when Saddam was backed by the United States;
- The pragmatic alliance between Iran, which has a hybrid theocracy-parliamentary democracy, and Syria, the last Ba’athist, secular dictatorship;
- The defeat, in Pakistan — by a coalition in which liberal (unscarfed!) Muslims pushing for democratic reforms were strong — of a repressive dictator who had been backed, as an ally in its ‘war on terror’ by the Bush administration;
- And the situation in Africa’s Sudan, where one of the most horrifically genocidal acts ever committed by a Muslim-dominated government has been perpetrated in Darfur against fellow Muslims for reasons that have to do with politics, oil, money and “race,” and nothing at all to do with religion.

All of this is to demonstrate that attitudes among Muslims — Arab, Persian or otherwise — with regard to the United States and Europe are as situational and fluid as any other political actors’ would be.

### Through the Looking Glass

The traditional Islamic concept of *jihad* is treated as crudely as all else in the film. Again, the ostensible message, that mainstream Muslims must be distinguished from fanatics, is undercut by juxtapositions of women who appear to be going about daily business on the street, people praying; preachers calling for jihad in a general way that could be taken to mean the traditional call for self-reflection and internal struggle — and Palestinian children reciting poetry in anticipation of their own violent deaths. At this point, not for the only time, this film displays its own mirror image. Various Muslim speakers are shown suggesting that the United States is waging war on Islam and means to destroy it. This is, of course, just what *Obsession* is saying with regard to “radical Islam” and its intentions toward the West. Proponents of the film might argue that the United States is not bombing civilian Muslim targets; but, of course, that’s exactly how the bombing of Iraq and the carpet bombing of Lebanon by Israel, which is viewed as a U.S. proxy, with anti-personnel weapons during the summer conflict of 2006 are seen.

One of the uglier sequences in the film makes cynical use of Dr. Khaleel Mohammed of San Diego State University. Indeed, Dr. Mohammed has since condemned *Obsession* as a “vile piece of propaganda”<sup>22</sup> for which he has been “used.” Dr. Mohammed reminds the audiences that the traditional meaning of the word *jihad* is indeed “self-struggle,” a meaning confirmed by the avuncular John Loftus, identified only as “a former fed-

eral prosecutor.”<sup>23</sup> Just as the viewer may be settling into a sense of warm admiration for this admirable idea, up pops Shoebat again with the attention-getting remark, “*Jihad* may mean self-struggle... but so does *Mein Kampf*.” Suddenly, the nuanced meaning of *jihad* is obliterated, and we are advised that today, *jihad* “means struggle against the Jews.” Lest we misunderstand, we are treated to what has become viral YouTube footage of Sheikh Dr. Bakr al-Samarai having an especially wacky moment while preaching at Baghdad’s Al-Gailani mosque. Is the viewer to understand from this hateful image, employed in *Obsession* in connection with the concept of *jihad*, that those Muslims, in the United States and elsewhere, who take back the traditional use of the word and advocate for a *jihad* of the soul are to fear being labeled as terrorist sympathizers?

*Obsession* takes particular issue with the notion that antipathy for the United States in either the Arab or Muslim worlds (which often are conflated, or used as synonyms in this film, even when footage from a non-Arab country, such as Iran, is being shown—in fact, the film shifts from Arab to Farsi often, with no indication of such switching is given in the subtitles) might be attributable to any concrete set of causes. Speakers such as Nonie Darwish, a convert to Christianity and U.S. resident who was the daughter of an Egyptian army officer, insist that any attempt at introspection on the part of the people of the United States following the 9/11 attacks represents either craven self-hatred or a naïve misunderstanding of why the attacks were perpetrated.<sup>24</sup> Itamar Marcus of Palestinian Media Watch assures us that contrary to what “academia and the media” might hint, there is nothing to be gained from trying to understand violent attacks on the United States by Islamic fundamentalists in terms of any causality at all other than “ideology.” We are not to wonder why such ideology might be persuasive and to whom. It just *is*.

Immediately thereafter, however, commentators begin to suggest an analysis that they find acceptable. Loftus reappears to observe, cannily enough, that for dictators, another enemy of the people serves as a convenient distraction. Other pundits, including Darwish, chime in to agree that a society can be effectively distracted from its own problems and internal inequalities by a mobilization against a common, external threat. No kidding. Again, *Obsession* mirrors itself.

If the viewer is willing to resist the scolding and risk the pollution of self-hatred that must accompany an attempt to figure out why this decade has seen such a sharp rise in violent Islamic fundamentalism, then what is presented in *Obsession* as hateful and demonizing Islamic propaganda might provide a clue. Many of the examples of so-called Islamist propaganda that are decried in the film turn out to be news footage of the war in Iraq or videos that incorporate such clips. Much

of what is shown will appear extreme to American audiences who don’t watch foreign news broadcasts. We have learned to register a cliché when newscasters talk of “kicking down doors” and we have seen footage of the actual kicking; but we rarely see footage of what follows. The “propaganda” shows terrified women and children held at gunpoint, beatings, dead civilians, missile attacks on residential areas. A thickening anger on the part of viewers who identify more with the civilians than with the soldiers, and who have watched these images of an actual war, initiated by the United States, for years, can hardly be reduced to “ideology.”

### What’s This in Aid Of?

Viewed cold, the film, titled *Obsession*, appears to be concerned with a single issue: what its subtitle calls “Radical Islam’s war against the West.” However, as has been well documented, the Clarion Fund, the 501(c)(3) organization that produced and promotes distribution of the film, appears to be composed of people with links to the organized conservative movement in the United States and to the Israeli political right.<sup>25</sup> For fear of seeming partisan, and because he has had second thoughts about the hatred and suspicion that this film may provoke, Howard Gordon, executive producer of the TV series “24,” has recanted his endorsement of *Obsession*, which was quoted on the box containing the DVD. As quoted in *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*,<sup>26</sup> Gordon said: “The goal of co-existence and tolerance is not being served by films like *Obsession*.”

In this context, it is useful to look at a key talking point of 2008 Republican presidential candidate John McCain. It must be emphasized here that the use of this example is not intended to indicate that the McCain campaign had a direct hand in making or distributing *Obsession*, or that the Clarion Fund’s effort will cease after the November election. (To the contrary: a second film, *The Third Jihad*, expected to have a life after the election, is already in the works.) On the other hand, it is worth paying heed to the words of Tom Trento, founder of the website watchobsession.org, who says: “I’m doing a major educational outreach effort with this movie that will continue long after the election, but certainly I have a goal to wake people up and have them vote intelligently for our national security ... John McCain is the best choice.”<sup>27</sup>

Senator McCain has been consistent in referring to what he calls “the struggle against radical Islamic extremism” as a “transcendent struggle between good and evil.”<sup>28</sup> McCain also has said: “Any president who does not regard this threat as transcending all others does not deserve to sit in the White House.”<sup>29</sup> All other threats and in all contexts? (One immediately wonders about where nuclear proliferation or, in that context, the growing tension between the United States and Russia, or the threat of a global economic depression might fit.)

Along those lines, it is not insignificant that, on October 6, a McCain adviser was widely quoted as wanting to “turn the page” on the economic crisis. That favorite adjective, “transcendent,” is telling. We are not only being distracted from the manifold, unglamorous, murky aspects of our economic calamities, we are invited to direct our gaze upward — we are uplifted — into a glorious heroic narrative. In the face of squalid and baffling everyday frustrations, we are offered a gift of permanent meaning.<sup>30</sup>

**Is there any problem? Of course.  
Just not like they say there is.**

Certainly, some of the material drawn from popular Islamic cultures that *Obsession* displays is highly disturbing. There is a special perversity about children being taught to embrace a life of permanent warfare. The crudity and vehemence of categorical bias expressed against Jews and Americans is painful to watch and reflects a real antagonism. On the other hand, it would be wrong to imagine that the bias goes only in one direction. *Al-Jazeera*'s Stacey Kaufman has collected footage of small-town Ohio voters who turned out for a Sarah Palin rally referring (as though it were an insult) to Senator Barack Obama as a Muslim (he is, of course, a Christian); suggesting that when a “nigra” runs for president of the United States, he must be a manipulated front for some unseen force; and yelling abuse at Obama supporters, one of whom indicates that he has been called “the n-word” (he appears to be white) and threatened with physical harm.<sup>31</sup> Doubtless most Americans would be embarrassed and insulted if this behavior was viewed overseas as representative of our country — and yet the behavior and the thinking behind it do characterize a small but dangerous minority.

In *Obsession*, other examples of what are presented as the unique problems associated with Arab culture also seem oddly familiar. Dr. Wahid ‘abd al-Maguid of the Al-Ahram Center for Political Studies, an Egyptian think tank, is shown in a television interview, decrying the tendency to “violence” in “the Arab culture,” and sure enough, the footage that follows includes exuberant celebrations of extreme violence, including the attack on the Twin Towers — in a rap song combining some ska with obvious American gangsta stylistic influences. Dr. al-Maguid might have been an American sociologist warning grimly of the corrupting effects on youth of the video game “Grand Theft Auto” — or one of those weedy “elitist” types ruining the bare-knuckled masculine style favored in “dude culture” and in certain right-wing sectors of this country.<sup>32</sup> This is not to say that Arab cultures do not operate from their own specific imperatives. But the conflation of all such cultures, for an audience of people who are mostly unfamiliar with the complexities of the Middle East, is more misleading than useful. The few images of lone speakers

who promote tolerance are contrasted with vociferous preachers of jihad, which is always presented to mean violence. This failure to reflect the complexity of Islam denies Muslims’ varied identities, their day to day activities and broad range of concerns. *Obsession*'s own denial of context and history not only misinforms its audience, it is liable to foment a hatred equal to that which does exist.

The part of that section of *Obsession* called “*Jihad* in the West,” depicting what it calls a threat of “infiltration” in the United States, might be the film’s most blatant appeal to the American viewer’s fear. Continuing the motif of simultaneous accusation and reassurance, we are warned by the pundits of *Obsession* that enemies walk among us. Says Nonie Darwish, “Of course, not all Muslims are like that, but America has to wake up. We have been infiltrated ... and we are strangling ourselves with our political correctness.” More than once, the twin demons of the “the media” and “political correctness” are invoked to warn against any namby-pamby liberal tendencies toward excessive respect for the sensibilities of shady minority populations.

This shibboleth of “political correctness” has come to stand for a tangle of constructs according to which any critical thinking or provision of unflattering information about our government’s conduct, or even any search for a complex analysis, is at once egg-headed, “elitist,” actively disloyal and contemptuous of “ordinary” American folk. This dismissal of the demands on civic life incumbent on citizens of a constitutional republic founded by immigrants is, of course, as contemptuous in its assumptions about the capacity for thought of “ordinary” Americans as it is possible to be.

The internal enemy is portrayed through a spectrum of images, ranging from footage of flag desecrations by men from the Islamic Thinkers Society (a New York-based fringe group that wishes to establish an international Muslim caliphate and whose website depicts John McCain and Barack Obama as sinners), to European-born violent extremists, and the late Palestinian national leader Yassir Arafat (who was in the United States to conduct peace negotiations with the late Yitzhak Rabin, subsequently murdered by a violent fundamentalist of the Jewish, not Muslim, variety). Pundits such as Darwish and Steven Emerson of The Investigation Project indicate that the “deception” is so faradvanced that “we are losing the battle.” Far more frightening than images of overt European radicals, such as Abu Hamza al-Masri, are the repeated hints by militarist pundits, such as Caroline Glick of the Center for Security Policy, who warns of a growing underground of “minorities,” and “immigrants” who may dress and act “like Americans” but are plotting our destruction. How the rest of us are to distinguish such people from the “good” Muslims is not made clear — although an

article by Zeyno Baran posted to the Clarion Fund's site, RadicalIslam.org<sup>33</sup>, indicates that all major Muslim civil rights organizations in the United States have been infiltrated and that the good Muslims don't need to "organize politically" anyway. This is an extravagant claim. Members of anti-bias organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League might be surprised to hear that their work, for respectable Jews, was never necessary.<sup>34</sup>

Any demurral this picture of the "Fifth Column" might stir is condemned preemptively as "denial." The film ends with the implication that it is up to the "good" Muslims to prove themselves. As a positive example, we are shown a clip of Muslims marching and chanting, "Death to terrorists."

### An Alternative Vision

At one point, toward its conclusion, *Obsession* features footage of Muslim clerics calling for a world united under the guidance of Islam interspersed with images of bloody violence. The viewer is never told which of the clerics featured are calling for international missionary work and which are calling for armed conflict. What might a Muslim audience, unfamiliar with the nuances of Western culture, make of footage devoted to calls by fundamentalist Christian preachers, to "bring the world" to their faith? Or footage of the unique culture of Christian "prayer warriors" speaking about their international ambitions? Particularly if such quotes were interspersed with footage of the Iraq war, along with the inflammatory rhetoric of those evangelical chaplains who aver that they are going to Iraq in order to fulfill a Christian mission.<sup>35</sup>

What if such a film were also to include footage of the bombing, by a right-wing extremist with ties to the white supremacist Christian Identity Church, of the federal building in Oklahoma City that resulted in over 100 deaths? And what might they then make of footage of the subsequently firebombed Holocaust Museum in Terre Haute Indiana, on the wall of which was written, "Remember Tim McVeigh"? Would it not be grossly unfair, even for people unfamiliar with the history and cultures of white American Christians to, after viewing such a film, regard all such people with suspicious distaste?

Should the United States government have declared martial law in white militia territories in the Northwest when they were at the height of their influence in the early 1980s? Should we have detained all young men with ties to white supremacist or Christian Identity organizations? Was not — is not—the violent combination of those forces genuinely dangerous? People can be both dangerous and, after being effectively isolated, marginalized. Timothy McVeigh was an eccentric, a pathetic figure, until he and his confederate actually managed to murder many people. The white suprema-

cist, Christian Identity movement still bears watching. But its members don't seem to be in any position to take over the country, and it's just as well that our civil liberties were never curtailed in the effort to stop them.<sup>36</sup>

It is true that there are violent Muslim fundamentalists who regard themselves as engaged in a holy war against the West. Such people must not be allowed to murder anyone. But why should we echo *their* self-serving narratives of glorious, epic, transcendental struggle with complementary epic narratives of our own?<sup>37</sup> And why on earth would we shrink from a cold-blooded analysis of how such groups rose to any position of influence — what conditions promote their growth and what developments would serve to isolate them?

Finally, since it is true that, as the makers of *Obsession* take care to state again and again, most Muslims are not in favor of terrorism, let alone actual terrorists, what is served by making our acceptance of the majority of our Muslim citizens conditional on their having rehearsed a set of denunciations and frantic denials? Doesn't it make us more vulnerable to terror — to increasing numbers of us feeling terrified and alone — to inflame categorical prejudices based on religion or ethnic origin? Should we not meet our compatriots as we find them and evaluate each person on his or her own merit? ■

### Endnotes

17. *Jerusalem Post*, March 30, 2008: "The Case of the Palestinian "Terrorist" Turned Zionist," by Jorg Luyken.
18. The Caliphate is the political leadership of the Muslim polity in classical and medieval Islamic history and juristic theory. For a more nuanced understanding, turn to the Nixon Center's website, The National Interest, to John O. Voll's article entitled "Revivalism, Shi'a Style" a review of *Makers of Contemporary Islam*.
19. Interview by Arutz Sheva internet television, October 28, 2008.
20. Let's remember that *Rambo III* was dedicated to "the gallant people of Afghanistan" during the period in which the United States was allied with Muslim fundamentalists in their fight against Soviet domination.
21. "Arab Perceptions of the West," Communique Partners 2006, at the website for Communique Partners, and also at the website Islam Perceptions: Toward a More Balanced View of Islam in the West.
22. ObsessionWithHate.com
23. Loftus, a former intelligence officer, is a spokesman who may prove embarrassing to the makers of *Obsession* if they want to maintain their mainstream credentials. Loftus definitely has gone off-message more than once. The reader is invited to visit John-Loftus.com where, in addition to screeds against "Islam and Terrorists," one may find references to the close ties between the Bush family and Saudi government and, further, between the Bush family and the Nazi regime — a reference that might prove especially discomfiting given *Obsession's* message with regard to the Nazi "legacy."

24. See the *Los Angeles Times* article and Jim Holstun's review of her book at the Electronic Intifada.
25. JewsOnFirst.org, "Insertion of millions of *Obsession* DVDs in swing-state newspapers appears to aid McCain campaign," September 14, 2008.
26. Rob Eshman, *The Jewish Journal*, October 15, 2008, "Return to Sender."
27. Ibid.
28. See, for example, *The New York Times*'s transcript of the 3rd Republican debate, p. 28, and "Remarks by John McCain to the Los Angeles World Affairs Council," March 26, 2008, from www.johnmccain.com.
29. "Remarks by John McCain to the Los Angeles World Affairs Council," March 26, 2008, from www.johnmccain.com.
30. The extent to which the worldview expressed in *Obsession* mirrors that of the forces it seeks to oppose is demonstrated by Al Qaeda's enthusiasm for John McCain, who shares their vision of a glorious, epic battle, albeit from the other side. "The Endorsement From Hell," by Nicholas D. Kristof, *The New York Times*, October 25, 2008
31. *Al Jazeera*, October 15, 2008.
32. In this context, it is telling to remember that Sayid Qutb, an influential leader, in the 1950s, of the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, has famously recounted his formative and negative impressions of U.S. culture in terms that many cultural conservatives in the U.S. would appreciate. Said Qutb, after attending a church dance during which the lights were dimmed and couples danced to "Baby, It's Cold Outside": "It is difficult to differentiate between a church and any other place that is set up for entertainment, or what they call in their language, 'fun.'" Qutb's forays into racism would certainly be unacceptable today in the polite company of conservatives, although in the 1950s that may not have been the case. Said Qutb, of the American: "Jazz is his preferred music, and it is created by Negroes to satisfy their love of noise and to whet their sexual desires." See "The Man Behind Bin Laden," by Lawrence Wright, *The New Yorker*, September 16, 2002.
33. "The Roots of Violent Islamist Extremism and Efforts to Counter It," www.radicalislam.org.
34. Takaki, Ibid.
35. Reinharz, Ibid.
36. Jeff Cohen, FAIR: Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting website, September 19, 2001. "Rule of Law vs. Rule of War: Are Media Missing the Lesson of Oklahoma City?"
37. Along those lines, see *The Washington Post*, October 22, 2008: "On Al-Qaeda Web Sites, Joy Over U.S. Crisis, Support for McCain" and *Slate Magazine*, October 22, 2008: "Why Do Terrorists Love to Strike Around Elections" by Daniel Benjamin. It should come as no surprise that Al Qaeda would welcome the candidate who sees it as it sees itself and could be counted on to echo the grand assertions that give Al Qaeda's efforts meaning.

## The Power of Reconciliation

### A Tribute to Nelson Mandela

By Ebrahim Muhamed

*[On December 5, 2013, the world mourned the death of South Africa's first black president and anti-apartheid icon, Nelson Mandela. Mr. Mandela provided the world with a modern example of the value and strength of forgiveness and reconciliation. In this article, Mr. Ebrahim Muhamed, President of the South Africa branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, pays tribute to Nelson Mandela and his example of unwaveringly upholding the universal principle of justice, a legacy for which he will be remembered and admired by future generations.]*

At the conquest of Mecca, 1400 years ago, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) demonstrated to the world the power of reconciliation. By granting blanket amnesty to his bitterest foes, he won over the hearts of the masses of Arabia.

In choosing a path of reconciliation over bloody vengeance to address the injustices of the past, Nelson Mandela proved to an ailing world struggling to come to terms with widespread violence and injustice, the efficacy of the Holy Prophet's example. Muslim leaders should take note! Almighty Allah places His Beneficence on whomsoever He wishes. He indeed blessed Mandela with such wisdom seriously wanting in contemporary Muslim leaders who, in most cases, pay lip service to the efficacious teachings of Islam and the Practice of the Holy Prophet and are thus unable to make any impression of note in the world. Instead they are frowned upon as weak, oppressive with unenviable human rights track records. Nelson Mandela was not a Muslim by Faith, but he carried with him the spirit and soul of a true Muslim and sincere follower of Muhammad (PBUH) more so than any of his contemporaries. For this he has been elevated to the position of the most celebrated and respected leader of the current age by all the known leaders of the world. David Cameron, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, puts it very well when he said that with the departure of Mandela, a great light went out in the world.

Against all odds, Nelson Mandela achieved a peaceful transition from the oppressive, inhumane conditions under apartheid to a state of freedom and dignity for all. We have covered almost two decades of peaceful coexistence in a country once marred by racial hatred and oppression of the worst kind. Although much of the socio-economic imbalances of the past still need to be resolved, the climate of "Ubuntu" (an ancient African word meaning 'humanity to others') which was created by Nelson Mandela and company in tackling the problems facing the nation, sent out a powerful message to all politicians, statesmen and human rights activists all

over the world that tolerance, reconciliation and forgiveness sustained by a remarkable strength of character and moral fibre of the leadership are more powerful than ‘guns and bullets’ in the quest for peace. The world is still marveling at this great achievement.

The United Nation’s Deputy Commissioner for Human Rights Kyung-wha Kang in her address to the UN Human Rights Council in a speech entitled **“Tolerance and reconciliation are key to a just and equitable society”** summed it up nicely: “To a greater or lesser extent, all countries still battle with intolerance towards those perceived to be different and it is incumbent upon all of us to combat this attitude. Fortunately, every so often throughout history,” she said “an individual emerges whose strength of character and personal commitment to equality and justice serve as a powerful inspiration to all of us and remind us that one person can make a difference. Nelson Mandela is such a man.” Drawing inspiration from the example of Mandela for promoting and protecting human rights without distinction as to race, colour or national or ethnic origin, the Council reflected on current human rights situations worldwide with regard to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Mandela devoted his life to the service of humanity – as a human rights lawyer, a prisoner of conscience, an international peacemaker and the first democratically elected president of a free South Africa. At the request of the Council, the UN Human Rights Office organized a panel discussion on the promotion and protection of human rights through tolerance and reconciliation. Kang said that there is still much to be done to rid the world of the scourges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance. “We should keep in mind the importance of tolerance and reconciliation as essential ingredients of a just and equitable society,” she added.

In her opening remarks, she said that during 27 years of imprisonment, Mandela “did not allow bitterness and resentfulness to poison his heart and cloud his mind.” “He steadfastly refused to succumb to acrimony and showed us that human rights can be promoted and protected through tolerance and reconciliation,” she added. And she concluded with a quote from Mandela’s autobiography “‘Long Walk to Freedom’”: “No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

Bill Clinton, former president of the United States and a great admirer of Nelson Mandela, said he questioned Mandela:

“Tell me the truth: when you were walking down the road that last time didn’t you hate them,”

“He said briefly: *‘I did. I am old enough to tell the truth.’* He said: *‘I felt hatred and fear but I said to myself, if you hate them when you get in that car you will still be their prisoner. I wanted to be free and so I let it go.’*”

“He said: *‘People can take everything from you. I lost my family, the chance to see my children grow up, the best years of my life. They can take everything except your mind and your heart. Those things I decided not to give away’* He looked at me and smiled and said: ***neither should you.***”

Clinton concluded: ***“That is a lesson that every human being on earth had better learn sooner or later...”***

In this Note we will remember Nelson Mandela by some of his quotes (courtesy Spiritual Notes):

*“Difficulties break some men but make others.”*

*“I like friends who have independent minds because they tend to make see problems from all angles.”*

*“Real leaders must be ready to sacrifice all for the freedom of their people.”*

*“A fundamental concern for others in our individual and community lives would go a long way in making the world the better place we so passionately dreamt of.”*

*“Everyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve success if they are dedicated to and passionate about what they do.”*

*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”*

*“For to be free is not merel one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.”*

*“Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies.”*

*“Lead from the back - believe they are in front.”*

*“I hate race discrimination most intensely and in all its manifestations.”*

*“A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination.”*

*“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.”*

The arch-Bishop Desmond Tutu summed up nicely what Nelson Mandela stood and died for:

“My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.” ■

## The True Significance and Benefits of the Annual Gathering of the Community (Jalsa Salana)

by Maulana Muhammad Ali  
(translated by Dr. Mohammad Ahmad)

*[This article is a transcript of a Jummah khutba (Friday congregational prayer sermon) delivered by Maulana Muhammad Ali on December 15, 1922. While explaining relevant verses from the Quran, Maulana Muhammad Ali addresses the importance and true purpose for the annual gathering of members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, a function instituted by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement) himself. Maulana Muhammad Ali passionately appeals to members of the organization to not only value the annual gathering by making all attempts to attend, but to also ensure that the function is devoted its true purpose of reviving the objective of propagation of the true teachings of Islam in the world.]*

I bear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah. After this I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

*“Only those are believers who believe in Allah and His Messenger, and when they are with him on a momentous affair, they go not away until they have asked leave of him. Surely they who ask leave of thee, are they who believe in Allah and His Messenger; so when they ask leave of thee for some affair of theirs, give leave to whom thou wilt of them, and ask forgiveness for them from Allah. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.*

*Make not the calling among you of the Messenger as your calling one of another. Allah indeed knows those who steal away from among you, concealing themselves. So let those who go against his order beware, lest a trial afflict them or there befall them a painful chastisement.”*

*Now surely Allah’s is whatever is in the heavens and the earth. He knows indeed your condition. And on the day when they are returned to Him, He will inform them of what they did. And Allah is Knower of all things.” (24: 62-64)*

### Quranic Prayers expressed in a Congregational Form

Al Fatihah is the essence of the Holy Quran. By studying this chapter we arrive at the conclusion that Allah,

The Most High, has chosen His words for all of mankind and not for a single individual. We do not find any prayer in this chapter which reflects individual intent or supplication, such as *I* am asking for this, or have mercy on *me*. What we find instead is, “Thee do *we* serve, and Thee do *we* beseech for help.” (1:5) “Guide *us* on the right Path” (1:6). Similarly we find in the Holy Quran, “Our Lord, punish *us* not if *we* forget or make a mistake” (2:286). We do not find, ‘do not punish *me* if *I* forget or make a mistake.’ Most prayers in the Holy Quran thus have a congregational mode of expression.

Some people raise the objection as to why the Holy Prophet asked to be guided on the right path, and whether he was not already on it? There is no doubt that he was certainly on the right path; in fact his prayer was for others to be guided towards it. He asked for guidance towards the right path for others. In my opinion if I pray and in my prayer I do not include my brethren, it would indeed be very lamentable. Our hearts should cry out before Allah on behalf of all. We should pray for others besides ourselves, our relatives, our community, for all Muslims, indeed for all of humanity.

The Holy Quran frequently adopts this type of format. These verses that I have recited are from the chapter *Al Nur* (The Light). This chapter frequently discusses matters which relate to a person, his home or family. Towards its end, in these verses, we are told that these individual matters are not as important as those which relate to the whole body or congregation. Thus it is stated:

*“Only those are believers who believe in Allah and His Messenger, and when they are with him on a momentous affair, they go not away until they have asked leave of him.”*

### The Momentous Affair

What is this momentous affair? All the very important tasks related to the whole congregation and nation, are included under this heading. It is not mentioned here that those believers actually attend this momentous occasion. It is implied in the words, ‘they do not go away until they have asked leave of him,’ indicating that attendance on such occasions is certainly even more essential. The need for attendance is further stressed in the words, “Surely they who ask leave of thee, are they who believe in Allah and His Messenger”; attending such a momentous affair, therefore, becomes a very important condition of faith. These words further emphasize the importance given to the matter. All of this is further strengthened by the words, “so when they ask leave of thee for some affair of theirs, give leave to whom thou wilt of them,” indicating that all who seek permission cannot get it except those whom the Holy Prophet permits. The words, “and ask forgiveness for them from Allah. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful,”

show that even leaving after seeking this type of permission is also not something very commendable and forgiveness of Allah is needed for this action. This clearly proves the importance of participation in such important matters of national interest.

### Calling of the Messenger

Further on we are enjoined, “Make not the calling among you of the Messenger as your calling one of another.” Contrary to this, in this day and age we notice that people readily join gatherings to which they are invited by others. If there is a gathering of poets or a meeting to recite poetry or some other social occasion, people participate enthusiastically in such gatherings. Such enthusiasm is, however, seldom noted when a meeting is arranged to discuss the word and command of the Holy Prophet. The command of Allah was that you should give more importance to the call of the Prophet than to your mutual invitations and not look at them as being at par with each other. There are perhaps very few other events which the Muslims treat with such callousness as they manifest towards the calling of the Prophet. If a friend invites us to his house for dinner we are ready to walk a distance of several miles to participate in this event. But if it is time for prayer, people make all kinds of excuses not to attend. The consequences of such neglect are expressed in the words, “Allah indeed knows those who steal away from among you, concealing themselves. So let those who go against his order beware, lest a trial afflict them or there befall them a painful chastisement.” Careful thought in this matter leads me to the conclusion that all the trials and afflictions faced by Muslims in this age are a consequence of not giving any importance to the call of the Prophet.

What is the calling of the Prophet? Has this call expired and as a result are these verses abrogated? The calling of the Prophet includes all those matters that were the purpose of the Holy Prophets mission. Wherever this purpose is fulfilled, that is the call of the Prophet. The work of the Holy Prophet was to exalt the name of Allah The Most High. That is the reason you are told not to consider this calling like any ordinary invitation. This calling for the work of the Holy Prophet has not come to an end and his invitation is still very much alive. All Prophets and messengers have passed away, but the message of the Holy Prophet is still alive and will remain so till the Day of Resurrection. His calling still invites towards God.

If from amongst the servants of the Holy Prophet someone calls us towards religion and the word of God, his voice is also the calling of the Holy Prophet. In this age a servant of the Holy Prophet stood up and called us towards the word of Allah. He revived the same call which was the call of the Holy Prophet. His calling was the calling of the Holy Prophet. He has now passed

away. You are now there to keep alive this calling. You took a pledge at his hands that you will continue this revival of the Holy Prophets call.<sup>1</sup>

### Our Annual Gathering

An important part of this calling is our annual gathering (*jalsa*). This is not a fair or an exhibition. The purpose of this gathering is to keep alive the objective for which we have taken the pledge.

It is through such gatherings that tranquility (*sakinah*) descends upon and strengthens the hearts of the participants. Take for example the obligatory prayers. We could recite those within our homes. What then is the purpose of congregational prayers five times a day? It is for acquiring this tranquility and moral strength. These gatherings are further expanded through the Friday prayers (*Jumma*) and the prayers of the two Eids. Muslims from all over the world are then enjoined to gather at the Kaabah to further advance this feeling of tranquility and unity. One often hears the stories of hard heartedness of the pilgrims, but it is for certain that even the most stonehearted persons melt and fall in submission to Allah when they witness the gathering of the pilgrims dressed in simple white robes on the plain of Arafat. Many people have admitted that the way ones heart falls in submission before Allah during this experience is quite unique.

Many of our friends have not understood the purpose of our annual gathering. If somebody attends this gathering to meet a friend or give an offering or kiss some one’s hand to show his reverence and respect, then they might as well have not come. The main purpose of this gathering is to pray together for the success of the work that we have undertaken. To collectively ponder upon ways and means of accomplishing and advancing the task that we have committed to and to benefit from each other’s advise in this matter.

I emphasize this to members of my organization that they should, “Make not the calling among you of the Messenger as your calling one of another.” Those of you who are present here are listening, but I am also addressing those of our friends who are not present. I am addressing all of them to hearken to the call of the Holy Prophet and together find ways of reviving this call. Try to find ways of removing the difficulties that are arising in its way. Pray before Allah The Most High to make it easy for us to propagate His word.

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In the second *Khutba* (sermon) Maulana Muhammad Ali further added these words:

I am asking you again to dedicate these days to the task that is in front of us in the form of this annual gathering. Remember that there is no better cause to serve

Islam than its propagation. There are other ways to serve Islam but this is the foremost. This was the task of the companions of the Holy Prophet. They left their homes and spread all over the world to carry out this work. The *Mujaddid* (Reformer) of this age also invited us to this task. You should come to attend this gathering and also bring others with you, so that they may witness whether it is the name of Allah that we propagate in the world or our own name. What else do we propagate except, ‘Nothing deserves to be worshipped besides Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.’ Even those who have foolishly made Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed a “prophet” cannot convey any other message than this. When you ask them what is it that they propagate when they go abroad, they admit it is the very same message of ‘Nothing deserves to be worshipped besides Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.’<sup>2</sup>

So you should come yourself and bring those who are under your influence and show them that we propagate the name of Allah and ask them to join you in propagating this message of the Unity of God. ■

### Endnotes

1. Reference is being made to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the mujaddid (reformer) of the era and founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement.
2. Reference is being made to the Qadian section of the Ahmadiyya Movement, which introduced the belief that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a “prophet”, a belief which led to the split in the movement and the creation of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement.

## Lessons on the Quran:

### Sura Al-Baqarah, Section 35

By Fazeel S. Khan, Esq.

*[Lahore Ahmadiyya members in various locations gather each week for a Quran study group via skype. The study group commenced with lessons from Sura Fatihah and continued with a subsequent section of the Quran every week. Members take turns presenting on a particular section, and discussion from all participants follow. This article is based on a lesson presented to the study group by the Editor. It deals with Section 35 of Sura Al-Baqarah.]*

This section is titled “How Dead Nations are Raised to Life” by Maulana Muhammad Ali in his commentary, and deals with Prophet Abraham and the promise given to him about his descendants being made into a great nation. The section, although relatively short (only 3 verses), provides a lot of information. For instance:

- It provides facts about the history of the Israelite nation;

- It provides a parable explaining what is meant by the terms “causing death” and “giving life” in relation to nations;
- And it provides an illustration of *how* nations are given life after appearing to have been dead.

This section also assists in the understanding of some of the previous sections better – it helps the reader more clearly see a theme about kingdoms and nation-building leading up to this section. Interestingly, this section also allows one to see a parallel of sorts between the lessons on reformation of nations and distinctive beliefs pertaining to the role of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat.

### Chapter 2, Verse 258

The verse first in this section states:

“Hast thou not thought of him who disputed with Abraham about his Lord, because Allah had given him kingdom? When Abraham said, My Lord is He Who gives life and causes to die, he said: I give life and cause death. Abraham said: Surely Allah causes the sun to rise from the East, so do thou make it rise from the West. Thus he who disbelieved was confounded. And Allah guides not the unjust people.” (2:258)

Maulana Muhammad Ali explains in his commentary that the majority of commentators understand the words “because Allah had given *him* kingdom” to refer to the person with whom Prophet Abraham was debating (whose name is given as Nimrod in the Book of Genesis). But the minority view, and the one he finds preferable, is that the personal pronoun “*him*” refers to Prophet Abraham. And Maulana Muhammad Ali cites 4:54 in support, which states: “*We have given to Abraham’s children the Book and the Wisdom and We have given them a grand kingdom.*” Moreover, Maulana Muhammad Ali notes that since the discussion arises out of the promise given to Prophet Abraham that his descendants would be made a great nation, it is clear that the reference here is to the life and death of *nations* and not an individual. So, the significance (or lesson to be learned) in this verse is that it is a promise to the Muslims that they too will be raised to great eminence, although they were at the time in a state of insignificance (which is what is really meant by the term “raising the dead to life” when referring to a community or nation).

And when we review the previous sections, we see that this interpretation of the “*kingdom*” referring to Prophet Abraham (and not his adversary) makes perfect sense. We can see a theme based on prophets and them being granted kingdoms. Beginning back in Verse 246, reference is made to “*leaders of the Children of Israel after Moses*” asking for a “*king*” to be raised up so that they may fight in the way God. And in the following sections, several examples are given of prophets, who

were granted kingdoms or a nation of followers. For instance, in Verse 247, it states: “Surely Allah raised **Saul** to be a king over you.” And in response to the query as to how this could be because he was not granted “*abundance of wealth*”, we are told that the qualities he did have were “*abundance in knowledge*” and “*physique*”. And then in Verse 251, we’re given the example of **David**, who slew Goliath and, we’re told, “Allah gave him kingdom and *wisdom*”. And then we are given the example of Prophet **Jesus** (who today has the largest nation of followers) and we are told he was given “*clear arguments*” and was “strengthened with the Holy Spirit”. Thus, just as the previous sections dealt with prophets and their being granted kingdoms, it is perfectly logical for the reference to the “kingdom” in the first verse of this section to also refer to a prophet, in this case Prophet Abraham.

And the discussion that follows between Prophet Abraham and his adversary in this verse reveals the application of the qualities of the prophets previously noted (that is the qualities of “**knowledge**”, “**wisdom**” and “**clear arguments**”). Here Prophet Abraham proves the superiority of God over all other things that are worshipped (whether a living being or a celestial body like the sun), through *knowledge*, *wisdom* and *clear arguments*. And it seems to be suggested that this is the manner in which one becomes a true leader of a nation – through appealing to others’ intellect and sense of rationality, not through force and imposing one’s views on others (as was explained last week when dealing with the Verse 256, which states: “there is no compulsion in religion – the right way is clearly distinct from error”).

### Chapter 2, Verse 259

The next verse in this section states:

“Or like him who passed by a town, and it had fallen in upon its roofs. He said: When will Allah give it life after its death? So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him. He said: How long hast thou tarried? He said: I have tarried a day, or part of a day. He said: Nay, thou hast tarried a hundred years; but look at thy food and drink — years have not passed over it! And look at thy ass! And that We may make thee a sign to men. And look at the bones, how We set them together then clothe them with flesh. So when it became clear to him, he said: I know that Allah is Possessor of power over all things.” (2:259)

Maulana Muhammad Ali explains that town referred to here is Jerusalem (as it was left after its desolation by Nebuchadnezzar in 599 BC) and that this verse is referring to Ezekiel’s vision (as related in detail in the bible). In this vision, the “*bones*” represent the fallen condition of the house of Israel. And, the causing of the prophet to die for one hundred years symbolizes the death of the

Jewish nation due to the desolation of Jerusalem, which covered a period of almost one hundred years. Hence, in this vision, Ezekiel is a symbol of the Jewish nation, and his symbolic death for a hundred years represents the sorrows and afflictions of Israel for a similar period, after which they were once more to be restored to life. And, again, this is a continuation of the underlying significance that the Muslim nation too, despite being in a sorrowful state at the time, would also one day rise to eminence.

Furthermore, the particular reference to the “bones” and how Allah “clothes them with flesh” seems to have a consistent significance with the same terms used in the Quran when describing the stages of *human* development in the gestational period. It seems to be suggested that just as man is created from insignificant dust, nations too may start off as desolate towns. And just as the clot in the womb develops from a type of bone matter to being clothed with flesh, so too can nations develop into more stable and recognizable forms or entities over time. The significance then may also be that just as a tiny embryo can develop into a human being (that species that is of great eminence, being the “ruler” on earth), so too can insignificant and desolate communities rise to become eminent nations on earth.

### Chapter 2, Verse 260

The next verse in this section states:

“And when Abraham said, My Lord show me how Thou givest life to the dead, He said: Dost thou not believe? He said: Yes, but that my heart may be at ease. He said: Then take four birds, then tame them to incline to thee, then place on every mountain a part of them, then call them, they will come to thee flying; and know that Allah is Mighty, Wise.”

The first part of the verse is quite fascinating. In one of our previous dars’ we talked about stages of spirituality and levels of one’s personal faith. And the first part of this verse shows a very human element to spirituality and to faith. Here, Prophet Abraham, the great patriarch of organized religion, and the source from which most of the world today derives its monotheistic belief, is shown as seeking some confirmation or some clarity for faith. Not because he didn’t believe, but so as to strengthen his belief. As it is very beautifully put, so “that my heart may be at ease”. And this again is a reminder that the true kingdom of God is not comprised of a worldly nation or force, but rather dwells within the heart of man; as we noted previously, Verse 248 explains that the true kingdom is achieved when one’s heart is in a state of “tranquility”.

Maulana Muhammad Ali explains that this verse is a natural sequel to Verse 258, which speaks of the manifestation of Allah’s power in the life and death of nations. The answer to Prophet Abraham’s question as

to “how” Almighty Allah gives life to dead nations is presented in the form of a parable: if one is to take four birds and tame them, they would obey his call and fly to him even from distant mountains. And the lesson being, that if the birds obey this call of a person, the person not being the bird’s creator or master, certainly nations can submit to the call of the Creator of the entire universe and Divine Master of all.

### Parallel with Ahmadiyya Jamaat

To end this lesson, I’ll share some interesting parallels that I noticed in the key features presented in the 3 verses of this section and particular beliefs of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat concerning the grand reformation of the Muslim nation in the latter days:

- In the first verse, reference is made to the question as to whether the sun can rise from the West. And we are all aware of Prophet Muhammad’s prophecy that in the latter days, the sun indeed will rise from the West. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement) explained the true significance of this prophecy. He explained that the “sun” does not refer to the actual sun but rather the “sun” (or “light”) of Islam that will shine from the West giving light to other parts of the world. And understanding this interpretation allows one to better appreciate the soundness of the argument being made in this verse. That is, that not only does God raise the sun from the East (which the adversary had no power to change), but He is also powerful enough to raise the sun (or light) of Islam from the West (notwithstanding how insurmountable the task may seem).
- In the second verse, mention is made of nations becoming desolate for one hundred years. And this seems to parallel the Holy Prophet Muhammad’s prophecy about “*mujadids*” (or reformers) who would appear every one hundred years to revive the nation of Islam. And the reference to “bones” being “clothed with flesh” suggests this is only a *revival*, putting flesh on the bones that are already present, not creating something new. And it may be understood as an explanation of *how* the sun (of Islam) will rise from the West – that is, through the work of one of its *mujadids*.
- And in the third verse, mention is made of the birds flying back to Prophet Abraham, a parable for people inclining towards the divine will. Similarly, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had a vision in which he was standing in a building in England (which symbolized the *West* at the time), and white birds were flying towards him. In line with the previous analogies, this appears to be a confirmation of sorts that this rising of the sun of Islam from the West, in which people will be

inclined towards this religion, will indeed come through the hands of one of the *mujadids*, and that *mujadid* would be Hazrat Mirza Sahib.

As a result, the three verses in this section about the reformation of nations, and in particular the Muslim nation, coincide with key features of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat’s understanding of how the religion of Islam will become prominent again in the latter days: that indeed Allah (swt) would make the sun of Islam rise from the West in the latter days; and that such reformation will take place at the hands of the *mujadid* of the age; and that despite being from an insignificant town from the other side of the world, the hearts of people from all over will incline towards Hazrat Mirza Sahib’s interpretations and philosophies on Islam, because in essence his teachings are only a revival (or giving flesh to the bones) of the divine message of the Quran. ■

## No Claim to Prophethood (Part 2)

### Twenty arguments proving Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad never claimed prophethood

#### From “The Ahmadiyya Case”

*[Reproduced here is Section 11 of the “Evidence” segment of the book “The Ahmadiyya Case”. “The Ahmadiyya Case” deals with the famous court case in South Africa concerning whether members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement are Muslims. In addition to the case history and judgment, a compilation of the evidence presented during the trial is presented in the book. The particular section reproduced here summarizes the evidence presented in the previous sections which clearly rebut the common allegation that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement) claimed prophethood. It was the innovation of this belief after Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had already died that caused the split in the Ahmadiyya Movement and the creation of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. The entire book “The Ahmadiyya Case” is available online at: [www.muslim.org/sa-case/intro.htm](http://www.muslim.org/sa-case/intro.htm)] The first seven arguments were presented in the previous issue; following are the remaining 13.*

#### 8. Eighth Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he would not have called himself a follower and subordinate of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, as he has written:

- “Almighty God says [in the Holy Quran]: *wa ma arsal-na min rasul-in illa li-yuta ‘a bi-izn Allah*. That is, every messenger (*rasul*) is sent to be a master and leader, not to be a disciple and subordinate of someone else.” (*Izala Auham*, p. 569)

- ii. “No messenger (*rasul*) comes into the world as a disciple and subordinate. Rather, he is a leader, and follows only his revelation which descends on him through angel Gabriel.” (*Izala Auham*, p. 576)
- iii. “I have not made any claim to prophethood (*nubuwwat*). This is your mistake, or perhaps you have some motive in mind. Is it necessary that a person who claims to receive revelation should also be a prophet (*nabi*)? I am a Muslim, and fully follow Allah and His Messenger.” (*Jang Muqaddas*, p. 67)

### 9. Ninth Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he could not have written, as he has done, that because Jesus was a prophet he cannot now return to this world after the Holy Prophet Muhammad:

- i. “Apart from these arguments, the second coming of Jesus is also barred by the verse: *wa lakin rasul-Allahi wa Khatam an-nabiyyin* [i.e. Muhammad is the Messenger of God and Last of the Prophets]; and also by the Holy Prophet’s Saying: *La nabiyya ba’di* [There is to be no prophet after me]. How could it be permitted that, despite our Holy Prophet, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, being the *Khatam al-abiya* [Last of the Prophets], some other prophet should appear sometime and the ‘revelation of prophets’ commence.” (*Ayyam as-Sulh*, p. 47)
- ii. “In the verses *al-yauma akmal-tu la-kum dina-kum* [‘This day have I perfected for you your religion’], and *wa lakin rasul-Allahi wa Khatam an-nabiyyin*, God has clearly terminated prophethood with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, and has stated unequivocally that the Holy Prophet is the Last Prophet. ... But those people who would have Jesus return to this world believe that he shall come with his prophethood, and for a full forty-five years the angel Gabriel shall come to him with the ‘revelation of prophets’. Now tell us how, under this belief, anything would be left of the finality of prophethood and the ending of the ‘revelation of prophets’? In fact, one would have to believe that Jesus is the last of the prophets.” (*Tuhfa Golarwiya*, p. 83)
- iii. “Our unjust opponents do not consider the doors of the termination of prophethood to be fully closed. In fact, they believe that a window is still open to enable the Israelite prophet Jesus to return. If, therefore, a real prophet came into the world after the Holy Quran, and the process of ‘revelation of prophets’ (*wahy nubuwwat*) commenced, what would happen to the doctrine of the termination of prophethood? Would the revelation of a prophet be known as anything other than *wahy nubuwwat*?” (*Siraj Munir*, pp. 2 – 3)

### 10. Tenth Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he could

not have written that there is no need of a prophet now, after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, because the Holy Quran has brought religious laws to perfection. He wrote:

“God speaks to, and communicates with, the saints in the Muslim nation, and they are given the colour of the prophets. However, they are not prophets in reality because the Quran has fulfilled all the requirements of a perfect religious law. They are given but the understanding of the Quran. They neither add to, nor subtract from, the Holy Quran.” (*Mawahib ar-Rahman*, pp. 66 – 67)

### 11. Eleventh Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he would not have considered the words ‘prophet’ (*nabi*) and ‘messenger’ (*rasul* or *mursal*), as occurring about him in his revelations, to be in a purely metaphorical and linguistic sense, as opposed to their technical sense. He wrote:

- i. “Do not level false allegations against me that I have claimed to be a prophet in the real sense. ... It is true that, in the revelation which God has sent upon this servant, the words *nabi*, *rasul* and *mursal* occur about myself quite frequently. However, they do not bear their real sense: ‘To each the terms he uses’. So this is the terminology of God, that He has used these words. We believe and acknowledge that, according to the real meaning of *nubuwwat* [prophethood], after the Holy Prophet Muhammad no new or former prophet can come. The Holy Quran forbids the appearance of any such prophets. But in a metaphorical sense God can call any recipient of revelation as *nabi* or *mursal*. Have you not read those Sayings of the Holy Prophet in which occur the words *rasulu rasul-illah* [‘messenger of the Messenger of God’]? The Arabs to this day call even the message-bearer of a man as a *rasul*, so why is it forbidden for God to use the word *mursal* [messenger] in a metaphorical sense too? Do you not even remember from the Quran the words: ‘So they [some non-prophets] said, We are messengers to you’? Consider justly whether this is a basis for *takfir* [calling a Muslim as *kafir*]. If you were questioned by God, what argument would you have for declaring me to be a *kafir*. I say it repeatedly that these words *rasul* and *mursal* and *nabi* undoubtedly occur about me in my revelation from God, but they do not bear their real meanings.” (*Siraj Munir*, p. 3)
- ii. “By virtue of being appointed by God, I cannot conceal those revelations I have received from Him in which the words *nubuwwat* and *risalat* occur quite frequently. But I say repeatedly that, in these revelations, the word *mursal* or *rasul* or *nabi* which has occurred about me is not used in its real sense. (Such words have not occurred only now, but have been present in my published revelations for sixteen years.

So you will find many such revelations about me in the *Barahin Ahmadiyya*.) The actual fact, to which I testify with the highest testimony, is that our Holy Prophet, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, is the Last of the Prophets, and after him no prophet is to come, neither an old one nor a new one. ... But it must be remembered that, as we have explained here, sometimes the revelation from God contains such words about some of His saints in a metaphorical and figurative sense; they are not meant by way of reality.” (*Anjam Atham*, footnote, pp. 27 – 28)

### 12. Twelfth Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he would not have denied in his books and speeches making a claim to real prophethood, taking the words *nabi* (prophet) and *drasul* (messenger) as being in a metaphorical sense, for the metaphorical cannot be real. He wrote:

- i. “This humble one has never, at any time, made a claim of *nubuwwat* or *risalat* [prophethood or messengership] in the real sense. To use a word in a non-real sense, and to employ it in speech according to its broad, root meaning, does not imply heresy (*kufr*).” (*Anjam Atham*, footnote, p. 27)
- ii. “When God speaks to someone very frequently, and reveals to him His knowledge of hidden matters, this is prophethood (*nubuwwat*), but it is not real prophethood.” (*Malfuzat Ahmadiyya*, vol. x, p. 421)
- iii. “God has called me *nabi* by way of metaphor, not by way of reality.” (*Al-Istifta*, Supplement to *Haqiqat al-Wahy*, p. 64)

### 13. Thirteenth Argument

A famous Saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, narrated by Nawas ibn Sam’an and recorded in the Hadith collection *Sahih Muslim*, refers to the Messiah to come *asnabi* (prophet) of God. If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he would not have considered this occurrence of the word *nabi* to be metaphorical, as he wrote:

- i. “The epithet ‘prophet of God’ for the Promised Messiah, which is to be found in *Sahih Muslim* etc. from the blessed tongue of the Holy Prophet, is meant in the same metaphorical sense as that in which it occurs in Sufi literature as an accepted and common term for [the recipient of] Divine communication. Otherwise, how can there be a prophet after the Last of the Prophets?” (*Anjam Atham*, footnote, p. 28)
- ii. “And it should also be remembered that in *Sahih Muslim* the word *nabi* has occurred with reference to the Promised Messiah, that is to say, by way of metaphor.” (*Ayyam as-Sulh*, p. 75)
- iii. “These words are by way of metaphor, just as in Hadith also the word *nabi* has been used for the Promised Messiah. ... And he who discloses news of the unseen, having received it from God, is known

as *nabi* in Arabic. The meanings in Islamic terminology are different. Here only the linguistic [root] meaning is intended.” (*Arba’in* no. 2, p. 18, footnote)

- iv. “Similarly, the Promised Messiah being called *nabi* in Hadith, is not meant in a real sense. This is the knowledge which God has given me. Let him understand, who will. This very thing has been disclosed to me that the doors of real prophethood are fully closed after the Last of the Prophets, the Holy Prophet Muhammad. According to the real meaning, no new or ancient prophet can now come.” (*Siraj Munir*, p. 3)

### 14. Fourteenth Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he would not have considered himself as a *muhaddas* (a Muslim saint who receives Divine revelation), because they are not prophets, nor would he have limited the significance of the word *nabi* (prophet) about himself to extend only as far as sainthood. He wrote:

- i. “I firmly believe that our Holy Prophet Muhammad is the Last of the Prophets (*Khatam al-anbiya*), and after him no prophet shall come for this nation (*umma*), neither new nor old. Not a jot or tittle of the Holy Quran shall be abrogated. Of course, *muhaddases* 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 coloured with the colour of prophethood. I am one of these.” (*Nishan Asmani*, p. 28)
- ii. “There is no doubt that this humble one has come from God as a *muhaddas* for the Muslim nation.” (*Tauzih Maram*, p. 18)
- iii. “The *muhaddases* are those persons who have the privilege of Divine communication, and their souls bear the utmost resemblance to the souls of the prophets. They are living reminders of the wonders of prophethood, so that the subtle issue of Divine revelation may not become a mere tale in any age, due to being devoid of proof.” (*Barakaat-ud-Dua*, p. 18)
- iv. “As our Leader and Messenger, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, is the Last of the Prophets (*Khatam al-anbiya*), and no prophet can come after him, for this reason *muhaddases* have been substituted for prophets in this Shari’ah.” (*Shahadat al-Quran*, p. 24)

### 15. Fifteenth Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he would not have called himself ‘a follower and a prophet’ or ‘a follower from one aspect and a prophet from another’, because these two aspects are combined only in a *muhaddas* (Muslim saint), a prophet only having the aspect of prophethood. He wrote:

- i. “So the fact that he [the Messiah to come] has been called a follower [of the Holy Prophet Muhammad]

as well as a prophet indicates that the qualities of both discipleship and prophethood will be found in him, as it is essential for both of these to be found in a *muhaddas*. The possessor of full prophethood, however, has only the quality of prophethood. To conclude, sainthood (*muhaddasiyyat*) is coloured with both colours. For this reason, in [the Divine revelations published in] *Barahin Ahmadiyya* too, God named this humble one as follower and as prophet.” (*Izala Auham*, p. 533)

- ii. “I cannot be called only ‘prophet’, but a prophet from one aspect and a follower from another.” (*Haqiqat al-Wahy*, footnote, p. 150)
- iii. “There is no need now to follow each prophet or Book separately that came before the Holy Quran because the Prophethood of Muhammad comprises and comprehends them all. ... All truths that take man to God are to be found in it, no new truth shall come after it, nor is there any previous truth which is not in it. Hence, upon this Prophethood [of Muhammad] end all prophethoods. ... Rendering obedience to this Prophethood takes one to God very easily, and one receives the gift of God’s love and His revelation in a much greater measure than people used to before [the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad]. However, its perfect follower cannot be just called ‘prophet’ because it would be derogatory to the perfect and complete prophethood of Holy Prophet Muhammad. But both the words *ummati* [follower of the Holy Prophet] and *nabi* [prophet] can jointly be applied to him, because that would not be derogatory to the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.” (*Al-Wasiyyat*, pp. 27 – 8)
- iv. “Islam is the only religion in the world having the virtue that, provided the truest and fullest obedience is rendered to our Leader and Master the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, one can have the privilege of Divine revelation. For this reason it is recorded in Hadith: *Ulama ummati ka-anbiya Bani Israil*, that is, ‘the spiritual savants from among my followers are like the prophets of Israel’. In this Saying too, the godly savants are on the one hand called followers, and on the other hand they are called the likes of prophets.” (*Supplement to Barahin Ahmadiyya Part V*, pp. 182 – 184)

(Note: Extracts *i* and *iv* above make it explicitly clear that the words “a follower from one aspect and a prophet from another” are exactly equivalent to *muhaddas* or spiritual savant of the Muslim community, and do not mean a prophet.)

### 16. Sixteenth Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he could not have written, regarding the use of these terms for him, that the word *rasul* (messenger or apostle) is a general term used not only for prophets but also for saints (*muhaddas*) and Divine reformers (*mujaddid*), and that

the word *nabi* too is applied to saints. He wrote:

- i. “The word *rasul* is a general term and includes the messenger, the prophet (*nabi*), and the saint (*muhaddas*).” (*Ainah Kamalat Islam*, p. 322)
- ii. “By *rasul* are meant those persons who are sent by God, whether a prophet (*nabi*), or messenger (*rasul*), or saint (*muhaddas*), or Divine Reformer (*mujaddid*).” (*Ayyam as-Sulh*, footnote, p. 171)
- iii. “By *rusul* [plural of *rasul*] are meant those who are sent, whether a messenger, or prophet, or saint.” (*Shahadat al-Quran*, p. 23)
- iv. “In terms of being sent by God (*mursal*), the prophet and the saint are on a par. And just as God has named prophets as *mursal* [‘sent ones’], so has He also named the saints as *mursal*.” (*Shahadat al-Quran*, p. 27)
- v. “My intention from the beginning, which God knows well, is that this word *nabi* does not mean real prophethood, but denotes only a saint (*muhaddas*).” (*Majmu’a Ishtiharat*, vol. i, p. 97)

### 17. Seventeenth Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he would not have called himself a *zilli nabi* (a reflection or shadow of a prophet) because the shadow or reflection is not the actual thing itself. He wrote:

- i. “My prophethood is a reflection of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and the blessings of God be upon him. It is not actual prophethood.” (*Haqiqat al-Wahy*, footnote, p. 150)
- ii. “This title [*nabi*] was bestowed upon me in the sense of reflection (*zill*), not in the real sense.” (*Chashma-i Ma’rifa*, footnote, p. 324)
- iii. “Remember well that the fruits of perfect obedience [to the Holy Prophet] are never wasted. This is an issue of *Tasawwuf*. If the rank of *zill* had not existed, the saints of the Muslim nation would have died. It was exactly this perfect obedience, and the rank of *burooz* and *zill* [becoming a reflection or image of the Holy Prophet], due to which Bayazid [famous Muslim saint, d. 874 C.E.] was called ‘Muhammad’. Upon his so saying, the verdict of heresy was pronounced against him seventy times over, and he was exiled from the city. In brief, the people who oppose us are unaware of these facts.” (*Badr*, 27 October 1905)
- iv. “The shadow itself has no independent existence, nor does it possess any quality in a real sense. Whatever is in it, is only an image of the original person that is being manifested through it.” (*Barahin Ahmadiyya*, Part I, p. 243)
- v. “It is just as when you see yourself in the mirror, you do not become two, but remain only one, though there appear to be two. The only difference is that between the real thing and the image.” (*Kishti Nuh*, p. 15)

- vi. "Sainthood (*wilayat*) is the perfect reflection (*zill*) of prophethood (*nubuwwat*)." (*Hujjat-Ullah*, p. 24)
- vii. "The prophet (*nabi*) is like the real object, while the saint (*wali*) is like the reflection (*zill*)." (*Lujjat an-Nur*, p. 38)

### 18. Eighteenth Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he would not have called himself a *burooz* (*nabi*) (image or manifestation of a prophet) because, according to the spiritual savants of Islam, being a *burooz* implies a complete negation of one's own existence. He wrote:

- i. "All prophets have believed that the *burooz* is a full picture of its original, so much so that even the name becomes one." (*Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala*)
- ii. "The Sufis believe that the nature, disposition and moral qualities of a person from the past come again in another. In their terminology, they say that so and so is in the footsteps (*qadam*) of Adam, or the footsteps of Noah. Some also call this as *burooz*." (*Mulfuzat*, Part I, p. 239)
- iii. "It is customary with Muslim religious scholars that they call *burooz* as *qadam* [footsteps], and say, such and such a person is in the footsteps of Moses, such and such is in the footsteps of Abraham." (*Lujjat an-Nur*, p. 1)
- iv. "The whole Muslim nation is agreed that a non-prophet takes the place of a prophet as a *burooz* [image]. This is the meaning of the hadith: *Ulama ummati ka-anbiya Bani Israil*, that is, the savants from among my followers are the likes of the prophets. See that the Holy Prophet, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, has likened the godly savants to prophets." (*Ayyam as-Sulh*, p. 163)
- v. "Being a *burooz* implies the negation of its own existence. Hence prophethood and apostleship by way of *burooz* does not infringe the seal of the finality of prophethood." (*Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala*)
- vi. "As a person's face is seen in the mirror, though that face has its own independent existence; this is called *burooz*." (*Tafsir Surah Fatiha*, p. 330)

### 19. Nineteenth Argument

After the death of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in May 1908, the headstone fixed over his grave in Qadian by his followers bore the inscription given below:

*Janab Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib Qadiani,  
Chief of Qadian, the Promised Messiah, Mujaddid  
of the Fourteenth Century, date of death 26 May  
1908*

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, his followers would never have inscribed the words *Mujaddid (Reformer) of the Fourteenth Century* on his grave-stone. This inscription stayed as such for about twenty-five years, but was then altered by deleting the words *Mujaddid of the Fourteenth Century*. The word

'prophet', however, was still not added.

### 20. Twentieth Argument

If Hazrat Mirza had claimed to be a prophet, he certainly would never have instructed his followers to refrain from using the word 'prophet' (*nabi*) for him, or told people at large to regard this word as deleted wherever it occurred about him. In fact, this was exactly what he did:

- i. "I wish to make it clear to all Muslim brothers that if they are displeased with these words, and if these words give injury to their feelings, they may regard them as amended ... and in every place instead of the word *nabi*, the word *muhaddas* should be understood, and the word *nabi* should be regarded as having been deleted." (*Majmu'a Ishtiharat*, vol. i, p. 313)
- ii. "This humble one has never, at any time, made a claim of *nubuwwat* or *risalat* [prophethood or messengership] in the real sense. To use a word in a non-real sense, and to employ it in speech according to its broad, root meaning, does not imply heresy (*kufir*). However, I do not like even this much, for there is the possibility that ordinary Muslims may misunderstand it." (*Anjam Atham*, footnote, p. 27)
- iii. "As these words [*nabi, rasul*], which are only in a metaphorical sense, cause trouble in Islam, leading to very bad consequences, these terms should not be used in our community's common talk and everyday language. It should be believed from the bottom of the heart that prophethood has terminated with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, as God Almighty says: 'He is the Messenger of God and the last of the Prophets'. To deny this verse, or to belittle it, is in fact to separate oneself from Islam. ... It should be remembered that I make no claim contrary to that of being a servant of Islam. The person who ascribes to me the contrary is making a fabrication against me." (Letter dated 17 August 1899; published in *Al-Hakam*, vol. 3, no. 29, August 1899)

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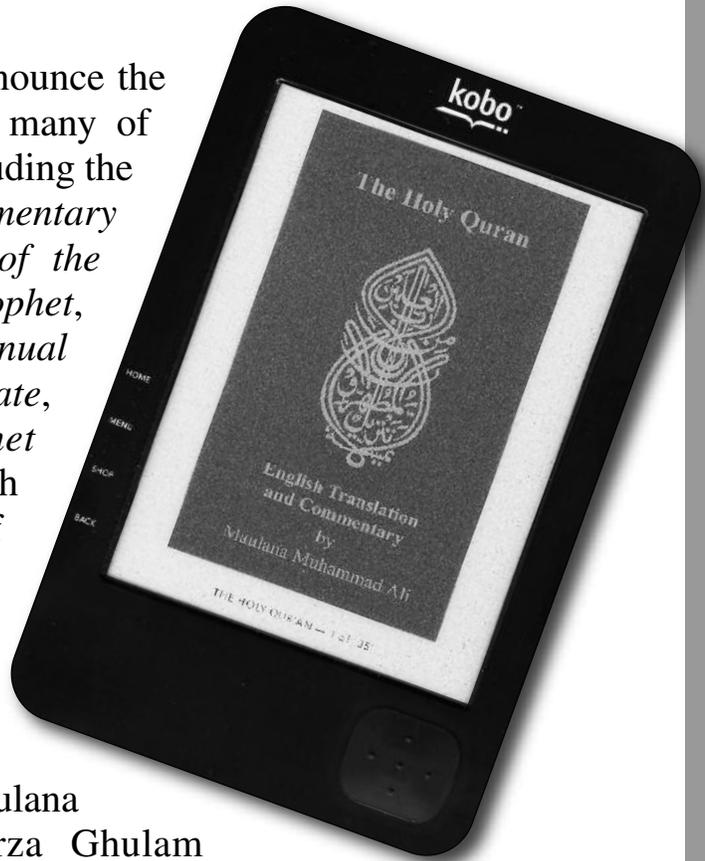
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