Our humble plea to the reader is not to let your prejudice cloud your views towards our Movement but to consider these articles in a cool and dispassionate manner.

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

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 and inter-denomination dialogue based on reason and rationality.
The main objective of the A.A.I.L.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 great 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 practice any creed or religion. Requires us to tolerate differences of belief and opinion.

Rational: In all matters, it argues 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 servant 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:
USA  Guyana
UK  Australia
Holland  Canada
Indonesia  Germany
Suriname  India
Trinidad  South Africa
Philippines

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 founder of 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 Lahore as Continuation of the original Anjuman. Maulana Muhammad Ali elected as 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.
HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD  
(Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam)

HIS LIFE & MISSION  
- by Maulana Muhammad Ali

BRIEF SURVEY OF THE AHMADIYYAH MOVEMENT

Early Life of the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement

It was probably in the year 1835 C.E. that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement, was born. He was the son of Mirza Ghulam Murtada. His ancestors has emigrated from Samarcand to India in 1530 C.E. during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Babur and settled down in the Gurdaspur district, Panjab, India. Here they founded the present town of Qadian, which was originally named Islam Pur Qadi. This is shortened to Qadi and then to Kadi and finally it became Qadian. His family belonged to the Mughals and descended from Haji Barlas.* On his account the Founder and his ancestors were called Mirza and for this reason, too, he was reputed as Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian.

He received his primary education in his own village and then in the town of Batala, about ten miles away from Qadian. In his youth, under the instructions of his father, he was occupied with the management of agricultural lands. In this connection he had to conduct law-suits relating to his family estate which were quite repulsive to his nature. He did it only in obedience to his father's advice. To fulfill his wishes, too, he accepted a Government job at Sialkot and remained there from 1864 C.E. to 1868 C.E. Besides his daily work, during this period he would spend his time alone in reading the Holy Qur'an.

Nevertheless, he entered into many controversies with Christian Missionaries during his stay at Sialkot. In 1868 C.E. he was called back to Qadian to attend to the cultivation of land under the instruction of his father. But his heart was not in this work: so he spent most of his time in studying the Holy Qur'an. He loved solitude and disliked worldly pursuits. To this effect he wrote to his father once mentioning that he would like to spend the rest of his life in solitude.

A new phase in his life and his claim of being a mujaddid

His father died in 1886 C.E. and a new era dawned upon him. He devoted himself completely to the cause of Islam. About that a new movement, known as Arya Samaj (founded in 1875 C.E at Bombay, India), had started among the Hindus. This movement attracted his attention in particular. Articles on religious subjects were published by him in various papers in 1878 C.E. Some of them were in refutation of the beliefs of the Arya Samaj. In his controversies with Swami Dayanand Sarasvati (1824-83 C.E.), the founder of the Arya Samaj and some other Arya Samaj leaders, we observe his great enthusiasm and deep scholarship about Islam. In 1880 C.E. he started his first and renowned book Barahin Ahmadiyyah, the first four volumes of which were published by 1884 C.E. In this work the truth of the teachings of Islam was established by forceful arguments, and the objections against Islam by Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj * [This society was founded in Calcutta (India) by Ram Mohan Roy in 1828 C.E. The members believed in God but not in Divine revelation. The society later on split into several branches. Tj. Christians, the three great movements of that age, were thoroughly dealt with and their wrong principles were powerfully refuted. He emphasised in this book the necessity of Divine Revelation, throwing light on its different aspects. He further showed that revelation was not simply a phenomenon of the past but that God also spoke to His chosen ones in this nation. In this connection he referred to his own visions and inspirations and mentioned the fulfilment of some of these. It was in 1880 C.E. while writing this book that the truth shone upon him that he was the mujaddid ( renovator) of the fourteenth century of Hijrah and was appointed to defend the cause of Islam. This announcement was made in Barahin Ahmadiyyah but he did not form any organisation immediately, and continued his defence of Islam against the Arya Samaj, which was imitating the Christian missionaries in its vitupervations against Islam. The announcement of his being a mujaddid, was not only published in Barahin Ahmadiyyah but was also issued in a separate manifesto, 20,000 in number, in which after referring to the publication of Barahin Ahmadiyyah he states "This servant of Allah has given a manifest proof by the grace of Allah the Almighty that many of the true inspirations and signs and wonders and the news of the unseen and Divine secrets and visions and prayers that have been accepted are part of the religious experience of this servant of the faith, the true of these being borne witness to by many of the religious opponents (the Aryas for instance). All these matters have been stated in this book, and the author has been given the knowledge that he is the mujaddid of this time and that spiritually his excellence resemble those of Messiah, the son of Mary, and one of them bears a very strong resemblance and a close affinity to the other." [Ish’ha, published 1885 C.E]

The admittance of his piety and righteousness and his unique service to the cause of Islam

The publication of Barahin Ahmadiyyah made a deep impression on the Muslims. They loved his author for his righteousness and piety, for his services to the cause of Islam, for his scholarly writings and for his bald stand against the opponents of Islam. How greatly he was respected by the Muslims of India is evident from a review of the Barahin Ahmadiyyah by the Maulawi Muhammad Hussain of Batala, the leader of the sect Ahl Hadith. The nature of this review is enhanced when it is borne in mind that there were differences between the Ahl Hadith and the Hanafi school of thought and it was to the latter group to which the author of the book belonged. I quote a part of the review: "In our opinion, this book in this age and in view of the present circumstances, is such that the like of it has not been written up to this time in Islam, and nothing can be said about the future; Allah may bring about another affair after this. Its author, too, has proved himself firm in helping the cause of Islam, with his property, with his pen and tongue and with his personal religious experience, to such an extent that
an example of it is rarely met among the Muslims who have gone before. If anyone looks upon these words of ours as an Asiatic exaggeration, let him point out to us at least one such book as has in it such forceful refutation of all classes of opponents of Islam, especially the Arya Samaj and let him give us the addresses of two or three persons, the helpers of the cause of Islam, who, besides helping Islam with their properties and their persons and their pens and their tongues, have also come forward with their religious experience and have proclaimed, as against the opponents of Islam and the deniers of revelation, the manly challenge, that whoever doubted the truth of revelation might come to them and witness the truth thereof, and who have made the non-Muslims taste of the same.” [Isha’at al-Sunnah, Vol.7, June November, 1884 C.E. Batala, India]

Announcement for accepting bai’at
At that time there were those who expressed the desire to enter into his bai’at (pledge or fealty) but he refused it by saying that God Almighty had not directed him to do so. At last on the first of December 1888 C.E. he announced that God had commanded him to accept bai’at and form a Jama’at “[I have been commanded that those who seek after truth should enter my bai’at in order to give up dirty habits and slothful and disloyal ways of life and in order to imbibe faith and a truly pure life that springs from faith and to learn the ways of the love of God.]” He also wrote that he had received ilham (inspiration) in this respect saying: “Trust in God and make the arc before Our Own eyes and according to our own revelation.” This bai’at was not like that of a sultan but its main purpose was to defend and extend the cause of Islam and to place the service of Islam above all considerations. Accordingly out of the ten conditions which have been mentioned elsewhere the following are the words of the eighth condition:

“That he will regard religion and the honour of religion and the sympathy for Islam dearer to him than his life and property and his honour and his children and every one dear to him.” Later on when he shortened these conditions the following words were retained to convey the whole sense: “I will hold religion above the world.”

Obviously the work of defence and propagation of Islam could not be carried on without the formation of a strong organisation and this naturally could not be achieved without an adequate pledge, which was made by giving one’s hand into the hand of the Founder. So this is the principle significance of bai’at in the Ahmadiyyah Movement. At this announcement many Muslims entered his bai’at.

The Claim of Messiahship
Hardly a year and half had passed before a third period of his life started when he announced that it was disclosed to him that Jesus Christ was dead and Messiah whose advent was promised to Muslims would be a mujaddid of this nation and that the prophecies relating to the advent of the Messiah were fulfilled in his own person. He further made it known that the reports relating to the appearance of a Mahdi also referred to the coming of Messiah who would spread Islam into the world, not by the sword as was commonly believed but by arguments and reasoning relating to the spiritual force which underlay the truth of Islam. The coming of a Mahdi who would propagate Islam at the point of the sword, he said, was against the express teachings of the Qur’an.

He was neither desirous of fame nor fortune
What were the reasons that led him to make these new claims? Did he seek cheap popularity, or was it monetary gain that he aimed at? Both these are evidently out of question. After the lapse of so many years—it is now more than sixty years since he advanced these very claims—it is these very claims that are a stumbling block in the way of Muslims acknowledging his great merits. Who can deny the service which Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had rendered to the cause of Islam? Muslims on the whole were absolutely indifferent to the propagation of Islam and it was only he who stirred them up to activity for this noble task. But many persons would stop here to question, why did he put forward such claims then? Let every one do the thinking for himself. Did he crave reputation that he put forth such a claim? As a religious leader he enjoyed the highest reputation. He was loved for his righteousness and piety, he was honoured for his learning and scholarship, he was renowned for his strong defence against the opponents of Islam. Such a claim did actually ruin his fame and he knew that a storm of opposition would rise against him, as the world not going to easily accept such claims. And a storm of opposition did rise. He knew that hatred would take the place of love. And so it happened. The man who was thought to be the champion of Islam a few days before came to be regarded as its worst enemy. His words and actions have been metaphorically compared with great respect and delight became straightforward an object of curses and accusations. It can also be very well realised that, if he had any intention of gaining wealth, all these methods were not in any way conducive to this end. Different is the technique of acquiring fame and fortune. Such a person should never excite the hostility of men around him but always try his level best to maintain good relations with them even if he were to act like a hypocrite.

Nor was he mad
Had he become mad, then? This is the question. The forceful arguments he advanced in favour of Islam simply nullify this charge. If there were any truth in this allegation during his life, nobody should at least assert it now. The success of his mission shows that he possessed a very strong will and this is sufficient to give the lie to the allegation that he was mad or had a diseased mind. The opposition which he had to face was the severest that any man has ever met with in this age. All communities—Christians, Hindus and Muslims—were united in their opposition against him. Yet he faced all this storm of opposition with a calmness which is granted to very few. When a mad person has to face opposition, his mental equilibrium, which is already shaken, gets absolutely out of control and his madness becomes more aggravated. But the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement never lost his calmness of mind for a moment, even when he was faced with the most serious situation. In the midst of all trials and afflictions, with even the Government of the day keeping a careful watch on him owing to his claim to be the Mahdi, he was doing the work of the propagation of Islam with zeal and an energy which one would in vain seek elsewhere.

Passion for the spread of Islam
His own writing also stand a mirror to his inner self. In his
first book, Bara'ih Ahmadiyah, the purpose of his being raised as a Mujaddid is the predominance of Islam over all other religions. In his own words:

"The spiritual triumph of the religion of Islam which would be brought about by conclusive arguments and shining proofs whether it is in his life-time or after his death, is destined to be accomplished through his humble servant. Though the religion of Islam has been triumphant from the beginning on account of its strong appeal to the mind of man and though from the earliest times its opponents have met with disgrace and discomfiture, its conquests over the different sects and nations depended on the coming of a time which, by opening the ways of communication, should turn the whole world into a kind of united states.

"Thus God intends, by raising me in this age and by granting me hundreds of heavenly signs and a vision of extraordinary matters relating to the future, and deep knowledge and truths and by giving me knowledge of hundreds of sure arguments, to spread and propagate the knowledge of the true teachings of the Qur'an among all nations and in all countries." [Bara'ih Ahmadiyah (1880-1884 C.E.) pp. 498-502]

The first book in which he wrote about his claim is Fath Islam. This deals with the triumph of Islam in the world. The object of his advent is described thus "Do not wonder that God the lost High in this time of need and in the days of this deep darkness has sent down a heavenly light and, having chosen a servant of His for the good of mankind in general, has sent him to make uppermost the religion of Islam and to spread the light brought by the most excellent of His creatures, (i.e. the Prophet Muhammad) and to strengthen the cause of Muslims and to purify their internal condition."[Fath Islam (22nd January, 1891) 2nd ed. p.5.]

And again:

"The truths will win and the freshness and light of Islam which characterized it in the earlier days will be restored and that sun (of Islam) will rise again which rose in the full resplendence of its light before. But it is necessary that heaven should withhold its rising till our hearts bleed with labour and hard work and we sacrifice all comfort for its appearance and we submit ourselves to all kinds of disgrace for the honour of Islam. The life of Islam demands a sacrifice from us and what is that? That we lay down our lives in this way. And on this death depends the life of Islam, the life of Muslims and the manifestations of the living God. This in other words is called Islam. And the revival of this Islam is the will of the Most High God." [Ibid, pp.8,9.]

This book is full of such ideas and at the end verses in Persian will be found that reflect the innermost thoughts of the author. Below I quote a few of them:

"It is fit that the eye of every Muslim should shed tears of blood over the distressed state of Islam and the dearth of Muslims. "Lo! Whose soul is destitute of all goodness and beauty finds faults with the Best of all the Messengers. "The wicked one, the wretched, flings arrows at one sinner: it is proper that heaven should rain stones on earth. "Unbelief is raging on all sides like the armies of Yazid.

The religion of Truth lies diseased and destitute like Zain al-Abidin.

"The learned are engaged day and night in mutual feuds out of their selfishness and the pious people are absolutely indifferent to the real needs of Islam.

"For the sake of his own lower self everyone goes in a certain direction: the flank of Religion is left with a gap and every for has sprung up out of his hiding-place.

"O you Muslims! Are those the signs of being Muslims? Distressed is the lot of Islam and you are pledged to the carcass of the world.

"A hundred thousand simpletons have turned away from the Religion; a hundred thousand have fallen victims to the snares of the cunning: "All calamities have befallen the Muslims only because for the sake of the Religion of Islam they have no courage. "Even if the whole world turns away from Religion of Mustafa (the Holy Prophet) the sense of their honour is not roused and they remain as motionless as the still-born child.

"Their thoughts are all immersed in the direction of this vain world and their wealth is wasted in the cause of their women and children. "It was by keeping religion in the forefront that Muslims first rose to eminence. Surely they can again rise to eminence by following the same way. "O God! When shall the hour of Thy help come? When shall we see those blessed days and years again?

"These two worries about the Religion of Ahmad have melted away my heart, the multitude of the enemies of Islam and the dearth of the helpers of religion.

"Come soon, O God, and shower upon us the rain of Thy Mercy or take me away from this place of fire, O Lord! "LORD! Bring forth the light of Guidance from the Rising place of Thy Mercy and give light to the eyes of the misguided with Thy clear signs.

"As Thou hast granted me truthfulness in this site of grief, I hope that Thou will not case me to die in failure. The work of the truthful is never left incomplete, for them there always lies hidden in the sleeve, the hand of God."

The thought of propagating Islam in the West
All these writings reflect the great passion he had for the propagation of Islam, and his writings for this period are full of hope that the days of the triumph of Islam had come nigh. It is still more astonishing that, while living in a village absolutely cut off from all modern movements, neither knowing the English language nor having any contact with the Western world, he particularly set before himself the task of propagating Islam in the West. He had visions in which he saw himself expounding the truths of Islam in England. The spiritual history of Islam offers many examples of Muslim saints who under the direction of similar visions were successful in spreading the light of Islam in various countries which were shown to them in their visions. It was due to the untiring efforts of such saints that Muslims have grown to such large numbers in India. Hadrat Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti 537-633 A.H) was one of them who saw in a vision during his stay at Madinah that the Holy Prophet had commanded him to go to India to preach Islam. So he went there and was successful in showing the light of Islam to
thousands of non-Muslims. The Mujaddid of the present century in a vision found himself preaching Islam in the West. In one of his books published as early as 1891 C.E. he writes:

"This humble servant has been shown in a vision that the rising of the sun from the West signifies that the Western world which has been involved of old in the darkness of disbelief and error shall be illumined with the sun of Truth, and those people shall have the light of Islam. I saw that I was standing on a pulpit in a city of London and was explaining the truth of Islam the a well reasoned address in the English language, and after this I caught a large number of birds that were sitting in small tress and in colour they were white and their size was probably the size of the partridge. So I interpreted this dream as meaning that, though I may not personally go there, yet my writings would spread among these people and many righteous English men would fall a prey to the Truth." [Izalath Auhum (3rd Septmeber, 1891.) pp 515-16]

He had such a great faith in it that he mentions it at several places in this book and at one place he expresses his desire of writing a commentary of the Qur'an for this purpose. He says:

"At this critical moment a man has been raised by God and he desires to manifest the beautiful race of Islam to the whole world and open its ways to the Western countries." [[Izalath Auhum (3rd Septmeber, 1891.) p. 769]

"Then so far as it lies in my power I intend to broadcast, in all countries of Europe and Asia, the knowledge and blessing which the Holy spirit of God has granted me... It is undoubtedly true that Europe and America have a large number of objections against Islam, inculcated through those engaged in Mission work; and that their philosophy and natural sciences give rise to another source of criticism. My enquiries have led me to the conclusion that there are nearly three thousand points which have been raised as objections against Islam. To meet these objections a chosen man is needed who should have a river of knowledge flowing in his vast breast and whose knowledge should have been specially broadened and deepened by Divine inspiration... 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'an as well, which should be sent to them after it has been rendered into 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." [Ibid., 771-73]

These are the writings of that period i.e. 1890-91 C.E. when he claimed to be the Promised Messiah. Two years after he wrote a book entitled Nur al-Haqq in Arabic, and along with it is found its Urdu translation. Here, too, he prophesied about the spread of Islam in Europe, saying that respectable persons and members of the British Government would accept Islam:

"Likewise we observe that eminent members of this Government are gradually inclining towards the unity and abhor these erroneous beliefs... I know that these persons are like eggs which will ultimately hatch into the young ones of Islam, and their minds will be turned towards the Divine Religion." [Nur al-Haqq, Vol. 1 (February, 1894) p.44]

The burning passion of his heart was to carry the message of Islam to the whole world, particularly to Europe and other Western countries, where only a dark picture of Islam had been drawn. His aspirations were to some extent materialised when he started an English monthly. The Review of Religions from Qadian to present the true picture of Islam before the English-knowing public. This plan was further developed after his death when at first the Woking Muslim Mission was established in England in 1912 C.E., later the German Muslim Mission at Berlin in 1922 C.E. Thence forward the work of promulgating the teachings of Islam was carried from one country to another. Doubtless the passion which was at the back of these plans originated from the heart of this pious and solitary figure of Qadian.

The claim of Messiahship was made to remove an obstacle from the way of Islam

If the whole matter is scrutinised closely, we mark that there were two great obstacles to the propagation of Islam among the Christian nations.

One was the belief that Jesus Christ was alive in the heavens and that he would come back again and the other was the wrong notion that the Mahdi would appear at the same time to spread Islam by the sword. The belief in the ascension of Jesus Christ and the continuity of his physical existence, definitely strengthened the Christian view in his Divinity or Sonship. Christian missionaries took full advantage of this belief, and advanced them as strong arguments for Jesus Christ's Godhood. The Qur'an, they said, clearly mentioned that the messengers were not given bodies which could exist without food. ["Nor did we give them bodies not eating food, nor did they abide."] [21:98] Many Muslims erroneously believed as the Christians did, that Jesus Christ was taken up to the heavens with this material body and that, though possessing the same body as on this earth, he did not stand in need of food and his mortal body had also not undergone any change. The logical conclusion of such a belief must be that the body of Jesus Christ was not made of the same stuff and stock as the body of other prophets who were human beings and mortals. As his body had not suffered any change during the last two thousand years, he was definitely different from all other human beings and this made him a participant in Divine attributes! Now as long as this mistaken belief in the bodily ascension of Jesus Christ is prevalent among Muslims, Islam can make no appeal to the Christian world; rather Muslims will be carried away by the Christian propaganda. The time had come to dispel all these doubts [This argument was in fact extensively used by the Christian Missionaries to mislead the Muslims. Thus in a tract called Haqaq in Qur'an issued by the Christian Book Store, Ludhiana (India), it is stated: 'Question 6. Again it is written of all the prophets: Nor did we give them bodies not eating food, nor did they abide, i.e. We have not made for them such bodies that they should be able to live for ever without eating and drinking. Therefore one who can live without eating and drinking, not withstanding a mortal body, is unique and superior to all the other prophets otherwise the statement made in this Qur'anic verse will have to be admitted as being wrong. Christ who from two thousand years is alive in the heavens without food and drink cannot be counted as one of
the apostles and prophets whose life depends on eating and drinking. If the Muhammad does not possess these attributes, it is not manifest that Christ is superior to and by far greater than he?" See also Al-Masih ill-Islam (Arabic, printed in Egypt.)

To spread the light of Islam in Europe it was essential therefore to eradicate such false notions with regard to Jesus Christ; without this Islam could not flourish in Christendom. Moreover, the central and basic doctrine of the Christian faith was that Jesus, having been taken up alive in the heavens, had taken away the sins of his followers, and if, it was shown that Jesus Christ had died a natural death like other mortals, that basic doctrine would fall to the ground. The death of Christ was, therefore, rightly regarded by the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement as taking away the heart out of Christianity.

The belief that Jesus Christ was alive in the heavens was intertwined with the belief in his physical descent in the latter ages. Unless the truth about the doctrine of his descent was properly explained, the belief in his life could not be adequately shaken. Thus, when God willed that Islam should flourish among Christians. He informed the Mujaddid of the fourteenth century of Hijrah that according to the Qur’an and reports of the Prophet Muhammad, Jesus Christ was dead and the decent of the son of Mary did not mean the coming of the same person again but signify only the appearance among the Muslims of a mujaddid who would be specially commissioned to carry the message of Islam to the Christian world as the following couplet shows:

“As I have been given light for the Christian people, “The name of the son of Mary has been given to me for this reason.”

The claim of Mahdihood was advanced to remove another obstacle from the way of Islam

Likewise, to clarify the objection that Islam was spread at the point of the sword, it was essential to eradicate the false doctrine of the coming of a Mahdi who would spread Islam by arms. As long as this false belief prevailed among Muslims it was not possible to convince the world that Islam, as its very name showed, was the religion of peace, and that it could bring about a revolution in the world without the use of physical force. Islam never stood in need of violence or coercion for its spiritual conquests. As it did in the past, in future too it will capture the hearts of people by sheer beauty of its teachings. It was further disclosed to him that the authentic reports did not mention the coming of a Mahdi who would bring a sword upon non-Muslims and convert them to Islam. On the contrary, Mahdi was just another name for the coming of Messiah as is stated clearly in a hadith.

“There will be no Mahdi except Isa (Jesus).” [Ibn Majah, 35:24]

This is the whole significance underlying his claim being the Messiah and Mahdi, which aimed only at removing the two great obstacles that blocked the advancement of Islam.

Conditions of ‘Ulama’

Seen against the background of the narrow mentality of the learned in religion (‘ulama’) of this age, the great object of carrying the message of Islam to the world, which the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement set before himself, appears to be inspiration from God. The intellectual occupation of the ‘ulama’ as at the time has sunk to such a low level that wranglings on petty differences of religion were thought to be the greatest service of Islam, and declaring one another kafir was regarded as the only means of strengthening Islam. [When the Mufi Kiyay Allah, President of the Jam’i’at al-’Ulama’, India once came to Lahore at a conference of the ‘ulama’ a delegate of the Ahmadiyyah Movement put before him a proposal that as the kafir making habit of the ‘ulama’ was creating great disruption in the ranks of Islam, therefore, it should be entirely given up. The disappointing reply he gave was that how could the ‘ulama’ abandon the only means they had for setting the Muslims right.] It was indeed a great advance, a complete revolution, to turn the ideas of Muslims from the petty disputes undermining the strength of Islam, in which they were engaged, to the high and noble ideal of serving the whole of humanity by making the truth accessible to them and revealing to them the beauties of the last and the perfect Divine message. The energy of the Muslims, which was not only being wasted but was also working to their own destruction, had to be given a new direction so as to become a source of strength to Islam.

Preaching of Islam was declared to be the jihad of this age

The Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement put forth this object of propagating Islam not as an ordinary matter but regarded it as a mujahada, a means of purification of the soul.

Mujahada is a technical term for the purification of the soul through various spiritual exercises. The spiritual leaders took people into their ba’lat to make them advance spiritually, and would suggest to their disciples (murids) different adhkar (recitals of the praises of God) and mujahadat (pains-taking in remembrance of God). The Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement replaced all these adhkar and mujahadat by something of real benefit to the cause of Islam, and more in accordance with the Sunnah (practice of the Prophet). Besides, there was no trace found in the life of the Prophet of the many of the ‘mystic methods’ which were introduced by these sufis with the result that these had brought Muslims into a hopeless state of inertia. The Founder, while taking ba’lat, would ask his followers to strive hard for the cause of Islam and participate with all their might in the jihad for the spread of Islam. And in this way he awakened the dormant powers of the Muslim nation and directed them to the attainment of a higher object. The purification of the soul, he taught, could be attained not by hard exercises which could not be traced to the ways of the Prophet and his companions but by a spiritual jihad of carrying the message of Islam to other people. And with this he clarified the significance of the term jihad, too, and explained that jihad which necessitates fighting with sword is allowed only in particular circumstances while the jihad which is always permissible is the jihad with the Qur’an. [And strive against them a mighty striving (jihad-al kabira) with it (i.e. with the Qur’an).” 25:52.]

Allegation of claim to prophethood and the anathema of heresy

It was but natural that people should differ in respect of and protest against such ideas. The first note of dissent
against a belief avowed for years and received as a heri-
tage from foregone generations is always unpleasant
and repulsive to the generality of people but the religious
leaders or the 'ulama' went a step further. Being already
addicted to the bad habit of calling one another kafir for
minor differences they straightaway made it a point of
kufr verses Islam. The same Maulawi Muhammad Hu-
sain of Batala who had written six years before, when
reviewing the Barahin Ahmadiyah that the like of it "has
not been written before in Islam" and that the example
of its author could not be met among the Muslim 'ulama
before, became the leader of takf ir (denunciations of
Muslims as unbelievers) and drafted a long Istifta (note
asking for anathema), on which the 'ulama' readily de-
clared the Founder as an arch heretic, a kafir, Dajjal, etc.
this Istifta was based on the allegation that the Founder
was a claimant to prophethood. I quote the words which
served as the foundation of this charge:

"Here, if it be objected that the like of 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 or-
dinary Muslims...Besides this there is no doubt in it that
this humble servant has been raised by the Most High
God for this community in the capacity of a muhaddath
and a muhaddath is in one sense also a prophet. Though
he does not posses perfect prophethood, nevertheless
he is partially a prophet, for he is endowed with the gift
of being spoken to by God, and the matters unseen are
manifested to him and like the revelations of messen-
gers and prophets his revelations are also made free
from the intervention of the devil. And the real kernel of
the law is disclosed to him and he is commissioned just
like prophets, and it is obligatory on him, like prophets,
that he should announce himself at the top of his voice,
and anybody who rejects him deserves punishment to
some extent. And by prophethood here means nothing
but that the above mentioned characteristics are met
with in him.

"If the plea is put forward that the door of prophethood
has been closed and a seal has been set on the revela-
tion that descends on prophets, I say that neither the
door of prophethood has been closed in all respects
nor a seal has been set on every form of revelation. On
the contrary, the door of revelation and prophethood
has been partially open for this nation ever since. But it
should be carefully borne in mind that the prophethood,
which is continued forever is not perfect prophethood,
but as I have just mentioned is only partial prophethood
which in other words is termed muhaddathiyat." [Taudih
Maram (22nd January 1891) pp.19:20.]

No claim to prophethood
These statements were, however, misrepresented as
being a claim to prophethood, and the Founder of the
Movement who stood for the revival propagation of Is-
lam was denounced as a kafir being outside the pale of
Islam. In reply to this, he made his position further clear
by repeated announcements in his books and manifes-
tos. The first announcement thus made was a manifesto
which he published on 2nd October 1891 C.E. and which
was read out by him personally in the great Jum’a Masjid
of Delhi:

"I have heard that some of the leading 'ulama' of this
city are giving publicity to false charges against me that
I lay claim to prophethood, or do not believe in angels,
or in heaven and hell, or in the existence of Gabriel, or in
Lailat al-Qadr (the Grand Night), or in miracles and the
mi’raj (Ascension) of the Holy Prophet. So to make the
truth known to all and sundry, I do hereby publicly declare
that all this is complete fabrication. I am not a claimant
to prophethood, neither am I a denier of miracles, angels,
Lailat al-Qadr, etc. On the other hand, I confess belief in
all those matters which are in the Islamic principles of
faith, and, in accordance with the belief of Ahi Sunnah
wal-Jama’ah, I believe in those things which are estab-
lished by the Qur’an and Hadith, and regard that any
claimant to prophethood and messengership after our
Master Muhammad Mustafa (may peace and the bless-
ings of God be upon him, the Last of the messengers)
is a liar and an unbeliever (kafir). It is my conviction that
the apostolic revelation (wahi risalat) began with Adam,
the chosen one of God, and came to close with the Mes-
senger of God, Muhammad Mustafa (may peace and the
blessings of God be upon him)."

A clear refutation of this charge of being a claimant to
prophethood has been made in all his books which
appeared after that. Below are given a few quotations
only:

"There is no claim of prophethood but of muhaddathiyat
which has been advanced by the command of Allah." [Izalah Auham (3rd September 1891) p. 421]

"These people have forged a lie against me who say
that this person claims to be a prophet." [Hamamat al-
Bushra (27th July 1903)p.8]

"I lay no claim to prophethood. This is only your mistake."
[Jong-i-Muqaddas (22nd May-5th June 1893) p.67]

"If this be the objection that I have laid a claim to prophet-
hood...what can I say except that the curse of Allah be
upon the liars and imposters." [Anwar al-Islam (6th Sep-
tember, 1894) p.39]

"This is an absolute forgery attributed to me...that I lay
a claim to prophethood." [Anjam Atham (22nd January
1897)p. 45]

"They accuse us unjustly of this calumny that we have
laid a claim to prophethood." [Kitab al-Bariyah (24th
January 1898) p. 182 footnote]

Opposition continues
In spite of all these repeated announcements the 'ulama'
kept on raising a storm of opposition against him, doing
their best to denounce him and put him to trouble. Even
violence against him was justified. Some went so far
as to issue fatwas that he and his followers should not be
allowed to enter mosques and that their dead were
not to be buried in Muslim graveyards, that their mar-
rriages should not be considered valid that their prop-
erty could be taken away by impunity. But the founder
suffered all this with patience and fortitude. On the one
hand, he refuted these false charges and, on the other,
he stood firmly against Arya Samaj and Christians with
the result that Arya Samajists, Christians and Muslims all
formed a block against him on religious grounds. Pandit
Lekhram, an Arya Samajist, Abdullah Atham a Christian missionary and the Maulawi Muhammad Hussain of Batala with a batch of Hanafi, Sunni, Shi'a and Ahl Hadith 'ulama' fought tooth and nail against him. This opposition was not confined to religious controversies only. False cases were filed against him in courts, too. A well-known case from among these is the charge of abetment to murder brought forward by Doctor Henry Martin Clarke of the Church Missionary Society. The allegation was that the Founder had deputed somebody to murder Doctor Clarke. The Maulawi Muhammad Hussain of Batala acted as a witness and Chaudhary Ram Bhaj Dat, an Arya Samajist, conducted the case free of charge.

[The Cloak of Baba Nanak, (1469-1538 C.E) the Founder of Sikhism worn by him in the latter part of his life, is preserved as his sacred relic at Kirtapur, Dera Baba Nanak, India. The diagram of this Cloak is given in Sardar Kirtar Singh's Jughrafiya Zila' Gurdaspur (Geography of Gurdaspur District) published by Mulk Raj Duggal, Bookellers and Publishers, Batala, India. According to the Sikh traditions God presented this Cloak (Cloak) to Nanak. It is quite possible that Nanak got it made under some Divine Command. The writings of this Cloak consist of some chapters of the Qur'an, the Divine names of God, Muslim formulae of faith etc. The existence of this Cloak and what was written on it was fully brought to light by the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement to show that Baba Nanak really believed in the truth of Islam. With this cloak was also a cap which Nanak wore and it is reported that some Arabic verses have been written on it, the exact text, however, is not known so far. Notwithstanding the political differences between the Sikh and the Muslim community of Indo-Pak sub-continent today, Sikhs in their religious beliefs are still the closest group to Islam than any other Indian community. T. (P.36)]

But for want of evidence the case was dismissed. The Founder was asked if he intended to sue his accusers criminally, but he replied in the negative. He preferred a quiet life from early youth. Even when his father asked him to follow law suites relating to his estate he did it with great reluctance. All the prosecutions in which he was involved were borne by him in calmness. In spite of all this he kept himself busy in expounding the beauties of Islam. Those who entered into his bail'at would listen to scorn and sneers and suffer trials and tribulations cheerfully. They were sometimes handled violently and deprived of their rights, too, but they bore all this patiently. On the other hand, they felt a solace and comfort in their troubles, so much so that a very learned scholar of Afghanistan was stoned to death, along with his companion, by the orders of the Amir. They preferred death to denying faith in the Founder in spite of the request and insistence of the Amir of Kabul, who was willing to set them free if they denied the Muddajid.

Research work
The attention of the Founder was not confined to the religious doctrines only. In the comparative study of religions most of his writings should be regarded as research work. In 1895 C.E. he went to the village of Dera Baba Nanak to find out the truth about Nanak's Chola 35 [Baba Nanak (1469-1538, C.E) was the Founder of Sikhism which claims about six million disciples in India, T.] (Cloak). The Chola is kept at this place a relic of Baba Nanak, whose followers now call themselves Sikhs. The Chola was shown to him by the custodian, and to the amazement of all who went with him he found that the writings of the Chola were all verses of the Qur'an that bore testimony to the truth of Islam. On his return he wrote a book, called Sat Bachan in which besides giving a sketch of the Chola, he put forth solid arguments showing the Baba Nanak really believed in the truth of Islam. Similarly he carried on an investigation about the tribes of Israel and was successful in proving that those tribes have emigrated from Palestine and settled down in Afghanistan and Kashmir. About Jesus Christ, too, it was historically proved that, though he was nailed to the Cross, he did not die on it but journeyed to Afghanistan and Kashmir after the incident of the Cross and preached his message to the Israelite tribes that had settled there. The Founder also produced historical evidence that the tomb of Jesus Christ was at Srinagar, (Kashmir) in Mohalla Khanyar.

He also carried on a research to show that Arabic was the mother of languages.

Why the name 'Ahmadiyyah' was adopted. Not because Ahmad was part of the Founder's name but because it was one of the two names of the Prophet Muhammad
In spite of the great opposition of the 'ulama' and other people his followers went on increasing in number. Before the census of 1901 C.E thought of knowing the number of his followers. Till that time they were called Mirzais or Qadianis by others, the Founder himself having given no name to the Movement. Had he not given any name to his followers one of these names must have found place in the official papers of the Government. Realising this difficulty he made an announcement about his Movement on 4th November 1900 C.E the following passage of which will suffice for our purpose:

"As, on the occasion of the official census, arrangements have been made that every section which has been distinguished from other sections with regard to its doctrines should be registered in a separate column and whatever name that section likes and suggests for itself should be entered in official documents...therefore the name which is appropriate for this Movement and which we approve for our community is Muslims of the Ahmadiyyah Section....This name has been given to this section because our Holy Prophet, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, had two names, one Muhammad and the other Ahmad. The name Muhammad was indicative of his jalal (glory or grandeur) which contained a prophecy that the Holy Prophet would punish with the sword those who took up the sword to annihilate Islam and hundreds of Muslims. But his name Ahmad reflected his jamal (beauty) which meant that the Holy Prophet would spread peace and harmony in the world. So Almighty God made a division of these two names in this manner that in the Makkah period of his life there was a manifestation of his name 'Ahmad' where it was taught that Muslims should go on advancing the cause of Islam while suffering all kinds of persecutions, and in his life at Madinah the name Muhammad was manifested when overthrow of the opponents was considered necessary by Divine wisdom and by requirements of justice. But it was prophesied that in latter ages there would be a manifestation of the name 'Ahmad' again....Thus, on
account of this, it is fit that this section should be called
the Ahmadiyyah section." [Manifesto, 4th November,
1900.] It is quite evident from this that the name 'Ahmadiyyah'
was given to this Movement, not because 'Ahmad' was
a part of the Founder's name, but because 'Ahmad' was
one of the two names of the Prophet Muhammad. By
referring to the significance of the name 'Ahmad', he
showed that the domination of Islam would be effected
in this age only by the beauty and attraction of its teach-
ing and the sword would not be needed for its defence
as it was not needed in the Makkah period of the Holy
Prophet's life. There was also a reference in this name
to the fact that Islam, after gaining glory and temporal
power, would once again become feeble and helpless
in many respects. The association of the name of the
Movement with the name of the Holy Prophet shows that
he did not consider it necessary to bring forward his own
personality.

The preaching of Islam to the West
In the year 1901 C.E. he laid the foundation of carrying
the message of Islam to the West by starting a monthly
magazine in English. This was really the beginning of
the spread of Islam in Europe. I quote his own words:

"It was always a matter of great anxiety to me and I felt
distressed that the great truths and deep knowledge (of
the Qur'an) and strong arguments in support of Islam
and matters which brought solace to the mind of man,
which have been made manifest to me, had not yet been
made known to the educated people of this country or
the seekers after truth in Europe. My anxiety in this mat-
ter was so great that I could bear it no longer. But as it
is the will of God Almighty that before I leave this mortal
abode the object which I have set before myself should
all be accomplished so that there may be no regret
in my heart when I depart from this world, a way has
been suggested to fulfil this real object of my life. Some
friends have, after holding a consultation with sincerity
of purpose, directed my attention to the bringing out of a
monthly journal in the English language for the fulfilment
of the object I have stated above...And we have decided
that this journal should be edited by the Maulawi Mu-
hammad 'Ali (M.A.), pleader and Khwajah Kamal al-Din,
pleader." [Tabligh Risalat, Vol. 10, pp.1-2]

This journal bearing the name of the Review of Religions
was started in the beginning of 1901 C.E. under the edi-
torship of the writer of these lines. It gained popularity
very soon and remained for a long time the only journal
in English relating to Islamic matters. As is apparent from
its very name, comments were also made in this journal
about other religions. This magazine was, however, a
source of enlightenment to Muslims and non-Muslims
alike. A very hostile critic of Islam writes:

"This paper was well-named, for it has given its attention
to a remarkably wide range of religions and to a great
variety of subjects. Orthodox Hinduism, the Arya Samaj,
the Brahmo Samaj and Theosophy; Sikhism, Budhism,
Jainism and Zoroastrianism; Bahaism, Christian Sci-
ence and Christianity have all received attention; as well
as Islam in all its ramifications, both ancient and mod-
ern, such as the Sh'ite, Ahl Hadith, Kharjites, Sufis and
such representative exponents of modern tendencies as
Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Syed Ahmad Ali." [A.H Wal-
ter: Ahmadyyah Movement]

The articles which were published in the Review of Reli-
gions had drawn the attention of eminent men in Europe,
like Count Tolstoy and others. The English and American
Press also commented on its articles. To mention only a
few of them: the Glasgow Herald, Church Family News
Paper, (New York), Commercial Advertiser, Union Se-
quel, (Chicago), Literary Digest, (New York) Bralington

Propagation of Islam among Hindus
In November, 1904 C.E. the Founder made an an-
nouncement at Sialkot (the Punjab) that as he was Mah-
di for Muslims, and Messiah for Christians, he was also
raised for Hindus as a manifestation of Krishna. In his
own words:

"Raja Krishna as revealed to me was so great and per-
fected a man that his equal is not to be found among
the Hindu Rishis and Avatars. He was an Avatar i.e., prophet
of his time and he received the Holy Spirit from God........

He was a true prophet of his time but many errors were
introduced into his teachings afterwards. His heart over-
flowed with the love of God and he loved virtue and hat-
ed evil. Almighty God had promised to raise a spiritual
manifestation of his in the latter ages, and He has now
fulfilled this promise through me." [Lecture Islam, Sialkot
(2nd Novemver 1904) p 20]

The main object of this announcement was stated by
him in the beginning of this lecture:

"It should also be made clear that Almighty God raised
me not only for Muslims but also for the reformation of
Hindus and Chrisitains."

Obviously, self-aggrandizement was not the object when
he declared to the world that the time had come when
all the communities of the world should unite. The argu-
ment for this unity he advanced was that all prophecies
relating to the advent of a reformer of latter days had
been fulfilled in a single person, a humble servant of the
Holy Prophet Muhammad. And this proved that Islam
was the only religion where all the nations could unite.
If the promised reformer of Muslims, Christians and Hin-
dus is only one person; this will remove many of their dif-
ferences and lead them towards oneness and harmony
which is the greatest object of religion.

Death of the Founder
In December, 1905 C.E. the Founder was informed by
Almighty God that his end was nigh. Therefore he pub-
lished a small pamphlet entitled Al-Wasiyyah (i.e., The
Will) and in accordance with that he formed an Anjuman
(Society) which was named later on Sadr Anjuman Ah-
jadiyyah (the central society of the Ahmadis). This An-
juman was entrusted with full powers to deal with mat-
ters relating to the movement and was further declared
as his own successor when he died.

Though he knew that his end was quite near he carried
on work of expounding Islamic truths with the zeal of
a young man. During the last two years he wrote volumi-
nous books such as Haqiqat al-Wahy, Barahun Ahmadi-
yyah (Vol. V), Chashmeh Ma'rifat, etc.
For change of climate at the end of April 1908 C.E he went to Lahore. Here he was busy in writing his last book Paigham Suh (The Message of Peace) which aimed at bringing about friendly relations among Hindus and Muslims when suddenly he fell ill with an attack of diarrhoea, a chronic disease to which he was liable since his youth. He breathed his last on his bed at 10 a.m on 26th May 1908 C.E. The last words on his lips were “O my beloved God, O my beloved God!” The Civil Surgeon of Lahore certified that death was not due to an infectious disease, and it was on the production of this certificate that the authorities permitted the carrying of his body to Qadian the next day where it was laid to eternal rest.

“Thus ended an eventful life which in the short space of eighteen years -1891 to 1908 C.E – not only had revolutionized many of the existing religious ideas but had even taken definite steps in an entirely new direction – the presentment of Islam to, and spiritual conquest of, the West. Deep religious mysteries which had baffled human minds for centuries had been unravelled. The second advent of Christ, the tribulation of the anti-Christ, the prevalence of Gog and Magog, the coming of the Mahdi and similar other topics were mysteries which affected the two great religions of the world, Christianity and Islam, both retaining for the mastery of the world, and an inspired man was indeed needed to lift the veil from the face of these mysteries. Such a man was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. He was gifted not only with inspiration to elucidate the deepest mysteries, but also with the faith and energy which enabled him to give a new direction to the dissemination of Islam which had hitherto found the West deaf to its message. Christianity was out to conquer the Muslim world; in temporal matters it had ousted Islam, but in the spiritual domain, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad made a bold start and gave a challenge to Christianity in its very home. It is as a result of that challenge that mosques are being built in the greatest centres of Christianity, that a vital change is being brought about in the attitude of Europe towards Islam, and that thousands of cultured and advanced Europeans are finding a haven of peace under its banner.” [The Maualaa Muhammad ‘Ali: The Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement (Lahore, The Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Ishaat Islam)], pp.80-1

Two branches of the Movement

After the death of the Founder all the work of the Movement according to his Will (al-Wasiyyah) remained in the hands of the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyyah and the leadership of the Movement fell to the lot of the Late Maulawi Nur al-Din. This condition existed till his death which occurred in March 1914 C.E. During this period the Movement made rapid progress. Of much more importance besides its progress was that it became increasingly popular among the general body of Muslims. Apparently there were no signs of a split in the Movement. However, on two matters opinions became gradually divergent but did not gain much strength because of the powerful personality of the Late Maulawi Nur al-Din. One of these centered round the relation of the Khalifah (successor) with the Anjuman and the other the talkif of Muslims i.e., denunciation of Muslims as unbelievers.

As the first point was related to the internal management of the Movement, therefore, it did not assume much importance, neither at that time nor afterwards, though it was one of the controversial points at the time of the Split. Nevertheless the second point, which was not only connected with the teachings of the Movement but also with fundamental principles of Islam, was the final cause of the Split after the death of the Maulawi Nur al-Din. One section kept on adhering to the belief that all those who did not believe in the Founder, whether they had heard his name or not, or if they had heard his name and looked upon him as a Muslim or even accepted him as the mujaddid or the Promised Messiah in their hearts, were to be adjudged among the Kafirs and outside the pale of Islam unless they had formally entered into the Bai’at of the Founder. [“All those so-called Muslims who had not entered into his Bai’at formally wherever they might be living, were Kafirs, and outside the pale of Islam, even though they may have not heard the name of the Promised Messiah.” -Mirza Bashir al-Din Mahmud Ahmad: The Truth about the Split (Qadian 1924 C.E) P.24

“Not only have those people been deemed to be Kafirs, who openly give the name of Kafir to the Promised Messiah as well as those who, although they do not give him that name, still decline to accept his claim, but even people who, in their hearts, believe in the truth of the Promised Messiah and do not even deny him with their tongues, but, nevertheless, put off entering into his Bai’at, have been adjudged to be among the Kafirs.” (Ibid. p 140-1). A detailed discussion in this subject will be found in the Maulana Muhammad ‘Ali’s Radd Takfir Ahi Qiblah published by the Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Ishaat Islam, Lahore. This book has also been translated in English. See also Annex C “Today and Yesterday of the Qadiani Doctrine of Kufri (unbelief) and Islam” T.

The other section believed that every professor in the Kalimah (There is but one God, Muhammad is His Messenger) was a Muslim though he might belong to any sect of Islam, and nobody went outside the pale of Islam unless he denied himself the messengership of Muhammad, peace and the blessings of God be upon him. The question of the prophethood of the Founder which is at present considered to be the main controversial point between the two sections, has, in fact, arisen out of the question of takfiri. This doctrine of kafarization of Muslims could not be held valid unless Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was raised to the status of prophethood. The split was, however, caused in the Movement chiefly on this ground in March 1914 C.E. The first section, which denounced Muslims as kafirs and believed that the door of prophethood was open after the Prophet Muhammad, kept their headquarters at Qadian [After the partition of the British India in 1947 C.E. it has been shifted to Rabwah, West Pakistan. The present head, since November 1965 is Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the eldest son of Mirza Bashir al-Din Mahmud Ahmad. T.] and the other section established theirs at Lahore. The leadership of the Qadian group of Ahmadi is in the hands of Mirza Bashir al-Din Mahmud Ahmad [The present head since, October 1951 is the Maulana Sadr al-Din.]

T.] Now both these groups are working separately. Although the Qadian group is greater in number than the Lahore group, the latter exercises more influence among the general Muslims than the number of their adherents would suggest as has been admitted by the Reverend Kraemer in one of his articles, as part of which is quoted below:
"The Lahore group who have seceded from the original community on the ground that they venerate their founder as a Mujaddid (renewer of religion) and not as a prophet, are therefore more acceptable to public opinion in Islam.

They have the same spirit of opposition against Christianity as the Qadianis, but their activity is more exclusively concentrated on the proclamation of Islam as the only religion that is in conformity with reason and nature.

The crisis of Christian Europe gives them much material to expose this religion and extol Islam... In their bitter aggressiveness they mere out the same treatment to Christianity that has often been meted out by Christianity to Islam... Their influence is far wider then the number of their adherents would suggest. Their vindication and defence of Islam is accepted by many educated Muslims as the form in which they can remain intellectually loyal to Islam." [The Rev. H Kraemer, The Moslem World (The Hartford Seminary Foundation Hartford Connecticut, U.S.A) Vol. XXXI, April 1931 C.E., pp. 170-41]

ISLAM, PEACE AND TOLERANCE- PART II
(continued from last edition)

Freedom of religion in Islam
It is intended to show here that Islam recognizes complete freedom of religion and belief for every human being, and that, consistently with this principle, it does not prescribe any punishment whatsoever for a person who leaves the religion of Islam to adopt some other faith. [This section and section 4 benefit from the following authoritative writings by Maulana Muhammad Ali, and expand upon the material in these sources:
1. The English translation of the Holy Quran will commentary, in particular the section Liberal View of Other Religions in the Introduction, 1951.

No compulsion in Religion
The Holy Quran altogether excludes compulsion from the sphere of religion. It lays down in the clearest words:

"There is no compulsion in religion- the right way is indeed clearly distinct from error." 2:256

In fact, the Holy Quran is full of statements showing that belief in this or that religion is a person's own concern, and that he is given the choice of adopting one way or another. If he accepts the truth, it is for his own good, and that, if he sticks to error, it is to his own detriment. Some quotations to this effect are given below:

1. "The truth is from your Lord; so let him who please believe and let him who please disbelieve." -18:29
2. "We have truly shown him (man) the way; he may be thankful or unthankful." - 76:3
3. "Clear proofs have indeed come to you from your Lord: so whoever sees, it is for his own good; and whoever is blind, it is to his own harm. And I am not a keeper over you." - 6:104
4. "If you do good, you do good for your own souls. And if you do evil, it is for them." - 17:7

The duty of the Messenger of Allah, and, following him, the duty of every Muslim, is only to deliver the message of truth and no more. It is indicated in the Holy Quran in passages such as the following:

1. "If they accept Islam, then indeed they follow the right way; and if they turn back, your duty (O Prophet) is only to deliver the message." - 3:20
2. "And obey Allah and obey the Messenger; but if you turn away, the duty of our Messenger is only to deliver the message clearly." - 64:12 see also 5:92
3. "Say (to people): obey Allah and obey the Messenger. But if you turn away, he is responsible for the duty imposed on him, and you are responsible for the duty imposed on you. And if you obey him, go on upright. And the Messenger's duty is only to deliver (the message) plainly." - 24:54
4. "O people, the truth has indeed come to you from your Lord; so whoever goes aright only for the good of his own soul, and whoever goes astray, goes astray only to its detriment. And I am not a custodian over you." - 10:108
5. "Surely We have revealed to you (O Prophet) the Book with truth for people. So whoever goes aright, it is for the good of his own soul, and whoever goes astray, only to its detriment. And you are not a custodian over them." - 39:41
6. "We have not appointed you (O Prophet) a keeper over them, and you are not placed in charge of them." - 6:107
7. "Your duty (O Prophet) is only the delivery of the message, and ours (God's) is to call (people) to account." - 13:40
8. "And your people (O Prophet) call it (the message) a lie while it is the truth. Say (to them); I am not put in charge of you." - 6:66
9. "And those who keep their duty (i.e., Muslims) are not accountable for them (i.e., the unbelievers) in any way, but their duty is only to remind; perhaps they (the unbelievers) may become devout." - 6:69
10. "And you (O Prophet) are not one to compel them. So remind by means of the Quran him who fears My warning." - 50:45

The Quran tells us that it is in the natural order of things that while some people believe, others do not, and no human being can or should apply compulsion to others in this regard. The Holy Prophet Muhammad is told:

"And if your Lord had pleased, all those who are in the earth would have believed, all of them. Will you then force people till they are believers?" - 10:99

The above verse refers to the deep anxiety felt by the Holy Prophet that people should embrace the message brought by him. Elsewhere his feelings of pain are expressed as follows:

"Then perhaps you will kill yourself with grief, sorrow-
ing after them, if they do not believe in this message." - 18:6

As the Holy Prophet was grieving and sorrowing over the fallen state of his deniers and their rejection of his message, and pleading day and night before God that the Almighty may bring them to the right guidance, he could not conceive of resorting to coercion to compel them to accept him.

A passage which recognizes that different people follow different religions is as below. It tells the whole of mankind:
"...for everyone of you We appointed a law and a way. And if Allah had pleased He would have made you one religious community, but He wishes to try you in what He has given you. So vie with one another in virtuous deeds. To Allah you will all return, and He will then tell you about your differences." - 5:48

Christians pray in Holy Prophet's mosque
A well-known event that took place a year or so before the death of Holy Prophet illustrates his strong commitment to the freedom of religion. A large delegation of Christians from Najran, near Yemen, headed by their religious leaders, came to meet him and discussed with him the doctrinal differences between Islam and Christianity, especially the question whether Jesus was mortal or Divine. Upon their arrival, the Holy Prophet lodged them in rooms connected with his mosque. Before the discussion began, the time came for the Christians to hold their prayer, and they enquired from him where they could pray. The Prophet Muhammad allowed them to hold their service inside his mosque. Thus they prayed according to their own faith and religious observances, which conflicted with Islam, within that mosque which is one of the holiest places of worship for Muslims. Their discussion is reported in many classical Islamic historical works, biographies of the Holy Prophet and commentaries of the Quran.

Some Passages of the Quran on how to preach Islam
A verse from the Quran illustrating how Muslims should invite people to Islam is as follows:
"Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the best manner. Surely your Lord knows best who strays from his path, and he knows best those who go aright." - 16:125

"Wisdom" means to appeal to reason and knowledge, not to exploit people's prejudice or ignorance. "Goodly exhortation" is to give advice that can make people lead better lives. Arguing in the "best Manner" is to be both present the best arguments and evidences and to do so in the best behaved, polite manner, showing consideration for the feelings of others.

It is stated beautifully elsewhere:
"And who is better in speech than one who calls to Allah and does good, and says: I am surely of those who submit (to Allah)? And good and evil are not alike. Repel evil by what is better, when lo! He between whom and you is enmity would be as if he were a warm friend. And none is granted it (this quality) but those who are patient, and none is granted it but the owner of a mighty good fortune." - 41:33-35

The way to preach Islam described above is as follows:
1. By means of speech, not force;
2. By setting an example yourself of doing good deeds, rather than merely preaching about it;
3. Returning the evil done to your opponents with good. Then will the heart of your opponent turn, and your enemy will become your warm friend.
4. By exercising patience, which is the only way to achieve success through the above means:

Two other verses which teach Muslims not to quarrel with others when presenting Islam are as follows:
"And do not argue with the people of the Book except by what is best, save such of them as act unjustly. But say: We believe in that which has revealed to us and revealed to you, and our God and your God is One, and to him we submit." - 29:46

"To this (truth), then, go on inviting, and be steadfast as you are commanded, and do not follow their low desires, and say: I believe in what Allah has revealed of the Book, and I am commanded to do justice between you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For us are our deeds, and for you your deeds. There is no contention between us and you. Allah will gather us together, and to Him is the eventual coming." - 42:15

The Quran also prohibits Muslims from abusing the deities worshipped by the followers of other religions. It says:
"And if Allah had pleased, he would not have worshipped others (besides God). But We have not appointed you (O Prophet) as a keeper over them, and you are not placed in charge of them. Do not abuse those whom they call upon (in worship) besides Allah, in case, exceeding the limits, they abuse Allah through ignorance." - 6:107-108

No Punishment for Apostasy
It is generally thought that Islam provides a death sentence for those who desert the religion of Islam. Anyone who takes the trouble to read the Quran will see that there is not the least ground for such a supposition.

1. Several times the Quran speaks of people going back to unbelief after believing, but once does it say that they should be killed or punished. In the place the Quran refers to the war being made upon Muslims by their opponents based in Makkah and says:

"They will not cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can. And whoever of you turns back from his religion, then he dies while an unbeliever – these it is whose works go for nothing in this world and the Hereafter." - 2:217

This verse clearly speaks of a person as continuing to live after turning away from religion of Islam until he dies while still an unbeliever. This verse also shows that force was being used against Muslims by their enemies to make them leave Islam, rather than being used by Muslims to keep the followers of Islam within its fold.

2. The Quran also says:
"O you who believe, should anyone of you turn back from his religion, then Allah will bring a people whom He loves and who love Him." - 5:54

"Those who disbelieve after their believing, then in-
crease in disbelief, their repentance is not accepted, and these are they that go astray." - 3:90

"Those who believe then disbelieve, again believe and again disbelieve, then increase in disbelief, Allah will never forgive them nor guide them in the (right) way." – 4:137

The last verse above speaks of certain people who switched back and forth between Islam and unbelief. They embraced Islam of their own accord, then left it of their own accord, and finally left it and became confirmed in disbelie. No punishment was applied to them at the hands of the Muslims, nor prescribed to be applied. Only God would judge them.

3. The Quran also speaks of a plan of a group of Jews living in Madīna to adopt Islam first and then desert it, thus creating the impression that Islam was not a religion worth having:

"And a party of People of the Book say: Avow belief in that which has been revealed to those who believe, in the first part of the day, and disbelieve in the latter part of it, perhaps they may turn back." – 3:72

Such a scheme, that they would first announce belief in Islam and then renounce it a little later, could never have been conceived by them while living at Madīna, where the Government was Muslim, if apostasy, according to the Quranic law, were punishable with death.

4. In the Encyclopedia of Islam, which is a production largely of anumber of non-Muslim Western orientalists, it is stated at the beginning of the article Murtadd ('Apostate') written by Willy Heffening:

"In the Quran the apostate is threatened with punishment in the next world only." [Volume 3, p.736 of the old edition; volume 7, p.635 of the new edition]

**Apostasy during War**

The misconception that apostasy is to be punished with death seems to have arisen from the fact that people who, after becoming apostates, joined the enemy, were treated as enemies, or that, where an apostate took the life of a Muslim, he was put to death, not for changing his religion, but for committing murder.

The Holy Quran mentions a number of kinds of people who leave the cause of Islam during war (4:88-91), and instruct Muslims how to deal with each kind of case. Those who openly join the enemy, with whom the Muslims were at war, and fight against Muslims, should be fought in the same way as the enemy. Some other groups are mentioned as follows:

"those who join a people between whom and you there is an alliance, or who came to you, their hearts shrinking from fighting you or fighting their own people ... So if they withdraw from you and do not fight and offer you peace, then Allah allows you no way against them." – 4:90

Thus, even in case of war, if anyone leaves the Muslim side but joins another non-Muslim people that the Muslims are at peace with, or he does not fight at all, then Muslims cannot harm him in any way.

**Apostasy in Hadiths and classical Islamic jurisprudence**

The view that apostasy is punishable with death is derived by classical Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) from various reports in books of Hadith. It should be noted that Rulings in the books of jurisprudence are judgments arrived at by human beings and therefore cannot be treated as infallible.

However, even a careful study of Hadith leads to the conclusion that apostasy was not punishable unless combined with other circumstances which called for punishment of offenders, such as joining the enemies with whom Muslims were at war. In any event, a Hadith report cannot be used to overturn principles clearly laid down in the Quran. A report such as "Whoever changes his religion, kill him" must be treated subject to the principle that the change must be accompanied by some crime committed against the Muslim community.

The books of Fiqh seem to recognize that mere change of religion is not punishable in Islam, but consider that the apostate thereby necessarily places himself in a state of war with the Muslims and thus should be killed as a combatant. On this ground the famous book of jurisprudence, Hidaya, rules that a woman apostate cannot be put to death for the reason that she is not able to fight in a war against Muslims. It also contains the following statements: "The killing of apostasy is obligatory in order to prevent the mischief of war, and it is not a punishment for the act of unbelief", and; "For mere unbelief does not legalize the killing of a man". The clear error committed by the jurists, by which they have contravened the Holy Quran, is that they consider a Muslim who leaves the religion of Islam as necessarily having joined those who are war with Muslims.

If the Holy Quran and the practical actions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad are regarded as the supreme authorities for determining the teachings of Islam, that it is undeniable that Islam grants complete freedom to everyone to adopt whatever religion they wish, and does not allow Muslims to apply any punishment whatsoever to someone who leaves Islam.

Finally, it is important to make clear that a person can only leave the religion of Islam by his or her own decision and choice, and not be a determination or judgement made by any other Muslim. A person who claims to be Muslim, and makes a declaration that "there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is his Messenger", cannot be expelled from Islam by any other Muslim, nor by any Islamic body, court or state. Islam strictly prohibits the branding of such a person as an unbeliever or apostate. The Prophet Muhammad has called it one of the basic points of faith that if a person is professing Islam by the above declaration then you "must not call him an unbeliever due to any sin or expel him from Islam for any bad deed". [Abu Dawud, book: ‘Jihad’, ch. 293 in the Urdu translation of Maulana Waheed-uz-Zaman]. Thus those rulings and fatwas which declare that such and such a Muslim has become an unbeliever and apostate, while he or she professes to be a Muslim, have no authority or legitimacy in Islam.
THE SECOND COMING
OF JESUS
by: MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI – PART II

THE WAY TO RESOLVE DIFFERENCES

"And hold fast to the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited. And remember Allah’s favor to you when you were enemies, then he united your hearts so by his favour you became brethren. And you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then he saved you from it. Thus Allah makes clear to you His messages that you may be guided." [3:102]

1. The Qur’an is the covenant of Allah
In the above verses, Muslims have been told that the secret of protecting themselves from disunity and discord is to hold fast together to the covenant of Allah. The Arabic word for covenant is habl, which primarily means a rope or a cord, but its significance is very wide. Every means by which a desired object can be attained is habl.

It is stated in the Mufradat of Imam Raghib: "Symbolically habl means to join, and everything which makes one join with another is called habl."

Habl-al-Allah means that by which one can reach God. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said, on the authority of Ibn Mas’ud, that "the Qur’an is the covenant (or rope) of Allah" [Bahr al-Muhit (Commentary) by Imam Abu Hayyan al-Undusy] and according to another report by Abu Sa’id Khudri, it is the book of Allah which is the rope of Allah extending from heaven to earth [ibid]. Some have taken it to mean obedience to Allah and others have said that it means Islam, Jama’at, etc.

But all these explanations tend to support the first report. There is no doubt that the way which God has shown to Muslims for protecting themselves from disunity is that they should hold fast to the Qur’an.

2. The spirit of unity infused by the Qur’an
The Qur’an does not make a claim without furnishing proof. When it says that by holding fast to the Qur’an one will be saved from disunity, it also gives proof to establish this claim by pointing towards the condition of Arabia before the revelation of the Qur’an. In the whole country, tribe against tribe and family against family were at war day and night as though they were standing on the brink of an abyss of fire and their differences and skirmishes were threatening to reduce them to ashes, when suddenly, God, in his Grace, came to their rescue and bestowed his favors on them. That is, he started reforming them by means of the Qur’anic teachings, and the fire which was going to destroy them entirely was extinguished and Muslims were united in brotherhood. This was not just peace on the surface, but God created in their hearts real love for one another. Thus, the Qur’an, which has shown such a great and unprecedented miracle that brought age-long enemies into close fraternity, can still come to the rescue of Muslims.

3. Authority of the Qur’an accepted by the companions of the Prophet
The companions of the Holy Prophet understood this principle well. They would immediately give up their own opinion if it did not conform to the teachings of the Qur’an. A person like Hazrat ‘Umar, who was educated in the company of the Holy Prophet, and whose opinion on several occasions corresponded with Divine revelation (testified to by many reliable hadith), changed his opinion in public when a verse of the Qur’an contradicting his view was recited. His statement (near the time of death of the Holy Prophet), hasbuna kitab al-Allah (the Book of Allah is sufficient for us), [Al-Bukhari, kitab al-I’tisam, ch. Kirahiyat al-khilaafa] should be inscribed in gold letters, and his attachment to the covenant of Allah (i.e the Qur’an) serves as a pattern which should be followed by every Muslim. This is, in fact, the distinguishing feature of the companions of the Holy Prophet, that whatever they uttered with their lips they translated into actions. If mountains of hardships and misfortunes stood in their way, they were able to overcome them. In the language of the Qur’an, the work done by their opponents was rendered as scattered motes (25:23). What a heart-rending event for his companions was the death of the Holy Prophet, for whom they would gladly have shed their blood for every drop of his sweat when he was separated from them and had joined his Companion on High. Hassan Ibn Thabit has expressed the intensity of his grief in the following verses:

Thou (O Prophet) wert the pupil of my eyes!

After thy death my eyes became blind.

After thee let anybody die.

I was afraid only that thou wouldst die.

4. Argument from a verse of the Qur’an at the death of the Holy Prophet
At the time of great sorrow when men of great firmness and resolution lost their senses, we found the companions of the Holy Prophet bowing their heads before the Qur’an. When news spread about the death of the Holy Prophet, Hazrat ‘Umar unsheathed his sword and went to the mosque where the companions of the Holy Prophet had gathered and shouted aloud:

"If anyone says that the Messenger of Allah has died, I will cut off his head."

After a short while, Hazrat Abu Bakr arrived and went to the Holy Prophet’s chamber where his body lay. He realized that the Holy Prophet has died. He then returned to the mosque, ascended the pulpit and recited this verse of the Qur’an:

Muhammad is but a messenger – messengers have already passed away before him. If then he dies or is killed, will you turn back upon your heels?[3:143]

The reading of this verse had a magical effect on the audience. Hazrat ‘Umar and the other companions immediately cooled down and after hearing this verse they were convinced that since the previous prophets had passed away, it was natural that the Holy Prophet should also
pass away. This incident shows the great confidence Hazrat Abu Bakr had in the power of the Qur’an. Hazrat ‘Umar’s sword fell from his hand after he heard the Qur’an and the perturbed minds of other companions were also put at rest. Hazrat Abu Bakr neither cared for the unsheathed sword of Hazrat ‘Umar nor for the agitated mood of the assembly, who were not willing for a moment to ascribe the word death to the Holy Prophet; he though it sufficient merely to recite the verse of the Qur’an. The mood of the whole assembly was instantly changed. Was this verse not known to the other companions besides Hazrat Abu Bakr? Were they not aware of the Arabic language? Yes, they knew everything, but had forgotten these words of the Qur’an. The moment this verse was read to them, they bowed their heads before the authority of the Qur’an.

5. Hazrat ‘Umar’s sermon about dowry and his acceptance of his mistake in public

The history of the companions of the Holy Prophet is full of such instances when someone used a verse of the Holy Qur’an in support of his argument, and another who held a contrary view immediately dropped his own view, however long it may have remained embedded in his heart and however pleasant it might have looked in some of its aspects. I will quote another incident here from the period of Hazrat ‘Umar when, after the conquest of Iran and Syria, the wealth of the country had increased immensely and the simple life of Arabia had undergone a radical change. Besides other things, people started bestowing huge dowries on their wives. Hazrat ‘Umar was not the ruler of Arabia alone, but also had under his control the great kingdoms of Iran, Syria and Egypt, but his way of life remained as simple as ever. He ate the same simple food, wore the same simple dress and lived in the same simple house. When camels owned by the state treasury fell ill, he would nurse them; if lost, he would go in search of them even when the dangerous sandstorm was blowing at noon; and when he saw someone going hungry he would carry a sack of flour on his back to deliver it to the needy. An ordinary employee of his once came back as a courier. Hazrat ‘Umar went to welcome him and walked on his foot while the courier rode his camel. When he was invited to go to Jerusalem to sign an agreement of peace, a slave accompanied him. They both took turns riding the camel and kept watch alternately when they camped at a site. If a guest came into his house, he would simply ask his wife to bring some food. The treasures of the world were lying at his feet, but they were worthless in his eyes. He wished that other people should also lead plain and simple lives like him. He once summoned them, ascended the pulpit and told them not to bestow huge dowries on their wives. No doubt it was good advise. The Khalifah himself conducted his life with great simplicity. Why would his words then not touch the hearts of people? Great companions and scholars of the Qur’an were among his audience, but they were all silent. Then a woman in the assembly stood up and addressed him:

“O son of al-Khattab (i.e. ‘Umar), God gives us and you forbid.”

In such an august assembly and in the presence of such a mighty ruler, what was it that inspired a woman and made her fearless? She knew that the Khalifah had invited the people for a special purpose and to raise a voice against him was a serious thing. If the other companions of the Holy Prophet kept quiet, she did not. She knew only one thing — that all heads would bow before a verse of the Qur’an, so she recited:

And if you have given one of them a heap of gold, take nothing form it. [4:20]

When the Qur’an permitted the offering of a heap of gold who was ‘Umar to forbid it? She did not even say “O Amir al-Mu’minin” but addressed ‘Umar as “O son of al-Khattab” and went straight to the point and cited a verse of the Qur’an. Did ‘Umar have no understanding of the Qur’an? Were all the ill-lustrious companions of the Holy Prophet unaware of this verse of the Qur’an or its true meaning? In these circumstances, it was a difficult task to admit once mistake. Even an ordinary preacher today, instead of withdrawing his statement, may bring a hundred and one excuses in his favor. The latter-day commentators of the Qur’an have given various explanations of this verse, but the one who said, “The Book of Allah is sufficient for us” [[Al- Bukhari, kitab al-I ‘tisam, ch. Kirahiyat al-khilafa] had such a great regard for the Qur’an. Strangely enough, he did not feel upset or hurt that an ordinary woman understood what he did not, and in a candid manner he admitted that everybody was wiser than he. He is also reported to have said:

“The women of Madinah have better knowledge of the Qur’an than ‘Umar.”

This was the theologian of great rank about whom the Holy Prophet saw in a vision that his (‘Umar’s) shirt was so long that it trailed behind and the Holy Prophet interpreted the shirt as symbolizing religion. Then, in another vision, he saw that he drank some milk from a cup and the rest he gave to ‘Umar and said that the milk stood for knowledge. Again, sometimes opinions expressed by Hazrat ‘Umar corresponded with prophetic revelation. Such a great scholar and theologian who spent years in the company of 16th Holy Prophet did not reprimand that woman by saying:

“Who are you to cite the Qur’an before me? Do you think that I am ignorant of the Qur’an?”

No. on the other hand, he bowed his head before the Qur’anic verse and told her that whatever she understood from the Qur’an was right. Was that in any way disparaging to the dignity of Hazrat ‘Umar or of Hazrat ‘Abbas and the other great companions of the Holy Prophet, about whom it was mentioned in the traditions that the Qur’an should be learnt from them? Certainly not. On the other hand, it shows the greatness and the authority of the Qur’an. From this incident, we perceive the attitude of the early Muslims of the emigrants and the helpers whose example we are commanded to follow. Even if a person of the most common demeanour presented the Qur’an in his support, they never admonished him sarcastically by saying that such great companions of the Holy Prophet did not understand the Qur’an, and he did; they would immediately accept the truth. They truly acted on the verse: Hold fast to the covenant of Allah. [3:102]

This is what the Muslims need today: to hold fast to the
covenant of Allah as this alone can remove the disunity and discord from among them. When the Qur’an says something quite clearly and explicitly, we should all give up our own prejudices. Unless such a condition is not brought about in our lives, that we are willing to renounce all the age-long erroneous ideas from our minds, our lives will not really be governed by the Qur’an but only by our opinions. However, if a true explanation of a verse of the Qur’an from the tongue of the Holy Prophet reaches us, we should bow our heads before it, because it also springs out of the pure source of revelation (although it may be of the nature of wahy khafiy (minor revelation). [3:103]

6. The need for Invitation to good

The secret of the success of Muslims lies in the following injunction of the Qur’an:

And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful. [For explanation of this kind of revelation, see The Religion of Islam, Ch.1, p.20 (SMT)]

These words are placed in the Qur’an immediately after the injunction to hold fast to the covenant of God all together and be not disunited (3:102), and in the next verse it is stated that from among you there should always remain a group who should invite to good (al-khair) that is, the Qur’an. Al-khair is, in fact, the name of the Qur’an because it contains all the principles of good conduct, moral and spiritual. In our times, Muslims have become totally negligent of this duty, and the work of invitation to Islam which, in fact, was the key to their success, has been abandoned. In this land of India where hundreds of Muslim luminaries are buried, respect for them is implanted in the hearts of people only because they made the sacred mission of the invitation to Islam the main object of their lives and thus they became shining stars showing the way of righteousness to thousands of men. But alas, the successors of these pious dignitaries (sajjada nashin) have turned away from this work. Instead, they have made the seats of their spiritual heritage (gaddi nashin) a source of worldly and financial benefits. The ulama (theologians) are engaged in petty wrangling among themselves. The rich are concerned only with a life of luxury and do not want to spend a fortune, but for the sake of Islam they have nothing to spare, with a few exceptions, of course.

7. The Mujaddid of this century was assigned the task of the propagation of Islam

When Muslims all over the world had become negligent of this great task, God fulfilled His promise which had made to the Holy Prophet in the following words:

“Most surely Allah will raise for this ummah at the head of each century one who shall revive for it its faith.”[Abu Da’ud, kitab al-Malahim, ch.1, p.241]

At the head of the fourteenth century after Hijrah, He appointed Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian and informed him of matters which were going to make Islam prevail over all the religions of the world. Right from the beginning, great passion and love were found in his writings for the defense of Islam against its opponents, and such arguments were granted to him for the establishment of the truth of Islam that their parallel was not found in the works of other writers. At a time when other Muslims were neglectful of their duty towards propagating Islam, he stood alone to perform this task. Later on, he organized for the propagation of Islam, a group (jama’at) which even today is actively engaged in this work. No other mujaddid had appeared in any country at the head of the century – and the tradition of the advent of a mujaddid was so authentic that many luminaries of the ummah, after receiving divine inspiration (ilham), had established its truth.

Therefore many people welcomed the founders claim to being a mujaddid. In fact, in the presence of the authentic hadith, the truth of which was established from other sources, there was no other way out except to admit the truth of the Founder’s claim to this office. But there were great obstacles in the way of propagation of Islam. Christianity had spread on a large scale in every country, so much so that many Muslims, too, had become Christians. The reason for all this was that the Christians had built up an edifice on the hypothetical supremacy of Jesus Christ over the Prophet Muhammad and in this way they were able to mislead Muslims. Moreover, some of the views entertained by the Muslims themselves supported this assumed concept of Jesus’ superiority over the Holy Prophet, although they believed that the Holy Prophet was the best of men. One of the points which went towards supporting the Christian view was the belief that Jesus Christ was physically alive in heaven. Sometimes an issue remains dormant and people do not pay much attention to it unless it is God’s Will to clarify the point. As Christianity had not become such a dominant force before, Muslims, therefore, never took much notice of it as a religion. The time was not yet right for the misconception about Jesus being physically alive to be eradicated forever. When this concept became a formidable obstacle in the way of the progress of Islam and many Muslims had become converts to Christianity, it was time then that the facts be brought to light. It was destined that the sun of Islam, in its full splendor, should rise in the West, the home of Christianity, as it had risen in the eastern countries before. Therefore, He manifested the truth to the Imam of this age that Jesus had, in fact, died a natural death. (It is the Divine practice that God appoints a mujaddid specially to cure the disease which is prevalent during that time). Jesus had died and the prophecy of his second advent in this ummah was fulfilled in the person of the mujaddid of this century. From the Qur’an and the Hadith he advanced such clear arguments about the death of Jesus Christ that many fair-minded people were forced to accept the truth, but the disclosure of the true interpretation of this doctrine and the fulfillment of the prophecy of Jesus’ return in the person of a mujaddid became a source of great obstruction in his mission. The spreading of truth, according to divine practice, is always faced with a storm of opposition. He was denounced and different kinds of verdicts were issued against him by the Indian ulama. This was nothing new, however, because pronouncements (fatwas) of heresy were passed against many eminent servants of Islam before. The unfortunate thing was the work of the propagation of Islam, which was the real mission of his advent, suffered heavily on this account. In most cases, the common people, instead of carrying their own enquiries about the issues
involved, followed their ulama. This caused a big misunderstanding among the Muslims about the Ahmadiyya Movement. To remove this misunderstanding and dissension, I put forward my point of view before the readers of this book and request them, that, like ‘Umar the Great, they should follow in his footsteps and bow before the verdict of the Qur’an. That great man did not express surprise at the knowledge of an elderly woman about the Qur’an exceeding his knowledge and that of many other great companions of the Holy Prophet. Instead, when he heard a verse of the Qur’an from the elderly woman, Hazrat ‘Umar, in spite of his high position, admitted his mistake. Thus, we should not make the excuse that people before us did not know about those verses. It is up to God—His infinite knowledge. He passes on a portion of knowledge to whom he wills. Thus, if the clear indication and application of the Qur’anic verse is different from, or even opposed to, our own views, we should immediately renounce our own views and accept what the Qur’an says.

8. The Qur’an is the sole arbiter

The Qur’an itself explains that one of the objects of its revelation is to remove differences. The Qur’an is not only called muhaimi [5:48], a guardian over all the truths, but also qaul al-fasi [86:13], a decisive word that separates truth from falsehood. It is also called the Book explaining all things [16:89], and the Book that resolves all differences. Says the Qur’an:

We have not revealed to thee the Book except that thou mayest make clear to them that wherein they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe. [16:64]

This verse of the Qur’an clearly indicates that one of the objects of the revelation of the Qur’an was to root out all differences from the minds of people. If this means that the removal of these differences is confined to the differences among the followers of previous religions, and the Qur’an does not help to remove the internal differences in Islam, then we are faced with two difficulties. Firstly, was God, the Knower of the unseen, Who knew the differences of the followers of previous religions, unaware of the future differences among Muslims? The Holy Prophet had not made a study of the differences found in the earlier scriptures and religions, it was God Who knew these differences and helped to root them out. Similarly, He knew the differences of the Muslims and it is He Alone Who can help eradicate them. Thus, the Qur’an is the Book which resolves the differences of the previous, as well as of the future generations, and this is the true meaning of the verse quoted above (16:64). If we do not accept this

meaning, the second difficulty in our way would be that if a book of God was needed to remove the differences of the previous faiths and if this book cannot help Muslims to resolve their own disputes, then another book would be needed. It is not at all possible for another book to be revealed after the Qur’an. Thus it shows that the Qur’an itself presents the solution to the internal problems of Muslims. If Muslims firmly hold fast to the covenant of Allah [3:102] they may be able to solve their disputes in no time.

9. The Qur’an claims not only that it can solve all disputes, but it has also laid down a principle, by following which, we ourselves can help in solving these disputes. Says the Qur’an:

He it is Who has revealed the Book to thee; some of its verses are decisive — they are the basis of the book — and others are allegorical. Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation. And none knows its interpretation except Allah, and those firmly rooted in knowledge. They say: We believe in it, it is all from our Lord.[3:6]

This verse shows that the Qur’an is such a comprehensive book that it cannot be the word of man, for it is not possible for a man to lay down principles of eternal value. The summary and essence of this verse is that there are two kinds of statements in the Qur’an, viz mukham (firmly constructed, unambiguous) and mutashabih (dissimilar, less clear or allegorical). Mukham means a statement for the interpretation of which one does not have to look elsewhere for its interpretation. Mutashabih is that which is verified by other verses and the full meaning cannot be comprehended without references to them. Here, a principle has been laid down that, following and interpreting the allegorical (mutashabih) verses on their own without any references to the clear and decisive verses, is the work of those in whose hearts there is perversity (zaigh) which leads them to deviate from the right way of belief and conduct. Thus, to single out one statement of the Qur’an and cling to it in spite of what is positively and definitely mentioned elsewhere in the text, causes mischief. In this way, some verses would contradict other-verses of the Qur’an. This is what is meant by the expression ibtigha al-fitnah, that is, seeking to draw men away from the religion of God by suggesting doubts and difficulties and making the allegorical verses contradict the decisive ones. The words none knows its interpretation except God are absolutely true. It does not, however, mean that God does not pass on that knowledge to anybody else. If this were really the true meaning of this verse, then what was the need of revealing such verses for the guidance of mankind? The Qur’an has repeatedly made a definite claim that all of it is guidance, a blessing, a mercy and a light. If the meaning of a thing is not known, how can it be a light and guidance for men? That is why after saying, None knows its interpretation except God, the words, and those firmly rooted in knowledge. They say: We believe in it, it is all from our Lord, were added.

Thus, there can be no contradiction in two verses of the Qur’an. Verses which are less clear should be interpreted according to the verses which are unambiguous and free from all obscurity. It is the principle of interpretation enunciated by the Qur’an itself that allegorical verses should be interpreted in the light of decisive verses: a verse should not be interpreted in such a way as to contradict other verses.

10. Furu’ (branches) should be subjected to usul (principles)

Sometimes we are faced with the difficulty that one word may have different meanings and some selfish people
may regard a verse as being allegorical (mutashabih) and will subject it to another verse for the sake of interpreting it according to their own fancy. Again, another person may regard that very verse as being decisive (mukham) and interpret other verses in its light. To resolve this problem, the Qur'an has itself enunciated a firm principle in relation to verses which are firmly constructed and decisive. These verses are the basis (umm) of the Book. [3:6]

This principle holds good in all worldly laws as well. Umm (mother) means the source, origin, foundation or basis of a thing, or stay, support or cause of its subsistence. Thus, mukham means that which is free of all obscurity, admitting of only one interpretation, and relates to the basic tenets of the Book: According to this clear indication, whatever verses are open to various interpretations, and whose significance is not clear, must be interpreted according to the verses which are distinct and decisive. Furu' (branches) are like offshoots and usul like roots. The furu' must therefore be interpreted according to the usul. This is a very firm criterion which can easily resolve many religious disputes. In common law also, the same standard is followed. The Qur'an has also established this principle of interpreting its verses, that in matters of dispute, if there is any ambiguity, we should first decide on the principle, then solve the dispute in the light of that principle.

Whatever is mentioned above can be made clear by an illustration. Says the Qur'an:

And when We wish to destroy a town, We send commandments to its people who lead easy lives, but they transgress therein; thus the word proves true against it, so We destroy it with utter destruction [17:16].

Here, people can put forward the view that God himself commands them to disobey and transgress. To know what the truth is, we should revert to the point of whether it is God's practice to command people to transgress and then punish them. The Qur'an does not enunciate any principle like that. On the contrary, it is plainly stated: Allah enjoins not indecency [7:28]

But:
He enjoins justice and the doing of good (to others). [16:90]

If this is the case, how can God enjoin indecency and transgression? According to the above-stated rule, the meaning of the verse (17:16) would be that God commands the affluent people of the community to obey His message but they transgress, and in consequence of their law-breaking, destruction is brought on them.

At another place it is said:

They have forgotten (forsaken) Allah, so He has forgotten (forsaken) them.[9:67]

God cannot forget. Therefore, rendering these words as God has forgotten them cannot be true because at another place it has plainly been said about Him:

Thy Lord is never forgetful. [19:64]

Thus, in the verse 9:67, forsaken is the correct rendering rather then forgotten – they have forsaken God, therefore (as a result of their own action) He has forsaken them.

When the body is prepared for a particular disease, a dream may often disclose the embodiment of the conditions giving rise to it. From the manner in which internal conditions are represented in physical forms, in dreams, we can have an idea of the embodiment of the spiritual conditions of this world in the life to come. After our earthly course is ended,

We are translated to regions where our deeds and their consequences assume a shape, and what is hidden in us in this world is there unrolled and laid open before us. These embodiments of spiritual facts are substantial realities, as even in dreams, though the sight soon vanishes away, yet so long as it is before our eye it is taken to be reality. As this representation by images is a new and a perfect manifestation of the power of God, we may as well call it not a representation of certain facts, but a new creation brought about by the powerful hand of the creator. With reference to this, the Quran says:

"So no soul knows what refreshment of the eyes is hidden for them..." -32:17

Thus the Lord describes the heavenly blessings that the righteous shall enjoy in the next life as having been kept as secret because, not being like anything contained in this world are not a secret to us; we not only know pomegranates, grapes, milk, etc., but frequently taste of them.
Consequently, these things could not be called secrets. The fruits of paradise have, therefore, nothing in common with these except the name. He is indeed ignorant of the Holy Quran who takes paradise for a place where only the things of this world are provided in abundance.

It may be added here, in explanation of the verse quoted above, that Prophet Muhammad said that heaven and its blessings are things which “the eye hath not seen, nor hath ea heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive of them.” But of the things of this world we cannot say that our eyes have not seen them, or that our ears have not heard them, or that our minds have not conceived of them. When God and His Prophet tell us of things in haven which our senses are not cognizant of in this world, we should be guilty of cherishing doctrines against the teachings of the Quran if we supposed rivers flowing with the milk which we ordinarily drink here. Can we, moreover, consistently with the idea of heaven, suppose herds of cows and buffaloes reared in paradise and numerous honeycombs hanging on trees with countless bees busily engaged in collecting honey and hosts of angels busy day and night in milking these cows and getting honey and pouring them continuously into streams to keep them running? Are these ideas in keeping with the teachings of verses which tell us that this world is a stranger to the blessing of the next world? Will these things illumine the soul or increase the knowledge of the Lord or afford spiritual food as the heavenly blessings are represented as material things, but we are also told that their source is spiritually and righteousness. The following verse, which may ordinarily be misunderstood, is far from describing the heavenly blessings as being identical with the worldly things:

“And give good news to those who believe and do good deeds that for them are Gardens in which river flow. Whenever they are given a portion of the fruit thereof, they will say:

This is what was given to us before; and they are given the like of it...”2:25

Now the context clearly shows that the fruits which the righteous are said to have tasted here do, by no means, signify the fruits of trees or the things of this world. The verse in fact tells us that those who believe and do good works prepare the paradise with their own hands for themselves, with their faith for trees and their good deeds for fruits. It is of the fruits of this garden that they are spiritually made to taste here and of the fruits of the same will they eat in the next life; only the spiritual fruits of this life will be transformed into palpable and more delicious fruits in the next life, but, as they will have already tasted of them spiritually in this life, they will be able to identify the fruits of that life with those of this and, witnessing the close resemblance between the two, will cry out: “these are the fruits which were indeed given to us in the former life.”

Nature of next life
The verse quoted above tells us in plain words that those who spiritually taste of the love of the God in this world will be physically sustained by the same food in the next life. The blessings of the next life will recall to their minds the spiritual blessings of the love of God which they tasted in this life, and they will remember the time when in seclusion and in the dead of night, alone and in silence, they found their sweet enjoyment in the remembrance of the Lord.

If it be objected that the words of this verse contradict the saying of the Prophet which describes the blessings of heavenly life as unseen by worldly eyes, unheard by human ears and inconceivable by the mind of man, the answer is that the contradiction exists only when we take the words “these are the fruits which were given us in our former life” as indicating temporal blessings, enjoyable in this life by all men whether good or bad. But if the “fruits” spoken of here be understood to mean the fruits of good works, the spiritual blessings which the good enjoy in this very life, there is no contradiction. Whatever, the good men enjoy spiritually in this life and are granted to them as a specimen of the bliss that is in store for them in the next life in order to increase their yearning for it.

It should further be remembered that the righteous man is not of this world and hence he is hated down here. He is of heaven and is granted celestial blessings just as the worldly ones are granted and dainties of this world. The blessings which are granted him are really hidden from the eyes, the ears and the hearts of men and they are quite strangers to them. But the person whose life in this world has been transformed so that he tastes spiritually the cup which he shall actually quaff in the next world, shall truly utter the words: “these are the fruits which were given us formerly.” However, he shall at the same time be perfectly aware that those blessings were quite unknown to the world, and as he too was in this world - though not of this world - so he also shall bear witness that his physical eye never saw such blessings, nor his ear ever heard of them, nor his mind ever conceived of them in the world. But in his second life, after his regeneration, he did witness specimens of these things but this was only when, all his lower connections having been cut asunder, higher ones were established with the next world.

The following verses will show how the Holy Quran has repeatedly asserted that the life after death is not a new life but only an image and a manifestation of the present one:

“And We have made every man’s actions to cling to his neck, and We shall bring forth to him on the day of Resurrection a book which he will find wide open...” [The Arabic word tair, used in this verse, literally means a “bird” and is here used metaphorically to signify the actions of men; for every action, whether good or bad, takes flight like a bird. The bliss or burden which a person feels in the performance of an act vanishes but it leaves its impression upon the heart. The Quran has disclosed the important principle that every act makes a mysterious impression upon the heart. Every action of a man is in fact followed by an action of God which imprints its good or bad effect not only upon the hearts but also upon the hands, the feet, the ears, the eyes, etc., of the doer. This
book which, hidden from the human eye, is being prepared, recording every action in this life, shall show itself clearly in the next] - 17: 13.

"On that day thou wilt see the faithful men and the faithful women, their light gleaming before them and on their right hands." [This verse refers to the heavenly life, while the verses which follow (102:1-8) relate to the wicked people] - 57-12.

"Abundance diverts you, until you come to the graves. Nay, you will soon know, nay, again, you will soon know. Nay, would that you knew with a certain knowledge! You will certainly see hell; then you will see it with certainty of sight; then on that day you shall certainly be questioned about the boons" [God has here described three stages of certainty: `ilm al-yaqin (certainty by inference), `ain al-yaqin (certainty by realization). A homely illustration would perhaps make the subject easily comprehensible. If a person sees a column of smoke from a distance, he readily concludes the existence of fire there, as nothing else can give rise to smoke. He thus obtains a certainty by inference with regard to the presence of fire, which is called the "certainty by knowledge" in the verses quoted above. But, if he walks on to the place from which the smoke rises and actually sees the flames, he obtains a knowledge with the eye, which is "certainty by sight". To realize the truth of certainty, he must thrust his hand into it and the certainty he thus attains to is "certainty by realization".

These are also the states of human knowledge with regard to hell. The knowledge of certainty can be had in this world by those who will, but in the interval between death and resurrection a man sees hell with the eye of certainty, while at the day of resurrection he shall realize the truth of the certainty by himself entering into hell] -102:1-8.

It may be recalled here that the Holy Quran has described three worlds of three different states of man's life:

World of earning
The first is the present one, called the "world of earning and of the first creation." It is here that man earns a reward for the good or bad deeds he does. Although there are stages of advancement of the good after Resurrection, yet that advancement is granted simply by the grace of the Beneficient and does not depend upon human efforts.

Intermediate state
The second termed barzakh. The word originally means any "intermediate state". It has been thus called because this world falls between the present life and Resurrection. But this word has from time immemorial been applied to an intermediate state and thus the word itself is a standing witness to the intermediate state between death and after life [Barzakh is a word of Arabic origin and is a compound of bar and zakh, and literally means that "the period of earning merit or demerit by deeds is over". I might add here that I have shown in my book Minhaj al-Rahman that the words of Arabic language are the words of God, and that the only language which can claim to be Divine, the fountain from which all sorts of knowledge flow, the mother of all languages ad the first as well as the last medium of Divine revelation. It is the first because Arabic was the Word of God, which had at last been revealed to the world, from which men learned to make their own languages, and the last because the last Divine Book (the Quran) is also in Arabic].

The state of barzakh is that in which the soul leaves the mortal body, and the perishable remains are decomposed. The body is thrown into a pit and the soul also is, as it were, thrown down into a pit as is indicated by the word, because it loses the power to do good or bad deeds along with its loss of control over the body. It is evident that a good state of the soul is dependant upon the soundness of the body. A shock communicated to a particular part of the brain causes a loss of memory, while an injury to another part is certain to injure the reasoning faculty and may even destroy consciousness. Similarly, a convulsion of the brain muscles or a hemorrhage or morbidty of the brain may, by causing obstruction, lead to insensibility, epilepsy or cerebral apoplexy.

Experience, therefore, establishes the fact beyond all reasonable doubt that with all its connections severed from the body, the soul can serve no purpose. It is idle to assert that the human soul can, at any time, enjoy a bliss without having any connection with the body. It may please us as an interesting tale, but reason and experience lend no support to it.

We can hardly imagine the soul to be in a perfect condition when all its connections with the body are cut off, in the face of our daily experience that the slightest rearrangement of the physical system interrupts the functions of the soul as well. Do we not witness that when a person becomes decrepit with old age, the soul also is enfeebled and age often steals away the whole store of its knowledge? With reference to the decrepitude of old age, the Quran says:

"(A man lives to such an old age) that, after knowledge, he knows nothing" -22:5

These observations should be sufficient to demonstrate that the soul is nothing unless it has its connection with a body. Had it any value apart from the body, the action of an All-Wise Being in uniting the soul with a short-lived body would have been quite meaningless. Moreover, man is essentially a progressive animal, and the advancement which he aims at is by no means a limited one. Now, if the soul is unable to make any advancement in the brief life without the assistance of the body, how could it attain to the higher stages of advancement in the next life?

Various arguments, therefore, prove conclusively that, according to the Islamic principles, the perfection of soul depends upon its permanent connection with a body. There is no doubt that, after death, this body of clay is separated from the soul but, then, in the barzakh ever soul receives temporarily a new body to be in a position to taste of the reward or punishment of its deeds. This new body is not a body of clay but a bright or a dark body prepared from the actions of his life. It may appear as a
mystery to some, but this much at least must be admitted that it is not unreasonable. The perfect being realizes the preparation of such a bright body even in this life. Ordinary human outstanding may regard it as a mystery which is beyond human comprehension, but those who have a keen and bright spiritual sight will have no difficulty in realizing the truth of a bright or a dark body after death, prepared from actions in this life. In other words, the new body granted in the barzakh becomes the means of the reward of good or evil [I may state here that I have personal experience in this matter. Many a time, when fully awake, I have had vision in which I saw those who were dead. I have seen many an evildoer and a wicked person with a body quite dark and smoky. I have personal acquaintance with these matters and I assert it strongly that, as God as said, everyone is granted a body either transparent or dark. It is not necessary that unaided reason should be able to look into these mysteries. The eye sees things, but it is in vain to expect it to serve as an organ of taste. Similarly, the muscles of the tongue may be used for tasting things, but as organs of sight they are useless. In like manner, the deep secrets of the other world, upon which light is thrown only by visions, cannot be discovered by the help of reason. The Almighty has established certain laws in this world and particular means for the knowledge of particular things].

It must also be remembered in connection with this point that the Word of God has described those who walk in error or wickedness as dead and lifeless, while the good it calls living. The secret of it is that the means of life of those who are ignorant of the Lord, being simply eating, drinking or indulging in their bestial passions, are cut off along with their death. Of spiritual food they have no share and, therefore, their resurrection will only be for their punishment. We are told:

"Whoso comes guilty to his Lord, for him is hell. He will neither die therein nor live" -20:74

It may be added that the chosen ones of God do not die with their physical death, for they have their means of sustenance with them.

Resurrection

The third world is the world of Resurrection. In this world, every soul, good or bad, virtuous or wicked, shall be given a visible body. The Day of Resurrection is the day of the complete manifestation of the Lord's glory when everyone will become perfectly aware of the existence of God. On that day, every person will have an open and complete reward of this actions. How this can be brought about is not a matter to wonder at, for the Creator is All-Powerful and nothing is impossible with Him. Thus He says:

"Does not man see that We have created him from the small life-germ? Then lo! he is an open disputant. And he strikes out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones, when they are rotten? Say: He will give life to them, Who brought them into existence at first, and He is Knower of all creation, Who produced fire for you out of the green tree, so that with it you kindle. Is not He Who created the heav-
eens and the earth able to create the like of them? Yeal and He is the Creator (of all), the Knower. His command, when He intends anything, is only to say to it, Be, and it is. So glory be to Him in Whose hand is the Kingdom of all things! and to Him you will be returned" - 36:77-83.

It is to be noted that in these verses the Almighty tells us that with Him nothing is impossible, for when He could create man out of an insignificant thing at first, He cannot be regarded as destitute of the power to bring him to life a second time.

Reward and punishment

Before proceeding further, it seems necessary to deal with an objection here. It might be argued that when a long period of time must elapse before the world of Resurrection is brought into existence, the barzakh, where the souls of both good and bad man must remain in the mean while, is no better than a useless lock-up for souls. The objection is based upon ignorance, for the barzakh is as well a place of reward for good and evil as the Resurrection itself. The Quran describes it as a place where punishment and reward shall be given though not so openly as after the Resurrection. It abounds with verses stating that a man meets with his due immediately after his death. Thus speaking of a certain person, it says:

"It was said (to the man who believed in the Truth): Enter the Garden" -36:26

With reference to another person, the Holy Book says the following:

"Then he looked down and saw him (his friend) in the midst of hell" [A good man had an unbelieving friend in this life and when they both died, the good man, anxious to know the state of his friend, was shown that he was in the midst of hell] -37:55.

Value of spiritual facts

The second point of importance, which the Quran has described with reference to the life to come, is that the spiritual facts of this life shall be represented in the next as embodiment:

"And whoever is blind in this (world) he will be blind in the Hereafter, and further away from the (right) path." [In other words, the spiritual blindness of this world shall become apparent and shall be seen as actual blindness in the next] -17:72.

"Seize him, then fetter him, then cast him into burning Fire, then insert him in a chain the length of which is seventy cubits" [The thrusting into a chain the length of seventy cubits reveals the same secret. The limit of age may, as a general rule, be fixed at seventy. The wicked person would sometimes even enjoy seventy years excluding the periods of childhood and decrepitude. These seventy years during which he could work with honesty, wisdom and zeal, he wastes away only in the entanglements of the world and in following his own sensual passions. He does not try to free himself from the chain of desires and, therefore, in the next world, this chain, which he indulged in for seventy years, will be
embodied into a chain seventy cubits long, every cubit representing a year, in which he will be fettered] -69:30-32.

In these verses, the spiritual torture of this world has been represented as a physical punishment in the next. The chain to be put round the neck, for instance, represents the desires of this world which keep a man with his head bent upon the earth, and it is these desires that shall assume the shape of a chain. Similarly, the entanglements of this world shall be seen as chains on the feet. The heart-burning of this world shall likewise be clearly seen as flames of burning fire. The wicked one has, in fact, in this very world, within himself, a hell of the passions and inextinguishable desires of this world and feels the burning of that hell in the frustrations he meets with. When, therefore, he will be cast farther off from his temporal desires and will see an everlasting despair before him, his heart burning and bitter sighs for his dear desires will assume the shape of burning fire. The Holy Book says:

"And a barrier is placed between them and that which they desire . . ." 34:54.

It should, therefore, be remembered that the punishment which overtakes a man is one prepared by his own hands, and his own evil deeds become the source of its torture. This law is elsewhere expressed in the following words:

"(O ye wicked ones) walk on to the shadow, having three branches, neither cool, nor availing against the flame" [The three branches spoken of here represent bestiality, savageness and infaution which, remaining unmodified, lead to transgressions and evil deeds. These three will appear on the Day of Judgement as three branches without any leaves and, therefore, availing nothing against heat] -- 77:30-31.

To declare the same law, the Almighty says of those who are in paradise:

"On that day thou wilt see the faithful men and the faithful women, their light gleaming before them and on their right hands." -57:12

"On the day when (some) faces turn white and (some) faces turn black . . ." -3:105.

"A parable of the Garden which the devout (to Allah) are promised: Therein are rivers of water not altering for the worse, and rivers of milk whereof the taste changes not, and rivers of wine delicious to the drinkets, and rivers of honey clarified..." -47:15

From this verse, it appears clearly that the promised paradise is only a representation of boundless oceans of all these things. The water of life which the righteous man drinks spiritually in this world shall there appear manifestly as a river; the spiritual milk with which he remains in a blissful state in this world shall assume the shape of a river flowing with wine, and the honey of the sweetness of faith, which he spiritually tastes here, will flow in paradise in palpable rivers. The spiritual taste of every person will, on that day, become visible to all in his gardens and rivers, and God also will reveal Himself to the righteous in His full glory on that day. In short, the spiritual states will no more remain hidden but will manifest themselves palpably.

Infinite progress

The third point of importance that the Holy Quran has described in connection with the life after death is that the progress that can be made in that life is infinite:

"And those who believe with him (the Prophet), their light will gleam before them and on their right hands — they will say: Our Lord, make perfect for us our light, and grant us protection! Lo! Thou art Able to do all things" -66:8.

This unceasing desire for perfection shows clearly that progress in paradise will be endless. For, when they will have attained one excellence they will not stop there but, seeing a higher stage of excellence, will consider that which they will have attained as imperfect and they will, therefore, desire the attainment of the higher excellence. When they will have attained to this, they will yet see another higher excellence and thus they will continue to pray for the attainment of higher excellences. This ceaseless desire for perfection shows that they will be endlessly attaining to excellences: the righteous will go on making progress and will never recede a step nor shall they ever be deprived of those blessings [The question may arise here as to the seeking of maghfirat after entry into paradise and obtaining God's pardon. Such a question is, however based upon ignorance of the actual meaning of maghfirat and istighfar. Maghfirat really means "suppression of a defective state". The righteous will be continually praying to the Lord for the attainment of perfection and complete immersion in light. They will be ever ascending upwards and will regard every state as defective in comparison with a higher one to which they will aspire and will, therefore, pray God to suppress the defective state that they may be able to get the higher one. Their desire for maghfirat will, therefore, be endless because the progress which they will have to make will also be endless. We can clearly see from this that the true significance of the word istighfar and also the desire of it is really the pride of a man, because it is the only thing which leads him on to the highest excellences which a man can possess].

In short, heaven and hell, according to the Quran, are images and representations of a man's own spiritual life in this world.

They are not new material worlds which come from outside. It is true that they will be visible and palpable, call them material, if you will, but they are only embodiments of the spiritual facts of this life. We call them material not in the sense that there will be trees planted in the paradisical fields just like those that are planted here below and that there will be brimstone and sulphur in hell, but in the sense that we shall there find the embodiments of the spiritual facts of this life. Heaven and hell, according to Islamic belief, are the images of the actions which we perform down here.
Hazrat Aishah Siddiqah’s Age at Her Marriage:
by Ghulam Nabi Muslim Sahib, M.A.
Translated by: Masud Akhtar, B.A., LL.B

Most narrations carry misstatements about the age of Hazrat ‘Aishah Siddiqah at the time of her marriage to the Holy Prophet, (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). They place this marriage in the tenth year of the Call and state that Hazrat ‘Aishah was only 6 years old at that time. On proper sifting of the material facts, these statements turn out to be incorrect and it becomes evident that she, in fact, was about 19 or 20 years of age when she arrived in the house of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as his wife in 2 A.H.

It will be in the fitness of things to quote from the writings of two well-known Muslim scholars of the present century who are the main exponents of the view that Hazrat ‘Aishah Siddiqah was 6 years old at her Nikah and 9 years old at the time of the consummation of her marriage. Both Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadvi and Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maududi are well-known Muslim authors of Seerat (biography).

Nadvi’s View:
“Books of history and biography are generally silent about the birth date of Hazrat ‘Aishah. The historian Ibn Sa’d, whom many later biographers have followed, has written that Hazrat ‘Aishah was born in the fourth year of the Call, and was married at the age of 6 years in the tenth year of the Call. Apparently this cannot be correct, because if her birth in the fourth year of the Call be admitted as correct then her age at the time of her marriage in the tenth year of the Call works out to 7 and not 6 years. The fact remains that some matters about the age of Hazrat ‘Aishah are admitted to be correct by most historians and biographers, and these are: She was married three years before Hijrah at the age of six years; the marriage was consummated in the month of Shawal in the year 1 A.H. when she was 9 years old, and she became a widow in Rabi-al-Awwal 11 A.H., at the age of 18 years. According to this account, the correct date of her birth works out to the end of the fifth year of the Call or 614 A.D. of the Christian calendar. For a proper comprehension of the events of history, one should bear in mind that out of a total period of 23 years of the Call, the first 13 years were passed in Mecca and the last 10 years in Madina. Thus, the fourth year of the Call had already been out before her birth and the fifth year was running.”

Maududi’s View:
In the article, “The Nikah Date of Sayedah ‘Aishah,” published in the Tarjuman al-Quran’ of September 1976; Maulana Abul Ala Maududi wrote:
“It is apparent from the detailed reports of Imam Ahmad Tibani, Ibn Jareer and Baihaqi that the Nikah of Sayedah ‘Aishah was solemnised before the Nikah of Sayedah Saudah. It is also evident that her Nikah with the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was solemnised in the month of Shawal of the tenth year of the Call, three years before Hijrah, when she was 6 years old. Here a question arises, that if Sayedah ‘Aishah was 6 years of age in the Shawal of the tenth year of the Call, then she should have been 9 years of age at the time of Hijrah and should have been of 11 years in 2 A.H. at the time of consummation. But all narrators agree that her Nikah was solemnised when she was 6 years old and the marriage was consummated when she was 9 years old. Some Ulema have tried to meet this discrepancy by saying that the marriage was consummated seven months after Hijrah. Hafiz ibn Hajar has preferred this view. On the other hand, Imam Nauvi in his ‘Tahzeeb al-Asma’a al-Lughat’, Hafiz ibn Katheer in his ‘Al-Badaya’ and Allama Qustalani in his ‘Mawahib al-Deeniah’ report consummation in 2 A.H. Hafiz Badrud-Din Aini has written in his Umdat al-Qari that the marriage of ‘Aishah Siddiqah was consummated in Shawal 2 A.H. after the return of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) from the battle of Badr. Both Imam Nauvi and Allama Aini consider the above-quoted reports of consummation of marriage seven months after Hijrah as irresponsible and untrustworthy. Thus we are faced with a question that if the marriage was consummated at the age of 9 years in Shawal 2 A.H., then what should be the date of Nikah which should tally with her age of 6 years? An answer to this question is found in Bukhari wherein it is reported from Urwah ibn Zubair, “Sayedah Khadijah died three years before Hijrah; the Holy Prophet solemnised Nikah with Sayedah ‘Aishah two years after that. Then it was consummated at the age of 9 years.” This works out to be correct that Nikah was solemnised one year before Hijrah when she was 6 years old and consummation took place in 2 A.H. when she was 9 years.”

The above quotations amply bear out that both Syed Nadvi and Syed Maududi agree to the correctness of reports stating the age of Sayedah ‘Aishah at 6 years at Nikah and 9 years at the consummation. Their only worry seems to be the calculation of the correct year of the Call and the Hijrah for fixing these ages in those calendar years. Both of them start with a preconception that the age of 6 years for Nikah and 9 years for consummation are correct and true, and set out in search of the correct year of the Call and Hijrah in which these preconceived ages will fit in. This hardly can be called a scientific method of finding her correct age. This rather may be called an effort to find a correct date for a given age.

The Other View:
As far as my information goes the first voice against the common misconception about the age of Sayedah ‘Aishah at her marriage was raised by Maulana Muhammad Ali, M.A., LL.B., in 1924 in his ‘Muhammad the Prophet’, wherein he wrote:
“The popular misconception as to Aishah’s age may be removed here. That she had not attained majority is clear enough, but that she was not so young as six years of age is also true. In the first place, it is clear that she had reached an age when betrothal could take place in the ordinary course and must therefore have been approaching the age of majority. Again, the Isabah, speaking of the Prophet’s daughter Fatimah, says that she was about five years older than ‘Aishah. It is a well-established fact that Fatimah was born when the
Ka'bah was being rebuilt, i.e., five years before the Call or a little before it, and so 'Aishah was certainly not below ten years at the time of her marriage with the Holy Prophet (pbuh) in the tenth year of the Call. This conclusion is borne out by the testimony of 'Aishah herself who is reported to have related that when the chapter entitled 'The Moon' (the 54th chapter) was revealed she was a girl playing about and that she remembered certain verses then revealed. Now the fiftieth chapter could not have been revealed later than the fifth year of the Call, and therefore the report which states that she has been six years old in the tenth year of the Call when her marriage ceremony was gone through cannot be correct, because this would show her to have been born about the time of the revelation of the 54th chapter. All these considerations show her to have been not less than ten years old at the time of her marriage. And as the period between her marriage and its consummation was not less than five years, because the consummation took place in the second year of the Flight, it follows that she could not have been less than fifteen at that time. The popular account that she was six years at marriage and nine years at the time of consummation is decidedly not correct, because it supposes the period between the marriage and its consummation to be only three years, while this is historically wrong."

Sulaiman Nadvi took Maulana Muhammad Ali to task (for his above-quoted view) in note 2 on page 26 of the third edition of his 'Seerat-i-'Aishah' in the following words: "Some irresponsible persons who think that the marriage with a girl of tender age was not befitting for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) have tried to prove that the age of Hazrat 'Aishah Siddiqa at her marriage was 16 years instead of 6 years. All such efforts are useless and all such claims are illogical. Not a single word is the Hadith and history can be found in their support."

_Nadvi Contradicts Himself:_

In spite of this severe criticism of Muhammad Ali's view, Nadvi not only contradicts himself about the age of Hazrat 'Aishah, but provides supporting evidence to Muhammad Ali's views when, writing about the last days of the life of Hazrat 'Aishah, he writes at page 111 of the same 'Seerat-i-'Aishah': "Hazrat 'Aishah was a widow and she passed 40 years of her life as a widow." Further, at page 153 he writes: "The last days of Khilafat (Caliphate) of Amir Muawiyiya were the last days of the life of Hazrat 'Aishah and her age at that time was 67 years." Now if we deduct 40 years of her widowed life from 67 years then we find she was 27 years of age at the time of the passing away of the Holy Prophet in 11 A.H. and not 18 years as reported by Nadvi in the earlier pages of the same book. Since the total period of the Call is 23 years, therefore, according to this account she was born about four years before the Call and not in the fourth year of the Call as Nadvi tried to make us believe in his earlier pages quoted herein above. Consequently, her age at the time of the Nikah in the tenth year of the Call works out to 14-15 years and not 6 years, as Nadvi himself so assertively reported. According to this account, Hazrat 'Aishah's age at the time of consummation of her marriage in 2 A.H. works out to 19-20 years and not 9 years as stated in earlier pages of Seerat-i-Aishah. A further enquiry is most naturally necessitated to find out which of the reports of Nadvi should be given credence.

_Other Sources:_

There are other important events recorded in history which provide definite evidence about the age of Hazrat 'Aishah.

1. The well-known historian Ibn Jarir al-Tabari writes at page 50 of volume 4 of his 'Book of History': "Abu Bakr married two ladies in the days of ignorance (pre-Call era). Fateelah daughter of Abd al-Aza was the first, from whom Abdullah and Asma were born. Ummi-i-Rooman was the second, from whom Abd al-Rahman and 'Aishah were born. All the four children of Abu Bakr were born in the days of ignorance (Jahiliyyah, i.e., pre-Islamic days) from the above-named two ladies.

2. It is a well-known fact of history, that Abu Bakr's son Abd al-Rahman fought against the Muslims in the battle of Badr. His age at that time was 21-22 years, and although he was older than 'Aishah, there is no evidence to show that the difference between their ages was more than three or four years. This fact lends support to the view that Hazrat 'Aishah was born four or five years before the Call.

3. The well-known historian and scholar 'Allama 'Imad-ud-Deen Ibn Katheer writes in his 'Al-Badayaah' about Sayedah Asma' daughter of Hazrat Abu Bakr' (Allah be pleased with him) (and we hope Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maadudi must have seen it as he referred to 'Al-Badayaah' in his article): Asma' died in 73 A.H. at the age of 100 years. She was ten years older than her sister 'Aishah.

Now according to this report 'Asma' would have been 27-28 years old at the time of Hijrah and since she was ten years older than Sayedah 'Aishah, therefore the age of Sayedah 'Aishah would have been 17 or 18 years at the time of Hijrah. Accordingly, her birth falls about four or five years before the Call, and her age at the time of the consummation of marriage in 2 A.H. will work out to 19-20 years.

4. The author of the well-known collection of Hadith 'Mishkat al-Masbeeh', Sheikh Waheed-ud-Deen, writes in his well-known book 'Ahmal fi Asma' al-Rijail': "At the time of the consummation of her marriage Sayedah 'Aishah's age was not less than 18-19 years."

All the above quotations give ample refutation to the common misconception that Sayedah 'Aishah's age at the time of her Nikah was 6 years and at the time of consummation of marriage it was only 9 years. If Muslim scholars of the present era deem fit to make an objective research instead of beating the old track, they will find ample material in the pages of history to arrive at a correct age for Sayedah 'Aishah. This indeed would be a great service to the cause of Islam. - Islamic Review, December 1980, U.S.A.
**Lahore Section ..........................**

1. Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is khatam al-Nabiyyin, the interpretation of which is that he is the greatest and last of all the prophets.

2. The Holy Quran is the final Shariah (code) for the world.

3. No prophet, whether new or old, shall come after the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

4. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian was not a prophet but a Mujaddid (Reformer) and Promised Messiah and Mahdi in Islam.

5. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad never changed claim, views or definition of prophethood in 1901 with the Publication of Ek Ghalati ka Izala.

6. Belief in the advent of Mirza Sahib as a Mujaddid is not essential for becoming Muslim but his acceptance is necessary in the interest of progressive Islam.

7. Any one who profess faith in the Kalima-LA-ilaha illa Ilahu Muhammad ur Rasul Allah (there is only one God and Muhammad is His Apostle) - is a Muslim and not a Kafir.

8. It is permitted to say prayers behind any Muslim Imam provided he is not guilty of dubbing other Muslims.

9. Marriage relations with non-Ahmadi are permitted.

10. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Wahi-e-Nabuwat has ceased, only Wahi-e-Walayat (Saintly revelation) is continued. Hazrat Mirza Sahib's revelation was Wahi-e-Walayat and not Wahi-e-Nabuwat.

11. The Founder of the Lahore Section was Maulana Muhammad Ali, M.A.L.L.B. Translator of the Holy Quran into English, a companion and disciple of the Founder of the Movement.

12. The members of this section call themselves Ahmadis, and are generally known also as Ahmadis or Ahmadis of Lahore Movement.

**Qadian Section ..........................**

1. Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is khatam al-Nabiyyin, the interpretation of which is that he is the greatest though not last of all the prophets.

2. The same.

3. Prophets may come after the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

4. Mirza Ghulam Ahmed was a prophet as well as Promised Messiah and Mahdi in Islam.

5. The first written evidence of the change of the belief with regard to prophethood was the poster EK GHALTI KA IZALA.

6. Belief in the mission of Mirza sahib as a prophet is essential for becoming Muslim.

7. Any one, who does not believe Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian to be a Prophet, is a kafir.

8. It is not permitted to say prayers behind any Imam who does not recognize Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claim.

9. Marriage relations with non-Ahmadi are not permitted.

10. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Wahi-e-Nabuwat is continued. Hazrat Mirza Sahib's revelation was Wahi-e-Nabuwat.

11. The Founder of the Qadian Section was Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, who was the son of the Founder of the Movement and was a young man in his teens at the time of his noble father's death.

12. The members of this section call themselves Ahmadis, but are generally known as Qadianis.
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