THE SECOND COMING
OF
JESUS
by
MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI

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by MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI
World-renowned translator of the Holy Qur'an into English

English translation of Masih-i Mau‘ood
by Maulana S. Muhammad Tufail
Revised & edited by Imam Kalamazad Mohammad

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I went to Trinidad in 1985 on the eve of the Tenth Anniversary of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at-i Islam, Trinidad and Tobago. It was on this auspicious occasion that the Maulana Tufail Memorial Library was inaugurated by Mrs. Nasira Tufail in a beautiful, well-attended ceremony on the ground floor of 4 Ruhee Gardens, Freeport. All the Urdu and English books of the Maulana taken from England were nicely arranged and displayed on the racks along with the late Maulana’s manuscripts of the English translations of the books of Maulana Muhammad Ali and Dictionary and Concordance of the Qur’an.

The main object of my visit was to obtain the manuscripts of the English translation of the works of the late Maulana Muhammad Ali. The major portion of the manuscript of Prophethood in Islam was sent to me by the Maulana from his sick bed, but the last chapters and the incomplete Supplement of this book and other manuscripts were in Trinidad. The manuscript of his Urdu masterpiece, Paigham-i Ahmadiyyat (The Message of the Ahmadiyya Movement), was given to me by the Maulana himself on his last visit to Pakistan. This is a beautiful, rational and subtle reply to the notorious work Qadiani Mazhab by Prof. Ilyas Burney. It has been very much appreciated by members of both sections of the Ahmadiyya Movement. I brought with me photocopies of all the English-translation works done by the late Maulana Muhammad Tufail for publication.

This was my first visit to Trinidad and it gave me an opportunity to discern glimpses of the love and affection and admiration of the people for the wonderful work done by the late Maulana Tufail for the cause of Islam not only in Trinidad, but in the whole of the Western Hemisphere.

The late Maulana Muhammad Ali was one of the leading literary figures and was very close to the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. It will not be an exaggeration to say that the Founder always entrusted his important literary writings for English translation and other projects such as editorship of the English organ The Review of Religions to the Maulana.

The Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, Qadian was formed in 1906 during the lifetime of the Founder. But later in 1911, during the successorship of
the late Hazrat Hakim Maulana Nur-ud-Din, Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, the eldest son of the Founder, started raising objections concerning the status of the Central Anjuman vis a vis Head of the Movement and made certain misleading speeches and statements about the nature of the claim of the Founder saying that those who did not believe in him were outside the pale of Islam. On the instructions of the late Maulana Nur-ud-Din, Maulana Muhammad Ali published articles and leaflets clearing the doubts created in the minds of the followers as well as the opponents. These issues and certain objectionable views held by Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad became the main cause of the Split in the Movement in 1914 and we see a host of books, booklets and articles published both by Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Head of the Qadian Section and Maulana Muhammad Ali, leader of the Lahore Group (Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at-i Islam, Lahore) between 1914 to 1918.

The late Maulana Tufail went to Holland for the first time as a missionary in 1954 and there he felt the need of an English translation of all the major works of Maulana Muhammad Ali published during this “controversial period”. Maulana Tufail put in a lot of labour in translating the Urdu works of the late Maulana Muhammad Ali, who was at that time and is still one the greatest authorities on Islam in the present age. The object of translating these books into English was to inform the English speaking people about the true concept of the claims and the interpretation of Islam put forward by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. It was also undertaken to refute wrong views and baseless charges of the opponents and also to remove the extremist and misleading concepts ascribed to the Founder. It was aimed, too, at establishing the veracity of the missionary work being done by his learned disciples such as Maulana Muhammad Ali and Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din in the West. The following review of the late Mr. Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall on *The Religion of Islam, An Encyclopaedic Work on the Principles and Practices of Islam* truly depicts the underlying zest and thrust of the Ahmadiyya Movement for presenting Islam:

“Probably no man living has done longer or more valuable service for the cause of Islamic revival than Maulana Muhammad Ali of Lahore. His literary works, with those of the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, have given fame and distinction to the Ahmadiyya Movement. In our opinion, the present volume is his finest work. It is a description of
Al-Islam by one well-versed in the Sunnah, who has on his mind the shame of the Muslim decadence of the past five centuries and in his heart the hope of the revival, of which signs can now be seen on every side. Without moving a hair's breadth from the traditional position with regard to worship and religious duties, the author shows a wide field in which changes are lawful and may be desirable because here the rules and practices are not based on an Ordinance of the Qur'an or on an edict of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and should be altered when they cease to meet the needs of the community. Such a book is greatly needed at the present day when in many Muslim countries we see persons eager for the reformation and revival of Islam, making mistakes through lack of just this knowledge.

We recommend it as a stimulous to Islamic thought. To use an old-fashioned word, it is an edifying book” (Islamic Culture, Hyderabad Deccan, India, October, 1936).

So far, the Maulana Tufail Memorial Literary Trust, UK has been able to publish the following English translations done by the late Maulana Tufail: 1. Prophethood in Islam, 2. The Last Prophet, and 3. Heresy in Islam. The fourth is his Urdu work, Paigham-i Ahmadiyyat.

The present book, The Second Coming of Jesus by Maulana Muhammad Ali is an English translation of his last work (Masih-i Mau'ood) in the series of publications which were written during the “controversial period” (1914-1918) as mentioned earlier. It appears from the title of the book that it deals only with the second advent of Jesus. But in fact, if one glances through the contents, it will become evident that it deals with all aspects of the claims and mission of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement and its main thrust regarding the propagation of Islam in the West.

I may mention here another important work of the late Maulana Muhammad Ali namely, Tehrik-i Ahmadiyyat (The Ahmadiyya Movement). Its first edition was published in 1931. It was also translated into English by the late Maulana S. Muhammad Tufail and was published in 1973 under the title The Ahmadiyya Movement. It deals with the claims, the true concept of the Ahmadiyya interpretation of the prophecies of the Holy Prophet Muhammad about the present time, and the literary contributions of the Founder to the defence and propagation of Islam in the West.
was published in 1973 under the title *The Ahmadiyya Movement*. It deals with the claims, the true concept of the Ahmadiyya interpretation of the prophecies of the Holy Prophet Muhammad about the present time, and the literary contributions of the Founder to the defence and propagation of Islam in the West.

All praise be to Allah that with the publication of *The Second Coming of Jesus* I have been able to complete publications of all the manuscripts which I brought from Trinidad in 1985 or which were entrusted to me by the late Maulana himself. All through that difficult period Mrs. Nasira Tufail, her family and close friends of the Maulana supported me in every possible way to see that all his translation works were published.

I am also greatly indebted to my learned brother, Kalamazad Mohammed, *Imam* of the Uquire Mosque, Freeport, Trinidad for thoroughly revising the manuscripts of most of these books and minutely correcting their proofs. I am also grateful to my host and dear brother, Enayat Mohammed, chairman of The Muslim Literary Trust, Trinidad and Tobago for providing hospitality during my visits to Trinidad and also for his co-operation in bringing out the final prints of *The Second Coming of Jesus* at his press, HEM Enterprises. May Allah bless them all.

Nasir Ahmad
Hony. Secretary Trust
Milton Keynes, UK
10th April, 2002.
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The Second Coming of Jesus
INTRODUCTION

Is there any Muslim who is unaware of the fact that this age of Islam is the age of great misfortunes? The greatest of them all, the real cause of their decline and decay, is their utter neglect of carrying the message and the knowledge of the truth of Islam to the world. On the one hand, there is the Qur’an, the fountainhead of spiritual knowledge, and on the other, the dry and parched world thirsting for this knowledge, but unable to find the water which will quench its thirst. In most parts of the world, illumined by the new scientific learning, the old religion has been relegated to the background and people are in search of a new one. Europe, in particular, the centre of material civilisation at present, is in search of a religion and is unknowingly moving towards accepting the principal teachings of the Qur’an. The need of the hour is that Muslims should pool their resources to make Europe and the rest of the Western world understand and admire the true teachings of Islam and the spiritual treasures of the Qur’an. But when the negligence of a people towards these matters goes beyond its limit, the practice of God is that He sends a person to wake them up. Accordingly, He raised among the Muslims Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, as a mujaddid (renovator) at the head of the fourteenth century Hijrah so that he might show the light of Islam to a world groping in darkness, especially the Christians who had politically dominated the world. As he himself had said in a Persian couplet:

“As I have been given light for the Christian people, therefore the name Ibn Maryam (son of Mary) has been bestowed on me.”

As the great mujaddid of this age was commissioned to reform and rectify the errors of present-day Christianity, and to
save Muslims and mankind in general from the false doctrines of Christianity, he was therefore also appointed as a messiah for this nation. In his heart was engraved such a deep passion for the service and propagation of Islam - the religion of unity and peace, the religion of light and guidance — that not only did he devote himself entirely to this noble task which Muslims had completely forgotten, but he also gathered around him an enthusiastic band of followers who joined hands with him in this work. But as there are thorns where flowers grow, so, too, there are people who rise in opposition against those who are appointed by God to help the world. This happened in the case of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad also. A group of people stood in his way and tried to wipe out his mission from the face of the earth. But the tree which was planted by Allah cannot be uprooted and by the grace of Allah it is growing well in spite of all efforts to destroy it.

In this small book, I have gathered all the points which relate to the claims of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement so that our Muslim brethren should reflect on them in a cool and dispassionate manner, and see that the path towards which he wants to direct the attention of the Muslim ummah is the path of righteousness and is not in any way a deviation from the religion of Islam, even by a hair’s breadth. On the other hand, all these matters which were made a source of serious objections by the opponents of Islam have been clarified in the light of the Qur’an and the Hadith. Similarly, the fulfilment of many of the prophecies of the Holy Prophet Muhammad helped to increase our faith in the truth and dignity of the Holy Prophet and that of Islam. A Muslim gains practically in every way by accepting and joining this Movement. In some way or other, he gets engaged in the service and propagation of Islam and joins a party about which it has been mentioned in 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 (3:103).

This Movement is distinguished from others in this age. Its main objective is to lead its followers exactly in the footsteps of the Prophet Muhammad. For self-purification, there are also mujahidat (spiritual exertions) in it, but only those mujahidat which were taught by the Holy Prophet to his companions, that is, to exert oneself with one’s life and property for the propagation and service of Islam. Thus this Movement is not devoid of mujahidat, but these spiritual exertions not only help one in the upliftment of one’s soul but also in the upliftment of the cause of Islam. In this way, this Movement has combined together spirituality (ruhaniyyat) and jihad or tasawwuf (mysticism) and acquiring eternal knowledge (‘ilm-i zahiri) for the defence of Islam, for the greatest of jihad belongs to the realm of knowledge. I have a request to make to Muslims in general, that they should study the history of the Movement themselves and do not pay any attention to hearsay. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has not claimed to be a prophet; he is a mujaddid and a servant of Islam. Any fair thinking person can easily decide about the teachings of this Movement after going through the ten conditions of bai’at (pledge of fealty) which are quoted below:

1. That until he is laid in his grave, he will shun all forms and shades of shirk (polytheism).
2. That he will guard against falsehood, fornication, evil sight and every form of sin, evil, cruelty, dishonesty, disorder and rebellion; that in moments of passion, he will on no account give in, however boisterous that passion may be.
3. That without fail, he will say his prayers five times a day
as enjoined by God and His Messenger and that, to the
best of his power, he will say his midnight prayer, will
invoke Divine blessings on the Holy Prophet, will ask
forgiveness for his sins and will, with a truly loving heart,
recall God’s favours and glorify Him.

4 That he will do nothing in any way to injure his fellow
human beings in general and the Muslims in particular -
neither with the tongue nor with the hand nor in any
other way.

5 That he will show fidelity to Allah under all circumstances
- alike in prosperity and adversity, in pleasure and pain,
in time of bliss and affliction; that he will resign himself
to God under all conditions and will cheerfully bear all
hardships and humiliations in His way; that in the hour
of calamity he will not turn his back but will step yet
onward.

6 That he will eschew observance of evil customs or fol-
lowing the prompting of his lower nature; that he will
thoroughly submit to the guidance of the Holy Qur’an;
and that in every walk of life he will hold the Word of
God and of His Messenger as his guiding principle.

7 That he will totally abstain from haughtiness and will
live in humility, meekness and mildness.

8 That he will hold the honour of religion and sympathy
for Islam dearer than everything else - dearer than his
life, his wealth, his honour, his children, his kith and kin.

9 That he will make it a rule of his life to show sympathy
towards all human beings out of love for God and that,
to the best of his power, he will use all his God-given
faculties and blessings for the benefit of humanity.

10 That, binding himself with me (i.e. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam
Ahmad, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam),
in a fraternal bond in the way of Allah, he will obey me
in everything good, and will live up to his pledge till his death; that in this fraternal bond he will show such sincerity as is not met with in cases of blood relations or other worldly connections.

Muhammad Ali

Ahmadiyya Buildings
Lahore
29 January 1918
INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION

As regards the publication of the second edition of the book, *The Promised Messiah*, I could not find time to revise it and make the necessary changes, particularly because I was extremely busy with the translation of the shorter edition of the Qur’an. The book is, therefore, a reprint of the first edition. It will suffice here to mention a few points which I think must be put before my Muslim brethren.

1. **Assessing the truth of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s mission**
   There are many people who are bent on opposing Mirza Ghulam Ahmad without thinking of, or understanding the true nature of his mission. They never take the time to ponder whether he was beneficial or not to the cause of Islam and Muslims in general. Remember well, that the question of good and bad is a question of actual facts and not one of religious beliefs and opinions. At the moment, I do not want to discuss what the claims of Hazrat Mirza are and whether they are in any way opposed to the beliefs of the Ahl-i Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah. This question can only be raised when there exists a doubt about it. When he has declared not only once, but scores of times that his beliefs are the same as the beliefs of the Ahl-i Sunnah, the question of discussing these beliefs does not arise. Thus the point at issue is only whether Hazrat Mirza has been harmful or beneficial to the cause of Islam and the Muslim world.

2. **He did not create dissension among Muslims**
   In what ways has he been harmful? The greatest charge attributed to him is that he has damaged the solidarity of Islam by
creating a new sect. This is even asserted by intelligent Muslims, but they never take the trouble to look into the facts. Did unity among Muslims exist before him? The fact is that Muslims were fighting against one another over things of minor importance, thus sundering and disrupting the unity of Islam. The condition in India was such that cases of quarrels over the saying of Amin in a loud or low voice were brought before the High Court. Pronouncing one another as unbelievers (kafir) was the main occupation of the Muslim ‘ulama. Where was the unity of Islam which was damaged by Hazrat Mirza? Perhaps somebody can lay the charge that with the appearance of Hazrat Mirza on the scene, the differences among Muslims were further augmented. If he had, in fact, drawn the attention of his followers to the trivial matters over which Muslims were already fighting, then, this new sect or new Movement should undoubtedly be blamed for expanding the dissension among Muslims. But in spite of this, a storm of opposition was raised against the claims of Hazrat Mirza and pronouncements of heresy were issued against him and a lot of his time was wasted in clarifying his position. Still, he turned the greater part of the activities of his followers towards defending and propagating the message of Islam in India and abroad. He wished the ulama were patient with him for some time and see whether his mission was for the good of Islam or not, and if it damaged the interest of Islam, they would have been justified in their campaign against him, but no one really listened to him. In spite of all that, he produced valuable literature about Christianity and the Arya Samaj - and this was extensively used even by his opponents for the defence of Islam against the powerful onslaughts of the Christians and the Arya Samajists. Another contemporary movement among the Muslims which came into existence at the same time was that of the Ahl-i Qur’an (People of the Qur’an). As this movement was not based on the Qur’anic verse, He sends down angels
with revelation by His command on whom He pleases of His servants (16:2), therefore all its energy was spent on the minor internal problems in which Muslims were already deeply engrossed. If it is said that this movement of the Ahl-i Qur’an, in fact, increased the existing dissension among Muslims, it would be nearer to the truth. But a movement which was particularly made the target of attacks by the ulama of Islam and did their best to destroy it completely, was a movement which, in fact, became the source of strengthening the cause of Islam. Instead of entangling itself in internal skirmishes, it stood in defence of Islam against its external foes. To say that this Movement has enlarged the gulf of dissension among Muslims is to close one’s eyes to relevant facts. The day all Muslim sects unite against the foes of Islam and spend their time and energy in the defence and propagation of Islam, as Ahmadis have done, dissension in Islam will disappear. Hazrat Mirza revived the principle that if there are ninety-nine signs of disbelief (kufr) in a person and only one indication of Islam, that person should still be considered a Muslim. This has laid down a solid foundation for the unity of Islam. If this principle is accepted by Muslims, it will have far-reaching effects on them and will give back to them their lost power and glory.

Some people, by neglecting the distinction between sectarianism and difference of opinion, regard all differences of opinion as an attempt at creating disharmony and discord in Islam. The Qur’an says:

As for those who split up their religion and became sects, thou hast no concern with them (6:160).

The meaning of splitting up the unity of religion and becoming divided into sects is obvious, but some people have a wrong understanding of this verse. It does not and could not mean
that Muslims should not differ with one another in any respect. It was, however, not surprising to find differences of opinion in a nation that was spread all over the world. The Holy Prophet had declared difference of opinion to be a mercy for his ummah, which shows that in difference is also hidden the secret of the progress of the ummah. Difference only comes into existence by the expression of an opinion which in turn helps to clarify and improve the intellectual and mental faculties of a person. Islam advocates unity, but unity in the principles of religion. In other matters in Islam, there is wide scope for differences. Becoming divided into sects and having differences of opinion are not one and the same thing. Sectarianism is a curse but difference of opinion is a blessing. The companions of the Holy Prophet themselves differed on certain questions although the Qur’an was revealed in their presence, and the words of the Holy Prophet reached their ears and they were direct recipients of spiritual blessings from him.

3. What is Sectarianism?
The Kharijites were the first who were responsible for the creation of sects in Islam. There have been reports in which it has clearly been mentioned about them that they shattered the solidarity of Muslims, not because they differed with the companions of the Holy Prophet on some matters, for difference existed among the companions also, but because it was they who started takfir (pronouncement of unbelief) among Muslims. At that time, Hazrat ‘Ali and Hazrat Mu’awiyah were engaged in a battle. The Kharijites sided with ‘Ali but they demanded that ‘Ali should declare Mu’awiyah and his collaborators kafirs (unbelievers) and outside the pale of Islam. Hazrat ‘Ali refused to do so and clearly said:

“They are also our brothers who have revolted against us; we do not declare them unbelievers or transgressors (fasiqs).
If some thought is given to the verses of the Qur’an on this point, it would be clear that Muslims have been forbidden from two things; these are, from becoming divided into sects and from splitting up the religion. Both of these are the result of takfir. Any group that declares the other to be kafir (perhaps that group is greater in number and calls itself the greatest group among Muslims), when it indulges in the takfir of the professors in the Kalimah (there is but One God and Muhammad is His Messenger), has indeed created divisions in the ranks of Islam and has destroyed the basis on which Muslims could unite. When the essence of religion is confined to a few problems in which one group differs with the other, and the principles of faith are completely neglected, this is how the religion is split. The result is that all one’s energy is wasted on matters of peripheral importance. The parties are so engaged in such trivial differences that nobody cares whether the foundation of faith itself is being destroyed. The basis of sectarianism is, therefore, the pronouncement of unbelief (takfir) against Muslims. The sad aspect of the story is that when people start condemning one another over minor differences, the strength of the nation becomes weak. Power which ought to have been used for the progress of Islam is frittered away in trying to decry one another.

When the Qur’an laid the great foundation of Islamic brotherhood and stated: Innamal mu’minuna ikhwatun (Verily the believers are brethren - 49:10), it did not overlook the possibility of the rise of honest differences among Muslims. At the same place it was pointed out that if two parties of the believers quarrel, make peace between them (49:9). Now, both the contending parties have been considered believers here. This is the lesson which Muslims have forgotten today. The tolerance which Muslims were expected to show towards the fol-
lowsers of other religions should have been observed to a greater extent among themselves. They ought to have learnt to respect the ideas of others and to tolerate differences of opinion among themselves. But their present condition is such that the moment a person differs from them on any point he is immediately declared to be an unbeliever and a heretic. To torture and molest him in all possible ways is regarded as a deed of great virtue. The main problem is not that among Muslims there are people who differ in their opinions, which is, however, one of the essential requisites for the progress of Islam, but that Muslims cannot tolerate honest difference of opinion. On the other hand, the companions of the Holy Prophet showed great broadmindedness regarding the diversity of views among themselves.

If, however, a people differ with other people on some matters and they prefer a different opinion, this cannot be called sectarianism. When on account of this difference, one brother Muslim is declared an unbeliever and is subjected to persecution, which is mistakenly thought to be a meritorious deed and a source of great reward (thawab), it is then that the evils of sectarianism take root in a society. A person is not guilty of sectarianism when, having complete faith in the Kalimah and the Qur’an as the Word of God, he considers some of the ideas or customs and habits of Muslims as being against the Qur’an and Hadith. If this is sectarianism, then the scope for the reformation of Muslims will be closed. The day when Muslims are delivered from the curse of takfir, the day when they cease making plans for destroying one another, their differences will indeed be a blessing in disguise.

4. The importance of little things
Perhaps it can be said that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya
Movement is himself responsible for disputes on many matters of minor importance. It should be remembered that he has only drawn attention to problems which in their existing forms were detrimental to the cause of Islam on the one hand, and were becoming a source of strength to the enemies of Islam on the other. For instance, he has indeed laid emphasis on the question of the death of Jesus Christ, the main reason being that Muslims, though they denied the godhead of Jesus Christ, had inadvertently made him an associate in some of the attributes of God. In the struggle between Islam and Christianity, the Christian missionaries used the unfounded beliefs of the Muslims, as a weapon against Islam. They led many Muslims astray by arguing that according to Muslims, Jesus Christ was alive with his temporal body, without eating and drinking, in the fourth heaven, and that his body had not undergone any change, as if it were completely different from the bodies of all other prophets. They would often compare the Prophet Muhammad with Jesus Christ by saying that one lay in the ground and the other was alive in heaven and that God made a general rule for the prophets that He did not give them bodies not eating food, nor did they abide (21:8) but that Jesus was an exception to this rule and therefore he was a superior being to other messengers. It was also argued that he shared the divine attribute of being now as he ever was, because for the last two thousand years no change had taken place in his body. It was to eradicate this false belief from the minds of Muslims that the Founder had to devote his attention to this problem.

Similarly, the preposterous thought that the Mahdi would spread Islam at the point of the sword was another weapon which was extensively used against Muslims. Such a belief in a way lent credence to the allegations against Islam that it was
indeed spread by the sword. By his claims that he was the Messiah and the Mahdi promised in the Traditions, the Founder removed completely from the way of Islam two serious obstacles and by so doing opened new vistas for the propagation of Islam. He did not engage himself in the disputes in which the Muslim ‘ulama at that time were completely engrossed. On the other hand, he guided his followers towards the liberal view that, in spite of these differences, Muslims could still become a united body. This was the secret of his success. He delivered Muslims from a meaningless occupation and directed their attention to a work of real value.

5. The advantages of his claims
A little consideration will show that the points on which the Ahmadiyya Movement has been considered harmful have, in fact, been the source of great benefit to Muslims. The objection that a useless discussion has sprung up about the Founder’s claims of being the Promised Messiah and the Mahdi, is the result of a lack of serious reflection. The two so-called beliefs, one in the temporal life of Jesus Christ and the other in a warrior mahdi, were extremely damaging to Islam. Their extirpation was not possible in any other way except that God, by giving a person the names of Messiah and mahdi, should demonstrate to the world that Islam was neither in need of an Israeliite prophet from heaven, nor of the sword of the so-called warrior mahdi. Islam was going to dominate the world by its sublime principles and by its inherent spiritual powers. This was the great task for which the Mujaddid of the fourteenth century was raised, so that it might clear the way for the progress of Islam in the world. The claims of the Founder, over which Muslims are stumbling by shutting their eyes to the pertinent facts, are, in reality, the source of real benefit to Muslims on the one hand, and the source of protecting Islam
against the attacks of its enemies on the other. God alone knows when the eyes of our people will open and they will respond to the call of the person who suffered every kind of persecution but could not bear to see that the cause of Islam should suffer. He was considered the only champion of Islam prior to his claims and had earned great respect in the hearts of Muslims, something for which a worldly-minded person would have had a great yearning. However, for the ultimate good of Islam and Muslims, he turned his back on this worldly honour and esteem. He did not care that he should be respected. The only passion he had was that Islam should be respected - that Islam and Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, should become dear to the world. In the love of the Messenger of God he did not care if anyone called him a kafir:

“After the love of God I am intoxicated in the love of Muhammad.
If this is unbelief, by God, I am the greatest of unbelievers.”

6. The beneficial aspects of the Ahmadiyya Movement
As compared to the supposedly detrimental aspect of the Ahmadiyya Movement, let us now consider what actual benefits Muslims and Islam received at the hands of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. Had he not appeared, all the Islamic literature which his followers have produced would not have come into existence. Neither would there have been translations of the Qur’an nor other literature in English and German and other languages. The lost teachings and the true principles of Islam would not have been revived nor would there have been any missions in England, Germany and America. Europeans would not have become Muslims, nor would the voice of Allahu Akbar (God is the greatest) be raised in places where unbelief once reigned. The yeoman service
which Ahmadis have rendered in defending and strengthening Islam in India and abroad cannot be ignored by any fair-minded historian of Islam. Let every Muslim think for himself whether or not the Ahmadiyya Movement has been beneficial to the cause of Islam.

As to our opponents, I will ask them a few questions. Why are they provoked at the name of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and the Ahmadiyya Movement, and why are they not disturbed at the attacks of Christian missionaries and Arya Samajists against Islam? Why do they not take note of the hostile forces working against Islam, and why are they bent on annihilating a Movement that exists only for the service of Islam? How painful it is that a thing which is of real value is considered to be worthless, a Movement which stands for Islam is considered to be a thorn in the side of Islam, and Ahmadis who have pledged themselves to live and die for Islam are being hated by their fellow-Muslims! This is indeed very sad but remember well that it has been said in the Qur’an:

As for that which does good to men, it tarries in the earth (13:17).

Anything which works for the good of men is never destroyed. Ahmadiyyat stands for the good of mankind, and therefore, it cannot be destroyed. Hence, do not fight against the laws of God. Do not close your eyes to plain facts. Remove the feelings of rancour and hatred from your hearts about this Movement. Try to understand things and learn to love the cause for which this Movement stands. Your hatred now is not hatred against Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, because he is dead; it is hatred against the service of Islam. If you love this Movement, this will prove your love only for Islam and nothing else.
7. The revival of the defence and propagation of Islam
I again declare that if any person looks at the events of the last thirty years he will realise that it is Ahmadiyyat which has created the passion for the propagation of Islam among Muslims. Muslims were, on the whole, embroiled in their petty disputes and had practically no organisation for the propagation of Islam. It was Ahmadiyyat which revived the work of the defence and extension of Islam in the world. It was Ahmadiyyat which carried the torch of Islam to Europe in this age. It was Ahmadiyyat which defended Islam against the attacks of Christian and Arya Samajist preachers. In short, towards the preaching and propagation of Islam, on which depend the secret of the life and success of Muslims, there was only one community which drew the attention of Muslims, and that community was linked with the Mujaddid (Renovator) of this century. If the Ahmadiyya Movement had done nothing else except arouse the passion for this protection and propagation of Islam in the hearts of Muslims, this was a great achievement on the part of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, to whom Muslims ought really to have paid homage for his services. They should have joined hands with him in this noble work. If the followers of this small organisation, momentarily quite insignificant when compared with the vast number of Muslims in the world, could achieve what they have with their limited means, what a great revolution might have been created had Muslims unanimously supported them in their activities. Thousands in India, Europe and other parts of the world would have seen the light of the Qur’an. Now, consider for a moment on whose shoulders lies the sin of their not seeing the light of Islam. Of course, on the shoulders of those who look with their own eyes at the work which serves the interests of Islam and Muslims, but refuse to lend a hand of co-operation. Is this not criminal disregard and neglect as far as the service
of Islam is concerned? Alas, the plant of Islam is becoming
dry before our eyes and there is none to water it. Perhaps it
sometimes brings tears to our eyes but we lack the resolution
to join those who are trying to nourish it with their own blood.

“O Allah, have mercy on the nation of Muhammad
(peace and blessings of Allah be on him).”

Muhammad ‘Ali

Ahmadiyya Buildings
Lahore, India
23 March 1928 CE
29 Ramadhan 1346 A.H.

1 Literally means “those who went out.” Kharijites were members of
the earliest of the religious sects of Islam which rose during the time
of Hazrat ‘Ali, the fourth Khalifah. They were known for their fa-
naticism, extremist proclamations and terrorist actions. They branded
everyone who disagreed with their point of view an infidel and out-
side the pale of Islam. (SMT)
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Chapter 1

The Way to Resolve Differences

And hold fast to the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited. And remember Allah’s favour 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.¹

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”² 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.³ 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 favours 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
ahadith), 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), hashbuna kitab al-Allah (the Book of Allah is sufficient for us), ⁴ 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 realised that the Holy Prophet had 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?*  

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 that 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 great assembly, who were not willing for a moment to ascribe the word death to the Holy Prophet; he thought 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 samum 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 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 to 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 advice. 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 that 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 from it.  

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 illustrious 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 one’s mistake. Even an ordinary preacher today, instead of withdrawing his statement, may bring a hundred and one excuses in his favour. 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” had such a great regard for the Qur’an that no power on earth could deter him from accepting its authority. Hazrat ‘Umar openly withdrew his remark in that very meeting because it was opposed to 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 symbolising 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 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 the 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 and 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.*
This is what 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 own 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 khafiyy (minor revelation)).

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.

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 anything for the sake of the propagation of Islam. On trivial and frivolous things they may 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 He 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.”

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 defence 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 organised 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 Founder’s 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, particularly when there was nobody else who had laid claim to this office. But there were great obstacles in the way of the 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 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 splendour, 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 fulfilment 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 that 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 out their own enquiries about the issues involved, followed their ‘ulama. This caused a big misunderstanding among 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 - from 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 muhaimin 12, a guardian over all the truths, but also qaul al-fasl, 13 a decisive word that separates truth from falsehood. It is also called the Book explaining all things, 14 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. 15

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 that 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. Simi-
larly, He knew the differences of the Muslims and it is He
Alone Who can help to 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 re-
solve 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 they may be able to solve
their disputes in no time.

9. The principle of arbitration
The Qur’an claims not only that it can solve all disputes, but it
has also laid down a principle, by following which, we our-
selves 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 alle-
gorical, seeking to mislead, and seeking to give it (their
own) interpretation. And none knows its interpreta-
tion except Allah, and those firmly rooted in knowl-
edge. They say: We believe in it, it is all from our
Lord.*

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 sum-
mary and essence of this verse is that there are two kinds of
statements in the Qur’an, viz. muhkam (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 reference to them. Here, a principle has been laid down that, following and interpreting the allegorical (mutashabih) verses on their own without any reference 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 ibtiigha 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 a 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 (*muhkam*) 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.¹⁸

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, *muhkam* 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 an ambiguity, we should first decide on
the principle, then solve the dispute in the light of that princi-
ple.

Whatever is mentioned above can be made clear by an illus-
tration. Says the Qur’an:

*And when We wish to destroy a town, We send com-
mandments 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.* 19

Here, people can put forward the view that God Himself com-
mands them to disobey and transgress. To know what the truth
is, we should revert to the point of whether it is God’s prac-
tice 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* 20

but:

*He enjoins justice and the doing of good (to others).* 21

If this is the case, how can God enjoin indecency and trans-
gression? 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 trans-
gress, 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 for-
gotten (forsaken) them.* 22

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.  

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

11. The Qur’an should hold precedence over the Hadith

This also shows that the Qur’an should be given preference over everything else, even the Hadith. If there is a hadith which seems to be against the clear teachings of the Qur’an, the rule is that the furu’ (details) should be subjected to the usul (principles). The Qur’an says that all the necessary matters relating to the bases of religion have been made perfect in it, but as far as the furu’ are concerned, their scope is limitless. The usul have been stated in the Qur’an in a clear and explicit manner, but only some of the furu’, according to the need, have been mentioned. In the Hadith, whatever is mentioned is mostly about the furu’ which cannot be given preference over the usul. As a consequence of this, the Hadith should be subjected to the authority of the Qur’an and any hadith which is against the clear verdict of the Qur’an cannot be accepted.

The Qur’an deals with the principles of the Islamic Law while the Hadith deals with its details, and it is just and reasonable that only such details should be accepted as are in consonance with the principles. Again, as the Holy Prophet is plainly represented in the Qur’an as not following anything except that which is revealed to him and as not disobeying a word of that which was revealed to him, it clearly follows that if there is anything in the Hadith which is not in consonance with the Qur’an, it could not have proceeded from the Holy
Prophecy.

12. The various Muslim schools of thought are united on the Qur’an but differ on the Hadith

The second reason why the Hadith should be subjected to the authority of the Qur’an is that the whole of the ummah agrees on the Qur’an but not on the Hadith. There is one Qur’an for all of them, but several collections of the Hadith are found in the hands of various Muslim sects. Wherever one goes, in the east or the west, in the north or the south, in the new world or the old, only one version of the Qur’an, without exception, will be found everywhere; but this cannot be said about the Hadith. Thus, if the ummah of Muhammad is one - and will stay one - our differences can be resolved by something on which we all agree. The Qur’an has given us a basic principle towards solving the discord among the various religions, that they should:

\(\text{come to an equitable word between us and you.}^{26}\)

When the differences with other religions can be resolved amicably by adhering to a common and an equitable word, why can the differences among Muslims not be resolved by following the common factor - which is the Qur’an, and about which we have been told:

\(\text{Hold fast to the covenant of God.}^{27}\)

Thus the covenant of Allah, or the Qur’an, is a uniting force among Muslims. The Hadith should be given a position next to the Qur’an - a point which some of our ‘ulama have sadly neglected - and the Qur’an should be considered an arbiter over the Hadith.
13. Promise for the protection of the Qur’an
The third reason for giving the Qur’an precedence over the Hadith is that a promise for the preservation of every word of the Qur’an has been given by God but such a promise has not been given for the preservation of the Hadith, either in the Hadith or in the Qur’an itself. It is said about the Qur’an:

Surely We have revealed the Reminder (i.e. the Qur’an) and surely We are its Guardian. ²⁸

Surely it is a bounteous Qur’an, in a book that is protected. ²⁹

Falsehood cannot come at it from before or behind it. ³⁰

For the preservation and protection of the Hadith, God has not made any such promise, nor has He said that falsehood cannot come to it from any side. On the other hand, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said:

“He who intentionally attributes a lie to me shall find a place for himself in the Fire.” ³¹

This shows that the Holy Prophet was informed (by God) that false reports would be attributed to him.

14. Special arrangement for the protection of the Qur’an
The fourth reason for giving the Qur’an preference over the Hadith is the extra care which the Holy Prophet himself took in preserving the revelation of the Qur’an. Whenever a verse was revealed, he would ask for a scribe to write it down, but no such care was taken about preserving the Hadith. The Holy Prophet had even said:

“Do not write anything from me except the Qur’an”  
(Ahmad bin Hanbal, vol.2, p.21)
Although in exceptional circumstances he did allow the writing of hadith, as long as he was alive his companions generally did not preserve his sayings in writing. The Qur’an was not only written, but also committed to memory at the same time. If a person made the slightest mistake while reciting it, others would immediately correct him. Although great efforts were made by the companions of the Prophet to preserve the Hadith, in most cases it was the meaning and the spirit of the saying that was preserved. In many of the authentic sayings, minor differences in the wording show that, unlike the Qur’an, extreme care was not taken to preserve every word of a tradition. There were hundreds of people among the companions of the Holy Prophet who knew the Qur’an by heart but there were very few of them who devoted their lives to memorising the Hadith, and if they did, the standard of accuracy was not the same as that of the Qur’an. The Qur’an was recited day and night and the slightest mistake had not the remotest chance of escaping the notice of its listeners. There was no arrangement for the recitation of the sayings of the Holy Prophet; they were neither recited in prayers nor otherwise. Some people, on their own, had memorised the words uttered by the Holy Prophet. It is not surprising that in the transmission of the Hadith, a word or two may have been misplaced here and there.

15. The Holy Prophet gave preference to the revelation of God over everything else

The fifth reason for the preference of the Qur’an over the Hadith is the practice of the Holy Prophet himself. When something was inquired of him, he would first wait for the revelation of God to descend, otherwise he would exercise his own
judgement (*ijtihad*) to give a decision. This *ijtihad* was the result of inner revelation (*wahy khafī*) or the companionship of Gabriel with the Holy Prophet. In such cases, the companions of the Holy Prophet would go to the Qur’an first and if nothing was clearly indicated in it, they would turn to the Hadith. Imam Abu Hanifah always gave preference to the Qur’an. Other Imams also adopted the same principle. In short, the whole of the Muslim *ummah* turned to the Qur’an first and then to the Hadith.

16. Five reasons for the Qur’an holding precedence over the Hadith

For the removal of the differences from among us, these are the five reasons why we should give the Qur’an preference over the Hadith:

1. All the bases (*usul*) of religion have clearly been enunciated in the Qur’an, and the Hadith, which mostly deals with *furu’* (details) should be subjected to the authority of the Qur’an. *Usul* should, as a rule, be given preference over *furu’*.

2. All Muslim schools of thought are perfectly agreed on the authenticity and purity of the text of the Qur’an but this cannot be said about the Hadith. In case of differences, or for the sake of bringing unity among them, we should fall back on the common factor, which is the Qur’an.

3. The promise for the preservation and protection of the Qur’an has been given by God, but there is no such promise for the literal protection of the Hadith.

4. The arrangements which were made for the preserva-
tion of the Qur’an _ the Holy Prophet himself took special care for the accurate transmission of the Qur’an to the ummah - were not made for the protection of the Hadith. It does not, however, mean that I regard the Hadith as being unreliable and untrustworthy. For the protection and accurate transmission of the Hadith, the companions of the Holy Prophet have made great efforts and contributions - unparalleled in the religious literature of the world. My only objective here is that in case of a dispute between the Qur’an and the Hadith, we should interpret the Hadith according to the Qur’an and if there is no way of reconciliation between the two, the Hadith, and not the Qur’an, should be rejected. In the case of a tradition, there is a possibility of certain words not having been exactly uttered by the Holy Prophet, but we cannot for a moment think the same about the Qur’an, that its words were not revealed to the Holy Prophet through the agency of Gabriel.

5. The practice of the Holy Prophet was that he either gave judgement by the Qur’an or waited for the revelation of God to descend on him. In the absence of these, he exercised his own judgement.

17. The Hadith is not untrustworthy
In addition to all this, I must say that because special arrangements for the protection of the Hadith were not made, as for the Qur’an, it does not mean that the Hadith is untrustworthy. In the Hadith, a great part of our religion is preserved, and in it are found great prophecies and religious knowledge of a high order. The Hadith is, in fact, the secondary source from which the teachings of Islam are derived. The arrangement which God made for the protection of the text of the Qur’an
never came to the share of any other religious book in the world. The *Hadith* was also preserved, though not like the Qur’an, but the collection and the preservation of it were done in a scientific and historical manner. What is knowledge of history, after all? The collection of world events in a biased manner. The *Hadith* has been preserved more carefully than the history of world events. In fact, it is more authentic than the so-called historical records.  

Some *ahadith* are such that have been continuously handed down to us (by way of *tawatur*), that is to say, by many unbroken and distinct chains of narrators, and no doubts were raised against them. The greater part of the Muslim *ummah* has accepted their authority. This part of the *Hadith* is called the *Sunnah* (literally, a way or rule or manner of acting or mode of life). For instance, the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet concerning worship is so well-known that no intelligent person can raise any doubt whatsoever about it. The five daily prayers which we perform are the same which were performed by the Holy Prophet. The particular form of prayer with various postures are also followed according to the Holy Prophet’s *Sunnah*. Shi’ahs and Sunnis may be diametrically opposed on some points, but in relation to prayers they generally follow the same pattern. If there are variations, it is in minor matters, like whether the hands should be placed over the navel or below it, whether *amin* should be said aloud or softly, or if *rafā’ saba’ah* should be done or not. Similarly, fasting, charity, *hajj* (pilgrimage) and many other matters have been shown by practice and serve as an explanation of the Qur’anic teachings in action. This is all a unanimously accepted part of Islam in the *ummah* and the greater part of the *Hadith* where these matters are mentioned is free from doubt and suspicion. None of these matters is against the clear injunctions of the Qur’an.
For instance, the Qur’an enjoined Muslims to *keep up prayer* \(^{34}\) but the details of these prayers were given by the Holy Prophet. The different postures and sections and the way to perform them were shown in practice by the Holy Prophet himself, under the guidance of Gabriel. It is the explanation in practice of the Qur’anic words of keeping up prayers. No Muslim should hesitate to accept it because it is unanimously accepted by the whole *ummah*. We should not, by our own fanciful thinking, give a different meaning to the words of the Qur’an when we know for certain that the Holy Prophet’s practice has been kept completely intact. Similarly, explanations of hundreds of Qur’anic words and terms have been preserved by the Holy Prophet’s practical example. Thus, this unfolding of the meanings of the Qur’an by the Holy Prophet’s example is, indeed, also a great part of the *Hadith* which helps to convey to us the details of Islam, and this part is absolutely free from conjecture (*zann*) and has reached the status of certainty. If in such matters the practice of the whole or greater part of the *ummah* is not established, that part, to a certain extent, may be conjectural. What is actually and continually needed by every Muslim on these matters, is agreed on by all.

Furthermore, the chain of narration (*riwayah*) reaches the Holy Prophet in an unbroken manner. As far as the *ahadith* which are concerned with story-telling, there is no harm if these are judged by critical historical standards.

**18. Stories and prophecies in Traditions**

A part of the Traditions also consists of stories and prophecies. These are not too connected with the practical life of the nation, nor is it important for every Muslim to remember them. Some companions did memorise them and conveyed them to
others. That is why the greater part of them did not attain the status of *tawatur* \(^{35}\) or *mashhur*.\(^ {36}\) As there was no practical arrangement made for the protection of their words, therefore, too much reliance cannot be placed on the accuracy in comparison with the Traditions of the first category concerning the practical side of the religion, as has been discussed above. Therefore, there was a possibility of alteration or interchanging of words, and at this stage the necessity of giving the Qur’an precedence over the *Hadith* becomes more important than before. In particular, those narratives which are not mentioned in the Qur’an cannot be accepted with the same certainty as the *ahadith* where details of prayer, fasting, etc. are given because the evidence found in the practice of the *ummah* in the latter case - which makes them free from all doubts and suspicions - is lacking in the Traditions about narratives. Such stories should be accepted only when they are reported in authentic *ahadith*, and if they are against the Qur’an in their contents or details, they should be rejected. I want to point out here, although it does not directly concern my subject, that many stories which are not mentioned in the Qur’an have been accepted on extremely weak authorities. The greater part of these reports is such that the words of the Qur’an are interpreted in a tendentious manner and a corresponding story is introduced to conform to its meaning. Sometimes unnecessary reliance has been placed on some of these stories narrated by the Jews. One should take great care in accepting any story which is not mentioned in the Qur’an. If it is against the general meaning of the Qur’an, it should be rejected. For example, we accept *Al-Bukhari* as the most authentic book after the Qur’an, but it does not mean that, like the Qur’an, *Al-Bukhari* is free from error. No Muslim believes that every word of *Al-Bukhari* - every word that is attributed to the Holy Prophet - has reached us unaltered and untampered with, in
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the same way that the words of God’s revelation have reached us. However, there is no doubt, unless the contrary is proved, that we generally regard the sayings attributed to the Holy Prophet in *Al-Bukhari* as the Prophet’s words. But when we find in *Al-Bukhari* a hadith that says:

“(The Prophet) Abraham did not speak a lie except three times” 37

we cannot accept it, for the Qur’an says about him that:

*Surely he was a truthful man, a prophet.* 38

Generally, what is said of one prophet in the Qur’an, of his high morals or sublime character or of his being sinless, is true of all. Under these circumstances, we cannot accept such a report about Abraham. If we accept it as true, we have to attribute the telling of lies to a prophet and if we reject the report, we only reject the truthfulness of the reporter of the hadith, in comparison with the statement made by the Qur’an. Imam Bukhari took great pains in his research about the authenticity of the traditions and the character of their reporters, but he was a human being after all, and if he committed an error, it does not detract in any way from the great research he did towards collecting the traditions.

19. Metaphors found in prophecies
The same is true for prophecies mentioned in the Traditions. They are not really connected with the practical life of the community. Prophecies which were fulfilled during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet or while his companions were still alive, have also been mentioned in the Traditions. Their fulfilment is evidence of the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet’s mission. But the words of a greater part of the prophecies, concerned with events of the future, can only be accepted as
true when their spirit and content are in consonance with the Qur’an. Whatever has been said above about stories mentioned in the Hadith is also applicable to prophecies. In the case of prophecies, we are confronted with a rather greater difficulty because they are full of metaphors and symbols. They are like dreams which need interpretation. In the Qur’an, Joseph saw in a dream that eleven stars and the sun were making obeisance to him and the interpretation of the dream was that one day Joseph would be raised to a dignified position. Similarly, the dreams of two young prisoners are mentioned in the Qur’an. One of them saw himself pressing wine and the other saw himself carrying on his head, bread of which birds were eating. Joseph interpreted these dreams by saying:

As for one of you, he will serve wine for his lord to drink; and as for the other, he will be crucified, so that the birds will eat from his head.

Another dream of a king is mentioned in the Qur’an, that he saw seven fat cows which seven lean ones devoured; and seven green ears and (seven) dry ones, which Joseph interpreted to be that there would be seven years of hardship and famine. Ru’ya (vision) is also a kind of news of the future. The same is true of prophecies which contain metaphors and symbols. In the Sahih of Muslim it is mentioned that the Holy Prophet said to his wives:

“The one whose hand is the longest will be the first to meet me” (in the life to come).

The Prophet’s wives started measuring their hands - because they took the words literally - and Hazrat Sauda’s hands were the longest. But the one who died first was Hazrat Zainab, and her hands were not the longest, but she was a generous lady and was known as umm al-masakin (the mother of the
needy). Long hand metaphorically applies to a person who possesses a great, charitable nature. Thus prophecies, like *ruʿya*, contain metaphors and similes and need interpretation. The basic principles of religion need detailed and clear-cut explanations. Prophecies stand in a different category and need not be very explicit. However, since Qur’anic prophecies are very clear, therefore the prophecies in the Traditions should be interpreted in the light of the Qur’anic prophecies. If there are prophecies in the *Hadith* about future events and the Qur’an deals with those subjects, then the Qur’an should be given preference over the *Hadith*.

20. Sayings of the companions (of the Holy Prophet) and other Imams

As the Qur’an holds precedence over the *Hadith*, similarly the Qur’an and the *Hadith* hold precedence over the sayings of the companions of the Prophet, or other Imams. If any saying of the companions or Imams is against the Qur’an or an authentic tradition, then we should first try to interpret it so that it may conform to the teachings of the Qur’an and *Hadith*, otherwise we should reject it. This point does not need much elaboration because the Qur’an declares in a clear and explicit manner:

> *Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger.*

In this verse, although obedience to *those in authority* is coupled with obedience to Allah and the Messenger, yet at the time of dispute (with the authority) it would be necessary to refer the matter only to Allah and His Messenger; in other words, the final authority will be the Qur’an and the *Hadith*, however great the *ulul ʿamr* (those in authority who) may be
found in the *ummah* at that time. The point has been further clarified a little later in the Holy Qur’an: *But no, by thy Lord, they believe not until they make thee a judge of what is in dispute between them.*

What greater clarification is needed than that those who do not consider the Holy Prophet as a final authority in a dispute between them, are not believers? During his life, the Holy Prophet would judge what was in dispute either in the light of the revelation of God - in case a clear guidance was given there - or according to the intrinsic light or inner revelation granted to him by God. After his death, the words revealed to the Holy Prophet should serve as a guiding light for us. The Qur’an comes first and then the *Hadith*. This is what is meant by his being *hakam* (judge) and this is what his companions followed. The companions, according to the divine promise, were purified by the Holy Prophet and were called *hizbullah* (the party of God). Allah was well-pleased with them and they were well pleased with Him. God said about them:

> *Into whose heart He has impressed faith, and strength-ened them with a Spirit from Himself.*

These companions also followed the same principle, that is, the Qur’an and the *Hadith* were given preference over their own opinion. If by mistake they expressed some views against the Qur’an and the sayings of the Holy Prophet, the moment their mistake was pointed out to them, they would immediately withdraw their remark. If they had submitted to the authority of the Qur’an and the *Hadith*, who else is there in the *ummah* who could be free of this submission? Thus, the Qur’an and the *Hadith* should remain the main guides for all of us. The sayings and efforts of other elders and dignitaries may also guide us, but as they were human beings after all, and
liable to commit mistakes, therefore, the Qur’an - which is free from all errors or the authentic Hadith (those not incompatible with the Qur’an) will be the final authority and judge. And if in the sayings of these Imams we discover anything against the Qur’an and the Hadith, we are not bound to accept it because the Qur’an and the Hadith hold precedence over everything else. When a person of the calibre of Hazrat ‘Umar openly submits to the authority of the Qur’an - when told about his mistake - we should also follow in his footsteps.

Footnotes on Chapter 1

1  3:102.
2  Bahr al-Muhit (Commentary) by Imam Abu Hayyan al-Undlusy.
3  Ibid.
4  Al-Bukhari, kitab al-I’tisam, ch. kirahiyat al-khilafa
5  3:143.
6  4:20.
7  Al-Bukhari, kitab al-I’tisam, ch. kirahiyat al-khilafa
8  3:102.
9  3:103.
10 For explanation of this kind of revelation, see The Religion of Islam, Ch. 1, p. 20. (SMT)
12  5:48.
13  86:13.
14  16:89.
15  16:64.
16  3:102.
17  3:6.
19  17:16.
20  7:28.
21  16:90.
22  9:67.
23  19:64.
The Way to Resolve Differences

26 3:63.
27 3:102.
28 15:9.
29 56:77-78.
30 41:42.
31 Al-Bukhari, kitab al-‘Ilm, ch. ism man kazaba ‘alan Nabi.
32 For a detailed discussion on this point, see Maulana Muhammad ‘Ali’s The Religion of Islam, Ch. II (SMT).
33 Raising the first finger of the right hand, in the sitting posture, while reciting the Tashahhud. (SMT).
34 2:43; 4:103; 6:72; etc.
35 One which is handed down by many distinct chains of narrators and is continuously considered authentic and genuine.
36 A well-known tradition which has been handed down by at least three distinct lines of narrators.
37 Al-Bukhari, kitab al-Anbiya, ch. Ittakaza Ibrahima khalila (4:125)
38 19:41.
39 12:4; Genesis 37:9.
40 12:100.
41 12:36.
42 12:41.
43 12:43.
46 4:59.
47 4:65.
48 62:2.
49 58:22.
50 9:100; 58:22.
51 58:22.
Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets. (33:40)

On Finality of Prophethood depends the unity of Islam
The issue of the Finality of Prophethood, like the concept of the Unity of Godhead, is of great importance to Islam as this is the true basis of unity among Muslims. If all Muslims are subservient to one Prophet they are just like the subjects of a king or sons of a father - they are all brethren. If they have some differences these are of no value as compared with unity among themselves. However, if there is more than one prophet in this ummah, this unity cannot be maintained. Thus on the issue of the Finality of Prophethood depends the unity of the Islamic brotherhood.

What is meant by the Finality of Prophethood?
What is the significance of the Finality of Prophethood? The brief reply to this question is that the real object of the advent of prophets and messengers was, as stated in the Qur’an, to bring guidance (hidayah) from God, and this object was achieved in its perfect form by the advent of the Holy Prophet. Thus, in the Finality of Prophethood is included both meanings, that is to say, perfection of prophethood combined with finality.
With the perfection of prophethood that mission, the need for which arose from time to time, has been completed for all times to come. A prophet was needed in the world so that he could show some of the aspects of God’s will and pleasure relevant to the needs of a nation and a country and so that he could make himself an example for other people by manifesting in himself some of the perfect attributes of God. The Holy Prophet appeared in the world with guidance which was meant for all nations, for all mankind, for all countries and for all times to come. This guidance was not lacking in any respect for the fulfilment of the needs of any race, nor did it remain confined to a particular era, nor did the development of any human faculty remain outside of its scope. Moreover, in the person of the Holy Prophet were manifested, in a perfect manner, all the divine attributes, and thus he became a perfect exemplar for all the peoples of the world, for all ages to come. In fact, when his mission was completed, there was no further need for prophethood. All God’s works are based on just and right exigencies:

\textit{With truth have We revealed it, and with truth did it come.}\footnote{1}

All the points which are essential for the Finality of Prophethood as stated in the Qur’an have been gathered together in the sacred person of the Holy Prophet. For instance, when the Qur’an mentions a prophet, it makes mention of his advent to a particular people. Noah, Salih, Hud, Shu’aib - they were all sent for their own people. The same was true about Jesus, who was the last of the national prophets. It was said that he was a messenger to the Children of Israel.\footnote{2}

In general terms, it has been said about other prophets, \textit{that there is not a people but a warner has gone among them}\footnote{3} and
for every people a guide and again, for every nation there is a messenger. But when the Qur’an makes mention of the Holy Prophet, it says: O mankind, surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, that is, he has not been sent to one particular nation. Then it was said about him: We have not sent thee but as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind (whether black or white, present or future). Again, it was said: We have not sent thee but as a mercy to all the nations and that he might be a warner to the nations.

Thus, first of all, the differences of time and space were obliterated, which means that in future there will be only one prophet for all nations and all ages to come. Although these verses alone were enough as decisive proof of the Finality of Prophethood, nevertheless for further clarification, another verse was revealed:

This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favour to you and chosen for you Islam as a religion.

In this verse it was also explained that no other prophet would be needed in the world, for the work which other prophets were supposed to do had already been done by the Holy Prophet. No task had remained unaccomplished for which the advent of a new prophet was needed. There has been no prophet in the world who claimed that through him, guidance (hidayah) had attained its perfection. On the other hand, the announcement of this day I have perfected for you your religion is a unique announcement. As compared to this, there is humility expressed by other prophets, so much so that even the Prophet Jesus had to say:

“There is still much that I could say to you, but the burden would be too great for you now. However, when he comes who is the Spirit of Truth, he will guide
unto all truth.”

The significance of the verse *Khatam al-Nabiyyin*

When the need for prophethood was no longer present, it was necessary to make an announcement that no one would be appointed to the post of prophethood, and thus it was declared:

*Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets.*

First, it was established that the paternal relationship of the Holy Prophet was cut off - he was not the father of any male descendants of his followers. With the use of “but” (*lakin*) which in the Arabic language is a particle of emendation (*harf istidrak*), the doubt, as if the fatherhood of every kind was denied to him, was removed, because this is what appeared to be the meaning of the words *Muhammad is not the father of any of your men*. However, the words that follow, *but he is the Messenger of Allah*, mean that the Holy Prophet enjoyed a kind of fatherhood which was spiritual in its significance. A messenger is a spiritual father for his *umma* and the righteous servants of his are his spiritual sons. Thus the words *Messenger of Allah* implied that although fatherhood in the physical sense was denied to him, it was not denied to him in the spiritual sense. And along with it, another point has been emphasised that his spiritual lineage was established and because of his being *Khatam al-Nabiyyin* the chain of his spiritual sons will never be cut off. If his prophethood was going to be terminated, in that case, only his spiritual fatherhood would come to an end. As his prophethood would remain operative for all times to come, therefore his spiritual fatherhood would never be cut off. In other words, he is *Abul-
Bashar, that is, Father of Man. In conformity with this, it is mentioned:

“It has been said in relation to the use of the particle of emendation (lakin) that when the Holy Prophet’s being the father of any man was negatived - although it was well-known that every messenger was the father of his ummah as the prophet Lot said: ‘these are my daughters’, 14 and by daughters was meant the believing women - it created the doubt of negation in the Holy Prophet’s messengership, because fatherhood and messengership were inter-related. The negation of this doubt was marked by the positive statement of the Holy Prophet’s messengership.” 15

Further, about the verse Khatam al-Nabiyyin, it is said that this expression is used to prove that his spiritual fatherhood, (affirmed in the form of messengership), extends to the Day of Judgement, as if it has been said that:

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men but is, in fact, (the spiritual) father of every one of you; he is the father of your sons and the father of the sons of your sons and so on till the Day of Judgement. 16

Every word of the Qur’an is full of such wisdom that anyone who thoughtfully ponders over its contents has to admit that, however great and sharp in scholarship a person may be, he is not capable of producing such a book of profound wisdom. It is, however, inconceivable that it should be the speech of an unlettered inhabitant of Arabia. If the main object was just to announce that the Holy Prophet was the last prophet, the whole concept would have been spelt out in simple words. But that was not the only objective. What was the reason and true significance of his being the last of the prophets?
Firstly, fatherhood in the physical sense was denied to him, but along with it his being God’s messenger was affirmed; that is to say, his fatherhood in the spiritual sense was established. But only that much was not enough, for earlier messengers, too, had the relationship of spiritual fatherhood with their followers. However, their power had its limitations, and when another prophet appeared, this spiritual fatherhood came to an end and the new prophet became the guide and exemplar for the people who were expected to follow in his footsteps and who were called his spiritual sons. As far as the Holy Prophet was concerned, the expression *Khatam al-Nabiyyin* was used to convey the point that his spiritual offspring will never come to an end. That is why, instead of *khatim*, the word *khatam* (a seal) was used, although in another reading *khatim* has also been used. A seal is put on a thing when it has reached its perfection, that is to say, there is no room for putting anything else inside it. Thus the real object of the use of the word *khatam* was to indicate that prophethood did not just simply come to an end, but it came to an end by attaining its perfection and excellence in the person of the Holy Prophet - this being the culminating point for which the dispensation of prophethood was established. In short, it was stated in the above-mentioned verse that there was no prophet after the Holy Prophet.

Secondly, prophethood was terminated not without any reason, but it came to an end after it had reached the stage of perfection and excellence. In other words, the object for which it was instituted had been accomplished in its highest form.

Thirdly, Finality of Prophethood meant that the chain of the Holy Prophet’s spiritual sons will never be cut off and the light and blessings which he brought to the world will always
come to the share of the people.

The interpretation of the Finality of Prophethood by the Holy Prophet himself

There are plenty of traditions (ahadith) which show that no prophet can appear after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. A unanimously accepted tradition says:

“The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to ‘Ali: You stand to me in the same relation as Aaron stood to Moses except that there is no prophet after me.” 17

If there was a possibility of someone becoming a prophet in the world after the Holy Prophet, Ali could have been the one. Similarly, in another unanimously accepted tradition, the Holy Prophet mentioned the appearance of false claimants to prophethood and then he added:

“I am Khatam al-Nabiyyin (the seal of the prophets); there is no prophet after me.” 18

In other words, the Holy Prophet had himself explained the word Khatam al-Nabiyyin, that is to say, no prophet could appear after him. In another authentic hadith it is mentioned:

“Had there been a prophet after me, it would have been ‘Umar.” 19

In another authentic hadith of Al-Bukhari, which has also been mentioned in Muslim, Tirmidhi and Ahmad through different narrators, it runs as follows: “It is reported from Abu Hurairah (Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ‘My likeness and the likeness of the prophets before me is the likeness of a person who built a house and he made it beautiful and made it com-
plete except for the place of a brick in the corner. So people began to go round it and to wonder at him and say: ‘Why have you not placed this brick?’ He (that is, the Holy Prophet) said: ‘So I am that brick and I am Khatam al-Nabiyyin (the Seal of the Prophets).’” 20

In yet another unanimously accepted hadith, the Holy Prophet said that his name was al-Aqib which was explained by him as being the one after whom there was no prophet. 21

Similarly in Muslim, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said that he had been given superiority over other prophets in six things and the last thing which he mentioned was:

“Prophets have come to an end with me.” 22

Again, the Holy Prophet said:

“Verily messengership and prophethood have been cut off. Thus, there is no messenger after me nor a prophet.”

When the reporter remarked that that was hard on the people, the Holy Prophet said “but there will be mubashshirat (receiving of good news)” which is one of the forty-six parts of prophethood. 23

There are many other traditions on the subject and there is such an abundance of them that they have reached the status of unbroken continuity and a great number of the companions of the Holy Prophet are reporters of these traditions. Thus, it has definitely been established that there can be no prophet after the Holy Prophet and there is a consensus of opinion in the whole ummah against which no opposing voice has been
heard during the last thirteen hundred years.

As the unity of Godhead is the basis of Islam and this belief has been clearly and emphatically mentioned in the Qur’an over and over - and the whole ummah unanimously agrees with this concept, similarly, the other basis of Islam is theFinality of Prophethood. And this doctrine, together with its essential requisites, is recorded in the Qur’an and the Hadith many times and the ummah in its entirety has confirmed this belief.

**Unity of Godhead and the Finality of Prophethood are the two basic principles of Islam**

The basis of the religion of Islam is the unity of Godhead and the Finality of Prophethood (*Khatm-i Nubuwwah*). The Unity of Godhead required that there should be unity in the human race as well. Therefore, when God perfected the faith of Islam He taught on one hand, the concept of the perfect Unity of Godhead, and on the other, the concept of the Finality of Prophethood so that the worshippers of the One Supreme God may follow one religion. It was for this reason that Muhammad, the Messenger of God, was included in the Muslim formula of faith: there is but One God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God. This is a point which has also been carped at by the opponents of Islam as if, joining the messengership of Allah with the Unity of Godhead (*tauhid*) is a form of polytheism. Among Muslims also there is a new sect whose followers are known as the People of the Qur’an (*Ahl-i Qur’an*) and who have prohibited the joining of *Muhammadur rasulullah* with *la ilaha illallah*. But the truth of the matter is that unless these two issues are combined, the basis of the religion remains incomplete. If the object of Islam is to establish the worship of one God, to establish the unity of the human race
is also one of its objects. The first object can be achieved by affirming one’s faith in tauhid and for the second object, affirmation in the messengership of the Holy Prophet (risalat) is essential. To say that with tauhid the mention of the risalat is polytheism is not right, because the concept of divine tauhid has been mentioned in such a perfect manner in the words la ilaha illallah (there is only One Supreme God worthy of worship) that this is enough for the negation of every kind of polytheism.

Nevertheless, it can be said that the affirmation, Muhammadur Rasullullah, does not indicate the admission of the Finality of Prophethood. This is also not right. In fact, with the affirmation of tauhid, the affirmation of the Holy Prophet’s messengership also stands for affirming the concept of the Finality of Prophethood. For, when the Kalimah (formula of Muslim faith) has been declared the basis of the Islamic religion, then, as long as this Kalimah is current, no other prophet in this ummah will appear. If there comes another prophet, faith in his messengership, instead of the messengership of the Holy Prophet, becomes essential. And in this way, by changing the foundation of the religion, the foundation of Islam itself is demolished. This can never happen, that by word of mouth the messengership of the Holy Prophet should be confessed and in one’s heart one thinks that belief in the risalat of another messenger is also indispensable. It is for this reason that in certain parts of prayer and ritual worship a mentioned has been made of the Holy Prophet; for instance, in the Azan (call for worship) where the words I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah can never be changed till the Day of Judgement. If another prophet was going to appear after the Holy Prophet, these words would not have been a permanent part of the Azan. As long as the call of
prayer is sounded, every Muslim will also affirm in a loud voice that the Messenger, belief in whom makes a person enter Islam, is only Muhammad and nobody else.

Similarly, in every prayer (salah), the sending of blessings (darud) on the Holy Prophet is essential. The sending of darud is either on the Holy Prophet or the Al-i Muhammad, in which are included his perfect followers, that is his spiritual offspring and no body outside his ummah, including a previous prophet. For instance, if Jesus Christ comes, sending darud on him is not part and parcel of our prayer because darud is either on Muhammad or the true followers of Muhammad. As regards the true followers of Muhammad, it is essential that they should be the spiritual offspring of the Holy Prophet and Jesus Christ is his brother and not his spiritual offspring. The Holy Prophet’s spiritual progeny or al would only be those people who are born within his ummah and attain to every kind of excellence by complete obedience and allegiance to him. On the other hand, Jesus Christ had not attained excellence by following him.

In attahiyyat (sitting position) the words recited mean, peace be on thee, O Prophet. Here the word al-Nabi (the Prophet) indicates that no other prophet can appear in this ummah. If there were the possibility of the advent of another prophet, the word al-Nabi would have become meaningless.

The Prophet is only one
The words, the Prophet and the Messenger, are specifically used for the Holy Prophet Muhammad not only in Islamic literature but also in the previous scriptures. It is mentioned in the New Testament that when John (Yahya) made a claim to prophethood, “the Jews of Jerusalem sent a deputation of
priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He confessed without reserve and avowed, ‘I am not the Messiah.’ Who then? Are you Elijah?’ ‘No,’ he replied. ‘Are you the prophet we await?’ He answered, ‘No.’” 25

The reference regarding “that” prophet is mentioned in the Old Testament thus:

“I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee” (i.e. Moses). 26

In any case, in the Gospel of John, the Promised One has only been indicated by the expression the Prophet and this was the question asked of John by the deputation of the Jews. This shows that among them, only the use of the term the Prophet pointed to the one and the only one who was a promised prophet among them and this expression was so popular that when John was asked, “Are you the Prophet?” he immediately understood that he was being asked about the promised prophet. For this reason, the Qur’ān has also used the Prophet and the Messenger for the Holy Prophet, as has been said:

Surely Allah and His angels bless the Prophet. 27

Again:

Obey God and the Messenger. 28

“And if Muslims have any dispute they should refer it to Allah and His Messenger.” 29

The expression ya ayyuhan nabiyyu (O Prophet) occurs frequently in the Qur’ān. The use of this expression indicates that Muhammad is the universal Prophet. Surprisingly, it is not only in the earlier prophecies and the Qur’ān that he has been addressed as the Prophet or the Messenger but also when-
ever among Muslims these words are used, they refer only to one person alone, that is to say, the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Muslims are, after all, his followers. Even when non-Muslims talk of the Prophet, it means only the Prophet Muhammad, as if this term is inseparably attached to him in the eyes of the whole world.

When we look at the issue from another point of view, the Holy Prophet’s particular association with this name extremely delights our hearts, because we see that, before as well as after his advent, all the people understood him to be the Prophet. And then in his sacred person God has assembled those qualities which entitle him to be called the Prophet. For this reason, it is essential for a Muslim to believe in that which was revealed before thee, (that is, the Holy Prophet). Another prophet was not needed, and thus only he became entitled to be called the Prophet and belief in him included belief in all the previous prophets. After him, there will not be any other prophet. If another prophet appears in his ummah, whether it is Jesus Christ or someone else, the use of the term the Prophet becomes doubtful for him and his peculiarity in this respect becomes null and void. The sovereign of the great kingdom of Islam is one. As in Islam God is One God and there is not the least room for anyone to be associated with His Unity - because He is the Possessor of all the excellent divine attributes, similarly the Prophet of Islam is also one and there is no co-sharer in his oneness, because in him are found all the excellences of mankind and of all the prophets. A nation which claims to be the worshipper of One God and the follower of one prophet should create such a unity among themselves that the parallel of this might never be found in the whole world.
The Finality of Prophethood in the eyes of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement

At this stage I will deal with one question. Are these my own views or the views of the Founder of the Movement, the truth of whose claim I will establish in this treatise? For this, one reference is enough to show what his concept was about the Finality of Prophethood (Khatm-i Nubuwat) but, because a false allegation has been laid against him, that he was a claimant to prophethood, therefore, I shall quote references from his earlier as well as his later works to clarify this issue.

Prophethood which is perfect and complete has been cut off

“And the Messenger of Allah is reported to have said that there is nothing left of prophethood except mubaṣḥḥirat (good news).” That is to say, from the parts of prophethood only one part is left and that is the receiving of good news from among the kinds of true visions and genuine inspirations (mukashifat al-sahiha) and revelation which descend on the chosen ones among the righteous servants (auliya). We believe that the prophethood which is perfect and complete and combines in it all the excellences of revelation has been cut off from the day it was revealed that, Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and Khatam al-Nabiyyin’ (the Last of the Prophets) (33:40). 31

The Holy Prophet is the last of the prophets and the Qur’ an is the last of the books

“The concise statement, and the sum and substance of our religion, is: ‘There is but One Supreme God, (and) Muhammad is God’s messenger’. Our faith, which we hold in this earthly life, and with which we shall pass away from this world by the grace and guidance of God, is that our master and leader,
Muhammad, the Chosen One, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is *Khatam al-Nabiyyin* (the Last of the Prophets) and the last of the messengers at whose hand the religion has been made perfect and that the divine favour has reached its completion and by following this course man can reach God, the Most High. We firmly believe that the Qur’an is the last heavenly book and not a jot nor tittle from its laws and commandments can be added, nor can any of it be subtracted from it. Now, no revelation (*wahy*) or inspiration (*ilham*) from God can descend which can alter, abrogate, modify or change any of the commandments of the Qur’an. If somebody thinks so, he, according to us, is outside the party of the faithful ones and is a heretic and a disbeliever.” 32

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

“For us, there is no guide and leader whom we should follow or ask others to follow except the Last of the Messengers, Ahmad of Arabia (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him!).” 33

**Nobody can come after the Holy Prophet, but one who is like a messenger**

“How can the Messiah come? He was a messenger and the iron wall of *Khatam al-Nabiyyin* prevents his coming. Thus one came who is like him, (but) he is not a messenger (*rasul*) although he resembles the messengers and is like them.” 34

**Prophetic revelation cannot resume after the Holy Prophet**

“And I have written this several times, that the coming of the
Messiah, son of Mary, after *Khatam al-Nabiyyin* (the Last of the Prophets) is the cause of great turmoil. Consequently, either it has to be accepted that prophetic revelation will be recommenced, or God will send the Messiah, son of Mary, after making him only a follower and thus depriving him of the essential characteristics of prophethood, but both these positions are prohibited.” 35

**The advent of a prophet after the Holy Prophet is a disgrace to Islam**

“But God, the Most High, will never allow this disgrace and dishonour to happen to this *ummah* and neither will He allow disrespect and loss of dignity to befall the Holy Prophet, the chosen, the *Khatam al-Anbiya*, by sending a messenger with whom the descent of Gabriel was essential, and thus He should turn the house of Islam topsy-turvy, in spite of the fact that He has promised that after the Holy Prophet no messenger will be sent.” 36

**The meaning of *Khatam al-Nabiyyin* is the one who brings prophets to an end**

“The twenty-first verse is this: *Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and Khatam al-Nabiyyin* (33:40). This verse also clearly establishes the point that no prophet will appear in the world after our Holy Prophet. Thus, this also is perfect evidence that the Messiah, son of Mary, cannot come back to the world, because he is a messenger and it is included in the true nature and essence of a messenger that he should obtain the knowledge of spiritual sciences through the agency of Gabriel, and it has just been proved that apostolic revelation (*wahy-i risalat*) has been cut off till the Day of Judgement.” 37
It is essential for a prophet to receive apostolic revelation through the agency of Gabriel and that is totally forbidden now.

“Fourthly, the Holy Qur’an does not permit the coming of another messenger, whether new or old, after the Khatam al-Nabiyyin, because a messenger receives the knowledge of faith through the mediation of Gabriel and the door of the descent of Gabriel with apostolic revelation (wahy risalat) has been shut. And it is forbidden, too, that a messenger should come to the world without apostolic revelation.” 38

There is no prophet in this ummah after the Holy Prophet

“I acknowledge and know it for certain that our Holy Prophet is the Khatam al-Nabiyyin (the last of the prophets) and believe with perfect certainty that our Prophet is Khatam al-Anbiya and no prophet, either new or old, will appear after him for this ummah.” 39

Prophets and prophetic revelation have come to an end and there is no messenger after the Holy Prophet

“God has brought an end to the prophets with our Messenger and prophetic revelation (wahy al-nubuwwah) has been cut off. How then could the Messiah come when there is no prophet after our Messenger? Will he then be separated from his prophethood and come like those who are deposed from their office?” 40

Prophethood has come to an end; the Promised Messiah will be from this ummah

“And all the traditions (ahadith) agree on the point that the Promised Messiah will be from among this ummah, because prophethood has been brought to an end and our Messenger is Khatam al-Nabiyyin (the Last of the Prophets).” 41
To believe in a prophet after the Holy Prophet amounts to denying the Last of the Prophets

“And this should also be understood that when our Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is Khatam al-Anbiya (the Last of the Prophets), there is no doubt in it that he who believes in the descent of the Messiah, who was a prophet for the Israelites, is a denier of the Khatam al-Nabiyyin.” 42

The period of prophethood of Muhammad extends to the Day of Judgement

“The needs of the time of our master and leader, the last of the messengers, were not, in fact, confined to one category only and that period was also not a limited period but it was so vast that its ambit extends to the Day of Judgement.” 43

God will not send a prophet after the Khatam al-Nabiyyin

“It does not beseem God that He should send a prophet after our Prophet, the Khatam al-Nabiyyin, and it does not beseem Him that He should start the chain of prophethood again after it has been terminated and that He should abrogate some of the Qur’anic commands or add thereupon.” 44

The door of prophetic revelation is closed and the explanation of Khatam al-Nabiyyin is There is no prophet after me

“Because this is against the saying of God Almighty that: Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and Khatam al-Nabiyyin (the Last of the Prophets) (33:40). Do you not know that the Beneficent Lord has declared our Holy Prophet to be Khatam al-Anbiya without exception and our Prophet has interpreted this verse with la nabiyya ba’di (there is no prophet after me). For the seekers of truth it is evident that if after our Holy Prophet we
A claimant to prophethood cannot be a Muslim

“On the other hand, from the same mouth he expressed the opinion about me that my Jama’at (followers) regard me as a messenger of God, as if I have made a claim to prophethood in reality. If the writer’s first opinion is correct, that I am a Muslim and have faith in the Qur’an, then his second opinion, in which he expressed that I am a claimant to prophethood myself is wrong. If this second opinion is correct, then the first one, in which I have been declared a Muslim and a believer in the Qur’an is wrong. Can an ill-fated fabricator who himself lays claim to messengership and prophethood have any faith in the Qur’an? And can such a person who has faith in the Qur’an and in the verse but he is the Messenger of Allah and Khatam al-Nabiyyin (the Last of the Prophets) as the words of God say, that he is a messenger and a prophet after the Holy Prophet?”

The Holy Prophet’s being Khatam al-Anbiya refers to the fact that he is the father of the righteous servants of his ummah and by following him the excellence of prophethood, that is, the favour of God’s communication, will be granted

“Similarly, the Finality of Prophethood (Khatm-i Nubuwwat) in the person of the Holy Prophet should not be denied, and also it should not be understood in a way that would shut the
door of divine communion and communication for this *ummah*. It must be remembered that we believe the Qur’an to be the last Book and the last Law (*Shari‘ah*) and after this, till the Day of Judgement, there is no prophet, in the sense of one who is the possessor of Law or one who can ever receive revelation without obedience to the Holy Prophet, but the revelation which is the result of obedience will never be cut off. But prophethood with *shari‘ah* and independent prophethood have been terminated, and towards this, up to the Day of Judgement, no way is open. If anyone says that he is not from the *ummah* of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and claims that he is a prophet with Law or without Law, his example is like that of a person who is lifted up by a torrent and is thrown backwards and he cannot come out of it till he dies. A further elucidation of this point is that when God has promised that the Holy Prophet is the last of the prophets (*Khatam al-Anbiya*), it has also been pointed out that the Holy Prophet, on account of his (quality of) spirituality is like a father unto those righteous persons whose souls are perfected by obedience to him, and divine revelation and the honour of communication are granted to them, as God mentions in the Qur’an:

*Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and Khatam al-Nabiyyin (the Last of the Prophets) (33:40).*

“It is evident that *lakin* (but) in the Arabic language is a particle of emendation (*istidrak*) and stands for the negation of what has passed before. Thus in the first part of the verse, the matter which has been considered void is that the physical fatherhood in relation to males has been negatived, but with the particle *lakin* this negation has been remedied and the Holy Prophet was declared the *Khatam al-Anbiya* which means that
after him the receiving of the blessings of prophethood directly has been cut off. Now, the blessings of prophethood will only be granted to that person who bears the seal of prophetic obedience in his actions, and in this way such a person will be the son and heir to the Holy Prophet. 48 In short, this verse in one way negatives the Holy Prophet’s being a father and in another way his fatherhood has been affirmed, so that the objection which has been mentioned in: Surely thy enemy is cut off (from good), could be removed (103:8). The sum and substance of this verse is that prophethood even without law is cut off in this way - that a person should receive the station of prophethood directly, but it is not forbidden that such a prophethood should be acquired and be graced with the lamp of the prophethood of Muhammad. In other words, the possessor of such an excellence should be the follower (ummati) of the Holy Prophet in one respect and from another he should posses within himself by way of acquisition of the splendours (anwar) of the prophethood of Muhammad. If in this way also, the perfection of the really earnest and worthy persons of this ummah is denied, it means, God forbid, that the Holy Prophet was cut off from good on both sides; neither did he have a son in the physical sense nor in the spiritual, and the opponent was right when he raised the objection that the Holy Prophet was abtar (cut off from God or without any children).” 49

In this ummah prophets cannot come because the Qur’an has made the Shari‘ah complete and perfect

“We are Muslims and believe in God’s book, the Qur’an, and we believe that our leader, Muhammad, the Chosen, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is the Prophet and Messenger of God and his religion is the best of all the religions. And we believe that he is the Khatam al-Anbiya and after
him there is no prophet, except the one who is nourished by his grace and appears according to his promise and God commune and communicates with His auliya (saints) in this ummah and they are imbued with the colour of prophethood though they are not prophets in reality, for the Qur’an has brought the needs of the Law (Shari‘ah) to perfection. And they are given nothing but the understanding of the Qur’an. Neither do they add nor subtract anything from it. And any one who dares to do so is a wrong-doer and a devil.”

All prophethood has come to an end because of the perfection of the prophethood of Muhammad

“All the prophethoods, and the books which have passed away before, need not be followed separately, for Muhammad’s prophethood includes and embraces them all. Besides this, all paths are closed. All the truths that lead toward God are contained therein. Neither will there come a new truth after this, nor was there such a truth before which is not found in it. Therefore with this prophethood came the end of all prophethoods and thus it ought to have been, for whatever has a beginning must also have an end.”

The granting of the excellence by the Seal of the Holy Prophet means the advent of auliya (saints) in this ummah

“God, Who is eminent in His glory has made the Holy Prophet the possessor of the seal, that is, He granted him a seal which was not granted to any other prophet at all for the communication of excellences. That is why he was named Khatam al-Nabiyyin, that is to say, by following him, excellences of prophethood are granted and his spiritual impact will imbue others with prophetic blessings. This holy power did not come to the share of any other prophet, and this is the true meaning of the tradition, ‘Ulama’u ummati ka-anbiya’i Bani
The Second Coming of Jesus

*Isra’il*, that is, ‘the learned of my ummah will be like the Israelite prophets’. Among the Israelites, although there appeared many prophets, their prophethood was not the outcome of obedience to Moses. On the other hand, all the prophethoods were a direct gift from God and the prophethood of Moses had no part to play in it. Hence they were not called, like me, a prophet from one aspect and a follower (*ummati*) from another aspect, but they were called independent prophets and the rank of prophethood was granted to them directly.”

Prophethood has been cut off after the Holy Prophet and only abundance of divine communication has remained

“And surely prophethood has been cut off after our Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. There is no book after the Qur’an, which is the best of all the scriptures, and there is no book and there is no law (*shari’ah*) after the Law of Muhammad.”

“And surely our Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is the *Khatam al-Nabiyyin* (the Last of the Prophets) and with him has been cut off the chain of the messengers. Thus, no one has a right to claim prophethood substantively after our Holy Messenger and nothing has been left after him except abundance of communication, and that cannot be received without obedience to the Holy Prophet, who is the best of men.”

The special grace of the Holy Prophet’s prophethood has come to an end but his followers will be honoured by divine communication

“The Holy Prophet has been granted a special grace (*fakhr*) that he is *Khatam al-Anbiya* (the Last of the Prophets) in the
sense that all the excellences of prophethood have come to an end with him, and secondly, there is no messenger after him who will bear a new law, nor will there be a prophet who will be outside of his ummah, but everyone who will be honoured with divine communication will receive it by his beneficence and he is called a follower (ummati) and not an independent prophet.”56

Footnotes on Chapter 11

1 17:105.
2 3:48.
3 35:24.
4 13:7.
5 10:47.
6 7:158.
7 34:18.
8 21:107.
9 25:1.
10 5:3.
11 John, 16: 12, 13 (The New English Bible)
12 33:40.
13 Used in the Arabic language for the removal of some error, doubt or misconception. (SMT)
14 11:78.
15 Ruh al-Ma‘ani, (33:40), p.32 by Abul Fadl Shahab al-Din Al-Sayyid Muhammad Alusi
16 Ibid.
19 Tirmidhi, ch. Manaqib ‘Umar.
21 Al-Bukhari, kitab al-Anbiya, ch. la yasubba nasabahu.
22 Muslim, kitab al-Salah, ch. al-Masajid, (ch. xciv:1062), vol. 1.
24 Tradition tells us that all prophets are as brothers: “The prophets are, as it were, brothers on the mothers’ side; their affair is one and their followers are different” (Al-Bukhari, kitab al-Anbiya, ch. wazkur fil kitab al-Maryam).
25 John, 1:21, The New English Bible. In the Authorised version, instead of “the prophet”, “that prophet” is used. In the Arabic version, Al-Nabi is used and this has been adopted in The New English Bible. (SMT)
26 Deuteronomy, 18:18, Authorised Version. The New English Bible says “of their own race” instead of “among their brethren”. (SMT)
27 33:54.
28 4:59.
29 Ibid.
30 2:4
31 Taudih Maram, pp. 19, 20 (22 January 1891).
32 Izalah Auham, pp. 137-138 (3 September 1891).
33 Ibid., p. 182
34 Ibid., p. 522
35 Ibid., p. 544
36 Ibid., p. 586.
37 Ibid., p. 614.
38 Ibid., p. 761.
39 Nishan Asmani, p. 29 (26 May 1892).
40 Tuhfa Baghdad, p. 7. (July 1893).
41 Ibid., p. 27.
42 Ibid., p. 28.
44 Ibid., p. 377.
45 Hamamat al-Bushra, p. 20. (27 July 1903).
46 Anjam-i Atham, pp.27-29 footnote (22 January 1897).
47 About the particle of emendation, it has been mentioned in a book of Arabic grammar: “lakin (but) is a particle of emendation the meaning of which is to remove the doubt which has been created by the earlier statement. This particle lakin comes between the statements which are different within themselves in negation and affirmation to each other.” (Sharah Mulla Jam’).
The translation of these words by Mirza Bashir Ahmad is: “now the perfectness of prophethood will be granted on to the person”. *(Truth About Khātam-i Nubuwwat*, p. 15, published in Rabwah) is totally wrong and against the clear writings of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. Righteous servants (*auliya*) who follow the Holy Prophet may acquire *excellences of prophethood* but not perfectness of prophethood (italics are mine). Complete and perfect prophethood has come to an end and only a part of it remains in the form of true visions (*mubashhirat*). (SMT)

Review on *Mubahatha* between Batalavi and Chakralavi, p.6 (27 November 1902).


*Al-Wasiyyah*, p. 10 (20 December 1905).

This sentence could also be translated thus: “And his spiritual impact is to imbue others with qualities of prophetic blessings (*ap ki tawajjuh ruhani nabi tarash hai*).” This, in fact, will be in consonance with the text which subsequently mentions the coming of the like of the prophets (not prophets) in the *ummah*. It is interesting to note that one of the revelations of the Founder is: “Thou art to me like the prophets of Israel (that is, by way of reflection (*zill*) thou resembllest them)” (*Tabligh Risalat*, vol. 1, p. 61, originally quoted from *Ishthihar*, 20 February 1886). (SMT)


*Chashma Ma’rifat, Mulhaqa*, p. 9 (15 May 1908).
CHAPTER III

THE APPOINTMENT OF RENOVATORS
(MUJADDIDS)

He makes the spirit to light by His command upon whom He pleases of His servants. (40:15)

The need for the advent of prophets
The concept of the Finality of Prophethood, is a great pillar of Islam and a strong basis for Islamic unity, but it also brings home to us some difficulties. Before the advent of the Holy Prophet, whenever mischief and corruption spread in the world, God appointed a messenger for the guidance of the people. In all the great nations of the world we observe the same phenomenon but we shall take particular notice of the nation which not only has been mentioned several times in the Qur’an but between which, and the nation of Islam, a parallel has been drawn. My reference is to the Israelites. Among them, after Moses and Aaron, several prophets were raised in succession as has been pointed out in the Qur’an:

And We sent messengers after him one after another

Again:

Then we sent Our messengers one after another.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the Shari’ah (Law) of Moses was not perfect. Neither were Moses and Aaron or the other prophets perfect examples for the Israelites. Any prophet
who appeared among the Israelites or in any other nation, was endowed with only some of the manifestations of divine attributes. However, the most perfect example appeared only in the sacred person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Similarly, the law and guidance which a previous prophet brought was meant to fulfil the needs of a particular age and these were the needs which necessitated the advent of prophets. Apart from this, people went astray from the path of righteousness, or, with the passage of time, their hearts became hard when they forsook the truths which the previous prophets had brought to them. Although the Holy Prophet was an embodiment of the highest divine manifestation and was a perfect example for mankind, and after him Muslims did not need any other model, and although the promise for the preservation of the Qur’an was also given by God, yet He knew that as years rolled by, human nature would become rusty. It was, therefore, essential that God should arrange for the removal of shortcomings from the Muslim ummah. Accordingly, the Qur’an reminds Muslims:

\[\text{And (that) they should not be like those who were given the Book before, but time was prolonged for them, so their hearts hardened.} \]

There is also a hadith applicable to the conditions of Muslims which says:

“The best people are of my period (qarn), then those who will join them, and thereafter those who will join them.”

After this, the spreading of falsehood and deception is mentioned. The question is, when in times of need God had previously raised prophets for the guidance of people, has He made some arrangement for the Muslim ummah, not contravening,
of course, the concept of the Finality of Prophethood?

What is the basis of the appointment of renovators (mujaddids)?

The reply to this question is found in a hadith which is mentioned in one of the six authentic collections of Tradition and has been accepted by the ummah by their conduct and practice, and its authenticity has been testified to by those great luminaries of Islam whose honesty and truthfulness have also been acknowledged by the ummah. Before I discuss the contents of the hadith, it is necessary to discuss the principle on which this hadith is based. If that principle is correct, in the light of the Qur’an and Hadith, there is no doubt why this report should not be accepted as genuine. To solve the current needs of the Muslim community by methods of reasoning, rationalisation, induction and deduction from the Qur’an and the Traditions had been an established practice by Muslims. And we find a large number of savants of Islam who had done great service to the cause of Islam, some specialising in one branch of knowledge and some in others. According to their own aptitude and talent they did more or less the work of reforming the Muslim people. But one thing which distinguished a mujaddid (renovator) from these savants of Islam was his special relationship with God. He was spoken to by God and was appointed for the removal of some errors from among Muslims and was granted by God special success and support in his mission. In short, the real basis of the tradition relating to the appointment of a mujaddid, in fact, was that God communicated with him and assigned a special task to him for the reformation of the community. Thus, if God’s communication with the members of this ummah is a fact and is based on a solid principle, to raise objections against the authenticity of this tradition of the coming of mujaddids is fu-
tile. If God does not communicate with the righteous servants (auliya) in this ummah, the tradition in question automatically becomes null and void. The real issue under discussion, therefore, is God’s speaking with his auliya and His supporting them with signs and with knowledge of the unseen. On this matter we shall first take up the point in the light of the Qur’an and Hadith, and then we shall discuss whether God had promised to raise after the Holy Prophet persons who will be following the path of prophethood (minhaj-i nubuwwat); that is to say, spiritual reformation of the people should be their main objective. If both these points are established, there is no need to discuss in detail the tradition of the mujaddid.

God’s communication with non-prophets in the previous ummaha

The easiest way to find out whether God communicates with the righteous servants (auliya) in this ummah and informs them of the knowledge of the unseen, is to know whether, before the appointment of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, God’s communication was particularly confined to the prophets of God alone or was granted to non-prophets as well. In this connection, the first testimony from the Qur’an is that of the mother of Moses. Divine revelation was given to her and she was definitely vouchsafed knowledge of the unseen as the Holy Qur’an testifies:

\[^{6}\text{And We revealed to Moses’ mother, saying: Give him suck; then when thou fearest for him, cast him into the river and fear not, nor grieve; surely We shall bring him back to thee and make him one of the messengers.}\]

Although Moses’ mother was not a prophetess, yet God re-
The Second Coming of Jesus revealed to her and communicated with her and that information was so full of certainty that on its basis Moses’ mother cast away the baby, Moses in the river. Thus it is definite and incontrovertible proof that God used to communicate with non-prophets in the previous ummahs and inform them of the knowledge of the unseen. Those were not matters of presumption and conjecture but of the highest certainty.

The second example is the mother of Jesus When the angels said: O Mary, surely Allah has chosen thee and purified thee and chosen thee above the women of the world. O Mary, be obedient to thy Lord and humble thyself and bow down with those who bow.... When the angels said: O Mary, surely Allah gives thee the news with a word from Him (of one) whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, worthy of regard in this world and in the Hereafter, and of those who are drawn nigh (to Allah). 7

This is also a divine communication to a non-prophet and consists of prophecies of great importance. There are many other examples like these in the Qur’an but I have cited only these two - of women who were not prophets, yet they received knowledge of the unseen - because it is an established fact that a woman has never been raised as a prophet.

God’s communication cannot end with the termination of prophethood

What I want to establish by these examples is that when God used to communicate previously with non-prophets and inform them of unseen matters, why is this practice not being continued in this ummah? Had God communicated before only with prophets and not with non-prophets, it was easy to un-
understand the cessation of Divine communion and communication with the termination of prophethood. However, when God’s communication was previously granted to non-prophets, the termination of prophethood could not be the cause of preventing this manifestation of God’s attribute for the coming generations. And if in this ummah the door of Divine communication, without rhyme or reason, was closed, we will have to admit that God’s attribute of speech with non-prophets is now in abeyance. However, as has been mentioned above, if God’s communication came only to the share of the prophets, the possibility of its termination with the closure of prophethood (Khatm-i Nubuwwat) was conceivable. In addition to this, in the Qur’an, the righteous of this ummah have been compared with Mary. 8 This also clearly indicates that if Mary was spoken to by God and was informed of matters unseen, there is no reason why the true believers and the righteous in this ummah should not be granted this Divine favour. On this point there is also clear evidence in the authentic traditions of the Holy Prophet. Thus in the Sahih al-Bukhari it is mentioned:

“It is reported from the Holy Prophet that he said that among those that were before you of the Israelites there used to be men who were spoken to by God. They were not prophets, and if there is one among my followers, it is ‘Umar.’” 9

I will discuss this report in detail a little later. Here I just want to show that, as non-prophets in the previous communities were spoken to by God and were endowed with knowledge of unseen matters, similarly the ummah of the Holy Prophet will not be deprived of this favour. The mention of ‘Umar here is only a testimony of his greatness, or, an account of his being from among the first of the companions, as has been
agreed upon by all the annotators of Hadith. In addition to this, the Qur’an has clearly testified the granting of knowledge of the unseen to the righteous in this ummah. Says the Qur’an:

Now surely the friends of Allah, they have no fear nor do they grieve.... For them is good news in this world’s life and in the Hereafter.  

In the Hadith, al-bushra (good news) has been explained by the Holy Prophet himself as true visions (ru’ya al-salihah). And true vision comprises the information of true news of the future. Thus in Al-Tafsir al-Kabir it is stated:

“It is reported from the Holy Prophet that he said: al-bushra is al-ru’ya al-salihah, that a believer sees or is seen about him, and it is reported from the Holy Prophet that prophethood has gone and true visions (al-mubashshirat) have remained.”

In the last part of the above statement, Imam Razi has quoted another tradition which indicates that prophethood has come to an end and only true visions have remained.

True visions (mubashshirat) are a part of prophethood
Accordingly, the true import of this verse is explained by the tradition in which the Holy Prophet is reported to have said:

“There has remained nothing of prophethood except mubashshirat. They, (the companions), asked: “What are mubashshirat?” He replied: “True visions (ru’ya al-salihah).”

About the same ru’ya al-salihah, in another tradition, it is stated:
“It is reported from the Holy Prophet that he said, “The vision of the believers is one forty-sixth part of prophethood.”  

This shows that true visions are indeed a part of prophethood, but they do not refer to ordinary dreams. The tradition about ‘Umar, quoted above, shows that it means Divine communion and communication with the righteous servants (auliya). While explaining these words it has been recorded in Fath al-Bari:

“Ībān al-Tīn said, that the meaning of the hadith is that revelation (i.e. prophetic revelation) will be cut off after my (the Prophet) death and what will be left will be al-ru’ya (vision); and ilham (inspiration) is also included in that, because it contains the news of what is going to happen. And that (i.e. ilham) which is granted to the non-prophets is like the ru’ya to prophets in relation to the revelation (wahy) which is granted to them as has been mentioned in the earlier hadith relating to the virtues (manaqib) of ‘Umar, that in the previous ummahs there used to be muhaddathun (those spoken to by God). And the meaning of muhaddath (with fath on the dal) is contained in the word mulham (with fath on the ha). And many of the auliya (saints or righteous servants) had been given news of the unseen and it happened exactly as they had foretold.”

Here ilham, that is, revelation to the saints, has been implicitly included among true visions (ru’ya al-salihah), because the revelation to the prophets brought down by the Angel Gabriel, on account of its purity, possesses a great excellence and is experienced in the condition of wakefulness. Compared to this, the revelation granted to saints has been called ru’ya (vision). There is a reason for adopting this word because
dreams are common and frequent and ordinary believers also partake of them whereas *ilham* is meant specifically for the *muhaddathin*. Therefore, this word, which is more comprehensive, has been chosen - as special communication is included therein. In the revelation of the saints, the greater part consists of dreams. Imam Raghib writes under the word *wahy*:

“The divine communication which is granted to the prophets (*anbiya*) and the saints (*auliya*) is called revelation (*wahy*).”  

This means that the use of the word *wahy* for the *ilham* of saints is also permissible and the Qur’anic evidence in its support has been mentioned above about the use of the word *wahy* for Moses’ mother, although she was not a prophetess. Still additional support can be found in Imam Qurtabi’s saying recorded in *Fath al-Bari* (Commentary of *al-Bukhari*), under the chapter *Ruya al-Salihin*:

“A true righteous Muslim is he whose condition resembles that of the prophets. Thus he is honoured with that with which the prophets are honoured and that is the knowledge of matters unseen.”

**Persons who are spoken to by God - *muhaddathin***

Now we shall discuss another aspect of this question in relation to the presence of *muhaddathin* in this *ummah* and on this point there is an agreement of opinion, so much so that in the other reading of the verse:

*We never sent a messenger or a prophet before thee but when he desired*  

Hazrat ibn Masud’s recitation is recorded thus:

....and a prophet and a *muhaddath*.”
In *Al-Bukhari*, the same version is reported from Ibn ‘Abbas. This, at least, shows that the existence of those who are spoken to by God (*muhaddathin*) is an established fact and, in addition to this, they have an extensive resemblance with the prophets and the messengers on account of their being mentioned together with them. When we turn back to the hadith we find the following unanimously accepted report, (which has been quoted before):

“Abu Hurairah reported that the Holy Prophet said that from those *ummahs* who have passed before you, there used to be *muhaddathin* among them. If there is one from among my followers, it is ‘Umar.”

This means that Hazrat ‘Umar was a *muhaddath* of a high calibre. Hazrat ‘Umar’s name has been particularly mentioned because it occurs in another tradition:

“Had there been a prophet after me it would have been ‘Umar,”

which clearly shows the great resemblance of the station of *muhaddath* with that of a prophet. In *yaku fi ummati* (if there is one from among my followers) does not mean there was no one in the Holy Prophet’s *ummah* or that Hazrat ‘Umar was the only *muhaddath*. In *Fath al-Bari* (Commentary of *al-Bukhari*) this tradition has been interpreted thus:

“This saying does not contradict the existence of *muhaddathin* because his (the Holy Prophet’s) *ummah* is the most excellent of all the *ummahs* and when it has been established that they (muhaddathin) were found in other *ummahs*, their presence in this *ummah* in a most perfect manner cannot be denied and the words (mentioned in the *hadith*) lay emphasis on the point.”
The author of *Fath al-Bari* then goes on to illustrate the point: “If a person says, ‘If I could have a friend it is such a one’, it does not mean that he has no friend or no friends except that particular person. On the other hand, the main object of such an expression is to demonstrate the distinction of such a person, and it is further stated that there has been a considerable number of *muhaddathatin* in this *ummah* because the philosophy (*hikmah*) behind the presence of their abundance in this *ummah*, seems to be, that they may resemble the abundance of the Israelite prophets. As there cannot be a large number of prophets in this *ummah*, because its Prophet is the Last of the Prophets, therefore, to compensate for this, a large number of *mulhams* (those spoken to by God) were raised in this *ummah.*”  

**Who is a *muhaddath?***

What is meant by *muhaddath*? Some say that he is one who is a *mulham*, one who receives *ilham* (inspiration) from God. Some say that he is a righteous person who receives communication from the angels. Yet others say that he is a person whose tongue utters truth spontaneously. Some are of the opinion that a *muhaddath* is not a prophet but a *mukallam* (one spoken to by God). And this last meaning is also found in an exalted (*marfu‘*) tradition which is reported by Abu Sa‘id. In fact, *Al-Bukhari*’s version of this tradition defines the meaning of *muhaddath* clearly and has been reported thus:

“It is reported from Abu Hurairah that the Holy Prophet said that among those that were before you of the Israelites there used to be men who were spoken to by God. They were not prophets, and if there is anyone within my *ummah*, it is ‘Umar.””  

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The difference in this hadith and the other one is that the former has the word muhaddath (reported by Abu Sa’id) and al-Bukhari says: “men who were spoken to by God (yukallamun), (but) they were not prophets.”

This shows that according to the saying of the Holy Prophet, the meaning of muhaddath is a person who is not a prophet but one with whom God communicates.

**The status of muhaddath**

As to the status and position of a muhaddath, it is enough to quote Fath al-Bari again. He is not a master (muta’) like a prophet but is obedient (muti’) to his own prophet and he is subservient to the prophet he follows. Thus it is reported in Fath al-Bari:

“When the being of a muhaddath is established, he does not issue commands according to what is given to him (by way of ilham) but it is essential for him that he should judge it according to the Qur’an. If it is in accordance with the Qur’an and the Practice (Sunnah) of the Holy Prophet, he acts upon it, otherwise he rejects it. Although this could happen, yet it happens rarely to those whose whole life is based on obedience and allegiance to the Book (the Qur’an) and the Sunnah (Practice of the Holy Prophet).”

The view of Mujaddid Alf Thani (Mujaddid of the Second Millennium)

It is better to know what the latter-day writers have said on the subject. Hazrat Mujaddid Ahmad Alf Thani of Sirhind says:

“Let it be known to you, O brother Siddiq, that God sometimes communicates with a person face to face
and such persons are from among the prophets, and sometimes the communication takes place with some of those perfected ones who are their followers on account of their allegiance and by way of inheritance. And when a person is granted this kind of communication in abundance he is called a *muhaddath* as this name was given to the Amir al-Mu’minin, Hazrat ‘Umar.”  

Hazrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddath Dehlavi writes:

“From among these stations is truthfulness (*siddiqiyat*) and *muhaddathiyyat*. And their reality is like this, that from the *ummah* there is a person who in his natural disposition resembles the prophets as an intelligent pupil has an alliance with his spiritual leader.”

He further writes:

“And from among the stations (*maqamat*) of the heart there are two more stations which are particularly related with those souls who resemble the prophets. The reflection of these stations falls on these souls as the reflection of the moon’s light falls on a mirror which is placed in an open inlet, and the reflection of this mirror falls on roofs, walls and on the earth. These two stations are also like *siddiqiyat* and *muhaddathiyyat*.”

Mujaddid Alf Thani says that God communicates in abundance with a *muhaddath* and Shah Waliullah has declared a *muhaddath* as being like the prophets, that is, “who in his natural disposition resembles the prophets” and then he has affirmed that the reflection or *zill* of prophethood is found in
them, as he says,” that the reflection of the stations of prophets falls on him as the moon’s light falls on a mirror.”

Summary of the discussion about *muhaddath*

The traditions and comments of the annotators of the Traditions, and the quotations from the books by Mujaddid Alf Thani and Shah Waliullah Muhaddath Dehlavi, establish the following points:

1. There would not appear any prophet in this *ummaḥ* but only *muhaddathin* (those who are spoken to by God).
2. A *muhaddath* is a non-prophet and a follower (*ummati*).
3. The highest station for a follower is that of *muhaddathiyāt*.
4. A *muhaddath* is endowed with the blessings of prophethood.
5. A *muhaddath* receives light from the prophet by way of reflection. In other words, he obtains (the blessings of) prophethood by way of *zilḥ* (reflection) and not by way of reality.
6. In this *ummaḥ*, the *muhaddathin* stand in place of the prophets of the previous *ummaḥs*, particularly the prophets of the Israelites.
7. A *muhaddath* bears a strong resemblance to a prophet and is his heir, but he is not a prophet.
8. A *muhaddath* is frequently spoken to by God.
9. The revelation of a *muhaddath* is free from satanic intervention.
10. However, a *muhaddath* does not follow his own revelation, unless he has examined it in the light of the Qur’an and by the Holy Prophet’s Practice (*Sunnah*), and if it is against the Qur’an and the *Sunnah*, he rejects it.
A mujaddid is needed to promote the cause of religion and this need has not come to an end

All the aforementioned arguments show that according to the Qur’an and the Hadith, the presence of such persons in this ummah is essential - they who are gifted with Divine communion and communication and are given the knowledge of unforeseen matters. Evidently, the manifestation of unseen matters is not for the sake of amusement but only to espouse the cause of religion. The real mission of prophets is not to perform miracles or to make prophecies; these are just to support this sacred cause, to strengthen the followers in their faith and to provide them with conclusive proof of the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet’s mission. In short, the real object of prophethood is to deliver God’s guidance (hidayah), and a prophecy or a miracle is simply an aid towards this object. Obviously the hidayah has been completed according to the verse:

This day have I perfected for you your religion.  

That is to say, all paths of guidance have been shown to the world by the advent of the Holy Prophet but promoting the cause of religion has not come to an end. Thus when God brought prophethood to a close and completed the hidayah (guidance), He also gave the glad tidings that the need of supporting and promoting the cause of religion had not been terminated. Therefore the promise to the believers: for them is good news,  was also given, and the remaining of a part of prophethood concerning true visions (mubashshirat) was clearly indicated, and the continuity of the Divine communion and communication together with the information of the unseen for the ummah was also foretold in the Hadith. These people who are appointed for the support (ta’id) of religion by being honoured by God’s communication and are called
mujaddids (renovators). To deny their existence and to oppose them means rejecting the need of God’s support and promotion of the Islamic faith. God used to aid the previous religions through the agency of prophets - that door has no doubt been shut in Islam, but does it mean that God will not help Islam even by the agency of non-prophets? This, in principle, is not only against the Qur’an and the authentic Hadith, as has been discussed above, but also against God’s attribute of speaking to His righteous servants. Will that attribute become null and void after the death of the Holy Prophet? If this is so, Islam becomes a lifeless religion. To bring an end to something which Islam always needs, in every age, amounts to a belief that it is against God’s wish that Islam should spread and progress. Otherwise why would He abandon His old practice for the support of religion? It is surprising that after making the religion of Islam complete and perfect, no arrangement was made for the maintenance of its spiritual perfection. As a matter of fact, such arrangement should have been made on a greater scale than before. And, in fact, God did indeed favour this ummah with a greater honour than those of the previous ummahs. The abundance of auliya (saints) in this ummah far exceeds the number of anbiya (prophets) in the other religions. A reference to this fact is made in the Hadith:

“The learned of my ummah will be like the prophets of the Israelites.” 34

That is to say, the work which was done by the Israelite prophets will be done in this ummah by non-prophets. The resemblance, however, cannot be maintained unless the excellence found in the earlier prophets is also found in some way among the learned (‘ulama) of this ummah. Thus in this hadith a reference is made only to those ‘ulama who are divinely appointed for the support and renovation of Islam.
Reference in the Qur’an about the appointment of mujaddids

The Qur’an says:

*He makes the spirit (ruh) to light by His command upon whom He pleases of His servants that he may warn (men) of the day of Meeting.* 35

In this verse the *ruh* (spirit) is interpreted as revelation (*wahy*) or speech (*kalam*) by Hazrat Qatadah 36 and in the words: *man yasha’u min ‘ibadihi,* (whom He pleases of His servants), mujaddids (renovators) are also included, as has been mentioned in the commentary, *Ruh al-Ma’ani,* compiled according to the views of the Ahl-i Sunnah wa’l-Jama’ah:

“The continuance of renewal for an indefinite period is implied in the word *yulqi* (He makes to descend), because the descending of revelation, which started with Adam, may the peace of Allah be upon him, has remained and will always remain to the end of our Holy Prophet’s time, which extends to the Day of Judgement, through the raising of those for the invitation (*da’wah*), as it is mentioned in *Abu Da’ud* that Abu Hurairah reported:

> It is reported that the Holy Prophet Muhammad said, Most surely God will raise for this *ummah* at the head of every century one who will revive for its faith.” 37

This *hadith* about the coming of mujaddids is, in fact, an explanation of the Qur’anic verse (40:15) quoted above. According to this verse, God will continue with His practice of raising somebody, from time to time, on whom He will cause His revelation to descend so that he, (the servant), will invite others towards the truth. Thus, this tradition is in every way
free of doubt and disbelief because it is in conformity with the Qur’anic verse and its commentary.

**The hadith of Mujaddid**

Let us now look at the hadith about mujaddids. First of all, it is recorded in Abu Da’ud, one of the six authentic collections of Hadith. Imam Jalal al-Din Suyuti (d. 911 AH / 1505 CE) writes:

> “that all the preservers of Hadith (huffaz) have agreed upon its authenticity.”

From among the classic writers (mutaqaddimin), Hakim (d. 405 AH / 1014 CE) in Mustadrak and Baihaqi (d. 458 AH / 1005 CE) in Mudkhil have mentioned it. From among the latter-day writers (mutakhkhirin), Abu al-Fadl Iraqi and Ibn Hajar also approve of its genuineness. Moreover, in every age, the learned (‘ulama) have agreed on its authenticity. After accepting the truth of this report, Hafiz ibn ‘Asakir writes that this proved the coming of mujaddids (renovators) at the beginning of every century. In our country (India), nearer our own time, Mujaddid Alf Thani, and after him, Shah Waliullah Dehlavi have accepted this tradition as true. Shah Waliullah writes:

> “And he (the Holy Prophet) informed that at the head of each century a mujaddid will be raised and it has happened like that.”

And in another book he says:

> “It is reported that the Holy Prophet said that most surely God will raise for this ummah at the head of each century one who will revive for it its faith.”

On the one hand, the reporters of this tradition have not been
convicted of falsehood and the great Imams have given testimony to its authenticity, and, on the other, this tradition is not against the Qur’an but is in conformity with it (See 40:15). Moreover, it is in no way against the principles of the Islamic faith; they are, indeed, all in support of its correctness. In view of all these strong testimonies, it is not befitting for a Muslim to reject it.

The claimants to the office of mujaddid
If we consider this tradition to be untrue, then those great luminaries of Islam who made claims on the basis of this hadith, or, were accepted by others as mujaddids, have to be considered false claimants and liars. For a mujaddid, it is, however, essential that he should be known and famous in his age and should be regarded as a mujaddid by other people. As is mentioned in ‘Aun al-Ma’bud:

“Verily Ibn al-Athir and al-Tayyibi etc. say that the mujaddid is he who is alive, known and famous at the end of the century and people point towards him.”

If the hadith is not true, then what about all the mujaddids who have been accepted? Jalal al-Din Suyuti has counted them till the 9th century Hijrah. Among them were great Imams. For example, Imam Ahmad Hanbal has accepted ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz as the Mujaddid of the first century and Imam Shafi’i of the second century. Should all of them be considered as laying their claim on falsehood or on a fabricated and spurious tradition and thus remained in error themselves and led others into error too? Even Imam Suyuti claims himself to be the Mujaddid of the ninth century Hijrah.

The claim of Mujaddid Alf Thani
In our country (India), a great luminary is known only by the
name of *The Mujaddid*. My reference is to Shaikh Ahmad of Sirhind Mujaddid Alf Thani, (971-1034 AH / 1563-1624 CE) (i.e. the *Mujaddid* of the Second Thousand). He has laid great emphasis on his claim of being the Renovator and says:

“These sciences (*’ulum*) have been derived from the illumination of the lamp of prophethood which, after the renovation of the second millennium, has been renewed by way of inheritance and has been freshly manifested and the possessor of these sciences and spiritual realities is the *mujaddid* of this millennium. It must be borne in mind that a *mujaddid* has passed at the head of each century, but the *mujaddid* of a century is different from the *mujaddid* of a thousand years. As there is a difference between a hundred years and a thousand years, similarly there is a difference between the *mujaddid* of a century and that of a thousand years. Furthermore, the *mujaddid* is such, that whatever spiritual grace is received by the communities in his time, is received through his agency, although in his lifetime there may exist *qutb*, *autad*, (spiritual chiefs), *abdal* (spiritual substitutes), and *nujaba* (excellent ones).”

The claim of Shah Waliullah
Similarly, a great Muslim luminary in our country is Shah Waliullah Muhaddath Dehlavi (1114-1176 AH / 1703-1763 CE) who also claimed to be a *mujaddid*. Thus he writes:

“My Lord, eminent is Whose Glory, has informed me thus: We have appointed you the leader of this path (*tariqah*) and have carried you to its height, and from today We have prevented all the other paths from reaching the reality of divine nearness except one path -the path of your love and obedience. The people of the
East and the West are all your subjects and you are their ruler, whether they know it or not. Those who know it will be successful and the ignorant will be unsuccessful and in loss.” 48

Then he says:

“When the circuit of wisdom with me reached its excellence, God honoured me with the robe of mujaddidiyyat (renovation).” 49

Accepting the mujaddid does not amount to showing contempt to other Muslim dignitaries

All these references indicate that the denial of the tradition of the appearance of mujaddids, in spite of the fact that Muslim saints of high dignity have laid claim to this office and a great number of people has accepted them, is absolutely the result of ignorance of the Islamic faith. There is no other way, except to admit the authenticity of this tradition and the claims of Muslim luminaries based on it as true, or to declare all these claimants as liars, God forbid! If the latter is the case, nothing of the Islamic faith will be left.

However, those who disbelieve in this tradition raise two main objections. Firstly, if this hadith is authentic, could other auliya (saints) of God be included among the renovators? Secondly, can the claim of a mujaddid at the head of each century be produced?

The reply to the first point is that the appearance of a mujaddid at the head of each century does not nullify at all the existence of other saints scholars and servants of Islam during that period. There may be thousands of auliya in this ummah and there could be more than one renovator in a century. The ques-
tion of rank is also not involved in this discussion. That is to say, that if one savant of Islam is a mujaddid and the other is not, the latter is not necessarily of a lower rank than the former one. It is God Who knows all these matters. He appoints mujaddids with a special mission after bestowing on them knowledge for the reformation of the community according to a divine purpose. Therefore, it is obligatory for every person to help them - as has been clearly indicated by the remarks made by Shah Waliullah above. The rejection of their mission deprives a person of many spiritual benefits; his companionship brings success to his followers. Enmity towards the saints causes perversion in one’s heart. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that God told him:

To the one who shows enmity towards My righteous servant (wali), I (i.e. God) declare war against him. 50

Hostility towards the auliya of Allah is man’s misfortune. To be in the company of mujaddids and support their cause is necessary, because mere denial of them deprives a person of many divine favours.

A mujaddid in every century

Another question asked is that the claim of a mujaddid at the head of each century should be produced. The Holy Qur’an has not given the names of all the messengers and has already said:

Of them are those We have mentioned to thee and of them are those We have not mentioned to thee. 51

To demand that the tradition about the mujaddid will only be accepted as true when the names and claims of all the renovators at the beginning of each century are pointed out, amounts to saying that the statements of the Qur’an, that there is not a
people but a warner has gone among them, \footnote{52} and, for every nation there is a messenger; \footnote{53} can only be accepted as true when the names of all the messengers in different nations, and their claims are produced. Both the objections and the demands are wrong. As the Qur’an has mentioned a few names of prophets raised among some people, so we have quoted above the claims of some of the \textit{mujaddids} in their own words. It does not make any difference if a \textit{mujaddid} did not make a claim in clear terms, as openly as has been done by Mujaddid Alf Thani and Shah Waliullah. The writings and sayings of all the \textit{mujaddids} have not been preserved. On the basis of what has been said by some \textit{mujaddids}, we presume that the others might have made similar statements. Moreover, the particular needs of a period give a different stance to the claim, as Mujaddid Alf Thani has said that the \textit{mujaddid} of a thousand years should be superior to the \textit{mujaddid} of a century. And as the annotators of the \textit{Hadith} have stated, that in the earlier times the claim of being spoken to by God was not made by most of the people most probably because their period was very close to the period of the prophethood of Muhammad, and therefore, such a claim was not really necessary in order to avoid any confusion regarding the efficacy of his prophethood. In any case, Shah Waliullah and Mujaddid Alf Thani have openly made claims to this office and have declared the \textit{hadith} about \textit{mujaddids} to be authentic. The testimony of these two divines that the \textit{hadith} is true is enough. Besides that, the scholars like Imam Suyuti have mentioned the names of the \textit{mujaddids} of each century. Thus the appointment of renovators in this \textit{ummah} of Islam is an established fact. To deny it amounts to denying the noonday sun.
Footnotes on Chapter 111

1 2:87.
2 23:44.
3 57:16.
4
6 28:7.
7 3:41-42, 44.
8 And Allah sets forth an example for those who believe - the wife of Pharaoh... and Mary, the daughter of Amran, who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into him Our inspiration, and she accepted the truth of the words of her Lord and His Books, and she was of the obedient ones. (66:11, 12). The example of the righteous granted in this parable illustrates how Divine inspiration is granted to the perfect ones. The words, We breathed into him Our inspiration, are remarkable. Evidently the word him (Ar. hi in fi-hi) cannot refer to Mary. The personal pronoun is taken by some commentators to refer to Jesus (Imam Fakhr al-Din Razi); and thus the meaning is that Mary gave birth to a son who received Divine inspiration. But the reference in the personal pronoun him might as well be to the believer for whom Mary is set as an example, and the object of the change of pronoun might be to draw attention to the fact that it is really the granting of inspiration to the believer that is meant here and not the breathing of a soul.
10 10:62, 64.
12 Al-Tafsir al-Kabir by Imam Fakhr al-Din Razi under v. 10:64.
14 Ibid.
15 Fath al-Bari (Commentary of al-Bukhari) by Imam ibn Hajar ‘Asqalani.
16 The Urdu translation by a Sunni scholar of this portion has been rendered thus:
Translation Mufradat al-Qur’an by Muhammad Abdhu al-Fallah al-Firozpurhi. Published Al-Maktaba al-Qasimiyya Jami’ Quds, Chawk Dalgaran, Lahore 1963. (SMT)
17 Fath al-Bari (Commentary of al-Bukhari) by Imam ibn Hajar ‘Asqalani.
18 22:52.
19 *Fath al-Bayan* under 22:52.
21 *Muhaddathun*, *muhammadhun* - both are plural forms of *muhaddath*.
In the report quoted before, the word *yukallamuna* is used instead of *muhaddathun*. The meaning is, however, the same. i.e. those spoken to by God.
27 Sirhind is a city in East Punjab (India) where Shaikh Ahmad was born in 1564. He died in 1629.
29 Born 1114/1703, died 1176/1763. (SMT)
30 *Hujjatullah al-Balighah*, p. 444, Tr. Maulvi Khalil Ahmad. Published by Adbiyyat, Lahore (Pakistan).
32 5:3.
33 10:64.
34 *Abu Da’ud*, *kitab al-‘Ilm*.
35 40:15.
36 Hazrat Qatadah in *Ruh al-Ma’ani* under 40:15 (Part 24, p.56).
38 *Mirqat al-Sa’ud* added to *Abu Da’ud* vol. 2, p. 233. Printed by Nawal Kishore, Lucknow, India.
39 *Ibid*.
40 *Izalat al-Khifa*, p. 41.
43 Lit., a stake, an axis, a pivot. Technically, a high stage of sanctity among Muslim saints; according to Kashshafu ‘l-Istilahat, a *qutb* is one who has attained that degree of sanctity which is a reflection of the heart of the Holy Prophet himself.
44 Plural of *watad*, a peg, a pillar, a prop, a chief. Technically, *autad* are saints regarded as props of the faith.
Plural of *badal*, a substitute. Technically, *abdals* are certain persons, it is said, whom God continuously has in the world for working spirituality on a limited scale and their existing number remains about seventy. No one pretends to be able to identify them in the world. God alone knows who they are and where they are.

Plural of *najib*, meaning noble, generous, the excellent one. *Nujaba*, according to the Sufis, are forty saintly characters who always exist on earth for the benefit of its people. (SMT)


*Tafhimat Ilahiyyah*, vol. II, p.151 (Literary Academy, Islamabad, Pakistan).


*Al-Bukhari*, *kitab al-Riqaq*, ch. *al-Tawadu’*

40:78.

35:24.

10:47.

On close study of the works of the previous *mujaddids*, such as Imam Al-Ghazali, Ibn Taimiyyah, Sayyid Ahmad Barelavi, etc. more references have been found about their laying claims to the office. See Annexe at the end of this chapter. (SMT)
CHAPTER IV

DESCENT OF THE SON OF MARY

Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will surely make them rulers (khalifahs) in the earth as He made those before them rulers (khalifahs). 1

The descent of the son of Mary and the Finality of Prophethood

It has been established so far that according to the Qur’an and the Hadith, prophethood has come to an end. Only renovators (mujaddids) will appear for the support of Islam. And in this ummah, after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, no other prophet will be raised. But some traditions mention the descent (nuzul) of the son of Mary (Ibn Maryam), who was a prophet, and it seems that a prophet will also come after the Holy Prophet. But the appearance of any prophet after him is incompatible with the conception of the Finality of Prophethood, although the descent of Ibn Maryam is mentioned in the most authentic traditions, which cannot be lightly cast aside. If Jesus Christ comes after the Holy Prophet, then the Holy Prophet is not the last and the final prophet, and if he does not come, what should be done about those authentic traditions that speak of his coming? This is the problem which must be resolved.

The basis of the Finality of Prophethood is decisive, whereas that of the descent of the son of Mary is allegorical

Right from the beginning we must understand that our faith
can never be based on the allegorical (mutashabihat) but only on something which is decisive (muhkamat). The doctrine of the Finality of Prophethood (Khatm-i Nubuwwat), as I have discussed above (see Chapter 11), is one of the established fundamentals of Islam, hence its basis can only rest on the muhkamat. That is why the Qur’an has explained all aspects of Khatm-i Nubuwwat clearly and explicitly. For instance, it has been mentioned in the Qur’an that the Holy Prophet is the Messenger of God to all men, he was a mercy to the nations, which means that not a single nation, present or future, was excluded from the heavenly ministration of the Prophet Muhammad. Religion has been made perfect by the revelation of the Qur’an, and it is a complete collection of the best teachings for the moral and spiritual welfare of man, and all that contributes towards this direction has been made distinct therein, and that it will remain protected and preserved from every kind of corruption. In short, all those matters which were essential for the Finality of Prophethood were made clear, and then it was stated that the Prophet Muhammad was Khatam al-Nabiyyin (the Last of the Prophets). As prophethood was made perfect with his advent, therefore no prophet will be raised after him. Thus the doctrine of the Finality of Prophethood is based on a firm foundation. Moreover, in the authentic and continuous traditions, the point has been made so clear that not the least doubt is left in the acceptance of this doctrine, and it is not susceptible to different interpretations. But it is permissible to use metaphors and similes in prophecies which deal with future events. They are based on symbolical narration (mutashabihat) because all the details of the unseen are not made known to man by God. The sum and substance of the whole argument is that the conception of Khatm-i Nubuwwat is a tenet of faith which is based on the muhkamat, that is, on a firm and stable foundation, while
the prophecy about the descent of Ibn Maryam is susceptible to different interpretations. When we come across a prophecy incompatible with a clear and well-established doctrine of faith, the prophecy has to be interpreted in the light of the doctrine of faith and not vice-versa.

**During his second advent, the son of Mary will not be a prophet**

It is because of this that the majority of the Muslim ‘ulama thought that when Jesus Christ comes he will be a follower (ummati) and not a prophet. In case he were to appear as a prophet, it will be inconsistent with the doctrine of the Finality of Prophethood. Hence, Nawab Siddiq Hassan Khan, while mentioning the descent of Jesus under verse 40 of Chapter 33 of the Holy Qur’an writes:

*When he (i.e. Jesus Christ) descends he will act on the Law (Shari’ah) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad as if he were one of the members of his ummah.*

Imam ibn Hajar Asqalani writes on the same subject:

“Jesus will be a judge (hakam) from among the judges of this ummah.”

The view that after his descent Jesus will not receive any revelation had been common among the Muslim ‘ulama, but then the ‘ulama were divided into two groups. In the opinion of one, although Christ will return to his previous status of prophethood, he will not function as a prophet, nor will he receive any revelation. In the opinion of the other, he will be deposed from his office of prophethood. The author of *Ruh al-Ma’ani* (Commentary of the Qur’an) writes:

“When Jesus descends, he will retain his previous prophethood and under no circumstances will he be
discharged from it, but he will not act according to it because of its abrogation for him or for that matter, for anyone else. He will be bound by this *Shari’ah* (of Muhammad) in its principle (*asl*) and detail (*far’*), thus he will not receive any revelation (*wahy*) and he will not give any command. He will be a *khalifah* and a judge (*hakam*) from among the judges (*hukkam*) of the religion and *ummah* of the Holy Prophet and function according to what he had learned of the *Shari’ah* of the Holy Prophet before his descent from heaven.”

Contrary to this, the other view is:

“His (Jesus’) being the follower of our Holy Prophet means that he will be deprived of the attribute (*wasf*) of prophethood and messengership which means that prophethood and messengership will no longer remain with him.”

**Not to function as a prophet amounts to dismissal from the office of prophethood**

Whatever view is accepted as true from the above two, the meaning is, in fact, the same - that Jesus will not perform any function of prophethood at all. According to the first view, he will not be discharged from his office as a prophet but will not act as a prophet. In practical terms, the result is the same - that he will not be stationed at his post of prophethood. The reply to this is sometimes given that his prophethood will remain with him as it remains with other prophets of this world. When a person lives in this world he must execute his worldly obligations. When a person is appointed as a prophet he must make a pronouncement about his prophethood and should ask others to acknowledge it; whatever is revealed to him must be conveyed to others. In whatever way God guides him, he
should guide other people accordingly. His connection with Gabriel does not cease till his death. Gabriel comes to him with divine revelation. When a prophet is alive in this world, he is bound by all these conditions, and when he dies, all these obligations are removed from him. Thus all the restrictions and obligations which were laid on Jesus Christ at the time of his appointment will remain in force until and unless he truly passes away into another world. If he returns to this world, God will not snatch away any of the favours He had bestowed on him before, such as the coming of Gabriel to him with Divine revelation. If he is absolved of all these obligations in this world and the divine favours are also taken away from him, it necessarily follows he will also be deprived of the office of prophethood. Whether one admits it verbally or not, the simple fact is that when Jesus works as a follower of another prophet while being a prophet himself, it amounts to his dismissal from his office as a prophet. And both views above agree on one point - that after his descent Jesus will not do any work of prophethood.

The dismissal from prophethood of a person is against the Qur’anic principle

By deposing Jesus Christ from prophethood the doctrine of the Finality of Prophethood indeed remained intact, but a problem far more serious and of greater intensity arose - that God first appointed a person to a position of eminence and glory then deposed him from that office. This is against Divine practice. There is no doubt that prophethood is a favour (nī’mat) and when God bestows a favour on a person He will not snatch it away from him unless and until he has been ungrateful or has contravened some Divine law. There are certain things that must undergo changes in the life of a person according to natural laws; he is young and grows old; he has teeth and they
decay and fall. But prophethood, according to Divine practice, does not follow such a law, that when a person reaches a certain age it is taken away from him. On the contrary, let us suppose that a person is deposed from this office. There must be a very strong reason for God to do so. If this has happened to Jesus Christ, the only reason could be that he might have developed some serious defect in his person or had contravened some Divine law. If this hypothesis is accepted, it raises serious objections concerning God’s knowledge and choice. It is against the clear verdict of the Qur’an that Allah knows best where to place His message. Moreover, prophethood was not something which was acquired by him. To resolve this problem, some people believe that when Jesus returns he will return as a prophet and Gabriel will descend on him with prophetic revelation. In other words, he will perform the functions of prophethood. But this view is not only decisively against the verse “the Seal of the Messengers” and the hadith “there is no prophet after me” and several other authentic and continuous reports, but it also contravenes the conception of the completion and perfection of Islam. If Jesus still had to do or finish some work connected with prophethood, then Islam was not perfected at the hands of the Holy Prophet, and, God forbid, it has remained defective and deficient in some respects. In short, if Jesus comes and does not function as a prophet, he is practically discharged from his office, something which is contrary to the teachings of the Qur’an, and if he acts as a prophet, the doctrine of Khatm-i Nubuwwat is destroyed and with it is destroyed Islam, too.

Sending a prophet to do the work of a mujaddid is against Divine Wisdom
The latter part of the above statement cannot be accepted by any Muslim at all. And if the first part is accepted as true then
this necessitates the dismissal of a prophet from his office - in practice, of course, if not as a matter of belief. Another difficulty with which we are confronted at this point is that although none of God’s work is void of wisdom yet strangely enough, God keeps physically alive a prophet in the heavens for the last two thousand years or more and when he is sent back to the world he will not do any work connected with prophethood. When there is no function of prophethood left to be performed why should a prophet be kept physically alive in the heavens? When that work can easily be done by a member of the Prophet’s ummah, why should someone be brought back from heaven? If this is not so, under these circumstances, we have to admit that some great work of prophethood had remained undone, God forbid, by the Holy Prophet for the completion of which Jesus had been kept alive. On the other hand, Jesus had already confessed:

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Paraclete (Comforter) will not come unto you.... When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you unto all truth.” 20

As these words about the Holy Prophet were uttered by Jesus himself, how sad and unfortunate it is that we should think that even the Holy Prophet could not complete his prophetic mission for which God had, against His plain and manifest practice, to carry Jesus physically alive to heaven and keep him there for two or three thousand years. This is a position of shame and indignation for Islam and cannot be tolerated at all. Even the Muslim ‘ulama had rejected such a thought. This is how Imam ibn Hajar ‘Asqalani interprets the hadith about the descent of Jesus:

“He will descend in the latter ages as a mujaddid (reno-
Thus, if the work is the same which a mujaddid is supposed to do, why is a prophet sent instead? Not only is a prophet sent in his place, but for the work of a mujaddid he is kept alive for two or three thousand years. It seems as if there was a great mission to be accomplished for which, contrary to all divine laws, a prophet had to be kept alive. And when we look at the work, for which all this trouble has been taken, it is simply and plainly the work of a mujaddid! As I have just explained above, it is against Divine practice to send a prophet to do the work of a mujaddid. Thus, when there is no need for a prophet to appear and there is no work of prophethood to be done, how can we accept the need of keeping a prophet alive and then bringing him down from the sky without any physical changes occurring in his body? Yes, if in this ummah no mujaddid can appear and the Holy Prophet had not said that there will be a mujaddid at the head of each century, then we can accept the need of depriving a prophet of his office to do the work of a mujaddid. But when the followers of the Holy Prophet are capable of being appointed as mujaddids (renovators), it is absolutely meaningless to send a prophet in the capacity of a mujaddid, and this affair cannot be attributed to God Who is Hakim (Wise) and the work of a hakim cannot be void of wisdom.

The Qur’an and its followers are enough to provide conclusive arguments against the Christians
If it is said that although the work involved is that of renovation (mujaddadiyyat), nevertheless the coming of Jesus Christ in that capacity is conclusive proof against the Christians, so that they may become penitent about their belief in Jesus’ Divinity, the question that arises is: Did the Qur’an fail to pro-
vide such conclusive proof against the Christian doctrine which now will be provided by the coming of Jesus Christ? This is a great disgrace to the Qur’an and the Holy Prophet. This means that the Holy Prophet himself and those who were spiritually trained by him, God forbid, proved unfit for this task, and Jesus Christ, who became a prophet without the mediation of the Holy Prophet and without his pupilage, became fit for this mission. The Qur’an, which extirpated idol-worship from Arabia and provided conclusive proof against all false creeds and doctrines and declared:

\[
\text{that he who perished by clear argument might perish, and he who lived by clear argument might live} \quad 23
\]

was unable to do this work! Were the followers of the Holy Prophet, who illumined all parts of the world with the light of Islam, and kingdoms and empires fell before them, unable to dispel the darkness of the false doctrines of Christianity? It is insulting to the Qur’an and to the spiritual power of the Prophet that we should look for another prophet to accomplish this work. And then we hold the view that Jesus will be able to do this work in spite of his being deprived of his office as a prophet, but the Prophet Muhammad whose period of prophethood extends to the Day of Judgement and whose spiritual grace flows among his followers, God forbid, is unable to help Islam! Such a belief is the greatest disrespect to the Holy Prophet.

When Jesus Christ was first appointed as a prophet he plainly declared, “I am indeed a servant of God” 24 and “sent by Him”, 25 and in the Gospels his sayings still exist: “Why callest thou me good? There is none good but One, that is God” 26 and: “I can of my own self do nothing.... If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.” 27

When Christians do not accept these sayings of Jesus, even
now (in their literal sense) how will they accept his claims when he is dismissed from his post of prophethood? On the other hand, when they hear him saying “I am Jesus but I am not God” they will immediately denounce him, call him an impostor and a fraud and will say: “Our Jesus was God.” How can all this be conclusive argument against the Christians? However, Islam is such a spiritual force that it will root out all the wrong creeds and doctrines of Christianity. The Prophet Muhammad has attained the summit of perfection and neither needs Jesus nor Moses to accomplish his mission. To manifest his spiritual excellence he is reported to have said:

“Had Moses and Jesus been alive they would have but followed me.”

Those who are dependent on the Holy Prophet and are the recipients of spiritual blessings from him - those are the people who will be the true servants of his religion. The one who comes from outside will lay Islam under a great obligation. One who has any sense of honour for Islam will never tolerate such a situation. The Holy Prophet affirmed the truthfulness of Moses as well as of Jesus and cleared them of all the accusations laid against them by their opponents. In fact, he affirmed the truthfulness of all the prophets of the world. Thus all the prophets and nations lie under his obligation and he lies under the obligation of none. The Qur’an says:

We have not sent thee (the Prophet Muhammad) but as a mercy to the nations.

For the sake of argument, let us suppose that Jesus Christ will descend from above. What substantial proof will there be about the truthfulness of his claim that, “I am Jesus and have descended on earth from the sky?” Will the Western world give up its belief of two thousand years only because a few hun-
dred or a few thousand Muslims of Damascus - where he is supposed to descend on the minaret of a mosque - give evidence that they had seen with their own eyes the descent of Jesus from the sky? The Christians will reject both the claimant and the witnesses. I wonder, how could Jesus’ coming in this way be conclusive argument against Christianity?

In short, Jesus’ second coming after the Holy Prophet is clearly against the firm doctrine of the Finality of Prophethood. His appearance in this way is an insult to the Qur’an and the Holy Prophet. In other words, it means that the holy power of the Prophet of Islam cannot operate through his own ummah - called the best of the ummahs - and accomplish the work which only a prophet of Israel can do. However, if it was God’s work, it could not be void of wisdom! Why did He keep a person alive against all natural laws for such a long time, not on the earth but in the heavens? There he stands above all his physical needs and no change takes place in his body! He is superior to ordinary human beings and becomes a co-sharer in the Divine attributes! But strangely enough, when he comes, it is in the capacity of a mujaddid!

Apart from all this, we are confronted with another difficulty. According to the Qur’an, Jesus Christ has suffered death like other mortals (and the authentic traditions also support this view), but as this subject is vast and needs a detailed discussion, I shall deal with it in the next chapter. However, the belief in the descent (nuzul) of Jesus does not mean that he had not died, because some people do hold the view that he died once before and after his descent he will die for a second time. Thus it is mentioned in Fath al-Bari:

“When he (Jesus) descends on earth and the ordained term has passed he will die for the second time.” 30
It is for this reason that I have kept the question of descent quite separate from the death of Jesus. I will go so far as to say that if Jesus were alive and had not died, the doctrine of *Khatm-i Nubuwwat* debars him from coming, unless, of course, he breaks the Seal of Prophethood.

**The son of Mary will be a follower**

Even if the questions of the *Khatm-i Nubuwwat* and that of the death of Jesus Christ are kept out of the way, the problem of the descent of the son of Mary, with a little thought and reflection, of course, is not difficult to resolve. There is no doubt that there is a mention of the descent (*nuzul*) of the son of Mary in the *Hadith*, but the words of the *hadith* need some careful attention:

“The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said: ‘How would you feel when the son of Mary makes his appearance among you, and he is your Imam from among yourselves (*wa imamukum minkum*)?’” 31

To understand the meaning of these words, we turn to another *hadith* of the *Sahih* of al-Muslim on the subject and the source of the report is Ibn abi Zi’b. Instead of *imamu-kum minkum*, the words are:

“He, (the Messiah), will be your Imam from among yourselves (*wa amma-kum minkum*).” 32

Walid ibn Muslim said to Ibn abi Zi’b that Auza’i had reported these words from Zuhri. Ibn abi Zi’b said: “You know what is meant by *wa amma-kum minkum*? Walid ibn Muslim said: “You tell me.” The reply Ibn abi Zi’b gave was:

“He will perform the function of an Imam by the Book
of your Lord.” 33

From another source, al-Muslim has reported the hadith thus: “How will you feel when the son of Mary descends among you and he will be your Imam?” 34

These three reports support one another and belong to the most authentic category of traditions. As against them, Imam Ahmad has reported another tradition in which it is mentioned that Jesus will ask Imam Mahdi to lead the prayers. 35 On the basis of this hadith, it is thought that imamu-kum minkum means that the son of Mary will “make his appearance among you and your Imam, that is, the Mahdi, will be someone else from among you.”

For three reasons this interpretation is not correct. Firstly, the three authentic traditions do not support this view. They all agree that the words imamu-kum or amma-kum only refer to the son of Mary. Secondly, if Bukhari and Muslim thought that imamu-kum minkum referred to another person, that is, to Imam Mahdi, they would have certainly given some consideration to reports about the Mahdi by mentioning some of them in their collections. By reflecting on all such traditions they have shown that they only believed in the coming of the son of Mary. Therefore the words imamu-kum minkum, according to Bukhari and Muslim mean nothing else except that the son of Mary will be your Imam from among yourselves. Thirdly, in the tradition quoted by Imam Ahmad, there is no word which indicates that this is what is meant by the words imamu-kum minkum. He is only referring to an event that the son of Mary will not lead the prayers but it will be someone else. In Ibn Majah, it is mentioned that a righteous man will be the Imam 36 and it only refers to the leadership (imamat) in
prayers. However, these four sentences, *wa imamukum min kum* (he is your Imam from among yourselves), *wa amma-kum min kum* \(^{37}\) (he will be your Imam from among yourselves), *wa amma-kum bi kitabi Rabbi-kum* (he will perform the function of an imam by the Book of your Lord) and *fa amma-kum* (he will be your Imam), clearly indicate that the son of Mary, whose descent is mentioned here, will be a member of the Muslim community and their Imam. The word *min kum* (from among yourselves) which has been accepted both by Bukhari and Muslim, undoubtedly establish the fact that the son of Mary (Ibn Maryam) is from among the community of Muhammad and not an Israelite prophet, because, in the beginning of the report, the words *kaifa antum* (how would you feel), address the followers of Muhammad in particular. This also conclusively proves that the son of Mary, whose descent is mentioned in the above traditions, is not an Israelite Messiah but a person who is a member of the Muslim community. The words *kaifa antum* - an expression of surprise - also point towards this direction. One is surprised only at a time when something unexpected happens. Thus, in the words uttered by the Holy Prophet, there is a clear reference that the *ummah* of Muhammad will one day be confronted with this situation of surprise, that they will expect something but the descent of the Messiah will be contrary to their expectations. It was also foretold that this Imam will be a member of the community of Islam. It must be borne in mind that the contents of a prophecy are to some extent synoptical and all the details are never given, as is evident from the prophecies mentioned about the Holy Prophet in the sacred scriptures of the world. Here, also, those who give the matter a little thought will find enough words in the prophecy to understand its true meaning, although the details are missing.
The mention of different complexions proves that the coming Messiah is not the Israelite Messiah

It is evident from another hadith recorded in Al-Bukhari that the coming Messiah and the Israelite Messiah are two different persons. Two kinds of traditions have been mentioned together. In one of them, the complexion of the Israelite Messiah has been given and in the other, that of the coming Messiah, and these two complexions are not one and the same. In the hadith about the Ascension, (Mi‘raj), the Holy Prophet is reported to have said:

“I saw ‘Isa. He was of medium height and was of fair complexion.” 38

In the same report, it is stated that the Holy Prophet also saw Moses and Abraham. This hadith is reported by Abu Hurairah. There is another hadith supporting it, but the reporter in this case is Ibn Umar.

“The Holy Prophet said: I saw Jesus, Moses and Abraham. Jesus had a white complexion, curly hair and a broad chest.” 39

These two traditions reported independently from different companions depict Jesus Christ as having a white complexion and curly hair. Together with these two reports, Imam Bukhari records two other reports which mention al-Masih al-Dajjal and the Messiah, son of Mary. This shows that in the latter two reports, the reference is to the coming Messiah who will destroy the Antichrist (Dajjal). In the first report, after mentioning the Antichrist, the Holy Prophet says:

“Tonight (in a dream) I found myself near the Ka`bah. I saw a man of wheatish complexion, very fair, from among the people of wheatish colour. The hair of his head rested on his shoulders below his ears and he had
straight flowing hair. I enquired who he was. They said it was the Messiah, son of Mary.”

The reporter of this tradition is Nafi’ from Abdullah. Accordingly, Salim has also reported from his father:

“In a state of dream I found myself going round the Ka`bah and there was a person of wheatish complexion having straight hair .... I asked who he was. ‘It is the son of Mary,’ they said.”

In the first two reports, where the Holy Prophet saw other prophets during the course of his Ascension, he found the Israelite Messiah having white complexion and curly hair. In the latter two reports, which mention his going round the Ka‘bah, he saw the Messiah, son of Mary, having wheatish complexion and straight hair. Two authentic reports agree on two different complexions. This certainly shows that the Israelite Messiah is different from the coming Messiah. No other explanation is possible on this difference of complexion. When the commentators of Hadith were faced with this problem, they thought the Israelite Messiah and the coming Messiah were one and the same person, and so they tried to explain these reports thus:

“Both the descriptions can be reconciled in this way, that on account of tiredness his complexion became red and fair.”

In other words, his real complexion was wheatish but it changed because of fatigue. But there are so many difficulties in accepting this interpretation. Firstly, it was the Holy Prophet who went up in the Mi’raj. Why should Jesus Christ get tired? What could be other reasons for changing his complexion in the heavens? Secondly, the Israelite Messiah, having fair com-
plexion and curly hair, was an inhabitant of Syria. (The other people of that region had more or less the same complexion). Thirdly, in case the wheatish complexion changed into a fair colour, how can the differences between curly hair and the long flowing hair be resolved? Such conjectures are obviously wrong. The simple and straight fact is what Imam Bukhari has stated: *imamu-kum min-kum* (he will be your *imam* from among yourselves). In other words, the coming Messiah is not an Israelite prophet but is a member of the *ummah* of Muhammad. And the reports about the descriptions, which are mentioned together at the same place, also refer to the same point, that they are two different persons.

**Prophecy of the descent, or the second advent of a person in the previous scriptures, means the appearance of a like of that person**

These authentic traditions made the point absolutely clear about the descent of the son of Mary. In this way, neither is the seal of the Finality of Prophethood broken, nor is a prophet deposed from his office, nor is the best of *ummahs* disgraced. It is surprising that in the previous *ummah* no prophets from outside were needed to help them but this *ummah* of Muhammad stands in need of an Israelite prophet! It is clear from the above discussion that the descent of the son of Mary means the appearance of a like of the Messiah and that Messiah will be a *mujaddid*, and *mujaddids* have always been appearing in this *ummah*. The explanation that the descent of the son of Mary means the appearance of another person, may sound strange to those people who are perhaps not aware of the history of religions. However, the truth is that, even if there were not so many reasons as have been mentioned above for Jesus not appearing personally to fulfil the prophecy about his descent, nevertheless, we should explain his second ad-
vent metaphorically - that a person like him was going to appear in this ummah. There is no evidence at all in the religious history of the world that a person actually appeared again. On the contrary, there is a prophecy about the second advent of the prophet Elias (Elijah), and when the Jews raised the objection that Elias must come first, Jesus answered that John the Baptist was Elias because he was like him and he came in the spirit and power of Elias. This shows that the prophecy about the second advent of a person does not mean his actual reappearance but only the coming of another person like him.

Prophecy about the second advent of Elias (Elijah)
In the Old Testament, a prophecy has been mentioned thus:

“Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.”

The Jews thought that Elijah was alive in the heavens. (Elijah is the same prophet who, in the Qur’an, has been mentioned as Ilyas.) It is again stated in the Old Testament:

“And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.”

And further on it is stated in the same chapter:

“And it came to pass, as they still went on and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.”

On one hand there is a prophecy about the second advent of Elijah, the prophet, and on the other, his physical ascension into heaven is clearly mentioned, so much so that while going up in the chariot, Elijah’s mantle “fell from him” and it was taken up by Elisha. This leads to no other conclusion but that
Elijah was taken up to the heaven. With such a clear description of the event, the Jews were perfectly justified in expecting the descent of Elias before the appearance of the Messiah.

**How did Jesus interpret the prophecy of the second coming of Elias?**

At the time Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, the Jews raised the objection that Elias had not descended from the heavens. When the first sign of the coming of the Messiah was not fulfilled, how could they accept the truthfulness of Jesus’ claim? The following is what was said in reply:

“And his disciples asked him, saying, ‘Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, ‘Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you that that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they liked. Likewise shall also the son of man suffer of them.’ Then the disciples understood that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist.’” 48

At another place in Mark (9: 11-13) the same incident is described in slightly different words. Then in Matthew, Jesus talks of John in clear terms and says:

“And if you will receive it, this is Elias, which was to come.” 49

Why was John declared as Elias? The third Gospel explains when it states: “And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias” 50

**Circumstantial evidence that this was a Divine prophecy**

Now here is the evidence of three Gospels, supporting one
another, that Jesus Christ was confronted with the objection that Elias must first come before the advent of the Messiah. The reply which Jesus gave was that John the Baptist was Elias because, (as has been stated in Luke), he came in the spirit and power of Elias. In other words, he bore a strong resemblance to Elias. The raising of such an objection is a fact, the testimony of which is found in three different Gospels. This is not a creed (‘aqidah), nor a deliberate distortion (tahrif), which could be considered the creation of a later period. This is the testimony of an event. And the event is such that the followers of Jesus cannot forget, for it raises a strong objection against the claim of Jesus. The reply which Jesus gave apparently did not have much force in it. The Jews were not convinced at all because they believed in the literal application of the words of the prophecy and they kept on waiting for the second coming of Elias and in place of this prophecy, they rejected all the other signs which Jesus showed to them. Moreover, this prophecy is also mentioned in the Old Testament and these Books were under the custody of the Jews. Even if Christians wanted to tamper with this event, they were unable to do so. If it is said that possibly the Jews might have made some alteration in the prophecy that Elias would appear before the Messiah, then why did not Jesus, who was God’s prophet, say to the Jews that such a prophecy was their fabrication and Elias’ coming before the Messiah was not really necessary? In short, the genuineness of such an event cannot be doubted at all. For the sake of a clear understanding of the whole issue, let me recapitulate all the points.

The Jews believed, according to their scriptures, that Elias was physically taken up into heaven and he was still alive there and that the same Elias would appear before the coming of the Messiah as a testimony to the truthfulness of the Messiah’s claim. When Jesus made a claim that he was the Messiah,
the Jews objected that he could no be the Messiah. In reply, Jesus told them that John the Baptist, who bore a resemblance to Elias, was indeed Elias. On this decision of Jesus depended the truthfulness of his claim. If he was true in his claim, then, we have to admit that the second advent of Elias did not mean the actual appearance of Elias himself but the coming of someone like him. A Muslim who considers Jesus true in his claim and a Christian who is Jesus’ follower, are both obliged to accept that in the terminology of prophecy, the second advent of a person who had earlier passed away - although people may think him to be alive - does not mean that he himself will actually return. On the contrary, another person resembling him will appear. Thus the descent of the son of Mary should be interpreted in the same way in which Jesus himself interpreted the prophecy of the descent of Elias.

The second advent of the Messiah will be similar to the second advent of Elias
There was no harm had Elias actually appeared again for the second time because prophethood was still current among the Israelites. If John the Baptist could be raised as a prophet, Elias could also come to fulfil the prophecy. But in the ummah of Muhammad, the coming of the son of Mary breaks the seal of prophethood. Thus, even if the example of Elias were not present before us, in view of the Finality of Prophethood, we have to admit that the son of Mary, who was a prophet, cannot appear in person. Only a like of him can come. Moreover, Elias was an Israelite prophet and there was no harm if an Israelite prophet had come for the guidance of the Israelite people, but it is a disgrace for Islam that an Israelite prophet, Jesus, should come for the guidance of Muslims. This means that the followers of Islam are spiritually defective and the spiritual power of their prophet, God forbid, is defective also,
and that it cannot enable them to do something which one of the Israelite prophets can do. Another problem with which we are confronted is that the Qur’an and the authentic traditions prove that Jesus is dead; therefore, his own coming is not possible at all. In the Old Testament a mention is made of Elias’ going up into heaven and had he personally come, it would have only fulfilled a prophecy of a previous scripture; but the coming of Jesus is contrary to the teachings of the Qur’an and the Hadith.

Now let us stop and think for a moment. There was absolutely no obstacle in the reappearance of Elias. Prophethood was not terminated among the Jews nor was there any mention of Elias’ death in the Old Testament. In addition to all this, he was going to appear for the guidance of his own people and not for another nation. But the coming of the son of Mary is not possible for the following reasons:

1. Prophethood has come to an end with the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, the son of Mary cannot come after him.

2. In clear terms the Qur’an talks of the death of the son of Mary. How then can he reappear?

3. The Qur’an says about the nation of Muhammad: And thus We have made you an exalted nation that you may be the bearers of witness to the people and (that) the Messenger may be a bearer of witness to you. It is a disgrace to this exalted nation that it is unable to do work an Israelite prophet can do, even though it is not the work of prophethood. Therefore, the son of Mary cannot appear for the guidance of this nation.
4. There was no obstacle in the reappearance of Elias; but he did not come and another person like him came to fulfill the prophecy about his second advent. It shows that it is against the *sunnat al-Allah* (Divine practice), that the same person should appear again after having accomplished his mission in the world. And if there is a prophecy about his second coming it only means that a like of him will come. Those who do not accept this interpretation, in fact, cannot accept Jesus to be true in his claim of being the Messiah, and they thus clearly oppose the Qur’an itself. The interpretation which Jesus himself gave to the prophecy concerning the second coming of Elias has conclusively decided the issue, that if there is a prophecy about the second advent of a person, it only means the coming of a person who resembles him. In this way, there is no ambiguity and no difficulty left in understanding the prophecy of the descent (*nuzul*) of the son of Mary.

**If Jesus Christ himself appears he will definitely be a recipient of the prophetic revelation**

Another problem with which we are confronted, if Jesus himself appears, is the *hadith* reported by Nawas ibn Sam‘an recorded in *Sahih al-Muslim* where the following words occur:

“When the condition will be such God will reveal to Jesus: I have created some servants of Mine with whom nobody is able to fight. Thus give My servants shelter toward the direction of (the Mount) Tur.”  

Apparently if by Jesus (‘Isa) is meant the same Jesus, the Israelite prophet, then because he was a prophet, if God sends revelation to him after his second advent, then it must be pro-
phetic revelation. Gabriel will bring revelation to him in the same manner in which he used to bring revelation to him during the period of his prophethood. This will certainly break the seal of the Finality of Prophethood, because this shows that his prophethood had remained intact. In this case, Jesus will be the last of the prophets (Khatam al-Nabiyyin) and not our Holy Prophet Muhammad. But if by the coming of Jesus here means the coming of a like of him from among the followers of Muhammad, then the sending of revelation to him will be interpreted according to the hadith where it is stated:

“Among those that were before you there used to be men who were spoken to by God, Although they were not prophets. “ 53

In this way, the words of the hadith of Sahih al-Muslim need not cause any problem and the doctrine of Khatm-i Nubuwwat will also remain intact. If, however, we accept the view that Jesus himself is coming back and will receive prophetic revelation, then the edifice of the Finality of Prophethood is completely destroyed and the verse Khatam al-Nabiyyin and the authentic and continuous traditions are falsified.

The use of the word prophet for the coming Messiah
It must be borne in mind that besides the hadith reported by Nawas ibn Sam’an and recorded in al-Muslim, 54 there is no other tradition where the words “prophet of God” have been used for the coming Messiah. On the contrary, if emphasis has been laid in the authentic traditions, it has been laid on the point that he will be your Imam from among yourselves, as is clearly indicated in Al-Bukhari and Al-Muslim 55 Thus, it is evident that the coming Messiah will not be the Israelite Messiah who was a prophet of God but an imam from among the followers of the Holy Prophet, as there have been other imams
in this *ummah*. Once such *imam* has been given the name Messiah or Ibn Maryam in the *Hadith*. This Ibn Maryam, it has been agreed, will not do any work related to prophethood at all, and the authentic traditions also agree that he will be “an *imam* from among the followers of Muhammad” and not anyone from outside. It is, however, true that in the report by Nawas ibn Sam’an, as recorded in *al-Muslim*, the words “prophet of God” have been used for the son of Mary but this *hadith* has not been mentioned in the chapter *Nuzul ‘Isa* (Descent of Jesus), but in the chapter concerning *Al-Dajjal* (the Antichrist). All the traditions mentioned in the chapter *Nuzul ‘Isa* clearly talk of the coming Messiah as “your *imam* from among yourselves,” or, *imaman muqsitan*, (an *imam* who will do justice). Thus all the reports about the descent of Jesus, whether mentioned in *al-Bukhari* or *al-Muslim*, or for that matter, in any other collection of *hadith*, agree that the coming Messiah is going to be one of the *imams* of this *ummah* and not a prophet of God. Another collection of *hadith* *Tirmidhi* ⁵⁶ has reported the same *hadith* from Nawas ibn Sam’an and surprisingly enough, the words “prophet of God” have not been mentioned there at all. Taking into consideration all these facts, it seems that the word “prophet of God” were not uttered by the Holy Prophet but were the addition of Nawas ibn Sam’an himself, because he thought the coming Messiah was an Israelite prophet. However, the collective testimony of *hadith* is clearly opposed to the coming Messiah being a prophet. It does not regard him as a prophet but a follower (*ummati*), and an *imam* from among the followers of the Holy Prophet. Such a person can never be an Israelite Messiah, who was a prophet and not from among us but from a previous nation.
The Qur’an does not mention the coming of an Israelite Messiah

So far I have only discussed the point from the Hadith, but the Qur’an cannot remain silent on this matter of supreme importance. When there is a mention in the Qur’an of the events with which Muslims will be confronted, and again when there is mention of the appointment of mujaddids according to the verse:

He (God) makes the spirit to light by His command upon whom He pleases of His servants, ⁵⁷

then there must be a mention of the coming of Jesus, if he, is, in fact, coming himself, or, the coming of a like of him, if a like of him is coming. Some people say that the Israelite Messiah, himself, is coming according to the following verse of the Qur’an:

And there is none of the People of the Book but will believe in this before his death. ⁵⁸

Apparently, there is no word in the verse indicating the nuzul (descent) of Jesus, but in a hadith, Abu Hurairah, while reporting on the descent of the son of Mary, had added the words:

If you like, read the verse, And there is none of the People of the Book but will believe in this before his death. ⁵⁹

This was the only reason why this verse of the Qur’an was associated with the descent of Jesus, but as I have said before, in the verse itself there is not a single word that refers to the nuzul of Jesus. It should also be borne in mind that these words which are attributed to Abu Hurairah are not found in all the traditions about the descent of Jesus but have only been added to one hadith. If this addition is accepted as true, even then
the above interpretation of the verse does not seem to be right. In this case, the meaning of the verse will be that at the time of the descent of Jesus, there will be none of the people of the Book who will not believe in him, that is to say, at that time all the Jews and Christians will become Muslims. To force this verse to yield such an interpretation, many words have to be added to the verse of the Qur’an. To say that “none of the people of the Book” apply to the people of the Book present at the time of the descent of Jesus is clearly opposed to the tenet of the Qur’an. The Qur’an has used the words in a general way, which include all the people of the Book. Therefore, how could all the millions of Christians and Jews who had passed away be excluded from believing in him before their death? Another great difficulty in accepting such a meaning of the saying of Abu Hurairah, (if that is truly his saying), is that it clearly contravenes some other verses of the Qur’an. At one place the Qur’an mentions of Jesus:

\[(\text{God will}) \text{ make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve to the day of Resurrection.}\] \(^{60}\)

This verse makes it incumbent that, like the followers of Jesus, his deniers should also exist till the day of Resurrection. If this was not the true meaning, why were the words \textit{ila yaum il-qiyamati} (to the day of Resurrection), added? If there was going to be a time before that, when none would remain a denier of Jesus and all would become his followers, then these deniers and followers must exist all the time - to the day of Resurrection. Therefore the explanation given to the verse in the light of Abu Hurairah’s report is not right. \(^{61}\) Again, this explanation is against the Qur’anic verse which says:

\[
\text{And if thy Lord had pleased, He would have made people a single nation. And they cease not to differ.}\] \(^{62}\)
Thus, in view of these verses the interpretation put on the words “and there is none from among the people of the Book” is totally wrong. If this is supposed to be the opinion of Abu Hurairah, it still cannot be accepted, because it goes against the Qur’an. The interpretation of this verse according to Ibn ‘Abbas is that at the time of death, Jews who are deniers of the Messiah become convinced of the messengership of Jesus and Christians who have an exaggerated view of the claims of Jesus also realise that Jesus was not God but only a messenger. This interpretation is supported by Hazrat Ubay ibn Ka‘b’s alternative reading of this verse where qabla mautihim (before their death), is used instead of qabla mautihi (before his death). 63 In the qir’at (reading) of Ubay ibn Ka‘b, the pronoun him in mautihim definitely refers to the “People of the Book”. Therefore, the pronoun hi must also necessarily refer to them in mauti-hi, and not to Jesus. This verse will be discussed in detail in the next chapter dealing with the death of Jesus Christ.

There is a reference about the descent of Jesus in verse 55 of Ch. 24
This verse (4:159) has nothing to do with the descent of Jesus; therefore we should look elsewhere to find out whether or not there is any other reference in the Qur’an about the descent of the son of Mary. After some reflection, we discover that the descent of Jesus is hinted at in 24:55 which is known as the ayah iṣṭiḵḥaf (verse of succession):

\[
\text{Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will surely make them rulers, (khalifahs), as He made those before them rulers.}^{64}
\]

There is no doubt in it that the outward meaning of this verse is the granting of worldly kingdom to Muslims and by making
them *khalifahs* also refers to this, but there is a special reference to the Israelites in the words “those before them” (*allazina min qablihim*). Again, the Holy Prophet has a special resemblance to Moses as the Qur’an has indicated by the use of the word *kama* (as), in the following verse:

_Surely We have sent to you a Messenger, a witness against you, as We sent a messenger to Pharaoh._

Thus, the making of *khalifahs* as *God made those before them* shows in the clearest terms that as the Holy Prophet resembled Moses, and Moses was granted a chain of *khalifahs*, similarly, a chain of *khalifahs* will be granted to the Prophet Muhammad. As Moses and the Prophet Muhammad not only enjoyed the status of prophethood but were also the leaders and kings of their nations, similarly, their *khalifahs* will be granted temporal as well as spiritual kingdoms. Some of the successors (*khalifas*) of Moses were kings and some were prophets; in some, prophethood and kingdom were both combined. Thus, in the Divine promise in the above verse, (24:55), if there is a reference to the establishment of the kingdom of Islam, there is also a reference there to the raising of *mujaddids* among Muslims. The Holy Prophet was given words of comfort that after him some of his successors would be kings and some would be *mujaddids* who would be responsible for the establishment of temporal as well as spiritual kingdoms of Islam. Thus this verse contains a double promise.

**Why was a promise given to the Holy Prophet for the appearance of *khalifahs* like that of the *khalifahs* of Moses?**

If we go into details concerning the resemblance of the *khilafat* among the followers of Moses as well as of Muhammad, the
discussion will become lengthy, so we shall deal with a few important points. One thing that is clear, however, without a shadow of doubt, is that the likeness (mumathilat) of the Holy Prophet with Moses does not end with him, but it continues after him, even among his khalifahs (successors). This prophecy is of such great importance that the resemblance of the Holy Prophet with Moses is not merely accidental but an established fact. That is why Israelites are mentioned frequently in the Qur’an and Muslims have been constantly reminded of the conduct and conditions of the Israelites. In the history of the Israelites is, in fact, shrouded the history of Muslims. If the Children of Israel received a message through Moses:

> It may be that your Lord may destroy your enemy and make you rulers in the land, then He will see how you act,

Muslims are also told:

> Then We made you rulers after them, (those who were earlier destroyed), so We might see how you act.

Thus the Holy Prophet resembled Moses in such a way that his resemblance was found among his successors as well.

The verse of succession, (istikhlafl) (24:55) shows that none of the Holy Prophet’s khalifahs will appear from outside the ummah of Muhammad

As a Messiah appeared among the followers of Moses, similarly it was necessary that a Messiah should appear among the followers of Muhammad. In fact, the prophecy about the descent of the son of Mary forms part and parcel of the verse of the Qur’an which says:

> Allah has promised to those of you (min-kum), who believe and do good that He will surely make them
rulers, (*khalifahs*) in the earth as He made those before them rulers.  

It has been mentioned in the *Hadith*, with reference to the prophecies about the descent of Ibn Maryam, that he will be an *imam* from among yourselves (*imamukum min-kum*), similarly, in the verse of the Qur’an, the word *min-kum* (from among you), clearly indicates that the *khalifahs* in the *ummah* of Muhammad will be raised from among his followers and no one will ever appear from outside who can be called the *khalifah* of the Holy Prophet. Thus, this one verse of the Holy Qur’an is enough to decide the prophecy regarding the descent of Jesus, son of Mary. If Jesus is to come as the *khalifah* of the Holy Prophet, then according to the verse of succession (24:55), it is essential that he should be from among the Muslims and not from outside. And by adding the word *kama* (like), the fact of similarity has been specifically hinted at that he will be like the *khalifas* of Moses and not exactly like them. Thus only one meaning of the prophecy mentioned in the Qur’an, the *Hadith* and earlier scriptures can be deduced and that is, that someone from the nation of Muhammad can appear and nobody from outside.

**The explanation of the word descent (*nuzul*)**

If the objection be raised that as in *Hadith* the word *nazala* (he descended), or *yanzilu* (he will descend), has been used, therefore, the promised one should descend from heaven and cannot be born in this *ummah*, this is the result of not understanding the true meaning of the word *nuzul*, (descent). *Nuzul* does not mean to descend from heaven, nor, in every case, does it mean coming down from above. God says in the Qur’an: *We sent down iron.*  

Iron is found in the mines on earth and does not *descend* from heaven.
Again:

*We have indeed sent down to you clothing.*  
Clothing also does not *descend* from the sky.

Again, it is stated:

*He sent down to you eight of the cattle in pairs.*

About messengers and Books, this word is particularly used, although messengers are born in this world and Books do not descend from above as written documents. For example, the word *nuzul* has been used for the Holy Prophet himself: *Allah has sent down to you a Reminder - a messenger who recites to you the clear messages of Allah.*

In the chapter *Al-Hadid*, a mention has been made of the messengers, and along with them, the books. The Qur’an says:

*And We sent down with them the Book and the measure.*

Sending down of the Book with the messengers indicates that the messengers were also *sent down* with the Book. But in the context *nuzul* only means appointment. In the *Hadith*, these two words have been used together:

“At that time God will appoint the Messiah, son of Mary, and he will descend near the minaret.”

Here clearly the “appointment” of the Messiah is mentioned and “appointment” is made on this earth by the command of God. Thus the meaning of *bi‘that* and *nuzul* is, in fact, the same.
Footnotes on Chapter IV

1 24:55
2 Things resembling one another, hence susceptible to different interpretations (LL).
3 Doctrines which are firm, stated and decreed.
5 21:107.
6 5:3.
7 98:3.
8 17:89; 25:33.
9 15:9; 56:77-78; 85:21-22.
10 33:40.
11 See Chapter 11. For further discussion, see The Last Prophet, Prophethood in Islam and Finality of Prophethood by Maulana Muhammad ‘Ali. (SMT)
13 Fath al-Bari fi Sharah Bukhari.
14 Ruh al-Ma‘ani, under 33:40 by Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi.
15 Ibid.
16 6:125.
17 33:40.
19 5:3
20 John 16:7-8, 13. Paraclete has been translated as Comforter. “Westenfells explains that the word used by Jesus was Mauhamana (Aramaic) and in Hebrew it was Mauhamanna, both meaning the praised. In the sister language, Arabic, this word will be Muhammad or Ahmad which are derived from the same root hamd, which means praising.” For a detailed discussion, see Khwaja Nazir Ahmad’s Jesus in Heaven on Earth, Ch. XVII. (SMT)
21 Fath al-Bari (Commentary of al-Bukhari).
22 Sunan Abu Dawud, beginning of Kitab al-Malahim.
23 8:42.
24 19:30.
27 John, 5:30-31; Matthew, 20:20-23.


30 *Fath al-Bari* (Commentary of *al-Bukhari*), vol. vi, p. 358.


34 Ibid. (ch. lxxii:292).

35 *Muslim*, *kitab al-ajsad*, ch. *Nuzul al-‘Isa* (60:47)


37 Maulana Muhammad Ali’s comment in his book, *A Manual of Hadith*, will also be of some interest in this regard:

“This is a further prophecy relating to the ascendancy of Islam. The son of Mary is the Messiah, and Muslims are told that a Messiah would appear among them. This Messiah is called *imamu-kum min-kum*, i.e., *your imam from among yourselves*. In a *hadith* of the *Sahih Muslim* on the same subject, the words are *wa amma-kum min-kum*, i.e., *he*, (the Messiah), *shall be your imam from among yourselves*, leaving no doubt that a member of the Muslim community would be raised to the dignity of the Messiah. These words are no doubt added by the Holy Prophet to remove the possible misconception that the Israelite Messiah would appear among Muslims.

“The prophecy relating to the advent of a Messiah among Muslims, generally known as the second advent of the Messiah, is on all fours with the prophecy relating to the second advent of Elias among the Israelites: ‘Elias went up by a whirlwind into heaven’, (11 Kings 2:11): ‘I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord’ (Mal. 4:5). When Jesus Christ was confronted with this difficulty - ‘Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come?’ (Mt. 17:10) - he simply replied: ‘Elias is come already and they knew him not’....‘Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist’ (Mt. 17:12-13): because, as further explained, John the Baptist came ‘in the spirit and power of Elias, (Lk. 1:17). The appearance of the Messiah among Muslims thus meant only the appearance of a *mujaddid* ‘in the spirit and power’ of the Messiah.
“The Messiah’s work is thus described in *Bukhari*: ‘The son of Mary will appear among you as a judge, doing justice (between people), and he will break the Cross and kill the swine’. (B. 60:49). This clearly shows that the Messiah would come when the religion of the Cross will be in the ascendance, and that his work will be to spread Islam among the Christian nations of the world in particular, which in another hadith is described as the rising of the sun in the West, the sun standing for the Sun of Islam and the West for the Western nations. Thus this prophecy speaks in fact of the final ascendency of Islam in the world.” (Footnote p. 257). (SMT)

43 Malachi, 4:5.
44 6:86; :123.
45 2 Kings, 2:1.
46 *Ibid.*, 2:11
51 2:143. Maulana Muhammad Ali writes while commenting upon this verse: “The bearers of witness are the persons who carry knowledge to others, bearing testimony to its truth in their own persons. Some commentators explain the word *shahid* as meaning a purifier. But *shahid* also signifies one possessing much knowledge (LL), and it means also an *imam* or a *leader*, and the significance is that just as the Holy Prophet delivered the message of truth to the Muslims and was their purifier and leader, the role of the Muslim community was to deliver the message of truth to the whole of humanity, and to be its purifiers and leaders.” (SMT)
52 *Muslim, kitab al-Fitan wa al-Ashrat al-Sa’ah*, ch. zikr Dajjal (ch. mccvii:7015).
54 *Sahih al-Muslim, kitab al-Fitan wa Ashrat was Sa’ah*, ch. zikr Dajjal.
55 Al-Bukhari, kitab al-Anbiya, ch. nuzul al-I’sa; kitab al-mazalim ch. kasri salib.


57 40:15.

58 4:159. “Before his death” is interpreted as “before Jesus’ death.” A detailed discussion of this verse will be found in Ch. III. (SMT)


60 3:54.

61 Similarly, the Qur’an says at another place, And We have cast among them enmity and hatred till the day of Resurrection (5:64). If all the people of the Book become Jesus’ followers, the statement made in this verse will become null and void.

62 11:118.


64 24:55.

65 73:15.

66 Similarly, in the nation of Muhammad, khalifahs, (temporal rulers), will appear as well as mujaddids, (spiritual khalifahs); mujaddids will appear instead of prophets, (because prophethood has been terminated after the Holy Prophet).

67 The Holy Prophet’s likeness to Moses also means that the prophecy of a promised prophet who will be the “like” of Moses (Deut. 18:18) was fulfilled in the person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. (SMT)

68 7:129.

69 10:14.

70 24:55.

71 57:25.

72 7:26.


74 65:10-11.

75 57:25.

76 Ibn Majah, kitab al-Fitan, ch. 33, p. 482.
CHAPTER V

DEATH OF JESUS

*And I was a witness to them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die Thou wast the Watcher over them.*  

Importance of the question of the death of Jesus

The prophecy about the descent of Jesus has been discussed in detail in the last chapter. However, all the intricacies of this prophecy can be resolved if we accept that Jesus has died. If it is established from the Qur’an and the authentic Hadith that there is no proof of Jesus going alive into heaven, then, no other interpretation of the prophecy of the descent of Jesus is possible except the one given by me in the last chapter. To understand its true implications we should reflect on the question of the death of Jesus in a cool and calm manner. Most people do not pay attention to this subject because they think that the whole ummah has already agreed on the point that Jesus did not die. But this view in itself is not right. There are clear statements found in some commentaries of the Qur’an that Jesus did die, though for a limited period of time. One statement says that he remained dead for three hours, the other, that he remained dead for seven hours and still another says that he remained dead for three days. When there is so much difference on this matter we should really go back to the Qur’an and the authentic Hadith for guidance. I even say that if there was no statement at all in Islamic literature about the death of
Jesus, still it was not right to hold a view about his physical ascension into heaven unless it was clearly mentioned in the Qur’an and the authentic Traditions. Apart from this, we should not forget that in this age, Christians have made it a big issue against Islam. The belief that Jesus is still physically alive in heaven has, in a way, lent support to the wrong doctrines of Christianity relating to Jesus’ divinity. Therefore, in the interest of Islam, it is imperative that we carefully consider the whole issue, because the true principles of Islam cannot support any false doctrine, wherever that doctrine may be found. How is it possible that Islam should teach a doctrine that would support the perilous and un-Islamic creed of Jesus’ divinity? This is itself great proof about the death of Jesus. Apart from this, the question of Jesus being alive is neither included in the principles of Islam nor in its branches, but is a separate issue. If it is established from the Qur’an and the authentic Hadith, then we should accept it, otherwise as we believe in the death of other prophets, we should also believe in the death of Jesus Christ as a matter of course.

Onus of proof about Jesus being alive is on those who hold that view

It is however, extremely important to remember while discussing the point of whether Jesus is dead or alive that it is not necessary to offer proof for the death of a prophet, because it is an established fact that whoever is born, dies. In this respect, messengers are just like other human beings, and all of them who appeared in the world have passed away. If, on the contrary, anybody claims that one, or more than one prophet who appeared before the Holy Prophet is still alive, the onus of proof of this extraordinary phenomenon lies on his shoulders, and unless the Qur’an and authentic Hadith clearly indicate that a prophet has not indeed died and is still alive some-
where, till then, to hold such a belief is against the teachings of the Qur’an and Hadith. Thus the first question is, what is the historical proof of Jesus being alive? It is not the objective of the Qur’an to falsify historical facts. We do agree that there is a possibility of error in history, but unless the Qur’an and the authentic Hadith implicitly nullify some historical fact, we cannot accept it as a religious doctrine of faith. Therefore, we shall first look into those verses of the Qur’an and the authentic traditions, which supposedly deal with the question of whether Jesus is still alive in the heaven or somewhere else. On this issue, this verse is often quoted as a clear indication that Jesus is alive:

> And for their (the Jews) saying: We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah, and they killed him not, nor did they cause his death on the Cross, but he (the Messiah) was made to appear to them as such.  

Negation of Jesus’ death on the Cross or negation of his being slain do not prove that he is alive

This verse negates Jesus’ death by slaying, or his death as a result of being nailed to the Cross and affirms that he was made to appear to them as such. We shall deal with the first part of the statement concerning what is truly meant by the negation of his being slain and the negation of his dying on the Cross. If it is said about a person that five or six hundred years ago he was neither slain nor crucified, it does not mean that he is still alive. Negation of being slain or being crucified does not amount to negation of death (by other natural means). This is clear from the views of some of the commentators of the Qur’an, that in spite of *wa ma qatalu-hu wa ma salabuhu* (they killed him not, nor did they cause his death on the Cross) they still believed that Jesus remained dead for three or seven
hours or for three days. Thus, this verse does not prove that Jesus did not die at all or that he was taken alive into heaven. To argue from this verse that Jesus is still alive is an absolutely futile effort. It is quite possible that a person whose death is not mentioned must be living, but his being alive cannot be accepted - if normal circumstance require his death - unless there is specific and definite proof of his staying alive. In any case, negation of being slain and negation of being crucified (expiring on the cross) do not substantiate the view that the person in question is alive. For his being alive, further clear proof is needed - some words which bear out that he is not dead or which indicate in a distinct and plain manner that he is still living.

The meaning of *qatl* (slaying) and *salb* (crucifixion)
Now I shall deal with the meaning of the verse. First of all we shall find out what is meant by *qatl* and *salb*. The upholders of the view that Jesus is still alive claim that *salb* means to hang a person on the cross, and death by hanging on the cross is not the meaning of this word. They do not mention anything about *qatl*, whether it also means to attack a person by the sword or inflict some grievous harm to him, and whether to actually cause death by such attack is not a part of *qatl*; because in the verse under discussion, both *qatl* and *salb* have been denied. However, the lexicons tell us a different story. *Lisan al-’Arab* says: “He was slain, which means he died by a blow or by stone or by poison or by any other means.”

*Taj al-’Arus* says nearly the same thing. In *Mufradat* it is stated: “The true meaning of *qatl* is to separate the soul from the body.”

As to the meaning of *salb*, it is mentioned in *Lisan al-Arab*:
“Salb means death in a certain well-known manner and is derived from wadak because ichor mixed with blood of the person so put to death, flowed.”

Here salb clearly means qatl (killing in a well-known manner) and it is agreed that qatl is to separate the soul from the body. Similarly Taj al-’Arus says: “Salb is wadak which means ichor or watery humour, mixed with blood and further on it is stated: “Maslub is called maslub because the ichor mixed with blood of the person so crucified flows, and salb is causing death in a certain well-known manner and is derived from this because the ichor of the person so crucified, flowed.”

These are the two famous books of lexicon which do not say at all that salb is just to hang a person on the cross. On the contrary, it has clearly been indicated that salb means qatl (death) in a certain well-known manner and qatl means, to separate the soul from the body. The difference between salb and qatl is that every salb is qatl, but every qatl is not salb. Death by a blow, stoning or poisoning does fall in the category of qatl, but if a person is hit by a blow, or by a stone, and does not die, we cannot say that he has been slain. Similarly, if a person is hanged on the stake (cross) and does not die, we cannot say that he has been crucified. Crucifixion means to be slain in a particular manner. A person who is not slain (maqtul) cannot be called crucified (maslub). Thus, for such a person, the expression that he is neither slain nor crucified is perfectly justifiable, although he may have been attacked by sword, or hit by stone, or may have been hanged on the cross. Salb, as has been proven above, is a kind of qatl. If qatl (slaying) cannot be applied to an incident, then there is no justification for applying the word salb (death by hanging) to that incident.
People of the Book and their concept of crucifixion (*salb*)

We have seen above the meaning of *qatl* and *salb* according to the lexicons of the Arabs. Now we shall discuss the meaning of these words according to the usage of the People of the Book who claim to have slain or crucified Jesus. The word *qatl* need not detain us here because this word or its synonym denotes the killing of a person by a special method. As to crucifixion, the form it took was that a person was placed on a wooden structure in the shape of a cross and his hands and feet were nailed. In the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* it is written that the body would remain on the cross till it dried up. 6 This is exactly what the Arab lexicologists have said; drying up the body meant that the bone marrow and the fat flowed out of the body. It is mentioned in the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* that the real cause of death was hunger and loss of the power of the body, and by the contortion of the body, the person put on the cross suffered great agony and gradually cramp and convulsion took place in it. 7 Sometimes the body remained on the cross for three days. To cause early death, sometimes the legs were broken.

Thus, according to the Arabs, as well as the People of the Book, a person was called “crucified” (*maslub*) only when he had actually died on the cross and generally his corpse dried up in the process of hanging. If he did not die on the cross, although he may have been put on it, he could not be called *maslub* (crucified), just as a person could not be called slain (*maqtul*) if he is wounded by a sword but does not die as a consequence of the attack made on him.
The Qur’an does not belie the history of the People of the Book, but belies their false doctrine

What has been said above proves that “they crucified him not, nor did they cause his death on the cross.” ⁸ It does not mean that Jesus was not put on the Cross. It is important to remember the point that we should not interpret the Qur’anic words in such a way that belie obvious historical facts. It is quite possible that a person may conclude from the words:

_They killed him not, nor did they cause his death on the cross_ ⁹

that Jesus was not subjected to an act like that of _qatl_ (killing) or _salb_ (crucifixion), but this is not a necessary conclusion. When we look at history, the Jews claimed on the one hand that they hanged Jesus on the cross and on the other hand, the followers of Jesus admitted that he was, in fact, put on the Cross, and there is no contemporary historical record which shows that Jesus was not at all put on the cross. Now, if after six hundred years, somebody says that Jesus was not put on the cross, who is going to believe it? While interpreting the Qur’an, it should be kept in mind that if a word can bear two meanings, we should adopt that meaning which is not contrary to historical records. Apart from this, the Qur’an came to provide conclusive proof against the beliefs of the Jews and the Christians. How would they be silenced? They agree on the fact that Jesus was put on the Cross but we reject their views and advance another theory, that Jesus was only physically lifted up into heaven. How could we ask them to affirm this view which has no historical testimony to support it? Therefore, we should interpret the Qur’an in such a way that does not belie their history but only belies their belief. This is what the Qur’an has done. Without rejecting their history, on
which both Jews and Christians agree, the Qur’an has rejected their erroneous beliefs, the details of which will be discussed a little later.

The question may be raised here that when we accept their history in which both parties agree, then why should we not accept their unanimous verdict that Jesus died on the Cross as well? The reason for rejecting this presumption is that not only is it against the express teachings of the Qur’an but also against historical evidence. Even the events mentioned in the Gospels clearly indicate that although Jesus was put on the Cross, he did not die there.

**Evidence from the Gospels: Jesus did not die on the Cross**

The following points are established from the Gospels:

1. Jesus remained on the Cross for a few hours only, according to one report, at the most for six hours and according to another, for about two hours. According to Matthew and Mark, it was at about the ninth hour (3 p.m.) that Jesus complained of having been forsaken by God and it was shortly after this that he died. Mark says “it was the third hour (i.e. 9 a.m.) that they crucified him”. Therefore, according to Mark and Matthew, Jesus was on the Cross for six hours. Luke fixes the sixth hour as the time when Jesus “gave up the ghost”. He also mentions that the darkness lasted from the sixth to the ninth hour. On the other hand, according to John, it was about the sixth hour (12 noon) that Pilate sat in judgement over Jesus. Even if we assume that Jesus was put on the Cross immediately after the sentence, Jesus would not have remained on the Cross for more than three hours. Death by crucifixion was always tardy. In any case, the person who was crucified could
not die within two, three or six hours.

2. According to John, the soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus.14 This was done to cause quick death to the victims. The legs of Jesus were, however, not broken.

3. The two thieves who were crucified with Jesus were still alive when taken off the Cross with him.

4. According to John, “One of the soldiers pierced his (Jesus”) side and forthwith there came out blood and water.”15 This was a sign of life in him.

5. Even Pilate marvelled that Jesus actually died in so short a time.16

6. When Jesus was taken off the Cross, he was not treated like ordinary criminals, but was given in the charge of a wealthy disciple of his, Joseph of Aramathea, who lavished care on him and put him in a spacious tomb, hewn in the side of a rock.17

7. On the third day, when Mary Magdalene and two other women came to the tomb, they saw that the stone from the tomb had been rolled away,18 which shows that Jesus was taken away after the stone was rolled away from the sepulchre, which would not have been the case if there had been a super-natural rising.

8. When Mary Magdalene saw Jesus, she took him “to be the gardener”19, which indicates that Jesus had disguised himself as a gardener to escape. Such disguise would
not have been needed if he had risen from the dead.

9. After a few days when Jesus’ disciples saw him, it was in the same body of flesh that they found him, with marks of nails in his hands, and a wound in his side deep enough for a man to thrust his hand into. In other words, Jesus had not actually died on the Cross.

10. It is clearly established from Luke that when Jesus saw his disciples, it was with a body of flesh; he still felt hunger and ate food, which prove the truth of the Qur’anic statement:

\[
\text{They both (i.e. Jesus and Mary) used to eat food (when they were alive).}
\]

Jesus said to his disciples: “Why are you so perturbed? Why do questionings arise in your mind? Look at my hand and feet. It is I myself. Touch me and see; no ghost has flesh and bones as you can see that I have. They were still unconvinced, still wondering for it seemed too good to be true. So he asked them, ‘Have you anything here to eat?’ They offered him a piece of fish they had cooked, which he took and ate before their eyes.”

All these incidents prove that Jesus had escaped death on the Cross and that he had contacted his disciples and had also eaten food before their eyes.

11. Jesus undertook a journey to Galilee with two of his disciples walking side by side with him, which shows that he was fleeing for refuge; a journey to Galilee was not necessary to rise to heaven.
12. In all the post-crucifixion appearances, Jesus is found hiding himself as if he feared being discovered. A risen Jesus should have made a public appearance and should not have shown any fear of being discovered by the persecuting Jews.

13. Above all this, Jesus prayed for the whole night before his arrest to be saved from the accursed death on the Cross, and he also asked his disciples to pray for him; the prayers of a righteous man in distress and affliction are always accepted. He seems to have even received a promise from God to be saved, and it was to this promise that he referred when he cried out on the Cross: “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me!”25 Hebrews makes the matter still clearer, for there it is plainly stated that his prayer was accepted: “When he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him Who was able to save him from death and was heard in that he feared.”26

All these incidents and references are sufficient to prove, historically, that Jesus was indeed put on the Cross, but did not remain on it long enough for it to have caused his death. His bones were not broken, and in great haste he was taken down from the Cross and placed in a grave, which was actually a spacious place hewn in a rock. His coming out of this tomb, his meeting some women and his disciples, his disguising himself, his walking on foot, his showing his wounds on his hands and side, his feeling hungry and eating food, all point to one fact - that he was finally saved from dying on the Cross. This is something which cannot be rejected light-heartedly.27 Subsequent events show that he migrated from that place for af-
terwards he went to Galilee. And migration (hijrah) is the practice of prophets - when they are persecuted beyond limits at one place, they have to go to another.

The Jews claim that they slew Jesus; the Qur’an denied that he was slain or that he was crucified

All these incidents show that Jesus was put on the Cross but he did not die there. But the belief of the Jews and the Christians is that he did die on the Cross. The Qur’an has not rejected their history, but only their belief. How wonderful and full of wisdom is the statement of the Qur’an! The saying of the Jews recorded therein is: We have killed the Messiah.

In reply the Qur’an has rejected their claim by saying: They killed him not, nor did they cause his death on the cross. 28

That is to say, slaying (qatl) and crucifixion (salb) have both been rejected. Death by crucifixion really meant that the victim should die on the cross-bar and his corpse should remain hanging there. But sometimes to cause quick death his legs or bones were broken. As has been shown above, Jesus’ body was taken off the Cross in great haste. To cause real death, the other method, that is, breaking the legs, was not resorted to in his case. Therefore, the Qur’an refuted the Jewish claim that “we slew” him by saying that they neither broke his bones to cause death nor did they let him stay hanging on the Cross long enough that he could die through exposure and exhaustion - the usual rigours and tortures of crucifixion. Otherwise, there was no need of using the two words in this connection.

The meaning of wa lakin shubbiha lahum

Now we take up for discussion the words which follow the previous statement. To interpret wa lakin shubbiha lahum, as
meaning that someone else was made to resemble Jesus, is totally wrong. The commentators themselves have found it rather an intricate problem. Thus Imam Razi writes: “To whom is shubhiha lahum attributed, that is to say, who is the mushabbah (likened to)? If it is attributed to the Messiah, he is the mushabbah bihi (that to which anything is likened), and not the mushabbah. If it is attributed to the slain (maqtul), then the slain is not mentioned here.”

This question has been answered in two ways by Imam Razi:

1. Shubhiha lahum is like (khuila ilaih) and thus the meaning rendered is but the incident appeared to them as such.

2. Ma qataluhu (they slew him not) indicates that someone else was slain.

Thus the pronoun him was directed towards someone else. What a feeble manner of reasoning! It is as if during a discussion, the claim itself has been put forward as an argument! Ma qataluhu only shows that the person mentioned in the text (in this case Jesus) has not been slain. How “someone else” is reported to have been slain, according to these words, I fail to understand. If someone says: “Zaid has not been slain,” does it mean that “Bakr has been slain?” The point that has to be established first is that someone else was killed in place of Jesus. Before settling this issue, a presumption was made and strangely enough then, that presumption was put forward as an argument. An erroneous notion has compelled most of the commentators to take a conjectural notion as a real incident. The other interpretation that it means, “it happened as they thought it to be,” is also mere conjecture and this interpretation cannot be supported by the lexicons. The question was simple. Who was the person who was “likened to” or made
mushabbah for them? Obviously all the pronouns refer to Jesus; thus Jesus was made mushabbah and no one else. Now, with what was he “likened”? The meaning becomes clear by the words: *ma qataluhu wa ma salabuhu* (They slew him not nor did they crucify him (i.e. caused his death on the Cross).

Jesus was neither slain nor crucified, but his condition became dubious like the one who was slain or crucified. And the historical incidents quoted above from the Gospels clearly support this view. The Qur’an has also made a reference affirming what has been said in the Gospels.

It is surprising that a simple statement which would have made the whole matter clear has been twisted in such a way as to mean that Jesus was not put on the Cross but someone else of the same appearance, or one who was made to resemble him, was crucified. This is not borne out at all by the words of the Qur’an or any saying of the Holy Prophet. As has been mentioned above, the pronoun *hi* in *shubbiha* (he was made to appear as such) refers to Jesus whose mention has previously been made in the same verse. Thus the statement would read like this: *wa-lakin shubbiha ‘Isa lahum* (but he (Jesus) was made to appear to them as such.)

This is itself an independent and a clear statement; only that thing is omitted to which he was likened. The word *lakin* (but) is a letter of emendation (*istidrak*) for removal of a doubt or for the elucidation of a point. The rendering of a statement could only be like this: *wa la-kin shubbiha ‘Isa lahum bil-maslubi wal-maqtul* (but Jesus was made to resemble them as if he was crucified and slain), that is, he became like the one who was crucified).
The pronoun he in shubbiha refers to no one who was slain because no maqtul (slain person) has been mentioned afterwards. To get out of this impasse, some people think that the statement should read like this: “They slew him not, nor did they crucify him, but they crucified and killed him who was made to resemble them (like Jesus).”

Obviously it is introducing at will words to the text of the Qur’an to distort its meaning. Here, after lakin, a complete statement, shubbiha lahum is present, and in shubbiha the verb is clearly indicated. In the presence of a verb, to accept that another verb has been omitted from the statement is against the rules of grammar. Nevertheless, if the word is omitted (mahzuf) after lakin, in this case the omitted verb from the previous statement should govern the statement that follows. For instance: Zaid did not stand but Umar, should mean that Zaid did not stand but Umar stood. Although one verb was mentioned after lakin (but), the verb of the previous clause was implied in the clause that followed. The Qur’an says (literally):

\[ Muhammad \text{ is not the father of any of your men, but the messenger of Allah.} \]  

Because there is no verb in the clause wa lakin rasulullah, therefore, the verb kana in the beginning of the verse should be considered implied in the subsequent clause which should read: “but he is the messenger of Allah.”

Similarly the Qur’an says: \textit{It is not a narrative which could be forged, but a verification of what is before it.}  

Here after \textit{wa lakin} the verb has been omitted. Therefore, again the verb kana in the beginning of the clause should be consid-
This principle is neither something unheard of, nor is there any rule of syntax, that when there is a clear implied verb after *wa lakin* in a clause, another verb should be forced into the text. It is surprising that people consider a verb omitted in the presence of the verb *shubbiha*. The Qur’an is full of such instances where after *wa lakin* the verb has been clearly indicated, in which case we cannot place the previous verb in the clause which is followed by *wa lakin*. An obvious example is the following verse: *And Allah wronged them not but they wronged themselves.* 31

Here after *wa lakin* the verb is clearly indicated, therefore no other supposedly omitted (*mahzuf*) verb could be forced in the text after *wa lakin*. If the construction is adopted in the style of: “but they slew and crucified him who was made to resemble them (like Jesus)” then the above verse should read like this: “And God wronged them not, but God wronged them who wronged themselves.” The fact is that God does not wrong anyone: *And your Lord is not in the least unjust to the servants.* 32 Similar is the position with the verse: *Allah knows that you will have them in your minds, but give them not a promise in secret.* 33

Here the verb is also found after *wa lakin*, therefore, no other omitted verb can be added to the text after *wa lakin*.

Again: *Yet why did they not, when Our punishment came to them, humble themselves? But their hearts hardened.* 34

Here after *wa lakin* the verb *qasat* is clearly specified; therefore, no other omitted verb could be introduced after *wa lakin*.
If the previous verb is introduced in the text after *wa lakin* the statement would read like this: “But those people humbled themselves whose hearts hardened”, which does not make any sense. This would be the case with every statement where, in spite of the presence of a clearly specified verb (*fi’l musarrah*), another *fi’l musarrah* is added.

Let us take another instance from the Qur’an: *And if the people of the towns had believed and kept their duty, We would certainly have opened for them blessings from the heavens and the earth. But they rejected.*

Now after “but”, the verb “rejected” has clearly been mentioned and the pronoun *they* in the verse can only refer to those people who have been mentioned before, that is, the people of the towns, as is the case in 4:157: *but he was made to appear to them as such.* In this verse too, after *but*, the verb, “was made to appear” has been explicitly mentioned and the pronoun *he* can only refer to Jesus who has been mentioned in the earlier part of the verse. If, against all rules of grammar, we introduce an extra verb after “but” and change the construction of a simple statement “he was made to appear to them as such” to read: “they crucified and killed him who was made to resemble to them (like Jesus),” this rendering would be contrary to the text of the Qur’an. If we change the construction of the verse 7:96 in the same way, it would read like this: “but we opened for them blessings from the heavens and the earth, for those who rejected.”

This kind of construction has twisted the whole meaning of the text. Similarly, adding words and changing the construction of words in 4:57 distort the meaning of the verse and this is eventually contrary to the true meaning of the Qur’anic text.
History verifies the statement of the Qur’an and rejects the beliefs of the People of the Book
Many illustrations of this nature can be cited. The sum and substance of all these is that when a verb is omitted after *wa lakin*, the word prior to this clause can be transferred thereafter. But when after *wa lakin* a verb is clearly mentioned, to introduce a supposedly omitted verb at that place is, in fact, going against all rules of syntax. The whole world knows that the omitted verb (*fi’l mahzuk*) is placed in the text when it is not there. And when the verb is already there, the text should be interpreted accordingly, and if an extra verb is inserted without any rhyme or reason, the whole meaning will be inverted as has been shown above by the many examples. Thus, according to the rules of grammar, the words can only be interpreted in one way, that they slew Jesus not, nor did they crucify him (caused his death on the Cross) but he (Jesus) was made *mushabbah* for them. If anything is omitted, it is only that to which Jesus was made *mushabbah*. In other words, he was likened to the one who was crucified and slain. References which have been quoted from the Gospels above clearly indicate that, in fact, Jesus appeared as if he were slain or crucified and at the same time the other incidents in the Gospels show that he was not actually slain or killed on the Cross. When his side was pierced, blood rushed out and this was a sure sign of life - blood only rushes out from the living and not from the dead. His legs were not broken so he was not slain. The stone from the tomb where Jesus was laid was removed to take him out of the grave which would not have been the case if there had been a super-natural rising. Then he met his disciples, showed them his wounds, ate fish, talked to them and travelled with them. All these are clear signs of life. Thus the Qur’an is true in its statement about Jesus and this is con-
The Second Coming of Jesus

firmed by historical facts, but the belief of the Jews and the Christians is, surprisingly enough, invalidated by their own history.

**What was the need of executing someone else who resembled Jesus?**
The mistake made in interpreting *wa lakin shubbiha lahun* has been explained by me above. The only possible meaning of these words is that Jesus was made to appear to them as if he were slain. However, these words can be interpreted in another way, as has been done by some commentators; that is: “the matter was made dubious to them,” or, in other words they kept on doubting whether Jesus had died or not. (See *Ruh al-Ma’ani.*) And this interpretation is supported by the subsequent statement in the same verse. But these words cannot bear the interpretation at all that someone else, who resembled Jesus, was executed. Even if these were words which may be interpreted in that sense, we could not accept that meaning because it is against God’s practice (*sunnat Allah*) and the events mentioned in the Gospels do not support this view, and we do not see any wisdom in God’s execution of such a plan.

The following story, too, is totally absurd, that is, the one which says that Jesus was in the company of twelve or thirteen companions of his when the Jews came to arrest him. At that time, Jesus asked his companions which one of them would like to be with him in paradise so that he should be made to resemble him (Jesus) and be crucified in his place. A young man (in some reports called Sarjus), offered himself and he was eventually crucified and Jesus was lifted up to heaven. It is surprising that when Jesus knew that he would be physically exalted, then why did he get one of his companions killed
unnecessarily? What was the benefit, spiritual or otherwise, behind such a plan? When the Holy Prophet Muhammad left Makkah, Hazrat ‘Ali slept in his bed so that the enemies could not find out that the Holy Prophet had escaped and they could not immediately go after him. At that stage, his enemies could have reached him and killed him. Was Jesus also really worried that if he flew away to heaven without leaving a counterpart of his on earth, that the Jews would follow him up to heaven and bring him down? And was it for this reason that another person was made to appear like Jesus so that the Jews may keep on thinking that they had actually killed Jesus and that they would give up the idea of following him to the fourth heaven? After all, God’s actions are not devoid of wisdom. What was the wisdom behind this strategy? If Jesus had gone to heaven without making another person look like him, could the Jews cause any harm to him? On the other hand, it would have become a great miracle on Jesus’ part, especially since he was considered an impostor by them. It would have been still more impressive if such a miracle were performed in a big assembly of the Jews so that they could all have had faith in him. But the execution of the reported plan looks meaningless and absurd - that Jesus himself escaped by going to heaven but let one of his companions to be unnecessarily killed in a cursed manner - the kind of death which he did not like to suffer himself. Was it lawful for a prophet to take recourse to such action? When it is clearly mentioned in the Torah that “he that is hanged is accursed of God”, 37 then why did Jesus choose a cursed death for any one of his friends?

To get out of this muddle, another version of the same incident has been introduced, that is, that one of the companions of Jesus was a traitor and he accepted thirty rupees as a bribe and disclosed to the Roman police the place where Jesus was.
At that very moment Jesus was lifted up to heaven and that very person became like Jesus in appearance. The same objection could be raised against the narration of the incident above and one may well ask: Why did there arise such a need that another person like Jesus should fall in the hands of the Jews? Is it God Himself who did not wish that the Jews should have faith in the Messiah? Did He Himself force them to believe that Jesus was actually hanged and killed on the Cross? And according to their belief that “he that is hanged is accursed of God” therefore, did God Himself allow the Jews to be blamed for rejecting him? If we consider the first report concerning Sarjus as a fabrication and accept the other one about a traitor-companion of Jesus as true and make him suffer an accursed death, then another question arises: Why did this traitor not create an uproar that he was not Jesus, that Jesus had gone up to heaven and that he himself was a different person? After all, those who came to arrest Jesus knew that a hypocrite friend of Jesus had accompanied them and he was going inside the house to get Jesus arrested. What happened to him? How is it that none of them made any further inquiry about him? And the wrong culprit never denied his being Jesus? He was led to Pilate and he never protested! He was mocked and a crown of thorns was put on his head and he kept quiet! He was hanged on the Cross and uttered loudly “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” (My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?) but did not say a word that he was wrongly and unjustly being crucified in Jesus’ place? Then, after being taken off the Cross, he met with his mother and other disciples and never gave a hint that he was someone else and that the real Messiah was sitting in heaven? When even this report was not found suitable, another story was invented in its place that the Jews had surrounded Jesus’ house but when they did not find him there, they became worried that
with his disappearance people would accept him as a messenger of God. Therefore, they got hold of somebody from among themselves and crucified him and did not permit people to come near him for fear of his being recognised. Then later on his appearance changed (i.e. he started looking like Jesus). This is how the whole incident is reported in Ruh al-Ma‘ani.

One may escape from some of the problems met with in other reports, but new difficulties arise by accepting such a fanciful story. The obvious contradiction is that the Jews caught hold of another person and crucified him as they did not find Jesus at his place and they did not bother to look for him elsewhere - he might have absconded. They immediately understood that he had gone to heaven (they were really clever people!) and then they made one from among themselves agree to play the part of Jesus and told him to keep quiet and not make any fuss! As if there was no Roman Government at that time! One wonders at the imagination and ingenuity of those who invented such historical myths. Let us forget that the Jews crucified such a person and did not allow anyone to come near him. Let us also forget that he was taken to Pilate in the presence of a big assembly, including his mother and other disciples. The trouble is, however, that even God had such regard for the Jews that He produced a miracle for them and the appearance of that person was instantly changed into that of Jesus. God forbid, but was it His intention that Jesus should be proven an impostor? According to this report, the changing of appearance, it seems, was not the miracle of Jesus but of the Jews. The whole narrative is baseless and cannot stand the least rational or historical test. The Qur’an and the Holy Prophet cannot be held responsible for teaching such fables.
Further evidence from the Qur’an that Jesus appeared like the one who was crucified

It is indeed true that such a wrong view about Jesus came into Islamic literature through Christian sources and those who have given serious thought to the matter know very well how Jewish and Christian stories have found their way into Islamic literature. With regard to Jesus, the Qur’an categorically rejects the Jewish and the Christian versions. It verifies that Jesus appeared like one who was crucified - and not that someone else who was crucified looked like Jesus. Thus, after mentioning that Jesus was not actually slain, or crucified, but he appeared to them as such, the Qur’an says:

\[\text{And certainly those who differ therein are in doubt about it.} \]

It is obvious that those who differed therein are both the Jews and the Christians; therefore; the Jews are not specifically mentioned here. According to the Qur’an they are both in doubt about it. If the view is accepted that someone else was crucified in place of Jesus, this is not the point of dispute among them, nor is this view supported by the events recorded in history respecting the fate of Jesus. According to the Jews, it was Jesus who was put on the Cross. There was no eyewitness of Jesus’ going to heaven. There were no other special signs to show that he might have gone up there. The person who was put on the Cross made no protest concerning his innocence. His mother and disciples also called him Jesus. However, the incidents narrated in the Gospels - towards which the Qur’an has made a reference that Jesus was made to appear to them as if he were crucified - do create doubt in the mind of the reader as to the true nature of the fate Jesus suffered at the hands of his enemies. This shows that even those in front of whose eyes these incidents took place were also
left groping in the dark. The incidents which have been mentioned above clearly indicate that the Jews were not certain whether Jesus had died on the Cross or not. And the incidents mentioned in the Christian scriptures never conclusively proved that Jesus did die on the Cross. When Jesus was nailed to the cross, a furious windstorm started, and according to the Gospel, darkness fell over all the land “unto the ninth hour,” “and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent”. At the same time, preparations for the Sabbath were going on, so the Jews left Jesus on the cross in those terrible circumstances and Pilate himself was doubtful that Jesus had died so soon when he was told about it as is mentioned in Mark 15:44. Why would the Jews not doubt his death? Then Jesus left the tomb, after somebody had removed the stone - for a spiritual resurrection this would not have been necessary. His meetings with his disciples, sometimes at night, and sometimes away in the country, show that he had not died on the Cross. There is in existence, even now, a Christian sect which holds a similar view. All these incidents show that friends and foes alike remained in doubt about the death of Jesus on the Cross. The Qur’an has laid great emphasis on this point because it further states: *They have no knowledge about it, but only follow a conjecture.*

It was just their speculation that Jesus had died, otherwise all the events surrounding the crucifixion clearly pointed out that he had not died. The Qur’an completes the statement thus: *And they killed him not for certain.*

Here, some commentators have interpreted *qata-lu* (killed) as ‘*alimu* (knew). Whatever interpretation is given to the words, the meaning is clear, that they were not certain about Jesus being killed. The denial of certainty (*yaqin*) and following conjecture (*zann*) and remaining in doubt (*shakk*) all indi-
cate that the whole matter had become dubious; some events led them to believe that Jesus had died and others, that he had not actually died. That is why the Qur’an has used such words while describing this incident and the statements made in the Qur’an corroborate the statements made in history.

Further explanation of 4:159
The following verse: And there is none of the People of the Book but will believe in this before his death. I discussed in the last chapter in which I said that it had nothing to do with the descent of the Messiah. In fact, there is no mention of his descent here at all. Hazrat Ibn Abbas had interpreted this verse thus: “At the time of death, the dying person is endowed with a kind of light which makes a Jew or a Christian understand the true nature of Jesus’ claim; those who considered him to be an impostor knew that he was true in his claim and those who made him God knew that he was a servant of God and not God.” But in view of the events mentioned in the text so far, the meanings are plain and clear. It was stated in the above verse that they (the Christians and the Jews) are “in doubt about it” and that “they have no knowledge about it”. The pronoun “this” in layu’minanna bihi refers to the same matter towards which the pronoun it leads in lafi shakkin minhu and ma lahum bihi min ‘ilm. The Qur’an has here compared the historical facts with the beliefs of the Jews and the Christians and has indicated that the actual events show that Jesus appeared to be as if he were crucified, but he was not crucified and the Jews remained in doubt and they were not sure whether he had really died on the Cross or not. The same was true of the Christians and other people, so much so that even Pilate also doubted Jesus’ passing away so soon. However, as compared to these historical facts, the belief of the Jews as well as of the Christians is that they both, before their own
death, or before the death of Jesus, necessarily believe that Jesus was crucified. For Jews, it is essential that they believe that he was (God forbid) an impostor, therefore they had to accept that Jesus died an accursed death because he was hanged. 47 For Christians, it is essential to believe that Jesus indeed died on the Cross and was accursed - because unless he was accursed he could not take away the sins of those who believed in him. 48 Therefore every one of the People of the Book, before his death or before the death of Jesus, believes that Jesus died on the Cross. Therefore, the meaning of the verse (4:59) would be that there is none of the People of the Book but certainly believes (or will believe) in this, on which he is in doubt historically, before his (or Jesus’) death.

Thus, first, the history of the case about which they harbour doubts is pointed out. Then, their religious doctrine is mentioned, according to which, following different lines of arguments, of course, both the Jews and the Christians, make a dubious historical occurrence the fundamental principle of their faith, that is, that Jesus died on the Cross. Their history says something different from their belief. For this reason, the verse ends with the words: *And on the day of Resurrection he (Jesus) will be a witness against them.* 49

It is sometimes asserted that *la yu’minanna bihi* indicates having faith in a future time (would certainly believe in this), because when the *lam* of emphasis (*lam takid*) and the heavy *nun* (*nun thaqilah*) enter on an aorist (*mudari’*) it indicates the future tense only. Although this statement is questionable, even if we accept it as true, the interpretation I have given above denotes the future tense because it applies to the People of the Book, that, in spite of historical facts, they will keep on having a contrary belief. This expression can be com-
pared with another verse of the Qur’an which says: *We shall surely cause thee to turn towards the Qiblah which shall please thee.* 

“We shall surely cause thee to turn” (*fa-la-nuwalliyanna-ka*) is the future tense (with *lam takid* and *nun thaqilah*) but represents the present tense, because the Ka’bah had already been made the *qiblah* with this order and this was not *something which was going to happen at some future date*. Still, the Qur’an used the words *fa-la-nuwalliyanna-ka*. Similarly, in 4:159, the expression *la yu’minanna* was used, that, in spite of the knowledge of history, every one of the People of the Book would have faith in this about which he was in doubt historically. In other words, the Jews and the Christians have been put to shame here: that is, the basis of their faith lies on something the authenticity of which they are not sure themselves.

**The question of exaltation (rafa’)**

The words *ma qata-luhu wa ma salabu-hu* (they slew him not nor did they cause his death on the Cross) do not at all support the theory that Jesus had gone up to heaven. However, the supporters of the view of Jesus being alive, apart from this verse, greatly rely on the word *rafa’a* used in this verse and which has been used to refer to Jesus: *And they killed him not for certain: nay, Allah exalted him in His presence.*

And in another place it has been mentioned: *O Jesus, I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence.*

At both these places *rafā‘a ilallah* (exaltation toward God) is considered to mean that Jesus was physically taken up alive to heaven because *rafā‘a* means to raise or lift something up. Therefore, it is supposed that when God raises a person it
should necessarily mean that He raises him up physically from earth and takes him away somewhere else. But it should be borne in mind that in every language, a word may be used in many different senses.

Generally, the use of a word in a particular context indicates in what sense it has been used there. Therefore, first of all we must see whether the word *rafa‘a* in the Arabic language is used in one sense only or more, and then what meaning could be given to it in the context where it has been used. Imam Raghib says:

“*Rafa‘a* is sometimes applied to corporeal things, meaning the raising or elevating of a thing from the resting place thereof... sometimes to a building making it high or lofty... and sometimes exalting of one’s fame... sometimes exaltation in degree of rank or station.”

Apart from these, other uses of *rafa‘a* have also been mentioned by Imam Raghib.

*Taj al-‘Arus* has also given various examples of the use of the word *rafa‘a* and has also quoted the statement by Imam Raghib. In another lexicon, *Lisan al-‘Arab*, all these meanings have been mentioned with appropriate examples. I will quote a few references from this book. First of all, the following remark has been made while discussing the word *rafa‘a*:

“that is, *Al-Rafi‘* (One Who exalts) is one of the (attributive) names of God, the Most High. That is, He exalts the believer by making him prosperous (or happy) and by granting His friends (*auliya*) nearness and that *rafa‘a* is contrary to *wada‘a* (to be abased, to
About this, Imam Zujaj says that it means that Judgement Day will abase the evil doers and exalt the believers. That is, it will exalt them in rank or station. Another meaning of rafa‘a is bringing a thing near one to another and the meaning of nisa‘un marfu‘at is nisa‘un mukarramatun or women who will be honoured; and rafa‘a fulanan ilal hakim means he brought him or presented him or brought him forward to the judge. The meaning of rafa‘ al-ba‘ira fi al-sair is, he made the camel to exert himself to the full in going or speed or he made him go with the utmost swiftness. And in a tradition, it is said fa rafa‘tu naqati - I made my she-camel go at a pace termed marfu‘ that is, made her go with the utmost swiftness. In the same sense, in another tradition, it is reported: Wa rafa‘na matiyatuna wa rafa‘ Rasoolullahi sallallahu alaihi wasallam matiyatuhu wa safiyatun khalfahu (We made our animals go in speed and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, also made his animal go in speed and Safia was sitting behind him). And what God said about the house, that they should be exalted - there an turfa‘a means that they should be honoured or be exalted in estimation. 55

The use of the word rafa‘a for Jesus cannot be the basis of the doctrine of his going up to heaven
As has been shown above, the word rafa‘a is used in so many different ways. Thus there is nothing more hasty and reckless than to conclude from the verses rafi‘uka ilayya 56 and bal rafa‘ahullahu ilaih 57 that Jesus has physically gone up to heaven. If, however, for the sake of argument, it is accepted that God’s raising some person towards Him, or some person
going up towards God could possibly mean that he has corporally gone up to heaven, nevertheless when *rafa‘a ilallah* in the dictionary means only nearness, as has clearly been mentioned in *Lisan al-‘Arab*, or also exaltation in degree of rank and granting of glory or honour, as has been mentioned in *Mufradat, Lisan al-‘Arab*, etc., how is it permissible to depend on this word alone and evolve a doctrine about Jesus’ being lifted up physically alive to heaven? (I will later prove that expression *rafa‘a ilal-lah* can never lend support to such a doctrine). As this view is far removed from the ordinary phenomena of life, and there is no parallel of such an instance in God’s law and practice, that a person had physically entered heaven without tasting death, or that God had helped save any prophet like that in times of distress, therefore, some other clear words are needed in the Qur’an to prove that Jesus was actually lifted up to heaven with his body. The expressions *rafi‘uka ilayya* and *bal rafa‘ahullahu ilaih* do not lend support to this theory at all.

Thus the use of the word *rafa‘a* for Jesus does in no way prove his going to heaven in this body of clay. Now I will show that when God exalts a person (or makes his *rafa‘*) towards Himself, it does not mean that He lifts him up alive physically. Such meanings are absolutely against the Arabic lexicons. It is most important to remember here that in both these verses (3:54 and 4:158) the subject of the verb *rafa‘* is God Himself and *rafa‘* is also towards Him, which conclusively prove that *rafa‘* here does not mean raising up physically but only exaltation in rank or station.

**What is the significance of *rafa‘* (exaltation) of a person towards God?**
The first question is, in what manner are human beings ex-
alted by God? In other words, when the subject of the verb\textit{ rafa‘a} is God, what is its significance in relation to men? Because Jesus was, after all, a human being. The first and the strongest evidence in this connection is God’s name, \textit{Al-Rafi‘}\textsuperscript{1} (The One Who exalts). This establishes the fact that exaltation (\textit{rafa‘}) of men is a Divine attribute. That is, those persons who prove themselves capable of exaltation are exalted by God. It is, however, obvious that God does not exalt men by lifting them up physically towards the sky but, instead, exaltation is done by granting them honour, dignity, supernatural power or high spiritual rank. If God’s attribute of being \textit{Al-Rafi‘} was particularly manifested for Jesus alone, it could mean something different. But when this attribute is manifested for all the believers and friends of God (\textit{auliya Allah}) and this attribute demands that the exaltation (\textit{rafa‘}) of the believers should continue - then the \textit{rafa‘} of Jesus should also be interpreted in the same manner. To accept a different significance of the use of this word with respect to Jesus means that up till now no other person has been granted exaltation in its true sense except Jesus. This amounts to a clear denial of God’s attribute of being \textit{Al-Rafi‘} because a Divine attribute is manifested over and over. If God’s attributive name is \textit{Al-Rafi‘}, then only that interpretation is possible which falls within the purview of this attribute, the meaning of which has been explained, namely, the bestowing of honour, glory and dignity on a person. This is the first evidence that when God is the subject of the verb \textit{rafā‘a} in relation to a human being, it cannot mean lifting him up alive towards the sky.

The second piece of evidence in this respect is that of the lexicons. In all the Arabic dictionaries, only one meaning of \textit{Al-Rafi‘} is given:

\textit{“Al-Rafi‘ is one of the names of God, Most High, That}
is, He exalts the believer by making him prosperous (or happy) and by granting His friends (auliya) nearness.”

This means that God only exalts men in one sense alone. It is not mentioned in any Arabic dictionary that by God’s being Al-Rafi‘, He lifts them up physically alive to heaven. I have mentioned it before that words in every language may have different meanings and it is the context that decides what meaning should be adopted according to that particular occasion. When God uses the word rafa‘ for Jesus, it obviously means that this rafa‘ is similar to the rafa‘ which He grants to the believers and His auliya and nothing more. If some other meanings were mentioned in the dictionary (of God’s rafa‘ of human beings), then we could think of some different interpretation, but as no other meanings have been given in this context, therefore, the lexical evidence is conclusive, that the rafa‘ of Jesus was spiritual and not physical.

The Qur’anic evidence also supports this view that God’s exaltation of His servants does not mean anything at all except their exaltation in degrees of rank. At one place the Qur’an says: We exalt some of them above others in rank. 58

It does not mean that some are a few yards above the ground from the others but only the degrees in nearness in rank are implied. Similar is the meaning of the verse: We exalt in degrees whom We please. 59

And about the messengers it has been said: And some of them He exalted by (many) degrees of rank. 60

About him who turns aside from guidance, the Qur’an says:
And if We had pleased, We would have exalted him thereby; but he clings to the earth. 61

Although here clinging to the earth is clearly mentioned and this might lead one to think that rafa‘ in this context could mean lifting him up from the ground, rafa‘nahu here also means exaltation in rank and granting of nearness. These meanings are so clear that the clinging to the earth must necessarily be taken as a metaphor. This goes to establish the fact that God’s rafa‘ of a person, without a shadow of a doubt, clearly and explicitly means the granting of spiritual nearness, and if there are some doubtful words in the context, they should be interpreted metaphorically. Even if in respect of Jesus’ rafa‘ there was an expression indicating that he was lifted up from the ground, it should have been considered a metaphorical expression, mainly because it was God Who was the object of causing his rafa‘. About the Prophet Enoch (Idris), the Qur’an says: And We raised him to an elevated state (or position). 62

Here, again, the mention of a lofty place could lead one to think that perhaps Enoch was lifted up from the ground and placed on a lofty place but as his rafa‘ has been attributed to God, therefore, the lofty place could only mean an elevated state or position which in other words is God’s granting of honour and dignity to the person concerned. Thus, these two instances from the Qur’an do not leave the least room for any other interpretation. And if there is any expression giving a contrary indication, that expression should be interpreted metaphorically. As far as Jesus is concerned, there are no such expressions used as in the above two instances (7:176 and 19:57). Therefore, how could it be permissible to give up the true meaning of God’s rafa‘ and introduce something different instead?
Perhaps somebody may think that in *la rafa‘na-hu biha* (We exalted him - 7:176) it is quite possible that *rafa‘* here may be physical. Let us see what the commentators of the Qur’an say on this point. A few references here will suffice.

Ibn Khatir says in respect of this verse that *la rafa‘nahu biha* means that We would have raised him above the worldly impurities and filth.” *Fath al-Bayan* renders it “We would have raised him to the stations of the learned.” In *Baidawi*, similar meanings are given that “We would have raised him to the stations of the doers of good.” Ibn Jarir says that:

“Much signification is attached to the word *rafa‘*. From among them is the exaltation of rank in God’s presence, and the granting of honour and benevolence in the world, and the exaltation of one’s fame. It is permissible to accept that here all these may be applicable, that is, if God willed, he would have all these things.”

In the above reference, how clearly has the significance of God’s exaltation (*rafa‘*) been explained!

However, about Enoch (Idris), some commentators have introduced Jewish stories (*isra‘iliyat*) while interpreting the words *wa rafa‘na-hu makan-an ‘aliyya* (We raised him to a lofty place or position). Under the influence of *isra‘iliyat*, they have expressed the view that Idris had gone alive to heaven, as has been stated in *Fath al-Bayan* and Ibn Kathir. After Ibn Kathir has quoted a report by Ka‘b al-Ahbar, that an angel carried Idris to the seventh heaven but the angel of death immediately seized his soul there, he says that:

“This is from among the *isra‘iliyat*. The reports narrated by Ka‘b al-Ahbar and some points therein are
After mentioning the same report, the author of *Fath al-Bayan* says:

“These are the *isra’iliyat* which Ka‘b used to narrate.”

The authoritative view on the subject, however, is that in spite of the use of *makanan ‘aliyya, rafa‘na-hu* here means “We honoured him.” In *Ruh al-Ma‘ani*, it is remarked that:

“This *rafa‘* to a lofty place means honouring him with prophethood and Divine nearness.”

And it is reported from Hassan concerning *makanan ‘aliyya* that this *rafa‘* was granted to him in paradise because paradise is the loftiest place. In another report it is mentioned (see *Ruh al-Ma‘ani*) that when this verse was recited:

*Bala‘ghna al-sama-a majadna wa sana-u-naa. Wa inna lanarjoo fawqa zalika mazharan.* It means: We reached a lofty place and our praise was lofty. And we desired to go above that which was designated for us.

And the Holy Prophet asked: “O Abu Laila, towards which place? He said towards paradise (*jannah*), O Messenger of Allah! (which is above the skies). The Holy Prophet said: Absolutely right.”

The misunderstanding about the Prophet Idris apparently has arisen because the Holy Prophet saw him in the fourth heaven as is stated in the report about the *Mi‘raj* (Ascension); but the Holy Prophet saw Noah, Abraham, Moses, John and others, too. As other prophets had reached heaven, similarly Idris and Jesus had also reached there. Thus *rafa‘na-hu makan-an ‘aliyya* does not mean anything except the raising of Idris to a
high position of dignity.

After mentioning all these reports, *Ruh al-Ma‘ani* says:

“This *rafā‘* which requires elevation in dignity and rank is used to indicate high praise, otherwise just putting one on a raised place does not (really) mean anything.”

**The meaning of *rafā‘* in hadith**

Now we turn to the sayings of the Holy Prophet which very often mention God’s exaltation (*rafā‘*) of the believers. First is the prayer which we recite in our daily prayers between the two prostrations:

“O Allah! grant me protection, and have mercy on me and guide me, and grant me security, and grant me sustenance, and exalt me (*warfā‘ni*) and set right my affairs” (*Ibn-i Majah*, p. 64).

What do we actually mean when we say the prayer, *irfā‘ni* (exalt me)? Do we for a moment think that God should physically lift us to heaven? When such a thought does not cross our mind at the time of prayer, how could this expression mean something different when God says that He has exalted Jesus? The *rafā‘* which we desire for ourselves is the same *rafā‘* which came to the share of Jesus. There is a report mentioned in *Tirmidhi*:

“People want to disgrace them but God does not want anything for them but their *rafā‘* (i.e. He wants to honour them.” 63

From Hazrat ‘Umar a report is mentioned in *al-Muslim* and *Ibn Majah*:

“God the Most High will exalt some nations (i.e. give them honour and dignity) on account of this Qur’an.”
In another hadith, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said to Hazrat Abbas:

“May God exalt thee, O Uncle.” 65

In another it is said: “Show humility; God will exalt you.” 66 There are several ahadith on tawadu‘ (humility, modesty) in which God promises that anyone who shows humility is exalted by Him. The obvious reason seems to be that rafa‘a and wada‘a are contrary to each other. Thus, when a person, for the sake of God, lowers himself, God raises him. Lowering oneself does not mean that a person should enter a pit, nor does raising in this context mean that he is lifted up several yards above the ground, but as lowering implies lowering in character, similarly raising is raising in rank or dignity. In some traditions the words rafa‘a ila al-sama’ (he raised towards the sky) have been used for the person who shows humility. In one hadith it is said:

“When a person show humility, God lifts him up with a chain towards the seventh heaven.” 67

How clear are the words in this tradition! Rafa‘ (raising), sama’ (heaven) and silsilah (chain) could lead us to interpret them literally, but we do not take them literally because God’s exaltation of a person cannot lend support to such meanings. If that were so, everyone showing humility would have been raised to the seventh heaven with a chain. In that case no one could really raise any objection against Jesus’ physically going up to the fourth heaven.

In spite of the Divine promise that a person showing humility is lifted up to the seventh heaven with a chain, no such person has ever gone up that way even to the first heaven. And even the Holy Prophet who had been declared the possessor of
sublime morals 68 in the Qur’an, and there was no one who showed humility and modesty like him also, remained on this earth and was not raised up to the seventh heaven. This shows that although God’s rafa‘ may be mentioned in the clearest terms, it cannot be interpreted in its literal sense at all. It only means Divine nearness, or raising in rank.

Imam Bukhari has, however, made it exceedingly clear that the meaning of rafa‘a ilal-sama’ does not at all mean going upwards with this body of clay. He says:

“Rafa‘ towards heaven is contrary to wad’a and from this is the prayer: O God, exalt me and disgrace me not. And God exalts whomsoever He wishes and disgraces whomsoever He wishes.” 69

This statement by Imam Bukhari is decisive proof in relation to the meaning of rafa‘a ilal-sama’ that it cannot mean anything else except the raising of a person in dignity and rank.

Thus, from the Arabic lexicons, and from the Qur’an and the Hadith, it is established that God’s exaltation (rafā‘) of a person has one meaning alone. This also conclusively proves that the words used about Jesus, rafī‘uka ilayya (I shall exalt thee in My presence (3:54) and rafa‘hullahu ilaih (Allah exalted him in His presence - 4:158) do not mean anything else concerning Jesus except exalting him in rank. To believe that these words mean the raising of Jesus physically to heaven is absolutely wrong. Not only because God Himself is the cause of Jesus’ rafa‘ but in both cases, this rafa‘ is towards God. Where the rafa‘ of a man to God is spoken of in the Qur’an, or in the religious literature of Islam, it is always in the sense of exalting or making him honourable. Abraham says in the Qur’an:
Surely I flee to my Lord. 70

Although *zahaba* means to go, Abraham did not mean that he would be going to his Lord on foot and would bodily meet Him, but that he was leaving his people for the sake of God to attain Divine nearness and pleasure. Although *zahibun* (going) is a physical act, the use of the words *ila Rabbi* (to my Lord) shows that this going towards God was not with this body of clay. Any ambiguity in *zahibun* was removed by *ila Rabbi* which finally decided the true meaning of the verse (37:99). Whatever was allegorical (*mutashabih*) was solved by the decisive (*muhkam*) by the use of the words towards my Lord. As compared to this, in *rafi‘u-ka ilayya* and *rafa’ahullahu ilaih*, the absolute sign was found in *rafa’ahullah* and the second absolute factor was added by the expression *ilaih* (towards him). In other words, the verses *rafi’uka ilayya* and *rafa’ahullah ilaih* consisted of two parts. The first part is *rafi’uka* and *raf’a’ hullah* where God talks of the exaltation of a person which undoubtedly and decisively means the granting of Divine nearness. The second part is *ilayya* or *ilaihi* which clarifies that this *rafa’* is towards God. And *rafa’* towards God or going towards God does not mean going to Him with this body of clay, nor can any example of this fact be found in the Qur’an or the Hadith. On the contrary, the illustration as quoted above (37:99) *inni zahibun ila Rabbi* shows that when the ultimate destination is God, it also means Divine nearness and not coming and going with this physical body. Many illustrations of this can be found in the Qur’an, for example: *O soul (nafs) that art at rest, return to thy Lord.* 71 Here *nafs* may not mislead anyone to believe erroneously that the address here is to man with this body of clay.
Similarly in the following verses: *We created you from a single being* (nafs), 72 *When men* (nufus) *are united* 73 and *Slay yourselves*, 74 only human beings are mentioned. Therefore, in the above verse, *return to thy Lord* does not mean that this return is with the physical body but *ila Rabbika* (towards thy Lord) has made it clear that *ruju* (returning) here only means spiritual nearness. 75

This spiritual nearness is also indicated in the words “*rafa‘a towards God*”, and this view has been accepted by some commentators, although some others, without proper investigation, and thinking that the coming of the son of Mary means the actual coming of Jesus, understand *rafa‘* as a physical *rafa‘*. However, the words *ilal-lah* (towards God) have diverted the attention of some of them - from the correct significance - that it does not mean lifting him physically towards a place, as Imam Razi says:

“*We have proved in this book with conclusive arguments at several places that God, the Most High, cannot be confined to a space.*”

However, the thought of Jesus being alive was so dominant in their minds that they had to interpret the word *ilayya* (towards) differently. Sometimes it was interpreted as *ila mahalli karamati* (towards the place of My reverence), which in other words only means exaltation in rank or granting of nearness. Sometimes it was interpreted this way - that God would carry him to a place where no command will be in operation except that of God as if God’s command does not operate on earth, which in itself is an absurd thought.

If such were not the case, how could God have saved the Holy Prophet from the hands of his enemies? How could
God have saved Abraham? And how could Moses and other prophets have been saved on this earth from the cruel hands of powerful monarchs? Was it only for Jesus that God’s command could not operate on earth? Were the Jews so strong that they would not even let God’s law function here (although they themselves were a disgraced and subjugated nation at that time)? But surprisingly enough (although their belief may be different concerning Jesus), some of the commentators give a correct interpretation of the words under discussion. For instance, Imam Razi says that “I will raise thee towards Me” means: “I will raise thy action towards me.”

And then he goes on to illustrate what it is like, as has been mentioned in the verse: *To Him do ascend the goodly words.*

Still, with greater clarity he writes in explanation of the verse: *And make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve:* “Placing those who follow Jesus above those who disbelieve” means making them superior in argument and proof, and know that this verse proves that God’s saying, “I will raise thee towards Me’ means God’s raising him in rank and station and not raising him to a particular place or to a direction, as the dominance (*fauqiyyah*) here means the dominance in rank and station also.”

The whole matter is very simple to understand. *Qurb* means nearness, but nearness to God means spiritual and not physical nearness. Similarly, *rafa’* towards God is not physical but only spiritual.

**Reason for the use of the word *rafa’***

Only one point needs to be mentioned here concerning *rafa’* and that is, why did God mention at two different places the
rafa‘ of Jesus? In rafi‘uka ilayya (I will raise thee in My presence - 3:54), there is a promise and in rafa‘ahullahu ilaih (Allah exalted him in His presence - 4:158), that promise has been fulfilled. A few points should be borne in mind here. At the first place the promise was made because in verse 3:53 the plan or plot of the Jesus was mentioned, and God wanted to comfort Jesus by telling him that his enemies were planning against him but would not succeed, and that Jesus would be granted God’s nearness. And at the second place it was intended that the claim of the Jews should be rejected: And for their saying: We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah. 78

It was said in reply: They killed him not for certain. Nay, Allah exalted him in His presence. 79

Another point which should be mentioned here is that in 3:54 rafi‘u-ka is placed after mutawaffi-ka and in 4:157-158 rafa‘ahullah is placed after a denial has been made of Jesus’ being slain or crucified (i.e. death on the Cross), which shows that this rafa‘ is such that can be accompanied only by tawaffa (natural death) but not by killing (qatl) or crucifixion (salb). The meaning of tawaffa will be discussed later. Here it should suffice to say that in Al-Bukhari it is reported from Hazrat Ibn Abbas that mutawaffi-ka means mumitu-ka (I will cause you to die). 80 For this reason, many commentators are of the opinion that Jesus suffered death. Thus, natural death is not contrary to rafa‘ (exaltation) according to God, but death by qatl and salb is contrary to rafa‘. This also clearly proves that this was not physical exaltation because physical rafa‘ cannot take place with tawaffa (death). Some people think that the verse would better be understood by changing the order of the words in the text (i.e. rafi‘uka should be considered as if it occurs
The point worth mentioning here is, why has God joined *tawaffa* (death) with *rafa'* (exaltation) in 3:54, and at another place (4:157-158) *qatl* (killing) and *salb* (death on the cross) have been rejected but *rafa'* has been affirmed? To get at the root of the matter, we have to look to the Jewish scriptures. Death on the Cross was an accursed death. An accursed person (*mal‘un*) was he who was expelled or removed from the presence of God (88) and about death on the Cross, it was said:

“And if a man has committed a sin worthy of death, and he has to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; for he that is hanged is accursed of God.” 81

Here hanging on the tree means hanging on the cross or gibbet as is mentioned in John:

“Because it was the eve of the Passover, the Jews were anxious that the bodies should not remain on the cross for the coming Sabbath.” 82
And in Galatians it has been made abundantly clear:

“Christ brought us freedom from the curse of the law by becoming for our sake an accursed thing; for the Scripture says, Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.” 83

All these references show that according to Jewish scriptures anyone who dies on the cross was considered an accursed person. This was the only reason why the Jews were trying hard to cause Jesus’ death on the Cross, otherwise it was not difficult for them to kill him secretly. But all their plans centred round the point that Jesus should be proved an impostor and an accursed (mal’un). Mal’un or one expelled from the presence of God, is the opposite of marfu‘ or one who is exalted and honoured in the presence of God. Therefore when the Qur’an denied Jesus’ dying on the cross, it was explained at the same time that although the Jews wanted him to die an accursed death, God frustrated their plans and honoured him and granted him His nearness. Similarly, when it was said: And (the Jews) planned and Allah (also) planned, 84 it was mentioned at the same time: “O Jesus, these people want thee to die an accursed death by hanging thee on the gallows, but I will cause thee to die a natural death and save thee from the death on the Cross and will thus honour thee.”

Other verses analysed
I have already discussed the verse And there is none of the People of the Book (4:159) above. Sometimes it is said that the verse: When I withheld the Children of Israel from thee, 85 shows that the Jews would not be able to touch Jesus at all. Such an interpretation of the word kaffa is rather a forced one, apparently for the sake of Jesus alone. Kaffa’an means to prevent, to turn from, but it does not mean that no one is even able to touch or hurt a person in any way at all. There
has been no messenger of God who has not suffered at the hands of his enemies. Why should Jesus be considered an exception above every other messenger, in that his opponents were unable to do the slightest injury to him? When he was arrested, he was after all held by the hands of his captors. Restraining the Children of Israel, in fact, means that God frustrated their plot.

Another verse which is put forward in support of the theory of Jesus being still alive is: And verily he is a sign of the Hour. 86 There is, however, no proof that the pronoun hu (he, it, this) refers to Jesus. On the contrary, it is reported from Hassan, Qatatah and Jabir that the pronoun in the expression innahu refers to the Qur’an itself. Undoubtedly, it is the Qur’an that has given the knowledge of the “Hour” or the “Judgement Day”. Some have expressed the opinion that the pronoun here refers to the Holy Prophet. Accordingly, the saying of the Holy Prophet should be understood in this light when he said: “I and the Day of Judgement are joined together like two (close) fingers.” 87

This indicates that after the Holy Prophet, no other prophet will appear till the Day of Judgement. One of the names of the Holy Prophet is Al-Hashir 88, which means the one who gathers people together on the Day of Judgement. Even if we accept that the pronoun refers to Jesus in the above verse, it does not prove that his return to the world is a sign of the Hour. We have no right to interpret tendentiously a verse of the Qur’an by adding words to bear out a meaning of our choice from the text. If Jesus is the sign (‘ilm) of the Hour (al-Sa‘ah) then it is the sa‘ah (hour) of the Jewish people when they were deprived of the Divine blessing of prophethood (because of their persistent rejection of truth and opposition to
Death of Jesus

When a person dies, the Day of Judgement begins for him. Similarly, when a nation dies, the Day of Judgement starts for it. The commentators who have taken the pronoun \((he, it)\) to refer to Jesus have considered Jesus’ bringing the dead to life, or his allegedly fatherless birth, or his second coming as a “sign of the Hour.” When so many different interpretations are possible, have we any right to give preference to one particular interpretation and insist on its acceptance to the extent that we should believe in a person’s physically ascending to heaven and remaining alive till now - against all Divine practice? In short, such an argument is very weak and absurd.

The Muslim scholars who believed in the death of Jesus

I have taken into consideration almost all the verses which are put forward in support of the view that Jesus is still alive with this body of clay in heaven and have proven that there is not a single verse which can truly be the basis of such a belief. No doubt, traditions do mention the descent of the son of Mary but I have explained this point in detail earlier (see Chapter IV) to the effect that a mistake has been committed in understanding the word \(nuzul\) (descent). In any case, even the word \(nuzul\) does not establish the point that Jesus is still alive. There have been many people among Muslims who have held the view that Jesus did not die, but there have been others who have held the contrary view that he did die, although for three hours, or seven hours or for three days. Imam Malik believed in Jesus’ absolute death. It is mentioned in \textit{Majma‘ al-Bihar} under the word \textit{hakam}:

“He (Jesus) will descend as a judge; that is to say, he will judge according to this \textit{Shar‘iah} (Law) (and) he will not be a prophet. The majority think that Jesus did not die but (Imam) Malik said that he died.”
The view of those who believed that Jesus died is based on the clear testimony of the Qur’an and the thought of his being alive is only the product of the wrong interpretation of prophecies about his descent (nuzul). Prophecies are, in a way, ambiguous, and sometimes couched in metaphors, the true meanings of which become clear at a later stage. Therefore, there is a possibility of committing a mistake in understanding them before their fulfilment. The truth of the matter is that a prophecy, which is of the nature of an allegory, should not be the basis of any doctrine of our belief. Our belief should be based on something which is decisive. As a mistake was going to be committed on this question by many persons in this ummah, therefore, many clear verses on the death of Jesus have been revealed in the Qur’an and these I shall discuss presently.

The meaning of tawaffa

Tawaffa is from the root wafa, meaning to fulfil. Tawaffa is from bab tafa’ul. A change occurs in the meaning of a word in every bab, therefore we need not discuss these various meanings because we are concerned with the word tawaffa only. The other point to be borne in mind here, is that sometimes words occurring in a different context and idiom convey special meanings. As I have shown above that in the Arabic idiom and dictionary God’s exaltation (rafa’) of human beings towards Himself means something different, and no one has a right to alter the meanings at will, similar is the case with the word tawaffa. The lexicologists have mentioned the phrase tawaffahu-llahu (God caused him to die) separately. Thus in Taj ul-’Arus it has been mentioned:

“When tawaffahu is spoken of by God, Exalted and Magnified (be His Name) about a person, it means He seized his life (nafs), and in al-Sihah it is mentioned He seized his soul (ruh).”
The same meanings are given in *Lisan al‘Arab*, that is, He (God) seized his life (*nafs*). Thus when the lexicologists have explained the meaning of *tawaffahullah* in one way, we have no right to alter these meanings and put forward the argument that because the root of *tawaffa* is *wafa*, therefore it could mean something different. Lexicons do not depend on presumptions (*qiyas*); if they did, there would be much confusion all around. The basis of lexicons is *sama*’ (hearing) whether a particular word has been used in that sense or not. The question is whether *tawaffahullah* has been used in any other sense than seizure of life or seizure of soul. The two great Arabic lexicons clearly indicate that *tawaffahullahu* does not mean anything except that God seized his life, or soul. It could indeed be said that lexicologists could also commit mistakes, but to prove this point we would have to cite illustrations that at a particular place *tawaffahu-llahu* meant something different. Unless there is clear and undisputed proof against the lexicologists, that is, a clear example of the use of a word in a different way from that indicated by them, we have to submit to the authority of the lexicologists. Three questions arise at this stage:

1. Have the lexicologists mentioned *tawaffahu-llahu* as a separate phrase, separate from the root of the word and its derivatives? The answer is in the affirmative.

2. Have the lexicologists given a different meaning of *tawaffahu-llahu* except seizure of life or soul? The answer is clearly in the negative.

3. Contrary to the evidence of the lexicologists, can we find any example in the Arabic language, where the Arab linguists have accepted a different meaning of *tawaffahullahu* than what has been mentioned above?
The answer to this question is also in the negative - that *tawaffahu-llahu* only means that God seized his soul, or life, or caused him to die.

All the Arabic poetry, of the Days of Ignorance as well as the Qur’an and all the *Hadith* literature, and all the other vast amount of Arabic literature that came into existence after the Holy Prophet, give only one meaning to the phrase *tawaffahu-llahu*.

If the lexicologists had not separated the phrase *tawaffahu-llahu*, if they had given a different meaning other than seizure of the soul, and if they had used this phrase in a different sense, there was a possibility of some hair-splitting argument about the word, that is, that because its root is *wafa*, which means to fulfil one’s engagement, to fulfil, etc., therefore it could mean to raise up a person bodily with his shoes, turban and clothes, all together. However, when the evidence of the lexicologists is clearly against such a meaning, and no example at all can be cited against it from Arabic literature, to argue that on account of its root being *wafa* that it could mean something different, is like introducing one’s own conjecture and opinion into the meaning of the word.

There is clear evidence in the Qur’an itself that *tawaffahu-llahu* only means that God took his life. Says the Qur’an: *Allah takes (men’s) souls at the time of their death, and those that die not, during their sleep. Then He withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death and send the others back till an appointed term.* (39:42). In this verse Allah has explained the method of *tawaffa* or how He takes away the human soul. It is taken away in two ways, either during sleep or at the time of death. At both these occasions it is the soul
that is taken away and not the body. There is no third way of tawaffa or taking away of the human soul mentioned anywhere in Qur’an. The Hadith also mentioned that tawaffa means causing of death. Similarly, where the word mutawaffika has been used with regard to Jesus it has been explained as mumituka by Ibn Abbas in Bukhari, which means “I will cause thee to die.”

The question could, of course, be asked, how could tawaffahullahu mean God seized his soul? The lexicologists have advanced several reasons for this. For instance, the deceased person’s days which he has to spend in this world are completed and at the time of sleep, conscious life undergoes cessation (although temporarily), 90 or, at the time of death, the soul, which, in other words, is life and movement, is completely taken away and during sleep the discriminating intellect is fully seized. 91 But these explanations do not affect the usage of the word at all. Although in the lexicons the word tawaffa has been used in the sense of to receive full payment of a due, that is a separate phrase. In Taj al-‘Arous it is said: “I received fully payment of my due from him.”

Here the subject (fa‘il) of tawaffa is not God, nor is an animate being the object (maf‘ul). God does not cause tawaffa of a person in the sense that He receives full payment of His due from him by carrying him from one place to another. Then it should also be remembered that as tawaffa means seizure of the soul, similarly wafat means death. Because the root of the word implies “to receive in full” (one’s due), it does not mean that when we say that a particular person has suffered wafat (death) that the person in question has gone somewhere in one piece. When we go from one place to another we do not leave our hands and feet, or shoes and clothes, behind. No-
body has applied the word *wafa* to our going somewhere in this way.

If these meanings were applicable, then day in and day out we would undergo *wafat*. Similarly, *tawaffaitu-hu* does not mean that I have taken him whole with this body of clay. When police take a criminal away, they take all of him but nobody has used the expression *yatawaffauna-hu* for that occasion. A mother carries her child in one piece but has anyone used the word *tawaffa* for such an act? When a *maulavi* arrives at a certain place - without leaving his hands, feet, shoes, etc. behind, or if he is carried away by horse or by train from one town to another, would it be right to say that the *maulvi* has undergone *wafat* (death)? If according to some, the use of the word *tawaffa* is permissible for lifting the body upwards, would it be right to say, for persons who travel by aeroplanes, that they have undergone *wafat* (death)? When such an expression cannot be used on all occasions, why should it be used in this particular sense in the case of Jesus?

**Proof of the death of Jesus from the verse *inni mutawaffî-ka* (3:54)**

After understanding the meaning of *tawaffahu-llahu* (God caused him to die), the question of the life and death of Jesus can easily be settled. God says in the Qur’an:

> *O Jesus, I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence and clear thee of those who disbelieve and make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve to the day of Resurrection.*  

(According to Ibn ‘Abbas, the significance of *mutawaffî-ka* is *mumitu-ka*, that is, I will cause thee to die.)

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92

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The whole statement is clear. Death comes first and then *rafa*‘ that is exaltation in rank, because it is granted only after death, as is the case with a believer who is granted *rafa*’ after death. Then the verse talks of the clearing of Jesus from the charges of the disbelieving people, so that his mission may be generally accepted. Last of all has been mentioned the dominance of his followers against the disbelieving people, something that will continue to the Day of Resurrection. Sometimes it is said that the statements made in the above verse have not been mentioned in a chronological order because *waw* (and) in the Arabic language does not always mean enumeration of facts in a particular order; thus, in the above verse it is suggested that exaltation comes before death (i.e. death will take place later, after Jesus descends from heaven). I admit that *waw* does not always indicate an order of things in time, but when a person narrates a few incidents, it is generally understood that he is doing so in a chronological order, unless there is strong evidence against this classification in the text. The question is, what is the evidence in the above verse which is forcing us to alter the order of the words? A little thought makes it clear that, in fact, there is no such evidence except the pre-supposed belief that Jesus is still alive; therefore, according to this belief, the verse has to be interpreted in such a way as to prove this hypothesis to be correct! In other words, the assumption that Jesus was alive, which had yet to be proven, was made the basis of this argument of the change in the order of the words. This method of reasoning is false and futile. For the sake of argument, if we do want to change the order of the words in the above verse, what other order should we adopt? One order is given by the Qur’an, that is, death first, exaltation later, then the clearing of charges and last of all, the dominance of Jesus’ followers over his opponents. If we change the order, where shall we place *mutawaffi-ka* (I will cause
The Second Coming of Jesus

Thee to die? Between exaltation and clearing of charges? If that is the case, it means that unless Jesus dies, the clearing of charges against him has not taken place, and this is not true. If mutawaffi-ka is placed between the clearing of charges and the dominance of his followers, this means that unless Jesus dies, his followers will not become dominant, and this, too, is wrong. And if mutawaffi-ka is placed at the end of the verse it would read like this:

“O Jesus, I will exalt thee in My presence and clear thee of those who disbelieve and make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve to the day of Resurrection and I will cause thee to die.”

According to this arrangement of the text, Jesus will die after the day of Resurrection! The truth of the matter is that the order of words in the Qur’an is correct and there is no evidence in the text which necessitates such a change. And, in fact, no other order of words seems to be right.

Proof of the death of Jesus from the verse fa-lamma tawaffaitani (5:116)
On the question of the death of Jesus, the verse at the end of chapter 5 of the Qur’an (Al-Maidah) explains the whole point with great clarity. Jesus is asked: O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah? ⁹⁴

The reply which Jesus gave was: Glory be to Thee! It was not for me to say what I had no right to (say). ⁹⁵ Thus he exempted himself from such a charge. He further affirmed: I said to them nothing except as Thou didst command me: Serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord. ⁹⁶ Here, also, Jesus told what kind of teaching he gave to his people; he did not teach them
anything wrong, he taught them about the Unity of Godhead. Then he said: \textit{And I was a witness of them as long as I was among them.} \footnote{In other words, Jesus was clarifying the position of his companions too, that he was a guardian over them in respect of their beliefs as long as he was among them. In the above verses, firstly he denied giving his followers wrong teachings, secondly, he affirmed the imparting of right teachings to them and thirdly, his disciples followed the right teachings as long as he was among them. The question, however, that was asked was about the false doctrine of taking Jesus and his mother as two gods besides Allah, and about which Jesus said: \textit{But when Thou didst cause me to die Thou wast the Watcher over them}.\footnote{The main objective of the statement is that his followers went astray in their beliefs after his death. Therefore, Jesus further remarked: \textit{If Thou chastise them, surely they are Thy servants}.\footnote{This verse clearly shows that after the death of Jesus, his followers perverted his teachings. If the teachings have been perverted, it means that Jesus is dead, and if he is not dead then his teachings here also not perverted.}}

The meanings of the above verses are very clear and need no further interpretation. The Holy Prophet has, however, also given an explanation of this verse (5:117) and all believers should bow their heads before it. I quote the relevant part from \textit{al-Bukhari:}

\textquote{\textquote{\textquote{It is reported from Ibn ‘Abbas that the Holy Prophet gave a sermon and said: O people, you will be gathered together towards God (on the day of Resurrection). And a few men of my ummah will be brought and will be driven towards the left side (i.e. hell), then I will say: O Lord, they are my companions. It will be}}}}
said: You do not know what new things they invented after you. Then I would say what the righteous servant (Jesus) said: I was a witness of them as long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die, Thou wast the Watcher over them.”

Here the Holy Prophet says exactly what Jesus is reported to have said in the Qur’an about his people. The words, what new things they invented after you, clearly indicate that it was after the death of the Holy Prophet that these people perverted the teachings of Islam. That is why the Holy Prophet said that as long as he was among them he was a guardian over them and did not find them straying from the right path but when God caused him to die then God was the Watcher over them. This shows that Jesus, also, meant exactly the same thing, that during his lifetime his followers did not go astray but when God caused him to die they perverted his teachings. This is the true significance of the above verse and nobody who has any respect in his heart for the Holy Prophet can deny such an interpretation.

### Enjoining the payment of zakat on Jesus shows that he is not alive

Many other verses can be cited in this connection but I do not want to lengthen this chapter. I will only quote a few more verses on the subject. At one place in the Qur’an, Jesus is reported to have said: And He has enjoined on me prayer and poor-rate (zakat) as long as I live. Now, God would not give commands which a person is unable to fulfil. The condition, as long as I live, shows that as long as Jesus is alive prayer and alms-giving are obligatory on him. If he is able to say his prayers in heaven, how and to whom is he distributing alms there? Is zakat obligatory on him now, or not? If it is,
what kind of wealth is in his possession in heaven and who are the recipients of alms? And if he does not possess any wealth and God, the Knower of the Unseen, knew that after paying zakat in the world for a few years Jesus would not be able to fulfil this command for a few thousand years, why did Jesus say that as long as he lived God had enjoined the payment of alms on him?

**Partaking of food by Jesus is another proof that he is not alive**

The Qur’an says about Jesus and his mother: *They both used to eat food.*

At another place in respect of messengers, it is said: *Nor did We give them bodies not eating food, nor did they abide.*

*Khalid* in the Arabic language is that which is unalterable. Imam Raghib says:

“*Khulud* is a thing which is free from becoming decrepit, and it stays perpetually in the same condition and from which alteration and corruption stay away; Arabs describe it as *khulud.*”

Thus the Qur’anic verse: *wil-danum mukhalladun,* means *youths never altering in age.* While explaining it further, Imam Raghib says it means *to remain in its original condition where change from one condition to another condition will not take place.*

The Qur’an also indicates that Jesus’ body stood in need of food which means that his physical system was not free from urinary and bowel movements. The reference in the verse *they both used to eat food* (5:117), in fact, negates the con-
ception of Jesus’ divinity. It has also been mentioned that there had been no messengers who did not stand in need of food (21:8) and whose bodies did not undergo alterations. When no messenger could remain alive without food, the same principle applies to Jesus as well. Thus, Jesus stood in need of food, and alteration kept taking place in his body as happens with all other mortal bodies.

Now, if we believe that he was taken up alive to heaven with the same body of clay which he had on this earth, it necessarily follows that it needs food to sustain itself, and that physical alterations, similar to those of other mortals in this world, keep on taking place in his body as well. If that is so, shall we presume that there are kitchens and other sanitary facilities provided for Jesus up in the heavens too? If he is above the needs of drinking and eating, it goes contrary to what the Qur’an has said about him and his mother and about the other messengers. Sometimes it is said, in reply, that Jesus has been given a different body like that of the inmates of paradise, but the inmates of paradise receive this body after death. And those who believe in the life of Jesus believe in his physical ascension with this body of clay and that he will return with the same body. If God did not mention Jesus’ partaking of food, perhaps those who believe him to be alive could say that he was given right from the beginning a different body which did not undergo any change and which did not stand in need of food. But as it has clearly been stated in the Qur’an that he ate food, therefore it is no use advancing such an argument. Jesus, after all, was born as a baby and he grew up to be a young man after undergoing physical changes in his body. As the process of growth takes place in a body up to a certain stage, similarly, the process of decay starts under the natural law of change after a certain period. The Qur’an says:
Whomsoever We cause to live long, We reduce to an abject state in creation. 106

This shows that a human being does not keep on growing all the time, nor does he stay in one condition, but after a period, weakness and decay start in his body. If Jesus were still alive for the last two thousand years he would have become an old man incapable of doing anything. The more one ponders on the subject the more one is convinced that the thought of Jesus’ being alive is absolutely irrational and against the teaching of the Qur’an. If he is still alive, he is more than a human being, different from, and superior to all other messengers, and a possessor of divine powers and attributes.

All those who are taken for gods besides Allah are dead

Another point to remember in this connection is what the Qur’an says about all those persons who are taken for gods: And those whom they call on besides Allah created naught, while they are themselves created. Dead (are they), not living. And they know not when they will be raised. 107

These two verses show conclusively that neither Jesus nor any other person who is taken for a god was alive at the time of the revelation of the Qur’an: Dead (are they), not living.

The following statement that they do not even know when they will be raised shows that the verse speaks of men taken for gods, or at any rate, includes them.

3:143 proves that Jesus is dead

I do not want to prolong this discussion and will only quote one more verse from the Qur’an on the subject. When the news of the demise of the Holy Prophet spread, Hazrat ‘Umar
stood up and threatened to kill anybody who said that the Holy Prophet had died. At that stage, Hazrat Abu Bakr addressed the gathering and recited this verse of the Qur’an: *And Muhammad is but a messenger; messengers have already passed away before him.* 108 On the basis of this verse, Hazrat Abu Bakr argued that the Holy Prophet had died and all the companions of the Holy Prophet, including Hazrat ‘Umar, bowed their heads before what Hazrat Abu Bakr had said. This verse could only be advanced to prove the death of the Holy Prophet because all the previous messengers had died before him. If some messengers were still alive, it could not prove the point that the Holy Prophet had really died. When the opponents said: *And they say: What a messenger is this? He eats food and goes about in the markets.* 109

God, in reply, said: *And We did not send before thee any messengers but they surely ate food and went about in the markets.* 110

This argument would not have been correct if there was one messenger who did not eat food or walked about in the markets. Similarly, the point that the Holy Prophet should have remained alive was resolved by the question of how was it possible for him to remain alive when all the previous messengers had passed away before him. If there were some messengers who had not passed away and were still alive, then the case in point could not be proved. The acceptance of Hazrat Abu Bakr’s statement convinced them of the truth of that statement. If it is said that the word *khalat* does not always mean death, I say that the crux of the argument was against any messenger being alive and if any messenger were alive, the argument itself was not correct. Besides that, a similar statement was made elsewhere in the Qur’an: *The*
Messiah, son of Mary, was only a messenger; messengers before him had indeed passed away. ¹¹¹

The difference in the two verse (3:143 and 5:75) is that in one verse the Holy Prophet Muhammad is mentioned and in the other, the Messiah, son of Mary. The former bears testimony to the death of the Holy Prophet and the latter to the death of Jesus. If verse 5:75 does not prove the death of Jesus, then verse 3:143 cannot prove the death of the Holy Prophet. The event mentioned above shows that there was a consensus of opinion among the companions of the Holy Prophet on the death of Jesus.

**Proof about the death of Jesus from the Hadith**

There are several traditions which also serve to prove the death of Jesus. There are two authentic traditions about the different descriptions of the Israelite Messiah and the coming Messiah which prove that the former Messiah has died. A discussion has been made about these traditions in the last chapter. Similarly, the hadith in explanation of the verse 5:117 where the Holy Prophet said: “Then I would say what the righteous servant (Jesus) said” proves Jesus’ death. The hadith about the Ascension of the Holy Prophet also proves that Jesus is dead because the Holy Prophet saw Jesus in the same heaven where the Prophet John was. If Jesus were alive, he could not be included among those who were dead. When God’s prophets pass away from this world, they enter paradise, but a person who is still alive and has to return to this world cannot enter paradise, and if he does enter paradise, he cannot come out of it, according to the Qur’anic statement: *Nor will they be ejected therefrom* (i.e. paradise). ¹¹²

Thus, Jesus being in the company of John shows that both are
in one condition, and as John is unanimously accepted as dead Jesus should also be placed in the same category. Sometimes it is said that the Holy Prophet was there too. This kind of reasoning does not hold ground because that was a vision that the Holy Prophet saw; he was not actually included among them.

There are several other traditions but I will quote only one and end this discussion. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: “Had Moses and Jesus been alive there was no other way out for them except to follow me.”

This shows that both Moses and Jesus are not alive. This hadith cannot be a fabricated one because in the period when traditions were being fabricated the thought of Jesus being alive was prevalent, and if any tradition had to be fabricated, it would have been fabricated in support of the prevalent view and not against it. Moreover, this hadith is in conformity with the Qur’an and other authentic traditions.

Footnotes on Chapter V

1 5:117
5 “For three reasons it is wrong to assume that *salb* means killing by hanging on the Cross.... If, in any book of lexicon or idioms or verse, *salb* means killing by hanging on the Cross, it was incumbent on the author to quote such reference.... Remember that no book of lexicon can ever be quoted to support this view.” *Shahadat al-Qur’an* by Maulavi Ibrahim Sialkoti, pp.60-61. The said *maulavi* was a great opponent of the Ahmadiyya Movement.
“It may be repeated that the short time that Jesus was on the Cross, three hours at the most, and the uncertain nature and effect of the wound from the spear, and the (coming out) of blood and water from his body leave no room for any doubt that Jesus did not die on the Cross. If the soldiers and others present, in the circumstances already mentioned, thought him to be dead, it was because they could not distinguish between a deep swoon and the rigidity of syncope from real death. There is no ground for the suggestion that amongst them was anyone who was acquainted with medical science, which itself was in a low state in that age.”

“That there was doubt about Jesus’ death at that very time is clear from the Gospels. Dean Farrar also refers to the assertion of the
Docetic sect of Gnostics that Jesus only seemed to have died. (Farrar, *Life of Christ*, p.424). Tertulian had his own doubts, so had Origen, and he had to invoke a miracle to explain so sudden an end. But the fact that people at that very time doubted his death can be gathered from the surprise of Pilate (Mark, 15:44). Besides, the questions put by him to the Centurion show that he wished to silence the doubts of his contemporaries. However the narrative of Matthew itself mentions an event which puts the matter beyond all doubt. After Jesus’ body had been placed in the sepulchre the Pharisees came together to Pilate and asked him:

‘Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead. So the last error shall be worse than the first.” (Matthew, 27:64).

“The same version is given in the Gospel of Peter. (Gospel of Peter, 2:8). Now, what was this first error? Not that they had accused Jesus and found him guilty of “corruption”, not that at their insistence he had been sentenced to death by Pilate; not that he had been put on the Cross. No, they believed Jesus to be a pretender and a false prophet: and, therefore, they could not have had any compassion for him. The first error could not, therefore, be any other than that Jesus had been taken off the Cross much earlier than was necessary, that his bones had not been broken and as a result of these things, Jesus had not been, according to them, in fact “crucified” at all. This and this alone was the first error which would become insignificant if the apprehensions of the Jews should have been materialised. They, therefore, prayed that the sepulchre should be made secure and sealed so that even if buried alive, Jesus should remain there and die of suffocation. They, in fact, in the narrative, express their apprehensions in quite unambiguous terms:

‘Lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, he has risen from the dead’. (Matt., 27:64).

“The Pharisees did not believe in his miracles; they did not admit his Divine origin or mission; they did not even acknowledge him as the Messiah. They, therefore, could not attribute a belief to the people that, if the body was stolen and the sepulchre found empty,
any one would believe that Jesus had arisen from the dead. To them, with the traditions of the Old Testament regarding the raising of the dead, the securing and sealing of the tomb would have been no safeguard. It is evident, therefore, that the Pharisees and the Elders knew that through unforeseen circumstances Jesus had not died on the Cross and they wanted to ensure his death by sealing and securing the tomb to prevent all possibility of his body being stolen or otherwise removed. Events regarding the burial and the subsequent visits of the women to the sepulchre, to which I will refer in detail shortly, also point to the same conclusion.

“There is one very peculiar feature about the alleged death of Jesus on the Cross. Nowhere in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke or John is the positive statement of an eye-witness recorded that Jesus had died on the Cross, or that he was dead when they removed him from the Cross or placed him in the tomb. None of the disciples was present on the spot. The Jews, as we have already seen, had their own doubts. The Evangelists clearly felt the weakness of their evidence. They, therefore, were compelled to introduce the women:

‘Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him, and many other women which came up with him into Jerusalem’ (Mark, 15:41).

“They are supposed to have watched what was happening from afar, but then the real object was to guarantee by their presence the truth of what had already been, and still more of what had to be, added to the description of the scenes at Calvary. The guarantee appears to be singularly fragile as soon as we begin to examine it. No doubt, it becomes less dubious and doubtful when compared with the Johannine scheme where the object of the women, with the unknown beloved disciples, was to receive the last instructions which fell from Jesus (John, 19:25), but it represents the same anxiety to establish a testimony and is, of course, a later addition. As a matter of fact, early tradition, with or without the guarantee of women, was not in a position to do anything more than assert the essential facts: Jesus was arrested, tried, condemned and put on the Cross; of that alone they were certain. They could not, and did not, in clear and unambiguous terms assert his death on the Cross because the matter was made dubious to them (H.Q.
And certainly those who differ therein are in doubt about it (4:157).

Deuteronomy, 21:23.

Mark, 15:34; Matthew, 27:46.

4:157.

Matthew, 27:45,51.


Mark, 15:44.

4:157.

Ibid.

4:159

Ruh al-Ma‘ani under 4:159, p.12.

“He that is hanged is accursed of God” (Deut. 21:23).

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Galatians, 3:13).

4:159.

2:144. (Translation by ‘Abdul Majid Daryabadi). Maulana Abul A‘la Maududi has also translated the verse in the present tense:

“We are turning you towards the same Qiblah which you like” (Tafhim al-Qur’an, vol.1, p.121).

There are many other instances in the Qur’an where lam takid and nun thaqilah enter on an aorist but do not necessarily indicate the future tense alone. Sometimes they include the past, present and future (and sometimes the present and future) tenses also. The following are a few examples:

Present and future:

“And thou wilt certainly find them” (wa la-tajidanna-hum)...

(2:96).

“And we shall certainly try you” (wa la-nabluwanna-kum)...

And certainly those who differ therein are in doubt about it (4:157).”
Past, present and future:

“We shall certainly make him live” (fa-la-nuhiyanna-hu)... (16:97).
“We will certainly burn it” (la-nuharrigannahu)... (20:97).
“And certainly Allah will help him” (wa la-yansurnanal-lahu)... (22:40).
“We shall certainly make them enter” (la-nudkhilanna-hum)... (29:9).
“We shall certainly guide them (la-nahdiyanna-hum) in our ways” (29:69).

Allah has written down: “I shall certainly prevail (la-aghibanna), I and My messengers” (58:21). (SMT).
way mean going somewhere on foot, horse or train; it only means the way of spiritual nearness to God.

76 35:10.
77 3:54.
78 4:157.
79 4:157-158.
82 John, 19:31 (NEB Translation).
83 Galatians, 3:13 (NEB).
84 3:53
85 5:110.
86 43:61 (Translation by ‘Abdul Majid). Muhammad Ali translates this verse thus: “And this (revelation) is surely knowledge of the Hour.”
87
88 *Tirmidhi*, ch. *Names of the Prophet*.
89 Jesus said to the Elders of the Jews: “Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof” (Matthews 21:43). (SMT)
90 *Taj al-‘Arus*.
91 *Majma‘ al-Bihar*.
92 3:54.
93 *Al-Bukhari, kitab al-Tafsir*, ch. 5:103.
94 5:116.
95 *Ibid*.
96 5:117.
97 *Ibid*.
98 *Ibid*.
99 5:118.
100 *Al-Bukhari, kitab al-Anbiya*, ch.4:125
102 5:75.
103 21:8.
104 *Al-Mufradat* under the word *khuld*.
105 56:17; 76:19. See also *al-Mufradat*.
106 36:68.
108 3:143. It must also be remembered that after this incident Hazrat
Abu Bakr wrote several letters to various tribes and in each one of them he quoted the same verse (3:143) to demonstrate the point about the death of the Holy Prophet (SMT).

111 5:75. In this connection, another significant but less known historical incident is narrated in Tarikh of Tabari which further clarifies this point:

Acceptance of Islam by the tribe of Abdul Qais

“Soon after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) passed away, his (i.e. Jarud’s - SMT) tribe, ‘Abdul Qais said:

‘If Muhammad was a prophet, he would not have died.’ And they all turned away from Islam. When Jarud came to know of it he gathered them together and said:

‘O tribe of Abdul Qais! I want to ask you something. If you have knowledge of it, then tell me, and if you do not know about it, then do not tell me.’

They said: ‘Ask any question you like.’

Jarud said: ‘You know, prophets of God have appeared in previous times.’ They replied: ‘Yes.’

Jarud again questioned: ‘Do you only know about them, or have you personally seen them?’

They replied: ‘No, we have not seen them, but we know (about) them.’

‘What happened after that?’ Jarud asked.

‘They died,’ they said.

Jarud then told them that likewise the Holy Prophet had also died. I proclaim that there is but One God and surely Muhammad is His servant and messenger. His tribesmen repeated the same words and added: ‘We accept you as our elder and leader.’ It was thus that they remained steadfast in Islam.” (Jarir Tabari, Tarikh vol.2, ch.v, pp.122-123, Urdu edition. Published by Nafis Academy, Karachi, Pakistan).

The above questions and answers are very significant indeed. It may be noted here that none of them said that if Jesus Christ could go up to heaven and remain alive then how could the Holy
Prophet die? All prophets before the Holy Prophet had died, they all agreed. This is what the Qur’an also says: And Muhammad is but a messenger - (all) messengers have already passed away before him (3:143). And Jesus Christ was no exception. (SMT).

112 15:48.
CHAPTER VI

RENOVATOR (MUJADDID) OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

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. ¹

Only one claimant appeared at the head of the century

After having these preliminary discussions we must see if there has been a mujaddid during the fourteenth century Hijrah or not, in accordance with God’s promise delivered to the ummah by the sacred tongue of the Holy Prophet. And if there has been any, who is that person and what work he has done and whether it is the same work, or something else which should have been done according to the needs of this age.

Let us take the first part of this question. If no mujaddid had appeared at the head of this century, it meant that the Divine promise had not been fulfilled, God forbid! We cannot say that this century did not stand in need of any mujaddid, or, no mujaddid appeared. The only question then, that remains is: Who is that mujaddid? For a seeker of truth, no doubt, the answer is simple and clear. The one who was appointed by God in this century openly declared himself to be the mujaddid and conveyed his message to the whole world. There can be more than one mujaddid in a century, of course, but the one who was going to appear at the head of this century was also going to fulfil some of the prophecies relating to this age and accordingly, a great task was awaiting him. As God willed,
there appeared only one mujaddid at the head of this century throughout the world, so that the seekers of truth may find a clear sign in recognising him. In the whole world, it was only Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, who declared at the head of the fourteenth century that God had appointed him the mujaddid. If there were other claimants to this office, a person had the right to reject one and accept another. However, God’s plan worked in a different way, that only one person announced himself as the mujaddid so that nobody should raise any objection against accepting his claim. Thus our first question as to who was the mujaddid appointed at the head of the fourteenth century Hijrah has been answered in a clear and explicit manner.

**Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s claim of being a mujaddid**

Although his claim of Divine appointment as well as his being the muhaddath (one spoken to by God), was expressly mentioned in his book, *Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah*, this book only reached the hands of a selected few. Therefore, he published separately twenty thousand copies of a poster in which he clearly proclaimed himself to be a mujaddid. Besides its circulation in Urdu on such a large scale, its translation into English was also published. The preliminary remarks of this poster were as follows:

“The book, *Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah*, is compiled by the author who has been inspired by God and appointed by Him for the reformation and renovation of Islam. Along with this book is a poster, offering a prize of ten thousand rupees. The substance of the book is that in the world, the true religion is Islam by means of which a man believes from the core of his heart in God - Who is free from every blemish and imperfection and is pure and perfect in His attributes…. And in this book
the truth of Islam has been established in two ways. Firstly, by three hundred strong intellectual arguments. Secondly, by those heavenly signs which are most essential to prove the perfect truthfulness of a true religion.”

These signs, then, are divided into three categories.

“Firstly, the signs which the opponents of Islam witnessed at the hand of the Holy Prophet himself... secondly, the signs which are found permanently in the Qur’an… and thirdly, the signs which are received by way of inheritance by a follower through allegiance to the Book of God and the Holy Prophet. This servant of Allah has given manifest proof by the grace of Allah, the Almighty, that many of the true inspirations and signs and wonders that have been accepted are a part of the religious experience of this servant of the Faith, and the truth of these have been witnessed 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 excellences resemble those of the Messiah, son of Mary, and one of them bears a very strong resemblance and a close affinity to the other. And to him has been granted, on the pattern of special grace of prophets and messengers, excellence over many great righteous servants (auliya) who have passed away before him, only on account of the blessings of following the best of men and the best of the messengers, the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. And to follow in his footsteps is the cause of salvation, felicity and blessing, and to go against him
is the cause of (spiritual) remoteness (bu‘d) and distress (hirman).” 2

In the aforementioned references not only has an open claim been made of his being the mujaddid of this age but the Founder has also explained the real object of the advent of a mujaddid, that is, he is sent for the support of the Islamic faith. As this support is needed in every age, therefore God had instituted the appointment of mujaddids. The Founder then put forth the heavenly signs which were granted to him in support of the truthfulness of Islam, and which showed that a mujaddid appeared only as a servant of Islam. Almost all the great ‘ulama of the country looked at his claim approvingly because they were expecting the advent of a mujaddid of the century. On the one hand, nobody before him had announced himself as mujaddid of the century before him, and on the other, after the Founder’s claim, nobody had the courage to make such a claim even for the sake of opposing him.

After the Founder’s claim, as will be shown a little later, a storm of opposition arose against him and fair and foul means were all used to denounce him and destroy his mission. But as to the point that he was the only claimant for the fourteenth century, God neither let this fact become dubious, nor did anyone suggest that the hadith about the mujaddid was inauthentic - and how could a claim based on such a fabricated tradition be true? Maulavi Muhammad Hussain Batalavi, who was the leader of the Ahl-i Hadith, himself wrote a long review on the book, Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah, and in strong words supported him and his claims and admitted his great service to the cause of Islam. In short, the Founder’s claim was made when people were looking forward to it and most of them welcomed it.
The services rendered to Islam by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement

The reason for the acceptance of his claim was not only that it was made right at the time of its expectancy but also that the Founder was renowned for his scholarship and piety and for the services he had rendered to the cause of religion and for the strong arguments he had given for establishing the truth of Islam, and for his deep understanding of the Qur’an found in his writings. When people were becoming neglectful about their duty towards Islam, the Founder devoted all his time, energy and financial resources to the service of Islam and showed integrity of character, uprightness and great steadfastness in the face of severe opposition and never wavered for a moment from the mission which God had assigned to him. All these matters were combined in his person and people bowed their heads in respect before him and acknowledged openly that, in truth, this was the person who could be the true master of the ship of Islam in this turbulent age. Maulavi Muhammad Hussain’s review of *Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah* was not an ordinary review. In it he included a summary of this great book and also recorded some of the Founder’s inspirations (*ilhamat*). After listing all these, the review began with the following words:

“This is the sum and substance of this book. Now we express our brief opinion about it without exaggeration. 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 with among the Muslims who have gone before. If any one looks upon these words of ours as an Asiatic exaggeration, let him point out to us at least one such book that has in it such forceful refutation of all classes of opponents of Islam, especially the Arya Samaj and the Brahmu Samaj, so emphatically and forcefully, and let him give us the names of two or three persons, the helpers of the cause of Islam, who besides helping Islam with their properties, their person, their pens and their tongues, have also come forward with their religious experience and have proclaimed 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 non-Muslims taste of the same.”

This is the testimony given by the pen of a person who later became the most implacable opponent of the Founder. This review, comprising 152 pages, was published in Isha’at al-Sunnah vol. 7, Nos. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. In this review, in many places he mentions several of the Founder’s inspirations. Thus on page 192 of No.7 he quoted the following ilham:

“I decided to appoint a vicegerent (khalifah), so I created Adam.”

As an explanation of this ilham, Muhammad Hussain writes, (quoting the words of the Founder):

“This only connotes spiritual office and succession and Adam also does not mean the father of mankind. It means a person through whom, after establishing a movement of direction and guidance, a foundation of spiritual revival (for mankind) will be laid. In other words, he will be the spiritual father for the seekers
after truth And this is a grand prophecy pointing towards the establishment of a spiritual movement at a time when this movement does not even exist in name.”

Page 260, No 9, quoting the *ilham*: “Therefore declare openly, what thou art commanded, and turn away from the ignorant”, Muhammad Hussain says:

“Similarly in the words of the verse (15:94) *fasda’* (therefore declare openly), he, (i.e., the Founder), considers that the Holy Prophet was the person who was addressed in these words but when in the same words God addressed him, (i.e. the Founder), then, in these words, (not in the verses of the Qur’an) he considers that they refer to his lying down, sometimes wrapped up in a garment and it means his appointment for the manifestation of truth.”

And on page 277 in this review, the Founder’s claim of being a *mujaddid* has been reproduced:

“And the author has been given the knowledge that he is the *mujaddid* of his time.”

The following remarks by the Founder have further been added:

“And he has been granted, excellence over many great righteous servants (*auliya’*) and obtained characteristics of prophethood and messengership on account of the blessings of perfectly following the best of men and the best of messengers, the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. And to follow in his footsteps is the cause of salvation, felicity and blessing and to go against him is the cause of (spiritual) remoteness and distress.”
At the end of this review, to silence the opponents, Maulavi Muhammad Hussain mentioned the names of many Muslim luminaries who have expressed the same views about ilham as expressed by the author of Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah. In this connection, he quoted from the books entitled Mansab-i Imamat and Sirat-i Mustaqim by Maulana Muhammad Isma’il Shahid and says:

“You should read the book Mansab-i Imamat from pages 3 to 42, then you will notice that that what I have claimed, rather all that I have said and whatever has been claimed and said in the Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah, are fully supported by that book.”

References from the writings of Maulana Shah Abdul Aziz and Shah Waliullah and from the writings of many early dignitaries of Islam have also been quoted and all this has been put forward to prove that whatever has been stated in the Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah is precisely according to the beliefs of the Ahl-i Sunnah wa’l-Jama‘at. Towards the end of the review he writes:

“The author of the Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah has saved the honour of Muslims. He challenged the opponents of Islam to an encounter and made the announcement to most parts of the world that any one who entertained any doubts should come to him and see with his own eyes the truth of Islam by intellectual arguments from the Qur’an and from the miracles of the prophethood of Muhammad (by which he means his own inspirations and supernatural signs).”

With this prayer he ended the review:

“O God! The Guide of the seekers of truth, show mercy to him more than his own parents and more
than all the affectionate ones in the whole world. O God! Create the love of this book in the hearts of the people and enrich them with the blessings of this book. And for the sake of some righteous servant of Thine, O God, confer on this humble ashamed sinner the special blessings and bounties of this book. Amin!"  

The **Mujaddid’s mission**

His claim has been mentioned above. But what was his mission? This has clearly been explained in *Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah* and the Poster (*Ishtihar*), which was published along with it. This showed that the great work which was assigned to him was not an ordinary work of reformation but the real object of his appointment as a mujaddid was to establish by intellectual and spiritual arguments and signs the supremacy of Islam over all the other religions.

Thus he writes in *Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah*:

“The last portion of the revelation indicates that the Holy Prophet had mentioned the appearance of this person in the above quoted *hadith* and a reference has also been made in God’s revelation recorded in Volume III of this book. This humble servant has been shown that in lowliness, humility, trust in God, generosity, heavenly signs and illumination, he is an example of the first life of the Messiah. And the nature of this humble servant very much resembles the nature of the Messiah as if they are two pieces of the same jewel or two fruits of the same tree. The spiritual triumph of the religion of Islam which would be brought by conclusive arguments and shining proofs, whether it is in his lifetime or after his death, is destined to be accomplished through this 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. In short, in this age, every means for the propagation of religion has reached its highest limit. Although the world is overcast by darkness, yet the circuit of perversion seems to have reached its end, the power of moral deviation seems to be declining, as if it has been God’s will that healthy minds are devoting themselves to the search of the straight path and good and pure natures are falling in line with the state of righteousness. The natural zeal of tauhid (unity of Godhead) has turned worthy minds towards the pure and clean spring of belief in the Oneness of God; and the weakness of the worship of created things is becoming apparent to the learned. The artificial gods are once again putting on the robes of humanity in the eyes of the wise. Moreover, heavenly help is being stirred up in such a way for the support of the true religion that the proofs and supernatural signs, by hearing about which humble and weak servants of God were given the status of Divinity, are now being manifested at the hands of the ordinary servants of the Holy Prophet…. Thus, intellectually and spiritually, the spread of the truth of the religion of Islam, depended on this age…. Thus, God intends, by raising me in this age and by granting me hundreds of heavenly signs and vision of extraordinary matters relating to the future, and deep knowledge and also 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 the nations and in all countries and to bring decisive proofs of the truth of Islam against them. In short, God the Most Forgiving, has granted to this humble servant, by His favour and grace, the ways and means for the propagation of Islam and in its support conclusive proofs and arguments which had not been given to anyone in the previous nations until now, and whatever unseen resources have been given to this humble servant had not been given to any of them before. That is God’s grace; He gives it to whom He pleases.”

The need for an organisation for the propagation of Islam
The above passage clearly shows the work for which the mujaddid of this age was commissioned and the manner in which this work was entrusted to him. The real object of his appointment was the propagation of Islam so that conclusive proofs should be given of its supremacy over other religions, and by refuting all the false doctrines, the true teachings of Islam should be spread.

The work of inviting to Islam, which was particularly made obligatory for Muslims but of which they had become extremely neglectful, should be revived. Muslims should translate the following verse of the Qur’an in their practical life:

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.

Inviting others to good, which in other words is inviting to Islam, gets preference over everything else. At another place
in the Qur’an it is stated:

*Neither those who disbelieve from among the people of the Book, nor the polytheists, like that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord.*

Here, the good (*khair*) stands for the Qur’an, because all the paths of goodness are found in the Qur’an. Therefore, according to the Divine command, there should be a party from among the Muslims who should always engage themselves in calling people to Islam. In the earlier days of Islam all Muslims had that spirit breathed into them so that they were all missionaries of Islam. Their enthusiasm was such that in a short time they created a great revolution in the world by their preaching. They carried the message of Islam to different countries, such as Afghanistan, China, India, Algeria, Africa, Iran, Turkistan, Syria, etc. Then a time came when the Muslim rulers and the rich became more engrossed in material luxuries than in the work of Islam. The learned (*‘ulama*) spent most of their time in mutual wrangling about minor theological points. In spite of that, many Muslim servants kept themselves busy with inviting people to Islam, and the great respect which is shown to them by thousands of people today is only because of their service to Islam. They were, in fact, the spiritual rulers of the Muslim world. When the worldly kings gave up the work of the propagation of Islam these spiritual kings took charge of this work. But alas! nowadays the centres and seats of the great missionaries of Islam have become only a means to earn money towards upkeeping the controllers and owners of these centres so that they may lead a luxurious life. These places have become not only a source of quarrels and disputes but also of religious deviations and innovations. Would that even a fraction of their income was spent for the cause of disseminating the teachings of Islam!
Then the Muslim nation would not have reached the state of such disgrace! Would that the Muslim kings had made some arrangements for the cause of spreading Islam which would have saved their kingdoms from destruction! However, when Muslims turned their backs on the Divine injunctions - the kings hankered after a life of luxury, the owners of the so-called spiritual seats yearned for worldly goods and honour and the learned (‘ulama) wasted their time and energy in petty wrangling - the sacred mission of invitation to Islam was totally abandoned. This was the real cause of the downfall of Muslims. They threw away with their own hands what was the source of life to them and what they grabbed - physical luxuries and pleasures and the accompanying greed to procure more of them - was, in fact, the source of their destruction.

The negligence of Muslims
What beautiful principles of success were given to the Muslims in this pure book, the Qur’an! Others derived benefit by following them and became successful, but as far as Muslims were concerned, they confirmed the truth of the following verse of the Qur’an in their persons:

Surely my people treat this Qur’an as a forsaken thing. 11

The Qur’an enjoined on its followers that there should be a group among them who should carry on inviting others to their faith. No other sacred scripture has laid down this principle except the Qur’an, but in practice it is only Muslims who have neglected this mission. Followers of almost all the other religions are trying to preach the doctrines of their religions to other nations. To give up this struggle amounts to death for them. But Muslims who were taught by the Qur’an not to be neglectful of this work, pay no regard to it. They neither
care for the preaching of Islam nor have they set up any organisation for training missionaries. They neither know the needs of the Muslim world, nor do they know about the beliefs and doctrines of other religions, nor do they pay any attention to the attacks made against Islam by its opponents. It is time to shed tears at the sad plight of Muslims; there is a great spiritual treasure in their house but they are unaware of it. Why has the existence of a party for carrying the message of Islam to other people been given so much importance in the Qur’an? Because without it the Muslim nation could not survive. The history of the world bears testimony to the fact that the moment a nation gave up the struggle to increase its membership, decay and decline set in in its house. Some people think that the decline of Muslims was the result of the loss of their worldly kingdoms and empires. The truth, however, is that the fall of Muslims began when they started disregarding the work of inviting others to Islam and the loss of worldly power was one of the consequences of this neglect. When Muslims pay full attention to the propagation of Islam, in its true spirit, they will acquire the same splendour the promise of which is given in these words: \textit{ula’ika humul-muflihun} (these are they who are successful) (3:103).

The greatest need of Islam in this age is to propagate the teachings of Islam

Thus, when in this age Muslims were becoming heedless of the work of the propagation of Islam, God revealed to the \textit{mujaddid} of this century to form an organisation for this great object. Every \textit{mujaddid} is assigned a task according to the needs of his age. In these times Islam was being attacked from all sides. The religion that was sent to prevail, “over all religions” \textsuperscript{12} was considered to be the weakest of them all. Had God not supported His religion at this hour of need it
would have been difficult for Islam to stay alive as a force in the world. This support for Islam was shown in a thousand and one ways but the greatest favour God did to Islam was that He commissioned the mujaddid of this age to show to the world the face of Islam in its full splendour. Thus, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement repeatedly emphasised in his writings such as *Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah* and from the beginning and right up to the end kept on proclaiming the fact that the real object of his advent was the propagation of Islam and the exaltation of the Word of God. And those who entered his movement had to affirm:

“I will hold religion above the world.”

The real object of this affirmation was the formation of such a party which should devote itself unitedly to the service of Islam. Every person who joins the Ahmadiyya Movement, in fact, makes a promise that the main aim of his life is to spread the message of Islam.

**The success of the work of propagation**

Of all the works, this, undoubtedly, is the work of the greatest importance for without it Muslims cannot survive. There are many other innovations and deviations found among Muslims today - and Muslims themselves stand in need of great reformation - but God wanted first to cure the disease which was the root cause of all the troubles. It was affecting not only a part but the whole body of the Muslim community. The work of establishing the truth of Islam by the mujaddid of this age will be discussed by me separately. One thing, however, which every person can understand is, that in spite of all the opposition, the Founder, before his death, was able to create an organisation, the object of which was the propagation of Islam. He equipped his followers with powerful arguments which
The Second Coming of Jesus proved very effective against all false beliefs and doctrines. God has crowned with success the efforts of this *Jama’at* in England, where Islam is painted in the darkest of colours. Islam is becoming popular there although it is the religion of a nation that was ruled by the English people. In a few years’ time, about two hundred persons have entered the fold of Islam and among these persons are included lords, counts, majors, captains, professors, editors, authors etc. The translation of the Qur’an into English with notes and commentaries has been published and this has laid a firm basis for the propagation of Islam. This is all the work of the *mujaddid* of the fourteenth century because it is he who laid its foundation.

**Footnotes on Chapter VI**

1 3:103.
2 *Ishthihar*, published 1885 CE. (Quoted in *Mujaddid-i A’zam*, Dr. Basharat Ahmad, vol. 1, pp. 113, 114.)
3 *Isha’at al-Sunnah*, vol. 7, June-November, p.169, 1884 CE Batala, India.
4 *Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. iv, p. 489-493.
5 *Isha’at al-Sunnah*, p.310.
7 “Even if faith had gone up to the Pleiades, a man from among these would surely find it.” *Al-Bukhari*, *kitab al-Tafsir*, ch. *Akharina minhum* (65:62).
9 3:103
10 2:105.
11 25:30
12 9:33; 48:28; 61:9
CHAPTER VII

MESSIAH OF THE MUSLIM UMMAH

He it is Who raised among the illiterates a Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His messages and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom - although they were before certainly in manifest error - and others from among them who have not yet joined them., And He is the Mighty, the Wise. ¹

For its spiritual progress and purification, the Muslim ummah needs only the guidance of the Holy Prophet

Earlier, in Chapter IV on Descent of son of Mary, I showed that it was an insult to this ummah that for its own reformation, and for the predominance of Islam in the world, it should depend on anyone else besides the Holy Prophet Muhammad. This is the same ummah for which Abraham and Ishmael had prayed:

Our Lord, and make us both submissive (Muslims) to Thee, and (raise) from our offspring, a nation (umma) submissive to Thee. ²

And for the guidance and teaching of this ummah, they prayed:

Our Lord, and raise up in them a Messenger from among them who shall recite to them Thy messages and teach them the Book and the Wisdom, and purify them. ³

It was in fulfilment of the Prayer of Abraham that the Holy
Prophet said:
   “I am (the result of) the prayer of Abraham.”  

It was in the same messenger about whom it was said in the Qur’an:
   *He it is Who raised among the illiterates a Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His messages and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom.*  

This subject, which has been dealt with in the Qur’an at two other places, also shows that the teaching and purification of this *ummah* depends entirely on the Holy Prophet. Jesus Christ was only appointed for the Israelites, for a particular period; the period of his prophethood did not extend to the day of Resurrection and the scope of his teaching was also limited. The Holy Prophet was raised for all mankind, for all times to come, to impart complete and perfect teaching to his followers in all branches of human faculties and his period of spiritual blessings extends to the day of Resurrection. The Holy Prophet alone is responsible for the guidance, teaching and purification of his *ummah*. Human life comes to an end quickly, but the spiritual power of the Holy Prophet keeps on working even when it is transferred to the next life; it is carried on by the Holy Prophet himself, or by his followers trained by him. If this *ummah* needs a Messiah, and according to the traditions it does, it can only be the person who has been taught and purified by the Holy Prophet Muhammad; that is, a follower of his. It cannot be a person in whose teaching and purification the Holy Prophet had no hand to play and who was appointed by God independently and was directly taught the Book and the Wisdom, as the Qur’an says about Jesus:
If Jesus, who has already been taught the Book and the wisdom, comes again for guiding and teaching the Muslim ummah, it causes two great wrongs. Firstly, the teaching and purification of the ummah did not remain the work of the Holy Prophet but became the responsibility of Jesus. This, in fact, nullifies the prophecy and the prayer of Abraham and also the Divine promise which indicates that the work of guidance of the ummah would be done by the Holy Prophet for all time to come. Secondly, the guidance of the ummah was transferred to a person whose spiritual power and teaching, whose example and mission, were all confined to a limited circle. To remove this wrong notion, in Chapter 62 of the Qur’an it has been clearly stated that nobody else from outside will appear in this ummah, but others from among them who have not yet joined them will also partake of the spiritual blessings of the Holy Prophet. As the Holy Prophet guided, taught and purified his immediate followers and companions, he would do the same to those who would come later and his spiritual power was not limited in scope and time like that of other prophets.

**Jesus was not taught and purified by the Holy Prophet Muhammad**

As long as the teaching of the Holy Prophet is considered perfect and his spiritual power is believed to extend to the day of Resurrection, this is going to be a formidable obstacle in the way of an Israelite Messiah appearing for the reformation and purification of the Muslim ummah. Some people have tried to remove this obstacle by saying that Jesus Christ had received his teaching from the Holy Prophet during the time of the Holy Prophet’s ministry. But this is a futile argument. When God Himself says in the Qur’an that He had taught
Jesus the Book and the Wisdom (3:47) before the appointment of the Holy Prophet, on what grounds can the statement made in this verse be considered wrong? Besides all this, if Jesus used to come down daily to receive training from the Holy Prophet, in which verse of the Qur’an or in which hadith is this recorded and why has this occurrence of his daily descent and (physical) ascent, (those who believe him to be alive believe in his physical ascension), not been mentioned anywhere at all? Every event of the life of the Holy Prophet is recorded in history. At what time did Jesus get his training? Did he get it along with the companions of the Prophet, or separately inside the Holy Prophet’s houses, or somewhere which was specified for this purpose? If it is said that Jesus received his training at the time of the Ascension (Mi’raj) the only mention is that the Holy Prophet saw John and Jesus together. In none of the traditions about the Mi’raj is it mentioned that the Holy Prophet gave Jesus any kind of training. Even if we suppose that some sort of training was given to Jesus at that time, we must not forget that the Mi’raj took place in the Makkan period of the Prophet’s ministry and the Qur’an was partly revealed by then, so only a part of the teachings of the Qur’an could have been imparted to Jesus. When were the other details of the Shari’ah (Law) taught to him - details about which the Holy Prophet himself did not know anything during the time of the Mi’raj? How could Jesus then give guidance and training to the Muslim ummah when he himself knew about half of the Qur’an and was unaware of the greater part of the details of the Shari’ah and of the Hadith?

The mujaddid of the fourteenth century Hijrah was made the like of Jesus

In short, the Messiah for the Muslim ummah can only be that person who belongs to this ummah and who has been trained
and purified by the Holy Prophet himself. No other person can be the Messiah for the ummah of Muhammad. I have discussed it before, that the descent of the Messiah only means the descent of a like of him, (see Ch. IV), as the descent of Elias (Elijah) meant the coming of a like of him in his power and spirit. Thus when God appointed the mujaddid of the fourteenth century it was openly declared by him that he bore a strong resemblance to Jesus. One of his visions mentioned in Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah (p. 253) bears testimony to this, where he says:

“I saw in a dream Jesus, on whom be peace, and he and I had a meal together at one place and in the same dish and during the meal we were quite intimate with each other, like two real brothers or like two companions and bosom friends of long standing.”

And on page 499, sub-footnote of the same book, he says:

“It has been made manifest to this humble one that by virtue of his meekness and humility, and his trust and sincerity, and the signs shown by him, and of the light that he possesses, he resembles Jesus in his previous life and that the nature of this humble one and that of Jesus bear a strong resemblance to each other as if they are pieces of the same jewel, or, they are fruits of the same tree. They are so close to each other that to a spiritual eye there does not seem to be much distinction between the two. There is also another obvious resemblance, namely, that Jesus was the follower and servant of the faith of a perfect and high-standing prophet, namely Moses, and his gospel was a branch of the Torah and this humble one is also one of the lowly servants of that majestic Prophet who is the chief and crown of all prophets” (i.e. the Holy Prophet Muhammad).
The knowledge of this likeness was given to him by God When the mujaddid of the fourteenth century declared his strong resemblance to Jesus, he did not know at that time that he himself was going to be appointed as the Promised Messiah. In his book, Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah, it has clearly been mentioned that he was raised as a mujaddid for the Muslim ummah, and through him it is destined that Islam will spiritually predominate over all the other religions, and with his advent a great movement for guidance will be established, and he had such a strong resemblance to Jesus as if they were two pieces of the same jewel. In that book, the old view about Jesus’ descent has been mentioned too, in the same manner. In the same Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah, where he remarked about his likeness to Jesus and his bearing a strong resemblance to him, as he was informed about it by God, at the same place he wrote about the second coming of Jesus:

“When Jesus, peace be on him, returns to this world, Islam will spread all over the world but it has been made manifest to this humble one that he ... resembles Jesus in his previous life ... therefore God, the Gracious, right from the beginning, has made me a co-sharer in the prophecy about the Messiah. In other words, Jesus conforms to the above prophecy externally and physically, and this humble one conforms to it spiritually and rationally, which means that the spiritual dominance of Islam which will come about by high and conclusive arguments, is destined through this humble servant.”

These statements clearly show that they were simply based on truth and were absolutely free from any pretence or fabrication. If the author had not declared on the basis of divine visions and inspiration, that he bore a strong resemblance to
Jesus as if they were two pieces of the same jewel, and his real intention was to make a claim of being the promised Messiah at a later stage, on account of these visions, he would never have mentioned the second advent of Jesus. The above writing makes him free from every accusation of pretence and shows that whatsoever God revealed to him up to that moment he conveyed it to the world. God told him that he had a great resemblance to Jesus and he conveyed this to the public in his writings, but at the same time he stated the old view concerning the second coming of Jesus. A person who is appointed by God does not overstep the limit of what God had clearly informed him. Thus, there is a clear distinction between these two statements. Where he mentions the second coming of Jesus, this old view is expressed in general words. But when he mentions his likeness to Jesus the words are very clear:

“but it has been made manifest to this humble one.”

Thus, along with information from the Unseen, his pen was also made to commit a mistake, so that it may always remain clear evidence that nothing was pre-planned by him when he declared his resemblance to Jesus and that, in fact, this news was given to him by God. Any person may commit a mistake, but God saves a prophet from committing such a mistake when his saying sometimes becomes a command of the Shari’ah (Law). But for the one who is supposed to refer to “Allah and His messenger”, there is no harm if he commits such a mistake. However, this mistake has made it clear that his being the like of the Messiah was an inspiration from God and was not based on any of his personal opinions. Perhaps the commission of such a mistake was necessary because John had committed a similar mistake about the second coming of Elias. When Jewish priests asked him:

“Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not.”
Although Jesus said about him “This is Elias, which was for to come” 14 and that “he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias”, 15 John was made to commit the same mistake so that he might be free of all pretence.

In fact, all that I have said above is to end this discussion and prove that the mujaddid (renovator) of the fourteenth century was going to be the Promised Messiah. The descent of the son of Mary only meant that a perfect like of him would appear in this ummah. But before this reality was manifested to him, the mujaddid of the fourteenth century was told that he bore a perfect resemblance to the Messiah. In reality, the Promised Messiah was going to be the like of the Messiah. He also declared that he conformed to the prophecy of the second advent of Jesus “spiritually and rationally.” Thus the likeness as well as the mission of his advent was the same as was that of the advent of the Messiah.

The Promised Messiah can only be the person on whom the truth about the descent of the Messiah was manifested

When the truth of the descent of the son of Mary was made manifest to the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement and he was told in clear words:

“All praise belongs to Allah, who has made thee the Messiah, son of Mary,” 16

(that is, the one who was promised), an uproar of opposition started against him. If, however, the subject was considered in a cool and dispassionate manner, the whole issue was not difficult to understand. If it is not proven from the Qur’an and the authentic Hadith that Jesus was raised to heaven with this body of clay and that he was still alive, his death has to be accepted. And when it is established that he is dead, the de-
scent of the son of Mary can only mean the appearance of a like of him in this *ummah*. That like of him was a person whose services in the cause of Islam were acknowledged (by Muslims all over India). His writings in support of Islam had such an impact that it was admitted that such contributions had not been made during the last thirteen hundred years. This was the person, the truthfulness of whose revelations was established by their fulfilment, and there was no reason to doubt his good intentions and there was no pretence on his part and it was, in fact, the word of God which declared him to be the like of the Messiah. And above everything else, it was he who removed the veil of ambiguity from the prophecy (about the coming Messiah) and made the truth known to all and sundry that a mistake was committed, on the one hand, in believing that Jesus had gone to heaven alive, and on the other, in interpreting the prophecy about his descent as if he were actually going to come down from above. This was the person whose claim of being a *mujaddid* was accepted for five consecutive years. Who else could be the rightful claimant of this prophecy? But it was natural that he should also face severe opposition as had come to the share of the other spiritual guides and leaders according to the Divine practice.

The first reason why the *mujaddid* of the fourteenth century *Hijrah* was going to be the Promised Messiah - dominance of Christianity in the world

Apart from what has been mentioned above, there are many other reasons which clearly indicate that the *mujaddid* of the fourteenth century should have been the Promised Messiah of the *ummah* of Muhammad. The *mujaddid* of every century is raised to remedy the particular ailment from which Islam suffers during that period. If we study the condition of the world prior to the fourteenth century we find that Christianity had
made Islam its chief target for attacks. We see Christian missionaries spreading all over the Islamic countries and their onslaughts on Islam increasing in intensity all the time. Many Muslims went over to Christianity and some of them became great enemies of Islam and started a campaign, sometimes unbearable to the Muslims, against the Holy Prophet Muhammad, his companions, his wives, and the pure teachings of the Qur’an. Now look at events which have happened before our eyes and then read the prophecy of the Holy Prophet concerning the descent of the son of Mary - that the coming Messiah will break the Cross. The Cross, in fact, represents the doctrines of Christianity. If this prophecy was not going to be fulfilled in this age, the age of the most distressful time for Islam, when was this prophecy going to be fulfilled then? The teachings of Islam were being attacked from all sides, its virtues were made to appear like vices and all kinds of charges were being fabricated against it. Belief in the doctrine of the Trinity and the crucifixion of Jesus was considered to be the only source of salvation for the world. If the son of Mary, who had to counter the Christian doctrine, did not appear now, when was he going to appear? In short, if on the one hand, the saying of the Holy Prophet that the task of the coming Messiah was the breaking of the Cross, that is, invalidating the false doctrines of Christianity, and on the other, in view of the intensity of Christian attacks against Islam, the only appropriate time was the present century for averting these attacks, then the mujaddid of this century had to be the Promised Messiah of this ummah.

The second reason - present-day condition of the Muslims
If the Messiah of this ummah should be a like of the previous Messiah, as is evident from the Qur’anic verse of istikhalaf,
(24:55), it is necessary that this likeness should become evident in the events surrounding the times and the present age. When we look carefully, we observe that the circumstances with which the Israelite Messiah was faced are more or less being repeated in the fourteenth century of the ummah of Muhammad. The condition of the Muslims represents the same kind of degradation and decline which had taken place among the Israelites at the time of the advent of the Messiah. Israelites had completely lost their kingdom; the kingdoms of Muslims have been lost or have become extremely weak. The rich among the Israelites were fond of living a pleasant life, oblivious of the needs of the community. The same is true of the rich among Muslims. For the sake of religion they are not willing to spend anything. For the needs of their community they act in a niggardly manner but for their own pleasures they spend their wealth lavishly. The ‘ulama of the Children of Israel indulged in an ostentatious style of life and were led far astray from the true path of piety and righteousness. Similar is the condition of the ‘ulama of Islam, with a few exceptions; they are neglectful of the true needs of their religion, unmindful of the propagation of Islam and do not bother at all about dealing with the allegations against Islam by its opponents. The one thing they enjoy most, however, is declaring one another heretics and infidels and as being outside the pale of Islam. They are wasting all their knowledge and energies in minor disputes. As for the sajjadah nashins they also do not pay any attention to the propagation of Islam. Both these groups are mostly concerned with filling up their pockets with money. According to the Qur’an, they belong to the category of: Those who take a small price for the covenant of Allah.

The Qur’an, however, provides us with decisive proof that the mujaddid of the fourteenth century shall, in fact, be the Promised Messiah. Every word of this Book contains such
arguments that after a little deliberation, many complicated problems can be solved. Prophecies concerning the future of Islam found in the Hadith are, in fact, based on the Holy Qur’an, or in other words, are an exposition of the Qur’an. In case of ambiguity, or difference among them, the best method is to go back to the Word of God. Says the Qur’an:

Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will make them rulers (khalifahs) in the earth as he made those before them rulers.  

In this verse the word kama (as) has established a likeness in the khilafat of Moses and that of Muhammad. Again, in the verse: as We sent a messenger to Pharaoh, the word kama (as) shows a resemblance between Moses and Muhammad, (peace be upon both of them). It must be remembered, however, that the resemblance or likeness does not mean that they should resemble in all details; resemblance in the most important aspects of their dispensations is enough. For instance, the resemblance of Moses to the Holy Prophet is not found in every detail but only in the most important aspects of their lives. Moses was granted a Shari’ah (Law) which was a source of guidance to the Israelites in every way. After Moses, there appeared among the Israelites no prophet who brought such a detailed law, although a few commandments were revealed to them according to the needs of the time. When the Holy Prophet appeared, he was also granted a Shari’ah, with the difference that this was meant for the whole of mankind. Similarly, Moses was not only given the Law but he was also granted rulership - this, he did not inherit, but he became a king by virtue of his being a prophet. The same is true about the Holy Prophet. With prophethood he was also granted rulership (kingdom). There is another similarity be-
between the two dispensations. The condition of the Israelites at that time was despicable and with the advent of Moses a new period of honour and glory started for them. Similarly, the condition of the Ishmaelites was not worthy of much mention till the Holy Prophet appeared among them and a new era of fame and prestige began for them. In short, the resemblance which was indicated in the above verse by the word *kama* (as) was found in the most important aspects of these dispensations and not in every detail.

As I mentioned above, to further establish the resemblance between the Holy Prophet and Moses, God also showed some aspects of this resemblance among the successors of the two prophets. The first *khalifah* of Moses Joshua, the son of Nun resembled Hazrat Abu Bakr, the first successor of the Holy Prophet. Both were spiritual leaders and kings. In the later history of Muslims, in some most important respects, the history of the Israelite nation also seems to be repeated. The destruction of Baghdad presents a spectacle of the destruction of Jerusalem which was destroyed twice. And the verse of the Qur’an about the Children of Israel: *Certainly you will make mischief in the land twice*, 21 also refers to Muslims. But the most important aspect of this resemblance which I want to mention here is that, fourteen hundred years after Moses, there occurred a great change in the *khilafah* of Moses, (i.e. the advent of the Messiah and with him the termination of the chain of prophets in the *ummah* of Moses). This kind of change could not happen in the *ummah* of Muhammad because the *khalifahs* in the *ummah* of Moses were going to appear for a limited period but in the *ummah* of Muhammad *khalifahs* were going to appear till the day of Resurrection. As has been mentioned above, the Muslim nation resembled the nation of Moses in many respects; therefore, like the nation of Moses, it was
destined that a Messiah should appear in the nation of Muhammad. This becomes clear to those who study the Traditions of the Holy Prophet. Signs given about the advent of the Promised Messiah and the condition of Muslims at the time of his coming were very similar to the condition of the Israelites at the time of the advent of Jesus Christ. However, the coincidence of events of a certain age does not determine the time of the appearance of a person. Therefore, it was necessary to make the resemblance more conspicuous so that the Messiah in the nation of Moses appeared. Generally it is thought that Jesus appeared fourteen hundred and fifty years after Moses. Even if this view is correct, that is enough to show resemblance between the two events, but the latest researches have made it clear that the time of the advent of Moses was not more than fourteen hundred years before Jesus. This has been admitted by some biblical commentaries. Therefore it was necessary that since Jesus appeared in the beginning of the fourteenth century after Moses, it was also necessary that fourteen hundred years after the advent of the Holy Prophet, the Messiah of this ummah, who was going to be the mujaddid of the fourteenth century, should appear.

Apart from these, there are many other references in the Qur’an and the Hadith which indicate that this fourteenth century was the period for the appearance of the Promised Messiah. That is why most of the people expected the advent of the Messiah during this period. Not only Muslims but Christians also were expecting his second coming because, according to them, all the signs of his coming had been fulfilled. This was the view of the ‘ulama of Islam, too. Nawab Siddiq Hassan Khan, a great Indian scholar had expressed the same view. He had openly admitted in his books that the signs of the coming of the Messiah had appeared. Even before that, Mujaddid Alf
Thani Sirhindi had mentioned in his Letter 68, vol. II of Maktubat, p. 136, that the time of the appearance of the Mahdi was nigh. That means that the remote signs of the appearance of the Mahdi had started to appear and in our age the nearer signs have also been fulfilled. Shah Waliullah of Delhi has derived the period of his coming by the words charagh Din. Nawab Siddiq Hassan Khan Khan gives a clear indication on this point. He says:

“All the minor signs have appeared; total change has taken place in the world and among the people living therein. Islam has become entirely weak, knowledge has been taken away and the spread of ignorance and fallacy is rampant. Wickedness, immorality and corruption, malice, jealousy and extreme love of the mundane things and lack of effort in earning an honest living and becoming negligent of the Last Day and holding the interests of the world over the life Hereafter are the order of the day. These are the main signs of the appearance of this age.”

He goes on to write in a similar strain:

“The occurrence in the thirteenth century of great tribulations and disasters of great intensity is something which was known to all and sundry. We were children and heard the old women saying that even the beasts have sought protection from this century.”

This is the general testimony of the people, that this age was the age of the appearance of the Promised Messiah.

**Signs of the advent of the Promised Messiah**

I have intentionally left out the details of some of the signs because they will unnecessarily prolong the discussion. I have taken only those testimonies which herald the appearance of
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the Messiah and whose fulfilment is agreed to by all. This is, in fact, a criterion for the truthfulness of a claimant. Some of these signs are so clear and evident that every one of them is in itself a proof that the mujaddid of the fourteenth century should be the Promised Messiah of this ummah. For instance, in a hadith concerning the descent of the Messiah it has been clearly stated:

“She-camels will be abandoned, so they will not be used going swiftly” (from one place to another). 24

This shows that the work of transport which is carried out by camels from one place to another will be carried out by some other means (of transport). There is a reference on the subject in the Qur’an also:

And when the camels are abandoned. 25

How clearly has this sign been fulfilled. Then there was another sign, that at the time of the appearance of the Mahdi, during the month of fasting, the moon and the sun would be eclipsed in the same month. This happened in the year 1894 on the 13 Ramadhan when the moon was eclipsed, and the sun was eclipsed on the 28 Ramadhan. Then there was another sign of the appearance of a star having two horns, which has also been fulfilled. Another sign was that from the east fire would emerge, the trace of which would be visible in the sky. Thus from the east such a fire appeared from Java and for six months its glow was visible in the sky. Another sign of this age was that the pilgrimage would be terminated, that is, some temporary obstructions would hinder its performance, and so it happened. Although the House at Makkah would remain a place of asylum and assembly till the day of Resurrection, due to some temporary obstructions the Hajj was intercepted. Then the spread of plague was also one of the signs of the age -
twenty years have passed since this sign was fulfilled in India. There are other signs, too. For instance, different men and nations are being united, circulation of books and papers is going on a large scale, men want to appear like women and women want to appear like men; women are in greater number than men; money lenders are making big profits; adultery, fornication, lust and transgression are found in abundance. Was it possible for a human being to generate all these signs, which were foretold thirteen hundred years ago, at one time by his own efforts?

This is enough to prove that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian was the Promised Messiah, because in this age he was the only claimant to the office of mujaddid of the fourteenth century Hijrah. When he is the mujaddid and he has also foretold of his likeness to the Messiah, then after establishing the death of Jesus and explaining the reality of the descent of the son of Mary, there is no room left except to accept his claim of Messiahship. The exposition of a prophecy is generally hidden from common eyes and made clear at the hand of one who comes to fulfil that prophecy, because the reality of a thing is only known at a time when its manifestation is shortly due. Assuming the descent of the son of Mary meant the physical coming of Jesus from above, the claim of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam is not right. But if the descent of Jesus did not mean his actual coming, then Hazrat Mirza is that person who has fulfilled that prophecy because he has solved the mystery surrounding this great problem. This problem had become so complicated that nobody could clear it up by his own efforts unless he was divinely guided.

Apart from these, the Divine practice is that prophecies are covered with a veil till the time comes for their fulfilment. All
the great prophecies which were related to the Holy Prophet were not applied by any other person to himself, as for instance, the prophecy of Moses that a prophet like him would be raised among his brethren or the prophecy of Jesus that after him the Paraclete would come who would guide everyone to all truth.

The true nature of these prophecies only became manifest at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet. Similarly, at the advent of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, not only the truth of the prophecy about the descent of the son of Mary, but also all the prophecies relating to the latter ages, became clear. The appearance of the Anti-Christ, the dominance of Gog and Magog, the rising of the sun from the West, were all extremely complicated matters. I propose to discuss them in detail in another book.

Three main works of the coming Messiah
There is another aspect to this problem - whether the work which the Messiah had to do was in effect accomplished by the Promised Messiah or not. What actually was that work? It was the formation of a great movement for the propagation of Islam as has clearly been mentioned in the Qur'an:

And from among you there should be a party who invite to good.

It is this work that Muslims in this age had almost neglected.

The second special work assigned to the coming Messiah was “the breaking of the cross,” which clearly shows that this age will witness the dominance of the Christian religion and the work of the Promised Messiah will be to remove the mistakes of Christian doctrines about Jesus.
The third thing which we particularly notice in the work of the Messiah is the Divine promise which is found in the verse:

\[
\text{that He may cause it to prevail over all religions.}^{30}
\]

That is, his work was going to make Islam dominant over all other religions. The commentators of the Qur’an have agreed that this dominance would take place during the time of the Promised Messiah. Some of them admitted that this dominance would not be by sword but by arguments and reasoning, as is mentioned \textit{Ruh al-Ma’ani}:

\[
\text{“It is said that dominance means to reach the height by clarity of arguments and the light of (spiritual) proofs.”}
\]

Thus these were the three important tasks assigned to the Messiah and we have to see whether or not Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him), was able to accomplish them all.

The first task of the Messiah was to prepare a \textit{jama’at} for the propagation of Islam - the Founder of the Movement succeeded in doing so

The first priority for the Founder of the Movement was to establish an organisation for the propagation of Islam and this is now an accomplished fact. In this age, when Muslims had become entirely neglectful of this mission, the Founder of the movement established a \textit{jama’at} exclusively for disseminating the knowledge of Islam all over the world. That zeal of propagating Islam was inborn in him, as was shown by his activities prior to his being appointed a \textit{mujaddid}. When he was appointed a \textit{mujaddid}, he was divinely commissioned to form a \textit{jama’at}. The pledge he asked the members to take was:
He would remind his followers again and again that the only purpose of his advent was to manifest the truth of Islam to the world. When Muslims were generally negligent of the needs of their religion it was the Founder of the movement who started an organisation solely for the propagation of Islam. It was generally thought that the best way to serve Muslims was to think of some stratagems to improve their worldly conditions. This was not what the Founder had planned. He founded an organisation purely for the sake of propagating Islam and he did succeed in his mission.

The second task of the Messiah

The second task of the Messiah was the “breaking of the cross”; that is, removing the mistakes of the Christian doctrines about Jesus. This work was, in fact, done by the Qur’an, but some errors had crept in among Muslims on account of which they became neglectful of this work. One of these errors was that Jesus was alive in heaven. Christians took great advantage of it and used it as a great weapon against Islam and thus misled many Muslims from the straight path. As a matter of fact, the belief in the death of Jesus Christ, which is the basis of the claim of the Promised Messiah, completely destroys the foundation of the Christian doctrines, for if Jesus did not rise from the dead and is not still alive, then the doctrines of Atonement and the Trinity do not have a leg to stand on. Jesus in that case did not bear the sins of mankind and could not be raised to the pedestal of godhead, but being a mortal, and like a righteous servant, was saved from the accursed death of the cross and later on died a natural death like other messengers. These are not just mere claims but are facts which are corroborated by the scriptural history of Christianity. Christians have them-
selves admitted that if Jesus was saved from death on the cross and died a natural death there is not a hope for the Christian religion to survive. Thus the task of breaking the cross was, truly, accomplished by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. It is, however, true that those raised by God for the reformation of mankind only come to sow the seed. In a similar way, the foundation of this work has been laid down by the Promised Messiah. Along with it God has created such conditions that people on their own are becoming disenchanted with the Christian doctrines because these doctrines cannot stand any rational test. A very large number of Christians now regard Jesus as a moral preceptor only, as an example for their practical lives. In fact, they neither consider him God nor his blood as an atonement for their sins. With a little consideration, one can arrive at the conclusion that the Christian beliefs are on the wane in the hearts of men. Actually, no other Messiah is needed for breaking the Cross now; the work has already been started. This, then, was the time for the appearance of the Messiah - when the Christian religion was in its full ascendancy.

No sword is needed for the proclamation of Islam
The third work for the coming Messiah was to bring about the dominance of Islam by spiritual proofs and intellectual arguments against all religions. First of all, the thought should be discarded from one’s mind that Jesus, (peace be on him), would convert people to Islam by the sword. Islam was never spread by the sword nor would the sword ever be needed for its propagation. It was only the truth of its principles that made Islam conquer the hearts of men and the same will happen in the future. The Holy Prophet did not need the sword for the propagation of Islam, nor can religion ever be propagated by means of the sword. The Holy Prophet had to wage wars only
in self-defence and those wars were needed till religious freedom was established for all. As regards Islamic wars, it is clearly mentioned in the Qur'an that their objective was that the cloisters of monks and Christian churches, synagogues and mosques should be saved from being pulled down. Thus the Messiah of this ummah will only follow the practice of his Prophet, that is, he cannot wage a war for the propagation of Islam. There is religious freedom found in this country. Nobody is killed for accepting Islam nor is anyone driven from his home. Therefore, as the previous Messiah had no concern with the sword, so too, during the time of the Messiah of the Muslim ummah, God has created such conditions that he and his jama’at will not need any sword to spread Islam; the message will be spread by spiritual signs and intellectual arguments. That is the way Islam will gain dominance over other religions.

The significance of predominance (izhar) of religion
It is worth remembering that the predominance of Islam does not at all mean that all the other religions will perish from the face of the earth. This itself is against the teachings of the Qur’an, which says that differences among religions will always exist:

   and they cease not to differ.  

The predominance of religion, however, means that one religion will dominate the others and, in general, learned and intelligent people will accept it and its followers will surpass in numbers the followers of other religions and nobody will be able to defeat it by intellectual arguments.

Signs for the predominance of Islam are in sight
If we look carefully we will notice that clear signs for the predominance of Islam are visible. The Founder of the
Ahmadiyya Movement has laid down a few principles, derived from the Qur’an, against which the followers of other religions find themselves helpless. Moreover, the world has taken a new turn. Communications and personal contact among men and nations by correspondence and other means have increased immensely, and it seems as if different countries have become like different wards of the same town and the difficulties which were found in conveying some message to another part of the world have disappeared. Another point in support of the predominance of Islam is that a natural desire has been created generally in the hearts of men to investigate the tenets and beliefs of other religions. The religious fanaticism or hatred of earlier times is gradually becoming a thing of the past. Even the followers of Christianity, who, on account of their strange beliefs and principles, considered all other religions false and of satanic origin, are now admitting that there is some truth in other religions as well. Religious meetings are now held for the comparative study of different faiths. Nothing like that has happened before in the world. Similarly, a change is observed in literature published on religious subjects where, again, religions are studied on a comparative basis. All these conditions lead to the conclusion that this is the age destined for the predominance of Islam in the world.

**A principle of profound value**

While making a comparative study of religions, a very sound principle was advanced by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. The principle is that any book which is considered the revealed word of God should not only lay down the basic doctrines of religion in clear terms, but should also furnish relevant arguments and proofs to support them. If that book refutes a false doctrine, it should do so by giving adequate reasons for doing so. The Founder followed this prin-
ciple every time he was engaged in a religious controversy, or at the time of making a comparative study of religions. In the year 1893, while having a debate with a Christian missionary, ‘Abdullah Atham, he strictly adhered to this principle during the course of his discussion. In an inter-faith meeting at Lahore in 1896, he also brought this point to the notice of the audience and in his other writings also he emphasised it repeatedly. It is no exaggeration to say that no one in Islamic history has ever brought this principle forward at the time of a religious controversy. This is such a strong and valid proof for the truthfulness of the teachings of the Qur’an that no follower of any religion has so far been able to adhere to this principle in proving the truthfulness of his respective religion. And this point, according to the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, is of the greatest value as far as the teachings of the Qur’an are concerned. All other scriptures, except the Qur’an, fall short of this standard. Obviously, when heavenly books are silent on a subject and say nothing in support of their doctrines, what right does a humble follower have to advance arguments based on his own human knowledge and present them as if they are of heavenly origin? The real object of religion is to offer man light and guidance which he cannot discover by his own intellect. When that basic guidance is not found in those scriptures, unlike the Qur’an, how can they be of any use to their followers?

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement addressed himself to the followers of all religions
The excellence of Islam, the Holy Prophet, and the Qur’an which the Founder has expounded in his writings and the replies he gave to various objections raised against Islam cannot all be discussed in this small treatise; this would need another book on the subject. The real mission of the Founder in
defence of Islam began with his book, *Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah*, which he started writing in 1880. For about thirty years, that is, till his death in 1908, he was busy in the service of Islam. He wrote about eighty books, the greater part of which deals with giving decisive proofs for the validity and superiority of Islam over other religions. According to the Qur’anic verse:

...that He (God) may cause it (Islam) to prevail over all religions,

the Founder addressed himself to all religions. He pointed out mistakes in their doctrines; he dealt with the objections of those who denied God; those who denied the institution of prophethood; and those who denied the Unity of Godhead. He pointed out the doctrinal errors of Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Arya Samaj and Brahmu Samaj. He showed that the Qur’an dealt with all these errors in a comprehensive manner. To Sikhism, his approach was that its founder, Guru Baba Nanak, was, in fact, a follower of the teachings of Islam - he believed in the Unity of Godhead (Tauhid) and regarded the Qur’an as a source of salvation; he prayed in the Muslim way, kept the fast, performed the pilgrimage, and conformed to the other articles of Islamic faith.

**How to solve the internal disputes among Muslims**

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement not only effectively dealt with the basic doctrines of other religions but he also directed his attention towards finding a solution for the internal disputes among Muslims. According to the Hadith, the Promised Messiah was going to play the role of an arbiter and judge for Muslims also. About the Shi’ah sect, he wrote a separate book. In respect of other differences among Muslims he dealt with the subject at several places in his books. Most of the disputes among Muslims arise out of different traditions (riwayat). Therefore, he laid down a principle that
any tradition which is not in accordance with the Qur’an and is against it, is not acceptable, because the Qur’an has precedence over Hadith. This principle alone is sufficient to settle all the internal disputes among Muslims. There is indeed one Book for the whole of the Muslim ummah and if traditions are made subservient to this Book, it can bring about unity among Muslims and all their minor differences can be settled.

A unique hero
In short, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement was a unique hero in the field of religion in this age. He wielded his pen to refute all false doctrines and gave the right direction in all religious controversies. He showed the world the bright face of Islam. In the inter-faith meeting at Lahore, the reply to the five questions he gave according to the Qur’an impressed everybody and all of them unanimously agreed that his treatise surpassed all others presented at that meeting. The amount of work the Founder did in the field of religion is such that its parallel cannot be found in the life span of a person during the last thirteen hundred years. This proves that through him was fulfilled the Divine promise that God will cause Islam to prevail over all religions. Now it is up to his jama’at to carry on this mission of showing the beautiful face of Islam to the world; that is the only purpose for which this jama’at was founded.

This chapter is headed: “Messiah of the Muslim ummah”, and I have not mentioned the Mahdi. In fact, I need not write much on this point. If the Messiah and Mahdi were two separate persons who were going to appear in the Muslim ummah, then it was impossible for Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim to omit mentioning the prophecies concerning the appearance of the Mahdi in their collections. This shows that either Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim did not consider the traditions about
the Mahdi authentic or they did not regard the Messiah and Mahdi as two separate persons. This view is supported by a hadith mentioned in Ibn Majah which says:

“There is no Mahdi except ‘Isa.”

This hadith has been mentioned by Hakim in Mustadrak also. Similarly, in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad, while talking about the descent of the Messiah, it has been mentioned about him:

“Iam, Mahdi, arbiter and judge, thus he will break the cross and kill the swine.”

Here the coming Messiah has also clearly been called the Mahdi. Thus the authentic traditions rather agree on this that there is no separate Mahdi, and Isa is, in fact, the Mahdi. Traditions about a warrior Mahdi have been considered defective by the great scholars such as Ibn Khaldun. And their omission by Bukhari and Muslim in their collections show that such traditions are defective.

Footnotes on Chapter VII

1 62:2-3.
2 2:128.
3 2:129.
4 Ahmad ibn Hanbal, p.262.
5 6:2.
6 3:48.
7 3:47.
8 Ch. IV : 10, 11, 12. see Luke 1:17.
9 Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah, p. 499, sub-footnote.
10 Ibid., sub-footnote, pp. 499-500.
11 4:59.
12 Even a prophet can make a mistake in interpreting a prophecy or a dream.
13 John 1:25
The Second Coming of Jesus

14 Matthew 11:14.
16 Tuhfa-i Baghdad, p.20
17 Occupiers of the places which were once the spiritual seats of the renowned Muslim saints or Sufis (with their graves generally found within the premises). (SMT)
18 3:76. This is true even today. Appeal from the custodian of the Shrine of Ajmer (India), which is regularly sent to persons and institutions all over the world, is self-explanatory.
19 24:55.
20 73:15.
21 17:4.
22 Hujaj al-Kiramah, p. 394.
23 Ibid. p. 395.
26 Deut. 18:18.
27 John 14:16.
29 3:103.
31 22:40.
32 11:118.
33 Ref. Teachings of Islam. It is surprising that some of the basic dogmas accepted by the followers of various religions do not find any support in their religious scriptures. For example, the doctrine of the Trinity is not mentioned in the Gospels, nor is the theory of Re-incarnation mentioned in the Vedas. The Old Testament does mention belief in God, but no argument or proof is given in support of it. The Qur’an on the other hand does talk of the Unity of God but also gives reasons for accepting such a belief. (SMT).
35 Sirr al-Khilafah.
In spite of the weaknesses and discrepancies of the reports about the Mahdi their collective evidence cannot be rejected.

There is a clear distinction between the two sets of reports, one relating to the advent of the Messiah and the other to the appearance of the Mahdi. The reports about the Messiah have been accepted by all the great authorities of Hadith whereas the reports relating to the Mahdi have been rejected not only by Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim but also by many eminent scholars of Hadith. There is no doubt that all these reports have been greatly tampered with for various reasons, so much so, that even those who believe in the coming of the Mahdi only accept the fundamental fact of his advent. Because of the extreme differences and discrepancies found in their details, they refuse to approve of these reports in toto. Nawab Siddiq Hasan (an Ahl-i Hadith scholar of India), who was expecting an early advent of the Mahdi, even during his lifetime, wrote: “There is no doubt in it that the bases of these reports are very often defective.” 1 At another place, in the same book, he has written that all the details about the reports of the Mahdi only show this much, that he will certainly appear, though his appearance may occur in any form. The question here naturally arises: when Bukhari and Muslim have not accepted these reports and other scholars of Hadith have also regarded their bases as defective, why should these not be considered as ab-
olutely weak or fabricated and be rejected entirely? The attitude, that if there is discrepancy in details the basic fact itself should be rejected, does not only go against all the principles of accepting Hadith but also of history. On the other hand, the difference in the details shows that there is somewhere a fundamental reality behind all this. If, in reports relating to the Mahdi different parties for their own ulterior motives have mixed up false reports, this is quite feasible, although this again proves that behind these reports there is something substantial which both parties had wanted to seize upon to serve their own ends. The original is, therefore, grossly distorted. When historical reports (and even a non-believer in ahadith gives at least this much status to them) differ in details, the common factor among them is at least accepted as true. In reports concerning the Mahdi, the appearance of the Mahdi himself is such a common factor; therefore, this at any rate cannot be put aside. The reason why Bukhari and Muslim did not accept them is the weak and defective way they were reported. But when weak and defective reports have at least gained historical status, then according to the rule of history we are forced to consider and accept their common and collective testimony as true. Besides that, we cannot reject the possibility of different persons being referred to in these reports, and that some signs may be fulfilled in one person and others in another as the word mahdi is also used in a very broad sense. It means one who is guided and the heir to all truths and in whom the attribute “Guide” for God is fully represented and thus this word can be applied to every guided person as, for instance, the first four righteous successors of the Holy Prophet have also been called Mahdis. In his Tarikh, Imam Suyuti has reported a saying of Wahb ibn Munabih: “If there has been any mahdi in this ummah it is ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-Aziz.” 2 In view of this wide significance, if different signs are fulfilled in different persons, they can all be called mahdis.
Common factors in the reports about the **Mahdi**

*Abu Dawud* and *Tirmidhi* mention a report by Ibn Mas‘ud that “the world will not come to an end unless a person from the people of my house becomes the ruler of Arabia and his name will be identical to mine”.

A report from Umm Salamah reads thus: “The **Mahdi** is from me, having a bright forehead, a high nose and will fill this earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and violence.”

In *Abu Dawud* it has been again mentioned that Hadrat ‘Ali looked towards his son, Hasan, and said “A person will be born from your seed whose name will be the name of your Prophet and he will resemble him in disposition but not in outward forms.”

In the *Musnad* of Ahmad it is again reported from ‘Ali that the Holy Prophet said: The **Mahdi** is from the people of my house.

In another report we find: Even if a day is left from the age of this world, God will certainly raise a person from among us who will fill the whole world with justice as it was filled with oppression.”

In another report by Ibn Mas‘ud it has been mentioned that: “There will be no *Qiyamah* unless there is a person from among the people of my house who is raised as a ruler, whose name will be my name.”

There are many reports by Abu Sa‘id Khudri. In one of them we find “The **Mahdi** will be from my ummah.... will fill the earth with fairness and justice,” and in another “I give you the glad tidings of the **Mahdi** who will be raised in my ummah at a time of digression of and distress to people. He will fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and violence.”

In yet another it has been stated: “He said that we feared that new things would crop up after the Holy Prophet, then we asked him and he said: The **Mahdi** will be raised in my ummah, five, seven or nine (years).” Similarly Ibn ‘Asakir has reported in his *Tarikh*: “A person from the family of Hasan will appear from the Eastern countries. Even if mountains stand in his
way he will demolish them and make his way through.” 12 In Tibrani and Abu Na‘im the following report occurs: “I swear by my Lord Who appointed me with truth, that the Mahdi of this ummah will be of these two that is i.e., of Hasan and Husain.” 13 And it is reported from Dar Qutni that: “The Mahdi will be from the family of my uncle ‘Abbas.” 14 Yet there is another report which reads: “O ‘Abbas ! God started this matter with me and will end it with a young man of your progeny who will fill this earth with justice as it was filled with violence.” 15 There is a report in Ibn Majah: “There is no Mahdi except ‘Isa.” 16

Now the common factors in these reports are reduced to this, that a mahdi would appear in this ummah in the later ages having a strong resemblance with the Holy Prophet and filling the earth with equity and justice. But these reports differ as to which family he would belong. He might be from me (i.e., the Holy Prophet), or from the people of his house, or from the seed of Hasan and Husain, or of Ibn ‘Abbas and it has also been mentioned that he might be only a person from the nation of Muhammad. The reports of his being from the seed of Hasan, Husain or ‘Abbas, definitely contradict one another. Therefore, this part of the reports has to be given up, but the reports which contain expressions such as from me, from the people of my house, from my ummah, can easily be reconciled, for they may imply his spiritual resemblance to the Holy Prophet, as he is reported to have said about Salman of Persia:

“Salman is from the people of my house.” 17

Similar expressions have been used as well for other persons. Thus a member of this ummah having a strong resemblance to the Holy Prophet can be regarded as from him or from the
people of his house. The common factor in these reports, therefore, is that the Mahdi will be a person belonging to the nation of Muhammad. This view is supported by the report in Ibn Majah where only ‘Isa has been called Mahdi.

Another important point which is clear from these reports is about the Divine appointment (bi‘that) of the Mahdi. Now the word appointment for human beings (in Islamic terminology) is used either for prophets or for mujaddids. But as prophethood has come to an end with the Holy Prophet, therefore the Mahdi can be raised in this nation only as a mujaddid. As to the reports in which his equity and justice have been mentioned, it must be borne in mind that one type of law and order is the responsibility of the government of the day and the other type of justice is connected with the appointed ones (mamurin) of God whether they are in possession of temporal power or not. What type of justice has been referred to in these reports will be discussed later. Oppression and violence which have been particularly mentioned here are the same which have been spread by the followers of the Religion of the Cross. On the one hand, they have raised a humble servant of God to the pedestal of Divinity as the Qur’an says: The heaven may almost be rent thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down into pieces, that they ascribe a son to the Beneficent! and, on the other, they have inflicted sufferings on their fellow beings by their peculiar philosophy that it is only the white people who have the right to rule over other nations, the latter being created for the service of the whites.

**Whether the Mahdi will spread Islam by the sword**

Strangely enough, a common misconception prevalent among Muslims about the Mahdi - that he will spread Islam at the
point of the sword - has not been mentioned at all in these reports. Not only Muslims but non-Muslims as well have come to associate the very name of *Mahdi* with bloodshed and fighting. The book, *Iqtarab al-Sa’ah*, supposed to be written by the son of Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan, contains the following words about the *Mahdi*: “He will call people towards God with the sword. The one who refuses will be killed.” 19

When we look into the *ahadith* we find only the words *yamlik al-‘Arab*, that is, he will be the ruler of Arabia, and “for the spread of equity and justice on earth” he has also been mentioned in these reports. The words *yamlik al-‘Arab* which confine his territory to Arabia are either an interpolation of a reporter or are meant for another person whose kingdom will be limited to Arabia. 20 Reference to his kingdom on one side and the abundance of wealth on the another may have led people to believe that the *Mahdi* would propagate Islam with force. This view is supported by a statement in *Iqtarab al-Sa‘ah* which says that: “Wars will be waged at his hand, treasures will be dug out, city after city will be conquered from East to West.” 21 It seems that on account of such conjectures the wrong conception of a warrior *Mahdi* gradually got its way among Muslims. Some reports might have also been fabricated in this connection. But the *Sihah Sittah* (six authentic collections of *Hadith*), and the *Musnad* of Ahmad, which refer to the benevolence of the *Mahdi* do not mention any report to show that the *Mahdi* will wage wars or conquer the whole world or convert unbelievers to Islam at the point of the sword. How was it possible, when the coming of such a *Mahdi* was decidedly against the clear verdict of the Qur’an that: “There is no compulsion in religion.” 22 How indeed could such a *mahdi* come who would act against this injunction and wield the sword to convert people to Islam?
This wrong conception was removed by the *Mahdi* himself

May God bless Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian for completely rooting out the false conception of the *Mahdi* spreading Islam with the sword, for this has opened the eyes of Muslims and has made them realise that the story which was forged by their enemies to stem the progress of Islam was unwittingly accepted by Muslims themselves. Had there been no other argument for his being a *mahdi*, this alone was sufficient to prove that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s claim of being the guided one, the *Mahdi* of God, was correct. The greatest obstacle today in the progress of Islam is the world-wide misconception that Islam was propagated at the point of the sword. The enemies of Islam made full use of this weapon to scare the people away even from the name of Islam. As for Muslims themselves, instead of removing this blot from the beautiful face of Islam, they lent a helping hand to its opponents by their wrong belief in a warrior *mahdi*. No doubt there had been other Muslim scholars also who had rejected the reports about the advent of the *Mahdi*, or doubted their authenticity, such as Ibn Khaldun and the Mu‘tazalites, but it had no general effect on Muslims. There was also a reason for this attitude, because the complete rejection of these reports meant the rejection of a fundamental reality as well, that, is the coming of the *Mahdi* himself, which was basically true and was a prophecy of the Prophet Muhammad. It was necessary, therefore, that unless the truth had manifested itself and the promised *Mahdi* had come, correct interpretation of this prophecy could not have been established to the general body of Muslims. When the real claimant appeared, he sifted out the truth from falsehood and showed in what way the true part of the prophecy was fulfilled. The rest he showed was added either by the carelessness of the reporters or by wilful interpolation.
There have been, of course, several other claimants to mahdihood, but every one of them was interested in his own person and claim and cared nothing about making Islam free from false objections. Every one picked up certain words and expressions from the reports and tried to apply them to himself but paid no attention to the removal of this false belief that Islam was propagated by the sword. There had been some pious persons from among these claimants as well and they might have identified their own temporal victory with the victory of Islam, but the extermination of this outlandish conception of a warrior mahdi who would wield the sword for the spread of Islam was destined to take place at the hands of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, and thus was removed a great obstacle which stood in the way of the progress of Islam. His claim to being the Mahdi showed to the world that the secret and glory of Islam was correlated with such a claim. Not one, but let hundreds of such claimants appear for the glory and success of Islam, and Muslims should welcome them with open arms. To obstruct their cause, because of suspicions and misunderstandings, is to obstruct the cause of Islam and the Muslim nation. Hazrat Ahmad was no doubt a claimant to mahdihood but he made his claim a source of the onward march of Islam. The prophecy relating to the Mahdi has been fulfilled today with such clarity that the fundamental fact behind it has gradually been accepted by all Muslims. The conception that Islam was, or will be, thrust upon non-Muslims with the sword is losing its hold on their minds. Islam has never stood in need of violence for its progress, and never shall a time come when such a course will be applied for its propagation. Even non-Muslims have also started to realise that the advancement of Islam was simply due to its spiritual force and not to the use of any sword. And it is indeed a fact that the real success of Islam was brought about not by a pow-
erful emperor, but its conquests were mainly due to its dy-
namic spiritual force. The following passage by an American 
scholar confirms this view:

“The other great religions won their way slowly, by 
painful struggle, and finally triumphed with the aid of 
powerful monarchs converted to the new faith. Chris-
tianity had its Constantine, Buddhism its Asoka, Zo-
roastrianism its Cyrus, each lending to his chosen cult 
the mighty force of secular authority. Not so with Is-
lam. Arising in a desert land sparsely inhabited by a 
nomad race, previously undistinguished in human ann-
als, Islam sallied forth on its great adventure with the 
slenderest human backing and against the heaviest 
material odds.”

In short, the real Mahdi of Islam is he who has clarified the 
real meaning of mahdihood and has shown to the world that 
the Mahdi of Islam is a spiritual mahdi and that Islam’s suc-
cess depends on its intrinsic spiritual values and not on out-
ward force.

**Messiah and Mahdi are one**

There was yet another great misunderstanding about the Mahdi 
which the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement removed. 
The Messiah and the Mahdi were considered to be two sepa-
rate persons although it was indicated in a report of Ibn Majah. 
“There is no mahdi except ‘Isa.”

There is a great positiv-
ness about these words that there is no other mahdi. This can 
only be interpreted that the Promised Mahdi is another name 
of the Promised Messiah. If the name mahdi in some other 
reports has been given to someone else, it is to be accepted in 
a general way, as for instance, the first four Khalifahs have 
also been called mahdis. ‘Umar ibn Abd al-`Aziz, too, has
been given this name. Now this report of Ibn Majah could not be untrue as it was against the general conception among Muslims about the Mahdi and such a thought could not have occurred to the reporters. On the other hand, this hadith supports the reports by Bukhari and Muslim as they also mention the coming of only one person in later ages, and that is Jesus. The coming of any other person is not at all mentioned in these two authentic collections (Sahihain). Thus the report of Ibn Majah has made it clear that if in some reports the appearance of the Mahdi is suggested besides the coming of Jesus Christ, this also refers to Jesus. Here we should stop and think that if we do not try to solve the difficulties involved in the reports about the Mahdi in the light of this hadith we shall have to admit that with the exception of Al-Bukhari and Al-Muslim, other works of the Sihah Sittah (the six authentic collections of reports) have incorporated a lot of fabricated matter in their collections. If these reports were not fabricated, why did Bukhari and Muslim reject a prophecy of such magnitude and did not even care to mention it in their works? The report of Ibn Majah: “There is no mahdi except ‘Isa” solves both these difficulties. Al-Bukhari and al-Muslim have only reported the second name of this reformer and other books of Sihah have mentioned both names: ‘Isa and Mahdi.

This is not the only hadith which shows that the Messiah and the Mahdi are one, for if we carefully study other reports, they also point towards the same conclusion. Evidently there cannot be two amirs (leaders) or khalifahs at one and the same time. Hazrat Abu Bakr immediately after the death of the Holy Prophet gave a reply to the Ansars (Helpers) who said: “One leader from us and one from you,” that this was not possible and there could not be two leaders at the same time. If this report is true, how could there be two leaders,
The Mahdi

that is, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, simultaneously? If it is said that one will be an assistant to the other then we do not find that mentioned in the reports. Both the Messiah and the Mahdi have been called imams. In Al-Bukhari and Al-Muslim: imamu-kum minkum and amma-kum minkum occur for the Promised Messiah who has also been called arbiter and judge. Hakam and imam are identical. In the Musnad of Ahmad, he has been clearly referred to as “arbiter, judge and imam.” 28 About the Mahdi, it is a wide-spread belief that he will be an imam and some think that he will be a king also. In this case, the Messiah must be his wazir (minister, assistant). On the other hand, it is also acknowledged that the Messiah will be superior to the Mahdi as Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan quotes in his book, a saying by Imam Shaukani: “There is no doubt that Jesus is superior to the Mahdi.” 29

At any rate there can be only one imam at a time and when Jesus and the Mahdi are both called imam then it necessarily follows that Jesus and the Mahdi are also one.

The third argument in favour of this view is that the Promised Messiah has also been called mahdi in the reports. Accordingly, there is a hadith from Abu Hurairah to the effect that: “Whoever lives from among you shall meet Jesus, son of Mary, who is imam, mahdi, arbiter and judge.” 30 Besides all this, if we look deep into the matter we observe many other similarities showing that these are only two different names of one person. The time of their advent is the same, they shall have the same office, the same work, and the same complexion, so how can they be two separate persons? That the time of their appearance is the same is acknowledged by all. About their office, I have discussed above that both of them have been called imam, amir, khalifah and mahdi. Their work and du-
ties are also the same. The making of Islam dominant over other religions is the work of the Messiah and the same has been assigned to the *Mahdi* as well, so much so that the breaking of the Cross and killing the swine, thought to be the special duties of the Messiah, have also been attributed to the *Mahdi*, as has been mentioned in *Hujaj al-Kiramah*:

“The religion of Islam in his time will be established as it had been in the age of grace of the Prophet Muhammad. He will be a ruler over all the world and shall break the Cross and kill the swine. All these signs have been briefly discussed by Ibn Hajar in connection with the coming of the *Mahdi*.”  

The spreading of peace and justice has also been assigned to both. It is frequently reported about the *Mahdi* that he will fill the earth with justice and the Messiah has also been called arbiter and judge. Their complexion is also the same. The coming Messiah is of wheatish colour, and a quotation to that effect has been given before. The *Mahdi* is of the same complexion as is found in a report by Na‘im ibn Hammad that: “He will be of wheatish complexion from among the people (of the land).”

A prophecy becomes a great miracle after its fulfilment
The prophecy about the advent of the *Mahdi* is from among those prophecies which relate to this age. The *mujaddid* of this century has shed such light on them that all the darkness which surrounded them has been dispelled and they have become a manifest sign of the truth of the Holy Prophet. These prophecies were buried under so many obscurities that there were many who denied their authenticity and even those who believed in them were also bewildered (at the great contradictory mass of such reports) and were at times inclined almost
towards its rejection. Accordingly it was said: “We admit that the Mahdi will not appear. What harm is there if he does not?”

Or: “Leave the Mahdi aside. The descent of Jesus is at least unanimously agreed upon by Christians and Muslims alike. Let him descend.”

In another book it has been mentioned that: “We admit that the Mahdi may not come. This does not contradict any important belief of the people of Islam. But the son of Mary will indeed appear according to all of them. May God bring him soon, for his coming as well will serve the same purpose for which we expect the advent of the Mahdi.”

That person (Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) has indeed rendered a great service to Muslims for he has removed all the cobwebs from these prophecies and has thus placed before us clear evidence of the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet. It is easy to ask: “What difference does it make to Islam whether the Mahdi comes or not?” But the first advantage of the Mahdi’s advent has been that it has brought to light a new testimony in favour of Islam, or in other words, a miracle of Islam has manifested itself in this age. The miracles of all the prophets have come to an end with their death but the miracles of the Prophet Muhammad have continued to manifest themselves ever since and will remain so till the Last Day. As a matter of fact, the faith which the fulfilment of a prophecy creates in one’s heart is not created even at the occurrence of a great miracle, because a miracle may contain some elements of doubt in it, but the fulfilment of a prophecy is in fact a “talking witness” which stands before friends and foes alike. Moreover, at the occurrence of a miracle, there are only a few persons present who witness its truth but a prophecy after its fulfilment does not stand in need of any other evidence. It becomes evidence in itself. Has that person not done any service to Islam when he explained the hidden truths behind these prophecies and has thus helped to strengthen our faith in Is-
Islam? Hazrat Ahmad’s interpretations concerning the prophecies about the Mahdi do not seem to be the result of his intellectual investigations but were the work of Divine light given to him which helped him to discover the truth underlying these reports. This discovery consisted of two great facts. Firstly, it was wrong to associate the name of Mahdi with the sword and to believe, as the opponents did, that Islam was spread at the point of the sword, and, secondly, that Jesus and the Mahdi were not two separate persons but two names of the same reformer.

**The significance of the two names**

As has been discussed above, there was a profound reality hidden behind these two names. Therefore, the mujaddid of this age was assigned two great tasks which entitled him to receive the names of Messiah and Mahdi. On the one hand, Islam had a big encounter with Christianity, for, according to the Qur’an and the Hadith, Christianity was going to attain great power in the world, and, on the other, the present age was particularly suited for the propagation of Islam among Christians. Islam had won the hearts of millions of people of other religions before, but Christianity had not offered its due quota to Islam. It was, however, destined that the sun of Islam should rise over Eastern countries first. Therefore it was mostly in the East that the light of Islam spread in the beginning, but, then according to the law of nature, this sun was going to shine over the Western countries as well. In a report of the Holy Prophet, this had been described as the rising of the sun in the West. Again, it is to this same phenomenon that the Holy Prophet has referred: “I have been given two treasures; one red (Eastern nations), and another, white (Western nations).” As the encounter with Christianity and the propagation of Islam in Christendom were the two tasks of the
mujaddid of this age, therefore the title Ibn Maryam or `Isa was given to him. He mentions that fact in the following couplet:

As I have been given light for the Christian People,
For this reason the name of the Son of Mary has been given to me.

Further, because he was commissioned to strengthen the inner solidarity of Islam, to save Muslims from going to immoderate extremes, to cure them of the habit of takfir (denunciation of Muslims as heretics), and to place before them the sublime object of the preaching of Islam, which was in fact the object of the life of the Prophet Muhammad, therefore, the name Mahdi was also given to the mujaddid of this age. The only reality behind all this is that the perfect mujaddid of the fourteenth century was like the full moon that was going to shine on the world. For shedding the light of Islam in the Christian world he was called the Messiah or Son of Mary, and for illuminating the hearts of Muslims with the light of Islam he was called the Mahdi. That is why the Holy Prophet declared: “He has been given my name.” 38 The point that the Mahdi is superior to Jesus, though Jesus was a prophet of God, only means that, as the Mahdi, he will manifest the truth of Muhammad and, as the Messiah, the truth of Jesus, the former being superior to the latter; it is because of this that the Mahdi is superior to Jesus.

**Other prophecies about the Mahdi**

Prophecies about the advent of the Messiah and the Mahdi have been discussed by me elsewhere. Here I will only like to make mention of the place of his advent. There is no doubt that some reports also suggest Makkah or Madinah as the place of his appearance and the sanctity of these places might
have turned the attention of the reporters towards these towns. But there are reports which not only indicate the place of his advent in the East, but even his companions are also reported to be from among the Eastern people. The reporters’ own imagination in normal circumstances could not have gone to that extent. Accordingly, the following are the words of the reports of Abu Na‘im and Ibn ‘Asakir: “From the offspring of Hasan ibn ‘Ali, a person (i.e., the Mahdi) will appear from the East. If mountains are in his way he will demolish them and make his way through.” 39 Here the reference to his being the offspring of Hassan ibn ‘Ali has been due to the wrong impression that the Messiah and the Mahdi were considered to be two different persons. A report in Ibn Majah says: “Some people will come out from the East and will support the Mahdi that is, they will help him in his domination.” 40 Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan also writes:

“Men of Divine gnosis will enter into fealty with the Mahdi by God’s guidance and Divine visions. Holy people will be with him to strengthen his message and to support him ... There will be nine persons in the footsteps of the Companions (of the Prophet); they will prove true their covenant which they made with Allah. They will all be non-Arabs (‘ajami) and none will be an Arab from among them.” 41

If the companions and supporters of the Mahdi are non-Arabs, it clearly shows that the place of his advent is not Makkah, but some other country outside Arabia, and it has just been stated that his companions would be coming from the East. Undoubtedly, in view of this, the place of the Mahdi’s advent should also be an Eastern country as has been mentioned in one of the reports: “The Mahdi will appear in a village, the name of which will be Kadi`ah.” 42 This name is so identical
with Qadian (or Kadi as Qadian was formerly known) that, if read with the reports of the general signs of the *Mahdi*, it becomes clear that such reports are applicable only to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian.

**Some of the signs are only in the form of metaphors in the prophecy about the Mahdi**

There are some signs, of course, about the *Mahdi’s* advent which do not apply in their literal sense to the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. For instance, that he will be a king for seven years or that he will possess large treasures. It is, however, accepted on all hands that prophecies are couched in metaphorical language, because future events are shown in the form of visions and dreams which are subject to interpretation like other prophecies. The Qur’an has also called *ru’ya* and *kushuf* as God’s speaking from behind a veil,⁴³ So the expressions should not mislead a person. About the Promised Messiah, for instance, it has been mentioned in a report that he would come with two yellow mantles.⁴⁴ A yellow mantle is interpreted as a disease and this in fact pointed to two diseases from which the Promised Messiah was going to suffer. It is surprising to note that about the *Mahdi* it has also been mentioned that: “On him there will be two shining mantles as if he is from among the men of Israel.”⁴⁵ About possessions of *kunuz* (treasures) as well, the same mistake is committed and *kunuz* is taken to mean treasures of gold and silver. But when the Holy Prophet says: “I have been given two treasures, red and white,”⁴⁶ no one takes them to be treasures of gold and silver and it is only interpreted as signifying two groups of people. Similarly, a saying of Hazrat ‘Ali has been recorded in *Hujaj al-Kiramah* that: “Blessings of God be upon the renouncers (taliqan) that at that place are treasures of God, but these are not of gold and silver but consist of people
who have recognised God as they should have and they would be the helpers of the Mahdi. “47 When in such reports treasures of the Mahdi have been considered as his helpers, there should be no difficulty in interpreting metaphorically the expression kunuz appearing in other traditions. It has also been mentioned in a hadith that:

La hawla wa la quwwata kanzum mim kunuzil jannah
(treasure from among the treasures of paradise).48

Now this is not a treasure of gold and silver but only, as it is stated in Al-Nihayah, ajrun muddakhar or the reward which has been stored.49 Again, it has been mentioned in some of the reports that the Mahdi would also dig out treasures from under the Ka’bah. Now gold and silver are not buried under this holy place. On the other hand, they refer to the riches of knowledge and wisdom which were manifested by the Prophet Muhammad and have been concealed from the eyes of the world with the lapse of time. The real treasure is, in fact, the wisdom and Divine gnosis which were lost in the Age of Corruption and in which age only letter and form-worship were left with the Muslims. Thus, whoever restores the lost glory of wisdom, it is he who really digs out treasures and distributes them among the people. The istikhraj kunuz (i.e., the digging out of treasures from the earth) therefore, in the case of the Mahdi does not mean the digging of gold and silver, but is only a metaphorical expression which implies the imparting of knowledge and wisdom by the Mahdi to his people, which is indeed the task of all God-sent reformers. Their kingdom is also a spiritual one, and, if God wills, He may favour them with temporal power as well. But their actual kingdom is always spiritual. Now, if a person insists on the literal meanings of these reports, it will be impossible for him
to accept all the reports which are so contradictory in their details that even those who generally believe in them also entertain doubts as to their literal fulfilment. The contradictions in them are so great that either the whole lot has to be rejected under the principle that when two things contradict, they erase each other, or only their general and collective testimony should be accepted. A part of them should be interpreted metaphorically and a part, of course, has to be left aside. When we follow this principle, these reports invariably apply to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. These two points - that the Mahdi will not spread Islam with the sword and that he and the Messiah are one - have made it definitely clear that Hazrat Ahmad is indeed the Promised Mahdi. It does not make any difference if a ruler Mahdi may also appear at some future time, but, just for the sake of mere possibility, it is not right to reject the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad which have been fulfilled.

Footnotes on Chapter V111

3 Sunan Abu Dawud: kitab al-Malahim (Mujtabai Press, Delhi, 1318 A.H.) vol. 2, Dhikr al-Mahdi, p. 239.
4 Ibid., p. 240.
6 Imam Abu ‘Abd Allah Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol. 1, p. 84.
7 Ibid., p. 99.
8 Ibid., p. 376.
10 Ibid., p. 37.
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11 Ibid., p. 21.
12 Hujaj al-Kiramah, p. 355.
13 Ibid., p. 356.
14 Ibid., p. 355.
18 The Qur’an, 19 : 90-91.
20 Apparently these words seem to apply to ‘Abd Allah ibn Zubair who did not enter into bai’at of Yazid. When Yazid died in 64 A.H. ‘Abd Allah ibn Zubair was elected as the Khalifah. The people of Hijaz, Yemen and Iraq also submitted to his rule. Mu’awiyah ibn Yazid’s rule was limited to Egypt and Syria, but after his death, the people of these countries also took the bai‘at of Zubair, but soon after they revolted and separated themselves from him. Thus Zubair’s kingdom remained confined to Arabia. In 73 A.H. during the reign of ‘Abd al-Malik, Zubair was attacked by Hajjaj and was martyred by him. Thus his reign was spread over a period of nine years. Reports concerning the Mahdi mention seven or nine years of his rule. These words, therefore, may refer to ‘Abd Allah ibn Zubair. If it is kept in view that these ahadith have been greatly tampered with, the part mentioning the period of Mahdi’s kingdom for seven or nine years can be applied to him as well.
21 Nawab Sayyid Nur al-Hasan Khan, Iqtarab al-Sa’ah, p. 64.
22 The Qur’an, 2 : 256.
23 Muqaddamah
24 Hujaj al-Kiramah, p. 386.
32 *Kanz al-‘Ummal*, vol. 6, p. 126.
33 *Kanz al-‘Ummal*, vol. 7, p. 262.
34 *Hadith al-Ghashiyah*, p. 343.
35 Ibid.
38 Ibid., kitab al-Malahim, vol. 2, p. 239.
41 Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan, *Hujaj al-Kiramah*.
42 *Jawahir al-Asrar*, p. 55. The original name of Qadian was Islam Pur Qadi Majjhi which was gradually shortened to Qadi, being generally pronounced as Kadi. If it is kept in view that the form of foreign words in the Arabic language undergoes a little change, for instance, London (Landan) is altered into Landarah, the change of Kadi into Kadi‘ah is easy to understand.
43 The Qur’an, 42 : 51.
49 Ibid.
And if he be a liar, on him will be his lie, and if he be truthful, there will befall you some of that which he threatens you with. Surely Allah guides not one who is a prodigal, a liar.

The difference between the miracles of Islam and those of other religions
For the support of every religion God always grants miracles to its founder so that those who do not take much advantage of rational arguments, and whose eyes apparently cannot discern truth from falsehood, may benefit by these miracles so that it should be made clear to them that a certain teaching is of divine origin and that the same God, Who has by His special grace granted light to a servant of His for the guidance of man, can also express His will and supernatural powers through the agency of the same person. However, there is a clear distinction between the miracles of Islam and those of other religions. As Islam was given to mankind for all times to come, therefore the miracles granted to it were of a permanent nature. The other difference is that as Islam was going to spread in an age of reason where human intellect would be fully occupied and man would demand rational proof for everything, Islamic miracles are such that in spite of their supernatural character, they appeal to the human intellect as well, unlike the miracles granted to other religions which appeal to the
emotion and not to the intellect.

**A dual system of prophecy in Islam**
The greatest miracle of Islam is prophecy. Doubts can be raised about miracles and after some time the real testimony of their occurrence disappears. The miracle of a prophecy is above all these limitations. A miracle can only have an effect on the minds of those who are actually eye-witnesses to its happening, whereas the truth of the prophecy can be known in the future also, at the time of its fulfilment in the same way as its truth was known in the beginning. Apart from this, support for Islam was needed in every age. Therefore, such a system of prophecies was evolved for it so that it would keep on manifesting its truth in every age. For this purpose, God has established a dual system of prophecies in Islam. That is, through our Holy Prophet, God foretold many things about future events which keep on being fulfilled in every age. At first, those matters were orally conveyed by one generation to another, but after some time they were recorded in writing. By the second and third century almost all of them found their place in books. Although the verbal communication of those prophecies was authentic, and many of these prophecies were fulfilled even after they were recorded in books, yet to give added support to these prophecies and to show that the close contact with God in this *ummah* did not cease after the death of the Holy Prophet, there appeared in every age divinely inspired people who helped to support the religion of Islam. Continuance of this dual system had many significances. One of them was that it should become a sign by itself. On the one hand, the prophecies of the Holy Prophet were fulfilled in every age and on the other, the prophecies of the saints (*auliya*) were fulfilled in support of the Holy Prophet’s prophecies. Secondly, the Holy Prophet had such close contact with God
that those who followed him were also granted the blessings and excellences of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet. Thirdly, it showed that Islam was a religion for all times to come and its signs did not come to an end after some time but new signs were manifested in every age. Fourthly, the hearts of Muslims were strengthened by the fact that God Almighty would support Islam up to the day of Resurrection, and the Qur’anic promise:

_Thy Lord has not forsaken thee, nor is He displeased_  

was not confined to the Holy Prophet alone but that the Holy Prophet was given an eternal life (of spirituality). Fifthly, that it may be known that God’s attribute of speaking is not nullified in any particular age, that He kept on communicating with His saints (auliya) all the time and will continue to do so for ever. As His power is always manifested in nature, similarly the attribute of His speech is manifested through the agency of His saints. In short, many Divine experiences demand that an order of prophecies should also continue in this ummah.

**Evidence from the Qur’an and the Hadith that prophecies will continue to be granted to Muslims**

There is clear evidence in the Qur’an and the Hadith that prophecies will be granted to the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Says the Qur’an:

_For them is good news in this world’s life and in the Hereafter._  

_The angels descend upon them, saying: Fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the Garden which you were promised. We are your friends in this world’s life and in the Hereafter._
In an authentic hadith it has clearly been mentioned:

“There has remained nothing of prophethood except mubaşşhirat (i.e. good visions or prophecies).”

This news about future events is a great blessing for a Muslim. It has been unanimously accepted by the scholars of Islam that the followers of this ummah are told about matters unseen. While commenting on this hadith, Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani writes:

“Many saints (auliya) told about matters unseen. It happened exactly as foretold.”

**Conciseness in prophecies**

Prophecies are undoubtedly miracles. They are rather more than miracles, but as they are only corroborative evidence and not a real part of religion, therefore the clarity and decisiveness needed for religious laws are lacking in them. Like miracles, some aspects of prophecies also do not exceed beyond faith in God - faith in the Unperceivable by the ordinary senses. Therefore, whereas the teachings of the doctrines of religion, which are the fundamentals of faith, are essentially based on something decisive, prophecies include some parts which are allegorical. With regard to prophecies, the only point to remember is that whatever has been made manifest is beyond human power - not that some particular aspects have not been made absolutely clear. God does not fully inform about all the details of a prophecy. Another point in this connection to remember is that mubaşşhirat (good visions) or the prophecies which are granted to the saints (auliya) of this ummah have been explained thus:

“They (the companions of the Prophet) asked: ‘What are mubaşşhirat?’ He (the Prophet) said: ‘True visions.’”
Another authentic tradition says that it is not only true visions (ruya’ al-salihah) which will be given to the followers of the Prophet, but God will also speak to them. Says the Prophet: “Among those that were before you of the Israelites, there used to be men who were spoken to by God, though they were not prophets, and if there is one among my followers, it is `Umar.”

On the surface, there seems to be a contradiction between these two authentic traditions. In one, the remaining of good visions and in the other, God’s granting of Divine communication to the perfect ones of this ummah are mentioned. But, in fact, there is no contradiction between these two reports. Ru’ya (vision) is also a kind of communication, as is clearly stated in the Qur’an:

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

Here, the second mode of Divine communication is from behind a veil and this exactly is what is experienced in ru’ya (visions) or mukashafah (Divine manifestation). Ru’ya is liable to interpretation and its words do not sometimes mean the same that is expressed in obvious terms, such as the vision of Joseph in which he saw eleven stars and the sun and the moon making obeisance to him. The third form of revelation, brought by the angel Gabriel, is granted to prophets alone and has come to an end after the revelation of the Qur’an. Therefore, the Holy Prophet has confined the Divine speech to ru’ya which will remain in force in this ummah. This, truly, is an explanation of min wara’ il hijab (communication from behind a veil). In other words, the revelation brought by Gabriel
to prophets bears a strong resemblance to the revelation granted to aula (saints). Both are news of the Unseen. But, clearly, revelation granted to prophets is an experience which happens in hours of wakefulness, and revelation granted to saints is like a vision (ru’ya). The reason is obvious. The revelation granted to saints is for the support of religion whereas in prophetic revelation, religious commandments are also given.

**Different kinds of prophecies**

In view of what has been said above, we find that there are two kinds of prophecies given to the persons who are not appointed (ghair ma’murin) and three kinds (including the first two) of prophecy in case of those who are appointed by God for a divine mission. One kind of prophecy deals with one’s own person or one’s relations and friends, etc. The other kind of prophecy deals with general events of the world or with nations and their conditions. The third kind of prophecies is specifically granted to the appointed ones (ma’murin) whether they are prophets or renovators. These prophecies deal with the future success of their mission and the failure of the opposition. Prophecies of the first category are necessarily limited in their scope as compared to the prophecies of the second category, because they can only be helpful in increasing the faith of the recipient (mulham), or some of his close friends. These prophecies are not connected with the events of the world in general. That is why the Qur’an has not given much importance to these prophecies. There is no doubt in it that the Holy Prophet was given news (basharat) about his own person, or about his kith and kin, some of which are mentioned in the Hadith, and there may be some which may not have been mentioned there. In Sahih al-Bukhari, it is stated that even before his advent as a prophet, the Holy Prophet
saw many dreams and the truth of them shone forth like the
dawn of the morning. ¹¹ These dreams, which came true con-
comitantly, cannot be connected with great and important
events because such events are associated with great occur-
rences in the world and it needs time before they are made
manifest. Similarly, news about his own person, relatives,
friends, etc. must have been made known to the Holy Prophet
a number of times. A few of them are mentioned in the Hadith
also, for example, the prophecy about the wife with the long
hands who was going to be the first to meet the Prophet after
his death, ¹² and the seeing of Hazrat ‘Aishah in a vision be-
fore her marriage. ¹³ However, most of these prophecies or
visions have not been mentioned in the Qur’an at all, and in
the Hadith also, only a few of these prophecies have been
recorded. But when we look at the second category of proph-
cecies, connected with general events of the world, we find
that this part is given great prominence. These prophecies are
not only mentioned in the Qur’an but the Hadith literature is
also full of them. Some of these prophecies have been dis-
cussed by me in the previous chapter. Apart from these, there
are many more prophecies, mentioned in the Qur’an, which
foretell of future events. One of these prophecies is the vic-
tory of the Romans over the Persians, ¹⁴ who, at the time of
the prophecy, had overrun the whole of the Roman Empire.
In short, those prophecies which are connected with the gen-
eral condition or events of the world are mostly of a miracu-
lous nature. They gain more publicity and it is through them
that the grandeur and dignity of God’s communication are
manifested. Therefore, I will deal with this part of the proph-
cecies of the Promised Messiah a little later.

Clear and important prophecies
Prophecies of the third category are granted only to the di-
Prophecies of the Promised Messiah

Vinely appointed ones (ma’murin). The ma’mur is sent for a mission and the dominance of the ma’mur is, in reality, the dominance of the mission for which he stands. Therefore, in respect of fame and grandeur, these prophecies are included in the prophecies of the second category. From one aspect, however, their grandeur is greater than the prophecies of this category. The ma’mur’s entire mission depends on their fulfilment. The opponents spare nothing in trying to destroy this mission, but in spite of all this, the Truth prevails. These prophecies, on account of their basic nature, contain the least amount of allegory, and are free from all doubts and uncertainties. That is why the Qur’an has laid great emphasis on them. Therefore, to judge the truthfulness of the claim of a ma’mur, these prophecies are of primary importance.

Prophecies of warning

As a matter of principle, it should be remembered that prophecies of warning can also be withdrawn. A prophecy of warning is some information from God that persons or nations, on account of their evil actions, are liable to be divinely punished. And as divine punishment is as a result of their evil actions, therefore if those actions are transformed, the divine punishment, in most cases, is also withdrawn or deferred. Sometimes in the prophecies of warning, the condition of repentance is clearly indicated, sometimes not. Even if it is not clearly indicated, it should be considered as implied in the prophecy, because from among the attributes of God, the attribute of His mercy dominates all other attributes. The main objective of the prophecy of warning is corrective so that one should turn towards God and take advantage of His attribute of mercy. With regard to the Prophet Jonah (Yunus) the commentators have expressed the same opinion. Under the verse, And Jonah was surely of those sent, the author of Fath al-
Bayan says:

“Jonah had promised God’s chastisement to his people but when that chastisement did not take place he left his people.”

Further on it is stated:

“God, the Most High, revealed to Jonah that He (God) would chastise his people within a certain time.... So whatever God had promised about the chastisement, Jonah told his people.... But later his people wept and cried and repented and God accepted their repentance and the punishment was withdrawn from them. Jonah said: ‘I cannot return to them as a liar.’”

This shows that the prophecy about divine punishment can be withdrawn by repentance and turning towards God even if the condition of repentance is not expressly mentioned in the prophecy. The same principle has been stated in the verse:

*And if he be truthful, there will befall you some of that with which he threatens you.*

All the punishment promised does not befall a person because if he repents even slightly, God, on account of His limitless mercy, withdraws some of His promised punishment. In the Qur’an the prophecies about the dominance of the Holy Prophet and the believers over their opponents were literally fulfilled in all their details. On the other, hand prophecies about chastisement for the disbelievers, although in spirit, were also fulfilled and the opponents were completely overpowered, but the chastisement of thorough devastation for them did not take place. The warning which was given to them was:

*But if they turn away, then say: I warn you of a scourge like the scourge of ‘Ad and Thamud.*
The nations of ‘Ad and Thamud were completely destroyed. The people of Makkah were subdued so the chastisement of thorough devastation did not take place in their case and they were redeemed after light punishment. Thus, in the case of prophecies granted to saints, if the opponent does not die, or is not chastised, as mentioned in the prophecy, it does not mean that the prophecy itself was untrue.

**A prophecy could be misunderstood or misinterpreted**
Sometimes on account of human limitations, a prophecy can be misunderstood or misinterpreted. The point to remember is the actual words of the prophecy and not always the understanding of it by its recipient. Examples of this misunderstanding can even be found in the prophecies granted to prophets. (The prophecy granted to Jonah has been quoted above.) The Holy Prophet was shown in his dream that he was migrating from Makkah to a land of date palms. He thought that this place would be Yamamah but it was Madinah. Another of his prophecies is about his wives, that, “She whose hand was the longest will meet him first.”

At this, his wives started measuring their hands with a stick and the Holy Prophet did not say anything. However, the wife who died first was Zainab and she did not have the longest hands, but was extremely generous. In Arabic idiom, one who has long hands means a generous person. So the prophecy was fulfilled but not in the sense his wives had understood it. Similarly, the Holy Prophet saw in a vision that he was performing the pilgrimage. On the basis of this vision he undertook a journey to Makkah along with about thirteen hundred of his companions. The Makkans, however, stopped him at Hudaibiyyah, and a truce was arranged, according to which the Holy Prophet had to return without performing the pil-
The Second Coming of Jesus

The Second Coming of Jesus

grimage. When an objection was raised (by ‘Umar), the Holy Prophet replied that he did not say that they would perform the pilgrimage that same year. 21

A prophecy does not form that part of the articles of faith, so even if a prophet commits a mistake in understanding its true nature, it does not matter. Thus, it is possible that those from among the ummah who are granted prophecies for the support of religion may sometimes make a mistake in understanding them. We should, however, always look at the original words of the prophecy to judge its truth, or untruth, and not always at the opinion of its recipient.

Principles for understanding prophecies

In view of what has been discussed above, to understand the prophecies of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, the following points should be remembered:

1. If his opinion (ijtihad) about the meaning of the words of a prophecy is not correct, it does not affect the prophecy itself in any way.

2. From among the prophecies of warning or chastisement, the fulfilment of a prophecy can be deferred or entirely put off.

3. The clearest prophecies of a ma’mur (one appointed by God) are those which mention beforehand the ultimate success of his mission and the failure of his opponents. These prophecies contain very few allegories. The criterion for judging the truth or untruth of the claim of a ma’mur is, in fact, these prophecies.

4. Prophecies about his own person or about the relatives etc. of a ma’mur are not as important as his prophecies concerning the events of the world.
5. In their clarity and lucidity, prophecies of the saints of this *ummah*, however, cannot be compared with the prophecies of the Holy Prophet.

6. A prophecy is a miracle, or supporting evidence for religion; therefore, it does not matter if it is couched in figurative descriptions.

**Prophecy is not the only criterion for judging the truth of a claimant**

In my view, the greatest criterion for judging the truth or untruth of a claimant is his work. Prophecies do have a special importance, but not to the extent that we should place our entire reliance on them. If the truthfulness of the Founder’s claim has to be judged, it should be judged on his work. The mission of the breaking of the Cross was assigned to him and in this connection the secrets of the Qur’an were disclosed to him. It is God’s practice that when He displays His great benevolence on any of the saints of this *ummah*, He discloses to him wonderful secrets of the Qur’an which are hidden from the eyes of other people. Again, great evidence and material for the proclamation of Islam over other religions are found in the literature produced by the Founder. He also laid the foundation of an organisation for the propagation of Islam, and this was the greatest need of the time. Besides that, many prophecies of the Holy Prophet himself, concerning the Messiah and *Mahdi*, were fulfilled in this age. Furthermore, the concept of the descent of the son of Mary, which had always posed a problem for Muslim scholars, was solved by him. Similarly, his prophecies, particularly those which deal with the success of his mission and the failure of his opponents, are also proof of his truthfulness.
The unforeseen part in a prophecy is a source of knowledge about God’s existence
Perhaps someone may think that I have belittled the value of prophecies. But all Muslims agree that miracles are not the only criterion for judging whether a prophet is true in his claim or not; several other elements go along with miracles. A true prophecy is also definite proof of the existence of God, because knowledge of the future, which is connected with world events and the result of complicated human relationships, cannot be received by man unless it is given to him by the Supreme Knower of the Unseen. Thus the fulfilment of a prophecy can also prove a person to be true in his claim. My only object in saying this is that if there is some ambiguity in a prophecy, a contrary conclusion cannot be drawn (that the person concerned is not true in his claim), as long as there are other prophecies made by him which have also been fulfilled. The enemies of truth have often thrown aside hundreds of strong testimonies and have stumbled over some allegorical part of an ilham or prophecy.

Prophecies about the success of the Founder’s mission
First I shall deal with the prophecies about the success of the Founder’s mission which were disclosed to him right from the beginning. I quote a few of his revelations (ilhamat) from his book, Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah, vol. III which are dated March 1882 CE:
“\[\text{We shall suffice thee against those who mock thee. They will say: Whence have you received this? Whence have you received this?}\]\n
(These are the same words which were uttered by the ‘ulama of Jesus to Mary: Whence have you brought this Jesus? This is a reference to things which will be said at the time of the
Founder’s claim of being the Messiah.)

“It is the promise of one who is mean and cannot express himself properly. He is ignorant or demented.”

“This is a mercy from thy Lord. He will perfect His bounty unto thee so that it should be a sign for the believers.”

“Lord, do not leave me alone and Thou art the best of the heirs. Lord, reform the ummah of Muhammad. Our Lord, judge between us and our people with truth; Thou art the best of judges.”

(This shows that his own people would turn against him.)

“They attempt to frighten thee by others besides Allah.”

“We shall cause fear to enter their hearts. When the help of Allah and victory come and the affair draws to its close you will be asked: was this not true?”

“Despair not of the mercy of Allah. Hearken, indeed the mercy of Allah is near. It will come to thee by every distant track. People will come to thee from every distant track so that those tracks will become deep (by their walking). Allah will help thee from Himself. Men whom we shall inspire from heaven will help thee. There is no changing the words of Allah. We shall bestow upon thee manifest victory. The victory of the friend of Allah is a true victory and we have bestowed upon him ultimate nearness to Us.”

“Be not arrogant towards Allah’s creatures and be not tired of receiving visitors (when they come to you
in great numbers). The dwellers of the Lounge (Al-Suffah), you do not realise who will be the dwellers of the Lounge. You will see their eyes shedding tears.”

These revelations (ilhamat) clearly indicate that the Founder will be alone and people will oppose him, will mock him, talk evil of him, try to inflict harm on him, but all hostilities will fail. God will openly support him, every obstacle from his way will be removed and he will be granted a great victory, and through him the truth will prevail.

Similarly, many of his revelations have been printed in Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah, vol. IV, published in 1884 CE:

“Thou hast been helped with awe and hast been brought to life with truth. O truthful one, thou hast been helped and thy opponents said: No way of escape is left. This means that divine help will reach a stage when the opponents will be broken-hearted and they will be filled with despair, and truth will be made manifest ... when the help of Allah comes and the victory and the words of thy Lord are fulfilled, it will be said to the opponents: This is what you desired to be hastened. I decided to appoint a ruler (khalifah) on this earth so I created Adam. This is a brief statement which means I (God), will establish him in the earth. The word khalifah here means a person who will be the source of direction and guidance between Allah and His creatures. Here it does not signify kingdom or government. It connotes only a spiritual office. Also the word Adam does not here refer to Adam, the father of mankind. It means a person through whom a movement of direction and guidance will be established for the spiritual revival of mankind. He will thus be in the posi-
tion of a spiritual father for the seekers after truth. This is a grand prophecy predicting the establishment of a spiritual movement at a time when even its name or address is not visible.” 23

“I shall help thee, I shall protect thee. I shall make thee a leader of men. Do the people wonder at this? Tell them: Allah is wonderful, He chooses whom He likes from among His servants. He is not questioned about that which He does and they are questioned. We keep on revolving these days among people, which means that everything happens by turns and divine favours continue to be bestowed upon individuals from among the ummah of Muhammad, turn by turn.” 24

“Thy Lord will spread His shade over thee and will respond to thy supplication for help and will have mercy on thee. If men will not give thee security, Allah will safeguard thee on His Own. Allah will safeguard thee on His Own even if men will not give thee security, which means God will help thee Himself and will not let thy effort go to waste and His support will be ever available to thee. Call to mind when he who disbelieved for the sake of some pretence, said to his colleague: Prepare a fire, O Haman (of mischief and corruption), so that I may discover the God of Moses (that is, of this man), and find out how He helps him, for I consider him to be a liar. In terms of the past, this gives an intimation of something that will happen in the future. The two hands of Abu Lahab (Father of Flames) will perish and so will he perish. It did not behove him to enter into it except in fear. Whatever affects thee is from Allah. In this there is a reference
of some evil that will proceed from some one in writing or in some other manner. And God knows best! Here is the mischief. Then be steadfast as those of high resolve were steadfast. Hearken, this tribulation is from God so that He might love you with perfect love; the love of God, the Mighty, the Lord of honour, a bounty without end.... Slacken not, nor grieve. Is Allah not sufficient for His servant?”  

“In these revelations, God has indicated great support and bounty and pointed to an extraordinary rise in dignity and honour and greatness that will arrive at its climax gradually. We have granted thee a clear victory, that is, will grant you, and some intervening disagreeable trials will be encountered so that Allah may cover for thee thy shortcomings in the past and future. This means that God has power that the purpose in view may be accomplished without any kind of trouble and that a great victory may be achieved quite easily. But trials and tribulations are for the purpose of raising in rank and forgiveness of defaults.”

Apart from these, there are quite a number of other revelations, with explanations, in Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah. The surprising point is that in these revelations, not only was the founding of a movement in the future foretold and the glad news of the success of his mission given, but also foretold to him were disagreeable trials and tribulations which he was going to encounter, the fire of opposition which was going to break out, the plots and schemes which were going to be hatched against him, and the anathemas of heresy which were going to be levelled against him.
It was also foretold that these trials and tribulations would not do any real damage to him and finally his honour and acceptance would increase and the opposition would fail to gain its object. This is the knowledge of the unseen which a man cannot perceive unless it is given to him by God. Man is helpless and he cannot even say how long he will live. How can he proclaim with certainty the success of his mission in the distant future? He did not only tell about his success when no movement was started and there was no sign of any opposition, but he also prophesied about the opposition, that it would crumble by itself and Divine support would make his mission successful.

This is not just a single sign but the collection of hundreds of signs. It also includes the news that people will come to him in such numbers from all parts of the world and will come in such numbers that they will almost tire him. Then, there will be other people who will come to stay with him, after breaking their worldly connections. This is strong enough evidence for the truthfulness of the claim of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. It is difficult to enumerate all the prophecies. For this, another book is needed. In his book, *Haqiqat al-Wahy*, the Founder has mentioned two hundred signs granted to him. I quote below just a few prophecies which are connected with the events of the world. From among these there is a prophecy about the “Partition of Bengal” which was published in February 1906 and fulfilled on 12 December 1912. At the fulfilment of this prophecy, Khwajah Kamal-ud-Din wrote a pamphlet entitled *Bengal Ki Diljoi* (Consolation for Bengal) from which I briefly quote below. In the course of the discussion of this prophecy, some other prophecies have also been mentioned therein.
Prophecy about the partition of Bengal

“In this materialistic age when almost the whole world is engrossed in search of material things and has practically forgotten God, it was not surprising that for the reformation of the world God should again provide mankind with proof of His existence. About nine years ago, Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, for special reasons regarding the welfare of the country (about which they had felt the need, probably in 1867 CE, during the ministry of Lord Northcote), finally issued an injunction which resulted in the partition of the Indian province of Bengal. This partition, although mostly effected for the smooth running of the country, had severe repercussions among the people of Bengal, the details of which need not be mentioned here. The partition of the province was considered a national calamity by the people of Bengal. Resentment was expressed by lawful and unlawful means. On one hand, uproar was created by agitation and political meetings, and on the other, murder, plunder and riots took place and many precious lives were lost. In short, resentment was expressed on a large scale. Had this order been given by a junior officer, the dangerous state of the country would have necessitated its immediate amendment. This was, however, not only the order of a deputy of the King, supported by the British Minister for India, but this partition was also considered most essential for the smooth management of the Presidency of Bengal. Therefore, the amendment, or abrogation of this order at the outcry and clamour of the Bengalis, was against the administration of the country and royal prestige. In the Presidency of Bengal, besides Bengal itself, the inclusion of Bihar, Orissa
and Little Nagpur was creating difficulties in the management of the territory. This caused the officials to incline toward the partition of Bengal. There was not much weight in the statements issued by those who opposed the partition, whether they were Bengalis or non-Bengalis. As a matter of fact, the pernicious effects of the partition which were given wide publicity by the leaders of the opposition were only the result of the excited whims and apprehension of the people. Those conditions were not yet to be found in the country (which might have turned the imaginary complaints of the Bengalis into reality). Therefore, at that time the government took no notice of even the breach of peace and did not agree to change its policy. As a result, the people of Bengal failed in their just, and unjust efforts. Although the sudden departure of Lord Curzon and the appointment of Lord Minto (a person of pleasant disposition), as Viceroy, and the appointment of Lord Morley, (a man of great intelligence), as the Secretary of State for India, and some ordinances issued by them, pacified the Bengalis to some extent, however, whenever they expressed their views about the partition they made it clear that it would not be revoked or modified at all. At that hour, when this order had taken decisive shape and the people of Bengal were completely sunk into despair and had lost all hope of its ever being amended, the voice of God, the Knower, the Almighty, descended on a servant of His and addressed him with these authoritative words, on 11 February 1906:

“Regarding the order that was issued before concerning Bengal, they will now be consoled.”

27
God is really Great. Today, after about six years, these words have literally and meaningfully been fulfilled. The point to remember about these sacred words is that they do not indicate that order which had created so much turmoil among the Bengalis at the time of partition, but these words suggest some kind of modification which the British Government will adopt, at a future time, to console the people of Bengal. In my opinion, if the words of the prophecy had indicated the cancellation or affirmation of the order, it could rightly have been considered as an intellectual presumption because political expediency favoured its affirmation, and the turmoil in the country, its abrogation. But these pure words were not the result of the knowledge of astrology, or mere intellectual conjecture. These words were the words of the All-knowing God who knew that a time would come when, owing to some new circumstances, this partition would also prove hurtful, to some extent, to the interests of the people of Bengal, and at that time the people of Bengal would be comforted with the modification of the part of the order which was repulsive to them. Was it possible for a person, in 1906, to predict and to assure the Government that one day this order would be modified and would be comfortable for the people of Bengal? By 1906, the leaders of Bengal could not themselves precisely pin-point the really hurtful part of the order which the partition was going to cause to their people. How could they then be considered deserving of consolation? It was, in fact, a few years after 1906, when the new proposals by Lord Morley were accepted by the legislators of the Indian Constitution that the British Government itself realised the harmful effects of the partition of Bengal for the people of that territory. The complaints of the Bengal that were considered imaginary even in 1909 and 1910 began taking realistic colour, as a result of which the government of the present Viceroy paid attention
and the Government started thinking of a plan which would comfort the people of Bengal concerning the order already issued. Let us stop here and ponder for a moment. After many years, new events took place and the government was forced to do something which was predicted in 1906 that, regarding the order that was issued before, concerning Bengal, they would now be consoled. These words were spoken at a time when this order was neither considered hurtful, nor was there any need of consoling the people of Bengal.

“This point further increases one’s faith in God when one knows that the object of modification, which the present Viceroy had effected in Lord Curzon’s order, is to console the people of Bengal. This is what is referred to in the words of God. The letter which was sent in August, four months ago, by Lord Harding and his Council to the Minister of India for changing the capital of the country and modifying the order of partition of Bengal clearly indicates that the main purpose of modifying the order was the consolation of the people of Bengal. In the view of the Viceroy and his Council, there was no other opportune moment to announce this change for comforting the people of Bengal except at the time of the Darbar, to be held at Delhi (for the coronation of King George V on 12 December 1911). It is surprising that the Viceroy of India points out the same reason - consolation of the people of Bengal - for this great announcement, at the time of changing the capital of the country. This was foretold six years before by a vicegerent of God on the basis of divine revelation. This consolation in the eyes of the high officials was considered so important that it was mentioned several times in different forms in the official documents. And then the news of this
consolation was announced by the Great Emperor at the happiest moment of his life (i.e. at the time of his coronation). This was only so that the words of God, who is the Ruler of all rulers and King of all kings, can be fulfilled.”

Besides this, there are also other prophecies referring to political revelations which took place many years after the announcement of those prophecies, and the attention of the whole world was drawn towards them. Think again whether any astrologer, diviner or political speculator had so clearly predicted the happenings of such events.

Prophecy about Japan
Was there any country or nation in Asia which could be called a power\(^\text{28}\) a few years ago in the true sense of the word? After 1857, the Asian Kingdoms kept on declining in their authority and they did not have that political importance in the eyes of the European nations that they could consider them as powers in the world. The word “power” was only used for the Western nations and only the Western nations had the right to use this word for any other nation in the world. There was no such power in any of the Eastern countries. It was at this time that God told a servant of His that soon there will be an Eastern power\(^\text{29}\) which would create a dangerous situation for Korea. The mention of the delicate situation of Korea clearly pointed out that the destiny of this country was in the hands of an Eastern power. Did anyone imagine or fancy at the time of the publication of this revelation (\textit{ilham}) that Japan would soon become an Eastern power and would bring Korea under its sway?\(^\text{30}\) There is no doubt that for the last fifty years the Japanese were making great strides in trade and industry to the astonishment of other nations, but before the Russo-Japa-
inese War nobody actually knew the strength of their maritime power. After the termination of the war (in which Russia suffered defeat), the people of Europe conceded, willingly or unwillingly, that Japan was an Eastern power. Is there any other country besides Japan which Western nations acknowledge as a power in the East? The words of the revelation: “An Eastern power and the delicate situation of Korea” imply the rising of Japan as a power when Japan was a country not worth mentioning as a power. Today it is Japan which has created a delicate situation for Korea and has finally won full control over it. This is how the words of the prophecy about Korea were fulfilled.  

Prophecy about Iran
Apart from the Eastern power, another country which attracted world attention politically was Iran. The history of this country is old and its kings in Eastern literature were known by the title of Chosroes (Kisra). Although for sometime back the condition of the country was not good, nobody imagined that its king would be forced to abdicate his throne and a commotion would take place in the royal family. However, the world has witnessed today things which nobody dreamed of a few years ago. Did any astrologer or diviner tell the world that events in that country would create a great commotion in the palace of the Emperor of Iran? When the country of Iran was enjoying safety and peace in every respect, the following words were revealed to a sent one:

“Commotion has taken place in the palace of the Chosro (Emperor of Iran).”

This revelation was published by the Promised Messiah in January 1906. In fact, this is a line from a verse in Bostan composed by the famous poet Sa’di of Shiraz in which a ref-
ference was made about the destruction of the royal family that ruled Iran at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet, and the Chosro of Iran was forced to abdicate his throne after the death of the Holy Prophet. Similarly, a servant of the Holy Prophet, who was appointed by God in India, foretold that the palace of the Emperor of Iran would be shaken and it was after the death of this servant that the Emperor of Iran was forced to leave his throne. Did Mirza Muhammad Ali, the former Emperor of Iran, not feel the political turmoil in his palace which resulted in his abdication? If these events are true and the Palace of the Chosro, which is a symbol of Iran itself, has been thoroughly shaken, who else besides God, the Knower of the Unseen, could inform about it on 15 January 1906, when this prophecy was published? 32

**Prophecy about the World War and the destruction of the Tsar (Czar) of Russia**  
Another great prophecy by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, was announced on 15 April 1905. This was published in newspapers and books and has spread to all parts of the world. It is mentioned in his book, *Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah* in the form of a poem, thus:

“A sign is going to appear after a few days from today which will work havoc on villages, towns and meadows. Divine wrath will send a great revolution on creatures, so that a naked person will not be able to tie his trouser string. All of a sudden, all shall suddenly quake by an earthquake (*zalzalah*). 33 In the twinkling of an eye, this earth will turn upside - down - mortals and trees and stones and seas. Streams of blood shall flow as water flows in a river. Those who don robes at night, white as jasmine, the morning will turn them blood-stained like poplar trees. Men and birds will lose their
senses. Pigeons and nightingales will forget their songs. On every wayfarer, that moment and that hour will be extremely hard, (so much so that) ambling horses will become drunk and tipsy and forget their way. With the blood of the dead, the streams of mountains will become red, like red wine. All men and jinn will be worn out by fear. Even the Tsar (of Russia) at that moment will be in a state of great despair. That divine sign shall be a sample of wrath. Even the sky will pull out its dagger and make a charge. Do not deny in haste, O ignorant fool! On this depends the truth of all for which I stand. This is the revelation of God which will certainly come true. Just show some patience for a few days by becoming righteous and forbearing. Do not take it for granted that all this disbelief and mistrust will be forgiven. It is all a debt which will be paid off to you in full.” 34

It is clear from the above words that the Promised Messiah foretold such a catastrophe concerning the world that would bring in its wake huge destruction for men, villages and towns. About this dreadful calamity, he gave descriptions of such events which are clearly applicable to the present-day world war. 35

Firstly, this calamity will be of such a nature which will work havoc on villages, towns and meadows. This means that along with human habitations, pasture lands and forests will also be destroyed. The history of the world bears testimony to this fact, that during the present war, the destruction of human life and property which has taken place has not been seen before in such magnitude Not only are villages and towns affected but many countries have also been devastated. Millions of
people have taken refuge in other countries. The whole of Belgium has been turned into a battleground. The prosperous and flourishing areas of France, Poland, Romania and many other countries have been turned into wasteland. In a town in Belgium which was inhabited by sixteen thousand people, only one old and blind woman was found alive. In many forests, so much bombardment took place that no trees were left standing. In villages, houses were turned into mounds of bricks to be used for the protection of the army. Such havoc that took place all around was like nothing that had happened before in the history of mankind.

Secondly, during the calamities, massacres on a large scale have taken place, the reference to which is made in the words “streams of blood will flow as water flows in a river” and “with the blood of the dead, the streams of mountains will become red, like red wine”, and similarly, “those who will be wearing during the night garments of the colour of jasmine, in the morning they will find them red like the poplar trees” (the white leaves of poplar trees are splashed with a red colour). Those people who have witnessed the carnage which has taken place in the present war, have portrayed the scene in the almost the same way which was portrayed in the above prophecy ten years ago. A reporter describes the condition of Poland thus: “The war has filled the rivers of this unlucky country with blood.” Millions have died and those who are wounded are countless. As compared to this the previous wars’ ravages seem insignificant.

Thirdly, apart from this great slaughter described in the above prophecy, another point has also been mentioned in the words, “men and birds will lose their senses and that on every wayfarer, that moment and that hour will be extremely hard, (so
much so that) ambling horses will become drunk-like and tipsy and forget their way.” Those who have read the harrowing reports of the war know in what panic, from Belgium and other countries, young and old, men, women and children, fled from one place to another to seek shelter; they saw with their own eyes the scenes of the Doomsday. In their despair and fright, husbands were separated from their wives and mothers from their children. A large number of these terror-stricken people are still sheltering in other countries.

Fourthly, another great sign of this calamity is that its destruction will not remain confined to one country alone. Such a great part of the world will be affected that it will be as if this calamity has spread all over the world. The truth of the matter is that there has been no parallel to this huge destruction even in the most ghastly wars ever fought, or in the most dreadful earthquakes that have ever struck any part of the world. The whole world, new or old, East or West, Europe, Asia, Africa or America is equally overtaken by this calamity. The words of the prophecy said:

“Divine wrath will send a great calamity on creatures.”

All continents belonging to the old and new worlds, like Asia, Africa, Europe and America are witnessing the scenes of this great calamity.

Fifthly, besides all these points, another astonishing sign is that “even the Tsar at that moment will be in a state of great despair.” In comparison with the kings of the world, the Tsar of Russia was the greatest autocrat. Constitutional and democratic governments were set up in many countries, but the Tsar controlled the fate of sixteen million people and laws and regulations did not mean anything to him. Look at the sad
plight of this great despot of the world. He is in such a state of distress that it is difficult to describe his true condition. He has not only been deprived of his crown and throne but he is also a prisoner in the hands of those whom he despised the most. He has been separated from his wife and children. The news agency, Reuters, sent out the following cable to the press about him:

“When the order for his arrest was presented to him he only said: `I am willing to accept any decision and go anywhere.’”

It was further stated:

“The Tsar was dressed in a Cossack uniform. He came out in a quiet manner but looked very sad. A car was waiting for him outside and he got into it. No member of the public was present there.”

The Tsar is at present living somewhere, separated from his family and is even deprived of that freedom which is being enjoyed by an ordinary labourer. If thousands of pages are written about his condition it could all be summed up in two words “state of despair” (hal-i zar) - which have been mentioned in the prophecy.

To foretell all these events with such clarity, ten or twelve years before, was not possible for a human being. It was only the All-Knowing God who could reveal these secrets. They were foretold at a time when everybody talked of peace. Even our own emperor, Edward VII, became known as Peace-maker because he drew up many plans for bringing about peace in the world. The common man also did not want any war. Nobody could think at that time that such a ghastly war would ever be waged. This is where Divine power shows its hand.
Not only was a prophecy of a world war made, but this catastrophe was also linked to the sad plight of the Tsar. Surprisingly, the war began with great victories for the Russian army. The Tsar’s army was very strong and was supported by many world powers. Even our own government aided and assisted Russia in every way. Could one have imagined that the Tsar would ever have reached that state of extreme despair?

The testimonies of the prophecies
There are many other prophecies concerning world events: for example, repeated news of earthquakes, the spread of plague, the victory of Turkey after its defeat, as was witnessed in the Balkan War, etc. I cannot go into details of all of these for lack of space. It is, however, regrettable that the opponents of the Movement cast aside all these clear testimonies and spend all their energies on a few prophecies of warning, (not connected with world events and therefore not that important in themselves), that were withdrawn, or their fulfilment was postponed in view of some conditions mentioned, or implied therein. In the prophecy about ‘Abdullah Aṭham, the condition was clearly mentioned that he would die within fifteen months unless he inclined to truth. These words show that they did not mean his becoming a Muslim, otherwise the words should have been “unless he became a Muslim.” A person can incline to truth within his heart: it clearly shows some inclination. At the time of the debate in Amritsar when he heard this prophecy, he became frightened and immediately said that he had never called the Holy Prophet a dajjal (a great deceiver). Then for fifteen months he moved from one place to another with the fear of death on his lips and saw frightful and threatening scenes as if snakes had been let loose on him. When he did not die within fifteen months, because of his fear and inclination to truth within his heart, the Founder
told him to take an oath that he was not inclined towards truth in his heart and not frightened, but Atham refused to do so. This shows that he took advantage of the condition implied in a prophecy of warning, but when he intentionally tried again to make the truth obscure and doubtful, he died after a few months.

Similarly, there were two parts of the prophecy concerning Muhammadi Begum. In one part, the news about the death of her father was given and in the other, the news about the death of her husband. The first part was fulfilled and the other part, dealing with admonition and warning, was cancelled by God, which according to the rules of interpretation of prophecies, is not beyond understanding. But is it right that if some ambiguity is found in a few prophecies, hundreds of other prophecies of a high degree should be thrown away?

Footnotes on Chapter IX

1 40:28.
2 93:3.
3 10:64.
4 41:30-31.
6 Fath al-Bari (Commentary of Al-Bukhari), vol.12, p.332.
8 Ibid., kitab al-Anbiya, ch. Manaqib ‘Umar.
9 42:51.

The following remarks on this verse by the Maulana Muhammad Ali in his commentary of the Qur’an may also be read with interest:

“This verse shows how Allah speaks to a person or makes known His will to him. Three modes of this are stated:

i. By wahy, which word is generally translated as meaning revelation. The primary significance of the word wahy is, however, a hasty suggestion, and since the different kinds of rev-
elation are spoken of here, the meaning intended must be the primary significance of the word. Hence, the inspired word, which enters the hearts of the prophets and of the righteous, is called *wahy* or *revelation*, because it is like a hasty suggestion made directly to the heart of the inspired one, *ilqa'-un fi-l-rau‘i*. It is in this sense that a revelation is spoken of as being granted to the mother of Moses (28:7), and to the apostles of Jesus who were not prophets (5:111).

ii. The second mode of Allah’s speaking to His servants is that He speaks from behind a veil - a scene is shown as in a vision carrying a deeper significance, or words are heard by the person spoken to as from behind a veil.

iii. The third form of revelation is that in which a messenger - an angel - is chosen by the Almighty to deliver His message to the person to whom He wishes to speak. This is the highest form of revelation, and such is the revelation of the Qur’an as granted to the Holy Prophet, being recited by Gabriel. This is called *wahy matluww* or *revelation that is recited*. This revelation is granted only to prophets, while the other two may also be granted to the righteous who are not raised to the dignity of prophethood. It should, however, be borne in mind that in all these cases the recipient of the revelation is granted certain other senses. He sees what others do not see and he hears words which others do not hear. It is, therefore, with what may be called the spiritual senses that he hears and sees and feels things which others do not hear, see or feel” (Footnote No. 2235). (SMT).

10 12:4,5.
14 30:2-3.
15 37:139.
16 *Fath al-Bayan*, under v. 37:139.
17 40:28.
18 41:13.
19 *Al-Bukhari, kitab al-Ru’ya*, ch. *Iza ara’ baqaran tunharu*.

Sometimes it is said that the wives did not measure their hands in the presence of the Holy Prophet. The report of *al-Bukhari* does
not support this view. It says: “Reported from ‘A’ishah that some wives of the Holy Prophet asked him who from among them would meet him first. He said: whose hand is the longest. Then they started measuring their hands with a piece of stick. Saudah’s hand was the longest. Later on we found out that long hand signified the giving of charity.” There is no mention at all here that after replying to their question the Holy Prophet left them. (SMT).

21 Ibid., kitab al-Sulh, ch. Al-sulh minal mushrikin; ch. Ghazwah Hudaibiyyah.


23 Ibid., part iv, pp. 490-493, sub-footnote.

24 Ibid., part iv, p. 507, sub-footnote 3.


26 Ibid., p. 515.

27 The announcement was looked down upon with contempt by the Hindus of India as the order of modification was considered beyond the range of possibility. (SMT).

28 “Power” in the English language is used for a nation or a country whose political importance is acknowledged by other powerful nations of the world.

29 “An Eastern power and the delicate situation of Korea” are the revealed words.

30 The Russo-Japanese War started on 6 February 1904 and in this short and disastrous war, Russia suffered a series of defeats at the hands of Japan. Eventually Japan’s occupation of Korea was confirmed in the Treaty of Portsmouth (USA) on 5 September 1905, and Russia was again pushed back to the River Amur. (SMT)

31 This prophecy was fulfilled in another way in 1950. After the second World War, Japan declined as a “Power” and Soviet Russia emerged as an Eastern power. Around the 1920’s, some Communist organisations were formed in Korea, which later received the recognition of the Comintern (Russian form of Communist International). Again, another Eastern country which came into power was Communist China. Korea was divided into North and South. North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950. The former was helped by Communist China and the situation once again became very delicate for Korea. The relationship between North (Communist) and South (democratic) Korea is still strained. (SMT).

32 When this prophecy was made, Muzaffar-ud Din Shah sat se-
curely on his Imperial throne. A parliament was set up in 1905 and was opened in October 1906. The Shah died on 8 January 1907, and his son Mirza Muhammad Ali Shah succeeded him. At that time, signs of political turmoil appeared. The Shah dissolved the Parliament, whereupon the Republicans took over the administration of the country and this plunged Iran into a civil war. Eventually the Shah abdicated on 15 July 1909, about a year after the death of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. All the efforts of the Shah to regain his throne failed. This prophecy was recently fulfilled in another way. In 1921, Reza Khan captured the throne of Iran and the Pahlavi regime came into power. On 17 January 1979, his son Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi fled the country and with that followed the end of the Pahlavi regime. The palace of the Emperor of Iran was in ruins and became a thing of the past. (SMT)

33 “In the revelation of God, the word zalzalah (earthquake) occurs very often and it has been said that this earthquake would be on the pattern of the Day of Judgement or in other words, it can be described as being as severe as the earthquake of the Day of Judgement towards which a reference has been made in the verse: When the earth is shaken with her shaking (99:1). But up to the present time I am unable to definitely apply this word in its literal and obvious sense. It is quite possible that this is not an ordinary earthquake but a severe calamity which may foreshadow a scene of the Day of Judgement and the equal of which has not been seen by the world before, and life and property may suffer heavy destruction” (Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah, vol. v.).

34 Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah, vol. v, p. 120.
The description of the word zalzalah (earthquake) is clearly indicated in the prophecy itself but for further clarification, I quote the testimony of the Arabic lexicon. Lisan al-Arab says that according to Ibn al-Anbari asbatial qaum al-zalzalah means a frightening befall the people and further on it is said that “earthquakes” mean great calamities and frightful misfortunes.

35 The reference is to World War 1. The first edition of this book was published in January 1918. (SMT)

36 David Smith Writes:
(Nicholas II) “The Tsar was stubborn. ‘Let every man know,’ he said at the outset of his reign, ‘that I will devote all my strength to
the good of my people but that I will uphold the principle of au-
tocracy as firmly and as unflinchingly as did my ever-lamented father.” (Russia of the Tsars, 1796-1917, p. 101. Published by Ernest Benn Limited, London, Edition 1971.)

At the declaration of the First World War, the loyalty of the Russian people to the Tsar was at its zenith. David Smith says: “Ironically, however, the first effect of the declaration of war was a great outburst of Russian loyalty to the Tsar. When he appeared with Alexandra on the balcony of the Winter Palace, a vast crowd filled the whole square and all the adjacent streets. At the sight of the Emperor, an electric current seemed to pass through the mass of people; a mighty ‘hurrah’ filled the air. Banners and placards, on which were inscribed the words ‘Long live Russia and the Slavonic cause’ were lowered to the ground, and the whole crowd, as one man, fell on their knees before the Emperor. He tried to speak, raised his hand: the front rows endeavoured to silence the rest, but nothing could be heard amid the deafening cheers and roaring of the crowd. The Emperor stood for a while with bowed head, overpowered by the solemnity of the moment, when Tsar and people became one. Then he turned slowly and withdrew into his apartments” (Ibid., p. 124). (SMT)

Later on, Nicholas II was allowed to rejoin his family at Tsarskoe Selo. However, in July 1918, at Ekaterinburg, where the royal family was finally held by the Bolsheviks, they were all butchered in a cellar. (SMT)

Jang-i Muqaddas, p. 293, 294 (Published June 15, 1893).

In his book, Androona Bible, he did call the Holy Prophet by that name. (SMT)
And say not to anyone who offers you the (Islamic) salutation, Thou art not a believer. ¹

O you who believe, be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for Allah, even though it be against your own selves. ²

The beginning of takfīr
As I have mentioned before, the claim to being a mujaddid (renovator) by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement was generally accepted by the Muslims of India. Even Maulavi Muhammad Hussain of Batala, who later on turned out to be his most implacable enemy, paid allegiance to such a claim. He openly admitted that a book like Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah had no parallel in the history of Islam. But when the Founder declared that Jesus Christ had died a natural death, and because of his likeness to Jesus Christ, the promise of the coming Messiah in the Muslim nation was fulfilled in his person, a storm of opposition was raised against him. Maulavi Muhammad Hussain was the greatest supporter of the Founder in the beginning, but it was he who became his greatest opponent in the end. As belief in the death of Jesus Christ, and anybody coming in the likeness of him, according to the prophecies about his descent recorded in the Hadith, were not matters over which the general body of Muslims could be incited.
by the ‘ulama against the Founder, therefore an entirely different attitude was adopted. Instead of discussing these points, or making them the foundation of their fatwa, the pronouncement of unbelief (fatwa kufr) was issued by levelling false charges against him. In this way, the so-called custodians of the faith split up the believers and shattered the solidarity of Islam. The Qur’an had clearly stated: *Say not to anyone who offered you the Islamic salutation (Assalamu ‘Alaikum): Thou art not a believer.* The Holy Prophet expressed his extreme displeasure at the killing of a person after he had recited the *Kalimah* on mere suspicion that he had uttered it to save his life. “Did you tear asunder his heart?” said the Prophet to the person who was guilty of this offence. But our *maulavis* neither cared for the Islamic salutation nor for the testimony of the *Kalimah*, nor for the belief in the principles of faith, for the acceptance of the Prophet Muhammad as *Khatam al-Nabiyyin*, nor for conformity to Islamic practices like prayer, fasting, charity etc. But when they saw the seal of one *maulavi* under the Pronouncement of Heresy they followed suit without thinking, or without understanding.

**Allegations made the basis for the pronouncement of heresy**

The nature and validity of these allegations can be judged by the following poster published by the Founder at Delhi on 2 October 1891 CE:

“I have heard that some of the leading ‘ulama of this city are giving publicity to false charges against me saying that I lay claim to prophethood, and that I do not believe in angels, nor in heaven and hell, nor in the existence of Gabriel, nor in *Lailat al-Qadr*, nor in miracles and the *Mir’aj* (Ascension) of the Holy Prophet. So, to make the truth known to all and sundry, I do
hereby publicly declare that all this is a complete fabrication. I am not a claimant to prophethood, neither am I a denier of miracles, angels, *Lailat al-Qadr*, etc. On the other hand, I confess belief in all those matters which are included in the Islamic principles of faith and, in accordance with the belief of the Ahl-i Sunnat wal-Jama’at, I believe in those things which are established by the Qur’an and the *Hadith*, and I believe that any claimant to prophethood and messengership after our lord and master, Muhammad Mustafa (may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him), the last of the messengers, is a liar and a disbeliever. It is my conviction that divine revelation, which was granted to messengers, began with Adam, the chosen one of God, and came to a close with the Messenger of God, Muhammad Mustafa (may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him). Everyone should bear witness to this statement and Allah, the All-Knowing and the All-Hearing, is the greatest of all witnesses that I declare my belief in all those doctrines by the acceptance of which even a *kafir* also becomes a Muslim, and a follower of any other religion too, is immediately proclaimed a Musalman.”

Similarly, in a speech delivered at the Jama’ Mosque on 23 October 1891, and published under the title *Wajib al-I’ lan*, he declared:

“Other charges are advanced against me that I am a denier of *Lailat al-Qadr*, miracles and of the Ascension and that I am also a claimant to prophethood and a denier of the Finality of Prophethood. All these charges are untrue and absolutely false. In all these matters, my belief is the same as that of the other Ahl-
i Sunnat wal-Jama’at and such objections against my books, *Taudih-i Maram* and *Izalih-i Auham* are entirely the errors of the fault-finders (themselves). Now I make a plain statement before Muslims in this house of Allah of the following matters: that I am a believer in the Finality of Prophethood (*Khatm-i Nubuwwat*) of the Seal of the Prophets (*Khatam al-Anbiya*), and I consider the person who denies the Finality of Prophethood to be a heretic and outside the pale of Islam. Similarly I am a believer in angels, miracles, *Lailat al-Qadr*, etc.” ³

**Insistence of the maulavis on the pronouncement of heresy**

Readers might be thinking that, perhaps after this clear announcement, the *maulavis* might have withdrawn their *fatwa*. But the seal of the so-called *maulavis* was given on the pronouncement of heresy when their hearts were already sealed. In reply to the above poster, another poster was published by Maulavi Muhammad Hussain of Batala on 18 October 1891 in which it was stated:

“The general body of Muslims should think him to be a liar in his various claims, and his declaration in the poster dated 2 October 1891 should be considered as an attempt at dissimulation (*taqiyya*) and hypocrisy (*nifaq*).” ⁴

This is an example of the piety of those *maulavis*. A person declared on solemn oath that he was not a claimant to prophethood and not a denier of *Lailat al-Qadr* (The Grand Night), miracles and angels and that he held the same beliefs as those held by the Ahl-i Sunnat wal Jama’at, but perhaps the *maulavis* had torn asunder his heart and seen that all that was
due to hypocrisy. Bigotry could perhaps go no further. The question however, that could be asked was, what were the actual writings of the Promised Messiah on account of which the maulavis had attributed a claim of prophethood to him, for this was their greatest allegation. The writings quoted by them were from his two books, viz. *Taudih-i Maram* and *Izalah-i Auham*. The following words of *Taudih-i Maram* were assumed to be the basis of his claim to prophethood:

“Here, if it be objected that the like of the Messiah should also be a prophet because the Messiah was himself a prophet, the reply to this, in the first place is, that our Holy Prophet has not made prophethood a condition for the coming Messiah, but has clearly stated that he shall be a Muslim and bound by the law of the Qur’an like ordinary Muslims. He shall not say anything except that ‘I am a Muslim and their leader’. Besides, there is no doubt in it that this humble servant has been raised by the Most High God for this ummah (nation) in the capacity of a muhaddath and a muhaddath is in one sense also a prophet. Though he does not attain to perfect prophethood, nevertheless, he is partially a prophet, for he is endowed with the gift of being spoken to by God, and matters unseen are manifested to him and, like the revelations of messengers and prophets, his revelations are also made free from the intervention of the devil, and the real kernel of the Law is disclosed to him and he is commissioned just like prophets, and it is obligatory on him, like prophets, that he should announce his claims at the top of his voice, and anybody who rejects him deserves punishment to some extent. **Prophethood means nothing but that the above characteristics are found in him.**
If it is argued that the door of prophethood has been closed and that a seal has been set on the revelation that descends on prophets, I say that neither has the door of prophethood been closed in all respects nor has a seal been set on every form of revelation. On the contrary, the doors of revelation and prophethood have been partially open for this nation ever since. “That the (type of) prophethood, which is to continue for ever, is not perfect prophethood… which in other words is termed muhaddathiyyah and this is attainable by following the greatest and the most perfect of all human beings i.e., the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the embodiment of all the excellences of perfect prophethood (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Now, may Allah guide you, and ponder deeply that a prophet is a muhaddath and muhaddath is a prophet in the sense that he possesses one of the various characteristics of prophethood. The messenger of Allah is reported to have said that nothing is now left of prophethood, except mubashshirat (good news); that is to say from the characteristics of prophethood only one kind is left, that is, mubashshirat such as true dreams, right visions and revelation that descend on the chosen ones from among the saints (auliya). And that is a light which descends on the hearts of compassionate people. Thus look at this, learned critic and possessor of insight, whether the door of prophethood has been entirely closed because of this. On the other hand, the hadith proves that perfect prophethood which contained the revelation of the Shari‘ah has certainly
been cut off, but prophethood which contains nothing except \textit{mubashshirat} will remain till the Day of Judgement and will never be cut off. You know and have read in the books of Tradition that prophetic dream is a forty-sixth part of perfect prophethood. Thus, when true dreams could rank so high, what would be the position of revelation which descends on the hearts of \textit{muhaddathin}? The substance of my talk is this, that the doors of partial prophethood have always been open. But this kind of prophethood is nothing except glad tidings, warnings, reports of matters unseen, deep understanding of the Qur’an, and Divine knowledge. We believe that prophethood, which is perfect and complete and possesses all the excellence of revelation, has ceased from the time this verse was revealed: \textit{Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the messenger of Allah and the last of all the Prophets.”} \textsuperscript{5}

It is clear from the above quotation that he claims to be the \textit{muhaddath} only. Of course a \textit{muhaddathin} in a sense is also called a prophet. The reason for this has also been given by him, that a \textit{muhaddath} shares in some of the attributes of a prophet. The door of prophethood has indeed been closed, but not in every respect, so that nothing is left of the blessings of prophethood. A part of prophethood, that is to say, \textit{mubashshirat} continues in this \textit{ummah} according to the Tradition, and a recipient of this part has been called a partial prophet (\textit{juzwi nabi}). But it has also been made clear that a partial prophet only means a \textit{muhaddath} and not a prophet. Perfect and complete prophethood according to him has been cut off. To make this statement the basis of prophethood and insist
that in spite of the clear explanation that this statement does not carry the meaning attached to it by the opponents, is not to be expected of a God-fearing person. The point was still further clarified in Izalah-i Auham where he writes:

“Question: In the pamphlet Fath-i Islam, has a claim been laid to prophethood?

“Reply: There is no claim to being a prophet, but a claim to being a muhaddath has been laid and this has been advanced by the command of Allah. Further, there is no doubt that muhaddathiyyat also contains a strong part of prophethood. In this case, when good visions are a forty-sixth part of prophethood, then if muhaddathiyyat, which has been mentioned in the Qur’an together with prophethood and apostleship and of which there is also a report in al-Sahih of Bukhari, is called metaphorical prophethood or is regarded as a strong part of prophethood, does this then amount to a claim to prophethood? 6

“The possessor of perfect prophethood (nubuwwat-i tammah) can never be a follower (ummati). And if one is called a perfect messenger of God, his becoming a complete follower of, and obedient (muti‘) to another prophet is absolutely forbidden according to the clear and express teachings of the Qur’an and the Hadith. God says: And we sent no messenger but that he should be obeyed by Allah’s command (4:64). That is to say, every messenger is sent to be a master (muta‘) and an imam. He is not sent for the object of becoming obedient and subordinate to another person. Of course, a muhaddath, who is from among the sent ones
(mursalin), is a follower, too, and a prophet in an imperfect sense, as well. He is a follower, because he is totally obedient to the Shari‘ah of Allah’s messenger and is the recipient of the light from the lamp of his messengership, and a prophet because God deals with him as He does with prophets. God has created a muhaddath as an intermediary (barzakh) between prophets and nations. Although he is a perfect follower, he is also a prophet in a sense.”

“Moreover, the finality of our Holy Prophet precludes the coming of any other prophet. This restriction in fact does not apply to an apostle who receives his light from the lamp of the prophethood of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and lacks perfect prophethood. In other words, he too is a muhaddath because on account of discipleship and annihilation in the Messenger (fana-fil-rasul) he is included in the person of Khatam al-Mursalin (Seal of Messengers) as a part is never outside the whole”

These writings also support the first conclusion. He has repeatedly clarified the point that his claim is not that of prophethood but of muhaddathiyyat and a muhaddath is, in a sense, a prophet because he shares in some of the attributes of prophets. But the point has been explained that he can only be called a prophet in the metaphorical sense, or because he has attained to the status of annihilation in the messenger (fana-fil-rasul). Thus, those who have declared him to be a prophet on the basis of these writings have laid a false allegation against him. If this was not done intentionally before, it was proper to withdraw this allegation when the writer openly declared that by the use of such words he never meant to be a claimant to
prophethood. On the contrary, he believed that prophethood had come to an end with the Holy Prophet Muhammad and that after him a claimant to prophetic revelation, or a denier of the Finality of Prophethood was considered by him to be a heretic and outside the pale of Islam. The opponents’ insistence on their allegation and their assertion that the Founder was saying all that by way of hypocrisy was a downright lie. This attitude was only adopted so that the general body of Muslims should consider him to be a kafir and should not listen to him and refrain from reading his writings. Even after this, the Founder kept on repeating what he had already said above, but alas, the maulavis considered it an insult to change their minds and accept the plain truth. In 1892, he again wrote:

“About these allegations, I have repeatedly explained and have told them the meaning of my writings. There is no statement of heresy found in them, and neither do I lay a claim to prophethood, nor do I remove myself from the ummah of Muhammad, nor am I a denier of miracles, angels and the Grand Night (Lailat al-Qadr). I believe that the Holy Prophet is the Khatam al-Nabiyyin (the Last of the Prophets) and know with perfect certainty and have firm faith that our Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is the Last of the Prophets (Khatam al-Anbiya) and no prophet, either new or old, will appear after him for this ummah, and not a single jot or tittle of the Holy Qur’an will be abrogated. Of course, there shall appear muhaddathin who are spoken to by God, Whose glory is eminent, and they possess some of the attributes of perfect prophethood by way of zill (reflection). On account of certain reasons, they are imbued with the colour of some excellences of prophethood. And I am one of them.” 9
The use of the term *prophet* by way of metaphor

From the beginning, it has been the belief of the Promised Messiah that *muhaddathin* are spoken to by God, are endowed with some of the attributes of perfect prophethood by way of *zill*, and are imbued with the colour of prophethood. Therefore, the word prophet can be applied to them by way of metaphor. They are partially invested with a kind of prophethood, or they get a kind of *zilli* or *baruzi* prophethood by the reflection of the sun of prophethood (*afتاب-i nubuwwat*) in the mirror of their hearts. This station (*maqam*) can be attained by annihilation in the messenger (*fana-fil-rasul*). This belief has been expressed by him in his earliest book, *Barahin-i Ahmadiyyah*, and the same has been the view of the righteous ancestors of this *ummah* as well. And in recent times, as I have explained before (in Chapter III), Mujaddid Alf Thani and Shah Waliullah of Delhi have also clearly advocated this view. But to the so-called ‘*ulama* of this age, who had gone far away from the reality and kernel of Islam, these simple statements appeared to them as a claim to prophethood, notwithstanding the fact that it was clearly written by the Founder at the same place that his claim was not that of prophethood but that of *muhaddathiyyat*. The superficial observers did not care to look at the facts and obstinately clung to their anathema of heresy. In spite of the Founder’s clarifications, they called him a hypocrite and thus added further black spots to their character.

The extremist group of followers

Strangely enough, another group which calls itself his followers, now also says the same thing which his opponents said, with this difference: they affirm that the Founder did claim to be a prophet, but before 1901 he was not aware of his prophethood, so the writings before that period, concerning
the denial of prophethood, have been abrogated and it is wrong
to argue from them, and that the Promised Messiah changed
his belief concerning prophethood in 1901 by the publication
of *Ek Ghalati Ka Izala*. This is something which never oc-
curred to his friends or foes before Mian Mahmud Ahmad,
the son of the Founder, gave an expression to this view. Dur-
ing the lifetime of the Founder or the late Maulana Nur al-
Din, the first successor of the Fonder, nobody thought for a
moment that a change had taken place in 1901 in the claim of
the Founder or that it was wrong to argue from his writings
prior to 1901. According to the divine revelation, Hazrat Mirza
bore an extreme resemblance to Jesus Christ. Therefore, it
was also necessary that an extremist group should rise among
his followers who would exalt his position from the rank of a
mujaddid to that of a prophet as had happened in the case of
Jesus Christ whose status from prophethood was exalted to
that of divinity. The words *son of God*, which Jesus Christ
used metaphorically, ultimately became the source of all er-
ror. In the case of the second Messiah also, the words he had
used metaphorically, and their application to him in the literal
sense he had denied, were accepted in their real sense, and
thus the foundation was laid for a wrong belief.

**Correction of an Error**

Even the poster, *Ek Ghalati Ka Izala* (Correction of an Er-
ror), has not a vestige of evidence for this assertion that the
Founder made a change in his former claim. The Promised
Messiah has not corrected his own error in this poster, but the
error of a disciple of his who had not studied his books care-
fully, nor had fuller information about his claims and argu-
ments. The poster, therefore, begins with these words:

“Some persons from among my disciples, having mea-
gre knowledge of my claim and arguments thereof, hav-
ing neither read my books thoroughly, nor stayed with me for a sufficiently long time to perfect their knowledge, sometimes (make statements) in reply to the objections of opponents statements which are absolutely contrary to facts.”

The above words clearly indicate that there was neither any mention there of the abrogation of his books, nor a change in his belief. On the other hand, someone who was quite ignorant of his books had committed a mistake in presenting his case. What that mistake was about becomes clear by reading this poster. The opposing ‘ulama had also misunderstood his writings wherein he had declared that he was a muhaddath and a muhaddath was in a sense a prophet, that is to say, partially or metaphorically, and that baruzi prophethood was attained by the perfect followers of the Holy Prophet in this ummah by reaching the stage of annihilation in the Messenger (fana-fil-rasul). They had wrongly concluded from this that the Founder claimed to be a prophet in the real sense of the term. The reason for all this was that they themselves were far removed from the reality of the institution of prophethood and had lost the faith that by following the Prophet Muhammad, one could be endowed with the gift of Divine communication in this ummah. Whatever the ignorant disciple of the Founder said, amounted to more or less the same view as that of the opponents. Thus it was that the Founder made this point clear to him. The sum and substance of the whole matter is found in the few words where, after quoting the verse, Khatam al-Nabiyyin, and the hadith, la nabiyya ba‘di, he writes:

“There is a prophecy in this verse of which our opponents are unaware. It is that the Most High God states in this verse that after the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the doors of prophe-
cies have been closed forever.... All the doors of prophethood have been closed except the one of Sirat-i-Siddiqi; that is, of annihilation in the Messenger (fanafil-rasul). Thus, anyone who comes through it to God is wrapped up by way of zill with the same mantle of the prophethood of Muhammad.”

He has further explained the verse Khatam al-Nabiyyin in the following way:

“This means that Muhammad is not the father of any of the men of this world but he is the father of the men of the next world, because he is the Seal of the Prophets (Khatam al-Nabiyyin) and there is no way left for (receiving) God’s graces without his mediation.”

The significance of the Finality of Prophethood - the Founder did not change his views on the subject

Besides this, after 1901, he gave the same explanation of the verse Khatam al-Nabiyyin which he had given before that time. If, however, some change had taken place in this important issue, great emphasis should have been laid on it by him because up till then he had agreed with the consensus of opinion of the ummah, that no prophet would appear after the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

(“Every prophethood has come to an end with him.” This is a line from one of the Founder’s couplets. Not only in his lifetime, but up to 1912, this line was written at the top of the front page of the weekly Badr (Qadian).

Assuming he was going to advance a new belief against the consensus of opinion, he should have openly said that, so far, whatever explanation was given to the words Khatam al-
Allegations against the Promised Messiah

Nabiyyin by him or by other Muslim divines, was wrong and that the Qur’an and the Hadith are opposed to this view. But there is not a single word in his writings to that effect. On the contrary, there are statements in his later writings, more or less in the same words used by him before, which indicate that no such change had ever taken place in his views. It will suffice here to quote two such references. While discussing his beliefs in his book Mawahib al-Rahman, published in 1903, he writes:

“God communes and communicates with his saints (auliya) in this nation and they are imbued with the colour of prophethood, but they are not prophets in reality, for the Qur’an had brought the need of Law to perfection. And they are given nothing except the understanding of the Qur’an, neither do they add to, nor subtract anything from it.” 12

It has clearly been said here that although the saints (auliya) of this ummah are imbued with the colour of prophets and are spoken to and addressed by God, they are really not prophets. The reason for this is that the Qur’an has made perfect the requirements of the Law and there is no need left for another prophet. Now, a person who is himself a claimant to prophethood cannot say that the perfection of the Qur’an prevents the coming of another prophet, because this is a prevention of his being a prophet as well. Thus, the principle which he has laid down is that the perfection of the Law of the Qur’an is a restraint against the coming of a new prophet. Therefore, nobody, except a denier of the perfection of the Qur’an, can advocate the view of the continuity of prophethood. Similarly, he wrote at another place:

“And prophethood has been cut off after our Holy
Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him ... and with him has been cut off the chain of messengers ... and nothing has been left after him except the frequency of (divine) communication.”

It is obvious that the writer of these lines has openly admitted the termination of the institution of prophethood and messengership and that after this termination what is left is only the abundance of Divine communication. Therefore, according to him, prophethood and frequency of communication are not one and the same thing. He has also stated at the same place:

“I have been called a prophet of God by way of metaphor, and not by way of reality.”

In the same Istifta, he has also written at another place:

“By my prophethood is not meant the prophethood which has been mentioned in the previous Scriptures.”

His belief remained unchanged before and after 1901
I do not want to prolong this discussion. I have dealt with these points in detail in my book, Al-Nubuwwat fil-Islam (Prophethood in Islam) and will request the reader to go through it for more comprehensive information. The Founder, however, interpreted Khatam al-Nabiyyin and Khatm-i Nubuwwat in one and the same sense before 1901 and after. That is, that prophethood was cut off with the Holy Prophet Muhammad although his grace is continued in his ummah in the form of Divine communion and communication, and that by way of zill and by annihilation in the Holy Prophet, a person obtains the blessings of prophethood. In both the periods, that is, before and after 1901, he said that the kind of
prophethood that one obtains by annihilation in the Messenger is, in fact, not real prophethood but only prophethood in the metaphorical sense. Again, in both periods, he said that his belief about the Finality of Prophethood was the same as the belief of the righteous ancestors. A reference prior to 1901 has been quoted before and in his last book he wrote:

“God does not mean anything by my prophethood except abundance of communion and communication and that is acknowledged by the elders of the Ahl-i Sunnat. Thus, it is nothing but a verbal dispute.”

These words also clearly indicate that the Founder did not change his belief concerning prophethood. Before 1901, he said that his belief was the belief of the righteous ancestors, and after 1901 he also said the same, that his belief was just like the belief of the elders of the Ahl-i Sunnat. Before 1901, he said that a muhaddath was like an intermediary (barzakh) between a follower and a prophet, and therefore both aspects (of prophethood) were found in him; that is, by following the Holy Prophet, he possessed the status of ummatiyyat and by being imbued with the colour of the Holy Prophet, he possessed, in a sense, an aspect or blessing of prophethood.

Again, he wrote in Al-Wasiyyat and Haqiqat al-Wahy also, the last of his important writings, that he could not be called a mere prophet. According to him, ummati nabi was another name for a muhaddath. In short, his belief, from the beginning of his claim to being the Promised Messiah (in this respect), remained the same.

**The Founder has asked his followers not to become zealots and extremists**

The Founder has advised his followers thus:

“Because of the use of such words which are merely
by way of simile (isti’arah), a commotion has been created among Muslims, the result of which is extremely unpleasant. Therefore, in the common and daily conversation of my followers, these words should not occur. One should believe from the core of one’s heart that prophethood has come to an end with the Holy Prophet Muhammad as God says: But he is a messenger of Allah and Khatam al-Nabiyyin (Seal of the Prophets). To deny this verse, or to look down upon it is, as a matter of fact, to abandon Islam. Anyone who goes to the extreme in denying it is in as dangerous a state as he who, like the Shias, goes to the extreme in belief (i’tiqad). It must be known that the Most High God has terminated all prophethood and messengership with the Qur’an and the Holy Prophet.  

Belief in Lailat al-Qadr, angels and miracles
There are also other charges levelled against the Founder, that he was a denier of the Grand Night (Lailat al-Qadr), angels, miracles and the Mi’raj (Ascension of the Holy Prophet). These are all mere fabrications. I have quoted the original words of the Founder whereby he rejected these allegations. He believed in these matters and taught the same to his Jama’at. We, Ahmadis, believe in the Grand Night and try to seek it in the last ten days of Ramadhan. We have faith in the existence of angels. We believe in miracles. To us every incident in the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is a miracle. As for the Mi’raj (the spiritual Ascension of the Holy Prophet), we accept the view of Lady ‘Aishah, the truthful, on this subject.

The Founder did not declare other Muslims to be kafirs (unbelievers)
Another charge which the Founder’s opponents bring against him is that he declared other Muslims to be unbelievers (kafirs).
This, again, is mere fabrication as he has written in one of his last books:

“Again, consider this falsehood that they bring this charge against us that we have declared two hundred million Muslims to be unbelievers. On the other hand, we have not at all been the initiators of takfir. These ‘ulama’ themselves issued anathemas of heresy against us and created an uproar in the whole of the Punjab and India that these people, (i.e. Ahmadis), were unbelievers ... And when they declared us to be unbelievers by their own pronouncements, and also admitted it themselves that if anyone calls a Muslim an unbeliever, that unbelief (kufr) reverts to him, 18 then in this case was it not our right that we should consider them unbelievers according to their own admission?” 19

At another place in the same book he writes:

“Dr. ‘Abd al-Hakim Khan, in his pamphle, Al-Masih al-Dajjal, lays this charge against me that I have written in my book that anyone who does not accept me, even if he is unaware of my name and although he is in a country where my invitation has not even reached, even so he shall be a kafir (unbeliever) and go to hell. It is entirely a fabrication of the said doctor; I have not written so in any book or poster of mine. It is his duty to bring forward that book in which this is written.” 20

In another book, he has plainly stated:

“It has been my belief from the beginning that no one can become a kafir or dajjal (anti-Christ) on account of denying my claim.” 21

Under this, a footnote has been added in which he writes:

“It is a point worth remembering that to call a denier
of one’s claim a *kafir* is the right of those prophets who bring a Law and new commandments from God, but as for the inspired ones and the *muhaddathin*, or others than the givers of Law, however great their dignity in the sight of God, and however much they may have been honoured by being spoken to by God, no one becomes a *kafir* by their denial.” Of course he is an unfortunate denier who refuses to accept these *auliyas* or friends of Allah and as a result of such non-acceptance his heart hardens day by day. Consequently, the light of faith goes out of his heart. This is what we also learn from the authentic *ahadith*. It is mentioned there that refusal to accept the *auliya* and to entertain enmity against them leads one to negligence and worldliness, and one loses the ability to do works of goodness, truthfulness and sincerity. At last he becomes devoid of faith, its reality and substance. And this is also the meaning of the *hadith* where Allah says: To one who becomes an enemy of My *auliya*, I say to him, now be ready to face My punishment.”

As against this, one reference is quoted from *Haqiqat al-Wahy*, that he who denies the Founder and he who declares him to be a *kafir* are not two different kinds of persons. But when the whole statement is read, it becomes clear that only those deniers are mentioned there who called him a fabricator against God (*muftari ‘alal-lah*) as the words of *takzib* (accusation of falsehood) and *mukazzib* (belier) have repeatedly been used there. At the same place, it has been mentioned in the footnote:

“But even now, I do not declare the *Ahl-i Qiblah* (People of the *Qiblah*) to be *kafirs*.”

22
Besides that, if a statement apparently seems to be ambiguous, it should be interpreted according to those writings which are clear and are found in abundance where he has frequently denied the declaring of any person an unbeliever except the *mukaffir* (one who declares another a *kafir*). The sum and substance of what the Founder said was that “because you have declared us to be *kafirs*, therefore, according to the saying of the Holy Prophet, *kufr* has reverted to you.” This plainly indicated that if the opponents would take back their pronouncement of *kufr*, the words which had been uttered by the Founder would automatically be withdrawn. Moreover, the evidence of his practical life in these matters should also be observed. Did he treat other Muslims as Muslims, or not? Decisive proof on this point is that he offered funeral services for Muslims and gave his followers permission to do so. In this connection, he had only excluded those opponents who pronounced him to be a *kafir* (unbeliever). The following *fatwa* of his has been published in the newspaper and also in separate publications:

“When he was asked whether it was lawful to offer prayers for the (dead) person who had not joined this Movement, the Promised Messiah replied that if he was an opponent of this Movement and abused us and thought of us in an evil manner, you should not offer funeral service for him, but if he was silent and in a middle position, it is lawful to offer prayers for him, but the *imam* of the funeral service should be from among you.” 23

The condition that the *imam* should be from among the Ahmadis was only placed because the *maulavis* at that time generally used to call the Promised Messiah a *kafir*. It was not because the Founder himself considered all non-Ahmadis to
be *kafirs*; otherwise, why should he give the sanction for the funeral services to be held for them?

**Marriage relation with others**

Similar is the situation about marriage relations with other Muslims. He never said that it was forbidden to give the hand of an Ahmadi girl to a non-Ahmadi Muslim. Had he said that, it would have amounted to interference with the *Shari’ah*. But there is nothing like that in his writings. Indeed, he had drawn to the attention of his followers, by a poster, that for strengthening mutual relations and for protecting themselves from the evil influences of the pronouncers of heresy, marriage relations should take place among Ahmadis. No distinction whatever has been made between boys or girls. He never said that non-Ahmadi girls may be taken into marriage, but Ahmadi girls should not be given to non-Ahmadi Muslims. His original words, however, are as follows:

“As by the grace and bounty of the Most High God and by His great favour, our followers have increased much in number and can now amount to several hundred thousand, therefore it is expedient that for the sake of developing common bonds of harmony among them and for protecting them from the evil influences of their families and near relatives, that a better arrangement should be made for the marriage of (our) boys and girls.”

That arrangement was as he himself had said:

“There is no need whatsoever for our followers to enter into new relationships with those who call us *kafir* and give us the name *dajjal* (anti-Christ), or with those who are admirers and followers of such persons.”
Then he proceeds with a proposal on how marriage relations among Ahmadis should be arranged. Obviously, the question of the legality and illegality of marriage has not been discussed here. He has only declared it a matter of expedience. Arrangements for the marriage of boys as well as girls have been mentioned together. It was because of this that the Founder himself agreed to the marriage of a daughter of a reputed disciple of his, Dr. Khalifa Rashid al-Din, with a non-Ahmadi boy. The girl in question was the sister-in-law of Mian Mahmud Ahmad (the Founder’s own son), and she was married among the relatives of the mother of the girl. These were not Ahmadis, but rather opponents of the Movement. He gave permission to this marriage towards the end of his life, and after his death, the marriage sermon was delivered by the late Maulana Nur al-Din. Mian Mahmud Ahmad himself was present at the ceremony. Later on, in Lahore, he was also present at the departure of the bride. If at that time he had thought that all other Muslims were unbelievers, it was his duty to save the sister of his wife from falling in to the hands of *kafirs*.

**The question of imamat**

The last practical aspect of this problem is the saying of prayers behind non-Ahmadi *imams*. Some points are worth considering in this connection. The foremost is that this question has nothing to do with his claim. After his claim to being the Promised Messiah, he, as well as his followers, continued to offer their prayers behind other Muslims. But when his followers were persecuted and turned out of the mosques, when Ahmadis and their leader were persistently declared to be unbelievers and liars, then there was no other choice left for the welfare of this small community except to take the defensive measure of prohibiting prayers behind non-Ahmadi *imams*. It was in *Arba’in* that this problem was mentioned for the first time.
While explaining one of his revelations, “Abu Lahab’s hand will perish and he will perish”, he wrote in the footnote:

“It is evident from this divine revelation that the pronouncers of heresy and those who have adopted the path of belying (\textit{takzib}) are a ruined people. Therefore, they are not worthy that anybody from among my followers should pray behind them. Can the living pray behind the dead? Thus, remember that, as God has informed me, it is forbidden to you and altogether forbidden that you should pray behind any \textit{mukaffir} (pronouncer of heresy) and \textit{mukazzib} (believer) or \textit{mutaraddid} (reluctant).” 26

This writing is from a period about which it has been admitted even by Mian Mahmud Ahmad, that the Founder at that time neither considered himself to be a prophet nor declared anybody an unbeliever except those who called him a \textit{kafir} and a liar. After this, his book \textit{Tiryaq al-Qulub}, was published in October 1902, in which he clearly stated:

“This has been my belief from the very beginning that no one can become a \textit{kafir} ... on account of denying my claim.” 27

The above writing from \textit{Arba’in}, as is clear from its words, is only about those who declared him to be an unbeliever or a liar. By the reluctant (\textit{mutaraddid}) is only meant reluctance in \textit{takfîr} and \textit{takzîb}, not in the acceptance of his claim, because there is no mention of his claim here, but only of \textit{takfîr} and \textit{takzîb}, and it was only on account of this that he prohibited his followers from praying behind such persons. All his writings and speeches after this conform to this conclusion. He never said, even towards the extreme end of his life, that unless a person entered into his \textit{bai’at}, prayer was forbidden
behind him. On the other hand, what he said was that if a person fulfilled certain conditions he would offer prayers behind him. These conditions were firstly, that such a person should not himself declare the Founder to be an unbeliever and a liar, and secondly, that he should not belong to those who had done so. Thus, his own words bear testimony to the fact, which he wrote with his own pen in reply to an inquiry dated 17 March 1908, from Baluchistan. The following were his words:

“In reply, it should be written that generally the mullah of this country, on account of prejudice, have declared us to be unbelievers and have issued fatwas against us, and the other people are their followers. Therefore, if there are such people that make a public announcement for the sake of clarity that they are not the followers of these maulavis who have declared me to be a kafir, then it is permissible to say prayers with them. Otherwise, he who calls Muslims unbelievers becomes an unbeliever himself. How can we then say prayers behind him? This is not permitted according to the Shari’ah.” 

These are the Founder’s own words written by him towards the end of his life. There is no doubt about it, that at some places it has been recorded from his speeches that Ahmadis would only say prayers behind those who make an announcement to the effect that they regarded Ahmadis as Muslims and that those who have declared them to be unbelievers were themselves unbelievers according to the hadith which indicated that unbelief reverted to him who declared other Muslims to be kafirs. But the writing of the Founder, in his own hand, determined the point that the only object of all this was that people should isolate themselves from the mukaffir
maulavis. Thus, if anyone separated himself from such maulavis, then prayer behind him was lawful. No Ahmadi has the right to put a new meaning to, or to advance a step beyond the words of the Founder himself.

It is evident from this that the fatwa for not performing salah (prayers) with other Muslims was, in fact, only against the deniers (mukaffirin) and the beliers (mukazzibin). As prayer is the spiritual ascension (mi’raj) of a believer, therefore, it was prohibited to say prayers behind those who kept themselves bound together with such maulavis, and although not outstanding mukaffirs themselves, yet they were with them in practice. As for those who did not call the Promised Messiah an unbeliever and a forger, but instead separated themselves from the mukaffir maulavis, or expressed their repulsion against their pronouncement of heresy, prayers could be offered behind them. That is why the late Maulana Nur al-Din gave permission to pray behind other persons in foreign countries where there was no fatwa of kufr against Ahmadis, so much so that in Arabia itself, during the pilgrimage, Ahmadis said their prayers behind non-Ahmadi imams in accordance with this fatwa. Mian Mahmood Ahmad may declare the whole world kafir today but he said his prayer behind a non-Ahmadi during his pilgrimage. The late Maulana Nur al-Din, on being questioned by Maulavi Fazl al-Din of Kharian (Punjab) regarding the saying of prayers behind other imams, wrote the following with his own pen:

“Those who entertain a good opinion about the Movement are excused to a certain extent. You may say prayers behind them after having made istikharah.”

A facsimile reproduction of his writing has been published.
The name *Ahmadiyya*

Another charge against the Founder is that he has created dis-sension in Islam by making a new sect of his own. The reasons for the formation of a new *Jama’at* for the propagation of Islam, have been discussed by me before (Chs. 6 and 7). The work which he started could not be continued without forming a new organisation. The name *Ahmadiyya* was given to this organisation, not after his own name, but after the name of the Prophet Muhammad (Ahmad being his second name). Thus, in his poster dated 4 November 1900, published before the census of 1901, he wrote:

“This name has been given to this group because our Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah 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 who actually murdered hundreds of Muslims. But his other name, Ahmad, reflected his *jamal* (beauty) which meant that the Holy Prophet would spread peace and harmony in the world. So God made a division of these two names in the manner that in the Makkan period of his life, there was a manifestation of his name Ahmad when the teaching of extreme patience and endurance was given, and in his life at Madinah, the name Muhammad was manifested when the punishment of the opponents was considered necessary according to divine wisdom and the requirements of justice. But it was prophesied that in the latter ages, there would be a manifestation of the name Ahmad again and such a person would appear in whom the Ahmadi characteristics, that is, the characteristics of *jamal*, would be
manifested and all the religious wars would come to an end. Thus, on account of this, it was considered fit that this group should be called the Ahmadiyya Movement.”

Footnotes on Chapter X

1 4:94.
2 4:135.
3 As quoted in Din al-Haqq, p. 29.
4 As quoted in Din al-Haqq.
5 Taudih-i Maram, pp. 9, 10.
6 Izalah-i Auham, pp. 421, 422.
7 Ibid., p. 569.
8 Ibid., p. 575.
9 Nishan-i Asmani, p. 28.
10 Ek Ghalati ka Izalah.
11 Ibid.
12 Mawahib al-Rahman, p. 66.
13 Haqiqat al-Wahy, Istifta, p. 64.
14 Ibid., p. 65.
15 Ibid., p. 16.
16 Ibid., Istifta, p. 16 footnote.
18 According to a saying of the Holy Prophet, “If a person declares his Muslim brother to be kafir (unbeliever), that kufr (unbelief) reverts to one of the two” (hadith unanimously accepted). (SMT).
19 Haqiqat al-Wahy, p. 120.
20 Ibid., p. 178.
21 Tiryaq al-Qulub, p. 130, published 28 October 1902.
22 Haqiqat al-Wahy, p. 163, footnote. It is obvious that by the Ahl-i Qiblah is here meant the other Muslims. But the extremist group of the Qadianis take them to be restricted to Ahmadis alone. This is just playing with words. A wise person need not say that he does not declare his disciples to be kafirs.
23 Fatawa Ahmadiyyah, vol. 1, p. 118.
25 Ibid.
26 Arba‘in, p. 283.
Annexe to Chapter X

Allegation of claiming Godhead

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement said:

“I saw in a dream that I am exactly God” ¹

This dream of his is considered to be his claim to being God.

1. The Qur’an says that Joseph saw in a dream that eleven stars and the sun and the moon were prostrating before him.² The sun, the moon and the stars only make obeisance to God and to no one else. Has anyone charged Joseph with making a claim to Godhead on the basis of his dream?

2. Dreams are liable to interpretation. The famous book on the interpretation of dreams, Ta’bir al-Anam, says that any person who sees himself in a dream to be God means that he will be guided to the right path.

This shows that a Muslim may see in a dream that he has become God. On the basis of such a dream, it is foolish to suppose that he is a claimant to Godhead.

3. The Founder has explained the dream in the following words:

“I saw in a dream that I became Allah and I believed that it was true. I had neither any such intention nor thought, nor there was any wish in my self of this sort. I became like a broken utensil, rather worse in condition. Consider it as if some other power has taken hold of me and has hidden me in his being to the extent that I have lost existence altogether and my own self has disappeared and become annihilated.

My becoming the very being of Allah means that as shadow returns to its original and vanishes into it, similarly sometimes people who love Allah experience such a condition. The condition can be described in this way. When Allah intends to do some
good to His creatures, He manifests His glory on them as He had done with me. Then the will of such a person becomes the will of Allah and his knowledge and limbs become the knowledge and limbs of Allah. Thus, Allah’s Unity and Individuality work through His true servants such as *abdals*, *aqtabs* and *siddiques* like His limbs. The same happened to me. I saw that the Spirit of Allah had completely engulfed me and had overpowered me and my body was submerged into His being. Nothing remained of my body and I was fully annihilated into His being. When I looked towards my body and limbs, they appeared to me as they had become limbs and parts of the body of the Divine being. My eyes became His eyes, my tongue became His tongue. In fact, Allah had completely taken my whole being into His custody. In other words, I had become completely absorbed into the Being of Allah. I felt as if Allah’s glory and His power was surging into my being and Allah’s Divinity was raging in me and was setting up some sort of fence around my heart (for protection) and Allah’s sphere of Omnipotence had suffused every limb and fibre of my being. So there was no intention of mine but His, nor I had any desire or wish of my own. It appeared that even the shadow of my being had vanished and all aspects of my ego had been obliterated. And thus nothing remained of my desires and Allah’s Divine being completely over-powered my person to the extent that from the hair of head down to the nails of my feet I was assimilated into the Divine Being. Thus I became like a kernel without any skin and like oil without any dregs.

Thus the gulf between my body and my soul widened and became as if I had no existence of my own, just as a drop of water enters a river, and is absorbed into the vast sheet of its water and thus disappears into the waves of the river. So I also reached that state in which I did not know what I was before. My being was obliterated altogether and there only remained the Being of the Divine which had penetrated into every vein and fibre of my body. I felt as if somebody had taken away the whole of my being and as if Allah had assigned work in some way to all my limbs, and my being acquired such a tremendous power that there could not be greater power than that. My whole being had gone into such a state through the Divine possession and His strong grip that I never felt as if I ever had a separate entity of my own before. I
became certain that all my limbs were not mine but those of Allah. I was convinced that my being had become non-existent and all my desires had become extinct. There was no one equal to me. No one could oppose me and no one possessed more power than I. In fact, I had become one without any associate. Allah had completely entered into my being. And so my anger, my sweetness and my bitterness, in fact, every movement or rest was only under the command of Allah. My body became devoid of any soul. In that state I decided that I should initiate a new system, a new heaven, a new earth. So I created a heaven and an earth. In the beginning all were in a state of amalgamation. There were no separate entities and no order. I separated them in a way which was the will of Allah. And I found myself having control over all of them.”

1  A’ina-i Kamalat-i Islam, p. 564.

2  12:4.