THE DEBT FORGOTTEN

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A Fresh appraisement of the Life and Mission of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām ʿĀhmād of Qādiān, Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement, the Promised Messiah and Māḥdī

Published in U.S.A. by
Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at Islām Lahore Inc. (U.S.A.)
1315 Kingsgate Road, Columbus, Ohio 43221 U.S.A.

1993

www.aaiil.org
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Transliteration

Below is explained the system of transliteration of proper names and Arabic words as adopted in this book. It follows the most recent rules recognized by European Orientalists with very slight variations.

' stands for hamza, sounding like h in hour, a sort of catch in voice.
‘ stands for ‘ain, sounding like a strong guttural hamza.
a sounds like u in tub.
ā sounds like a in father
ai sounds like a in mat; it represents a fatha before yā.
au sounds between au in auto and o in more; it represents a fatha before wāo.
d stands for dāl, being softer than d.
dz stands for dzād, sounding between d and z.
gh stands for ghain (soft guttural g).
h sounds like h in how.
h smooth guttural aspirate, sounds like h but is sharper.
i sounds as i in pin
ī sounds as ee in deep.
g sounds as g in gem.
kh stands for khā, sounds like ch in the Scotch word loch.
q stands for qaf, strongly articulated guttural k.
ṣ stands for sad, strongly articulated, like s in hiss.
sh stands for shīn, sounding like sh in she.
t sounds like Italian dental, softer than t.
ṭ strongly articulated palatal t.
th sounds between th in thing and s.
u sounds like u in pull.
ū sounds like oo in moot.
z strongly articulated palatal z.
Other letters sound as in English.
The Debt Forgotten

I. INTRODUCTION

Pride and Prejudice

The reader would be surprised at the above sub-head, 'Pride and Prejudice', which is the name of one of Jane Austin's novels. Though I have not read this story yet, the title of the book is, nevertheless, so suggestive as to strike me as the most appropriate introduction to the subject in hand. Pride and prejudice are the two most prevalent and wide-spread mental aberrations from which humanity has suffered through the ages, and which still continues to afflict the human race deplorably even in this age of enlightenment. These mental processes are so intimately and deeply interrelated, that one begets the other to form a continuous vicious circle. Pride in its multifarious manifestations sets in such complex reflexes in the conscious and more often in the subconscious mind, as to deflect its activity into unhealthy channels, and thus becomes an impediment to the proper understanding and due appreciation of the true position or correct point of view. History bears witness to the vast havoc that have been wrought on a mere point of pride! How many devastating wars have been waged and inhuman atrocities committed over a question of prestige or a false sense of honour! In the present time too, we come across instances of this tendency of human nature during the course of our daily experience. This vanity born of the pride of possession, pride of power, racial, colour or national pride, prevents one from looking straight at a simple fact or accepting an obvious truth.

Pride of intellect is another great barrier which so often stands in the way of recognition of the Truth. In short, pride looks askance at everything, howsoever right, considering it below its cognizance so long as it does not agree with its sense of superiority. Consequently, it blinds the eye to the beauty and
‘good’ found elsewhere than within its limited range of knowledge and possession. The great discoveries of science were meted out this despicable treatment by the contemporaries because the new conceptions, however accurately based on experimentation, stood at variance with their preconceived ideas and exalted views. Nobody believed in Copernicus when he startled Europe with his theory of the revolution of the earth and the orbital movement of the planets, but now the fact has been accepted as indisputable. The profound verities of life as pronounced by the great prophets and God-sent messengers have met with similar lamentable fate at the hands of the opponents of Truth, more through arrogance and haughtiness than ignorance or failure of understanding. The Holy Qur’ān has condemned this tendency in so many ways. The point is beautifully expressed in an allegorical manner in the Story of the creation of Ādam. The immediate cause of refusal of Satan to submit to Ādam was nothing but this sense of pride.

And when We said to the Angels, Be submissive to Ādam, they submitted but Iblīs (did not) - he refused and was proud.¹

And We indeed created you, then We fashioned you, then We said to the Angels: Make submission to Ādam. So they submitted, except Iblīs; he was not of those who submitted. He (Allāh) said what hindered thee that thou didst not submit when I commanded thee? He said: I am better than he; Thou hast created me of fire, while him Thou didst create of dust.²

What a true picture is depicted here of the man’s false sense of superiority complex, of arrogance, of haughtiness vis-a-vis a spirit of humility and meekness required for true understanding! How this sense of pride acts as an hindrance to the acceptance of Truth is amply demonstrated in the lives of all the prophets and divine reformers. In narrating the life of Noah, how deeply is this

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¹ 2:34. ² 7:11, 12.
spirit of pride and haughtiness on the part of his people deplored by this Prophet:

Surely, We sent Noah to his people, saying: Warn thy people before there comes to them a painful chastisement. He said: O my people, surely I am a plain warner to you: That you should serve Allāh and keep your duty to Him and obey me. He will forgive you some of your sins and grant you respite to an appointed term. Surely the term of Allāh when it comes, is not postponed - did you but know! He said, My Lord! I have called my people night and day! But my call has only made them flee the more. And whenever I have called to them that Thou mayest forgive them, they thrust their fingers in their ears and cover themselves with their garments, and persist and are puffed up with pride ... ³

The Holy Qur’ān decries this spirit of arrogance and disdain on the part of the opponents of every prophet following Noah, saying:

Then after him We sent messengers to their people but they would not believe what they had rejected before (through arrogance). Thus do We seal the hearts of those who exceed the limits. Then after them We sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Our signs, but they were arrogant and they were a guilty people.⁴

The Holy Qur’ān also lays down a general principle to the effect that pride and haughtiness ultimately lead to disbelief and loss of faith in the Truth.

Then as for those who believe and do good, He will pay them fully their rewards and give them more out of His grace; and as for those who disdain and are proud, He will chastise them with a painful chastisement.⁵

And again:

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3. 71:1-7  4. 10:74-75.  5. 4:173.
O children of Ādam! if there come to you apostles from among you relating to you My communications, then whoever shall guard (against evil) and act aright - they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve. And (as for) those who reject Our communications, because they turn away from them haughtily, these are inmates of the fire, they shall abide in it.⁶

I have only cited a few quotations, but throughout the Holy Qur’ān this attitude of haughtiness of spirit, arrogance and disdainful pride to the acceptance of Truth are condemned in the strongest possible terms.

And its concomitant evil - prejudice - Oh! thy name is perversity! The jaundiced eye of prejudice can never see things in their true colour and proper perspective. It warps the vision so that it can see nothing but evil where good exists; it cannot appreciate any bona fides but instead is prone to cast aspersions and throw out calumnies even on characters of unblemished purity. As in the case of pride, cherished prejudices also play the evil part to block the way to true understanding, and have similarly led to bloodshed and persecution of the worst type. The Holy Qur’ān deplores this tendency in unmistakable terms and so often ascribes the rejection of Truth by the opponents to such prejudices. To quote a few verses:

Surely the (true religion) with Allāh is Islām, and those to whom the Book had been given, did not show opposition but after knowledge had come to them, out of (sheer) prejudice (prevailing) among them, and whoever disbelieves in the communications of Allāh - then surely Allāh is quick in reckoning.⁷

Mankind is a single nation. So Allāh raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the Book with Truth that it might judge between people concerning that in which they differed. And none

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but the very people who were given it differed about it after clear arguments had come to them (due to) prejudice (prevailing) among them. So Allāh has guided by His Will those who believe in the truth about which they differed. And Allāh guides whom He pleases to the right path.\textsuperscript{8}

Mankind’s Debt to Islām

It will then be seen how essential it is to cast off all pride and free oneself of all prejudices before approaching such a delicate subject for a critical study, and how careful one has to be in passing judgement on a matter of so vital an importance as religion or respecting the character of an outstanding religious personality. The malady of prejudice, deep-rooted as it is, most often finds a vent deliberately or unknowingly in subversive criticism or fallacious strictures. What a travesty of facts! Islām, the most enlightened of all the religions, and the Holy Prophet, the greatest benefactor of humanity (may peace and blessings be upon him) have been the worst victims of slander at the hands of Christendom of the Middle Ages. It is now admitted on all hands that at a time when medieval Europe was sunk in barbarism and superstition, Islām was making rapid strides in moral and intellectual upliftment of humanity in learning and scientific research covering the various fields of philosophy, mathematics, chemistry, medicine, physiology, geography, astronomy etc. Who can deny the marvelous achievements of Islām in bringing about enlightenment to the world with a lightning speed and thereby striking at the roots of all superstition, bigotry and ignorance? In fact, it was admittedly the prelude to the great Renaissance. Yet instead of a due appreciation of its merits, the whole Christendom rose up in arms to stop this light from spreading over the Dark Continent. It marshalled all its resources and sent its combined forces to fight the renowned series of ill-fated Crusades against the Muslim Empire, to the ultimate

\textsuperscript{8} 2:213.
disillusionment of all their preconceived notions about Islām and Muslims.

But the poison of prejudice born of pride is hard to die. Having failed in its objective of conquest by physical force, it assumed a more subtle form of vile and malicious propaganda against Islām and its Prophet. All intellectual resources were now brought into play by Christendom in its attack on Islām by carping at the fair face of Islām and maligning its Founder. As seen through the distorted glasses of pride and prejudice, Islām appeared to them nothing but a target for frivolous allegations, flippant criticism, prurient comments and pernicious propaganda! This legacy has naturally passed on to modern times; and though the virility of the propaganda might have lost somewhat in edge, the appalling misconceptions about Islām and Muḥammad the Prophet still persist to a lamentable degree in the West, in particular, and the rest of the non-Muslim world in general. This is how the obligation to Islām, under which the world has been placed, has received recognition! And this is how the Great Debt owed by the world to Islām has been repaid! Thirteen centuries ago, the Qur’ān had said:

Vehement hatred has already appeared from out of their mouths, and that which their hearts conceal (of deep prejudices) is greater still.⁹

Has the modern world changed for the better towards understanding Islām with its more enlightened outlook? Let us hope so.

The Debt to the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement

Comparisons, they say, are odious, particularly when analogies are drawn with the Holy Prophet and the Qur’ān. But is there anything really wrong in taking a cue from the Holy Prophet’s life and his teachings, or in applying the principles laid down by the

⁹. 3:118.
Qur’ān in order to assess the merits of a movement or to test the truth about its founder? Why should we feel shy of seeking guidance in this, connection from pronouncements of the Qur’ān and the life and sayings of the Holy Prophet? It has been shown above that the world, since the inception of Islām, is indebted to it for the moral and intellectual upliftment, and in fact for the Renaissance of humanity, but in spite of the intrinsic beauty of this religion and the immense and everlasting benefits derived by mankind from its teachings, there still abound misconceptions and distortions of the vilest type which subvert the mind from true understanding and due acceptance of the faith. In the same manner, there is a heavy debt - the debt of gratitude - owing from the Muslims of the present age of which they need to be reminded. Why and how it is incumbent upon the Islāmic world of today to realize and repay this debt it owes to the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement will be evident from what follows.

But before broaching the subject, it is necessary to sound a note of warning. Here again, unless the mind is purged of all ‘pride and prejudice’, the matter can hardly be brought home to the reader in its real significance. Acrimonious misunderstandings have cropped up on account of these subversive tendencies and a great deal of misconception about this Movement still prevails; to remove ignorance or clear such misunderstandings is, however, not a difficult matter, but what is well-nigh impossible is to bring conviction to a mind which consciously or subconsciously labours under a superiority complex of the ‘we-know-better’ type or ‘what-poor-stuff’ attitude, or wearing a thick cloak of prejudice refuses to work in channels other than those which accord with its set and preconceived ideas. The stiff-necked intellectuals of the modern age, who look upon with contemptuous indifference and disdainful arrogance at all matters religious in general and the Ahmadiyyah movement in particular, need to change their angle of vision for a profitable study of this Movement. And the leaders of the different Islāmic movements, need to set aside their unfounded prejudices and baseless bias in order to catch the real spirit of this Movement. It is with a genuine spirit of humility and open mind that the worth
of the Founder of the Movement can be conceived. It has, however, been ordained since the creation of mankind, that the initial followers of the prophets and divine messengers have been of humble origin. It was because of the disdainful attitude of the highly placed that Christ said:

It is easier for the camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the kingdom of Heaven!\(^\text{10}\)

The Holy Qur’ān has expressed this idea in a more cogent manner when it says:

Surely (as for) those who reject Our communications, and \textit{turn away from them haughtily}, the doors of Heaven shall not be opened for them, nor shall they enter the garden until the camel passes through the eye of the needle.\(^\text{11}\)

And mark in what strong terms this baneful tendency of pride is condemned in the following verse:

I will turn away from My communications those who are \textit{unjustly proud} in the earth; and if they see any sign, they will not believe in it, and if they see the way of rectitude, they do not adopt it as a way, while if they see the way of error, they take if for a way.\(^\text{12}\)

To what dire consequences does man’s arrogance lead him!

It will thus be clear how important it is that, before approaching the subject, the mind should be well balanced and unswayed by any emotions of ‘Pride and Prejudice’ so that it is open to conviction when it sees the truth. In dealing with subjects of a spiritual nature, it is all the more essential to steer clear of this baneful attitude; but there is another serious misconception which confronts the generality of Muslims in this respect. The great divine personalities who claim to be blessed with revelation from God, possess certain characteristics peculiar to this class of humanity. Their utterances, their actions and character have to be

\(^{10}\) Matt. 19:23, 24. \(^{11}\) 7:40. \(^{12}\) 7:146.
judged on certain ethical standards and moral criteria not applicable to the other great personalities. It is like treatment of jewels on the same par with heavenly bodies. The jewels comprise a wide range of precious stones and gems such as diamonds and rubies and emeralds, all of which are highly valuable. Their size can be gauged, their weight can be ascertained, their lustre and shine can be examined, and thus their value can be accurately determined. But what about a bright star shining in the firmament? You cannot evaluate it in the same terms as the precious gems. Its appraisement is possible on ethereal tests, and you need long-range telescopes and highly complicated instruments to find out its constituents and to analyze the phenomena of its brilliancy. So is the case with the great men of genius as compared to the Great Souls of the Age. By applying the same principles to judge the worth of both these categories, you arrive at misleading conclusions. That is how the Founder of the Aḥmadiyyah movement came to be misunderstood and misjudged. He has been maligned and dubbed as a hypochondriac who was subject to fits of melancholia, a self-deluded person professing communion with God, an impostor who fabricated revelations from on High. Others have gone so far as to call him a stooge of the late British Government, who banned Jihād and inculcated loyalty to the British Government. But the question is: Why this diversity of divergent views? Because no serious effort is made to understand the real Mirzā, and because his is adjudged on mundane grounds.

Doubtless a number of brilliant contemporaries did exist during the lifetime of the Founder of the Aḥmadiyyah Movement, who were intellectual prodigies and performed marvelous feats in the domain of education, literature, philosophy and poetry, such as Sir Sayyad Aḥmad Khān (d. 1896 C.E.), Hālī (d. 1934 C.E.), Shiblī (d. Nov., 1914), C.E. Iqbal (d. 1937 C.E.), and Abul Kalām Āzād (d. 1957 C.E.). But like gems and jewels, these luminaries were of the earth, earthly; while the Great Soul that was the 'Founder of the Aḥmadiyyah Movement' derived his light from Divine source. Let us, therefore, be fair (as fairness is the chief quality of a Muslim), and shedding all vain thoughts, social or intellectual superiority,
cleanse our minds of petty prejudices and proclivities (for these are not the characteristics of a true Muslim) and then see the real man, the Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān, what he was - what he said and - what he did.
II. LIFE AND MISSION

Life of Mirzâ Ghulâm Aḥmad

What Mirzâ Ghulâm Aḥmad was, can be stated in a few lines, but what he said and what he did, is a long story. Mirzâ Ghulâm Ahmad of Qādiān belongs to contemporary history and there is no dearth of biographical literature on his life. The reader is referred to the voluminous work of the late Dr. Bashārat Aḥmad in Urdu, entitled Mujaddad-e-A‘azam and in English Maulānā Muḥammad ‘Ali’s ‘Founder of the Aḥmadiyyah Movement." For a brief life-sketch, the reader may consult Maulānā Muḥammad Ya‘kūb Khān’s treatise ‘Quest After God’ of which I quote the following to summarize the life-history of the Founder:

He (Mirzâ Ghulâm Aḥmad) was born in 1835 C.E. at a country-place, Qādiān, some seventy miles from Lahore. He came of a good, old stock of Central Asia and was the scion of a dynasty which originally belonged to Persia. As such, he was one of the “Sons of Persia”, as was foretold by the Holy Prophet. It was in the reign of Babar, sometime about the year 1530 C.E. that his family migrated to India. They were granted a large estate in the fertile plains of the Punjab and they settled at a place where now stands the modern Qādiān. Anyway the family lived here in power and plenty as the ruling family. The advent of the Sikh rule in the Punjab, however, spelt to them a hard turn of fortune. Their power was crushed and they were driven out of their estate. The rule of Ranjīt Singh brought them some measure of relief. On the representation of Mirzâ Ghulâm Murtada, father of Mirzâ Ghulâm Aḥmad, the house was restored to its ancestral

13. Published by Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha‘at Islām, Lahore-7 (Pakistan).
14. Published by Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha‘at Islām, Lahore-7 (Pakistan).
home at Qādiān, though not to its former glory. The once big estate shrank into just five petty villages.

Mirzā Ghulām Murtadā was ever haunted by the vision of the lost power of his house ... At the advent of British rule Mirzā Ghulām Murtadā tried his luck once more and he underwent a lot of worry and expense to win back the rest of his ancestral estate. But this was a fond hope. He would incessantly brood over these disappointments and this went a long way to mould at that tender age the trend of his younger son, Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad’s mind. It impressed upon him the transient character of worldly glory and the hollowness of worldly ambitions.

At the age of six, the would-be Mujaddid was put in charge of a private tutor who gave him coaching in the Holy Qur’ān, and the Persian language. There were no regular schools in those days and only the nobility cared to educate their children by such special arrangements. At ten, an Arabic scholar was engaged to teach him Arabic. From him he learnt a few books in Arabic grammar. At the age of seventeen, a third teacher was employed who gave him lessons in Arabic syntax, in logic and in medicine. It is said that unlike other boys of his family, who were put under the same teacher, he was ever engrossed in his studies. The frivolities characteristic of the age were not after his heart. Gifted with a contemplative bent of mind, he loved solitude and books.

Mirzā Ghulām Murtadā wanted him to grow up to the best traditions of his family, a man of the world bent on making a mark in life. So he put him in his own line of work, which consisted mainly in looking after the agricultural interests of the family, and knocking about the courts in the vain pursuit of regaining the lost estate. Now this was a work utterly foreign to the nature of the young Mirzā whom providence had designed for higher things. He was no good at this sort of job, and his father, disappointed in him, would often scold him as a hopeless
fellow. Nevertheless, in obedience to the wishes of his father, he would do all he could to attend to the affairs entrusted to him. During this period he had to undertake long and weary journeys mostly on foot to follow up lawsuits in courts. His trips in this connection to the hill courts at Dalhousie, however, were not absolutely devoid of interest. He loved to tread the lovely tracks up and down the hills and dales, musing and chanting within himself on the beauties of nature to the accompaniment of the nodding trees and the murmuring streams. In older days, he would often talk of these pleasant moments. 'Whenever I happened to make a journey to Dalhousie, my heart would spontaneously gush forth with glorification of the Lord at the sight of vast tracts of rich verdure and flowing springs of water. I thoroughly enjoyed those solitudes and would find my prayers particularly sweet.'

Litigation, however, was not in the line of Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad and, as was only to be expected, he was not much of a success at it. His father thought of trying another field, the opportunities of Government service. At the age of 25 in 1864 he was made to accept a job in Government service at Sialkot. This brings us to what is known as the Sialkot period of his life. Here he went through the most momentous experience of his life, the transitional stage. Here he came in contact with men and matters. This sphere of life in which the hand of providence placed him, as if with a purpose to try his mettle and bring him out as burnished gold from the crucible, was full of corruption. He saw the seamy side of human life and the filth and dirt in which so many human beings were wallowing. Like a duck in the water, however, he never mixed with these men. On the other hand, he gave himself up all the more to solitude and meditation., And later on when he visited

16. *Tāriḵ Ahmadiyyat* Published by Şadr Anjuman, Rabwah, Jhang (Pakistan) p. 106.
this town in 1904 C.E., as the Messiah, it was with no small amount of pride that he recalled his early life there. Addressing a public meeting, he said: 'I am the self-same man who lived here in your city a number of years. But how many of you then knew me? I lived in obscurity, but these were the sweetest days of my life. For though in society, I was yet alone: though in a crowded town, I yet passed my days as if I lived in a desert'. In short, the youthful Mirzā lived in a world of unworldliness.

His sojourn at Sialkot also brought him in touch with the Christian Missionary movement. Sialkot was the centre of the Scotch Mission. He held frequent discussions with the Christian Missionaries. The head of the Mission, Rev. Mr. Butler, M.A., held the Mirzā in very high esteem, for his piety and sterling qualities. When leaving Sialkot for England, he expressly called on the Mirzā in his office to say good-bye to him.

When the father saw that even in this new walk of life his son was a round ball in a square hole, he called him back to Qādiān. This was in 1868 C.E. Now most of the young Mirzā's time was devoted to a critical study of the Holy Qur'ān, of Commentaries and books on Traditions. This period immediately preceding the supreme spiritual experience, was a distinct chapter in itself, characterised by numerous visions harbingering the approach of dawn. These visions were mostly about coming events and came too surprisingly true.

This period was also marked by a course of severe fasting and intense praying on the part of young Mirzā. On the return from Sialkot, he took his father's permission to cut himself off from all worldly affairs and devote himself entirely to religious matters. He undertook a full-scale comparative study of critically examining the charges and accusations levelled against Islām and the Holy Prophet by missionaries of other religions. He held discussions and debates with leaders of Aryā Samāj, Christians and leaders of other current religious movements; and by reasons and arguments proved
the supremacy and beauty of Islāmic principles vis-a-vis the prevailing beliefs and tenets of various religions. In order to complete this task and hold the banner of Islām high, he finally undertook the compilation of his great book, the Barahīn-i-Ahmadiyyah which came out of press in 1880 C.E. for the first time and its publication continued till 1884 C.E. From this time onward, Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad’s life entered the phase of public career which lasted till his death in 1908 C.E. Meantime his spiritual experiences were undergoing vast changes and the Great Soul was soaring higher and higher towards it Creator.

The preliminary period of visions was followed by the dawn of direct communion with God in 1876 C.E. on the death of his father. The first revelation, or in better understandable terms ‘divine communication, came to him then to say 'Is not God sufficient unto (the needs of) His servant', which acted as a solace to the bereaved heart. The divine communications, after this, followed in increasing numbers, and were immediately disclosed by the recipient to those who happened to be present at the time and were given as wide a publicity as possible to establish the veracity of their divine origin. These communications comprise a wide range of prophetic utterances foretelling future events in unanticipated advance, of his Great Call to his Mission as Mujaddid of the century, of his claim as Messiah and Mahdī of the Age, of the ultimate triumph of Islām and its universal acceptance. Thenceforward his entire energies were directed towards the execution and fulfillment of his mission, and in spite of his advancing age, failing health and ailing body, he never for a moment lagged in his exertions but toiled ceaselessly to this end till he breathed his last (may his soul rest in peace!)

The tests of the truth of Mirzā’s mission

A panoramic view of Mirzā Ghulām Ahmād’s life, as outlined above, presents certain striking features for a dispassionate study of his claims of Divine Commission. From his early childhood,
through his adolescence and till the ripe age of about 40 years, he was an unknown figure, a mere recluse in a remote village cut off from all kinds of social or political activities. By nature he was pious, liked seclusion, was possessed of quiet and studious habits and shunned every form of publicity and entry into public limelight. He had no worldly ambitions, and was content with a mere pittance to sustain himself. From the very beginning he led a life of extreme purity, of exceptional truthfulness and honesty, of utter sincerity in an atmosphere of corrupt and degenerate society. He had not the slightest inclination for popularity or fame, till he received the Divine Call which brought a sudden change in his life and he blazed forth into an unprecedented whirl of public activity and wider publicity. He was, as it were, impelled by a Higher force against his own will and inclination, and made to perform the duties of his Mission. Had it not been for that Heavenly Source to force him to publicity, he would have still remained a hidden entity. Such is not the case with men of genius and ambition who rise to pinnacles of glory and fame. The precocious self of the genius always displays itself from childhood and works upward to it’s own destiny. A poet buds into lyrics early in his teens, a scientist, a philosopher shows his bent of mind in his young age, a conqueror or dictator exhibits his traits of character and warlike qualities from childhood. Their path is chalked out and destiny set by their nature; they strive to seek recognition and attain their goal from early life through hard work and perseverance; while in the case of divine personalities, their course is set by Divine guidance and they are led towards their goal by a Supernatural Hand. This is so because it is ordained that God reveals His existence and power through the medium of these personalities.

Still more remarkable is the peculiarity which in keeping with the pattern of divine personalities, is amply displayed in the life of the Mirzā Šāhīb, and which may be termed as Defiance of the Times. Though such divine personalities appear at a time when their need is the greatest, yet the times are set against them and all the corrupt and disruptive elements are ranged against them. Placed against such odds, they are entrusted with a mission which sets all
the prevailing forces at naught. Mirzā Šāhib appeared at the end of nineteenth century and the beginning of 20th century, at a time when Islām had entered its worst phase of decadence. Being completely shorn of its temporal power, it was a spent force in the entire Muslim world. The march of materialistic and atheistic forces coupled with the virulent anti-Islāmic propaganda, carried out by the Christian missionaries on the one hand and Aryā Samāj zealots on the other, had completely rooted out the germs of faith in Islāmic principles from the minds of its so-called adherents. The hopelessness of the situation had sunk the Muslims into deepest depths of despair, and with disruption of their faith the Prophets, the Qur’ān and all Islāmic tenets were treated as symbols of superstition and barbarism. Amid this darkness and gloom, appeared the Mirzā with a message and a Mission from on High to proclaim to all the world that Islām is the only true religion, that the abiding Truth promulgated by the Qur’ān would stand the test of all time and scientific scrutiny, and that Islām will ultimately triumph over all other religions and schools of thought so as to spread in all its glory throughout the world.

He also claimed that the phenomenon of revelation or direct communion with God is a living experience as undergone by him personally, and the door of non-prophetic revelation is still open for God’s chosen ones. The world in general and Muslims in particular were startled by this preposterous claim, some treating it with ridicule, others with indifference. It appeared a most fantastic idea in the face of the materialistic forces ranged against such a spiritual ideology. A worldly-wise man would have moved cautiously with the times, and in all sincerity, adopted a conciliatory attitude. But not the Mirzā Šāhib; against all odds and, come what might, he had to deliver the message as received by him, little caring for personal glory and throwing all ideas of popularity to the winds. He thus ran the gamut of the Muslim world’s animosity, hatred and heresy.

Undoubtedly, contemporary talents were anxious to revive Islāmic glory and had launched reformatory movements, but they were inspired by mundane motives directed to materialistic
advancement of the Muslim community. Thus while Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan\textsuperscript{17} (d. 1315 A.H.) was burning with the zeal of educational reform and applying Western ideals to accord with Islamic principles, while Hali\textsuperscript{18} (d. 1934 C.E.) was singing the dirge of Islamic glory in his immortal Musaddas, while Abul Kalâm Āzād\textsuperscript{19} (d. 1957 C.E.) was yet sounding the clarion call to search for and locate the Sage of the Time whose advent was overdue, and while the muse of Iqbal\textsuperscript{20} (d. 1937 C.E.) was just lisping its sublime tunes in the \textquote{Shikwā} and \textquote{Jawāb Shikwā}\textsuperscript{21} poems and while as yet the Muslim League\textsuperscript{22} was being set up to meet the political aspirations of the Muslims, the Mirzā, the stalwart champion of Islam, had taken up the challenge and had already entered the arena of defence of Islam against all attacks of demoralization of the Faith. He had thrown the gauntlet in the face of every adversary and had come out with flying colours in every round. It was nothing but Divine insight and a superhuman power that was leading and propelling Mirzā Sāhib to perform the

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\textsuperscript{17} The founder of the Aligarh University and pioneer of modern education among the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent.

\textsuperscript{18} A contemporary of Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan, one of the leaders of the modern Urdu literature. He had a simple, lucid pen in poetry and prose. Musaddas is the immortal creation of his genius-mind outlining the rise and fall of the Muslims and an inspiring shake-up for the Muslims to struggle and fight for a place in the community of nations with the universal message of Islam as their guiding Star.

\textsuperscript{19} Maulānā Muḥammad Ḥusain Abul Kalâm Āzād, a great genius-scholar, one of the founders of modern Urdu and a great Congressite Muslim political leader. Till his death, was the Education Minister of Republic Bharat.

\textsuperscript{20} Generally known as Poet of the East, a great thinker and philosopher of the Muslim World. His is a substantial contribution towards the struggle for separate land for Muslims. He presided over the Allahabad Session of the Muslim League in 1930 which strongly demanded a separate land for the Muslims consisting of majority provinces of India. Maulānā Muḥammad 'Alī Jauhar was the greatest advocate of this idea and thus his remarkable speech at the First Round-Table Conference in London in 1930 C.E.

\textsuperscript{21} The two famous poems of Allāmah Iqbal. These have been translated into English by A.J. Arberry under the title \textquote{Complaint and Answer}.

\textsuperscript{22} The Muslim Political party which passed its famous Lahore Resolution in 1940 C.E. and its struggle crowned with success in the achievement of Pakistan under the able and dynamic leadership of Quaid-i-Ā'īzam.
incredible task of reviving faith in Islām, in the sublime character of the Holy Prophet, and in the beauties of the Qur'ān.

And, lastly, the supreme and crucial test of the genuineness of Mirzā Šāhib’s claims lies in the successful completion of the mission he was entrusted with, and the Divine protection and security accorded to him in all the trials and tribulations through which he had to pass in the fulfillment of his mission. He lived for over twenty years after he proclaimed himself as Mujaddid of the Century, as Messiah and Mahdī of the time as was foretold by the Holy Prophet. The Qur’ān lays down the principle that an impostor who forges lies against God never prospers and does not survive to establish his false claims.

And who is more iniquitous than he who forges a lie against Allāh, or gives the lie to His messages. Surely the iniquitous will not be successful.  

23

Who is then more iniquitous than he who forges a lie against Allāh to lead men astray without knowledge? Surely Allāh guides not the iniquitous people (to success)  

24

Who is then more iniquitous than he who forges a lie against Allāh or gives the lie to His messages. Surely the guilty (of forming lies against Allāh) never succeed.  

25

Due to the strong front assumed by Mirzā Šāhib in defence of Islām against the vituperative propaganda by the Aryā Samāj and the Christian Missionaries, he had already antagonized a large section of the non-Muslims, but from the time he proclaimed himself as Messiah and Mahdī, he antagonized the entire Muslim community who in fact joined hands with the Christians and Aryā Samājists to bring harm to him. He had to face severe ordeals of persecution and prosecution, but he never wavered for a moment from the course set for him by the Divine Call. Devoid of all worldly means, without support of wealth or power, he had an

23. 6:21.  
24. 6:145.  
25. 10:17.
unshakable faith in Divine protection, which indeed was forthcoming at every trying moment of his life. What is still more remarkable is that he not only stood firmly by his claims but created a band of his followers — a Jamāʿat — who were imbued with his own spirit and deep conviction in the truth of Islāmic principles and a sincere faith in the existence of God. For once the world was startled to witness a most astounding spectacle and caught a glimpse of early Islāmic period. The metamorphosis was phenomenal.

In this twentieth century of worldly ambition and material advancement, a Jamaʿat came into being whose members exhibited exemplary purity of character, whose mutual relations were characterised by a unique fraternity. This Aḥmadiyyah movement soon captured a reputation for piety, Godfearingness, truthfulness, honesty, and sincerity. Every Aḥmadi bore, as it were, a stamp of these qualities. But withal he was fired by a religious zeal for the Islāmic Cause unalloyed with any worldly considerations. He sacrificed his all in the sacred cause and was at the same time punctilious in the observance of his religious obligations - leading a simple, almost ascetic life, see him working hard in his daily routine to earn his livelihood, ever attending to the call of scheduled prayers in between, and see him off duty giving Qur’ānic lessons, delivering lectures and carrying on debates on Islāmic subjects and at night lying prostrate before God, praying and praying with tears in his eyes. This was the movement started by the Mujaddid, and at a time, it so captivated the imagination of Allamah Iqbāl (d. 1938 C.E.) that he could not help exclaiming at Aligarh in one of his speeches, that if one wants to see a sample of the real Muslims, he should go to Qādiān.26 Was this the work of a fake, an impostor, a maniac, a secret agent of the British Government and above all a ‘heretic’?

Movements have come and movements have gone, but the Aḥmadiyyah Movement has come to stay, and the passage of time

has adjudged its *bona fides*, and will confirm the judgement with its further march. It is a matter of serious consideration (by the Muslim Intelligentsia in particular) whether the life and mission of Mirzā Șāhib are a *conundrum*, a riddle or enigma that baffles solution, or present plain facts acceptable to reason when alienated from all emotional elements of 'pride and prejudice'. The old adage, 'A tree is known by the fruit it bears', can well bear out the truth of Mirzā's mission. However, if the matter still appears ambiguous to the reader let him think it over again in the light of what follows.
III. DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF AḤMADIYYAH MOVEMENT

What Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad Said

What Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān, the great saint and Mujaddid (Spiritual leader) of the century, said is, however, the most controversial matter. His proclamations, announcements, and statements cover a wide range of theological topics including his claims, exposition of the teaching of Islām based on the Qur’ānic Text, rectification of general mistaken beliefs, prophecies about future events and so on. To deal with all such points in detail would perhaps be a monumental work, and is beyond the scope of a booklet; but it is not difficult to sift the salient mootable items of the most important nature to serve as guiding principles, leaving the less important and complex matters to be adjudged in their true perspective. Literature is, however, not lacking (in Urdu mainly) for an exhaustive study of the entire subject which can be consulted on reference to the Ahmadiyyah Anjuman, Ishā‘at Islām, Dārul Kutub Islamia, Lahore. The most significant and distinctive features of the Aḥmadiyyah Movement, which form, as it were, the backbone of the claims, as advanced by the Founder, are therefore set out here:

1. The Death of Jesus Christ and the Second Advent of Messiah

The pronouncement that Jesus Christ, the Israelite Messiah and prophet, died a natural death after living a normal span of life to fulfil his mission - that he neither died on the Cross nor was lifted bodily to heaven - was the most startling statement to the Muslim as well as Christian world and, falling as a bomb-shell to explode the old-cherished conceptions, caused a furor of provocative protests on all sides. The hitherto admirers and believers in his
saintly personality (like Maulavi Muhammed Hussain Batalvi\textsuperscript{27}), turned suddenly into bitter enemies. In spite of sound reasoning based on Qur’anic references and reliable Traditions, and appeals to fair-mindedness, the orthodox ‘Ulama’ could hardly overcome their prejudices, and the opposition gathered in force and vehemence, culminating in a joint pronouncement of the charge of heresy (Fatwa-i-Kufr). It is said that the opposition actually grew up on the Mirza Sahib’s claim of Messiahship and Mahdiaship which followed the announcement of Jesus Christ’s death - a claim considered far premature and too presumptuous by the leading ‘ulama’ for a man of Mirza Sahib’s status. But it is sadly overlooked that the claim stands \textit{a priori} on the proof of the death of Jesus Christ; if this postulate is proved through Qur’anic text and the law of nature that pervades this universe of ours, what then?

If Jesus Christ was as much of a mortal as all the other prophets and the Qur’\textsuperscript{\text{a}}n makes no exception in his case, and he did die, how can you explain the reappearance of the real Jesus in his original physique to claim his second advent? On the other hand, if the ascension of Jesus in his corporate self is really advocated by the Qur’\textsuperscript{\text{a}}n and he is still alive in the heaven above, well then Mirza Sahib’s claim immediately falls to the ground and there could be no argument about it. Is not then the fact of the death of Jesus Christ a fair criterion for the truth of Mirza Sahib’s claim, and a decisive factor in accepting or rejecting his authority?

Let us, therefore, examine this, the most ticklish problem. The view held by the orthodox opposition is that the original Jesus Christ who appeared as prophet some six centuries before the Holy Prophet Muhammed (May peace and blessing be on both) was at the time of crucifixion actually raised to heaven, and ever since these two thousand years is living there in flesh and blood in order to be sent back to earth in the same body to bring about the promised dominance of Muslims in the world! The entire

\textsuperscript{27} One of the leading religious leaders and scholars of Ahl al-\textit{Hadith} and a bitter opponent of \textit{Haadrat} Mirza Ghulam A\textit{hm}ad.
conception is based on a single phrase occurring in the Qur’ān about Jesus, namely نَزَّلَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَرِّ الْخَيْرَاتِ which is literally “God raised him to Himself”. Now this phrase occurs in two contexts in the Qur’ān (1) “I will cause you to die and raise you to Myself”\textsuperscript{28} and (2) “And they killed him not for certain, but Allāh raised him to Himself”\textsuperscript{29}. The meanings of رفع rafā, are however quite clear from the first context, which are equally applicable in the second context. When God said to Jesus that He will cause him to die, there arises no question of Jesus being raised alive. So the appropriate rendering in the first context is obviously: “I will cause you to die and exalt you in My presence”. The same sense of exaltation and honour holds good in the second verse: “And they (Jews) killed him (Jesus) not (on the Cross to cause ignominious death) for certain, but Allāh (caused him to die a natural death and thus) exalted him in His presence”\textsuperscript{30}. This rendering is simple enough to solve the puzzle. This idiomatic sense of the word رفع is amply illustrated in Arabic sayings, elsewhere in the Qur’ān and also Hadith viz., مَنْ نَزَّلَهُمْ مِنْ شَرِّ الْخَيْرَاتِ, “Allāh exalts him who humbles himself for Allāh”\textsuperscript{31}. Speaking of different prophets in the chapter ‘Mary’, the Qur’ān says - “And mention Idris in the Book. Surely he was a truthful man, a prophet And We raised him to an elevated place”\textsuperscript{32}. Surely this raising does not convey any physical lifting of the body. Examples could be multiplied. But apart from the discussion and worthy warfare over a few words and phrases such as “Mutawaffika” مَنْ نَزَّلَهُمْ مِنْ شَرِّ الْخَيْرَاتِ and “Rāfi‘uka” رَفَعَكَ so keenly contested by men of lore and erudition (though their idiomatic meanings are clear enough), let us see how the proposition sounds, \textit{prima facie}, to the average man of modern outlook and education.

\textsuperscript{28} 3:55. \textsuperscript{29} 4:157, 158. \textsuperscript{30} 4:157, 158.
\textsuperscript{32} 19:56, 57.
It could be said of religion, as is said of medicine, that it was once a mystery, compounded more of myth and magic (or miracles) than of sense and science. But this is the age of science and reason, and a belief in a most extraordinary phenomenon directly in conflict with the physical law of nature as proved and established on empirical basis, can hardly carry conviction. This, of course, in no way involves any negation of the power of the Almighty since it is not supported by Qur'ānic authority, as we shall see later. To a man of reason and scientific knowledge, a belief in the physical ascension of Jesus to heaven and his escape from death over a period of twenty centuries, would be like believing in the antediluvian notion of the earth being a stationary flat disc, with the sun and moon revolving round it, which has long since been discarded in the light of the facts discovered and authenticated by science with regard to the revolution of the earth round its own axis. Has not yet the passage of time opened the eyes of the holders of orthodox view to the futility of such a conception? Half a century has passed since Mirzā Ṣāḥib proclaimed the death of Jesus Christ, and still these fifty years the eyes of the Muslims have been vainly fixed on heaven to watch the descent of the original Jesus from the celestial regions to his terrestrial abode. After all, how long is this wait going to last? And in heaven's name, where and what is the 'heaven' above, which forms the resting-place of a mortal being like Jesus, the prophet of God sent to the Israelites "And (Jesus) was sent a Messenger to the Children of Israel."

In the modern age of conquest of space, science has revealed that there is no such thing as a corporate heaven spread over us - nay beyond the stratosphere and far beyond our solar planetary system, there is vacant immensity, and the extent of this void of inter-stellar space is beyond any computation of the human mind. This entire outer space is filled either with such intense radiation as to sear a live body into smithereens under a moments exposure or it is enshrouded in an icy blackness which can sustain no life.

33. 3:49.
Imagine then the body of Jesus Christ rising up above the clouds, above the atmosphere, thence above the stratosphere, up above into the cosmic space, without any protective apparatus or oxygen mark, still rising further up under complete exposure to the extreme severities of radiation and temperatures far below freezing point - but where is this flight into space to end, as space is limitless, *ad infinitum* (unless it is to land on a planet of a distant solar system) to give respite to the poor mortal body? And then where and how is this physique of Jesus, the prophet, to be maintained for two thousand years without food and other necessities of life; and again imagine his descent passing through similar ordeals of space, and hurtling meteor-like but miraculously escaping the frictional forces that in the ordinary course would burn up, in a moment, immense masses of the whirling meteors! Just imagine and then calmly ponder whether a mere juggling of words can bring conviction for such supernatural happenings, and can such ideas commend religion to the modern age for acceptance? No sensible person could in his heart of hearts put his faith in such notions, although deep-rooted prejudices may hold back the expression of his true opinion. Come then, let us be sensible, and consider in right earnest the version of *Hadrat Mirzā Šāhib* regarding the death of Jesus based on a correct rendering of the Qur’ānic text, and in keeping with the laws of nature - and it is this: While delivering his apostolic mission, Jesus Christ faced severe opposition from the contemporaneous Jews, who did their utmost to put him to death by crucifixion, maligning him thereby with an ignominious death. The Holy Qur’ān describes the situation thus:

But when Jesus perceived disbelief on their (Jews’) part, he said, Who will be my helpers in Allāh’s way? The disciples said, We are Allāh’s helpers: We believe in Allāh; and bear thou witness that we are submitting ones. Our Lord! we believe in that which Thou hast revealed and we follow the messenger, so write us down with those who bear witness. And (the Jews) planned (to crucify Jesus) and Allāh also planned (to avoid the death of Jesus
on the Cross). And Allāh is the best planner. When Allāh said: O Jesus, *I will cause thee to die* (a natural death) and *exalt thee in My presence* (to give you an honourable position worthy of a prophet), and clear thee (of calumnies and ignominies) of those (Jews) who disbelieve; and make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve on the day of Resurrection. Then to Me is your return, so I shall decide between you concerning that wherein you differ\(^3^4\). (The Italics here and further on indicate the phrases of controversial meaning).

Elsewhere the Holy Qur’ān clarifies the manner in which the plan of the Jews to crucify Jesus (in order to bring upon him ignominious death) was foiled by God. Speaking of the wrong-doings of the Jews, the Qur’ān states:

Then for the breaking of their covenant and their disbelief in the messages of Allāh and their killing the prophets wrongfully, and their saying, 'our hearts are covered'! Nay, Allāh has sealed them owing to their disbelief, so they believe not but a little. And for their disbelief, and for their uttering against many a grievous calumny, and for their saying: We have killed Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the messenger of Allāh, and *they killed him not nor did they cause his death on the Cross, but he was made to appear to them as such* (i.e., he was treated as dead when taken down from the Cross, while actually he had life in him). And certainly those who differ therein are in doubt about it, but only follow a conjecture (of having killed Jesus on the Cross). *And they killed him not for certain* (i.e., the Jews did not succeed in causing the death of Jesus on the Cross, and although Jesus was actually put on the Cross and was considered as dead, he was taken down alive and thus escaped the ignominious death on the

\(^3^4\) 3:52-55.
Cross). But (in this way) Allāh exalted him in His presence. And Allāh is ever Mighty, Wise.

How naturally the above quotation from the Qur‘ān reads to narrate the episode of Jesus’ crucifixion, his escape from death on the Cross and his leading an honourable life till he died a natural death, vis-a-vis, the orthodox story that at the time of crucifixion, the real Jesus was lifted bodily to heaven by God, and a substitute resembling him was nailed to the Cross! Corroboration of the death of Jesus (not on the Cross but a natural death after spending his normal life) and the impossibility of his remaining alive over a span of twenty centuries, is forthcoming from numerous places in the Holy Qur‘ān. To quote a few of the familiar ones: While narrating the incident of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad’s serious injuries sustained in the battle of Uhad and when some people thought that the Holy Prophet had died, the Qur‘ān says in an admonishing tone, “And Muḥammad is but a messenger - (All) messengers have already passed away before him. If then he dies or is killed, will you turn back on your heels?” This same verse was later on quoted by Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr on the occasion of the actual death of the Holy Prophet, showing conclusively that all prophets of God previous to the Holy Prophet, had died. Had there been an exception in respect to the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (may peace and blessings be upon him!), the assembly whom Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr was addressing would not have been convinced of the mortality of the Holy Prophet in accordance with the immutable law of nature so clearly enunciated by the Holy Qur‘ān.

The law of the mortality of all the prophets without a single exception is pronounced by the Holy Qur‘ān in another place in the most clear terms:

And We sent not before thee any but men (or mortals) to whom We sent revelations; so ask the followers of the

35. 4:155-58. 36. Muḥammad the Prophet, Muḥammad ‘Alī.
37. 3:144. 38. Muḥammad the Prophet, Muḥammad ‘Alī.
reminder if you know not. *Nor did We give them bodies not eating food nor did they abide.*

And again:

And We did not send before thee any messenger (*i.e.*, prophet), but they surely ate food and went about in the markets.

Now if every prophet is as good a mortal as any other human being requiring food and wanting other necessities of life, how could Jesus Christ continue to live in his original body without the need of food and other necessities of life during these twenty centuries? There is also sufficient evidence available from the Qur’ān regarding the life of Jesus after his escape from death on the Cross, thus:

And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign and We gave them refuge on a lofty ground having meadows and springs.

It is most interesting study of the life and death of the Prophet Jesus as adumbrated in the above quotations of the Holy Qur’ān. The Traditions also bear out the fact of Jesus’ death: The Holy Prophet said, “Had Moses or Jesus been alive, they would have but followed me?” Another report has it, as the saying of the Holy Prophet, “Īsā son of Mary lived for a hundred and twenty years.” Recent-most research on historic and scientific lines wonderfully testifies to the Truth of the Qur’ānic narrative; and the theory of the unnatural phenomenon of Jesus’ ascension to heaven and his descent after two thousand years, falls to the ground. For a detailed and exhaustive treatment of this episode in the mystical past, the reader cannot do better than study *Khwāja Nazīr Aḥmad’s* book, “Jesus in Heaven on Earth” which is a compendium of all

the facts on this topic, and has been aptly described by a correspondent of the 'Light' in the following eulogistic terms:

It is a miracle of selection and critical scholarship. The author has given us a highly informative and readable history of the life and mission of the Great Nazarene. There is no such book so accurate, so cogent, so lucid and sound in judgment in any language. It is really a monumental contribution to the scant Muslim literature on the subject of Jesus' Birth, Descent, Ascension, Death, Resurrection, etc.\(^{45}\)

Kashmir has been described by a famous Persian poet as 'the heaven on earth': there lie the mortal remains of the roving prophet (the word Messiah indicating a traveller), who preached purity of character, spoke in parables and denounced hypocrisy in the strongest terms, and underwent most cruel persecution at the hands of the Jews, and escaping death at their hands, remained concealed for some time in a cave to recover from his wounds, and then wandered from place to place in search of his 'lost sheep' till ultimately he got refuge in 'the heaven on earth' - the Kashmir Valley so beautifully described by the Holy Qur'ān thirteen centuries ago as "a plateau green with meadows and flowing with springs."\(^{46}\)

Did not Mirzā Şāhib, then, render an invaluable service to the cause of Islām by unravelling, for the first time, the mystery of Jesus' life and death, and bringing the real facts to light not only to rectify the illusions of the Muslims but to deal a death blow to the antagonistic spirit of the dogmatic Christianity prevalent at the time? Indeed the Muslims stand under an obligation to Mirzā Şāhib

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44. (...continued)
published by Dar-ul-Ishā'at-Kutub-e-Islamia 17, Maulana Azad Road, Bombay 400011 India.

45. The Light vol. 30, dated October 1, 1957 C.E. English weekly organ of Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha‘at Islām, 1315 Kingsgate Road, Columbus, Ohio 43221 U.S.A. Annual Subscription $15.00

46. 23:50.
in his vindicating the Islāmic thought by purging it of the quagmire
of Grecian myths and absurdities which had crept first into
Christianity, and then into Islāmic thought in the course of its
wide-spread contacts. Is it not, therefore, incumbent upon the
Muslims to feel grateful to the Mirzā Şāhib for removing such
erroneous notions, and does it not become obligatory upon them
that, in true appreciation, they should pay due homage to the great
Mujaddid of the century?

Once, therefore, it is established that Jesus Christ suffered
death six centuries before the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (may
peace and blessings of Allāh be on him!), the question of his
descent and second advent takes on a new meaning, and what
appeared an enigma seems easy of solution. The conclusion must
force itself that the second advent of Jesus is in the metaphorical
sense, and connotes nothing but spiritual resemblance of a
mujaddid appearing in his power and spirit. Is it not significant that
although there are so many references in the Holy Qur'ān about
Jesus being raised to heaven as held by the orthodox view, there
is no single verse of the Holy Qur'ān mentioning the descent or
of Jesus Christ from heaven. Whatever
references exist regarding the second advent of Christ, are found
only in the Traditions, which are in the way of prophecies
projecting into distant future the degeneration of the Muslims, and
the regeneration of Islām through the reappearance of the Messiah.

It is an admitted fact that prophecies are generally couched in
metaphorical language, and their true significance is only realized
when the time of their fulfillment arrives. Had there been any
reality behind the descent of the body of the original Jesus, the
Holy Qur'ān would not have omitted the mention of such an
important event in the life of Jesus Christ, especially when his so-
called ascent had been so much reiterated. Taken in this light, the
prophetic utterances of the Holy Prophet regarding the second
advent of Jesus assume their true significance in the person of
Mirzā Şāhib; his claim for Messiahship amounts to nothing more
than a spiritual affinity with the original Jesus Christ. There is yet
another and more cogent reason for christening the Mujaddid of this century as Jesus Christ.

As foretold by the Holy Prophet, the rise of Christendom at some distant future time would be phenomenal, while the Muslims themselves would degenerate and Islām would be at its lowest ebb: it would then be destined through the agency of the mujaddid of the time to deal a death blow to the false Christianity, not by force of arms but on intellectual grounds, the second advent of Messiah would thus restore the pristine purity of Jesus’ faith and reclaim, as it were, the ‘lost sheep’ among his own followers in the West, to whom his original mission was not directed as he was an apostle for the Israelites only: “And (Jesus was sent) a messenger to the children of Israel”47 thereby to bring about supremacy of Islām and its regeneration. Thus it seems quite appropriate in this context to call the mujaddid after the name of Jesus or in other words pronounce it metaphorically as the second advent of Christ. The following traditions, which form the basis of Mirzā Šāhib’s claim, need to be profitably studied in the above context, but it should be kept in mind all the time that the prophetic utterances contained in these traditions are worded in metaphorical language and must be interpreted as such.

Bukhari’s report in the chapter entitled “Descent of Jesus Christ, son of Mary” narrated by Ḥadrat Abū Huraira runs thus:

I swear by Him Who holds my life in His hands that son of Mary will descend among you as arbiter and judge, and shall break the Cross and kill the swine and postpone the war. Wealth will be multiplied to the extent that nobody will be there to accept it, that a Sajdah (prostration) at that time will be better than this world and whatever is in it.48

Does this report not reflect some of the aspects of modern life? Another report (also from Bukhari) states:

47. 3:49.
What will be your condition when the son of Mary will descend among you and he will be your Imām? 49

Apart from the real sense of the word, لَجَنُ, translated as descend, means 'appearance', 'provision' etc. "We have indeed sent down to you clothing to cover your shame"50 and "And He has sent down for you cattle"51. Does this report not imply that the prophesied advent of Jesus will be in the person of a Muslim? The reports about the advent of Mahdī are mostly vague, but the link between the second advent of Jesus and the appearance of Mahdī could not be better illustrated than the tradition of Ibn Mājah: "There is no Mahdī except 'Īsā,"52 indicating clearly that Mahdī would be another name of the promised Messiah. These scattered reports, if pieced together and read in the light of present-day events, make out a sufficiently coherent story of the coming of Jesus in the garb of Mahdī as fulfilled in the person of Hadrat Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad of Qādiān. Although these claims of Mirzā Šāhib as Jesus and Mahdī were announced to the world on his receiving specific revelation from God, they were entirely based on the correct and authentic interpretation of the injunctions of the Qur‘ān and the traditions of the Holy Prophet. Let the reader judge for himself whether the great Mirzā Šāhib did not set the path for true guidance to the Muslims in this age of chaotic religious thought and vitriolic attacks on the fair face of Islām and the sublime character of the Holy Prophet, by shedding false notions and fictitious ideas, and then in all humbleness, acknowledge the sense of deep gratitude that the Muslims owe to the Great Mujaddid of the century.

The Importance of the Creed of Jesus’ Death

Even admitting that the death of Jesus Christ is proved on Qur‘ānic text, the skeptics would say, it matters little whether we

49. Ibid. 50. 7:26. 51. 39:6.
52. Ābū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Yazīd ibn Mājah Qazwīnī, Sunnan Ibn Mājah, Ch. Al-Shārāt al-Sā’ah, p. 302.
may or may not believe in the creed of his death. Why should this question hold such prominence in Islamic thought as to evoke our interest for its acceptance or otherwise. Undoubtedly, the belief in the death or life of Jesus Christ forms no part of the fundamentals of Islam, but its importance has to be viewed in the context of the alleged descent of Jesus Christ, and the advent of Mahdi. At the time of Mirza Sahib’s proclamation of his claim of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, the entire Islamic world was steeped in the belief of the Israelite Jesus’ return to the earth, and Muslims had pinned their faith to the advent of a warrior Mahdi. They were expecting that both these Divine Agencies would wipe out in a miraculous manner all the unbelievers from the face of the earth, and thereby establish the Kingdom of Islam. The situation was like the Jews at the time of Jesus Christ, awaiting a Divine Power to appear, and place the scepter of world kingdom in their hands. It had thus created a fatalistic mentality which left them in a helpless lassitude and inactivity fatal to their very existence. It was, therefore, of vital urgency at the time to root out the mistaken notion of waging a bloody Jihad on the return of Israelite Jesus. Instead it was essential to arouse them into well-directed action by instilling a firm faith in the truth of their religion, namely, missionary propagation of the true teachings of Islam through which it was bound to attain supremacy over all other faiths and become a world force.

The Significance of Jihad

What is Jihad? Muslims had been and may still be labouring under the illusion that jihad carries the sense of fighting in the cause of Islam by putting all the unbelievers to the sword and thus achieving domination through sheer force of arms. Strangely enough both to the Muslims and the antagonists of Islam, jihad was synonymous with the ‘battle-cry’ for waging war against the infidels and unbelievers, till they surrendered themselves to the fold of Islam. There was no quarter for the non-Muslims to exist with the Muslims. Such ideas had led to what has been termed as ‘Pan-Islamism’ movement. It was, however, believed that the
initiative in this direction was to be taken by the Promised Messiah and the Mahdi under whose banner the Muslims would rally and be led to conquests and world domination. Muslims had to do nothing of their own accord, but must await the advent of these Heavenly agencies to regain their power and lost glory. Such vainglorious dreams were shattered by Mirza Sahib, who gave a realistic significance to ‘jihad’. But holding to their strong prejudices, how could Muslims follow the lead of an insignificant person like Mirza Sahib who had nothing but missionary zeal for the spread of Islam and who imposed upon his followers the severe ordeal of sincere devotion, self-denial and sacrifice? How could this dreary spectacle charm the lively imagination of the downtrodden Muslims? What use was this man, who was without power or pelf and aimed at spreading Islam through conviction rather than conquest? So he must be dubbed a heretic, because he banned ‘jihad’, and prohibited the Muslims to take to the sword as means of Islamic revival. It was most disappointing. Be that as it may, and leaving aside the well-known irrefutable arguments and interpretations, let us see what is the verdict of the time.

Half a century has elapsed since Mirza Sahib’s proclamations were made in the face of bitter opposition, but mark the change. The same orthodox Muslims have, during this period, veered round to the point of view held by Mirza Sahib. The non-Muslim world, too, has come to accept the truth of the matter that Islam won its rapid march through moral and spiritual force and not by the force of sword. There is now a cry on the very lips of the orthodox opposition that the present-day desideratum for spreading Islam constitutes a different type of ‘jihad’ - a ‘jihad-bil-qalam’ coupled with Missionary activities. How has it come to pass that ‘pen’ has by their own admission substituted ‘sword’ in fighting the battles of Islam? Nobody among the Muslims will, these days, contest the stand taken by the Great Mujaddid of the time long before to the effect that it is through missionary propagation (Tabligh and Isha‘at) that the revival of Islam is destined. In matters of religious beliefs, it is not coercion but conviction that carries the day. The truth of the principle 伊斯兰 There is no
compulsion in religion\textsuperscript{53} has at last dawned on the Muslim intelligentsia. The test of time has thus borne out Mirzā Šāhib’s proclamation regarding ‘jihād’ and the real significance of the term has come to be realized. There hardly exists a doubt, now-a-days, as to the intrinsic meaning of ‘jihād’. However to recapitulate; the word is derived from the root ‘jihāda’ of which the dictionary meaning is ‘striving’. Obviously strife for the attainment of a goal can assume different forms of action in consonance with the circumstances and the requirements of the time.

There was a time when it had become incumbent upon the Muslims to defend Islām by recourse to the sword, as the attack on their religion and existence had been launched in the same form. But, admittedly, the time to wield the sword in defence of Islām has passed. The present-day onslaught against Islām is an intellectual challenge, which must, of sheer necessity, be answered in the same coin. Hence ‘jihād bil-Qalam’ must take the place of ‘jihād bis-Ṣaif’, in the present age. In fact, a saying of the Holy Prophet throws abundant light on the real significance of ‘jihād’. On return from a successful campaign of battle with the enemies he uttered, “We have returned from a petty jihād to a greater jihād.” The fighting with sword was relegated to the position of a small jihād, but what signified this greater jihād? It was the battle of self, the endless, relentless fight against the evil tendencies. The Holy Qur’ān has, on several occasions, used this word in this context:

So obey not the disbelievers and strive against them a mighty striving \( \text{جَاهِدُوا مَعَنا} \) with it (Qur’ān).\textsuperscript{54}

Then surely thy Lord to those who flee after they are persecuted, then struggle hard \( \text{اَنْقُلُوا} \) and are patient, surely thy Lord after that is Protecting, Merciful.\textsuperscript{55}

\begin{align*}
\text{\textsuperscript{53}} & \quad \text{2:256.} \\
\text{\textsuperscript{54}} & \quad \text{25:52.} \\
\text{\textsuperscript{55}} & \quad \text{16:110.}
\end{align*}
And those who strive hard for Us
We shall certainly guide them in Our ways. And Allah is surely with the doers of good.\textsuperscript{56}

And strive hard for Allah with due striving. He has chosen you and has not laid upon you any hardship in religion - the faith of your father Abraham. He named you Muslims before and in this that the, Messenger may be a bearer of witness to you, and you may be the bearer of witness to the people; so keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protector and the excellent Helper!\textsuperscript{57}

All these are Makkah revelations, injunctions to take up arms against unbelievers had not yet been revealed to the Holy Prophet. The term ‘jihād’ in these verses, therefore, conveys the sense of struggle with the evil forces and upholding the Islamic Faith by facing all tribulations and persecutions. Evidently, jihād presents so many facets of the same phenomenon of strife of good against evil, of truth against falsehood, of right against wrong. Whatever form it assumes, it will be jihād all the same: there is the subjective ‘jihād’ within every soul, and there is the objective ‘jihād’, outside in social, religious and spiritual circles for upliftment through all possible means. What Mirzā Šāhib declared was the launching of a ‘jihād’ suited to modern requirements - a campaign against the forces of skepticism, atheism, and cynical attacks on Islam and its Founder, which were and are still undermining the Muslims’ faith and barring the way to proper understanding and due appreciation of the beauties of Islamic teaching, and the unparalleled sublime character of the Holy Prophet. It was no time, he said, to lament the lost temporal glory of Islam or to resort to martial force to regain it in the context of the present-day situation. It is an age of reason and rational thinking, and the best way to present Islam to the modern world was through propagation by utilizing the modern

\textsuperscript{56} 29:69. \textsuperscript{57} 22:78.
means of platform and press. For this purpose the Muslims must in the first place arm themselves with a moral force of their own by conforming to the true teachings and spirit of Islām and sacrificing their all to spread the Faith throughout the world. This, he inculcated, is the real ‘jihād’, both subjective and objective which will, on the one hand, regenerate the Muslims, and on the other hand win over the world to the kingdom of Islām. Let Muslims think over the matter clearly and conduct a thorough search for the best means of propagation of Islām. Can they conceive a better way or chalk out a more constructive programme than the line of action pointed out by the Great Sage and Mujaddid of the age? If not, then why not rally to his side to raise aloft the banner of Islām?

Current history has again testified to the veracity of the Mirzā’s pronouncements regarding ‘jihād’. The principle of jihād, as enunciated by him, has been demonstrated by factual occurrence in social and political fields as well. None of the Movements advocating force and coercion have endured to promote the cause of Islām, but this achievement has been possible through moral force and intellectual efforts of reasoning and conviction. Truly speaking, the creation of Pakistan is, per se, the greatest testimony to the truth of Mirzā Šāhib’s policy of ‘jihād’. This great Muslim State was attained not with the clash of swords, not with the boom of guns, not with the roar of the cannon, not with the droning bombers, nor with the crash of the screaming bombs. Admittedly Pakistan came into being through the firm faith, a bold stand and the strength of character of the Quaid-e-Ā‘azam. And it will be through the firmness of faith and purity of character that Islām will ultimately triumph. Should then the Mirzā be maligned for directing the energies of the Muslims to the right path in order to establish Islām’s supremacy in the world, or does he not deserve the deepest gratitude for such guidance at a time when nobody was prepared to listen to him? Judge for yourself in all fairness.
IV. TRADITION EXPLAINED

Sun to Rise from the West

Among the traditions, there is a saying of the Holy Prophet pertaining to the latter era of Islām to the effect that the Sun will rise from the West. Taken literally it would be a strange phenomenon, a reversal of the rotational movement of the earth round the sun which seems incomprehensible. Mirzā Šāhib, however, with his spiritual insight, interpreted the Tradition in its metaphorical sense, as foretelling a momentous event in the future career of Islām - the Sun rising from the West indicating the spread of Islām in European countries and its acceptance by the Occident. He actually beheld visions, of delivering lectures on Islām in London and of catching white birds, meaning thereby that his Mission will reach the Western countries and members of the white nations will enter the fold of Islām⁵⁸.

Mirzā Šāhib’s mission was, therefore, specifically directed to the propagation of Islām in the West. But his visions of Islām gaining a foothold in the West and conversion of European nations to this religion were treated as a wild dream, a fantastic idea, and pursuit of such venture, a wild goose chase. Notwithstanding, his zeal for establishing Islāmic missions abroad and getting the Holy Qur’ān translated into foreign languages, particularly in English, was unbounded and he exhorted his followers to devote their lives in the fulfillment of these aims. Subsequent events have amply proved that these were not vain assertions, and persons of deep insight and enlightenment the world over, have already visualized Islām’s triumph in the West. The Dawn of Islām has perceptibly appeared on the Western horizon, and it is a matter of time before its light will blaze out into full effulgence. But let us analyze the

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situation at the time when Mirzā Šāhib beheld such 'fantastic' visions and made such prophetic utterances. Fifty years is a long span in this era of rapid progress and stirring events. Muslims, were, then retrograde in every sphere of life, and a pall of despair and gloom had fallen over the entire Muslim world.

At such a time, imagine a secluded person, a mere recluse, living in a remote village isolated from all social contact with the world, uneducated, rather uninitiated in the Western languages or sciences, coming forward and declaring boldly in unequivocal terms that since Islām embodies all the religious truths needed for emancipation of humanity and its principles conform truly with human nature, its appeal cannot fail to win Europe to its cause; in fact, it is the only religion that will stand the challenge of the time despite all the scientific progress and rational outlook of the modern age. He did not try to give an apologetic exposition of Islām for acceptance by the West so as to accord with its scientific thought. He advocated Islām in its pristine purity - a true faith in one God, a sincere belief in Qur'ānic revelation as the original word of God, in the efficacy of prayer, in the existence of angels, of hell and heaven as a sequence of life in the Hereafter and all the other tenets of Islām - and asserted that science and human knowledge is ultimately bound to bow its head to the sublime Truths embodied in the Qur'ān. At a time when the great Muslim men of genius were searching for apologetic explanations of Islāmic principles and tenets to accord with Western thought, here was a man without the least inkling into the Western learning, asserting that Islām needed no light from the West to make its appeal but that the case was reverse, and in reality the West needed the light of Islām to lead it to the path of spiritual advancement.

While Sir Sayyad Aḥmad Khān and Iqābāl, the great luminaries of the Islāmic world, had gone to the West to bring its message to bear upon Islāmic thought and ideology, the Mirzā without ever setting foot on foreign soil sent the message of Islām to the West calling upon it to conform its ideology to the Islāmic principles! Read the Barāhīn Ahmadiyyah, read his subsequent works, just go through, for once, his renowned lecture in the Great Religious
Conference entitled ‘The Teachings of Islām’, listen to the strains of his soul’s outpourings in the form of simple poems compiled in ‘Durr-e-Thāmīn’. These poems are nothing but fervent eulogies of the Holy Prophet and the Qur’ān, and bespeak of his supreme love and adoration for these. Not only that, he exhorted the Muslims to the service of Islām and the Qur’ān. To quote one Persian couplet:

اگه ی بخبر بخدمت فرقان کمر به بند
ژان پیشتر که پانگ بر آید فلان نماند

O careless! beware and gird up your loins to serve the Qur’ān before you hear that some one has departed.

And now judge for yourself, what was the source of his inspiration, urging him to make these stirring proclamations, what force lay behind this man which impelled him to utter things beyond the ken and knowledge of the great intellectuals of his age. How could a man of Mirzā Şāhib’s calibre with a meager learning and shorn of all worldly glory challenge the Western civilization to accept the Truth of Islām as the Religion of Humanity. Think it over and pose the question: Could he be a maniac, or an impostor? Was he a man of false pretensions or suffering from self-delusions? Or do these facts reveal a different story and set a seal on the unassailable position of Mirzā Şāhib’s claims as a Divinely-inspired Mujaddid who did yeoman service to the cause of Islām in raising its banner aloft and infusing a confidence and faith in the truth of its principles against the undermining influence of Western Civilization? Give up all ‘pride and prejudice’ and be fair - the truth will speak for itself from the recesses of your heart.

**Mysteries of Dajjāl, Gog and Magog**

Besides clarifying the mists shrouding the problems relating to the death and return of Jesus, advent of Mahdī and rise of Sun from the West, Mirzā Şāhib unravelled the mysteries concerning the appearance of Dajjāl, of Gog and Magog, of Dābbat al-Ard etc., that were puzzling the minds of the Muslims. He explained that the Traditions speaking of the occurrence of these events in a
distant future epoch of Islām, were prophetic utterances of an allegorical nature foretelling of momentous happenings that were to influence the course of Islām’s progress in its later era. The views expressed by Mirzā Ṣāḥib on these topics were held in derision at the time, but, here again, the passage of time has brought public opinion to veer to the version of Mirzā Ṣāḥib. As irony would have it, the very opposition have come to use the terms in the sense adopted by Mirzā Ṣāḥib. It is now a by-word to apply the nickname of Dajjāl to the Western nations.

The underlying meaning of the root word ‘dajjāl’ is to give the appearance of reality to unreality and vice versa. ‘Dajjāl’ which is the superlative of dajal, signifies one who is past-master in the art of such deceptions. The appellation may not necessarily be taken in a derogatory sense. It can be complimentary to signify such a skill as ‘par excellence’; the best illustration of which is the modern fiction and film. The present novel has been developed in the West from the ordinary art of story-telling to a perfection of their own creation. Read a good novel, the description of places and persons, the characterization and narration of events is so graphic that the reader is transported to a world of the author’s imagination. The ‘reality’ of the ‘unreality’ is sometimes so effective, that the reader actually sighs with the lovers’ emotions, sheds tears at the pathos of the situation, and bursts into laughter at a humorous or comical turn of events. The cinema’s origin can be traced to the drama or the stage, and its development is a marvel of achievement by the West. The silent movie gave place to the talkies, and the latest technicolour cinemascopic brings a reality of object and sound to an amazing fidelity. The screen affords a realistic spectacle of a vast panorama of scene and action, and one can witness thereon historical personalities of the dead past spring up vividly into life, fairy tales and wonderlands of parody, and pageant take lifelike shape, the drama of real life and fiction is enacted in its true colours. Nothing could envisage this performance of the Western nations better than the comprehensive word ‘Dajjāl’ the Arch-Simulator, adept in creating illusion and causing delusion.
As regards the Dajjal’s donkey, mentioned in the Tradition reports as having a span of 70 yards between its two ears which he would be riding all the world over in rapid marches\(^{59}\); how appropriate is the explanation offered by Mirza Šāhib, namely, the railway, an invention of the West which has transported these nations to distant places with a speed which could not have been conceived thirteen hundred years back.

Another characteristic of the Dajjal as reported in the Traditions is that he would be blind in one eye\(^{60}\) - certainly not the mythological Cyclops. The Dajjal would possess two eyes, but he would be blind in the right eye, while his left eye will be sharp and penetrating. The prophetic description is, like the rest, to be read in the metaphorical sense; the right eye symbolizing the true insight and understanding of spiritual and religious matters, which the Dajjal would be lacking; while his left eye represents the perception and apprehension of the physical world, which would be keen beyond all measure. How well this interpretation of the Traditional reports fits in with the Western civilization’s attitude towards life! Their progress and advancement in the physical sciences is unprecedented and unapproachable, while they are, as a nation, wanting in appreciation of the moral and spiritual values of life. On the side of dogma, Christendom still adheres to the most incredible practices and principles of sacrament comprising such rites as baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, the tenets of Trinity, worship of Mary and Jesus as deities, atonement through crucifixion of Christ and so on.

In their appraisement of moral and spiritual standards, they are oblivious to the sanctity of sexual relations, and to the evils of drink, of betting and gambling. Dabbat al-Ard is another apt description of the Western nations, who have clung to the earth and what is earthly so tenaciously to the exclusion of all spiritual values. The identity clothed in the phrase ‘The Creature of the Earth’ is so obviously discernible. It is now an admitted fact that

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Islāmic teachings present a far higher and more rational approach to these problems than Christianity or any other religion. And has not the time come when the new World Order envisaged by Islām will give the lead to the West? What else is meant by the ‘Killing of Dajjāl by the Promised Messiah’? Has not the mission of Mirzā Şāhib succeeded in enlightening the West to a new appreciation of Islām, a fresh appraisal of its beauties?

The Traditions concerning the Dajjāl also attribute a most extraordinary phenomenon to his personality. It is stated that he will be striding on the earth with paradise on one side and hell on the other, that whoever follows his footsteps, he will be offered the delights of paradise, and whoever rejects him will be suffering in hell. This is another metaphorical significance of the luxuries and amenities of life enjoyed by and at the disposal of the West. The comforts and joy of the earthly life are beyond dispute, the possessions of the West who showers them on those who fall in line with its ways and manners, while those who do not align themselves to their side are denied these amenities and have to undergo suffering of want and penury. However, these earthly possessions will turn into real blessings when the ‘Dajjāl’ is captured and converted to Islām.

The prophecies relating to Gog and Magog provide another instance of the truth of Mirzā Şāhib’s pronouncements. The significance underlying Gog and Magog, as explained by Mirzā Şāhib long before, has now been made so well known by the famous couplet of Iqbāl;

\begin{center}
کہھل گئے بہوج اور ماجوج کہ لشکر تمام
چشم مسلم دیکھے لی تفسیر حرف یںسلون
\end{center}

Whole armies of Gog and Magog have been let loose. Let the Muslim eye witness the meanings of the word ‘Yansiloон’.

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The explanation of the effigies of Gog and Magog in London by Mr. Churchill, corroborates so nicely the version of Mirzā Šāhīb, that no doubt should exist in the veracity of his sayings.

63. I cannot help feeling the import of these thoughts in this war-scarred hall. Its battered monuments remind us of other struggles against the continental tyrants of the past, in generations before the supreme ordeal of 1940 we all endured and won together.

I am so glad my Lord Mayor, that you have decided, to replace the effigies of Gog and Magog. It was to me a painful blow when they were burnt to ashes by Hitler’s bombs. They will look fine in the gallery up there. Indeed, I think they are not only ancient but up to date.

It seems to me that they represent none too badly the present state of world politics. World politics, like the history of Gog and Magog, are very confused and much disputed. Still, I think, there is room for both Gog and Magog.

On the one side is Gog, and on the other Magog. But be careful, my Lord Mayor, when you put them back to keep them from colliding with each other, for if that happens, both Gog and Magog would be smashed to atoms and we would all have to begin all over again - and begin from the bottom of the pit.

Whatever are the differences between Gog and Magog, at any rate, they are made out of the same materials. Let me tell you what the materials are: Cast masses of warm-hearted human beings wanting to do their best for their country and their neighbour and longing to build their homes and bring up their children in peace, freedom, and the hope of better times for the young when they grow up.

That is all they ask of their rulers and governors and guides. That is the dear wish in the hearts of all the peoples of mankind. How easy it ought to be, with modern science standing tiptoe ready to open the doors of a golden age, to grant them this humble, modest desire.

But then there came along all these tribes of nationalists, ideologists, revolutionaries, class warfare experts, and the imperialists, with nasty regimentation of academic doctrinaires, striving night and day to work them all up against one another so that homes, instead of being built, are bombed; and the bread-winner is killed, and the broken housewife left to pick the surviving children, maimed and scorched, out of the ashes.

There is the structure; that is the composition which Gog and Magog have in common, and there is the fate which both will suffer if you, my Lord Mayor, and others concerned in our City affairs and some who deal with world affairs, do not act with ordinary common-sense and keep Gog and Magog from falling upon one another.

Somehow or other these ideas about Gog and Magog seem to have some suggestive relationship to the discussions which are taking place in Paris at the present time. But we must not let our thought be complicated by our imagery. So here I leave Gog and Magog, hoping I may have the chance to see them both in their places as you promise.

(continued...)
63. (...continued)

What is the world scene as presented to us to-day? Mighty forces, armed with fearful weapons, are baying at each other across a gulf which, I have the feeling to-night, neither wishes and both fear to cross, but into which they may tumble and drag each other to their common ruin.

On the one side stand all the armies and air forces of Soviet Russia and all their Communist satellites, agents, and devotees in so many countries. On the other are what are called "the Western democracies" with their far superior resources, at present only partly organised, gather themselves together around the United States with its possession of the mastery of the atomic bomb.

Now, there is no doubt on which side we stand. Britain and the Commonwealth and Empire, still centering upon our island, are woven by ever-growing ties of strength and comprehension of common need and self-preservation to the great republic across the Atlantic Ocean. The sacrifices and exertions which the Unites States is making to deter, and if possible prevent, Communist aggression from making further inroads upon the free world are the main foundation of peace.

(Extract from a speech given by Sir Winston Churchill at the banquet of the Lord Mayor of London on the evening of November 9, 1951 published in the Times, London dated November 10, 1951. It was reproduced in the weekly Light vol. 30 dated December 16, 1951.)

In reply to a letter written to Sir Winston Churchill by Maulānā Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, the then editor of the weekly Light, asking him "to tell us in brief about the sources of your information about Gog and Magog", Mr. T.W. Keebel, the then Deputy High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in Pakistan, wrote the following reply on behalf of Sir Winston Churchill:

I have been directed by the Commonwealth Secretary, Lord Ismay, to reply to your letter to the Hon'ble Mr. Winston Churchill on the 29th November, 1951.

I am to say that Mr. Churchill's allusions to Gog and Magog in his Guildhall speech came in part from memory and in part from the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

An extract from the Encyclopaedia Britannica has been sent to me for onward transmission to you. I hope that this extract will help to answer your question and I hope it may be useful to you.

To this Maulānā Āftāb al-Dīn Ahmad wrote: "I beg leave to respectfully submit that the extract from the Encyclopaedia Britannica which you have so kindly enclosed in your letter cannot fully explain all that Mr. Churchill said in his Guildhall speech. It is however interesting to note that Mr. Churchill admits having spoken 'in part from memory'. As we all know, memory is not creative but only retains and reproduces what is experienced in the surroundings. It is evident, therefore, that Mr. Churchill got his ideas about the connection of Gog and Magog with the Slavonic and Teutonic races from sources which he does not clearly remember. We really wonder if this source is Islāmīc. So far there seems to be no evidence of its being otherwise."

(continued...)
The appearance of Gog and Magog represents the emergence of two great world powers whose influence would hold sway over the entire world. Are not the two big powers capitalist versus communist - the two greatest forces pitted against each other and casting their influence all round in their respective spheres. Who could foresee the rise of Red Power at the time of Mirzá Šāhib (d. 1908 C.E.) when the Russian territory was under the crumbling suzerainty of Czars, yet the prediction has come true in the most astonishing manner. From all this evidence, has not time, so imperceptibly but so unerringly passed its verdict in favour of Mirzá Šāhib, turning the opposition's ridicule into a veritable realization? And yet, Muslims won't ... Oh! the poignancy of ingratitude. ... Well, never mind, think for yourself without being deflected by difference of opinion! And God helps the soul that seeks the Truth!"

63. (...continued)

These giants stood in London since the days of Henry V. The earlier figures were burnt in the Great Fire of 1666 C.E., and new ones, 14 feet high, were constructed in 1708 C.E. The ancient effigies, which were of wickerwork and pasteboard, were carried through the streets in the Lord Mayor's shows; and copies of the old ones were in the show of 1837 C.E. The latter figures were destroyed in the aerial bombardment of London in 1940 C.E. (Encyclopaedia Britannica: Gog and Magog.) (Reproduced in the weekly Light, vol. 31, dated February 1, 1952 C.E.)
V. MIRZĀ ŞĀHIB’S REVELATIONARY STATEMENTS

The sayings of Ḥadrat Mirzā Şāhib dealt with so far, were concerning his proclamations and announcements bearing on his claims as the Promised Messiah and Mahdī, and regarding expositions of the Qur’ānic text and Traditions on the subject. But there is a special feature of his other pronouncements, which are, at the same time, the most important and the most complex to comprehend. These pertain to the prophetic utterances based on ‘revelations’ through direct communion with God. The revelationary statements of Mirzā Şāhib abound in all his books, and range over the various aspects of his spiritual experiences, such as dreams, visions, and external voices heard by him. Mirzā Şāhib started undergoing this experience early in his life, but the nature of the ‘revelations’ assumed greater strength and force with the advance of his career. These ‘revelations’ form a bulk of Mirzā Şāhib’s statements, and are, in fact, the highest testimony to the truth of his Mission, and also the greatest stumbling-block to the understanding of his claims, depending on the correct or crooked attitude adopted towards the apprehension of the phenomenon of revelation.

The Phenomenon of Revelation

What is ‘revelation’? Certainly it is something distinct from ‘inspiration’; the phenomenon of ‘revelation’ is what may be termed a ‘mystical’ experience, a special condition undergone by certain personalities of high spiritual calibre. It is beyond the ken of parochial and empirical knowledge, as it is outside the scope of experimentation or personal experience of ordinary men. We are, therefore, entering ethereal regions of spiritualism, where even angels, so to say, fear to tread. It is not possible nor advisable for a layman to explain the phenomenon. But should the matter, for that reason, be discarded or dispensed with as mere phantasy? Do
we, for similar reasons, refuse to believe in some scientific data, because we cannot either understand them or perceive them with our sensory powers? We are so accustomed to the use of electricity, but has any one seen the negative or positive currents passing through the wires? How many have, with their own eyes, perceived the space rockets, the Sputniks, the Explorers, the Vanguards, and the latest Mechta (the Russian dream rocket) - seen them hurtling into the skies, and turning into satellites orbiting round the earth or the sun? And yet the whole world believes in these startling achievements of the modern science. Why? Except for a few great scientists equipped with the most complex and sensitive instruments, why can’t the common man reasonably deny the existence of these weird projectiles speeding into the unknown depths of cosmic space? Why can’t these missiles be treated as mere political stunts and brushed aside as figments of scientific imagination? There is, however, no gasp of doubt in the newscast which came to the world from Moscow and U.S.A. radios announcing the launching of these space-rockets.

The analogy can, very well, be carried to the mysteries of the spiritual realm. Let us then leave the technicalities of ‘revelation’ to the privileged recipients of this wonderful experience. The exceptional trait of unimpeachable truthfulness and purity of character possessed by these great souls, entitles them to be heard in order to be believed implicitly, but judged only by results. Let them explain that the first indications of the phenomenon of ‘revelation’ take the form of ‘true’ dreams - dreams that are deeply stamped on the mind of sleeper when he awakes, dreams that turn out to be amazingly accurate in their import after the event has come to pass. Let them unravel the strange phenomenon of ‘visions’, the next stage in the development of the human soul in its spiritual advancement. While yet in the waking condition during the occurrence of these ‘visions’, these mystics behold objects and persons, which are invisible to other human beings present at the spot, and they converse with the visionary figures without the ordinary persons even hearing anything. Let them expound the nature of the still higher form of ‘revelation’ in which clear vocal
messages and announcements are heard by the recipient only; how with the onset of this form of ‘revelation’, the ‘medium’ as it were, is transported, while wide-awake, into a different sphere out of contact with this world; how in the grip of this condition, the recipient is made to utter words and phrases beyond his power and ken; how such prophetic utterances foretell of the distant future, inconceivable by human mind but which prove true on fulfillment during the life time or even long after the death of the recipient.

The Prophecies of Ḥadrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad

Ḥadrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad claimed to be one of the recipients of God’s such favour and grace i.e., direct communion with God and his version is acceptable on the strength of his truthful character because by his very nature he could never indulge in any form of deception or falsehood in his worldly affairs. On the authenticity of his personal experience, he has explained the phenomenon of ‘revelation’ in almost all his writings, but a detailed study is embodied in his last famous book, ‘Haqiqat al-Wahy’ 64 - The Reality of Revelation. In support of his claim, he has cited innumerable instances of revealed information beforehand, which came out true afterwards. These prophecies extend over a wide range of minor events of personal life to major upheavals in the religious and political fields of international magnitude. For a full comprehension of the subject with particular reference to the context of the circumstances in which the prophecies were made, the reader must go through all the works of Mirzā Šāhib, but a few decisive prophecies relating to great events and with a bearing on the lives of important personalities, are worthy of note to signify the veracity of Mirzā Šāhib’s claims. Read in their true context, one cannot but be struck with the extraordinary nature of these prophecies which foretold momentous happenings years and decades ahead of their occurrence, while

64. Published by Dār al-Kutub Islāmīa, Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha‘at Islām, Lahore, 1952 (First published 1907 C.E.).
these utterances came through the lips of a man of most limited means and knowledge.

Prophecies relating to Lekhrām and Dowie

By far the most astounding prophecies, which caused a great stir in the religious world, are those relating to an Aryā Samāj leader, Pandit Lekhrām, and an outstanding Christian Missionary, Alexander Dowie. The circumstances attendant upon the fateful end of Lekhrām in conformity with the words of a prophecy announced five years earlier, are most amazing and the mystery has remained unsolved to this day. Pandit Lekhrām was a prominent leader and a zealous Aryā Samājist. He was a bitter antagonist of Islām who made most scurrilous attacks on Islām and its founder. Nothing ached the heart of Mirzā Šāhīb more than the uncalled for and unfounded carping and malicious charges levelled against Islām and the Holy Prophet. It was an intolerable situation for him, and when, in spite of several warnings issued to Lekhrām, he found that the vicious propaganda was exceeding all bounds of decency and in fact the Samājist leader was demanding a prophecy regarding his own fate, he fell prostrate in deep anguish before his Lord imploring Him to save the honour of Islām and his beloved Master. The Almighty responded to his earnest appeals, and revealed to him a sign in the form of prophecy announcing a tragic and bloody end for Lekhrām within six years if he persisted in his nefarious course. The prophecy was, as usual, met with ridicule and derision by the victim of its objective. The world looked askance with indifference, and as time passed, the words of prophecy were almost forgotten, when all of a sudden God’s decree struck with its deadly precision and force. Oh! Woe for the victim of the Providential Wrath! And here is an account of what happened.

The prophecy was proclaimed in a poster published on 20th February, 1893 C.E., and it was couched in words of clear import to the effect that the said Lekhrām would pay the penalty of his wickedness and would suffer a severe chastisement which would
take place in a most extraordinary manner indicative of a bloody death within six years of the date of the issue of the poster. Four years after this announcement, it was the 17th March 1897 C.E. The day was full of jubilation for the Aryā Samāj in general and Lekhrām in particular, as this day had been fixed to convert a Muslim into the Aryā fold as the first fruit of the Shudhi Movement initiated by Lekhrām. It was also a happy occasion for Muslims, as it was the day following the Ḥīd al-Fitr. Lekhrām, who belonged to Peshāwar, had for this purpose come to Lahore and was staying in the upper story of a Hindū friend’s house in Mohalla Wachhowālī. There was a stir and bustle in the whole house in preparation for the shudhi. The great Pandit had started the day muttering his prayers in the usual Hindū mode in a squatting posture with his body uncovered except for a loin-cloth. When he had finished his Sindhā, he straightened himself in his position, thus exhibiting his bare abdomen to full view. It is related that just at that moment, a dagger flashed out from the hands of the would-be convert who was lying huddled up next to the Pandit. Like lightning, the knife plunged in the soft folds of the bulging belly up to the hilt, throwing out, instantaneously, the intestines, and the Pandit collapsed with a big yell resembling the bellow of a bull; he expired shortly afterwards in hospital under a surgical operation. And so no one could save him from his gory end, and the words of prophecy came to be fulfilled. But what in the meantime happened to the assassin? It is still a matter of greater wonder that though the inmates of the house rushed at once to the scene of the assault, and though the neighbourhood was astir with the people, the murderer vanished, as it were, into thin air before their very eyes, and no trace of him could either be found at the time nor thereafter to the present day.

It is reported that the assassin was seen descending the stairs, but no one saw him come out of the house below. According to another report, the dagger was struck by an invisible hand. Who could have foretold a fatal event of this nature with such certainty four years in advance, except a ‘revelation’ from on High? And suspicion of Mirzā Šāhib’s complicity in a conspiracy for the
murder can be ruled out by the fact that thorough search was made by the police and the interested public immediately after the event, which proved futile to haul up the culprit or his abetters; thus establishing the innocence of Mirzā Šāhib in the whole affair despite all attempts even to fabricate false evidence against him. After all without Divine assistance, how could a weak mortal like Mirzā Šāhib with poor means, pitch himself in a deadly conflict against a vast aggressive organization of the Aryā Samāj possessing wealth and influence and aided by a powerful Government who was taking active steps to locate the culprit or any of his associates, and come out unscathed? Nevertheless, against such heavy odds, the grim drama of the Almighty’s stern hand overtaking the inveterate culprit with inexorable Nemesis was enacted in broad daylight! The age-old adage ‘Murder will out’ did not prove its worth because of the Divine-hand in the affair.

Dr. Dowie, the false prophet of America

The story of this Christian Missionary, who also posed as a prophet, is full of romance and Divine Retribution. It is also a positive evidence of Mirzā Šāhib’s communion with God and the truth of revelation received by him. In the year 1902 C.E. there appeared in Chicago, U.S.A., a Christian Chaplain by the name of Dr. John Alexander Dowie, a prominent figure in his learning and religious lore, who claimed himself a prophet of God, in fact, as Elijah who had returned to the world before the second advent of the Promised Messiah. He was a colourful personality, but his false claims were brought to a sad end through the instrumentality of Mirzā Šāhib. But let us proceed with the story, and I quote from Mirzā Ma’sūm Beg’s booklet ‘Prophecies of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Āḥmad of Qādiān’.

John Alexander Dowie, generally known as Dr. Dowie, was born in 1847 C.E. at Edinburgh where he studied at the university before entering the ministry. He was ordained in South Australia as a congregationalist and subsequently founded “The Divine Healing Association of
Australia and New Zealand”. In 1888 C.E. he proceeded to America, and in 1896 C.E. organized “The Christian Catholic church” in Zion with himself as its supreme head. This city of Zion was founded by him at a great cost on the west shores of Lake Michigan as “a great object-lesson of practicability and present-day reality of the ten commandments and the teachings of Jesus Christ”. The population of this place soon rose to be 10,000 souls.

Dowie styled himself as ‘the First Apostle of the Lord Jesus the Christ’ whom he believed to be the Divine Being. He also called himself “Elijah the Restorer and the Promised Messiah.” Enthused with such quixotic ideas he became a very zealous missionary of his church and was possessed with so vehement a passion for propagating his principles as could not be seen in any other minister. To give a wide circulation to his teaching, Dowie had also started a paper entitled “Leaves of Healing”. Wrote he in one of its issues that it had been revealed to him by the great God, that within a period of 25 years, Jesus the Christ shall descend from the clouds.

Of Islām, Dowie was a sworn and implacable foe. He inveighed against the Holy Prophet in the vilest terms, calling him a mere scheming impostor hankering after worldly aggrandizement, and his divine faith, a mere mass of quackery and fatuity (Na’uzo-billāh); prophethood he claimed for himself audaciously, and wrote in his paper: “If I were not a true prophet of God, there could not be another man who could be honoured and blessed with divine correspondence”. By means of pen and platform both, Dowie had set up a relentless crusade against Islām and left no stone unturned to blot it out of existence. Just turn over his paper dated December 19, 1903 C.E. and February 14, 1907 C.E. and read the imprecation which he invoked on Islām: “My mission is to gather people from the East and the West, and North and the South, and fill this city and all other places with Christians until the time
comes when Islām should be swept away from the face of this earth ... Thee I implore, our Lord God, that the day may dawn soon when Islām shall be done for and destroyed. Be it so! Exterminate Islām, O Thou Great God, and wipe it off from existence!” In short, Dowie was consumed with one desire, the death and destruction of Islām.

_Hadrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad_, the Promised Messiah, read his pestiferous paper almost regularly. He was chafed to the quick when he perused Dowie’s contemptuous attacks upon Islām couched in the most scurrilous language. There was no term of abuse, to say the least, which the malicious monster expended not lavishly on the Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of God be upon him!). At this cold-blooded contempt of his illustrious Master, the Promised Messiah was inflamed justly with resentment, and he challenged the false prophet of America to enter into a spiritual duel with him, and imprecate God’s vengeance on the pretender.

The challenge, to put the matter concisely, claimed that Islām was the only true faith and that the present-day tenets of the Church were untenable and false. That _Hadrat Mirzā_ was the Promised Messiah who was to come from on High as spoken of in the ancient scriptures, and Dowie, who claimed divine prophethood for himself, was an impetuous impostor, and his doctrines merely false and fatuous. That, should he enter into a prayer-duel with the Promised Messiah, he would be consumed with the wrath of God, and die in the life-time of the Promised Messiah, nor could he escape Heavenly chastisement even though he should refuse to be engaged in the spiritual combat.

The challenge concluded with these terms: “Well-stricken in age I am, having years 70 on my back, whereas Dowie, according to his own statement, is a younger man of 50. But I care not for my old age for the reason that this duel shall not be decided by the Government of Ages but by the Supreme God Who is a Truth, the Best of Judges.” If
Dowie should slink away from the spiritual strife, even then a calamity shall crash upon him and his Zion in the very near future. I now conclude this subject with a prayer: O Thou most powerful and perfect God Who had been revealing Thyself to the prophets, and shall continue to do so in future, adjudge between us at an early date, and expose to the people Dowie's most odious falsehood. Thou shalt, I believe, redeem Thy covenant with me, O Thou Almighty God; with Thee resides all power'.

In 1902 C.E., the Promised Messiah sent this challenge to Dowie; but he responded not. The following year it was repeated more forcefully; still he cared not to reply. The American Express, nevertheless, splashed the news of the prophecy of the death and destruction of Dowie, and as many as 32 papers gave it a very wide circulation - Chicago Interpreter; Telegraph; Literary Digest, New York; Pilot, Boston; New York Mail & Express: Path-Finder, Washington; Baltimore American etc. etc. In a short space of time, the important news was bruited over the wide world - America, Europe, Asia, India etc. Dowie was at last obliged to speak. Wrote he in his paper dated September, 26, 1900 C.E. "There is in India a stupid Muslim Messiah who writes to me oft and oft again that the tomb of Jesus the Christ is in Kashmir. People inquire of me why I do not send him a reply. But do you think I should answer these gnats and flies on whom if I were to stamp my foot I would crush them to death and destruction!"

Dowie became more and more inveterate in the ways of his wickedness and vice. Upon the Divine Word of warning, he looked with contumely and contempt, and showed no signs of relenting. The Promised Messiah continued to implore the Most High God to establish His covenant; and many a revelation came upon him intimating that, of a surety, his hand shall be on the neck of his
enemy,  "Thou shalt predominate and prevail"

'Unto thee should be given another happy sign by means whereof a glorious triumph shall be thine.'

The day of Dowie's reckoning had come. His own people revolted against him and charged him with misappropriation of the large treasures amounting to seven crores of rupees which he had amassed by drawing wool over the eyes of his followers. Dowie had forcefully forbidden the use of wine, but was now proved to be a wine-bibber himself. His own wife and son turned his enemies, and his father proclaimed publicly by means of a poster that Dowie was a natural child born of adultery. In 1906 C.E., the entire city rose against him with a vengeance, and accusing him with misuse of funds, tyranny and immorality, drove him out of his real dwelling to eat dirt and disgrace. The wrath of Heaven, as a matter of fact, had been enkindled against Dowie. He was struck with a dire disease and lost all movement of his limbs. He had to be carried by the people from place to place, palsy stricken as he was. His senses too left him and he ultimately became stark mad.

The hour of the fulfillment of the prophecy was now fast approaching. On February 20, 1907 C.E. another revelation came upon the Promised Messiah from on High which he published as usual:

A fresh sign, says the Most High God, shall be shown. It shall indeed be a sign for the world (not India alone), and shall carry with it a glorious triumph. An act of the Supreme God shall it be, and every eye should watch and wait for the immediate future so that it may be a good testimony of the fact that this man whom the nations chide, is, of a truth, from the Most High God. Blessed are those who shall benefit by it.'
Fifteen days had hardly gone by when in the first week of March 1907 C.E., the false prophet of America having suffered untold miseries died a very painful death. The vainglorious boaster had claimed a long life for himself and said that while people grew older with the lapse of time, he became younger and younger every day.

Further details of the scene of attack by the fatal disease are so spectacular that the hand of the All-Powerful God seemed clearly to work in the whole affair. It is related that Dr. Dowie had called a big meeting of his disciples and followers to expound and establish his claims. This vast concourse of humanity were intently expectant to hear the 'divine' and 'prophet', and as he rose to address the huge gathering, right at that moment and before the eyes of his admirers and followers, he was struck with paralysis, and except for some idiotic and incoherent mutterings from his transformed being, nothing could be heard. The great sign of God, as foretold by Mirzā Ṣāhib was witnessed by an unprecedentedly large assemblage. This was enough to shake the faith of his most ardent disciples, and the fraud perpetrated on the world could not have been more clearly exposed. Abject infamy and public dishonour followed in the wake of this event to bring the episode to the sad and ordained end by God as an appropriate punitive measure against His Prophet's implacable foe.

The lamentable fate of these two persons was prophetically pronounced by Ḥadrat Mirzā Ṣāhib neither with motives of self-glorification or aggrandizement, nor did the fulfillment of the prophecies bring him a sense of exultation and jubilation. His personal feelings at the unfortunate ends of Lekhrām and Dowie, were undoubtedly of pain and sympathy; he had the good of them at heart and sincerely wished that they had relented and given up their nefarious activities on the warnings issued by him; he had to act as a mere agent in bringing about God's wrath on these incorrigibles. All that mattered to him was that the Almighty had extended His Protection to save the honour of Islām and the Holy Prophet. But let us now turn to some cases of impersonal prophecies that relate to political and international matters beyond
the scope of Mirzā Šāḥib’s mental horizon, and certainly outside his ken.

The Prophecy about the first World War (1914-1918)

The phenomenon of ‘revelation’ could not be more wonderfully exhibited than the prophecy relating to the First World War, which was announced by him to the world in 1905 C.E., and which spoke of the terrible events of 1914-1918 C.E., i.e., nearly 10 years ahead with such clarity as if it was being witnessed directly. This assertion is not a matter of credulous belief; one has just to read the few verses of a poem, published in his last work, Barāhin Ahmadiyyah, Vol. V, after his demise in 1908 C.E., to realize the amazing truthfulness of the prediction. No translation can convey the sense and import of the original Urdu version: however here is the English rendering:

A sign is going to appear sometime after this date (5th April 1905 C.E.), on account of which whole towns, cities and fields will suffer ruination. God’s wrath will manifest itself in the form of a calamity over mankind; in a moment, the entire world will be turned upside down, and streams of blood shall flow as profusely as the water of the rivers. Those who would don robes white like jessamine at night would turn like the poplar trees by the morning. Both men and birds will lose their senses, and the nightingales and pigeons will forget their singing. Every traveller shall feel the severity of that hour; those who would be on their way would lose their path along with their sense. The running waters of the mountains shall turn red with the blood of the corpses like the red wine. All the jin and men will be shaken with the terror of it. Even the Czar shall, at that hour, be in state of utmost distress. That Divine sign shall be a specimen of His Wrath. Heaven shall draw its sword, as it were, to attack.

What a true picture of the great catastrophe of the First World War! This announcement, says Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Šāḥib, further, is a
positive proof of his veracity, and it is bound to happen without any vestige of doubt. Ten years earlier, there was not the least indication of the grim fate of the Czar of Russia, which he suffered during the First World War. How well Heaven’s attack by drawing the sword depicts the havoc of the aerial warfare that ensued in this war for the first time in the world’s history! And the bloodshed that resulted from the fatalities of the battle-field and urban population - it is computed the casualties amounted to 30,000,000 - could not be better expressed than the flowing of rivers of blood! And the terrible event did come to pass as foretold at a time when nobody could imagine even the possibility of such eventuality.

The Partition of Bengal

Mirzā Šāhib had no interest or insight whatsoever in politics, indeed he never took part in any political movement. He lacked all political aspirations. Any opinion or forecast of a political situation could not, therefore, lie within the ambit of his mental make-up. Yet on the strength of ‘revealed’ word, he proclaimed a message from on High on a purely political issue, which had not the least bearing on his mission or his activities. Said the message in Urdu translated as follows: “An order was issued regarding Bengal. But they (i.e., people of Bengal) shall be conciliated.”

The partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon in 1905 C.E., was an important episode in the history of Bengal, and it was full of grave import to the people of Bengal. The splitting up of the province of Bengal into two separate provinces, was, at the time, bitterly resented by the local public, and there was vehement opposition resulting in violent demonstrations for the repeal of the Act passed by Lord Curzon. This public unrest had little effect on the indomitable Curzon, and the position remained unchanged for a long time to come. Yet at the very outset of the partition in 1905 C.E., the intelligence passed on by the Omniscient God to His chosen servant, Mirzā Šāhib, clearly indicated the reversal of the position in some future time. But time rolled on, and there was yet
no visible sign of a conciliation to be seen on the political horizon of India. The time of the fulfillment of the prophecy was, however, destined during the régime of Lord Harding about six years after the prophetic announcement of 1905 C.E. How the events shaped themselves mysteriously into the Divine scheme of things shows the Hand of an Omnipotent God, Who had long foretold the final act in this political drama. And it came about as dramatically by a proclamation in the Coronational Darbar held in 1911 C.E. The partition of Bengal was revoked as a gesture of conciliation for the people of Bengal. How aptly the prophecy came to be fulfilled three years after the life-time of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad!

Prophecies concerning political events in Afghanistan and Turkish Empire

Two other prophecies of a political nature need be mentioned briefly to show that the prediction regarding partition of Bengal was not a mere stray case but news of important events in far-flung countries, like Afgānistān and Turkey, were intimated to Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ṣāḥib in ‘revelations’ far in advance, and published to the world.

A prophecy came out in May 1905 C.E., concealed in most peculiar phrase, quite incomprehensible at the time of its publication. It was a single exclamatory Urdu phrase:

“Oh! Where is Nādir Shāh gone!” - This short sentence sums up a long string of future events, and embraces a period of over one and a half decades of Afgānistān’s history. It was beyond the bounds of any imagination to foretell how Nādir Khān, who was a mere obscure student at the time of the prophecy, would ultimately take over the reigns of Afgān Kingdom and assume the name of Nādir Shāh: how in the meanwhile, things began to shape themselves to fulfil the Divine decree, how Nādir Khān rose from position to position in the military ranks to become Commander-in-Chief of the Kābul Army in 1911 C.E., how he was instrumental in winning the independence of the country by defeating the
British Army in the third Afghan War, and thus became the War Minister under the reign of King Amānullāh Khān; how he resigned his post on account of his failing health and remained confined to his sick-bed in France for a long period, how Bachā Saqqā wrested the throne from King Amānullāh Khān who had to flee his country to remain in exile for the rest of his life; how then the odds turned in favour of Nādir Khān, who stepped from his sick-bed to the throne, leading to the last tragic episode of his life when he was shot dead in his own palace by the bullet of one of the students who fired at him at point blank - the words of the prophecy rang into the ears of the world - 'Oh! Nādir Shāh where have you gone!'

The prophecy about the Turkish Empire pronounced in 1904 C.E. is couched in a verse of the Holy Qurān, which was repeated to the Promised Messiah in a 'revelation': it read:

"The Turks (Romans) shall be defeated in the land near by, but after their defeat, they shall defeat (their foes)".65 this prophetic utterance covers a period of about 10 years of the most important epoch of Turkish history. And I cannot do better than to quote excerpt from Mirzā Ma'sūm Beg's booklet to explain the situation.66

All was quiet on the Turkish front when this prophecy was made in 1904 C.E. Turkey at the time was not involved in any war nor was there any probability of it. But the Word of the All-Knowing God must come to pass. In 1910 C.E. things began to shape themselves accordingly. The Balkan nations, Servia, Greece, Bulgaria and Montenegro suspending their mutual animosities, formed a coalition against Turkey. A couple of years later they declared war on her. The Turkish troops were everywhere defeated in the open field and driven from one stronghold to another.

65. 30:2, 3.
66. Prophecies of Ḥadrat Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad: Mirzā Ma'sūm Beg, Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Ishā'at Islām, Lahore.
The Bulgarian army was knocking almost at the doors of Constantinople, and the condition of the Turks resembled every whit the condition of the Romans in 64 C.E. The roar of cannon on the Cataldja was heard in Constantinople. Even the great fortress of Adrianople fell on the 27th March 1913 C.E., and the defeat of the Turks was final and complete. They were forced to accept peace terms according to which the whole territory beyond the Cataldja lines was to be ceded to the Allies.

During the war the allies had concluded secret treaties for the partition of Turkey among themselves. It looked as though not only would the Ottoman Empire be dissolved but that even the Turkish race would be disintegrated among Allied protectorates. But the Almighty God Who had pronounced His word through the mouth of His Messenger years before, had ordained otherwise. Suddenly quarrel arose between the victors for the division of the conquests and in the following June they commenced fighting among themselves. Servia and Greece came to grips with Bulgaria. Rumania also joined them, and the power of Bulgaria was entirely crushed.

This gave the Turks a respite which that still vigorous race turned to great advantage. The vanquished armies of Turkey reorganized themselves and advanced upon the enemy. Within a few days they captured Adrianople together with all the subjoining territory wherefrom they had been apparently expelled for ever. How true came the prophecy of the Promised Messiah uttered several years ago - "The Turks shall be defeated in the land near by, but after their defeat they shall defeat their foes."

Prophecy Regarding the Great Kangra Earthquake

Earthquake is one of nature's phenomena which has not yet come under human control. There are scientific instruments which can trace the intensity and epicentre of an earthquake-shock after
the event has occurred. But no instrument has, as yet, been devised to forecast the occurrence of an earthquake well in advance. Geology has unearthed the nature of the different strata of the earth’s crust, and explained the causes of these terrestrial calamities, but no geological or astronomical computation can foretell the time or place of the disaster. Hence these upheavals of the earth’s surface take mankind by surprise, and the resulting devastation after a severe shock is immense and on a vast scale. Yet the prophets of God have, from very early history, been warning their opponents of their impending doom through such shakings and quakings of the earth, which amazingly come out true. What these physical disturbances and disasters have to do with the spiritual and moral degeneration of human society is, prima facie, inconceivable, but is a mystery belonging to the domain of spiritualism; the Holy Qur’ān has narrated a number of such disasters which were foretold by the prophets to their inveterate foes. God spoke to Ḥadrat Mirzā Šāhib of one such great earthquake in keeping with the Divine warning for spiritual awakening, as also reported in the Holy Prophet’s Traditions. This earthquake, which shook the whole of the Indian sub-continent, caused destruction and devastation in the fertile valley of Kangra in 1905 C.E.

The prophecy came in with its first forebodings in 1884 C.E. couched in general Arabic text saying “The Most High God shall manifest His glory unto the mountain and crush it to pieces; all this He shall do for the sake of His slave.”67 As the portentous period, the time of earthquake approached nearer, the message became more distinct and definite. In December 1903 C.E. he received the revelation "زایه کا دھکا "The shock of an earthquake", which was duly published in a local paper Al-Ḥakam dated 24th December, 1903 C.E. A year later in June 1904 C.E. another revelation pronounced further details of the impending calamity indicating the nature and locality of the occurrence. The message stated: “Permanent and temporary residence in this

67. Barāhīn Ahmadiyyah, Ḥadrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, vol. 1, 1908 C.E.
part of the country shall be swept out of existence, but all those persons who shall be within the four walls of your following, We shall preserve and protect in this deadly incident.” On the threshold of the fateful event, only a day before the dreadful occurrence, the last grim message was received in such eloquent terms: “Death is waiting at the door.” Early next morning on April 4, 1905 C.E. the well-known Kangra earthquake, memorable for its violence and intensity, shook the mountainous range of Kangra with its deadly grip. The destruction that followed in the wake of this earth’s upheaval, is a matter of historical record. Hundreds of brick structures crumbled down in a matter of seconds and became heaps of wreck and ruin. According to the Government account of the casualties, twenty-thousand persons met their death. It is recorded that, miraculously, not a single follower of Ḥadrat Mirzā Ṣāḥib perished in the wide-spread disaster. And thus the various prophetic utterances came to be fulfilled literally.

The afore-mentioned are only a few of the numerous instances, which illustrate in no uncertain measure but fully demonstrate the phenomenon of ‘revelation’ through the gift of prophecy.

The gift of prophecy

It is admitted on all hands and even the most orthodox will not deny that the ‘gift’ of prophecy is a favour bestowed by God on those who, in their spiritual development, have attuned themselves to the Great Unseen, and through this miraculous power they predict into the unknown future.

These predictions have a special peculiarity of their own and are quite distinct from any speculations and calculations of the astronomers, or astrologers, as featured in the prophecies of Ḥadrat Mirzā Ṣāḥib. In fact God reveals His Existence to man through such communion with His chosen few in all ages. The miracle of God speaking to man was not confined to ages in the past only; sages, seers and saints among the Muslim community have, from time to time, testified to the realization of this mystical experience, thereby testifying the existence of the Eternal Living Being. The
Qur'an and Hadith also vouchsafe such favours to the pure and righteous friends of God called Auliya', in the form of 'Mubahsharāt' or 'good news.' Says the Qur'ān:

Now surely the friends of Allāh, they have no fear nor do they grieve - Those who believe and keep their duty, for them is good news in this world's life and in the Hereafter. There is no changing the words of Allāh. This is the Mighty achievement. 68

The two terms 'good news' and 'words of Allāh' used here, are authentically interpreted to mean prophecy - 'revelations'. The Tradition which explains these verses states:

There has remained nothing of prophethood except Mubahsharāt. When the Holy Prophet was asked what is meant by Mubahsharāt, he replied: Good visions 69.

i.e., revelations of non-prophetic character can be received after the Holy Prophet. This leads us, now, to the most controversial topic 'Khatam al-Nabūwwat' or "the Finality of Prophethood."

The gift of prophecy is not a negation of the Finality of Prophethood

The English word 'prophet' is a derivative of the word 'prophecy', and in its general as well as literal sense, a prophet is one who makes prophecies, i.e., foretells of future events. Its equivalent in 'Arabic is 'Nabī', which is derived from the word 'Naba', meaning 'news' or 'announcement' or 'information' and hence the primary sense of 'Nabī' is one who gives news or information about future. The technical term 'Nabī' in the Islāmic theology carries a different and more comprehensive significance, which is better expressed by the term 'Rasūl' or 'Divine Messenger'. This point becomes clear from a study of verse 90 of Chapter 6 (Yūnus) of the Holy Qur'ān. While mentioning the names of the prophets Abraham and his descendants in the

preceding verses 84 to 89, the next verse 90 says: "These are they to whom We gave the Book and authority and (gift of) Prophecy." Evidently each one of these great prophets was endowed with three distinct things, (1) The Book, i.e., the revealed Code of Law received by him for the guidance of his followers; (2) The authority to judge, i.e., to correctly interpret the law and adjudge its principles in practical life and (3) The gift of Prophecy, i.e., revealed predictions about the future particularly with regard to the Prophet's triumph over his opponents in spite of his helplessness. Thus the 'Gift of Prophecy' is only a part of the role of a full-fledged prophet or Law-giver Messenger of God, and such revelations of non-prophetic character were received in part by certain persons who were not prophets such as the mother of Moses, Mary, the mother of Jesus. It further clarifies the sense of the aforequoted Tradition: "Nothing is left of the prophethood except Mubashšarāt (the gift of prophecy)." Obviously finality of Prophethood puts a bar on the first two items, and no fresh Book of revealed law will now be received after the Holy Qur'ān which is now a complete and perfect code for all time to come, nor the authority of Sunnah can be claimed by any one, but the 'gift of prophecy' constituting non-prophetic revelations will continue to be bestowed on the righteous Muslims who attain the stage of 'Wali' or friend of Allāh. No prophet with a book or code will henceforward appear after the advent of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, the final law-giver of the whole world. I leave aside the detailed discussion on the real meaning of the term 'Khatamal-Anbiyā', to the scholars and theologians who can provide a full exposition of the intricacies and complexities of the subject. As a layman, I content myself with enunciating the guiding principle which may lead to the true understanding of this much misunderstood theme both by friends and foes. There is no lack of literature on this burning topic, and the reader who is keen to pursue the studies further, is referred to a most authoritative work of Maulānā Muḥammad 'Ali, namely, Al-Nabuwwat fil Islām, published by Dār al-Kutub Islāmiyyah, Aḥmadiyyah Buildings, Lahore.
Ḥadrat Mirzā Šāhib did not claim anything beyond this ‘gift of prophecy’ which is vouchsafed to the true and faithful followers of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, the last of the Apostolic prophets (may peace and blessings of God be upon him!). He claimed for himself along with previous Muslim saints, the rank of a ‘Wali’, a Mujaddid endowed with the ‘gift of prophecy’ by God or in other words non-prophetic revelations from on High. This favour is granted not only as a living demonstration of the existence of God but plays a vital role in the mission of regeneration of faith entrusted to them by God. For what Ḥadrat Mirzā Šāhib did in the way of regeneration of Islām, the reader may turn to the pages that follow.
VI. OPERATION REGENERATION

Spiritual Reformation

We have heard of many a rescue operation these days and might have witnessed a few. There was the famous operation airlift of arms and Muslim evacuees from Hyderabad Deccan, the salvage operations of flood-stricken areas have been so common in recent years, then there are the famine relief operations by rushing supplies of food through planes and helicopters, and the most benevolent and beneficial operations of saving humanity from epidemics and disease through coordinated international medical-aid organizations. All this entails humanitarian work of a noble character which engenders some faith in the good nature of man in a faithless world. A still higher form of rescue operation comprises the reformatory movements launched under the leadership of great intellectual personalities of the time. Such reforms generally aim at national welfare and bring about advancement in social, educational and political fields. But there is one phase of reformation which is beyond the scope of these humanitarian and national movements; it is the spiritual regeneration of man which God has taken upon Himself as His sole responsibility. He has ordained that man could, through his own efforts, acquire vast stores of knowledge, he may scale the heights of civilization; his progress in social, educational and cultural fields may be unlimited; he may attain marvels of scientific achievements; and yet despite all his attainments, he may still lack in moral and spiritual acumen and fall prey to evil and sin, his passions run riot precipitating his fall into depths of degradation. It has, therefore, been ordained that his spiritual salvage would be effected through a Divine mission as revealed to His Messengers.

The problem of man’s spiritual advancement and rejuvenation has existed since his creation. The Holy Qur’ān has expounded the entire evolutionary process of man through various stages, to the
attainment of the highest form of spiritual enlightenment through the medium of Divine revelation, in the form of an allegory, unsurpassed in conciseness and beauty in any religious literature. Just read section 4 of Chapter 2, carefully grasping the deeper significance behind the metaphorical language:

And when thy Lord said to the angels (forces or agencies of nature), I am going to place a viceregent (man) in the earth, they said: Wilt Thou place in it such as makes mischief in it and sheds blood? (indicating the savage and wild nature of man), while we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness; He said: Surely I know what you know not (pointing to the unknown vast potentialities of man, not possessed by any other creation). And He taught Adam all the names (here man is endowed with mental power to acquire knowledge). He said: Tell the names of those if you are right. They said: Glory be to Thee! We have no knowledge but hat which Thou hast taught us (i.e., the blind forces of nature unquestionably follow the laws set by God). Surely Thou art the Knowing, the Wise. He said! O Adam, inform them of their names (here man acquires the power of expression and speech). So when he informed them of their names, He said, Did I not say to you that I know what is unseen in the heavens and the earth? And I know what you manifest and what you hide (i.e., the extent of the future progress of man through his latent faculties is only known to God). And when We said to the angels, Be submissive to Adam, they submitted. But Iblis (did not) (i.e., all forces of nature are subservient to man, but his evil self is uncontrollable). He refused and was proud, and he was one of the disbelievers (i.e., the evil tendencies of man lead him to intransigence and haughtiness resulting in disbelief in virtue).

And We said to Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in the garden and eat from it a plenteous (food) wherever you wish, and approach not this tree (of evil) lest you be of the unjust (i.e., man in his state of innocence enjoys complete
bliss of peace so long as he refrains from indulging in his evil ways). But the Devil made them slip from it, and caused them to depart from the state (of bliss) in which they were (i.e., in spite of man's capabilities of expression and knowledge, he is prone to fall prey to his evil nature). And We said, Go forth, some of you are the enemies of others. And there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time (i.e., commission of sin causes enmity between one another though it provides temporary enjoyment of earthly life). Then Adam (the Prophet) received (revealed) words from his Lord, and He turned to him mercifully (i.e., man can get out of his sinful state only through revelation). Surely He is Oft-Returning (to Mercy), the Merciful. We said: Go forth from this state all (who commit sin.) Surely there will come to you a guidance from Me (through the Prophets and Messengers of God), then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve (i.e., man can overcome evil and avoid sin only by following the guidance of the revealed word of God received through His Prophets and Messengers). And (as to) those who disbelieve in and reject our Messages, they are the companions of Fire; in it they will abide.\(^70\)

In another place the law has been briefly stated thus:

O Children of Adam, whenever messengers come to you from among you relating to you My messages, then whosoever guards against evil and acts aright, they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve. And those who reject Our messages and turn away from them haughtily, these are the Companions of Fire: they shall abide in it.\(^71\)

This law of Divine revelation for the spiritual enlightenment and regeneration of man has been enunciated in the Holy Qur'ān so very often and repeatedly illustrated by the history of the

\(^{70}\) 2:30 - 39.  \(^{71}\) 7:35 - 36.
various prophets sent by God from time to time. The long line of the prophets starting from Adam, Noah to the Holy Prophet Muḥammad mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān, besides so many others not stated, who appeared from time to time and in many a clime, fulfilled the exigencies of this Divine ordinance, till the Divine message assumed its perfect and final shape in the Holy Qur’ān revealed to the last of the prophets, Muḥammad (May the peace and blessings of God be upon him!). Thenceforward Islām has been ordained to be the only acceptable form of religion destined to guide humanity to the right course for his spiritual regeneration. But does it follow that evil has been eradicated for good from the world, and there would be no need for regeneration? The law of decline and fall of nations and civilizations, of degeneracy and decay, of degradation and degeneration still operates as it did before the advent of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. How was then Islām to be guarded against such pitfalls so as to escape the fateful and inevitable extinction? Islāmic history of the last thirteen hundred years bears ample testimony to an ebb and flow of its fortunes. After the first phase of the dominance of Muslims throughout the known world, when Islām rose to the crest of the wave, there have followed many a period of degeneracy and decadence, but every time some vital forces have appeared on the scene and contributed to save Islām from utter annihilation and to revive its glory. This has come to pass under a Divine scheme of the institution of Islāmic revival.

The Institution of Islāmic Revival or Tajdīd

A reliable Tradition ascribes the following authentic report to the Holy Prophet: “Surely Allāh will ordain for this Ummah in a cycle of a hundred years such (divine) persons, who will revive the religion (of Islām).” Such spiritual personalities are called ‘Mujaddids’ in the Islāmic terminology, and under a Divine Mission they play a specific role of reviving the Faith. This class

of spiritualists are a category distinct from the secular leaders of thought such as philosophers, poets, educationists or politicians. Their saintly lives are models of purity and truthfulness, and they emulate the character of the prophets. Through their personal example and precept, they instil a living faith in God to enable mankind to eschew sin and lead a life of righteousness. It is not difficult to pick up the names of such 'Mujaddids' from the annals of Islām. The great saints Ḥādhrat Abdul Qādir Jilānī, Ḥādhrat Khawājā Mu‘īn al-Dīn Chishti of Ajmer, Ḥādhrat Sheikh Aḥmad Sarhindī, Sayyad Aḥmad Brelvi are a few examples. The name of 'Mujaddid Alī Thānī' is well-known who appeared at the head of one thousand years of the beginning of the 2nd thousand years after the Holy Prophet. Another name of household fame in India is that of Ḥādhrat Shah Waliullāh Muhaddath of Delhi, who was the accredited Mujaddid of twelfth century Hijrah. Among this line of 'Mujaddids', the prophecy of the century reformer found its fulfillment in the person of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān, the Mujaddid who appeared at the head of the fourteenth century of Hijrah. He was called to the office of Mujaddid in the eighties of the nineteenth century C.E. with the publication of his famed book 'The Barāḥīn Aḥmadiyyah'.

Advent of the Mujaddid of this Age

In consonance with this Divine law, there appeared the Mujaddid of this century who had to fulfill the demands of the present age. In the case of the former mujaddids, the task entrusted to them consisted in combating the degeneracy of the Muslim community itself while it enjoyed temporal power; it was a reformation from within. The present age called for quite a different type of reformer. Almost shorn of its temporal power, Islām was under assault from within and without; it was, as it were, between two hell fires. There was degeneracy and dissension within the camp of Islām itself, and it was exposed to the most virulent attacks from without. The age of science and reason had girt up its loins to deal a smashing blow to Islām. Ḥādhrat Mirzā Šāhīb had, therefore, to launch the campaign for the defence of
Islām on both fronts. By his dynamic writings, through ceaseless discourses, in the series of his lectures and debates, he led the banner of Islām from victory to victory. In all his works, whether scriptural or verbal, he marshalled reasons and arguments, all cogent and irrefutable, to establish the truth of Islām. At the same time, he initiated the study of comparative religions in a most scientific manner, subjecting their alleged beliefs and tenets to the searchlight of reason, which went a long way to bring about the beauties of Islām in bold relief.

In the domain of internal reform, he organized the Aḥmadiyyah Movement by setting up a Jama‘at (an Association) with specific aims to propagate Islām and act up to its principles, responding to the Qur’ānic injunction “And from among you there should be a party who invite to good (i.e., Islām) and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong”. With the above objectives, it could never be the intention of the author of this Movement to create a separate sect and cause schism in Islām. On the other hand, he held strictly non-sectarian views, and firmly advocated that a declarant of Kalima could not be dubbed a heretic; all differences of opinion could be tolerated as different schools of thought in Islām. It is, however, a fact that without forming a band of sincere followers who entered into his Bai‘at (pledge with him) for devotion to the cause of Islām, it would have been impossible to carry out the aims and objects of his Divine mission. And did not the Aḥmadiyyah Jamā‘at win the unique distinction of a true Islāmic character, of righteousness, of honesty and truthfulness, of sincere devotion to promote the cause of Islām? Among the group of devoted disciples, who gathered round him, were men of distinguished ability, whose merit won world wide recognition for their services to the cause of Islām; such as Hadrat Maulānā Ḥakīm Nūr al-Dīn, Khwājā Kamāl al-Dīn of the Woking Mission fame, Maulānā Muḥammad ‘Ali renowned translator of the Holy Qur‘ān, and author of the best type of literature on Islām.

73. 3:104.
The achievements of this modern Mujaddid are now a matter of history, and the facts cannot brook blinking or denial. The Movement has been responsible for publishing a mass of enlightening literature on Islām. It has brought out a most authentic translation of the Holy Qur’ān into English and other languages, it has pioneered the establishment of Islāmic Missions abroad, the Woking Mission in England, founded by one of his great disciples, and which has been responsible for revolutionizing the whole outlook on Islām in the West, is the lasting tribute to the work of this great Mujaddid of the times. Does the Islāmic world need any other proof of the truth of Mirzā’s mission? The ramifications of Ḥādrat Mirzā Šāhib’s Mission and the Movement launched by him, are so vast and varied as to defy description.

Believe it or not

I am going to venture a most startling statement. It may sound highly presumptuous to many, it may be contested by few, it may appear eccentric to some, it may be met with disdain and sarcasm in many a quarter, but the time may come when history will bear out its truth. So I leave it, for the present, to the discretion of the reader to believe it or not. Let him deny it, or taking it at its face value, probe into its implications in a spirit of research. Now hearken, ye who pause and ponder - I make bold to say: The reorientation in Islāmic thought brought about by the Founder of the Aḥmadiyyah Movement and his followers is so momentous and far-reaching in its effects, that it has revolutionized the entire religious outlook of the world. In fact the different reformatory movements even in other religions, have taken a cue from it, while the mode of presentation of Islām as set by the Aḥmadiyyah Movement is the only acceptable form in the present age. Consciously or subconsciously, every modern leader of Islām, be he an educationist, a philosopher or a poet, has imbibed the true Islāmic ideas from this Great Soul of the Age, and got their illumination from the light shed by him; it is immaterial whether the recipient acknowledges it or not.
It can be said without fear of exaggeration or deviation from truth, that even the great Iqbal received his initial insight into Islamic truths through his early contact with Hadrat Mirza Sahib; Iqbal’s early teacher Shamsul Ulama Sayyad Mir Hasan was a great admirer of Hadrat Mirza Sahib. Recently a well-known critic wrote in his article on Iqbal on the occasion of his anniversary, that so far all the biographies of Iqbal have failed to record the exact influences that went to divert the poetry of Iqbal from the usual love lyrics to the lofty tunes of Islamic ideology. When this is done, it will perhaps be realized that one of such influences, in all probability the most potent influence in this direction, came from the source and had its roots in the teachings of the Century’s Mujaddid. It will also come to be recognized that Iqbal’s spiritual vision which penetrated the secrets of Self and perceived the future glory of Islam, can be traced to its ultimate origin in Mirza Sahib’s exposition of the Islamic Faith.

Great inferences can sometimes be drawn from trifling matters. A single instance will suffice to show how the trend of Islamic thought has come to adapt itself to the pattern set by the Ahmadiyyah Movement. There was a time, in living memory, when in the sub-continent of undivided India, with the exception of the Ahmadies, the general mode of salutation among the Muslim officials and intelligentsia was ‘Adab ‘Ard’ or some similar expression. The Islamic mode of salutation was confined to the ‘fanatic’ Ahmadies and was looked upon with contempt by the generality of Muslims. If, by chance or inadvertently, any Muslim high official was accosted with ‘Assalamu ‘Alaikum’ he got startled and seemed to regard it as an affront to be saluted in this manner. What a change has come over now! Everywhere, whether in official circles or in high society, the Islamic salutation of ‘Assalamu ‘Alaikum has become the general vogue. Even the President deems it an honour to address the audience by Assalamu ‘Alaikum.

74. Zikr-i-Iqbal, Maulana Abdul Majid Salik (Bazm-i-Iqbal, Lahore., 1955 C.E.) p. 120.
The more important and wider influences of the Movement may be difficult to assess, but there is no gainsaying the fact that the reactionary tendencies in religious thought were set in by the impact with this Movement. The general awakening to the Living-God sense as the basic conception for emancipation from sin, the universality of the Divine Revelation, the comprehensiveness of Islāmic principles between the physical and spiritual laws of nature, the true significance of jihād, the angels, the heaven and hell, negation of any compulsion in religion, the rationalistic understanding of the Holy Qur'ān through the study of Maulānā Muḥammad ‘Ali’s translation of the Holy Qur’ān, are some of the phenomenal trends in the world outlook which owe their origin to the Āḥmadiyyah Movement. Whether it be the orthodox ‘ulama’ or the Muslim intelligentsia, every one has derived benefit from ideas spread by the Movement, though most often in mute acknowledgement.

The quality of gratitude

The worth of a thing is sometimes known by its antithesis. One perhaps, cannot realize what is gratefulness until he has tasted the bitterness of ingratitude. Shakespeare has, in one of his plays (As You Like It), depicted the pangs of ingratitude in those memorable lines which are worth quoting here:

Blow, blow thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man’s ingratitude!
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,!
As benefits forgot!
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp,
AS DEBTS REMEMBERED NOT!
Then - Oh! for man’s folly -
The world is not so jolly!

(I have made slight alterations in the 12th line, and modified the last stanza to suit the context.)

In our daily dealings with our fellow men, too, we are cut to the quick when we meet with ungratefulness from those whom we have shown kindness or favour, and then, do we not keenly feel how inhuman it is that ingratitude prevails in this callous world? Gratitude, on the other hand, ennobles man and exalts him above the animal stage. Æsop's fables ascribe the quality of gratitude even to animals. Who has not read the story of the lion and the slave; how a fugitive slave in the course of his flight in a jungle extracted a thorn from the paw of a lion and relieved the king of the jungle from pain; how in return for this kindness, the lion evinced his gratitude by refusing to attack the slave, when the latter was thrown before the same hungry lion to be torn to pieces! How, sometimes, a mere word of thanks gives us a sense of satisfaction and faith in the goodness of human nature! But let us analyze in the light of the Qur’ān - what is gratitude.

More than anything else, the Holy Qur’ān has laid great stress on this quality of gratitude on the part of man towards his Creator. The word ‘shakar’ ‘give thanks’ or ‘be grateful’ is used in its various derivations in so many places that it is difficult to enumerate all the occasions. Is it the mere expression of thanks, that God enjoins upon man? The use of this word by the Holy Qur’ān, however, is a most interesting study, and reveals much deeper significance than mere lip-profession. The prophets, who are the highest spiritual entities and are sent by God as models of righteousness, are called the ‘grateful ones’. Of Noah the Qur’ān says: Surely he was a grateful servant75 َّلاَنَّ إِنْ شَاكِرًا ‘Are you not grateful’ and َّنَّالَّا ثَابِثًا ُّلَّا ثَابِثًا ‘So that you may be grateful’ are the ever-recurring admonitions to man in general and the disbelievers in particular:

75. 17:3.
Then He made him (man) complete, and breathed into him of His spirit, and gave you ears and eyes and hearts; little it is that you give thanks.\textsuperscript{76}

In fact, so great importance is attached by God to gratitude on the part of man, that most often ‘gratefulness’ and ‘belief’ go hand in hand in the Holy Qur'ān, almost as synonyms, while the contrary ‘ungratefulness’ tantamounts to disbelief. To illustrate by a few quotations:

Why should Allāh chastise you if you are grateful and believe?\textsuperscript{77}

And certainly We gave Luqman wisdom saying: Give thanks to Allāh. And whoever is thankful, is thankful for his own soul; and whoever denies, then surely Allāh is Self-Sufficient, Praised.\textsuperscript{78}

And when your Lord made it known: if you are grateful, I will give you more, and if you are ungrateful my chastisement is truly severe.\textsuperscript{79}

Why is gratitude treated equivalent to belief and ungratefulness as heinous as disbelief, by the Qur'ān? The verses quoted above also give a clue to this significance. ‘Gratitude’ or ‘giving of thanks’, according to the Qur'ān, does not dignify merely a verbal expression, it indicates something translated into action, something which governs the course of life, something which is essential to lead man to the path of righteousness and truth and hence \textit{vice versa} ungratefulness leads to disbelief and wrong-doing. The fact is that the real significance of ‘gratitude’ by the Qur'ān denotes the proper use and development of his faculties by man, as endowed by God in his nature. It is because the prophets used their faculties according to God’s will that they are called ‘grateful’. And it is on account of the right use of faculties the eyes, ears, the heart as the Qur'ān puts it, that they develop fully; and the meanings of the verses: ‘If you are grateful it is for your own soul’; and ‘If you are

\textsuperscript{76} 32:9. \textsuperscript{77} 4:147. \textsuperscript{78} 32:12. \textsuperscript{79} 14:7.
grateful, I will give you more’ become clear. In a wider sense: ‘gratitude’ would mean that man should derive due benefit from all the blessings of God by utilizing them appropriately - the more you make right use of these blessings, the more you gain by them. The contrary is, similarly, true; ungratefulness amounts to rejection or misappropriation of God’s gifts and thus leads man astray form the path of rectitude.

The reason why?

The Qur’anic truths are eternal verities and do not change with time or place; the quality of ‘gratitude’ is as much in need of being acquired now as it was on the creation of man. A question is generally and very often posed: Since the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the last of the prophets, and religion has been perfected in Islām for all times, what need is there for Muslims to believe in a Mujaddid and why is it necessary to follow his lead? A Muslim is, after all, a Muslim and will remain so, whether or not he accepts the claim of a Mujaddid.

It has been explained at length that a Mujaddid is entrusted with the mission of revival of faith in Islām and the rejuvenation of Muslims through a genuine faith in God; that he is appointed to this office under God’s decree; that he is for this purpose favoured with ‘revelation’, which is the highest form of Divine blessing. Does it not become incumbent and obligatory on the Muslims to show their gratitude by promoting the cause of the Divine Mission and following the lead of the Man of the Hour and the Leader of the Times? Does it not amount to ungratefulness to reject his claims or ignore him altogether? Can the Muslims evade the consequences of such ingratitude? The situation needs to be studied closely.

The period of Mirzā Şāhib’s advent, as a Divine Reformer, is also marked by the emergence of a galaxy of Muslim luminaries, men of genius and intellectual giants under whose leadership different reformatory movements were launched and great strides were made in the field of literature, education, philosophy, poetry,
but as I have indicated, the progress made was in the secular direction. Nevertheless we feel indebted to all these leaders and express our gratitude for their beneficent activities. We take our hats off to Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan for his yeoman service in advancing the cause of Muslim education. We pay due homage to all the literary geniuses of those times, like Shibli, Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar and a host of other bright personalities, and our respect is not abated by the weakness of their character. Iqbal holds a unique position among Muslim leaders as the great philosopher-poet cum politician of Indo-Pak subcontinent. His contribution in these spheres of Islamic thought is highly extolled the world over, and our esteem is not mitigated by considerations of personal character. The heroic struggle of the Muslim League in arousing political consciousness among the Muslims, and ultimately attaining the goal of independence with the creation of Pakistan cannot be under-estimated and the marvelous achievement of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (d September 1948 C.E.) in political sagacity and leadership is unequalled in contemporary history. But there is one serious omission, one unforgivable forgetfulness, there is never a mention, nor the slightest remembrance of the One Great Soul whose resounding Divine message for spiritual revival has been sorely neglected and sadly ignored, but not with impunity. The Muslims are paying the penalty for this gross negligence. Here are the facts which indisputably prove the assertion.

It is with the grace of God that the efforts of the Muslim League under the leadership of the Quaid-i-Azaam were crowned with success and' Iqbal's dream of Pakistan came out true. A new Islamic state suddenly came into being to mark the map of the world. But did the acquisition of the temporal power also build up the character of the nation? Admittedly the case has been just the reverse as it resulted in a deplorable deterioration. Alas! the characteristics of a living nation are sadly lacking and badly needed. Selfless sacrifice, truthfulness, honesty, sincerity of purpose, straightforwardness, the qualities which build the character of a nation, have vanished. Instead, corruption, dishonesty,
deception, selfishness, blackmailing, black-marketing and all the allied evils, have become the order of the day. The position went from bad to worse, till one fine morning the scourge of Heaven befell the nation, though mercifully, by the imposition of Martial Law, which proved to be a blessing in disguise and suddenly brought the nation face to face with the realities of life. The most pertinent question, however, still remains unanswered. Why did the nation not rise to the occasion, but failed miserably to properly use the power placed in its hands? What is the root cause of all these ills? Why has the nation been deprived of all the virtues and has acquired instead all the vices? These questions need investigation and a probe in the matter is worth the while.

You be the Judge

If you were the judge, what verdict would you pass in the following case:

In the thirties of the nineteenth century of the Christian era corresponding to the thirteenth century of the Hijra, a child was born in a remote, insignificant village in the interior of the undivided Punjab. This male issue came of a highly respectable Muslim family; in fact, he was the scion of a noble dynasty originally belonging to Persia. He was brought up in the orthodox style of education prevalent among the Muslim landlords. From his early childhood, he was possessed of studious and devotional habits, and did not take part in any activities of a frivolous nature. As he grew up from childhood to youth, he regulated his life, all along, strictly in accordance with the Islāmic code. He was simple, straightforward and extremely honest in his dealings, and elicited respect and regard for the purity and righteousness of his character. From youth, he passed on to middle age, without any deviation from the conduct of his saintly life.

He believed in the Holy Prophet as the greatest and last of the prophets, for whom his love and esteem was unbounded. He believed in the Holy Qur’ān as the last revealed code and Islām as the perfect religion for humanity for all time to come. His zeal for
the Truth of Islāmic Faith was so great that he devoted all his energies to. the exposition of the beauties of the Qur’ān and the excellence of the moral and spiritual principles of Islām. By the force of his writing his illuminating lectures and discussions, he earned for himself a high position among the Muslim intelligentsia and ‘ulama’ as the best advocate of Islām. Till the age of 45 years, he was acclaimed as the greatest Islāmic Revivalist of the age even by his later bitter opponents. At this stage, and under Divine Revelation, he asserted certain claims, all subject to the authority of the Qur’ān and Sunnah (Ḥadīth). There was, however, no claim for prophethood, which he repudiated for himself to the last. He continued in his campaign of defence and propagation of Islām through missionary activities. To promote this aim, he organised a Jama‘āt, whose members pledged themselves at his hands to sacrifice their all for this cause. He inculcated a life of purity of righteousness, and honesty upon his followers, and those who came in contact with him were infused with this spirit. He sent the call of Islām and the message of peace to all the nations of the world and invited other religions to study Islām in the spirit of seeker-after-truth. He ultimately laid down his life to revive the glory of Islām and to uphold the honour of the Holy Prophet. This was Mīrzá Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān, the Mujaddid of the Age, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi.

Now during his very life time, the charge of heresy was hurled at this man by the leading orthodox ‘ulama’; they proclaimed this man a heretic, a non-Muslim. It is still debated whether he and his followers should be called Muslims or treated as unbelieving minority outside the pale of Islām.

What would be your judgement, if you be the judge? For God’s sake, think for yourself regardless of the ‘Pride and Prejudice’, from which the orthodox ‘ulama’ or the typical mulla always suffer. Be earnest, be honest, be sincere, and God will help you to pass the right verdict, the truth will speak from the recesses of your soul - the Daniel, as it were, will come to judgement.

To call this man a heretic, an unbeliever, a non-Muslim! What height of ingratitude! To relegate his name to the limbo of
oblivion, what a criminal negligence! Have not the Muslims totally forgotten to repay the Great Debt that he placed upon them? Were not the inexorable consequences of this ingratitude, this negligence, to follow suit? It is God’s decree - unless they rally to his side and express gratefulness for the Divine blessings by taking his lead, the Muslims may yet remain as devoid of the sterling national qualities and strength of character as ever. Back to Spartan simplicity, to a life of honesty, of truthfulness, of sincerity is the crying need of the hour. It is the desideratum devoutly to be wished. The sooner the Muslim world realizes that the desired transformation towards high morals and spiritual elevation is linked with the acceptance of the Mujaddid, and destined to be attained through his following the better it would be. It is not yet too late! Membership of the Ahmadiyyah Movement means a change of heart for the better, for a life of truth and purity, for liberation from sectarianism and false dogma for a splendid opportunity to participate in the service of Islām!!

AN APPEAL

I conclude with the following words:

It is an appeal to humanity at large, to all the nations of the world, to all shades of religious persuasion, to recognize the worth of this Age’s saint, Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān, to listen to the ‘Message of Peace’ delivered by him, to come to a common ground of understanding - not to deprecate any religion or its founder but to appreciate the excellence in every religion, as every religion emanated from the same Divine source. He was the veritable Prince of Peace in the present age, and it was with a view to stress the same Divine source of every religion, that he identified himself (metaphorically of course) with the founder of every religion - for Hindus he was the Krishna, for Christians, Jesus Christ, for Jews Moses, and so on. It is an appeal to the Muslim world to appreciate the real position of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān who by his life and deeds proved worthy of holding the office of Mujaddid of the present age. He spread the
true light of Islām and chalked out the right programme for the glory of Islām.

It is an appeal to the orthodox ‘ulama’ of the Islāmic world to shed their baseless prejudices, and discard all petty wrangling; and in the true Islāmic spirit not only to withdraw but to deprecate the ‘charge of heresy’ فتوی كفر issued against Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān and his followers, and to declare them as Muslims.

It is an appeal to every sane element among the Muslim intelligentsia to study earnestly the Aḥmadiyyah Movement, and if it is found to be serving the cause of Islām, to show moral courage by rallying to the support of the Movement and joining its ranks.

It is a heart-searching and heart-rending appeal to the followers of the Great Mujaddid of the Age to close their ranks, and not to mislead people by imputing exaggerated claims to the Founder but to expound his true teachings and preserve the real spirit of the Movement.

And God bless those who follow the path of rectitude! And lastly let us herald the dawn of the era of better understanding, of peace and tolerance, of the Triumph of Islām, as envisaged by the Mission of the Great Mujaddid of the time, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, on whom may God shower His choicest blessings. Ameen!