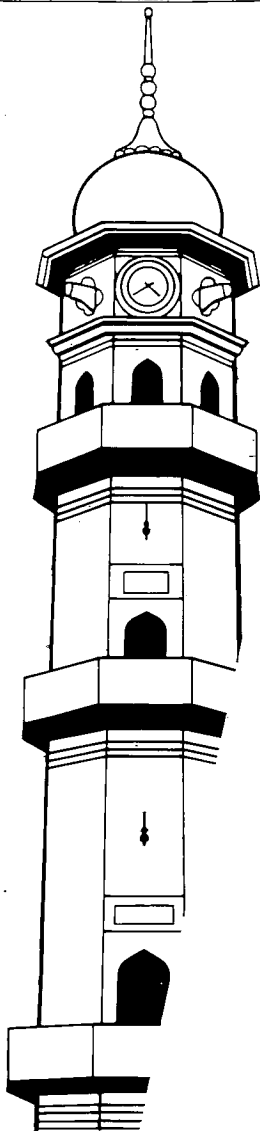


THE REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the expected world reformer and the Promised Messiah whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Movement is an embodiment of true and real Islam. It seeks to unite mankind with its Creator and to establish peace throughout the world. The present head of the Movement is Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad. The Ahmadiyya Movement has its headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan, and is actively engaged in missionary work.



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The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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The Review of Religions is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents the pure and true Islam. It is open to all for discussing problems connected with the religious and spiritual growth of man, but it does not accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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EDITORIAL

CENTENARY NEW YEAR

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community celebrated its centenary on March 23, 1989. One hundred years ago the Community was formally established by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India who claimed on the basis of divine revelation that in his person had been fulfilled the advent of the Promised Messiah and Al Mahdi whose coming had been foretold not only in Christian and Muslim scriptures but also in those of other religions.

It was on March 23, 1889, that the Promised Messiah started taking oath of allegiance from his followers. They were called upon to dedicate themselves with utmost devotion to the high spiritual ideals of Islam. In order to do this one must firmly resolve to do so. There are sins and weaknesses to be overcome and virtues to be developed and practised. In order to attain this goal resolve, in addition to all important prayer, is absolutely essential.

The practice of making New Year resolutions is something to be commended although it does not mean that resolutions should not be made at other times also.

New Year Day, 1990, is the hundredth to be ushered in since the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was founded, and falls within its centenary year. It is, therefore, a notable occasion for Ahmadi Muslims to make some worthwhile resolutions concerning the betterment of their lives not just for the year 1990 but for all times.

Resolution makes objectives much easier to attain. When one makes a resolution of any value then it is worth sticking to until it has been accomplished. Perseverance is essential:

Persevere in the right path. (Quran 10 : 89)

Perseverance is the difference between success and failure. Lack of perseverance is what more than ever keeps one from advancement and achievement. There are those who make resolutions but fold up as soon as the going becomes difficult and tough. Unfortunately lack of perseverance is a weakness common to the majority of people. This weakness should be overcome by persistent effort and prayer.

(continued on page 31)

FRIDAY SERMON

(Delivered by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV at the London Mosque
on 24th November, 1989)

FIVE MORAL VALUES

Those people who make loud claims and make big plans should pay special attention to elementary points. High buildings cannot be constructed unless the foundations are properly prepared. Basic requirements cannot be ignored by an engineer or for that matter by an expert of any kind. In the building of nations and religious communities there are two things of great importance around which revolves the whole philosophy of life. They are one's relationship with God and with man. Islam provides directions and guidance regarding the development of both these relationships but in order to practise them it is only possible when one gives special attention to the basic and initial stages. First one should lay the foundations and then hope and pray that on them may be built magnificent spiritual buildings.

At present the Ahmadiyya Community is passing through a period of exceptional importance about which I have often reminded you as we move ahead from the end of the first century of the Movement founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad the Promised Messiah. This is in terms of time. The Holy Quran has made clear prophecies that the gap of time can be bridged and can be overcome if one does not let one's moral values decline nor let one's actions slip behind. The Holy Quran states:

وَأَخْرَجَ مِنْهُمْ لَسًا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

And He will raise him among others of them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise (62,4).

This verse carries the same message and the same glad tidings. It has been fulfilled and has revived our spirits. It is of utmost importance, therefore, that those of us who have accepted the Promised Messiah according to the prophecy of the Holy Quran have seen and proved that the time gap can be removed through moral practice. As it has in the past so will it be in the future. In this regard it is necessary for us to stop at the end of the previous century and examine carefully that our progress in practical morality has not receded. Moving forward can be in two ways. The first is to move with time which is unavoidable and over which we have no control. The other moving forward can also be in the sense that

apparently nations seem to advance but they become a prey to time. Their moral values decline. There is need for us to return to original values. The great miracle and achievement demonstrated by the Promised Messiah was the act of taking people back to original values and not of moving them away from them. There was a gap of thirteen hundred years between him and the Holy Prophet of Islam but with just one jump he reached back to the time of the Holy Prophet. So with passage or jump of time from century to century we should also make a reverse jump with a definite and determined decision to formulate a code for the future according to the standard of earlier moral values. When from this point of view I look around in this age I see that with the expansion of the Community problems are also increasing.

By the Grace of Allah the Community is spreading rapidly at a much faster rate in all directions. Whereas the spread and expansion of this Community carries blessings it also carries fear and concern. Similarly as the Community expands so so does the concern increase for the spiritual training of the new generation. I decided therefore, to make subsidiary organisations of the Khuddam (male members from 15 – 40), Ansarullah (male members above forty) and Lajna (womenfolk) in all countries to come directly under my control which in my view is a wise step by which I will be able to get more work done by these organisations which would result, by the Grace of Allah, in the need of spiritual training being fulfilled instead of the organisations just building castles in the air. In this respect I wish to put two basic plans before the Community and for this reason I am especially addressing these three organisations. They will, God willing, receive detailed instructions and they will be allocated practical programmes in small and easy batches. Although I have already put forward the basic points in various forms I feel it necessary to repeat some of them. A religious community cannot be built without the development of moral character so this is the most important thing. The quicker it is done the easier it will be. The Lajna or ladies' organisation will have to do the basic work. Also the same basic and elementary work for different age groups will be allocated to the Khuddam and Ansarullah organisations.

TRUTHFULNESS

The first requirement is the habit of speaking the truth. The habit of telling lies is the worst evil found in the world today. The advanced nations are considered to be established on high moral values. However they tell lies according to their needs. Their philosophies are based on lies. They indulge in bad jokes. Their mode of living and economy is based on lies. Although they seem polished and cultured the central point around

which their civilisations are established are based on falsehood. This, however, is a separate discussion. My interest is in the Ahmadiyya Community where in I particularly keep my eye on the children. Unless one inculcates the habit of speaking the truth from early childhood it becomes a difficult task to discard this habit of telling lies in later life. There are various levels of truthfulness, one person is less truthful while another is more so and yet another extremely truthful. The highest level of truthfulness is manifested in Prophethood. An Ahmadi should have no texture of falsehood in his get up.

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ
وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا ۖ

And whoso obeys Allah and this Messenger shall be among those on whom Allah has bestowed His blessings — the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs and the Righteous. And an excellent company are they. (4:70)

How high and magnificent are these aspirations. They start from honesty, No one can become a righteous person unless one is truthful. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that you should teach your children the virtue of truthfulness in a gentle yet firm manner. Under no circumstances should you tolerate falsehood even if uttered in Joke. If mothers impress this on their children then other stages would become easy to accomplish. If those children who are honest and truthful are attached to the Lajna or Khuddam association they can be employed for all sorts of tasks because with honesty and truthfulness you can find that fibre on which you can put responsibility or you can make use of in your programmes. Dishonest nations remain weak and do not possess the strength to sustain high values. This, however, is a lengthy and detailed subject. You should believe that without honesty you cannot establish high values or perform great tasks. It is extremely necessary, therefore, that the Ahmadiyya Community in Islam inculcates the habit of speaking the truth in the children from the very beginning. Also to keep an eye on the adults and to organise such programmes as to remain the Khuddam, Lajna and Asarullah organisations of the essential value of truthfulness and how great is its need, not only for the members of the Ahmadiyya Community, but also for everybody throughout the world.

GENTLE AND PIOUS SPEECH

Another aspect of spiritual training, is to speak in a gentle and pious

manner. This may appear to be a small thing. It is very basic, As far as I have noticed in the private quarrels within the Community, the major factor involved is that people do not know how to talk gently and courteously. They speak harshly and thereby hurt the feelings of others and often they are not even aware of it just as a thorn can hurt but does not know what it is doing. The wives of such men also become the targets of their fuming outburst. Some people become spiritually dried up. They spread pain in all directions daily being unaware of what they are doing. Children should be trained and guarded against speaking like this at the outset in the homes. If they do not speak with loving respect on small matters, become rude and start quarrelling, then the parents are sure to produce an impious progeny. They will produce such descendants as will cause all kinds of problems and suffering in the nation. The parents will be responsible for they paid no attention to the training of their children in speaking respectfully. Such children can even become rude to their parents because they had been quick to raise their hands against them. It is most important to teach children good manners in their homes from early childhood otherwise when they become older they display rudeness even in school in classes, they shout at and hurt one another and become a headache for the teacher. It is then difficult to train these children, if. They should be put in care of the Khuddam or Lajna Associations they would give them trouble also. It is difficult to train such kind of children and the task of spiritual training is not easy. If the clay is not pliable and has no quality to be moulded then no matter how skilled one might be it cannot be moulded into an attractive shape. From this point of view, therefore, it is highly necessary to develop gentleness and politeness in young children along with mutual respect. If this is not done some serious quarrels can arise and sometimes reports of them reach me directly or indirectly. I feel, therefore, that if you do not teach your children to adopt respectful speech when young then there is no surety of their character when they have grown up and their ill manners can create some extraordinary dangerous situations. As a result bitter feelings can spread, the Community could become divided, hypocrisy could develop and perhaps some people might leave the Community.

FORTITUDE

The third moral value is fortitude which is courage in the face of odds and adversity. Right from childhood you must teach your children that if some one has said some little thing to annoy them or that if they have suffered a little in one way or another they must not worry but keep their courage high. This teaching of fortitude to your children must not just be given by words but also through your personal example. Sometimes

children may damage or break something such as a piece of crockery, knock over an ink pot or a glass of water on the table. On such small things I have seen some parents pounce on their children, lose their tempers, use abusive language and slap them and give other kinds of punishment. Not only that but those who might have domestic servants treat them even worse. The training which the Promised Messiah gave to his children was not just through words but through high moral example. When Hazrat Mirza Basher – ud – Din Mahmood Ahmad was a child he set fire to the manuscript of a book which he had prepared for publication and the whole household feared what might happen. When the Promised Messiah came to hear about it he simply said that it did not matter and that God would enable him to write a better one.

Fortitude is developed by the example of one's own practice and those parents who lack fortitude and patience cannot develop this quality in their children. Gentle and courteous speech is deeply linked to one's capacity to show fortitude. Lack of fortitude always develops disrespectful speech. It is not enough just to develop a gentle manner of speaking if one does not also develop courage. Fortitude will be advantageous for our Community in the future. It can create exceptional benefits internally and externally. It does not mean that if one possesses fortitude then one should show no care or concern over losses. You will have to develop a balance between them.

WASTAGE

Wastage is not a good habit. Children are inclined to be wasteful and to make them understand the impropriety of this habit it is essential for them to know that God has created everything for our benefit and we should be careful and not waste anything even in small amount or quantity. When we perform ablution before commencing our prayers we should not waste any water and similarly, for further example, we should not waste any water when washing clothes. In Pakistan and some developed countries much water is wasted. Sometimes I have seen people turning on hot or cold water taps and after using just a little leave them running on and on. We must appreciate the fact that water is a blessing of God and whether or not its wastage causes a financial loss to you it is a loss to the nation. It is an act of ingratitude to fail to appreciate a blessing. Fortitude does not mean that we should not care about wastage. By way of example the meaning of fortitude is that if you suffer a loss accidentally on account of somebody then you should bear it with courage and patience and should tell the person what happened. Those young people who possess a good measure of fortitude are able to bear larger losses

losses more easily when they grow up. Sometimes there are national calamities and man sees his harvest destroyed. Those who lack fortitude even over little matters sometimes even become rude to God. If something of benefit happens to a person he feels content but shows a lack of fortitude when something goes wrong and may even become impatient with God let alone with other people. The Holy Prophet has told us that if one cannot learn to thank people then one cannot be thankful to God. This is a deep philosophy which we observe daily. The person who shows patience when he is helpless shows fortitude, but that person who is carried away over a loss or trial lacks fortitude. Impatience is foolishness, ignorance and in some cases ingratitude. You should teach your children patience along with fortitude.

As I have mentioned I have seen here in the U.K. great wastage of water. I have also seen a wastage of heating and lighting. The people show little care. Our own people from Pakistan who have taken up residence here switch on heating unnecessarily. The fire or stove is left on unnecessarily. Here women should take particular note. The water is left running unnecessarily. One can fulfil one's need with much less quantity and so help the country. Attention to these matters helps to build a person's character. This can be of great benefit in the spiritual training of children. Take electricity for example. I see people unnecessarily leave lights on in their home. They leave the radio or television on after they have left the room and also the lights. I often tell the children in my home that there must be a ghost living in the house because when I entered a room I found the light on and also the television. It seems that there are invisible beings who turn them on. It does not benefit any one that he should unnecessarily waste the blessings of God. I have seen this often. We have to train our children with patience and not just by being good. These two virtues go together. If you save the nation from any kind of loss then the internal result will be beneficial for you and your family. When a child trained in these things grows up it will produce great beneficial results. Those who overlook and do not care for smaller losses in business try to show fortitude by saying everything is O.K. and adopt the attitude that they will do better later. These are words of ignorance. Fortitude does not mean that if one suffers a loss one should not try to stop it.

SYMPATHY

The fourth virtue is to show sympathy for the poor and try to remove unnecessary suffering and misery. This attitude should be developed from childhood. The children of those mothers who teach them sympathy for the poor develop an inclination in their nature to do so. Such mothers, by

the Grace of God, help to build a great nation worthy of being the best spiritual community. Those mothers, however, who show a selfish attitude and make their children only concern themselves about their own misfortunes build a selfish nation which becomes a source of misery for other people. It is, therefore, not only necessary to develop human sympathy but without it you cannot attain the high purpose for which you have been created. The Holy Quran says:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

We would fail in achieving the purpose of our life if we do not teach and encourage our children to show sympathy for mankind and if we do not make them put it into practice. Children would enjoy co-operation and feel enjoyment as a result of their sympathetic activities. Unless they enjoy doing them they would not become absorbed in their lives. Until then they are merely words of admonition. There are two aspects. One is that you should tell your children stories involving acts of sympathy for people. You should encourage them to show sympathy for the poor and help in relieving distress and suffering of the inflicted. You should develop within them a passion for service to humanity and provide them with opportunities to do so. In the U.K you do not generally find so many opportunities in day to day life because this is a country in which there is a wide gap between the rich and poor. In the third world countries, however, the rich and the poor live side by side. Poverty can be felt. There it is easy for children to be given practical training in assisting the poor but also there is the problem that so great is the suffering that it seems beyond the capacity of man to rectify. It is about the situation in such countries that the poet Ghalib asked *Who is it who is not in need? Whose need should we try to fulfil?* The heart desires to fulfil each person's needs. You should assist yourself and through your children. If such a habit is developed in childhood then children will take pleasure in rendering such sympathetic service and it will be ingrained within them. When they join the Khuddam or Lajna associations they will be members of good character eager to serve humanity and make it easier for these organisations to operate.

RESOLVE AND COURAGE

Strong resolve and courage can exist side by side with gentleness of heart otherwise if they are not combined character will be weak. Possessing gentleness of heart does not mean that such a tender hearted person should not possess strength and courage to meet and fight adversities. Hazrat Abu Bakr who was the greatest of the faithful in this

respect, was a perfect example for all time to come. Although he had derived this moral quality from the Holy Prophet he developed it step by step to such a degree that he excelled in manifesting it. When problems commenced on the first day of his Khilafat and continued to follow then this same person who used to shed tears over ordinary distressing incidents and sympathised with people suffering minor afflictions, he faced and dealt with problems and afflictions with such great resolve and courage like a mountain stands before a heavy flood. There was no question of his slipping. Gentleness, therefore, does not mean that a person should become weak and dispirited in the face of difficulties. This positive attitude should be developed from childhood. The Promised Messiah said that defeat was not written in his nature which reveals his high moral attitude.

There are those who lose heart over small things and become sick of heart if they fail in an examination, and who suffer a great shock if their wishes are not fulfilled. They begin to wonder whether God even exists. Their small world is made of straw and a minor shaking can destroy it. Those nations, therefore, which have great tasks to perform have to overcome every difficulty over centuries, have to tackle them with manliness. They have to combat each powerful enemy. If the children of these nations are not taught resolve and courage from the beginning then the future generations would not be able to accomplish the tasks required. It is essential, therefore that while you teach your children gentle and sympathetic manners you should also train them to become full of resolution and courage from which nations will learn a lesson.

Our organisations should specially keep in mind these five fundamental moral values in the preparation of their spiritual training programmes and give much attention to them. I feel that their advantages will continue to reach mankind not just for the next century but for many hundreds of years to come. If the Ahmadiyya Community is firmly established on these five moral values and parents become responsible for implanting them in their children then we can depart this life in a state of peace and tranquility with the consciousness that we have accomplished the task with which God entrusted us, according to the best of our ability.

PRISON WITHOUT WALLS

(Prof. Terence P. Day,
Department of Religion University of Manitoba)

For more than fourteen centuries, Islam has kept alive the Prophet Muhammad's noble cause for the world which he called the *jihad*, the Islamic holy war. He showed his countrymen that there is sometimes 'the little holy war' against the external enemies of Islam; there is always the *big holy war* in the human heart against arrogance, prejudice, disbelief, hatred, cruelty and all the negative forces that generate, fuel and sustain *man's inhumanity to man*.

For half a century Amnesty International has fought a *holy war* for human rights, international justice and moral compassion against forces of oppression, instruments of barbarism against the denial of civil rights, the suppression of human moral and religious freedom, and against the cruel and unjust exploitation of human beings but above all against the tyrannies which have led to imprisonments without trial followed by torture and other maltreatment of tens of thousands of *prisoners of conscience*. Amnesty International has become the modern world's conscience, its ever vigilant watchman and guardian of human dignity in an era of global unrest and striving for freedom.

Amnesty International's self sustaining inspiration has been grounded in the spiritual faith and essential ethical assumption that mankind is one people, one community, one human race sharing a common human identity, having the same essential human needs, and emerging in the world as one complex but integrated human society. Its members have kept their faith in the goodness of mankind in the face of the unspeakable cruelties, untold human tragedy and oceanic misery of at least 200 wars presently being fought in different parts of the world and a thousand times more of political upheavals and civilian uprisings, especially in the Communist world.

Against the blood red dungeons of blind fanaticism, violent unreason and cruel malevolence, Amnesty International has quietly and persistently pressed its reasonable and compassionate case for humanity and has tried to win national and public leaders in every nation into the ranks of ethical cause for humankind.

So much of the human and social injustice in the contemporary world

is politically motivated, but, there are thousands of *prisoners of conscience* who are in jails and are denied natural justice and personal liberty on *religious* grounds. It is their religious beliefs that are being denied and their right not only to share what they believe with others but even to practise their beliefs privately. It is not that their beliefs are contrary to just laws and true morality but only that they are different from normative creeds which have become accepted by uncritical and unquestioning majorities.

Men, women and children are being persecuted, oppressed, imprisoned without charge, tortured and murdered, sometimes at dead of night they are attacked and murdered in their homes, and they are otherwise subjected to continuous harassments and injuries for no other fault or *crime* than their faith in God and their desire to worship and organize themselves differently from the majority of their countrymen.

For the *prisoners of conscience* in Pakistan and Iran, there are prisons with walls and bars for the Ahmadis and for the Bahais. But, for two decades, at least, Pakistan and Iran have become nationwide *prisons without walls* within which those religious minorities are forcibly confined through severe restrictions against leaving the country as refugees from religious oppression and persecution. Ahmadis are denied the right to declare themselves Muslims or even to identify their religion as Islam. They are prevented from acquiring passports and exit visas; they face daily dangers and threats of physical assaults, of sudden arrests, confiscations of their property, closures of their places of worship and other threats which have been sanctioned by unjustly arbitrary and discriminatory legislation which have been politically designed to please orthodox Muslim factions. Both in Iran and Pakistan are the strange plights of sincerely devout and self dedicated Muslims who have been made *prisoners of conscience* by their own Muslim countrymen! While fundamentalist factions fight and destroy each other their minorities suffer for choosing to be Muslims or to espouse forms of Islam which are not approved by state institutions.

Most of the religious persecution and oppression in the world has been racially, politically and sometimes socially motivated. Indeed, whenever the history of religion in our century gets written we should not be surprised to notice that it has only two sections. Its first and smaller section will describe how secular instruments such as politics and economics were used for furthering religious causes. But, its second and larger section will describe sundry misuses of religion for nationalistic, communalistic and sectarian purposes including using of religion

to sanction the oppression and persecution and annihilation of social minorities.

Even so, this century's story of religious persecution will not be new although we have grounds for hope that this century will prove to be its concluding episode. But, the story so far is long and mostly focused in the western world. For, unlike the oriental world of where religious tolerance reigned within syncretistic Hinduism and Buddhism for more than 25 centuries, only since the seventeenth century have liberalism, humanism and secularism closed the western world's era of religious persecution and inaugurated its century of religious toleration. Even so, the rise of Amnesty International with its mountainous volume of work indicate that our modern world has far to go in the matter of religious toleration. This is because, the United Nations' Charter of Human Rights and the Assembly's cause for world wide personal and civil liberties including the right to believe without restriction and oppression on racial, religious, political or any other grounds have barely moved beyond the legislative chambers and the occasional conferences, meetings and commissions on human rights by the United Nations and related agencies.

The instinctive fears, prejudices, envies, jealousies and power interests which fuelled and sustained the momentum of religious persecution throughout the centuries are real and alive also today especially in developing societies in the third world which have large sectarian religions which have not out grown a medieval and backward religious outlook but have even adopted a retrogressive religious thinking and behaviour.

Even at the present time when Islam seems ready to offer a morally and spiritually confused western world its viable ethical and religious alternatives, its image is being sadly tarnished, marred and scarred by a persecuting zeal of religious majorities against their minorities. The gracious practice of religious tolerance by spiritually enlightened Muslim leaders and the practical tolerance of millions of average Muslims, have not prevented nor stopped this persecution. While mournful anniversaries recall the genocidal massacre of Coptic Christians in Egypt, of Maronite Roman Catholics by the Druzes of Lebanon in 1860, and also of Old Catholics, Nestorian Christians, and Jacobite and Armenian Christians by Turkish Muslims in 1895 and 1915 there continues, almost unnoticed by the rest of the world, the seemingly endless social and economic oppression of Christians in the Southern Sudan by the predominantly Muslim Northern Sudan, and the repressive inequalities and indignities suffered by Christian minorities in Malaysia, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Libya. Elsewhere, Hindus and Christians are suffering the

inequalities of being religious minorities in Buddhist Sri Lanka and Burma. Atheistic Communism has sanctioned the persecution and imprisonment of Jehovah's Witnesses and Baptists in Russia and the Communist bloc countries of Europe and of Buddhists in Tibet and Vietnam. The innocent suffer despite their noble values and positive services to their respective societies and nations.

But, it has become historically apparent that the worst kinds of religious persecution have occurred within religious communities between groups sharing the same religion and not from external oppression. This has been so throughout the history of our era beginning with the widespread harassment and persecution of Jewish Christians by orthodox Jews during the first and the second centuries followed by the Catholic Church's persecution and suppression of *heretics* and heretical groups within its own communities. The Church's suppression of pagan minorities, next of heretical and reforming Christian sects and also of Ashkenazik and Sephardic Jews throughout the early and later Christian medieval period, repeatedly exposed the conflict of principle with practice and the enormous gap between Christianity's formal ideal of Christian peace and love its persecuting zeal throughout the Christian centuries.

More recently, however, a special burden of religious persecution has been felt by Muslim minorities in the contemporary Muslim world. Historic suppressions of Shi'ite minorities by Sunni'ite majorities have engraved funeral tones of martyrdom and mourning upon the conscience of Shi'it Islam. But, the recent extermination of 10,000 Sunni'te Muslims by an Alawite faction supported by Syria's President Asad, the oppression of Muslim, mountain dwelling Kurds and the genocide of urbane Bahais in post revolutionary Iran are evidences of the sorrowful plight of Muslim minorities in majority Muslim lands

There are indications of easements in the persecution of Bahais in Iran. But, daily from Pakistan come fresh stories of harassments, repressions, oppression and murders of Ahmadi Muslims by orthodox mullahs and the national judiciary. The persecution is sanctioned by religious complaints that the Ahmadis are corrupting the true Islam by misinterpreting the Koran. Although Ahmadis affirm Islam, practise Islam, revere Islam and propagate Islam their right to be Muslims is denied by a Muslim majority which is not more devout and dedicated to Islam than the Ahmadis.

Yet, the irony of the persecution of Muslims by Muslims is that Islam is

called *the religion of peace*. Moreover, not only Islam, but all the major religions claim to be religions of peace. Then why have they been so constantly engaged in religious persecution? Part of the answer lies in political aspirations and motivations which have caused nations in a transitional stage of social development to connect religious affliction with national loyalty, to harness the pent up religious emotions of the masses against foreign powers mainly from the West and to exploit fear of imaginary enemies within their societies. The current genocide of the Bahais in Iran and the Ahmadis in Pakistan is not an Islamic *holy war* against real *enemies of Islam* but the reaction by culturally backward and economically disadvantaged majorities to the enlightened and progressive and even *westernized* minorities in their midst. The contributions of the minorities to social emancipation have been read as threats to Islam and as portents of sweeping changes which are to come to all societies and nations which are on the threshold of the global technological and economic revolution. On the other hand, religious persecution has been also rooted in jealousy instead of fear in the envious coveting of the material wealth, social advantages and political power which have been earned by enterprising minority groups. Outwardly, the charge against Ahmadis in Pakistan is that they are heretics and of Bahais in Iran that they are *stooges* of a foreign power the United States of America. Secretly, their prosperity is coveted by others who claim to represent the interests of a captive and under privileged many.

In this light, it can be argued that, it is not the religion of Islam that is at fault but human ambitions, avarice and greed. Nevertheless, even because it is the religion of peace, Islam has imposed a special obligation on its religious leaders to be the lights and instruments of its peace. Moreover, just because that peace should properly begin at home, the leaders are bound to secure the true peace of religious freedom for the minorities as well as the majorities in Islam. Its leaders must develop and expand their tolerance of the variations and differences of religious understanding and practice which religious freedom generates even because they must be intolerant of narrow bigotry in the guise of false piety. They must not be cowed or persuaded to aid and abet the political, the economic and other materialistic pretexts of religious persecution and oppression against minorities. Together with their reformist scholars, theologians, jurists and statesmen, they must expunge any theological and other distinctions which sanction religious intolerance and persecution; and they must translate into realistic practical terms the religion's ideas and ideals of human dignity and personal freedom. But,

(continued on page 46)

JESUS AND THE PROMISED MESSIAH SPIRITUAL SIMILARITIES.

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

The great advantage of studying the lives and keeping the company of holy men of God is that one may perceive their virtues and heavenly way of life and so become inspired and stimulated to emulate them. This is what religion is all about. It is a way of divine living wherein one endeavours to manifest the attributes of God in one's thoughts, words and deeds. It is a heart felt aspiration which is ardently expressed by every sincere and earnest Muslim when reciting the Sura Fatiha (the opening prayer in the Holy Quran) in his or her daily prayers. How fervent are the words:

*Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help.
Guide us in the straight path, The path of those on whom Thou hast
bestowed Thy favours, those who have not incurred Thy displeasure
and those who have not gone astray.*

In presenting this treatise on some of the spiritual similarities which were shared by both Jesus and Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, I will endeavour to confine my observations only to the spiritual aspect of their personalities and will avoid historical comparisons such as both living under governments of foreign occupation and being brought to trial on false charges by their enemies etc. I will focus my attention only on the sanctity, spiritual beauty and holiness of their lives. Those qualities were, of course, also common to the lives of all Messengers of God.

I would commence by saying that there are two kinds of spiritual characteristics which may be manifested to a greater or lesser extent in a Messenger of God in accordance with his status and mission. They are known in Arabic as Jalal and Jamal. Jalal indicates strong majestic power while jamal signifies a more subdued and gentle nature. Moses and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may be peace be on them) were Jalali prophets as they came to establish new laws of God being the founders of Judaism and Islam respectively. They were opposed by the swords of their enemies against whom they were compelled under divine command, to stand up and fight in self defence. They had the gigantic task of establishing a new law from God under circumstances which seemed humanly impossible. They were involved in dominant actions of various kinds even up to

delivering condign punishment to those guilty of offences. At the same time, of course they were paragons of virtue doing nothing contrary to God's will. Indeed, they shone like the sun.

On the other hand Jesus and the Promised Messiah may be likened more to the soft, gentle and silvery light of the moon. They were characterised by Jamali manifestations of gentleness, humility, and quietude because their work was not to establish a fiery new law but to persuade mankind back to the right path from which they had digressed. They were subordinate Messengers of God. Nevertheless, like all Messengers of God, they were sinless. In this sense they were all on an equal footing.

Jesus laid much emphasis on living the good life and drawing souls to God through the practice of exemplary conduct. He wanted that his followers should be known by their fruits keeping in mind that every good tree brings forth good fruit (Matthew 7: 16,17). He further said:

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works. (Matt 5:16)

Be ye therefore perfect... (Matth 5:48)

Jesus expressed the importance of radiating a heavenly demeanour in one's deportment and conduct which can only be acquired through prayer, humility, piety, devotion, good works and watchfulness.

Similarly the Promised Messiah called the attention of his followers to the Quranic exhortation:

Excel one another in virtue. (2:149)

He also said, regarding the relationship of his followers with God:

Become entirely His, living wholly for His will and pleasure.

God's will and His pleasure should be the supreme thought in your mind, so that satan may have no chance to let you stumble.

He (a true believer) should tread the path of righteousness to the minutest detail according to the best of his ability.

Giving an illustration of this point the Promised Messiah once said:

As for me I once spoke to my wife in rather a loud voice and I felt that my voice had a tone of displeasure, although I had uttered no offensive or harsh words. Thereafter I continued to ask the

forgiveness of God for a long time and offered many prayers in an attitude of humility and gave some alms also, thinking that that loud voice was due to some hidden sin of mine.

Commenting on this remark of the Promised Messiah, one of his companions and disciples, Maulvi Abdul Karim, had stated:

Such minute regard of subtle points of morality could not be attained by an ordinary man. Notwithstanding that I myself and hundreds of Muslims like me boast of being the followers of Islam and of the practice of the Holy Prophet and, without doubt, do not intentionally discard the law nor proudly transgress the bounds of God, yet we totally lack this high degree of holy piety and such keen perception of right and wrong. We consider ourselves to be most fortunate and regard ourselves as having attained the highest degree of morality when begin to abstain from the common sins and the ordinary acts of disobedience without paying heed to doubtful points and subtle issues of disobedience. We try to avoid only the apparent and basic sins. Such microscopic perception, however, as is possessed by the Promised Messiah can be attained only through perfect faith and proper fear of God.

On one occasion when the Promised Messiah was on a journey he stayed in the house of one of his disciples. The season was extremely hot so a bed was prepared for him on the flat roof of the house where it was much cooler than inside the building. He noticed that there was no parapet around the edge of the roof and recalled that the Holy Prophet had forbidden anyone from sleeping on a roof which had no parapet. There was no other open space in the building where he could sleep but he insisted that he should sleep indoors where it was very hot and uncomfortable. Such was the care and attention he gave to every instruction of the Holy Prophet

Let us now look at the attitude adopted by Jesus and the Promised Messiah towards Jihad which is often wrongly understood to mean holy war on the battle field where as its general meaning is to strive in the cause of God by any legitimate means. More than three thousand years ago the law which God revealed to Moses permitted the Israelites to engage in war when the necessity arose. Despite the fact that Jesus did not come to destroy or change the law but rather to fulfil it (Matthew 5:17), he found it expedient in his time not to promote any kind of violent action. He directed his followers to dwell peacefully with their opponents even to the extent that they should not resist evil (Matthew 5:39). When an

armed band of men came to arrest Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane and took him away for trial, one of his disciples, Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of one of them whereupon Jesus instructed him:

Put thy sword into the sheath (John 18:11)

In more or less a similar way, though not exactly, the Promised Messiah emphasised that current conditions did not warrant Jihad with the sword and advocated peaceful means of propagating and defending Islam against the onslaught of anti-Islamic propaganda especially, I regret to say, by Christian missionaries. No doubt the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) did resort to Jihad by the sword after years of insufferable persecution when the very existence of Islam was at stake and in danger of extermination.

Furthermore he did so only after God had directed him to do so. On the other hand the Promised Messiah explained that the time and circumstances were different and that his followers should propagate and defend Islam by expounding its beautiful teachings through peaceful means and exemplary conduct as taught in the Holy Quran and explained by the Holy Prophet. This, he declared, was the real and effective jihad for this age.

Love, sympathy and forbearance were prominent features in the characters of Jesus and the Promised Messiah. Let me quote a few extracts from Jesus's well known Sermon on the Mount:

Blessed are the meek, the merciful and the peacemakers.

Whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you. (Matthew ch.5)

After being ridiculed, dishonoured, spat upon, scourged and crucified on the cross, Jesus practised what he preached when he called out from the cross to God saying:

Father forgive them for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:24)

Let us now turn to the Promised Messiah. It has been reported by one of his close companions Maulvi Abdul Karim, in his book *A Character Sketch of the Promised Messiah* that:

He does not speak of his enemies in public and when reference is made to any one of them by one of the persons present, he does not speak ill of him. This clearly shows that his heart is incapable of burning without fire of enmity..... One day the Promised Messiah said 'I have such control over my passions and God has made myself so submissive to me that even if a man goes on abusing me in my face in the foulest manner for one year, he would at last himself feel ashamed and will have to admit his failure to move me even a little'.

I will now quote a few pertinent extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah in connection with the attitude which we should adopt towards others:

You should have no ill feeling for anyone whosoever.

I say that you should forgive and overlook the faults of others.

Develop more and more your power of forbearance.

Never return evil for evil.

Take every hardship and injury with the proper degree of forbearance.

During this month of August in 1897 a Christian missionary by the name of Dr. Henry Martin Clark brought a false charge of attempted murder against the Promised Messiah. He Alleged that the Promised Messiah had sent a young man to murder him. On hearing the case and investigating the matter, the magistrate, Lieut. Col. M. W. Douglas, realised the falsity of the charge and discharged the Promised Messiah telling him that he was now at liberty to prosecute his accusers. He replied that he did not want to prosecute anybody and showed his magnanimous forbearance by forgiving them.

At this point I would like to emphasise that I am quoting many exhortations of Jesus and the Promised Messiah along with some events in their lives not just for the purpose of conveying information about their way of life, but primarily with the hope and prayer that we may absorb these spiritual gems in our hearts and that they may flower and fructify in our own lives. As I mentioned earlier this is what religion is all about. It is up to us to decide what we are going to do about it. If we have done nothing or little about it in the past then now is the time to resolve to make up our minds to change our way of living for the better which was the message of Jesus and the Promised Messiah. On the other hand, if as devout Ahmadis, we have been doing much about it then that is indeed

very gratifying. Nevertheless, on self analysis, we will find that there is still so much more that we can do in moulding our lives in conformity with the high ideal of Ahmadiyyat the True Islam which requires of us that we adorn ourselves with every virtue and make our good lives an example to others.

Let me now turn to a spiritual likeness between Jesus and the Promised Messiah upon which I have already touched. It is the importance of obeying all the commandments of God. They emphasised the error and dire consequences of observing some commandments and of ignoring, neglecting and disobeying other equally important ones.

The mission of Jesus was to re-establish the Law of Moses which some fourteen hundred years earlier had been revealed for the guidance of the Israelites. Jesus had declared:

I have not come to destroy the law but to fulfil it. (Matthew 5:17)

He had come to revive and instil in the hearts of the people the true spirit of their religion which they had lost. Jesus said with reference to the religious leaders of his time:

Do not do after their works; for they say and do not. (Matthew 2:3)

Jesus then went on to insist upon the utmost need of keeping all the commandments of God:

Whosoever shall break one of the least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of heaven. (Matt 5:19)

The Promised Messiah was also adamant on the importance of giving proper attention to all the commandments of God:

Anyone who violates a divine commandment for the sake of his appetites will not be admitted to the kingdom of heaven. Try and see, therefore that not a jot out of the Holy Quran becomes a witness against you. you should not have to answer for anything. You are accountable for every evil deed – however small.

Take care, therefore, and do nothing which is contrary to the teachings of God, or the guidance contained in the Quran. I say to you truly that he who fails to observe even one of the 700

ordinances of the Quran, closes the door of salvation upon him by his own hands.

These exhortations confirm what I have already said that it is not good enough to observe some commandments of God and to neglect others. Every housewife knows that in order to bake good cake she must utilise all the required ingredients and follow all directions listed in the cookery book. If she leaves out the eggs, butter or the flour, if she does not stir the mixture properly or heat the oven to the right temperature she is certainly not going to make a good cake. Likewise if a Muslim does not follow all the directions of the Holy Quran and the directions of the Holy Prophet then one may justifiably conclude that he is not going to make a good Muslim. The warning of Jesus and the Promised Messiah, therefore, should not be taken lightly.

I now wish to turn to a common feature regarding thier countenances which convey without words that they were imbued with the spirit and light of God. They emanated and radiated divine lustre, and on their faces shined heaven's serene and holy light. We read in the Bible that on one occasion Jesus had a waking vision in which he met the two prophets Moses and Elijah when we are told:

His face did shine like the sun. (Matth 17:2)

In the year 1900 the Promised Messiah, under divine direction, delivered his famous revealed sermon in Arabic after Eid ul Azha prayers in Masjid Aqsa, Qadian. He spoke in the most eloquent Arabic and the words flowed from his tongue without any conscious effort on his part. He was moved by the spirit of God. He seemed to be speaking from another world. Describing his appearance at that time one of those who was present said:

He seemed to be, in the grip, as it were of the Supreme Being; and his half closed eyes, with a flow and halo of divine light, which shed lustre all round, convinced everybody present that the speaker before them was at that time certainly in a different world to theirs.

There is the instance of man prejudiced against the Promised Messiah, who visited Qadian for medical treatment from Hazrat Maulvi Nur ud Din who was elected the first Khalifa after the demise of the Promised Messiah in 1908. When his health had improved and he was planning to return home some one reminded him that he had not seen the Promised Messiah. He was taken to the mosque which was empty at that time. All of a sudden the Promised Messiah entered. Immediately the man saw the

bright and holy face he fell at his feet under stress of great emotion and, there and then declared his pledge of allegiance.

It does not mean, of course, that everybody who beheld the countenance of Jesus or the Promised Messiah were instantaneously transformed. Nevertheless many of them recognised their spiritual power although they did not accept their claims. Then there are others who were spiritually blind.

Even the pagan Roman governor, Pontious Pilate, who tried Jesus in the presence of the fury of the Jews, had to admit that he could find no fault in him (Luke 23:4).

Once a Christian missionary by the name of Mr. Walter visited Qadian and asked one of the Companions of the Promised Messiah what it was that impressed him most about his holy master. He replied:

I have known the Promised Messiah from a time earlier than the day he put forth his claim. Another face so pure, and lit up with such spiritual light, I have never seen in my life. That light and his magnetic personality were for me the greatest argument in his favour. What we constantly hungered for was just an opportunity to have a look at that illumined face.

Later on Mr. Walter wrote a book called *The Ahmadiyya Movement* in which he wrote:

Those older Ahmadies whom I have questioned as to their reasons for joining the Movement have, most of them, laid greater stress on the personal impression made upon them by Mirza Sahib's forceful and winning personality.

During the course of this treatise I have focused the spotlight on some of the spiritual beauties which attracted and won the hearts of the faithful followers of Jesus and the Promised Messiah. The manifestation of these holy qualities is able to do more in attracting mankind to the truth than all learned theological arguments although, of course, they have their essential value. In the end I would close with the words: *May we shed light in every step; in every word spoken and written; in every glance and in every action. May we be illumined with the light of heaven — Amen.*

BOOK REVIEW

PROPHECY CONTINUOUS

by Yohanan Friedmann,
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Part V

Extracts from the above book are narrated YF (Yohanan Friedmann) with the formal response by the Review of Religions (hereafter RR).

YF: According to most commentators the meaning of both *Khatam* and *Khatim* is *last*. This understanding provided the impetus for the development of the idea in *hadith* literature (p.53). The commentators discuss some fine distinctions between the two versions, but these do not amount to anything essential. The reading *Khatam*, which became the *textus receptus* is attributed by the commentators to the reader Asim alone; all other *qurra* preferred *Khatim*, (several commentators adequately referred) attributed this reading to Asim and al Hasan (al Basri).... The reading *Khatim* is said to be supported by the version of Adb Allah b Masud, who read *walakin nabiyyan khatama al nabiyyin* (footnote p.53).

RR: Many orientalists have acknowledged that there is no evidence to suggest that the *textus receptus* of the Holy Quran as it exists today is in any way different from the Message of God revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessing of Allah be upon him. God Himself has been the Guardian of this text. It had been revealed piece meal. It was committed to memory. It was written down. The whole text, from beginning to end, was recited. All this happened while the Prophet was still alive. Thousands of people had committed it to memory. To turn to a group of commentators on their conjecture (which does not amount to anything essential) and state that somehow Asim's reading was preferred to all other readers is incompatible with the true history of Islam. Is there any record of such a dispute amongst the early Muslims? Indeed, why should one turn to commentators to know the meaning of *Khatam* when this word is in every day usage in this Arabic world? (Those meanings are admitted by YF in his subsequent pages. YF provides some excellent background and detailed references and has inevitably tried his best at presenting this debate from all angles. YF appears to sense light bar suddenly abandons the reader in darkness in the pursuit of *independent* research).

But there is considerable confusion and internal contradiction in those pages. In the above quoted text, the understanding of *Khatam* or *Khatim* as assumed to provide the impetus for *hadith* literature (Was it *hadith* which came first or this understanding?). On page 64 we are told that the emergence of (false) prophetic claimants in the Muslim Community gave an impetus to the development of the dogma concerning the finality of Muhammad's prophethood.

We are repeatedly told that early traditions had little or nothing to say about the superiority of the Prophet and yet on pp 54 - 64, YF cites numerous traditions including that of Ayesha admonishing, *but do not say that there is no prophet after him*. Ayesha's words were uttered in the early history of Islam. One cannot turn a blind eye to such an utterance or to accredit it to some later development in *hadith* literature. Neither she, nor any of her contemporaries, nor for that matter their generations, had any incentive in creating such a *hadith*.

One has to examine the subject of finality of prophethood from a logical angle. It cannot be examined logically if one assumes that the religion of one's forefathers has determined that prophets may only arise from some race and therefore any other claimant must be false. Nor can it be examined logically by attributing to the text of the Holy Quran a different vowel sound, make the verse in which it exists utterly meaningless or by rejecting scores of traditions which prove that the door to non-law-bearing prophethood has not been sealed. This is our recommendation to all research scholars; it is not intended to be specific to YF's treatise.

YF: Hanzala b. Safwan is said to have been sent to the *Ashab-ur-rass*. The tribes of Abd-ul-Qays claimed prophethood for Riab b Zayd who is also said to have made rhymed utterances in praise of Allah. Khalid b Sinan was a prophet who lived one generation before Muhammad. This material indicates that the emergence of Muhammad, his phenomenal success notwithstanding, was not a unique event in the history Arabia. It also explains the fact that claimants to prophethood did not cease to appear there from time to time, even after the coming of Islam. Indeed a real upsurge of prophetic claims seems to have occurred durring the Prophet's life time and shortly after his death. (pp 64-65)

RR: Readers would no doubt have noticed that we have been tolerant in our attitude to some very strange and ill-founded allegations against the Ahmadiyya Movement which we can only attribute to some minor misunderstanding on YF's part. We are nonetheless obliged to defend Islam and the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon

him, against apparently mischievous and totally irrelevant swipes attempted by authors. Thus, in this case, YF must have known that there had been no prophet in Arabia since Jesus, peace be upon him, up to the advent of Muhammad, may peace and blessing of Allah be upon him. He must have additionally known that excessive reliance could not be placed on myth about Hanzala and Khalid because there is ample evidence in *Al-Kamil fit Tarikh* and Ibn Kathir's *Al Bidaya wa - al Nihaya* (both sources referred by YF). Despite nearly every word of the Prophet and his Companions having been carefully recorded, we find no reference to these earlier claimants. YF must also have known that throughout history there have been bogus claimants to someone else's laurels. Such people ride on the tide of someone else's fame and begin to claim the attributes, or tittle, or renown of that contemporary famous person. So there was nothing unusual of people like Musailmah, Tulaiha and Harith claiming to be prophets - their motive was utterly political. But what grieves us most here is the remark that the advent of the Prophet was not a unique event in history. God Almighty has called him the Prince of Peace, the Seal of Prophets, a Mercy unto mankind, an Excellent Exemplar, etc. Just as man is the best of creation, the Prophet was the best of men. Almost all historians agree that the advent of Muhammad, may peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, marked a turning point in the history of man not only in Arabia but throughout the world. Perhaps YF considers all such historians to be false but surly he must believe in the Jewish prophets of the past. The following quotations may perhaps re-alert him about the Prophet whom he has just brushed aside:

And also of the son of the bond woman will I make a nation because he is thy seed. (Genesis 21:13)

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his month, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. (Deuteronomy 18:18 19)

And he said the Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them, he shined forth from Paran and he came with ten thousands of saints, from his right hand went a fiery law for them. (Deuteronomy 19:20)

God came from Teman and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah His glory covered the heaven, and the earth was full of his praise. (Habakkuk 3:3)

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the Ever lasting Father, the Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

Then there are numerous prophecies in Solomon, Daniel etc. which clearly point to none other than the Holy Prophet may blessings of Allah be upon him. Notwithstanding the above evidence, YF may quote from as many sources as he likes, he will never be able to belittle the lofty status of the Prophet because it is God Who put him there.

YF: The life time of the Prophet was the ideal period: then nascent Islamic community is thought to have lived in strict harmony with the divine writ. This period was not to endure....The virtues bestowed upon the world began to exhaust themselves almost immediately. Thus, though Islam is considered to be the perfect religion, capable of establishing the ideal social order, Islamic tradition, since its emergence, has paradoxically held a pessimistic view of history. In a very famous utterance the Prophet is reported to have said that *the best of my community is the generation in which I was sent, then those who follow them, then those who follow them....* A process of deterioration is thus expected to set in after the completion of Muhammad's mission. It will pursue till the Day of Judgement when it will reach its nadir. The world will become full of wicked infidels and will abruptly come to an end (p. 94-95).

RR: Despite this Muslim pessimistic view, why does YF state that *Muslims have come to regard Muhammad as the best of all prophets. Islamic civilization has always been deeply convinced of its inherent superiority, and it is only natural that its founder should be so highly regarded.* (p. 77)

No sane person can ever claim superiority over all others and resign oneself to pessimism about the future. Nor is it correct to say that Islam somehow died with the Prophet. The tradition about the process of deterioration is a re-statement of natural law. A thing begins to grow obsolescent the moment it is set up. Any machinery begins to depreciate from the moment it is installed. So too with religious movements. We observe that the immediate followers of Moses, peace be upon him, were better than the next generation of adherents. The earlier generation had seen the signs of God and had been nourished by Moses's spiritual training and knew the application of the law. The next generation were not eye witnesses nor had they lived in the company of that great Prophet. So, to that extent they were second best. This same law is recognised by Islam. All Muslims agree that the status of the Companions

was indeed great and that inspite of all the victories which came as Islam spread throughout the world they could not match the tremendous spirit of Islam which prevailed during the Holy Prophet's time. Nonetheless, this recognition of a natural law and really speaking, only a true religion could acknowledge it cannot be misconstrued as a sense of pessimism. One cannot start putting such labels on a living religion which has more than one billion followers. It is additionally wrong to say that the world will become full of infidels till the Day of Judgement. The prophecies about the spiritual revival and the advent of the Mahdi contain rich material and a ray of hope for all mankind as far as the future is concerned.

YF: Part of Ghulam Ahmad's criticism of them (*ulamas*) is inspired by medieval Sufi attacks on the wicked *ulamas* (p.105). Clearly inspired by Ibn ul Arabi's mystical vision of the world. Ghulam Ahmad could perceive no universe that was deprived of divine guidance (p. 106). Probably influenced by the *tajdi* theory of Ahmad Sirhindi, Ghulam Ahmad considers the *mujaddidun* to be *prophet like people* (p. 109). The classical *hadith* is clearly the authority that provides legitimacy for Ghulam Ahmad's use of the concept of *muhaddath*. His understanding of it is, however, inspired by the Sufi tradition, represented by mystics such as al-Hakimal Tamidhim and Ibn ul Arabi. (p. 110) Strictly speaking, the inspirational sources of his further claim to be Mahdi and Masih are not different, but the central position, which these two claims occupy in Ghulam Ahmad's thought is undoubtedly the result of his desire to counter as effectively as possible the activity of the Christian missionaries in nineteenth century India (p. 111). Ghulam Ahmad... realized the centrality of the crucifixion and understood that his attack... was an attack on the innermost core of Christianity. As in many other cases, his exegesis of the relevant Quranic passages is a modified revival of certain medieval interpretations. (9.114) Ghulam Ahmad's views concerning Krishna are thus identical with those of Mirza Mazhar Jan-i-Janan (the eighteenth century Naqshabandi Sufi), though it is not clear whether this is a result of direct influence. (p.123)

RR: Such allegations against a man who claims that he is in receipt of divine revelation are not new. People invariably ask wherefrom he has learnt such things. Jesus, peace be upon him, was asked this by the Jewish priests. Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was falsely alleged to have learnt about past prophets from his travels while in the employ of Khadija. One needs to examine the sum total of all the claims of a Prophet along with the signs that God Almighty has taught us in distinguishing His Prophets and test them on that basis and not on the

basis of his predecessors. Neither the medieval Sufi mystics nor Ahmad Sirhandi claimed that God had informed them that they were the Mahdi and the Promised Messiah whose advent had been awaited by all great world religions. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad did, if, by the way, such great scholars, like Ibn-ul-Arabi and Ahmad Sirhandi, had also acknowledged the universal truths that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad did, it shows that such truths were irrefutable. We cannot dismiss a claimant merely because we think that he may presumably have been inspired by some one else's thoughts. God is their inspiration.

YF: The *Israeli* chain of prophets was started by Moses. He was a legislative and therefore an *independent* prophet. The *Israeli* prophets who followed him were not given new books of law and were not legislative....They were nonetheless *independent* and received their prophethood directly from Allah. In a way, this is an honour which Allah bestowed on the sons of Israel. Yet Ghulam Ahmad perceives religious inferiority in the fact that no member of *Israeli* community achieved prophetic status by following Moses. Moses had no role in the spiritual upbringing of any of the prophets who emerged after him from among the sons of Israel. In Ghulam Ahmad's parlance, no *Israeli prophet was simultaneously a prophet (nabi)* and a follower (of Moses), a member of his community (*ummati*) It must be said however, that this assessment is questionable even in its own intellectual framework. Ghulam Ahmad's argument that none of the Biblical prophets was an *ummati* of Moses (his denial) that any of them was at the same time a prophet and an *ummati*, denial of their *ummati* status is, however, hardly appropriate when the prophets in question undoubtedly belonged to the community *umma* of Moses, even if they received their prophethood independently of their predecessor. Ghulam Ahmad himself does not claim that the Biblical prophets who came after Moses belonged to a community different from that of Moses himself. His apparent implication that divine providence abandoned the sons of Israel in post – Mosaic Biblical period therefore lacks cogency.
(pp. 125–126).

RR: The passage which has caused so much consternation in YF's mind actually reads as follows (using YF's method of transliteration):

Aur beni Israel mein agarchay bohat nabi aaye magar unki nabuwat Musa ki pairwee ka natijah na thaa balkay woh nabuwatayn barahi raast khuda ki aik mauhibat thiyn. Hazrat Musa ki pairwee ka is mein aik zarra kuchh dakhil na thaa. Isi waja say meri tarah un ka ye naam naa huivaa keh aik pahlu say

nabi aur aik pahlu say ummati.

(Haqiqatul Wahy pp. 97)

This may be restated as follows:

And although there were many prophets who came amongst the tribes of Israel, yet their prophethood was not as a result of following strictly on the footsteps of Moses but such prophethoods were a beneficent inheritance bestowed directly by God. Following in the footsteps and unstinted devotion to the most honourable and revered Moses he had absolutely nothing to do with their prophethoods. This is why, unlike me, they were not called in one way a prophet and in another a devoted adherent from within the community.

What is implicit in the above extract is that the chain of prophets which came amongst the Jewish people was an integral part of the inheritance promised to Abraham through his son Isaac. These Jewish prophets were not charged with a mission only because of their love and devotion to Moses (i.e. Ishq i Musa) i.e... they had no special or specific characteristic affinity to Moses himself. The Promises Messiah has not denied that they were Israeli in essence. Thus we find no mention of Moses specifically in the claims and teachings of David, Isaiah, Solomon, Jesus etc. because, as YF observes, they were prophets in their own right. However, in the case of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, in one manner of speaking he was a prophet and in another manner of speaking he was totally a devoted servant of Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and without the latter he would have been nothing. He has explained this further by saying that the Holy Prophet was like the radiant sun and he (Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) merely a moon reflecting the light of the sun. As for superiority or inferiority, prophets of God do not suffer from such human complexes. It is up to God to determine their true worth.

YF: The criticism aroused by this revelation provided Ghulam Ahmad with an opportunity to discuss the question whether Allah is likely to reveal to His prophets words previously pronounced by man. His response to the question is unequivocal. Allah is the heir of all human words and must not be blamed of if He deemed it correct to use some of them in His revelation. Ghulam Ahmad finds support for his position on this matter in the famous tradition concerning Abd ullah b. Abi Sarh, one of Muhammad's *writers of revelation* (Kuttab ul wahy). According to this tradition, Abd-ullah b. Abi Sarh introduced changes into some passages revealed to the Prophet, and the material so modified by him was nevertheless incorporated in the Quran. (pp. 137-138).

RR: There is a slight misrepresentation here. The word *warisin har aik shakhs keh qual kaa waris hay* in this context means a Master, the Creator, and Originator of all human languages and not the heir of human words. The reference to Abdullah b. Abi Sarh, who was a poet and later renounced his faith, is to his poetic interjection in completing the last part of the following verse (number 15) of the Holy Quran.

13. *Verily We created man from and extract of clay.*

14. *Then We placed him as a drop of sperm in a safe depository*

15. *Then We fashioned the sperm into a clot, then We fashioned the clot into a shapeless lump, then We fashioned bones out of this shapeless lump, then We clothed the bones into flesh, then We developed it into another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators. (Holy Quran ch 23;13-15)*

The words *So blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators* uttered by Abdullah b. Abi Sarh while he was being dictated the above revelation by the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, were part of the revealed text and rhymes with the earlier verses. Much hue and cry has been raised by orientalist although there is nothing much to it. Any how, YF has fortunately spared us from entering into lengthy debate on it. Our purpose in setting it above is to draw attention which modification was made but to merely four words in the above verse. Indeed, the Promised Messiah in this reference (*Brahini Ahmadiyya vol. 5. Appendix p. 5 : Roohani Khazain Vol 21 p 158*) has been even more specific by stating that this change was made up of 22 letters, whereas the objections raised about the prophecy of the Promised Messiah contained 21 letters.

(The final part of this Review will appear in the next edition).

(from page 2)

May God grant us the wisdom to make noble resolutions and grant us steadfastness and perseverance to see them through — Amen

SUFISM

(Maulana Raushan Ali)

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SUFISM

Sufism is based upon the LOVE OF GOD and the SERVICE OF HUMANITY, so say the Sufis. As a matter of fact, both of these principles are really—one the Divine LOVE. Ethics and morals, service and righteous life, are the direct result of this love, say their great leaders. The initiative, they say, always rests with Divine Love which induces human love as with the process of induction. As soon as human love begins to stir, the Divine love begins to descend and unite with the human love. The Sufi writers quote a well known saying of the Prophet which says that God told him that He was a hidden treasure, but He willed to be known and so He created Adam. Again, continues, the Prophet, if a man stirs, God moves towards him; if he walks, then God runs in his direction.

It should be borne in mind that though now and then these Sufi teachers quote Jesus, Buddha, Socrates and others, that is only in additional support and confirmation of their views, but they base their teachings invariably on the Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet. Ibn-ul -Arabi declares that no religion is more sublime than a religion of Love. He claims that Islam is peculiarly the religion of Love, inasmuch as the Prophet Muhammad is called God's Beloved (Habib), and that is why they have laid the greatest stress on love. 'Man's love of God,' says Hujwairy, 'is a quality which manifests itself in the heart of the pious believers...who abjure the recollection of everything else.' 'I fancied I loved God,' said Bayazeed, 'but on consideration I found that His love surpassed mine.' Junaid defined love as the substitution of the qualities of the Beloved for the qualities of the Lover, relying on the well known saying of the Holy Prophet which says that man's love is really the effect of God's love. 'If I worship Thee for Thine own sake, with hold not Thine everlasting beauty,' says Rabia Basri.

Again:

His love entered and removed all besides Him, and left no trace of anything else, so that it remained single as He is single.
(Bayazeed)

To feel at one with God for a moment is better than all men's acts of worship from the beginning of the world to the end of the world.
(Shiblee)

Fear of the fire in comparison with the fear of being parted from the Beloved is like a drop of water cast into the mightiest ocean. (Dhuni Noon)

Thyself hast Thou sprinkled salt on the wound that has raised the cries of Thy distressful lovers. The mellowness of a sweet face is a part of Thy beauty, and every curled lock points to Thee. (Hazrat Ahmad)

O Love, what wonderful signs hast Thou shown. The cut and the salve hast Thou made the same in the way of the Beloved. Thy love is a remedy for a thousand ills. By Thy Face, the real liberty consists on Thy Bondage. (Farrukh)

If the secret of Love between Him and me had been disclosed, thousands of lives would have been offered as a sacrifice at my door. (The Promised Messiah)

'The Muslim mystics enjoyed greater freedom of speech than their Christian brethren who owed allegiance to the medieval Catholic Church, and if they went too far, the plea of ecstasy was generally accepted as a sufficient excuse... Their expressions were bold and uncompromising,' says Professor Nicholson.

We know that they never hesitated to use sayings of Jesus and other great teachers by way of supplementary proofs of their teachings, but perhaps it would be a surprise to many that they very rarely used the Gospel definition that God is Love. Their point of view is so sublime that such a definition would not fit in. Love, according to them, is one of the attributes, and not a whole definition of God, that is why they always rely on the Holy Quran and the traditions, and the works of other Muslim saints. Fatherhood of God seems an imperfect idea to them, that is why the Quranic verse, *O ye believers, remember God with an intensity of love as ye remember your parents, or rather more*, goes deeper into their hearts. Another verse which throws them into raptures is: *O ye believers, if you love God then follow me, and thus you (yourselves) will become the beloved of God*. Love of the Prophet and love of the Word of God with them are tantamount to Divine Love—a practical expression of it. That is why they can never be dissociated from God according to Sufi interpretation.

This Divine Love has found its highest expression in total resignation and complete submission to the Will of Allah according to great Sufi minds. 'Thy Will be done' was spoken to give expression to this very sentiment. As a matter of fact, this is the culminating stage of Love. How

enraptured and how eloquent the Sufi writers are when in glowing words they comment upon the following Quranic verses:

Say if your parents or your children, your brothers or your wives and your other kith and kin, and the hoardings that you have amassed together, and the business of whose dullness you are afraid and the mansions that you love if these things are dearer to you than Allah and His Prophet, and striving in His way, then wait till Divine decision arrives, verily, God never guides the violators of solemn pledges. (9.24)

Say: My prayers and my sacrifice, my life and my death are for Allah. There is none beside Him. That is my order (duty) and I am the first of the believers. (6.163)

Love of God and total submission to His Will are the first and the last principles, and the whole foundation of Islam, according to these Sufi minds, is based upon these two hinges.

VARIOUS STAGES OF SUFISM

Sufism has been developed into a science. Even the minutest points of a person's character have been classified. It is at once a composite of ethics, philosophy, metaphysics, psychology and spiritualism, etc. A vast literature has been written on every phase of the subject, and abstruse problems such as the reality of God, His Unity, the problem of good and evil, responsibility of man, or otherwise God and His attributes, Pantheism, created and uncreated things, matter and soul, life and death, almost all the points have been dealt with in great detail and with a depth of mind which would baffle the students of abstruse psychology of today. It is impossible to deal with them here. Suffice it to say that with the master minds among the Sufis, these were not mere mental exercises. Their discussion had always a bearing on life, and they did live up to their professions. Whatever views they expressed, they never meant to be libertines. As their efforts were directed to the improvement of their self. As they have reduced this Sufism to a science they have their own terminology. The Sufi who sets out to seek God is called a *Salik* (a traveller). He advances by slow stages (*maqamat*) along a path (*tariqat*) to the goal of union with Reality (*fana fil Haqiqat*). In general, there are seven stages

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| 1. Repentance. | 5. Patience. |
| 2. Abstinence. | 6. Trust in God. |
| 3. Renunciation. | 7. Satisfaction. |
| 4. Poverty. | |

After the traveller has progressed along this path, he is raised to the higher planes of *Ma'rifat* (Gnosis) and *Haqqitat* (the Truth). It would be well to note that the Sufi renunciation differs from Christian and Bhuddhist renunciations. The Sufi is a true Muslim. He does not believe in mere other-worldliness, or celibacy and monasticism. All the great Sufi teachers led happy married lives. This renunciation is the right use of all powers given to man by God. The Sufi is in the world, yet he is out of it. He braves the risks like a courageous, dutiful soul. He never shirks his responsibility, for the Prophet had said that an unmarried person who shirked the great responsibility of life could not be trusted with higher responsibilities.

The Sufis have three more advanced stages. As a matter of fact, the divisions are many, but these three roughly include them all. They are *Fana*, *Liqa* and *Baqa*. *Fana* means total effacement of one's self, so much so that the adept becomes merged in Divine Presence. He eats and drinks, prays and fasts, not that he likes to do it but because he is impelled to do it. God is all in all for him. *Turn to your Creator and surrender yourself to Him*, says the Holy Word; and the Sufi, in contemplation of this, just puts himself at the disposal of his Creator, as the dead corpse in the hands of the undertaker. He thinks of the Holy Prophet's words 'Die before your death', and in keeping with his origin that he is a perishable thing after all, for the Word says: 'Every thing is perishable but what comes under Divine Will,' he undergoes a death to receive an eternal life; not that he wants it, but because it is the Divine Will, which in Sufi terminology stands for Law. That is the stage of *Fana*, of passing away in to Divine Presence. Rumi has well illustrated this stage of *Fana* or self effacement in the following verses:

When a fairy comes to possess a man, he loses his attributes of man. Whatever he says is through the inspiration of that fairy. It is neither from this nor from that brain. Gone is his own individuality, he himself becomes that fairy. Arabic to a Turk comes as a mother tongue without any revelation. When he is lost to himself he knows nothing of the language. For knowledge is the person and attributes of the fairy, How can then the Creator of man and spirit be less than a fairy if this influence and law hold good in the case of a fairy? We can well judge the powers of the Creator of the fairy. When he (the drunkard) is under the influence of old or new wine he begins to speak. You would say, 'It is the wine that is speaking.' If this noise and fuss are due to wine, could it be possible that the light of God can be without force and power?

Though the Quran has come out of the lips of the Prophet, Infidel is he who says that God has not said it.

Unlike Nirvana, *Fana*, the passing away of the Sufi from his phenomenal existence, involves *Baqa*, the continuance of his real existence. He who dies to self lives in and with God, but not in the pantheistic sense as is generally supposed. The Sufi is opposed to deification.

Rumi, who has been accused of being a believer in pantheism, clearly refutes this idea in his well known couplet:

To say I am He at the wrong moment (as did Pharaoh) is a curse. To say I am He at the right moment (as did Al Hajj Ibn Mansoor) is a blessing.

Yet, as he thinks that his soul has proceeded from the hands of his Creator and that his self is but a reflection of the Real Self, so he always aims at continual progress. The elder Sufis never lost sight of the fact that they were human, and though in their periods of illumination and union they sometimes thought they were lost to themselves, just as the shadow vanishes when the sun is high in heavens, their ultimate aim was to continue in a state of *Baqa* eternal life actuated and moved by the instinctive desire for unification called *Liqā* in their language. That is why the elder Sufis never went beyond the bounds of the Law. Such a state of mind according to their best judgment, bordered upon apostasy. 'Strive hard in the path of truth and rectitude, piety and devotion,' says Saadi, 'yet never dream of trespassing the bounds set by Mustafa (Muhammed).'

Two more stages the advanced Sufis claim are *lahoot* and *nasoot*. When the Sufi has traversed all the stages until he has attained to the stage of *Baqa*, or Eternal Continuance, he is supposed to have stepped into the stage of that which they call *lahoot* in which stage the Sufi remembers nothing but God. He is dead to all else besides, and he feels that he is, as it were, at unison with Him. At this stage, all his actions and all his movements are due to Divine urge rather Divine Will for that is the stage of 'There in none but Allah (*La ilaha ilallah*). The Sufi is nowhere, but God is everywhere. This stage has its degrees the beginning and culminating points. That is the ascent of the Sufi, which is his own terminology he calls *Mi'raj* (ascent), and when the climax arrives, then he begins to descend, which should not be confused with decline, for this descent is higher than his previous ascent.

It happens in this way: Divine Love is the source of all creations, and

Divine Love is what inspires the Sufi to seek union; and now that the consummation has arrived, he is not his own self but Love himself and now he desires to manifest himself. Here the Sufi writers quote the well known saying of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him), in which God says that He was a hidden treasure and that He desires to be realised, and so He created Adam. The Sufi believes that God is the Creator, and it is in the realisation of His attributes of Creation that He brought forth Adam. Hence, after this ascent, when the Sufi becomes united with God, Divine attribute begin to manifest themselves through him. As Divine Love is always flowing out to meet the needs of humanity, so the Sufi, the highest embodiment of Divine Love, begins to evince and ultimately manifest his love for humanity, which is termed service, and this is called the stage of Muhammad (peace be on him) Rasool Allah, that is the Sufi, the reflection of Muhammad (peace be on him), has now become the message of God, That is the stage of *Mujaddid*, and a *Nabi*, both of these having their own stages, degrees and qualities, the highest being the stage of Muhammed, which the Sufis call the Light of Muhammad (peace be on him). The Sufis here draw a very fine distinction. Love of God with them is the first and the original inspirer, but progress depends upon the human soul, for which effort is necessary. This self effort, which is a reaction of the human soul to the Divine action, then leads him on to the stage of submission, total and entire, where all his movements become Divine. Here the Sufi's action becomes God's action. The highest stage is that of the prophet, where the prophet is only the instrment and God works through him. All this is included in the stage of *nasoot*. One of the stages in this state of *nasoot* is the stage of *burooz*.

According to the Sufis, Muhammad (peace be on him) is the Perfect Man, *Al Insan-ul-Kamil*, and it was to realise this or that aspect of the Light of Muhammad (peace be on him) that the other prophets have been appearing in this world, and the perfection was fully realised when Muhammad (peace be on him) himself appeared. All the prophets that appeared before him were but a partial reflection, the reality alone was Muhammad (peace be on him) himself. Just as John the Baptist was the second coming of Elijah, so were the earlier prophets the forerunners and heralds of Muhammad (peace be on him), and now that he has appeared he has become the seal of the prophets. The other prophets came only to herald his coming. They were the pioneers, and in the absence of the Master they were allowed a free hand. Hence they are called independent prophets. Now that the Master himself is holding the court and swaying his dominations, nobody can assume independence; each one has to act under his guidance. That is why the Sufis (one and all) regard his law as

final, and Muhammad (peace be on him) the last of the prophets. Dependent prophets, of course, may continue, and in fulfilment of the ancient prophecies and Sufi beliefs, there has appeared one who is the *burooz* of Muhammad (peace be on him) in the full sense of the word, and he is no other than the late Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, the Second Christ, the Buddha Matreya, the Second Krishna, the greatest Sufi of the age, and the successor of Muhammad (peace be on him).

It is better to state here that the Sufi term *burooz* is not reincarnation theory, which the Sufis totally reject. *Burooz* means the appearance of one in the power and spirit of another, just as John the Baptist was Elijah that was to come, yet Elijah was dead and he could not come back to this life. This phenomenon of recurrence the Sufis use in a spiritual and metaphorical sense. The Second Christ or the Second Buddha does not mean that both these dead personages have taken a re-birth. The second one is individually different, but corresponds to his prototypes in some of his spiritual traits. moreover, the correspondence in situation needs correspondence in character, neither more nor less.

The Sufis are opposed to *hulul* and *tanasukh*, that they reject both the theory of reincarnation transmigration and metempsychosis, and they also deny that there is anything like one soul possessing or overshadowing another.

SUFISM AND ISLAM

The elder Sufis were true Muslims. They lived and taught nothing but Islam, and the emphasis that they laid on the spiritual side was only to revive the pristine, pure, Islamic spirit. Islam stands for the whole, while Sufism is but one of its aspects. Moreover Sufism has no constructive side, nor does it stand independent. It stands and falls with Islam.

Like everything, else, Sufism has been affected during its history of many centuries. The present day Sufism, though built on the old lines, has undergone some changes. Some of the present day practices and teachings are not in conformity with the original Sufism. Renunciation in the sense of celibacy and monasticism was never countenanced by the great Sufis. What they taught was the same as is taught by Islam. They never used it in the sense of severance of human relations and retiring into woods and forests leading anchorite lives, having nothing to do with this world. That is a great departure from the old Sufi point of view. All that Islam and early Sufism insisted upon was that real attachment should be with God. Support and care and maintenance of one's wife and

upbringing and looking after one's children is one of the primary duties of man. Under the mistaken notion of serving God with a singleness of purpose they have forsaken the world. They are just like a horse that runs without a load or carriage, but as soon as he is loaded or yoked he stops short and kicks. What Sufism and Islam required of a man was that he should learn to stand, walk and run in spite of hindrances and handicaps, so as to bring out the best in him. As a matter of fact, the care of all these things in the right spirit is a part of Divine worship. That is why the Sufi writers have insisted on the law which says, 'There is to be no monasticism in Islam.' God has willed that all these things should be well looked after, and yet a monk disregards all these duties. That is one of the practical abuses that has found its way into some present Sufi orders, whose practices, in certain instances, are a direct infringement of the teachings of the great Sufi Master. The *Shariat*, or law of Islam, has always stood mounted guard to counteract such tendencies.

Another mistake pertaining to belief has also crept into some of the present day orders. One is the belief in transmigration and reincarnation (*tanasukh* and *hulool*.) The elder Sufis have always reflected it. What they mean by recurrence is, the reversion of the old types. Some Sufis represent the spirit and power of some of the past Sufis, and therefore they sometimes have asserted their identity with their prototypes. This has been understood to mean reincarnation, etc., which the elders have expressly repudiated as abomination. As we have explained elsewhere, this reversion of types they term a *burooz* which means the coming of another in the power and spirit of the departed one. These elder Sufis cite one of the sayings of the Holy Prophet, which says that some people among his followers are born in the spirit of Abraham, while others in the spirit of Moses, and Jesus, and other prophets. But they are not the same. It is only the prominence in resemblance which entitles a person to a certain name. Ahmad of Qadian had appeared in our day in the power and spirit of Jesus, and that is why his coming is the coming of Jesus. It was necessary to guard against these corruptions that the form of *Shariat* was maintained by them, and it was in conformity with the law that the elder Sufis have all rejected reincarnation and other theories that border on polytheism.

MYSTICISM AND SUFISM

Sufism has generally been confused with Mysticism. The misunderstanding has been due to the apparent similarity in the meanings of the word 'mysticism' and *sirr*. But the *sirr* of Sufism is not the mystery of the mystic, for the Sufi had nothing to conceal. To a Sufi the word connotes the reality underlying anything, even if it be a phenomenon. As the

reality of every one's experience is known which one has to go through himself. One can instruct another in formalism, but discipline and illumination are an individual affair.

This attitude of a Sufi has been attributed to a mystifying habit, which is surely an unfair judgement on him. So Mysticism and Sufism are two different things altogether.

ORDERS IN SUFISM

There are many orders of Sufism with many more sub orders. They all started with the same principles and the same practices, differing only in minor details, and the idiosyncrasies of the individual. These orders are all known by the names of the different persons who first founded the movement in their own localities. There has been no difference whatever so far as the elders and the best people in these movements have been concerned. But with the lapse of time and the difference of tastes, temperaments and traits of character, and the atmosphere and environments that surrounded them, there were developed certain practices, which though harmless perhaps at first, led in the end to wide cleavages, not only in matters of details but also even in principles of actions. The present day orders are mostly of the above type, who neither care for the law nor for the behests of great minds of their movements. This degeneracy was mostly the result of contact with peoples that had themselves deviated from the right path and who now have come to think more of hypnotism, mesmerism, auto suggestion and cure by suggestion, which the elder Sufis never cared much about, though of course during the course of their disciplines those, or some of these things, came to them of themselves, and were perhaps made use of very often unconsciously, but these were never the chief nor the sole means. These latter day Sufis, having lost the spirit and the reality, now looked about for something tangible, and as the sudden results achieved themselves through these alien practices along with the fact that there was some similarity between these practices and some of the actions of their elders, which they never tried to fathom, they devoted themselves to these things to the exclusion of the reality, and that is the reason we meet with fraud, hypocrisy and imposture so often. Some of them have adopted the heathenish practices of bowing and prostrating before men, offering libations to dead saints, offering prayers to the living and dead. Some think themselves above every law, thus giving a free rein to every passion. It is fortunate that there are not very many of them, but it is undeniable that they are a part of the society, however low it may be. But they have nothing in common with the real Sufism of Islam.

80 YEARS AGO

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CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT

(Mufti Muhammad Sadiq)

Definition of the Doctrine.—The Christians assert that God has a Son, who is His only Son. This Son of God incarnated himself in the womb of Mary. She and her husband Joseph the carpenter, were informed of this by an angel. In fulness of time, the Son of God was born in the form of a human child. He was brought up like human children and when he grew old, he worked miracles, The Jews among whom he was born, persecuted him and at last killed him by suspending him on the cross. Thus the Son of God incarnate, died and after death, descended into hell where he remained for three days. Then he rose from the dead and now sits in the heavens on the right hand of God. Though he was innocent, yet he bore this pain and death for the sake of human beings, so that his sufferings may atone for the sins of man. Now man will not be punished for his sins, provided he believes in him, for Jesus has taken upon himself the sins of all men. This is what the Christian doctrine of atonement means. According to Christian belief, all children of Adam are sinful. Adam and Eve were expelled from heaven for their sin and all their children have inherited the sin and hence all are born sinful. It was for this reason that the Son of God did not enter the womb of Mary through the seed of man, but Mary conceived him without knowing a man, so that he may not inherit the sin of Adam, like the rest of Adam's children.

Necessity of Atonement.—Having explained what the Christian doctrine of atonement means, I now turn to its necessity from the Christian point of view. The Christians assert that man is sinful and the result of sin is the punishment of hell. God being merciful, His mercy demands that man should be saved from this punishment. But He is also just and justice demands punishment. How then could justice and mercy go together? The difficulty was solved by the Son. The Son, who was innocent, offered to undergo punishment in place of man. God accepted the offer. Thus there were both justice and mercy, for both the sins were punished and man was released. The punishment for the sins of millions of men was a heavy one, but the person who underwent it was the Son of God, so a small amount of punishment on the Son of God, taken as equivalent to the

whole punishment that was to be undergone by all men together.

Refutation of the Doctrine.—I now proceed to a refutation of the doctrine. I will first offer intellectual arguments against the doctrine.

I.—The first intellectual argument against the Christian dogma of atonement is the absence of any practical proof of its truth. This will become clear from the two following illustrations:

- (a) *Moses, a solitary and to all appearance a helpless man, stood before Pharaoh, the powerful king of Egypt and said to him, I am a Prophet of God. Send with me the people of Israel. If you refuse to do so, bear in mind that I shall triumph over you and you shall perish.* Thus Moses claimed to be a Prophet and uttered a mighty prophecy. That prophecy was fulfilled, thus showing that Moses was truly a prophet of God. This was practical proof of his being a prophet.
- (b) The Holy Prophet, Muhammad, may peace and blessings of God be upon him, appeared in the land of Arabia. The Arabs of his day were the most illiterate, the most demoralised and the most ignorant of the nations of the earth. He said to them, *Follow me; the teachings of the Holy Quran will make you learned, wise and victorious.* And so it came to pass. This was a practical proof of the Holy Prophet's truth. These two instances belong to the religious world. I will now add an illustration from the secular world. Every government makes various rules for various matters. There are laws for punishing crimes and there are also certain rules for rewarding good service. And we daily see these laws and rules being carried into practice. Let us now glance at the past 1900 years that have elapsed since Jesus was hung on the cross and see whether the Christian doctrine of atonement has led to any practical results.
- (1) It has been said that sin was brought into this world by Adam and Eve and that it cannot be removed unless we make ourselves deserving of salvation by a faith in the atonement of Jesus. Let us now see what was the punishment which Adam and Eve suffered for their sin and then see whether those who believe in the atonement have been exempted from it. From the Bible it appears that the punishment given to Adam for his sin was: *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.* (Gen. ii, 19), while to woman, the Lord said, *In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children* (Gen. III, 16). Now I ask, Is there a faithful Christian man, or has there ever been one, who can claim for himself exemption from this punishment and who can assert that

through faith in the atonement of Jesus, he no longer stands in need of work to earn his livelihood? Similarly, is there any believing Christian lady, European or native, who can say that faith in the blood of Jesus has relieved her of the pains of childbirth? Can any Christian in any part of the world answer to these questions in the affirmative? It is clear from this that our daily experience falsifies the Christian doctrine of atonement. If Jesus has really borne all our sins and has suffered punishment for them, and all that we have to do is to believe in him, why is it that all Christians, whether young or old, have to undergo the punishments referred to above? Thus, the atonement of Jesus turns out to be of no value; it is merely an imaginary thing, to the unreality of which our daily experience is bearing an unmistakable evidence.

- (2) When a man first believes in the atonement of Jesus, he has certain sins which he committed in the past and there are other sins which he may commit in the future. If belief in atonement brings about a forgiveness of the sins, then it follows that he should be exempted from the punishment of his past sins. But our daily experience belies this. Suppose the convert had been guilty of unlawful sexual intercourse and had the seed of the punishment of the sin sown in his frame, but he had not yet actually been attacked by a disease, his faith in Jesus must transfer the punishment to Jesus and he must not be attacked by the impending disease such as syphilis, etc. But our daily experience shows that this is not the case and that his faith in Jesus does not render him immune from the punishment that was in store for him in the shape of a venereal disease. This shows that a belief in the atonement of Jesus does not wash away the past sins. As to the future sins, we see that whenever the Christians commit an evil deed they are subject to the punishment of the sin as other men are. Of what use is the atonement then, which can save us neither from the punishment of past sins nor from that of the future sins?
- (3) Another instance will also make it clear that the atonement of Jesus is of no practical use whatever. Suppose a man steals Rs 1,000 and after some time becomes a Christian. Can he without returning the money to the owner, be saved, because he has believed in the atonement of Jesus? No. On the other hand he will be punished for the sin of theft. Belief in atonement has been of no avail to him, for it has not exempted him from

punishment.

- (4) Another practical proof of the falsehood of the doctrine may be found in the fact that even the Christian missionaries themselves, who preach the doctrine with such zeal, and even dismiss their Christian subordinates for their faults, though they do not strike their names off their convert registers. On the other hand, they admit that the recipients of the punishments are men that have faith in the atonement of Jesus. So if faith in atonement cannot exempt a person from punishment in this world, how can it exempt him from punishment in the next world? This is a practical proof of the falsehood of the doctrine to which the Christians themselves are witnesses.
- (5) Another practical proof of the falsehood of the doctrine is to be found in the fact that the atonement of Jesus has not been able to cleanse the hearts of men during the nineteen hundred and ten years that have elapsed since the Son of God incarnated himself in the womb of Mary. Every year are published long lists of the crimes of the Christian world. If it be said that they who commit these crimes do not act on the Law, we ask of what use is the atonement then? If it be said that the virtue of the atonement lies in the fact that it removes the power of doing evil, we say, this is wrong. Leaving aside the ordinary Christians, long lists have been published of horrible crimes of the Christian preachers themselves. Only recently a book called, *The Crimes of Preachers* has been published in New York. It gives a list of the crimes committed during the last twenty years by the clergy of two Christian countries only, viz., the United States of America and Canada, and from it appears that about 900 Christian priests of the United States and Canada were punished by the courts of the country for horrible crimes. How can we believe in the face of such a startling record, that the atonement of Jesus is instrumental in removing sin? Startling facts have been disclosed both about the Roman Catholic and the Protestant clergy which throw a flood of light on the moral condition of the Christian world. The reader is referred to the following works, which will enable him to form an idea of the gross immorality that prevails among the Christian priests:— (a) *The crimes of Christianity* by J. M. Wheeler and G. W. Foote, published at London in 1887. (b) *Life by the Nun of Kenmare. Inside the Church of Rome*. (c) *Life Inside the Church of England*. The Christian world itself has admitted the failure of

the present Christian faith in reforming the gross immorality of both Europe and America. The work, entitled *Why is Christianity a Failure*, is a readable book on the subject. It is written by a *Churchman* and is published by Ideal Publishing Union, Ltd., London. If the effect of the atonement is to produce good blacksmiths, skilled masons and excellent workmen, we are ready to admit that the atonement of Jesus has produced excellent results, but if the object of religion is that men should attain righteousness and purity, then Christianity is a sad failure. It has been admitted even by European writers that in morality and purity of heart, the Islamic world is far ahead of Christian world.

II. It has been said that the justice of God cannot be fulfilled except through the atonement of Jesus. But the truth is that this doctrine itself implies infringement of justice; for Jesus was innocent and it is injustice to lay the burden of a sinner on a sinless person. It may be said in reply that Jesus was the master of his own life and that he gave it willingly. In the first place, it is wrong to say that he gave his life willingly. We read of him in Matt. xxvi 93, that *he fell on his face and prayed, saying, O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me* Again, there is the heart-rending cry which he uttered in a loud voice on the cross, *My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?* Both these prayers show that it was not willingly that Jesus gave his life. But even if we admit that he gave his life willingly, we have to face another question, viz., If Jesus was the master of his life, is not God he master of His own acts? Is He not the master of the vast treasure of His bounties? If Jesus could give his life without receiving anything in return for it, can not God make free gift of His mercy? In short, God's punishing Jesus for the sins of others is incompatible with His justice.

III. The doctrine of atonement represents Jesus also as unjust. Man commits two kinds of sins. He sins either against God, or against man. If a man fails to perform his duty to God, belief in the atonement of Jesus will save him from punishments. Man sinned against God, God's Son bore the punishment and man passes scot-free. But take the case of a man who sins against his fellow human beings. Suppose there is a man named John who steals the watch of another man named Henry. Then John becomes a believer in Jesus and Jesus bears his sins on himself. Let Henry now cry as much as he pleases, he can neither get back his watch nor can have John punished for his sin. Has not then Jesus acted unjustly towards Henry by taking on himself the sin of John? Thus it is not only God whom the doctrine of atonement represents as unjust, it also represents Jesus as guilty of injustice.

IV. It has been said that if God had pardoned the sinners out of mere mercy, without exacting punishment in some way or other, people would have been emboldened to commit sins, trusting that God will forgive them their trespasses. But the doctrine of atonement is one which makes a man much bolder in the commission of sins. In the former case, a man is in doubt as to whether he will have mercy or not and therefore he will try to shun evil. But in the latter case, the door to evil is thrown wide open because Jesus has made an atonement for all sins both great and small. All that we have to do is to believe in his atonement. Only recently a Christian preacher has written a book in defence of atonement, which he has named *Only believe*. Luther, the Founder of Protestantism, said that a believer in atonement might sin to his fill, for he was sure to be saved. In short, the doctrine of atonement gives free license to commit sins and it is this doctrine which is chiefly responsible for the gross immorality which has deluged the two great Christian continents, Europe and America.

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we also who are not religious leaders but represent the rank and file of all good people in the modern age must be willing to support them by entering into our personal *holy war* against the causes and roots of racial pride, social prejudice and moral bigotry within our own hearts. Cleaning up this mess within ourselves is a prerequisite for our collective spiritual and ethical engagement in the cause to which Amnesty International is manifestly committed on behalf of persecuted, oppressed and imprisoned individuals anywhere and everywhere in our world.

SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE

The readers should, please, note the change in the annual subscription of the Review of Religions from £12-00 to £15-00 with effect from January, 1990.

MANAGING EDITOR

PRESS RELEASE

AHMADI DOCTORS AND VOLUNTEERS ARRESTED IN RAHIM YAR KHAN, PAKISTAN.

According to reports reaching London, a seven member team of Ahmadi doctors and volunteers, which was running a Medical Relief Camp at *Chak No. 6, Abbasia, District Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan*, was arrested by police last week. The camp was organised by the Pakistani Ahmadiyya Muslim Community under the *Help the Poor Scheme* under which free medical advice and treatment was given to the poor and the needy. According to the details received, a police party from *Liaqat Pur* police station raided the camp and arrested all members of the team. A case has been registered against them under the Anti-Ahmadiyya laws, section 298-c and 16 MPO. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community of Great Britain strongly condemns the high handedness of the police and demands the immediate release of their members.

AN AHMADI SENTENCED TO SIX MONTHS FOR SAYING *PEACE BE UPON YOU.*

A Pakistani court sentenced an Ahmadi Karamatullah of Mansehra, Pakistan, to six months imprisonment and a fine of 500 Rupees, for saying *Assalamo Alaikum*, an Islamic form of greeting, meaning *peace be upon you* to a person in the street. Under Anti-Ahmadiyya Laws of the country, no Ahmadi can call himself a Muslim or use any Islamic term. In another case an Ahmadi Zafrullah Khan of Model Town, Lahore, was sentenced in absentia to imprisonment and a fine, for saying *Azan* the call to Prayer. The Magistrate has also ordered that all his movable and immovable property be confiscated.

A spokesman of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Great Britain, has regarded these sentences as blatant violations of Human Rights and has demanded that the Anti-Ahmadiyya Laws be repealed immediately.

(For further information please contact
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FEATURES OF THE HOLY QURAN

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

The Holy Quran was revealed piecemeal to the Holy prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) during the course of his ministry in Arabia from 610 – 632 A.D. It is the sacred scripture of Muslims. Its original Arabic text has been preserved throughout the centuries in its pristine purity free of all change and alteration. It was not written by the Holy Prophet or any other person. It is pure revelation from God being the very words He spoke to the Holy Prophet in the same way as God spoke to the prophets in past ages.

It might be asked what was the need for God to reveal a new scripture when there had been so many earlier ones including the Bible. One reason is that during the course of time they have suffered all manner of interpolation with the result that fact and fiction have become interwoven. It is an irrefutable fact that the Holy Quran which contains Divine guidance for all mankind, is the only revealed scripture preserved by God in its original language free of any kind of discrepancy.

The Divine guidance and laws contained in earlier revealed scriptures were restricted to meet the needs and times of the particular people for whom they were sent. As man developed and matured he required a fresh law of guidance to meet the needs of the new times. Whereas other scriptures were meant only for chosen tribes and nations the Holy Quran was sent by God for the guidance and unification of all mankind. It has been memorised by thousands of Muslims in all ages and its literary standard and eloquence has remained unsurpassed, and will always remain so, in accordance with clear prophecies to this effect in the Holy Quran.

The Holy Quran lays much emphasis on the Unity of God. It states that He begets not nor is He begotten. He has no partner and there is none like Him. It contains commandments for all times. It gives good tidings to those who strive on the right path and warns those who pursue the wrong path. The purpose of life is to win the pleasure of God through righteous conduct and self-purification by self-effort and prayer. God is the source of all blessings and favours.

The Holy Quran mentions that God selects His messengers or prophets. They are all sinless and therefore, exemplars of all they teach. God foretells them things of the future. They bring glad tidings for their people. The

Holy Quran states that during the course of history there is no nation to whom a Prophet has not been sent with Divine guidance. The Quran mentions the names of only a few of them and exonerates them all from sinful acts which have been leveled at them in other scriptures.

The Holy Quran clarifies right from wrong involving every aspect of life. It calls upon man to live a life of virtue requiring him to be humble, just, grateful, truthful, honest, forgiving, merciful, patient, kind, sympathetic, charitable, loving, prayerful, etc. It also calls upon him to avoid wrongdoing such as backbiting, pride, slander, envy, gambling, miserliness, untruthfulness, dishonesty, drinking alcohol, vengeance, ill-will, etc.

The Holy Quran often refers to the next life although it states that paradise is something that the eye cannot see, something the ear has not heard about and the mind cannot conceive. It is something about which man has been given little knowledge. As it is beyond the ken of man to understand properly in this world the rewards of the next life. They are, therefore, not of a material nature and all descriptions of them in the Holy Quran likening them to various things of this world are not to be taken literally but metaphorically. Hell is not everlasting but a state similar to a reform prison where the soul undergoes its condign punishment to be later released on its heavenward journey.

There are a multiple of prophecies in the Holy Quran. Many have come to pass during the ages and in more modern times. They are signs to think over. There are prophecies regarding the Holy Quran, the Battle of Badr in the early days of Islam when the idolaters outnumbered the Muslims three to one, defeat of the Persians by the Romans, the Suez and Panama canals, and so many more.

The Holy Quran is a miracle in that its divine and holy influence completely transforms the lives of those who recognise its spiritual status and dedicate their lives towards adherence to its instructions. Most Arabians were idolaters, heavy drinkers, gamblers and debauchers at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet, yet by the end of his ministry these very people became God fearing, teetotalers, prayerful people. This remarkable spiritual change was effected by the Holy Quran. Such changes are taking place even in this age among people of various nationalities who, through coming in contact with the Holy Quran, have completely changed for their spiritual betterment, whereas previously they were living Godless lives.

The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

The Review of Religions is the oldest magazine of its kind published in English language in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent. Its first issue was published in 1902 and it has been continuously published since.

It bears the distinction that it was initiated under the direction of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah himself.

During more than eighty-six years the message of Islam has been conveyed through this magazine to millions of readers and many fortunate persons have recognized the truth of Islam and accepted it through its study.

The articles published in it deal not only with the doctrines and teachings of Islam but also set forth a comparative appreciation of the teachings of other faiths.

One of its outstanding features is the refutation of the criticism of Islamic teachings by orientalists and non-muslim scholars.

It also presents solutions in the light of Islamic teachings of the problems with which the Islamic world is from time to time confronted.

A study of this magazine is indispensable for the appreciation of the doctrines of the Ahmadiyya Movement and the teachings of its Holy Founder.

