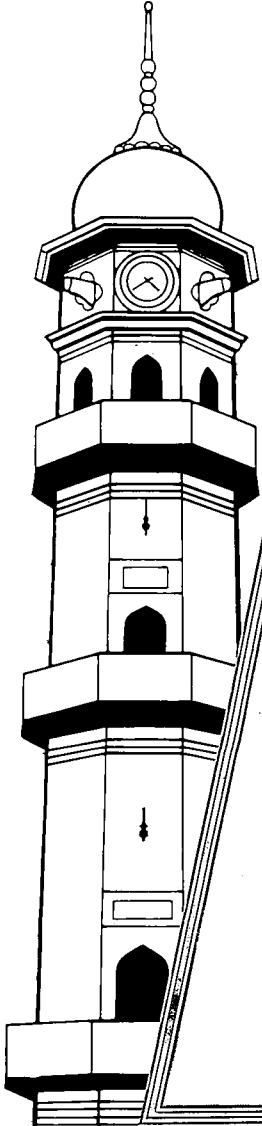


THE REVIEW of RELIGIONS



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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

A monthly magazine devoted to the dissemination of the teachings of Islam, the discussion of Islamic affairs and religion in general.

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

ONE MAN – MANY VOTES

Sir Harold Mc Millan's winds of change took a long time to arrive in South Africa. Was South Africa living in the eye of the storm as the pressure began to build up around it? Never before in history has the release of one man been witnessed by so many people around the world. With the release of Mr. Nelson Mandela, South Africa has taken a distinct turn towards black majority rule. His release has paved the way for one man, one vote.

Unshaken in its control, the National government had enacted and actively pursued *apartheid* (racial segregation) in every sphere of life. This system was supposed to be the life line of the white population, sixty per cent of whom are Afrikaans – descendants of the Dutch, Huguenot and German settlers – mainly belonging to the Dutch Reform Church. Although some other churches were partially more liberal towards racial integration on the pews, in the final analysis, Christianity must bear a heavy responsibility for the perpetuation of this system.

Many of us live a very insular life in our cocoons of freedom, liberties and the rights that past generations have won for us. We are purblind to the plight of those who suffer religious persecution, racial discrimination or violation of other human rights which we take for granted for ourselves. We make tall claims of having abolished slave trade while having shut our eyes to the racial, social, economic and political enslavement of millions of black Africans in South Africa.

One needs to be black to know the true injustice and the degrading nature of racial discrimination. Only he understands what it means to be crowded into shanty towns and with *no-go* areas while the rest of the world is told that he likes living in the homelands. Only he understands that his bright children will not have access to the educational system which is available to others of a different skin. Only he gets transported to and from work in return for a paltry wage in comparison to a person of another skin of equal skill and experience. Only he understands what it means to have churches, beaches, toilets, shopping precincts, farms etc. exclusively reserved for the whites. Day in and day out, the colour of his skin is the most noticeable feature of the society he lives in and he does not even have a say in forming the rules under which he must abide.

The political leaders of the world ought to hang down their heads in

shame in allowing this system to flourish for such a long time while gloating about their own cherished freedoms which are rapidly leading man to the brink of anarchy. Whereas racial discrimination has by no means ended, the greatest visible edifice of distinction by the colour of one's skin has come tumbling down. Let us hope that the many pockets of racial discrimination which still remain open in very many countries can also be finally buttoned up. This would be one of the pre-requisites for a united world.

In such a world we must start from the premise that all human beings are equal. Thus, no one can claim any privilege. The Holy Quran states that the only badge of honour is righteousness:

O mankind, We have created you from male and female; and We have divided you into nations and tribes for greater facility and intercourse. Verily, the most honourable among you in the estimation of God is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, God is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (49:14)

No people or group should look down upon another people or group by virtue of any difference of colour, race, language or descent.

O ye who believe, let no people deride another people, haply they may be better than they nor let one group of women deride another, haply the last may be better than the first. (49:12)

The believers are all knit under Islam into a single brotherhood. The Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, announced in his farewell address that an Arab is not superior to a non-Arab nor is a non-Arab superior to an Arab; nor is a white person superior to a black one, nor a black person superior to a white one. All are brethren, one to another.

In contradistinction to other religions of the world, one may therefore describe Islam as being totally colour-blind. The history of Islam can elicit no instance where the colour of one's skin has interfered in the meting out of justice. During the five daily prayers, all chasms which otherwise divide a society are removed. The greatest spectacle of human unity manifests itself even more visibly when more than a million Muslims, the males clad in two unstitched sheets of cloth, gather together on the plains of Arafat during the annual pilgrimage. No other religion has a teaching anywhere equivalent to Islam on inter-racial harmony.

Although the black Africans in South Africa have many hurdles yet to

(continued on page 13)

RESPONSE OF ISLAM TO CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

(We produce a gist of a lecture delivered on the above topic by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV, Head of the Ahmadiyya Community in Islam on February 24, 1990, at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London.)

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih commenced his address by thanking everyone for their presence and by stating that the address he was about to deliver posed a great challenge to him and that he would begin with the most crucial issue.

The most serious malady in the world today, he said, is the lack of peace. Mankind has attained a high standard of material progress which has been made possible by the advancement of science and technology in every sphere of human requirements. Nevertheless man is not happy and content. On the other hand there is growing restlessness every where. This constitutes one outstanding feature of the contemporary world. Man is in search of peace. The word Islam literally means peace and is a religion of peace. It advocates and promotes peace. Its teachings guarantee peace in every sphere of human interest and activity. In this address I have categorised some of the areas in which the contemporary world stands in need of special guidance. The first is inter-religious peace then in social, national, international and economic fields. In the general religious scenario one cannot fail to notice that in religion there seems to prevail a paradoxical situation today. Religion is both losing its grip and tightening it in different areas. In some sectors of society and in most religions there seems to be a swing back in the direction of dogmas with rigid and intolerant opposition, while in other areas there is a desire for something new. Unfortunately neither of these two attitudes help in creating a good religious climate.

Islam provides a solution for all these problems. I feel deeply concerned and disturbed at what is happening in the world of religion today. There is a deep urgency for religion to make a genuine effort to remove misunderstandings existing between man and man and religion and religion. I believe that Islam can provide the remedy in a manner which can fully satisfy the need. I have categorised this subject under different sections. I believe, for instance, that if a religion is to be helpful in

establishing world peace then that religion should present a universal message from God. Islam does just that and in this respect God says in the Holy Quran:

And We did raise among every people a Messenger with the teaching, 'Worship Allah and shun the Evil One.' (16:37)

And We, indeed, sent Messengers before thee; of them there are some whom We have mentioned to thee; and of them are some whom We have not mentioned to thee. (40:79)

Thou art surely a Warner. And there is a guide for every people. (13:8)

There is no people to whom a Warner has not been sent. (35:25)

According to the Holy Quran all prophets are equal. This is essential for the establishment of inter-religious peace. As far as their ministry is concerned they should all be treated equally. Elsewhere the Holy Quran does admit that there are different statuses of prophets but that all have the same divine authenticity. God says in the Holy Quran:

These Messengers have We exalted some above others; among them are those to who Allah spoke; and some of them He exalted in degrees of rank. (2:254)

This verse should be understood from the context. One of the companions of the Holy Prophet once declared that the Holy Prophet was the best of all the prophets. This happened on two occasions. In one case when discussing with a Jew the companion insisted that the Holy Prophet was higher in rank than Moses. When the matter was referred to the Holy Prophet he replied that he should not be declared superior to Moses. At another time he said he should not be declared superior to Jonah, the son of Mutta. The underlying principle to be borne in mind is that it is for God to decide and declare in what way one prophet is dearer to Him than another. The followers of prophets are not permitted to start quarrelling or fighting over who is the better prophet.

Salvation cannot be monopolised. This is another beautiful declaration of the Holy Quran which is a highly essential factor for establishing peace among religions. God says in the Holy Quran:

For every people We have appointed ways of worship which they observe; so let them not dispute with thee on the matter of the Islamic way of or worship; and call thou the people to thy Lord, for, surely, thou art on the right path. (22:68)

Surely those who have believed, and the Jews and the Sabians, and the Christians, whoso believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good deeds, on them shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve. (5:70)

The Holy Quran makes it clear that the reward of these people would be their Lord. Again with reference to the people of the Book, whoever they may be, although usually in the Holy Quran they are understood to be the Jews and the Christians.

The Holy Quran does not permit Muslims indiscriminately to censure all those who belong to other religions regarding their chances of redemption. It states that there are some people of the Book who stand by their covenant and recite the words of Allah at night. Furthermore they believe in God and the Last Day, they enjoin good and forbid evil, and they compete with one another in doing good works. They are among the righteous and they will receive their reward.

Today there is a great misunderstanding due to the misunderstanding between Jews and Muslims. It is thought that Islam teaches that all Jews are destined for hell. This is totally false as borne out by what I have quoted from the Holy Quran. Referring to all the religions of the world the Holy Quran says:

And of those We have created, there are a people that guide men with truth and do justice therewith. (2:182)

At the same time Islam claims itself to be a universal religion and that one day it will emerge as the one religion for all mankind:

He it is (God) Who has sent this Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over every other religion even though the idolaters may resent it. (9:32)

It should be borne in mind that no religion with a universal message can ever momentarily think of employing force to proclaim its message. The sword can win territory but not hearts. Force can bend heads but not minds. Islam strictly forbids the use of force for the propagation of its message:

There is no compulsion in religion. (2:257)

Righteousness has become distinct from wrong so there is no need for coercion. Let the people themselves decide where the truth lies. Again, addressing the Holy Prophet, God says in the Holy Quran:

Admonish, therefore, for thou art but an admonisher. Thou art not appointed a keeper over them. (88:22,23)

But if they turn away, We have not sent thee as a guardian over them. Thy duty is only to convey the message. (42:49)

If one meets with hostile reaction when delivering the message then how should one react? The Holy Quran teaches one should remove evil with goodness. Do not return evil for evil:

Repel evil with that which is best. (23:97)

Freedom of speech and expression is highly vital for the spread of the message as well as for restoring the dignity of man. Religion is not worthy of consideration if it does not restore human dignity. It is unbelievable that in a religion like Islam there could be restrictions on the freedom of speech. Today liberty and emancipation are two important slogans which in different ways are influencing the world to a lesser or greater extent. There is no doubt man is becoming more aware and conscious of the importance and value of liberty. The need for emancipation is being felt everywhere; but emancipation from what? The yoke of foreign rule, dictatorship, corrupt democracy, ignorance, superstition etc.

Islam champions the cause of liberty from all these maladies but not in a manner which would create disorder and chaos along with indiscriminate vengeance causing suffering to the innocent. God states in the Holy Quran that He does not like disorder. The role of freedom should be in a spirit of give and take. Unrestricted individual freedom is bound to effect the freedom of the innocent and weak. Nothing but anarchy is the end product of absolute freedom. Unfortunately in many advanced countries crime is being inadvertently encouraged and protected in the name of individual liberty at the cost of peace of the innocent law-abiding citizens. Sometimes the concept of freedom is made an ugly picture when insults, abuse, and blasphemy are practised. Blasphemy in Islam is not considered to be a crime. I have studied the Holy Quran hundreds of times and I have not been able to find one verse which prescribes any punishment in this world for the blasphemer. The Holy Quran discourages indecent behaviour and talk, and hurting the feelings of others without justification. Yet Islam prescribes no punishment for the blasphemer. God says in the Holy Quran:

When you hear the Signs of God being mocked at, sit not with those who indulge in such talk until they engage in some other talk. (4:141)

No punishment is mentioned. The Holy Quran also states that Jesus and his mother Mary were made the targets of blasphemy yet no mention has been made about any punishment for the blasphemers. Even God has been blasphemed against and still the question of punishment has not been mentioned.

The Holy Quran refers to a person who was called the chief of the hypocrites. He declared himself to be noblest of the Medinites and that the meanest of them was the Holy Prophet whom he would expel from Medina. One after the other the companions of the Holy Prophet asked permission to kill the blasphemer but he refused permission. Eventually the son of this hypocrite sought permission to kill his own father which the Holy Prophet again refused. Later on the man died and the Holy Prophet announced that he would lead his funeral prayer. Among those who protested was Hazrat Umar who later became the second Khalifa. He reminded the Holy Prophet of God's order that even if you seek the forgiveness of such kind of people seventy times God would not forgive them. He replied that if God would not forgive the man even if he asked God seventy times then he would ask more than seventy times. Such a person was the Holy Prophet. This is how blasphemy is treated on the authority of the Holy Quran and by the conduct of the Holy Prophet of Islam. Such a religion must have a claim for being able to establish inter-religious peace in the world. In this respect Islam goes one step further by declaring:

And let not the enmity of a people, that they hindered you from the Sacred Mosque, incite you to transgress. And help one another in righteousness and piety. (5:3)

This verse teaches that a Muslim has no right to treat people unjustly even if they have tried to suppress their religion. They should be treated with absolute justice. There is no other way.

Let us turn to the subject of peace in society. It is unfortunate that religious influence on moral behaviour is fast losing its grip. There is a general disregard for religious and ethical teachings. Belief in the Living God Who has shaped the destiny of human beings is rapidly eroding. Till the turn of this century Christianity, the predominant religion of the West, had a strong and effective hold on the moral behaviour of its adherents in the West. Not so any more. Civilisation has, instead, evolved with scientific socialism, rapid scientific development and material progress thereby forcing Christianity to retreat step by step and to adopt a progressively diminishing role in moulding social behaviour in the contemporary world. Moral behaviour in the West today is as low in character as is the moral character in most Muslim countries representative of Islamic ideals. It is the same everywhere. An evil wind is polluting the world which seems to be far more aware and conscious of the rising level of pollution in the physical atmosphere than in the rapidly developing a pollution in the social environment. Regarding this state of affairs the Holy Quran states:

By the time, surely man is ever in a state of loss, except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and exhort one another to preach Truth, and exhort one another to be steadfast. (103:2-4)

Exploitation, duplicity, hypocrisy, selfishness, oppression, corruption, greed, pursuit of pleasure, theft, violation of human rights, fraud, treachery, lack of responsibility and mutual respect and trust have become the hall-marks of modern society. It would be wrong to say that similar times of human failings did not occur in past ages. It would also be wrong to single out any particular region of the world which has been particularly beset by moral evils. Let me describe the kind of society which according to the Holy Quran is unIslamic:

Know that the life of this world is only a sport and a pastime, and an adornment, and a source of boasting among yourselves, and a rivalry in multiplying riches and children. (57:21)

There are no generation gaps in the Islamic conception of society. The Holy Quran speaks on the rights of parents and the rights of children. Children must be mindful in showing kindness to their parents. They should be as kind to them as they have been to them. If these lessons are observed in society many problems of today which are a blemish on advanced society would cease to exist. Elderly homes would no longer be needed except for those who have no relatives to look after them. In an Islamic society the love between parents and children is so repeatedly emphasised that it is impossible for children to abandon their parents when they grow older for the sake of their personal pleasure. A mother would not be able to discharge her duties to her children if it were not for the love she bears for them and not just a sense of responsibility. The mother-child relationship is the strongest bond of human relationships. If that bond is weakened then the relationship between family members becomes damaged. It is completely destroyed and society does not become worthy of this life.

The main pursuit of this life is an ideology which stresses that *this life* is not all and everything. There is a life to come. Social order must keep in view the relationship of this world with the world to come. That is the only safe way of teaching people how they should mould their habits towards one another in this world and, of course, their relationship with God. The Holy Quran has also pointed out another very important attitude of the materialistic society:

There is no life than but our present life; We die and we live, and we shall not be raised up again. (23:38)

What they say:

They say, What! when we are dead and have become mere dust and bones, shall we, indeed, be raised up again? (23:83)

Islamic society moderates and disciplines natural desires which, if left uncontrolled, would play havoc with the gamut of human emotions. It discourages or forbids the fulfilment of desires which cause more misery than pleasure.

The fundamentals of Islamic society have been mentioned in the Holy Quran. All such behaviour which one's conscience suggests is wrong should be shunned. The Holy Quran goes on developing the subject of society by declaring:

And who shun all that which is vain. (23:4)

The Holy Quran states that desires should be controlled and jealousy is not permitted. It states that one should not think evil of others nor be inquisitive; nor should one backbite. Unviolability of trusts and treaties is a fundamental Islamic teaching. The education of others is not only a responsibility of the government but selectively on the people themselves. The Holy Quran declares:

And let there always be among you a body of men who should invite to goodness and enjoin virtue and forbid evil. And it is they who shall prosper. (3:105)

There is no difference between the fundamental rights of men and women:

And they (the women) have rights similar to those of men over them in equity. (2:229)

Islam teaches that humility, noble bearing, return of favours with favours and spending for a good cause even in times of adversity is highly essential for the promotion of dignity. The Holy Quran directs that if a person grants a favour one should not follow it up by reminding and bothering the recipient about it. The Holy Quran says that it is not enough to feed those in need but to do so when one is hungry oneself so that one may share their pain.

It is considered very essential in Islam that government officials should be sensitive to the needs of the people to such a degree that there would be no need to form pressure groups. In a truly Islamic society bribery would be unthinkable. According to the Holy Quran the ruler is held answerable

to God for the state of affairs of his subjects.

Once Hazrat Umar who was the second Khalifa after the demise of the Holy Prophet, was passing through a suburb of Medina at night. Sometimes he would walk the streets incognito to see for himself what was happening. He heard the sound of crying coming from a house in which an old mother and three children were sitting around a fire on which a pot was boiling. He asked the mother what was the matter and she replied that her children were very hungry as she had nothing to give them. In order to cajole them and help them to fall asleep she said she had put some water and stones in the pot. Hazrat Umar went away and returned with a bag of edibles which he carried himself. His servant was surprised to see him carrying the bag himself. Hazrat Umar said that it was his responsibility and that on the Day of Judgement no one else would carry his load. This is the spirit which modern governments should observe everywhere.

The concept of rendering service in Islam has been beautifully and comprehensibly described in the Holy Quran. If Muslims fail to render service to others then they have no right to boast of the superiority of Islam. The Holy Prophet has referred to this principle by saying that the hand which is above is better than the hand which is below. The Holy Quran directs them not to speak harshly to the people despite the fact that begging is discouraged. It also declares that if one has nothing to give to a beggar then at least one should convey kind words to him. This is the Islamic way of rendering help to others which should be practised in society.

Islam is totally opposed to racialism. God says in the Holy Quran:

O ye people! fear your Lord Who created you from a single soul and of its kind created its mate, and from them twain spread many men and women. (4:2)

The Islamic Order belongs neither to Capitalism nor Socialism. The economic philosophy is scientific without being mechanical. It is disciplined without being over restricted. It allows private enterprise and the acquisition of private possessions but not greed and the amassing of wealth in the hands of a few resulting in a large section of society becoming destitute, serfs, and slaves in a cruel and lengthy system of exploitation.

There are three distinctive features of the economic philosophies of Capitalism, Communism and Islam. Capitalism rewards capital. Interest is

the incentive role and this makes all the difference between what is Capitalism and what it is not capitalism. Although Scientific Socialism claims there is no capital but the fact is that the state becomes the monopolist in capitalism. The state itself becomes capitalist. Every citizen, except those who govern, become mere labourers. In Islam capitalism is penalised with levying Zakat tax and the fear of lost work as an incentive. These are three fundamental philosophies which are responsible for keeping the wheel of economy in motion. The Holy Quran forbids interest and warns that as long as a system based on interest continues war is inevitable eventually. I have no time to enlarge on this subject but those who know the history of the two world wars would remember that capitalism based on interest played a very important role not only in starting those wars but also in maintaining them for a very long time. As far as the rights of the people are concerned the Holy Quran says:

And those in whose wealth there is a known right. For those who ask for help and those who do not ask. (70:25,26)

The Holy Quran does not just say give something out of kindness to the poor. It says: give to them what belongs to them. In a society where there are poor people a part of wealth, according to the Holy Quran, belongs to them by right. According to Islam there are four basic needs of man which must be fulfilled:

It is decreed for thee that thou shalt not hunger therein nor shalt thou be naked; and that thou shalt not thirst therein, nor shalt thou be exposed to the sun. (20:119,120)

This verse refers to food, clothing, water and shelter. Even in England and America there are hundreds of thousands of people without proper help. Some have to dip into dustbins in search of some kind of food to satisfy their hunger. It is happening every day and every night while time is flourishing and life is prospering. These areas are a blemish on human society. There are large areas in Africa and other countries where water is not even available. A person would feel himself very fortunate if he is able to have one square meal a day. There are countries which have all the potential and resources to change their lot within a matter of a few months without harming themselves but they do not care. It is very important according to Islam that if there is suffering in the world then not only are the people in that country responsible but also all mankind. There must be a system whereby wealth should be provided to those areas where famine plays havoc. On this matter the Holy Quran gives four guidelines. Aid should be sent to those areas without any strings

attached. According to Islam aid is only aid when it liberates people and not when it enslaves. Furthermore it is not enough just to feed them. It is also the responsibility of man to rehabilitate them and to restore their economy. This is just the opposite to what we observe today in trade relationships. I am not an economist but, at least, I understand this much that it is impossible for the third world countries to remain in a trade relationship with a large or prosperous country and at the same time prevent the flow of wealth from their countries to the wealthier ones.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said in the end that due to the limitation of time he would be unable to cover some other points which he had in mind.

(from page 3)

cross before they attain one-man one-vote, we hope that the majority will accommodate the interests of the minority whites and the coloured. The whites must not use the pretext to negotiate terms to prolong the misfortunes of the black people who are being returned their land depleted of nearly all its valuable mineral resources while the country stockpiled arms. In the transitional period, the communities need to come to terms with their revised status. If the black Africans want true independence, they must free themselves from bribery and an over indulgence in drinking habits which are the traces that imperialism leaves behind. They must be magnanimous in their hour of triumph and not seek any revenge from the whites. At this time, if they remember that a black person is not more privileged than a white person just as a white man was no better than a black man, there is no reason why South Africa should not become a progressive country based on equal justice for all.

(from page 45)

path of those gone astray. Hence we conclude that these are the trees planted by man as opposed to the tree planted by Allah, the Jama'at Ahmadiyya in order to re-establish the superiority of the religion taught by the holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him), in complete fulfilment of Allah's promise to the Muslims at the appointed time and in a manner appropriate to His Divine Mercy.

JESUS IN ISLAM

(Tahir Ijaz, Winnipeg)

Islam is a religion which requires belief in not only the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) but all the prophets, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. The sacred Book of Muslims, the Qur'an, repeatedly mentions that the Prophets and Messengers of Allah (God) have appeared among all the nations of the world throughout the history of mankind. Their purpose was to create a new spirit in their people, enabling them to be in closer communion with their Maker.

The Holy Quran relates in detail the story of Jesus as the Messiah of the Jews, including his birth, his mission as a prophet to the Israelites, and the crucifixion. Non-Muslims are usually suprised at the amount of information contained about Jesus in the Quran. Indeed, a whole chapter in the Quran is named after Jesus' mother (Maryam).

BIRTH OF JESUS

The Qur'an affirms the fatherless birth of Jesus and rejects outright the Jewish claim that his birth was illegitimate. Instead, Mary is described as a pious and righteous woman who symbolizes righteous believers blessed with divine inspiration. According to the Qur'an, angels told Mary that:

Allah has chosen thee and purified thee and chosen thee above all women of the time. (3:43)

The angels also told her:

O Mary, Allah gives thee glad tidings of a son through a Word from Him; his name shall be Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, honoured in this world and in the next, and of those who are granted nearness to God. (3:46)

Being unmarried, she prayed to God, 'My Lord, how shall I have a son when no man has touched me?' God replied, 'Such is the way of Allah. He creates what He pleases. When He decrees a thing, He says to it, 'Be' and it is.' (3:48)

It is important to note that while Islam recognizes the virgin birth as a miraculous event, it does not consider it unnatural; the laws of nature are never broken. It more reflects the inability of man to fully understand the science behind various phenomena observed in nature. A virgin birth is

certainly a medical phenomenon. Many eminent gynecologists have stated that it is possible for a woman to conceive a child without the agency of a male. This is extremely rare, but cases have been recorded.

In Islam, the immaculate conception of Jesus is not interpreted to mean he was in some way a Divine Being. The Qur'an repudiates the idea of a fatherless birth being a criterion of divinity, and considers Jesus as only a human being like Adam:

Surely, the case of Jesus with Allah is like the case of Adam. He created him out of dust, then He said to him 'Be', and he was. (3:60)

MISSION OF JESUS

The mission of Jesus was confined to the Children of Israel (Al Quran, 3:50), and he was not a world Messenger. The Gospels also mention this fact (Matt. 10:5,6; 15:24). Prophet Jesus was commissioned by God to revive the true spirit of the Torah in the hearts of the Israelites and clear any misunderstandings about the law. He purified and revitalized Judaism. As Jesus was a follower of Moses, he did not change or reject the Mosaic Law. The New Testament quotes Jesus as saying that he came only to fulfill the Law and not to abolish it (Matt. 5:17).

The Quran also says:

We caused Jesus son of Mary to follow in their footsteps, fulfilling that which was revealed before him in the Torah. We gave him the Gospel which contained guidance and light, fulfilling that which was revealed before it in the Torah, and a guidance and admonition for the righteous. (5:47)

The Gospel (Arabic: Injil) given to Jesus and to which the Quran refers was the actual divine revelations received by him. It does not refer to the four Gospels in the New Testament which were written by anonymous authors long after the crucifixion and influenced by the philosophies of Paul whose teachings about the Atonement and Resurrection were foreign to the original Christianity taught by Jesus.

DIVINITY OF JESUS

Jesus is depicted in the Quran as a human being who believed in the absolute unity and indivisibility of God to Whom he was subservient. Jesus said:

I am a servant of Allah, He has given me the Book, and has appointed me a Prophet; He has made me blessed wheresoever I may be, and

has enjoined upon me prayer and almsgiving throughout my life.
(19:31,32)

Muslims consider the doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus and Trinity as later additions to the teachings of Jesus. The New Testament itself furnishes abundant evidence to show that Jesus was only a human being whom God chose for the reformation of his people, and repeatedly contradicts the concept of a Divine Jesus. Jesus always referred to himself as having been sent by God (John 17:3) and his followers too, considered him a man approved by God (Acts 2:22, John 3:2). He was undoubtedly called the son of God, but this title has only been employed metaphorically and in fact is used for all the chosen-ones of God (Matt 5:9; Exodus 4:22). The literal connotation of *son of God* as a Divine Being and hence the subsequent development of the Trinity Dogma was the result of Hellenistic influences on Christianity as it spread in the Gentile world. The Semitic usage of *son of God* was misunderstood and forgotten and disputes about the exact status of Jesus erupted, as recorded in early Church history.

Jesus prayed to God like all other God-fearing individuals (Luke 5:16), and engaged in spiritual exercises such as fasting (Matt. 4:2). His complete submission to God is revealed by his words of prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane: *Yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt.* (Matt. 26:39).

Furthermore, Jesus lacked knowledge of the future (Mark 13:32), as only the Divine Being possesses perfect and complete knowledge.

Jesus also taught that perfect and complete holiness belonged to the One God alone. Once he even rebuked a man who spoke of him as a *good teacher*. Jesus said to him, *Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.* (Mark 10:18)

MIRACLES OF JESUS

The Quran mentions several miracles of Jesus, including his ability to create birds, his ability to cure the leprous and the blind, and raising the dead to life (Quran 3:50). The ability to create birds is a metaphor meaning ordinary people who accepted the teachings of Jesus and were spiritually transformed into birds soaring high into the lofty regions of the spiritual firmament above all worldly concerns. The healing powers can also be understood in the spiritual sense. He restored sight to those people who were spiritually blind, restored hearing to those spiritually deaf, healed the spiritually sick, and gave life to those spiritually dead. Jesus specifically referred to the Pharisees of his day as being blind because

among other maladies they were hypocritical in nature (Matt. 23:26). Indeed, all reformers from God are spiritual physicians since the disbelievers are deaf, dumb, blind (Quran 2:19) needing revival from death (Quran 8:25).

THE CRUCIFIXION

The Jews wished to bring about the death of Jesus upon the cross for the purpose of calling him accursed in accordance with the pronouncement in Deut. 21:23 which declares, *he that is hanged is accursed of God*. His death on the cross would thus confirm him as a false Messiah. Therefore, it was incumbent upon God to save Jesus from the accursed death to prove the validity of Jesus' claim that he was a reformer sent by God. The Quran contradicts the assertion that Jesus died on the cross:

They slew him not, nor did they bring about his death on the cross. but he was made to appear to them like one crucified..... they have no certain knowledge thereof, but pursue only a conjecture. (4:158)

Thus God frustrated the plan of the Jews. Although Jesus was nailed to the cross, he did not perish on it. He was removed from the cross in an unconscious state.

The Gospels themselves provide evidence of Jesus' escape from the accursed death on the cross. Jesus foretold that his fate would be similar to that of Jonah (Matt. 12:39,40). In other words, Jesus would be placed in the tomb alive just as Jonah entered the body of the whale alive; he would remain alive in the tomb just as Jonah was alive inside the whale; and Jesus would emerge from the tomb alive just as Jonah came out of the whale alive.

The Gospel narrative of Jesus' earnest prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane is very significant. The supplication revealed Jesus' agitation of the prospect of suffering an accursed death. Jesus begged God to remove the cup (of death on the cross) away from him (Mark 14:36). Certainly, his prayer was accepted (Luke 22:43). This humble prayer of Jesus to be spared from death dispels the notion that his mission was to atone for the sins of mankind by dying on the cross. Furthermore, the cry, *My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?* uttered by Jesus on the cross when he thought he would perish clearly indicates that earlier God had promised he would save him.

The Gospels also record that a Roman soldier pierced the side of Jesus' body with a spear and blood and water immediately came out (John 19:34). The flowing out of blood is a sign of a functioning heart and a sure

testimony that life was not extinct. The fact is, it usually took days to execute a criminal by crucifixion, and for Jesus to die within a few hours, as recorded in the Gospels, is extremely unlikely.

According to Islam, Jesus did not preach salvation through atonement of sins by his death on the cross. The doctrine of Jesus' blood washing away sins is a later innovation of the genuine Christianity taught by Jesus. But the true teaching regarding salvation can still be traced in the Gospels. While the Doctrine of Atonement considers the Law a curse, Jesus insisted that the path to salvation and eternal life was through keeping the Mosaic Law (Matt. 5:17; 19:16,17), with the essential requirement being repentance (Luke 5:32) and self-denial (Matt. 16:24). Each person must carry his/ her own cross and account for ones' own actions. It is illogical for a person to suffer for the sins of someone else. No vicarious sacrifice is needed for man's salvation as God Himself can forgive the sins of His repenting servant. The philosophy of someone atoning for the sins of another is emphatically rejected in the Old Testament (Deut. 24:16, Ezekiel 18:2 and 20)

POST-CRUCIFIXION

Jesus came under the care of his devoted followers after he was removed from the cross. One of them was Joseph of Arimathea who had prepared a spacious rock-hewn tomb for Jesus. Nicodemus, also a follower of Jesus, brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes to the tomb (John 19:39). Jesus was placed in the tomb where he recovered from unconsciousness. With the medicinal herbs, Nicodemus prepared an ointment for application to the body of Jesus as an aid in healing the crucifixion wounds. It is interesting to note that the contents of the ointment administered to Jesus is recorded in ancient Latin and Greek medical texts and in fact, is termed the *Ointment of Jesus*.

According to the Gospels, Jesus was still in his earthly body of flesh and bones after emerging from the tomb (Luke 24:39) and suffered pangs of hunger (Luke 24:41). On one occasion, Jesus invited Thomas to touch his wounded hands (John 20:25-27). Therefore, it was not a glorified supernatural body, but clearly a patient's body bearing the wounds of crucifixion.

Analysis of the post-crucifixion period described in the Gospels reveals that Jesus led a low-profile existence. He hurriedly travelled away from the locality of the crucifixion (Matt. 28:10; Mark 16:7). He met only his disciples and trusted followers, and not once did he appear before his persecutors asking them to now accept him as the resurrected Messiah

who atoned for their sins. On the other hand, Jesus even resorted to disguise to avoid being recognized by others (John 20:15; 21:4). One does not expect such fear in a person who has conquered death. One would expect to find a certain level of fear in a person who wished to avoid re-arrest after having escaped from death on the cross. Fear was also expressed by Jesus' followers to the extent that some decided not to tell anyone about his emergence from the tomb. (Mark 16:8)

MIGRATION TO THE EAST

According to Christian belief, the ascension of Jesus to heaven followed his resurrection. But if an ascension really occurred, there is no reason why the Gospels of John and Matthew would fail to mention it. The references to the ascension in Mark and Luke are now considered fabrications; light thrown on ancient manuscripts of the New Testament reveals that the ascension story is a later interpolation. The term *heaven* is used for spiritual bliss which the righteous enjoy after mortal life. Heaven is not a geographical location in the universe to which one ascends.

The fundamental question that arises is, if Jesus did not ascend to heaven, where did he go to continue his prophetic mission for the Israelites? Jesus himself provided the answer when he declared, *I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel* (Matt. 15:24). Out of the twelve tribes of Israel, only two were in the region where Jesus preached. The other ten tribes, as a result of persecution and migration, domiciled in the eastern countries, especially in Afghanistan and Kashmir. These tribes became known as the Lost Tribes or Lost Sheep of the house of Israel as they became dispersed and never returned to Palestine. As Jesus was the Messiah of the Jews of Judea and the Lost Sheep of Israel, it was imperative for him to migrate eastwards to complete his mission.

The mass of evidence showing the people of Afghanistan, Kashmir and neighbouring regions to be of Israelite ancestry is overwhelming. Their physical features, language, folklore, customs, and festivals attest to their Israeli heritage. Evidence also comes from the names they give to their villages, their monuments, and ancient historical works and inscriptions:

JESUS IN INDIA

The presence of Jesus in India is recorded in ancient Indian literature. An example is the Sanskrit book entitled *Bhavishya Maha Purana* composed in the second century A.D. It describes a meeting in the Himalayas which took place between Raja Salivahana and a Messiah who was born of a virgin. The Messiah told the Raja that he had come from another country where he suffered at the hands of his enemies.

When the Messiah was asked to explain his faith, he replied, *love, truth and purity of heart.*

Jesus is also known in some ancient texts as *Bodasaf*, also pronounced *Yuz-Asaf* in the Semitic languages. It is an amalgamation of the titles *bodhisattva* and *asaf*. The title *bodhisattva* given to Jesus stems from the fact he was in India at a time of Buddhist supremacy. Large parties of Jews had accepted Buddhism. Therefore, Jesus turned his attention to the followers of Buddhism, who then became convinced of his holiness and elevated spiritual stature. The titles *bodhi* and *bodhisattva* in Buddhism denote highly exalted states. The word *asaf* in Hebrew means *gatherer*. As Jesus' mission was to travel in search of the Lost Sheep of Israel, he performed the function of a *shepherd* gathering *sheep*. In the Gospel of John, Jesus said: *I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd.* (John 10:16)

It is clear from the literature of Buddhist origin that Yuz Asaf spoke in parables, called his teachings the Gospel and arrived in the Kashmir Valley from another country to gather his people. He then died and was buried in Kashmir. According to other ancient records of Kashmir, Yuz Asaf came to Kashmir from the Holy Land during the reign of Raja Gopadatta (49–109 A.D) to proclaim his prophethood to the Israelites. Thus he was also known as Yusu (Jesus) of the Children of Israel.

TOMB OF JESUS

The Quran says Jesus found shelter on an elevated land of valleys and springs of running water (23:51), an apt description of the Valley of Kashmir. Thus Jesus found acceptance in the Land of the Lost Tribes and lived and preached among them. With the mission completed, Jesus died a natural death at the approximate age of 120. Jesus' tomb, known as the tomb of Prophet Yuz Asaf, still exists in the Khanyar quarter of the city of Srinagar, Kashmir. It has been venerated for centuries. The local inhabitants refer to the tomb as *Rauzabal*, meaning *The Honoured Tomb*.

80 YEARS AGO

(Reproduced from the April issue of the *Review of Religions* 1910)

REVIEW

We have received the first four volumes of *Personal Purity Publications*. The first two are *For Boys* and *For Young Men* and the other two, *For Girls* and *For Young Women*. These volumes are handy, instructive and concise and wholly free from all technicalities. The author has taken pains to be plain and distinct and has dealt with the subject in the manner of a layman who is otherwise fully master of the subject; and the language is so simple and illustrations so very homely that a boy or a girl of an ordinary understanding can understand them very easily. It is the parents first who are addressed and to whom it is pointed out that it is their first duty to instruct their children in the universal laws of personal purity. The parents, says the author, withhold their advice from their children under the mistaken impression that ignorance is innocence, and the result is that what they do not learn at home, they learn from their companions generally in a manner that brings bitter fruit in the end. The great enemy of personal and individual growth is self-abuse which is so very rampant now-a-days among the youth of all countries. The author chiefly inveighs against this curse which, he says, makes those that take recourse to it, dull-witted and stupid. They cannot play any healthy or manly game, they grow weaker, they are unhappy. They suffer from headache and backache and the first disease that comes along lays hold of them and finds them ready victims. They become morose, quarrelsome and mischievous. They flush to the roots of their hair at the slightest provocation, their muscles become flabby, their eyes lustreless and they look old, haggard and worn out. Their brain fails, their memory departs, and all interest in life soon vanishes away. Their probable end is first the lunatic asylum and then the grave.

The author also gives valuable advice on matters pertaining to food, drink, dress, reading etc., and we would be doing mere justice if we strongly recommend these volumes to our readers.

PROPHET FOR ALL MANKIND

(Muzaffar Clarke)

The Holy Quran bears testimony that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, was a source of mercy and blessing for all mankind:

Say, 'O mankind, truly I am a Messenger to you all from Allah to whom belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. There is no God but He. He gives life and He causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the Ummi Prophet, who believes in Allah and His words; and follow him that you may be rightly guided.' (7:159)

Blessed is He Who has sent down Al-Furqan to His servant that he may be a Warner to all the worlds. (25:2)

And We have not sent thee but as a mercy for all mankind (21:108)

The Holy Prophet himself also said:

All creatures of God form the family of man and he is the best loved of God who loves his creatures the best. O Lord! Lord of my life and everything in the universe, I affirm that all human beings are brothers. Respect God and be affectionate to the family of God.

In spite of these references many non-Muslim scholars and orientalist persist in their contention that the Holy Prophet of Islam did not see himself as a world reformer and that his vision was limited to Arab tribes living within the boundaries of Arabia. This mistaken view lies in the face of historical fact. We have only to consider the quoted verses from the Holy Quran which were revealed to the Holy Prophet during the early days of his ministry before his persecutors forced him to leave his home town, Mecca. The letters and invitations to accept Islam which he sent to the rulers of Persia, Abyssinia, Egypt, Bahrain and to many tribes of the Arabian peninsula show how perfect was the Holy Prophet's faith in God. They also show how from the very beginning he had not been sent only to a particular people but to all the people of the world. It is true that the persons to whom he sent the letters reacted in different ways. Nevertheless he fulfilled his duty to God and mankind by presenting Islam to them.

Far from being a local or national faith, Islam is international in its outlook and does not recognise tribal, national or ethnic barriers which

destroy peace and harmony. True Islam is based upon the true teachings of Islam and on the practices and sayings of the Holy Prophet. Islam embodies the eternal principles of guidance given by the Lord of the Universe and has given man the freedom to apply them in every age according to the spiritual conditions of the times. One of the beauties of Islam is that it satisfies both the demands of stability and change. In all ages the basic problems of life remain the same but the ways and means of solving them change with the passage of time. The basic principles of Islam provide for these changes.

George Bernard Shaw put the importance of Islam and the Holy Prophet into twentieth century context when he wrote:

I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high esteem because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phases of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him – the wonderful man – and in my opinion, far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the saviour of humanity. I believe that if a man like him was to assume dictatorship of the world he would succeed in a way that would bring it much needed peace and happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the people of Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable by the Europe of today.

(The Genuine Islam)

No finer tribute of the greatness of the Holy Prophet has ever been made by a non-Muslim scholar. In the estimation of Bernard Shaw he was *the wonderful man! The Saviour of humanity!* He wrote that in 1936 and since then the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam has established a network of missions and mosques in European countries in addition to numerous missions, mosques, schools, hospitals and clinics throughout the world.

Having considered the claim of the Holy Prophet to be the Messenger of God and reformer for the whole world we should next consider the universal features of Islam and why his claim should be accepted. It was revealed to him through the Holy Quran that God (Allah) is *Rabb-ul-Alameen* which means *God of the universe* Who is the Creator and Nourisher. The One Who looks after and provides for all spiritual, ethical, social, economic and other needs of His entire creation. He is not only the God of the Muslims but the God of all human beings and of all creatures in the universe. This belief in a universal God along with specific injunctions to all followers of Islam to try to cultivate the attributes of God bestows and

creates a unity of outlook among Muslims. God has catered for the spiritual and material needs of every one irrespective of nationality.

Islam requires belief in the Prophets of all revealed religions such as Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Confucius, Zoroaster, Buddha etc. The Holy Quran teaches that there is no nation to which a Warner has not been sent at one time or another with divine guidance to meet the needs of the times and in accordance with the spiritual development of the people concerned.

The Holy Quran teaches that these heavenly Messengers are to be respected because they have one common origin of truth. All Prophets have taught the absolute Unity of God and that He Himself is perfect Unity.

Holy Books were revealed before the Holy Quran but were limited in two respects. Each Book contained a code of conduct which was designed to meet the needs of people to whom it was sent. Each revelation contained fundamental truths through the ages but it also contained exhortations, commandments and prohibitions which were of a local or temporary nature. Moreover, as time passed portions of the revelation were lost, interpolated or forgotten. Those things which are of universal application have been restored by the Holy Quran. Local or temporary material has been omitted. Allah, however, out of His love and mercy, has added new material required for the present and future requirements of mankind. The Holy Quran is the final revealed Book for mankind and in it God says that He has perfected religion for mankind through the revelation of this revealed scripture which is the perfect revelation for all time.

Man has been given a very high and exalted status in God's universe. He has been endowed with the best and most appropriate faculties and qualities. He is, however, responsible for their proper use. He runs the risk of severe punishment if he misuses or abuses any of them.

God has given man the freedom of thought and speech and everyone is responsible for his or her own thoughts, motives and faults. If human beings did not have these freedoms they could not be held responsible for their actions.

There are two indispensable fundamentals of faith in Islam to which its followers must adhere. They are belief in the existence of God and his absolute Unity. Also belief in the accountability of conduct which includes thoughts, motives and good and bad actions. This accountability is

emphasised in the next life after death.

Human beings have been created so that they may develop the attributes of God. The Holy Prophet said *Adorn yourselves with divine attributes*. In order that they may achieve this purpose God has given them appropriate faculties and, in addition, He has put the universe at their service. He has put into operation laws for the regulation of the universe and by studying them people can put these forces of nature to their own beneficial use. If they misuse or abuse them then they can bring about their own destruction.

The basis of our relationship with our fellow beings is our common relationship with our Creator. Our duty to Him balances our duty to our fellow human beings and helps to adjust all our relationships. It is a self-evident truth that God stands in no need of anything and that we are dependent upon His Grace and Mercy every moment of our lives. The service of God and striving in His path means service to our fellow beings and striving to bring about conditions where goodness may flourish. The only way to establish communication between man and his Maker is through prayer and the remembrance of God which involves contemplation of His attributes. God says in the Holy Quran:

I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me.
(2:184)

Repentance is another means of approaching God. Islam takes into account man's liability to fall into error unconsciously or by design. In such a case he may retrace his steps and climb higher through sincere repentance. He not only forgives sins and errors but even wipes out their consequences. The Holy Quran teaches that one should never despair of the Mercy of God Who is Most Forgiving and Merciful. These attributes of God are not limited to any particular people. God's Grace and Mercy may be sought and won everywhere and by everyone.

Islam, the religion revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, is a practical religion. Symbolic expression has its value but we must not allow it to become a substitute for the spirit and reality of Islam. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East or to the West, but truly righteous is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the Book and the Prophets, and spends his money out of love for Him, on the kindred and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and those who ask for charity and for

ransoming the captives; and observes prayer and pays the Zakat; and those who fulfil their promise when they have made one, and the patient in poverty and afflictions and the steadfast in the time of war; it is these who have proved truthful and it is these who are truly God-fearing. 2:178)

God says regarding the character of the Holy Prophet:

Verily you have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent model, for him who hopes to meet Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah much. (33:22)

The Holy Prophet left an enduring impression on a large section of mankind. He proved himself an Excellent Exemplar as again confirmed by God in the Holy Quran:

Allah sends down His blessings on the Prophet and His angels constantly pray for him. O ye who believe, you too should invoke His blessings on him and salute him with the salutation of peace. (33:57)

The renowned Muslim scholar, Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, has described the debt which the world owes to the Holy Prophet of Islam:

In obedience to this divine command, all through the centuries Muslims have constantly prayed for and invoked Allah's blessings upon the Holy Prophet, peace be on him. There are today more than 800 million Muslims spread throughout the world in all the countries and their number is increasing daily. On average a Muslim invokes God's blessings on the Holy Prophet at least forty times during the course of each day and many of them do it much more than that. Every time the Holy Prophet's name is mentioned Allah's blessings are invoked upon him and Allah's peace is called down upon him. Every moment of the night and day millions of devoted hearts supplicate the Almighty for His blessings on the Prophet. Has there been in the history of man any other who has been so richly blessed: And it is right that it should be so. One who devoted his life so utterly to the service of God and His creatures, as did the Holy Prophet, is deserving of the deepest gratitude on the part of the whole of mankind. By constantly invoking the blessings of God upon him, those who do so seek to pay a fraction of the debt that the world owes to him. (Muhammad the Seal of the Prophets)

I would like to close by quoting a tribute to the Holy Prophet by Hazrat
(continued on page 36)

BOOK REVIEW

PROPHECY CONTINUOUS by Yohanan Friedmann.

Published by the University of California Press.
Berkeley and Los Angeles (1989 First Edition).
ISBN 0-520-05772-4, Hard Cover 230 pages.

Consistent with previous reviews of this book, Yohanan Friedmann's (hereafter YF) text is reproduced Verbatim before the formal response by the *Review Of Religions* (RR hereafter).

YF: The idea of the Perfect Man (al-Insan ul-kamil) developed by Ibn-ul-Arabi and extensively treated in the famous work of Abdul Karim al-Jili (or Jilani) is frequently reflected in Ghulam Ahmad's works. The *Taryaq-ul Qulub* starts with a lengthy poem in which Ghulam Ahmad describes the virtues of the Perfect Man and claims that all of these are found in his own personality. Furthermore, the idea that the Perfect Man (Who is identical with the prophet Muhammad) is capable of manifesting himself in the form of other persons and, more specifically, in the most perfect personality of each age seems to be the source of Ghulam Ahmad's idea of *buruz* and of his conviction that he is the perfect manifestation of Muhammad and is essentially identical with all other prophets. It is also noteworthy that in al-Jili's view the Prophet manifests himself in the various periods in order to exalt the status of the people and to straighten their crooked ways (li-yulia shanahum wa yuqima mayalanahum). This formulation is very similar to the task of Ghulam Ahmad as perceived by himself. There is, however, a significant difference between Ghulam Ahmad and his Sufi predecessor: Whereas al-Jili stresses Muhammad's ability to appear in different forms and pays little attention to the personalities in whom he appears, Ghulam Ahmad's starting point is his own ability to absorb and reflect all the perfections of the Prophet. The difference is subtle, but it has some importance for our understanding of Ghulam Ahmad's consistently self-centered attitudes. (pp.142-143).

RR: Al-Jili's *Al-Insan ul-Kamil* makes it clear that this manifestation occurs in the most perfect personality of each age. By no stretch of imagination does it imply that it can manifest itself in any Tom, Dick or Harry but only in those who are recipients of God's revelation. Since YF has already rejected Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, as the most perfect man, he, naturally, has to deny that such

perfection, to a somewhat lesser extent, can manifest itself in a faith which gets perpetuated by followers who emulate the example of their Master to the best of their ability. YF quotes from p.72 of *Haqiqatul Wahy* by the Promised Messiah but had he cared to read the next revelation to which this footnote is appended, he would have understood its true import. It states:

All praise belongs to Allah, Who has made you Messiah, son of Mary. Allah is not called to account for that which He does and they are called to account (footnote appended here). They said: Will you place one who will commit disorder therein? He said: I know that which you do not know.....

YF has repeatedly quoted various writings to show that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had ameliorated his love for the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, to such an extent that he had lost his own identity. He likens the Prophet to the radiant sun and himself as the moon reflecting that light. It is most unfair of YF to accuse someone of showing *consistently self-centered attitudes* on the basis of a false assumption from Al-Jili's works especially when that someone neither gained any political power nor obtained any material benefit from his claims but merely the abuse of his opponents and persecution of his followers at their hands.

YF: Ghulam Ahmad's works are so steeped in Sufi terminology that such points of resemblance (i.e; the idea of Sufi love [ishq] which may bring a believer to the brink of infidelity – after the love of God, I am so leavened with the love of Muhammad, if this is unbelief. I am, indeed, an infidel) could easily be multiplied Ibn-ul-Arabi's idea concerning the uninterrupted existence of non-legislative prophetology was fully integrated into Ghulam Ahmad's prophetology. In contradistinction to Ibn-ul-Arabi, Ghulam Ahmad stresses time and again that after the completion of Muhammad's mission, prophecy exists only among the Muslims and is a sign of the special favours that Allah bestowed upon them..... Ibn-ul-Arabi may have thought along similar lines, but he does not seem to have been greatly interested in this aspect of the question. Another difference between the two thinkers lies in the fact that Ibn-ul-Arabi did not name the persons who were granted the gift of non-legislative prophetology after the emergence of Islam. His reticence to do so must have considerably lessened the irritation his prophetology caused the orthodox establishment. Conversely, Ghulam Ahmad's explicit claim of prophetic status for himself infused his prophetology with great pungency and was certainly the cardinal reason for the implacable

hostility of the orthodox establishment. (p.144)

RR: It is extremely naive on YF's part to ignore that the concept of love was not a copyright of the Sufis. YF disregards the past history and sources of Islamic teachings in his vain attempt to alienate Ahmadis from the *orthodox establishment*. This orthodox establishment was awaiting anxiously the advent of a prophet when Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad made his claims; so there was nothing alien in his claim. The source of prophethood continuing in the umma is the Holy Quran. It is absurd to assume that Ibn-ul-Arabi thought along these lines but was not interested in it. It is an idea held by all Muslims. But YF elects to ignore it. We have repeated time and again in this book review that Prophets are chosen and sent by God. One cannot make oneself a prophet (i.e; if such a person claims to be a Prophet, God would seize him by the jugular vein and cause him to die an accursed death). So, if Ibn-ul-Arabi did not receive a revelation commanding him to claim to the world that he was a prophet, it is not a reflection of his humility or a desire on his part to lessen the irritation caused to the orthodoxy. If a man is addressed by God as a Prophet, his mission would demand that he has the courage to declare to the world that he had been commissioned by God to be a Prophet. Such persons are not weaklings who fear from the discharge of their responsibility. When the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was raised as a Prophet, it was not because of any ambition on his part or that his claim might infuriate the idolatrous inhabitants of Mecca, the Jews and Christians of Medina, etc. He claimed to be a Prophet despite his long-established humility and without fear of what might happen to him. He was the most trustworthy person (*amin*). He was left with no option but to claim to the world that he was a Prophet of God. Ibn-ul-Arabi did not name the person after the emergence of Islam because by his time no such person had been appointed by God. YF, therefore, apparently makes a difference between Ahmadis and others only to infuriate Muslims further against the claims of the Promised Messiah. He thus falsely creates the impression that he is in sympathy with the general body of Muslims regarding the truth of the Holy Prophet but that he is at a difference with the claims of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

YF: Other Sufi masters, such as al-Junaya, Abdul-Qadir al-Jilani, and others, are mentioned by Ghulam Ahmad and later Ahmadi writers as thinkers whose ideas deserve to be emulated. In the context of Indian Islam, however, the most significant reference is to Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi. Ghulam Ahmad mentions Sirhindi's prediction that the *ulama*

will oppose the Messiah at the time of his appearance and will consider his views to be contradictory to the Quran and the Sunna. It is, indeed, an irony of the intellectual history of Indian Islam that Ahmad Sirhindi, who has come to enjoy in the twentieth century the image of a paragon of orthodoxy, should have provided only a few years earlier, inspiration for the arch-heretic of modern Indian Islam. It goes without saying that the conditions that existed in British India on the eve of the twentieth century enabled Ghulam Ahmad to express his beliefs freely and explicitly without exposing himself to the dangers that threatened a prophetic claimant in medieval Muslim society. (pp 145-146)

RR: Turning first to the last remarks, we have responded to the British association in our earlier review. As far as a prophetic claimant in medieval Muslim society is concerned, no one made such a claim and then withstood the acid test of his prophetic claim. Now we turn to the rest of YF's conclusions. A Jewish professor sitting on the seat of judgement and determining who is an arch-heretic in his claims of prophethood and who is not, appears to us to be extremely bizarre, hollow and unrealistic. According to YF's beliefs, the whole basis of Islam is false; the Founder of Islam was false and subject to satanic influence in the revelation received by him; and, hence, the Holy Quran was not the revealed word of God but a book concocted by the Holy Prophet of Islam, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Then to pick Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad for his venomous attacks and not sparing all other Muslim Sufis who were recipient of God's words is something that defies comprehension. It of course seems to be a conscious and wilful attempt to create further mistrust and contempt between the so-called *orthodox establishment* and the already persecuted Community of Muslim followers who believe in the claims of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. How can he be accused of being an arch heretic of the kind of Islam believed by Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi when Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad speaks so highly of him? But, for YF, such words are further evidence only of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's deriving inspiration from past Sufi thinkers. The Jews and Christians also considered that the Holy Prophet of Islam, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was somehow inspired by his contemporary Jews and Christians while he was at Medina irrespective of the significant difference between the Holy Bible and the Holy Quran. Truth is not the exclusive monopoly of any religion. But Jews and Christians allege that he copied garbled versions of Biblical stories where these match with the Holy Quran and that the Prophet erred wherever the two accounts differ. Nonetheless the Holy Quran rectified the exaggeration and interpolation suffered by *inspired authors* of the Bible and set the records right. Unlike his

Sufi predecessors, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad challenged the teachings of the Jews, Christians, Arya Samajists, Buddhists, Sikhs and the agnostics and proved beyond any reasonable doubt that their teachings led man away from God. He also claimed that he was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi chosen by God. Perhaps YF could provide us with the appropriate evidence proving that in all such writings Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was inspired by past Sufi writers and that this *self-centered arch-heretic* was incapable of logical conclusion or being inspired by God.

YF: Mahmud Ahmad also took issue with the Lahori view that Ghulam Ahmad was, at most, a *partial (Juzi)* and *deficient (naqis)* prophet whose prophethood was not different from that of *muhaddathun* Mahmud Ahmad does agree that Ghulam Ahmad had expressed such a view of himself, and in some passages had even denied his prophethood altogether. He argues, however, that these views were abrogated (*mausukh*) by Ghulam Ahmad's later pronouncements on the subject. Mahmud Ahmad goes to considerable lengths to establish for Ghulam Ahmad's works a chronology suitable for such an understanding. It is interesting to note that Mahmud Ahmad was willing to argue along these lines, though the Movement rejected the *naskh* theory with regard to the Quran itself. (pp.153)

RR: It is even more interesting to note YF's misunderstanding of *Haqiqatul Nabuwwat* (pp16–18, 121–123) by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II, who clearly means that the earlier writings of the Promised Messiah were superseded by his later writings. Had YF been serious in his assertion, he should have set out his own research and disputed the chronology of the Promised Messiah's writings. *Mansukh* in this context cannot be understood to be *naskh* of God in the verbal revelation revealed to the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of God be upon him, and as set out in the Holy Quran. To call the earlier case to be *naskh* is illogical.

YF: *Jihad* is undoubtedly one of the most important elements in the Islamic world-view. In contradistinction to some other religions, Islam has always ascribed decisive importance to its worldly success. Its military triumphs were considered proofs of divine support as well as indications of the justice of the Muslim cause. The many reasons for the extraordinary success of the early Muslim wars of conquest – political, economic, social and military – are beyond the scope of our discussions. What matters here is that *jihad* not only has been part of Muslim history, but also became one

of the important commandments of Islam, frequently presented as a means to exalt Allah's word, to honour His religion, and to humiliate its rivals E. Tyan classified the relevant (Quranic) verses into four categories: those which encourage the invitation to Islam by means of peaceful persuasion; those which enjoin fighting to repel aggression; those which enjoin military initiative except in the four sacred months; and, finally, those which enjoin military initiative absolutely, whatever the time and place..... One may say, in general, that this was the way in which classical Islam explained the divergencies between the various Quranic verses dealing with *Jihad* and arrived at the conclusion that the final – and eternally valid – form of the commandment envisages an unrestricted war against the infidels, a war that will last until the whole world is incorporated into the *dar-ul-Islam*. (pp.165–166)

RR: It seems strange that YF firstly dismisses the reasons for the early Muslim conquests as being beyond the scope of his discussion and arbitrarily concludes that the Quranic *commandment envisages an unrestricted war against the infidels* for no rhyme or reason. (For a better appraisal of the freedom of conscience enshrined in Islam – let us say, in contradistinction to other religions – the reader is referred to *Murder in the name of Allah* by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad – Lutterworth Press, Cambridge 1989). YF must have read the debate with Abdullah Athim wherein the Christians made allegations about the early Muslim battles. YF ignores the arguments of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and lands the allegation that *Islam has always ascribed decisive importance to its worldly success* in the lap of another bitter writer, W. C. Smith. Where was this *always* when the Holy Prophet was being persecuted during his Meccan life or for a number of years when the Meccans engaged in the battles of Badr, Uhud and the Ditch? Where does it state that *the military triumphs were indications of the justice of the Muslim cause? By the way, it was not merely in the military field that early Muslims excelled others. Architecture, mathematics, alchemy, medicine etc. owe much to Islam. Why should one exclude the political causes which led to the wars of conquest as the Muslim civilization began to expand just as so many other civilizations expanded before it? Which verse of the Holy Quran enjoins military action irrespective of the reason, time and place? Whereas it is true that the concept of Jihad had been misconstrued out of all reasonable context by people who used religion as a means to exploit the Muslims to serve their own political ends, the Promised Messiah declared the concept of a belligerent Islam as being null and void for cause ascribed by such exploiters in this day and age. YF accuses Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who set out to undermine messianic expectations when he transformed the Mahdi into a totally peaceful figure.* (pp.172). There is no

logical basis for ascribing literal meaning to the prophecies about the Mahdi because this renders the task of the Mahdi beyond the capabilities of any human being. At the time of Jesus, peace be upon him, the Jews held some very strange views about the Messiah but Jesus dismissed them. Therefore, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad did not undermine any expectations; in fact the expectation had grown out of reasonable proportion. Then on pp.173 and 174, YF raises the ugly head of there being a different *qirat* of *yaiqatilunu* in Ch 22:40 as *yuqatiluna* as if the version preferred by Ahmadis (the former) is not accepted by other Muslims. We have already commented on a similar difference in *qirat* from the textus receptus in an earlier part of this review. On pages 174–175, YF repeats his new obsession with *naskh* that it *resulted in the development of the abrogation theory in the first place: the existence in the Quran of divergent views on matters that had to be unequivocally determined during the formative period of Islamic law*. Regretably, YF is wrong in this. The divergent views are complementary to each other and a subsidiary of the previously revealed verse. If there is any contradiction, perhaps YF could draw our attention to these. In the absence of any contradiction, nascent Islam gathered momentum during the revelatory process. For instance, the prohibition of wine did not *abrogate* any previously revealed commandment nor did it lead to any confusion when the relevant verses were revealed in Medina. It thus superseded the Biblical teachings and it is in this sense that *naskh* should be viewed.

YF: The basic idea of Muslim political thought is that Muslims ought to be ruled by Muslims. Islamic law deals only rarely with a situation in which Muslims are subject to an infidel government, and such a situation is clearly considered transitory. Islamic literature contains a maxim that a government may survive with unbelief but not with injustice..... It has been recently shown, however, that Muslim writers quoting this maxim are generally far from concluding that an infidel can be preferable to a Muslim, and they only intend to stress the importance of justice by referring to a hypothetical situation (footnote: J. Sadan, *Community and extra-community as a legal and literary problem, Israel Oriental Studies* 10 (1980) 102–115. It may be noted, however, that the non-Muslim Mongol conqueror Hulagu used the maxim to extract legitimization of his rule from contemporary *Ulama* *ibid* pp.114) (pp.178–179)

RR: This is a hollow claim. It is inconceivable that Islam should claim for itself a universal status and require the one billion Muslims who follow this faith today to be ruled only by Muslims. Where does it say that? For a Muslim, ultimate authority rests with God Almighty. Whether the reins of

government are controlled by a monarchy or a democracy or by Muslims or non-Muslims, Muslims are required to live as law-abiding citizens of that government. To quote an Israeli study of this subject produced during the period of the injustice of Zionist expansion or to cite Hulagu's decision as being binding on all Muslims is totally irrelevant illogical and a pointless attack on Islamic law. Calling its value of justice and equity as being no more than a hypothetical situation is opposed to the history of Islam.

YF: We have seen above that on the question of prophecy Ghulam Ahmad was deeply influenced by an important stream in medieval Sufi thought. On the question of *jihad* the situation is different. Ghulam Ahmad's theory of *jihad* seems to be substantially his own. He was able to develop his ideas on this issue by ascribing absolute validity to the Quranic verses that support defensive *jihad* while considering those which enjoin an all-out assault on the infidels as relating only to specific occasions during the Prophet's lifetime. This runs contrary to a long-standing tradition of Muslim exegesis, and we have seen above that Ghulam Ahmad was able to argue along these lines only after he abolished the theory of abrogation (*naskh*) in the Quranic Ghulam Ahmad's theory of *jihad* is open to serious objections from the historical point of view: the idea that Allah commanded the Prophet to fight the infidels only when Islam was in danger of destruction does not tally with the fact that the verses enjoining *jihad* were revealed in Medina, where the Muslim community was progressively growing in influence and strength. The last verses on this issue, such as those included in *Surat-ul-Tawba*, state from a period when Islam had already begun its victorious march..... Islamic law retained the notion of *jihad* even after Islam had become an empire and was in no danger whatsoever. Strictly speaking, it is therefore not possible to accept Ghulam Ahmad's analysis of the idea of *jihad* as historically valid; this analysis must be considered (as) bearing a conspicuous apologetic tinge. (pp.180)

RR: Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad did not package Islam for his contemporary Muslims nor did he render any apologies to any one. There is nothing in the Quran which has been abrogated. This is a fundamental principle accepted by all Muslim schools of jurisprudence and prevails in exegesis. It is true that some commentators have digressed into this unnecessary discussion in an effort to justify some traditions instead of testing the traditions on the anvil of the Holy Quran and rejecting them if they contradicted any teachings of the Holy Quran. The teachings on *jihad* were revealed when the Muslims were surrounded by adversaries.

The verses in *Sura Al-Tawba* teach Muslims to be vigilant, not to lower their guard, the principles to be observed in drawing up treaties, etc. and this chapter was revealed when the community was nonetheless threatened by the incident in Tabuk and whilst hypocrites conspired their plots. Unfortunately, the use of the concept of *jihad* in much later years was used for political exploitation and has to be viewed in that context.

YF: Yet the main reason for the virtually universal condemnation of the Ahmadiyya lies in the fact that Ghulam Ahmad's religious claim was considered disrespectful to Muhammad. In Islam there can hardly be a transgression more serious than that, and the Persian verse saying *be ecstatic with God but sober and cautious with Muhammad* is an excellent reflection of this attitude. (footnote: it is noteworthy that similar accusations were directed also against Ahmad Sirhindi). Despite the infinite praise, respect and glorification which Ghulam Ahmad lavished on the Prophet, his claim was seen as incompatible with Muhammad's honour..... The non-Ahmadi prophethood the perfection of Muhammad's prophethood depended upon the according of prophetic status to Ghulam Ahmad. This interpretation of Ahmadi thought resulted in the emergence of an unbridgeable gap between the Ahmadiyya and the mainstream of Sunni Islam. (pp.186)

RR: This is an unfair conclusion. The Persian saying is a slur on Islam and forms no part of Islamic teaching. YF has demonstrated in numerous sections of his book the sincere respect held by the Promised Messiah for the Prince of Peace, Muhammad, the Khatmun Nabiyyeen, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. His contemporaries could find no fault with his noble character nor could they find any statement made by the Promised Messiah which was incompatible with the Holy Prophet's honour. The unbridgeable gap resulted from the blindness of the so-called *ulemas* and their poor comprehension of the fundamental teachings of Islam rather than anything said or done by the Promised Messiah against the honour of the Holy Prophet of Islam, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

We have commented very briefly on only some of the allegations made by Yohanan Friedmann in his book: it should not be misunderstood that in respect of other allegations, the absence of a comment by the *Review of Religions* should not be construed in any way as an indication of our agreement with this author. Indeed, the Ahmadiyya Movement is mature

enough to take all criticism on the chin but we reserve the right to respond to criticism which is based on unfair allegations, concoctions of the truth or which is used to make attacks on Islam itself. But in keeping with the nature of a review, our response has of necessity been brief. We acknowledge that at the time of writing, YF did not have access to a series of booklets wherein the Head of Jama'at Ahmadiyya, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV has made a detailed reply to the ill-founded allegations contained in the Government of Pakistan's *White Paper* and repeated by YF in his book.

We trust that having studied these booklets and re-read the *voluminous* books of the Promised Messiah, YF will be in a better position to understand the Ahmadiyya view point. We sincerely hope that as a result he will be able to revise his views in any subsequent edition of his book before authors who do not have the time to conduct their own independent research begin to quote YF as if he is an authority on a status bestowed by God Almighty and most certainly beyond the scope of authors who before launching into such a research have already made up their mind to reject a claimant.

Editor's note: A reader has commented on the incident of Satanic Verses in relation to *naskh* as set out in an earlier part of this review. Whereas we had hoped that the summary dismissed such a notion, we shall be devoting a separate article on this specific subject in a subsequent edition.

(from page 26)

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam:

Our Holy Prophet, peace be on him, was a great reformer for the proclamation of truth and restored to the world the truth that had been lost. No Prophet shares with him the pride that he found the whole world in darkness and by his appearance that darkness was converted into light. He did not die until the people among whom he had appeared had cast aside the garment of paganism and had adopted the role of the Unity of God. Such perfect reform was particular to him that he taught a people who were at the level of animals the ways of humanity. In other words he converted wild beasts into men and made them men of God and breathed spirituality into them, and created a relationship between them and the True God.

DIVINE ORIGIN OF AHMADIYYAT

(Tahir Ahmad Khan)

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, The Promised Messiah and Mahdi was born in Qadian, India, in 1835 and passed away in 1908. He was appointed by Allah to this exalted rank in order to revive Islam in the 14th century A.H. Since Islam was established by Allah to be mankind's perfect religion it was but natural that He and only He may raise among Muslims a person to serve as a guide for those whose beliefs are erroneous. Wrong beliefs and misdirected faith can never lead to correct actions. Therefore it is necessary for all Muslims to hearken to the call of such a chosen one from Allah who endeavours to reform the Muslims, enjoins upon them to enter the fold of a divinely established Jama'at, literally guarantees the revival of the Straight Path and re-establishes the superiority of the True Islam over all other beliefs and religions.

Heavenly Signs in support of his claim have now been recognised by more than ten million people all over the world. The fact that the numbers of his followers are increasing is in itself a sign in favour of his greatness and truth. Allah blesses that which He has established Himself and causes it to succeed against all odds.

No matter how vast their economic, governmental, or religious influence may be, political leaders, military rulers, leaders of revolutions, kings, presidents, nominated scholars or self-appointed custodians of holy shrines, all of them cannot be free from vain talk and idle boasts. Since they have not been appointed by Allah to safeguard religious purity, it follows that they cannot revive that which was instituted by Allah. It is only Allah who has the power to revive religion and establish a group in His name, the timing of which is also ordained by Him. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

O children of Adam, if Messengers come to you from among yourselves, rehearsing My Signs unto you, then whoso shall fear God and do good deeds, on them shall come no fear nor shall they grieve. (7:36)

Terrestrial rulers, nevertheless, form part of Allah's grand design, but the influences they leave on religion He alone knows. On the other hand the effects of divinely appointed persons on religion become evident for everyone to experience and observe.

The Jama'at Ahmadiyya which was established on the basis of revelation by divine command in 1889 has been showered with His blessings and great successes. False claimants to divine revelation and all their followers never escape the wrath of Allah. The Promised Messiah's claim was published in 1891. During the month of Ramazan in 1894, there occurred eclipses of both the sun and the moon. This was a powerful and clear sign for all to see with physical eyes according to that which had been foretold in the Hadith. Likewise, the era of the Promised Messiah was foretold during which there would be means of transport working with fire, all means of communications would become vast and the camel would be rendered obsolete. The appearance of the same Promised Messiah came about at the head of the 14th century A.H., also in accordance with a prophecy in the Hadith. The Breaking of the Cross has also been rendered in the most powerful and conclusive terms, a singular honour which had been reserved for the Promised Messiah and Mahdi for so many centuries. The scores of books written by him in Urdu, Arabic and Persian form the everlasting foundations for the Islamic Renaissance upto the Day of Judgement. All these signs and historical facts, coupled with the sheer and total absence of any other enduring claimant is enough for the fair-minded believer whether layman or learned to accept the divine call of the time and prevent an increase in the error of their ways.

The Holy Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) in Arabic. Hence it was absolutely necessary that the Promised Messiah too, should have complete mastery over this language. Knowledge to this effect was also bestowed on him by Allah through revelation. He had thrown a challenge to all men whether Arabs or non-Arabs to match his knowledge of the language. None accepted this challenge because all knew that his knowledge of Arabic language was indeed very vast.

During the 19th century, especially in the latter half, efforts of Christian missionaries in India were at their highest. Their main target being Islam. At the same time the decline of the Muslims was at its lowest. Centuries of terrestrial power had caused them to relegate the practice of religion to a mere ritual. Lack of knowledge had definitely lapsed into a lack of faith. Many had even started worshipping the graves of dead saints. The remnants of such practices can still be found in varying degrees even up to this day. In these conditions the day to day affairs of religion like prayers, marriage, funeral services etc., were totally in the hands of those who could memorise the required verses of the Holy Quran and some other Arabic texts. Because an overwhelming majority of the

people had already come to accept their religion as a mere ritual, a cursory and superficial knowledge of Arabic was quite enough to make them leaders in moral affairs, and be regarded as mullahs. These mullahs behaved very much like the high priests of Roman times, and who were the persecutors of Jesus, son of Mary, holding complete sway over their followers. This was the situation existing in India. The case of Muslim communities in other parts of the world differed only in the degree of fanaticism of the mullah. On the other hand, Christian missionaries spurred on by the ascendancy of their mentors and the obviously complete weakness of their quarry, pursued their preaching very intelligently and relentlessly. They fully exploited the apparent simplicity of the Christian Faith, the miraculous powers of Jesus (sometimes as a man and sometimes as God), the selfless devotion of celibate priests and nuns, the awe-inspiring rhetorics and the general progress of the Christian people. They encouraged public debates on religion with full confidence and fearlessly challenged the Quran, and thereby succeeded in a large measure, in creating doubts among Muslims that the Quran might not be the Word of God. In the history of Islam if ever there was a challenge from Christianity, this period represented its high point. Translations of the Bible were circulated in large numbers. Since there are many events which have been recorded in the Bible prior to the revelation of the Holy Quran, they accused the Holy Prophet of plagiarising the Bible. In total disregard of history they also tried to put the Holy Prophet's person into disrepute. Missionary schools, colleges and other societies were established on a large scale in India as well as in other parts of the Muslim world in order to substantiate the claims of the padres. In short, no stone was left unturned in pursuit of this tireless missionary work to break the Muslims' will. The edifices of Islamic education or whatever was left in them, were thoroughly permeated by Christian thought. The breeze of a Christian victory was felt strongly especially towards the end of the last century when scholars of the World Council of Churches gathered in India and declared that there was no further need to waste time in arguing against Islam because Muslims do not respond with clear and appropriate arguments in return. This was not an expression of despair, but indeed quite the opposite. They had completed their arguments, and without getting a reasoned and logical response they understandably assumed that the Muslims were now willy nilly drifting towards a final and total intellectual capitulation. A virtual insult to injury was the disturbing lack of intellectual crusade or even moral support offered against the Christian onslaught from any other Muslim quarter of the world. Hence the Christian scholars in this gathering were in effect saying with one voice: we close our case.

In retrospect, however, it is only today that we realise and observe that in reality the case had not been closed and a lot remained to be said. We now examine that reality and point out in clear terms as to who showed us the positive, logical and reasoned approach in order to turn that reality into the concrete manifestations of the resurgence of True Islam. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

..... This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you and chosen for you Islam as religion.... (5:4)

Verily it is We Who have sent down this Exhortation and most surely We are its Guardian. (15:10)

If the religion was perfect and the Book was guarded by Allah Himself, then where was the problem? Lack of knowledge of their own religion had resulted in a weak faith. It was under these circumstances that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad appeared as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi in Islam to revive the original spirit of righteous deeds and peaceful behaviour. He emphasised in unequivocal terms that there was no danger to Islam because Allah is its protector. The only danger being to the unrighteous who arrogate upon themselves the duty to protect religion without first ensuring their own good moral conduct. In contrast to these people some righteous Muslims had already started physically searching for the Messiah or Mahdi as foretold by the Holy Prophet. It is the eternal way of Allah that during times of great religious tumult and consternation He always informs the righteous ones of His own choice that divine revelation has been showered upon someone amongst a particular people. This is the reason why people usually start searching for a divine sign or divinely appointed personality, during or immediately prior to his actual appearance. Apart from other prophets, this phenomenon was certainly witnessed in the case of Jesus and the Holy Prophet. It is irrefutably clear that it also happened for the Promised Messiah and Mahdi.

Thus did Allah intervene to protect Islam and appointed a Reformer in Islam in order to illustrate the correct path and save the Muslims from degeneration and utter destruction. Those who were searching for the truth found it through him. Those who were waiting patiently believed in him immediately upon hearing the news about the claims of this divinely appointed Reformer. There were also many who accepted him as a Warner and consequently started fearing Allah and adopted righteous conduct thus avoiding arrogant conduct. Out of this transformation arose a manifest improvement in moral fibre. In opposition were the mullahs,

and, of course, the well entrenched Christian missionaries. The immediate effect of this much awaited reformatory process established by Allah, was that a substantial number from among the righteous seekers of truth accepted this divine call whole-heartedly, whereas among the mullah-led opponents there were many who opposed tooth and nail, exhibiting a hard-heartedness of the worst kind. Messengers of God are never welcomed immediately upon appearance amidst a people. A vast number opposes them mindlessly. In this connection, it is enough to note a basic fact which is indeed a trait of human nature. A person's hard-heartedness takes root and multiplies only after he observes the clear and decisive success of his perceived opponent. There would be no logic or compulsion to adopt such an attitude towards a false claimant to prophethood, or self-styled religious reformer, because he is always fickle, and treacherous, bearing the seeds of self-destruction. Of course, if such a claimant becomes physically aggressive, appropriate measures may be taken for self-defence. But as long as he repeats his claims peacefully, the matter rests between him and Allah. It is up to Allah to take him to account. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

It is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds. And if he had forged and attributed any sayings to Us, We would, surely, have seized him by the right hand. And then, We would have cut his life-vein, And not one of you could have held Our punishment off from him.
(69:44-48)

The hard-hearted never trust Allah to do what He has promised. Hence, it was but natural that a wild and abusive cacophony should surround the promised Messiah's call. Contemptuous names were coined. False murder charges were brought against him. Extracts from his books and speeches were deliberately taken out of context and made the object of the lowest ridicule. Outright misquotations were spread and published shamelessly. Books were written especially for the purpose of ridiculing the Promised Messiah personally and also as the Ahmadiyya movement. Christians and even the Hindu Arya Samajists sprinkled their books liberally with attacks on the person of the Holy Prophet. Since Ahmadiyyat is nothing but pure Islam and the Promised Messiah had expressed his eternal love for the Holy Prophet throughout his life and works, it was impossible to write against him without denigrating the Holy Prophet and Islam. But the mullahs and other scholars of questionable repute turned a blind eye towards this basic fact and willingly tolerated the non-Muslims' attacks regardless of the extent of false and abusive accusations towards Islam. Their mindless animosity towards the Promised Messiah thus stood confirmed. They were not

defending Islam, but their own selves; after all, it was their very existence as the unchallenged interpreters and masters in religion which was at stake. If he, they thought, was right, then they surely, would lose all the privileges which their laity innocently bestowed on them. Once drawn into this pattern of self-defence, there was no choice but to make intellectual compromises with their newly acquired friends, the Christian priests and reverends who abounded in India with awe-inspiring force. These compromises can be found in their books, speeches and interpretations written after the advent of the Promised Messiah. The concept that Islam was spread by the sword, Jesus is sitting next to Allah in his physical body, all religions say the same thing and other attempts to reconcile dogmatic differences in religion were promoted. This was the outcome based on a marriage of convenience.

It must be mentioned here, that during the time when many Muslims had joined hands with the Christians against the Promised Messiah, it was the latter who had counter-attacked the very foundations of Christian beliefs and showed clearly to the world the falsity of their doctrines. The arguments used by him against the Christians were so cogent and conclusive that any further rise of Christianity was effectively checked and the tables were turned. This was their reason for the alliance with the opponents of Ahmadiyyat. It is impossible and vain to imagine that they did so to help True Islam against false so called Islam. Missionaries are not unintelligent people. Planning sensibly is the essence of missionary work. Thus, they were trying to kill two birds with one stone. Through the alliance they were giving strong currency to Christian concepts among the Muslims and simultaneously pitting the main body of Muslims against Ahmadiyyat, the True Islam, because the Breaking of the Cross was one of the divinely appointed and openly declared aims of the Promised Messiah. This unholy alliance presents itself as a clear proof in support of the True Islam. Furthermore hitherto declared opponents suddenly joined hands to crush a peace advocating person who claimed to have been appointed by Allah. Obnoxious as it may seem today, it is a historical fact. Much is not talked about it today, because it was based on ulterior motives and such aberrations never last. Truth, however was evident to genuine seekers, and there occurred a change in the general Muslim psyche. Divine revelation is indeed a bounty and mercy from Almighty Allah. The tumult, consternation and despair changed into a strong hope. The alliance fizzled. The tide of the missionaries and their friends subsided. Islam had triumphed, in the intellectual and spiritual sense.

This religious controversy won by the Promised Messiah was not

widely published. As a matter of fact it was suppressed. How could the almost insignificant minority be admitted to have prevailed over the majority, the learned and the scholars? It was certainly the greatest cover-up act of the 19th century, at least as far as matters of religious debates were concerned.

Religious apathy cannot be cured on a mass level over a few decades. The mission of Jesus was also essentially reformist in nature, in that he did not bring any new Law, but confirmed and fulfilled the Mosaic Law, stressing and reviving the original concepts forgotten by the Jews. It took time and Divine Signs for the message to sink in. Indeed the early Christians were persecuted for about three centuries after Jesus' time. Quite naturally, therefore, the Promised Messiah was generally scorned and his successes played down by the majority. The ability to tolerate human injustice and yet continue its reformatory mission without material reward, is the strength which Allah has given to the Jama'at Ahmadiyya in order to conduct its activities in a peaceful manner and re-establish the religion of peace in this world. That is Divine Justice.

Although the arguments had been won, the Divine Community established, yet there still existed some flimsy grounds in order to mask the truth. The Turkish Empire still represented many misguided hopes and aspirations of the intellectually tired people. We can say today, after a century, that the Empire was decaying in all spheres of human activity, but this fact was not generally accepted by those who considered political power essential for the defence of all that was represented by the Sultan, including the office of the Caliphate. (The Sultan was also the Khalifa of the Empire, a successor among the believers). In order to keep the record straight, and remind those who oppose the Promised Messiah and his Community that much pain, anguish and despair was expressed by all those people who took Allah's promise of Khilafat as an unfulfilling birthright of the believers, irrespective of their moral condition. Although the Rightly Guided Khilafat had been taken away long ago, even the last mere symbolic representation was totally finished now. This was the most dreaded final disaster, because in their eyes the Promised Reformer had not yet appeared despite the advent of the prophesied time (14th century A.H.). Religious scholars set out to resolve this gross contradiction between their belief and the actual events. History gives us clear evidence of the utter failure of the Khilafat Movement initiated by despairing scholars to re-institute this office. The failure is surely a Divine Sign that without revelation from Allah, man alone cannot revive an institution which must be based on Divine Guidance if it is to be worth its name. As we know from history, let alone the Khilafat of Right Guidance, they could

not even re-establish a mere symbolic representation.

Was Allah unmindful? Did He not promise *Khilafat* till the Day of Judgement? Neither is Allah forgetful nor did He go back on His promise, because He promised *Khilafat* not to all believers, but only to the righteous among them. Hidden inside Allah's promises for the future are also His prophecies. If those believers who were given *Khilafat* forget righteousness, then *Khilafat* is bound to be snatched away from them and vouchsafed to those among them who would be righteous. Looking back today we marvel at Allah's Wisdom and Planning. The *Khilafat* of Islam had already been vouchsafed in the Jama'at Ahmadiyya. The Promised Messiah's divinely appointed mission had been completed. The tree had been planted by Allah.

As the Jama'at Ahmadiyya is of divine origin, then all the features of its establishment must, therefore, be full of great promise. Not surprisingly, no deep research is necessary for us to recognise that it is a mirror image of the original tree planted by Allah, the greatest Law-Giver, through His Seal of the Prophets, Muhammad (peace be on him), more than fourteen centuries ago.

The *Khilafat* has been firmly established since 1908. This is a Divine blessing which no true believer of Islam can deny. The Quran says:

*Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will, surely, make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors (from among) those who were before them.....
(24:56)*

The subsequent continuation of the *Khilafat* of the Promised Messiah is a great Sign in support the truth of his claim. Those who deny now, invite the burden of proof upon themselves, failing which, they should fear Allah and seek His guidance in this respect. He guides those who seek the truth from Him. It is no secret that this Community is organised on the basis of the early *Khilafat* of Islam, and devoted for nothing but the propagation of Islam. For this purpose funds are not sought from those who deny the Promised Messiah's claim. It is not at all a charity organisation as such. A declaration of religious allegiance is necessary to render support to the propagation of Islam. Allah does not require charity for Himself from man, but it is for man to spend for his own spiritual benefit. Such is the Divine Grace upon this Community, that it has never and will never beg for money. The *Khalifa* makes a call to the followers of The Promised Messiah, who have the ability to respond with the true sense of self-purification, by way of sacrifice of wealth, time and property.

What greater measure of purification and *Jihad* can be inculcated in a world so much in love with material gain, comfort and leisure. A world full of insecurity and money-mindedness to the extreme!

Allah says in the Holy Quran:

Those who, if We establish them in the earth, will observe Prayer and pay the Zakat and enjoin good and forbid evil. And with Allah rests the final issue of all affairs. (22:42)

It follows, that it will only be that Community observing these injunctions which can rightly claim to enjoin good and forbid evil. Any organisation, not established by Allah's Command, cannot rightly claim to do what the above verse implies. Only the Jama'at Ahmadiyya has been practising these injunctions for more than a century. Many others entered this field but have long since left the scene. Their fates were sealed the day they arrogated upon themselves the task of creating a jama'at, society, organisation, brotherhood or *Khilafat* for the purpose of reviving religion according to their own fancies. They certainly overstepped their rights in this world. After all, Allah is the protector of the purity of Islam, He is responsible to guide Muslims and let them be sure as to where the righteous group is among believers whom He has entrusted with the heavy, yet blessed burden of representing true Islam.:

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. (1:6,7)

The notion that ever since the revelation of the Quran, all the numerous sects of Muslims are on the straight path, and hence no further explicit guidance is necessary to show them that path is an erroneous theory. It shows a misunderstanding of the meaning of the Surah Fateha, a portion of which is quoted above, and which all Muslims recite repeatedly in their daily prayers. All sects of Muslims agree that it is a most comprehensive prayer taught to man by Allah. Ritualisation of this bountiful prayer signifies a total lack of trust in Allah as the True Guide. Only those can tread the straight path, who possess divine guidance through *Khilafat*, as promised in the Holy Quran (24:56). The maximum which the others can do is to form societies, associations, leagues, brotherhoods, fronts, alliances and similar organisations, holding man-made charters and constitutions above their professed religious beliefs. Suffice it to say, that neither man-made establishments guarantee the illumination of the Straight Path, nor can they avoid treading the

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EMBODIMENT OF THE QURAN

(*Abraham Okimo*)

Such were the above words used by Hazrat Ayesha, wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) in describing his character. He taught the Quran to others and practised what he preached.

It should be remembered that words have to be translated into actions to demonstrate the presence of moral virtues. How can one preach to others what one does not understand and practise? The best way of preaching is through personal example. The Holy Prophet practised whatever he taught.

The best model is the one who has experienced adversity and success, setting a practical example of proper conduct under all kinds of circumstances. This is what the Holy Prophet of Islam practised all his life from early childhood. He passed through many stages during his life from a young orphan to a king. All kinds of diverse events occurred during his life which called upon him to meet and handle in the proper manner. He was a perfect model in all walks of life. He was a friend, a neighbour, business man, soldier, general, judge, adviser, statesman, husband, father and a king. He did not preach only theoretical religion but demonstrated the teachings of Islam in all situations. He was, indeed, an ideal exemplar illustrating that example is better than precept.

FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness, for example, requires situations for its demonstration otherwise nobody can truly claim to have exercised it. The mere preaching of mercy is of little use unless one has opportunities to show it. No doubt, according to the New Testament, Jesus is reported to have asked God to forgive his tormentors but he was not actually in a position to show practical forgiveness because they were not at his mercy. In the early days of Islam the Holy Prophet and his small band of devoted followers were subjected to barbarous persecution by the Meccans. Eventually they were compelled to find refuge in Medina. Ten Years later the Holy Prophet returned to Mecca with ten thousand followers and his persecutors were at his mercy. He could have taken revenge upon them or severely punished them for the atrocities they had earlier inflicted. He would have been quite justified to have taken retaliatory action against them. On the other hand he showed merciful magnanimity and forgave them for their cruelties.

One of his formidable enemies was Ikrama, son of Abu-Jahl, his most implacable enemy who was killed in the battle of Badr. On the Holy Prophet's triumphant return to Mecca Ikrama fled from the town. His wife followed him and persuaded him to return and seek pardon from the Prophet who graciously granted it to him.

The Holy Prophet passed through all conditions of life. He experienced adversity and prosperity and conducted himself in an exemplary manner under all circumstances. His life was a perfect commentary of the practical teachings of the Holy Quran. He practised every virtue and avoided every sin.

FAITHFUL TO PROMISES

The Quran instructs that one should fulfill one's promises and agreements:

And who are watchful of their trusts and their covenants.
(23:9)

Before the battle of Badr two of the Prophet's companions were intercepted by the enemy on their way to join him. They were released, however, on the condition that they would not side with the Prophet. Although every man was sorely needed to participate in the vital battle that lay ahead the Prophet insisted that they should keep their promise and not join in although his followers were outnumbered by three to one.

JUSTICE

On the matter of justice the Holy Quran says:

Verily Allah enjoins justice, and the doing of good to others.
(16:91)

O ye who believe! be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely Allah is aware of what you do. (5:9)

Once a woman of high social standing was found guilty of stealing. Her relatives endeavoured to persuade the Prophet to overlook her crime. He responded by saying that in the past nations had been destroyed because they had punished the poor but exempted the rich from punishment. He said that even if his own daughter was proved guilty of theft he would not hesitate in passing due punishment upon her.

FAIR DEALING

The Holy Prophet was scrupulously honest and fair in every way just as he was in matters of justice. We read in the Quran:

And give full measure when you measure and weigh with a right balance; that is best and most commendable in the end. (17:36)

Verily Allah commands you to give over the trusts to those entitled to them, and when you judge between men you judge with justice. (4:59)

Once someone came to the Holy Prophet and demanded in a rough and uncouth manner that he should return some money which he had borrowed from him. Some of the companions of the Prophet expressed their annoyance and remonstrated with the man. The Prophet intervened and checked them saying the man was in his right.

On another occasion he observed a heap of corn for sale in the market. He thrust his arm into it and found it was wet inside although on the outer service it was dry. He reproved the owner for deceiving the public and remarked that a person who deals unfairly with others cannot become a useful member of society.

BENEVOLENCE

The Holy Quran has laid much emphasis on benevolence:

And worship Allah and associate naught with Him, and show kindness to parents, and to kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and to the neighbour who is a kinsman and the neighbour who is a stranger, and companion by your side, and the wayfarer, and those whom your right hands possess. Surely Allah loves not the arrogant and the boastful. (4:37)

The Holy Prophet was the most generous of men. He would never refuse a person anything if it was proper and within his means to do so. He would often receive gifts of money and merchandise which he would quickly distribute. Often he would stress the importance of being benevolent towards parents in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Quran:

We have enjoined on man benevolence towards his parents. (29:91)

A man once asked the Holy Prophet who deserved the kindest treatment and he replied *your mother. And who after her* the man asked.

your mother replied the Prophet. The man asked the same question for the third time and again received the same answer *your mother*. This shows the very high esteem the Holy Prophet possessed for mothers. Moreover, on another occasion he said *Paradise lies at the feet of your mothers*.

It was established that a certain man who depended on Abu Bakr for his means of livelihood, was involved in a slander against Ayesha the wife of the Holy Prophet and who was also the daughter of Abu Bakr. The latter was very much aggrieved and ceased to support the man. When the Holy Prophet learned of the action taken by Abu Bakr he admonished him to resume giving support to the man despite of his wrongdoing. Such was the benevolent attitude of the Holy Prophet.

There was an occasion during a famine when a boy stole some fruit from a garden. He was caught by the owner who gave him a thrashing. When this matter was brought to the notice of the Prophet he sent for the owner and told him that the boy was ignorant and hungry. The Prophet gave the boy a quantity of corn.

TRUTHFULNESS

The Holy Prophet was renowned from childhood for his truthfulness and honesty. His standards were so high that the people called him *The Trusty and Truthful one*. The Holy Quran describes devout followers of the Holy Quran as: *Men who are truthful and women who are truthful. (9:119)*. The Holy Prophet said: *Speak the truth even though it be against thyself*.

Abu Bakr was an extremely close friend of the Holy Prophet since childhood. When he heard that the Holy Prophet had claimed to be a Messenger of God he went to him and asked him if it were true. The Holy Prophet tried to explain but Abu Bakr insisted that he be just told *Yes* or *No*. *Yes* was the reply where upon Abu Bakr immediately accepted his claim having always known him to be strictly truthful.

The Holy Prophet decided to announce his Divine mission to the people of Mecca. He called them around him and asked them whether they would believe him if he informed them that a hostile army was approaching Mecca from behind the surrounding hills? They replied that they would believe him because they had always known him to speak the truth. Then he proclaimed that he was a Messenger of God.

Such were a few of the characteristics of the Holy Prophet of Islam who was a practical embodiment of the teachings of the Holy Quran.

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-eight 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 orientalisists 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.

