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Assalamu alaikum: Our next meeting —

Dates: **Sunday 5th October**

Time: **3.00 p.m.**

Speaker: **Dr Zahid Aziz**

Topic: **Views of some contemporary
Muslims on the Founder
of the Ahmadiyya Movement**

Regular activities:

Darus-i Quran and Hadith:

Every Friday after *Jumu'a* prayers.

Meetings of the Executive:

First Sunday of every month at 2.00 p.m.

Meeting of the Jama'at:

First Sunday of every month at 3.00 p.m.

The New Moon

Seeing or Calculating?

by **Riaz Ahmadali**

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The time of the year is here again when Muslims worldwide are awaiting the start of the new lunar month for *Eid-ul-Fitr*. Many organizations have fixed their dates for *Eid* already, based on calculations. Others will await the appearance of the crescent moon to fix their dates. And every year the question arises whether we can resort to calculations in this modern age, or whether we should await the physical appearance of the crescent, as in the time of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). The aim of this article is to provide the average reader with some insight on this subject.

The most used methods to fix the beginning of the new month are:

1. Viewing the crescent with the naked eye;
2. Calculating the crescent;

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Id-ul-Fitr is on:

Wednesday 1st October

***Id* prayers will start promptly
at 11.00 a.m.**

**Please arrive well in time
to be ready to start at 11.00 a.m.**

3. Calculating the times of sunset and moonset;
4. Calculating the birth of the moon;
5. Starting the month on the same day as in Saudi Arabia.

1. Viewing the crescent with the naked eye

Followers of this method base their view on the literal interpretation of some Traditions of the Holy Prophet, for example:

Hadith A. “We are an illiterate community, not educated in writing or calculating. So start fasting when you see the crescent, and stop fasting when you see it again” (Bukhari, 31:13).

Hadith B. Ibn Umar (*ra*) said: “I heard the Messenger of Allah saying: “If you see the *hilaal* (new moon of Ramadan), start fasting, and if you see the *hilaal* (new moon of Shawwaal), stop fasting; and if the sky is cloudy (and you cannot see the *hilaal*), then consider the month 30 days” (Bukhari, 31:11).

2. Calculating the crescent

Supporters of the methods of calculation have some remarks regarding the aforementioned *hadith*:

Hadith A. This *hadith* describes the situation of the Muslim community in the time of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). It does not say that the Muslims will always be in an illiterate state. On the contrary, Islam encourages seeking knowledge.¹ Therefore, if the Muslim community nowadays is no longer illiterate, the gained knowledge should be utilized.² Also, in medical science, the most advanced techniques are utilized to keep the Muslim community (and other communities as well) as healthy as possible; nobody would consider using the curing techniques from olden days in this modern age.

Two other arguments. According to the *Hadith*, prayer times should be calculated according to the length of the shadow. However, nowadays prayer times are calculated years in advance, by calculating the sun’s altitude. Nobody considers this against the *sunnah* of the Prophet (pbuh). Also, the times of *sehri* and *iftaar* (start and end of the daily fast in Ramadan) are calculated in advance, despite the Quran 2:187:

1. A Tradition of the Prophet says: “Seek knowledge, even if you have to seek it in China.” And the Quran states in 3:7: “And none knows its interpretation (of the Quran) save Allah, and those firmly rooted in knowledge.”

2. www.ummah.net.

“Eat and drink until the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the blackness of the night at dawn.”

Nowadays, nobody goes outside to check whether dawn or sunset is approaching. Still, many Muslim *ulama* consider it unacceptable to calculate the crescent.³

Hadith B. In this *hadith* (and other *hadith* as well), the Arabic word used for ‘seeing’ is *ru’yat*, or a derivation thereof. According to Imam Raghīb, there are four forms of *ru’yat*: seeing with the senses, seeing with imagination, seeing by contemplation, and seeing with the spirit. He quotes several Quranic verses to support his view, among which are the following (please consider that in these verses the word *ru’yat* cannot mean ‘seeing with the eye’):

“When Joseph said to his father: O my father, I *saw* eleven stars and the sun and the moon — I saw them making obeisance to me. He said: O my son, relate not thy *dream* to thy brethren, lest they devise a plan against thee” (12:4-5).

“Which He made to prevail against them for seven nights and eight days continuously, so that thou mightest have *seen* the people therein prostrate as if they were trunks of hollow palm-trees” (69:7).

“Hast thou not *seen* how thy Lord dealt with ‘Ād” (89:6).

Ru’yat, therefore, does not mean that the moon should be viewed physically, according to the supporters of this view. If there are other means available to determine the crescent, these means could be used; all the more if we consider that these means have proved to be far more accurate than determining the crescent by eye.

The supporters of calculations also base their view on the Quranic verse, 2:185:

“So whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein.”

The word *shahida* means ‘testify’ or ‘being present in,’ but also ‘having evidence or convincing knowledge about something.’ For example, Muslims testify that Allah is One (*shahida*), without having seen Him with their own eyes.⁴

Furthermore, supporters of calculations prove from various verses of the Holy Quran that the sun

3. www.albalagh.net

4. *The Crescent*, by Maulana M.K. Hydal, and Iqbal Hydal.

and the moon follow a fixed path (which can be calculated in advance):

“He has made the night for rest, and the sun and the moon for reckoning” (6:96).

“He it is Who made the sun a shining brightness, and the moon a light, and ordained for it stages that you might know the computation of years and the reckoning” (10:5).

“The sun and the moon follow a reckoning” (55:5).

“He has created the heavens and the earth with truth; He makes the night cover the day and makes the day overtake the night, and He has made the sun and the moon subservient; each one moves on to an assigned term” (39:5).

See also 36:38-40, 21:33, 2:189.

The question now arises: What should be calculated: the visibility of the crescent, the birth of the moon, or any other criterion? In section 2 we considered the calculation of the crescent (*hilaal*), but there are other criteria as well, according to which the Islamic calendar is calculated. We will deal with this in the next sections.

3. Calculating the times of sunset and moonset

In Saudi Arabia and the neighbouring Gulf states, the *Umm al-Qura* calendar is used. In this calendar, each month starts on the evening when the moon sets after the sun for the first time (calculated for the coordinates of Mecca). In most cases, on this evening the moon will not be visible yet, with the consequence that in these regions Ramadan often starts and ends one day earlier than in other countries. In Egypt, a similar calendar is used. One should note that the *Umm al-Qura* calendar has been established years in advance, primarily for civil — and not for religious — matters, such as determining the dates for school holidays, etc. Therefore, people are still sent out to physically check the moon, and scientific facts are used to inspect these observations. So, if someone testifies to having seen the moon, and according to scientific calculations the moon could not be visible at all, such an observation is considered invalid, as happened in 2000. So it can happen that the civil Ramadan and the religious Ramadan in the Arab countries start on different dates. However, the tendency in the past few years is to use the *Umm al-Qura* calendar for religious matters as well.

4. Calculating the birth of the moon

In August 2006, the *Fiqh* Council of North America announced that the start of the Islamic moons will be determined according to calculations. The criterion is that if the moon will be born before 12:00 P.M. (GMT), the month will start at the next sunset, because the moon will then be 12–18 hours old, and thus theoretically visible. The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) has adopted this view, as well. Also, the Islamic scholar, Yusuf Qaradawi, holds the view that in this modern age the birth criterion can be used.⁵

5. Starting on the same day as in Saudi Arabia

Some hold the view that Saudi Arabia should be taken as standard when determining the Islamic months. Opponents of this view say that the Quran states that the *hilaal* should be followed (2:189 and other verses), not the calendar of any other country on earth. Another argument is that, while praying and fasting, the local times are followed and not the times of Arabia.

Another point is that Saudi Arabia is not consistent in their procedure when determining the Islamic months. As stated before, according to the *Umm al-Qura* calendar, the new month starts at sunset if the new moon is born before sunset, and sets after sunset. However, at *Eid ul-Fitr* 2000 (Islamic year 1420), it happened that the moon was not seen, and that the moon set before the sun on Ramadan 29. But still the Saudi Government declared the next day (7 January 2000) *Eid ul-Fitr*. Sheikh Qaradawi then issued a *fatwa* that every Muslim, who had celebrated *Eid* on 7 January, should make up for the missing fast.

In many other years it happened that none of the official ‘moon sighting committees’ in Saudi Arabia had seen the moon on Ramadan 29, but still the Saudi Government declared the next day *Eid ul-Fitr*, based on non-formal witnesses. After some years it appeared that the false statements came from a certain group of persons from the cities Tabuk, Hareeq and Huta, but still the Government accepted their false statements, which was thus considered a more proper method than accurate calculation of the position of the moon!

Another issue is the miscalculation of the Islamic calendar in Arabia in 1988; in that year Arabia had a Ramadan of 28 days and a Shawwaal of 31 days, which is not possible at all according to the Islamic calendar.⁶

5. As stated in his book *Kaifa Nata'amal ma'a al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah*.

6. muslimedia.com

Again, another issue happened in 2007. According to the *Umm al-Qura* calendar, *Eid ul-Fitr* in Saudi Arabia should have been on 13 October, because the moon — viewed from Mecca — would set one minute before the sun on 11 October. Astronomers also announced that, according to calculations, *Eid* should be on 13 October.⁷ However, days before the end of Ramadan the Saudi Government declared 12 October *Eid ul-Fitr*.

As a result of these facts, it is not wise to use the Saudi calendar in other countries, and we cannot state that ‘by definition our *Eid* date is the right date, because it coincides with the Saudi date.’

Date of *Lailat al-Qadr*

A point of concern for many believers is that at a wrong start of the Ramadan, the *Lailat al-Qadr* will be commemorated on a wrong date. However, this should not be of any concern. It is known from the time of the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) that different locations in Arabia started their Ramadan on different dates. A Tradition states that Kurayb, a companion in the time of the Prophet, traveled to Syria and noticed that the Ramadan was started on a Friday. When returning to Madinah, he informed Ibn ‘Abbas that he himself had seen the *hilaal* on Friday, but that the people in Syria, including Governor Mu’awiya, had fasted on Friday already. Ibn ‘Abbas replied that the *hilaal* was seen on Saturday in Madinah. Kurayb asked Ibn ‘Abbas if seeing the *hilaal* in Syria was not enough as testimony, and Ibn ‘Abbas replied: “No, this is the way the Messenger of Allah has ordered us”.⁸

Conclusion

As long as we fix the dates for the start of Ramadan and *Eid ul-Fitr* according to a pure intention and reliable sources, we can use these dates for our respective *jama’ats*. The method of calculation has been proved to be a much more precise method than the method of physically viewing the crescent, or the method of blindly following the calendar of Saudi Arabia. Within our worldwide Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at-i-Islam, some *jama’ats* use the calculation of the birth of the moon as the start date for the Islamic months, and some use the calculation of the crescent (*hilaal*) for calculating the Islamic months.

7. Among others, the site islamonline.net.

8. Narrated by Muslim, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi and Nasa’i.

‘Id-ul-Fitr August 1914

Celebration at the Woking Mosque

Here we look back at the occasion of *‘Id-ul-Fitr* from 94 years ago. August 1914 was a monumental month in world history. The dreadful First World War began during that month, and this cataclysm brought the previous age to a close and gave birth to a new age in the political and social history of the world. *‘Id-ul-Fitr* that year fell on Sunday 23rd August, and was the first *‘Id* at the Woking Mosque since the establishment of the Woking Muslim Mission by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din in late 1913. A report of the *‘Id* proceedings was published in the Woking local newspaper the *Surrey Herald*, and this was reproduced in *The Islamic Review* in its issue for October 1914. We quote it below.

Muslim festival at Woking

Visit of an Indian Prince

One of the unique features of Woking is the stately Mosque, a view of which is obtainable from passing trains. There are visitors to the Muslim house of prayer every day, and there are few who do not make a special point of seeing the interior while spending a holiday in the neighbourhood.

Well attended lectures are held every Sunday afternoon, but the largest gathering known at the Mosque assembled on Sunday for the “*Eid-ul-Fitr*,” or the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast. From the early morning Muslims began to pour into Woking by trains, and at eleven o’clock the prayer was commenced.

The assembly was a brilliant one, and the spotless whiteness of the interior of the Mosque threw out in bold relief the multi-coloured garments of the large gathering, amongst whom was His Highness the Ruler of Bahawalpur. The Mosque proved to be too small for all, and carpets were spread on the steps and in the courtyard.

The prayers were said in Arabic language, and formulas magnifying and glorifying God were recited. The leader of the ceremony was Moulvie Sadr-ud-Din, B.A., B.T., and his words were repeated for those outside to follow by Shaikh Noorahmad. The prayers were said according to Muslim customs — bowing, kneeling, and prostrating.

After the prayer a sermon was preached by Moulvie Sadr-ud-Din, and many references were given from the Bible and the Quran. At its

conclusion an appeal was made for the usual collection on behalf of the poor, which is the custom at all Muslim festivals, and the money will be distributed among poor in Woking. The congregation then repeated several times the following words, but in the Arabic language: “God is great! God is great! All praises and glorification are due to God!” During the ceremony members of the public of Woking were in the Mosque to witness the proceedings, at the close of which an English lady made a declaration embracing Islam.

The gathering then proceeded to the lawn in front of the Memorial House, where lunch comprising Indian dishes was partaken of.

To commence the afternoon proceedings the Muslims made a procession through the streets, evoking considerable interest in the novel sight. Prior to the commencement of the lecture the Mosque was becoming quite full, and it was found necessary to adjourn to the lawn in order to provide ample accommodation.

The speaker, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, leader of the Muslims in England, being with the processionists, the gathering was entertained by an address from Shaikh Khalid Sheldrake, who explained misrepresentations and objections raised against Islam, and appealed for those present to investigate for themselves.

The procession having returned, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din spoke for some time. He justified the action of the British Government at the present crisis, and said that the present material and physical civilisation, not being constructed upon a pure religious basis, was responsible for the terrible war.

Many of the public remained for tea which followed. The usual prayers were offered at the appointed hours, and the last function of the day was dinner, served in the Memorial House. Many speeches were made, and Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din was wished a safe and happy voyage when he leaves in a week or so to make the pilgrimage to Mecca and a short visit to India.

The whole day was apparently one of complete happiness, a noticeable feature being the way in which English people — Muslims and non-Muslims — volunteered their aid in the performance of various duties.

We are asked to say that the heartiest thanks are due to the host, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, to whose wide popularity and work for Islam the large gathering is accounted a tribute.

Note by *The Light*

Maulana Sadr-ud-Din had recently arrived at Woking to relieve Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, who left for India a few days later, performing the *Hajj* along the way in October 1914.■

Passing away of Maulvi Muhammad Ali

“*Speak well of your dead*” — *Holy Prophet Muhammad*

by Shaikh Yaqub Ali Turab,
former editor *Al-Hakam*

[Shaikh Yaqub Ali Turab was a leading Qadiani journalist and writer who started the journal *Al-Hakam* in 1897, which chronicled the activities, conversations and talks of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. After the Founder’s death, when differences arose within the Movement on the issues of the Founder’s claim and the system of succession after him, Shaikh Yaqub Ali was a staunch adversary of Maulana Muhammad Ali on these questions. Yet on the Maulana’s death he wrote an extraordinarily remarkable tribute. This was reproduced in the Lahore Ahmadiyya paper *Paigham Sulh*, of 26 December 1951, taken from his own journal *Al-Hakam*. It is translated below.]

Respected Maulvi Muhammad Ali, President of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at Islam Lahore, died in Karachi on 13 October 1951. *Inna li-llahi wa inna ilai-hi raji‘un*. I personally felt such a shock at the news of the death of the Maulana as if a dear brother of mine had died. This feeling is not something imaginary, but a real fact. For years we grew up under the care of one spiritual father, and reached adulthood. After the death of the Promised Messiah, we stayed united around one hand during the first *khilafat*. At the beginning of the second *khilafat*, the respected Maulvi sahib separated from us on the grounds of some differences. This is not the time to discuss the nature of those differences. He has now passed away, and we too are travelling on the same road which leads to death. His affair is now with Allah. Bearing in mind the command of the Holy Prophet quoted above, I will mention his good qualities.

Sometimes people use a difference of opinion as the basis for hostility and animosity. This is not worthy of a true believer. A true believer never deviates from doing justice even to one with whom

there is animosity, because departure from justice is a sin. I have observed and studied the Maulvi sahib very closely since the year 1897. We worked together. He entered the Ahmadiyya Movement with sincerity and true belief. He devoted his life to the service of the Movement, and earned the approval and praise of the Promised Messiah. No one can deny what the Promised Messiah said and wrote about the Maulvi sahib, and it is because of these sacred words that I have always held feelings of respect for the deceased. Although I frequently wrote in refutation of some of his views, and wrote much, Allah knows that there was no spite or malice, and I never forgot his services. Even though we were, so to speak, at war with him, nonetheless whenever I went to Lahore I would meet all the honoured brethren. We would meet like brothers. Certainly we would debate the differences, but when we would take leave, feelings of love and fraternity would rise up in our hearts, and we could detect the effects of our old connections.

Due to his academic excellence, respected Maulvi Muhammad Ali held a position of distinction throughout his years of study, always attaining the highest marks. And it is also a fact that, even while a student, he was virtuous and righteous. For this reason, he was held in high regard by his teachers and fellow-students. I made his acquaintance when he was appointed to the Islamia College, Lahore, but the real connection began when he joined this Movement. Maulvi Muhammad Ali was born in a village called Murar, in the state of Kapurthala, in an honourable and righteous family of land-owners. His father, Hafiz Fateh Din, was a *hafiz* of the Holy Quran. Another man belonging to this family, Maulvi Muhammad sahib, was a fellow-student of mine in Ludhiana in the school of Maulvi Muhammad Farooq. Eventually, he joined Maulana Nur-ud-Din in Jammu, and once visited Qadian.

So the Maulvi sahib was born in a noble family, and after having attained the highest accomplishment in his education, when he stepped into a worldly career, and looked at the hopes and the promise based on his period of education, he would have risen high in the world had he continued along this path, and reached a distinguished official position. But Allah had willed otherwise for him. He entered the Movement, and the Promised Messiah wished him to serve it. This young man agreed, and he agreed with a truthful heart. Discarding all the hopes and aspirations, for the service of the Movement in obedience to his master he vowed to serve Islam with the pen. And he performed this service till the

day of his death. His services, by means of scholarship and by means of the pen, are vast. If Allah please, I shall write in detail about his work.

To have differences with him is a separate matter. It does not mean that I or anyone else should find fault with his work, now that he is no longer in the world. The service he rendered to the Movement in Qadian till 1914 is magnificent, and it is an example to young men to employ their talents with such determination, zeal and sincerity.

At the beginning of the second *khilafat*, he had differences, and went to Lahore, taking a group with him, and started work. Till the end, he remained active in the work, and continued the writing of books which he had earlier begun.

We too shall pass away, and other generations will come and pass away. And in the history of the Movement, there shall remain the mention of the achievements of the respected Maulvi Muhammad Ali sahib.

There is no doubt that his writings acquired fame in different countries of the world and in different languages. He gained all this from the Promised Messiah. Our differences with him are at an end. In the Promised Messiah, we were sons of the same father, and now at his death we grieve as we do at the death of a relation.

There were differences among the Companions of the Holy Prophet as well, even leading to war. But the Quran says: "We shall remove whatever of rancour is in their breasts" (15:47). At the end they had clean hearts. May Allah produce the same cleanliness and purity in our hearts. The Maulvi sahib completed the natural span of his life and died. It would have been better if he had lived a while longer, but this was the time of death in the knowledge of Allah. We too shall pass away, and other generations will come and pass away. And in the history of the Movement, there shall remain the mention of the achievements of the respected Maulvi Muhammad Ali sahib.

I express my sincere sympathies to his family. I share in their grief. Although I had differences with him, there was love for him in my heart. ■

Does the Holy Quran incite Muslims to kill non-Muslims?

by Abdul Momin, U.S.A.

Some three years back, I read an article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* describing the Holy Quran as the “thinking man’s Scripture”. I do not know of a higher tribute to the Holy Book. I have adopted this description as my own. So if one reads the Holy Quran keeping in mind the allegation that the Holy Quran incites its believers to kill in the name of religion, the following verses will present a very different picture. In fact there are many, many more secondary verses from which the same conclusion will be drawn, which is that in the matters of religion God does not want people to force anyone to convert. In these verses the Holy Prophet or Muslims in general are told to be patient in the face of oppression or abuse, to forgive their oppressors, be just in their dealings with the non-Muslims or simply told that the Holy Prophet’s task is only to convey the Message of God to his people.

1. “Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good, they have their reward with their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve.” — 2:62

2. “Many of the people of the Book wish that they could turn you back into disbelievers after you have believed, out of envy from themselves, after truth has become manifest to them. But pardon and forgive, till Allah bring about His command. Surely Allah is Powerful over all things.” — 2:109

3. “Rather, whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such nor shall they grieve.” — 2:112. (Note: The words here are general.)

4. “There is no compulsion in religion — the right way is indeed clearly distinct from error. So whoever disbelieves in the devil and believes in Allah, he indeed lays hold on the firmest handle which shall never break. And Allah is Hearing, Knowing.” — 2:256

5. “Their guidance is not your duty (O Prophet or O reader), but Allah guides whom He pleases.” — 2:272

6. “If they submit, then indeed they follow the right way; and if they turn back, your duty (O

Prophet) is only to deliver the message.” — 3:20

7. “They are not all alike. Of the People of the Book there is an upright party who recite Allah’s messages in the night-time and they adore (Him). They believe in Allah and the Last Day, and they enjoin good and forbid evil and hasten in (doing) good deeds. And those are among the righteous. And whatever good they do, they will not be denied it.” — 3:113–115

8. “And do not let those grieve you (O Prophet) who run into disbelief hastily” — 3:176.

(Note: The Holy Prophet always wanted the best for humanity, but he is told not to grieve for those who could not follow God’s guidance. Someone who grieves for other people’s welfare is not likely to kill them.)

9. “Every soul must taste of death. And you will be paid your reward fully only on the day of Resurrection.” — 3:185.

(Note: Only the Almighty is the sole judge of people. No human is allowed to sit in judgement over another human.)

To be continued.

Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri as Mujaddid and Messiah

By Zahid Aziz

Recently I came across a copy of the February 2008 issue of the monthly Urdu magazine *Minhaj-ul-Quran*, published by the organisation of the same name founded by the well-known Pakistani religious figure Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri. He is a Sunni scholar who believes in Sufi teachings, and his organisation has branches in several countries.

In this issue Dr Qadri is repeatedly described as *Mujaddid of the age*. The issue contains several full-page messages of congratulations to him on his 57th birthday from various branches of his organisation. In many of these messages he is called *Mujaddid*. Moreover, there are two articles by his followers in which it is argued in detail that Dr Qadri is the *Mujaddid* according to the hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad about the coming of *Mujaddids*. Yet a third article is entitled *Marz-i Ummat ka Masiha*, or ‘The Messiah for the ills of the Muslims’, and it declares him “without any doubt, ambiguity or exaggeration to be the true Messiah of the Muslim peoples” (p. 71).

In one of the articles arguing that he is a *Mujaddid*, the writer says that *qudrat* selected Dr Qadri for the mission of the reform of the

Muslims, and he founded his *Minhaj-ul-Quran* movement in 1980, meaning at the commencement of the 15th century *hijra* (p. 24). The word *qudrat* (nature) indicates the general working of the laws of nature in the world around us rather than directly indicating God Himself. Perhaps this follower is reluctant to claim that Dr Qadri was actually appointed by Allah to this position. We do not find any statement by Dr Qadri himself that he claims to be a *mujaddid* appointed by Allah.

The writer of this article then says: "I wish to present a sketch of his reformist and revolutionary achievements but first please read the following verse of poetry by Iqbal which is a prayer, and which has been fulfilled in the Shaikh-ul-Islam [Dr Qadri]."

The writer's citing of Iqbal is rather surprising in view of the fact that the *Allama*, during his controversy with Ahmadis in the 1930s, wrote that the hadith about *mujaddids* was a fabricated one. He wrote in a published letter in 1932:

"I consider all the Hadith reports relating to the Mahdi and the concepts of Messiahship and Mujaddids to be the result of Persian and other non-Arab philosophies. They have nothing to do with Arab thought or the true spirit of the Quran."⁹

It is even more surprising that in the other article, the one which describes Dr Qadri as "the true Messiah", it is stated about the dangers confronting the Muslim world:

"A Messiah like Iqbal had apprised the Muslim *Umma* beforehand of all these dangers..." (p. 70)

It is then added about Dr Qadri: "At the present time there is a Messiah who can raise the world of Islam to greatness, stature, prestige and honour". But Iqbal, their great mentor, denies the concept of the coming of a *Mujaddid* or a Messiah!

The same article, listing the achievements of this so-called Messiah, says that one of them is:

"In the Federal Shariah Court [of Pakistan] he proved, by arguing continuously for three days, that the punishment for a person who insults the Holy Prophet Muhammad is nothing other than the death penalty and that even the repentance of such a person is not accepted. This is now the law." (p. 71)

On the other hand, throughout this magazine and elsewhere, one of the main aims of Dr Qadri's movement is said to be to create harmony and understanding between Islam and other religions. In pursuance of this aim, he has even created a Muslim Christian Dialogue forum, which holds Christmas celebrations at the headquarters of Dr Qadri's movement in Pakistan attended by Christian leaders in the country. But the law mentioned above, as a great "achievement" of Dr Qadri, has been widely used in Pakistan to persecute religious minorities including Christians. Entirely false cases have been made up against Christian individuals of insulting the Prophet of Islam. Usually such a case has been based on the unsubstantiated evidence of some unscrupulous Muslim who wanted to settle a grudge or stood to gain some property, land or the like by having the Christian convicted of this crime.

Despite Dr Qadri's staunch advocacy of this law in Pakistan, which has brought Islam into disrepute among other religions as well as in Western countries, he is called *The Messenger of inter-faith harmony and ambassador of peace* in the very heading of another article (p. 60). This article says: "Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri is the only figure in the Muslim world who can play the role of a bridge to create harmony between the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds ... his ideology contains that true picture of Islam which will gain goodwill for Islam in the West" (p. 61).

One of the services to Islam rendered by Dr Qadri is claimed to be his Urdu translation of the Holy Quran, *Irfan-ul-Quran* available at the website irfan-ul-quran.com. In the words of his translation, he has expressed all those erroneous doctrines that damaged Islam and which have been refuted by the Ahmadiyya Movement. For example, in his translation of verse 3:55 about Jesus he has used the words "I will raise you towards Myself (in heaven)". The words "in heaven", as shown here, have been added by him in parentheses.

In translating 24:2, which prescribes flogging as the punishment for illicit sexual intercourse, he has added in parentheses within the translation "if they are unmarried" and also "whereas the punishment for married persons is stoning and this is the death penalty".

While we dispute the assertions of Dr Qadri's followers that he is a *mujaddid* or a Messiah (a claim he seems not to have made himself), at least they confirm that the coming of *Mujaddids* in Islam, as well as Messiah-like figures, are concepts borne out by Islamic teachings.

9. *Iqbal Nama*, Part II, *Makatib Iqbal*, (Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore, 1951), pp. 230–232, Letter no. 87.