



The Light — U.K. edition

September 2007

The Lahore Ahmadiyya monthly magazine from U.K.

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Assalamu alaikum: Our next meeting —

Date: **Sunday 2nd September 2007**

Time: **3.00 p.m.**

Speaker: **Dr M.A. Hami**

Topic: **Fundamental Islamic Beliefs**

Regular activities:

Darus-i Quran and Hadith:

Every Friday at 2.30 p.m.

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.

Teachings of Islam on fasting

Importance of self-reform and abstention from base desires

1. "O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil." — The Holy Quran, 2:183.

2. Allah says: "And when My servants ask you (O Prophet) about Me, surely I am near. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should hear My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way." — 2:186.

3. "And swallow not up your property among yourselves by false means, nor seek to gain access thereby to the authorities so that you may swallow up other people's property wrongfully while you know." — 2:188.

4. "He who does not give up uttering falsehood and acting according to it, God has no need of his giving up his food and drink." — The Holy Prophet Muhammad.

5. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights, and explained it by saying: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:2-4). Moses also fasted forty days and forty nights (Exodus 34:28).

Purpose of fasting in Islam

1. To develop and strengthen our powers of self-control, so that we can resist wrongful desires and bad habits, and therefore “guard against evil” (see extract 1 above). In fasting, by refraining from the natural human urges to satisfy one’s appetite, we are exercising our ability of self-restraint, so that we can then apply it to our everyday life to bring about self-improvement.

2. To attain nearness and closeness to God so that He becomes a reality in our lives. As we bear the rigours of fasting purely for the sake of following a Divine commandment, knowing and feeling that He can see all our actions, however secret, it intensifies the consciousness of God in our hearts, resulting in a higher spiritual experience (see extract 2 above).

3. To learn to refrain from usurping other’s rights and belongings. In fasting we voluntarily give up even what is rightfully ours; how can then we think of taking what is not ours but belongs to someone else? (See extract 3 above.)

4. Charity and generosity is especially urged during Ramadan. We learn to give, and not to take. The deprivation of fasting makes us sympathise with the suffering of others, and desirous of alleviating it; and it makes us remember the blessings of life which we normally take for granted.

Fasting in Islam does not just consist of refraining from eating and drinking, but from every kind of selfish desire and wrong-doing. The fast is not merely of the body, but essentially that of the spirit as well (see extract 4 above). The physical fast is a symbol and outward expression of the real, inner fast.

Fasting is a spiritual practice to be found in all religions (see extracts 1 and 5 above). The great Founders of various faiths, such as Buddha, Moses, Jesus, practised quite rigorous fasting as a preliminary to attaining their first experience of spiritual enlightenment and communion with God. This kind of communion is indicated in extract 2 above.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad on fasting

“People are unaware of the true nature of fasting. The fact is that no country or realm can be described if one has not been there. Fasting is not just the state of remaining hungry and thirsty. Its nature and effect can only be discovered by experience. The human makeup is such that the less food is consumed the greater is the purification of the soul and the development of the powers of inner

vision. God’s purpose is that you should reduce one kind of food (physical) and increase the other kind (spiritual). The person fasting must remember that the aim is not simply to remain hungry; he should be engrossed in the remembrance of God so as to attain severance from worldly desires. The object of fasting is that a person should abstain from the food which nourishes the body and obtain the other food which satisfies and brings solace to the soul. Those who truly fast for the sake of attaining to God, and not merely as a custom, should be absorbed in the praise and glorification of God, and in meditating upon His Unity.”

Maulana Muhammad Ali on fasting

“The real purpose of fasting is to attain righteousness. A person who undergoes hunger and thirst, but does not behave righteously, has done nothing. If someone is told the aim and object of doing a certain duty, and he does that duty but does not attain the required aim and object, it is as if he has not done that duty.”

Prayers during Ramadan urged by Maulana Muhammad Ali on our *Jama‘at*

In the month of Ramadan Maulana Muhammad Ali used to exhort the *Jama‘at* to undertake a spiritual exertion (*mujahida*) in two forms. One was to fall in prayer before God and beseech Him tearfully in *tahajjud* prayers to enable us to carry out the work of the propagation of Islam and the Quran, and the other was to make financial sacrifices. In this connection he has written many heart-felt, moving prayers in his articles and *khutbas* published in *Paigham Sulh* and entreated every member of the *Jama‘at* that at least in the month of Ramadan they should treat the *tahajjud* prayer as obligatory for them.

Some prayers that he urged upon the *Jama‘at* are given below. These are based on the *Sura Fatiha*. Each verse of the *Sura* is followed by a prayer based on the meaning of the verse.

Al-hamdu li-llahi Rabb il-‘alamin — ‘All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds’. O God, You have provided the very best means for the physical development of human beings. Now **provide for Your creation spiritual nourishment through the Quran**, as they have moved far off from You and are lost in darkness, racing towards destruction. Acquaint their hearts with the bliss that is attained by bowing at Your threshold.

O God, Who granted the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his Companions unique success, enabling them to transform the destinies of entire

countries and nations, **foster and nourish us and our Jama'at today** to make it reach the pinnacle of success in spreading the Quran and propagating Islam in the world. Let the foundations for the propagation of Your religion **be laid by our hands**, upon which an edifice continues to be raised till the Day of Judgment.

Ar-Rahman-ir-Rahim — 'The Beneficent, the Merciful'. Your mercy is so boundless that it is aroused even without humans asking for it. It is by Your mercy that the efforts of human beings come to fruition. By Your beneficence, **provide guidance** through the Quran to those who are engulfed in darkness. **Make successful our insignificant efforts**, that we may take Your holy message to these people.

Maliki yaum-id-din — 'Master of the day of Judgment'. O God, we are Your humble, unworthy servants. There are shortcomings in us, in myself, in my *Jama'at*. Sometimes Your orders are even disobeyed. By means of Your authority of judgment, **forgive our faults and infringements**, and let them not be obstacles to the success of our efforts.

Iyya-ka na'budu wa iyya-ka nasta'in — 'You do we serve and You do we beseech for help'. We serve You and wish to exalt Your name in the world. This is the sole aim of our lives. But we are small in numbers and weak while the task is mammoth. We who are exhausted, weak, humble and sinful, beg only You for help. **Grant this Jama'at the success** which You bestow on people who spread Your name in the world.

Ihdi-nas-sirat al-mustaqim, sirat-allazina an-'amta 'alai-him — 'Guide us on the right path, the path of those upon whom You bestowed favours'. You have been showering Your servants with the greatest favours. You have never let those fail who made it their aim in life to exalt Your name. Guiding us on the straight path, **confer on us the same favour** which You granted to those before us. **Blow the breeze of Your help** upon us as You made it flow for them and **open the doors of Your bounty** upon us in the same way.

Ghair-il-maghdubi 'alai-him wa la-ddallin — 'Not those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor those who go astray'. O Master, let it not be that we make worldly gain to be our objective and give up spreading religion, as is the state of the general Muslims today, or that we become misguided and destroy our powers for the sake of following exaggerated, wrong beliefs, as some are doing.

Another prayer by Maulana Muhammad Ali

"O God, Your Holy Word that was revealed for the guidance of the world is not being spread even by its believers. But it is Your promise that You will make it prevail in the world. We too heard the voice of one who came to call to Your message (Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad), and our feeble hands came forward to take this great burden. It was this voice which revived our dead hearts. But our *Jama'at* is like an ant facing the mountain of unbelief. It is Your promise that has strengthened our hearts. We need Your help above all. We know we are unworthy and not fit to receive Your help, but, O God, Your religion, Your Quran and Your Prophet are deserving of Your help. Let help for them be today manifested through our hands, may Your light illuminate our dark hearts, and may we witness with our own eyes the fulfilment of Your promise."

— From *Mujahid-i Kabir*, Urdu biography of Maulana Muhammad Ali, pages 267–270.

Ramadan and 'Id dates

When in 2004 the U.K. *Jama'at* computed the dates of Ramadan and 'Id till 2008, we set Ramadan 2007 as at 13th September and 'Id-ul-Fitr as at 13th October.

The dates that are set depend on the criteria that is used. If actual new moon visibility is the criterion, then obviously the exact date cannot be fixed till one or two days before. With a few organisations now moving away from the criterion of actual sighting by eye-witnesses somewhere (or perhaps "claimed" sighting would be a better term for it), some suggest using the new moon birth while others put forward various new moon ages after its birth to be made the determining factor.

The problem this time is that the new moon is in the southern hemisphere, and therefore in the northern hemisphere there is quite a delay between its birth and even the possibility of its appearance above the horizon at sunset.

The Ramadan new moon is born on 11th September at 12.44 GMT. However, even at sunset on the evening of the 12th it will not be above the horizon in the U.K. (and the same applies at local sunset times in Berlin, Rome, Madrid, New York, Cairo and Karachi). Nonetheless, **we had settled on the 13th as 1st Ramadan** since by the evening of the 12th in the U.K. the moon age is almost 30 hours. Places in the world where the new moon

would become visible on 12th September include Mecca, Lagos (Nigeria), Miami, Atlanta and San Francisco (U.S.A.). This is due to their southerly or westerly locations.

The *'Id-ul-Fitr* new moon is born on 11th October at 05.01 GMT. Again, remarkably, it is below the horizon at sunset even on the evening of the 12th in the U.K. (as well as in Berlin, Rome and Madrid). **We had settled on the 13th for 'Id** as the moon age on the evening of 12th October in the U.K. would be about 36 hours. Places in the world where the new moon would become visible on 12th October include Mecca, Cairo, Lagos, Karachi, Miami, Atlanta and San Francisco. In New York and Chicago, although the crescent will be above the horizon, it will not be visible due to being too low.

It is interesting to note that if in Mecca this year the dates for both Ramadan and *'Id-ul-Fitr* were determined *by genuinely and actually sighting the lunar crescent by eye*, their dates would be the same as the ones we have declared, namely, 13th September and 13th October. But past experience shows that Saudi Arabia will announce that the new moon was sighted one day earlier, and their blind disciples elsewhere in the world will follow suit. ■

Ramadan 100 years ago

As some of our readers will know, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the death of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad next May, we have been following, every few days, the events and news of a hundred years ago in the Ahmadiyya community. This is done in a “weblog” or “blog” style column on the Internet at the link below:

<http://ahmadiyya.org/WordPress/?cat=4>

Looking at articles about Ramadan of 100 years ago in the Ahmadiyya community newspapers, we find the coming of this month mentioned in *Badr* of 3rd October 1907. It was due to begin on around 10th October. The editorial is a standard article about fasting with quotations from the Holy Quran and Hadith. It also quotes a couple of extracts from the Bible on fasting and gives several other references without quotation. One of the unquoted references is the following from the book of Isaiah:

“ ‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and you (O Lord) have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’ Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. Your fasting ends in

quarrelling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.

“ Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?

“ Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter — when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. ” — Isaiah, 58:3–10

The short passages from the Quran and Hadith quoted on page 1 of this issue summarise what is emphasised above in the book of the prophet Isaiah. For example, while the Bible says:

“Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I”

the words in the Quran spoken by God are similar in relation to fasting:

“...surely I am near. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should hear My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way” (2:186).

These being the purposes of fasting according to the Jewish scriptures, accepted also by Christians, as well as according to the Islamic holy book, one should expect the followers of all these faiths to try to achieve these aims practically and thereby display their shared values, rather than observe mere superficial fasting and continue to bicker and fight with each other.

Use of watches

In recent years Muslims have been discussing whether to use calculation as the means to determine the Ramadan and *'Id* dates. In the *Badr* newspaper of 3rd October 1907 mentioned above, there is an article recommending the *use of watches* to determine if the fasting time at dawn has arrived. The author begins it with this interesting remark:

“If the means for doing something are not available then if someone makes an error it

is forgivable in the eyes of God. But if, despite the existence of means, we are negligent and careless then it is difficult to avoid being called to account by God.”

He then goes on to mention the problems people face in knowing, each morning, when to start the fast. Some leave it too late, he writes, believing that they must see “ants coming out” before stopping eating, as this indicates that dawn has arrived. Others await the *azan*, which is often delivered late. Still others are too cautious and start the fast too early, in order to be on the safe side. Sometimes genuine misunderstandings lead to mistakes in deciding if dawn has broken. Finally, he adds that the human eye makes errors in this respect, particularly in the middle of the month when the moon is near to full and its light does not allow the light of dawn to be distinguished easily.

To avoid these problems, he recommends the use of watches. But he foresees this objection:

“A man of Wahhabi inclination will cry out: Watches were never used in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.”

The writer does answer this possible objection but we need not reproduce his reply since no one raises the objection today, although it would be most interesting to know if anyone does object.

The writer then raises the problem that while obtaining a watch is not difficult, how do you set it to the right time? This may sound strange to our ears, but if we give it a little thought we will realize that the means by which we set our watches did not exist at the time. There was no radio or TV, nor in a place such as Qadian any public clock tower set to the correct time by the authorities. The only standard time that existed in the country in those days, as in fact mentioned in this article, was railway time. Even in the U.K. before the advent of the railway train in the 1800s different towns had their own times, varying by some minutes. This did not matter very much because before the railways it took you days to travel from one town to another, rather than hours and minutes.

Our author advises people to observe the sunrise a few days before Ramadan and set their watches to a rough time. It wouldn't matter whether they set it to, say, 6 a.m. or 6.20 a.m., providing they continue using the same watch. Then, he says, that by observing sunrise/sunset over the next 3 or 4 days and looking at the watch (providing it was kept wound up!) you would also find out by how much each day the sunrise/sunset time is changing. Then during Ramadan you know what your watch will be reading at sunrise time each morning, and you

simply start your fast one and a half hours before that time.

Separately from this article, there is a Ramadan timetable printed in the same issue of *Badr*. A note with it states: “These times are according to Railway Time which is the standard time”. It advises that as times in different cities vary somewhat, therefore to obtain local times approximately one should check these times, on just one day, against observed sunrise/sunset. This will give a rough idea of how much the local fasting times differ from the printed timetable.

Quite obviously, advances in technology have rendered obsolete the methods of a hundred years ago as discussed in the above extracts, and they now appear to us as quaint and amusing. One hopes therefore that in the future our present-day discussions and controversies about the appearance of the new moon will sound just as outdated. ■

Letter to the Editor

In response to our August issue, commemorating the 60th anniversary of the founding of Pakistan, we have received the following letter from Capt. Abdus Salam Khan from California. He is son of the late Maulana Yaqub Khan, who was Editor of *The Light* (Lahore) for many years and a campaigner for the Pakistan Movement since long before partition. He writes as follows:

“One of the feathers in *The Light's* cap, as far as the idea of Pakistan goes, is the fact that *The Light* suggested the partition of the country even before Allama Iqbal, in an editorial in 1928 or 1929. I do hope that you would reproduce this editorial on this historic occasion.

K.K. Aziz, the famous historian, has mentioned in his book *The History of the Idea of Pakistan*, and also confirmed to me personally, that Khan Bahadur Ghulam Rabbani Khan, one of the Imams of the Woking Mosque, who was a member of the NWFP legislature, had moved a resolution in that assembly for creation of Pakistan in the 1930s.

Another very interesting bit that you should include in your commemoration is the one that Mr. M.A. Jinnah recounted in his speech at Maulana Muhammad Ali's residence in the 1940s — the one about his convincing the Viceroy of India of the Two-Nation Theory through sending him an editorial on this subject in *The Light*. ”

TV documentary on Muslims and violence in Britain

*Review of Channel 4 production
'Britain Under Attack'*

This was a one hour long programme broadcast on 6th August in the documentary series *Dispatches* by the U.K. broadcaster Channel 4 television. Since one particular aspect of this programme was billed in advance as exploring “the Koranic teachings that lie behind the concept of jihad”, it was naturally of interest to a religious movement such as ours. The programme summary, which can be read on Channel 4’s website, tells us that the reporter, Phil Rees, who is “an expert in Islamic violence”, “meets the clerics who justify and encourage attacks on British soil and analyses the government’s response — to de-politicise Islam and to silence radical views”. He interviewed those Muslim representatives as well who believe that Muslims in the U.K. must live as law-abiding citizens.

Unfortunately, the impression created by the programme and the interviews was that the people preaching violence are well able to justify their stand from the Quran and are motivated by Islamic teachings while those advocating peaceful living are following some far-fetched interpretations of Islam. The text of the Quran was only quoted when the extremists’ interpretations were being presented, as if it only contains teachings supporting their views and no verse supporting the opposite views.

I sent a note to Channel 4 commenting on this broadcast as below.

Comment note to Channel 4

‘Dispatches’, 6th August 2007, was highly unbalanced in that the presenter tried to provide legitimacy to the Muslim extremists’ interpretations as being supported by the Quran. He failed to put any critical questions to the extremists regarding the meanings they were attaching to certain verses of the Quran. The programme ascribed a text to the Quran which **does not exist** in it. This stated: “Jihad is ordained for you”. Nowhere in the Quran is such a statement made about Jihad.

A verse was quoted: “And the Jews will not be pleased with thee (O Muhammad), nor the Christians, unless thou follow their religion” (2:120). This relates purely to religious doctrines and beliefs. It has no connection with waging war against anyone.

Another verse quoted was: “And they will not cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can” (2:217). This verse is speaking of the fighting against Islam by the Arab fellow-tribesmen of the Prophet Muhammad. It makes no reference to Jews or Christians but to Arab idolaters.

The programme covered the Muslim belief that all Muslims in the world are an ‘Umma’ and how this motivates Muslims in U.K. to fight for others in the ‘Umma’. It was ignored that the Quran calls all humanity as one Umma as well! See 2:213 and 10:19. It was ignored that the Quran, three times, says that Jews and Christians have good ‘ummas’ within their ranks. See 3:113, 5:66 and 7:159.

The programme ignored that Islam requires Muslims to believe in and respect the Biblical prophets, the highest religious figures of the Jews and Christians, such as Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, as well as Jesus. It ignored that the Quran accepts that Jews and Christians can receive salvation with God. See 2:62 and 5:69.

The presenter took the greatest pains to highlight weaknesses in the non-violent interpretations of Islam and to make the violent interpretations look as much legitimate and well-founded as he possibly could.

Perhaps the most disgraceful part of the programme was where the extremists were allowed, unchallenged, to claim that Islam allows them to tell lies to get visas to enter the country and, far worse, it allows them to attack and bomb the general public. The programme clearly suggested that these are tenable interpretations.

The programme simply provided misguided Muslim extremists with a platform to present their views about Islamic teachings as justified. The very final comment by the presenter expresses his insidious conclusion that support can be found in the Quran for all the atrocities committed by the extremists.

The presenter appears unable to understand that any teaching can be perverted. The Bible was used to support Apartheid in South Africa. The scientific theory of Evolution was used to support the Nazi ideology of creating a master race by exterminating inferior races. Does that mean that the Bible or science actually provided justification for these ideologies?

Further comments

To add to the comments sent to Channel 4, we can construct artificial examples of how a text from the

Quran, as from any other book, can be misrepresented. For instance, someone could quote:

“O you who believe, surely of your wives and your children there are enemies to you, so beware of them.” — 64:14

Does this mean that Muslims are taught to look upon their wives and children as actually their enemies, and that Muslim husbands and fathers are on guard every moment in case their wives and children pull out swords to attack them with? Has anyone ever interpreted this verse in this way and acted accordingly? This verse would appear to be even more stern than the one often misrepresented which says: “O you who believe, take not the Jews and the Christians for friends” (5:51). At least, the latter verse only requires negatively that Jews and Christians should not be taken as friends, but the former positively declares that your wives and children may well be your enemies! The verse, of course, only warns against doing an act of wrong or injustice to favour one’s wife or children.

Covenant

A point covered during the broadcast is summed up as follows in its synopsis on Channel 4’s website:

“Another belief which is central to many Muslims living in the West is the ‘Covenant of Security’ which prevents Muslims from attacking their home nation if they are offered safety and freedom to pray. Rees [the presenter] visits an Islamic Centre in Luton where young men are taught to accept and honour the covenant. ... In stark contrast, Rees meets an Islamic scholar who believes the British government has broken this covenant through its foreign policy in the Middle East so attacks can be theologically justified.”

It is a highly negative view which suggests that Muslims are somehow ever-ready to attack their home nation of non-Muslims, but are just about held back by accepting a covenant of security with that nation, and the danger is that at any moment, for any reason, they may consider this covenant as breached and lash out at those around them. Firstly, the religion of Islam lays the highest stress on doing good to one’s neighbour, to whatever nation or religion the neighbour may belong. Secondly, as I said in my comments above, the Quran calls the whole of humanity as *one Umma*:

“Mankind is a single nation (*umma*). So God raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the Book with truth... ” — 2:213

A Muslim has a duty to that wider *Umma* as well. These teachings provide the basis for Muslims to live in peace with others around them.

While the programme was emphasising the importance of the concept of the *Umma*, “a notion of Islamic brotherhood which encourages Muslims to act on behalf of one another”, it failed to ask the question: on what basis are the same extremists killing other Muslims every day in countries such as Pakistan? Had it raised this question, the answer by these people would have been another “breach of covenant” type of reply. They would have responded that the Muslims they are attacking have deviated from true Islam. Muslims disagreeing with them are, in their eyes, no different from non-Muslims.

One hadith quoted in the documentary was to the effect that the Muslim *Umma* is like one human body, so that if one part is ailing all other parts also suffer illness and pain. But this is true in another sense than the one meant in the programme. The part that is ailing consists of the advocates of violence and intolerance. As a result the rest of the Muslims are also having to suffer. ■

‘A Misunderstanding Removed’

New translation by Qadiani Jama‘at

On the Qadiani *Jama‘at* website www.alislam.org, a new English translation of the Urdu pamphlet *Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala* by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has recently been published under the above title. An earlier translation of the same pamphlet by them was first published in 1978 and has been in circulation for several years on the Internet. They have been putting forward this pamphlet to prove that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement claimed to be a prophet.

The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement first published its English translation in June 1951 under the title *Correction of An Error*. The translation was ably done by Maulana Shaikh M. Tufail, who also added a valuable introduction as well as an analysis to refute the notion that Hazrat Mirza *sahib* was claiming to be a prophet in it. More than thirty years later, in the light of experience of doing translations during the South Africa court cases, I (Zahid Aziz) made a new translation under the same title, with extensive explanatory notes. This has not been published in print but has been available on our websites for about eight years. Please see the link:

www.ahmadiyya.org/nocclaim/gh-trans.htm

While the Qadiani *Jama'at* presents this pamphlet to prove that the founder of the Movement claimed to be a prophet, that is not the entire story of what they believe about this publication. Their belief is that in this booklet, published in November 1901, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad announced to the world **for the first time** that he was claiming to be a prophet and that he thereby **revoked his previous denials** of claiming to be a prophet which he had been announcing for the previous ten years. They also hold that **he was mistaken** during all those ten years in denying claiming to be a prophet, because he was actually a prophet but failed to realize it. The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement has, of course, always held that those previous denials were correct, remained valid and were always confirmed by the founder till his death.

The architect of these Qadiani doctrines, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, their second *Khalifa*, wrote as follows:

“He [Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad] did not know that the nature of the claim he was putting forward was that of a claim that only prophets can make, and no one else, and yet he was denying being a prophet. But when he discovered that the nature of his claim that he had been putting forward since the beginning of his claim was that of prophethood and not sainthood, he declared himself as a prophet...” — *Haqiqat-un-Nubuwwat*, published March 1915, p. 124

It is patently absurd and laughable to say that a prophet, after being given that office by God, does not realize for ten years that he has been made a prophet. All this time, when his opponents accuse him of claiming to be a prophet he denies it vehemently, even to the extent of taking oaths in mosques to deny this charge, and declaring that he considers anyone who claims to be a prophet as a liar, impostor and an accursed man. If such a man suddenly announced that he was actually a prophet, as the Qadiani *Jama'at* holds that he did, what credibility would he have left?

Due to the utter absurdity of this standpoint, the Qadiani *Jama'at* has felt it best not to mention it for the past several decades. Their new translation carries a Publisher's Note, but this makes no mention of it. The Note does, however, say that this pamphlet is:

“...the last word in settling the dispute between those who believe the Promised Messiah to be a Prophet of God and those who do not.”

How can it be the *last word* when according to Mirza Mahmud Ahmad it was his *first word* about his claim! If a man denies something continuously and forcefully for ten years and then, out of the blue, admits to it and revokes all his previous denials, he would face so many questions and objections that it could not possibly be his *last word* on the subject. He would have to spend a long time explaining and justifying this complete turn-about in his beliefs.

In Ahmadiyya literature after 1901, during the life of Hazrat Mirza *sahib*, we often find instances where the so-called pre-1901 beliefs, allegedly revoked in 1901, are reiterated again. An example brought to our attention recently is an article in the *Review of Religions* for May 1903, in connection with the tomb in Srinagar known locally as the tomb of a prophet called *Yus Asaf*, which we consider to be that of Jesus. Ahmadis argued that it could not be the tomb of a Muslim saint *after* the Holy Prophet Muhammad's time because then Muslims would not have called it the tomb of a 'prophet' as the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the Last Prophet. The article mentioned above is by Maulvi Sher Ali, who was later a leading scholar of the Qadiani *Jama'at*. He is replying to an article in a Christian journal in which the writer suggested that the person known as *Yus Asaf* was a Muslim saint of Kashmir who died no more than 200 years before. Maulvi Sher Ali writes in refutation:

“The fact that he is known as a Prophet or *Nabi* refutes the idea of his being a Muslim Saint. No intelligent man would think that a person who was reputed as a prophet among the Muslims was a Muslim Saint. Even if a Muslim Saint works miracles, they would take him as a *Wali* at the best and never as a prophet. They believe that their Holy Prophet is the seal of the prophets and that he is not to be followed by any other prophet. Hence the fact that *Yus Asaf* is believed to be a prophet by the Muslims of Kashmir clearly shows that he lived prior to the time of the Holy Prophet of Arabia and one who takes him for a Muslim Saint only, betrays his complete ignorance of the beliefs prevailing among the Muslims.” — p. 198

This is just one example of such statements in Ahmadiyya literature after 1901. Also after 1901 we find some pre-1901 letters and statements of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad about his claim published again. They carry no indication by the publisher or editor that those views had changed since the time when they were first expressed before 1901.