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Challenge of Ahmadism

The universally accepted idealism believe last Prophet Muhammad Al-Mustafa (S) was the last Prophet of God was unfortunately challenged some 70 years ago by one Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (Punjab, India) who claim to be a prophet.

As this booklet is being written to throw light upon the Muslim belief of "Seal of the Prophethood", it is essential to give a historical background to the birth of Ahmadism.

The famous Muslim thinker, Dr. Iqbal, wrote a booklet "Islam and Ahmadism" and I propose to quote in this chapter some of the paragraphs from his learned discourse.

He writes: "The simple faith (of Islam) is based on two propositions that God is One and that Muhammad is the last in the line of those holy men who have appeared from time to time in all ages to guide mankind to the right way of living".

The question of heresy, which needs the verdict whether the author of it is within or without the fold, can arise, in the case of a religious society founded on such simple propositions, only when the heretic rejects both or either of these propositions. Such heresy must be and has been rare in the history of Islam which, while jealous of its frontiers, permits freedom of interpretation within these frontiers.

And since the phenomenon of the kind of heresy which affects the boundaries of Islam has been rare in the history of Islam, the feeling of the average Muslim is naturally intense when a revolt of this kind arises. That is why the feeling of Muslim Persia was so intense against the Bahais. That is why the feeling of Indian Muslims is so intense against the Qadianis.

"The question of what may be called major heresy arises only when the teaching of a thinker or a reformer affects the frontiers of the faith of Islam. Unfortunately this question does arise in connection with the teachings of Qadianism".

"Theologically the doctrine is that. The organization called "Islam" is perfect and eternal. No revelation the denial of which entails heresy is possible after Muhammad. He who claims such a revelation, is a traitor to Islam. Since the Qadianis believe the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement to be the bearer of

such a revelation they declare that the entire world of Islam is infidel.

The founder's own argument is that the spirituality of the Holy Prophet of Islam must be regarded as imperfect if it is not creative of another Prophet. He claims his own Prophethood to be an evidence of the Prophet-rearing power of the Holy Prophet of Islam. But if you further ask him whether the spirituality of Muhammad is capable of rearing more Prophets, than one, his answer is "No". This virtually amounts to saying "Muhammad is not the last Prophet: I am the last".

This is, in fact, the accepted belief of the Qadianis. Really it is astounding that while the distinction of being the last of the Prophets is denied to the Prophet of Islam, it is claimed for the prophet of Qadian. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad himself says: "I am the last path of all the divine paths, and the last light of all the divine lights". Elaborating on this theme, the "Tash-hizul-azhan" writes: "In this 'Ummah' there can be only one prophet, that is, the promised Messiah; and certainly nobody else can come.

The same magazine 2 says: "After the Holy Prophet of Islam only one prophet can come. It will disturb many policies and kingdom of God if many prophets came.

The same paper declared: 'Thus it is proved that there cannot be more than one prophet. (The Holy Prophet of Islam) has said "La Nabiyva Ba'adi". There is no prophet after me; and thus has clearly declared that in this *Ummah* no prophet or messenger of God can come after him, except the promised Messiah".

This distorted logic is beyond human comprehension. The Qadiani writer accepts the Holy Prophet's declaration that there would be no prophet after him: and then (instead of refuting the claim of any pretender of prophethood after Muhammad) adds a tail to the interpretation: "except Mirza Ghulam Ahmad."

"Tash-hizul Azhan" was a magazine for Ahmadi children and that is the belief which is taught to their children from childhood.

Thus, the Qadianis have transferred the finality of prophethood from the Prophet of Islam to Prophets: for the Qadianis, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is the last of the prophets. But there is one "*Khatam un–Nabiyyin*" (the Last of the Prophets) in both religions, in the sense of the finality of the prophethood. I think this point of agreement should be enough to end the controversy about the meaning of the phrase "*Khatam un–Nabiyyin*".

Now, to revert to Dr. Igbal's writing:

"Far from understanding the cultural value of the Islamic idea of finality in the history of mankind generally and of Asia especially he (i.e., Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) thinks that the finality in the sense that no follower of Muhammad can ever reach the status of prophethood is a mark of imperfection in Muhammad's Prophethood. As I read the psychology of his mind he in the interest of his own claim to prophethood, avails himself of what he describes as the creative spirituality of the Holy Prophet of Islam

and at the same time deprives the Holy Prophet of his "finality" by limiting the creating capacity of his spirituality to the rearing of only one prophet, i.e., the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement. In this way does the new prophet quietly steal away the "finality" of one who he claims to be his spiritual progenitor".

He claims to be 'buruz' 4 of the Holy Prophet of Islam instituting thereby that, being a buruz of him, his finality is virtually the "finality" of Muhammad, and that this view of the matter, therefore, does not violate the finality of the Holy Prophet. In identifying the two finalities, his own and that of the Holy Prophet, he conveniently loses sight of the temporal meaning of the idea of Finality.

It is, however obvious that the word 'buruz' in the sense even of completed likeness, cannot help him at all, for the buruz must always remain the other of its original. Only in the sense of reincarnation a buruz becomes identical with the original. Thus if we take the word 'buruz' to mean 'like in spiritual qualities' the argument remains ineffective. If, on the other hand, we take it to mean reincarnation of the original, in the Aryan sense of the word, the argument becomes plausible but its author turns out to be only a Magician in disguise."

- 1. Vol. 9, No. 3, March, 1914.
- 2. Vol. 12, No. 8, August, 1917.
- 3. Vol. 9, No 3, March, 1914.
- 4. Buruz: Appearance.

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