

KHILAFAT-E-AHMADIYYA

(By Dr. Aziz Ahmad Chaudhary)

In Surah Al-Nur of the Holy Quran (24:56), there is a promise by Allah that He will raise Khalifas (successors of the Holy Prophet) among righteous Muslims with the result that Allah will establish their religion which He had chosen for them and that He will give them peace and security after their fear. Thus, after a Prophet passes away, a series of successors follow to carry on the Prophet's mission. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) passed away, it was a time of grief and fear and great crisis. Rebellions broke out in many parts of Arabia. At that critical time, Allah raised Hadrat Abu Bakr as the first Khalifa to the Holy Prophet. Muslims were again united, Islam was firmly established, and their fears changed into peace, security, and progress. Hadrat Abu Bakr was followed by other Khalifas, namely, Hadrat Umar, Hadrat Uthman, and Hadrat Ali. They were all righteous and guided by Allah. May Allah be pleased with them. This glorious period of early Islam is known as Khilafat-e-Rashida (i.e., righteous and guided Khilafat). No student of the history of Islam can ignore this glorious period of success and victory, when all Muslims were united and guided by Khalifas. Later on, Khilafat took a different shape. Kingship or monarchy followed. Some of them were saintly and have great names in the history of Islam. There have been a great number of saints and reformers in each century of Islam, who provided spiritual guidance in their times and spheres, with the blessings of the Holy Prophet. Many of them were persecuted by the authorities of their time.

In one Hadees in (Musnad Ahmad, vol.5 page 404, the Holy Prophet said: "O ye Muslims the present prophethood period amongst you will last as long as Allah wills. On its conclusion there will be a period of Khilafat on the design, pattern and succession of Nabuwat, i.e., in continuation of the Prophet's mission. This Khilafat will be followed by a succession of kingship, which will be dictatorial regimes of tyranny and oppression, which will be followed by non-democratic regimes. On its conclusion there will then begin real Khilafat on the model and pattern of prophethood."

This prophecy about the re-establishment of Khilafat on the pattern of prophethood in the latter days has been fulfilled by the Promised Messiah and Mahadi, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who also claimed to be an Ummati Prophet (i.e., follower prophet) and a deputy, and a Khalifa of the Holy Prophet in this age. In fact, he claimed to be Khatam-ul-Khulafa (a seal of Khalifas) and said that there will be no Khalifas after him, except those who would be among his followers.

The Promised Messiah, a few years before his death, wrote a book called "The Will", in which he wrote that Allah had informed him that his time of death was close. He gave advice to his followers and encouraged them not to grieve and

to put their trust in God. He gave tidings of the Khilafat that would follow after him, which he said will last forever until he Last Day. He wrote that he was a manifestation of Allah's power and after him there will be the second manifestation which will last forever (i.e., Khilafat).

The Promised Messiah, after fulfilling his divine mission, passed away on May 26, 1908. The next day Hadrat Maulana Nurud Din was elected as Khalifatul Masih I (i.e., the first successor to the Promised Messiah). He was the most devoted to Hadrat Ahmad, and a great ENS, scholar and physician; who had devoted his life for the service of the Promised Messiah and his Community. His great contribution for the Community was that he firmly strengthened the institution of Khilafat and frustrated those dissidents who were not in favour of Khilafat. The first missionary abroad to England was sent by him.

Khalifa Nurud Din passed away in 1914 and Hadrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmood Ahmad was elected as the second Khalifa. He was the "Promised Son" about whom the Promised Messiah had been given good news by revelation from Allah. We have already written about this illustrious son of the Promised Messiah and his great achievements which will shine forever in the history of the Ahmadiyya Movement and Islam. During his Khilafat, the Ahmadiyya Community became a truly international organization. Khalifatul Masih II died in November 1965 after a period of Khilafat lasting 51 years. Khalifas are elected for life.

Hadrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the eldest son of the second Khalifa, was elected as the third Khalifa in 1965. He had a long career as an educator and held many other high offices in the organization of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat prior to his election. During his Khilafat, the Ahmadiyya Community continued to progress. He started the Nusrat Jehan scheme to serve West Africa in the field of health care and education. This scheme has been a great success which can be judged by the statistics given earlier. He guided the Ahmadiyya Community during the crisis of 1974 when the Bhutto government of Pakistan declared Ahmadi Muslims to be "non-Muslims". His motto was "Love for All, Hatred for None". His personality reflected love and great humility.

The present Khalifatul Masih IV was elected in 1982 when the third Khalifa passed away. We have already written about him. He is a grandson of the Promised Messiah. Since his migration to London in 1984, the International Ahmadiyya Community has benefited greatly by his leadership. He is a great scholar, speaker, and writer. He travels extensively worldwide serving Ahmadiyyat and Islam. He is well regarded by many non-Ahmadi Muslims, and non-Muslims as well. He is the author of the following books in English.

1. Murder in the Name of Allah
2. Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues
3. The Gulf Crisis and the New World Order

4. Christianity: A Journey from Facts to Fiction

The great success which the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam has made is to a great extent the result of the blessings of Khilafat. Respect, love, and devotion is mutual between the Khalifa and the members of the community. Ahmadis follow all the instructions of the Khalifa with sincerity and zeal. The Khalifa is always engaged in making schemes for the welfare, training, and progress of the community and for the propagation of Islam to non-Muslims. He is both the Spiritual Head as well as Chief Administrator of the Organization of the Ahmadiyya Community.

Thus Khilafat in Islam has been reestablished by the advent of the Promised Messiah, as prophesied by the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). Other Muslim sects around the world suffer from disunity and from lack of leadership, and are like sheep without a shepherd. Their disunity and greed for oil wealth and material things is well illustrated by the Persian Gulf War in 1991, when many Muslim Kings, Amirs, and political leaders collaborated with Western interests. Saudi Arabia, the keeper of the holy places of Mecca and Medina, became a base for the American military and from there the war was launched to destroy the neighboring Islamic country of Iraq. Thousands upon thousands of Muslims were killed. Iraq continues to be the unfair victim of the economic embargo. What have the Islamic countries done for Bosnia, where Muslims are the victims of genocide at the hands of the Serbians? Muslim countries have done nothing significant to help Bosnian Muslims to defend themselves. The United Nations, NATO, the European community and US have provided humanitarian aid to Bosnian Muslims who are victims of Serb aggression, but were unwilling to take any strong measures to stop this fighting and bloodshed as that required risks and sacrifices they were unwilling to undertake.

Since the war started in Bosnia in 1992, it took three and a half years of brutal fighting, ethnic cleansing, and genocide of Bosnian Muslims which resulted in about 250,000 deaths and two million refugees that the world community has finally decided to do something to stop it. Finally United States asserted its leadership and NATO forces carried out bombing of Serbian aggressors in August 1995 which resulted in Serbian willingness to political negotiations with other parties in this conflict.

The United States has played leading role recently in encouraging all parties to stop fighting and negotiate a political settlement. It has resulted in Dayton peace agreement by all three groups of former Yugoslavia. President Clinton has decided to send 20,000 American troops to Bosnia to enforce the peace agreement, along with other NATO forces. In making this decision, President Clinton has shown courage and leadership. Many Americans, a majority by some estimates, are against this involvement in Bosnia because they think that American vital interests

are not at stake in Bosnia. To stop fighting, horrible killings and genocide, for humanitarian and moral reasons alone, must be regarded as vital interest by the International Community.

Many Muslims are misguided and think that they can regain their lost power and glory by being ultra-nationalists and by using force and violence. This view is contrary to the Holy Prophet's message of love, peace, and brotherhood. He has been called the "Mercy for Mankind". He never, fought any war except in self-defense and only when the enemy had come forth to completely annihilate the early Islam.

The Promised Messiah, writing 100 years ago has described the pitiful condition of Muslims at that time and their helplessness when faced with Dajjal and the mighty power of Gog and Magog, surging high all over the world. He said that this happened because the Muslims in the latter centuries ignored the teachings of Islam and Quran and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet. Many of them had become like the Jews at the time of Jesus, fighting over the literal and subjected to the power of Dajjal and Gog and Magog (European Christian Nations). He said that Islam had become like an old woman who had lost all charm and beauty. The moon of Islam had become like an old dry twig. When things reached to this extreme, the Lord had pity over them and as promised by the Holy Prophet, He sent their Messiah. With his advent, with his prayers and supplications, God-given knowledge and arguments, and heavenly signs in his support, the Promised Messiah, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, will succeed in delivering the Muslim world from this great danger. The cross will be broken as this was one of his missions. With the prayers of the Promised Messiah and frightful heavenly signs, Dajjal will simply melt away and the power of Gog and Magog will be shattered. The Promised Messiah said that all nations will be united under the banner of Islam. The moon of Islam will become full.

Addressing Muslims the Promised Messiah said that this time is for rejoicing as their Messiah, promised to them, had come. The Holy Prophet (peace be on him) had instructed Muslims to convey his Salaam (greetings of peace) to the Messiah when he appears. It is time to join the Community of the Promised Messiah and not to reject him and thus become deserving of punishment.

THE CENTENARY MESSAGE

We end this part of the book by quoting an article which was the Centenary message delivered by Hadrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV, on March 23, 1989, This was the first centenary of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

"One hundred years ago, an amazing event took place in an obscure and tiny hamlet (Qadian), in the Province of the Punjab, India. It was an event which was destined to change the course of history.

There appeared a religious leader specifically commissioned by God to lead mankind as the Promised Reformer of the latter days. His name was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908), the Founder of the world-wide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. He laid the basis for the unification of mankind in a unique manner. He resolved the conflicts and paradoxes prevailing in the religious world regarding the advent of a global Reformer.

The followers of all great religions – Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, and Confucians anxiously awaited the advent of a promised Reformer, as predicted in their holy scriptures.

The Jews expected the Messiah to rejuvenate Judaism, the Christians claimed that the second advent of Jesus would bring nigh the Kingdom of Heaven; the Muslims believed that the Messiah and Mahdi would join forces to bring about the final renaissance of Islam, the Hindus awaited the coming of God himself in the form of Krishna; and, the Buddhists were hopefully awaiting for the incarnation of Buddha. How could God send different Messengers simultaneously – each calling to the same God in his own diverse way, inviting mankind unto divergent paths and conflicting ideologies? That was the perplexing question addressed by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian under Divine guidance and revelation.

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