

Lecture Ludhiana

By:

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Lecture Ludhiana

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Publishers' Note

Lecture Ludhiana is the lecture delivered by Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, (1835-1908), on 4 November 1905 at Ludhiana—a town in Punjab, India.

This lecture is important for a number of reasons, the chief being the presentation of the Ahmadiyya viewpoint on true Islam, against the backdrop of persistent disinformation spread by the Muslim clerics and other vested interests. It analyses in detail the hardship and opposition faced by the Promised Messiah, the divine promises revealed to him, and the glorious fulfilment of these promises.

It also covers an entire spectrum of other topics ranging from Jihad to the importance of prayer, and a detailed analysis of the death and Second Coming of Jesus^{as}.

This English version is being published for the first time. It has been translated from the Urdu original by Professor Mian Muhammad Afzal and revised and edited by Professor Muhammad Ali Chaudhry and Mr. Kanwar Idris, assisted by Zulkarnain and Raja Ata-ul-Mannan.

In this translation, the name Muhammad or his title 'Holy Prophet', is generally followed by the symbol ^{sa} for the salutation *Sal-Lalaho 'Alaihi wa Sallam*, meaning 'May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.' The names of other prophets are followed by the symbol ^{as} for *'Alaihis-Salam*, meaning 'Peace be

on him'. Similarly, the names of the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} are followed by the symbol ^{tz} for *Raziya-Allaho 'Anho*, which means 'May Allah be pleased with him'. In most places the actual salutations have not been set out in full for the sake of brevity. Muslim readers should treat the full salutation as implicit.

Some verses of the Holy Qur'an quoted in this book have not been translated by the Author. The translation of these verses has, therefore, been given in footnotes. For this purpose, we have followed the English rendering of the Holy Qur'an by Hadrat Maulvi Sher Ali Sahib.

THE PUBLISHERS

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ¹
نَحْمَدُهٗ لَا وَنُصَلِّیْ عَلٰی ذٰسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِیْمِ²

Lecture Ludhiana

*Delivered by the Promised Messiah before a large
audience on 4 November 1905*

I begin by acknowledging my gratitude to Allah the Almighty Who has once again given me the opportunity to visit this town and convey His message to its citizens.

When I was here 14 years ago, I had but a few companions and my opponents were ever so vocal in condemning me as a liar, non-believer and Antichrist. In their eyes I was as one both damned and accursed. They thought it was only a short matter of time before my Jama‘at would stand rejected and, as a result, disintegrate to ultimately vanish without a trace.

To achieve this end, plots were hatched and extensive efforts were made culminating in a religious edict—*fatwa*— which declared me and my Jama‘at to be outside the pale of Islam. This edict was widely circulated in India, and, I regret to say, that some Muslim clerics from this very town were among the first to pronounce it. But as I can see, and all of you stand witness, they are no

¹ ‘In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.’ [Translator]

² ‘We praise Allah and invoke His blessings upon His noble Prophet^{sa}.’ [Translator]

longer among us today, while Allah has granted me life and enlarged my Jama'at.

I believe this edict, declaring me a disbeliever and bearing the signatures and seals of about 200 Muslim clerics and scholars, was re-issued and circulated in all the major cities of India. It accused me of being faithless, Antichrist, impostor, and an arch disbeliever. They used every means they could muster, believing that the attack they had mounted was sufficient to destroy this movement.

The truth is that had this been a man-made movement based upon falsehood, the weapon of the edict would have been more than enough for its obliteration. But since it was a Jama'at founded by the Almighty Himself, it could not possibly be destroyed by the hostile attempts of the enemy. As opposition to the Jama'at gathered momentum, so did the respect and honour which it commanded begin to be more firmly established in people's hearts.

Today I thank God as I look back to the time when I had but a handful of people by my side and the members of my Jama'at were very small in number. Today you witness a large Jama'at with me, whose membership has already reached 300,000; it is increasing by the day, and will certainly reach hundreds of millions.

Could this great revolution that we witness have been brought about by human hands? The worldly people wanted to obliterate all traces of my Jama'at and would indeed have done it long ago had it been in their power. But it was the work of God Almighty and earthly power

can never negate what He wills, whereas the plans which the world makes but God does not countenance, can never succeed.

Just pause and consider! All clerics, custodians of shrines and their ilk rose in opposition to me and joined hands even with the followers of the other faiths. Sparing no effort, they labelled me an apostate in order to alienate the Muslims at large. When all this failed, they started court proceedings against me. They tried to implicate me in a murder case and did their utmost to get me convicted. I was accused of plotting the murder of a priest. In that lawsuit Maulvi Muhammad Hussein too played a very active role against me, personally appearing as a prosecution witness and hoping that I would be entrapped and punished. That he went to such great lengths clearly showed his inability to produce any plausible argument or proofs *to disprove my claim*. In fact, it is a well established practice that when an enemy finds no argument or reason he opts for persecution and murder; he plans the banishment of his opponent from his native land and hatches a variety of plots and conspiracies against him.

This is what happened when the disbelievers of Mecca became helpless against the Holy Prophet^{sa} and all their efforts were stymied; they conspired to kill him, imprison him or expel him from his homeland. His companions too were subjected to torture, but in the end all the designs and intentions of the Meccans were frustrated. Exactly the same old story is now being repeated in my case. But this

world cannot exist without a Creator and Sustainer. It is He Who differentiates between truth and falsehood and helps the truthful to ultimately prevail. At this point in time, God has once again shown a glimpse of His Might and I am indeed a living sign of His grace and succour. You can all see for yourselves that I am the one whom the people rejected and yet I stand before you as the elect of God.

Recall the time when I came here fourteen years ago. Whoever wished me to have even a single follower? The Muslim clerics and sufis, the venerable and the affluent, all wished death to me and obliteration to this movement; they just couldn't stand it to flourish, but God, Who always helps His chosen people and brings victory to the righteous, also helped me. The result, therefore, has been exactly the opposite of what my enemies had schemed and planned. He has blessed me with success and drawn the attention of people to me. They have come and are coming to me in large numbers, breaking the barriers of opposition and overriding the obstacles that bar their way. Surely, this is a point to ponder. Can it be the result of human design and effort that people of influence, who are bent upon the destruction of a person, hatch all kinds of plots and use all possible means to ignite a dangerous fire around him, he still emerges completely unscathed? Of course not; for this indeed is the work of Almighty God who has always shown such miracles.

There is yet another undeniable proof of the truth of my

claim. Twenty-five years ago no one knew my name nor did anyone come to visit me in Qadian or even had correspondence with me, yet in that state of anonymity and helplessness, Allah addressed me in these words:

يَأْتُونَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ وَيَأْتِيكَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ لَا تُصَعِّرْ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ
وَلَا تَسْتَمِمْ مِنَ النَّاسِ - رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ³

This is the mighty prophecy which was made in those days. It has been widely publicized since then and read by people of every faith and persuasion. At that time and in that condition, when I was obscure and no one knew me, God informed me that people would flock to me in large numbers from far away lands, and provisions would also be made for them because one person on his own cannot possibly provide for the hospitality of hundreds of thousands of guests or bear the expenses. So God said:

يَأْتِيكَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ

‘Their provisions shall also come with them.’ As man tends to grow weary of multitudes and is likely to behave discourteously, God forewarned me not to be discourteous to them, and also not to get tired of the overwhelming flow of people.

Just imagine whether it is within the scope of human

³ ‘They will come by every distant track and will come to you from afar. Don’t turn away from God’s creatures with disdain and don’t get weary of people. My Lord, leave me not alone and You are the Best of inheritors.’ [Translator]

power to foresee such an event twenty-five to thirty years in advance and that too about one's own self. What is even more remarkable is that all this should happen exactly as predicted. No man can know for certain about his mortal life from one moment to the next, or even predict whether he will live to draw the next breath; how then can he foretell such an event? The fact of the matter is that I was literally alone at the time and was also averse to meeting people. But a time was to come when people in their hundreds of thousands would flock to me. Hence the need for this divine command:

لَا تُصَعِّرْ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَسْتَمِ مِنَ النَّاسِ⁴

During those days God also told me:

أَنْتَ مِنِّي بِمَنْزِلَةٍ تَوْحِيدِيٍّ- فَحَانَ أَنْ تُعَانَ وَ تُعْرِفَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ-⁵

This means that, 'The time approaches fast when help will arrive and when you will be acknowledged by the people.' The same message was reiterated in numerous revelations in Persian, Arabic and English. There is food for thought for those who fear God in the fulfilment of a prophecy that was announced well in advance. It was incorporated and published in *Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya*, a book which was widely circulated and read by friends and

⁴ 'Do not turn away from God's creatures with disdain, and do not get weary of people.' [Translator]

⁵ 'You are as dear to Me as My Oneness. The time is fast approaching when help will arrive and you will be recognized by the people.' [Translator]

foes alike. A copy of this book was also sent to the government. Christians and the Hindus read it as well. A sizeable number of people in this city also possess it and can verify for themselves whether or not it contains this prophecy.

Those clerics (who, out of sheer hostility, call me Anti-christ and a liar and deny that no prophecy of mine has been fulfilled), must then feel ashamed and be made to define what else a prophecy is if this one is not. *Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya* is the book that was reviewed by Maulvi Abu Sa'eed Muhammad Hussein Batalvi, my erstwhile fellow student who used to come to Qadian quite often. He knows too well as do many others belonging to Qadian, Batala, Amritsar, and others around us, that I was utterly unknown and alone at the time. Considering my circumstances no one could ever imagine that a time would come when I would have hundreds of thousands of followers.

I solemnly affirm that I was nothing at the time. I was alone and helpless. It was during this period that God Himself taught me the following prayer:

رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ⁶

He taught me this prayer because He loves those who pray to Him, for prayer is real worship. He says in the Holy Qur'an,

أُدْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ⁷

⁶ 'My Lord, leave me not alone for You are the Best of inheritors.'
[Translator]

'Pray and I will accept your prayer.' The Holy Prophet^{sa} also emphasized that prayer is the essence of worship. The other meaning implicit in this revelation is that God wants me to realize through this prayer that though I am alone, a time will come when I'll no longer be alone. I proclaim that this prophecy shines as bright as day and no one can deny the fact that I was alone at the time. Can anyone dare stand up and say that I had a Jama'at with me? But look! how God Almighty, in accordance with His promise and prophecy of a lifetime ago, has given me a large following! Who can ever deny this great prophecy in the context of such a situation and condition, particularly when the same book also contains the prophecy that there will be fierce opposition by people who will try to halt the progress of this Jama't, but God will frustrate them in all their designs.

Again, as mentioned elsewhere in *Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya*, God promised not to relent until the pure were made distinct from the impure. By narrating these facts, I do not mean to address those who do not fear God, who distort His words and do not think they are ever going to die. Rather, my appeal is to those God-fearing ones who believe that death is inevitable and that the hour of death approaches fast. Such God-fearing people cannot be so impertinent as to say that this prophecy, made some twenty-five years ago, can be the result of human effort or

⁷ 40: 61[Translator]

speculation, especially when it is prophesied by one so unknown, and the prophecy is moreover accompanied by another prophecy to the effect that people will try to oppose but they will be frustrated in their designs. To predict that the attempts of the opponents will fail while he who predicts will succeed is phenomenal indeed! However, if you still entertain doubts, the onus to cite a precedent lies with you.

I challenge you to cite just one instance of an impostor since the time of Adam^{as} to the present day who made such a prophecy twenty five years in advance while he was still in a state of anonymity. If anyone can produce such a precedent, then this entire movement and mission shall surely stand rejected. But who can undo the work and will of Allah? To reject, ridicule and deny without any justification is the practice of the baseborn and the illegitimate. No gentleman can commit such felony. This should suffice to establish the truth of my claim to those among you who have an open mind. Remember, this prophecy cannot be rejected unless you produce a precedent to disprove it.

I repeat that this prophecy is very much there in *Brahini Ahmadiyya*, which was reviewed by Maulvi Abu Sa'eed. Here in this very town Maulvi Muhammad Hassan and Munshi Muhammad Umar and some others must also have this book. Copies of it have reached Mecca, Madina and Bokhara. It was also sent to the government. It has been widely read by Hindus, Muslims and Brahmus Sama-

jists alike. It is not an obscure but a reputable book. No literate person of religious inclination and taste could be unaware of its existence.

It is predicted in this very book: "The whole world shall support you and I shall cause you to become famous in the world and shall not allow your enemies to succeed." Now I say once again, can this be the claim of an impostor? If you still insist that this could very well be the work of an impostor, then produce a precedent to prove it. If you are ever able to do so, I will concede that I am a liar. But no one, repeat, no one can ever produce such a precedent. But if you fail, and I am sure you will not be able to do it, I once again call upon you to fear Allah and desist from denouncing me.

Remember, it is unwise to reject the signs of God Almighty out of hand and one who does so will never come to a good end.

For my part, I care the least if someone rejects me or denounces me as an apostate, nor am I afraid of the attacks that are mounted against me because God Almighty has already told me that though people will violently oppose me, they will not be able to harm me in any way. Were not the truthful and the elect of God who came before me denounced? What attacks the Pharaoh and his hordes did not make on Moses^{as} or the scribes on Jesus^{as} or the idolaters of Mecca on the Holy Prophet^{sa}; and to what end? Did their opponents show any matching signs in reply? Never! They were always found wanting

in producing precedents; only their tongues wagged and they continued to denounce them as impostors. In my case too, when their position became wholly untenable, they could do little else but call me an impostor and Antichrist. But could they ever blow out the flame of divine light with their breath? No, never! Says Allah in the Holy Qur'an:

وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ⁸

Furthermore, those who have an ingrained tendency to cast doubts, dub such miracles and signs as sleight of hand. But a prophecy as such admits of no doubt. That is why prophecies have been proclaimed as the great signs and miracles of prophethood. Both the Torah and the Holy Qur'an testify to this truth. No miracle can match a prophecy. Hence the elect of God are to be recognized by their prophecies because prophecies are the crucial criteria decreed by God Himself. He says:

لَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ⁹

This means, 'Secrets of the divine are only revealed to the chosen prophets of God.'

It should also be borne in mind that some prophecies contain fine and abstruse meanings which, for their subtlety, cannot be comprehended by the short-sighted

⁸ 'Allah will perfect His light, even if the disbelievers hate it.' (61:9)
[Translator]

⁹ 72:27,28 [Translator]

ones who can only understand the very obvious. Such are the prophecies as are usually rejected. Those who are prone to be hasty and impetuous cry out that these prophecies have not been fulfilled. It is in this context that Allah says:

وَزَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ كُذِّبُوا¹⁰

People create doubts about these prophecies which in reality come to be fulfilled according to divine precedence. Even if the manner of their fulfillment is incomprehensible, the duty of a believer and God-fearing person is to consider the prophecies which are plain and obvious, instead of those which are subtle, and note how many of them have come true. Outright rejection is contrary to righteousness. One should consider with honesty and fear of God those prophecies which have already been fulfilled. But who can muzzle the mouth of the impulsive?

I am not the lone victim of such treatment. Moses^{as}, Jesus^{as} and the Holy Prophet^{sa} underwent similar ordeals. Little wonder, therefore, if I too face opposition. This was always going to happen, as it was in exact consonance with divine practice. I, for one, believe that one single testimony is enough to convince and overwhelm a true believer. But here we see not one but hundreds of signs. In fact, I can say with full authority that these signs are

¹⁰ '(The disbelievers) thought that they had been told a lie.' (12:111)
[Translator]

virtually innumerable. Is it not enough for a sign that *the Promised one* was to conquer the hearts and win over his opponents? One who fears God and reflects with honesty and wisdom will have to admit that these signs are from God. It is also self-evident that unless an opponent refutes these signs or counters them with precedents, divine position reigns supreme.

To sum up, my heart is filled with gratitude for God Who has appointed me. He rescued me from the storm of fierce opposition that raged against me in this city, a storm that moved all the way to Delhi. But, through God's grace, I emerged out of it safe and sound and triumphant. He has brought me back to this city when more than 300,000 men and women have sworn allegiance to me. Not a month goes by without another 2,000 to 4,000 or sometimes 5,000 people joining the Jama'at.

God sustained me at a time when my own people had risen against me. Man feels helpless and forlorn when his own people turn against him, for it is these who constitute one's limbs and organs. They are his only support. Of course people of other faiths would oppose, for they would feel their faith was under attack, but when one's own people turn against him, it is no small matter to survive and succeed. It is a great sign indeed!

I have to say it with deep regret and a heavy heart that people were not only hasty but also callous in opposing me. The only point of dispute between us was the death of Jesus^{as}, which I proved and continue to prove on the

authority of the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet's practical example— *Sunnah*, the consensus of his Companions, reason, logic and authentic Islamic literature. The Hanafite school of jurisprudence, the definitive verses of the Holy Qur'an, Traditions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, reason and evidence based on Islamic law— *Shariah*, are all in my favour. But before even examining my views at length or listening to my arguments, these people crossed all limits in opposing me, so much so that they called me an apostate and imputed to me whatever their whim or fancy dictated. In keeping with the demands of honesty, righteousness, and fear of God, they should have asked me to explain my viewpoint. Had my position been against the word of God and the Holy Prophet^{sa}, then they would of course have had the right to describe me in whatever terms they wished and call me and impostor, Antichrist and what not. But I have stressed from the very beginning, and still do, that to deviate, however slightly, from the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet^{sa} is an act of rank disbelief. It is an article of faith with me that whoever digresses from this path is accursed and damned. I have expounded this in very clear and positive terms not only in public lectures but in as many as sixty books. Indeed, this has been my constant preoccupation and concern. If these opponents of mine had the fear of God in their hearts, were they not obliged to ask me why my belief appeared to them as un-Islamic? Indeed, without giving the matter a second thought, just on hearsay, they at once

labelled me a disbeliever. I am amazed at this temerity on their part, for the life or death of Jesus^{as} is in the first place not a prerequisite to being a Muslim. Do we demand any such pledge from the Hindus or Christians who convert to Islam? What is required of them is no more than to proclaim:

أَمَنْتُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْقَدْرَ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ
 مِنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَالْبَعْثَ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ¹¹

Despite the fact that this issue (*of the life or death of Jesus^{as}*) does not form part of the Islamic dogma, why, consequent upon my declaration that Jesus^{as} was dead, was I subjected to such violent persecution? Why were my followers branded apostates, and Antichrists, to the extent that they were denied burials in Muslim graveyards, and their possessions were lawfully snatched; and it was considered legal to forcefully keep their women as mistresses outside wedlock, and to murder them was considered a good deed deserving reward in the hereafter and so on and so forth.

There was a time when these very clerics used to shout that if there were ninety nine reasons to call someone a disbeliever and only one reason to call him a Muslim, he would still be a Muslim and not a disbeliever. What has gone wrong now? Am I worse off than even this? Do my

¹¹ 'I believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, divine providence regarding good and evil and the resurrection.' [Translator]

Jama‘at and myself not solemnly pronounce,

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ¹²

Do I or my followers not observe the prescribed prayer? Do we not fast in Ramadan? Do we not follow the rules and articles of faith laid down by the Holy Prophet^{sa}? I swear by God that I and my followers are Muslims and have firm faith in the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the Holy Qur’an, as is incumbent on all true Muslims. I solemnly believe that even the slightest deviation from Islam results in damnation. I also believe that all bounties and blessings man can possibly receive and the closest he can ever get to God is only, repeat only, possible through genuine submission to and consummate love for the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Without him there is no path to piety. It is also my conviction that Jesus Christ^{as} did not physically ascend to the heavens, nor is he still alive. To believe that Jesus^{as} is alive, is highly insulting and derogatory to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. I cannot stand this sacrilege even for a moment. Everyone knows that the Holy Prophet^{sa} passed away at the age of sixty-three and lies buried in his tomb at Madina, which millions of pilgrims visit every year. If it is disrespectful to believe in the death of Jesus^{as} or even to think of it, then I ask how can you permit this insolence and disrespect with regard to the Holy Prophet^{sa}? Indeed, you so brazenly announce his demise. Your ceremonial

¹² ‘I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship but Allah, and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.’ [Translator]

singers recount the events preceding the demise of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and you readily admit even to the non-believers that he did die. But I wonder what hits you so hard at the mere mention of the death of Jesus^{as} that it fills you with uncontrollable rage. I would not have been so hurt if you had also shed tears at the mention of the death of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. But it is such a pity that you gladly accept the death of him who was the Seal of the Prophets and the lord and master of us all, but consider Jesus^{as} to be alive who pronounced himself unworthy even to unloose the shoe-laces of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. And you flare up the moment one speaks of Jesus' death! In fact, it would be of little wonder if the Holy Prophet^{sa} were still alive, as it was he who brought the Supreme Guidance, the equal of which is not to be found in the world. He demonstrated in his person all the possible spiritual excellences, the equal and like of which cannot be witnessed even if we trace history back to Adam. The truth of the matter is that the Muslims, as indeed the entire world, needed the Holy Prophet^{sa} alive far more than it did Jesus^{as}. His was the person so holy and august that at his death, his Companions were too shocked to believe that he had passed away, so much so, that Hadrat Umar^{rz} unsheathed his sword and vowed to behead anyone who dared say that the Holy Prophet^{sa} had died. In this highly charged atmosphere, God granted singular light and wisdom to Hadrat Abu Bakr^{rz} who gathered all the Companions and recited the following verse:

مَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ¹³

i.e., Muhammad^{sa} is but a Messenger, and all Messengers before him have passed away.

Now, just ponder and try to understand why Hadrat Abu Bakr^{tz} had to recite this verse in the presence of all the Companions. What was the purpose of this exercise on an occasion when all the Companions were present? I am sure, and you too will not deny, that on account of the death of the Holy Prophet^{sa} the Companions were terribly shocked for they considered his death untimely and premature. They did not have the heart to hear the news of his demise. And then such a prominent and respected Companion of the Holy Prophet^{sa} as Hadrat Umar^{tz} was so upset that only this verse was able dispel his anguish and resign him to the loss. Had the Companions known and believed that Jesus^{as} was still alive, the news of the death of the Holy Prophet^{sa} would have given them the shock of their lives. They were all lovers of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. They could not tolerate that any Prophet other than the Holy Prophet^{sa} should have been still alive. How could they possibly reconcile to the death of the Holy Prophet^{sa} with Jesus^{as} still alive? Consequently, when Hadrat Abu Bakr^{tz} addressed them, their distress was somewhat relieved and they went about the streets of Madina reciting the verse, feeling as if it had only just been revealed. On this occasion, Hassan bin Thabit^{tz} wrote an elegy, a cou-

¹³ 3:145 [Translator]

plet of which reads:

كُنْتُ السَّوَادَ لِنَاظِرِي فَعَمِيَ عَلَى النَّاطِرِ¹⁴ مَنْ شَاءَ بَعْدَكَ فَلَيْمَتْ فَعَلَيْكَ كُنْتُ أَحَاذِرُ¹⁴

Since the aforesaid verse of the Holy Qur'an had categorically spelled out that all Prophets had passed away, Hassan^{tz} too proclaimed that after the death of the Holy Prophet^{sa} he was the least worried about anyone else's death. It was too hard for the Companions to believe that anyone else should live and the Holy Prophet^{sa} die. This was something they were least ready to accept. Thus, it was the first consensus the world saw after the demise of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, which also settled once and for all the issue of the death of Jesus^{as}.

I have emphasized over and over again that this is the most convincing argument which establishes once and for all the death of Jesus^{as}. The demise of the Holy Prophet^{sa} was too extraordinary an event not to have shocked the Companions. We find that even if a petty village functionary, a neighbour, or a close relative dies, all concerned who belonging to the family, the village and the district are overcome with grief. Then how is it possible that the devoted followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, who was kindness and mercy personified, who had been appointed prophet for the whole world, as stated in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ¹⁵

¹⁴ 'O Prophet, you were the pupil of my eyes; with your death they have gone blind. Whosoever dies now is no concern of mine; what I feared most was your demise alone.' [Translator]

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا¹⁶

who was an embodiment of truth and loyalty, and who demonstrated such spiritual excellences as had no equal, passes away and his death does not come as a great shock to his devoted followers, who, for their part, so unhesitatingly laid down their lives, left their hearths and homes, kith and kin and considered it an honour and a pleasure to bear the greatest of hardships for his sake. How could they remain unaffected by his death? A little thought and reflection would show the intensity of the shock and distress experienced by the Companions at the mere possibility of the Holy Prophet's demise, an intensity which we can't even conceive of. At such an impasse, it was the verse which Hadrat Abu Bakr^{rz} recited that brought solace and comfort. May God reward him for guiding the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} aright at such a critical juncture.

I am sorry to say that some ignorant people, who are too hasty and precipitate in pronouncing judgement, while agreeing that this verse was recited by Hadrat Abu Bakr^{rz}, contend that Jesus^{as} did not fall within its scope. I really do not know what to say to such ignorant people. They profess to be divines yet they say things so absurd. They fail to specify the word in the verse which singles out

¹⁵ 'And We have sent thee not but as a mercy for all peoples.' (21:108)
[Translator]

¹⁶ 'O mankind, truly I am a Messenger to you all from Allah.' (7:159)
[Translator]

Jesus^{as} as an exception. Furthermore, God has said nothing in the verse which could lend itself to more than one interpretation. God Himself defines the term قَدْ خَلَّكَ as:

أَفَأَيْنَ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ¹⁷

Had there been a third option in addition to these, why shouldn't God have also added: 'Or if he was raised to heaven in his physical body.' Did God forget to add what they are trying to remind Him of? We seek refuge with Allah for all this.

This verse alone would have sufficed; but I would like to add that so intense is the love and fondness for the Holy Prophet^{sa} that even today his followers cannot help shedding tears at the mere mention of his demise. For the Companions at that moment, the grief was naturally far more painful and poignant. To me, he alone is a believer who follows the Holy Prophet^{sa} faithfully and attains an exalted spiritual station, as God Himself says:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ¹⁸

“Say, ‘If you love Allah, follow me; so that you become His beloved.’” Love demands love for whatever the beloved does. The Holy Prophet^{sa} died, and, by courting death, he demonstrated that this was the tradition to be followed. Who would now wish to live, or wish someone else to be still alive, after the Holy Prophet's has died?

¹⁷ ‘If then he die or be slain.’ (3:145) [Translator]

¹⁸ (3:32) [Translator]

Love for the Holy Prophet^{sa} simply demands that one should lose oneself in total submission to him, exercise complete control over one's emotions and have full awareness of one's station as a part of the Muslim nation. This being so, how can one claim to love and be a follower of the Holy Prophet^{sa} if he accepts a superior status for Jesus^{as} by pronouncing him alive and the Holy Prophet^{sa} dead?

Believe me, had the Holy Prophet^{sa} continued to live, not a single person would have remained an unbeliever. On the other hand, what is the use of Jesus^{as} supposedly being alive except for the four hundred million Christians? Just pause and ponder! Haven't you tested the belief in Jesus being alive? Hasn't the outcome been grave? Name any Muslim community of which no member has been converted to Christianity. For my part, I can say with certainty that Muslims belonging to all classes have converted to Christianity and the number of such converts may be more than one hundred thousand. The lone weapon with which Christians convert Muslims to Christianity is none other than the belief that Jesus^{as} is still alive. "Show us such an exclusive quality in anyone else other than Jesus," they say. "If Jesus is not God, why was he singled out for this distinction?" To them, he is Ever-Living, and Self-Existing—God forbid. This concept of a living Jesus^{as} has emboldened them to mount attack on Muslims, the effect of which I have already pointed out. Imagine the dismay of the priests if, on the contrary, you

were to establish the death of Jesus^{as}! I have confronted many an eminent Christian priest with this and they have invariably replied: “If it is proved that Jesus^{as} is dead, our faith cannot live.”

Here is another point to ponder: You have seen for yourselves the consequences of the belief in a living Jesus^{as}. Now try to visualize the after-effect of his demise and the damage it does to the Christian creed. This can be illustrated from the fact that whenever any of my followers wants to enter into discussion with the Christians on this point, they instantly refuse, for they know it would sound their death knell. With Jesus^{as} dead, they can prove neither redemption, nor Jesus’ divinity, nor, for that matter, his being the son of God. So try this formula for a few days and the reality will speak for itself.

The Holy Qur’an and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} contain the prediction that Islam will spread and prevail over other religions and the doctrine of the Cross will be smashed. The point to consider is that this is a world of causes and effects. If one falls ill, no doubt he is cured by God alone, but it is He Who has endowed medicines with certain characteristics which help when it is taken. Similarly, when we feel thirsty, it is God Who quenches our thirst, but it is also He Who has created water for this purpose. Also, when we are hungry, it is God who feeds us, but food too is a gift of God. In the same way, Islam will triumph and the Cross will stand demolished, for it is so destined, but it is God Who has provided the means

and an appropriate law to help accomplish this task. Everyone agrees, on the authority of the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions, that in the latter days, when Christianity will hold sway, the supremacy of Islam will be established by the Promised Messiah who will demonstrate the superiority of Islam over all religions and creeds; he will kill the Antichrist and demolish the doctrine of the Cross. And this, as already mentioned, shall happen in the latter days of the world. Nawab Siddiq Hassan Khan and other religious divines, who have written books about these latter days, are of the same view. But the fulfillment of this prophecy has to be through some means because God also employs means to attain an objective just as He cures with medicine and satisfies hunger and thirst with food and water. Now that Christianity has become dominant and Muslims from different strata of society have entered its fold, God has willed Islam's ascendancy in keeping with His promise. The instrument He has employed to realize this end is, of course, the death of Jesus^{as}, which becomes the basis for bringing about the death of the religion of the Cross and breaking its back. I repeat with full conviction that there can be no better strategy to make the Christians shed their wrong beliefs than to prove the death of Jesus^{as}. Ponder over this when you go back home, and reflect when you lie alone in bed, for in anger one is swayed by emotion, but a right-thinking person can still mull over it all. When I put this point across in Delhi, the noble-minded among the audience conceded that it

was the worship of a ‘Living Jesus’ which gave life to Christianity. Unless this pillar was demolished, the door to Islam would not only not open, but, on the contrary, this belief would continue to sustain Christianity.

Now, let me address those who love to believe in Jesus^{as} as being alive. Capital punishment is awarded on the testimony of two witnesses, but here the number of witnesses supporting our contention is legion and yet they persist in their disbelief. God says in the Holy Qur’an:

يَا عِيسَىٰ إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ¹⁹

Jesus’ own admission is recorded in the Holy Qur’an in these words:

فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي ۚ كُنْتَ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ²⁰

The Holy Qur’an bears out that the expression *tawaffi* means death because the same expression was used for the Holy Prophet^{sa} in the verse:

وَإِمَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ²¹

Also, the Holy Prophet^{sa} has used the same term *fa lamma tawaffaitani*, which only means ‘death’. This word has been similarly used for Joseph and for other people as

¹⁹ ‘O Jesus, I will cause thee to die *a natural death* and will exalt thee to Myself.’ (3:56) [Translator]

²⁰ ‘But since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the Watcher over them.’ (5:118) [Translator]

²¹ ‘And if We show thee *in thy lifetime the fulfilment of some of the things with which We have threatened them, thou wilt know it*; or if We cause thee to die *before that*.’ (10:47) [Translator]

well. It doesn't mean anything other than 'death'. This indeed is an incontrovertible proof of the death of Jesus^{as}. Furthermore, the Holy Prophet^{sa} saw Jesus^{as} among the dead on the night of Me'raj— the Ascension. No one can deny the authenticity of the Tradition about the Ascension. Have a look for yourselves, is Jesus^{as} mentioned among the dead or somewhere else? Just as the Holy Prophet^{sa} saw the Prophets Abraham^{as}, Moses^{as}, and others, so did he see Jesus^{as}. There was nothing special or distinctive separating them. No one can deny the fact that Moses^{as}, Abraham^{as} and all the other prophets have passed away and that the angel of death has conveyed them on to the next world. How then could a person, who was alive in his physical body, be with them? All these proofs are more than enough to satisfy a true Muslim.

Also, there are other Traditions which fix Jesus' age varyingly at 120 or 125 years. Taking all this evidence into account, it is contrary to the spirit of righteousness to summarily pronounce the bodily ascent of Jesus^{as} to heaven, especially when there is no supporting precedent. This is also what reason demands. But, alas, these people paid no heed, and, discarding all fear of God, hastened to label me as the Antichrist. It was a terrible thing indeed, if you come to think of it.

When they find no other excuse, they contend that the consensus *about Jesus^{as} being alive* was reached some time in the middle of the Islamic era. I ask, if so, when? The real consensus was the consensus that was reached

among the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} after his death. If there was at all a consensus after that, let all the sects assemble to demonstrate it now. The truth is that it is an absolutely false assertion. No consensus was ever reached about Jesus^{as} being alive. Those who subscribe to such an idea have not read the relevant literature, otherwise they would have come to know that the sufis themselves believed in the death of Jesus^{as} and in his second coming in the figuratively sense.

Just as I have praised Allah the Exalted, I also invoke His blessings upon the Holy Prophet^{sa}, for whose sake alone God has established this Jama‘at. The successes I am achieving are the result of the Holy Prophet’s grace. I unreservedly declare, and this indeed is my belief and faith, that without implicit submission to the Holy Prophet^{sa} and without following in his footsteps, no one can attain spiritual grace and bounty.

Another point worth mentioning, which it would be ungrateful of me not to mention, is that we live, by the Grace of God, under the government of a kingdom which ensures peace all around and allows complete freedom to propagate and publicize our faith. We are also privileged to enjoy all kinds of facilities in these blessed days. Can there be greater freedom than that we openly criticize Christianity and no one stops us from doing so. But there was a time, and many who witnessed it are still alive, when no Muslim dared even to proclaim the Adhan— call for prayer— from the mosques. Not to speak of other

sanctions, we could not even eat what was permissible in our religion. Action used to be taken without holding proper enquiry. But, by God's grace, we now live under a government which is free from these defects. It is peace-loving and does not object to holding different religious views. Under its legal system, everyone is free to carry out his religious obligations. Since God had willed that our message should spread all around, He caused us to be born in this empire. We admire this government, just as the Holy Prophet^{sa} admired the rule of Noshirwan. It is an admitted fact that since an appointee of God brings the message of justice and truth, these qualities appear on earth in anticipation, as it were, even before God's appointee makes his appearance. I can say with confidence, that the present government is far better than the empire of Rome in the days of Jesus^{as}. Although the real framework of the two governments is somewhat similar, it has to be conceded that the laws of this government are subservient to none. A comparison of the laws of the two governments reveals an element of barbarity in the Roman empire, at the same time we also see a demonstration of cowardice when Jesus Christ^{as}, the righteous and chosen of God, was put behind bars out of fear of Jews. A similar case was filed against me with the difference that while the case against Jesus^{as} was brought up by the Jews, in my case it was a reverend clergyman and doctor, i.e. Dr. Martin Clark, who accused me of attempted murder. The evidence he mustered seemed thorough so much so

that even Maulvi Abu Sa'eed Muhammad Hussein Batalvi, an arch enemy of this Jama'at, appeared as a witness and did his utmost to establish the case against me. The case was heard by Captain Douglas, the Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur, who is now posted probably at Simla. The case was duly heard and completed and all the witnesses against me were produced with great fanfare and clamour. In the circumstances not even the best of lawyers could say that I would be acquitted. The prevailing situation, and other factors, demanded that the case be committed to the Sessions who could have sentenced me to transportation for life or even to death. But just as God forewarned me about the case, so did He reveal to me in advance that I would be acquitted. A large number of people belonging to my Jama'at knew about this revelation. When the case reached a stage when the prosecution and my opponents believed that the magistrate would commit the case to the Sessions, Captain Douglas told the Police Superintendent that he had a hunch that the case was a frame-up and he couldn't believe that such an attempt was ever made and that the defendant sent someone to murder Dr. Clark. He asked the superintendent to investigate the case himself. This was the time when not only were my opponents busy plotting against me, but those who claimed that their prayers were heard and accepted, were tearfully soliciting God to punish me. But who can fight God? I also know that some people approached Capt. Douglas and tried to influence him, but

he, being a just and fair magistrate, told them that he could not be a party to such an outrage.

In short, when the case was entrusted to Capt. Le Marchand for a renewed investigation, he summoned Abdul Hamid and told him to state the truth. Abdul Hamid repeated the same old story he had related before the Deputy Commissioner. Actually, at the very start he was warned that the slightest deviation from his original statement would render him liable to prosecution, that is why he repeated the same statement he had made earlier on. The Police Superintendent told him that he had already related the same story but the Deputy Commissioner was not satisfied that he was telling the truth. When Captain Le Marchand again told him to tell the truth, he started crying and fell at the feet of the Captain imploring him for protection. The Captain reassured him and told him to go ahead. At this he came out with the truth. He confessed that he had been coerced into making his earlier statement and deposed that Mirza Sahib had never sent him to murder anyone.

The Captain was overjoyed at this statement and sent a telegram to the Deputy Commissioner that he had solved the case. The case once again came up for hearing at Gurdaspur. Capt. Le Marchand was sworn in and recorded his affidavit. I could notice that the Deputy Commissioner was visibly pleased that the truth had come out. But he was also furious at the Christians who had given false evidence against me. Addressing me, he said

that I had the right to file a suit against them. But, as I am totally disinclined to litigation, I said I didn't want to enter into any litigation, for my suit was filed with God. At this Capt. Douglas straightaway wrote down the judgement and read it out to a large number of people who had gathered there. Addressing me, he said, "**Con-
gratulations, you stand acquitted.**"

You can see for yourselves how commendable it is of this government that for the sake of justice and fair-play no consideration whatsoever was allowed to influence the court—not even when a prominent member of the judge's own religious community was involved. At the time, it seemed as if the whole world was lined up against me and this is what usually happens that when people decide to hurt you, the whole world turns against you; it is God alone Who comes to the rescue of His true servants.

Then another case was filed against me in the court of Mr. Dowie, and was followed by yet another concerning income tax. By the grace of God, my innocence was established in all of them. Then came Karam Din's case in which every effort was made against me and it was assumed that the case would sound the death knell of this Jama'at. Indeed, had the Jama'at not been from God and had He not sustained and strengthened it, it would no doubt have been wiped out. People from one end of the country to the other lent their support to Karam Din. He was aided and abetted in every way, so much so that some of the prosecution witnesses, despite their claim to being

religious divines, testified to what was totally false. They went to the extent of alleging that despite being an adulterer, a transgressor and a libertine, I dared claim to be righteous. The case dragged on for a long time. During this period a number of heavenly signs appeared. At long last, the judgement was announced by the magistrate, who happened to be a Hindu, imposing a fine of five hundred rupees on me. But God had already informed me: “**The Superior Court acquits.**” Therefore, when the appeal was filed in the court of the Divisional Judge, he, in his God-given shrewdness, at once got to the bottom of the case and noted in the judgement that whatever I had written about Karam Din was absolutely correct and I had full right to do so. The judgement he passed has since been published. In the end, he acquitted me of the charge and ordered the refund of the fine. He also censured the trial court for letting the case linger so long.

In short, my opponents have never missed an opportunity to crush me and have left no stone unturned to destroy me. But, just as God has protected all the Prophets, through sheer grace, He also has protected me from all fires. Against the backdrop of these events, I can say with all the emphasis at my command that this government is far better than the Roman government under which Jesus^{as} suffered torment. Pilate, the Governor in whose court Jesus^{as} was initially tried, was in fact a follower of Jesus^{as}, and so was his wife. That is why he washed his hands off Jesus’ blood. The Governor, despite being a follower of

Jesus^{as}, did not show the courage that Capt. Douglas showed. Jesus^{as} was innocent in that case, just as was I in this.

I speak and testify from experience that God has gifted these people with the courage to be just. In this context, I advise the Muslims to obey this government sincerely. Remember, he who is not grateful to his benefactor cannot be grateful to God. The facilities and comforts people enjoy these days are unprecedented. Just look at the facilities provided by the Police, Post & Telegraph, Railways and other departments, and think of the advantages that accrue from these services. Did such facilities exist some sixty to seventy years ago? Be fair, why should we not be thankful for enjoying so many benefits! Most Muslims criticize me and allege that the one fault in my mission is that I have abrogated Jihad. Alas, these ignoramuses are simply unaware of the true significance of Jihad. They only defame the Holy Prophet^{sa} and bring a bad name to Islam. The Holy Prophet^{sa} never mounted an armed attack for the propagation of religion. It was only when the atrocities perpetrated by the enemies against the Holy Prophet^{sa} and his Companions exceeded all limits, and his devoted followers—both men and women—were mercilessly slain, and he himself was chased right up to Madina, that he was allowed by God Almighty to defend himself. It was not the Holy Prophet^{sa} who drew the sword, it was his opponents who did it. Many a time the brutal unbelievers wounded the Holy Prophet^{sa} covering him with

blood from head to foot. Even then he did not retaliate. Remember, had the use of the sword been obligatory for Muslims, they would have used it in Mecca; but the sword of which we speak was drawn only when the blood-thirsty non-believers pursued him into Madina. The enemy at that time brandished the sword, today the sword is no more. My opponents now attack me with false reports and religious edicts. Today it is the pen which is employed against Islam. Can he who fights the pen with the sword be other than a fool or a tyrant?

Do not forget that the Holy Prophet^{sa} drew his sword only when the unbelievers had crossed all limits of cruelty and barbarity; it was a simple act of self-defence, which the law of every civilized government permits. If a thief enters a house and attacks with intent to kill, it is no crime even to kill him in self-defence.

So, when things came to such a pass that the devoted followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa} were murdered, and even old women were most mercilessly and shamelessly massacred, weren't the Muslims justified in punishing the culprits? Had God wanted Islam to disappear leaving no trace behind, perhaps the question of retaliating with the sword might not have arisen. But God wanted Islam to spread all over the globe for the salvation of mankind. That is why, at that point in time, the sword was drawn in self-defence alone. I am certain that no moral code, religion, or law would, in such circumstances, object to having recourse to the sword. Even those who preach that

if you are slapped on one cheek offer the other one as well, cannot exercise patience in such situations nor would those who consider it a sin to kill even a worm. Why then criticize Islam?

Let me make it clear that those ignorant Muslims who believe that Islam was spread by the sword insult Islam and cast false aspersions on the innocence of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Do not ever forget that Islam spread only because of its pure teachings and guidance and because of the miracles that were witnessed, and the blessings and the heavenly light; it spread because of the Holy Prophet's glorious miracles and the ennobling and sublime influence of his exemplary character. Those signs and blessings have not come to an end. They are perennial and present in every age, ever fresh and evergreen. That is why I say that **our Prophet is the Living Prophet^{sa}**. This is because his teachings and guidelines ever and always keep bearing fruit. Even in the future, as Islam progresses, it shall do so by following his path alone and no one else's. Since the sword was never drawn to propagate Islam in the past, it is sinful even to entertain such an idea now, especially when everyone is living in peace, and plenty of means and devices for the propagation of one's faith are available.

I am very sorry to say that the Christians and other detractors have never tried to consider the facts before launching attacks on Islam. If they had, they would have understood that at that time all the enemies were out to annihilate Islam and the Muslims. In fact, they had all

joined forces to conspire against Islam and persecute the Muslims. Confronted with such pain and anguish, what other recourse was left to the Muslims but to save their lives? Referring to this the Holy Qur'an says:

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلَمُوا²²

This shows that when the cruelties perpetrated against the Muslims crossed all limits, then and only then, were they permitted to fight back in self-defence. This permission was granted specifically to meet the situation which prevailed at the time, and was not for every other situation. Indeed, the hallmark of the arrival of the Promised Messiah was ²³يَضَعُ الْحَرْبَ. The proof of the authenticity of the Promised Messiah is that he would not wage religious wars. The reason is because today the opponents too have stopped waging religious wars. The confrontation has, of course, assumed another shape and complexion. Now they use the pen as a weapon to attack Islam. Take the Christians for example: the circulation of each one of their publications exceeds fifty thousand and they make every effort to alienate people from Islam. In these circumstances, should we have recourse to the pen or the arrow? Who will be a greater enemy of Islam and a bigger idiot than the one who opts for the latter? What else would it mean except to defame Islam? Our opponents are not in the right and yet

²² 'Permission *to fight* is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged.' (22:40) [Translator]

²³ 'He would abolish religious war.' [Translator]

they do not resort to the use of the sword, how sad and unfortunate it would be if we, being in the right, should think of taking up the sword.

Draw your swords, if you will, and force a person to accept Islam on pain of death. What will happen is that he will get you apprehended by the police and leave you to relish the use of the sword. This way of thinking is simply absurd. Rid your minds of it. Time has come to reveal the bright and shining face of Islam, to refute all objections against it, and to remove the scar so unjustly stamped on its luminous face. But, I regret to say, that the chance God has provided to the Muslims to bring the Christians into the fold of Islam is being spurned and rejected.

Through my writings, I have exhaustively demonstrated the way which would help Islam succeed and establish its supremacy over all religions. My publications are sent to America and Europe. Endowed with intelligence, those people have come to realize the truth. But when the same point of view is presented to a Muslim, it makes him froth at the mouth, as if he were mad or a homicidal maniac. In point of fact the teaching of the Holy Qur'an is none other than:

ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ²⁴

The purpose of this teaching is to transform the enemy into friend through such kind and decent behaviour that he is forced to listen with patience and calmness. **I swear by**

²⁴ 'Repel *evil* with that which is best.' (41:35) [Translator]

Allah, the Glorious, that I am from Him; He knows that I am not a liar nor an impostor. If, in spite of this solemn oath, and despite witnessing the signs God has shown in my favour, you still call me a liar and an impostor, then I implore you to cite just one instance of an impostor who continues to be blessed with Divine support and succour in spite of his constant lying in the name of God. Such a person should be killed by God, but just the reverse is happening in my case. I again swear by God that I speak the truth and that I have been sent by Him. Though I am in turn called a liar and an impostor, God comes to my help in every case in which my opponents implicate me. What is more, He helps me by infusing my love in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of people. I stake my credibility on this. Show me an impostor and a liar and someone who dared attribute to God what was not from Him, and was still the recipient of His help and support and continued to enjoy life as long as mine and whose aspirations were similarly fulfilled.

Divine messengers are recognized by the signs and favours which God shows in their support. Whatever I say is rooted in truth. God, who looks at the hearts, is aware of what goes on in mine. Can't you even say what one of Pharaoh's men said:

إِنْ يَكُ كَاذِبًا فَعَلَيْهِ كَذِبُهُ وَإِنْ يَكُ صَادِقًا يُصِيبْكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي يَعِدُكُمْ

²⁵ 'If he be a liar, on him will be *the sin of* his lie; but if he is truthful, then some of that which he threatens you with will, *surely*, befall you.'

Do you not believe that God is most of all the enemy of liars. The wrath of God far exceeds the intensity of your collective attack against me. No one can save you from His wrath. The point worth remembering in the verse I have quoted is that God shall fulfill some, and not all, the prophecies concerning chastisement. The philosophy behind this is that some prophecies are conditional and the punishment can be averted through repentance, imploring divine mercy, and turning towards God.

Prophecies are of two kinds: First, those bearing glad-tidings, as God says in the Holy Qur'an:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ²⁶

The *Ahl-i-Sunnah* believe that prophecies of this kind imply certain fulfillment because God is *Karim*— Gracious. But, in case of prophecies of warning, God sometimes forgives, after He has sent the warning, because He is *Rahim*— Merciful. Anyone who says that prophecies containing warning are invariably fulfilled is ignorant and far removed from understanding Islam. He ignores the Holy Qur'an which says:

يُصِيبُكُمْ بِعَظْمِ الَّذِي يَعِدُّكُمْ²⁷

It is a pity that many who style themselves as clerics,

(40:29) [Translator]

²⁶ 'Allah has promised to those among you who believe.' (24:56)
[Translator]

²⁷ 'Some of that which he threatens you with will, *surely*, befall you.'
(40:29) [Translator]

neither know the Holy Qur'an, nor the Traditions, nor, for that matter, the example of the prophets. They froth at the mouth out of malice only to deceive. Remember:

²⁸ الْكَرِيمُ إِذَا وَعَدَ وَفَى

This concept of 'the Merciful' implies that God may pardon even after finding someone guilty. Forgiveness is embedded in human nature too. Once a man, who falsely deposed in a case in my presence, was found guilty of perjury. He was being tried by a British Judge who received sudden orders of transfer to a far-off station. He felt pity for the criminal who was an old man. He told his court clerk that he feared the poor fellow might die in jail. The clerk agreed and submitted that the man also had a family to support. The Englishman said that nothing could be done now that the proceedings had been completed. Soon, thinking better of it, he said: 'All right, destroy the file.' Just reflect, if an Englishman can take pity, why can't God?

Also try to realise why the practice of alms-giving and charity has come to stay, and why is it customary with all peoples? When we are in trouble or face danger, the natural human response is to offer sacrificial lambs and give in charity clothes or whatever one can lay one's hands on. If sacrifice cannot ward off the impending calamity, then why this spontaneous human reaction? Calamity can be averted and this fact is borne out by the

²⁸ 'When a gracious one promises, he fulfills.' [Translator]

collective example of one hundred and twenty four thousand prophets. And I know that this belief is not part of the Muslim faith only, but also of the Jews and Christians, as well as the Hindus. To my mind, no one in this whole wide world denies it. This shows beyond doubt that Allah is sometimes pleased to avert the impending doom.

The difference between a prophecy and Divine Will is that a prophecy is communicated to a prophet, whereas no one is apprised of the Will of God. That remains a secret. The self-same Will of God when communicated through a prophet, becomes a prophecy. If a prophecy cannot be averted, the Will of God, too, cannot be averted through charity and alms-giving. But such an inference would be totally false, since prophecies pertaining to warning can be averted as is clear from the verse:

وَإِنْ يَكُ صَادِقًا يُصِيبْكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي يَعِدُكُمْ²⁹

God Himself testifies that some of the prophecies of the Holy Prophet^{sa} were also averted. How then can you justify your objections against any of my prophecies. Any attempt on your part to reject me on this ground, will amount to rejecting God. I reiterate with full confidence that all the *Ahl-i-Sunnah*, as indeed the entire world, are one on this universally accepted principle that humble and remorseful supplication to God can ward off the impending doom. Have you forgotten what happened in the case

²⁹ 'But if he is truthful, then some of that which he threatens you with will, *surely*, befall you.' (40:29) [Translator]

of Jonah^{as}? Why was the punishment which was about to visit his people averted? It is written in *Durr-e-Manthur* as well as in other books, and in the Book of Jonah^{as}, that divine punishment was destined to overtake them, but, having seen signs of the approaching doom, they repented and turned to their Creator Who forgave them and their punishment was averted. Jonah^{as}, for his part, awaited the chastisement to visit on the appointed day, and went about asking people for the news. He enquired of a farmer about Nineveh. The man replied that all was well. At this Jonah was rather deeply dismayed and said:

لَنْ أَرْجِعَ إِلَى قَوْمِي كَذَّابًا

‘I shall never return to my people as a liar.’ In the presence of this precedent, and a very strong Qur’anic testimony, it is against the spirit of righteousness to raise objections against any of my prophecies which were basically conditional. It is not the wont of a righteous person to blurt out opinions without forethought and be ever ready to reject.

The story of Prophet Jonah^{as} is indeed painful and piteous, and, at the same time, has a moral to convey. It is recorded in the books, read it carefully. It goes on to tell us that Jonah^{as} was thrown into the river and ended up in the belly of a fish. Only then was penitence accepted. Now, why was he visited by such divine chastisement and displeasure? It was because for a while he thought God was not Omnipotent enough to avert a promised retribution. In spite of all this, why do you hastily pass

judgement on me, for by rejecting me you reject all the prophets.

Remember, God is also *Ghafur*— Most Forgiving. Why then should He not forgive those who repent and turn to Him?

One example of this kind of erroneous thinking, which is rampant in Muslims as a whole, is Jihad. It is amazing how they start breathing fire when I say that Jihad is forbidden, and yet they admit that the Traditions about the blood-thirsty Mahdi are doubtful. Maulvi Muhammad Hussein Batalvi has written a number of booklets on this subject. Mian Nazir Hussein of Delhi too was of the same opinion. Both do not consider such Traditions authentic. Why then should I be called a liar? The truth of the matter is that the main task of the Messiah and Mahdi was to abolish religious warfare and to establish the superiority of Islam with pen, prayer and persuasion. What a pity, people do not understand this because they are interested more in what is mundane than in faith. Steeped as they are in worldly worries and immoralities, how can they ever hope that the deeper verities of the Holy Qur'an will be revealed to them, for the Book clearly says:

³⁰ لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ

Listen carefully as to the ultimate purpose of my advent, which is to renew and reaffirm Islam. This should not be construed to mean that I bring a new Law or *Shariah* or

³⁰ 'None shall touch it except those who are purified.' (56:80) [Translator]

that new commandments or a new book will be revealed. Not at all. If somebody so thinks, he is highly misled and devoid of faith. Let it be clear that prophethood and the Shariah have found their total and absolute expression in the person of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. There can be no new divine law. The Holy Qur'an is the last and perfect book, it does not admit of any change, not even of a dot or a mark. Nevertheless, it is also true that the blessings and bounties of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the rewards of the Holy Qur'an's teaching and guidance are unending. They are to be seen in every age, ever fresh in their pristine purity. It is for the demonstration of these rewards and blessings that God Almighty has appointed me. The dire state that Islam is in today is not a secret. Everyone agrees that Muslims suffer from all sorts of shortcomings and decadence. They are degenerating in every aspect. They pay only lip-service to Islam, their heart is not in it. Islam has become like an orphan. Such are the circumstances in which God has sent me so that I may support Islam as its guardian. What is more, God has sent me in fulfilment of His promise, for He had declared:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ³¹

When will this help and succour and protection come if not now? The situation in the fourteenth century *Hijrah* is

³¹ 'Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We will be its Guardian.' (15:10) [Translator]

similar to the one that obtained on the occasion of Badr, and about which Allah says:

وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ³²

This verse actually implied a prophecy: When in the fourteenth century *Hijrah* Islam becomes frail and weak, God, according to His promise, shall come to its help. Why do you wonder if Allah has come to help Islam? I do not care about being called a liar and Antichrist or about aspersions cast on me. This had to happen, for such was the treatment meted out to God's Messengers who came before me. I too had to share this age-old tradition. In fact, my share of these sufferings and hardships is not even a fraction of what our lord and master the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} had to face. His suffering has no parallel in the whole history of the prophets. He suffered such hardship for the sake of Islam as is beyond the pen to describe and the tongue to express. This shows how magnificent and determined a prophet he was. Without divine help and succour, it would not have been possible for him to face up to such mountains of trials and tribulations. Any prophet other than the Holy Prophet^{sa} would have failed. The Islam he established in the face of such suffering and hardship is in such dire straits today as defy description!

Islam means to love and to be lost in total submission to

³² 'And Allah had *already* helped you at Badr when you were weak.'
(3:124) [Translator]

God. It requires a Muslim to surrender to Him as meekly and faithfully, as a goat before the knife of a butcher, believing that God is One and without a peer. This belief in the Unity of God had been lost when the Holy Prophet^{sa} was commissioned. The Indian subcontinent at the time was also full of false gods, as has been admitted by Diyanand Saraswati. Such a state of affairs underscored the need for the Coming of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. The present age is a living image of those times, except that, in addition to idol worship, atheism and the worship of humans are also rife. The result is that Islam has lost its soul and purpose. The essence of Islam lay in losing oneself in love of God and in holding none worthy of worship except Him. Its purpose is to be lost in God and not in the world. Towards this end, Islam divides its teachings into two parts—our obligation to Allah, and our obligation to His creatures. Our obligation to Allah demands implicit submission and our obligation to His creatures requires sympathizing with them and helping them. Tormenting others simply because of religious difference is wrong. Sympathy and kindness are one thing, and opposition because of religion quite another. The group of Muslims which has wrong notions about Jihad, and is grossly mistaken about it, has gone to the extent of justifying the unlawful seizure of property belonging to non-Muslims. About me and my followers too they have issued an edict to usurp our goods and even to abduct our women, whereas the teachings of Islam never

sanctions such foul deeds. Islam is a clean and pure religion. Just as a father expects his children to perform the duties they owe to him and also be mutually helpful and not be at loggerheads with each other, similarly Islam lays emphasis on the Oneness of God and also underscores the need for concord and unity among mankind.

Congregational prayer is promised to be more rewarding because it makes for unity. To translate this unity into practice, Islam enjoins with great emphasis that when we line up for prayer, our feet should be in line, the lines should be straight, and all worshippers should stand close to one another with a view to uniting the many into one, so that the light of one should illuminate the others, thus removing the divide which causes egoism and selfishness.

Remember, man is gifted with the power to absorb the light that others radiate. It is for the realization of this unity that we are enjoined to offer daily prayers in the local mosque, the weekly prayers in the central mosque, Eid prayers in the *Eidgah*, and, once a year, to ensure the congregation of Muslims from all over the world in the House of God— Ka‘bah. The purpose of all these injunctions is none other than forging unity.

Our obligations, as prescribed by God, are only of two kinds: our obligation to Allah and our obligation to His creatures. The Holy Qur’an deals with this subject at great length. In one place it says:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا³³

‘Celebrate the praises of Allah as you celebrate the praises of your fathers or even with greater devotion.’

Here two fine points need to be noted: Remembering God has been compared to remembering one’s forefathers. The underlying idea is that the love for one’s forefathers is personal and natural. When a mother slaps a child, he still cries: “Mamma! Mamma!” In other words Allah instructs human beings to cultivate with Him the relationship of natural love. Having reached this stage, one spontaneously submits to His injunctions. This is the station of true knowledge which man should try to attain: he should truly understand God and develop such love for Him as is natural and personal. Elsewhere in the Holy Qur’an Allah says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ³⁴

This verse mentions three stages which man should strive to attain. The first is justice, which means doing good to others for the sake of reward. Obviously this kind of good signifies not the exalted but the lowest kind of virtue. The next higher virtue is benevolence or doing good without the hope of reward. Of course, it would be wrong to be kind to one who is given to doing evil; offering the right

³³ 2:201 [Translator]

³⁴ ‘Verily, Allah enjoins justice, and the doing of good to others; and giving *like* kindred.’ (16:91) [Translator]

cheek to one who smites you on the left is neither right, nor commonly practicable. Sa'di says:

نکوئی باپداں کردن چناں است
³⁵ کہ بد کردن برائے نیک مرداں

The teachings of Islam on the limits imposed on taking revenge are so wonderful that no other religion can present their like. The Holy Qur'an tells us:

جَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا وَ مَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ ³⁶

This means, 'The recompense of an injury is an injury the like thereof but forgiveness is better, provided it leads to correction and reform.' Thus Islam teaches forgiveness without encouraging mischief.

The next stage after justice is benevolence—doing good without any recompense. But such an action could at times be motivated by selfish motives for one may sooner or later hint at the good he had done. Therefore, Islam goes one step further and teaches us to do good like it is done to the next of kin, quite like the mother who is kind to her baby and never expects any compensation or reward in return. The good she does to her child is done out of natural and spontaneous love. Even if the king orders her not to suckle the child and assures her that she will not be punished even if the child were to die as a result, and promises to reward her in that consequence,

³⁵ 'Doing good to the evil is like doing evil to the good.' [Translator]

³⁶ 42:41 [Translator]

even then she will refuse to obey the king and will curse him for being the enemy of her child. This is because she is motivated by love alone. No self-interest is involved. Such are the excellent and lofty teachings of Islam. The verse covers our duties and obligations to Allah as well as to people. In the context of our obligations to Allah, the meaning of this verse is that in keeping with the requirements of justice, man should obey and worship God Almighty, Who has created him and nurtures him. But, anyone who rises higher than this state of submission to God, should submit to Him consistent with the requirements of benevolence, for God is the Benefactor and the bounties He confers are countless. The favours He confers on us remain fresh in our minds when we think of His sublime characteristics and attributes. Therefore, the meanings of the word ‘benevolence’, as explained by the Holy Prophet^{sa}, are to worship Allah as if you are beholding Him or, at least, as if He is beholding you. Even at this stage, man is held back by a kind of veil. But, next to it is the third stage, that of *Ita’i dhil Qurba*— loving like the kindred. At this stage, one develops personal love for the Creator. Pertaining to this stage, I have already explained the obligations one owes to fellow humans. I have also clarified that no scripture other than the Holy Qur’an contains a teaching which is as perfect as it is unprecedented. For instance:

جَزُوا سَيِّئَةً سَيِّئَةً مِّثْلُهَا وَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ³⁷

Here forgiveness is conditional and reform specific. The Jewish religion prescribed the recompense of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. As a result, they became so vengeful, and this habit became so deeply ingrained in them, that if the father failed to take his revenge it became incumbent upon the son and even the grandson to avenge him. This made them vindictive, hard-hearted and merciless.

The Christians went to the other extreme. They were instructed to offer the second cheek as well when slapped on one; and to accompany for two miles anyone forces you to walk one mile, and so on and so forth. The obvious defect in this teaching is that it is not practicable. The Christian governments have demonstrated in practice that it is defective. Is there a Christian so bold as to offer his other cheek to a scoundrel who has knocked out his tooth with a blow and say, “All right, go ahead, knock out the other tooth as well.” Will this not further embolden the scoundrel? It would certainly result in the breakdown of law and order. How on earth can we admit the superiority of such teaching or say that it is consistent with divine design? If this teaching becomes the guiding principle, no country could be governed properly. It would require

³⁷ ‘The recompense of an injury is an injury the like thereof; but whoso forgives and *his act* brings about reformation, his reward is with Allah.’ (42:41) [Translator]

surrendering what is left to the invader who has already grabbed a part of the country. Similarly, it would imply surrendering ten more officials after one is arrested. These indeed are the defects which render such teachings impracticable. Their only vindication could be that they were meant for a particular period and became inapplicable when the situation changed.

The Jews were enslaved for as long as four hundred years. The life of bondage made them callous and vindictive. It is but natural for the morals of a people to assume the complexion of the ethos of the reigning monarch. For instance, during the Sikh rule, most people took to banditry, while in the British rule, education and civic sense are gaining ground with everyone contributing to the effort. The Israelites living under the Pharaoh were brutalized, so in the days of the Torah justice became the need. The Jews, unaware of justice as they were, had become unjust and cruel by habit. They had come to believe that knocking out a tooth for a tooth was not only essential, but obligatory. Hence God taught them that justice alone was not enough, compassion was also necessary. That is why when slapped on one cheek, they were instructed through Jesus^{as} to offer the other as well. But when too much stress was laid on this, God at long last caused this teaching to attain true consummation in the person of the Holy Prophet^{sa} which was none other than that recompense of injury is injury in equal measure, however, he who forgives, provided forgiveness leads to

reform, has his reward with God. Thus forgiveness is emphasized but on the condition that it results in reform; forgiveness doled out thoughtlessly causes mischief. This is a moment to reflect. One must forgive if forgiveness is likely to bring about reform. This point can be illustrated by an example of two servants: one basically decent, obedient, well-meaning but quite unintentionally makes a mistake, it would only be proper to forgive him and punishing him would be inappropriate; the other, a mischievous rogue who does not desist from mischief and causes damage, if let off, would become even more reckless, hence he must be punished. So act wisely in keeping with the demands of the situation. This is what Islam teaches and it is indeed is the perfect teaching. No other teaching or law can ever replace it, for the Holy Prophet^{sa} is the Seal of Prophets, and the Holy Qur'an is the Perfect Book. There can be no other *Kalima* or prayer. The Holy Prophet^{sa} demonstrated what he preached. No salvation is possible without following the Holy Qur'an. He who turns his back on it, will land in hell. This is our faith and belief. But it should as well be borne in mind that the door of divine converse and revelation remains open for this Ummah. This door is an ever present and lasting testimony to the truth of the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet^{sa}. It was to this end that God taught us this prayer in the Chapter *Al-Fatihah*:

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ³⁸

The prayer taught in terms of ‘those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings’ suggests how to seek the excellences of the prophets. Of course, the excellence vouchsafed to the prophets was their true knowledge and understanding of God and this they achieved through direct communion and converse with Him. This is what you also desire. But if you think that though the Holy Qur’an directs us to offer this prayer, we are not likely to achieve anything from it, or that none from among the Muslims will be privileged to attain this spiritual station and the door to the acceptance of this prayer has been shut to us till the Day of Judgement, then will this not amount to insulting Islam and the Holy Prophet^{sa}? The plain truth is that he who so thinks and believes defames Islam. He fails to understand the spirit of Islam. What Islam emphasizes is that mere verbal pronouncement of the belief in the Oneness of God is not enough; one should really and truly understand its full import. Belief in Heaven and Hell should not be based on mere conjecture. One should taste the blessings of Paradise in this very life, and shed sins in which savages wallow. This indeed was and remains the splendid objective that human beings must pursue, a noble and holy objective, the like of which no other people can point out in their religion, nor can they produce an in-

³⁸ ‘Guide us in the right path, the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed *Thy blessings*.’ (1:6-7) [Translator]

stance of having achieved it. For a fact, this is easy to claim but impossible to demonstrate.

I have asked the Aryas and the Christians to prove the existence of the God they believe in. They could not go beyond longwinded verbosity. They are not aware of the true God the Holy Qur'an presents. The only way to know Him is through direct communion with Him, which distinguishes Islam from other religions. What a pity that Muslims, just to oppose me, deprived themselves of this distinction.

Remember, immunity to sin is only possible when man comes to have absolute faith in God. Indeed, the chief object of human life is none other than deliverance from the clutches of sin. Look, how a child is tempted to catch a snake for it fascinates him. He may even touch it. But a sensible person who knows the snake will bite and kill shall never dare touch it. He will not even enter a house in which he knows there is a snake. Likewise when one knows that poison kills, he will never be foolhardy enough to taste it. In the same manner, one cannot avoid sin unless one believes it to be a deadly poison. This kind of conviction is not possible without true understanding and knowledge. Why then does man commit sin with audacity, despite having faith in God and considering sin a sin. The only possible explanation is that he does not possess the knowledge and perception which destroys the disposition to sin. Inability to attain this state would be tantamount to admitting that, God forbid, Islam is devoid

of its paramount quality. But I reiterate that such is not the case. It is through Islam alone that this objective can be attained to its highest degree, and the only way to it is through converse and communion with God, for this creates complete faith in the Creator, and thus alone do we come to know that God detests sin and punishes it. Sin is poison: it is venial at first, then becomes deadly and ultimately leads to disbelief.

I must say it in passing, that every people in their own right try seriously to figure out how to be cleansed of sin. The Aryas, for instance, believe that there is no way to be purified of sin except through punishment, and the punishment for just one sin means millions of rebirths. Unless a person passes through these rebirths, he can never be absolved of sin. But this process poses many problems—the most formidable being that if all living beings are sinful, then when will salvation ever become possible? Even more bizarre is their commonly held belief that those who ultimately attain salvation shall, after some time, be thrown out of the salvation cell. What is the use of such salvation? When asked why expel someone after according him salvation, they reply: because one sin is kept in store for eventual expulsion. Just consider, can this possibly be the work of the Omnipotent God? What is more, if each self is its own creator and God is not the Creator (God forbid), there is no compelling need for the self to subordinate itself to Him.

The Christians have yet another view. They have devised

a method of getting cleansed of sin which is to believe in Jesus^{as} as God and Son of God and then rest assured that he has redeemed our sins and himself became accursed through crucifixion (we seek Allah's refuge from this). Just think, what has salvation to do with all this? To escape from sin, they proposed an even bigger sin by labelling a man as God. Can there be a greater sin? What is more, after pronouncing him God, they hastened to declare him accursed. Could there be any greater insolence and disrespect to God? They converted into God one who ate and drank and was a slave to his physical appetites although the Torah clearly states: Let there be no other God—neither on earth nor in the heavens. This doctrine was inscribed on doors and portals yet it was ignored to invent a new god who was mentioned nowhere in the Torah.

I once asked a Jewish scholar, "Do you find any trace of a God who should come out of Mary's womb and go about being beaten by the Jews?" His reply was that this was nothing but slander and that no trace of such a god was to be found in the Torah, adding that, "Ours is the God Who is the God of the Holy Qur'an: Just as the Holy Qur'an proclaims the Oneness of God, so do we, in accordance with the teachings of the Torah, believe God to be the One, Who is without partners, and we believe no human to be God." It is obvious that had the Jews been foretold of a God who would be born of a woman, they would not have opposed Jesus^{as} so fiercely, to the extent of accusing

him of blasphemy and crucifying him. This clearly shows that they were not at all inclined to accept Jesus^{as} as God and Son of God.

Thus, the very remedy the Christians propose to get rid of sin, is itself a source of sin. It has absolutely nothing to do with deliverance from sin because they prescribe sin itself to cure sin which can in no way be considered appropriate. They are their own foolish friends like the monkey which killed its master. For their own safety and exemption from sin, they prescribed a sin which was absolutely unpardonable i.e. they were guilty of associating partners with God and adopting a humble human as God. The Muslims, on the other hand, should rejoice that their God is beyond any criticism or objection. They have faith in His Omnipotence, Might and Attributes, but those who denied God's Omnipotence and elevated a human being to the status of God would be the least concerned about His existence or non-existence. For instance, the Aryas believe that each minuscule particle is its own God and that God Himself did not create anything. Now, if God did not create even the particles, where is the need of a God for their subsistence. And when, according to them, all forces are self-existent and have the inherent capacity to combine or separate, then be fair and say whether God is at all needed? To my mind, there is hardly a dividing line between atheists and Aryas who hold this view. Islam alone is the religion which is perfect and living. It is about time Islam revealed itself once again in all its splendour

and glory. And my advent is for this very purpose.

It is incumbent on Muslims to value the light and the blessings that are at present descending from heaven and be grateful to God for this timely guidance and for helping them out in their hour of distress in keeping with His promise. If Muslims do not cherish this divine bounty, God Almighty will not be in the least bothered about them. He will not stop before completing His task and will leave them to rue their plight.

I declare with all the emphasis at my command and with full conviction and understanding, that God has decided to demolish all other religions and let Islam triumph and be strong. No power or person can now resist or stall the fulfilment of the Will of God. He is:

فَعَالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ³⁹

O Muslims, Listen! God has communicated this tidings to you through me and I have duly conveyed the message. Now it is for you to heed or not to heed. The plain truth is that Jesus, on whom be peace, is dead, and I swear by God that I am the Promised one who was to appear. And this too is an undeniable fact that Islam lives if Jesus^{as} dies.

If you reflect on this, you will realize that this is the issue which is destined to seal the fate of Christianity. It is the mainstay of the edifice of the Christian faith, so let it

³⁹ 'Doer of whatever He wills.' (85:17) [Translator]

collapse. This issue could have been easily settled if righteousness and fear of God had governed the actions of my opponents. Name a single person who ever came to me, having shed his beastly attitude, to attain certainty. They are so mad at me that they start fretting and fuming and hurling abuses at the mere mention of my name. Is this the way to reach the truth?

I cite in my support the explicit and unequivocal verses of the Holy Qur'an, the Traditions and the consensus of the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, but my opponents refuse to listen and start shouting and calling me an apostate and Antichrist. I challenge them all to prove from the Holy Qur'an that Jesus^{as} ascended to the heavens alive, or to produce anything that contradicts what the Holy Prophet^{sa} witnessed, or to disprove the Consensus in the presence of Hadrat Abu Bakr^{rz} on the occasion of the demise of the Holy Prophet^{sa}; but no reply comes forth. Some others vociferously ask that if Jesus Son of Mary was not meant to come again, then why was the Promised Messiah named 'Jesus son of Mary'? I say that this is a silly objection. Isn't it surprising that these very objectors exercise the right to name their own children as Moses, Jesus, Ahmad, Abraham, or Isma'il, but are ready to object if God names the future Prophet as Jesus^{as}! In this context, the crucial point to consider was whether the Promised One was accompanied by the signs or not. Had they sought to find those signs in the Promised one, they would never have had the daring to reject. But they never

bothered about the signs and the supporting evidence, instead, the moment they heard the claim, they declared: “You are a disbeliever!”

It is an accepted fact that the means of recognizing the Prophets of God are the miracles and signs which accompany them. Just as an officer appointed by the government is assigned a distinguishing mark, the Appointees of God too are given signs which make their recognition easier. I maintain that God has manifested not one, two, or two hundred signs in my favour, but tens of thousands of them. These signs are not unknown and obscure, they have been witnessed by hundreds of thousands of people and I can confidently say that probably hundreds of such witnesses are present in this very meeting. Signs appeared for me from the heaven and so they did from the earth.

The signs which were the conditions precedent to my advent, and which the prophets, including the Holy Prophet^{sa}, had foretold, appeared in my support. One of them was the eclipse of the sun and the moon which must have been witnessed by everyone. Indeed this was the prophecy recorded in the authentic Tradition according to which both the sun and the moon were to be eclipsed during the month of Ramadan, testifying to the coming of the Mahdi and Messiah. Now come and tell me whether this prophecy has been fulfilled or not? Who can deny having witnessed this sign? Another prophecy was that the plague would rage as an epidemic at the time to such an extent that seven out of ten people would die. Now has this sign appeared or has it not? Another prediction on

record is that during that time a new form of transport would appear which would render the camels useless. Has not the introduction of the railways fulfilled this prophecy? How many of these signs can I go on recounting, for it is a very long series. Just imagine that whereas I, the claimant, have been called a liar and Antichrist, isn't it very strange that all these signs should have duly appeared for me? If somebody else were yet to come, what would be left for him? Be fair for once and fear God! Does He ever grant so much support to a liar? Isn't it strange that anyone who ever rose to oppose me was defeated and I emerged successful and safe out of every calamity and hardship in which my adversaries tried to implicate me? Can anybody swear and say that this is how liars end up?

I regret to say, what has gone wrong with these clerics who oppose me? Why do they not closely study the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}? Don't they know that all the important scholars and divines of the past foretold that the advent of the Promised Messiah would take place in the fourteenth century?⁴⁰ The visions of all the recipients of revelation also point to the same period. It is clearly recorded in the book *Hujaj-ul-Kiramah* that the advent of the Promised Messiah would not exceed the fourteenth century. It was these very people, *who oppose me today*, that used to shout from

⁴⁰ Fourteenth century of the *Hijrah*. [Translator]

pulpits that even the beasts prayed for safety from the thirteenth century and that that the fourteenth century would be auspicious. How strange that in the fourteenth century, in which the Promised Imam was to appear, an impostor should appear in his place and that he should be supported by hundreds of thousands of signs and God Almighty should help him to emerge successfully out of every contest and competition! Just pause and think before trying to answer. It is easy to blurt out something thoughtlessly, and so difficult to utter a word if one fears God.

Another point also worthy of your attention is that God does not grant so long a reprieve to a liar and impostor as exceeds even the period of blessed grace granted to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. I am now sixty-seven and it is more than twenty three years since the Call to this office. Had I really been an impostor and a liar, God would not have stretched this period so long. Some people ask what is the good of my coming? Remember, the purpose of my coming is twofold: First, Islam is under attack from other religions, which, in a manner of speaking, are eating it up and have reduced it to the level of a small and weak orphan. God has sent me at this point in time to save Islam from the attacks of false religions, and to furnish incontrovertible proofs of its rationale and verities. These proofs, in addition to the scientific and intellectual arguments, lie in the heavenly signs and blessings which have always appeared in support of Islam. A look at the current

reports by Christian missionaries would apprise you of the sort of strategies they intend to employ against Islam, and how vast is the circulation of each of their publications! In these circumstances, to establish the superiority of Islam was of the utmost importance. It is to achieve this end that God has sent me and I am sure Islam is bound to triumph. Signs of this triumph have already started to appear. For this triumph no sword or gun is needed, nor has God sent me armed with weapons. He who at this time thinks of *resorting to* such things would be a naive friend of Islam for the purpose of religion is to conquer the hearts which the sword just cannot do. I have explained a number of times that the Holy Prophet^{sa} was compelled to draw the sword only in exercise of the acknowledged right of self defence and that too at a time when the atrocities inflicted on the Muslims had crossed all limits and the earth had literally become red with their blood. The purpose of my advent, in short, is to bring about the triumph of Islam over other religions.

The second purpose of my advent is this: People claim that they say prayers and perform sundry other religious rites, but all this is mere lip-service; what is needed is an inner transformation which is the essence of Islam and its very basis. For my part, no one can be a true Muslim unless he imbibes the colour and complexion of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali, (may Allah be pleased with them all). They did not love this world but placed themselves entirely at the service of God. Today whatever is

done is for this world alone. Man is so engrossed in worldly pursuits that no room is left for God. Trade is for the world, construction is for the world, so much so that even prayers and fasts are for the world. Everything is done to please the worldly-wise, no heed at all is paid to religion. Now everyone should reflect whether the purpose of acknowledging and accepting Islam was limited to what is so misunderstood, or was it something loftier? What I know is that a true believer is purified and assumes the complexion of angels. As he gets closer and closer to God, he hears His voice and is reassured by it. Let each one of you ask himself whether he has attained this station. I am afraid that you rest content with what is only husk and crust which is of no value. What God wants is the kernel. In short, just as the purpose of my mission is to counter the external attacks against Islam so it is to let the Muslims have a true understanding of Islam and to infuse them with its true spirit. Today it is the worldly icons instead of God that occupy a place of honour in the hearts of Muslims, their hopes and desires are all geared to them, their quarrels and their agreements are all for this world. I want these idols to be demolished and I want the glory and majesty of God to find place in their hearts and the tree of faith to blossom and bear ever fresh fruit. Today it looks like a tree but it is not really a tree, for a genuine tree has been described thus:

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ

وَفَرَعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ تُؤْتِي أُكْلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا⁴¹

This means: ‘Didn’t you see how Allah described the example of the perfect religion? The pure word is like the holy tree which is so firmly rooted and whose branches reach out to the heavens and which bears its fruit at all times, by the commands of its Lord.’ The firmness of its root means that the principles on which this religion is based have been fully established and have attained the stage of certainty. This tree should be able to bear fruit at all times and never be like dead wood. Does this condition obtain today? Many people are wont to say: ‘What is the need of a Reformer?’ How foolish is the patient who questions the need of a physician? If he thinks he is free from needing one, he is inviting but death. The Muslims today fall under *أَسْلَمْنَا*—*we agree*—but they do not belong to the category of *آمَنَّا*—*we believe*—for this happens only when one is accompanied by the light of divine guidance.

Summing up, this is the mission which has been assigned to me. So do not be hasty in rejecting my claim. Fear God and repent, for repentance sharpens the mind. This rampant plague is indeed a dangerous sign, regarding which I have received the following revelation:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ⁴²

This is the word of God. Cursed be the person who

⁴¹ 14:25,26 [Translator]

⁴² ‘Surely, Allah changes not the condition of a people until they change that which is in their hearts.’ (13:12) [Translator]

attributes to God what is not from Him. He says that He changes His Will only when a change takes place in the hearts. Therefore, fear God and dread His wrath. No one shoulders another's responsibility. Most people part company when one is implicated in the smallest crime, how then can you rely on others on the Day of Judgement about which God says:

⁴³ يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ

My opponents should have tried to bear with me, acting on the injunction:

⁴⁴ لَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ

But they were too hasty. Remember people in the past perished because of haste. He alone is wise who gives up opposition when he realizes that he is in the wrong. But it is the lot only of those who fear God. It is only the brave who own their mistakes, they alone are the champions of moral courage. They are the ones whom God loves.

Having said all this, let me now add a word about empirical generalization— *Qias*. Although the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions support me, the unanimous verdict of the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} is in my favour, the heavenly signs and the accompanying evidence are on my side, and the need of the hour too establishes the veracity of my claim, empirical generalization may also clinch the

⁴³ 'On the day when a man flees from his brother.' (80:35) [Translator]

⁴⁴ 'Follow not that of which thou hast no knowledge.' (17:37) [Translator]

argument. Let us therefore find out what reason has to say. Man is never prepared to believe that which has no precedent. For example, if someone comes and reports that your son was carried to the skies by a windstorm or the child turned into a dog and ran away, will you accept what he says without reasonable explanation and further enquiry? No, you won't. That is why the Holy Qur'an instructs us:

فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ⁴⁵

Now just consider the question of the death of Jesus^{as} and his bodily ascent to heaven. Leaving aside for a moment the arguments that can be advanced about his death, it is an indisputable fact that the infidels demanded of the Holy Prophet^{sa} the miracle of ascending to heaven. The Holy Prophet^{sa}, who was the most perfect and the best of all Prophets, ought to have gone on and ascended to the heavens. Instead, he replied in words of the Divine revelation:

قُلْ مُبَاحًا رَبِّي هَلْ كُنْتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَسُولًا⁴⁶

This means: 'Tell them that God is innocent of acting in violation of His promise particularly when He has made it impossible for mankind to ascend to the heavens. If I do this, I will be considered a liar.' Now if your belief that Jesus^{as} ascended to the heavens is correct, what explanation would you have for an antagonist clergyman who criticizes the Holy Prophet^{sa} on the basis of this verse? Do not therefore entertain ideas which are not supported by the

⁴⁵ 'So ask those who possess the Reminder, if you know not.' (16:44)
[Translator]

⁴⁶ 17:94 [Translator]

Holy Qur'an, because in doing so you will only bring bad name to Islam and to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Furthermore, the earlier scriptures do not contain any precedent of this kind either, and it is not prohibited to argue in the light of these scriptures. Allah says about the Holy Prophet^{sa}:

شَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ⁴⁷

Again He says:

كَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ⁴⁸

يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ⁴⁹

God Himself presents these verses as proof of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, then what is wrong if we were to base our reasoning upon them?

Among these scriptures is that of the prophet Malachi, which forms a part of the Bible. It promises that the Second Coming of Elijah shall take place before the coming of the Messiah. At his advent, the Messiah son of Mary was confronted with the question about the second coming of Elijah, in accordance with the prophecy of the Prophet Malachi. Jesus' answer to this question was that

⁴⁷ 'A witness from among the children of Israel bears witness.' (46:11) [Translator]

⁴⁸ 'Sufficient is Allah as a Witness between me and you and so is he who possesses knowledge of the Book.' (13:44) [Translator]

⁴⁹ 'They recognize it even as they recognize their sons.' (2:147) [Translator]

the promised one had already come in the form of John.⁵⁰ Thus a verdict has already been delivered by no less a court than that of Jesus^{as} himself on the interpretation of the Second Coming, in which John the Baptist was not described as the like of Elijah but was called Elijah himself. And this reasoning supports me. I keep citing precedents whereas my opponents do not. Some people, who are found wanting at this stage of the argument, are wont to say that these scriptures have been tampered with and interpolated. It is a pity that the objectors forget that the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the Companions used to rely on these very books. Most distinguished scholars, including Imam Bukhari, believe that biblical distortion is distortion only in sense and meaning. Moreover, the Jews and the Christians are mortal enemies and their scriptures are different. The Jews still believe Elijah will come again. But for this, they would have accepted Jesus^{as}. I have a book by a Jewish scholar who asserts with great conviction that if he were confronted with this question, he would simply produce the book of the prophet Malachi in which it was promised that Elijah would come again.

Just ponder that despite such excuses, millions of Jews were consigned to Hell and labelled as monkeys and pigs. Would this argument be valid against me that it was Jesus the son of Mary himself who was supposed to come? Jews might have been handicapped for want of a prece-

⁵⁰ John the Baptist. [Translator]

dent to go by, but there is no room for any excuse now. The Holy Qur'an confirms the death of Jesus, the Holy Prophet's vision supports it and the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions specifically use the term *الْمُبَشَّرُونَ*—*the Promised one* would be from amongst you. Moreover, God did not send me empty handed. Hundreds of thousands of signs have appeared in my support. And even now if somebody were to stay with me for forty days, he would surely witness a sign for himself. The sign concerning Lekh Ram is a glorious sign indeed. But even in this case, some fools allege that it was I who had him murdered. Were this allegation true, the reliability of all such signs would become suspect. God forbid, tomorrow somebody might stand up and charge the Holy Prophet^{sa} with the murder of Khusro Pervaiz. To raise such objections is not the way of the truthful and the seekers after truth!

In the end, I would like to reiterate that signs which support me are not few and far between. More than a hundred thousand people are still alive to testify to these signs. Do not be hasty in rejecting me, for you will be held accountable in the hereafter. Remember, God is Ever Watchful; He establishes the truth of the truthful and falsehood of the false.

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