

In the name of Allah, the Gracious the Merciful

THE FINALITY OF PROPHETHOOD -- THE REST OF THE STORY!

by Naeem Osman Memon

Editor's Note: A booklet of Abul Alaa Maududi titled *The Finality of Prophethood* was recently posted in parts on various newsgroups on the USENET including soc.religion.islam, soc.culture.pakistan etc.. The following article shows that the concept of Khatam-e-Nabuwat as presented by Maududi is **not** in line with what the famous saints and scholars had believed centuries ago and also how it contradicts their own beliefs.

BACKGROUND

Over the last few decades, the adversaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community have capitalized on the emotional susceptibilities of the Muslim masses by exploiting the question of Khatam e Nabuwat and have alleged that with:

'their queer interpretation of the term Khatam un-Nabiyeen, as against the obvious and universally accepted interpretation of the term,

Maududi, A. A. The Qadiani Problem: pg 2

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community have:

'tried to wreak (sic) the edifice of prophethood and undermine the finality of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.' (Hasan, S: The Truth About Ahmadiyyat: pg 3)

Hasan, S: The Truth About Ahmadiyyat: pg 3

It needs to be stated at the outset that neither Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad nor the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community deny our Lord and Master, the Holy Prophet's (SAW) status as the Khataman Nabiyeen since that status has been bestowed upon him by God Almighty. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (AS) was quite explicit on this issue and he believed that:

'What God demands from you is the concept that God is one and Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is His Prophet who surpasses everyone in rank and who is the Khatamul Anbiyya.'

Ahmad, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam: Kishti Nuh: pg 15

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community held absolute faith in the Holy Prophet as the Khatamul Anbiyya and he stated that:

'The allegation charged against me and my followers that we do not believe in the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, as the Khataman Nabiyeen is a scandalous lie.'

Ahmad, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam: Al Hakam: 17.3.1905

THE VERSE IN QUESTION

The Arabic expression *Khataman Nabiyeen*, on the basis of which this controversy rests comes from the following Quranic verse:

'Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Rasul Allah and the Khataman Nabiyeen, and Allah has full knowledge of all things.'

Al Quran 33:41

When these two Arabic expressions are translated into English by not only the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's English translations of the Holy Quran but also those sponsored by the Rabita al Alam al Islami of Saudia, this Quranic verse reads:

'And Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Apostle of God and the Seal of Prophets: and God has full knowledge of all things.'

Al Quran 33:40, The Holy Quran by Abdullah Yusuf Ali: Published by the Islamic Education Center, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

However, while the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community believes that the expression *Khataman Nabiyeen* employed in relation to our beloved Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, in this Quranic verse refers to the status of our beloved Master, upon whom be peace, since:

'the excellences of prophethood attained their climax in the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him,"

Ahmad, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam: Al Hakam: 10.6.1905

the adversaries of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad contend that it refers to **chronology** and they argue that during the entire course of Islamic history:

'Muslims have believed, and so do they today, that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the last messenger of God and there can be no prophet after him.'

Maududi, A. A.: The Qadiani Problem pg 2

Before one proceeds to study what the Muslim Ummah has believed or not believed during the course of the Ummah's history, it may be pertinent to analyze the circumstances which necessitated revelation of this to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH NECESSITATED THE REVELATION OF THIS VERSE

It is generally accepted that whenever the adversaries of Islam objected to any aspect of the Islamic faith, Allah (SWT), furnished an answer to the criticism of the antagonists by revealing a Quranic verse or a passage to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). A. A. Maududi, a critic of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, states in relation to this phenomenon:

'The Holy Quran furnishes answers to the charges of the mischief-mongers at several points without actually mentioning the charge. In each case, however, the relevant text bears unmistakable evidence as to which allegation is being answered.'

Maududi, A. A.: The Finality of Prophethood: pg 3

A. A. Maududi also contends that the revelation of this particular Quranic passage which employs the phrase *khataman nabiyeen* was necessitated because the adversaries of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), objected to his marriage to Hazrat Zainab (may God be pleased with her), the divorced wife of Hazrat Zaid ibn Harith, whom the Holy Prophet had, at one stage adopted as a son. For instance Maududi states that in this passage of the Holy Quran:

'Allah has provided answers to all those objections raised by the hypocrites, which has given rise to a storm of calumnies, slander and mischief in respect of the marriage of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) with Hazrat Zainab (may Allah be pleased with her)... These hypocrites argued that Zainab was the wife of an adopted son of the Holy Prophet and by this connection she stood in a position of the Prophet's daughter-in-law. Hence, after divorce from Zaid, the Prophet had taken his own daughter-in-law as wife.

Maududi, A. A.: The Finality of Prophethood: pg 1

Maududi then continues his analysis of what necessitated the revelation of the Quranic passage by stating that in order to refute the allegation, God Almighty announced that this marriage of the Holy Prophet had Divine sanction and was made to serve as a lawful precedent for Muslims to marry the divorced wives of their adopted sons. (*Maududi, A. A.: The Finality of Prophethood: pp 1/1*) He adds that in response to the charge that in:

'taking his own daughter-in-law as wife had contravened his own law since the wife of a son is forbidden to his father, the Almighty affirmed that the Holy Prophet had no sons thereby making absolutely clear that the man whose divorced wife had been taken into wedlock, not being his real son; the act, therefore did not imply violation of any law.'

Maududi, A. A.: The Finality of Prophethood: pg 2

This controversy stirred up by the critics of the Holy Prophet (pbh) did not end with this assurance by the Almighty Lord. Maududi proceeds to describe how the opponents of the Holy Prophet argued that:

'Admitted that the adopted son is not a real one, and on that basis a father might lawfully marry the divorced spouse of his adopted son, but where was the compulsion for the Prophet to do so.'

Maududi, A. A.: The Finality of Prophethood: pg 2

In response to this argument of the enemies of Islam, Maududi states that:

'Allah affirmed in answer to this charge: "But verily, he is the Apostle of Allah." The implication is that it was Allah's mandate to the Holy Prophet to wipe out all prejudices and declare all taboos that pagan custom had unnecessarily imposed upon the people, as lawful. In this respect the Prophet's action was unequivocal and left no room for doubt. In order to lay particular emphasis upon this point Allah observes: Khataman Nabiyeen."

Maududi, A. A.: The Finality of Prophethood: pg 2/4

One must admit that up to this point of the arguments presented by the Abul Ala Maududi, one cannot but agree with him in essence. It is ironic however that after having analyzed the circumstances which necessitated the revelation of this Quranic passage with a certain amount of integrity, Maududi allows his prejudices to get the better of him and begins to play Russian roulette with the expression Khataman Nabiyeen and states that this expression implies:

"And he is the last in the line of Prophets," which means that no messenger nor even a Prophet charged with the mission of carrying out reforms in the sphere of Law of society which might have been omitted (God forbid) during the lifetime of Muhammad (PBHU) will ever succeed him. Since Allah ordained the ministry of Prophet Muhammad (PBHU) to be final, it was therefore imperative that he should accomplish the task of uprooting this pagan custom.'

Maududi, A. A.: The Finality of Prophethood: pg 4

TRUE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EXPRESSION

It has already been shown that the Quranic passage in question was revealed to the Holy Prophet (pbh) to answer the charges of his opponents who argued against his marriage to Hazrat Zainab, may Allah be please with her. It was necessary to establish that the conduct of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, was in strict accordance with the Divine commands received by him and in marrying the divorced wife of his adopted son, the Holy Prophet had not violated any law. (*Al Quran 33:39*) On the contrary, this marriage, decreed by Divine wisdom was to serve as a precedent for mankind:

'so that there may be no hindrance for the believers with regard to marriage with the wives of their adopted sons, when they have accomplished their want of them and have divorced them.'

Al Quran 33:38

And, to finally resolve the entire controversy and close all avenue of criticism the Almighty Lord declared that the Holy Prophet of Islam Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha (pboh) was not the father of any men but was the Messenger of Allah, spiritual father of the entire Ummah and also the Seal of the Prophets signifying that he was also a spiritual father of all Prophets and he, whatever course of action he adopted, commanded a seal of legality whether it had been found acceptable by the preceding Prophets or not.

This view has frequently been expressed by the scholars of the Muslim Ummah. For instance, while reflecting upon the expression Khataman Nabiyeen, **Hazrat Abul Hasan Sharif**, a renowned scholar of the 5th century Hijra stated:

'This has been spoken metaphorically and means that God Almighty has appointed the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, over the books of all the previous prophets and he authenticates their teachings and verifies these in the same way as documents are verified with the affixing of the seal to make them authentic.'

Talkhisul Bayaan Fi Majazatul Quran: pg 191

If however, as the adversaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community argue, the expression Khataman Nabiyeen was taken to mean that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, was the last in the line of the Prophets and no Prophet will come after him, then one would find that the Quranic verse which employs the expression *khataman nabiyeen* (*Al Quran 33:41*) is totally out of harmony with the rest of the passage (*Al Quran 33:38/41*) since the concept of chronological finality would not refute the objections raised by opponents in relation to his marriage with Hazrat Zainab, the divorced wife of his adopted son, and hence the expression itself would be found to be, God forbid, superfluous in the context of the passage.

It is acknowledged that the usual translation of the expression does not contradict the view held by Ahmadi Muslims.

For instance, Abul Ala Maududi's essay admits in relation to the expression Khataman Nabiyeen:

'Yusuf Ali renders this "THE SEAL OF PROPHETS" and adds footnotes to explain that the seal here is used in meaning of sealing a document when it is complete. I would prefer to render it "THE LAST OF ALLAH'S PROPHETS" because the Arabic phrase conveys the two meanings of "LAST" and "SEAL" as interchangeable though the one aimed at is clear of the two approaches. To render the verse as "THE SEAL" IS TO RUN THE RISK OF UTILIZATION BY QADIYANIS.'

Maududi. A.A: The Problem of Qadianism: Destructive Movements. Three Essays on Qadianism: Majliss of Al Haq Publication. Canadian Edition: pg 41

That is, the Maulana feels that the usual translation supports the Ahmadi view. This is the explanation given by Maududi for not rendering the expression Khataman Nabiyeen as the Seal of the Prophets when that is what it actually means in this instance, and that is exactly what Muslim scholars of repute have, throughout the history of the Ummah, believed it means.

THE OPINION OF MUSLIM SCHOLARS

The opinion of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, to the effect that the expression *khataman nabiyeen* employed in the Quranic verse refers to the status of the Holy Prophet (pboh) has frequently been expressed by the saints and scholars of the Ummah. In fact, when one studies the revered opinions expressed by some of the Ummah's most venerable saints and respected scholars, one finds that the concept of the **chronological** finality of the Prophethood of our beloved master, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is not only argued against but thoroughly rejected by these revered personalities.

If the opponents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community who insist on the chronological finality of the prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, insist that when the same view held by Ahmadi Muslims makes them kafirs then for consistency they must hold the same opinion of the saints about to be quoted:

Hazrat Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ali Hussain al Hakim

For instance, the renowned sage Hazrat Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ali Hussain al Hakim of Tirmidhi states:

'According to our belief *khataman nabiyeen* means that prophethood, with all its adjuncts and glory, has culminated in the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings on him, and God Almighty so determined that his heart be used as a vessel to collect all the perfection of prophethood and then put His Seal to it.'

Kitab Khatamal Anbiyya: pg 241

The revered saint also challenges the mistaken concept of the chronological finality of prophethood and states:

'How can the glory and superiority of Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, be manifested if we claim that he was the last, in time, to appear in the world? This is, no doubt, an interpretation of the foolish and the ignorant.'

Kitab Khatamal Anbiyya: pg 34

Maulana Muhammad Qasim

Sufi Hazrat Abu Abdullah's view was also shared by the 19th century CE scholar, Maulana Muhammad Qasim of Nanauta (founder of the Deoband seminary) who stated:

'According to the layman, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings on him, being Khatam is supposed to have appeared after all the other prophets. But men of understanding and the wise know it very well that being the first or the last, chronologically, does not carry any weight. How could, therefore, the words of the Holy Quran 'But he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets (33.41) mean to glorify him? But I know very well that none from among the Muslims would be prepared to agree with the common men '

Tahzeerun Nas pg 3

This revered scholar, on another occasion, explained the true meaning of the expression Khataman Nabiyeen and stated:

'Prophets, as they are message bearers of God, are His viceregents. It would therefore, be necessary that they are endowed with Divine authority. From among the subordinate posts, the post of the governor or the minister is the highest and all other posts are subordinate to them and they can over-rule the decisions and rulings of their subordinates; similarly there is no position higher than *khatam* of the prophets. Every other prophet is undoubtedly subordinate to him.'

Mubahitha pg 24/25

In relation to the status of our beloved Prophet, upon whom be peace, as the Khataman Nabiyeen, the Maulana stated:

'If finality of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet be considered in the light of his excellent attributes and of his having reached the apex of excellence, as I have already stated, but not chronologically, and which heights no one can reach, the point of his superiority over all other persons becomes established over those who have passed away and also those who come after him. If we accept this view it shall not at all contravene his finality, even though someone in the future may rise to the high status of prophethood.'

Tahzeerun Nas pg 28

Hazrat Abu Saeed Mubarak

Maulana Muhammad Qasim's view that the expression Khataman Nabiyeen refers to the excellent attributes of the Holy Prophet, upon whom be peace, which reached the apex of excellence is shared by another venerable saint of the 6th century Hijra, Hazrat Abu Saeed Mubarak, the revered preceptor of

Hazrat Ghauthi-Azam Sayyed Abdul Qadir Jilani, the founder of the Qadiriyya school of Islamic mysticism, who states:

'Man is the most privileged of God's creatures. When he reaches the zenith of exaltedness he begins to manifest in himself all the above mentioned qualities and their corollaries. He is then called the perfect man and the acme of perfection. These attributes are found in the Holy Prophet in the highest abundance, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. That is the reason why he is called Khataman Nabiyeen.

Tofha Mursalah Sharif: pg 5

Hazrat Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Baqee and Ibni 'Asakar

Hazrat Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Baqee and Ibni 'Asakar, both subscribed to this view and agreed that:

'The meanings of Khataman Nabiyeen are that the Holy Prophet, in his physical and spiritual build, is the most charming and lovable personality, peace be upon him. This is because the glory and the spiritual magnitude of all the prophets is manifested through him and he can be likened to the beautiful ring worn for adornment.'

Zarqani Sharah Mwahabui Luddunia: Vol 3, pg 163 and Sehlul Huda wal Irshad pg 55

Hazrat Sayyed Abdul Karim Jilani

Hazrat Sayyed Abdul Karim Jilani, the renowned mystic of the 8th century Hijra was of the opinion that:

'Hazrat Muhammad, peace and blessings on him, is the Khataman Nabiyeen because he attained the highest perfection which no prophet ever did.'

Al Insanul Kamil: Vol 1. Ch 36. Pg 69

The venerable saint also expressed the opinion that:

'The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was the Khataman Nabiyeen because he imparted to us the knowledge of wisdom, guidance and all other spiritual secrets and he directed us to these in the very clear and exhaustive manner.'

Al Insanul Kamil: Vol 1. Ch 36. Pg 69

Hazrat Sayyed Abdul Karim Jilani expressed the opinion that the expression *khataman nabiyeen* signified that only Law bearing prophethood had now ceased. He stated:

'The coming of the Law bearing prophets, after the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings on him, has ceased as he has been exalted to be the Khataman Nabiyeen because he brought with him such a perfect law as no other prophet had brought before him.

Al Insanul Kamil: Vol 1. Ch 36. Pg 68

Qari Abdul Tayyab

The irony of this entire controversy is that the leaders of some of the most hostile anti Ahmadiyya Jamaats have themselves expressed this view in relation to our beloved master's status as the Khataman Nabiyeen.

For instance, Qari Abdul Tayyab of the Darul Uloom of Deoband states:

'Just as there is from among the angels and the satans a person par excellence who excels everyone of its kind in beneficence and cannot be surpassed - Gabriel in the case of angels and Iblis the accursed in the case of satans apportion them evils and wickedness. Similarly, there is a Khatam for the prophets and a Khatam for the Dajjaals, and they are both supreme in their respective spheres. From among the prophets there is he who is the acme of perfection and at the same time bestower of perfection to others. His name is Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.'

Talimati Islam aur Masihi Aqwam: pg 223/224

MUSLIM SCHOLARS ON THE CONTINUATION OF PROPHETHOOD

Many of the Ummah's saints and scholars have been of the opinion that the expression Khataman Nabiyeen has no relationship to the belief that he is the last in the line of prophets. They have believed that non Law bearing prophethood had not ceased but shall continue within the Ummah.

Hazrat Imam Mohiyyud Din ibni Arabi

For instance, Hazrat Imam Mohiyyud Din ibni Arabi, a distinguished commentator of the Holy Quran states:

'From the study and contemplation of the Darud we have arrived at the definite conclusion that there shall, from among the Muslims, certainly be persons whose status, in the matter of prophethood, shall advance to the level of prophets, if Allah pleases. But they shall not be given any book of law.'

Fatuhati Makiyyah: Vol 1. pg 545

Hazrat Shah Wali Ullah

The Muhaddith of Dehli, Hazrat Shah Wali Ullah subscribed to this opinion and stated:

'The meaning of the Holy Prophet being the Khataman Nabiyeen is that there shall not now appear a person whom God may appoint with a new Law for mankind, that is to say, there shall be no prophet who shall come with a new Law.'

Tafheemati Ilahiyyah

The Hakim ul Millat in fact gave credence to the opinion that prophets within the Ummah may arise when he stated:

'There cannot be an independent prophet after the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who is not his follower and his adherent.'

Al Khairul Katheer: pg 111

Hazrat Sheikh Ahmad Farooqi

The Muhaddith of Delhi's opinion was shared by the Muhaddith of the second millennium, Hazrat Sheikh Ahmad Farooqi of Sarhind who stated that:

'The rising of prophets after the Khatamar Rasul Hazrat Muhammad, the Chosen One, peace and blessings be upon him, from among his own followers and as a heritage, does not in any way run counter to his status as the Khatamar rasul. Therefore, O reader, do not be among those who doubt.'

Maktubat Imam Rabbani, Hazrat Mujaddid Alf Thani

Hazrat Maulana Faranghi Mahal

Hazrat Maulana Faranghi Mahal, an eminent scholar of the Ahle Sunnat also discussed the significance of the expression Khatamae Nubuwwat and on behalf of the Sunni Scholars, he declared:

'The divines of the Sunni sects believe in and expound the fact that in the course of the Ministry of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, there cannot appear a law bearing prophet and his prophethood extends to the end of days. A prophet who appears during his ministry shall necessarily be the follower of the Law of Muhammad.'

Maulvi Abul Hayee: Majmu'ah Fatawa: Vol. 1, pg 144

Hazrat Maulana Abul Hasanat Abul Hayee

Hazrat Maulana Farangi Mahal's contemporary, Hazrat Maulana Abul Hasanat Abul Hayee, a distinguished scholar of the Sunni sect shared this opinion and stated:

'After the demise of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, or even during his own lifetime, it is not an impossibility for someone to be exalted to the position of a simple prophet. But a prophet with a new Law is, indeed, forbidden.'

Dafe ul Waswas: pg 16

In fact, when one studies the literature produced over the Ummah's history, one finds that the saints and scholars' of Islam have urged Muslims to:

'Strive hard in the path of virtue in a manner so that you may be blessed with prophethood and you still be a follower.'

Rumi, Hazrat Maulana Jalalud Din: Mathnavi Maulana Rum: Ch 1. pg 53

Hazrat Mazhar Jan Janan Naqshabandi

These saints of repute have urged Muslims to do thus since they are well aware that:

'No perfection, except the perfection of prophethood bearing Law has ended. With respect to the other beneficences of God Almighty, He is neither miserly nor niggardly.'

Naqshabandi, Hazrat Mazhar Jan Janan: Maqamati Mazhari: pg 88

Hazrat Imam Abu Ja'far Sadiq

The revered sixth Imam of the Shia, Hazrat Imam Abu Ja'far Sadiq was quoted saying :

'Hazrat Abu Ja'far, while discussing the Quranic verse: "For verily We granted the Book to the children of Abraham...", said that God vouchsafed to the children of Abraham, Messengers, Prophets and Imams. But what is ironical is that people believe in what God blessed the children of Abraham with and yet they deny this blessing for the progeny of Muhammad.'

The generosity of the Almighty Lord, Muslim saints of repute believe, embraces prophethood also. And hence, if God Almighty so wills, He may bestow prophethood upon whom He chooses. It is however ironic, as Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq points out that while Muslims throughout the world beseech God Almighty to bestow upon the Ummah of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the blessings He bestowed upon the children of Abraham, upon whom be peace, with the recitation of the Salat un Nabi, they refuse to accept the fact that their own prayer could be rewarded on account of their mistaken belief that prophethood has now ceased with the advent of the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace be upon him.

This brief discussion on the very sensitive and complex issue of the continuation of prophethood should hence be sufficient evidence to prove that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's interpretation of the Arabic expression *khataman nabiyeen*, is far from being 'queer' (*Maududi, A. A.: The Qadiani Problem: pg 2*). On the contrary, it has been frequently accepted by the saints and the scholars of the Muslim Ummah.

It should also suffice to show that insistence of the opponents of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community that the only correct translation of the phrase Khataman Nabiyeen is that the Holy Prophet (pbh) was the last prophet in the line of God's apostles' has been rejected by Muslim scholars of the past and that the Ahmadi viewpoint is not a recent innovation.

In fact, as already quoted, the Ahmadi viewpoint was expressed by none other than Maulana Muhammad Qasim of Nanauta, the founder of the Deoband Seminary, an institution to which most anti Ahmadiyya organizations of this day and age show singular respect and loyalty. It is also interesting to note that on the publication of his book, *Tahzeerun Nas*, in which the learned Maulana expressed the opinion that the Holy Prophet's status as the Khataman Nabiyeen has absolutely no relationship to chronology but prophets could appear after him, a hue and cry was raised against him by the ulema.

A verdict of apostasy was subsequently pronounced against the founder of Deoband and his followers by, amongst others, twelve Meccan and thirty Medinite ulema since they too, like the scholars of this day and age, took exception to Maulana Qasim:

'who is the author of the book Tahzeer un Nas and who has in this book stated: "But even supposing that there appeared a prophet in his [the Holy Prophet's] time, even then he [the Holy Prophet, upon whom be peace] shall continue to be the Khataman Nabiyeen; and even if a prophet does appear after the Holy Prophet, his [the Holy Prophet's] status as being the Khatam still remains 'intact.'

Husaam ul Haramain i 'Alaa Manharil Kufr i Wal main: pg 100

They then proceeded to state of the Qasimiyas:

'All these people, everyone of them, is an apostate and a renegade and out of the pale of Islam.'

Husaam ul Haramain i 'Alaa Manharil Kufr i Wal main: pg 100

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is hence not the only victim of fatwas of apostacy. It is ironic however, that human memories are short and these critics of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, who have the audacity to brand him as, God forbid, an apostate on account of his opinion on the real significance of the Arabic expression Khataman Nabiyeen, either forget or refuse to accept the fact that their own leaders had also shared Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's opinion for which they too were branded as apostates by the ulema of their own time.

EVIDENCE IN TRADITIONS FOR THE CONTINUATION OF PROPHETHOOD

Anti Ahmadi scholars have spent considerable effort on such Traditions of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, as may help them confirm their belief.

Ironically, they fail to appreciate that a critical analysis of these Traditions has often been conducted by some of Islam's most learned saints and scholars. And, on the basis of their unprejudiced findings, they have judged that 'prophethood shall continue till the end of time although law bearing prophethood has ceased permanently' with the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pboh).

'I AM THE LAST OF THE PROPHETS'

This Tradition attributed to the Holy Prophet of Islam is probably the most common Tradition furnished by the opponents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in support of their claim that no prophet would ever arise after the advent of our beloved prophet, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. It is however ironic that while they capitalize on this Tradition which states:

'I am the last of the Prophets'

they forget that these words are followed by:

'and my mosque is the last of the mosques.'

On the basis of the complete Hadith, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community argues that since the Holy Prophet's mosque at Medina is not literally the last mosque built in the history of Islam, the first part of the Tradition could hence not be assumed to mean that no prophet would appear after the Holy Prophet (pboh), because such an assumption would be an apparent contradiction in the first and the second part of a single Tradition. Or else:

'If the expression last of the prophets was to entail the abolition of prophethood, then the expression last of the mosques must also entail the abolition of mosque building after the Holy Prophet's mosque at Medina.'

Ahmad, Hazrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmood: Invitation to Ahmadiyyat: pg 45

Maulana Maududi interprets the last part of the tradition metaphorically

'no other mosque should bear such sanctity.'

Maududi, A. A.: Finality of Prophethood: pg 21

But insists that the first part should be interpreted literally.

What one fails to understand is, why do these critics find it justifiable to read a meaning into the second part of the Tradition which they regard as:

'foolish reasoning.'

Maududi, A. A.: Finality of Prophethood: pg 18

if read into the first part of the same Tradition?

Why one wonders could the first part of the Tradition not also relate to the sanctity of the Holy Prophet (pboh)?

'THERE IS NO PROPHET AFTER ME'

The second Tradition often relied upon by the critics of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in support of their contention that prophethood has now ceased refers to the period when the Muslim army was about to depart on an expedition to Tabuk.

On this occasion, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, had decided to command the expedition himself and hence he appointed Hazrat Ali, upon whom be peace, in charge at Medina during his absence, As would be expected, Hazrat Ali, upon whom be peace, was extremely distressed at being deprived of the opportunity of serving at the front under the command of his beloved master.

However, to console him, the Holy Prophet (pboh) told him:

'You are to me in the position in which Aaron was to Moses, except that there is no Prophet after me.'

It is rather ironic that the opponents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community misquote this Tradition to support their view inspite of the fact that in the context of this Tradition, it is perfectly clear that the expression 'after me' means 'DURING MY ABSENCE' and NOT 'AFTER MY DEATH.' To assume that 'AFTER ME' connotes 'AFTER MY DEATH' would make the comparison superfluous since, although Aaron was a prophet during the lifetime of Moses, he did not survive his brother and hence was not a Prophet AFTER Moses's death.

OPINION OF MUSLIM SCHOLARS ON THE TRADITIONS

Muslim scholars of repute have in fact asserted that these Traditions on the basis of which the critics of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community argue that the Holy Prophet (pboh), was the last prophet, have no bearing whatsoever to the alleged chronological finality of the prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

Hazrat Mullah Ali bin Muhammad Sultan al Qari

For instance, Hazrat Mullah Ali bin Muhammad Sultan al Qari, a highly respected divine of the Hanafi sect whose opinions on the question of the finality of the prophethood have often been quoted by the anti Ahmadiyya authors (*Maududi A.A.: Finality of Prophethood: pg 33*) stated:

"According to the Ulemma, the words La Nabiyya Ba'adee means that no prophet in the future shall be raised who shall abrogate the Law of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.'

Al Isha'at Fi Ashrat us Saat: pg 226

Hazrat Shah Wali Ullah

This opinion was confirmed by the patron saint of India, the Hakim ul Millat, Hazrat Shah Wali Ullah of Delhi, revered as the Mujaddid of the 12th century Hijra. He stated:

'From the sayings of the Holy Prophet La Nabiyya Ba'adi and La Rasool we come to understand that prophethood that has ceased is the Law-bearing prophethood.'

Qiratul 'Ainain Fi Tafadulul Shaikhain: pg 39

Hazrat Imam Abdul Wahab Sherani

This opinion had previously been expressed by Hazrat Imam Abdul Wahab Sherani, who, while explaining the Traditions La Nabiyya B'adi and La Rasool B'adi declared that these suggest that after the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him:

'there shall be no Law-bearing prophets.'

Al Yawaqeeet Wal Jawahar: Vol2. pg 25

Hazrat Hafiz Barkhurdar

Another revered saint of Islam, the successor to Hazrat Sheikh Nausha Ganj, Hazrat Hafiz Barkhurdar also subscribed to this view. He stated:

'The meaning of this Hadith is that there is no prophet after me who shall be raised with a new Law.'

Nibras, 445, footnote

Nawab Siddique Hasan Khan

In recent times, Nawab Siddique Hasan Khan of Bhopal, the leader of the Ahle Hadith in India stated:

'The Hadees La Wah b'ada Mautee has no foundation, although La Nabiyya Ba'adee is quite correct, which, according to men of letters, means that: There shall be no prophet after me who shall be raised with a new code of Law which shall abrogate my Law.'

Iqtarabus Sa'at: pg 162

Hazrat Ummul Momineen (ra)

The concept of the chronological finality of prophethood had also been rejected by the blessed consort of our beloved master, the Ummul Momineen, Hazrat Ayesha, God be pleased with her, when she stated:

'O ye Muslims! do proclaim that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was the Khataman Nabiyeen but never say that there shall be no prophet after him.'

Suyuti, Hazrat Hafiz Jalal al Din Abd al Rahman: Durri Manthur: Vol2 pg 24

AUTHENTICITY OF THE TRADITION

It is rather ironic that since this Tradition negates their concept of the chronological finality of prophethood, the opponents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, deny its authenticity on the pretext that:

'This Tradition is derived from the commentary entitled Durr i Manthur and a compilation of Hadith known as Takmilah Majma ul Bihar, but its source and credentials are unknown.'

Maududi, A. A.: Finality of Prophethood: pg 21

Whether or not, the authenticity of this Tradition is acceptable to the adversaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the fact remains that this Tradition has been quoted in the works of some of the Ummah's most revered and respected personalities. And, while some enemies of the Ahmadiyya Community cast doubt on the credibility of these two sources which quote this Tradition, they paradoxically quote the same sources in support of their own assertions. This is a double standard.

For instance, the author of the Durr-i-Manthur, Hazrat Hafiz Jalal al Din Sayuti is quoted by Maududi in support of his assertion that according to the consensus of the Ulema of the Ummah, prophethood has now ceased (*Maududi, A. A.: Finality of Prophethood: pg 32*) and the author of Takmilah Majma ul Bihar, Hazrat Imam Muhammad Tahir of Gujarat has been quoted by Maududi's colleague, Ehsan Ellahi Zaheer, in his attempt to prove that the expression *khataman nabiyyen* means the last in the line of prophethood. (*Zaheer E.E: Qadiyaniat. An Analytical Survey: pg 257*)

Furthermore, the authenticity of this Tradition has been acknowledged by the saints and scholars of Islam and besides Hazrat Hafiz Jalal al Din Suyuti and Hazrat Imam Muhammad Tahir of Gujarat, such venerable personalities as the Sheikh ul Imam, Ibne Qateebah also accepted the authenticity of this Tradition when he stated:

'This statement does not go against what the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, had said, i.e., La Nabi B'adi. Because what the Holy Prophet actually meant was that no prophet would come after him who would abrogate his Code of Law.'

Qateebah, Ibni: Taqil Mukhtaliful Ahadith: pg 236

Would the opponents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community now care to condemn Hazrat Ibn Qateebah, Hazrat Hafiz Jalal al Din Suyuti and Hazrat Imam Muhammad Tahir for what these adversaries allege is:

'the height of audacity to put forward a statement of a lady companion in order to contradict the explicit observations of the Holy Prophet which the eminent traditionalists have transmitted on the most authentic chains of transmissions.'

Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pg 21

THE HOLY PROPHET'S OWN VERDICT

This verdict of the Ummul Momineen, one needs to add, is not the only conclusive evidence of the fact that prophethood has not ceased with the advent of the Holy Prophet of Islam, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Traditions for instance report that on the death of his beloved son, the Holy Prophet (pbh) stated:

'Had Ibrahim lived, he would certainly have been a righteous prophet.'

Ibne Majah: Kitab al Janaiz

It is however ironic that since this Tradition negates the concept of the chronological finality of prophethood, its supporters deny the authenticity of this Tradition also on the alleged grounds that:

'This Tradition is not true, and is maliciously cooked up by the Qadianis to support their perverse thesis of the continuation of prophethood after Muhammad, peace be upon him.'

Zaheer, E.E: Qadiyanat. An Analytical Survey: pg 286

The impression which Ehsan Ellah Zaheer, tries to create with this statement is that the Ahmadi Muslims have invented this Tradition to support their view. However, in the very next breath, he vindicates the Ahmadi Muslims of this slander by admitting that this Tradition has not been cooked up by them but was reported by a companion of the Holy Prophet, upon whom be peace, Hazrat Ibrahim bin Uthman. (*Zaheer, E.E: Qadiyanat. An Analytical Survey: pg 286*)

After having first accused Ahmadi Muslims of fabricating this Hadith and then admitting that it was reported by a companion of the Holy Prophet, upon whom be peace, Zaheer then proceeds to deny the authenticity of the Tradition in question on the alleged grounds that this companion of the Holy Prophet, upon whom be peace, is considered to be 'weak, unreliable and also a liar.' (*Zaheer, E.E: Qadiyanat. An Analytical Survey: pg 286*) . And hence:

'since his [Hazrat Ibrahim bin Uthman's] authority is not recognised by the traditionalists, therefore to quote him as an authority is actually to dent the validity of one's own thesis. Therefore the Qadiyanis' reliance on the authority of this weak tradition vitiates their defense and hardly proves anything.'

(Zaheer, E.E: Qadiyanat. An Analytical Survey: pg 286).

However, several Muslim scholars of repute have admitted the authenticity of this Tradition. Included amongst these is the venerable saint, **Hazrat Imam Mullah Ali bin Muhammad Sultanal Qari**, whose authority is not denied by the anti Ahmadiyya authors themselves. (*Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pg 33*)

This venerable saint states of this Tradition reported on the authority of the Holy Prophet's blessed companion, Hazrat Ibrahim bin Uthman:

'The Holy Prophet's statement concerning Ibrahim becoming a true prophet does not in any way contradict the verse Khataman Nabiyeen, because it means that (1) the said prophet should not abrogate his Law and (2) that he may be one of his followers.'

Qari, Hazrat Imam Ali bin Muhammad Sultan al: Mauzu'ati Kabeer

Another learned scholar of Islam, **Hazrat Shahabud Din Ahmad Hajar al Hashmi**, a renowned Muhaddith and a respected authority on jurisprudence quotes this Tradition on the authority of the blessed 4th Caliph of Islam, Hazrat Ali bin Abi Talib, peace be upon him, and states:

'When Hazrat Ibrahim, the son of the Holy Prophet, passed away, he called Hazrat Maria Qibtiyya who washed and bathed her child and wrapped him in the coffin cloth. The Holy Prophet then held him in his arms and came out of his house. A few more men were also with him. He went and got the child buried and placing his hands on the grave said, BY ALLAH, HE IS DECIDEDLY A PROPHET AND THE SON OF A PROPHET.'

Hasmi, Shahabud Din Ahmad Hajar al: Al Fatwa al Hadisiya: pg 125

OTHER EVIDENCE IN THE TRADITIONS

In fact, these Traditions which the opponents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community reject, are not the only basis upon which it can be construed that prophethood has not ended but will continue until the end of time. Traditions for instance report that the Holy Prophet stated:

'Abu Bakr is the best of my followers except anyone who might be a prophet.'

Dalmy as quoted by Kanazul Haqaiq of Imam Mandani: pg 7

Another Tradition reports that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, stated:

'Abu Bakr is the best of the people except one who may be a prophet.'

Tabrani Kabir kamil Ibne Adi as quoted by Jami Saghir of Imam Suyuti

These Traditions, reported by some of Islam's acknowledged saints and scholars, are hence a clear indication that prophets will continue to arise amongst Muslims even after the advent of the Khatamal Anbiyya, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

CHRONOLOGICAL FINALITY OF PROPHETHOOD

It is rather amusing to note that while the adversaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community are prepared to deny all such evidences which refute their mistaken belief in the chronological finality of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet (pboh) they themselves hold such beliefs as breach their own concept of the chronological finality of the Holy Prophet (pboh).

The adversaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community do not dispute the fact that they anticipate the advent of the Messiah, Hazrat Isa ibne Mariam, upon whom be peace, after the advent of our beloved Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. For instance, they maintain that:

'The advent of the Messiah is one of the signs of the expected big calamity of the world, He will descend [sic] in this world again sometimes before the day of Doom. (Hasan, S: The Truth About Ahmadiyyat: pg 4)

Hasan, S: The Truth About Ahmadiyyat: pg 4

This belief, these supporters of the chronological finality of prophethood maintain:

'is one of those beliefs of Muslims which have their basis in the Holy Quran and are also proved by Prophetic Traditions, and in which Muslims have believed consistently.'

Nadwi, A.A: Qadianism. A Critical Study: pg 39

They also admit that the Messiah they anticipate before the day of Doom was not only an apostle of God Almighty on his first advent (*Hasan, S: The Study of Al Quran: Lesson 14. pg 6*) but shall continue to be a prophet when he returns for the second time (*Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pp 62/65*). However, to cover up their anticipation of a prophet after the advent of the Khatamal Anbiyya, they argue that when he does return:

'As a follower of Islam, he will not be coming as a new Prophet after our Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him' (*Hasan, S: The Study of Al Quran: Lesson 14. pg 15*) but he 'will become an individual member of the Fraternity of Islam' (*Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pg 64*) and 'Muslims will not put faith in the ministry of a new Prophet. They will retain their belief in the sanctity of Christ as a former Prophet.'" (*ibid: pg 65*).

The fact remains, however, that if Jesus ever returns to this earth, he would retain his status as a prophet.

Muslims scholars are for instance agreed that when the son of Mary returns to this earth,

'Whosoever holds the view that Jesus, peace be upon him, shall come down shorn of his prophethood, is undoubtedly a manifest disbeliever as Imam Sayuti has also made this point very clear.'

Khan, Nawab Siddique Hasan: Hujjajjul Karamah: pg 431

This opinion has also been accepted by the predecessors of some of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's most passionate opponents, the scholars of Deoband who maintained:

'Whosoever denies the prophethood of Jesus is an infidel and the same verdict shall apply even after Jesus has descended. The concept of his being a messenger shall be binding and because he shall come as the Imam, it shall be binding to obey his commands. In short, Jesus, peace be upon him, even after his descent, shall be a prophet and a messenger and faith in his prophethood shall continue to prevail as it was imperative in the past.'

Register Fatwa: pg 49

This verdict issued by the scholars of the non Ahmadiyya Muslim organization is hence positive proof of the fact that Jesus, if he were to ever return to this earth, would continue to be a Prophet. But this alleged second advent of Jesus, the adversaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community admit, is to transpire after the chronological finality of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pboh).

Would the son of Mary then not be the last prophet in the line of God's apostles if he was to appear as a prophet after the prophethood of the Khataman Nabiyeen, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him? Would this then not cause a breach in the chronological finality of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pboh)?

The opponents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community may argue to their heart's content, that, since the son of Mary would not be a new prophet but will merely retain his sanctity as a former prophet:

'this position is neither contrary to faith in the Finality of Prophethood today nor will it be derogatory to this belief in the time of Christ's second advent in the world.' (Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pg 65)

Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pg 65

Nevertheless, this does not alter the fact that if Jesus were to appear after the advent of the Holy Prophet of Islam, he would be, chronologically, the last in the line of prophets. The excuse that he would not be a new prophet but would merely retain his sanctity as a former prophet is irrelevant to the question of the chronological finality of prophethood--last being a happening or coming at the end or after all others.

And, if the expression Khataman Nabiyeen allegedly means the 'last in the line of Prophets,' (*Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pg 11*) would this appearance of the son of Mary at the end of time, before the day of Doom, not then entitle him to the status of being the last prophet in the line of Prophets and the final apostle of God Almighty, in time? Would this then not undermine our beloved Prophet, the Khatamal Anbiyya's status as the last in the line of Prophets--he not being the last chronologically since he, according to the critics is to be followed by the son of Mary at the end of time.

OPPONENTS' ARGUMENT NOT SUPPORTED BY TRADITIONS CITED BY THEIR OWN PUBLICATIONS

One also needs to appreciate that the excuse to the effect that Jesus's advent, after the advent of the Holy Prophet would not breach the finality of prophethood since Jesus would not be a new prophet but will merely retain his sanctity as a former prophet, does not hold any substance since most Traditions cited by the critics of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, in support of their case, do not make any allowance for a hypothesis of new or old.

On the contrary. these are in fact quite insistent that no prophet of whatsoever description, new or old, would arrive after the advent of the Khataman Nabiyeen, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Do these Traditions not state that the Holy Prophet declared:

'After me there will be neither Prophets nor Messengers.'

Judgement of the Federal Shariah Court: Govt. of Pakistan: 28th Oct., 1984

'The chain of Messengers and Prophets has come to an end. There shall be no Messenger or Prophet after me'

Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pg 17

'I am the last prophet and there is not to be any prophet after me.'

Hasan, S: The Truth About Ahmadiyyat: pg 14

'I am the last in the sense that no prophet shall succeed me.'

Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pg 10

'With me the Apostles have ended.'

Zaheer. E.E: Qadiyaniat. An Analytical Survey: pg 269

'No prophet will come after me, only caliphs will succeed me.'

Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pg 12

'Through me the Prophethood was brought to a close.'

Judgement of the Federal Shariah Court: Govt. of Pakistan: 28th Oct., 1984

'It is in me that the line of Prophets came to a final end.'

Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood: pg 13

These few of the numerous Traditions cited from the anti Ahmadiyya publications establish beyond a shadow of doubt, the fact that **if** the expression *khataman nabiyeen* means the **last in chronology**, then these Traditions do not make any allowances for the advent of any prophet whether old and new, after the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbh).

PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT'S CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE 260

This assertion is also proved by the requirements of the Pakistan Government's Constitutional Amendment of Article 260 of the Constitution of Pakistan-- According to this Constitutional Amendment:

'A person who does not believe in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the last of the Prophets; or claims to be a prophet, in any sense of the word; or of any description whatsoever; after Muhammad, (peace be upon him); or recognizes such a claimant as a prophet or a religious reformer; is not a Muslim for the purposes of the Constitution or law.'

Qadianis Threat to Islamic Solidarity: Govt. of Pakistan: pg 28

As is evident from the requirements of this Constitutional Amendment, the Constitution of Pakistan demands an absolute and unqualified Faith in the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, as the last prophet in every sense of the word and also of every description whatsoever, whether old or new since the words 'absolute' and 'unqualified' and also 'in every sense of the word' and 'of every description whatsoever' in the context of this Constitutional Amendment demand that no exceptions whatsoever be made. And hence, these requirements of the Constitutional Amendment of the Constitution of Pakistan nullify the entire concept of old or new prophethood and the Constitutional Law of Pakistan makes no allowance for the advent of any prophet, including a former prophet.

CONTRADICTORY ATTITUDE

Oddly enough, a claim of prophethood by any other person except the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community appears to be quite acceptable to the opponents of the community.

For instance, one critic of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad states in relation to the claim of Elijah Muhammad:

'In the beginning of the present century Elija Muhammad, a black American leader who died in 1975, declared himself a prophet but specifically confined his prophethood for the black Americans only.'

Hasan, S: The Truth About Ahmadiyyat: pg 10

This critic of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community then states in relation to the Elijah Muhammad's claim:

'There is no doubt about it that the teachings of the Elija were to a great extent opposed to Islamic teachings but at the same time one cannot ignore this fact that for the first time in the Christian environment of America it was he who, for the first time, raised the banner of Islam.'

(Hasan, S: The Truth About Ahmadiyyat: pg 10)

While it is not the purpose of this article to enquire into the merits of Elijah Muhammad's claim, one cannot refrain from enquiring into the double standards of the adversaries of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian. While on one hand they insist the Holy Prophet of Islam is positively the last prophet and they also accuse the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community of having, God forbid: 'tried to undermine the finality of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him' (*Hasan, S: The Truth About Ahmadiyyat: pg 3*) on account of his claim to be an apostle of God Almighty, they on the other hand compliment Elijah Muhammad for having: 'raised the banner of Islam' although he 'declared himself a prophet.' (*Hasan, S: The Truth About Ahmadiyyat: pg 10*) This indicates that the adversaries of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad are themselves not thoroughly committed to their own concept of the finality of prophethood. Otherwise, what conceivable reason could they have for complimenting Elijah Muhammad as being the first standard bearer of Islam in America in spite of his claim to be an apostle of God Almighty after the **chronological finality** of the prophethood of Muhammad Mustapha (pboh)? The adversaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community may well argue that Elijah Muhammad:

'specifically confined his prophethood for black Americans only,'

Hasan, S. The Truth About Ahmadiyyat: pg 10

but could one ask them if the Traditions they cite in support of their belief in the finality of prophethood make allowances for a national prophet for a particular people within the broader spectrum of Islam?

Should not all claimants to prophethood be treated the same way by those who deny its possibility?

PRECEDENT IN HISTORY

'None can dispute about the Signs of God but the unbelievers. Let not, then, their strutting about through the land deceive thee! But (there were people) before them, who denied (the Signs)--The people of Noah, and the Confederates (of Evil) after them; And every people plotted against their prophet, to seize him, and disputed by means of vanities, therein to condemn the Truth but it was I that seized them and how (terrible) was My requital!'

Al Quran 40. 4/5: Abdullah Yusuf Ali's English Translation: pp 1262/1263

Does it then surprise one that the opponents of this particular apostle of God Almighty also act like their predecessors did in the times of other apostles of God Almighty?

Does it surprise one that these too, like their predecessors dispute Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's prophethood by 'means of vanities, therein to condemn the Truth'?

Or would they care to state that in this instance, they are not disputing by means of vanities but on account of their:

'conviction that no new prophet can be raised after [Hazrat] Muhammad [peace and blessings of Allah be upon him].' (Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood pg 25)

Maududi, A.A: Finality of Prophethood pg 25

In that event, they would not be the first to believe that prophethood has ceased completely. For instance, when Prophet Joseph, upon whom be peace, died, his followers declared:

'Allah will never raise a Messenger after him. Thus does Allah leave to stray such as Transgress and live in doubt.'

Al Quran 40:35

CONTINUATION OF PROPHETHOOD

Prophethood, whether the adversaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community admit it or not shall continue since God Almighty promises:

'And who so obeys Allah and His Messenger shall be among those on whom Allah has bestowed His blessings--the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous. And an excellent company they are. This grace is from Allah and Allah suffices as One Who is All Knowing.'

Al Quran 4: 70/71

The critics of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad may reiterate their assertion that the Ahmadi Muslims have misinterpreted this Quranic verse, but Muslim scholars of repute have always subscribed to the Ahmadiyya Muslim interpretation, For instance, the Bahr al Muhit quotes **Imam Al Raghīb** to state in relation to this particular verse of the Holy Quran:

'God has divided believers into four classes in this verse, and has appointed for them four stages, some of which are lower than the others. and He has exhorted true believers not to remain behind in any of the stages.

Hayyan, Athir al Din Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Yusuf Abu: Al Bahr al Muhit

The opponents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community may once again argue that this exhortation relates to the reward in the Hereafter and prophethood of any kind cannot now be achieved in this world; but, the revered saint left no room for ambiguity since he also added:

'Prophethood is of two kinds, general and special. The special prophethood, viz; the law-bearing prophethood is now unattainable; but the general prophethood continues to be attainable.'

Ibid: Vol 3 pg 28

This is exactly how Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian viewed his own prophethood. He **never** laid any claim to special prophethood which was now unattainable but viewed his prophethood as a GENERAL one, the doors of which are open to eternity. He stated in relation to his own prophethood:

'With my heart and soul I believe in His [Allah's] Prophet [Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha], peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and believe that all kinds of prophethoods have culminated in him and that his Law is the last Law. Yet, there is a type of prophethood which has not been banned, that is to say, the prophethood that can be acquired **through following him** [Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him] implicitly, wherein is reflected his [the Holy Prophet's] own light. This is because this, in fact, is a part of the prophethood of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and is his reflection derived through his beneficence only.'

Chashma Marifat: pg 324

This kind of prophethood, which is a reflection of the Holy Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and which is derived through his beneficence has not been found to be against the essence of Islamic teaching. For instance, **Hazrat Sheikh Ahmad Farooqi** has stated:

'The rising of a prophet after the Khatamar Rasul, Hazrat Muhammad the Chosen One, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, from among his followers and as a heritage, does not in any way run counter to his status as the Khatamar Rasul.'

Maktubat Imam Rabbani

And the reason why the arising of such a prophet after our beloved Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has not been found to run counter to his status as the Khatamar Rusul has been explained by the founder of the Deoband Institute whose Ulemma today prove to be the most passionate opponents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. **Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim** of Nanauta, who totally rejected the concept of the chronological finality of the prophethood of our beloved master, the Khataman Anbiyya (*Tahzeerun Nas: pg 3*) and who did not disregard the feasibility of a prophet appearing after the Khatamar Rasul, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, (*Tahzeerun Nas: pg 28*) stated that:

'If there appears to be equality and similarity between the original and its reflection, it does not matter, because superiority belongs to him [Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him] for he is the original and the Khataman Nabiyeen.'

Tahzeerun Nas: pg 30/33

HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD'S PROPHETHOOD

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's prophethood was a mere reflection of the prophethood of his lord and master, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him-- a kind of prophethood which has been found permissible by the founder of the Deoband Seminary.

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community himself states:

'the exalted office of prophethood is now denied to everyone, except him who effaces his own identity with his love and subjection to the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. But he who seeks to approach God through this avenue will have the mantle of prophethood conferred upon him and his prophethood would be a mere reflection of the prophethood of Muhammad, peace be upon him. This prophet does not infringe the prophethood of Muhammad, upon whom be peace, as he is neither self subsistent nor independent. Whatever he achieves, is not achieved through his own efforts but is bestowed upon him through the fountain of grace to which he has subjected himself--the Holy Prophet of Islam, upon whom be peace. He is a prophet therefore, not of self exaltation but of the glorification of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. That is why he is known in heaven as Muhammad and as Ahmad--the prophethood of Muhammad, peace be upon him, having returned unto Muhammad, upon whom be peace, therefore remains with him and none other as the one who claims this rank professes to be a mere shadow of his master. He reflects in him, all the qualities of his lord's glory and acknowledges his debt to the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him.'

Ek Ghalati ka Izala

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad then states in relation to his own prophethood:

'My prophethood and my messengership are but a mere act of grace due to my being a Muhammad and an Ahmad, not through my own person, but as a reflection of him through whose grace I have been elated to this rank as a result of my self effacing devotion to him, the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.'

Ek Ghalati ka Izala

In fact, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was of the opinion that any person who proposed to establish a claim to prophethood without first effacing his own identity in total submission to the Holy Prophet, upon whom be peace, was an infidel.

However:

'if a person, as a result of his complete subjection to Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, loses his own identity and begins to reflect in himself, all the beauty and excellence of the Holy Prophet, upon whom be peace--like a mirror reflects the image--he would be called a prophet without compromising the seal of Prophethood as such a person would be reflecting the image and the character of Muhammad, peace be upon him. And hence, the claim of such a person, who comes to be known as Muhammad and as Ahmad, would not be incompatible with the dignity and stature of the Khataman Nabiyeen because he would, through his subjection to Muhammad, peace be upon him, be a reflection of Muhammad, upon whom be peace, and hence an image of him.'

Ek Ghalati ka Izala

This submission by the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community should hence suffice to establish that his prophethood was a mere act of grace bestowed upon Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad by God Almighty on account of his submission to the Khataman Nabiyeen, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. And, it was not bestowed upon him independently, but it was bequeathed to him as a heritage on account of his being a follower of the Khatamar Rasul, Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Incidentally, this kind of prophethood has not been found unattainable in Islam, a fact admitted by some of the most respected saints and scholars of the Ummah. (See for example *Farooqi, Hazrat Sheikh Ahmad: Maktubat Imam Rabbani.*)

The adversaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community need to be reminded that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad' prophethood, as he himself stated on numerous occasions, was in fact:

'a mere reflection of the prophethood of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.'

Ek Ghalati ka Izala

And this reflection of the prophethood of his lord and master, peace be upon him, could neither infringe the prophethood of the Khataman Nabiyeen, nor could it compromise the seal of his prophethood since according to the spiritual predecessors of the anti Ahmadiyya elements, the scholars of Deoband, even:

'if there appears to be equality and similarity between the original and its reflection, it does not matter, because superiority belongs to him [Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him] for he [Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha, peace be upon him] is the original and the Khataman Nabiyeen.'

Nanauta, Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim of: Tahzeerun Nas: pg 33

If after all these submissions, the adversaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community still persist in their opposition to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, then one can only recall for their benefit, the Quranic verse:

'And even if We send down unto them the angels, and the dead speak to them, and We bring together all things before them, they would not believe, unless God enforced His will. But most of them are ignorant. And in the like manner have We made for every Prophet an enemy, the evil ones from among men and jinn, some of them inspiring others with gilded speech in order to deceive. And if thy Lord had enforced His Will, they would not have done it; so leave them alone with that which they fabricate.' (Al Quran 6: 112/113)

Al Quran 6: 112/113