

**HERESY IN ISLAM
OR
A REFUTATION OF
DECLARING A MUSLIM
AN UNBELIEVER**

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"Whoever declares *kāfir* someone who believes in the *Kalimah*
is nearer to unbelief"
— Hadīth: *Tibrānī* related by Ibn-i Umar.

"Fear Allah... Muslims are already in a small number. Do not
further decrease their number and thus increase that of the
unbelievers" — Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement,
Izālah Auhām, p. 597.

A REFUTATION OF DECLARING A MUSLIM AN UNBELIEVER

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Radd-i Takfir Ahl-i Qiblah

by Maulana Muhammad Ali

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FOREWORD

Heresy in Islam or "A Refutation of Declaring a Muslim an Unbeliever" is the English translation of an important treatise in Urdu *Radd-i Takfir Ahl-i Qiblah* by Maulana Muhammad Ali, the translator of the Holy Qur'an with commentary into English. Misconception and improper interpretations of the plain injunctions of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, in this regard have caused much confusion and dissension in the Ummah. The exposition of the Maulana manifests the Lahore Ahmadiyya's views on this issue and upholds sanctity of the Islamic formula *Lā ilāha ill-Allāh Muhammadur Rasulullah* (There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of ALLAH). There is complete consensus to the fact that any one who believes in and professes the *Kalima* is a Muslim and no body has the authority to drive him out of the pale of Islam. The Maulana also repudiates the biased views of the Qadian section in this behalf.

We are grateful to Brother Kalamazad, Mohammad of Trinidad for revising the booklet and to Brother Abdul Razak of India and Mian Fakhar-ud-Din Ahmad of Pakistan for going through the proofs and for making valuable suggestions. Our thanks are also due to Sister Zarina Mohammad and Sister Nadara Khan of Trinidad for their kind collaboration in the final production of the booklet.

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INTRODUCTION

Faith and action

The religion of Islam may be broadly divided into two parts — the theoretical, or, what may be called, its articles of faith or its doctrines, and the practical, which includes all that a Muslim is required to do, that is to say, the practical course to which he must conform his life. The former are called *usūl* and the latter *furū'*. The word *usūl* is the plural of 'asl which means a root or a principle, and *furū'* is the plural of *far'* which means a branch. The former are also called '*aqā'id* (pl. of '*aqīdah*, lit. *what one is bound to*) or beliefs, and the latter *ahkām* (pl. of *hukm*, lit. *an order*) or the ordinances and regulations of Islam. According to Shahrastānī, the former is *ma'rifah* or knowledge, and the latter *tā'ah* or obedience. Thus knowledge is the root; and obedience or practice, the branch. This terminology is adopted by the later doctors; the two divisions being, in the Holy Qur'ān, *īmān* and '*amal*. The word *īmān*, generally translated as faith or belief, is derived from *āmana* (ordinarily rendered, *he believed*) which means, when used transitively, *he granted (him) peace or security*, and when used intransitively, *he came into peace or security*; while '*amal* signifies a deed or action. (The two words are most often used together in the Holy Qur'ān to indicate a believer, and *those who believe and do good* is the oft-recurring description of true believers). Hence Góð is called *al-Mu'min* (59:23), meaning the Granter of security while the believer is also called *al-mumin*, meaning one who has come into peace or security, because he has accepted the principles which bring about peace of mind or security from fear. As a principle is first accepted and then put into action, so the articles of faith are called the roots, and the regulations or ordinances which must be carried into effect are called the

branches, because the branches grow from the roots just as action springs from faith. This relation of faith with actions must be borne in mind in order to understand the true meaning of Islam.

Īmān in the Qur'ān

The word *Īmān* is used in two different senses in the Holy Qur'ān. According to Rāghib, the famous lexicologist of the Qur'ān, *Īmān* is sometimes nothing more than a confession with the tongue that one believes in Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). There are many examples of this use of the word in the Holy Qur'ān, as in 2:62: "Those who believe (*āmanū*), and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good, they have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them nor shall they grieve;" or in 4:136: "O you who believe (*āmanū*)! Believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Book which He has revealed to His Messenger." But as Rāghib has further explained, *īmān* also implies the condition in which a confession with the tongue is accompanied by an assent of the heart, *tasdiq-un bi-l-qalb*, and the carrying into practice of what is believed, *'amal-un bi-l-jawāriḥ*, (lit., *doing of deeds with limbs*), as in 57:19: "And those who believe in Allah and His Messenger, they are the truthful and the faithful ones with their Lord." The word is, however, also used in either of the two latter senses, *i. e.*, as meaning simply the assent of the heart and the doing of good deeds. Examples of this are: "The dwellers of the desert say: We believe. Say, You believe not, but say, We submit; and faith has not yet entered into your hearts" (49:14). Here belief clearly stands for the assent of the heart as explained in the verse itself. Or, "What reason have you that you believe not in Allah?, And the Messenger invites you to believe in your Lord, and He has indeed accepted your

convenant, if you are believers" (57:8), where "believe in Allah" means *make sacrifices in the cause of truth*, as the context shows. Thus the word *īmān*, as used in the Holy Qur'ān, signifies either simply a confession of the truth with the tongue, or simply an assent of the heart and a firm conviction of the truth brought by the Holy Prophet, or the doing of good deeds and carrying into practice of the principle accepted, or it may signify a combination of the three. Generally, however, it is employed to indicate an assent of the heart, combined, of course, with a confession with the tongue, to what the prophets bring from God, as distinguished from the doing of good deeds, and hence it is that the righteous, as already remarked, are spoken of as those *who believe and do good*.

īmān in the Hadith

In Hadith, the word *īmān* is frequently used in its wider sense, that is to say, as including good deeds, and sometimes simply as standing for good deeds. Thus the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "*īmān* (faith) has over sixty branches, and modesty (*hayā*) is a branch of faith" (Bu. 2:3). In another hadith the words are: "*īmān* has over seventy branches, the highest of which is (the belief) that nothing deserves to be worshipped except Allah (*Lā ilāha ill-Allāh*), and the lowest of which is the removal from the way of that which might cause injury to any one" (M.1:12). According to one hadith: "Love of the Ansar is a sign of faith" (Bu. 2: 10); according to another: "One of you has no faith unless he loves for his brother what he loves for himself" (Bu. 2:7). And a third says: "One of you has no faith unless he has greater love for me than he has for his father and his son and all the people" (Bu. 2:8). The word *īmān* is thus applied to all good deeds and Bukhārī has as the heading of one of his chapters in the *Kitāb al-īmān* (Book 2): "He who says, *īmān* is nothing but the doing of good;" in support of

which he quotes verses of the Holy Qur'ān. He argues from verses which speak of faith being increased (74:31; 3:172); that good deeds are a part of faith, because otherwise faith could not be thus spoken of.

Kufr or unbelief

Just as *Īmān* is the acceptance of the truth brought by the Holy Prophet, so *kufr* is its rejection, and as the practical acceptance of the truth or the doing of a good deed is called *Īmān* or part of *Īmān*, so the practical rejection of the truth or the doing of an evil deed is called *kufr* or part of *kufr*. The heading of a chapter in the *Bukhāri* is as follows: "*Ma'asi* (acts of disobedience) are of the affairs of *Jāhiliyyah*" (Bu. 2:22). Now *jāhiliyyah* (lit. *ignorance*), in the terminology of Islam, means the "time of ignorance" before the advent of the Holy Prophet, and is thus synonymous with *kufr*, or unbelief. In support of this is quoted a report relating to Abū *Dharr* who said that he abused a man, *i. e.*, addressed him as the son of a Negro woman, upon which the Holy Prophet remarked: "Abū Dharr! Thou findest fault with him on account of his mother; surely thou art a man in whom is *jāhiliyyah*" (Bu. 2:22). Thus the mere act of finding fault with a man on account of his Negro origin is called *jāhiliyyah* or *kufr*. According to another *hadith*, the Holy Prophet is reported to have warned his Companions in the following words: "Beware, do not become unbelievers (*kuffār*, p. of *kāfir*) after me, so that some of you should strike off the necks of others" (Bu. 25:132). Here the slaying of Muslims by Muslims is condemned as an act of unbelief. In another *hadith*, it is said: "Abusing a Muslim is transgression and fighting with him is unbelief (*kufr*)" (Bu. 2:36). Yet in spite of the fact that the fighting of Muslims with one another is called *kufr* — and those who fight among themselves are even called *kāfirs* — in these *hadith*, the Holy Qur'ān speaks of two parties of Muslims

at war with one another as believers (*mu'minīn*) (49:9). It is, therefore, clear that such conduct is called an act of unbelief (*kufr*) simply as being an act of dis-obedience. This point has been explained by Ibn Athīr in his well-known dictionary of Hadīth, the *Nihāyah*. Writing under the word *kufr*, he says: "*Kufr* (unbelief) is of two kinds; one is a denial of the faith itself, and that is the opposite of faith; and the other is denial of a *far'* (branch) of the *furū'* of Islam, and on account of it a man does not get out of the faith itself." As already shown, the *furū'* of Islam are its ordinances, and thus the practical rejection of an ordinance of Islam, while it is called *kufr*, is not *kufr* in the technical sense, *i.e.*, a denial of Islam itself. He also tells of an incident which throws light on this question. Azhari was asked whether a man (*i.e.*, a Muslim) became a *kāfir* (unbeliever) simply because he held a certain opinion, and he replied that such an opinion was *kufr* (unbelief); and, when pressed further, added: "The Muslim is sometimes guilty of *kufr* (unbelief)". Thus it is clear that a Muslim remains a Muslim though he may be guilty of an act of unbelief (*kufr*).

A Muslim cannot be called a *kāfir*

The concluding portion of the above paragraph makes it clear that a Muslim cannot properly be called a *kāfir*. Every evil deed or act of disobedience being part of *kufr*, even a Muslim may commit an act of unbelief. And the opposite is equally true; namely, that since every good deed is a part of faith, even an unbeliever may perform an act of faith. There is nothing paradoxical in these statements. The dividing line between a Muslim and a *kāfir*, or between a believer and an unbeliever, is confession of the Unity of God and the prophethood of Muhammad — *Lā ilāha ill-Allāh Muhammad-ur Rasūlu-llāh*. A man becomes a Muslim or a believer by making a confession of the Unity of God and of the prophethood of Muhammad,

and so long as he does not renounce his faith in this, he remains a Muslim or a believer technically, in spite of any opinion he may hold on any religious question, or any evil which he may commit or have committed; and a man who does not make this confession is a non-Muslim or unbeliever technically, in spite of any good that he may do. It does not mean that the evil deeds of the Muslims are not punished, or that the good deeds of the non-Muslims are not rewarded. The law of the requital of good and evil is a law apart which goes on working irrespective of creeds, and the Holy Qur'ān puts it in very clear words: "So he who does an atom's weight of good will see it; and he who does an atom's weight of evil will see it" (99:7,8). A believer is capable of doing evil and an unbeliever is capable of doing good, and each shall be requited for what he does. But no one has the right to expel any one from the brotherhood of Islam so long as he confesses the Unity of God and the prophethood of Muhammad. The Qur'ān and the Hadith are quite clear on this point. Thus in the Holy Qur'ān we have: "And say not to any one who offers you salutation, Thou art not a believer" (4:94). The Muslim form of salutation — *assalāmu 'alaikum*, or peace be on you — is thus considered a sufficient indication that the man who offers it is a Muslim, and no one has the right to say to him that he is not a believer, even though he may be insincere. The Holy Qur'ān speaks of two parties of Muslims fighting with each other, and yet of both as *mu'min*: "And if two parties of the believers (*mu'minīn*) quarrel, make peace between them" (49:9). It then goes on to say: "The believers are brethren so make peace between your brethren" (49:10).

Even those who were known to be hypocrites were treated as Muslims by the Holy Prophet and his Companions, though they refused to join the Muslims in the

struggle in which the latter had to engage in self-defence, and when the reputed chief of these hypocrites, the notorious 'Abd-Allāh ibn Ubayy, died, the Holy Prophet offered funeral prayers on his grave and treated him as a Muslim. Hadith is equally clear on this point. According to one hadith, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "Whoever offers prayers as we do and turns his face to our Qiblah and eats the animal slaughtered by us, he is a Muslim for whom is the covenant of Allah and His Messengers, so do not violate Allah's covenant" (Bu. 8:28). In another hadith he is reported to have said: "Three things are the basis of faith: to withhold from one who confesses faith in *lā ilāha ill-Allāh*, you should not call him *kāfir* for any sin nor expel him from Islam for any deed" (AD. 15:33). And according to a third, reported by Ibn 'Umar, he said: "Whoever calls the people of *lā ilāha ill-Allāh*, an unbeliever (*kafir*), is himself nearer to *kufir*" (Tb.) By the people of *la ilaha ill-Allah* or the upholders of the Unity, are clearly meant the Muslims, and it is made quite evident that any one who makes a confession of the *Kalimah*, that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger, becomes a Muslim, and to call him a *kāfir* is the greatest of sins. Thus it will be seen that membership of the brotherhood of Islam is a thing not to be tested by some great theologian, well-versed in logical quibblings, but rather by the man in the street, by the man of common sense, or even by the illiterate man who can judge of another by his very appearance, who is satisfied with even a greeting in the Muslim style of greeting, who requires no further argument when he sees a man turn his face to the Qiblah, and to whom Islam means the confession of the Unity of God and the prophethood of Muhammad.

A doctrine so plainly and so forcibly taught in the Holy Qur'ān and Hadith stands in need of no support

from the great and learned men among the Muslims. But, notwithstanding the schisms and differences that arose afterwards, and the numerous intricacies that were introduced into the simple faith of Islam by the logical niceties of later theologians, the principle stated above is upheld by all authorities on Islam. Thus the author of the *Mawāqif* sums up the views of Muslim theologians in the following words: "The generality of the theologians and the jurists are agreed that none of the *Ahl Qiblah* (the people who recognize the Ka'bah as their *qiblah*) can be called a *kāfir*" (Mf. p. 600). And the famous Abu-l-Hasan Asha'ari writes in the very beginning of his book *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyin wa Ikhtilāfāt al-Musallin* (*What the Muslims say and the differences of those who pray*): "After the death of their Prophet, the Muslims became divided on many points, some of them calling others *dzāll* (straying from the right path), and some shunned others, so that they became sects entirely separated from each other, and scattered parties, but Islam gathers them all and includes them all in its sphere" (MI., pp. 1,2)¹. Tahāwi, too, is reported as saying that "nothing can drive a man out of *īmān* except the denial of what makes him enter it" (Rd. III, p. 310). Similarly Ahmad Ibn al-Mustafā says that it is only bigoted people who call each other *kāfirs*, for, he adds: "Trustworthy *Imāms* from among the Hanafis and the *Shafi*'is and the Malikis and the Hanbalis and the *Ash*'aris hold that none of the *Ahl Qiblah* can be called a *kāfir*" (MD. I, p. 46). In fact, it is the *Khawārij* who first introduced divisions or sectarianism into Islam by calling their Muslim brethren *kāfirs*, simply because they disagreed with their views.

Imān and Islam

The lexicology of *Imān* and *Islām* has already been explained. The word *Imān* signifies originally conviction of the heart, while the word *Islām* signifies originally

submission, and hence relates primarily to action. This difference in the original meaning finds expression both in the Qur'ān and the Hadith, though in ordinary use they both convey the same significance, and *mu'min* and *Muslim* are generally used interchangeably. An example of the distinction in their use in the Holy Qur'ān is afforded in 49:14: "The dwellers of the desert say, We believe (*āmānā* from *īmān*). Say, you believe not but say: We submit (*aslamnā* from *islām*). and faith has not yet entered into your hearts. And if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not diminish aught of your deeds. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."² This does not mean, of course that they did not believe in the prophethood of Muhammad. The significance of faith entering into the heart is made clear in the very next verse: "The believers are those only who believe in Allah and His Messenger, then they doubt not and struggle hard with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allah; they are the truthful ones" (49:15). In fact, both words, *īmān* and *Islām*, are used to signify two different stages in the spiritual growth of man. A man is said to have believed (*āmāna*) when he simply declares his faith in the Unity of God and the prophethood of Muhammad, which, in fact, is the first stage of belief, because it is only by declaration of the acceptance of a principle that one makes a start; and a man is also said to have believed (*āmāna*) when he carries into practice to their utmost extent the principles in which he has declared his faith. Examples of both these uses have already been given; examples of the first are 2:62, 4:136; an example of the latter (49:15) has just been quoted above. The only difference is that in the first use, belief or *īmān* is in its first stage, a confession of the tongue — a declaration of the principle; and in the second, *īmān* has been perfected and indicates the last stage of faith — which has then entered into the depths of the heart and brought the change required. The same is

the case with the use of the word Islam. In its first stage it is simply a willingness to submit, as in the verse quoted above (49:14); in its last it is entire submission, as in 2:112: "Nay! whoever submits himself (*aslama*) entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such, nor shall they grieve." Thus both *Īmān* and Islam are the same in their first and last stages — from a simple declaration they have developed into perfection, and cover all the intermediate stages. They have both a starting-point and a goal; and the man who is at the starting-point, the mere novice, and the man who has attained the goal, in spite of all the differences between them, are both called *mu'min* or Muslim, as are also those who are on their way, at different stages of the journey.

No dogmas in Islam

The above discussion leads us also to the conclusion that there are no dogmas in Islam, no mere beliefs forced upon a man for his alleged salvation. Belief, according to Islam, is not only a conviction of the truth of a given proposition, but it is essentially the acceptance of a proposition as a basis for action. The Qur'ān definitely upholds this view for, according to it, while the proposition of the existence of devils is as true as that of the existence of angels, a belief in angels is again and again mentioned as part of a Muslim's faith, whereas a disbelief in devils is as clearly mentioned as necessary: "So whoever disbelieves (*yakfur*) in the devil and believes (*yu'min*) in Allah, he indeed lays hold on the firmest handle" (2:256). The words used here for believing in God and disbelieving in devils are, respectively, *Īmān* and *kufr*. If *Īmān* meant simply a belief in the existence of the thing, and *kufr* the denying of the existence of a thing, a disbelief in devils could not have been spoken of as necessary along with a belief in God. God exists, the

angels exist, the devil exists; but while we must believe in God and His angels, we must disbelieve in the devil. This is because the angel, according to the Qur'ān, is the being that prompts the doing of good, and the devil is the being that prompts the doing of evil, so that a belief in angels means really acting upon the promptings to do good, and a disbelief in the devil means refusing to entertain evil promptings. Thus *īmān* (belief) really signifies the acceptance of a principle as a basis for action, and every doctrine of Islam answers to this description. There are no dogmas, no mysteries, no faith which do not require action; for every article of faith means a principle to be carried into practice for the higher development of man.

Principles of faith

The whole of the religion of Islām is briefly summed up in the two short sentences, *Lā ilāha ill-Allāh*, i.e., there is no god but Allah, or nothing deserves to be made an object of love and worship except Allah, and *Muhammad-ur Rasūlullāh*, i.e., Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. It is simply by bearing witness to the truth of these two simple propositions that a man enters the fold of Islam. These two component parts of the simple faith of Islam do not occur together in the Holy Qur'ān, as in the accepted creed. The first part of the creed, however, is the constant theme of the Holy Qur'ān, and a faith in the Unity of God, in the fact that there is no god except Allah, is repeatedly mentioned as the basic principle, not only of Islam but of every religion revealed by God. It takes several forms: "Have they a god with Allah?" "Have they a god besides Allah?" "There is no god except Allah;" "There is no god but He;" "There is no god but Thou;" "There is no god but I." The second part of the creed, *Muhammad-ur Rasūlullāh*, is based on the messengership of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, which is also a constant theme of the Holy Qur'ān, and the very

words occur in 48:29; while from Hadith, it appears that the essential condition of the acceptance of Islam was the acceptance of these two component parts of the creed (Bu. 2:40).

The above, in the terminology of the later theologians, is called *īmān mujmal* or a brief expression of faith. The detailed expression of faith, which the later theologians call *mufassal*, is set forth in the very beginning of the Holy Qur'ān as follows: A belief in the Unseen (*i.e.* God), a belief in that which was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad and in that which was revealed to the prophets before him, and a belief in the Hereafter (2:2-4). Further on in the same chapter, five principles of faith are clearly mentioned: "That one should believe in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Books and the Prophets" (2:177). Again and again, the Holy Qur'ān makes it clear that it is only in relation to these five that belief is required. In the Hadith, there is a slight variation. Bukhārī has it as follows: "That thou believe in Allah and His Angels and in the meeting with Him and His Messengers and that thou believe in the Life after death" (Bu. 2:37). It will be seen that a belief in the meeting with God is mentioned distinctly here, and while this is included in the belief in God in the Holy Qur'ān in the verse quoted above, it is also mentioned distinctly on many occasions; see 13:2, etc. Again, in the Hadith, the Books are not mentioned distinctly and are included in the word "Messengers". Thus the basis of belief rests on five principles, according to the Holy Qur'ān and Hadith, God, His Angels, His Prophets, His Books, and a Life after death. But in some hadith, the words are added: "That thou believe in *qadar*" (lit., *the measure*). *Qadar* is, no doubt, spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān as a law of God, but never as an article of faith, and all the Divine laws are accepted as true by every Muslim.

Significance of faith

As I have already said, all articles of faith are in reality principles of action. Allah is the Being Who possesses all the perfect attributes, and when a man is required to believe in Allah, he is really required to make himself possessor of the highest moral qualities, his goal being the attainment of the Divine attributes. He must set before himself the highest and purest ideal which the heart of man can conceive and make his conduct conform to that ideal. Belief in the angels means that the believer should follow the good impulses which are inherent in him, for the angel is the being associated with a good impulse. Belief in the books of God signifies that we should follow the directions contained in them for the development of our inner faculties. Belief in messengers means that we are to model ourselves on their noble example and sacrifice our lives for humanity even as they did. Belief in the Hereafter or the Last Day tells us that physical or material advancement is not the end or goal of life; but that its real purpose is an infinitely higher one, of which the Resurrection, or the Last Day, is but the beginning. — (*The Religion of Islām*, pp.119-133, ed. 1950).

REFERENCES

1. Ash'ari states this principle by way of a preliminary to a discussion on the different sects of Islam, and then he goes on to speak of the Muslims as being divided into the Shi'ah, the Khwārij, the Murji'ah, and the Mu'tazilah, etc. Next he proceeds to discuss the main subdivisions of these heads, those of the Shi'ah being the Ghāliyah (Extremists) who are again subdivided into fifteen sects, the Rāfidzah who are subdivided into twenty-four different sects, and the Zaidiyah, who have six branches. Fifteen subdivisions of the Khwārij are spoken of, and so on with regard to the other main sects. All these different sects and sub-sects are spoken of by Ash'ari as being Muslims, and not even the Ghāliyah are excluded from Islam though almost all of them believed in one of their leaders as a prophet, and legalized certain things expressly forbidden in the Holy Qur'ān. For instance, the Bayāniyah believed in the prophethood of Bayān, their founder; the followers of 'Abd-Allah ibn Mu'āwiyah believed in their founder as Lord and as a prophet; and so it was with many others of them. Even these people are called Muslims because they still believed in the prophethood of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and in the Divine origin of the Qur'ān and followed the law of Islam. The modern followers of Ash'ari who call their Muslim brethren *kāfirs* for the slightest differences should take a lesson from this.

2. The use of *īmān* and *Islām* in Hadith points occasionally to a similar distinction in use, though ordinarily they are used interchangeably. Thus in the *Kitāb al-Īmān*, Bukhārī relates the following from Abū Hurairah: "The Holy Prophet, peace and the blessings of Allāh be upon him, was one day sitting outside among the people when a man came to him and asked. What is *Īmān*? He replied: *Īmān* is this that thou believe in Allāh and His angels and in the meeting with Him and His messengers, and that thou believe in life after death. He asked, What is *Islām*? He replied, *Islām* is this that thou worship Allāh and do not associate with Him aught, and keep up prayer and pay the obligatory alms (*Zakāt*) and keep fast in Ramadzān" (Bu. 2:37). In another hadith narrated in the same book, it is stated how when a Companion of the Prophet speaking of another repeatedly said that he thought him to be a believer (*mu'min*), the Holy Prophet every time said, Rather a Muslim (Bu. 2:19); thus indicating that men could judge of each other only from outward acts. In the beginning of that book, however, a hadith is narrated from Ibn 'Umar showing that *Islām* also includes belief: "*Islām* is based on five fundamentals, the bearing of the witness (*shahādah*) that there is no god but Allāh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh, and the keeping up of prayer, and the giving of *zakāt*, and the pilgrimage, and fasting in the month of Ramadzān" (Bu. 2:1). The word used here is, however, *shahādah* (or, the bearing of witness), not *īmān* or believing, and *shahādah* in this case, though requiring a belief in the truth of what is stated, is still an outward act.

CHAPTER - 1

Heresy as defined in the Qur'ān and Hadith

If the Muslims had due regard for the injunctions² of Allah and His Messenger, the idea of declaring "unbelievers" (*kāfir*) their fellow-Muslims would hardly have occurred to them. Not only the masses but even their so-called ulema today follow their own whims and fancies, thus disregarding the Qur'ān and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

The greatest restraint, however, on the pronouncement of heresy (*takfir*) is to be found in the Qur'ān itself, where it is mentioned: "and say not to anyone, who offers you salutation, thou art not a believer, seeking the good of this world's life" (4:94).

The incident relating to the revelation of this verse indicates that a certain person who was considered to be an unbeliever and belonged to an enemy tribe greeted a group of Muslims with the Islamic salutation: Peace be on you! (*Assalāmo 'Alaikum*) or pronounced the *Kalimah* (there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) before them, but such a confession was totally ignored. It was on that occasion that this verse was revealed, enjoining upon Muslims that when any person accosts you with the Islamic salutation, it amounts to a confession of his faith in Islam. He should not as such be considered an unbeliever.

Tirmidhi records the following:

"Ibn-i 'Abbās reported that a man from Banū Sālīm, while tending his goats passed by the Companions of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and greeted them with "Assalāmo Alaikum". They thought that he had

offered this salutation only to save his life. They killed him and drove away his goats and brought them to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. It was on this occasion that the verse: "O you who believe... say not to any one who offers you salutation, thou art not a believer," (4:94) was revealed.

When the pronouncers of heresy are confronted with this explicit injunction of the Qur'ān, they argue as to whether they should consider a Jew or a Christian as a Muslim simply because he greets them with the Islamic salutation. They never seriously think that this verse is a part of the Qur'ān and to despise it in this manner is nothing less than despising the Word of Allah. There can be no other meaning to this verse except this: that the person greeting Muslims with the Islamic salutation in no case is to be considered an unbeliever. There is no doubt that "thou art not a believer" can only be applied to a person who does not declare his belief in Islam. Thus the Qur'ān has indicated a clear notion that when a person greets you with the Islamic salutation to show that he is a Muslim he should not be called an unbeliever. In the presence of this express teaching of the Qur'ān, insistence on declaring a Muslim an unbeliever is a clear deviation from the Word of Allah. This verse does not, in any way, suggest that if a Jew or Christian or Hindu greets you with the Islamic salutation he is to be taken as a Muslim. Here, it is about a person who discloses his identity of being a Muslim by offering the Islamic salutation and such a person should by no means be considered an unbeliever.

Let us now examine, in this behalf, the practice of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. In the first instance, for accepting Islam, a non-Muslim was only required to recite the *Kalimah*, "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." This was customary not only during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet and his

Companions but also during the last fourteen centuries throughout the world. Thus the *Kalimah*, by the declaration of which an unbeliever becomes a Muslim, cannot turn a Muslim into an unbeliever so long as he adheres to it and does not renounce this oath of allegiance. So, we see that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, converts a non-Muslim into a Muslim when the latter solemnly recites the *Kalimah* while today a reciter of the *Kalimah* is considered an unbeliever. As a matter of fact, as long as a person adheres to the *Kalimah* he is a Muslim and anyone violating this established law disobeys the teachings of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. And it was for this reason that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, warned that "whoever calls those who believe in the *Kalimah* unbelievers (*kāfir*) is nearer to unbelief (*kufr*)."— *Tibrānī*.

Further, it is reported in *Sahih al-Bukhārī* that, in a certain battle, Usāmah ibn Zaid overpowered an enemy who recited the *Kalimah*; even then Usāmah killed him. When this incident was reported to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, he was annoyed and reprimanded Usāmah by saying: "You killed him when he had recited the *Kalimah*; he continued repeating this remorsefully so many times that Usāmah lamented: I wish I had not become a Muslim prior to this" (*Kitāb al-Maghāzī*).

Another similar incident is reported in *Sahih al-Bukhārī* where a group facing Muslim soldiers in a battle shouted, *sabāna sabāna*, meaning, "We have become Sabeans." But Khālīd ibn Walid, the commander, paid no heed to their utterance and continued his attack relentlessly. When this incident was reported to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, he was infuriated and rebuked Khālīd for this act and implored: "O Allah! I absolve myself of what Khālīd has done." In fact, these people did not clearly confess that they had become Muslims but only said that they had become Sabeans,

meaning that they had actually become Muslims. (In those days the unbelievers called the Muslims Sabians). This proves that to consider a reciter of the *Kalimah* an unbeliever is to incur the displeasure of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

The third hadith in support of this argument is also from *Bukhāri*. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is reported to have said: "Whoever offers prayers as we do, turns his face towards our *Qiblah* and partakes of the animal slaughtered by us, is a Muslim for whom is the covenant of Allah and His Messenger. So, be mindful of the covenant of Allah" (*Bukhāri*, 8:28). Thus to call anyone who faces our *Qiblah* an unbeliever is against the covenant of Allah and His Messenger.

The definition of a Muslim in this hadith is so clear that those who dub Muslims unbelievers have no argument. It is shameful on their part to argue that such a person may still in his heart believe in the Trinity. This is no argument at all! While the majority of believers in the Unity of Allah are unmindful of their proper prayers, will the believers in the Trinity pray as Muslims turning their faces towards our *Qiblah*? But the above hadith has already cleared this ambiguity.

It has been reported in *Sahih al-Bukhāri* that a person behaved rather insolently in the company of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. *Khālid ibn Walīd* rose up to kill him but the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, intervened by saying: "Maybe he offers prayers!" *Khālid* replied: "There are many who offer prayers while their hearts are false." The Holy Prophet remarked: "I have not been commanded to pierce through their hearts or tear open their breasts (to find out the truth)" — *Kitāb al-Maghāzi*.

It is thus clear that the law of the *Shari'ah* is applicable to what is manifest. Anybody who worships Allah in the manner Muslims do is undoubtedly a Muslim irrespective of what he holds in his heart.

These three *hadith* thus illustrate that whosoever recites the *Kalimah* is a Muslim, and whosoever worships Allah, turning his face to our *Qiblah*, like Muslims in general, is a Muslim. His being a Muslim has been regarded as constituting a covenant with Allah and His Messenger. Anyone who calls such a person an unbeliever consequently incurs the displeasure of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

Declaring as unbeliever a reciter of the *Kalimah* was such a heinous offence that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, compared it to the murder of a Muslim. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "Anyone who declares a Muslim an unbeliever is like his murderer" (*Tirmidhi: Kitāb al-Īmān*). It is for this reason that the punishment prescribed for this offence was the same as that of homicide as is reported in another unanimously accepted *hadith*: "If anyone calls his fellow-Muslim an unbeliever, then that act of heresy reverts to one of them (*i.e.*, that person who initiated it)."

This deterrent punishment is similar to the punishment for homicide. As a murderer is killed for murdering another person, likewise a person who declares another Muslim an unbeliever becomes an unbeliever himself. This severe punishment has been prescribed to deter Muslims from such an ignoble tendency which shatters the very solidarity of the Muslim nation. Maintenance of law and order, peace and tranquillity and protection of life and property in a society warrants stern and strong measures. So, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, considered the sanctity of the solidarity of the Muslim *ummah* equal to the protection of

human life and declared that anyone who breaks the unity of Islam by dubbing his brother Muslim an unbeliever is to be treated as a murderer of his brother. In other words, the heresy he thrusts on his brother Muslim falls back on him as punishment and he ceases to be a Muslim. This is in accordance with the Qur'anic injunction that "if two parties of the believers quarrel, make peace between them. Then if one of them does wrong to the other, fight that which does wrong, till it returns to Allah's command" (49:9). Since it is obligatory for Muslims to stand against an aggressor, likewise it is incumbent upon them to treat similarly those who have wantonly declared a Muslim an unbeliever according to the hadith of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, which explains that a person declaring his Muslim brother an unbeliever, is guilty of murder and is liable to the punishment thereof *i. e.*, heresy or *kufir* reverts to him. To consider such an accuser as a religious scholar or a pious devotee and to make him an *Imām* for prayers contravenes the directive of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. In doing so they have, on one hand, shattered the solidarity of Islam and, on the other, they cannot be absolved of negligence in not holding such recalcitrants punishable as directed by the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and based on the Qur'anic principle.

There are people who consider themselves liberal-minded and will not criticise anybody. True, it is unfair to despise a person for his shortcomings; but we shall be justified only when it relates to one's personal traits; but when his conduct and behaviour are injurious to the society, it is advisable to restrain him. To declare a Muslim an unbeliever is detrimental to the solidarity of the Muslim community. Thus, declaring someone an unbeliever is the gravest crime a Muslim can commit and to let the offender go un-restrained is nothing short of an open rebellion against Islam. No person can be higher in rank than the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be

upon him, in his love for peace and harmony. There is not a single instance of his acquiescence on such occasions. How audacious is the person who cares not for the behest of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him! Such disobedience has increased the tendency of *takfir* so much so that individuals, and even groups, are out to lay the axe on the very root of Islam, and are unmindful of the precept of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. According to another hadith, people who have scant regard for the eradication of this social evil are in no way sincere and faithful to Islam and the Muslim *Ummah*. Nations of the world are trying to resolve their differences but this blessed *Ummah* is fomenting petty differences at the instigation of their religious leaders. The obvious reason is that moral courage is dwindling from their national character. They are reluctant to rise to the occasion and take cognizance of this growing cancer that is fast taking hold of their polity. If Muslims resolve today that they would in no case accept *mukaffirs* as their leaders, the *Ummah* would be healed of this infection. Such a constructive step will usher in an era of progress and unity among Muslims, enabling them thus to raise the edifice of Islam to unimaginable heights. Anybody who professes Islam and follows it to the best of his ability is a Muslim for all intents and purposes and to dub him an unbeliever is inimical to Islam.

CHAPTER - II

Views of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement

Although this booklet dealing with declaring Muslims as unbelievers (*kāfir*) is meant for all Muslims, it particularly concerns our Qādiāni friends who have ascribed *takfir* to that divine Reformer whose life mission was to cure Muslims of this contagious disease. In order to show that the eradication of the virus of *takfir* from the Muslim community was one of the important purposes for which he was raised as a Reformer by Allah, I quote the following from his book:

"It is evident that Jesus, son of Mary, also came for this task at a time when the Jews were divided into many sects, as the Muslims are at this time, and they punctiliously adhered to the words of the Torah whilst forsaking its essence and spirit. They quarrelled on trifling and insignificant matters. Due to lack of mutual understanding and narrow-mindedness, different sects fell prey to malice, spite and jealousy. One sect could not tolerate the existence of the other, and like innate enmity between a lion and a goat, individual animosity had become their second nature. The diversity in religious views left no love between their rank and file. Brutality was growing in their society like wild weeds. They were wild animals having scant regard for decency and morality. They were notorious for malice and spite. Observance of a few rites and rituals was considered to be the main object of religion. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, prophesied this same predicament for his *ummah* in the later ages when a lot of sects would grow amongst the Muslims and they would entertain diverse and conflicting ideas, and declaring one another unbelievers as Jews had done. Even if a person

possessed ninety-nine per cent of the qualities of a Muslim he would be dubbed an unbeliever for lacking the remaining one per cent. *Takfir* would generate malice, enmity and hatred in them. Intolerance for differences of opinion was apt to promote vindictiveness, jealousy and beastly tendencies among them. Islamic character which requires perfect harmony and uniformity in a body nursed by love and human sympathy would be taken away from them. One would consider the other a stranger to the extent that the ties and bonds of religion would be broken altogether. Groups would try to declare others as unbelievers as was the case with the Jews when Jesus appeared among them. They would be helpless, humiliated and despised by the nations of the world due to their internal dissensions, prejudices, bickerings, jealousy, enmity and intolerance. Their retrogressive traits would drive them to the brink of the abyss of destruction. They would try to devour one other like beasts. Their plight would entice outsiders to overpower and subdue them as had been the case with the Jews . . . History tells us that internal strife weakened the Jews who fell an easy prey to the mighty Caesar. For centuries they remained slaves to the Romans. Allah has also warned the Muslims of this eventuality through the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Religious feuds and differences would reach such heights that they would suffer from anguish prompted by malice, jealousy and spite against one another. Owing to these weaknesses the Muslims would be bereft of God-fearingness and truthfulness; they would be degraded religiously as well as politically; brute, ignorant and aggressive, devoid of learning which generates nobility and decency. This would be the occasion when Allah would raise an Ibn-i Maryam for uprooting this Jewish tendency" (*Izālah-i Auhām*, pp. 588-592).

This is a pitiable state of affairs. Allah has raised the *Mujaddid* of this age in accordance with His promise and it is by the grace of Allah that the principle of revival of faith has come true. The centuries old principle that a person who has even one per cent of Islam still remains a Muslim has been revived at the hands of the *Mujaddid* of this age. Alas, a section of his followers has declared sixty million Muslims to be outside the pale of Islam with a single stroke of the pen. The Founder firmly believed that a Muslim possessed of even one per cent of Islam could not be declared an unbeliever, for this would be contrary to the explicit injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān and the Sunnah — so much so that he had written about himself that "nobody becomes an unbeliever on account of denial of my claim." In spite of this unequivocal and clear verdict, it is regretted that a group of his followers, under the leadership of his son, Mirzā Baṣhīr-ud-Din Mahmūd Ahmad, is bent upon the *takfir* of Muslims, unmindful of the havoc it would cause in the house of Islam. This is not a trifling matter; rather, it is a blunder and is against the will of Allah. It was through the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, that Allah willed to bring all nations of the world together under one ensign and to establish unity among Muslims, but this group is shattering this very unity. Haven't they heard of and discerned the reaction of their victims on being declared non-Muslims? A devastating rift has been created and Muslims are at daggers-drawn among themselves. Don't they realise that it is their instigation that has caused this critical situation? The *takfir* condemned and eschewed by others has been adopted by us. History will repeat itself. The goodwill for the Movement sprouting in the Muslim intelligentsia will wither away. There will be no love lost between them and their sympathies will be alienated. At one time the ulema were guilty of dubbing the Founder of the Movement and his followers as unbelievers, and this had promoted hatred amongst the Muslims against the Movement, but, now, when a majority was forsaking it and brotherly feelings and esteem were taking root in the minds of

Muslims for this Movement, a blast from Qadian, declaring as unbelievers all those Muslims who did not subscribe to the Founder, has lowered the prestige of the *Mujaddid* of this age. The dying flames of retaliation were fanned and reappeared on the surface. The result was that the oppressed were now the oppressors.

Footnote

These words were written about 26 years ago. Now the seventh edition of this book is in the press and events have proven that our Qādiāni friends are reaping what they themselves had sown.

The Qādiāni belief

The Qādiāni belief which holds as unbelievers all people facing the same *Qiblah* in prayers (*Ahl-i Qiblah*), with the exception of Ahmadis of the Qadian Section, is a patent fact. Nevertheless, I quote a few writings of Mirzā Mahmūd Ahmad, the author of this belief. The inception of this belief dates back to April 1911 when he published an article in the magazine *Tashheezul Azhaan* under the caption "A Muslim is he who believes in all the Apostles of Allah." In this article Muslims who did not subscribe to the claims of the Founder, whether they denounced and considered him an unbeliever or considered him to be righteous and truthful, whether or not they had any knowledge of him or his teachings, were declared unbelievers and outside the pale of Islam. On p.139 of this magazine, while referring to those who were beyond the message of the Founder, it is stated that there is no exception in their case, and they too are *kāfir*. It means that the entire Muslim world not

subscribing to the claims of the Founder has become unbelievers. Here are the relevant words:

"Thirdly, the fate of the people who are not aware of the teachings of the Promised Messiah is known to Allah. It cannot be said with certainty what is in their minds. Since the *Shari'ah* takes cognizance of what is patent we are bound to consider them *kafirs*."

Again on p. 141, we are told:

"Thus not only the person who does not declare him *kāfir* but happens to ignore his call is an unbeliever, but even the one who considers him truthful in his heart and does not reject him outright but is hesitant to take the pledge, is an unbeliever."

Anwār-i Khilāfat, published in 1916, contains a revised version of the speech Mirzā Mahmūd Ahmad delivered during the Annual Gathering of 1915: "It is our duty to call non-Ahmadis unbelievers" (p.90). This speech was also reproduced in the newspaper *Farooq* in its issue of January 16, 1916. On p.10 thereof, we find: "As a non-Ahmadi is under obligation to hold the Promised Messiah and his followers as non-Muslims, it is incumbent upon us to hold all and sundry who have not taken the oath of allegiance at the hands of the Promised Messiah as unbelievers."

In another book, Mirzā Mahmūd Ahmad exhorts: "This change in the beliefs, according to the Maulvi (Muhammad Ali) concerns three matters. Firstly, that it was I who introduced the concept that the Promised Messiah was actually a prophet (*nabi*); secondly, that he (the Promised Messiah) is the Ahmad whose advent was heralded by the prophet Jesus, son of Mary, as referred to in the Qur'ān (61:9); and, thirdly, that all those Muslims who had not joined the Promised Messiah, although they were unaware of him, are unbelievers and outside the pale

of Islam. I confess that these are my beliefs" (*Āina-i Sadāqat*, p. 35).

The Founder disowns

It was during his very lifetime that the Founder was accused of declaring other Muslims *Kāfirs* and in his writings he repeatedly denounced such a calumny against him. It is pertinent to quote from one of his last books, *Haqiqat al-Wahy*, the refutation of this blasphemy:

"Again, look at this calumny of my opponents accusing me of having declared two hundred million Muslims who recite the *Kalimah* as *kāfir*, whereas, the fact is that I never took the lead in this matter. It was the ulema who issued the anathema of heresy against me and publicised it throughout the Punjab and other parts of India, proclaiming that we were unbelievers. Influenced by these pronouncements, the ignorant people were so infuriated that they deemed it sinful to speak to us. Can a *maulvi* or my opponent or the custodian of a shrine swear that we were first in declaring them unbelievers? Any leaflet, poster and pamphlet published by us preceding their anathema of heresy (*fatwā-i kufr*) declaring them unbelievers, should be produced. They should judge for themselves who is the aggressor and whether they are justified in blaming us for declaring other Muslims unbelievers. Every fair-minded, law-abiding and prudent person will unhesitatingly hold this insinuation against us as distressing, dishonest and unjust! Undoubtedly, in our case, they are aggressors themselves, especially since according to their admission, heresy reverts to the person who unwittingly brands a Muslim an unbeliever. Are we not justified to consider them unbelievers on this score?" (p. 130).

This exposition relates to the later period of the Founder's life. His opponents contended that he had declared them unbelievers. The reply, according to the Qādiāni concept, should have been somewhat like this: 'In our estimation you are certainly unbelievers, hence we call you unbelievers, and we are unbelievers in your view.' Was this the rejoinder of the Founder? No, indeed, he argued that you have yourselves taken the first step in declaring us unbelievers. Consequently, heresy has reverted to you according to the hadith that "heresy falls back on the one who initiates it." In other words, if you withdraw the anathema of heresy against us, the word heresy used by us would be void and ineffective.

Denouncement of Founder's claims

In brief we have to see whether the Founder made any announcement at the time he was designated Promised Messiah or, for the sake of argument, even afterwards, that a person who does not enter his *bai'at* or subscribe to his claims was a *kāfir* and outside the pale of Islam. I would assert the contrary. There is a clear negation in the following words of his which bear me out in my assertion: "This has been my belief from the very beginning that none can be held to be an unbeliever or *dajjāl* (Antichrist) on account of the denial of my claim" (*Tiryāq al-Qulūb*, p. 130)

There is also a footnote to this sentence elucidating the point further:

"It is worthwhile to bear in mind that to call a denier of one's claim an unbeliever is the exclusive privilege of prophets who bring Law (*Shari'ah*) and new commandments from Allah. Besides them, all inspired ones (*mulham*) and those spoken to by Allah (*muhaddath*), however elevated and prestigious position they may enjoy

for being spoken to by Allah, no person can become an unbeliever for denying their claim" (*Ibid.*).

If declaration of other Muslims as unbelievers was permissible for him, the Founder should have openly declared so. On the contrary, we find an absolutely different statement of the Founder viz., "No person can become an unbeliever on account of the denial of my claim." The following words precede this assertion: "I still abide by these beliefs, by the grace of Allah, and shall do so till I depart from this world." In the face of this explicit statement it is sheer impudence to declare all other Muslims unbelievers and outside the pale of Islam and it is a slander to ascribe this corrupt practice to the Founder.

The Qādiāni zeal for declaring their dissidents unbelievers has been so uncharitable that not only people who have heard neither the name nor the message of the Founder have been branded as unbelievers, but even persons who are sympathetic for him and testify to his righteousness but are diffident to join him, have been roped in with the former. The following lines from the latest writings of the Founder will serve as an eye-opener so far as the position of the first category is concerned:

"Dr. Abdul Hakim in his pamphlet *Masih al-Dajjāl* and other writings accuses me of having written that anyone who does not believe in me, even if he has not heard my name or is living in a country beyond the reach of my call, is an unbeliever and shall go to hell. This is a patent fabrication by the Doctor. I have never said so in any book or poster of mine. It is binding on him to produce such writings of mine in which I have said so" (*Haqiqat al-Wahy*, p. 178).

The insinuation refuted by the Founder as being palpably false has unfortunately been ascribed to him by a group of his followers led by his son. In the above quotation, the Founder denies having made any such statement in any of his books or writings, and has challenged the accuser, Dr. Abdul Hakim, to produce the book containing such a statement. Attributing such an allegation to the Founder is not only far from the truth but is diametrically opposed to what he preached. It is, in fact, a villification of him and a vindication of his opponents. It is a pity that a group of his followers attributed to him by far-fetched conclusions and misinterpretations concepts, which he disowned throughout his life. Mark the strange coincidence that the Messiah of the Muslim *ummah* is receiving the same treatment from his own followers as his name-sake, the Messiah of the Israelites, received from his followers. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, had rightly warned his *ummah*, as is reported in the Hadith: "Verily, you shall follow in the footsteps of the nations preceding you." When it was asked: "Do you mean the Jews and the Christians, O Messenger of Allah?" The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, replied in the affirmative."

CHAPTER III

The Rule of interpretation

The second point adduced by Mian Mahmūd Ahmad — that a person who admits the truth of the Founder's claim from his heart and even expresses this orally but is diffident to follow him, is also an unbeliever — is an idea against which can be cited the glowing example of the late Khawāja Ghulām Farīd of Chācharān. He affirmed the truthfulness of the Founder from his heart and confirmed it in his utterances yet he did not take the formal oath of allegiance. The Founder considered him to have attained the spiritual stage of a righteous servant (*'abd-i sālih*), while according to the Qādiāni concept he was a *kāfir*. The Founder addressed him as "peerless in truth and piety" (*Sirāj-i Munir*, Supp. p.v), but the Qādiānis would consider him an 'hypocrite'.

Decisive and allegorical statements

The words of the Founder as quoted above are so clear and manifest that no reader can for a moment accept anything contrary to these nor can he interpret them otherwise. In fact, in all his writings there are decisive (*muhkamāt*) as well as allegorical (*mutashābihāt*) constructions. It is strange that our Qādiāni friends have kept the decisive aside and have based their arguments on the allegories. Unsophisticated people, not capable of fully grasping the intricacies of a particular issue, fall into the snare spread by the Qādiānis. Some of them in their bewilderment do not delve deeply. The question is: Is there any text in the world free from allegorical statements? When in the Holy Qur'ān we find: "Some of its statements are decisive — these are basic while others are allegorical" (3:6), how then can there be any writing free from passages capable of clear and also subtle interpretations? The same is the case with belief and

unbelief. In this context, let us consider the following hadith of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him:

1. "Whosoever says 'There is no god but Allah' shall enter Paradise."

2. "Beware! Do not become unbelievers (*kuffār*) after me by smiting off the necks of others" (*Bukhāri*, 25:132).

3. "If a person says to another, 'You are my enemy; one of them has committed heresy against Islam.'"

4. "A person who goes into a menstruating woman is also guilty of heresy."

5. "I beheld that most of the inmates of Hell were womenfolk because of their heresy" (*Bukhāri*, 2:29).

6. "Scolding a Muslim is transgression (*fisq*) and waging war against him is heresy" (*Bukhāri*, 2:36).

7. "None from among you is a true believer unless he holds me dearer than his father, his son and all other people" (*Bukhāri*, 2:2).

8. "A believer, while committing adultery or theft, is no more a believer" (*Bukhāri*, 46:29).

Now, should we say that because these hadith differ from one another or contradict one another, that these are not reliable or some have overridden others, or, should we study them in their proper perspective and try to reconcile the discrepancies after approaching the basic truth underlying these ahādith?

It is a pity that people get readily perturbed over petty issues of a religious nature while in worldly matters they try

their best to find a way out. Ibn-i Athir, has, however, given a very good solution for such problems. He writes thus in *Nihāya*, a dictionary of Hadith:

"*Kufr* (unbelief) is of two kinds viz., denial of faith itself which is the antithesis of faith, and the other is the denial of a twig or a branch of Islam and nobody gets out of the faith merely on this score."

This shows that unbelief in the latter case has not been used in its technical sense but only in its literal (*lughwi*) sense which means only the denial of a specific object and not denial of Islam in its entirety. Ibn-i Athir also related an incident which throws light on this point: "Azhari was once asked whether a person (a Muslim) becomes an unbeliever (*kāfir*) for having a different view and he replied that it was so but, when repeatedly asked about it, he admitted that "a Muslim may sometime utter some heresy."

Interpretation of the Founder's writings

We shall now examine the writings of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. In the light of above-quoted statement that "None who rejects my claim becomes an unbeliever," it is unfair to accuse the Founder of declaring Muslims as unbelievers. The following lines from the writings of the Founder tally with the observations of Ibn-i Athir referred to above:

"*Kufr* (unbelief) is of two kinds. In one case a person renounces Islam altogether and ceases to believe in the apostleship of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, while in the other case he does not for instance, believe in the Promised Messiah and inspite of conclusive evidence, considers him, whose acceptance and truthfulness has been enjoined by Allah, His Messenger and all other prophets in the Scriptures, a liar and an

apostate. Verily he is denying the command of Allah and the behest of the Holy Prophet and is an unbeliever (*kāfir*)" (*Haqiqat al-Wahy*, p. 170).

Now, according to the Founder a person who does not believe in the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, warrants exclusion from the pale of Islam. This conduct has been called the antithesis to faith (*zidd īmān*) by Ibn-i Athir and is tantamount to the denial of Islam.

With regard to the second kind of *kufr* only an example has been given as is clear from the words "for instance". It means that in this case, the denial is only of a branch (*fara'*) of faith. That is why the quotation above concludes with "so he has incurred unbelief by denying the command of Allah and the behest of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him." Evidently, such a person is a believer in Allah and His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and does not deny them. Nevertheless he disregards one of the commands of Allah and His Messenger by ignoring the Promised Messiah. It is thus not a denial of the basic faith but only denial of a branch (*fara'*). As Ibn-i Athir has said, denial (*kufr*) of a branch of faith by a person does not throw him outside the pale of Islam. In the same way, the Founder has indicated that a believer in Allah and His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is a Muslim but a person ignoring him (*i.e.*, the Founder) is a denier only of a command of Allah and a behest of His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and is not outside the pale of Islam. To sum up, *kufr* of the latter type is in the literal sense and not in the technical sense as could be seen in *ahādith* quoted earlier.

It is true that a little further on the Founder has said that both these types of *kufr* are of the same nature. Although he has described them of the same nature yet he has not held them as falling into one and the same category. For instance, if someone

says that a horse and a man are living creatures, it does not mean that both man and horse behave alike and are of one and the same class. It only indicates that both are animals. Similarly, denial of a branch (*fara'*) and denial of the basic (*'asl*) may not differ literally but differ technically. The word "kufr" used here is in its literal sense as has been made clear elsewhere that denial of the Promised Messiah can by no stretch of imagination be taken to mean *kufr* technically. And thus *kufr* here will mean denial of a branch only. Though we find in the Hadith the word *kufr* used for a denial of this kind, yet it does not in this case mean exclusion from the pale of Islam. Further elucidation of this point is to be found in other writings of the Founder.

Once a question was put to the Founder:

"We believe in Allah, His Book (the Holy Qur'ān) and His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, from the core of our hearts; we keep up prayers, observe fast, etc. etc. Why is it then necessary for us to believe in you?"

And the answer was:

"Just as a person who claims to believe in Allah, His Book, His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, but does not follow the commandments, e.g. keeping up prayers, observance of fasting, pilgrimage, poor-rate, piety and cleanliness in letter and spirit and belittles the obligatory commandments, for purification, shunning of evil and attainment of righteousness, does not deserve to be called a Muslim or to be considered to have a firm and true faith; similarly, a person who does not believe in the Promised Messiah or overlooks his importance lacks the reality of Islam and the very aim and object of the prophethood and the messengership of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon

him. Such a person does not deserve to be called a true and perfect Muslim, an obedient and faithful servant of Allah and His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him." (*Al-Hakam*, vol. 12, No.31, pp.3-6, May 6, 1908)

These lines are taken from *Hujjat al-Allāh* published by Hakim Muhammad Hussain soon after the death of the Founder on 26th May 1908. The book also contains the speech delivered by the Founder a few days before his death in Lahore.

No absolute negation

These words indicate that sometimes negation (*nafi'*) of an object does not construe negation in toto (*nafi'-i haqiqat*) but only negation of perfection (*nafi' kamāl*). This is a fact admitted by all. For example, let us keep in mind the hadith, "None from among you becomes a true believer unless he holds me dearer to him than his father, his son and all other people." It does not mean that all Muslims of the universe who lack this quality or standard are outside the pale of Islam. It only means that they are not perfect in their faith because perfection requires that religion should be held above worldly affairs and love for Allah and His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, should surpass attachment to worldly objects and ethnic relations. Similarly, we find in another hadith that "None of you is a believer unless he likes for his brother what he likes for his ownself." This too is an example of perfection. A number of such examples is also available in the writings of the Founder. In his book *Kashti-i Nooh*, he warns:

"He who forsakes not lying and deceit is not of my followers. He who is engrossed in avarice for this world and is unmindful of the Hereafter, is not of my followers. He who does not hold religion above the world is not of my followers. He who repents not totally for every vice

and every wicked habit such as drinking, gambling, sensual pastimes, dishonesty, trickery and iniquity is not of my followers. He who does not say the five daily prayers regularly is not of my followers. He who keeps not praying constantly to Allah and remembers Him not with a meek heart is not of my followers. He who breaks not his association with evil company and companions who leave an unchaste impression on him is not of my followers. He who does not respect his parents and does not obey them in what is fair and in conformity with the Holy Qur'ān or neglects to take good care of them to the best of his ability is not of my followers. He who denies hospitality and kindness to his spouse or her relations is not of my followers. He who refuses his neighbour the slightest good he can do is not of my followers. He who forgives not the transgressor is not of my followers" (*Ibid.*, p. 17).

Thus we see that the Founder disowns those who do not obey him in such cases. Now, according to the Qādiāni concept they no longer remain members of the Jamā'at, and are not even Muslims, and consequently are outside the pale of Islam. But is it true that the moment a person does some evil such as fornication, theft, gambling, drinking, debauchery, bribery etc. etc., he ceases to be a Muslim and goes out of the pale of Islam? Or does a person become a *kāfir* when he disregards the obligatory prayers or does not keep himself constantly busy in supplicating Allah or for disobeying his parents in certain matters? Or, above all, does a person really become an apostate (*murtad*) and an unbeliever (*kāfir*) for maltreating his spouse and her relations? In all such cases it is the negation of perfection and not the absolute negation of reality that is meant. These statements mean only that such a person is not a perfect Ahmadi. Strangely enough, after the sentences quoted above, the Founder writes: "He who believes not in me as Promised Messiah and Mahdi is not of my followers," which means

negation of reality, while in the preceding text absolute negation of reality cannot be construed by any means, although the construction of the last sentence may warrant it.

In the light of the above statements, their intents and purposes, let us now consider and understand the import of a sentence appearing in a letter from the Founder which has been misinterpreted and has brushed aside the expressions in his books and other writings. This solitary sentence of the letter has been made the basis for a specific concept of our Qādiāni friends. The reader may himself assess the sagacity of the Qādiāni exposition. The sentence is: "At any rate when Allah, the Most High, has manifested to me that whosoever within the reach of my call does not accept me, is not a Muslim and is accountable before Allah; how can I ignore the Divine command at the instance of an individual whose heart is immersed deep in fathomless darkness:.. These persons who deny my invitation ignore the clear and succinct principles of the Holy Qur'ān and thus despise the manifest signs of Allah, the Most High. To hold such persons as honest and sincere is the act of unjust persons whose hearts are in the grip of the devil." Do the words "he is not a Muslim" here refer to the same negation of perfection, examples of which are available in the Hadith and writings of the Founder or do these mean negation of reality (*nafi-i haqiqat*)? I am confident that if someone studies the entire passage without any reservation he will reach the conclusion that nothing but negation of perfection is meant here. Incidentally, the writer of the letter admits that such a person does not go outside the pale of Islam and it is his avowed belief found extant in his books. Besides other explanatory statements quoted elsewhere the following words of the Founder elucidate this point further:

"It is obligatory for every Muslim to obey me in religious matters and accept me as the Promised Messiah. And, every Muslim, within the reach of my call, who

does not regard me as arbiter or denies me as the Promised Messiah or does not regard my revelation as Divine is accountable in the heavens" (*Tuhfa al-Nadwāh*, pp. 3,4).

A passage has already been reproduced from the lecture in reply to a question as to why it was necessary to accept his claim. The Founder has argued that just like a person who discarded commandments other than belief in Allah and His Messenger such as prayers, fasting, etc. can not be considered to be a perfect Muslim, similarly, his acceptance was a command of Allah and His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Not only the writings of the Founder discussed earlier but the words of the last sentence of the present quotation wherein he regards the person who rejects him as not truthful, explain the meaning of the words, "he is not a Muslim." Then by saying that "he is accountable in the heavens" he intends to draw our attention to the same conclusion. This is how he attempted to explain in his speech of May 1908 that such a person was not perfectly obedient to Allah and His Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Undoubtedly, denial and rejection of Reformers raised by Allah for the eradication of evil is far from truthfulness.

At this stage, another point deserves serious consideration. If the Founder did believe that those who did not accept him were not Muslims, why did he write again and again contrary to it in his books? Was a letter the proper course for the expression of a belief, especially when it was addressed to a person who was a deserter. Numerous books which the Founder wrote in his lifetime for the instruction and education of his followers contain clear assertions that no one becomes an unbeliever through the denial of his claim. In accordance with a well-known *hadith*, unbelief invariably reverts to those who pronounce the *fatwa* of *kufr* against the Founder. How was it possible that anything contrary to it was written again in a letter

and that, too, to a deserter? Had Dr. Abdul Hakim Khān not published this letter, such a belief would have remained concealed and none of his followers would have known about it. Or, suppose Dr. Abdul Hakim had not adopted such an attitude nobody would have known about it and such an important piece of evidence concerning his belief would never have been disclosed. How odd it appears that a prolific writer, author of more than eighty voluminous books in Urdu, Arabic and Persian, having a wide circulation, in a letter addressed to a deserter, writes something different to what he has said in his books — a statement which destroys his credibility and the authenticity of his books. This point deserves serious consideration by fair-minded people.

Firstly, the words in the letter have to be interpreted in consonance with his express statements and professed beliefs. Secondly, the letter itself contains words indicating that the writer had not in his mind to declare a person to be outside the pale of Islam but only to suggest that such traits were not worthy of righteousness and truthfulness. Thirdly, in another letter addressed to Dr. Abdul Hakim Khān, he is cautioned that the holding of views such as stated in his letter not only expels one from the community, but drives one away from the path of Islam. This clearly shows that going out of the community is different from going outside the pale of Islam.

CHAPTER - IV

Views expressed in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*

The most important question that arises here is whether the words "no one can become an unbeliever for the denial of my claim" occurring in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* have been abrogated or annulled. Our Qādiāni friends can strengthen their concept only if they can prove abrogation or annulment which, for more than one reason, is difficult. According to Mian Mahmūd Ahmad, the author of the abrogation theory, the date of abrogation in the first instance was 1st October 1902, and later on it was pre-dated to November 1901. If November 1901 is the date of abrogation it would mean that the above words of *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* were written by the Promised Messiah before November 1901, but published after that date. In the intervening period, as is alleged by the exponents of the abrogation theory, a change occurred in the belief of the Founder, hence all his writings that shed light on the issue of his prophethood and unbelief resulting from the denial of his claim were set at naught or abrogated. A question now arises whether the Promised Messiah himself knew that during this period his beliefs had undergone a change and that his previous writings were as such no longer authentic. Had it been so, he should have added a "Publisher's Note" apprising the readers that since these books were written before a change had occurred in his beliefs these were being published in the original form, and that the readers should please note that whatever was written in them about prophethood or heresy stood abrogated. The Founder's omission to do so and the continued publication of his books written prior to 1901 in the original form, substantiate the fact that the alleged idea never crossed his mind; neither there were any transformation in his beliefs in the so-called intervening period nor were the publications during that period ever abrogated.

The matter does not end here. The Founder in his book *Haqiqat al-Wahy* written in 1906-07 and published in close proximity to his demise (May 1908) confirmed what he had said in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*.

Here he says:

"Sign No. 118. I was staying in Gurdāspūr in connection with a criminal case (brought against me by Karam Din of Jhelum). I received a revelation: 'You will be questioned about your rank and dignity. Say, Allah has bestowed this rank on me; and leave them in their sport.' I related this revelation to my companions who were not less than forty in number including Maulvi Muhammad Ali and Khwāja Kamāl-ud-Din. Later, we went into the court where the counsel for the complainant asked the same question, 'Is your rank and dignity the same as has been written in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*? I replied: 'Yes; it is so by the grace of Allah' " (*Haqiqat al-Wahy*, pp. 265-266).

Here are two conclusive proofs:

1. The Founder has explicitly stated in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* that "No one can become an unbeliever for the denial of my claim."

2. He has mentioned in one of his last books that whatever he has written in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* about his rank and dignity was correct. Thus, if there is any confusion it has to be interpreted according to these basic and decisive statements (*muhkam*).

Let us now take up for discussion the following paragraph from *Haqiqat al-Wahy*:

"You have, sir, thousands of times written that it is not justifiable to hold those who recite the *Kālimah* and turn their face towards the *Qiblah* as unbelievers (*kāfir*). It clearly shows that besides those Muslims who become unbelievers for declaring you an unbeliever no one becomes an unbeliever through the denial of your claim. But addressing Dr. Abdul Hakim *Khān* you have said that 'every person within the reach of my call who does not accept me is not a Muslim'. The statements mentioned above appear to be self-contradictory. For example, you have written in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*, etc. that 'no one becomes an unbeliever on account of your denial' and then you assert that 'one does become an unbeliever for your denial' (*inkār*)" (p. 163).

The Promised Messiah replied to this objection in the following words:

"It is really strange that you place one who calls me an unbeliever and the other who denies me in two different categories, while this is one category in the sight of Allah, because he who denies me does so because for him I am an impostor (*muftarī*) and Allah says that a fabricator against Him is the greatest of all unbelievers: "Who is then more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah?" (The Qur'ān, 6:145). It means that the greater unbeliever is he who forges a lie against Allah and he who belies the words of Allah. Therefore, when according to a person who considers me a liar (*mukazzib*), I have forged a lie against Allah, then I have become not a mere unbeliever but a great unbeliever. But if I am not an impostor then unbelief has to revert to him according to this verse of the Qur'ān. Now how can he be a believer (*mu'min*), when he does not believe in the Holy Qur'ān and His Messenger, (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and knowingly rejects the signs of

Allah, and inspite of witnessing hundreds of signs in my support regards me as an impostor? If he is a believer, then I am an impostor... How in the sight of Allah can such persons be believers who openly belie His words and inspite of witnessing thousands of signs appearing in the sky and on the earth vouchsafed for my appearance, refrain not from my denunciation (*takfir*). They themselves agree that in case I am not an impostor and, am a believer then they have put a seal on their unbelief by declaring me an unbeliever in accordance with the principle of the *Shari'ah* viz., he who calls a Muslim an unbeliever becomes an unbeliever himself."

There are two footnotes to this passage. One runs: "Iniquitous (*zālim*) here means a denier (*kāfir*). The reason is that as compared to an impostor, the repudiator of the Book of Allah has been called 'iniquitous' and undoubtedly one who belies the words of Allah is indeed a denier. As such, a person who does not believe in me, in fact, considers me an impostor and consequently an unbeliever and thus becomes himself an unbeliever for considering me an unbeliever."

The other footnote concludes with the words: "Thus even now I do not call the people of the *Qiblah* unbelievers. But how can I hold them believers when they have themselves generated *kufr*?"

Assertion in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* is decisive

An undeniable fact is, however, manifest from this reply. The Founder has not abrogated any of his earlier assertions. He has rather reiterated those and also what he wrote to Dr. Abdul Hakim Khān. The words in the letter addressed to Dr. Abdul Hakim Khān, *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* and his earlier works convey one and the same sense. The issue thus stands settled once and for all that nothing stands abrogated either from *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* or

any earlier publication. To sum up, the Founder has nowhere abrogated or annulled any sentence of *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*; rather, he has denied having done so. The result is that the assertion, "no one can become a *kāfir* for the denial of my claim" holds good for all times to come and has not been disowned in any form. We are, therefore, justified in reconciling the two statements and thus removing the anomaly.

There are two ways for reconciling the two apparently contradictory statements. The first is to hold the principle enunciated in *Haqiqat al-Wahy* (p.162) as basic and all prior writings subjected to it. The second is that prior writings are considered as basic and subsequent statements are applied to it for appropriate understanding. However, before making a choice of the two methods it is expedient to quote from *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* in extenso:

"The District Magistrate of Gurdaspur, in his order passed on 24 February 1899, made Maulvi Muhammad Hussain sign an undertaking that he would not, in future, call me an Antichrist (*dajjāl*), an unbeliever and a liar. Now what is the position of the *fatwa* of heresy which he had drawn up so laboriously by travelling all over the country and going as far as Benares after this undertaking (in the court)? Had he been sincere in the formulation of this *fatwa*, he would have pleaded before the Magistrate that since he (the Founder) was an unbeliever according to the *Fatwā*, he would call him an unbeliever, and because he was an Antichrist (*dajjāl*) he would call him by this name, and as he (the Founder) was certainly a liar he would call him so. On the other hand, I still adhere to my expressed views and shall continue to do so until I depart from this world. What a pity that for the fear of the Magistrate he has destroyed his own *fatwā*! What more disgrace could there be than undoing with his own hands what he had wrought so painstakingly! It is true

that I, too, have subscribed to that undertaking but it is not reproachable in my case in the sight of Allah and fair-minded persons. It is not a disgrace for me, for it has been my belief from the very beginning that no one can become an unbeliever through the denial of my claim" (p. 130).

The footnote added to this further elaborates the point:

"Remember that only prophets bringing law (*Shari'ah*) and new commandments from Allah enjoy the privilege of calling their deniers unbelievers, but in the case of inspired ones (*mulham*) and those spoken to by Allah (*muhaddath*) other than the bearers of *Shari'ah* (*sāhib-i shari'ah*), however elevated they may be in the sight of Allah and blessed with divine communication, their denial does not incur *kufr*."

The quotation leads us to the following un rebuttable conclusions:

1. No person can become a *kāfir* for denying the claim of the Promised Messiah.

2. The Founder does not consider the person, who does not regard him as a *dajjāl*, a liar or a *kāfir* to be a *kāfir*.

It appears from the words in *Haqiqat al-Wahy* that apparently a person who does not accept him, and holds him a *kāfir* becomes a *kāfir* himself by virtue of the hadith mentioned earlier. It means that whereas *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* has it that whoever denies his claim does not become a *kāfir* on this count, but a *kāfir* is only the person who holds him a *kāfir*, a *dajjāl* or a liar, while in *Haqiqat al-Wahy* we are told that one who does not believe in the Founder considers him a *kāfir*. At the same

time the Founder has also written that there is no discrepancy in these two statements, both meaning one and the same thing.

I have mentioned above that there are two possible courses to arrive at the correct conclusion. Either the explicit words in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* should be taken as decisive and used as a touchstone and the words in *Haqiqat al-Wahy* be interpreted in the light thereof, or, vice versa, the statement in *Haqiqat al-Wahy* should be considered basic and decisive and the statement in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* and all earlier books interpreted in its light. Let us see which of the two methods is appropriate.

Abundance of evidence

Firstly, it is to be noted that besides *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* there are a thousand other explicit and clear writings, whereas the expression in *Haqiqat al-Wahy* is solitary in this respect. The basic and decisive writings ought to be those which are both explicit and abundant. +

+This principle has been laid down by the Founder himself that preponderance is to be taken as a basic and decisive factor, and sporadic statements subjected to it.

Clarity and equity

The second ground in favour of the preference to *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* is the clarity and equity found therein. Here we notice a principle that "no one can become an unbeliever through the denial of my claim." Not only is it a solid principle but it is also supported by a strong argument, *i.e.*, "only prophets bringing law and new commandments enjoy the privilege of

calling their deniers unbelievers." Unless this argument is rebutted, and this has never been done so far, this decisive principle shall hold good.

We should also note that the principle laid down in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* has often been reiterated in *Haqiqat al-Wahy* and in subsequent writings; and even during the high level debates with his opponents the Founder laid stress on this point. For instance, on p.120 of *Haqiqat al-Wahy* referred to above, occur the words:

"Again look at this patent fabrication that I have declared two hundred million Muslims as unbelievers... If any leaflet, pamphlet or poster has appeared from our side containing this declaration prior to their *fatwā* of heresy, I challenge those people to produce the same. Otherwise they should realise that this is a sheer dishonesty. They have themselves called us unbelievers and blame us for it. ... So, when they have declared us unbelievers, knowing that one who declares a Muslim an unbeliever becomes himself an unbeliever, as unbelief reverts to the miscreant, were we not justified to consider them unbelievers according to the principles admitted by them?"

Again in *Tuhfa-i Nadwā*, published in 1902, the Founder in explicit words asserts his deniers to be Muslims (pp. 3.4).

In *Barāhin-i Ahmadiyya*, vol. v, published during 1905-06, (when *Haqiqat al-Wahy* was also being written), it has been said:

"Those who regard me an unbeliever and a heretic ignore the hadith of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, wherein it has been mentioned that in the later days a majority of Muslim religious leaders

would resemble the Jewish Scribes and Pharisees" (Supp. p. 14).

The following footnote has been added to it:

"The ulema of the later days whom the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has described as the Jews of his *ummah* are bitter enemies and hostile to the Promised Messiah. They call him unbeliever, heretic and Antichrist, and had it been within their reach, they would certainly have crucified him. It was the Jewish Scribes and Pharisees who meted out this treatment to Jesus and had also plotted to kill him. However, the religious leaders who do not behave as such cannot be called Jews. In fact, the Jews are those ulema who call me unbeliever, heretic and Antichrist. I call them Jews not of my own but they have been called so in the divine revelation... Since I am a servant of Allah, I am not an unbeliever nor an Antichrist nor a heretic but I am true in my claim. Anyone who is insolent and opposes me, the true promised Messiah, has been correctly named a Jew by the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. If Maulvi Muhammad Hussain abstains from calling me an unbeliever, a heretic and an Antichrist punishable with death, I too will stop calling him a Jew."

Here the Founder has even agreed to refrain from calling his antagonistic ulema Jews or unbelievers provided that they, too, desist from calling him an unbeliever or an Antichrist. Even in the case of Maulvi Muhammad Hussain the Founder has assured that if the latter did not call him an unbeliever or an Antichrist he, too, would not call him (the maulvi) a Jew.

Moreover, during his conversation with Mian Fazl-i Hussain, a couple of days before his death at Lahore, the

Founder repeated what he had been saying earlier: "I do not hold any reciter of the *Kalimah* as outside the pale of Islam until he himself becomes an unbeliever for calling me an unbeliever Now if they are called unbelievers, it is in consequence of their initiating heresy against me. A person requested me to enter into a prayer-duel (*mubāhala*). I refused on the plea that such a duel was not permissible between two Muslims. He argued that he considered me a confirmed unbeliever."

The Founder was then asked: "If non-Ahmadis call you an unbeliever, let them have their way. What is the harm if you ignore them?" He replied, "I never call someone an unbeliever who does not accuse me of heresy" (Newspaper *Badr*, May 24, 1908).

These statements and writings amply corroborate what has been said in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*. The statement in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* is thus basic and decisive because of its clarity and unambiguity. And if there is anything contrary and repugnant to it, it has to be interpreted in accordance with the principle laid down in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*.

Now let us study the statement in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*. We find that mention is made here not only of those who call the Founder an unbeliever but of such dissenters also who dubbed him a liar and an Antichrist. The undertaking before the magistrate to which the parties in the trial subscribed contained the words: "I will not henceforth address Mirzā Sāhib as an unbeliever, an Antichrist or a liar." *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* thus mentions two types of deniers: those who hold the Founder as an unbeliever and those who, although they do not consider him so, call him Antichrist, liar and impostor. Both these types have been considered to be of the same nature. It is in respect of people who do not call him unbeliever and impostor that the words "No one becomes an unbeliever on account of denial of

my claim" have been used. Now the people who have issued the anathema of heresy against the Founder and have also called him a liar and an impostor have been placed in one category and the mere deniers in the second. The latter do not become unbelievers merely for denying him. In *Haqiqat al-Wahy* it has been written that the people who deny and those who call him unbeliever are one and the same. If by deniers are meant those people referred to in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* who have declared him a liar and an impostor and included in the category of champions who declare others unbelievers, the whole matter becomes clear and the anomaly is removed.

If Maulvi Muhammad Hussain only undertook not to call the Founder an unbeliever and if there was no mention of the word 'liar', then, of course the assertions in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* and *Haqiqat al-Wahy* would have been at variance with each other. Here, he has undertaken not to call the Founder a liar and an impostor. Hence there is no contradiction in what has been mentioned in the two books.

In *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* the deniers have been placed in two categories: (i) Those who deny his claim and call him a liar, and (ii) those who deny his claim but do not call him a liar and an Antichrist. The book *Haqiqat al-Wahy* refers to the first category and not to the second. It cannot be gainsaid that those who call him an unbeliever and deny him because he is an impostor, fall in one category. At the same time it is a fact that mere denial of his claim does not make one an unbeliever. Thus the Founder's view about his deniers has been very clear and succinct. His writings in the earlier and later periods have been consistent and unequivocal necessitating no occasion for abrogation.

A forceful argument for the reliability of this interpretation on the quotation from *Haqiqat al-Wahy* is that the Founder has himself explained the category he was talking

about, because after the words "but in the sight of Allah they are of one and the same type", we find the words "for he who denies me does so because he takes me to be an impostor." Now calling a God-sent Reformer an impostor or a liar is one and the same offence. Calling him a liar connotes that Allah has not raised him nor appointed him, and calling a person an impostor (*muftarī*), too, conveys the same sense. It is thus abundantly clear that here the Promised Messiah is not talking of all deniers of his claims but only of those who called him a liar and an impostor. In *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*, too, those who call him unbeliever and liar have been placed in one category. It is clear that the statements contained in these two books are not contradictory.

It can further be argued in the light of the words that immediately follow the passage we have already quoted from *Haqiqat al-Wahy*: "Thus when according to my belief (*mukazzib*) I have been guilty of fabrication against Allah, then I have not only been an impostor but a confirmed unbeliever, and if this is not so, then heresy has undoubtedly fallen back on him."

It makes two points clear:

1. The person who has been called a denier in the above statement: *i.e.*, "It is strange that you consider the one who calls me an unbeliever and he who denies me to be of two different types," has been called here a repudiator (*mukazzib*) and a repudiator is one who calls a heavenly raised person a liar. This also shows that only that class of deniers is discussed here who have declared the Founder an impostor and have been referred to in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* under the category of those who call him an unbeliever.

2. The Promised Messiah here also has not held the rejection or denial of his claim as the basis for declaring them

unbelievers, but it is for their calling him an impostor and, consequently, an unbeliever, in which case unbelief has reverted to them in accordance with the well-known hadith already quoted. Thus the statement in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* ("it is the sole privilege of those prophets who are law-bearers and bring new commandments to call deniers of their claim unbelievers") holds good. Evidently, he still maintains that no one becomes an unbeliever through the denial of his claim as we find from *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*. Nevertheless he who calls him an unbeliever and he who considers him a liar stand on the same footing because both consider him an unbeliever, hence, according to the hadith heresy reverts to them both.

Another ground for according preference to the statement in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* is the footnote on p.163 of *Haqiqat al-Wahy*. We have now to see how a person who calls the Founder an impostor incurs heresy. To be more exact, is it for the rejection of the claim of the Founder, as is the case with the prophets, or is it in accordance with the hadith of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, "that whosoever slanders his brother-Muslim unjustly becomes an unbeliever himself?" The Founder writes: "Here, as against an impostor, he who denounces the words of Allah has been held as "iniquitous" (*zālim*). And undoubtedly he 'who denies the words of Allah is an unbeliever." The statement concludes: "Thus he becomes an unbeliever for considering me an unbeliever." It is noteworthy how explicitly the Founder has stated here that it is the initiation of heresy against him or calling him an impostor which has made such a person an unbeliever.

Another reason for relying on the statement in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* is that towards the close of his statement, the Founder asserts that he does not consider Muslims as unbelievers. His words are: "I still do not consider any Muslim an unbeliever,

but how can people who have themselves incurred heresy be held as believers (*mu'min*)" (p. 165 footnote).

A Muslim cannot be dubbed an unbeliever unless he becomes an unbeliever by his own act. A glance at the writings of the Founder will nowhere show that the Founder says that the denial of his claim also lands a person in the domain of heresy. On the contrary, there are numerous writings of his to the effect that he has never made the denial of his claim the basis for heresy; rather, it is holding him an impostor which results in heresy. Here are some examples;

1. "He does not accept my claim because he takes me to be an impostor."
2. "When an accuser charges me with forging a lie against Allah, I have become not merely an unbeliever but a confirmed unbeliever."
3. "He brands me an impostor and eventually considers me an unbeliever. Thus he himself becomes an unbeliever by declaring me an unbeliever."
4. "He declares me an impostor in utter disregard of hundreds of celestial signs vouchsafing my advent."
5. "If he is a believer I am an unbeliever because of my forging a lie (against Allah)."
6. "Because I am an impostor in his opinion."
7. "How, in the sight of Allah, can these persons be believers who openly refuse to accept the word of Allah."
8. "Even (in these circumstances) they persist in rejecting me."

9. "Evidently, they have become unbelievers for taking me as an unbeliever and deriding me. Thus they have themselves set a seal on their heresy."

10. "I do not even now consider the Muslims as unbelievers. But how can I consider those persons as believers who have, by their own conduct, incurred this heresy?"

I now take up another aspect of the question. The earlier as well as later writings and speeches of the Founder reaffirm his belief that he who does not declare him an unbeliever is not an unbeliever. In the circumstances, how is it justifiable to pick up a writing or two from the middle period and determine its meaning against all clear and plain writings and statements at various stages of his career? To interpret his writings in this clumsy manner is to bring a slur to his fair name for such an inconsistency. I say with all the power at my command that the principle enunciated by the Founder in *Tiryāq al-Qulūb* was never discarded by him anywhere. That principle, as has already been shown, was that a person who calls him an unbeliever, liar or Antichrist becomes an unbeliever in accordance with the verdict of the Hadith; but those who have not accepted his claim nor joined his fold, do not become unbelievers merely on this score. This is precisely what he has stated in *Haqiqat al-Wahy* and earlier, and has tried to explain in his later writings.

CHAPTER - V

Denunciation of a Muslim is against Islam

To call a Muslim an unbeliever is a very grave error. If there can be no escape from interpreting a doubtful statement in a way to avoid denunciation of Muslims, what is the safe way out? Let us for a moment treat those Muslims as criminals. Even the *Shari'ah* and the law of the land provide for giving the benefit of doubt to the accused. Even if there be some doubt, although for me the clear explanation leaves no doubt in one's mind, we ought to be hesitant in denouncing our Muslim brethren as *kāfirs*. It is a serious matter and shatters the very unity and solidarity of the Muslim *ummah*. It generates dissension among Muslims and strengthens the foes of Islam. Such an unfortunate schism in Islam does not behove a Movement that has been raised for the service to Islam; every member of the Movement has pledged to "hold religion above the world and its affairs" and that he would "abstain from harming his fellow-beings in general and with the Muslims in particular, either with the tongue, or with the hands or in any other way."

The most abominable aspect of the denunciation of Muslims as *kāfir* is that our Qādiāni friends have not spared even those Muslims who are unaware of the Promised Messiah notwithstanding the Founder's clear declaration in *Haqiqat al-Wahy*: "Even now I do not declare Muslims as unbelievers. But how can I call those persons believers who, on their own, have incurred heresy?" (Footnote to p.165).

If with the slightest fear of Allah in mind one thinks over these words one dares not declare unbelievers those Muslims who are unaware of the Founder especially when he (the Founder) argues that they have incurred heresy themselves, i.e.

initiation of heresy against him. One wonders how Muslims, unaware of the Founder and his call, have incurred unbelief especially when the Founder has nowhere made the denial of his claim a ground for unbelief. If for the sake of argument it be supposed that a denial of his claim did land one into unbelief, how could those people who are unaware of his claim or call be held as his deniers?

It will be useful to read what the Founder has himself written about it: "In his book *al-Masih al-Dajjāl*, Dr. Abdul Hakim has accused me of writing that 'anyone who does not accept me, even if he is unaware of me and lives in a country beyond my call, shall be considered an unbeliever and hell-bound.' It is entirely a fabrication of the said doctor. I have not written so in any book of mine nor have I announced this. He should produce such a statement from my book or announcement, containing these words. Let it be said that he has deliberately forged this allegation against me. No sensible person could conceive that someone absolutely unaware of me could be taken to task for despising me. Anyhow, I do maintain that because I am the Promised Messiah and Allah has manifested many celestial signs to support my claim, if my call has reached that person, he is accountable to Allah. It is to be noted that disregard of divine apostles is not a matter which will pass without accountability. It is not I who have been wronged, but it is "he", the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, for whose support I have been sent. So, he who disregards or ignores me is disobedient not to me but to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who prophesied my advent (in these days)" (*Haqiqat al-Wahy*, p. 178).

Go through these sentences again and again. How emphatically the Founder declares it to be a fabrication and a slander against him that he has declared as unbelievers Muslims who are unaware of his claim or call. He challenges his

opponent Dr. Abdul Hakim Khān to adduce proof in support of such an allegation. He also considers such an idea devoid of sanity and logic. But mark the audacity of Mirzā Mahmūd Ahmad, head of the Qādiāni group of the Ahmadiyya Movement, when he contradicts and undermines the concept of the Promised Messiah, his spiritual guide, who, according to him, is the arbiter and final authority in religious matters, and avers "all those Muslims who have not joined the Movement and have not taken formal pledge at his hand, wherever they may be living, are unbelievers and outside the pale of Islam, even if they may be unaware of the Promised Messiah" (*Aina-i Sadāqat*, p. 35).

It is a matter of concern that the Qādiānis are blindfoldly following a person, not raised by Allah, and who is waging an ignominious campaign of declaring unbelievers those who profess the *Kalimah*, unmindful of the repeated warnings of the Founder on this matter. Mian Mahmūd Ahmad and his followers are igniting a conflagration which will be ruinous to them and detrimental to the Muslim world.

The interpretation put upon the words "even then he shall be an unbeliever and hell-bound" is fallacious. These words have been taken to mean that "although, according to the Founder, such a person becomes an unbeliever, yet he does not fall in the abyss of hell." This interpretation is nothing short of a corruption of the text. The Founder is disowning both these statements, viz., unbelief of a person who is unaware of the Founder and his falling into hell, and followers of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad assert that the Founder agrees that such a person becomes an unbeliever but denies his being thrown into hell. Such an interpretation is puerile and every sane person will scoff at it, but it is a pity that even the intelligentsia of this group harp on this fantastic string and display scant regard for the Founder. It is a matter of deep regret that they have drifted away from facts and do not apply commonsense to understand

such plain and simple words. They are content with what their leader says and his findings are part and parcel of their faith or belief without their giving a little thought to the concept of the person to whom such a belief is ascribed. Had the Founder intended to express the view that Muslims unaware of his claim and call were only unbelievers but not destined for hell, why did he declare these to be forgeries against him? Why did he deny their being in his books? Why did he challenge Dr. Abdul Hakim Khān on this point? Here the Founder has himself refuted the charge levelled against him by Dr. Abdul Hakim Khān and has expounded his tenet in these words: "I do maintain that after a person has been justifiably informed of my being the Promised Messiah and is fully aware of my claim (but disregards it) he is accountable to Allah because it is no trifling matter to discard intentionally the chosen ones of Allah and escape punishment. ..."

If Mian Mahmūd Ahmad is correct that prophethood continues and not one, but thousands of prophets will be raised in this *ummah*, as he has written in *Anwār-i Khilāfat*, imagine the number of sects that would arise, in consequence of these prophethoods! Will not these multitudinous sects call one another unbelievers? Will unity remain in the *ummah*? Let us consider, for argument's sake, that all these prophets are to be raised from among Ahmadis. In how many sects will Ahmadis be divided? After all, Mian Mahmūd Ahmad knows fully well that whenever a prophet was raised in the pre-Islamic period there were two groups — one, of his followers and the other, of his opponents. Is Allah, the All-Wise, Who has decreed and planned that all nations of the world should gather round the leadership of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, going to alter His plan and cause disruption in the Muslim *ummah*, each group calling the other unbelievers and causing the Islamic fraternity to become extinct? Remember that if the Divine promise of Islam's dominance over other religions in the world is true — and true it is — then such a catastrophe

cannot be imagined even for a moment. How is it possible for myriads of prophets to travel with their followers hither and thither, to have thousands of mosques of their own claiming authority to declare their opponents unbelievers and apostates and to enjoy a monopoly for salvation and faithfulness?

It is impertinent to argue here as to why the Shari'ah declares unbelievers even those who do not believe in the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and who may be unaware of him. I would like to make it clear that it is belief in the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, that distinguishes between belief (*īmān*) and heresy (*kufr*) as laid down by the Shari'ah. Plainly speaking when Allah had decreed to remove all barriers of race, colour and creed standing between the people of the world and to bring them under the one and sole command of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, then, people who came under his canopy were Muslims and those who did not were categorised as unbelievers, irrespective of whether or not his message and call had reached them. This is what the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith lay down, and it is acknowledged by the Promised Messiah too. To instal another person in this unique and specific position foretold in the Scriptures, *i.e.* whosoever comes into his fold is a Muslim and he who goes astray is an unbeliever is divesting the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, of his lawful and prestigious stature.

We may adopt some fallacious and deceptive constructions to convince simple-minded people that things are not what they seem, but the fact remains that as long as he is not divested of the status of Last Prophet and another person is not installed in his place, the distinction between belief and unbelief as determined by the Islamic Shari'ah is irrevocable. The very day this definition undergoes a change, Islām will consequently suffer a change in its very foundation, and whenever there is a change in the foundation, the structure is apt to crumble.

Beware! the Islamic *Shari'ah* has prescribed belief in the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, as a touchstone for belief and unbelief. Whosoever declares belief in him is a Muslim and he who does not is a non-Muslim. Whosoever gathers under his banner is a Muslim and he who stays away is an unbeliever. The moment you dislodge the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, from his lawful and prestigious position and try to instal the Founder in his stead by proclaiming that from now on only a believer in Hazrat Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad and his mission shall be a Muslim and the people opposed to are unbelievers, you will be lowering the top-most flag of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and dismantling the ramparts of the citadel of Islam. This ignoble act will deal a deadly blow and will cause irreparable damage to the edifice of Islam. In the pre-Islamic period every time a new prophet was raised the domain of his predecessor ceased and the reign of the new comer commenced. Prophethood in those ages was limited to time and people. To apply that principle and condition to the Religion of Islam means the everlasting prophethood of our Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has abruptly ended with the advent of the Promised Messiah who now occupies the position and status of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. If this is so, God forbid, hundreds of Qur'ānic verses, eg., 7:158; 25:1 etc. will stand annulled and this is unimaginable. In short, when belief in the Founder is introduced as the criterion for belief and unbelief, it will result in the ouster of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, from the honoured position in which Allah had installed him and the status He conferred on him. This is why the Founder never imagined that people unaware of him and his claim would also be declared unbelievers.

It often happens that a statement can be construed in more ways than one, but when the statement is translated into action by the preacher it becomes explicit. Exchange of Islamic

salutation (*Assalāmu 'Alaikum*), offering of funeral prayers in congregation (*namaz-i janaza*), establishment of matrimonial relations are characteristics of the Islamic brotherhood. We never accost non-Muslims with the Islamic salutation, neither do we offer funeral prayers for them, nor do we establish matrimonial relations with them. Now let us see how the Founder, his companions and his followers behaved in such cases during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah. These are matters which need no detailed discussion because facts always speak louder than words. Every Ahmadi should see for himself whether or not he has been accosting his Muslim brethren with the Islamic salutation. I do not know a single Ahmadi who acted otherwise. A fanatic may argue that he has been doing so just in a customary manner. This is diplomacy; but what I actually mean is, whether the Founder himself or his companions or his followers greeted other Muslims with the Islamic salutation, when they happened to meet them during the lifetime of the Founder or was it done out of fashion and they were not considered Muslims in the true sense of the word. When one greets another with the Islamic salutation, does he realise what it means? "Assalāmu 'Alaikum" is a prayer from a Muslim for his brother-Muslim wishing him peace and goodness. The offering of such a prayer unknowingly or in a casual manner means that though our lips utter this prayer, yet our hearts entertain animosity and ill feelings. This trait in our religious terminology is called hypocrisy (*munāfiqat*). Unfortunately, the fervour to brand non-Ahmadi Muslims unbelievers has risen to such an extent that no Qādiāni would mind becoming a hypocrite. All other Muslims, according to their novel concept, are unbelievers. Is this Islam what one expects from a true Muslim? It is an enigma and right-thinking minds should ponder over it. And again how can the age-old social practice in our day to day life of greeting one another with the Islamic salutation held by Allah to be a visible characteristic of Islām ("and say not to any one who offers you salutation, you are not a believer" 4:94) carries something different from what

it means? Such an insane view is against the express teachings of Islām and the Holy Qur'ān and disseminates hypocrisy and not faith in its true sense.

It is interesting to note that Mian Mahmūd Ahmad has issued a strange *fatwā*. I was staying at Abbottabad in the summer of 1915 when a disciple of his, Munshi Allah Ditta, a clerk in the Military Works (Engineering) Service was asked about the saying of *Assalāmu 'Alaikum* to non-Ahmadis. He sent this query to Qadian seeking guidance as to whether or not non-Ahmadi Muslims are to be accosted with the Islamic salutation. He received the following reply on 20th September, 1915:

"I am directed by (Mian) Sahib to inform you that it is permissible to say *Assalāmu 'Alaikum* to a non-Ahmadi who does not hold Hazrat Sahib (the Founder) a *kāfir*..."

— Signed. Iftikhār Ahmad.

This letter, which is in my possession, makes strange disclosures. On the one hand, it is said that other Muslims are in our opinion unbelievers and vice versa; rather, it is obligatory for them to hold us as unbelievers, and we likewise are justified to consider them as unbelievers and in this way a differentiation has been made between the one who calls others unbelievers and the other who does not. Now it is permissible to accost one who does not call others unbelievers with the Islamic salutation while it is not so for one who calls others unbelievers. In other words, he who calls others unbelievers (*mukaffir*) is an unbeliever himself. The pretext of greeting with the Islamic salutation as a fashion does not hold good here because, if it is merely a formality, the question of "mukaffir" and "non-mukaffir" does not arise at all. If it be argued that he who declares others unbelievers incurs a high degree of unbelief, then the question of high and low degree does not arise because for Mian Mahmūd Ahmad both are outside the

pale of Islam. Why thus is the salutation "Assalamu 'Alaikum" permissible for one and not for the other?

Mian Mahmud Ahmad considers all Muslims unbelievers and declares it openly and does not think it foul or ignoble. Rather a "non-mukaffir" is, for him, iniquitous and lacks the courage to declare others unbelievers. Applying this criterion, if a "non-mukaffir" is more condemnable as compared to a "mukaffir", what does it then mean that greeting a "non-mukaffir" with "Assalamu 'Alaikum" is permissible but it is not so for a "mukaffir"?

CHAPTER - VI

Founder's views on funeral prayers

Another practical feature of Muslim brotherhood is participation in *janāza* prayers or funeral service, which a Muslim owes to another. This technically is called *fard-i kifāya* which means that it will suffice if some of the Muslims attend it. Here, too, the difference between the views of the Founder and Mian Mahmūd Ahmad Sahib are manifest and apparent and even a layman can understand them. Here is a verdict issued by the Founder on April 18, 1902 (the period falling beyond the presumed date when the Founder is alleged to have changed his belief about prophethood):

"When asked how far was it lawful for us to offer funeral prayers for a non-Ahmadi, the Promised Messiah observed: If the deceased was an opponent of the Movement, talked ill of us and used slanderous words about us, do not offer funeral prayers for him; but if he was neutral and was in a state of indecision, then you may offer funeral prayers for him provided the *Īmām* be from amongst you, not otherwise. Where a deceased is neither a belier (*mukazzib*) nor considers others unbelievers (*mukaffir*) there is no harm if the funeral prayers are offered for him because it is Allah alone Who is the Knower of the Unseen."

During the last days of his life, the Founder reiterated these words. Mian Ghulām Qādir of Jeovanjal (Gujrāt District) put certain questions to the Founder and desired that he should answer these personally. On receipt of this letter, Mufti Muhammad Sādiq, a close associate, was instructed to reply to this letter. The concluding sentence of the letter shows that all

replies were in a way, dictated by the Founder himself and signed by Muhammad Sadiq. It reads *inter alia*:

"Hazrat Sahib (the Founder) wishes you well. ... You may join the funeral prayers being offered for a deceased person who was his opponent not guilty of slanderous remarks but the person leading the prayers (*īmām*) should be an Ahmadi, otherwise you may offer these prayers separately (under an Ahmadi *īmān*:). It is lawful to offer funeral prayers for a Muslim who has not been regular in offering the obligatory prayers; but this person should not be from those who reviled us or called us an unbeliever. Holding long sittings at the house of a deceased person after his burial was not customary with the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and his companions. It is an innovation (*bid'at*)..."

It was in the wake of this statement that an agreement was reached between the Ahmadis and other Muslims of the village of Bhadyār (Distt. Amritsar) in 1908, incorporating the following clause suggested by the Ahmadis: "Funeral prayers shall be offered for a peace-loving non-Ahmadi relation who has lived a harmless and unprovocative life." When this agreement was submitted to the Founder seeking his blessings, he added the following words in his own hand: "*Assalāmu 'Alaikum wa rahmatullāh wa barakātuhū*. Whatever has been agreed upon is praiseworthy. May God bless it" (Newspaper *Badr*, May 13, 1909.).

These are three instances relating to the post-1901 period. Moreover, there was another letter on this very subject. It was handed over to Mian Mahmūd Ahmad Sāhib for consideration but he felt it expedient to suppress its publicity. This letter also conveyed permission for offering funeral prayers for other Muslims. This testifies to the fact that funeral prayers even for non-Ahmadis were being offered everywhere.

There was not a single sizeable Jama'at which acted differently during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah and Maulana Nūr al-Din. The Promised Messiah led such funeral prayers in Qadian and Mir Ābid Ali of Baddhomalhi and Mirzā Khudā Bakhsh, author of '*Asl-i Musaffā*', were eye witnesses. It was made clear to the Founder on all those occasions that the deceased were not Ahmadis, although this was not necessary in the presence of the above-mentioned evidence. Even during the lifetime of Maulana Nūr al-Din, funeral prayers of the patients under his treatment were offered under the *īmāmat* of Maulvi Ghulām Muhammad of Amritsar at the instance of Maulana Nūr al-Din. Four or five months before his death the Maulana offered the funeral prayers of his niece who was not an Ahmadi. Mian Mahmūd Ahmad had also been joining those funeral prayers. One can get solemn affirmations on this subject from the Jama'āts of Lahore, Siālkot, Simla etc. etc. showing the practice in vogue right up to the Split in 1914.

Funeral prayers of non-Ahmadi children

Inspite of the undisputed evidence, including written directions of the Founder, and the practice of the community, Mian Mahmūd Ahmad has now declared that it is unlawful to offer funeral prayers for other Muslims. He has gone to the extent of refusing to offer funeral prayers for non-Ahmadi children also. This is what he has written on this point in his book *Anwār-i Khilāfat*:

"Now one more question remains to be answered in this context. Non-Ahmadis are deniers of the Promised Messiah and as such funeral prayers are not to be offered for them, but if a child of a non-Ahmadi dies, why is funeral prayer not to be offered for him? After all, he was not a denier of the Promised Messiah. I would like to ask the questioner: Are funeral prayers to be offered for children of Hindus and Christians? How many people

offer or join the funeral prayers for these children? The fact is that according to the *Shari'ah* the religion of children is judged by the religion of their parents. Thus the child of a non-Ahmadi is also a non-Ahmadi and funeral prayers for him is forbidden. All the same, funeral prayer for a child is not essential because a child is sinless. So funeral prayers for a child are in fact for his survivors who are non-Ahmadis; hence funeral prayers for these children should also not be offered.

"And now we take up the case of a person who considers the Founder to be truthful but has not taken the oath of allegiance or is still indecisive about the Movement and death overtakes him in such a state. It is quite possible that Allah may exempt him from accountability but because the *Shari'ah* has laid down that we are to judge according to what is apparent, we have to treat the deceased accordingly, so funeral prayers should not be offered for him" (p. 93).

Persons unaware of the Promised Messiah

The Newspaper *Al-Fazl*, the official organ of the Qādiāni group, published the following *fatwā* in its issue dated May 6, 1915 in respect of deceased persons who were unaware of the Founder or beyond the reach of his call:

"If it be argued that a person died at a place beyond the reach of the call of the Founder and an Ahmadi happens to go there after his death, what should he do at the time of the funeral prayers of the deceased? Our considered view, on such occasions, is that we should keep in mind what is obvious and patent. Since he died bereft of the blessings of taking the oath of allegiance of a prophet and messenger of Allah, funeral prayers should not be offered for him. If the deceased deserved forgiveness in the sight

of Allah, then Allah may forgive him without our offering funeral prayers for him. But if he does not deserve Allah's forgiveness, then even our offering funeral prayers for him would not earn for him Allah's forgiveness."

Violation of Founder's practice

These quotations show that, according to the pundits of the Qadian group, funeral prayer is not lawful for a person who has not formally taken the oath of allegiance of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement irrespective of whether he is a child, or is unaware of the Promised Messiah or is living at a place beyond the reach of his call. The entire writings of the Founder on this subject rebut these views. A letter written in his own hand, a reply to an inquiry dictated to Mufti Muhammad Sādiq, a general *fatwā* on the subject and, last but not the least, observations made on an agreement between Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis, indicate that for the Founder it was lawful to offer funeral prayers for non-Ahmadi Muslims who did not hold him to be an unbeliever. Compare these four instances with the utterances and writings of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad. He has gone so far as to put the children of non-Ahmadi Muslims, in the category of Hindus and Christians. Mian Mahmūd Ahmad ignores these four clear instances from the preachings and practice of the Founder, which shows that he has gone astray from the well-known beliefs and concepts of the Founder. He does not throw light on the anomalous situation created by his instructions conflicting with those of the Founder. It was in 1915 that he publicly promised in a speech to give the matter serious consideration but nothing has so far been decided, and his followers continue to put fantastic interpretations upon his instructions. For instance, the Founder said that where a person is not vociferous and is in a diffident state, funeral prayers may be offered for him; but it is now argued that this category is extinct and all Muslims are deniers and beliers (*mukaffarin* and

mukazzibin). In other words, it appears that the Founder issued a vague *fatwā*. A follower seeks the views of the Founder about funeral prayers for Muslims. The reply says such prayers are not to be offered for persons who consider him an unbeliever, apostate and impostor, but one may join funeral prayers for persons who did not behave as such and were diffident-minded. Here the Founder himself has placed non-Ahmadis into two distinct categories. If there were no such classification, it meant that the Founder was either ignorant of the environment or wanted to mislead others. Or, one may conclude that what he actually meant was that funeral prayers are not to be offered for non-Ahmadis at all; but instead he allowed offering funeral prayers for those who were neutral and diffident, but not for deniers and beliers. Our Qādiāni scholars take pride in such vague and confusing interpretations with scant regard for the Founder. May Allah have mercy on those who are busy in playing with the explicit words and statements of the Founder! Whenever I have tried to draw the attention of a Qādiāni friend to the variance between the clear statement of the Founder and the novel interpretation of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad, I have heard that "all Muslims are of one and the same class." If there were no such classification as defined by the Founder, why did he describe it? The question asked was simple, seeking instruction about the offering of funeral prayers for non-Ahmadis. The distinction has been made by the Founder himself and not the questioner. *Prima facie* there are two possibilities: either 1. The Founder at that time knew that there were no such people who were not vociferous, considerate and diffident and all Muslims unanimously considered him an unbeliever and impostor. If it were really so the Founder's unambiguous statement was deceptive. Or 2. This was a time when the Founder was not clear in his mind whether denial of his claim turned one into a heretic.

Mian Mahmūd Ahmad agrees that it was about or after 1901 that the exact nature of the Founder's prophethood was

made manifest to him, and that a denier of his claim incurred unbelief. Another problem was that permission for funeral prayers for people who were neutral, considerate and yet indecisive about the Founder was given time and again upto the last period of his life. Moreover, the Founder was more particular about the persons who vilified and slandered him than those who declared him unbeliever and impostor, and we find that he allowed the offering of prayers for opponents who neither reviled nor slandered him. On some occasions he permitted funeral prayers for those non-Ahmadi relatives who were neither hostile nor insolent towards him. The condition laid down here is that the person should not openly deride him by using vituperative language. I wonder how the followers of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad would justify that all Muslims indulged in vituperative talk against the Founder were guilty of insolence towards him, while some of them sincerely considered him truthful, and did not deny him verbally. I would like to ask Mian Mahmūd Ahmad whether he has any regard for what the Founder has been saying. Did the immaculate child for whom funeral prayer has been forbidden treat the Founder insolently? Did the unsophisticated Muslim living far beyond his call and unaware of his claim habitually revile him? If the replies are in the negative, then is it not a clear deviation from the command of the Founder while believing him to be the arbiter and adjudicator at the same time?

Another strange interpretation put on these words is that the exception by the Founder was by way of grace (*ihsān*), although it was not obligatory to offer funeral prayers for non-Ahmadis. Did the Founder ever extend this grace in the case of Hindus and Christians too? The point at issue is whether or not funeral prayer for a non-Ahmadi is lawful. According to the Founder it is lawful. As shown above, the offering of funeral prayer is a *fard-i kifāya*. Usually, we offer funeral prayers for our kith and kin. Ordinarily, funeral prayer is to be offered for every Muslim who dies: It, however, suffices if some of the

Muslims join these prayers. The offering of funeral prayers for the second time or prayers in absentia (*janāza ghāibāna*) is thus a grace as the obligatory prayer has already been offered. The Founder intends to say that in cases where non-Ahmadi Muslims are at the helm of affairs and have offered funeral prayers for the departed soul, we can also pray for the deceased separately by way of grace in the form of prayers in absentia. Any act performed after an obligation (*farz*) has been carried out, being voluntary, is a grace. It does not at all mean that it changes the nature of the propriety. What Mian Mahmūd Ahmad argues is that although the offering of funeral prayers for non-Ahmadis is not incumbent upon Ahmadis still we may offer funeral prayers in absentia for them. Such a frivolous and fallacious interpretation is, to me, only a contrivance to divert the attention of his simple-minded followers from the main issue. It is a pity that by confusing the issues his followers are prevented from forming a correct view.

There was a time when we used to hold funeral prayers for other Muslims, too, in almost every town and in every local Jama'at, although their relations with us were not very cordial. But today a person boasts that he did not offer funeral prayer for his spouse, and another crazy one takes pride in not offering funeral prayer for his benign father. There was a case where other Muslims abstained from offering funeral prayers for a lady due to strained relations with the bereaved family and the son, too, did not offer funeral prayer for his non-Ahmadi mother and she was buried without funeral prayer being offered for her. To add insult to injury, such episodes are publicised as examples of following in the footsteps of the blessed Companions of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. May Allah save us from such calamities! There is no comparison here at all! This is outright perfidy, whereas with them it was the height of purity and magnanimity. No wonder if a son, some day, is decorated with a feather for cremating his mother instead of burying her! After all, if the offering of

funeral prayer is not lawful why is it essential to bury the dead in the Islamic way?

Why don't these people realise for Allah's sake that during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah there were few Ahmadis in each family. If a father was an Ahmadi, his son was not; if a husband was an Ahmadi, his wife was not; if a son was an Ahmadi his mother was not; if a brother was an Ahmadi his sister was not. Had this been the practice, there would have been countless cases of unceremonious burials of their dear and near ones.

Mian Mahmūd Ahmad's dilemma

Mian Mahmūd Ahmad does not take a firm stand on this issue. He says: "A question has arisen as to the offering of funeral prayers for a non-Ahmadi. The predicament is that the Promised Messiah has in certain cases allowed offering of funeral prayer for them. There are some undeniable precedents which testify to these occasions. A letter has also been found in corroboration thereof and is receiving active consideration but the practice of the Promised Messiah is found to be contrary to all this" (*Anwār-i Khilāfat*, p. 91).

Is this version not in accord with the one for which there is a foreboding in the Hadith? Mian Mahmūd Ahmad issued a *fatwā* but he did not know what the Founder had said about it. When it was brought to his notice that his directive was in conflict with the instructions already issued by the Founder, he validated his own verdict and relegated the instructions of the Founder and adopted a dilatory attitude saying that the point was yet to be considered. What is more authentic: the utterances of the Promised Messiah, or, the conjectures of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad? Are the instructions of the Founder, who is considered as the arbiter and adjudicator, to be treated in such a manner? A *fatwā* of the Founder is brought to his notice; he

finds it contrary to his whim; so he evades the proper course by saying that the matter would be considered later. It happened in 1915 and after a lapse of a quarter of a century nothing came out of this "consideration". Have these writings and instructions of the Founder been found to be faked and forged or has any of his writings come to light saying these were obsolete and abrogated?

Practice of the Founder

It is now argued that "the practice of the Promised Messiah was contrary to it" (*Anwār-i Khilāfat*, p. 91). In the face of clear writings and the *fatwa* of the Promised Messiah we are told that these pronouncements do not prove the legality of funeral prayers and it is asserted that the Founder had acted against his own *fatwā*. This means that he was not true to his words in this matter. The Qur'ān says: "It is most hateful in the sight of Allah that you say that which you do not" (61:3). The proper course was to interpret the pronouncements of the Founder to show that they were against the legality of offering funeral prayers and then it was proper to declare that this has been found to be in unison with his practice. But in the presence of the clear writings and instructions of the Founder that it was lawful to offer funeral prayers for non-Ahmadis, how can it be argued that the practice of the Founder was against this and still cling to one's erroneous interpretation? This amounts to a vilification of the Founder.

Funeral prayer for Fazl-i Ahmad

Let us now look into the incident in which the Founder is said to have deviated from what he had said about the funeral prayers. This solitary event was the funeral of Mirzā Fazl-i Ahmad, his own son, and the Founder did not offer funeral prayers for him. Mian Mahmūd Ahmad, a minor at that time, is the only witness. He, however, does not depose that the Founder had said that since the deceased was a non-Ahmadi he

was not prepared to offer the funeral prayers. Mian Mahmūd Ahmad tells us that the Founder praised the obedience of the deceased yet did not offer funeral prayers for him. The conclusion that has been drawn from this instance is that according to the Founder funeral prayers for people who had not formally taken the oath of allegiance, though they admitted the truth of his claim, was unlawful.

Let us now look into the matter. For a long time the Founder had been displeased with Mirzā Fazl-i Ahmad and had even disinherited him. We need not here go into the reasons whatever these were. Mirzā Fazl-i Ahmad was close to the relatives who were sworn enemies of the Founder. They had gone so far in their animosity as to block his access to the mosque by constructing a wall just in front of the entrance to it. This happened a little before the death of Mirzā Fazl-i Ahmad. The latter did not breathe his last in Qādiān. He died in Montgomery and his dead body was brought to Qādiān in the custody of the relatives inimical to the Founder. Don't these facts justify adequately the attitude of the Founder in not offering funeral prayers for his own son? Why should this solitary incident be relied upon to establish that the Founder had been acting contrary to what he preached?

Whatever Mian Mahmūd Ahmad has written in *Anwār-i Khilāfat* about the Founder's reluctance to offer funeral prayers for Mirzā Fazl-i Ahmad may be true and the Founder may also have used words of praise for the deceased, but is there any room for doubting that Mirzā Fazl-i Ahmad had remained thick with the enemies of the Founder? In these circumstances, Mian Mahmūd Ahmad was morally bound to narrate those facts also which related to the poster (*Ishtihār*) which was the main cause for not offering the funeral prayers. This poster which refers to Mirzā Fazl-i Ahmad also is dated May 2, 1891 and concludes thus:

"We shall not henceforth be sharing with them in the hour of grief and relief, distress and pleasure, weddings and mournings, whatsoever, because they have themselves severed all relations with us and have adopted such an attitude themselves. It is now absolutely forbidden, disgraceful, against our self-respect and loathsome for us to have any concern with them because a true believer in Allah is never shameless" (*Majmū'ah Ishṭihārāt* compiled by Mir Qāsim Ali, vol. ii, p.11)

Had Mian Mahmūd Ahmad given a serious thought to the matter he would have realised that for the omission in offering funeral prayers for Mirzā Fazl-i Ahmad, the Founder did not countermand his own utterances. He was, in fact, true to his words. After he had publicly announced that in future, he would have no concern with them in the hours of grief, relief, distress and pleasure, weddings and mournings, he had displayed resoluteness and acted accordingly. Does Mian Mahmūd Ahmad wish that his father should have acted contrary to his public announcement and left himself open to abuse and accusation? Had he acted as such he would have been censured in the face of his own declaration.

Evidence on solemn affirmation

In fact it is a contrivance to show that the Founder acted against his preachings. We have found him always and everywhere true to his words without fear or favour. His followers acted upon his precept and funeral prayers have been offered for non-Ahmadi friends and relatives in Qādiān and elsewhere. Mian Mahmūd Ahmad subjects the admissibility of all this evidence to the condition that it should be proved that the Founder offered funeral prayers on such occasions after he had learnt that the deceased was a non-Ahmadi. How funny it looks that notwithstanding the presence of a clear *fatwā* permitting funeral prayers for people who did not consider the Founder to

be an unbeliever and impostor, it was still considered necessary to point out to the Founder on every occasion that the deceased was a non-Ahmadi! Only an insane person would have requested the Founder to join funeral prayer for a person who took him to be an unbeliever and an impostor. Mian Mahmud Ahmad is purposely confusing the issue. Had there been no such *fatwa* issued by the Founder to the effect that it was lawful to offer funeral prayers for those who were not offensive or in a state of indecisiveness, there would have been some sense in his imposing such a condition. By the Grace of Allah, I can also fulfil this demand of Mian Sahib. In fine, I refer here briefly to the following statement of Mir Abid Ali of Baddomalhi, a devoted follower of Mian Mahmud Ahmad:

"My mother got extremely displeased when, by the grace of Allah, I took the oath of allegiance of the Founder. No change was visible in her attitude throughout her life. I was with her for about two months during the period of her last ailment. I looked after her and wrote a letter almost every day informing the Founder about her condition and requesting him to pray for her and to intercede that Allah may bless her to take the oath of allegiance of the Promised Messiah. She passed away without becoming an Ahmadi. This humble servant reported this incident to the Promised Messiah and also requested him to be good enough to pray for the forgiveness of my beloved mother. I further requested him to lead her funeral prayer himself. I received a reply condoling the sad demise. It was written by Maulvi Abdul Karim under the instructions of the Promised Messiah, my life be sacrificed for him! The Promised Messiah had expressed heartfelt grief. The letter concluded with the words: 'The Promised Messiah says he will offer funeral prayers for your deceased mother on Friday next'."

This is one statement. Another is that of Khudā Bakhsh Hakim, a person of equal status and high calibre in the community. It runs as follows:

"I swear by Allah, the Eternal, in Whose hand is my life, that the Promised Messiah, may peace be upon him, offered funeral prayers for my mother who had not joined the Jama'at. She, however, considered him a saint but did not subscribe to his claim of being the Promised Messiah. I was in Qādiān when the news of her illness reached me. I waited for the Promised Messiah to inform him of the matter and to seek his permission to go and attend on her. The Founder very kindly granted my request and bade me to take good care of her. I left Qādiān with members of my family for my home. Within a month of my arrival my ailing mother breathed her last. I informed the Promised Messiah of this incident in writing and requested him to offer funeral prayers for her departed soul. His kind letter of condolence reached me at Jhang. He assured me that the funeral prayer for my mother would be offered on Friday (next). This letter is with me on record and when found will be produced before you. My mother died towards the close of 1901 or the beginning of 1902. The Founder, on my request, also offered funeral prayer for my maternal uncle the late Muhammad Sulemān in Masjid Mubārak, Qādiān. Before offering the funeral prayer, I had briefed him that the deceased considered him a saint of superior degree but could not appreciate the significance of his being the Promised Messiah, although I tried my best to make him understand. As such, he did not take the oath of allegiance. After hearing me, the Promised Messiah requested Maulvi Abdul Karim to step back and stood there himself and led the funeral prayer for the deceased. This happened probably in the beginning of the year 1904 because my uncle died a year and a half after the death of

my mother. I have written these facts faithfully. Moreover, I swear by Allah, and affirm that not once, but on several occasions the Promised Messiah granted permission for the offering of funeral prayer for people who were neither enemies nor aggressors but were rather neutral and spoke well of him, though they had not taken the oath of allegiance. Hence the Jama'at acted according to his *fatwā* which was operative. He, however, would suggest that these prayers should be led by someone from among us or we may offer funeral prayer separately. (It was a precaution to avoid any untoward incident - Tr.) Accordingly, I have to this day been acting on these instructions of the Promised Messiah and Allah is the best witness to it."

The respect and eminence Mirzā Khudā Bakhsh, author of the monumental work '*Asl-i Musaffa*, commands in Ahmadi circles need no introduction. Likewise, the entire Jama'at testifies to the piety and truthfulness of Mir Abid Ali. The Promised Messiah and Maulana Nūr-ud-Din had great regard for him. The evidence on solemn affirmation of these celebrities cannot be doubted in any way. They assure us that the Promised Messiah offered funeral prayer for their near and dear relatives knowing fully well that they were non-Ahmadi and had not joined the Movement. In one case he knew that the deceased had been his opponent but had never talked ill of him. The authenticity of these statements is also corroborated by the country-wide practice noticeable everywhere. In the face of this overwhelming and un rebuttable evidence there is hardly any necessity to probe further in this matter.

The issue: For and against

Let us now assess the arguments Mian Mahmūd Ahmad has put forward in his support in this issue and those against.

1. According to his own version, he falls back upon a casual writing in a certain *diary* in the hand-writing of the late Maulvi Abdul Karim in 1898 which never saw the light of day until 1915. The writing relates to the period of the so-called abrogation. This *diary* note does not discuss the legality or otherwise of the funeral prayers for non-Ahmadis but mentions the offering of funeral prayer for a particular person and tells us that the Founder did not approve of doing an act simply to please others.

2. Mian Mahmūd Ahmad relies on the non-offering of funeral prayer by the Founder of his own son Mirzā Fazl-i Ahmad. We have already discussed this in detail. The Founder had publicly announced the severance of all kinds of connection with him during his lifetime. Mirzā Fazl-i Ahmad died at Montgomery where his funeral prayer was offered and the dead body was brought to Qādiān under the surveillance of his maternal relatives who were sworn enemies of the Founder.

As against this, there are:

1. A letter, in the Founder's own hand, upon which the Jamā'at at Siālkot had been acting prior to and after 1901.

2. The *fatwā* issued by the Founder on April 18, 1902, and published in *Majmūa'ah Ishṭihārāt* permitting funeral prayer for a person who had not been aggressive and had remained diffident. This too has been followed by the Ahmadis at every place until the Split.

3. A letter written by Mufti Muhammad Sādiq under the instructions of the Founder.

4. The Founder's observations in his own hand on the proposed agreement between the Jama'at of Bhadyār and non-Ahmadis of the village.

This is the documented evidence. Oral testimony consists of the practice that remained in vogue right upto 1914 and the tradition of offering funeral prayer for non-Ahmadis in Qādiān and elsewhere; and last, but not the least, on several occasions the Founder himself led funeral prayer for non-Ahmadis. Two reliable witnesses have already been quoted above in support thereof.

CHAPTER VII

Matrimonial relations

Now we come to matrimonial affairs and inter-marriages between Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis. There is not a single direction in the writings or the spoken words of the Founder indicating that he ever frowned upon the giving of Ahmadi girls in marriage to non-Ahmadi Muslims. If Mian Mahmūd Ahmad has any knowledge in this matter, let him produce it. There is only an announcement or suggestion on this point advising his followers to promote, as far as possible, inter-marriages in the Jama'at with a view to strengthening the fraternity and preventing of the unhealthy influence of those who consider us unbelievers. No distinction was made between boys and girls in this announcement:

"Since by the grace of the Most High Allah and by His great favour, our followers are increasing day by day and count several hundred thousands, it is expedient to arrange marriages between Ahmadi boys and girls to promote affinity and affection among Ahmadi families and also for their protection against the evil and unhealthy influence of their non-Ahmadi kith and kin ... It is inadvisable and improper that our followers develop matrimonial relations with those who consider us unbelievers and call us Antichrist or with persons who may be neutral in nature but are under the unjust influence and discipleship of our opponents" (*Fatāwā Ahmādiyya*, vol. ii, p. 7).

Obviously the legality or otherwise of marriage relations has not been discussed here. The Founder deemed it expedient and suggested that preference be given to Ahmadi spouses for the sake of strengthening fraternity and affinity in our Jama'at.

Here is an example: The Founder did not object to the marriage between a daughter of Dr. Khalifā Rashid-ud-Din, one of his prominent followers, and a non-Ahmadi relation of the bride's mother. The bride happened to be the sister-in-law of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad and her would-be in-laws were somewhat averse to the Movement. This marriage link was permitted by the Founder towards the last days of his life. The marriage was performed by Maulana Nūr-ud-Din (after the death of the Founder), in Masjid Mubārak, Qādiān. Mian Mahmūd Ahmad also participated in the marriage ceremonies and did not raise his finger in protest. His passive non-intervention shows that his present views about marriages between Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis is clearly an after-thought and had not taken root in his mind in those days. His explanation regarding the marriage of his sister-in-law is reproduced below. This is from the speech he delivered on the eve of the Annual Gathering of 1916. This speech was later published separately under the title "Zikr-i Ilāhi":

"So far as the giving of Ahmadi girls in marriage to non-Ahmadis is concerned, the particular instance often reported relates to the lifetime of the Promised Messiah but he was never consulted about this tie. Dr. Khalifā Rashid-ud-Din told the Promised Messiah: 'My relatives argue that I have married one of my daughters in Qadian so I should give the other in marriage to other relations otherwise they would be annoyed.' The Founder replied: 'You may do so.' But how can it be inferred from this conversation that the Founder knew that the bride-groom was a non-Ahmadi? Later when it came to his knowledge he warned the wife of Dr. Khalifā Rashid-ud-Din to ask her husband how he had agreed to this proposal. On second thought he forbade her to do so and said: 'I will give you a copy of *Haqiqat al-Wahy* for the boy to study. If after reading this book he joins the Movement, the marriage may be solemnised, not otherwise.' This idea

somehow slipped from his memory and did not materialise."

The story narrated by Mian Mahmūd Ahmad in his speech, referred to above, shows that he is caught on the horns of a dilemma. At first, he denies that the incident took place in the life of the Promised Messiah or that he was consulted in this matter, but in the next breath he tells us that Dr. Khalifa Rashid-ud-Din took the Founder in confidence about his relatives' attitude and sought his blessings. And then the Founder is portrayed as too ignorant to know about the relatives of Dr. Khalifa among whom his daughter was going to be married. Was the Founder so ignorant of the relatives of Dr. Khalifa? Is it not a fact that Dr. Khalifa had joined the Movement from the time the Founder announced his claim? Was the Founder unaware that Dr. Khalifa's kith and kin were opposed to the Movement? Didn't the Founder know that the relatives of Dr. Khalifa were annoyed at the marriage of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad in their family? Can Mian Mahmūd Ahmad swear that Dr. Khalifa described his relations in a way that hinted at their being Ahmadi? The words "my relatives plead that since I have married one of my daughters in Qādiān, the second should be married among their relations," suggest something to the contrary. The words used by Dr. Khalifa soliciting permission clearly indicate that his relations despised Qādiān and did not like that his second daughter should also be married there. Could an Ahmadi utter such words? Would an Ahmadi be disgruntled if he is to marry his second daughter, too, in the family of the Promised Messiah or object to it? Mian Mahmūd Ahmad still contends that the Founder did not know that the fiance was a non-Ahmadi. He does not hesitate to rely upon and lean on false and idle presumptions. For example, when the Founder came to know that the would-be bridegroom was a non-Ahmadi, he forbade Begum Dr. Khalifa to convey his disapprobation of this tie to her husband and promised to give her a copy of *Haqiqat al-Wahy* for the boy to study, but

this idea slipped from his memory. Mian Mahmūd Ahmad wants, through this beating about the bush, to convince us that the Founder had allowed the marriage under some misapprehension and then he forgot all about it.

There is yet another amusing version of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad. It is in reply to a question put to him about this incident two years after his speech. It is to be found on p. 19 of *Haqiqat al-Amar*. It runs as follows: "Be it known to you that the girl had attained the age of puberty and was a non-Ahmadi. Her real mother was also a non-Ahmadi at the time of marriage. In the circumstances there was no violation of *Shari'ah* in this marriage. It is clear that the marriage was between two disbelievers and was solemnised by Maulana Nūr-ud-Din."

Now what do these two conflicting statements of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad lead to? At one time we are told that the father of the bride did not bring these facts fully to the notice of the Founder, and as such the permission was sought in disguise. Later, when the Founder came to know of these facts he did allow the marriage provided the bridegroom took the oath of allegiance. At a latter stage Mirzā Mahmūd Ahmad tried to establish that the bride was also a non-Ahmadi, hence the Founder was justified in allowing this marriage between two non-Ahmadis. Had he based his versions on his personal knowledge he would certainly not have landed in this predicament, although his pleadings that non-Ahmadis were unbelievers would have lost weight. If it were true that the bride was a non-Ahmadi, the statement he made during his speech in the Annual Gathering of 1916 was evidently false. And if that statement were correct then the bride was an Ahmadi.

It is now to be seen how this poor bride turned out to be a non-Ahmadi. The verdict of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad is that if either of the parents is an Ahmadi the children are to be treated

as Ahmadis, and it is not necessary for them to take the oath of allegiance afresh. Was it not an open secret that Dr. Khalifa was an Ahmadi? Under what circumstances did the progeny of an Ahmadi father become a non-Ahmadi?

Anyway, the Promised Messiah has not prohibited inter-marriages with Muslims in general. He practised what he preached. Both his precept and practice shed light on the lawfulness of such wedlocks. We do find an announcement in the Founder's writings suggesting marriages among Ahmadis but there is no distinction between boys and girls. The aim and object of the suggestion referred to above was mainly the strengthening of fraternity and brotherhood among his followers and not because it was unlawful from the *Shari'ah* point of view to marry outside the Jama'at as viewed by Mian Mahmūd Ahmad. As shown above, he gave permission to the marriage of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad's sister-in-law (daughter of his prominent follower) to a non-Ahmadi. The *nikah* ceremony was solemnised by Maulana Nūr-ud-Din in the Mubārak Mosque at Qādiān.

The fact remains that Mian Mahmūd Ahmad is displeased when his indigent followers arrange marriages of their children to non-Ahmadi families but when his wealthy followers give their daughters in marriage to non-Ahmadis there is neither hue nor cry. For example, Mian Shams-ud-Din, a hide merchant of Lahore, Khān Bahādur Sheikh Muhammad Hussain, Judge and Malik Ghulām Muhammad of Lahore married their daughters to non-Ahmadis, but none of them was expelled from the Community. This shows that either Mian Mahmūd Ahmad himself is not sincere in this matter or that for him wealth and eminence atone for certain sins.

CHAPTER IX

Prayers led by a non-Ahmadi *Īmām*

Last of all we have to examine the question of joining prayers led by a non-Ahmadi *Īmām*. Before arriving at a conclusion we will have to take a number of points into consideration. Firstly, this problem is not linked to his claim. The Founder and his followers kept on joining prayers led by non-Ahmadi *Īmāms* even after he had claimed to be the Promised Messiah. A crucial situation arose when the campaign to declare him an unbeliever and an impostor flared up and his followers were manhandled, tortured and thrown out of the mosques. Since he had come with a mission to resolve disputes he bade his followers to avoid conflicts and to stay away from these volatile places. The first direction on this matter is to be found in his book *Arbaʿīn* (No.3, p.28), published in December 1900. Here, while explaining one of his revelations "Abū Lahab's hands will perish and so will he," he wrote thus in the footnote:

"It is evident from this revelation that those who join others in declaring us unbelievers and liars, are doomed to perish. Therefore, it is not desirable for any one of my followers to offer prayers under their leadership (*Īmāmat*). Can the living pray under the dead? Thus remember that God has informed me that it is forbidden for you, and totally forbidden to pray under the leadership of any one declaring us unbelievers and liars, or one who is hesitant (i.e., to openly declare us so)."

This writing relates to the period which, as admitted by Mian Mahmūd Ahmad, was somewhat a transitory period, as the Founder neither considered himself to be a prophet nor held anyone who did not consider him an unbeliever and a liar, to be

outside the pale of Islam. The publication of *Arba'īn* was followed by *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*, published in October 1902, and in which we are told "no one can become an unbeliever ... on account of denying my claim." Therefore, the above prohibition is clearly in respect of those people who declared the Founder an unbeliever and a liar. The word *mutaraddid* or diffident denotes one who is hesitant to declare him an unbeliever and not one who is diffident to accept his claim, because there is no reference to his claim here; it is confined to the declaration of heresy and lying. It was only on this count that his followers were prohibited from offering prayers led by a non-Ahmadi *Īmām*. His subsequent writings and speeches fully bear him out on this point. This is why during the latter period of his life he exhorted his followers to join prayers in congregation led by an Ahmadi *Īmām* only. He had expressed his willingness to join prayers led by an *Īmām* who fulfilled the conditions prescribed for an *Īmām*. The principal condition is that the *Īmām* should be a person who desists from calling a Muslim an unbeliever and who does not side with the miscreants. Further, the observation made in his own pen on the inquiry received from Baluchistan in March 1908 substantiates what we have mentioned above (*Badr* dated 24/31 December 1908). This observation was: ... Reply, that as generally the prejudiced clergy in this country declare us unbelievers and have even issued a *fatwā* against us and the rank and file are under their influence, therefore if there are persons who publicly denounce these *mukaffirs* and dissociate themselves from them there is no harm in joining them in congregational prayers. Otherwise, according to the *Shari'ah* one who wantonly dubs a Muslim an unbeliever becomes an unbeliever himself as disbelief reverts to him. Therefore, how can one join prayers led by a *mukaffir*? It is unlawful in terms of the *Shari'ah*."

These are the words which the Founder wrote himself towards the end of his life. Without doubt, too, he has also said on certain occasions that Ahmadis may join congregational

prayers led by people who announce publicly that they consider Ahmadis as Muslims, and those who take them to be unbelievers become unbelievers themselves on the authority of the hadith which says that one who dubs another Muslim as an unbeliever becomes so himself. The writings of the Founder clearly indicate that the purpose of this ordinance was to keep the unlettered Muslims away from the *maulvis* who had declared Ahmadis unbelievers. Thus, according to this writing of the Founder, it is proper to join prayers led by people who dissociate themselves from the prejudiced *mukaffir maulvis*. No one can assign a new meaning to what the Founder has written.

The instruction to offer prayers separately was in fact intended to keep the Ahmadis away from those who declared the Founder an unbeliever and a liar. Prayer has always been considered for a believer a means of rising to the heights of spiritual eminence. Therefore, people who side with the clergy who consider the Founder an unbeliever and a liar, though not openly, but by way of acquiescence, are practically their henchmen, hence the restriction to join prayers led by them. As for those who did not indulge in declaring others unbelievers and in vilifying the Founder, but on the contrary, disagree with and dissociate themselves from "mukaffir" maulvis or resent their *fatwā* of heresy, Ahmadis are allowed to join prayers led by them. That is why Maulana Nūr-ud-Din permitted Ahmadis in foreign countries to offer prayers with other Muslims as no such *fatwā* of heresy had been in force there against them. There is no denying the fact that Ahmadis during the sacred pilgrimage in Arabia joined congregational prayers led by a non-Ahmadi Īmām. Even Mian Mahmūd Ahmad did so when he performed the pilgrimage. This is how Maulana Nūr-ud-Din, when asked by Maulvi Fazal Din of Khārian about joining prayers led by a non-Ahmadi Īmām wrote in reply on February 25, 1910:

"Barring hypocrites, good-natured persons who are sincere and friendly to us are excusable to some extent. You may join prayers led by the latter after beseeching Allah's guidance through *istikhāra* prayer."

Islāmic fraternity

In the end, I would like to stress again that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is the architect of the magnificent edifice of Islamic brotherhood. The religion he preached to the world provided a sound and stable foundation for strengthening the unity of Allah and it is free from all impurities and promotes fraternity of mankind to an extent that cannot be dreamt of in other faiths. At the time the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was raised, there were on this globe many nations and countries, big and small, separate from and opposed to one another and living in communal, national and religious strife and dissension. These evils were totally eradicated, differences removed and bad blood wiped off by his teachings and his followers cemented the brotherhood into an impregnable fortress. Right and not might ruled the land. Righteousness was the yardstick of superiority. The conception of the unity of Godhead is linked with the ideology of the fraternity of mankind and both are inseparable from each other. It is extremely regrettable that the unity of the Muslim *Ummah* is being broken into pieces by the wholesale practice of *takfir*. Lack of unity among Muslims has weakened the strength of Islām.

Followers of the Reformer (*Mujaddid*) of the fourteenth century, who was raised for eradicating the evils which had been eating into the vitals of the Muslim *Ummah*, should have tried their best to uproot the rampant disease of declaring Muslims unbelievers (*takfir*). The chief mission of the Promised Messiah was to cure Muslims of this virus. He, therefore, highlighted the hadith which says that heresy reverts to the

person who calls his brother Muslim an unbeliever. In other words, it was in a way incumbent upon the Muslim community to expel the mischief-monger from the society without throwing the recalcitrant outside the pale of Islam. It was for this very reason that the Founder forbade his followers from joining prayers led by advocates of those who declare others unbelievers and who create feelings of extreme hatred and animosity against the Founder. He, however, allowed joining prayers led only by such persons who despised those who called us unbelievers and dissociated themselves from them. Sometimes he also said that persons who called him an unbeliever should be considered an unbeliever in pursuance of the above quoted hadith.

The object of these "do's and dont's" was that we should sever connections with those who considered fellow-Muslims unbelievers. The Founder, therefore, prescribed some stringent measures as a preventive to combat this disease in the light of the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith. These include impressing upon the Muslims that to declare someone an unbeliever was not less than homicide and has to be averted at all costs. According to the warning contained in the Hadith, *kufir* or heresy invariably reverts to the person who wantonly calls his brother-Muslim an unbeliever. Unfortunately, Muslims paid scant regard to this stringent measure proposed by the Founder and they did not realise the gravity of it.

It is a misfortune that the wisdom of this sound advice which was in full conformity with the injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān and the Sunnah, was not appreciated by the Muslim *Ummah* and instead it fell on deaf ears and the disease gained momentum. Qādiān was conspicuous for re-establishing this golden principle that against ninety-nine elements of heresy only one element of "faith" apparent in a person sufficed for his being a Muslim and he should not be dubbed an unbeliever.

How sad it is that from the same Qādiān we hear the following announcement:

"Anyone who believes in Moses but does not believe in Jesus, or believes in Jesus but does not believe in Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, or one who believes in the Holy Prophet Muhammad, but does not believe in the Promised Messiah is not only an unbeliever but a confirmed unbeliever and outside the pale of Islām" (*Kalimatul Faṣl: Review of Religions*, No. 14, p. 110).

Allah raised the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, so that all mankind should gather around one Leader, follow one Teacher and be subservient to one sovereign Prophethood and derive light from one Sun. But, today Mian Mahmūd Ahmad is generating the dissension that existed in pre-Islamic days. I would earnestly appeal to all right-thinking and sagacious persons to ponder over the concepts introduced by Mian Sahib bearing in mind that they would be accountable on the Day of Judgement for their deeds and creeds which are detrimental to the very basis of Islām. The religion of Moses required belief in Moses; and the foundation of the religion of Jesus was a belief in him. Similarly, the mainstay of Islām, the religion of Muhammad, (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), is a belief in him. Now, if the Promised Messiah is installed on the pedestal on which Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon them, stood in their respective realms, the basis of the religion of Islām which to this day has stood firm on belief in Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, will undergo a material change. Just as with the advent of Jesus the religion of Moses, hinging on belief in him, ceased to be operative, and with the advent of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the religion of Jesus founded on belief in him, remained no more in operation, likewise in view of the verdict of Mian Mahmūd Ahmad, the validity of the

religion of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, based on an explicit belief in him, has expired. The matter deserves serious consideration. It is to be realised that this change has shaken the very basis of Islam and new foundations of religion have been laid down. The condition that a person does not become a Muslim unless he also believes in the prophethood of the Founder, (besides the unity of Allah), not only negates the religion of Islam itself but even invalidates the *Kalimah*, the basis of the religion, and the prophethood of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Let it not be forgotten that Allah Who has promised the ultimate triumph of Islam over all other religions of the world, shall never allow such a catastrophe to befall the religion of His choice. The sooner you get out of this grave error the better it is for you and the more you insist on it the more humiliated you will be on the Day of Reckoning before the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Just like the Israelite Messiah, the Promised Messiah would say that 'so long as he was among his followers their beliefs were correct but when Allah caused him to die He was a witness over them.' Believe in whatever you like but for God's sake try not to modify the religion and the *Kalimah* and be not the transgressors to lay the axe to the very root of Islam by declaring millions of Muslims not only unbelievers but confirmed unbelievers and outside the pale of Islām. The Promised Messiah has in his book *Haqiqat al-Wahy* absolved himself of the allegation that he declared even such persons unbelievers who were unaware of him and his claim. He was so broad-minded that he would count in his fold those who are not his opponents and instead are considerate. This is what he reiterated in his sermon published in the newspaper *Al-Hakam* in February, 1904:

"He said that there were three classes at that time: Firstly, those who are ablaze with malice, jealousy and prejudice, and impertinence in them incites them to affront him; their number is few and far between.

Secondly, those who are inclined towards his mission; they are increasing in number day by day. Thirdly, those who are neutral; they are neither foes nor friends nor are they under the influence of prejudiced *maulvis*. They abstain from slandering or reviling him. He took them also in his flock."

Now it is up to you to judge how and where the Promised Messiah has declared people unaware of him, as unbelievers. The number of people cognizant of his mission but continuing to abuse, accuse and humiliate him vainlessly, says he, is insignificant, while those not influenced by hardened *maulvis* are on the increase and in his favour. Still more explicit in this context is the dialogue between the Promised Messiah and Rev. Scott, a Christian missionary, on the 3rd November, 1904 at Wazirābād Railway station, on his return journey from Siālkot. When Rev. Scott observed that there were many sects in Islam, the Founder replied:

"How strange it is that you, too, raise such an objection against Islam! Don't you know how many sects are there in Christianity? They not only differ on fundamentals but also brand one another as renegades and apostates; while any difference, if any, among Muslim sects, is only in the interpretation of details and not in fundamentals."

I am at a loss to understand how members of a Movement which was known for its integrity, rational thinking and reasoned interpretations, today bypass the explicit and succinct precepts of the Promised Messiah, especially when he asserted that the difference among the Christian sects was not only in fundamentals but even they openly declare one another heretics, while, the difference among Islamic sects was only in the interpretation of details or in religious practices but not on the fundamentals. Hence, they cannot brand one another heretics. Can the belief that all the Muslims in the world are unbelievers be attributed to a person who openly denies that there is a

difference in fundamentals in Islām? It is nothing but outrageous in the face of these declarations to accuse the Founder of declaring unbelievers all Muslims who did not believe in him. Is it not, in his words, walking along the path of the Christians?

Mian Mahmūd Ahmad has transformed his deviation into a fundamental one by insisting that belief in the Founder is a basic and essential principle of the religion so that just like the different Christian sects he now freely holds all Muslims who did not take the oath of allegiance at the hand of the Founder as unbelievers (*kāfir*).

An earnest appeal for Muslim unity

I have discussed the basic facts and arguments concerning Islam and heresy in the light of the Qur'ān, the Sunnah and the writings of the Founder. May Allah through His grace and Mercy enable the readers to grasp them. To Allah I pray earnestly and fervently to remove all misconceptions and erroneous notions from among the Muslim ranks especially the dubbing of one another as unbelievers. May Allah in His infinite Mercy, once again establish among the Muslims the most cherished unity and solidarity which was infused by the unique spiritual personality of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, among the blood-thirsty, belligerent tribes of Arabia. May Allah preserve us from falling into the abyss of fire as He saved the Arabs at the gracious hands of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The Qur'ān says:

"And remember Allah's favour to you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favour you became brethren. And you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes clear to you His Messages that you may be guided" (3:102).