

Statements of his beliefs and claims by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in his *Lecture Ludhiana*, November 1905

Compiled by Dr Zahid Aziz

A misimpression has been spread regarding the claims of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, to the effect that although he denied claiming to be a prophet from the time he began his mission till the year 1901, but from this date onwards he announced that he was a prophet, declared prophethood as continuing after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and declared that those Muslims who did not believe in his claims were unbelievers (*kafir*) and expelled from the fold of Islam.

In order to refute this misimpression we quote below some extracts from a lecture which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad delivered in the city of Ludhiana on 4 November 1905 to thousands of people. This lecture dates from a late period in his life, so late that his next publication after this lecture was his Will, *Al-Wasiyya*, in December 1905.

1. He states in this lecture:

“I say with deep regret and pain that the Muslim community were both quick and callous in opposing me. The only issue of disagreement was the death of Jesus, which I was proving and still continue to prove from the Holy Quran, the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the consensus of his Companions, logical arguments and previous scriptures. In accordance with the principles of Hanafi law, I was supported by the clear verses of the Holy Quran, Hadith reports, and arguments from Islamic teachings. But these people, before properly enquiring from me or listening to my arguments, opposed me on this issue and went to the extreme extent of declaring me to be a *kafir* and attributing to me whatever false beliefs they wanted.” (p. 258)¹

Our comments:

This shows clearly that the real and basic difference between Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and his Muslim opponents was on the issue of the death of Jesus, i.e., whether he died a natural death after completing the course of his life, as Hazrat Mirza sahib believed, or he did not die but was taken up by God bodily to heaven and is still alive there. His difference with his Muslim opponents was not on any fundamental beliefs or practices of Islam, nor did his difference relate to any kind of claim to prophethood on his part.

¹ The original Urdu text of *Lecture Ludhiana* is in the collection *Ruhani Khaza'in*, volume 20, pages 249–298. In this article the page references are to this volume.

2. Continuing, he states:

“But I have been explaining from the very beginning that I consider it to be an act of unbelief to deviate, however slightly, from following the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet. I believe that whoever digresses at all from this path would be consigned to hell. I have expounded this belief in very clear terms, not only in my speeches, but also in my books which are almost sixty in number. Indeed, this has been my constant preoccupation and concern.

If these opponents of mine were God-fearing, was it not their duty to enquire from me why I have said something which is against Islam? They should have asked for my answer. But no, they did not care for that at all, and merely on hearsay they at once labelled me a *kafir*.

I am amazed at their audacity because, in the first place, believing whether Jesus is alive or dead is not a prerequisite to being a Muslim. When a Hindu or Christian becomes a Muslim, do you ask him to affirm that Jesus is alive? What you require of him is no more than to proclaim belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and destiny being from Allah, whether good or bad, and the rising after death. Despite the fact that this issue (of the life or death of Jesus) does not form an essential of Islam, why, when I declared that Jesus was dead, was I subjected to such violent persecution? We were declared *kafir*, we were prohibited to be buried in the graveyards of Muslims, our possessions and our women were declared as lawful to be looted, and to kill us was deemed a good deed deserving of reward in the hereafter, and so on and so forth.

There was a time when these same Maulvis used to shout that if there were ninety-nine reasons to call someone a *kafir*, and only one reason to call him a Muslim, even then the verdict of *kufir* must not be issued against him, and he should be called a Muslim. What has changed now? Am I worse than even such a person? Do I and my followers not declare that “I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger”? Do I not say the Islamic prayers? Don’t my followers say them? Do we not fast during Ramadan? Do we not hold all the beliefs which the Holy Prophet preached in the form of the religion of Islam?

I declare truly and swear by God the Most High that I and my followers are Muslims, and we believe in the Holy Prophet Muhammad and the Holy Quran in the way that a true Muslim ought to believe. I believe that to deviate even in the slightest from Islam leads to spiritual destruction.” (p. 259–260)

Our comments:

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad says here that, to enter the fold of Islam, it is required to make a declaration only of its fundamental articles of faith: “belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and destiny being from Allah, whether good or bad, and the rising after death”. It is clearly obvious from this that he could not have himself declared such people to be unbelievers or *kafir* who, while acknowledging faith in these articles, did not accept his own claims. Similarly, he writes that those people who carry out the fundamental practices of Islam, i.e., declaration of the *Kalimah Shahadah*, prayer, fasting, etc., cannot be branded as *kafir*. This shows that he himself could not have branded such people as *kafir* because they did not become his followers. Also, he has expressed his support here for the principle that: “if there were ninety-nine reasons to call someone a *kafir*, and only one reason to call him a Muslim, even then the verdict of *kufur* must not be issued against him, and he should be called a Muslim”.

3. Further on, he says as follows about his mission and his claims:

“The aim and purpose of my coming is the revival (*tajdid*) and support (*tā'id*) of Islam. This must not be construed to mean that I have come to teach a new *Shariah*, or to deliver new commandments, or that a new book will be revealed. Certainly not. If anyone thinks that this can happen, I consider him to be badly misled and lacking in faith. Prophethood (*nubuwwah*) and *Shariah* have ended with the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Now no *Shariah* can come. The Holy Quran is the last book (*khātam-ul-kutub*). Not a jot or tittle can be added to or removed from it now. Of course, it is true that the blessings and bounties to be derived from the Holy Prophet, and the fruits of the teaching and the guidance of the Holy Quran, have not come to an end. They are ever-present and fresh in every age, and it is as evidence of those bounties and blessings that God the Most High has appointed me.” (p. 279)

Our comments:

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad here describes his mission as that of the *tajdid* or revival of Islam. The person who does the work of *tajdid* is known as a *mujaddid*, and thus his claim is that of being a *Mujaddid* of Islam. Not only is it that he did not “come to teach a new *Shariah*”, but also that he brought no new book, whether such a book contained any new *Shariah* or not. He also adds: “Prophethood (*nubuwwah*) and *Shariah* have ended with the Holy Prophet Muhammad”, i.e., along with *Shariah*, prophethood or *nubuwwah* have also come to an end.

Moreover, he says here that the Holy Quran is *khātam-ul-kutub*. That can only mean that the Quran is the last book of God. Therefore, the word *khātam* means “last”.

4. Later on in this lecture he mentions a certain teaching of Islam and says about it:

“This is what Islam teaches and it is indeed the perfect teaching. No other teaching or *shariah* can come after it. The Holy Prophet Muhammad is the *Khātam* of the Prophets, and the Holy Quran is the *Khātam* of the Books. Now there can be no other *Kalima* or prayer. Whatever the Holy Prophet taught by his words or by his practice, and whatever is contained in the Holy Quran, salvation cannot be attained by departing from it. He who departs from it, will be consigned to hell. This is our faith and belief. But it should also be remembered that the door of revelation and being spoken to by Allah remains open for this *Ummah*. This door is an ever-present testimony to the truth of the Holy Quran and the truth of the Holy Prophet.” (pp. 285–286)

Our comments:

His words, “The Holy Prophet Muhammad is the *Khātam* of the Prophets (*Khātam-un-Nabiyyin*), and the Holy Quran is the *Khātam* of the Books (*Khātam-ul-kutub*)”, clearly show that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the *Khātam* of the Prophets **in the same sense** as that in which the Holy Quran is the *Khātam* of the Books. The meaning of the Holy Quran being *Khātam-ul-kutub* **certainly cannot be** that, although it is the best and most perfect of the Books of God, nonetheless books of God of a lesser status can come after it, and Muslims must believe in those books as a fundamental article of faith as they believe in the Holy Quran. Therefore, the meaning of the Holy Prophet Muhammad being *Khātam-un-Nabiyyin* **cannot be** that, although he is the most excellent of the prophets, yet prophets of God of a lower rank can come after him, in whom Muslims must believe as a fundamental article of faith as they believe in the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

He has also said here: “But it should also be remembered that the door of revelation and being spoken to by Allah remains open for this *Ummah*.” This means that it is not the door of prophethood but the door of revelation from God to non-prophets which remains open.

Conclusion

The extracts we have presented above in this article show clearly that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, believed till the end of his life that no prophet can come after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and that those Muslims who

do not believe in the claims of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad do not become *kafir* or excluded from the fold of Islam. The beliefs and practices which are required for a person to be a Muslim are still the same today as they were stipulated in Islam at the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. There is no later prophet, after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, in whom a Muslim must believe in order to remain a Muslim.