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7. Retraction of beliefs by the Qadiani Jama'at

At the time of the split there were three related doctrines regarding the status and claims of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad upon which the Qadiani *Jama'at* and the Lahore *Jama'at* differed, so much so that this led to their separation as movements and organizations. These were stated and argued about by Maulana Muhammad Ali in the fourth of a series of English booklets, this one being entitled *The Ahmadiyya Movement — IV: The Split*, published at the beginning of 1918. In this he writes:

“I shall now take the three doctrines which M. Mahmud [Mirza Mahmud Ahmad] is promulgating and which are opposed to the teachings of the Promised Messiah.”¹

In reply Mirza Mahmud Ahmad wrote a book in Urdu, *A'inah-i Sadaqat*, published in 1921, in which he has confirmed that the three doctrines attributed to him by Maulana Muhammad Ali were indeed his beliefs. What he denies is the Maulana's charge that he had thereby deviated from the teachings of the Promised Messiah. He claims that he always held these beliefs. We quote below from its English version, *The Truth about the Split*:²

“[Maulana Muhammad Ali] endeavours to show how after the death of the Promised Messiah a certain conjunction of circumstances gradually led the present writer to introduce changes in my former beliefs.

These changes, according to Maulawi Muhammad Ali, relate to three matters; (1) that I propagated the belief that Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was actually a *Nabi*; (2) the belief that he was ‘the Ahmad’ spoken of in the prophecy of Jesus referred to in the Holy Quran

in Al-Saff 61:7; and (3) the belief that all those so-called Muslims who have not entered into his *Bai'at* formally, wherever they may be, are *Kafirs* and outside the pale of Islam, even though they may not have heard the name of the Promised Messiah.

That these beliefs have my full concurrence, I readily admit. What I deny is the statement that I have been entertaining these views since 1914 or only three or four years before.”³

What we intend to show in this chapter is that Mirza Mahmud Ahmad and the Qadiani *Jama'at* subsequently retracted all the three beliefs mentioned here, explicitly and directly in the case of beliefs number (2) and (3), and implicitly in the case of belief number (1). Thus the Lahore Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* has, over the past hundred years, been proved to be absolutely right that these three beliefs are false and heretical, and that they were never taught by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

Who is ‘Ahmad’ in Jesus’s prophecy given in the Quran?

We take belief number (2) first for the following two reasons. Firstly, in his book *Anwar-i Khilafat*, published in 1916,⁴ Mirza Mahmud Ahmad has raised this as the first issue while dealing with the points of difference between his *Jama'at* and the Lahore Ahmadis. Secondly, the Qadiani *Jama'at* was already retracting and withdrawing this belief even as Mirza Mahmud Ahmad wrote the words quoted above in 1921.

In *Anwar-i Khilafat* Mirza Mahmud Ahmad argued most emphatically that this prophecy of Jesus about the coming Ahmad, referred to in the Quran in *Sura Al-Saff* (61:6), does not apply to the Holy Prophet Muhammad but to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. He wrote:

“My belief is that this verse applies to the Promised Messiah, and he is the one who is Ahmad. ... I am prepared to offer a reward: if anyone can disprove my evidences and show from the Holy Quran and authentic Hadith that Ahmad was the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and not his attribute, and that the signs

about Ahmad given in the Holy Quran apply to the Holy Prophet, and that the Holy Prophet applied this prophecy to himself, I will pay that person a monetary penalty as mutually agreed between the two parties.”⁵

“This prophecy does not contain any word to show that it is about the *Khatam-un-nabiyyin*, nor any word to cause us to apply this prophecy necessarily to the Holy Prophet Muhammad. ... There is no Hadith report of any kind, whether true or false, weak or strong, of whatever standard of authenticity, mentioning that the Holy Prophet Muhammad applied this verse to himself and declared himself as fulfilling this prophecy. When that also is not the case, why should we apply the prophecy to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, in contradiction to the subject-matter of the verse?”⁶

“Why should the meaning of this verse be distorted to apply it to the Holy Prophet Muhammad just in order to prove that no messenger can come after him? Has the fear of Almighty God departed from the hearts of the people so much that they alter His word in this way and distort its meaning by misinterpreting it so blatantly?”⁷

“...the signs of the person having the name or the qualities of Ahmad that are given here are not fulfilled in the Holy Prophet Muhammad, as will be shown later. ... Our claim is that it is the Promised Messiah who is that messenger, the prophecy about whom is given in this verse.”⁸

“Now I present evidence from the Holy Quran that the one who fulfils this prophecy can only be the Promised Messiah and no one else.”⁹

Maulana Muhammad Ali refuted these ideas and arguments most forcefully in his Urdu book of some 90 pages entitled *Ahmad Mujtaba*, published in December 1917. Covering the same subject in his 1918 English booklet about the split, mentioned above, he wrote:

“I take first the question whether Ahmad was not a name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and whether the prophecy of Jesus relating to the appearance of a messenger named Ahmad was not fulfilled by the advent of the Holy Prophet. ... the idea that the prophecy of the advent of the messenger named Ahmad was fulfilled by the appearance of the Promised Messiah seems to have been the nucleus about which the doctrine of his prophethood was formed, this being the first question brought into prominence by M. Mahmud after the dis-sension of 1914.”¹⁰

Even in *A'inah-i Sadaqat*, in which Mirza Mahmud Ahmad had written “That these beliefs have my full concurrence, I readily admit”, we see the first step of retraction on this point. He wrote:

“...my opinion is that the passage contains a double prophecy, relating to two persons, one a counter-type and the other his prototype. The counter-type of course is the Promised Messiah, while the prototype is the Holy Prophet. The passage under reference speaks directly about the counter-type. A reference to the prototype of course comes in, but only indirectly...”¹¹

From his position of 1915-1916, that the prophecy could not at all be applied to the Holy Prophet Muhammad and that “the one who fulfils this prophecy can only be the Promised Messiah and no one else”, he now said that the prophecy relates to “two persons”: directly to the Promised Messiah and indirectly to the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Mirza Mahmud Ahmad continues on the next page:

“But the whole question is one regarding which no decision on the basis of revealed authority has been left by any of the Prophets. Any discussion of the question therefore has little more than mere academic interest. If any person holds a different view regarding the interpretation of the verse, all that I shall say is that he is mistaken, but I shall never deem him, on that account,

any the less an Ahmadi, and much less shall I deem him a sinner.”¹²

From challenging the whole Muslim world in 1915 to *prove* their belief that this prophecy applies to the Holy Prophet, he now says that the question is merely of academic interest. From declaring their belief to be a distortion of this verse, and condemning those who hold it as having lost fear of God from their hearts, he now says that he does not even regard them as sinners.

The final retraction on this prophecy

The final retreat on this point came in the Qadiani *Jama'at* English translations of the Quran. In the five volume English translation of the Quran with commentary by Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, or taken from his writings, his footnote on this verse consists of a total of 129 lines of print, out of which 122 lines are devoted to showing that the Ahmad of this prophecy is the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Having exhaustively argued that it was the Holy Prophet Muhammad who fulfilled this prophecy, he writes in this footnote:

“Thus the prophecy mentioned in the verse under comment applies to the Holy Prophet, but as a corollary it may also apply to the Promised Messiah, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement...”¹³

In *A'inah-i Sadaqat*, as quoted from its English version above, he had written that this verse “speaks directly” about the Promised Messiah, and the Holy Prophet “comes in, but only indirectly”. Here it is the exact opposite.

Thus from his original position expressed so forcefully in *Anwar-i Khilafat*, published in 1916, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad made one retreat in *A'inah-i Sadaqat*, published in 1921, and made a complete retreat in his commentary of the Quran published some decades later.

Declaring other Muslims as *kafir* and its reversal

Mirza Mahmud Ahmad's belief number (3) in *A'inah-i Sadaqat*, declaring “all those so-called Muslims who have not entered into his *Bai'at* formally, wherever they may be” to be *kafir* and “out-

side the pale of Islam”, was expanded upon by him in the same book. He explains that he had expressed the same view in an article which he wrote in 1911:

“The article was elaborately entitled — ‘A Muslim is one who believes in all the Messengers of God.’ The title itself is sufficient to show that the article was not meant to prove merely that those who did not accept the Promised Messiah were deniers of the Promised Messiah. Its object rather was to demonstrate that those who did not believe in the Promised Messiah were not Muslims.”¹⁴

“Regarding the main subject of my article, I wrote that as we believed the Promised Messiah to be one of the prophets of God, we could not possibly regard his deniers as Muslims.”¹⁵

He claims that in his article he had proved by quoting the Promised Messiah that:

“not only are those deemed to be *Kafirs*, who openly style the Promised Messiah as *Kafir*, and those who although they do not style him thus, decline still to accept his claim, but even those who, in their hearts, believe the Promised Messiah to be true, and do not even deny him with their tongues, but hesitate to enter into his *Bai'at*, have here been adjudged to be *Kafirs*.”¹⁶

He concludes about his article as follows:

“And lastly, it was argued from a verse of the Holy Quran that such people as had failed to recognise the Promised Messiah as a *Rasul* even if they called him a righteous person with their tongues, were yet veritable *Kafirs*.”¹⁷

In 1953 in Pakistan, following agitation against the Ahmad-iyya Movement which led to serious public disturbances and rioting in the Punjab, a Court of Inquiry was appointed by the provincial government to investigate the causes of the rioting.¹⁸ The Inquiry sent a set of seven questions to the Qadiani *Jama'at*

central body, the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, to answer in writing. The first question was whether a person who did not believe in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was “a believer (*mu'min*) and a Muslim”. Regarding ‘Muslim’, the answer was as follows:

“ ‘Muslim’ is the name applied to members of the *Ummah* of the Prophet Muhammad. ... according to the verse of the Holy Quran ‘He has named you Muslims’ (*Surah Hajj*, Section 10), every member of the *Ummah* of the Prophet Muhammad is entitled to be called a Muslim. ...

According to the above explanation, whoever believes in the Holy Prophet Muhammad and affirms that he belongs to his *Ummah* cannot be deprived of this name because of some intentional or unintentional error in his creed or practice. It is obvious that according to this explanation, and under the verse of the Quran, ‘He has named you Muslims’, no person can be called a non-Muslim because of not believing in the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement.”¹⁹

This answer was not the only retraction. Mirza Mahmud Ahmad was called to appear at this Inquiry, where he was questioned about his beliefs and other matters on 13–15 January 1954. The questions and answers were published as a booklet in Urdu by the Qadiani *Jama'at*.²⁰ We translate from it below:

“Question: If a person, after considering the claims of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib, honestly comes to the conclusion that his claim was wrong, would he still remain a Muslim?

Answer: Yes. In common terminology he would still be considered a Muslim.”²¹

“Question: You have now stated in your testimony that the person who sincerely does not accept Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib still remains a Muslim. Have you held this view from the beginning?

Answer: Yes.”²²

“Question: Do you include Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib in the category of those sent by God whose acceptance is essential for a person to be called a Muslim?”

Answer: I have earlier answered this question. A person who does not believe in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib cannot be declared as outside the pale of Islam.”²³

At the Inquiry he was also asked about his statement in *A'inah-i Sadaqat* in which he had described all other Muslims as “*Kafirs* and outside the pale of Islam, even though they may not have heard the name of the Promised Messiah”. He explained to the Inquiry:

“These very words show that I am considering the people whom I have in mind as Muslims. So when I use the word *kafir* I have in mind the second category of *kafir* who, as I have explained, are not outside the Muslim nation.”²⁴

However, while in Urdu in his book *A'inah-i Sadaqat*, as quoted from in the Inquiry, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad had used the words “all those Muslims” to mean other Muslims, but in the English translation of this book, *The Truth about the Split*, these words are translated as “all those so-called Muslims”. This demolishes the explanation he gave in the above reply because he is calling them, in the English version of his book, as “so-called” Muslims. Moreover, other quotations from this book which we gave on page 123 show that he had referred to them in the following terms: “those who did not believe in the Promised Messiah were not Muslims” and “we could not possibly regard his deniers as Muslims”.

Retraction by Mirza Nasir Ahmad, 3rd Khalifa

In 1980 the Head of the Qadiani *Jama'at*, Mirza Nasir Ahmad, son of Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, went on a tour of Europe and an account of this tour was published by the Qadiani *Jama'at* as a book entitled *Daura Maghrib 1400 Hijra*. Answering a question from a press correspondent in Norway, regarding other Muslims calling Ahmadis as non-Muslim, Mirza Nasir Ahmad said:

“No one has the right to say to a person who calls himself a Muslim that ‘you are not a Muslim’. To act on the Quran, he must be accepted as a Muslim. Those people who do not accept us as Muslims are acting against the Quran. But we accept their right to call themselves Muslims, and we consider them to be a part of the Islamic community (*Ummah*).”²⁵

The book then records:

“At this, the correspondent asked: Will you call them Muslims even though they do not consider you to be Muslims? Huzoor [Mirza Nasir Ahmad] replied: Yes, despite this, we believe them to be Muslims.”²⁶

Definition of ‘Muslim’ submitted to National Assembly

The Qadiani *Jama‘at* officially published from the UK a document in English (in 2003) and Urdu (in 1990) entitled *Mahzar-nama*, meaning *The Memorandum*. The introduction begins:

“Mahzar-nama—the Memorandum—is an important historical document which was presented by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama‘at in 1974, to the Special Committee of the National Assembly of Pakistan, comprising the entire house. The purpose of this document was to establish that the members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama‘at are Muslims and to explain its basic tenets, as well as refute the baseless allegations levelled against it.”²⁷

The Memorandum contains a section on the ‘Definition of a Muslim’ in the view of the Qadiani *Jama‘at*. It is stated therein:

“So the viewpoint of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama‘at is that we must adopt as a Constitutional definition which was precisely formulated by the *Khaatamul Anbiyaa*’, Hadhrat Muhammad and which constitutes a glorious charter for an Islamic country. In this context, we quote below, three Sayings (*Ahadith*) of the Holy Prophet.”²⁸

In the first two sayings which are quoted, the Holy Prophet, answering someone’s question as to what constitutes Islam,

defines practising Islam as consisting of: not associating partners with Allah, saying the five daily prayers, fasting in Ramadan, and giving *Zakat*. In the third hadith, the Holy Prophet has defined a Muslim as one “who observes the same prayer as we do, faces the same direction (in prayer) as we do, and partakes from the animal slaughtered by us”.

The definition of ‘Muslim’ presented here by the Qadiani *Jama'at* is exactly what they rejected at the time of the split and for long afterwards. The Qadiani *Jama'at* argued and debated this issue for decades with the Lahore Ahmadiyya *Jama'at*, and insisted that a person fulfilling such a definition was not a Muslim but outside the pale of Islam if he did not formally enter into the *bai'at* of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Maulana Muhammad Ali warned them, from the time of the split till his death, of the most dangerous consequences of declaring other Muslims, who are Muslims according to the above definitions, as being *kafir* and outside the pale of Islam. But he met with nothing but rejection, abuse and ridicule from the Qadiani *Jama'at*. Eventually it was external circumstances which compelled the Qadiani *Jama'at* to accept, or at least outwardly claim to accept, as shown above, that other Muslims are Muslims and cannot be declared as outside the fold of Islam.

Belief in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as prophet

We now turn to belief number (1) in *A'inah-i Sadaqat*, namely that “Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was actually a *Nabi*”. If the Qadiani *Jama'at* accepts that other Muslims cannot be called *kafir*, and are in fact Muslims, then their position *cannot be maintained* that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet. It is an implicit and indirect rejection of this belief. In *A'inah-i Sadaqat*, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad has plainly stated and argued at length that other Muslims are *kafir* because they do not accept a prophet:

“The man who rejects a Prophet thus necessarily becomes a *kafir*...”²⁹

Explaining why even those Muslims are *kafir* who have not heard of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, he writes:

“Now, as Islam bases its judgments upon what is patent and not upon what is possible, it cannot but class as kafir such as fail to accept any of the Prophets, even though such failure may be due to their want of information concerning him.”³⁰

This, he writes, is the reason why Muslims have always, unanimously, “designated as *kafirs* all those who have not accepted the faith of Islam” even if they live in such countries where they “have not yet heard anything regarding the teachings of the Holy Prophet”.³¹

Hence it follows that if the Qadiani *Jama‘at* has ceased to call other Muslims as *kafir* and accepts that they are Muslims, then it cannot maintain the belief that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet.

There is another strong basis also for saying that the Qadiani *Jama‘at* has, indirectly and implicitly, withdrawn its belief that he was a prophet. To uphold this belief, they constructed the theory that he had denied claiming to be a prophet up to the year 1901, as it was not clear to him what is a prophet, but thereafter he realised that he was a prophet and made the first announcement of this claim in November 1901 in the leaflet *Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala*. Mirza Mahmud Ahmad wrote in 1915:

“The books in which he has denied being a prophet in clear words, and has called his prophethood as partial and imperfect, and as the prophethood of saints (*muhaddas*), are all without exception books from before the year 1901. ... The issue of prophethood became clear to him in 1900 or 1901... he made a change in his belief in 1901, and the year 1900 is a middle period which is like a boundary between the two views. ... It is proved that the references dating prior to the year 1901 in which he has denied being a prophet, are now abrogated and it is an error to use them as evidence.”³²

Yet in their *Mahzarnama* mentioned above, in the section entitled “The exalted station of *Khaatamul Anbiyaa* in the eyes of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama‘at*”, several of

the quotations from the writings and talks of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, presented by them in relation to his own claim, are from before the year 1901. We comment on these as follows.

1. The first quotation they give begins as follows:

“The accusation levelled against me and my followers that we do not believe the Messenger of Allah to be *Khaatamun Nabiyyeen*, is a colossal calumny against us. The force, certainty, perception and insight with which we believe the Holy Prophet to be *Khaatamun Nabiyyeen* is such that the other people’s belief in this regard is not even the millionth part, in strength, as compared to ours.”³³

This extract is, in fact, from a speech by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in November 1899.³⁴ The Qadiani *Jama'at* acknowledges that at that time he did not consider himself to be a prophet and believed that no prophet could come after the *Khaatam-un-nabiyyin*, the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It is obvious that this statement is so powerfully made because he was not claiming to be a prophet. If the Qadiani *Jama'at* believe that he later claimed to be a prophet, then they cannot present this statement as it loses its value. On the other hand, by presenting this extract they have, in effect, withdrawn their doctrine that he later on, in 1900/1901, came to realise that he was a prophet.

In the same speech, only three paragraphs after the end of the extract quoted in *Mahzarnama*, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad mentions as two separate groups the prophets and the saints (*auliya*), and includes himself in the category of saints. Discussing the fact that the denial of prophets and saints leads to a loss of faith in God in the heart of the denier, he writes:

“Loss of faith is of two kinds. First, by denying the prophets. This idea is not rejected by anyone, and is an accepted matter. Second, there is loss of faith by denying the *auliya* of Allah and the ones appointed by him. ... Loss of faith by denying the prophets is a clear matter, known to everyone. ... But loss of faith by denying the *auliya* of Allah is different. In one hadith it is related

that Allah says: 'He who bears animosity towards one of My *auliya*, I declare war on him', as if he is preparing for war with Allah."³⁵

By presenting the extract which they have done from this speech, the Qadiani *Jama'at* has validated whatever else he has said in the same speech about his claim, unless they explain why only certain statements from the speech correctly reflect his beliefs and others do not.

The points we have made above apply also to some other quotations in the *Mahzarnama*, which we deal with below.

2. The second quotation is part of a letter by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, written and published in August 1899. The end part of the letter has been quoted, in which he writes that he believes in the Quran, in the Holy Prophet as *khatam-ul-aniya*, and in Islam, and makes no claim except that of being a servant of Islam. Within the quoted extract he writes:

"Therefore, it is befitting that no one must entertain in his heart anything contrary to this declaration of mine, otherwise he will be liable to be accountable to God for it."³⁶

But before the extract quoted here by the Qadiani *Jama'at*, he writes in this letter:

"There are many such revelations [of mine] in which the word *nabi* or *rasul* has occurred regarding myself. However, that person is mistaken who thinks that by this prophethood and messengership is meant real prophethood and messengership ... As these words, which are only in a metaphorical sense, cause trouble in Islam, leading to very bad consequences, these terms should not be used in our community's common talk and everyday language. It should be believed from the bottom of the heart that prophethood has terminated with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, as Allah Almighty says: 'He is the Messenger of Allah and the *Khatam-un-nabiyyin*.' To deny this verse, or to belittle it, is in fact to separate

oneself from Islam. ... It should be known that God has ended all His prophethoods and messengerships with the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet.”³⁷

This is also a part of the same “declaration of mine”, the declaration about which Hazrat Mirza sahib warns that if any follower of his holds a belief contrary to it then that person “will be liable to be accountable to God for it”. The Qadiani *Jama'at* should ponder whether their beliefs are contrary to these important statements in this declaration, and indeed whether they are trying to keep them out of public view.

3. The third and fourth quotations are from the book *A'inah-i Kamalat Islam* and are eulogies of the Holy Prophet Muhammad in poetry and prose.³⁸ This is the book in which, in an Arabic section addressing the Muslim spiritual leaders of India, Afghanistan and Arab countries, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has written about his claim as follows:

“O brothers, I have been sent as a *muhaddas* from God, to you and to all those on earth.”³⁹

“It does not befit God that He should send a prophet after the *Khatam-un-nabiyyin*, or that He should re-start the system of prophethood after having terminated it.”⁴⁰

“I am not a prophet but a *muhaddas* from God, and a recipient of Divine revelation so that I may re-vitalise the religion of the Holy Prophet.”⁴¹

A *muhaddas* is one who is not a prophet but receives revelation from God. The Qadiani *Jama'at* have quoted his praises for the great status of the Holy Prophet Muhammad from this book. But it is also a measure of the status of the Holy Prophet, from this same book, that God will not send a prophet after the *Khatam-un-nabiyyin*.

4. A little later, a quotation is given from near the end of the book *Siraj Munir*.⁴² Yet this is the book at the beginning of which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote so powerfully:

“Do not level false allegations against me that I have claimed to be a prophet in the real sense. Have you not

read that a *muhaddas* too is a *mursal* [messenger]?...

We believe and acknowledge that, according to the real meaning of *nubuwwat* (prophethood), after the Holy Prophet Muhammad no new or former prophet can come. The Holy Quran forbids the appearance of any such prophets. But in a metaphorical sense God can call any recipient of revelation as *nabi* or *mursal*. ... This is the knowledge which God has given me. Let him understand, who will. This very thing has been disclosed to me that the doors of real prophethood are fully closed after the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*, the Holy Prophet Muhammad. According to the real meaning, no new prophet nor an ancient prophet can now come.”⁴³

5. The most remarkable quotation comes a little further along and it is from the book *Anjam Atham*.⁴⁴ Here the lengthy quotation itself, which is also often presented by the Lahore Ahmadiyya *Jama'at*, shows that he did not claim to be a prophet and regarded the Holy Prophet Muhammad as the last Prophet. In this case we need only to refer to the quotation as presented by the Qadiani *Jama'at* without going outside it. The extracts that we give below from this quotation are in the words of the English translation presented by the Qadiani *Jama'at*.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad asks rhetorically whether:

“a person who believes in the Holy Quran — and firmly holds that the *Khatam-un-Nabiyyin* verse is the Word of God — can he ever assert that, ‘I, too, am a Messenger and Prophet after the Holy Prophet’?”

What could be clearer than this! He then continues:

“A seeker after justice must remember that my humble self has never — never — claimed to be a Prophet or Messenger in the real and literal sense of the term. And employing a word in its figurative sense and using it as part of everyday parlance consistent with lexical usage does not mean disbelief (*kufr*). For my part, I wouldn't have used this term for it is likely to mislead the lay Muslims.”

Again we ask, what could be clearer? He continues:

“But since I am the Appointed One from God, so I could not have concealed those instances of Divine dialogues and converse which Allah, in His Grand Majesty, granted to me and in which the words Prophet and Messenger have repeatedly occurred. But I repeat it over and over again that the word *Mursal* (one who is sent), or *Rasool* (Messenger) or *Nabi* (Prophet) which has been used in those revelations in reference to me, is not meant in its literal and real meaning.”

He writes here that he does not wish to use the words *nabi* (prophet), *rasul* and *mursal* (messenger) about himself but he cannot conceal his revelations containing these terms about him. So he repeats it “over and over again” that these are not meant in their real sense. He then continues to tell us what is “real”:

“The real truth which I solemnly affirm on the basis of evidence is that Our Prophet is *Khaatamul Anbiyaa* and no prophet will appear after him neither any of the old ones nor any new ones.”

With such statements of the Promised Messiah being confirmed and validated by the Qadiani *Jama'at* in what they themselves describe as “an important historical document” presented in 1974 to the National Assembly of Pakistan, a document whose purpose was “to establish that the members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at* are Muslims and to explain its basic tenets”, we are justified in concluding that they retracted their belief that the Promised Messiah was a prophet, or at least that they themselves have thrown the greatest doubt on this belief, by presenting such statements from him.

The theory of a change of claim in 1901 was so baseless and self-contradictory that the Qadiani *Jama'at* kept on modifying it from the very beginning.⁴⁵ For several years now, there have been almost no members of the Qadiani *Jama'at* who are aware of this belief of theirs, or who realise that if they put forward the Promised Messiah's writings about prophethood published

before 1901 as valid, they are destroying the very basis on which their *Jama'at* built the belief that he claimed to be a prophet.

Meaning of *al-akhira* in the Quran, 2:4

The following verse of the Quran requires Muslims to believe in the revelation sent to the Holy Prophet Muhammad and the revelations sent to prophets before him, and mentions a third belief:

“and who believe in what has been revealed to you (O Muhammad) and what was revealed before you, and of the Hereafter they are sure.”

The words “and of the Hereafter (*al-akhira*) they are sure” are always taken to mean belief in the life after death. In 1915, the Qadiani *Jama'at* published a statement claiming that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had stated verbally before some followers that Allah had intimated to him that *al-akhira* here indicates the revelation sent to the Promised Messiah, because this word means “what is to come” and it is mentioned in the context of revelation sent to the Holy Prophet and to prophets before him. This new interpretation made the revelation received by the Promised Messiah to be *wahy nubuwwat*, the kind of revelation which is received by none other than prophets and which a Muslim is required to believe in as an essential of Islam.

There was no corroborating evidence from the lifetime of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad that he gave such a meaning of *al-akhira*. The Lahore Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* refuted this interpretation at the time. The Promised Messiah himself took *al-akhira* in this verse to mean life after death. For instance in 1904, quoting these words about *al-akhira* from this very verse, he gives them the following meaning: “and he who seeks salvation must believe in the hour to come, that is, *qiyamat*, and must believe in reward and punishment”.⁴⁶

Later on, when the Qadiani *Jama'at* published their English and Urdu translations of the Quran, they used this new interpretation in translating these words. In English, the translation of *al-akhira* was given as “what is yet to come” and this was explained in the footnote as “the message or revelation which is to come”.⁴⁷ In Urdu, the translation in both *Tafsir-i Kabir* (larger

commentary) and *Tafsir-i Saghir* (shorter commentary) was “*A’inda honay wali (mau’ud batain)*”, or what is promised to happen in the future, and the commentary in the larger work explains this by saying: “*Al-akhira* means the revelation to come after the Holy Prophet”.⁴⁸

However, the edition of the translation *Tafsir-i Saghir* published in 1990 contains a Publisher’s Note stating that “objections had been raised from some quarters that at certain places there was, God forbid, a deliberate departure from the translation”. Therefore, says the Publisher’s Note, the standard, literal translation has now been used at those points and the earlier rendering moved to a footnote. The note adds that the *khalifa* Mirza Tahir Ahmad has himself considered all such places about which objections were raised, and made these changes. A list of such verses is also provided. One of those places is this very verse. *Al-akhira* in it is now translated by the equivalent Urdu word *akhirat*, and the earlier translation moved to a footnote.

This amendment is, of course, desirable, and in fact it shows that the Lahore Ahmadiyya *Jama’at* was right to challenge the wrong translation of *al-akhira* as the revelation to come. The question it leaves us with is whether the Qadiani *Jama’at* still regard as true the statement they published in 1915, that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad said that *Allah had intimated to him* that *al-akhira* in this verse means his revelation.

Conclusion

As mentioned on pages 119–120, three doctrines held by the Qadiani *Jama’at* were the basis of the split, namely, that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was the ‘Ahmad’ who fulfilled the prophecy of Jesus referred to in the Quran, that he was a prophet, and that those Muslims who do not accept him formally are outside the fold of Islam. Regarding these, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad had written: “That these beliefs have my full concurrence, I readily admit.” In this chapter we have proved, conclusively and irrefutably, that these beliefs were all retracted and withdrawn by the Qadiani *Jama’at*, two of them directly and one implicitly, within sixty years of the split of 1914.

Notes to this chapter:

1. *The Ahmadiyya Movement — IV: The Split*, original edition, p. 25. The 1994 reprint, *Split in the Ahmadiyya Movement*, p. 18.
2. The English translation of *A'inah-i Sadaqat* was published as *The Truth about the Split* in 1924, and has been revised and reprinted since. The latest edition was published in 2007, from which we have taken all the quotations given here.
3. *The Truth about the Split*, 2007 edition, p. 56–57.
4. This book is the text of a speech delivered by him at the December 1915 annual gathering (*Jalsa*) in Qadian. It is included in the collection of Mirza Mahmud Ahmad's writings *Anwar-ul-'Ulum*, v. 3, book number 5.
5. *Anwar-i Khilafat*, p. 18–19; *Anwar-ul-'Ulum*, v. 3, number 5, p. 83-84.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 23; *Anwar-ul-'Ulum*, v. 3, number 5, p. 88.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 24; *Anwar-ul-'Ulum*, v. 3, number 5, p. 89.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 31; *Anwar-ul-'Ulum*, v. 3, number 5, p. 96.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 33; *Anwar-ul-'Ulum*, v. 3, number 5, p. 97.
10. *The Ahmadiyya Movement — IV: The Split*, original edition, p. 25. The 1994 reprint, *Split in the Ahmadiyya Movement*, p. 18.
11. *The Truth about the Split*, 2007 edition, p. 58.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 59
13. The Five Volume Commentary of the Holy Quran in English, footnote 4226 from page 2620 to 2622. Almost the same footnote is in their one-volume 'Short Commentary', edited by Malik Ghulam Farid.
14. *The Truth about the Split*, 2007 edition, p. 144.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 146.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
18. The report produced by this Court of Inquiry in July 1954 is commonly known as the Munir report, after the name of the presiding judge, Justice Mohammad Munir.
19. Signed statement of the advocate of the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya Rabwah, published as the Urdu pamphlet *Tahqiqati Commission kay Sat Swalon ka Jawab*, publisher Dar-ut-Tajleed, Lahore, September 1953, p. 1, 2.
20. *Tahqiqati 'adalat main Hazrat Imam Jama'at Ahmadiyya ka Bayan* ('Testimony of the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community at the Court of Inquiry'), published by Dar-ut-Tajleed, Lahore.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
25. *Daura Maghrib*, p. 217.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Mahzarnama — the Memorandum*, English version published in 2003 by Islam International Publications, Tilford, U.K., p. iii.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
29. *The Truth about the Split*, 2007 edition, p. 60.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 60–61.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
32. *Haqiqat-un-Nubuwwah*, by Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, published March 1915, p. 120–121. See *Anwar-ul-‘Ulum*, v. 2, number 10, p. 444–445.
33. *Mahzarnama*, English version, p. 69.
34. *Malfuzat*, 5-volume edition, v. 1, p. 221–256 (1984 edition, v. 1, p. 331–386).
35. *Malfuzat*, 5-volume edition, v. 1, p. 229 (1984 edition, v. 1, p. 344).
36. *Mahzarnama*, English version, p. 70.
37. Letter dated 7 August 1899, published in *Al-Hakam*, v. iii, no. 29, 17 August 1899.
38. *Mahzarnama*, English version, p. 70–72.
39. *Ainah-i Kamalat Islam in Ruhani Khaza’in*, v. 5, p. 367.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 377.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 383.
42. *Mahzarnama*, English version, p. 75.
43. *Siraj Munir in Ruhani Khaza’in*, v. 12, p. 4–5.
44. *Mahzarnama*, English version, p. 81–82.
45. The history of the collapse of this theory is discussed in my translation of *Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala* with accompanying material, published in 2011 by Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore Publications U.K., in chapter 7.
46. *Al-Hakam*, 10–17 October 1904, p. 9.
47. The Five Volume Commentary, the first volume of which, containing this translation, was published in 1947. See verse 2:5 on p. 34.
48. *Tafsir-i Kabir*, p. 144, sub-heading.