



The Light — U.K. edition

March 2007

The Lahore Ahmadiyya monthly magazine from U.K.

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Assalamu alaikum: Our next meeting —

Date: **Sunday 4th March 2007**

Time: **3.00 p.m.**

Speaker: **Dr Mujahid Ahmad Saeed**

Topic: **Mother's Day**

Regular activities:

Darus-i Quran and Hadith:

Every Friday at 2.30 p.m.

Meetings of the Executive:

First Sunday of every month at 2.00 p.m.

Meeting of the Jama'at:

First Sunday of every month at 3.00 p.m.

Who are Gog and Magog?

*Winston Churchill's speech at the
Guildhall, London, 1951*

Gog and Magog are mentioned in the Bible as well as the Holy Quran. There has been discussion as to who these tribes were, especially because Gog and Magog are prophesied to re-appear in the distant future and fight against the followers of the true religion with powerful forces and eventually be defeated by the power of God. According to the Quran, chapter 18, Gog and Magog were mischief-making tribes creating trouble for people of a certain area, considered to be between the Caspian

Sea and the Black Sea. To contain them, a ruler called Dhu-l-Qarnain built a wall to confine them to the other side. The Quran also states that one day that wall will crumble and these people will surge out. A widespread belief among Muslims was that Gog and Magog, since that time, are digging a way to emerge from behind the wall, and one day they will succeed in getting out and create great mischief in the world. After their emergence, it is believed that Jesus would descend to earth to combat them.

Connection with Britain

When Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad laid claim to be the *Mujaddid* who fulfilled the prophecy of the coming of the Messiah among the Muslims, the question arose as to who were the Gog and Magog

that had spread in the world before his coming? Hazrat Mirza *sahib* argued that the European powers of his day fulfilled that description. Subsequently, when Maulana Muhammad Ali did further research from Western sources on the origin of Gog and Magog he noted the following:

“There is, however, another point worth considering, and that is **the gigantic effigies of Gog and Magog in Guildhall, London.** ‘It is known,’ says the Encyclopaedia Britannica, ‘that effigies similar to the present existed in London as early as the time of Henry V’. ... the preservation of the effigies of Gog and Magog in England, which can be traced to a very early period in English history, makes it probable that the Angles or the Saxons had in very ancient times some connection with the Scythians or other tribes living north of the Caucasus or the Black Sea.” — (Footnote on verse 18:94 of the Quran; bolding ours)

Gog and Magog feature in legends about the early history of Britain and particularly London. Some of these legends are mentioned on the official website of the Lord Mayor’s Show of London (see www.lordmayorsshow.org). The Lord Mayor’s Show is one of the longest established annual events in London, dating back to 1215, and is held on a Saturday in November. The above website contains a page entitled *Gog and Magog*, which tells us:

“Towards the head of the procession you will see two benevolent giants. They are Gog and Magog, the traditional guardians of the City of London who have been carried in the Lord Mayor’s Show since the reign of Henry V. They are descended from the pagan giants of early English pageantry and their history is buried in ancient legends of Britain’s origins.”

www.lordmayorsshow.org/visitors/history/gogmagog

The various, differing legends about Gog and Magog being in Britain are recounted in many old British books. There is, for example, *The History of Britain*, published 1670, by the famous poet John Milton (of *Paradise Lost* fame) which mentions these legends. Then there are the two ancient oaks in Glastonbury, Somerset, known as Gog and Magog since ancient times, that people visit till today. In addition, there are the Gog Magog Hills, located three miles south of Cambridge, whose name again is connected with such a legend.

The Lord Mayor’s Show website mentioned above says that the statues of Gog and Magog displayed at Guildhall were destroyed during the

Great Fire of London in 1666. They were replaced, but the replacements, being weak, were soon destroyed by mice and rats. The website then says:

“They were replaced in 1708 by a magnificent pair of wooden statues carved by Captain Richard Saunders. These giants, on whom the modern versions are based, lasted for over two hundred years before destruction in the blitz. They, in turn, were replaced by the pair which can now be seen in Guildhall, and which were carved by David Evans in 1953. They were a gift to the City by Alderman Sir George Wilkinson who had been Lord Mayor in 1940, at the time of the destruction of the Saunders versions.”

Churchill’s speech after restoration

As noted in the above quotation, new statues of Gog and Magog were installed at Guildhall to replace those destroyed in 1940 by the German bombing of London during the Second World War. At Guildhall every year in November the “Lord Mayor’s Banquet” is held, being the first banquet to be hosted by the new Lord Mayor who takes office at that time. It is a tradition, still followed to the present, that the Prime Minister of the U.K. makes a major speech on world affairs at this Banquet. At the Lord Mayor’s Banquet in November 1951, just before the statues were replaced, the Prime Minister delivering the speech was Mr (later Sir) Winston Churchill. His speech was reported in *The Times* of the following day, 10th November 1951. Reproduced below are some extracts from his speech, which we quote directly from a copy of *The Times* obtained from a library archive. Mr Churchill said:

“ I am so glad, my Lord Mayor, that you have decided to replace the effigies of Gog and Magog. It was to me a painful blow when they were burnt to ashes by Hitler’s bombs. They will look fine in the gallery up there. Indeed, I think they are not only ancient but up to date.

It seems to me that they represent none too badly the present state of world politics. World politics, like the history of Gog and Magog, are very confused and much disputed. Still, I think there is room for both Gog and Magog.

On the one side is Gog, and on the other Magog. But be careful, my Lord Mayor, when you put them back, to keep them from colliding with each other, for, if that happens, both Gog and Magog would be smashed to atoms and we should all have to begin all over again — and begin from the bottom of the pit.

Whatever are the differences between Gog and Magog, at any rate they are made out of the same materials. Let me tell you what the materials are: vast masses of warm-hearted human beings wanting to do their best for their country and their neighbours and longing to build their homes and bring up their children in peace, freedom, and the hope of better times for the young when they grow up.

That is all they ask of their rulers and governors and guides. That is the dear wish in the hearts of all the peoples of mankind. How easy it ought to be, with modern science standing tiptoe ready to open the doors of a golden age, to grant them this humble, modest desire.

But then there came along all these tribes of nationalists, ideologues, revolutionaries, class warfare experts, and imperialists, with their nasty regimentation of academic doctrinaires, striving night and day to work them all up against one another so that homes, instead of being built, are bombed; and the breadwinner is killed, and the broken housewife left to pick the surviving children, maimed and scorched, out of the ashes.

There is the structure; that is the composition which Gog and Magog have in common, and there is the fate which both will suffer if you, my Lord Mayor, and others concerned in our City affairs and some who deal with world affairs, do not act with ordinary common sense and keep Gog and Magog from falling upon each other.

Somehow or other these ideas about Gog and Magog seem to have some suggestive relationship to the discussions which are taking place in Paris at the present time. But we must not let our thought be complicated by our imagery. So here I leave Gog and Magog, hoping I may have the chance to see them both in their places as you promise.

What is the world scene as presented to us today? Mighty forces, armed with fearful weapons, are baying at each other across a gulf which, I have the feeling tonight, neither wishes and both fear to cross, but into which they may tumble and drag each other to their common ruin.

On the one side stand all the armies and air forces of Soviet Russia and all their Communist satellites, agents, and devotees in so many countries. On the other are what are called "the western democracies," with their far superior resources, at present only partly organized, gathering themselves together around the United States with its possession of the mastery of the atomic bomb."

— End of quote from Churchill's speech.



Guildhall, City of London

Editorial in *The Light* after speech

After the appearance of Mr Churchill's speech, the Editor of *The Light* at the time, Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, who had been Imam of the Woking Mosque and Mission in England during the 1930s, wrote an editorial in its issue of 16 December 1951. We quote from this below:

Editorial begins

"Even when Gog and Magog are let loose and they sally forth from every elevated place" (Holy Quran, 21:96).

Mr Churchill's reference to Gog and Magog at the banquet of the Lord Mayor of London on the evening of 9 November, as reproduced on our front page, provides a shining proof of the truth of divine knowledge. References to these two mysterious figures in the religious traditions are persistent since the earliest period of our scriptural history. In Ezekiel 38:1-4 we read:

"And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, And say, thus saith the Lord God; I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws."

The Holy Quran, revealed long afterwards, speaks of this same Gog and Magog as making mischief in the land (18:94). It also speaks of their acquiring irresistible power in the world as the verse quoted at the top clearly indicates.

The Hadith literature refers to Gog and Magog in connection with the appearance of *Dajjal* or anti-Christ and incidentally says:

“Verily Gog and Magog are of the progeny of Adam” (*Kanz-ul ‘Ummal*, vol. 7, no. 2158).

This makes it clear that according to Muslim traditions Gog and Magog represent two different races who at a certain point of time are to prevail in the world. But the followers of the Bible have never been very clear about it. We have, for instance, the following observations on this subject in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*:

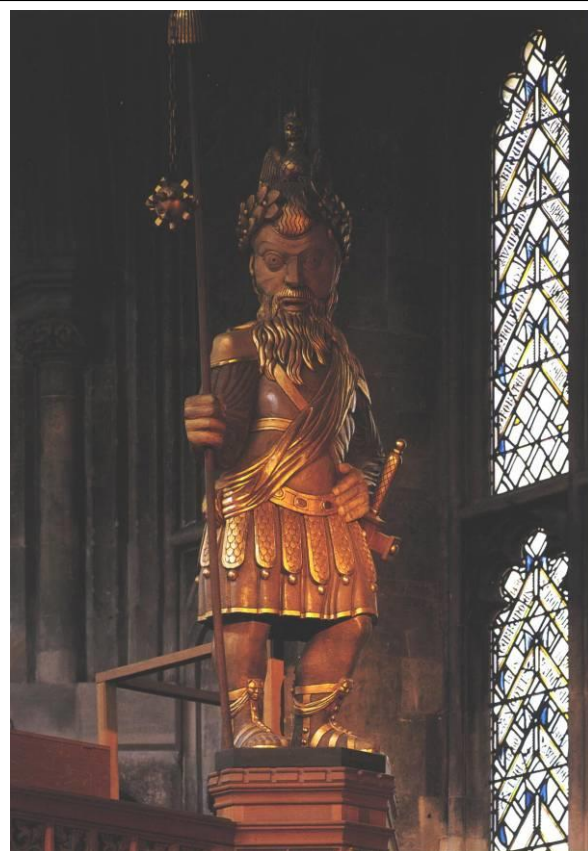
“Magog in Genesis 10:2 and 1 Chronicles 1:5 is a ‘son’ of Japhet. The name, which should be connected in some way with Gog, occurs also in Ezekiel 39:6, where Magog is spoken of as exposed to judgement. Gog is to come from the remote part of the North. ... The order of the names would place Magog between Cappadocia and Media, that is, Armenia or some part of it. ... The traditional identification with the Scythians is plausible but without definite evidence.”

So it takes us nowhere. It does not tell us whether these two names signify any nations or they refer to some countries. Latest researches on the subject embodied in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and *Encyclopaedia Americana* are not very helpful either. The article ‘Gog and Magog’ in the former reads as follows:

“Gog, a hostile power that is to manifest itself in the world immediately before the end of things (Ezek, xxxviii sq. Rev. xx). Magog, who is joined in the latter passage, is the name of Gog’s origin in the former. In Gen. x 2 and Ezek xxxviii 2 Magog appears to represent a locality in Armenia.

The legends attached to the gigantic effigies (dating from 1708 and replacing those destroyed in the Great Fire) of Gog and Magog in Guildhall, London, are of unknown date. According to the *Recuyell des histoires de Troye*, Gog and Magog were the survivors of a race of giants descended from the 33 wicked daughters of Diocletian; after their brethren had been slain by Brute and his companions, Gog and Magog were brought to London (Troynovant) and compelled to officiate as porters at the gate of the royal palaces. Effigies similar to the present existed in London as early as the time of Henry V.” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th edition).

So, far from telling us clearly the true significance of these two names the writer in this *Encyclopaedia* leaves the whole question, particularly the



Statue of Gog in Guildhall

London effigies, in a confused state. The second *Encyclopaedia*, viz. *Americana*, has practically the same thing to say about these names. Let us reproduce all that it has to say in this connection....¹

The *Jewish Encyclopaedia* would appear to be more helpful. For it says:

“Magog must be a people located east of the Cimmerians and west of the Medes. But in the list of nations (Genesis:10) the term connotes rather the complex of barbarian peoples dwelling at the extreme north and north-east of the geographical survey covered by the chapter. ... In Ezekiel 38:2, Magog occurs as the name of a country; in Ezekiel 39:6, as that of a northern people, the leader of whom is Gog.”

And this summing up of the Bible position seems quite appropriate. It was, therefore, a distinct departure on the part of the Quran from this loose tradition to present Gog and Magog as two different nations who were destined to influence human affairs in the latter days as has been done in the verses referred to above.

¹ We have omitted this quotation in our present issue (March 2007) to avoid repetition.



Statue of Magog in Guildhall

In the Hadith, that is, the reported sayings of the Holy Prophet, Gog and Magog have been mentioned as another name for *Dajjal* or Anti-Christ and are associated with the appearance of the Promised Messiah. The term “Dajjal” describes the religious and cultural aspects of the people concerned, while Gog and Magog describe their racial identity. But detailed as are the descriptions of *Dajjal* (Anti-Christ) and Gog and Magog in the Hadith, it never occurred to any Muslim scholar before our times that these people would be some well-known and highly cultured nations of the world with whom the Muslims were to deal and it was left for Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, to recognise these people and proclaim in clear terms without any doubt or hesitation:

“As for Gog and Magog, it is now beyond all doubt that these are two prosperous nations of the world of whom one is the British and the other the Russians. ... Both these nations are mentioned in the Bible” (*Izala Auham*, p. 502).

In further clarification of the same view, the Muslim Messiah goes on to say:

“A similar view should be taken of Gog and Magog. These are two old nations of the world who could not openly overpower

others in the previous ages and were found in a weak state. But Allah says that both of them will emerge from this obscurity in the latter days. In other words, they will manifest themselves in glorious power. Thus He says in the chapter *The Cave*: ‘And We will make some of them fall like waves on the others.’ That is to say, that these two nations, after having overpowered others, will attack each other” (*Izala Auham*, p. 508).

Thus, with the light provided by heaven, the Messiah, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, not only identifies the nations signified by Gog and Magog but also discloses a mighty prophecy contained in the Quranic words. When Hazrat Mirza disclosed this prophecy, the Slavonic peoples, now gathered under the mighty banner of Russia, were neither united nor so remarkably powerful as they are today. Besides, Russia has all throughout been an ally of the British so far in all major international conflicts, in spite of British apprehensions to the contrary, so much so that in the last Global War, Communist Russia was found to fight on the side of Great Britain in the same way as Feudal Russia fought in the First World War. And yet the prophecy is there about a final clash between these two races, the fulfilment of which appears to be quite imminent now, about half a century after its announcement in modern times. We say ‘modern times’ advisedly because in reality the prophecy is nearly 1400 years old, because ultimately it is a Quranic prophecy contained in the words:

“And on that day We will leave a part of them in conflict with another part” (18:99).

The disclosure, however, of this concealed prophecy owes its origin to a fresh revelation, a minor one though, received by the Muslim Messiah. Intellectual Islam became more or less satisfied about the true identity of Gog and Magog when Hazrat Mirza advanced his cogent reasonings. Men of great intellectual fame like the late Dr. Muhammad Iqbal were impressed with the soundness of Hazrat Mirza’s arguments, and tacitly, though not openly, enlightened Muslim world opinion came to veer round this revealing interpretation. The task of proclaiming this truth to the world, however, was reserved for the small Ahmad-iyya Community. And it is evident that the proclamation was not a pleasant task. To tell the mightiest nations of the world holding the torch of knowledge and culture in their hands that they are the Anti-Christ and Gog and Magog who are leading humanity astray and filling the world with mischief, is certainly a task which any people will

hesitate to undertake. And yet the people of the Ahmadiyya Movement had to do it, because to them it was a revealed truth and a prophecy the fulfilment of which would constitute a great sign of the Lord. So, however meagre their resources, moral and material, they set out on this sacred venture in the belief that a time was bound to come when the events of the world would themselves demonstrate the truth of their assertion.

God, however, sometimes comes to the help of His servants sooner than is expected. Even before the world outside would recognise the truth of this great prophecy, the nations for whom it was made and who were in a way the target of this reproachful announcement, have themselves come forward to vindicate its truth. It is really amazing how Mr. Winston Churchill, one of the front-rank leaders of the western nations, has come forward with the statement that Gog and Magog of the traditions are no other than the two blocks in the present Western power-politics, facing one another in the deadliest array. He frankly admits that the one name represents the Anglo-American block and the other the Russian — an admirable frankness, indeed, indicating great spiritual possibilities.

It is really unintelligible how these two effigies in Guildhall came to be installed there if they do not represent some kind of ancestry for these people. To say, as the Bible does, that one of these names represents some race and the other a territory, is poor logic, in so far at least as these effigies are concerned. Both of them must belong to the same category. If one is a person the other must also be a person and both these must be some remote ancestors of these races who venerate their memory in this way.

Be that as it may, Mr. Churchill's eloquent testimony to this fact must be regarded as a great sign not only of the truth of the Quranic revelation but of the revelational origin of Hazrat Mirza's interpretations of the Quran and the Hadith. Sensible humanity and the enlightened world of Islam cannot help taking it as such.

End of Editorial

Letter to Churchill by the Editor of *The Light*

There then ensued the following correspondence between the editor who wrote the above editorial, namely, Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, and representatives of the British government. This was printed in *The Light* of 1st February 1952.

Hon'ble Mr. Winston Churchill,
Prime Minister,
10, Downing Street,
London (England)

Sir,

Excuse me for encroaching upon your valuable time. We read in the papers with great interest your illuminating speech at the Banquet of the Lord Mayor of London held on November 9th wherein you spoke about Gog and Magog.

As students of the religious traditions common to you and us Muslims, the acts described in this speech appeared to us as very revealing.

We shall, therefore, deem it a great favour of yours if you can tell us in brief about the sources of your information about Gog and Magog.

Apologising once more for this intrusion on your time and thanking you in anticipation.

We remain,
Yours sincerely,
Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad

Reply

Office of the High Commissioner
For the United Kingdom
4, Race Course Road,
Lahore

9th January 1952

Sir,

I have been directed by the Commonwealth Secretary, Lord Ismay, to reply to your letter to the Hon'ble Mr. Winston Churchill on the 29th November.

I am to say that Mr Churchill's allusions to Gog and Magog in his Guildhall speech came in part from memory and in part from the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

An extract from the Encyclopaedia Britannica has been sent to me for onward transmission to you. I hope that this extract will help to answer your question and I hope it may be useful to you.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
T. W. Keeble
Deputy High Commissioner
for the United Kingdom

**Extract from *Encyclopaedia Britannica*
forwarded by the Deputy High Commissioner**

“Gog and Magog are names several times used in the Bible, and subsequently given to the figures of giants in the Guildhall, London. Magog is spoken of by the writer of Genesis as son of Japhet; Ezekiel speaks of Gog, prince of Magog, as a terrible ruler in the far north, allied with the Persians, Armenians and Cimmerians against Israel; Gog and Magog in the Apocalypse appear as co-ordinate terms comprehending all future enemies of the Kingdom of God. The name Magog was often applied generally to all unknown races north of the Caucasus. The Guildhall giants were images of the last two survivors of a race of giants who inhabited Albion. Brute and his Trojans finally overcame these giants, leading the last two of his prisoners to London, where they were kept as porters at the palace-gate. This is Caxton’s account; another one represents one of the giants as Gog-Magog, the other as a British giant who killed him, named Corineus.

These giants stood in London since the days of Henry V. The earlier figures were burned in the Great Fire of 1666 and new ones, 14 feet high, were constructed in 1708. The ancient effigies, which were of wickerwork and pasteboard, were carried through the streets in the Lord Mayor’s Shows; and copies of the old ones were in the show of 1837. The later figures were destroyed in the aerial bombardment of London in 1940.”

Reply by Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad

To The Deputy High Commissioner of UK,
4, Race Course Road, Lahore

Sir,

I acknowledge with thanks your letter No. 45/52/24, dated 9th January, written on behalf of Hon’ble Mr Winston Churchill.

I beg leave to respectfully submit that the extract from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* which you have so kindly enclosed in your letter cannot fully explain all that Mr. Churchill said in his Guildhall speech. It is however interesting to note that Mr. Churchill admits having spoken “in part from memory”. As we all know, memory is not creative but only retains and reproduces what is experienced in the surroundings. It is evident, therefore, that Mr. Churchill got his ideas about the connection of Gog and Magog with the Slavonic and Teutonic races from sources which he does not clearly remember. We really wonder if this source is Islamic. So far there seems to be no evidence of its being otherwise.

We take the liberty of sending to your address by today’s mail a copy of Maulana Muhammad Ali’s book, ‘Anti-Christ and Gog and Magog’, and also a copy of our weekly, ‘The Light’, dated December 16th, 1951, both of which contain discussions on the subject, in the hope that you will, as a seeker of truth, go through them yourself and forward the same on to the Hon’ble Mr. Churchill in the proper course.

Thanking in anticipation,
Yours truly,
Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad

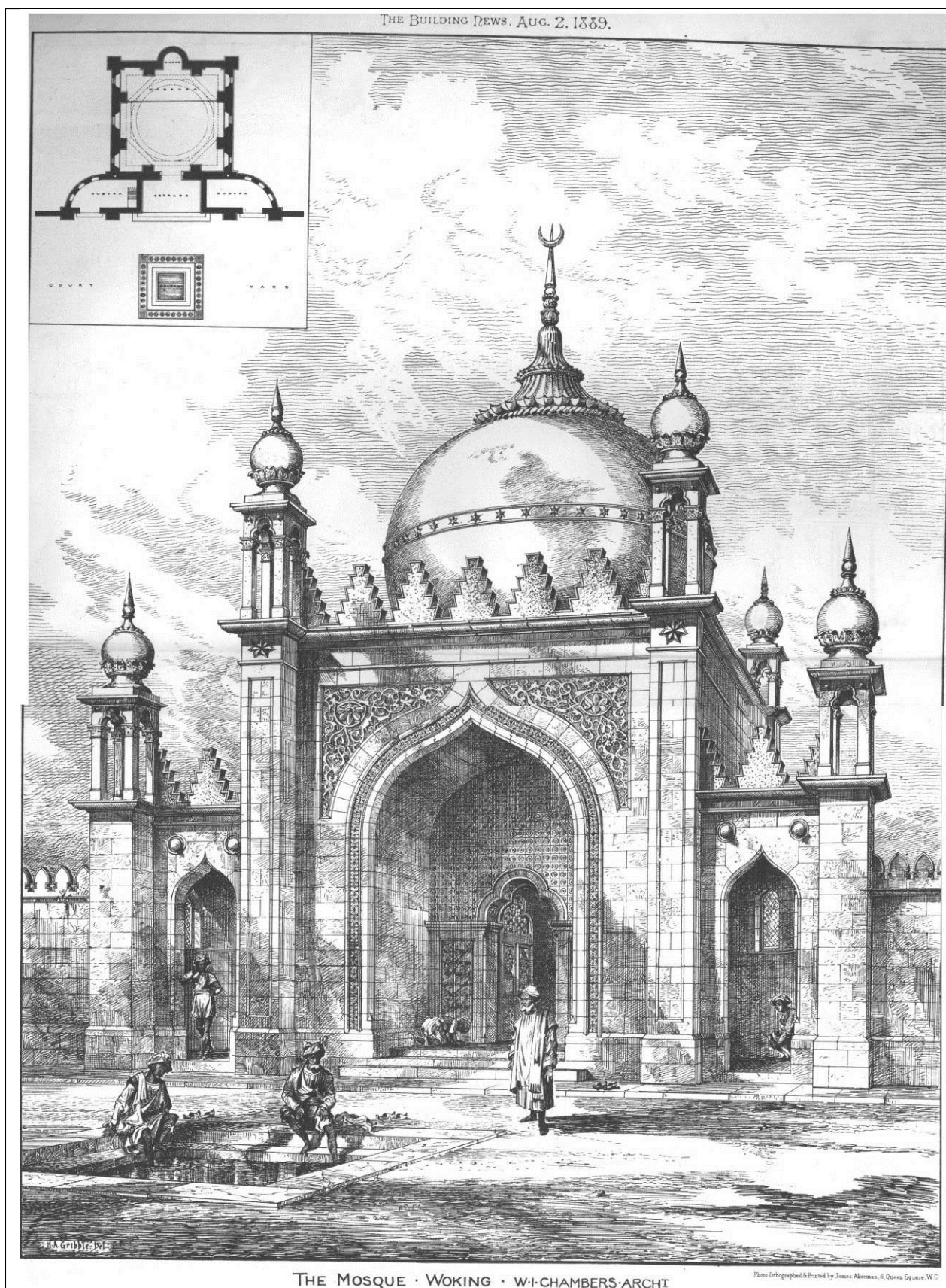
Final comment on above compilation

I do not think it is a necessary condition of the fulfilment of this prophecy that two great powers must be directly opposing each other in polarised blocs, as in the Cold War. Such a situation did not exist when Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad applied this prophecy to the European powers of the time, nor when Maulana Muhammad Ali produced most of his research and writings about it. The Holy Quran too does not necessarily imply that Gog and Magog are two rival powers, but that these powers would dominate everyone else in the world. The Hadith prophecies speak of Gog and Magog both together making mischief in the world and against Muslims. In some of the English legends, ‘Gogmagog’ is one giant. The Gog and Magog giants of Guildhall are regarded as together being guardians of London, and not as opposing rivals.

The important points are that they fulfil the words of the Quran “Gog and Magog do mischief in the earth” (18:94) and “Even when Gog and Magog are let loose and they sally forth from every elevated place” (21:96). Commenting on this last verse, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote:

“They shall rush forth from every height, i.e. they would show their power and eminence and superiority in every sphere. In terms of worldly power and rule, they would be paramount: discovering and inventing all sorts of sciences and technologies, and bringing out valuable and wonderful industries. In planning and organisation too, they would be superior. ... To sum up, they would tower over and rise above every nation in all fields. ... In other words, in every field where there can be excellence and superiority, they would surpass every other nation. This is the major sign of that nation of the last days known as Gog and Magog.” (*Shahadat-ul-Quran; Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 6, p. 361)

— Compiler, Zahid Aziz



In February 2007 we purchased the drawing shown above. It is an illustration of the Woking Mosque by the architect who designed it, W.I. Chambers, published in a building news magazine in August 1889, shortly before the Mosque was completed. The original drawing is A3 in size, twice the size above.