

Chapter

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TESTIMONY OF KHAWAJA GHULAM FARID - THE PIOUS SAINT OF CHACHRAN

Letter of Ghulam Farid - the pious saint of Chachran

The clerics and scholars of India and the rest of the Islamic world largely ignored Hazrat Mirza's challenge for imprecation. They neither came out in support of *Hazrat Mirza* nor did they accept his invitation for the imprecation to signal their continued rejection of his truthfulness. The only notable exception was that of Khawaja Ghulam Farid, *Sajjadah Nashin* of Chachran, who claimed among his adherents the Nawab of Bahawalpur. This venerable man wrote a letter of support in Arabic to *Hazrat Mirza*. The translation of the letter is given below:

From the beggar at the gate of Allah, Ghulam Farid, *Sajjadah Nashin*;

To Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian;

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful; All praise is for God, Who is the Lord and the Master, and salutations be on the beloved Messenger, who is the intercessor on the Day of Judgment, and also on his true followers and companions; peace be on you and upon all those who are exerting themselves in the path of goodness. Let it be known after this that I have received

your book in which you have called for an imprecation. Although I was very preoccupied, I did find the time to read a portion of the book, which was elegant in style and censoring in content. O my most beloved! I want you to know that I have held you in great respect from the very beginning because I want to be of those who are rewarded. I have never spoken about you but with respect and honor, and in accordance with the dictates of the best etiquette. And now I want to inform you that I am aware, without any misgivings, about your goodness and am convinced that you are from among the pious men of God, and your effort in the way of Allah is praiseworthy and deserving of a reward. You are blessed by God, the Forgiving; so pray for my forgiveness in the Hereafter as I, too, pray for a most excellent and happy end for you. If I were not worried about making this letter too long, I would have written more. Peace...

Seal

Dispatched from Chachran

This strong assertion in support of the truth at a time when there was a paucity of men with such courage created a very favorable impression on *Hazrat Mirza*. He included this letter in the Supplement to *Anjam Atham* with the following comment:¹

I am including this letter so that other religious leaders may at least follow in his (Khawaja Ghulam Farid's) footsteps and emulate his thinking even if they are unable to render greater assistance. I say in all honesty that God will include whoever supports this humble person even to the extent that Khawaja Ghulam Farid has done in his letter among those who did not want to reject the truth.

In his reply, *Hazrat Mirza* wrote a long poem in Persian to Khawaja Ghulam Farid in which he expressed his pain at the opposition of the clerics who had branded him an infidel. He also stated his articles of faith in the letter. The poem is a masterpiece of wisdom. A translation of a few sections of the poem is given below:

1 Supplement *Anjam Atham*. Page 32.

O the Peerless Man of this Time, pious and pure,
May your righteous disposition be aided by that Being called God.

May the blessings of that Eternal Friend shower upon you,
May the light of that Eternal Beloved shine in you.

O one with a righteous disposition, I am well pleased with you,
I see in you a real man when real men are rare in these times.

.....

My message of love, I send to you,
I sense the aroma of love emanating from your alley.

None from the multitude paid attention to me,
But you are fortunate for it was fated for you.

The whole world reproaches me,
Their cruelty and ruthlessness breaks my heart.

There is none to testify my genuineness by casting a friendly eye,
Out of fear of being labeled an infidel in the stranger's eye.

An infidel, Antichrist and accursed they call me,
And every reprobate lies in wait to kill me.

Look at these players when they initiate their plan,
Their hatred makes them willing to lay down their lives.

A believer, they brand as an infidel,
They consider it a plaything and realize not its gravity.

For he who wrongfully accuses another of heresy,
The charge reverberates on him and lo, he is an infidel.

Despicable is he and really sunk in heresy,
But speaks he of other's infidelity.

Was he but aware of his own internal infidelity,
He would know he is the lowest of the low.

.....

We are Muslims by the Grace of God,
And Mustafa is our chief and leader.

Our mothers gave us birth in this faith,
Steadfast will we hold to it till this world we depart.

This true Book, the name of which is the Quran,
Our goblet is filled with its mystic wine.

The Messenger, whose name is Muhammad,
Forever we will cling on to him.

With (mother's) milk has his affinity entered our bodies and
become our life,
It will depart only when from the body is severed this life.

From all Messengers and other creation, he is superior,
All prophethood has ended with him.

He is the fountain from which we drink,
All those who bloom, are watered by him.

What I receive of revelations and signs,
Are not from me but from the same source.

We receive all light and excellence from him,
Without him, meeting with the Eternal Beloved is difficult.

His word is an integral part of our life,
And all traditions proven as his are part of our faith.

Of Angels and the Day of Judgment,
In respect of which the Messenger of the Lord of Men has stated.

Is all true and from that One Being,
Whoever rejects it deserves to be cursed.

All his miracles are true and genuine,

And their deniers deserve to be cursed.

The miracles of past prophets,
Mentioned unequivocally in the Quran;

We believe them with our life and our heart,
Whoever denies them is from people, callous and wretched.

Any separation from that Book full of light,
Is surely a deprivation and a thing of great loss.

Hazrat Mirza has expressed his faith with the utmost clarity in the last verses of the above poem. Could there be any other reason after this to doubt his Islamic faith except ignorance, obduracy, prejudice and jealousy?

Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi journeys to Chachran

When *Maulvi Batalvi* read the letter of *Khawaja Ghulam Farid*, he forthwith repaired to Chachran, determined to obtain a negation from *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* of his letter to *Hazrat Mirza*. It so happened that a disciple of *Hazrat Mirza* was simultaneously visiting *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* and was a witness to the brazen attempt by *Maulvi Batalvi* to mislead *Khawaja Ghulam Farid*. The disciple watched anxiously to see how the situation would play out, but *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* reassured the disciple and said: "Just watch the finesse with which I will give him the slip." *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* told *Maulvi Batalvi*: "I am not of the same mold as ordinary clerics. I am neither argumentative nor do I give edicts. You have explained your viewpoint and thereby fulfilled your obligation to deliver the message. This is the end of the matter. Please do not pressure me any further." However, *Maulvi Batalvi* was insistent and demanded that either *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* should debate him or give him an edict denouncing *Hazrat Mirza*. When it became clear that *Maulvi Batalvi* would not take no for an answer, *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* quietly got up and went inside his private quarters. He then had some money delivered to *Maulvi Batalvi* through a disciple and *Maulvi Batalvi* left without a whimper. *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* later remarked: "This is the most efficacious way I know of shutting up such clerics."

Record of the life and sayings of *Khawaja Ghulam Farid*

It was the practice in India that disciples recorded incidents and sayings of their saint in a book called *Malfulzat* (Enunciations). After the

death of Khawaja Ghulam Farid, his son had his father's *Malfuzat* published under the title *Isharat Faridi* (Notes of Farid). The book is in Persian and an English translation of the portions of the book pertaining to *Hazrat Mirza* is given below:²

The discussion turned to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani and the arguments and invectives of his opponents. A knowledgeable person in the audience praised his fine qualities and praised him. Respected Khawaja sahib was happy and delighted at these remarks and said: "Mirza sahib spends his entire time in the worship of God, the Glorious and Exalted - he is praying, reading the Quran, or engaged in other similar activities. He has so relentlessly devoted himself to Islam and its propagation that he has invited the Queen in London to the religion of Muhammad, and has also invited the Kings of Russia, France and other countries to the religion of Islam. His entire effort and striving is devoted to the end that these people, namely the Christians, should give up the concept of Trinity and the Cross, which is a clear heresy, and accept the Unity of Allah. But the clerics of today are focused not on the followers of false religions, but on hounding this pious person and branding him as an infidel although he is from the *Ahl-e Sunnat wal Jamaat*, is on the right path himself, and guides others to it. The excellence of his Arabic writings is beyond human ability and every one of his writings is full of truth, wisdom and guidance. For sure he does not reject any of the tenets of *Ahl-e Sunnat wal Jamaat* or the necessary articles of religion."

After this, Khawaja Ghulam Farid said:

"Mirza sahib has drawn attention to many signs in support of his claim of being the *Mahdi*, but there are two signs in particular that he has written about and explained in his books that provide testimony of a high quality. The first is that he says there is in the books of *Hadith* a saying of the Holy Prophet that the *Mahdi* will appear in a village called Qadah,³ and Qadah is in reality the Arabic version of Qadian. The second is that he says that there is a *hadith* narrated by *Imam Muhammad Bakir* in the book, *Dar*

2 *Isharat Faridi*. Extracts from pages 69 to 72.

3 Sheikh Ali Hamza Ali Malik Al Tusi. *Jawarul Asrar* published 1435.

Qutni, which states ‘There are two signs of our *Mahdi* that have never appeared in support of any claimant since the time when Allah created the heaven and the earth. These are that in the month of *Ramzan*, a lunar eclipse will take place on the first night (of the possible nights of lunar eclipse), and a solar eclipse will take place on the middle day (of the possible days of solar eclipse). Accordingly, when the lunar eclipse took place on April 6, 1894 followed by the solar eclipse, Mirza sahib published and widely distributed an announcement that the prophecy of the Holy Prophet about the *Mahdi* has been fulfilled. He put this forward as a proof positive of his veracity and demanded that it is now incumbent on everyone to accept his claim of being the *Mahdi*. In response, the clerics of our time raised a childish objection that the meaning of the *hadith* appears to be that the lunar eclipse will take place on the first night of *Ramzan* and the solar eclipse in the middle of *Ramzan*. In actuality, the lunar eclipse took place on the thirteenth of *Ramzan* and the solar eclipse on the twenty-eighth of *Ramzan* and this is contrary (according to the clerics) to what is stated in the *hadith*. It is a different lunar and solar eclipse (according to them) that will take place in the time of the true *Mahdi*.’

After this, Khawaja Farid said:

“Glory be to Allah! Mirza sahib’s interpretation of this *hadith* is excellent and his reply to the clerics very effective. Harken! Mirza sahib says that there are two signs appointed for the identification and acceptance of the *Mahdi* and these two signs have never appeared in the time of any claimant since the inception of heaven and earth. These two signs are that during the period of the Promised *Mahdi*’s claim, the lunar eclipse will take place on the first of the three nights that the moon can eclipse, i.e. the thirteenth night of *Ramzan*, and the solar eclipse will take place on the middle day of the days in which the sun can eclipse, i.e. the twenty-eighth day of *Ramzan*.” After this His Highness stated: “There is no doubt that the meaning of the *hadith* is exactly as explained by Mirza sahib because the lunar eclipse always takes place on the thirteenth, fourteenth or fifteenth night and the solar eclipse always on the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth or twenty-ninth night. Hence the lunar eclipse that took place on April 6, 1894 was on the thirteenth night of *Ramzan* i.e. the first of the

possible lunar eclipse nights and likewise, the solar eclipse took place on the middle day (of the possible days of solar eclipse).”

In another place, the reference in *Isharat Faridi* to *Hazrat Mirza* is in the following manner:

During this period, *Hafiz Gammu*, a resident of Garhi Ikhtiar Khan, started discussing *Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani* in derogatory and disrespectful terms. The bright countenance of His Highness (Khawaja Farid) faded, and he scolded the *Hafiz* in a raised voice. The *Hafiz* submitted: “Sir! When we do not find the qualities and particulars of Jesus son of Mary, on him be peace, and the attributes of the Promised *Mahdi* in *Mirza sahib*, how can we accept that he is Jesus and *Mahdi*?” His Highness, Khawaja sahib replied: “The attributes of *Mahdi* are hidden and concealed and are not as people have imagined. It would not be strange at all if this *Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani* is the *Mahdi* because according to a *hadith* there are twelve Antichrists⁴ and so likewise there are an equal number of *Mahdis*. There is also a *hadith* that Jesus and the *Mahdi* are one and the same.”⁵ After this, he said: “It is not necessary that all the signs of the *Mahdi* appear exactly in the form that people have imagined in their minds. O *Hafiz*! The facts are against this happening. If things happened exactly as people have imagined them then the entire populace would know him as the *Mahdi* and believe in him. However, we see even with the prophets that their nation splits into groups. Some are able to discern the real situation of the prophet and they believe; some continue to harbor doubts, and yet others are totally unable to fathom his status - they disbelieve and are called infidels. If the real status of a prophet would become manifest to the entire nation then everyone would submit. Just consider the events in the life of the Holy Prophet; his attributes and signs were present in writing in the previous scriptures, but when the Holy Prophet appeared, people did not find some of the signs in accordance with their thinking and understanding. Those who discerned his condition

4 The Translator was unable to locate a *hadith* mentioning twelve Antichrists (*Dajjals*), but there is a reference to thirty Antichrists. See Ahmad bin Hanbal, vol. 2 page 104, line 3.

5 *Kanaz al-Ummal fi Sunani-l-Aqwal wa-l-Afal* (Hadith), by Al-Shaikh Ala al-Din Ali al-Muttaqi, vol. 14, page 363.

believed in him, but those who were unable to do so rejected him. It is the same way with the *Mahdi*. If Mirza sahib is the *Mahdi*, it is not a matter of any great impediment.”

The following extract is from page 75 of this book:

Mirza sahib was being discussed in the gathering. One person remarked that Mirza sahib was determined to crush the Christian belief of Trinity but the religious scholars of the day had turned on him, branded him an infidel and were waging a war against him. Khawaja Sahib said: “Truth will triumph and the side with the truth will triumph.”

In other words, the venerable saint’s view was that the religious scholars could wage their war all they wanted, but the truth will triumph because the side with the truth always triumphed. In a similar vein, the *Malfuzat* contained a comment Khawaja Farid made immediately after a reference to the letter he had written in Arabic (to *Hazrat* Mirza): “Mirza sahib is a pious and holy man. He sent me a book of his revelations, which clearly manifest his high stature and piety.” These words clearly show that Khawaja Farid accepted the Divine origin of *Hazrat* Mirza’s revelations. Another incident was also recorded in this book. It happened when some clerics started vilifying *Hazrat* Mirza and denied his righteousness. Khawaja Farid said: “No! No! He is a righteous man. He is not a liar or fabricator.”

In short, wherever there was a reference to *Hazrat* Mirza in this book, Khawaja Ghulam Farid testified to his righteousness and Divine appointment. As the above passages show, his favorable view of *Hazrat* Mirza was not merely an act of politeness, but based on a knowledge of *Hazrat* Mirza’s external and internal situation. He exhibited a deep understanding of *Hazrat* Mirza’s claims and their supporting arguments, and also the reasons put forward by the opponents for rejecting these claims. It was not just his pious nature that had guided him to accept *Hazrat* Mirza’s claims but also a thorough examination of these claims with their supporting arguments, and the awareness that the objections of the opposition were immature and childish.

The visit of two Sufis to Qadian

In 1906, this humble author took a long leave of absence from work and went to Qadian to spend time in the company of *Hazrat* Mirza. During this period, two disciples of Khawaja Ghulam Farid came and stayed in

Qadian for some days. Khawaja Ghulam Farid had passed away by then. His two disciples had heard their spiritual mentor speak so highly of *Hazrat* Mirza that they had decided to come and see the *Mahdi* for themselves in Qadian. The *Sufi* code of conduct does not allow multiplicity of spiritual guides although the *Sufis* are not averse to accepting good influences from other sources as well. For this reason, they did not take the pledge,⁶ but whenever they entered the presence of *Hazrat* Mirza, they showed great reverence, much to the surprise of everyone else. Their arms would be folded low across their chest as if in prayer, their eyes would be downcast and they would stand respectfully in quiet humility. Their actual names were something different, but out of humility they had adopted the nicknames *Shaitan* (Satan) and *Iblis* (Devil). *Shaitan* had a very melodious voice and whenever he gave the call to prayer, he would break down and weep on reaching the part "I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." In short, they were a very interesting pair. While in Qadian, they spent most of their time sitting around with *Maulvi* Nur-ud-Din. Both were devout individuals, and spent the greater part of the night invoking the name of God.

6 Another example of this code of conduct was the father of Qazi Amir Hussain. He was a *Sufi* scholar and respected *Hazrat* Mirza so much that when he came to Qadian, he would walk barefooted from where he saw the minarets of the Mubarak mosque. However, since he had already taken a pledge at the hands of some other holy person, he did not take the pledge with *Hazrat* Mirza.