

# NAJM AL-HUDA

*(The Star that Guides)*

*by*

*Hadrat Mirza* **GHULAM AHMAD**

*The Promised Messiah, and Mehdi  
and Reformer of the 14th Century A.H.*

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*In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Merciful.*  
*We Praise Him and send blessings on the Noble Messenger.*  
*(May peace and blessings of Allūh be upon him)*

*“Then fell a disaster upon Islam the like of which never happened in any previous age. It became like a city given up to pillage or like a wood filled with beasts, or like a country the population of which has been exterminated... My tears are for Islam, how its ancient splendour has been lost. I grieve over the days to see how they have been changed.*

*“It is therefore proper that you should render thanks to God that the Said Personage has appeared in your time and in your country. It is he who now speaks these words to you.”*

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

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*Najm al-Hudā* was written in a time, late 19th century, when the Christian mission work in India was exceedingly aggressive and the defence as put forth by Muslims in this country was comparatively weaker. The Muslims lacked self-assurance and what was seriously contemplated by the Christian missionaries to be the weakest point in the Muslim religious personality was the *loss* of faith in a living God. This was perhaps the most difficult time in the history of Islam, because the Religion had, unfortunately, succumbed to the miseries of a civilisation which had never before experienced such a catastrophe. There were talks of compromises, alliances and of outright rejection almost everywhere. Whatever be the complexion of the scene it is quite certain that the Muslims had not only lost their political freedom, they had lost the sense of direction also. The task before Hdt. Mirzā Sāhib was therefore of a greater magnitude and responsibility. His mission as *Mujjadid* should be evaluated within the perspective which determines the history of the period

Hdt. Mirzā Sāhib was constrained to work within a milieu which was adverse to the ideas he proclaimed as the basic truths of his divine ministry. It should not be for-

gotton that he did his writing when the English were here, and that British Government had a soft corner for the missionaries who, by no mere accident, also came from the British Isles. Hdt. Mirzā Sāhib had no option ; he had to accept the political situation as it stood then and had to work untiringly for the greater glory of Islam within that situation. Critics have given wrong and misleading interpretations to his commitment in relation to his loyalty to the British Government. To all practical purposes Hdt. Mirzā Sāhib's acceptance of the political situation was in no way a compromise with the alien power. He was actually all against it ; he in fact challenged it on higher levels.

The last decades of the nineteenth century were one of the dark decades of our history. We were the victims and the Europeans were our tormentors ! In our eyes the word : Europe, stood for our complete annihilation ; it also stood for power, culture and material wealth. Things and events obeyed the Europeans ; in India the English Controlled them. Islam had no doubt a glorious past to its credit, but it had only recently come out as a loser. We existed as a matter of history only. In retrospect we found our glory to be in ruins ; in the future we, however, found nothing but blankness. It is rather easier to-day to talk of the future, but in those days the future just did not exist for us. We lived and existed in the present and there was an end to it.

Hdt. Mirzā Sāhib restored our faith in a living God. He said that we were no longer the people whom God had deprived of His grace. His providence still worked for us and that we had only to feel it in our heart. Hdt. Mirzā Sāhib made us feel God as a living experience and thereby abridged for us the distance that lies between the infinite and the finite. Such mystical education was really valuable because



the Aligarh movement was then using a phraseology which had by rationalizing Islam obscured the divine presence and had made God at once impersonal, indifferent and abstract.

By establishing God as a living experience and His providence as an active agent in the movement of our affairs, Hdt. Mirzā Sāhib revealed to us the image of the future which had never been read before by us with as much confidence. He disclosed to us the advent of the Muslim renaissance, and made us realize that the possibilities of the future were once again entrusted to us by the providence. He made us see that Islam was the only true religion that suited the rhythm of the modern times. It is, however, interesting to note that his contemporaries behaved apologetically and thereby had failed to present Islam with assurance. In this respect Hdt. Mirzā Sāhib was the only solitary figure who proclaimed the role and significance of Islam in the world of to-day without the least hesitation. He was positive, assertive and full of confidence in his ministry. And it is in this direction that his importance as a *teacher* lies for us even to-day

*Najm al-Hudā* may be read in the light of what has been said above. The book is, no doubt, a product of its own times but it still possesses its charm and appeal for us. It is never late to remind ourselves that there are better worlds for us than the one we are actually living in. *Najm al-Hudā* takes us back to the days when things were so difficult for us and by so doing it makes us realize our responsibility in the world of to-day.

As regards the language of the book, it seems appropriate to say before hand that *Najm al-Hudā* was originally written

in Arabic, from where it was translated into Urdu. The style and the rhetorical requirements of the times were such that the author had to write on the traditional lines. It is perhaps for that that a good deal of orientalism has come into the English version. But once it is borne in mind that the original work is in Arabic, it would not be difficult correspondingly to make the necessary adjustments.

*Najm al-Ḥudā* was rendered into English by the late *Khan Bahadur* Abul Hashim Khan Chowdhary in 1933. This is a revised edition of the same.

The present edition of the book is being published from the donation contributed by late Dr. Ghulam Mohd for the works of the promised Messiah.

Lahore.  
December 25, 1960.

Gilani Kamran.

## ADVENT OF ISLAM

**A**LL praise is due to ALLAH Who made all things and placed in each an excellence peculiar to itself. He designed man to be specially His own and allayed the discontent of his soul by the gift of Himself. All his creations are marked by strength, beauty, originality and wisdom. He made the sun to shine and the moon to glow and assigned to man honour, eminence and a high dignity.

### **Significance of the two names Ahmad and Muhammad.**

And peace and blessings be upon His unlettered Prophet, who bears the names of MUHAMMAD and AHMAḌ. These were the two names first presented to Adam when in the Beginning the names of all things were introduced to him, because they conveyed the ulterior purpose of the creation of the world, and thus held with God the highest and the noblest place among all other names. So by virtue of bearing these names the Holy Prophet enjoys a pre-eminence over all other prophets. He was the recipient of the highest form of prophetic knowledge and was vouchsafed divine revelations in their fulness and completeness. He was gifted with the closest insight into divine secrets and was endowed with all the blessings bestowed upon preceding and succeeding generations. It

was for these reasons that he received the title of "The Seal of the Prophets."

He was sent with a message alike for the white and the black and was chosen to cure the blind, the deaf and the mute. He was endowed with divine blessings in a measure the like of which was not witnessed in any previous prophet or apostle. It was by the operation of His direct providence that God endowed him with knowledge, understanding, insight, purity and sense of propriety, and designated him as one of His Elect. It, therefore, became incumbent upon the Holy Prophet to extol the Lord, Who Himself had provided for his wants, sheltered him under the cloak of His protection and dispensed all his affairs by His direct intervention, without the intermediary of teachers, parents or patrons, and endowed him with all sorts of bounties in their perfection. Naturally, therefore, the soul of the Holy Prophet celebrated the praise of God with an exuberance the depth of which it is beyond the power of any human mind to fathom, and the bounds of which it is impossible for any human vision to explore. He attained the highest perfection in the celebration of God's praise and was lost and effaced in His remembrance. The secret of this exuberant praise and glorification lay in the fact that God had been unceasingly and continuously showering His blessings upon him; and His Succour did not leave the Holy Prophet for a single instant dependant upon his own effort, till at length the divine Presence took entire possession of his heart and made it its permanent abode and made the Holy Prophet its beloved in all respects. As a result, the heart of the Holy Prophet leaped up in praise of the Great Benefactor and to extol Him became the single

object of his desire. This was a privilege never vouchsafed to any save the Holy Prophet, nay to none of the other apostles or prophets or seers or saints. These had derived part of their spiritual insight and knowledge, and other gifts through the intermediary of learned men or their parents or other human benefactors. But, on the contrary, the Holy Prophet received all his gifts directly from God, the fountainhead of all blessings. They could not, therefore, experience the same degree of warmth in the glorification of God as did the soul of the Holy Prophet, to whom God had proved to be the Sole Provider. This was the reason why none of the previous apostles or prophets had received the name of AHMAD which means the greatest praiser. None of them had celebrated the unity and glory of God to the same extent as did the Holy Prophet, for human hand had a share in the blessings they enjoyed, and unlike the Holy Prophet, they had not been bestowed with their spiritual gifts directly from God. Nor did he become the immediate Dispenser of their affairs, or helped them in all their difficulties by His direct intervention.

It thus comes about that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is alone the perfect MAHDI (the Divinely guided) and the perfect AHMAD (the greatest praiser). This is indeed a mystery fathomed by none save by the hearts of the saints.

Again, since it so happened that the Holy Prophet's glorification of God consisted in his complete attachment to Him in preference to his own desires, and in his sincere, genuine and single-minded solicitude for Him, God as a reward returned all those praises to the Holy Prophet Himself. Such, indeed, is God's way of dealing with His

particular devotees. He turns His praiser into the praised. The Holy Prophet accordingly became the praised one both on the earth and in the heavens. This incident bears a moral for all true devotees, and a happy promise for all who praise God, namely, that God returns to the praiser all his praises and makes him the true subject of the same. The praiser then becomes the praised one on the earth and his acceptance spreads through the land. Every good soul joins him in praise for him. This is the stage of perfection of true devotion and the goal of all pure souls. This stage is recognised by none except those possessed of spiritual insight. This is the highest aim of man and his devotions. This stage marks the end of the ambition of all saints and the termination of the journey of all true seekers. This is the stage wherein God brings to perfection the souls of His elect. This is the purpose of the Law and the ultimate end of all religious experience. This is the gist of all the messages borne to the Holy Prophet by the Angel Gabriel. Let us, therefore, invoke peace and blessings upon the Holy Prophet.

The state described above is the end for which all spiritual strivers put forth their efforts, as well as those who detach themselves from the world for the sake of His love, who live by God alone and die in His name, who place their entire reliance upon Him, who submit to His will in perfect integrity of soul and carry out His commands with tears in their eyes and forget themselves in their search after His pleasure, who die at His loss and live with His countenance, who for His sake leave their nightly beds and engage themselves in devotion, and pass their nights standing or prostrate before Him

and are never forgetful ; and who when they feel restless, remember their Friend with weepings and tears and in the watches of the night mutter their complaints and breathe their sighs. Nobody knows which way these strivers are being driven and how they are being directed. Disasters befall them and they bear them with patience. They are cast into flames and the word 'peace' comes unto them and they are saved. These are the true extollers of His praise : His near ones, and accessories to His secrets.

Bless them ! They and their associates are the elected ones who have been privileged to intercede and whose intercession has been accepted. This is a dignity not granted to any except the favoured ones of God. It was to explain this state that Islam made its advent. It came to save men from the pit of destruction, and to lead them to the precincts of sanctity and to the further stage of attained blessedness. It came to warn the heedless that the sword is ever ready which will cut them off.

Little indeed do men know in what true praise and glorification of God consists, and why it is held in such a high esteem. To realize its worth it is enough to remember that God has opened the Holy Qur'ān with His praise, so that men may know its supreme importance. This praise can never emerge in any human heart except with the complete melting of one's soul and entire self-effacement, and can never be truly realized until all passions have been fully subdued and the cloak of selfishness put off. Nor can this praise move any human tongue but that the fire of love should first be kindled in the heart. Nay, it can never take shape until the traces of all the false gods have first been completely effaced from the heart, and until the man has been entirely consumed

in the fire of love for the true God. The man, who casts himself in this fire, and has his heart filled with aches and his head absorbed in the remembrance of God is alone privileged to utter this praise. To such alone is given in heaven the name of AHMAD. He enjoys the divine nearness and is admitted into the abode of dignity and into the lofty mansion. The latter signifies the mansion of majesty and power and may tropically be said to be the seat of the Almighty. The same place may be said to be awarded to the man who celebrates His praise. Such a man by God's command is praised both on the earth and in the heaven and receives the name of MUHAMMAD.

This name signifies one who is abundantly praised. Both of these names were specially designed for the Holy Prophet even from the very beginning of the world. But then by way of epithet they are also granted to him who makes himself the reflection of the Holy Prophet. And whoever is given the least part of the attributes signified by these names, has his heart illuminated by a thousand effulgences. And the prophecy had gone forth from the lips of the Holy Prophet that during the later days God would combine both of these attributes in one of His chosen servants ; as we may still read in the holy tradition. Read, then, those traditions, dear reader and reflect !

In short the attributes signified by the names AHMAD and MUHAMMAD are so comprehensive that they have been made the goal of every true monotheist. And it is impossible for any soul to realize the truth of the Divine Unity until and unless it develops both of these attributes. And no true spirit can find rest until it has



completely mastered these attributes. And no man can be saved from the snare of passions till he has attained this supreme stage. And for those who are strangers to this stage and have no part therein is promised a humiliation in this world and the next. They live in the world like straws in a flood. Darkness covers their faces like a piece of black night. Their birth, their life and their death are all shrouded in a pall. These are the men whose minds refuse to offer praise to God and who spend their time in the praise of false gods.

Blessed, then, are we the followers of Islam, because we have been given a prophet, who possessed both of these attributes of AHMAD and MUHAMMAD, who received both of these names from God so that they might prove a constant reminder to his followers and an ever-present motive to urge them to the goal, namely, that of perfect self-surrender to God and complete isolation from others beside. It behoves us then to strive for these attributes and to emulate these qualities of the Holy Prophet. This is enjoined on us by the Holy Qur'ān, where the words are put into the mouth of the Holy Prophet "Come, follow me that God may love you". The promise of this reward, therefore, sets our spirits dancing with joy and infatuate our minds intoxicating them, as it were, with the wine of anticipated bliss. How supremely eminent must be the rank of the Holy Prophet whose very names serve as a powerful sermon and furnish a lesson in the proper method of search after God and guide men in the path of spiritual advancement and point to the highest goal of this divine pilgrimage. May God, then, shower His peace and blessings upon the Prophet and his descendants who were pure and holy, and upon his companions who

were mighty workers by day and devotees by night and the resplendent stars of the spiritual firmament. May His pleasure never leave them !

### **The Purpose of the Book**

Next, I proceed to inform my readers that this little book is intended to give an account of the treasures which my good Lord has entrusted to me for distribution to mankind and of that fountain which in an age troubled by many a mirage, has brought God's merciful providence suddenly gushed forth in my mind. I began it on a Thursday and finished it by the next morning without being the worse for the labour. My object herein has been to produce an argument against my opponents. My sympathy for the negligents of the Muslim community also persuaded me all the more readily to undertake this service for the sake of their weaker members. For men or women their salvation lay in the acceptance of my call even though in outward piety they might rival the sanctity of *Rābia'*. The book is also intended to be a reply to those writings which have recently been published by my opponents. I have touched therein upon many of the deeper truths and hidden beauties of Islam. The book indeed is an appeal to my opponents which my love impelled me to write out in two different languages ('Arabic and Urdū). Friends added a Persian and an English translation. These flagged not in their zeal nor spared themselves any pain to carry out my wish. All these are the bounties of my Lord. There is none to thwart His purpose or to balk His will. There is none to intercept His favours or to avert His punishment. Had He not cared in the beginning of this century (of the Hijra) to look after the Muslims and out of His infinite mercy and grace

come to their assistance in this age of spiritual draught, then of sure the light of Islam would have been extinguished for ever and stars of the religious firmament would have once more vanished out of sight. Ye men ! ye should, therefore, be grateful if ye are true believers.

The book is specially intended for those of my people who have denied my truth and said that all these are the machinations of an impostor. They disbelieved my words and considered them to be mere fabrications. They distrusted me and decried me. The infinite sympathy and anxiety which I feel for them therefore prompted me to advise and admonish them and God is fully aware of the motives which move His creatures and of the secret designs of their hearts, for He knows full well what transpires in this world.

### **Transformation wrought by the Holy Prophet**

I do not propose in this book to adduce arguments at length in support of the truth of Islam or to describe in detail the many excellences of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him), because Islam is a faith at once sublime and simple which contains in itself innumerable evidences of its truth, which are striking and obvious and the Holy Prophet has been endowed with such a fragrance as is sure to reach and captivate every good soul. He was the embodiment of Divine effulgence and came to us at a time when the earth was steeped in darkness. At such a time he appeared to us in his radiant beauty and diffused his sweet odour for the edification of the world. He attacked falsehood and overthrew it for all times and shone forth in his truth with the utmost vividness. He gave guidance to a people who had ceased to believe in the last meet-

ing with the Lord and were spiritually dead, who had been lost to faith and virtue and had ceased to feel the thirst for Divine knowledge and passed their lives in utter despair. He guided them and made them a civilized nation and led them to the heights of spiritual advancement. Before his advent these people were sunk in idolatry and worshipped stocks and stones and had no faith in the Unity of God or in the last Judgment. They had put their trust in the idols and ascribed to them the powers of Divinity. They believed that the bringing of rain, the production of fruits, the giving of children and everything connected with life and death were due to their idols. Every one of them entertained the belief that his own potent guardian was the idol which he worshipped, which helped him in difficulties and rewarded him for his works. They took their refuge with them and prayed to them. They had rejected light and betaken themselves to darkness and preferred to make the night their permanent abode. They felt as happy with their idols as the man who suddenly attains the object of his desire, or as the hunter who finds the game unexpectedly in his power without the trouble of a shot. It was their deep conviction that their idols had the power to grant them whatever they desired. They had imagined that the Supreme Allāh was too holy to undertake the trouble of granting the prayers or of punishing His creatures and that He had delegated all His power and authority relating to the Universe and Spirit and Matter to those idols and had honoured them with the cloak of Divinity, while He Himself enjoyed rest on His throne and would have nothing to do with such affairs ; that it was their idols that interceded for them and relieved them from their troubles ; that they were the means to win the favours of God ; and that

it was those idols which helped confounded humanity to attain their desires. With such beliefs they combined a vile course of life. They committed adultery and theft, oppressed the orphans and misappropriated their properties, indulged in murder, robbery and infanticide without the least compunction. There was no villainy which they did not commit and no false deity which they did not worship. They had lost the sense of human propriety and had discarded all standards of morality. They had been turned into veritable brutes and ate the flesh of sons and brothers ! They greedily devoured the dead carrion and drank blood with avidity like milk ! They had transgressed all bounds in crimes and rebellion against God and like the beast of the forest knew no restraint. Their poets insulted women by their obscenities and the well-to-do among them were given up to gambling, drinking and debauchery. When they were inclined to thrift they ignored all claims of brothers, orphans or the poor and when they felt generous they squandered their wealth in luxury, extravagance, adultery, in the satisfaction of passions and greed and carried self-indulgence to the extreme. They killed their offspring for fear of poverty and want. They murdered their girls to prevent their future husbands becoming heirs to their properties. Thus they came to combine in their character the most degrading principles and the most heinous conduct. And there multiplied among them bastards, adulteresses and fornicators, and men who disapproved of their actions and admonished them, ran the risk of harm to their honour, their lives and their family. In short, these Arabs were a people, who never had a chance of listening to any admonisher. They were utter

strangers to piety and to purity of character. There was none among them truthful in word or upright in judgment. At such a time when the Arabs were sunk in such corruption, when all their words and deeds were so polluted with foulness, God raised among them a prophet. They knew not what a prophet meant and were completely in the dark about his function. They denied and disobeyed him and stuck to their idolatry and follies. And the Holy Prophet bore all their persecutions and patiently endured their excesses. He returned their evil with good and their hate with love. He had come to them as a friend and well-wisher, still for a long time he had to pace the streets of Makka like a forsaken outcast and to bear all their iniquities with the innate strength of his prophethood. It was his habit to rise in the night and to resort to God praying that his countrymen might be gifted with discernment and His grace and mercy. At last his prayers were heard, and God, the Changer of hearts, issued His decree. The influence of his mission began to spread faster and faster. He who instills love in human hearts and opens the seeds now came to his help. At His command the earth was changed and hearts were attracted to the blessed messenger. Every good soul now came forward in sincerity and truth and strove to win the pleasure of God by the sacrifice of his life and possessions until he fully redeemed his vow of life's consecration. They were killed for the sake of God like goats upon the altar. They proved with their blood the sterling quality of their race and by their deeds the earnestness of their solicitude for God. In the days of idolatry their spirits were enchained in the shackles of ignorance, now the acceptance of Islam illuminated their hearts and changed

their vices into virtue and their wickedness into genius. Their nightly carousals were abandoned for the sake of vigils and prayers and their morning bouts were changed to paeans of praise and thanksgivings. Once they were convinced of the truth, they spared neither life nor wealth in the service of God, and once they had discerned the right they strove with their might and main to strike fire out of the flint of their faith. They courted danger so that they might carefully and rightly gauge the real nature of their faith. This spirit of sacrifice was the secret of their heroism, of the keenness of their swords, of the renown which they achieved and of their ultimate triumph. It was this spirit which made their character so attractive to the people and like the musk under the pestle disclosed the hidden fragrance of their souls. It was this spirit which put valour into their hearts and gave eloquence to their tongues, firmness to their faith and elevation to their thought. It was this spirit which enabled them to cast themselves into the fire of Divine love till like coal they were kindled and consumed to ashes. They thus made ample preparation for their journey to God. For them afflictions were changed into peace and comfort. They became invulnerable to heat and fire. Any one who would carefully ponder over this remarkable change, how those wild Arabs abandoned their former pastures and hewed through the forests of their passions and desires to make their way to their Lord, cannot fail to conclude that it was all due to the sanctifying power of MUHAMMAD, the Supreme Prophet elected by God for His everlasting grace. And one may well wonder at the uniqueness of his power which picked up the holy companions from the depths of the earth and led them to the pinnacles of heaven, and step by step elevated them to the stage of

the elect. He found them like beasts devoid of the notions of Divine Unity and piety, who knew not the difference between virtue and vice. He taught them the rules of human propriety and explained to them the principles of communal and social life, instructed them in the laws of hygiene such as the need for brushing, cleaning and picking the teeth, for waiting in the closet until evacuation has been complete so as not to foul the clothes, in the rules of sex-intercourse and domestic economy, in the principles of diet and dress, of sanitation, treatment and prevention of disease, and in general inculcated lessons in moderation in all matters. And when they had mastered the rules of physical life, he led them on from physical to moral and spiritual qualities and to lessons in principled conduct, so as to enable them to develop a spiritual life. And, after they had been confirmed in morals and also in the practice of good conduct, he invited them to the heights of Divine propinquity and union and initiated them in the Divine mysteries, and directed them to the Supreme Lord of Power and Majesty, so that they might henceforth freely crop the green verdure of love in the holy precincts of God and enjoy the privilege of His approval and acceptance.

### **Three Stages of Islamic Teachings**

The fact is that the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān and the instructions of the Holy Prophet are divided into three stages. The first is intended to turn savages into men and to instill into them notions of human proprieties ; the second is to raise them from the stage of natural humanity to that of moral beings ; and the third is to elevate them from the moral stage to the stage of spiritual union with God, where they may enjoy His nearness,



approbation and love. At this stage there is annihilation and effacement, and all signs of a separate existence and a separate will are completely obliterated, and there is left only one absorbing sense of Divine Presence, the single transcendent Presence, that is to remain after the dissolution of the Creation. This is the final stage of progress for every God-seeking individual, be he man or woman, and hereto converge all the different systems of religious exercises. Here ends the journey of the saints. This is the stage referred to in the term "*Istiqāmat*", which occurs in the opening chapter of the Holy Qur'ān. At this stage are finally quenched under Divine Command all the passions and desires which are ignited in the lower self of man. When this stage is attained, then is the whole citadel finally conquered. The rabble of passions and desires cease their din and the question is asked "To whom does the Kingdom belong to-day?" and the answer comes, "To the God of Glory and Greatness." But far otherwise is the case with the stage of morals and good conduct. In that stage there is no security against the enemy during the unguarded moments of spiritual strife, because for those who have not yet passed beyond this stage there still remains to overcome many a stronghold difficult of conquest and they have to live in the constant fear of a sudden overwhelming assault by their lower selves when the appetites have been made more furious by prolonged abstention. Such men can never lead a life altogether free from dust and impurities nor can they ever be secure from the assaults of their passions.

### **Miraculous Character of the Holy Qur'ān**

Such are the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān. They lead men to perfection both in knowledge and practice. These teachings are indeed so advanced that none of the previous

Divine Books were deemed fit to propose or propound anything like them. They amount, in fact, to miracle of wisdom and achievement on the part of the Holy Prophet. They make the Holy Qur'ān a standing miracle for all times in the eyes of the world. The miracles of the previous prophets are all dead and gone, but this miracle of the Holy Qur'ān will stand till the last day. Such claims on behalf of the Holy Qur'ān are not mere figments of our imagination lacking a basis in actual facts. There is the most irrefutable evidence in their support and the most convincing and compelling arguments substantiating their truth. Its miraculous wisdom is evident from the fact that it contains all the principles and teachings, all the facts and arguments required by man for his search after God. Its teachings are perfect. It furnishes all the arguments necessary for the establishment of truth and the refutation of falsehood. In the manner and method of its exposition of the higher spiritual truths it leaves nothing to be desired. And withal it sets forth all these teachings and commands and prohibitions in a way which is at once most eloquent and sweet and charming. This is an achievement which is certainly beyond the power of man. Next, as for its miracle of achievement, as much as of wisdom, the fact is equally plain and obvious and admits of no denial or doubt. The Holy Qur'ān has indeed surprised many of the most intelligent thinkers by the wonderful effect and unique change it has wrought in the lives of its followers, by the extraordinary illumination it has caused in their minds, by the complete eradication it has effected of long-established evil customs. It scaled the walls of crooked and perverted natures and made its way into the secret chamber of the heart

of the hard-hearted. It crossed the deep and wide moats of carnal lives and reached to those who lived behind those barriers. For it, through God's intervention, the most difficult works were made easy, distances were obliterated, narrow, selfish minds were broadened and enlarged and every obstacle was removed, till at last truth was made manifest and its devotees gradually came to receive clear revelations and visions and the seed of perennial miracles was sown in their hearts. That is why when questioned about miracles, we have no need to refer to bygone ages for instances of them, but even from our own place can show to the sceptic ever-fresh examples of such miracles. On the other hand there is with our adversaries nothing but legends of the past. Such legends can never prove the truth of any religion. *The truth of a religion can be known only by the light of signs which never cease, nor ever get stale.* Thus the miracle of the Holy Qur'an is like a tree with two branches both of which are of great majesty. These diffuse their fragrance all round and crowds of people are gathered to bear testimony to their worth, just as they gather round the Holy Temple at Makka during the days of the pilgrimage. Imagine for a moment what an amount of pain the greatest philosopher will have to undergo in order to cure the perversion of a foolish or ignorant mind or to change the habits of a vicious life. The work will well nigh prove impossible for him. Try, then, to realize the greatness of the man, who in a few years reformed thousands of men and turned them from vice to virtue, eradicated their disbelief, adorned them with the qualities of truthfulness and probity, till the light of piety illuminated their hearts and the love of God was made manifest in their faces and they were

fired with zeal for the service of their faith and traversed the earth from east to west and from north to south inviting men to Islam and the religion of Muhammad. Their minds were enlightened with Divine knowledge and their intelligence was sharpened to understand the Divine mysteries and love of God and hatred of evil became a part and parcel of their nature. Thus gradually they came to reach the stage of the upright and the blessed after they had once been sunk in the grossest idolatry. In the service of Islam they spared themselves no pains until they carried it to the farthest corners of the then-known world, of Persian, China, the Roman Empire and Syria. In short, they reached all those lands where idolatry had spread its sway and paganism had established its power. They did not falter in the presence of death and did not yield even by an inch when threatened by the sword of the tyrant. They were staunch in battle and rushed to meet death for the sake of God. They were a people who never fled before an enemy. They carried their victories to the remotest ends of human habitation. Their genius was put to test and their fitness to rule was brought to the proof. In every field of human enterprise they came out victorious and they proved themselves masters in all departments of knowledge and achievements. This fact alone amounts to a miracle on the part of the Holy Prophet and a clear proof of the truth of Islam. If, however, our opponents should still feel inclined to doubt the truth of our statement, they may well try to point out one single instance from among the followers of Moses and Jesus or other prophets, who achieved anything like that achieved by the companions of the Holy Prophet. The condition of those followers is an open secret and the opinion expressed

about them by their respective leaders is a matter of common knowledge. These prophets, of course, could never have uttered what was not a fact, for they spoke from the promptings of the Holy Ghost and were not like ordinary men who speak under the influence of temper.

### **An evidence of the truth of the Holy Prophet**

Another evidence of the truth of the Holy Prophet is that he appeared just at the time when his appearance was most needed and he did not depart till he had perfected all the details of the religion he preached. As for his miracles they are indeed outstanding. Mention of many of them will be found in the literature of Islam and the reliable and well-known oral traditions which have come down to us. One important feature about his miracles is that they are as much extant today as in the past, which fact puts the whole matter altogether beyond the region of doubt and mistake. The never-failing presence of these signs makes the truth of the Holy Prophet perfectly obvious, which no one can reject except those brought up in sin and fostered in the atmosphere of evil.

Apart, however, from all these external proofs and evidences of the truth of the religion taught by the Holy Prophet, if we consider the intrinsic merits of its teachings, we cannot fail to discern in their clear and shining face the reflection of truth which requires no extrinsic weight of arguments. And, by God, nothing prevents men and women from the acceptance of Islam except when they carry within their hearts the secret maladies of pride, prejudice or bigotry or narrow sectional preferences or hatred. They have been deprived of this inestimable Divine Blessing only because they participated too extensively in sins. These close their hearts and entomb them in darkness and deprive them of moral insight.

## ADVENT OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH

**A**FTER this brief note on the evidence of the truth of Islam I shall now return to the main topic of my narrative. I shall describe some of the incidents of my own life and of the blessings which the great God has been pleased to vouchsafe to me and which form a part of the message I have been commanded to bear to mankind and to discharge with the sanctity of a debt.

### **Brief account of the life of the Promised Messiah**

I was born of a distinguished family of chiefs and rulers. One of my ancestors, I am told, migrated into this country from Samarkand. The king of the time made him a chief and placed him in command of a force. Later on when the Sikhs rose to power and overran the country and oppressed the people they wrested from my family along with others all their territories and imprisoned its members and forced them to fly from their capital. It was winter and the cold was biting. They had to leave the town by night shivering with cold and overcome with grief. They sojourned in the territory of another chief, who treated them with a degree of kindness and showed unsolicited sympathy towards them and in consideration of their sad plight granted them an allowance for their maintenance. This was however very inadequate for their needs. Then with the advent of the

British power and the passing away of the devilish regime and the restoration of peace my ancestors returned to their homes with the friends of their exile, and offered thanks to God. Some of the villages which were formerly under their rule, were now restored to them with their other possessions and departed fortune once more returned to the family. They had a twofold reason for gratification. Firstly, they were restored to peace and secondly, they came to enjoy religious freedom. Little, however, of these ancestral possessions actually came down to me and after the death of my father, I became a veritable derelict. There was indeed a time when except a few people of my own village nobody knew me and of those who lived in the surrounding villages only a few knew me by sight ; and my condition was that when I returned home from a journey nobody cared to enquire where I had put up. And this unimportance and want of fame were dear to me for I had a natural aversion to fame, honour and wealth and preferred a life of seclusion and felt weary and suffered in mind when visitors came to see me. My father had despaired of me and thought that I was like a stranger in the family, the guest of a night who merely shared their table. He was of opinion that as I loved solitude I could not possibly manage a big house or have dealings with people. In consequence he often scolded me and expressed himself in harsh and bitter words. He counselled me in public and in private to strive to better my worldly fortune holding up before me pictures of worldly comfort. But on the other hand my mind felt more and more inclined towards God.. My brother also who bore the mind of my father, dealt with me in a like manner. Now, God took them both away before long, because, as He told me, He wished that there should be none left to chide me or tune his rebuke to hurt me. Then, my Lord gradually drew me towards honour and

election. I had no knowledge that He would elect me to be the Promised Messiah or fulfil His promise through me. Indeed I preferred to be left in the corner of solitude, because I found all my pleasure in seclusion and want of renown. I coveted neither worldly nor religious fame and yearned to lead the life of a common mortal. It was the explicit command of God that at last overpowered me and brought me to public notice and compelled me to deliver my message to mankind. He is the Sovereign Lord and to Him it belongs to command whatever He wills.

“I have a Friend and I am filled with His Love,  
And I have an aversion to all rank and dignity.  
I see that the world and its votaries are  
  stricken with famine,  
But that the land of my Love never suffers  
  from want.  
Men incline towards worldly pleasures while I  
Incline towards the Face which gives delight  
  and thrill.  
I am attached to the shining skirt of my Beloved  
So much so that what was dull and dark has  
  been illuminated in me.  
My foes have been turned into the swine of  
  the wilderness,  
And their women have been converted into  
  worse than curs.  
They abuse me and I know not why  
They abuse me. Should I prove false to my  
  Friend or turn my back to Him !  
I have sworn that I will not part from Him,  
Even though the lions should tear my body  
  or the wolves.  
The kingdom of men depart with their death,  
But the kingdom of my Love for ever stays.



Thus I had withdrawn myself from men and having detached myself from all earthly love or hate consecrated myself wholly to God. For, while I was still young, I had come to realize that God had created me for a higher purpose. My mind yearned after spiritual advancement and communion with God. The jewel of my nature sparkled even on the surface and wanted not the miner to dig to discover it. My father felt sad on my account and my indifference to and want of interest in worldly matters troubled him and filled him with anxiety. It was his constant wish to see me rise in fortune and to regain the power and prestige of my forefathers. He wanted that I should achieve the highest worldly eminence. But God had designed other eminence for me. And it came to pass as God had wished. He vouchsafed to me a light in the gloom of a long dark night, and illumined my mind in order to illumine nations and peoples. He was gracious to me and made me the Messiah regarding whom he had given a promise of old. He helped me in diverse ways and manifested His signs. He displayed in the heavens the signs of the eclipses of the sun and the moon, in order to prove the truth of my claim and to save it from imputation of being an idle myth. When I announced my claim of being the Promised Messiah the people of my country looked upon me with extreme disfavour. They called me a heretic and rejected me and would have killed me had not the fear of the rulers restrained their hands. They argued that the Promised Messiah would descend from the sky as it was written in the ancient books, and decided by the consensus of theologians. They stuck to that opinion and when I spoke to them they would not listen to me, and when I tried to explain things to them, they would not understand. I have, therefore, resolved to carry my message to other people so as to make them witnesses against these people, and thus

have a double condemnation against my adversaries. And my help is with the Lord, the Best of Masters and the Best of Helpers.

### **Message of the Promised Messiah**

'Listen to my words, O Earth!  
And thou, O sky! be my witness.

This account is addressed to prominent and leading men of all communities. It is from Ahmad, the Servant of God, against whom the arrow of abuse has been aimed upon the bow. It is my hope that my readers will not be hasty in passing a judgment against me and will not reject my words before they have been tested, but that they will give me a patient hearing and afterwards come to a decision as they may be prompted by God. And I pray that God may prompt in their hearts thoughts which are true and right, and God is the Best Guide and the Best Master.

Know, then that I, Ahmad, have been gifted with revelations and spiritual knowledge, such as is usually given to God's chosen ones, and have been sent in the beginning of the Muslim era, so that I may rectify the beliefs of the Muslims, and as a judge decide the disputes that have cropped up among them, and break the power of the Cross with the help of heavenly signs, and bring about a reformation in the earth with my God-given power, and that God by His clear and unmistakable words has given me the names of the Promised Messiah and the Mahdī. I am not one of the impostors, nor one given to lies or to tempting men to sin. It is well-known what ultimate fate awaits such impostors. What I say is indeed a revelation from the Lord. To test their genuineness I had imposed upon myself the condition that I should not follow any of my revelations until the same had been repeated to me time after time and should

fully conform to the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān and the *Hadith*. I had also made it a condition that I must weigh every aspect of those revelations and must not accept them save with the concurrent testimony of supernatural signs. God is my witness, that I found my revelations perfectly fulfil all these conditions. I found them to be a veritable garden of truth and not a dry bush which may conceal many a serpent. Moreover, the revelations came to me at a time when my heart had been consumed in the Love of God and a veritable death had come over me. I had suffered diverse torments, and been crushed under various afflictions and I had ceased to feel a longing for wife and children. Then, at last was the design of God fulfilled, and the path was made clear for me, and my mind was made luminous like the moon. Two kinds of illuminations were vouchsafed to me, one of Revelation and the other of Reason. All this was a favour from the Lord, and His favour no one has the power to intercept.

It may also be noted that my revelations are full of prophecies. Now, the knowledge of the future is the special prerogative of God and it is not probable that God should grant to one foul of thoughts and a seeker of the world access to such knowledge. Can it be believed that God should take into His confidence one who spreads the net of deceit in order to destroy His creatures, who misleads His people instead of guiding them, who is a foe to Islam, intent upon its ruin, who never brightened the face of Islam with the light of truth, who never devoted his nights or days to the thought of Islam and never put forth his endeavour to effect its revival, who on the contrary, by his falsehoods helped to add to the rust that had already collected upon the human mind, and by his fabrications increased the dust of contro-

versies among the Muslims. No, rather God is sure to humiliate and overthrow such impostors and to make them among the accursed.

It may further be borne in mind that I had been receiving revelations for a long time, which for a period I kept to myself and never disclosed to the public. It was only when I was directly commanded to disclose them that I complied with the command. Moreover, the reports have reached you from the Holy Prophet that the Promised Messiah and Mahdī would appear at a time when the Cross would obtain universal ascendancy and that it will be his mission to eradicate the evils and errors thereof, and to offer true guidance to the right-minded and that the men whom their impure lives and pride will keep back from him will be over-powered by the weapon of his arguments. The fact that the word "descent" has been used in connection with the advent of the Promised Messiah indicates the fact that he would not come clad in armour and arms to wage a war, but that his kingdom will be of heaven and the only weapon he will wield will be that of his prayers. Now, you can see with your own eyes how the religion of the Cross has obtained universal ascendancy and how its partisans have left no stone unturned to discredit Islam and to disparage and to humiliate its Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and blessings of God) and how stiff they have grown in their belief and how they have been fired with their prejudices and filled with self-conceit. Within a short time they have published innumerable books containing nothing except vituperations and falsehoods against Islam and its blessed Prophet. These books are indeed so foul that it pains one even to read them. You have also observed how their falsehoods have obtained a great currency in the world, how

they have been lost to the sense of fairness and become a veritable menace to the continued existence of the *Musalmāns*, and how many a low and mean mind is being drawn towards them like a straw in the whirlpool. I do not, of course, say that the British Government do in any way abet them or assist them with funds. The British Government have indeed granted religious freedom to all its subjects and holds the balance evenly between them with the utmost fairness. Every religious community in India, in the matter of religion, now enjoys the dear boon of freedom and labour under no such disadvantages as they suffered during the days of the *Sikh* supremacy. From the time we came under the rule of Britain we have been living in peace and it is for this reason that we offer prayers for its rulers and their representatives. The Christian Missions receive no special support from this Government. They derive their vast funds from subscriptions raised from their people. Every promised contribution is faithfully paid up and goes to fill their coffers. Every neophyte who joins their fold has an allowance assigned to him and his cares and anxieties are set at rest. Thus, the funds at the back of the missionaries serve to add to the weight of their words. But this does not mark the end of their toils. They have at their command all the instruments for enticing and capturing men, and for this purpose they do not neglect to make use of every possible weapon great or small. Parties of new converts are despatched to every town where they take up their residence and build their churches and invade the quarters of the *Musalmāns*. Many falsehoods they circulate to deceive the inhabitants of the towns. In short, they avail themselves of every possible means to sow the seed of falsehood, and like locusts they

spread over the land, the foes of all who venture to uphold the cause of truth. Thus, have they overspread the country with disaster and death, petrifying by their false doctrines the virtues of the land. There is no home into which their doctrines have not found entrance. The mass of our population who belonged to the humbler ranks were not equal to the conflict but found no way to escape it. *Then fell a disaster upon Islam the like of which never happened in any previous age. It became like a city given up to pillage or like a wood filled with beasts, or like a country the population of which has been exterminated* The whole social system has been shattered. Now let him, who wills weep for this people. *My tears are for Islam ; how its ancient splendour has been lost. I grieve over the days to see how they have been changed.* Men have deserted the straight path and turned to the wilderness. They have adopted the crooked by-lanes and preferred narrow, uneven tracks. They were many who as Muslims were leading a life of struggle and hardship. To such, as these Christianity offered a new prospect and the Christian society promised a new field for the satisfaction of their lust. Thus, hunger induced them to join the ranks of the converts. They bade farewell to Islam and were persuaded by their misery and their craving for enjoyment and wine to embrace Christianity. They were fools who lacked knowledge and wisdom, and were wanting in piety and purity. That was why they preferred to follow the promptings of their carnal natures and in their misfortune accepted what meant for them veritable error and ruin. In a like manner many of those born of high and respectable families and even many *Sayyids* (descendants of the Holy Prophet) were attracted to Christianity, for its acceptance threw open to them the

door of unrestricted and unrestrained enjoyment, and emancipated them from the Islamic restrictions regarding diet. Moreover, in the beginning of a neophyte's career the missionaries, as a rule, are wont to help him with money and by other means. They refrain from noticing their faults and from visiting them with punishment even on the occurrence of a serious lapse, because they believe that the convert is protected by the purifying grace of the atonement. This increases the neophytes in their recklessness and many of them grow into confirmed rakes. They often mistakenly consider the foulness of their lives as a thing of merit. These men come to imbibe a strong aversion for Islam and freely abuse the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) in spite of the fact that they were once among his followers. They are, of course, a few exceptions, who observe the rules of decency. The majority, however, conduct themselves as set forth above in order to ingratiate themselves with the missionaries and to win their money. They become rich with the funds of the missions and bloom like green bay trees. The missionaries love them for their perversions, for their foul and virulent tongues and their sophistries, and consider these as proofs of their sincerity. They are deceived by their seeming piety and by their sanctimonious faces. They take them along with them in their journeys, associate with them in their camp, confide in them and make them share in their board and council, and always treat them with generosity and consideration. These renegades flaunt in their acquired wealth and decorate their persons and go about to meet their old friends, who might still be struggling against poverty and adversity. To such they relate their own stories, how from want and afflictions they have attained to affluence and how the missionaries

have been generous to them, and the details of all the amenities which they now enjoy and the wealth they acquired. Thus, they continue to tempt them and to hold up before their visions picture of wealth and other means of enjoyment, till at last their subjects are seized by a desire for Christianity and a gust of avarice blows out the faith in their hearts. They finally resolve to apostatise and are persuaded to it by the baseness of their hearts. And, when they turn renegades, they give out that they are seeking after truth. Now the real basis of this misdirected religious activity lies in the fact that the majority of people in this age are inclined towards materialism and have abandoned the fear of God and have ceased to love Him. Such men when they see that the missionaries hold the keys of the worldly success, incline towards them with all their heart. And it is thus that thousands of people have been daily bidding farewell to light and are entering the dark folds of Christianity. At such a critical time mere arguments of reason apart from the manifestation of supernatural signs could be of little avail, because what these men really propose is material comfort and their motive is full of guile. At such a juncture the only thing that could restore their faith was the heavenly sign. For years had their '*Ulamā*' tried to rouse them, but they slept on unconcerned, and preachers called to them but they held back and arguments of reasons benefited them not, nor the authority of traditions, and they increased in hard-heartedness and transgressions. They had abandoned the standards of fairness and justice. The reason was that their hearts were blinded and their reason was befogged and their passions were uncontrolled and thus they succumbed to the temptations of the world. The veil grew thicker ; so seeing they saw



not and hearing they heard not. For such a distemper the only remedy was that a glory should descend from heaven and signs should be manifested in quick succession, because faith had vanished and scepticism had increased and brought men to the verge of despair. The major portion of mankind had given themselves up wholly to the thought of the world and were mad after it and were altogether indifferent to matters of faith and religion. In the case of the *Musalmāns* there had arisen a twofold danger, the danger of conversion to Christianity and the danger of a total loss of faith. The majority of *Musalmāns*, as I have already observed, had little of faith left in them and the fire of sin had consumed whatever of virtue there was in them. This is what led them to apostasy. For, when God found them addicted to sin and full of hypocrisy like the hunter, in punishment He suffered them to fall a prey to those who were the protagonists of evil. This is the secret of the increasing number of apostates and of those who adopt the Cross in preference to the true God. To such men no sermon could do any good, nor the advice of any admonisher, and they were not likely to desist unless some manifest sign came to them, or some clear miracles were shown to them. It was for this reason that God raised a messenger and gave him the name of the Messiah and sent him to manifest the glory of Islam. And this was done at a time when the abomination had reached its height and people were turning renegades in troops and the wolves were abroad and the dogs had raised a howl and many a book had been written full of the foulest abuse, and the forces of evil, both horse and foot, had fallen upon Islam and a shaking was upon the earth, and errors had multiplied and injustice had obtained universal

predominance.<sup>1</sup> And God had promised that He would send at such a time a Messiah to break the power of the Cross and to fulfil all that He had promised to do, and God never breaks His word and never fails to accomplish whatever He promises to do. It was therefore in fulfilment to His promises that He sent His Messiah to break the Cross, for the Great One when He makes a promise fails not to see to its accomplishment. The dishonouring of promises is a quality of the liar and can therefore never be attributed to the Great Source of Truth. He is Holy. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth. Falsehood and breach of promise can never be attributed to Him like to any of His creatures. His Majesty is incompatible with the attribute of lying. You

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1. It is a Divine rule that whenever iniquities prevail in the world, God undertakes to accomplish a revival of faith. In accordance with this rule He has now manifested His glory to me so that I may infuse a new life into the dead form of the faith. He made me Messiah and Mahdī and furnished me with the accoutrements of true guidance. He instructed me to be soft of tongue, and to eschew harshness and fierceness of temper. This breaking of the Cross of which we find mention in the holy traditions is to be understood metaphorically. It does not imply any actual fighting nor any tangible religious war nor any literal splintering of the Cross.

To understand the words in that sense would be a mistake. The words really signify a refutation of Christianity by arguments and overthrowing of the power of the Cross by incontestable proofs. And I have been commanded to accomplish this refutation and overthrow by soft and peaceful method and not to return evil for evil except when some person should disclaim the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) and insult him or exceed all bounds in vituperation. It is not therefore for me to abuse the Christians generally, nor to disparage them, nor to defame them. In using such expressions I have in view only such persons as directly or indirectly insult the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). As for the missionaries who do not abuse the Holy Prophet, I respect them, and all such men as are free from the taint of this foul habit I regard with honour and name them with proper respect. In none of my writings there will be found a word disparaging to these worthy people. My method is merely to return to the vituperators the words of their own mouth as an antidote to their falsehoods.

should therefore mark His promise and also mark how extensive has grown the activities of the liars, and how the hope of their diminution is now all but gone, how their camps are being pitched daily more firm by ropes and how the thread of their fortune has been proving daily longer and stronger and how a multitude of *Musalmāns* has already joined their ranks and filled our country with renegades. What worse disaster could overtake the *Musalmāns* exceeding this in pain? These men gave the lie to Islam and no amount of admonition availed them nor dissuaded them from this course. As it is, we had expected to win over the Christian world to our fold and now a part of our own has been lost to us and are after seducing us to their error. They have divided sons from their fathers, friends from friends, mothers from their children and matrons from all they once held dear. Consider then well whether it is not yet time that sore-stricken Islam should be granted help to break the Cross or that the Divine promise should not be fulfilled even now when Islam has been bruised under the heel of Christianity.<sup>1</sup> Also, consider whether the need for rescuing Islam did not require that a reformer should be raised at the beginning of the century armed with signs and arguments to demolish the fabric raised by the partisans of the Cross and to establish the superiority of Islam over all other faiths. Ye brethren! stand apart each of you and ponder over the matter seriously and fairly and do not take up the attitude of adversaries. Do your hearts bear it out that when misfortunes have reached such a head and the world has

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1. I have already explained what is meant by "the breaking of the Cross". The reader should keep that meaning in mind and know that the usual meaning current among the '*Ulamā*' is incorrect.

grown narrow upon the Muslims and disasters have multiplied and a trembling has fallen upon their hearts and made them restless, that in spite of all these calamities no Divine succour should come from heaven and the Divine promise should remain unredeemed and the beginning of the century should pass away like the cloud which is dry of rain and bring forth no reformer or leader and there should be no stirring of the Divine solicitude for Islam although dangers should envelop her like mists ? Can such a contingency be calmly contemplated or does it find countenance in the Holy books ? Is not the present juncture a time of misfortunes and trials and a fit moment for Divine intervention and judgment ? Is it not high time for the justification of Islam and the repudiation of charges levelled against it ? Or are all these discords veritably designed by God, or is it a fate which the Merciful One is resolved not to alter ? Certainly not ; for long since were the glad tidings given to us and the same found place in the Holy Books. It is both foolish and recalcitrant to be indifferent to those tidings and not to take note of the signs and indications. Is it not a fact that the ascendancy of the Cross and the universal prevalence of its cult are the preliminary signs of the coming of the Messiah ? The subject is indeed one regarding which there is perfect consensus of opinion among the orthodox Muslims and there is not a single individual among them who holds an opposite view. Nor, can human reason or human nature admit that the destined signs should be fulfilled with such clearness and prominence and deceit and hypocrisy should obtain such prevalence, and this state of things should continue for such a long time and still the Promised Messiah should linger behind and fail to make his

appearance, in spite of the fact that his expected advent at the beginning of this century is a matter on which there is a perfect unanimity in Islam. And now a fifth of the century has already gone by and the expected advent of the Reformer has been delayed up to the utmost stretch of endurance<sup>1</sup> and the moment has arrived when God is to take pity upon the weak ones and alleviate their sufferings and rescue them out of their graves.

And long have men waited in expectation of the Messiah and been ground under vicissitudes till their eyes have almost burst through looking for him. Then, ye respected leaders of the people ! May God have mercy upon you and grant you His light ! Raise up your eyes once more and ponder well. Does not there stand the promise of God that He will raise the Promised Messiah at the time of the abomination of the Cross, when He will turn to the Muslims with mercy and grace and fulfil His favours upon them, and thus manifest the truth of His word, and do you not see how the Christian Missionaries have increased in their propaganda and how they have changed the aspect of the earth by their unwholesome presence ; and how a long time has now elapsed over their machinations. Where then is gone the promise of the most true Lord ! Have you not seen thousands of Muslims turning renegades and forsaking their

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1. The fact is well-known that a *mujaddid* (reformer) comes to ease the prevailing distemper of the time and attends to the most serious of the existing vices. It is also admitted that of all the anti-Islamic movements of the present age, that of the Cross is the most serious. It has proved the ruin of many of both urban and rural population. It was therefore incumbent upon the reformer of the present century to come with this special mission, viz., as the traditions put it "to break the Cross". Thus, he who would "break the Cross" is the Promised Messiah. Let therefore the wise consider.

faith, and is not this the greatest possible calamity to the religion of Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) ?

And not content with merely disseminating their false doctrines, have not their missionaries, moreover, abused the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) and libelled his creed and slandered it and carried things to extremes ? Are we to think that God granted them this opportunity to our disadvantage and denied us the same ? Such unequal treatment will certainly be far from just. Do you still wait to see Islam altogether wiped out from the face of the earth and no trace of it or of its Founder (peace and blessings on him) left thereon and then expect the Promised Messiah to appear after Islam has completely disappeared and the religious order of the world has been upset ? But you have read in the Holy Book that such a final catastrophe shall never overtake Islam and the signs of power and majesty shall never completely desert it, and before such a crisis comes to pass, the Promised Messiah will appear at the beginning of the century and that he will come destined as the arbiter and judge to remove all the differences among the Muslims and to unite all good people on one common platform. This reformer has been called by three names in the holy traditions—the *Hakam* (the arbiter), the *Mahdī* (the guided one) and the *Messiah* (the Christ). According to these traditions the name *Hakam* signifies that the reformer will appear at a time when differences will arise among the Muslims. These it will be his part to decide by a verdict which will be right and just. At that time there will be not one point of doctrine regarding which conflicting opinions will not be held. The *Hakam* (arbiter) will accept the right opinions and reject the wrong ones. As for the *Mahdī* the traditions tell us that he will not derive his learning from the

“doctors” but will be taught directly by God as was the case with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). And regarding the name *Messiah* it has been narrated that he will not make use of arms in the propagation of the faith, but that his sole reliance will be upon the Divine grace with which he will be anointed and his weapon will consist of supplications and prayers before God<sup>1</sup>.

*It is therefore proper that you should render thanks to God that the said personage has appeared in your time and in your country. It is he who now speaks these words to you.* And these are the days when the grace of God is descending from heaven and signs are being manifested and the banished faith is returning to its home, and gems are being freely scattered from the mine of Divine knowledge. Now is the time when a trembling has fallen upon the unbelievers and joy has filled the eyes of the God-fearing with tears. Now is the day for the awakening of the sleeping ones and of joy for the watchful. This is the time for either acceptance or rejection. The faces of the accepted ones will to-day shine

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1. As for the significance of the name of Messiah it should be borne in mind that according to the holy traditions there are to be two Messiahs. One is the False Messiah who is to appear in the latter age and the other the True Messiah who will also appear at the same time. The person who will work by foul methods and will possess all the profanations of the world by unworthy means and will have recourse to subterfuges, deceits and pretenses and will assist the spread of evil by his deceptions is the False Messiah or the Anti-Christ. But the one who will place his sole reliance in all his works upon God and without depending upon intermediate causes will put his trust in prayers, and from the instruments will turn his eyes to their provider till his faith will attain the highest summit of heaven, is the True Messiah, whose object would be to further the cause of truth and to rescue the drowning ones. The name of Messiah is common to both of these persons, one of whom will hail from heaven and the other will arise from the earth.

with joy and be bright and those of the rejected ones will look dark and gloomy. *And whoever will accept the true Messenger will in fact accept anew the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) and will have found the object of his search.* But whoever will turn away and reject the Messenger will virtually be disobeying the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) reckless of the event. These are not my words but the emphatic declaration of God. My advent has indeed proved a test of true piety and devotion. The recognition of my truth will be granted only to those whose hearts have been changed and made upright. But the hearts of the majority of the 'Ulamā' of this country are dead. God has withdrawn from them His spiritual light and understanding. The majority of them call me an infidel and they know not to whom they are giving that name. They turn away their faces from the truth and would not accept it. They see the signs of God and yet would not be guided. They abuse me and strive to compass my discomfiture and concert plans for my destruction. They jeer at my followers and give us bad names. But before long the unjust shall know their proper destination.

Know then, my worthy readers, that for many years the revelation has been coming to me which I have been commanded to publish to the public, that the true Messiah regarding whom the promise was given to the Muslims that he would come at the time of the predominance of the Cross, is no other than my humble self, who has been raised at the beginning of this century of the Muslim Era, and has been commissioned by God to condemn the partisans of the Cross and to refute their exaggerations by the aptest arguments and to leave to the unbelievers



no loophole of escape. The Messiah is to furnish the believers hitherto bankrupt of arguments a fresh supply of evidences, and to bear a glad tidings those who seek the pleasure of God and love the Last of the Prophets. May the blessings of God and His angels and of all good men be showered upon him perpetually.

### **Proofs in support of claims**

I have already said that the present is the time for the advent of the Promised Messiah. The word of my Lord has now been truly and faithfully fulfilled. And it could not be otherwise, since the time appointed in the promise has already arrived and all the signs have come to pass. Like a hurricane the evil influence of the Cross has for a long time been spreading over the world, and the followers of Islam have turned renegades, and not a home has been left unaffected by the taint of Christianity. The light of Islam has faded from the world. This is why the Merciful God has sent me in the fulness of time and vouchsafed to me an unceasing succession in order to increase my spiritual knowledge and granted me signs and visions to strengthen my faith and endowed me with the knowledge of the deeper meanings of the Holy Qur'an and the *Hadith*. He has revealed to me that the promised hour has neither been anticipated nor delayed, and that it has all come to pass just at the appointed time. I was not, however, disposed to be satisfied with any ordinary amount of signs and evidences. In fact I reckoned even a good deal of them as inadequate because of my intense desire for perfect assurance. I would not be content with any dubious light and would avoid the spring of which the water was anything but perfectly limpid. Then, for my satisfaction He sent me revelations in increasing numbers till my heart was set perfectly at rest and my path was made clear. Several kinds of clearest signs were vouchsafed

to me and I was made to quaff the draught of content and satisfaction. All sorts of misgivings were set at rest. God illumined my heart with a vivid brilliance ; and from clear indications and signs and from the Holy Qur'ān and the Prophet's sayings the fact was brought home to me that I was the Promised Messiah and that in my advent had been fulfilled the Divine covenant and promise ; for it belongs to God to accomplish whatsoever. He willed and He has unquestioned power over all things. He vouchsafes His spirit to whomsoever He chooses and no one is there to question Him regarding His actions, the Supreme Lord of the heavens and the earth.

I was well aware that the '*Ulamā*' would reject my claim and make me the butt of their attacks and would say : This man has broken our unanimity and flouted the general consensus of opinion. But I was not afraid of them nor would conceal any part of what had been revealed to me. For what greater sin could there be than to hide the truth for fear of men ? I did not however accept the situation without the clearest evidence and express Divine command. Nor was it possible for me to disobey it. My coming was not like the advent of an unexpected guest who arrives suddenly of a night. Rather it was like the appearance of the Holy Prophet who rose glorious like the moon in the holy land of Makka. I bore credentials of my truth which those who had eyes could easily see. I was accompanied by signs which reflecting minds might clearly discern. The age by its condition had borne witness that the time was ripe for the advent of the Messiah ; for the Cross was in the ascendant and errors had multiplied and the exponents of Christianity by their industry and organization had demoralized the

people.<sup>1</sup> They had abused the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) and disturbed the peace.

Yet if notwithstanding these arguments, one should still fail to discern the need for a God-sent Reformer who should break the Cross and show signs and uphold the cause of the true Faith now left so destitute or who in judging my case should still be left a prey to doubts and misgivings and be unable to perceive the truth of my claim and to endorse the same and feel that he stands in need of additional signs and still clearer proofs and arguments in order to remove his doubts, for such I am always ready with my sympathy and am prepared to run to his help with the alacrity of one who hears the cry of a thirsty brother. I shall presently assuage his thirst with the cooling draught of cogent proofs and shall satisfy him with the limpid water of my exposition. The only piece of advice I would offer him in all sincerity of heart is that he must not stir in this matter, but with perfect honesty of purpose and should in his enquiries observe the regards of piety and politeness, and not transgress the bounds of decency and good manners. Because, a person who sets himself in antagonism to the exponent of truth or to one who enjoys intimate relation with,

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1. I have very often made references to the unscrupulous practices of the missionaries and do not feel sure what effect such references will produce upon the minds of men. It should therefore be understood that it is never my intention that evil should be met by evil. The *Musalmāns* ought to bear with patience the excesses of the missionaries and return their evil by goodness, because God has commanded us to be patient and to bear with fortitude the excesses of the people of the Book. Accordingly the man who refuses to show forbearance proves himself virtually devoid of faith. It thus becomes your duty to exercise forbearance and to shun conflict. When they abuse you, you must not abuse them in return. Rather you should pray for them. You should also bear in mind the benefits you derive from the British rule and forgive so that you may be forgiven.

and is specially assisted by God, is like the hunter who enters a forest to hunt its king but omits to make necessary preparations and carry the required weapons. To hunt the king of the forest is a difficult job even for a large party of hunters. How much more difficult then it is to overcome the champion of God, who is the master of illimitable power? Who is so rash as to oppose him save one who is unfortunate and blind? The man who fabricates a lie concerning God is the most wretched creature on earth. And similarly one who rejects the righteous one is an associate of the devil. And certain it is that signs have been shown by me and proofs have been adduced, but still I notice that the majority of the '*Ulamā*' of this country are reluctant to admit the truth which once they have denied. It is indeed a habit with them that when they once commit an error or a wrong they find it extremely difficult to return to truth or to retrace their steps. Pity upon them that they fear not God although they know that His eyes are upon them watching their doings. They see the signs of God and still behave as if they never saw them. Every year they are visited by calamities but they still remain unrepentant. God's arguments have been brought home to them but still they are without fear.

I, therefore, propose to narrate in this place some of the signs which have been manifested by God for the removing of doubts and hope that these will prove useful to men who are prepared to accept the truth.

### **Signs of the Promised Messiah**

The first sign I would mention is that God has sent me in the beginning of this century of the Muslim era when the Cross has obtained ascendancy and its

partisans are most active and prospering in their enterprise and have secured a strong hold upon the the minds of the masses and have thrown the door of apostasy wide open to all the mean minded and by the inducement of a life of enjoyment captured the judgment of all would-be renegades. It is a time when various disorders are rife, fatal to the life of men and a tumult is abroad like that of the judgment day. At such a time God has vouchsafed to me such a secret for the breaking of the Cross, the like of which is not to be found among other *Musalmāns*. The books written by me bear conclusive testimony to this special feature of my mission. They have closed the mouths of the partisans of the church. These now find no way either to avoid the challenge or to refute our arguments. The time was one when every eye was anxiously turned towards Heaven for these deceivers had done their worst by their deceits and temptations to misguide the people. On the other hand among the *Musalmāns* there are now prevailing the most numerous dissensions and there is hardly a doctrine in which there does not reign a serious conflict of opinion among the different sections of *Musalmāns*. The soul of man therefore longed for an authority which could decide their disputes with truth and equity. Accordingly God sent me in the capacity of an arbiter to whom all the disputed points might be referred for decision. In this is a sign for those who reflect. Indeed it furnishes a sign superior to all other signs.

*A second sign which I have been granted is my extraordinary command of the Arabic language.* This is a sign for the wise. The fact is that to begin with except for an elementary acquaintance with Arabic I had no greater proficiency in that tongue. This furnished the

'*Ulamā*' with a handle to attack and to discredit me. They began to criticize and to find fault with my knowledge of Arabic in order to belittle me and my movement in the eyes of the masses. They spread the report that I was not acquainted with even the elementary rules of Arabic grammar and did not possess even a grain of that gold. I therefore prayed to God that He might grant me proficiency in this subject and might make me without an equal in the mastery of the idioms and rhetoric of the language. I urged my plaint with the greatest humility and meekness. I fell down before the Lord and moaned and persisted in my prayer with the greatest steadfastness, sincerity and perseverance. Then was my prayer accepted and the boon I had prayed for was granted to me and access was given to me to all the beauties and niceties of the Arabic language and literature, so that I wrote several books in Arabic unique in style and diction.<sup>1</sup> These I presented to the learned

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1. The information has come down to us from an unbroken succession of traditions and records that the Promised Messiah and Mahdī will unite in his character the spirit of Jesus and the traits of Muhammad, some characteristics of both being blended in him with a sweet internal harmony. The spirituality of both these teachers will permeate his life and will be the fire of his being. In fact, both of them will be manifested in him as in a common counterpart, and they will be the reality underlying his exterior. Now one of the distinctive characteristics of Muhammad ﷺ was his eloquence as we may see from the Holy Qur'an. Accordingly the Promised Messiah by virtue of being his counterpart was also granted the same sign, so that he might not be entirely destitute of any of the characteristics of the Holy Prophet, for to be so destitute was not compatible with the quality of a counterpart. The Promised Messiah was therefore gifted with the fresh ripe fruits of the blessed tree of Prophethood and his individuality was entirely covered by its shadow. Such indeed is the privilege of all perfect followers of Islam. Similarly he inherited also the excellences of Jesus (may peace be upon him and our Holy Prophet).

—Continued on page 45

men of the country and challenged them saying "Ye linguists and men of letters ! ye deemed me illiterate and ignorant and verily I was so before God was pleased to help me. But, now He has helped me and out of His special grace and favour has Himself done my tutoring and I am grown a master of literature and one without an equal in that field. Accordingly I have written several works adorned with the wealth of rhetoric and eloquence. They will be a sign of my truth for all men of understanding and discernment and in this there is an argument against you from God. If then you are still disposed to doubt my truth and my proficiency in Arabic and to question my power of exposition and expression and to disbelieve my claim and to consider me an impostor, then you too should produce some work of equal merit if you are right. And if you are in the right as you deem you are, then of sure God will manifest your superiority and assure you the victory and no harm will come to you. And when you have done this, your critics will cease to find fault with you and your opponents will be stopped from blaming you

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Now since the individuality of the Promised Messiah was submerged in the other two spirits abovementioned and was lost and obliterated in them and manifested their qualities, it happened that the names of these two personalities came to be applied to him and his own name was lost and forgotten. Only the names of the victors remained. Thus it happened that he came to bear in heaven the names of these two blessed personages. This is a secret which God has disclosed to my heart and which my reason has been persuaded to accept. But the forms in which the Messianic stories are current among the *Musalmāns* and which find apparent countenance in some of the reported sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) are in the nature of the language of vision. These have come down from the Holy Prophet and have been misconstrued by several interpreters who have understood them literally and fallen into error. But now the real truth has been disclosed and for the seekers of truth the right path has been laid open.

and men will be convinced of your truth and honesty. And if individually you consider yourselves unequal to meet the challenge by reason of the inadequacy of your knowledge and intelligence, then you may rise and summon to your aid all those who are well-known among you as writers and speakers or possess a reputation for proficiency in literature. The proposed method of decision will bring honour of the true claimant and disgrace to the false one, and disgrace and humiliation are the inevitable lot of the impostors. And if ye have faith then fear ye God."

But the '*Ulamā*' neither produced the like of my writings nor desisted from denying me ; and shame and fear and helplessness and bewilderment became manifest in their faces and cowardice and flight became their constant habit. They forgot all their boastings and had not a word to utter. And many repented, but many sealed the truth of the words of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him). The fact also should be borne in mind that this sign was derived from the spiritual power of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) and that it all happened according to the command of God. For those are foolish people who have remarked that this challenge is similar to the challenge of the Holy Qur'an and therefore bespeaks a lack of respect and faith. Such criticism can be uttered only by one who is a stranger to the true nature of spiritual life and is a victim of the blindness of ignorance. I have already said that the signs shown by the followers are the reflections which always accompany the miracles of the Prophet and they serve to extend the scope of the Prophet's mission. The Holy Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet's utterances tell us the same tale and support the same views ; and they are misguided who



deny the statement. But the eyes of the common people fail to discern the truth. The higher facts of religion are a sealed book to them. They therefore deem that in the perfection of the followers is implied a derogation of the dignity of the Prophet, whereas the truth, as men of wisdom and discernment know, is quite the reverse.

### **The lunar and the solar eclipses destined to occur at the appearance of the Promised Messiah**

Yet, another proof of my truth is contained in the lunar and the solar eclipses which happened in the month of Ramdzān. I have described this occurrence in detail in my book, "The Nūr al-Haq". I was already a constant recipient of divine help when this sign was manifested. As narrated in the Holy Prophet's sayings, this sign was a sure indication of the advent of the Mahdī. Praise then be to God, Who showered His favours upon me in such abundance and fulfilled His promise by manifesting His signs. He thus opened the path of guidance for His seekers and lent them His light to enable them to traverse the path. The inwardness of the question was now laid bare to the wise and the truth was made clear to all who were prepared to see. It may indeed be said that these divine signs are like a bright sword drawn from its sheath to silence the opponents and to condemn the disbelievers. For there might be men to whom my appearance at a period of ascendancy of the Cross and the prevalence of its cult and at the beginning of this century might not appeal as conclusive proofs of my coming from the Lord, and similarly there might be men who are of the opinion that my writing of certain Arabic works and my mastery of the depths of Arabic literature could not be considered to be signs of any special divine

help, and it was just the fruit of my own secret industry ; to such men *the signs* of the eclipses were a thing to ponder on. Could such occurrences also be the result of human machinations ? Were they not sure and certain witnesses from God ? The particulars of these signs as narrated by the eminent Muslims in the books of *Hadīth* are as follows :—*Dar Qutnī* reports to have heard from Imām Muhammad Bāqir the following statement :—“Our Mahdī shall be accompanied by two signs the like of which have not happened since the creation of the heaven and the earth, namely, that in a certain month of Ramadzān there will be an eclipse of the moon on the first of the three nights usual for such eclipses and in the same month in the second of the three days assigned for the solar eclipse there will occur an eclipse of the sun.” The same report is found in *Baihaqī* and compilers of *Hadīth*. The author of the Risāla *Hashriyya* has even remarked that these eclipses will happen in the month of Ramadzān and after their occurrence the Mahdī will be recognised in Makka. One of these pious narrators has also observed that the Mahdī will be recognised only after numerous divine signs have been disclosed by Heaven and that in the beginning of his mission he will be denied and rejected by the people who will take him to be a deceiver and impostor and pronounce against him the *fatwā* of heresy and apostasy and that the same objections will be raised against him as were raised against the Holy Prophet ; but in the end his acceptance will gain prevalence in the earth and no two believers will be found who will not remember him with admiration and praise. The fact also should be borne in mind that the Holy Qur’ān makes mention of this sign of the double eclipse as an indication of the near approach of the last day as you may

read in the sacred verse. "And when the eye shall be dazzled, and when the moon shall be eclipsed and the sun and the moon shall be united (in the eclipse)." Nor, must it be supposed that the sign indicated here is one among the events of the Judgment-day ; because the eclipses referred to in the verse depend for their occurrence upon the existence of *this* earth. They are the result of certain definite and well-known circumstances and occur at fixed times and stated periods. In the case of the eclipses the circumstances are such that after they have ceased, the sun and the moon will return to their former condition. On the other hand, the phenomena which will be manifested on the last day are such as will come to pass only after the universe has been completely upset. The circumstances which will bring them to pass can arise only after the earth has ceased to exist and also its denizens. In short, the eclipses depend for their occurrence upon the existing order of our system, and from the beginning of the universe form a part of its phenomena. It, therefore, follows that the lunar and solar eclipses mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān are only the harbingers of the last day and not the sign of the last day having already set in. All these questions have been fully dealt with by me in my work, "The Nūr al-Haq". Several other important matters have been related in that book in connection with these signs. These I wish to reproduce here in order to add to the weight of this argument.

I had stated in that book—"The Nūr al-Haq"—that those people who after witnessing the sign of the eclipses would not still believe in my truth, nor prefer religion to the world, would be visited with punishment. It accordingly came to pass that after the occurrence of those

eclipses a plague was sent to the heedless people of this country and thousands of them were carried away by the epidemic. The disease caught the miscreants as in a fire. They fell a prey to it in towns and villages. The fire has not yet been quenched and is still hovering over their heads. And all this came to pass as was foretold previous to the event in successive Divine revelations. And in this is a sign for the God-fearing. Further, I had said in the same book that after the occurrence of this sign of the eclipses, God would lend His help to the righteous, that their number would increase, and their affairs would prosper and that God would manifest more signs and spread the knowledge of His truth among mankind. God out of His mercy and grace has fulfilled all these prophecies. He has helped the believers to overcome opposition and in accordance with His promise increased the number of my followers. One of these signs I proceed to describe below and I take the opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to God for His great mercy. Men gifted with observing eyes will not fail to discern the Divine sign in these incidents.

### **The prophecy of the death of Lekh Ram fulfilled**

Among the more remarkable signs which came to pass after the occurrence of the eclipses and made a deep impression upon men's hearts is the sign of the death of Pandit Lekh Rām. This man was an ardent foe of Islam who had made it his habit to traduce Islam and to abuse its Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). It so happened that this man came to learn from some of his brethren that there had arisen in Qādiān a man who claimed to be the recipient of Divine revelations and claimed that Islam alone was the true religion, and that

whoever opposed it was in the error. This information aroused his curiosity and he resolved to visit Qādiān.

At that time he was nearly 30 years of age or perhaps a little less so far as could be judged from his appearance. He came to me and asked me to show those Divine signs to him and said that he would not leave the village until he had seen some of them or until I had confessed my inability. He demanded that some sign should be shown to him before his departure. He was altogether an ignorant man. He began to importune me, and blind as he was of spiritual vision, pressed his demand with continued persistency as he was a mere body devoid of the life of wisdom. He had decided in his mind that I was an impostor. This view was impressed upon him by his companions and it obscured his judgment. He came to me on a certain day, and urged that he must be shown a sign. He arrogantly looked at me and said that he would not leave the village till I had shown him a sign or confessed my imposture. His words wounded the hearts of the men present in the assembly. I advised him to be patient and to abate his excitement. Then I told him that Divine signs were not of the class of things which one finds scattered about one's feet and might display off hand. They belong to God and are manifested whenever He thinks fit. It is not therefore right to be restive like the wild bull. He should avoid the attitude of opposition. The man who seeks for signs should observe patience, because the signs come from God and their manifestation depends upon the humble supplications of the devotee. He might stay with me for one year. This would be better for him, so that God may manifest to him some signs and grant him certainty of faith and mental satisfaction.

Such, I told Lekh Rām, was my confident hope. If therefore he was a sincere seeker, he ought to wait with patience till that time. My admonitions, however, failed to make any impression upon him. He did not desist from vituperations. Then I said to him : “Well if you cannot wait and have made up your mind to withdraw and not to accept my suggestion, then certainly you are at liberty to depart and await what revelations might come to me in future.” He, therefore, withdrew in a rage without uttering a single word. He now adopted a new role. In every assembly he began to mention my name with ridicule and scorn wishing thus to undo my work and to humiliate me in the eyes of the world. For the same purpose he often took recourse to falsehood and fabrications and managed thus to hasten his doom. He departed more and more from the path of rectitude and invented many a falsehood and spread many a slander and uttered abuse against the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him). He made it his business to decry the Holy Qur’ān. In his writings he cast off all restraints and abused all great men—the shining orbs of the spiritual firmament. He made it his style to find fault with the beloved ones of God. Then it was that God decided to burst his bubble and to expose to mankind his inner rottenness and to make him the subject of one of His mighty signs. Accordingly when the time for the fulfilment of God’s word and the manifestation of His sign drew nigh, Lekh Rām addressed to me a letter enquiring where was my promised sign and whether my imposture had not by that time been fully demonstrated. And as usually is the case with mean persons, he addressed me in bitter language and considering me his adversary abused me.

Now the men who had incited Lekh Rām to make the demand for signs were no other than his own co-religionists

who lived in this village of Qādiān. They related to him many a false report concerning me which emboldened him and dispelled the awe which had at first fallen upon him. They continuously repeated to him that I was an impostor and a cheat and warned him not to fall a prey to my spell. And I am sure it was these men of Qādiān who were responsible for his ultimate death, because it was they who egged him on to put himself in opposition to me, and encouraged him with the most solemn assurances. By such action these men far from proving his friends actually proved to be his worst enemies for their false assurances served to harden his heart. He believed their tales and began a virulent opposition. As a matter of fact, Lekh Rām was at first disposed to spend some time in my company in the hope of witnessing a sign. But these people interposed and induced him to change his mind, for they feared that Lekh Rām might be influenced by the effect of my association. They assured him that it could serve no useful purpose to live in my society, since they already knew everything about me. Lekh Rām lived in Qādiān for nearly a month and fed upon their false reports. These at last fired his mind with an unholy flame and covered it with pitch darkness. He left Qādiān with the fire of enmity ablaze in his heart and began to demand signs. He had in reality no belief in the possibility of a divine sign but pressed for it only to win a name among his co-religionists. And it happened that when he had left Qādiān I had a dream. I saw that I was standing in an open field and had in my hand a spear which was bright and shining. I saw Lekh Rām as one dead and lying at my feet. I moved his head from side to side with the spear. At this time some one called out saying, "He is gone and will not again return to Qādiān." And it actually so happened that he never again returned to Qādiān till the news came of

his death. This happened as follows :—After his departure he began to press for signs and indulged in vituperations and vilifications. I then turned to God and prayed for some puissant sign. Thereupon God informed me that Lekh Rām would be killed within the next six years by some dire visitation and the day of his death would be one contiguous to the 'Id festival. I informed Lekh Rām of this revelation. But it only served to increase his vilifications. He wrote to me saying that he too had received the revelation that within the next three years I should be carried away by cholera. He gave publicity to this prophecy and sent me copies of the notice announcing the same. He also repeated the prophecy in several assemblies. I then wrote to him to say that the whole matter now rested with God, that if he was true in his prophecy, God would manifest his truth, whereas if I had spoken the truth, God out of His mercy and grace would demonstrate my veracity, inasmuch as God is always the friend of the righteous and truthful and never helps the liars. Now the time assigned in Lekh Rām's prophecy passed off in peace and safety and not the least harm came to me. But when the time came for the fulfilment of my Lord's promise and entered the fifth year, it happened (as the reports of the Arya Samāj show) that a certain stranger came to Lekh Rām and related that he had been a Hindū of the same caste as Lekh Rām, that he had been persuaded by some people to become a *Musalmān*, but that now he was sorry for the change and had come to him to be taken back into the old religion of his fathers and to renounce Islam. He flattered Lekh Rām praising him for having proved to be the instrument of rousing many a sleeping one from the slumber of ignorance and added that his fame had spread abroad and it had been acknowledged on all hands that he was a past master in the refutation of Islam and that it was for this reason that he had



come from such a distance in order to have the grace of his interview. He further added that men had tried to turn him from his purpose but without success, that there were a few outstanding questions regarding which he was still in doubt and when, as he hoped, Lekh Rām would solve them for him, and forgive his faults, he would re-enter the old faith of his fathers. Upon this Lekh Rām closely scrutinised the man. But God hid from him the secret design of the stranger. Lekh Rām believed his story and took him to be a fellow casteman. He received him warmly and soon became intimate with him. He showed him every mark of sympathy and regard, and carried the news among his people that the new comer had embraced Islam and now wanted to revert to Hinduism. The stranger meanwhile never mentioned the name of his birth place, so that no body knew whence he had come. His movements in the city were also secret so that no one knew where he resided. This went on till the fatal day arrived. On that day in an unsuspected hour the stranger came to Lekh Rām in the guise of a friend and waited till all those present had departed and then made a swift and sudden attack upon Lekh Rām who was completely off his guard. He plunged a dagger into Lekh Rām's body which broke his ribs and penetrated into his entrails. The day was 'the day immediately following the 'Id, as was foretold in the Divine revelation. And when he had finished his job, the murderer fled from the house and like an angel melted into the air and no one found any trace of him. God had covered him in the fold of mystery. Meantime the victim lay mangled in his wound and while breath still remained, he requested that he might be taken to the hospital. He was accordingly carried there, but the doctor was not to be found. There in his agony he cried "O my fate ! How unlucky ! that even the doctor is absent." After some time the doctor came and

rendered what help he could, but it was of no use. The doctor said there was little chance of life and when midnight passed Lekh Rām quaffed the cup of death. I have been told that his eyes were full of tears for he remembered the Divine prophecy and its fulfilment. His death overwhelmed his people with grief, for in him they lost one of their stoutest protagonists. They made a search from house to house and from town to town looking for the murderer, or to secure information about him. And when they despaired of finding any trace of him, people said it was a Divine mystery ; and their grief increased and difficulties multiplied and they became like mad men. In the extremity of their grief they ceased to distinguish between right and wrong and their pride was humbled because they felt that the argument had been proved against them and they now owed a heavy debt to the *Musalmāns*. They looked upon his death as a public calamity and a national misfortune and it was rumoured that they had resolved to kill some leading Muslims to avenge his death and to appease their wrath. But God protected the *Musalmān* and frustrated their designs and cast an awe upon their hearts and created a difference among them, so they remained unsuccessful and gradually ceased their pratings. And the Lord brings to pass whatever He wishes.

They now adopted another plan. They moved the authorities for a search of my house. But in this plan also God disappointed them and covered them with shame. When all their efforts proved unavailing and their idols failed to come to their help, they took counsel among themselves and decided to re-establish friendly relations with the *Musalmāns*. The wise among them said that it was advisable to be at peace with the Muslims because things had gone against them. They were also afraid of the plague. They accordingly

made peace with the *Musalmāns* and in this was a sign from God the Lord of Power Who hears the prayer of the weak and never disappoints those who rely on Him, and Who never casts away one who seeks His protection. All glory is due to Him ! A consideration of His signs fills the heart with wonder and the eyes with tears. Who then will be so fortunate as to reap benefit from this narration? This sign, in fact, is one of the miracles attributable to the credit of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be on him) and is a living evidence of the genuineness of his prophethood. Ye men, ponder on the sign, and may God have mercy upon you.

In addition to the signs recounted above, there are many others which at present I omit owing to the fear of unduly increasing the bulk of this narrative. And for those who fear God the above are more than enough. For the signs which distinguish any Divine messenger are the same as in the case of the prophets. There is therefore nothing new in my denial. Every prophet of God has been scoffed and ridiculed in his time. And although their opponents had seen many a Divine sign manifested in them and witnessed many an instance of special Divine assistance, they never ceased to call upon him to show signs. Therefore it is the wise part of every good man to eschew the ways of the unbelievers and to follow the examples of the believers. And as for those who turn away, they will not harm God in the least and God cares not the least for them.

## CONCLUSION

THE fact should be borne in mind that there are many traditions concerning the Messiah and Mahdī. Many of them are mutually conflicting and often contradictory. Nothing is known regarding their authenticity and we possess no authority for accepting their veracity. The common element in these traditions, that a person is to appear called the Messiah, the *Hakam* and the Mahdī—has indeed the support of every reliable evidence and has never been disputed. But as regards the other details the reports are so conflicting and contradictory that any attempt at a reconciliation has puzzled the collectors of the traditions and confounded the doctors and overtaxed the wit of the theologians. They have therefore remained content with merely collecting in their works the different traditions without any attempt at an examination of the comparative weight of evidence supporting the different versions. Accordingly they have found themselves in a veritable whirlpool of surprises. Some of them have expressed the opinion that the Mahdī will be descended from the family of ‘Abbās, and others that he will descend from the house of Fātima. Some say

that he will be of the children of Hussain and some that he will be a descendant of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him). There are also those who think that he will be an ordinary member from among the followers of Islam, and others who declare that the Mahdī is no other than the Messiah who is to appear, and that save him there is to be no other Mahdī. Such—and there are many more—are the traditions that have come down to us. Similarly regarding the coming of the Messiah there are numerous differences of opinion. The Holy Qur’ān bears witness that Jesus is dead; but nevertheless the contrary opinion is held that he will descend from the sky where he is still alive having never met with death. A few learned men there have been who held that Jesus was really dead. This is what has been stated in the Holy Qur’ān and this view cannot be gainsaid except by one who is obstinately bent to oppose the truth. The men who believe in the death of Jesus are of opinion that the second coming of Jesus will be in the nature of the appearance of a counter-part. This is the opinion held by the Mutezilites and the leading members of the Sufistic School. Among the men who believe that Jesus will descend from the sky there are some who say that he will descend near the minaret at Damascus, and some who hold that he will descend among the cohorts of Islam, and some who believe that he will descend when the Anti-Christ will make his appearance. Some assign Makka and some Jerusalem as the place of his descent while others have named various other places. The traditions further tell us that all these differences of opinion will be decided by the Messiah himself, who will be the *Hakam* (arbiter) appointed by God, and that men who will accept him as such and far from being dissatisfied with his findings will accept the same openly and sincerely, will be

reckoned as true Muslims ; while who will refuse to accept him will say "sufficient for us is the opinion in which we found our forefathers". Men wonder how could a commissioned messenger come from God, and say that the claimant is an impostor. But even these men were before this awaiting his advent at the head of the century of the Muslim era. And now the looked-for has appeared and brought with him honour for them, and prepared for them all necessary equipments and provided for them the required weapons to silent their enemies. Did they fail to recognise the time for the appearance of the Messenger or was his coming untimely? Certainly the day appointed by God has arrived and the hour of decision is at hand. Fortunate therefore are those who accept me with thanksgivings. Do they wish to overthrow him whom God is resolved to exalt and to persist in their fruitless controversies. But God has already indited His rule that the man sent by Him shall carry away the victory. Will they then make bold to enter the lists against God? As a matter of fact, there is no more any mystery about the question ; but their hearts have been hardened and they are groping like the blind.

O men ! Why do you reject the signs of God which you have seen with your own eyes? Is there no one righteous among you ? You scoffed at God's Messenger and would have killed him with your swords had not God cast the fear of the rulers upon your hearts. Had there not been present the existing Government, you would certainly have attacked the Messenger of God. Now the truth has been revealed and the excuses you have offered have proved to be lame. You have never cared seriously to ponder. So I leave the matter with God who decided everthing !