

15. The question that arises out of this evidence is whether the beliefs held by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and the Laheri Ahmadis show that they are Muslims. This was the second aspect of the evidence given by Hafiz Sber Muhammad. The witness quoted extensively from the writings of the founder of the movement. Reference is made to two quotations only:—

.....the gist and the essence of our religion is: There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad (peace be on him) is the messenger of Allah.....and

.....our religion is the same Islam. It is not new. There are the same prayers, the same facts, the same pilgrimage, the same *zakaat*...."

This evidence leaves no doubt that the basis upon which the religion of Islam is founded is the basis of the beliefs of Mirza and of the Laheri Ahmadis. Mirza stated his own convictions and those of his followers thus:—

"We believe that whoever takes away from or adds to the Islamic *Shariah*, even to the extent of an atom, or discards what is obligatory and permits what is forbidden, is without belief, and has deviated from Islam. I admonish my people, that they should believe in the Holy Kalima from the bottom of their hearts; namely that there is no God except Allah and Muhammad is Allah's Messenger, even till they die, that they believe in all the prophets and all the revealed books whose authenticity is established from the Holy Qur'an and that they accept as obligatory fasting, prayer, poor rate (*zakaat*) and pilgrimage and all that has been prescribed as obligatory by the Exalted Allah and His Messenger, and that they accept as forbidden all that has been forbidden and thus follow Islam in the true sense. To sum up, it is obligatory to believe in all those matters on which there was consensus in belief and practice of the pious ones of the olden days of Islam, and which are considered to be Islam by the consensus of *Ahl-i-Sunnat*"

The witness then referred to certain Muhammedan authorities on the subject of who are Muslims and in particular whether Ahmadis are Muslims.

I was told that the essential doctrine of the Muslim faith, the Kalima or credo of Islam, namely that there is but one God, Allah, and that Muhammad is his Messenger, and that this belief and a belief in prayer, fasting, *zakaat* (the giving of alms) and the Hajj, or pilgrimage (if this can be afforded) has frequently been recognised by Courts in Muhammedan countries and by learned writers on the Muhammedan law as being the touchstone by which to identify a person as a Muslim. The various authorities referred to clearly support this contention. I was also referred to decisions of foreign courts which though in no way authoritative are yet instructive in that they support the general contention advanced by Second Plaintiff. I refer to a few of them.

17. Amongst the decisions reference may be made to the following. *Narantakath v. Parakkal*: (1922) 45 Ind. L. Rep. Mad. 986. Coram: Oldfield and Krishnan JJ. The headnote reads:

"The essential doctrine of the Muhammedan religion is that God is only one and that Muhammad is his prophet; hence Ahmadiyyans

who also hold that belief are only a sect of Muhammadans, notwithstanding the fact that they differ from other Muhammadans in some other matters of religious belief. Hence on a Muhammadan becoming an Ahmediyan he does not become an apostate."

Then there is the case of *Mauilim and Ans v. Marrikan* (Case No. 513/1925) Supreme Court of the Straits Settlements (Singapore). I quote from the judgment of *Deans J.*;

"The overwhelming evidence in this case is that the fundamentals of Muhammadanism are believed in by the Ahmediyas who are also therefore entitled to be called Muhammadans and not *kafirs* and that the points on which they differ from the orthodox are on the traditions which have never been considered fundamental."

A further case is *Hakim Khalil Ahmad and others v. Malik Israfil and Ors.* 1917 Vol 37 Indian Cases (Patna High Court) p. 302. Sir Edward Chamber CJ and Ros J. The following passage appears :

"Members of the Amadiya sect of Qadian are Muhammadans; the court below have given...reasons for holding that the plaintiffs are Muhammadans, notwithstanding their pronounced dissent from orthodox opinion in several important articles of faith."

And then finally *Airyasha Koresht v. Hishmatullah Koresht.* (1972) Vol XXIV All Pakistan Legal Divisions (Karachi) p. 653 Coram : Imdadally H Agha J. The headnote reads :—

"A Muslim became a Bahai and after remaining so for a number of years reverted back to Islam by renouncing the Bahai faith and reciting the Kalima. Held : mere recital of the Kalima was enough for a person to become a Muslim ; no other formalities or rituals were necessary." The learned Judge is reported (at p. 657) as saying : "For becoming a Muslim all authoritative books of Islam are agreed that if a person believes in the unity of God (Allah) and Muhammad (may peace be upon him) to be his prophet and also says that he is a Muslim then he becomes a Muslim and no other formalities or rituals are to be gone through by him."

18. The defence having been withdrawn by the Defendants it was incumbent upon the Second Plaintiff to prove his case as set out in the pleadings. There was, strictly speaking, no need to meet the case as pleaded by the Defendants. Nonetheless Second Plaintiff did not content himself with the proof of his own case, he proceeded to meet the case as pleaded by Defendants and in particular he met the defences raised by the Defendants that for various stated reasons concerning their belief, Ahmadiis were not Muslims. The first such defence was that Ahmadiis did not accept and believe in what is known as the finality of the Holy Prophet and that their founder, Mirza, had proclaimed himself to be a prophet after Holy Prophet. This was the third aspect of the evidence tendered by the witness Muhammad.

19. This aspect was referred to as the issue of *Khatam an-Nabiyyin*, i. e. the belief in the Holy Prophet Muhammad as the Last and Final Prophet. Once again the witness quoted extensively from the writings of Mirza in order to establish that the founder himself and the members of the movement believed that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the *Khatam an-nabiyyin* I refer only to the following :

"...I believe that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, is the *Khatam* of the prophets and

...I believe in the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, being the *Khatam an-Nabiyyan* and

...I believe in God and his Messenger, and I also believe that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, is the *Khatam an-Nabiyyin*"

The witness then proceeded to analyse the writings of Mirza in order to establish the meaning which he attributed to the term *Khatam an-Nabiyyin*. He wrote—

"...The Holy Qur'an does not permit the coming of any prophet after the *Khatam an-Nabiyyin*, whether an old one or a new one and also

...Our Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, being the *Khatam an-Nabiyyin* is a bar to the coming of any other prophet"

Having established precisely what the founder believed concerning the finality of the prophethood and having analysed the precise meaning of his declared beliefs, the witness went on to examine his writings with the view to establishing that he himself, all his life, denied any claim to being a prophet. Referring to the writings of the founder, the witness quoted—

"...It is total slander by Muhammad Hussain to ascribe to me that I deny miracles and that I lay claim to Prophethood, and that I do not consider the Holy Prophet to be the *Khatam al-anbiya*. God forbid ... no, on the contrary, God is witness that I believe all these things : and again—

...I make no claim to Prophethood. This is your mistake, or you have some motive in mind : and again—

...Ignorant opponents allege against me that this person claims to be a prophet or apostle. I make no such claim : and again—

...In confronting the present Ulema, this humble servant has... sworn many times by God that I am not a claimant to any Prophethood"

At the same time there is no doubt that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad did claim to have received revelation from God. The witness accordingly dealt with the whole question of revelation in Islam with particular reference to its continuation among Muslim saints. This was the fourth main aspect of his evidence.

20. Relying on the authority of the Holy Qur'an he was at pains to point out that the distinctive characteristic of true religion is that it invites the acceptance of a living God who listens to the prayers of the distressed, removes their troubles, and speaks to His servants. Every follower of the faith can make the verbal claim that Islam takes man to God. However, to call people of the world towards God on the basis of one's personal experience and attainment, is the work of only those who are purified by God Himself, and are perfect followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Developing the theme of revelation in Islam, the witness indicated that with the prophethood having ended with the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the guidance which mankind was to receive reached its completion. He then posed the questions: is it the case that, with the completion of the guidance, the link between the Creator and His creatures

has been forged permanently, and all men in future will attain to God from birth? Or, will people still drift away from God and lose the right path, even after the finality of the prophethood? Who will take the place of prophets to establish the link between God and the lost people when people can go astray despite the existence of perfect teachings?

21. He then went on to show, on the basis of Quranic authority, that as the Holy Prophet called people to God through the light given to him by revelation, so will those of his followers who receive the light of revelation establish the link between God and his creatures on the basis of revelation. Such persons are called saints of God; and the revelation they receive is not prophetic revelation (*wahy nubuwwat*) but saintly revelation (*wahy wilayat*).

22. Thereafter, the witness dealt with the modes whereby God revealed himself. It is unnecessary to deal with this subject in any detail other than to make the observation that even in the modes of revelation a distinction is drawn between revelation which is common to saints and prophets and revelation which is exclusive to prophets. This last mentioned mode of revelation (*wahy nubuwwat*) came to an end with the Holy Prophet Muhammad but divine communication among Muslims continues in the form of *wahy wilayat* and such revelation was regarded by the Holy Prophet as part of Prophethood.

23. According to the Holy Qur'an this type of revelation came to non-prophets, such as Moses' mother, Mary, the mother of Jesus and the disciples of Jesus. It also came to the companions of the Holy Prophet, both during his life and afterwards. In his systematic and orderly manner the witness worked his way through the writings of numerous Muslim religious authorities, scholars and writers. An analysis of these writings makes it quite clear that revelation is one of the characteristics of the chosen ones of God; and that subsequent to the Holy Prophet this revelation came to non-prophets by way of saintly revelation.

"...The door of prophethood is closed after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and shall not be opened for anyone till the Day of Judgment. However, revelation (*wahy ilham*) remains for the saints, which does not contain the Shariab in it"

The witness referred to the work of a present-day Theologian, Allama Khalid Mahmud, who is opposed to the Ahmadiyya movement, and who wrote—

"...News of the unseen, visions and revelations are also received by some non-prophets. Saints of God are informed of news of the unseen. ...God Himself grants the privilege of His communication, without the person reaching the rank of prophet."

The fifth aspect of the evidence of the witness dealt with the concept of *Muhaddas* who is a saint or a non-prophet who receives revelation. He explained that the word *Muhaddas* admitted of two types of meaning: literal and technical. In its literal or linguistic sense the word *Muhaddas* did not convey the significance of relating news of the unseen, but merely relating something: as to its technical meaning in Islamic theology Mirza himself wrote:—

"...The muhaddas ... has the honour of being spoken to by God. Ma-

ters of the unseen are disclosed to him. His revelation, like that of prophets and messengers, is protected from the interference of the devil. The real essence of the Law is disclosed to him. He is appointed just like the prophets and, like them, it is his duty to proclaim himself openly"

The witness then explained the use of the words "*nabi*" (prophet and "*rasul*" (messenger) As before, the witness distinguished the *literal* or linguistic meaning of the words and the *technical* meaning thereof.

The *literal* meaning of the word "*rasul*" is "to be sent", *i. e.*

"...A person who is sent is called *rasul* in Arabic"

The technical meaning of the word "*rasul*" conveys something different. Mirza explained the meaning thus—

"...According to the explanation of the Holy Qur'an *rasul* is he who receives the commands and beliefs of religion through the angel Gabriel"

As with the word "*rasul*" (*i. e.* messenger), so Mirza, like other Muslim theologians, attributed to the word "*nabi*" (prophet) two meanings, *i. e.* a literal and a technical meaning. The literal meaning of "*nabi*" and "*nabuwat*" is as follows :—

"...*nabuwat* means to make prophecies : and again—

He who discloses news of the unseen received from God is called "*nabi*" in Arabic."

The technical meaning conveys something different:—

"...In terminology of Islam, *nabi* and *rasul* mean persons who bring an entirely new law, or abrogate some aspects of the previous law, or are not included among the followers of the previous prophet, having a direct connection with God without benefit from any prophet"

These were the meanings attributed to the words "*nabi*" and "*rasul*", by Mirza and these meanings accorded with the meanings given to them by the Muslim religious elders over the centuries. All the prophets of the past fulfil the technical meaning. Mirza, however, applied to himself only the literal meanings, and throughout his life denied applying to himself the technical meanings. Such literal use of these terms ("*nabi*" "*rasul*") is not against Islamic law and theology. The witness referred various writings of Mirza to emphasise this point ; for instance, and I quote—

"...These words (*i. e.* *nabi* and *rasul*) do not bear their real meaning, but have been used according to their literal meaning in a straightforward manner"

Mirza not only distinguished between the literal and technical meaning of the words but also drew a distinction, in terms of language, between that which is "real" (*haqiqat*) and that which is metaphorical (*majaz*). The witness illustrated this difference by referring to the word "lion". In its *real* sense it is an animal. In its metaphorical sense, it could mean a brave man.

25. Thus the terms "*nabi*" and "*rasul*" can be defined so as to connote the real prophets and messengers of God. In other words, used in

that sense, the person is actually a prophet. If, however, "*nabi*" and "*rasul*" are applied to a non-prophet or saint, they are used in their metaphorical sense, i. e. a metaphorical prophet or a saint.

26. As before. Mirza took pains to explain the meaning which he attached to the words; e. g.

"... By virtue of being appointed by God, I cannot conceal these revelations I have received from Him in which the words *nubuwwat* and *risalat* (prophethood) occur quite frequently. But I say repeatedly that, in these revelations, the word ... *rasul* and *nabi* which has occurred about me does not carry its real meaning"

Moreover, the meanings attributed to the words were not peculiar to Mirza. Saints in the Muslim world prior to Mirza were also given the titles "*nabi*" and "*rasul*" in their divine revelations in a metaphorical way, and no one took them to have become prophets.

27. It is quite apparent that Mirza intended no more than that he considered himself to have fallen into the category of saints (*wali*) and not into the category of prophets.

28. Indeed, the witness went on to analyse Mirza's claims in the light of the beliefs of the great religious authorities in Islamic history. It is clear on the evidence that when the words "*nabi*" and "*rasul*" are used in the literal sense or by way of metaphor for saints (*wali*) and reformers (*mujaddid*) that does not make such persons prophets. It is equally clear on the evidence that Mirza at no time claimed real prophethood, but always used the words "*nabi*" and "*rasul*" about himself in the metaphorical sense. He gave clear and explicit explanations of these words and made their literal, technical, metaphorical and real meanings quite clear. Mirza's claims can be summarized as follows:

- (i) He denied receiving *wahy nobuwwat* (prophethood) and affirmed receiving *wahy walayat* (sainthood).
- (ii) He denied the use of prophet (*nabi*) in its technical sense and affirmed the use of the term in its literal sense.
- (iii) He denied that the term *muhaddis* could be applied to him in its literal sense and affirmed that he was a *muhaddas* in the technical sense.
- (iv) He denied being an actual or real prophet and affirmed being a metaphorical prophet.

when one examines these claims against the background of the religious environment into which Mirza came there appears to be nothing untoward or sinister in such claims. They are consistent with the spiritual thought prevailing in that environment. The witness convincingly demonstrated this by referring to a wealth of writings of the saints and scholars of the Islamic religion.

29. The next aspect of the evidence of the witness related to the terminology of the Islamic mysticism as it applied to saints. He explained the meaning of such terms as

- *fana fir rasul* (one who is 'lost' in the Holy Prophet Muhammad)
- *sill* (an image or reflection)
- *burooz* (a manifestation)

- *masli anbiya* (like unto prophets) and
- *ummatt wa nabi* (follower with prophetic qualities).

Mirza used these terms; he explained them and he applied them to himself. An analysis of the use of these terms make it clear that what Mirza was claiming was not prophethood but rather a prophet by way of image or manifestation i.e. a picture or reflection and not the real thing itself. It was stated that Mirza's heart was like a well-polished mirror in which the image of the Holy Prophet Muhammad can be seen, or in other words, the Holy Prophet was the original and Mirza was the *zill* (reflection) or picture. According to the Sufis (muslim mystics) the Prophet is the original and the saint (*wali*) is the *zill* or reflection.

30. Moreover, it is manifestly apparent that Mirza firmly believed that the Holy Prophet was the Last of the Prophets, and that after him no prophet is to arise, whether new or old. With the finality of prophethood, religion or religious law reached perfection and therefore the chain of prophets was cut off. No prophet will now come.

31. At the same time, whenever people stray far from God and lose faith in Him, in order to revive faith and to re-establish man's relation with God, God raises up saints and reformers. This is in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith. These are known by various titles, such as *khalifa* (deputy to the Holy Prophet), *wali* (saint), *mujaddid* (reformer) and *muhaddas* (recipient of revelation, though not a prophet). These persons are also referred to as *fana-fir-rasul* (effaced in the Holy Prophet), *masli anbiya* (the like of prophets), *zilli nabi*, *buroost nabi* and *ummatt nabi* (prophet by way of reflection, or manifestation, or follower and prophet). These terms do not describe prophets but are synonymous for saints.

32. Despite the lengths to which Mirza went to explain his beliefs and the terminology which he used, he came under criticism and attack. It was alleged that he claimed to be a prophet. This was denied by one of Mirza's followers. This led to him publishing in 1901 a treatise known as "Correction of an Error". The gravamen of the publication was to explain the terminology which he had used and to reiterate that he was not a prophet in the real sense of the word but only a reflection or manifestation of the real thing. He did not purport to correct any error on his part but to correct those who were in error concerning his claims. This publication was questioned by an opponent of Mirza's. A follower of Mirza replied: this reply is contained in the document styled "Clarification of Correction of an Error". Yet again, the continuing theme was repeated, and I quote.

"... After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, all doors of prophethood have to be closed... But one window... is open. That is to say, the window of self-effacement in the Holy Prophet (*fana-fir-Rasool*) or perfect succession to the Holy Prophet which is known in other words as *buroost* (manifestation)."

And again:

"... I present opponents with the allegation against me that I claim to be a *nabi* (prophet) or *rasul* (messenger). I make no such claim..."

By way of further explanation of the terms used by Mirza and in particular by way of dealing with the characteristics of a saint, the witness dealt with a subject which he termed "How a Believer becomes 'Mary' and 'Messiah'". He referred to a class of believers "pure from the beginning and protected from attacks of the devil". Due to the high degree of goodness and purity in them, God has compared them to Mary and given them this name in the spiritual world. The witness referred to various Islamic writings and showed that Muslim saints are likened to Jesus and Mary, as well as to other prophets.

33. Against this background the witness stated that it was permissible to liken non-prophets to prophets and that the Holy Prophet himself likened those who were not prophets.

34. He then analysed the views of Mirza to show how a believer becomes a Mary:—

".....Every believer who accomplishes himself in piety and purity, is Mary in the sense of *buwoos* (manifestation and spiritual representation). And God breathes into him. His Spirit, which becomes the son of Mary....."

Thus, when a person acquires such accomplishment in turning to God that only the spirit remains, he then becomes the spirit of God in God's view, and he is named Jesus in heaven. He receives a spiritual birth at the hand of God, which is not from any physical father; rather, it is the shadow of the Grace of God, that grants him that birth. So in fact the excellence of purification and of absorption in God is such that he attains severance from bodily darkness so that only spirit remains and he is accorded the rank of Messiah or Jesushood. Indeed Messiah is the title which was given to Jesus, meaning 'one who touches God', 'partakes of Divine favours', the vice-regent of God', and 'one who adopts truth and righteousness'. When the believer becomes Jesus in this sense he also reaches the perfect rank of *Mahdi* (the rightly-guided one). *Mahdi* is a title which means 'rightly-guided by instinct', 'heir to all guidance', and 'the full reflection of the Divine attributes'.

35. It is in this spiritual sense that Mirza claimed to be the Messiah and *Mahdi*.

".....I am a Muslim...I have come from the Lord of the heavens and the earth as a Reformer (*mujaddid*) of the religion, for the fourteenth century, century having the characteristics and disposition of Jesus..."

And a further quotation:—

".....In a metaphorical and spiritual sense, this humble servant is that promised Messiah, the news of whose advent is given in the Qur'an and Hadith....."

Evidence was also led to show that the claims made by Mirza in this regard do not infringe against Islamic law. The claim to be *Mahdi* and the like of the Messiah is permitted by Islamic Shariah. What is objectionable is to deny that the Holy Prophet was *khatam-an-nabiyyin* and to claim prophethood for oneself. As already indicated Mirza believed the Holy Prophet to be *khatam an-nabiyyin* and the Last Prophet, and he held that no prophet could come after the Holy Prophet, new or old.