

Hadith report: “There is no prophet between me and Jesus”

Misrepresented by the Qadiani Jama’at

by Dr Zahid Aziz

A hadith frequently quoted by the Qadiani *Jama’at* is as follows, in full:

“There is no prophet between me and him, that is, Jesus. He will descend. When you see him, recognise him. He is a man of medium height, reddish fair, wearing two light yellow garments, looking as if drops of water are falling down from his head though it will not be wet. He will fight the people for the cause of Islam. He will break the cross, kill the swine, and abolish jizyah. Allah will destroy all religions except Islam during his time. He will destroy the Dajjal and will live on the earth for forty years. Then he will die and the Muslims will pray over him.”¹

The Qadiani *Jama’at* argument is that, as this hadith is speaking of the signs of the Jesus to come, it is referring to the Promised Messiah as a prophet in the words “There is no prophet between me and him”, and not to the Jesus of the past.

The **first point** to note is that, as far as we can find, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has never mentioned this particular hadith.

Secondly, he laid down a general rule that wherever the coming Messiah is referred to as *nabi* (prophet) in any hadith, it does not mean a real prophet because no prophet can come after the Holy Prophet, and this word must be taken metaphorically as referring to a saint of Islam. On this point, we quote from his writings below:

“The name ‘prophet of God’ for the Promised Messiah, which is to be found in *Sahih Muslim* etc. from the blessed tongue of the Holy Prophet, is meant in the same metaphorical sense as that in which it occurs in Sufi literature as an accepted and common term for the recipient of Divine communication. Otherwise, how can there be a prophet after the *Khatam al-anbiya*?”²

“...the Promised Messiah being called *nabi* in Hadith is not meant in a real sense. This is the knowledge which God has given me. Let him understand, who will. This very thing has been disclosed to me that the doors of real prophethood are fully closed after the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*, the Holy Prophet Muhammad. According to the real meaning, no new prophet nor an ancient prophet can now come.”³

¹ Abu Dawud, book 39: *Malāḥim*, ch. 14: The appearance of Dajjal, hadith 4324.

² *Anjam Atham*, footnote, p. 28; see *Ruhani Khaza’in*, vol. 11, p. 28.

³ *Siraj Munir*, p. 3; see *Ruhani Khaza’in*, vol. 12, p. 5.

"In *Sahih Muslim* there is a hadith about this, namely, that the Messiah shall come as a *nabi* of God. Now if, in a symbolic sense, by 'Messiah' or 'son of Mary' is meant a member of the Muslim community who holds the rank of *muhaddath*, then no difficulty arises." ⁴

He even writes that it is his opponents who "say the mention of the Messiah as prophet of God in *Sahih Muslim* and elsewhere refers to real prophethood." ⁵ What his opponents said during his life became the belief of the Qadiani *Jama'at* after his death.

The **third point** we make is that in the hadith above, almost everything said after the words "There is no prophet between me and him, that is, Jesus", is taken by all Ahmadis, including members of the Qadiani *Jama'at*, metaphorically and not in a real sense. Jesus' descending, his wearing certain garments, drops of water falling from his head, breaking the cross, killing the swine, all are taken by Ahmadis as being in a metaphorical, and not a literal, physical sense. One of his descriptions here is: "He will fight the people for the cause of Islam" (فَيُقَاتِلُ النَّاسَ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ). No Ahmadi, including any member of the Qadiani *Jama'at*, takes this as meaning literally that he will wage war on people to make them accept Islam.

A question arises that if, in this hadith, the word 'prophet' has been used in a metaphorical sense, as Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad says, "as an accepted and common term for the recipient of Divine communication", then how could the Holy Prophet Muhammad have said that "There is **no prophet** between me and him" when a large number of recipients of revelation appeared among Muslims before the time of the Promised Messiah?

The answer has been provided by the Promised Messiah himself in his book *Tadhkirat-ush-Shahādātāin*, published in October 1903, and elaborated further in a talk dated 15 April 1903 which can be read in his *Malfuzat*.

In *Tadhkirat-ush-Shahādātāin* he writes about an answer he gave to a question asked by Sahibzada Abdul Latif *Shaheed* when he stayed with him in Qadian. Its translation is as below:

"On one occasion, I also explained to him the answer to an objection, upon which he was very pleased. This was that as the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the like of Moses and his *khalifas* are the likes of the Israelite prophets, why is it then that the Promised Messiah is given the title 'Prophet' in Hadith reports while all the other *khalifas* are not given this title? The answer I gave him was

⁴ *Izala Auham*, p. 586; see *Ruhani Khaza'in*, vol. 3, p. 416.

⁵ *Kitab al-Bariyya*, p. 191, footnote; see *Ruhani Khaza'in*, vol. 13, p. 224.

that the Holy Prophet was the *Khatam-ul-anbiya* and no prophet was to come after him. If, therefore, all his *khalifas* had been named as prophets, the issue of the Finality of Prophethood (*khatm-i nubuwwat*) would have become dubious. On the other hand, if not even one of his *khalifas* had been called as 'prophet,' the objection would have arisen that his likeness to Moses is incomplete because all the *khalifas* of Moses were prophets. This is why Divine wisdom required that, first, many *khalifas* be sent having regard to the finality of prophethood and not be called prophets, and this rank not be given to them as a proof of the finality of prophethood. Then the last *khalifa*, the Promised Messiah, be called as 'prophet' so that the two series may have similarity in the matter of *khilafat*." ⁶

(Note: By the "two series" are meant the series of Israelite prophets after Moses till Jesus and the *khalifas* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad till the Promised Messiah.)

In his talk on the morning of 15 April 1903, he said:

"If we look carefully, the dignity of our Holy Prophet Muhammad lies in not calling anyone after him as prophet. ... It is to indicate the greatness of the Holy Prophet, and to show respect and honour for his prophethood, that after him no one else would, in any way, share the name 'prophet' with him.

Although thousands of venerable persons in the *Ummah* of the Holy Prophet displayed the light of prophethood, and they received a part of prophethood, and still do so, but because the Holy Prophet was given the title *Khatam al-anbiya*, God the Most High did not wish to give anyone else the title 'prophet', as this would be derogatory to the Holy Prophet's dignity. ...

For thirteen hundred years the word 'prophethood' was not applied to anyone due to regard for the greatness of the Holy Prophet's prophethood. Because of the passage of this long time, people were now firmly established on the belief that the Holy Prophet was *Khatam al-anbiya*. So now if a person were to be called 'prophet', it would not diminish the dignity of the Holy Prophet in any way. That is why the Holy Prophet applied the word 'prophethood' openly to the coming Messiah. ...

Although those persons possessed the qualities of prophethood and the light which emanates from prophethood, and they deserved to be called prophets, but due to regard for the greatness of the prophethood of the *Khatam al-anbiya* they were not given this title. But now that danger did not remain, so the Holy Prophet called the Promised Messiah of the last ages as *nabi-ullah* (prophet of Allah).

⁶ *Tadhkirat-ush-Shahādātain*, p. 43; see *Ruhani Khaza'in*, vol. 20, p. 45.

To call the successors of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and the servants of his *Ummah* openly as prophets of Allah, two points needed to be kept in mind. Firstly, the greatness of the Holy Prophet, and secondly, the greatness of Islam. So, due to having regard for the greatness of the Holy Prophet, the word 'prophet' was not applied to such persons for thirteen hundred years in order to avoid an insult to the Holy Prophet's finality of prophethood. For, if the word 'prophet' had been applied to the *khalifas* and righteous persons of his *Ummah*, starting from immediately after him, as was the case with persons after Moses, this would be an affront to his finality of prophethood, and would not bring him any greatness. Therefore what God the Most High did, out of His wisdom and subtleness, was that this word was removed after him from his *Ummah* for thirteen hundred years, in order to fulfil the obligation of establishing the greatness of his prophethood.

However, the greatness of Islam required that among Muslims there should be some such persons to whom the title 'prophet of Allah' should apply after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, in order to make complete the similarity of Islam with the earlier series (i.e., of the Israelite prophets after Moses). Therefore, Allah caused the words 'prophet of Allah' to be applied by the tongue of the Holy Prophet to the Promised Messiah of the latter ages. Hence, with immense wisdom and clarity, two conflicting aims were achieved: the similarity with the Israelite prophets was established, and at the same time the greatness of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet was maintained."⁷

On the basis of this detailed explanation by the Promised Messiah, the Holy Prophet's words, "There is no prophet between me and him", indicate that he would not call anyone between him and the coming Messiah as 'prophet', even though they could be called 'prophets' metaphorically, so that belief in the finality of prophethood becomes firmly established and is not jeopardised. Then after all this long period, when the Messiah comes, Muslims seeing him described as 'prophet' in Hadith would know that this description is metaphorical, not real, because they would be firmly holding the belief that no prophet can come after the Holy Prophet.

If you believe and proclaim that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the last and final prophet, after whom no prophet can come, then it is acceptable for you to apply the title 'prophet' to the Promised Messiah because it will be in a metaphorical sense. It is just as if Christians declare, as their firm and fundamental belief, that God cannot have a son, and then give Jesus the title 'son of God', everyone will know what they mean by calling him 'son of God'.

⁷ *Malfuzat*, 1984 edition, vol. 5, pp. 348–351; 2022 edition, vol. 5, pp. 62–65.

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