

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND JIHAD

(Government Angreizi aur Jihad)



Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad
The Promised Messiah and al-Imām al-Mahdī
(May peace be upon him)

Government Angreizī aur Jihād
The British Government and Jihad
(English Translation)

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Contents

Publisher's Note.....	v
Abbreviations.....	vii
System of Transliteration	ix
Glossary of Important Terms	xi
The Author	xv
1. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND JIHAD	3
2. ADDENDUM TO THE BOOKLET "JIHAD"	29
Index.....	43

PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Government Angreizi aur Jihad is an Urdu booklet written in 1900 by Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{as}, the Promised Messiah and the Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at. In this booklet, he refers to the Holy Qur'ān and the *aḥādīth* (sayings) of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa} in order to explain the true nature of the Islamic concept of jihad.

The author points to the peaceful nature of the Islamic faith and explains that Muslims resorted to defensive war early in their faith's history only after suffering thirteen years of brutal oppression. Divine permission to retaliate was granted for the specific purpose of self-defense, to punish aggressors, and to uphold freedom of conscience.

We are grateful to Ṭayyba Seema Aḥmed and Dr. Luṭfur Raḥmān for their earlier translations. The revised version was prepared by the Translation Team, headed by Munawar Aḥmed Saeed, under the direction of Vakālat-e-Taṣnīf London. Important contributions were made by Aḥmed Muneeb Saeed, Ḥanānah Zaheer, 'Abdul-Wahāb Mirzā, Fouzān Pāl, and Karīmullāh Zīrvī. May Allah bless them all. *Āmīn*.

Munīr-ud-Dīn Shams
Additional Vakīl-ut-Taṣnīf
London, March, 2006

ABBREVIATIONS



The following abbreviations have been used. Readers are requested to recite the full salutations when reading the booklet:

- sa** *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, meaning “may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him” is written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}.
- as** *‘alaihis salām*, meaning “may peace be upon him” is written after the name of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}.
- ra** *raḍi-Allāho ‘anhū/‘anhā/‘anhūm*, meaning “may Allah be pleased with him/her/them” is written after the names of the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} or of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION



This booklet uses the system of transliteration adopted in the Five Volume Commentary and the Short Commentary of the Holy Qur'ān published by the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at.

- ا at the beginning of a word, pronounced as *a*, *i*, *u* preceded by a very slight aspiration, like *h* in the English word "honour."
- ث *th*, pronounced like *th* in the English word "thing."
- ح *ḥ*, a guttural aspirate, stronger than *h*.
- خ *kh*, pronounced like the Scotch *ch* in "loch."
- ذ *dh*, pronounced like the English *th* in "that."
- ص *ṣ*, strongly articulated *s*.
- ض *ḍ*, similar to the English *th* in "this."
- ط *ṭ*, strongly articulated palatal *t*.
- ظ *ẓ*, strongly articulated *z*.
- ع ' , a strong guttural, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear.
- غ *gh*, a sound approached very nearly in the *r* "grasseye" in French, and in the German *r*. It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the gargling position whilst pronouncing it.

ق *q*, a deep guttural *k* sound.

ء ' , a sort of catch in the voice.

Short vowels are represented by *a* for ا (like *u* in “bud”); *i* for ي (like *i* in “bid”); *u* for و (like *oo* in “wood”); the long vowels by *ā* for آ or اَ (like *a* in “father”); *ī* for عِ or اِي (like *ee* in “deep”); *ai* for اِي (like *i* in “site”); *ū* for وِ (like *oo* in “root”); *au* for اَو (resembling *ou* in “sound”).

Please note that in transliterated words the letter “e” is to be pronounced as in *prey* which rhymes with *day*; however the pronunciation is flat without the element of English diphthong. If in Urdu and Persian words “e” is lengthened a bit more it is transliterated as “ei” to be pronounced as “ei” in *feign* without the element of diphthong thus كے is transliterated as “Kei”.

The consonants not included in the above list have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe.

GLOSSARY OF IMPORTANT TERMS



Some important terms used in this booklet are defined as follows.

Allah: Allah is the personal name of God in Islam. To show proper reverence to Him, Muslims often add the word *Ta'ālā*, meaning “the Most High,” when saying His holy name.

Adhān: The formal Islamic call to prayer.

Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at: The Community of Muslims who have accepted the claims of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{as} of Qādiān as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. The Community was established by Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{as} in 1889, and is now under the leadership of his fifth *khalīfah*—Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad (may Allah be his help). The Community is also known as Jamā'at-e-Aḥmadiyya. A member of the Community is called an Aḥmadī Muslim or simply an Aḥmadī.

Amīr: In this booklet *Amīr* refers to the ruler of Afghanistan who held the title of *Amīr*. In general, the Arabic word *Amīr* is used for a leader.

Avatar: A word that has been adopted in English from Sanskrit and which, literally translated, means incarnation. The Promised Messiah^{as} used the word very strictly in the sense of a spiritual reappearance or second advent. The Islamic belief concerning these concepts does not contain any sense of physical re-birth or transmigration of souls.

Burūz: A re-advent, second coming or spiritual reappearance.

Dajjāl: An Arabic word literally meaning “the great deceiver.” In Islamic terminology “*dajjāl*” refers to those satanic forces which would be unleashed in the Latter Days to oppose the Promised Messiah^{as} and *al-Imām al-Mahdī*. A similar prophecy in the Christian faith about the appearance of the Antichrist refers to the same phenomenon and we have therefore translated the term “*dajjāl*” as “Antichrist”.

Dār-ul-Ḥarb and Dār-ul-Islam: According to certain *mullāhs*, the world is divided into a “zone of war” (*dār-ul-ḥarb*) and a “zone of Islam” (*dār-ul-Islam*). A country is considered *dār-ul-Islam* only when it is ruled by Muslims. The Promised Messiah^{as} points out in this booklet that there is no basis for such a division in the Holy Qur’ān or *Ḥadīth*.

Fatwa: A legal ruling issued by an Islamic scholar. The plural is *fatāwā*.

Frontier Region: In this booklet the term Frontier Region refers to the North Western Frontier Province of India (now Pakistan) and contiguous regions of Afghanistan.

Ghāzī: One who has participated in and survived a religious war. According to Islamic belief, such service earns one Paradise.

Ḥadīth: The sayings of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}. The plural is *aḥādīth*.

Ḥaḍrat: A term of respect used for a righteous and pious person.

Holy Qur’ān: The book sent by Allah for the guidance of all humanity. It was revealed to the Holy Prophet^{sa} over a period of twenty-three years.

Jihad: The literal meaning of this word is “striving”. The term is used to mean self-purification as well as religious wars in some instances. The true Islamic concept of jihad is explained in this booklet.

Khalīfah: The literal translation of this word is “deputy” or “successor.” The word caliph is a cognate of the word “*khal-īfah*”.

Mahdi: The literal translation of this word is “the guided one”. This is the title given by the Holy Prophet^{sa} to the awaited Reformer of the Latter Days.

Maulavī and Mullāh: A Muslim religious cleric.

Mujaddid: Literally means, “one who rejuvenates”. The plural is *mujaddidīn*. The Holy Prophet^{sa} prophesied the coming of *mujaddidīn* among the Muslims at the beginning of each century of the Islamic era.

Pashto: A language spoken in the Frontier Region.

Ṣāḥib: A term of respect, similar to diverse English terms like Mister, Honourable, and Revered.

Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: A book of *aḥādīth* (the sayings) of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa} compiled by Ḥaḍrat Imām Muḥammad bin Ismā‘īl Bukhārī^{ra} (194H-256H). This book of *aḥādīth* is believed to be the most authentic book after the Holy Qur’ān.

Ṣalāt: The five daily prayers that are obligatory for Muslims.

Sharī‘ah: Divine religious law.

Tauḥīd: The fundamental Islamic belief that there is none worthy of worship except Allah.

The Holy Prophet: A term used exclusively for Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad, the Prophet of Islam^{sa}.

The Promised Messiah: This term refers to the Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā‘at, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{as} of Qādiān. He claimed that he had been sent by Allah in accordance with the prophecies of the Holy Prophet^{sa} about the coming of *al-Imām al-Mahdī* (the Guided Leader) and Messiah.

Walī: Literally means “the friend”. In the terminology of Islamic mysticism, *walī* refers to a very pious person or a friend of Allah.

THE AUTHOR



The worldwide Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā‘at was founded in 1889. Its founder, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{as} of Qādiān, India, claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Reformer whose advent was awaited under different names and titles by the adherents of various religions. Under Divine guidance, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{as} revealed that only one such reformer was to appear and that his mission was to bring mankind into the fold of a single universal religion, Islam. He also maintained that the Promised Reformer was to appear as a subordinate and follower of the Holy Prophet of Islam, Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad [may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him]—in accordance with the prophecies by him about the second coming of Messiah and the appearance of *al-Imām*, *al-Mahdī*. He claimed to be the person in whom these prophecies were fulfilled.

هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ

[*The reward of goodness is nothing but goodness*]

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT

AND

JIHAD



(May 22, 1900)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ¹
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ²

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND JIHAD

The philosophy and true nature of jihad is a matter both complex and subtle. Grave errors have been made both in our age and in the middle age [of Islam] because people failed to understand this subject. It is with great embarrassment that I am forced to admit that these dangerous mistakes have exposed the holy religion of Islam, which is a mirror of the laws of nature and a manifestation of God's glory, to the criticism of its opponents.

It should be understood that the word “*jihad*” is derived from the [Arabic] root “*juhd*”, which means “to strive” and is therefore used figuratively for religious wars. It seems that the word “*yudh*”, which is commonly used by Hindus to mean war, is in reality a corruption of the word *jihad*. Since Arabic is the mother of all languages, out of which all other languages emerged, the word “*yudh*” which in Sanskrit means war is actually the same as “*juhd*” or “*jihad*”. Over time the letter “*jīm*” was replaced by the letter “*y*” and after further alteration the word was spoken with phonetic emphasis.

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. [Translator]
2. We praise Allah and invoke His blessings upon His noble Prophet^{sa}. [Translator]

Why did Islam come to need *jihad* and what is *jihad*? I would now like to address this question. It needs to be understood that Islam was forced to confront great difficulties from its very inception, and all nations stood opposed to it. When a Prophet or Messenger comes from God, his followers are perceived to be a promising, truthful, righteous and progressive group that is likely to advance quickly. Pre-existing communities and religious sects inevitably begin to develop a certain kind of anger and jealousy towards them. Religious experts and leaders are particularly vocal about expressing such feelings because arrival of a man of God leads to a change in their incomes and prestige. Their students and disciples begin to emerge from their trap because they find all excellent qualities of faith, morality and knowledge in the person who is from God. Those possessing sense and discrimination therefore begin to understand that these scholars do not deserve the respect that they had been previously accorded on the basis of educational accomplishment, piety and abstinence. Exalted titles such as *Najm-ul-Ummah* [Star of the Nation], *Shams-ul-Ummah* [Sun of the Nation], *Sheikh-ul-Mashā'ikh* [Leader of the Honourable] and so forth no longer befit them. Sensible people who do not wish to lose their faith therefore turn away from these scholars.

Religious scholars and patriarchs have always been jealous of God's Prophets and Messengers because of the foregoing losses. The members of this faction are in fact deficient; they possess very little of Divine light and their flaws are totally exposed during a Prophet or Messenger's time. Their egos give rise to a hostility towards God's Prophets and the righteous, and they selfishly devise plans to injure them. Such people sometimes

even know in their hearts that they have fallen under God's wrath by unjustly persecuting his pure-hearted man. Their instinctive actions against the righteous indicate the guilty state of their hearts, and the fire of their jealousy—moving like a fast locomotive—pushes them towards the abyss of hatred.

These reasons incited the hostility of pagan, Jewish and Christian scholars and prevented them from accepting truth in the time of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). They therefore sought to eliminate Islam from the face of the earth. Since there were so few Muslims during Islam's early period, their opponents treated them with bitter hostility out of the natural arrogance that inspires the minds of those who consider themselves to be superior to the followers of a new faith in terms of wealth, property, numbers, esteem and rank. They did not want this heavenly plant [of Islam] to take root upon the earth, but rather were fighting with all their might to destroy these righteous people. They feared that the firm establishment of this religion would in turn sow the seeds of destruction for their faith and nation. Because of this fear, which was deeply impressed on their hearts, they committed acts of extreme viciousness and cruelty and brutally murdered many Muslims.

Their ways remained unchanged for a lengthy thirteen year period. Many of God's faithful—the very honour of humanity—were cruelly cut to pieces by the swords of these barbarians. Orphans and weak, helpless women were slaughtered in the streets and alleys. Even so, God commanded that there be no retaliation against evil. These righteous, chosen people adhered to this instruction precisely. While the streets

ran red with their blood, they did not utter a sound. They were slaughtered like animals but did not protest. God's holy and exalted Prophet (upon whom the heavens and earth shower their blessings) was stoned on many occasions, so much so that he was stained with blood. Nevertheless, that upright mountain of truth tolerated all this mistreatment with an open heart and love. This attitude of steadfastness and humility provoked Islam's enemies to intensify their persecution, and they looked upon this holy community as a hunter looks upon his prey. Then God, Who does not wish that cruelty and oppression should exceed their bounds on the earth, turned towards His oppressed servants, and His wrath was inflamed against the wicked. He informed His helpless, suffering people through the Holy Qur'ān: I am watching everything that is happening to you and henceforth give you permission to retaliate. I am God the Almighty, and I will not allow your oppressors to escape without punishment.

This is the commandment that in other words came to be known as *jihad*. The original wording, which is still preserved in the Qur'ān, is as follows:³

إِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ يُقْتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلِمُوا ۖ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ
تَضَرِّهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ۚ
الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ...

That is: Allah has heard the cry of those oppressed people who are killed and unjustly turned out of their land and has

3. (al-Hajj, 22:40–41), [Translator]

permitted them to retaliate. Allah is All-Powerful, and able to help the oppressed. (al-Juzw. 17, *Sūrah al-Ḥajj*)

This commandment was specific to the period and time. It was not forever. It applied during the time when those entering the fold of Islam were being slaughtered like sheep and lambs. After the time of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his Successors, people unfortunately made very grave mistakes in understanding the philosophy of *jihad*, which is rooted in the preceding verse. The unjust slaughter of God's creatures was deemed to be a mark of religious virtue.

It is a remarkable coincidence that Christians erred with respect to the rights of God, while Muslims erred with respect to the rights of human beings. That is, the Christian faith raised a humble man to Godhood, thereby compromising the obligations due to the All-Powerful, All-Sustaining Being Who has no equal in heaven or earth. But Muslims violated human rights by unjustly raising the sword and calling it *jihad*. In short, Christians adopted one path of violating rights, and Muslims adopted the other. Unfortunately for this era, both of these groups consider their own transgressions to be desirable. Each therefore emphasizes its own doctrine, certain that this alone is the straight path and best way to Paradise. Although violation of God's rights is the greatest of sins, it is not my intention here to discuss this dangerous offense of which the Christian people are guilty but rather to make Muslims aware of the transgressions that they are committing against their fellow human beings.

It should be remembered that today's Islamic scholars (who are called *maulavīs*) completely misunderstand *jihad* and misrepresent it to the general public. The public's violent instincts are inflamed as a result and they are stripped of all noble human virtues. This is in fact what has happened. I know for certain that *maulavīs* who persist in propagating these blood-spattered doctrines are in fact responsible for murders committed by ignorant, egotistical people who know nothing of why Islam was forced to fight battles in its early history. When these *maulavīs* meet present day rulers, they bow down as if ready to prostrate; but among their own kind they insist repeatedly that this country is "*dār-ul-ḥarb*" [the zone of war]. They consider *jihad* to be obligatory in their hearts, and few of them think otherwise. They adhere so strongly to their doctrine of *jihad*—which is completely misguided and entirely contradicts the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*—that they label as "*dajjāl*" [Antichrist] and advocate the murder of anyone who objects. A fatwa [edict] of this kind was pronounced against me some time ago. Some of this country's *maulavīs* labelled me a *dajjāl* and a *kāfir* [infidel] and—without fear of the British Government's laws—published a fatwa stating that I should be killed, and that it would be a blessed deed to loot my belongings or abduct the women of my house. What was the reasoning for this? Only that I incurred their displeasure because I am the Promised Messiah and preach against their concept of *jihad*, rejecting notions of the bloodthirsty Messiah and **Mahdi** whose advent would, they had hoped, allow them to engage in loot and plunder.

They should remember that their understanding of *jihad* is not at all correct, and that human sympathy is its first casualty. Their belief, that *jihad* should be lawful today because it was permitted in early Islam, is totally incorrect and we offer two rejoinders. The first is that their reasoning is baseless. Under no circumstance did our Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) raise the sword against anyone unless they had first raised the sword, mercilessly killing innocent, pious men, women and children with such brutality that reading about these events even today brings tears to our eyes. Second, even if we assume that *jihad* as conceived of by these *maulavīs* was obligatory in early Islam, the commandment is no longer applicable because it is written that violent *jihad* and religious fighting will come to an end with the appearance of the Promised Messiah, who will not raise the sword or any other earthly weapon. Prayer shall be his only instrument, and firm determination his only weapon. He will establish peace and gather together the goat and the lion. His age will be one of peace, gentleness and human sympathy. Alas! Why do these people not reflect that thirteen hundred years have passed since the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “*yada-‘ul-ḥarb*” in honour of the Promised Messiah. These words mean that the Promised Messiah will end warfare when he comes.

The same point is also indicated in the verse of the Holy Qur'ān:⁴

... حَتَّى تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ...

That is to say, fight until the advent of the Promised Messiah. This is the meaning of:⁵

... حَتَّى تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ...

Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī is considered the most authentic book after the Holy Qur'ān and it is available. Read it carefully.

O Muslim scholars and *maulavīs*! Listen to me. I tell you truly that this is not the time for *jihad*. Do not disobey God's Holy Prophet^{sa}. The awaited Messiah has arrived and orders you to abstain from religious wars involving armed combat, killing and bloodshed. Not refraining even now from spilling blood and giving such sermons is therefore not the way of Islam. The person who accepts me will not merely stop preaching in this way; rather, he will recognise the evil of this path and come to know that it invites God's anger.

At this point I must with great regret say that although ignorant *maulavīs* have instructed the ordinary public in plunder and killing by calling these actions *jihad*, Christian clerics have also done something similar. They have, in Urdu, Pashto and other languages, produced thousands of publications, journals and flyers alleging that Islam was spread by the sword. This

4. ...Until the war lays down its burdens... (Muḥammad, 47:5)
[Translator]

5. *Ibid.*, [Translator]

literature, which has been distributed by them in India, Punjab and the Frontier Region, wrongly claims that Islam is synonymous with violence. The people's penchant for violence has increased as a result of the combined testimony of the *maulavīs* and Christian clerics. The dangerous lies of the Christian clerics create unrest and rebellion and, in my view, it is essential that our government prohibit them. Muslims will never abandon Islam due to these senseless fabrications. By repeatedly calling their attention to the doctrine of *jihad*, these sermons will instead cause Muslims to rise from their slumber.

Now that the Promised Messiah has come, it is the duty of every Muslim to refrain from such *jihad*. There could have been some justification for misunderstanding this issue if I had not come. But I have arrived and you have witnessed the day that was promised. Therefore, those who now raise the sword on religion's behalf have no excuse before God Almighty. Those who possess sight, read the *aḥādīth* and ponder over the Holy Qur'ān should understand well that the kind of *jihad* practiced by many of today's barbaric people is not Islamic *jihad*. Rather, these misguided activities that have spread amongst the Muslims are instigated by *nafs-e-'ammārah* [self that incites to evil] or by a crude desire for Paradise.

I have just mentioned that during his entire life our Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was never the first to raise the sword. Indeed, he suffered for a long time at the hands of the disbelievers and displayed a degree of patience that is not possible for every person. His Companions^{ra} held fast to the same lofty principle, doing as they were commanded, withstanding atrocities and demonstrating patience. They were

trampled underfoot but did not utter a sound. Their children were cut to pieces before their very eyes. They were tortured with fire and water but, like innocent children, did not retaliate against this evil. Can anyone show that the people of any of the Prophets—despite possessing the ability to retaliate—heard God’s command and exercised similar restraint? Who can demonstrate that there has ever been another group like this? For these were a people who possessed bravery, unity in numbers, strength, ability to fight and all masculine qualities, and yet repeatedly restrained themselves for thirteen years in the face of a merciless and bloodthirsty enemy. The patience shown by our Lord and Master^{sa} and his Companions^{ra} was not due to their powerlessness. In fact, the hands and arms of the devoted Companions^{ra} who exercised restraint at this time of patience were no different after the permission for *jihad* was granted. On occasion only one thousand young Muslims defeated one hundred thousand enemy soldiers. Events transpired in this way so that people would know that the patience demonstrated in Mecca was not due to any weakness or frailty; Muslims laid down their weapons upon hearing God’s command and were prepared to be slaughtered like goats and lambs. This type of patience is certainly beyond human capacity. Even if one studies the history of the whole world and all the Prophets, one cannot find such an abundance of virtues in any other community or in the followers of any other Prophet. If we listen to stories about patience from the past, then immediately it crosses one’s mind that the conditions of the time indicate that the reason for this patience was in fact cowardice or lack of power to retaliate. But the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of

Allah be upon him) and his Companions^{ra} demonstrated very real bravery over a period of thirteen years. Despite being brave warriors of stout heart, and despite being persecuted, bloodied with spears and seeing their children killed, they did not retaliate against evil. Such patience over thirteen years in the face of dangerous tribulations is unmatched. Those who doubt this should step forward and provide us with an example of similar patience from among the righteous people of the past.

It may also be noted that despite the extent of the injustice done to his Companions^{ra}, our Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not of his own accord suggest any plan of escape. Instead, he repeatedly urged them to be patient despite much suffering. Anyone begging permission to retaliate was stopped and told: "I have been commanded to be patient." Until the commandment to retaliate descended from Heaven, the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) always preached forbearance and tolerance. Search for an example of comparable fortitude from the earliest to the most recent of times. If possible, try to find an example of such behaviour from among the followers of Moses^{as} or the disciples of Jesus^{as} and show it to us.

To summarise, Islam excels all other faiths in the demonstration it provides of patience, rejecting evil and noble conduct. It would be foolish, unfortunate and wrong for Muslims to abandon this example. May God bring these ignorant *maulavīs* back to the right path. They have misled the populace into believing that the keys to Paradise lie in beliefs that are oppressive, cruel and completely immoral. Can it be a good deed to shoot a complete stranger, intending to kill him while he is

absorbed in thought? Is this religiousness? If these are acts of any virtue then animals are more virtuous than human beings.

Glory be to God! How truly inspired by the spirit of the Prophets and the righteous were those who behaved like humble, weak babies when commanded in Mecca not to resist evil even if they were cut to pieces, acting as if their hands and arms possessed no strength. Some of them were killed in the following manner: two camels were made to stand close to each other, while each of the victim's legs were tied to the camels. Then, the camels were made to run in opposite directions. The victims were immediately torn apart just as a carrot or radish is split open.

Unfortunately, the Muslims—and the *maulavīs* in particular—ignore all these events and think of the whole world as their prey. Many *maulavīs* are just like a hunter who moves stealthily towards a deer he is stalking in the forest, shooting his gun at precisely the right moment. They know nothing about compassion for humanity. According to them, it is an act of Islamic virtue to fire a pistol or gun at an innocent person. Where are those who will act like the Companions^{ra} of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and remain patient while suffering torture? Has God commanded us to capture complete strangers and cut them to pieces or to shoot them without reason or proof of an offence? Can a religion be from God if it teaches that you can enter Paradise by killing His blameless and innocent creatures—to whom you have not even delivered the message? Is it not shameful that a complete stranger should be unjustly killed while occupied in his daily affairs, thus widowing his wife,

making his children orphans, and turning his house into a funeral parlour? Which *ḥadīth* or verse of the Holy Qur'ān authorizes such behaviour? Is there any *maulavī* who can respond? Foolish people hear the word *jihad*, and make it an excuse for the fulfilment of their own selfish desires. Or perhaps it is sheer madness that inclines them towards bloodshed.

I have just mentioned that Islam employed the sword during the time of our Holy Prophet^{sa}, with God's permission, only after the disbeliever's swords had already sent many Muslims to their graves. Then God's honour willed that those who kill by the sword should also perish by the sword. God is very Noble, Ever Merciful and Forbearing. He shows great patience but, in the end, He protects the honour of the righteous. Muslims are not being killed today by anyone because of their faith. What authority do they have to justify the killing of innocents, I wonder?

Why do their *maulavīs* not stop them from these awful actions which bring Islam into disrepute? One cannot enumerate the comforts which the Muslims have under this British Government. Many who lived under Sikh rule are still with us today. They should come forward and tell others about the circumstances of Islam and the Muslims at that time. The *adhān* [Call for Prayer], which is a mandatory tenet of Islam, was considered a crime. No one who called the *adhān* could survive the hatchets and spears of the Sikhs. Did God err in freeing the Muslims from the Sikhs' transgressions and in delivering them to the sanctuary of British rule? As soon as this government took power, the Muslims of Punjab were, for all practical purposes, granted their faith anew. Since a good deed

demands a good deed in return, we should not renounce the blessing that God has granted us in place of Sikh rule as an answer to our many tears and prayers.

At this time, I specifically instruct my *jamā'at* [Community], which accepts me as the Promised Messiah, that they should always stay away from these foul habits. God has sent me as the Promised Messiah and has clothed me with the garment of the Messiah, son of Mary. I therefore admonish you: Refrain from evil and be truly compassionate towards mankind. Cleanse your hearts of malice and spite, for you will become like angels through this habit. It is a filthy and unholy religion that is devoid of sympathy for humanity, and polluted is the path riddled with the thorns of a rancour based on selfish desires. O those who are with me, do not become like such people. Think about what it is we seek to attain through religion. Is it to constantly oppress others? No, religion exists so that we may obtain the life that lies in God. Such a life has not been, and will never be, attained unless Divine attributes come to abide in you. Be compassionate towards all for the sake of God so that you may be shown mercy in the heavens. Come, and I will teach you a way that will cause your light to prevail over all other lights. Abandon all lowly spite and jealousy, be compassionate for mankind, and lose yourselves in God. Being with God, achieve the highest levels of purification. This is the path on which miracles are bestowed, prayers are accepted, and angels descend to one's aid. But it is not a single day's work. Advance and continue advancing. Learn from the example of the washerman, who continues to boil clothes in hot water until the heat causes dirt and filth to separate from them. Then,

rising in the morning, he soaks the load in water, and beats the clothes on stone sills. The dirt that had settled in the clothes is thus slowly removed. This process of heating clothes and beating them continues until they are as clean as they were when new. This is the only strategy for cleansing the human soul. Your entire salvation depends on this cleanliness alone. This is precisely what Allah the Most High has said in the Holy Qur'ān:⁶

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۝

This means: the soul that has been cleansed of diverse types of dirt and filth has attained success.

I have come to you with an order: *jihad* with the sword has ended from this time forward, but the *jihad* of purifying your souls must continue. I do not say this of my own accord. This is indeed the will of God. Recall the *ḥadīth* from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* which honours the Promised Messiah by saying *yaḍa-'ul-ḥarb*. That is to say, when the Messiah comes he will put an end to religious wars. Accordingly, I command those who have joined my ranks to refrain from all such thoughts, to purify their hearts, to foster sympathy, and to be compassionate towards the suffering. They should spread peace on earth, because that will cause their faith to spread in return. They should not entertain doubts about how this will transpire. Just as God Almighty has—without the usual means of intervention—used the resources of the earth to create modern inventions, and satisfied our physical needs by making trains that outrun horses, He will

6. (al-Shams, 91:10), [Translator]

in the same way—unaided by human hands—use His angels to fulfil spiritual needs. Great heavenly signs will be seen and numerous flashes of light will open many eyes. Ultimately, people will recognise that they erred gravely in elevating ordinary people and objects to divine status. Be patient and keep watching, for God guards His *Tauḥīd* [Unity] with more jealousy than you do. Keep praying lest you be counted among the disobedient.

O ye who yearn and thirst for truth, listen! These are the days that have been promised since the beginning. God will not permit much delay in these affairs. Just as you can see that the lamp placed on top of a minaret spreads its light far and wide, and just as lightening in one part of the sky also illuminates all other parts, so too will it be in these days. God has Himself provided the means for fulfilling His prophecy that the message of the Messiah will spread in the world like lightening and will encompass all four corners of the earth like the light from a tower. The railways, telegraph, steamships, excellent postal services, easy modes of travel and tourism and other such means have been established to fulfill the prophecy that the message of the Messiah will illuminate every corner like lightening. The true nature of the tower of the Messiah that is mentioned in the *aḥādīth* is that the Messiah's invitation and message will spread on this earth very quickly just as light or sound from a tower reaches far. Therefore, trains, postal services, steamboats and ease of preaching and travelling are all special signs of the time

of the Messiah that have been mentioned by many Prophets. The Holy Qur'ān also says:⁷

وَإِذَا الْعِشَاءُ عُظِّمَتْ ۝

This means that the age of open invitation, which is the time of the Promised Messiah⁸, will occur “when camels would be rendered useless.” Some new modes of travel would be invented and therefore camels would no longer be needed. It is also stated in the *hadith* that:⁹

يُتْرَكُ الْقَلَاصُ فَلَا يُسْعَى عَلَيْهَا

In other words, camels will be rendered useless in that age. This sign has not been appointed for the time of any other Messenger. So be grateful that preparations are being made in heaven for spreading Divine light. Blessings are also stirring up in the earth. You are witnessing an ease in travel and movement that was not known to your parents and grandparents. It is as if this is a new world. Fruits are available out of season, trips that once took six months can now be completed in days, news is instantly transmitted thousands of miles and there are devices and machines to assist with every task. If you wish, you can travel by train with the same comfort that you would have in an

7. (at-Takwīr, 81:5), [Translator]

8. I have written repeatedly that the Promised Messiah has come with the nature and disposition of the Prophet of the Israelites but is not the same person. Since the Torah declares our Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to be like Moses, it was necessary that there be a Messiah at the end among the followers of Muḥammad just as there was one among the followers of Moses. [Author]

9. In today's available editions of *ahādīth* it is recorded as: وَلَيُتْرَكَنَّ الْقِلَاصُ فَلَا يُسْعَى عَلَيْهَا (Musnad Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal). [Publisher]

orchard at your home. Has the earth not undergone a revolution? Just as there is an astounding upheaval on earth, God also wills that an astounding upheaval take place in the heavens. Both of these are signs of the days of the Messiah. The revelation below, mentioned twenty years ago in my book *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, alludes to these signs:¹⁰

إِنَّ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتَّقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا

This means that the heavens and the earth were tied up like a bundle and their elements were hidden. God has untied both of these bundles in the days of the Messiah and has revealed their secrets¹¹.

As I have detailed extensively in this booklet, the tradition prevalent among Muslims of attacking the people of other religions, which they call *jihad*, is not the *jihad* of Divine religious Law [*Shari'ah*]. Rather, it is a grievous sin and a violation of the clear instructions of God and His Prophet^{sa}. It may not be easy for certain Muslims to abandon this custom since it is well-established among some tribes. In fact, because they imagine themselves to be *ghāzīs*¹², they may even become the mortal enemies of one who counsels them against this practice and seek to kill him. One solution that I can think of to this problem is that His Majesty, the *Amīr* of Kabul¹³, whose influ-

10. See *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 1, p. 611. [Translator]

11. Is it not a fact that the secrets of the earth have been revealed in this age and thousands of new facts and discoveries relating to the properties of things and new inventions are being made? Why should the secrets of the heavens then remain closed? Regarding the secrets of the heavens, previous Prophets had foretold that: Even children and women would receive revelation from God in the time of the Promised Messiah. [Author]

ence over Afghan tribes probably exceeds that of all previous *Amīrs*, should gather the great scholars of religion and convene a discussion on the true nature of *jihad*. These religious scholars can then educate the public about its errors. In fact, the religious scholars of this country should compile a few pamphlets in Pashto and make them available to the general public. I believe that this type of activity will have a tremendous influence on people. The passions instilled by the ignorant *maulavīs* will gradually subside. The *Amīr's* citizens will surely suffer if he fails to pay heed to this essential reform. The government that ignores such *fatāwā* from these *mullāhs* ultimately creates problems for itself because these days the *maulavīs* readily label people as disbelievers over minor religious differences, applying to them all other *fatāwā* that they apply to disbelievers. In light of this, even the *Amīr* himself cannot remain safe from these *fatāwā*. It is quite possible that the *maulavīs* may cast the *Amīr* out of the pale of Islam by taking offence over some trivial issue, and then subject him to the same *fatāwā* of *jihad* that they have applied to others. A group that has the power to declare a person to be a believer or disbeliever is dangerous, and the *Amīr* should not be complacent with respect to them. They

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12. The author is referring to a common belief amongst Muslims that steadfast participants in religious wars attain Paradise, regardless of whether they are killed in action or survive. In the former case, they are *shahīd* (martyr) and in the latter, they are referred to as *ghāzī*. [Translator]
 13. The *Amīr* of the Afghan at that time was 'Abdur Raḥmān (1881–1901). He ascended to the throne after the second Afghan war (1878–80) and was recognised as the *Amīr* of Kabul on the condition that he would not have political relations with any foreign power other than the British. [Translator]

are the source of the rebellions confronted by every government. They have power over the common people and create havoc by turning them in whatever direction they please. It is therefore no sin to free people from their influence through gentle education about the true nature of *jihad*. Islam certainly does not teach Muslims to behave like thieves and bandits, or to use *jihad* as an excuse to satisfy their basest inner desires.

Since the general public knows that Islam does not allow *jihad* to be waged without the sovereign's permission, it is possible that some people who are ignorant of the facts will blame the *Amīr* for such events. The *Amīr* must therefore do his best to prevent the issuing of these erroneous *fatāwā*. The *Amīr* will exonerate himself magnificently in this way. God will also reward him well because, after the observance of duties owed to God, there is no act of goodness greater than delivering the oppressed from the swords of their oppressors. The *Amīr* has been given an opportunity by God to make this great reform a part of his legacy because it is mostly Afghans who commit these acts and wield the sword with the intent of becoming *ghāzīs*, and a sizable majority of them live in his country. These barbaric practices defame Islam and he should do his best to cleanse the Afghan nation of them.

This is the time of the Promised Messiah. God will certainly create a way for the world, which is currently filled with persecution, injustice and bloodshed, to be filled with justice, peace and reconciliation. Blessed are the sovereigns and kings who play a part in achieving this objective.

At the end of this discourse, I wish to submit a proposal to our benevolent government. I know that this is a wise and

astute government; nevertheless, it is incumbent upon us to present any suggestions that may prove useful for the government and the public. I believe with absolute conviction that the barbaric practices of the Frontier Afghans, which result in the almost daily killing of innocent persons, have two causes:

- 1) First, those *maulavīs* for whom it is an article of faith that killing people of other religions—especially Christians—is an act of great virtue and that such murder opens doors of heavenly reward that cannot be achieved through obligatory *ṣalāt* [Prayers], *ḥajj* [Pilgrimage], *zakāt* [obligatory charity], or any other good deed. I am well aware of the fact that these *maulavīs* secretly preach this to the people. When ordinary people hear such sermons day and night, their hearts—which differ little from those of animals—become deeply affected. They become like beasts of prey, with no shred of mercy remaining within them and commit horrendous acts that make one shudder. Although Afghanistan and the Frontier Region are full of many *maulavīs* who regularly preach in this way, it is my opinion that Punjab and India are not entirely free of such *maulavīs* either. Our noble government should reconsider if it has come to believe that this country's *maulavīs* are innocent and do not think along these lines. I am of the opinion that the majority of the ignorant and short-tempered *mullāhs* of the mosques are not free of these evil thoughts. I would have considered them blameless if their opinions were in accordance with God's Holy Book because, in a way, one is indeed helpless in matters of

faith. However, I speak nothing but the truth when I say that they ignore the benevolence of this government and are its clandestine enemies in the same way that they are culprits and offenders in front of God. I have explained in detail that the Word of God in no way commands us to spill the blood of innocent people. Those who are of this opinion have turned their backs on Islam.

- 2) In my opinion, the second cause of this criminal bloodshed, which is carried out in the hopes of becoming a *ghāzī*, is the preaching of Christian priests who have widely publicised the claim that *jihad* is compulsory in Islam. They claim that killing people of other faiths is a matter of great Islamic virtue. I believe that the people of the Frontier Region were not even aware of this doctrine until the Christian priests embedded it in their minds. My view is supported by the fact that there were no incidents of this type before Christian priests began the distribution of journals, newspapers and books in the Frontier Region. In fact, ordinary Muslims and the people of the Frontier Region were very pleased when the British replaced the previous Sikh Government. In 1849, Reverend Pfander published his book *Mizan ul Haqq*¹⁴ in India, the Punjab and the Frontier Region. In it, he used offensive language to attack Islam and its Prophet (may

14. *Mizan ul Haqq* was written by the Reverend Karl Gottlieb Pfander. This was his first book on Islam and Christianity. The book is a defense of the integrity of the Bible, as well as an attack on the Holy Qur'ān and the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}. [Translator]

peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and publicised the claim that killing people of other faiths is not merely permitted but is in fact considered to be worthy of great Divine reward in Islam. This drew the attention of the barbaric people of the Frontier Region (who have no knowledge of their religion) and they came to believe that Islam advocates the killing of non-Muslims.

After careful consideration, I have concluded that most of the incidents in the Frontier Region, and the violent hostility that has been created among its people, are due to the priests' books, which use excessively harsh language and repeatedly draw attention towards the subject of *jihad*. Ultimately, after the great publicity received by *Mizan ul Haqq* and its subsequent poisonous effect, our government was forced to issue Act Number XXIII of 1867 in order to check the spread of the militant ideas of the Frontier's residents. This law was applicable to six tribes in the Frontier Region, and it was hoped that violent incidents would thereby come to an end. Unfortunately, however, the subsequent violent and bitter writings of Reverend 'Imād-ud-Dīn¹⁵ of Amritsar and some other foul-mouthed priests greatly damaged goodwill and reconciliation within the country. The books of other ministers, which we need not mention in detail, have also sown seeds of hatred within peoples' hearts, and they have thus proven to be a great obstacle for our noble government's attempts at

15. Reverend 'Imād-ud-Dīn, a former Muslim, was one of the many priests who published extensively against Islam during this period. [Translator]

reconciliation. Our government did act commendably in permitting Muslims to respond to these books, although the Muslims also showed some harshness in their replies. These sharp responses did, nevertheless, serve as a striking testimony to the open-minded nature of the government. The disturbances that could have resulted from these derogatory writings were avoided because of the well-intentioned and fair manner adopted by the government.

We acknowledge with great regret that Islam's *maulavīs* have focused on an improper definition of *jihad* and have taught the Frontier Region's tribes to unjustly harm this friendly government by spilling the blood of its honourable officers. Nevertheless, we are also disappointed with the '*mullāhs*' of Europe—namely the Christian priests—for they have inflamed the passions of the ignorant masses with their harsh and unjust publications. By bringing up the issue of *jihad* a thousand times, they have led ignorant Muslims to believe that this is an easy path to Paradise. If these priests were free from ill-will, they should have realised the truth themselves and remained silent after comparing the *jihad* of the Prophet Moses^{as} and the Prophet Joshua^{as} to the *jihad* of our Holy Prophet^{sa}. Even if we assume that the *maulavīs* are largely responsible for instigating the public to *jihad*, our sense of fairness compels us to point out that the literature of the priests, which offers almost daily insults to Muslims, also plays a part. It is regrettable that some ignorant people sit to one side after carrying out a mischievous act, leaving the British Government to deal with ensuing difficulties. In my opinion, an easy way to deal with these problems is to adopt the example of the present Ottoman government.

For an experimental period of a few years, every group should be strictly forbidden from using vicious language against other religions, be it explicit or implicit, in their writings or in their sermons. They should, however, be permitted to recount the virtues of their own faith. This will prevent the cultivation of new plants of hatred and as ancient tales fade away people will be inclined towards mutual love and reconciliation. When the barbaric people of the Frontier Region see love and friendship grow among nations, then they too will be impressed, and in turn will show as much sympathy towards Christians as one Muslim does to another.

A second suggestion is that if the *maulavīs* of Punjab and India truly oppose this notion of *jihad*, they should publish journals about it, translate them into the Pashto language, and disseminate them among the tribes of the Frontier Region, for these would certainly prove very effective. However, all this must be done with an honest heart and enthusiasm, not with hypocrisy. Peace be on him who follows the guidance.

Published by:
The humble one,
Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad
The Promised Messiah
Seeking Allah's security and peace
From Qādiān
May 22, 1900

ADDENDUM TO THE BOOKLET “JIHAD”



The real truth about my claim of being Jesus the Messiah and Muḥammad Mahdi and a proposal submitted to His Excellency the Viceroy

I have explained in many of my books that my claim of being Jesus the Messiah and Muḥammad Mahdi is not based on the idea that I am actually Jesus^{as} or the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}. Nevertheless, those who have not carefully studied my books might surmise that I am referring to reincarnation, as if I claim that the souls of both these holy men have reappeared in me. This is not so. The fact of the matter is that earlier Prophets predicted that there would be two types of transgressions in the Latter Days: one against the rights of God’s creation, and the other in relation to the rights of the Creator. They prophesied that killers would violate the rights of God’s creation by spilling much innocent blood under the pretext of *jihad*, believing that such acts would earn them great Divine reward. They also foretold that the excuse of religion would be used to persecute the human race in many other ways. The time that was foretold has

therefore arrived. Every God-fearing person must concede that human rights are violated constantly and manifest brutality occurs every day. For example, every other day the Frontier Region's violent tribes kill the British officers who are protecting their lives and property, as well as that of their Muslim brethren. This is manifest cruelty and a violation of human rights. Do they not recall the time of the Sikhs, who were ready to kill those who merely raised the *adhān* [Call for Prayer]? What did the British Government do to deserve this kind of treatment for its honourable officials? The British Government permitted complete religious freedom as soon as it entered the Punjab. Gone is the time when we were assaulted for even whispering the *adhān*. Nobody will stop you if you now proclaim the *adhān* from minarets, and perform *ṣalāt* [Prayer] in congregation. Muslims lived like slaves in the time of the Sikhs, but their dignity has been restored by the British administration. Their life, property, and honour are now safe. The doors of Islamic libraries are re-opened. Has the British Government been benevolent or oppressive? In the Sikh era, even the graves of Muslim elders were dug up. The Sirhind incident is still fresh in memories. However, this government guards the living among us as well as the graves of our dead. We live under the protection of a benign and peaceful government, which has shown no trace of religious prejudice. A Muslim can perform his religious obligations, including *ḥajj* [Pilgrimage], the *zakāt* [obligatory charity] and *ṣalāt* [Prayers]. Or, on Divine authority, he can claim to be the *mujaddid* [reformer] of the age, a *walī* [saint], a patriarch, the Messiah or the Mahdi [promised guided leader]. This even-handed government

remains uninvolved in these matters, unless such a person violates the law of the land and engages in rebellion. Muslims respond to the government's tolerance and benevolence by wrongfully killing the innocent authorities who are engaged night and day in serving the country justly.

And if it is said that the Muslims and *maulavīs* of our country are sinless in these affairs because the culprits are from the Frontier Region, then I respectfully point out that they have sinned whether one accepts it or not. While we observe the fervour with which the barbaric tribes of the Frontier Region seek to become *ghāzīs* [the survivors of a religious war], we do not, on the other hand, see that the *maulavīs* of this country demonstrate any feeling of true sympathy for the British Government and its officers. If they truly wish this government well, why do they not unanimously publish a fatwa in the Frontier Region dispelling the notion among foolish people that they are *ghāzīs* who will attain Paradise immediately after death. I do not understand why the *maulavīs* and their followers fail to perform any admirable service despite their lofty claims of loyalty. This is, in fact, an understatement. There are many *maulavīs* against whom even greater objections can be made. May God reform their hearts.

In short, our fellow Muslims are doing grave injustice to the rights of God's creation. If a benevolent king is treated like this, what treatment shall we expect for others? God witnessed this injustice from the heavens and has sent a person in the likeness of Jesus the Messiah to set it right. He named him the Messiah in the same way as the reflection of a face in water or a mirror can metaphorically be called the re-advent of that person. For

the teachings that I am emphasizing now, such as having love for your enemy and compassion for God's creation, have previously been stressed by that honourable Prophet whose name is Jesus the Messiah. Rather than loving their enemies, some contemporary Muslims unjustly use shameful religious pretexts to murder innocent people who, far from harm, have done only good things for them. The advent of one who receives revelation from God, has the characteristics of the Messiah, and brings a message promoting peace was necessary for the reformation of these people. Did this age not need the *avatar* [second coming] of Jesus the Messiah? Of course it did. Currently, millions of Muslims are ready to kill other people under the pretense of *jihad*. Indeed, some are unable to truly love a benevolent government even while living under its protection. They are unable to reach the highest levels of sympathy, and cannot cleanse themselves of affectation and pretence. There was therefore a dire need for the *avatar* of the Messiah. So **I am that very promised *avatar***, who has been sent in the spiritual likeness, personality and temperament of Jesus the Messiah.

The other type of transgression, which relates to the Creator, is the belief of the present day Christians that has exceeded all bounds. There is no doubt that the Prophet Jesus^{as} is a great Prophet of God. He is without question loved and honoured by God, a light of this world and the sun of guidance. He was glorified before the Lord God and possessed a status close to His throne. Millions of those who love him, follow his teachings, and act upon his guidance will receive deliverance from hell. However, it is a serious error and disbelief to raise such a

chosen servant of God to divinity. Those whom God loves are very close to Him and have a special relationship with Him. If, on account of this relationship, they sometimes refer to themselves as the “sons of God”, or claim that God speaks through them or manifests Himself in them, then these claims are true in a sense and from a perspective which must be explained. The use of such terms—for those who lose themselves in God and then emerge in a new form after being nurtured by the light of God—is a time honoured tradition among those bestowed with Divine knowledge. It is sometimes said that God has appeared in such a person. This expression does not mean that the person is himself *Rabbul-‘Ālamīn* [Lord of all the Worlds]. Many have lost their footing on entering this delicate château of thought and, as consequence of this confusion, thousands of pious people, holy men, and *avatars* have been worshipped as God. The truth is that the populace fails to appreciate the essence of spiritual issues and, at some point, distorts matters, going astray by treating metaphors as reality. Present day Christian scholars are also trapped in this mistake, seeking to somehow establish the divinity of Jesus^{as}. This is a violation of God’s rights and...

To establish the rightful status of the Creator and the grandeur of *Tauḥīd* [Unity] in peoples’ hearts, a great Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was raised in the land of Arabia. His name is **Muḥammad^{sa}** and **Aḥmad^{sa}**, countless greetings of peace be bestowed upon him by Allah.

Sharī‘ah [Divine religious Law] consisted of two parts. The more important part was *lā ilāha illallāh*¹⁶, i.e., *Tauḥīd*. The

16. There is none worthy of worship except Allah. [Translator]

other part was sympathy for mankind—to wish for them what you wish for yourselves. From among these two parts, the Messiah stressed sympathy for mankind, because that was the need of his time. The greater part, *lā ilāha illallāh*, the fountain-head of God's Grandeur and Unity, was emphasised by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) because his time needed that emphasis. The era we live in then followed, and both of these illnesses have reached their zenith in this age. Disregard for the rights of God's creation and the murder of innocent people have both become a part of the Muslims' beliefs. These barbaric people have killed thousands of innocent people because of this erroneous point of view. Disregard for the Creator's rights has also reached its apex. It has become a part of the Christian faith that Jesus^{as}, the Messiah, is God and worthy of worship by human beings and angels. There are three beings in the Trinity according to their belief but, in practice, they supplicate to and worship only the Messiah. Both of these violations—against the rights of God's creation and against those of the Creator—have reached such a height that it is difficult to tell which one exceeds the other. Therefore, God named me the Messiah in relation to the rights of His creation and sent me as the *avatar* of Jesus^{as} the Messiah. Similarly, in relation to the rights of the Creator, He named me Muḥammad and Aḥmad, and sent me as the *avatar* of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. In accordance with these meanings, I am Jesus the Messiah and also Muḥammad Maḥdī. "Messiah" is a title that was given to Prophet Jesus^{as} and it means: one who finds God, partakes of His favours, is His *khalīfah* and is a person established on the path of truth and righteousness. "Maḥdī" is a title

given to the Prophet Muḥammad Muṣṭafā (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and it means: one who by his very nature is rightly guided, is heir to all guidance, and is an embodiment of the reflection of God's attribute *Hādī* [Guide]. God's blessing and mercy have allowed me to inherit both these names in this era, and both these titles have been joined together in my person. In line with these meanings, I am both Jesus the Messiah and Muḥammad Mahdi. In Islamic terminology, this type of advent is called a "*burūz*" [re-advent, or spiritual reappearance]. I have been granted two kinds of *burūz*: one is the *burūz* of Jesus^{as}, and the other is the *burūz* of Muḥammad^{sa}. In short, by way of *burūz*, my being is a blended compound of the personalities of both these Prophets.

In the capacity of Jesus^{as} the Messiah, I have been assigned the duty of stopping the Muslims from vicious attacks and bloodshed. It has been clearly mentioned in the *aḥādīth* of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that the Messiah would end religious wars when he returns to the world. This is what is happening. My followers—who dwell in different parts of British India—now number close to thirty thousand or a little more¹⁷. Each person who takes the *bai'at* [pledge of allegiance] at my hand and believes in me as the Promised Messiah must accept that *jihad* is totally forbidden in this age because the Messiah has come. In particular, he must be loyal—truly and not hypocritically—to the British

17. The number of people who are especially endowed with knowledge and understanding is about ten thousand. But all types of people, including the unlearned, are at least thirty thousand, and possibly more. [Author]

Government. This flag of friendship has now been raised and, had they wished, even a hundred thousand *maulavīs* would not be able to establish a similar movement to bring an end to violent *jihad*. If God so wills, it is my hope that this blessed and peace-loving *jamā'at*, which is erasing the ideas of *jihad* and armed conquest, will increase to many hundreds of thousands within a few years, and those who practice violent *jihad* will change their views.

In the capacity of Muḥammad Mahdī, my mission is to re-establish *Tauḥīd* in this world with the help of Divine signs. Our Lord and Master Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) established the Grandeur, Might, and Power of God in the hearts of the idolaters of Arabia through heavenly signs alone. I also have been given the help of the Holy Spirit. The same Mighty and Holy God Who has descended upon me appeared to all Prophets. He appeared to Moses^{as} at Sinai, to Jesus^{as} at Mount Seir, and He shined forth on the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) at Mount Paran. He has communicated with me and said to me:

I am the Highest Being for the worship of Whom all Prophets were sent. I alone am the Creator and Possessor and there is none like Me. I am not subject to birth or death.

I have been informed that prevailing Christian beliefs such as Trinity and Atonement are all human errors in contravention of God's real teachings. God has directly informed me with His own living word:

If you confront difficulties, and people ask how they might know that you are from God, tell them that heavenly signs are my witness, my prayers are answered, and I am informed of what is yet to come.

Hidden mysteries, known only to God, are revealed to me before they are manifest publicly. Another sign is that if anyone wishes to compete with me in these areas—such as acceptance of prayers, the prior knowledge of such acceptance or knowledge of the unseen beyond human capacity—he will fail regardless of whether he is from the East or the West. These are the signs bestowed upon me in order to draw people towards the True God, Who is the God of our souls and our bodies and to Whom we shall all return one day. Certainly, a faith that does not demonstrate Divine Power amounts to nothing. All Prophets have accepted that Divine Power is the sign of a true religion.

It should be noted that it is not just in recent days that God has given me these two names. In a revelation mentioned in my book, *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, which was published about twenty years ago, God has used these two names for me—Jesus the Messiah and Muḥammad Mahdī—so that I might bring the message of God as mentioned above to both Christians and Muslims. Alas! All seekers have been provided the opportunity to satisfy themselves through me, if only their hearts wished it and they feared the Last Day.

A living faith is one which possesses God's Power and displays His countenance through miraculous works. I testify that the belief in *Tauḥīd*—that is Islam—is a faith in which God's creation does not assume the place of the Creator. Christianity

was also from God but, unfortunately, it is no longer established on those teachings. It is also disappointing that the Muslims of this era have deprived themselves of the second part of the Divine Law, which is composed of sympathy, love and the spirit of service. It is shameful that they indulge in such barbaric customs despite believing in *Tauḥīd*. I have tried repeatedly to liberate them from these habits. Unfortunately, they are presented with certain political movements that arouse their violent instincts. The writings of some unenlightened priests also have a poisonous effect on them. A number of books have been written that are full of insults and lies about our Holy Prophet^{sa}. The books written by Reverend ‘Imād-ud-Dīn, Reverend Thākar Dās, and Ṣafdar ‘Alī, the book *Umma-hātul-Mo’minīn*, as well as the journal of Reverend Riwārḥī are all of this type. Any Muslim who does not possess a high degree of patience and forbearance will become emotional upon reading this literature because the harsh language it uses in place of scholarly discussion is difficult to tolerate. One honourable priest has written in his Lucknow-based newspaper that if the events of 1857 were to recur it would be due to the books of Reverend ‘Imād-ud-Dīn. It is worthy of note that Reverend ‘Imād-ud-Dīn’s literature is inflammatory enough for an honourable missionary to have expressed this opinion. In light of the high emotions among Muslims, I recently wrote a somewhat stern response to these books so that Muslims might derive some comfort by seeing that their grievances had been redressed. This did benefit Muslims and their pain was eased with these rebuttals. Nevertheless, the problem remains since

priests continue to produce literature that sensitive and passionate Muslims cannot bear.

The Christian priests have embarked on a very dangerous course of action. On one side, they falsely argue that the Qur'ān summons Muslims to *jihad* at all times and occasions, as if seeking to draw attention towards this tradition. And then they incite the Muslims' passion with provocative literature. It is unclear why these people naïvely fail to recognise that these actions can combine to produce dangerous consequences. I have written repeatedly that *jihad* is certainly not a Qur'ānic commandment. The truth of the matter is simply that some of Islam's early opponents wanted to forcibly restrain or rather annihilate it. Islam raised the sword against them only in self-defense. Only for such enemies was it ordered that they could be killed¹⁸ unless they accept Islam. This permission was for specified circumstances and not forever. Islam is not responsible for the erroneous or self-serving actions of the monarchies that came after the time of the Prophet^{sa}. Anyone who raises the issue of *jihad* to deceive ignorant Muslims in fact wants to promote this poisonous habit. It would have been better if Christian clerics, upon duly examining history, had emphasised that there is no doctrine of such *jihad* in Islam, and that there is no injunction to convert people to Islam by force. The Holy Qur'ān is the book that contains the following verse:¹⁹

لَا كُرْأَا فِي الرِّئِئِ...

18. This reference is to the convicted criminals who had committed serious atrocities. *See also pages 5–7 above.* [Translator]

19. (al-Baqarah, 2:257), [Translator]

This means that there should be no compulsion in matters of religion. Can we conclude that such a book teaches warfare? What complaint can we lodge against the *maulavīs* when the Christian clerics have also failed to adopt the path of truth, which would have been beneficial in promoting the policies of the government. Because of these concerns, I have twice before requested His Excellency the Viceroy to suspend debates in which one party criticises the religion of another. However, up to this point no attention has been given to these suggestions. For the third time, I humbly request His Excellency to ban this practice of attacking the faiths of others for a period of at least five years. These practices are leading to chaos in the country, so much so that friendly meetings of different groups have ceased to occur. At times, one group with little real knowledge raises a baseless allegation and offends the others. Sometimes this leads to a riot. Criticism of the Islamic concept of *jihad* is an example of this phenomenon. Such criticism refreshes sensitive memories and results in disorder. I believe that the poisonous growth of envy and spite, which is secretly flourishing, will quickly disappear if our wise government passes a law that: [a] prohibits all parties, including the clerics of the Church, from indulging in negative attacks on other religions for a period of five years, [b] asks all parties to live together with love and civility, and [c] encourages all groups to focus on the positive features of their own religions.

Such action on the part of the government will be appreciated, will have a beneficial impact on the people of the Frontier Region and will also promote peace and friendship. It seems that God in Heaven wishes that wars and conflicts be

abandoned and that traditions of friendship and love be promoted. If there is any truth in a faith, it should be displayed. One should not just continue to recite the deficiencies of other faiths. Not every ruler or administrator can implement or accept my suggestion. Only a highly astute administrator will understand its true significance. I hope that his Excellency the Viceroy Lord Curzon, who is both broad-minded and perceptive, will consider this suggestion and implement it with determination.

If this is not possible, then he should put all faiths to the test in order to determine which has Divine authority on its side. In other words, orders should be sent to the renowned scholars of each religion—Muslims, Āryas, Sikhs, Sanatan Dharm, Christians, Brahmus, Jews, etc.—to demonstrate the evidence of Divine Power in their faith in the form of a prophecy or something else. The religion that is judged to have the strongest Divine support should then be declared true and worthy of respect. Since I have been given authority from the heavens, I volunteer on behalf of my followers, and I am ready for such a contest. At the same time, I pray that Allah may always bless our government, under the auspices of which we have the opportunity to make suggestions that demonstrate the Might of God.

With greetings of peace,
July 7, 1900

Petitioned by the humble one,
Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān

Index

Adhān

defined xi
banned by Sikhs, 15, 30

Afghanistan

jihad and, 20–23

Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā‘at

defined, xi
flag of friendship raised by, ... 36
Promised Messiah’s^{as}
instructions to, 16–17

Allah

communicated with Promised
Messiah, 36
helps the oppressed, 6–7
personal name of God, xi
protects the honour of the
righteous, 15
wishes conflicts to end, 40–41

Amīr

defined, xi

Amīr of Kabul

proposal to, 20–22

Arabic

mother of all languages, 3

Avatar

defined, xii
Promised Messiah as, 32, 34

British Government

proposals to, 22–27
religious freedom and, 15, 30

Burūz

defined, xii
Promised Messiah as, 35

Christianity

jihad and, 10–11
transgression against
God, 7, 29, 32

Companions^{ra} of the

Holy Prophet^{sa}

patience and bravery of, . 12–13

Dajjāl

defined, xii
misuse of term, 8

Dār-ul-Ḥarb

defined, xii
misuse of term, 8

Fatwa

against Promised Messiah^{as}, 8
defined, xii

Frontier Region

and *jihad*, 11, 23–27

Ghāzī xii, 22–27, 31

Ḥadīth

defined, xiii

- on *jihad*, 10
 Promised Messiah and, .. 10, 17,
 19, 35–36
- Holy Prophet**
 did not initiate violence, ... 9, 13
 purpose of, 33
- Holy Qur'ān**
 defined, xiii
 on *jihad*, 6–7, 10, 39–40
 Promised Messiah and, 19
- Jesus**
 re-advent of, 31–32
 status of, 32
- Jihad**
 causes of, 23–26
 Christian clerics and, 10–11
 Frontier Region and, .. 10, 23–27
ḥadīth on, 10
 misunderstanding by religious
 scholars, 8–9, 34
 permission of the sovereign
 and, 22
 prophecies regarding, 29
 Qur'ān on, 6–7, 10, 39–40
 injustice to God's creation, ... 31
 root of the word, 3
 time of the Promised Messiah
 and, 10–11,
 15–17, 31–32, 35–36
- Mahdi** xiii, 34–35
- Maulavīs** 8, 13, 15, 23, 26, 31
- Messiah** 34
- Muslim(s)**
 disobey Divine law by unjusti-
 fied war, 38
 offences in the name of
jihad, 7
 opposed in early history, 5
- Nafs-e-‘ammārah** 11
- Polytheism**
 in Christianity, 33
- Promised Messiah,**
 defined, xiv
 his claims and nature 29, 34–37
 prophecies of, 18
 prophecies regarding, 18–20
- Prophets**
 opposition to, 4
- Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī**
 defined, xiv
 on Promised Messiah, 10, 17
- Sikh Government** 15, 30