

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Master of Sacred Theology Thesis

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

5-1-1970

A Critical Evaluation of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Doctrine of God in the Light of the Trinity

Henry John Otten

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/stm>



Part of the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Otten, Henry John, "A Critical Evaluation of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Doctrine of God in the Light of the Trinity" (1970). *Master of Sacred Theology Thesis*. 459.

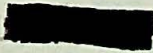
<https://scholar.csl.edu/stm/459>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master of Sacred Theology Thesis by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

A CRITICAL EVALUATION
OF THE
AHMADIYYA MUSLIM DOCTRINE OF GOD
IN THE
LIGHT OF THE TRINITY

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Systematic Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by
Henry John Otten
May 1970


Approved by: Robert Press Advisor.

W. J. Kaw
Reader.

Problems of Immutability 67

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION.	1
The Importance of the Muslim Doctrine of God	1
Why the Ahmadiyya Doctrine	iii
The Comparison with the Christian Trinity.	v
Translations of the Qur'an	vi
Chapter	
I. THE AHMADIYYA MUSLIM DOCTRINE OF GOD	1
Sources of the Doctrine.	1
The Qur'an	1
The Traditions	3
Reason	5
Continuous revelation.	7
The Existence of God	12
Arguments drawn from creation.	13
The evidence of human nature	14
Arguments based on divine revelation	14
The Name of God.	16
The Unity of God	18
God is one in His person	18
There is only one God and He alone is worthy of worship.	20
The unity of God and morality are closely related.	24
IV. The Attributes of God.	26
The four chief attributes.	28
The other attributes of God.	37
Mercy the overruling attribute	55
The manifestation of God's attributes.	58
The Problem of Evil.	63

Chapter	Page
Problems of Inconsistency	67
The problem of God's uniqueness and the manifestation of His attributes . .	67
The problem of <u>shirk</u>	75
Other inconsistencies	75
II. AHMADIYYA DOCTRINE AND ISLAMIC ORTHODOXY . .	77
Early Muslim Theology.	81
Mysticism	81
Application of Reason	84
III. THE AHMADIYYA ANTI-CHRISTIAN POLEMIC	88
The Doctrine of the Trinity	89
The Qur'anic basis.	89
Ahmadiyah amplifications	91
The Doctrine of the Divine Sonship.	96
The Qur'anic basis.	96
Ahmadiyya amplifications.	99
The Doctrine of the Incarnation	101
The Qur'anic basis.	102
Ahmadiyya amplifications.	104
The Sinlessness of Jesus.	107
The Doctrine of the Atonement	110
The Resurrection of Christ.	116
The Holy Spirit	117
Summary of Polemic.	119
IV. ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE.	120
Positive Aspects of the Ahmadiyya Doctrine of God.	122
The balance of transcendence and immanence	122
Its emphasis on human responsibility. .	123
Its moral motivation.	124

Chapter	Page
Appealing Aspects of the Ahmadiyya	
Doctrine of God	125
Its simplicity.	125
Its appeal to reason.	126
Its syncretism.	126
Its universalism.	127
Defective Aspects of the Ahmadiyya	
Doctrine of God	128
Weakness in the conception of God's holiness.	128
Weakness in the conception of God's justice	131
Weakness in the conception of God's love and grace.	137
Weakness in establishing solid basis for doctrine	139
Misunderstandings of the Christian Faith.	
Regarding the Trinity	141
Regarding the person of Christ.	146
Regarding the Incarnation	148
Regarding the death of Christ	150
Regarding the Holy Spirit	151
Christian Initiative.	
It takes God to reveal God.	155
The majesty of God demonstrated in the Cross	157
CONCLUSION	162
BIBLIOGRAPHY	165

¹The second part of the Muslim creed is Muhammad-ur-Rasul-illah. "Muhammad is the Apostle of God."

²M. Davis Jones, The People of the Mosque (3rd Revised edition; Calcutta; Baptist Mission Press, 1959), p. 99.

INTRODUCTION

The Importance of the Muslim Doctrine of God

The doctrine of God is the central doctrine of Islam and is inherent in the very name of that religion. Islam, based upon the Semitic root S-L-M, means "peace" or "submission," and a Muslim is "one who submits himself." In both cases the object to whom submission is rendered is God. The priority of the doctrine of God is also evidenced by the first part of the Muslim creed which states, la ilaha ill' Allah, "There is no god at all except God."¹ This is the central point of Muslim teaching and is instilled into the Muslim's consciousness from the time he is a babe until he leaves this world. The words la ilaha ill' Allah are whispered into an infant's ears at birth, inscribed on books and doorposts, repeated daily in prayers, and chanted by those who are carrying the bier of the dead.²

Any Christian who undertakes to proclaim the Gospel among Muslims or to engage in dialogue with them will soon find himself involved in discussions, questions, and challenges regarding the doctrine of God. Ultimately, it is the doctrine of

¹The second part of the Muslim creed is Muhammad-ur Rasulu-llah, "Muhammad is the Apostle of God."

²L. Bevan Jones, The People of the Mosque (3rd revised edition; Calcutta; Baptist Mission Press, 1959), p. 99.

God which gives Islam, or any other religion, its distinctive character. A proper understanding of this doctrine in Islam will enable the Christian to appreciate the need for his witness, the difficulties which lie behind a Muslim's reception of that witness, and the special areas of Muslim life and thought where that witness should be applied. For example, there are those who virtually identify the God of the Christians and the God of the Muslims. Among such there will not be much incentive to evangelism. Others look upon the Muslim denial of the death of Christ on the cross as an inaccurate fact which merely needs to be corrected in order to be believed. They do not realize that this denial is related to a conception of God incompatible with the fact, namely, that God is too powerful to give the victory to crime. Then there are those who tackle the problem of Islam by moving against the periphery, the social customs of Muslims, when the main effort should be directed to the source of Islam's strength and weakness, its doctrine of God. A grasp of the Muslim doctrine of God is essential for both the evangelistic and apologetic endeavors of the Church in relation to Muslims. As modern communications bring the peoples of the world closer and closer together, the day when Christians can live oblivious to the beliefs of millions of other inhabitants of this planet is rapidly drawing to a close. Ignorance of the Muslim doctrine of God is not only a hindrance to the Church's outreach; it may well become a positive danger to those Christians who are not

well grounded in their own faith. Islam once swallowed up large areas of the globe where the church was widespread. There is no guarantee that this could not happen again.

Why the Ahmadiyya Muslim Doctrine?

In this study special emphasis is given to the Ahmadiyya Muslim doctrine of God. The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam takes its name from the founder of the movement, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who lived in Qadian, Punjab, India, from 1835-1908. Organized in 1889, the movement has expanded under the leadership of his successors with present headquarters in Rabwah, Pakistan. Its influence has been out of proportion to its membership of less than 300,000 members. The Ahmadiyyas maintain an extensive outreach program which now has centers in more than forty different countries of Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas,³ including a number of centers in the United States. There are several reasons for concentrating upon the Ahmadiyya sources in a study of the Muslim doctrine of God.

First of all, the Ahmadiyya movement is a contemporary movement which provides insights and indicates trends in modern Muslim thought. Many modern Muslims are no longer interested in some of the theological problems which occupied the

³Mirza Mubarak Ahmad, Our Foreign Missions (4th revised edition; Rabwah, West Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions, 1965), pp. 1-87; Abdul Hamid, Islam and Christianity (New York: Carlton Press, Inc., 1967), pp. 214-215.

attention of classical orthodox Islam. A great effort is being made to make Islam relevant to the new age. For the Christian an awareness of the theological stance of present day Muslims is vital for effective proclamation. Ignorance of contemporary thought may put the Christian witness into the position of criticizing weaknesses or defects which the Muslims themselves have already abandoned. For example, the Ahmadiyyas have rejected the notion of propagating Islam through military force, and have committed themselves to peaceful persuasion by such means as conversation and literature. They limit the practice of Jihad, holy war, to defensive action.⁴

A second reason for concentrating upon the Ahmadiyya Muslim doctrine of God is the availability of source material. The Ahmadiyya Movement has produced many of its religious materials in English, including translations and commentaries of the Qur'an. It is therefore possible for both the technical student of Islam, as well as for other interested parties, to examine this faith and evaluate it even though they are not scholars in Arabic, Persian, and Urdu.

Thirdly, the Ahmadiyya Muslim doctrine of God is a fit object of study because many Christians may have their first religious experience with Islam in the form of an Ahmadiyya

⁴Muhammad Ali, The Religion of Islam (Lahore, India: The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1936), p. 551.

Muslim. The Ahmadiyya Muslims are very aggressive in the propagation of Islam today,⁵ especially in relation to the Christian world where they have missions. A knowledge of this movement is therefore desirable both for the purpose of helping the Muslim find life in the Gospel, and for the purpose of answering criticism which the Ahmadiyya Muslim may bring against the Christian position. It shall not be the object of this paper to describe the whole Ahmadiyya Muslim movement but to limit discussion to those aspects which affect the Ahmadiyya doctrine of God.

The Comparison with the Christian Trinity

Muslims from Muhammad onward have caricatured the Christian idea of God. The Ahmadiyya Muslims have been particularly active in this anti-Christian polemic and sharply verbalize some of the opposition to Christian theology which lies at the heart of Islam. Much of this caricature is directed against biblical and Christian terminology such as "Son of God" and "Trinity," and it is to be feared that the polemic against Christian terminology has prevented the Muslims from understanding and appreciating the concepts which lie behind the terminology. It is the conviction of the author of this study that the Christian doctrine of the Trinity expresses the fulness of the Godhead more adequately than the unitarian

⁵Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, Islam: Its Meaning for Modern Man (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 14.

formulations of Islam, and that the latter should therefore be studied in the light of the former, and not vice versa. Although the word Trinity was not applied to the Christian doctrine of God until about the year 200 A.D. by Tertullian, the concepts which gave rise to this terminology are rooted in the Old and New Testaments and vitally affect everyday life. By alienating themselves from the fulness of the Godhead as revealed by Christ and imparted through the Holy Spirit the Muslims are robbing themselves of real life and salvation. It shall be the aim of this study to clarify this issue for both Muslims and Christians with the hope that Christians will come to a deeper appreciation and understanding of their own doctrine of God and be helped to lead their Muslim friends into a faith relationship with God the Creator, the Savior, and the Sanctifier.

Translation of the Qur'an

A word may be said about the quotations from the Qur'an in this study. The translation of the Qur'an into other languages by Muslims is of rather recent development, and even now only undertaken by Muslims who have been affected by reform movements. Therefore early translations of the Qur'an were done by non-Muslims, especially by Christians. Perhaps the best English translation is that by Arberry called The Koran Interpreted. The title is well chosen because Muslims believe that the Qur'an in its original Arabic dress cannot

really be translated; it is the speech of God Himself, and therefore can only be interpreted. Arberry tried to reproduce some of the original poetry which is in the Arabic of Muhammad, and thus at least captures some of the spirit of the Qur'an along with its message.

The Ahmadiyyas have produced three translations of the Qur'an, one by Muhammad Ali, one by Marmaduke Pickthall, and another by Sher Ali. The latter work was not available for most of this study except for the first volume which is essentially contained in the translation sponsored by Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad.

In addition to Arberry's translation and the Ahmadiyya translations, the two-volume translation of Yusuf Ali was used.

No single translation has been followed in this study because in a sense they are all interpretations, and reflect in the translations some of the subjects which are treated. In presenting Ahmadiyya ideas the Ahmadiyya translations are usually quoted. In passages where no particular issue is at stake Arberry's translation is used. Significant variations in the other translations on the subject under consideration will be pointed out, and the identification of all translations will be made in the footnotes. Sometimes there is a difference in the numbering of the verses.

CHAPTER I

THE AHMADIYYA MUSLIM DOCTRINE OF GOD

Sources of the Doctrine

The Qur'an

The primary source for the Ahmadiyya Muslim doctrine of God is the Qur'an. Together with other Muslims the Ahmadiyyas regard the Qur'an as the verbatim Word of God delivered piecemeal to Muhammad and arranged in book form by divine direction. Spurred on by Western textual criticism of the Qur'an, the Ahmadiyyahs have gone to great lengths to prove that the present Qur'an is the exact replica of the words which Muhammad received by direct revelation in his lifetime. Although Muhammad could not read or write, they say that his message was infallibly recorded in the memories of his followers or immediately reduced to writing. They hold that Muhammad by divine inspiration also gave instructions for the proper order of the various verses before he died, and that the Caliphs Abu Bakr (632-634) and Uthman (644-656) arranged for Muhammad's secretary, Zaid ibn Thabit, to gather the various verses into book form and to establish the exact reading of the text. According to the Ahmadiyyas the authoritative canon of the Qur'an was established within twenty years of Muhammad's death, and has been transmitted in pure form to the

present day.¹ While Western scholars tend to regard the arrangement of the Qur'an as haphazard,² the Ahmadiyyas find abundant rationale for its present form.

The Qur'an is therefore regarded as the direct Word of God. As such it is the chief source of authority to which the Ahmadiyyas appeal in their doctrine of God. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, designated the Qur'an as the source of his teachings when he addressed a Great Religions Conference in Lahore, India (now Pakistan), in 1896:

Before I advert to the subject of this address, I beg leave to state that all my assertions and arguments shall be based upon and drawn from the Holy Quran Therefore, as it is my object to show the beauties of the Quran and to establish its exclusive excellence over all other books, I shall observe the rule above stated and depend solely upon the Quran for every assertion and argument, stating only that which is set forth in it in plain words, or what may be reasonably inferred from them I shall avoid all reference to the authorities containing the reported words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him) and not go outside the Word of God as revealed in the Quran.³

A modern Ahmadiyya gives a similar testimony to the importance of the Qur'an in his presentation of his belief:

¹See "The Collection and Arrangement of the Holy Qur'an" in Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, Containing the Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary (2nd edition; Lahore, Punjab, India: Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Islam, 1920), pp. xxviii-xcii.

²Robert Payne, The Holy Sword (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1959), pp. 91-92.

³Ghulam Ahmad, The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam (Washington, D.C.: The American Fazl Mosque, 1953), p. 15.

The question arises: What is the true concept of God? It is not right for man to describe God by stretching his own imagination as many philosophers and theologians have tried to do. The true concept of God is that which one learns from the true Word of God. We will, therefore, endeavor to answer this question from what we learn from the Holy Quran, the Perfect Book of God revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the chiefest of all Prophets.⁴

The Traditions

The Traditions in Islam are called hadith, and constitute a well-defined body of literature. These Traditions are supposed to be the conversations and actions of Muhammad as reported by his closest companions. Muslims often compare the Traditions of Islam to the Gospels of the New Testament, usually in the endeavor to show that the Gospels are a lower form of revelation than the Qur'an. At a certain stage in Muslim history pious Muslims began to multiply reports about the life and words of Muhammad, and Muslims themselves instigated an intensive sifting process in order to establish an authentic body of Traditions.⁵ Al-Bukhari (died 878) studied some 600,000 Traditions, and finally incorporated less than 7500 in a famous collection which the Ahmadiyyas also regard as valuable.⁶ The Qur'an is mostly in the form of direct speech

⁴Abdul Hamid, Islam and Christianity (New York: Carlton Press, Inc., 1967), p. 31.

⁵Alfred Guillaume, The Traditions of Islam (Beirut: Khayats, 1966), pp. 77-97.

⁶Muhammad Ali, The Religion of Islam (Lahore, India: The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1936), p. 75.

and contains very little historical material describing the occasion at which the verses were spoken. Most of this information is found in the Traditions. Certain Traditions also serve as a commentary or amplification of parts of the Qur'an.

In the Ahmadiyya literature material from the Traditions is often introduced with the phrase, "The Holy Prophet says" When quoting from the Qur'an they usually write, "The Holy Qur'an says" or "God says" In general, the Ahmadiyyas do not depend upon the Traditions so much as other Muslims. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, for instance, in the statement appealing to the Qur'an quoted above, was careful to say, "I shall avoid all reference to the authorities containing the reported words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad." Here he was referring to the Traditions. His followers, however, were not so exclusive, and made appeals to the Traditions, especially in their commentaries of the Qur'an.⁷ The important matter to note is that the Ahmadiyyas develop their particular doctrine of God partly by their manner of selection of Traditions. For example, the Traditions have many references to predestination.⁸ But by ignoring such Traditions, the Ahmadiyyas come up with a less deterministic conception of God than the orthodox Muslims.

⁷See Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran with English Translation and Commentary (Qadian, India: Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, 1947), I, 560.

⁸See W. Goldsack, Selections from Muhammedan Traditions, (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1923).

Reason

The Ahmadiyyas make many appeals to human reason both in their opposition to orthodox Islam and to the Christian faith. The doctrines which they reject are often rejected with an appeal to reason. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad asserts directly, "It should be borne in mind that the Quran does not inculcate any doctrines which are contrary to reason and which, therefore, a person can follow only against his better judgement."⁹ A modern Ahmadiyya almost gives priority to reason over the Qur'an when he says, "Human reason demands, and the Quran has conceded the reasonableness of this demand, that there should be one Creator and Controller of the universe."¹⁰ Muhammad Ali clearly defines the position of reason as over against the Qur'an in the matter of authority, but nevertheless ends up with a strong statement on reason:

The Qur'an does recognize revelation as a source of knowledge higher than reason, but at the same time admits that the truth of the principles established by revelation may be judged by reason, and hence it is that it repeatedly appeals to reason and denounces those who do not use their reasoning faculty.¹¹

In orthodox Islam the application of reason to the formulation of doctrine was recognized as a legitimate and necessary function. In cases where the Qur'an and the Traditions

⁹Ghulam Ahmad, p. 34.

¹⁰Abdul Hamid, p. 38.

¹¹Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 97.

did not give guidance, the Muslims accepted the principle of ijma, or the agreement of the learned. If the theological teachers of Islam agreed on a certain doctrine or practice, this agreement became authoritative for the rest of the Muslim community. This agreement was arrived at by the process of ijtihad, reasoning or the exercise of judgment. In some respects ijma corresponds to the "unanimous consent" of the Apostolic Fathers.¹² In Islam the principle of ijma became ossified to that agreement reached by four important teachers of Islam called the Four Imams: Abu Hanifa (699-776), Ibn Malik (711-793), Ash-Shafi'i (born 776), and Ibn Hanbal (born 780). In effect, later Muslims were not free to exercise their own judgment beyond that point reached by the Four Imams, with the result that Islamic theology for many centuries was a mere parroting of the past. One student of Islam called it the sclerosis of philosophical theology.¹³

The Ahmadiyya Movement is partly a protest against this static condition. In a way that is reminiscent of Luther's claim for private interpretation of the Bible, the Ahmadiyyas contend for the right of present day Muslims to interpret the Qur'an and their faith on the basis of their own reason and judgment. They say that the door of ijtihad is still open,

¹²L. Bevan Jones, The People of the Mosque (3rd revised edition; Calcutta: The Baptist Mission Press, 1959), p. 58.

¹³W. Montgomery Watt, Islamic Philosophy and Theology (Edinburgh: University Press, 1962), p. 149.

as long as it does not contradict any principle laid down in the Qur'an.

The right to differ with the highest of men below the Prophet is a Muslim's birthright, and to take away that birthright is to stifle the very existence of Islam. Under present circumstances, when conditions have quite changed and the world has been moving on for a thousand years, while the Muslims have more or less stagnated, it is the duty of Muslim states and Muslim peoples to apply their own judgment to the changed conditions.¹⁴

The new freedom claimed by the Ahmadiyyas is evident in their writings and commentaries. They make fresh interpretations of the Qur'an and try to apply their doctrines in terms of modern science and sociology. They also picture God in terms which appeal to people who are interested in progress and peace.

Continuous revelation

The Ahmadiyya Muslims not only recognize their own judgment as a valid source of defining a doctrine of God; they go a step farther and claim direct revelation from God. Most Muslims believe that Muhammad was the last and "seal" of the prophets. They regard his revelation as perfect and as containing all that is valuable and needful from previous revelations such as the Taurat (Torah) and the Injil (Gospel).

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, however, did not accept the idea that revelation is limited to the past.

To say that God spoke to generations of men in the past and made Himself known to them by His own clear

¹⁴Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 115

voice, yet He does not speak now would be to assert something wholly untenable. The unchangeable God who spoke to His chosen servants in the past speaks to them even now and blesses with His Holy Word such as [sic] His servants as seek Him with all their heart and all their soul.¹⁵

Ghulam Ahmad himself claimed to be the recipient of direct revelation; a similar claim was made by his son Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad (hereafter referred to as B. Mahmud Ahmad):

By the grace of God the writer of this paper has had personal experience of revelation and can confidently state on the basis of his own experience that revelation is conveyed in words and is not a mere idea of the mind.¹⁶

B. Mahmud Ahmad goes on to say that thousands of Ahmadiyyas have become recipients of divine revelation.¹⁷ He defines this revelation as the reception of a message from God conveyed in the form of words or writing. It is difficult to distinguish this type of revelation from that ascribed to Muhammad except that the angel Gabriel is not mentioned as the conveyer of the message, as in Muhammad's case. Ghulam Ahmad refers to his own revelations in terms of ilham,¹⁸ which Muhammad Ali defines as "when voices are heard or uttered in a state of trance, the recipient being neither quite asleep, nor fully awake."¹⁹ This is usually regarded as a lower form of

¹⁵Ghulam Ahmad, p. 84.

¹⁶Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat or the True Islam (Washington, D.C.: The American Fazi Mosque, 1951), p. 71.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁸Ghulam Ahmad, p. 180.

¹⁹Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 205.

revelation than that experienced by Muhammad, which is designated by the term wahi, "revelation that is recited in words."²⁰ But in the legal inquiries which followed the Ahmadiyya-centered disturbances in Pakistan in 1953 the revelations were called a type of wahi.²¹

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claims to revelation were also accompanied with identification of himself as a syncretistic eschatological figure of Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity. "God has told me, not on one occasion, but repeatedly, that I am Krishna for the Hindus and the promised Messiah for the Muhammedans and the Christians."²² In certain sections of Islam there is an expectation of another world figure called the Mahdi. Ghulam Ahmad also claimed to be the Mahdi of these expectations. Today Ahmadiyyas usually refer to their founder as the Promised Messiah.²³ Both orthodox Islam and Christians await the second coming of Christ; Jesus is designated as the Messiah in the Qur'an.²⁴ The founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement gathered these titles to himself by saying that he had been sent in the power and spirit of Jesus just as John the Baptist was identified with the spirit and power of Elijah.²⁵

²¹S. E. Brush, "Ahmadiyyat in Pakistan," Muslim World, XLV (April 1955), 145-171.

²²Jones, p. 216.

²³Abdul Hamid, p. 155.

²⁴Surah 3:44, in Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 154.

²⁵Abdul Hamid, p. 155.

He looked upon himself as the fulfiller of the law of Muhammad just as Jesus was the fulfiller of the law of Moses.²⁶

Under the mantle of claims to revelation and claims to eschatological fulfillment the Ahmadiyya Movement has syncretistic elements which do not hesitate to include biblical materials as if they were Islamic. For instance, B. Mahmud Ahmad, the son of Ghulam Ahmad and one of the previous heads of the Ahmadiyya Movement, includes the parable of the Prodigal Son in one of his expositions of divine forgiveness without any reference to its source.²⁷ Such tendencies blur the distinction between the Muslim and the Christian doctrine of God.

Furthermore, personal claims to revelation have also introduced mystical elements into the Ahmadiyya doctrine of God. Mysticism is not new to Islam; there are traces of mystical elements in the Qur'an itself, and a strong grassroots mystical movement, known as Sufism, even reached a stage of legitimacy in the theology of Al-Ghazali (1058-1111). But the assumptions of mysticism generally go against the grain of classical and orthodox Islam which defines God in exalted terms far removed from man.²⁸ The mystic tendencies of Ghulam Ahmad can be easily detected in his poetry where he speaks of God as his

²⁶B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 17.

²⁷Ibid., p. 39.

²⁸See chapter on Sufism in H. A. R. Gibb, Mohammadanism (2nd edition; New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 127-146.

Beloved and even refers to Him as his Sweetheart.²⁹ In other Ahmadiyya writings there are frequent references to union with God, especially in sections dealing with ethics.

In the end, some of Ghulam Ahmad's claims and those of his followers led to a split in the Ahmadiyya Movement itself. After the Mirza's death in 1908 he was succeeded as head of the Ahmadiyya community by Hakim Nur-ud-din, who served until his death in 1914. A disagreement arose as to the next successor, one group claiming that the founder was a prophet and should be succeeded by a head in the form of a caliph like the successors of Muhammad, and another group saying that the founder was only a reformer and that the movement should be governed by a more secular committee.³⁰ The former group appointed B. Mahmud Ahmad, the son of the Mirza, as the new caliph, and continued to operate from Qadian, the birthplace of the Mirza, as headquarters. After the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 they set up a new headquarters in Rabwah, West Pakistan. The group which opposed the idea of prophet and caliphate, headed by Muhammad Ali and Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, set up headquarters in Lahore. At present this group seems to be overshadowed by the Qadian/Rabwah group, whose present head is Nasir Ahmad,

²⁹Ghulam Ahmad, Precious Pearls (Rabwah, West Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions, 1965), pp. 3-21.

³⁰Humphrey J. Fisher, Ahmadiyyah (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 50.

the grandson of Ghulam Ahmad. Nasir Ahmad took over the leadership when B. Mahmud Ahmad died in 1965.³¹

In spite of this split and certain esoteric elements in the utterances of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and his followers, the Ahmadiyya Movement has not lacked men of literary talent, such as Muhammad Ali, a lawyer, and Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, presently one of the officers of the World Court at the Hague, who could present their teachings in an appealing way to Western intellectual man.³² Though there are crudities and confusion at the source of the Ahmadiyya Movement, the whole thrust of the Movement has been refined by its followers of both divisions. The doctrine of God which emerges from the Movement is a modified form of Islam, including some Christian conceptions and rejecting others, especially those which seem contrary to nature and reason. There is much in common with the Ahmadiyya Muslim doctrine of God and nineteenth-century Christian liberalism. The following pages will illustrate this point.

The Existence of God

Before formulating a doctrine of God the Ahmadiyya Muslims first set out to prove the existence of God. They base these proofs upon arguments in the Qur'an.

³¹Abdul Hamid, p. 184.

³²Cf. Muhammad Ali, The Religion of Islam, and Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, Islam and Its Meaning for Modern Man (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).

In all religious books the existence of God is taken almost as an axiomatic truth. The Holy Qur'an, however, advances numerous arguments to prove the existence of a Supreme Being Who is the Creator and Controller of this universe.³³

Muhammad Ali divides these into three main types of proof:

(1) Arguments drawn from creation; (2) The evidence of human nature; and (3) Arguments based on divine revelation.³⁴

Arguments drawn from creation

Under this head the Ahmadiyyas point to the design and order of the universe to prove the existence of God.

Had all these heavenly systems no designer they would soon have been disorganized and destroyed. The vast masses of matter rolling in space without interference with each other demonstrate by the regularity of their motions contrivance and design, hence the designer. Is it not surprising that these innumerable spheres thus rolling on from time immemorial do neither collide, nor alter their courses in the slightest degree, nor are subject to waste and decay from their constant motion? How could such a grand organization work on without any disorder or confusion for numberless years unless it were in accordance with the design and contrivance of a Supreme Contriver?³⁵

The argument of the first cause is also adduced:

But as the series of cause and effect, taking its rise in this finite world of ours, cannot be indefinite, it must terminate at some point. The final cause is, therefore, the Author of the Universe.³⁶

³³Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 134.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ghulam Ahmad, Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, pp. 88-89.

³⁶Ibid., p. 88.

One Ahmadiyya author finds proof for the existence of God from the way in which the universe demonstrates the circle of need and its satisfaction:

Some of the needs of the meanest worm that crawls on earth are being provided by a planet which is traveling billions of miles away from the earth. Let the contemplation of this circle of the want and its satisfaction teach us that this Universe has a Creator, Who has not omitted to foresee our smallest want and has provided the means of satisfaction of every yearning and true desire.³⁷

The evidence of human nature

This argument revolves around the phenomenon of conscience and man's innate consciousness of God. According to Ahmadiyya thought this "inner light" not only tells man that there is a Higher Being, but also creates in him a yearning for God and an instinct to turn to Him for help. Muhammad Ali speaks of an implanted love for God which cannot find contentment without Him.³⁸ But it is also recognized that this awareness of God varies in intensity with different people and can be clouded by ease, comfort, and evil.

Arguments based on divine revelation

Although the Ahmadiyyas cite the above arguments of creation and conscience for the existence of God, they admit that

³⁷B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 34.

³⁸Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 140.

they are not conclusive. The argument of creation can only posit the conviction that there must be or should be a Divine Being.

The existence of the earth and the heavens only proves that there "SHOULD BE" a Fashioner of this great universe, but this does not prove that the Fashioner "IS" in fact in existence; the difference between "SHOULD BE" and "IS" is obvious.³⁹

The argument from conscience is regarded as superior to the argument from creation, but nevertheless inadequate because of variations in man's "inner light." The crowning proof for the existence of God in Ahmadiyya thought is revelation, past and present. God speaks, and therefore is. Muhammad Ali says, "It is only revelation that discloses God in the full splendor of His light. . . ."⁴⁰ Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, identifies this revelation very clearly with the Qur'an when he says, "It is, therefore, only the Holy Qur'an which furnishes proof of the Existence of God IN FACT,"⁴¹ but seems to have present revelation in mind also when he writes:

If God is still a Living God as He was before; if He speaks and hears as before, there is no reason why He should today assume a silence as if He was non-existent; if He does not speak today, surely He does not hear either, i.e., He does not exist today.⁴²

The appeal to personal revelation as a proof for the existence of God is made clear in a later statement:

³⁹Ghulam Ahmad, Fountain of Christianity (Rabwah, West Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1961), p. 17.

⁴⁰Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 134.

⁴¹Ghulam Ahmad, Fountain of Christianity, p. 17.

⁴²Ibid.

Religions, other than Islam, lay stress upon man's own labour to find out God, as if discovery of God by man was doing a favour to God. According to Islam, however, God Himself gives proof of His existence in every age by the Divine Call "I do EXIST", as He gave such proof through me in this age.⁴³

It is seen then that the Ahmadiyyas regard Qur'anic revelation and personal revelation as the principle proofs for the existence of God. The identification of these revelations with the fact of God's speaking and so expressing His life and existence is important in both cases.

The Name of God

In the Qur'an the word God is rendered by the Arabic word Allah. Western students of Islam sometimes trace the origin of this word to ilah, "god," and claim that it is a contraction of al-ilah, "the god," and related to the Hebrew El and Elohim.⁴⁴ The pre-Islamic usage of the term is evidenced in the name of Muhammad's father, Abdullah (Servant of God) and in the name of an ancient shrine in Mecca called Baitu'llah (House of God). The Arabs at the time of Muhammad knew about a Supreme Deity called Allah, but they gave most of their worship to lesser deities. The pre-Islamic Allah may be compared to the Unknown God of Athens whom Paul filled with content. The mission of

⁴³Ibid., pp. 20-21.

⁴⁴Cf. article on "Allah" in Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam, H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers, editors (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1953), p. 33; Jones, p. 100.

Muhammad consisted in proclaiming Allah as the only reality among the different gods and objects worshipped by men, and in giving content to His being and actions.

The Ahmadiyya Muslims hold that the word Allah is the proper name of God, and as such, does not carry any significance. They deny any connection of the word with ilah:

{ In fact there is no etymological relationship between "ilah," god or a god, and "Allah," which is the substantive for God God is "ilah" and there is no other "ilah" beside Him, and His name is Allah.⁴⁵

The Ahmadiyyas also deny that it is derived from any other word.⁴⁶

Although the Qur'an has many other terms which it refers to God, Allah is known as the greatest name of God (ism a'zam). It is the name associated with His essence (ism dhat), and all other names or terms are regarded as names denoting attributes (asma' al-sifat). The word Allah occurs some 2800 times in the Qur'an.⁴⁷ In Ahmadiyya English literature the authors usually use the word God rather than Allah, but some writers retain Allah in passage quoted from the Qur'an even in translation.⁴⁸

⁴⁵Zafrulla Khan, p. 91.

⁴⁶Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, pp. 156-157.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 159.

⁴⁸Cf. usage in Zafrulla Khan, passim, and B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, passim.

The Unity of God

✓ In common with other Muslims the Ahmadiyyas lay great stress upon the unity of God. The doctrine of the unity of God in Islam is known as tauhid. ✓ It is the most important affirmation about God in Islam.

✓ The central pivot around which the whole doctrine and teaching of Islam revolves is the Unity of the Godhead. From this concept proceeds the fundamental unity of the universe, of man, and of life.⁴⁹

For the Ahmadiyya Muslims the unity of God has the following implications:

✓ God is one in His person

The Ahmadiyyas do not give much positive content to the nature of this oneness. In the Qur'an there are two related words which describe the oneness of God, ✓ ahad and wahid. The former word is found in the 112th chapter of the Qur'an which is called the Chapter of the Unity. It is a short chapter of only four verses, but has been designated in the past as equal to one-third of the Qur'an.⁵⁰ It reads:

✓ Say: He, Allah, is one.
Allah is He upon whom all depend
He begets not, nor is he begotten:
And none is like Him.⁵¹

⁴⁹Zafrulla Khan, p. 91. pp. 35-36.

⁵⁰Jones, p. 100.

⁵¹Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 1235. 144.

⁵²Zafrulla Khan, p. 93.

In commenting upon this verse, B. Mahmud Ahmad says:

AHAD (the One) is an epithet applied to God alone and signifies the One, the Sole; He Who has been and ever will be One and Alone; who has no second to share in His Lordship, nor in His essence.⁵²

He goes on to comment:

ALLAH-O-AHAD would mean that Allah is that Being Who is One and Alone in the sense that when we think of Him, the very idea that there is any other being or thing is absent from our minds. He is neither the starting link of any chain, nor its last link. Nothing is like Him nor is He like anything else.⁵³

✓ According to this definition the oneness of God in His person is closely connected to His uniqueness.

✓ Ahmadiyyas furthermore emphasize that the oneness or unity of God in His person excludes the plurality of persons in the Godhead.⁵⁴ Following the lead of the Qur'an, the Ahmadiyyas exclude the possibility of divine sonship on the basis of God's unity. "To attribute a son, in any but the purely metaphorical sense, to God, would amount to a denial of His Godhead."⁵⁵ By the metaphorical sense of sonship the Ahmadiyyas mean the sense in which all mankind are "children of God" by creation or in which the peacemakers are called the "children of God" in the Bible. ✓ By denying the plurality of persons in the Godhead the Ahmadiyya Muslims strike at what they conceive as the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

⁵²Quoted in Abdul Hamid, pp. 35-36.

⁵³Ibid., p. 36.

⁵⁴Muhammad Ali, The Religion of Islam, p. 144.

⁵⁵Zafrulla Khan, p. 93.

There is only one God and He alone is worthy of worship

This is the second implication of the unity of God for Muslims and one which the Ahmadiyyas elaborate in some detail. It flows out of such Qur'anic passages as Surah 2:163: "And your God is one God! there is no god but He,"⁵⁶ and is expressed in the Muslim creed: "There is no god at all but God." The impact of this message upon a Muslim may be felt from the following paragraph in Zafrulla Khan's treatment of the concept of God:

The primary object of all revelation is to emphasize this concept of God, that is to say, that He is One, has no equal or partner, and that all adoration, glorification, worship, and obedience are due to Him alone. He is the object of the heart's deepest love and devotion He is the Source of all beneficence, everything proceeds from Him, and is dependent upon Him. He is independent and stands in no need of help or assistance from any other source, inasmuch as all sources and needs proceed from Him, and none exists or subsists outside Him or outside His control and authority.⁵⁷

The antithesis of the unity of God in Islam is called shirk, the association of partners with God. Shirk is the greatest sin of Islam and is even termed unforgiveable. In Surah 4:48 the Qur'an says:

Surely Allah does not forgive that any thing should be associated with Him; and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He pleases. And whoever associates anything with Allah, he devises indeed a great sin.⁵⁸

⁵⁶Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 73.

⁵⁷Zafrulla Khan, pp. 91-92.

⁵⁸Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 216.

Under the category of shirk the Ahmadiyya Muslims include all forms of polytheism, tritheism, dualism, and finer forms of idolatry. ✓ Several authors distinguish four types of shirk.⁵⁹

Polytheism or the plurality of gods.--Under this head is included the direct worship of anything else than God, such as stones, idols, trees, animals, tombs, heavenly bodies, forces of nature, or "human beings who are supposed to be demigods or gods or incarnations of God or sons or daughters of God."⁶⁰ Idol worship and the worship of the heavenly bodies were rampant in Arabia at the time of Muhammad. Some of the Arabs also worshipped three goddesses, Manat, Allat and Al-Uzza, who were regarded as the daughters of Allah.

Understanding the Christian doctrine of the Trinity as tritheism, the Ahmadiyyas denounce it as a form of shirk. The ascribing of divine sonship to Jesus is placed in the same category as the worship of the daughters of Allah.⁶¹ Perhaps Christians are also partly in mind when Muhammad Ali speaks of advanced idolators who use images as helps or symbols to concentrate attention upon the Divine Being. He criticizes such usage and says that "it is wrong to suppose that a material symbol is necessary for concentration, for attention

⁵⁹B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, pp. 40-41; and Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, pp. 146-151.

⁶⁰Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, pp. 146-147.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 150.

can be every whit as easily concentrated on a spiritual object."⁶²

✓ Ascribing the unique attributes of God to any other thing or being.--The Zoroastrian doctrine of a separate creator of evil, as well as the Hindu teaching of the co-eternity of matter and soul, are condemned as shirk under this category. In some Ahmadiyya circles there seems to be a confusion of these dualisms with deism.⁶³

✓ The Ahmadiyyas also believe that Christians are guilty of the second type of shirk when they confess the co-eternity, omniscience, and omnipotence of the Son and the Holy Ghost along with God the Father. The identification of the Word of God with God Himself, as in John 1:1, is also condemned under this head. The leading principle is "that an attribute cannot become the substitute of the being and that the two are entirely distinct."⁶⁴

Ghulam Ahmad accused the Muslims themselves of this kind of shirk when they teach that God took Jesus alive from the cross into heaven, and that he has been living there in his physical body for nineteen hundred years without food or drink.⁶⁵ In the Qur'an there are references to Jesus' raising

⁶²Ibid., p. 148.

⁶³Ibid., p. 149.

⁶⁴B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. ccxxxvii.

⁶⁵Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyya Movement (2nd English edition; Rabwah, West Pakistan: The Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1962), p. 51.

of the dead and the apocryphal story of Jesus making a bird out of clay.⁶⁶ Ghulam Ahmad condemned the literal understanding of both of these Qur'anic miracles in the interest of the unity of God.

✓ The Promised Messiah Ghulam Ahmad . . . explained that to bring the dead back to life or to create a thing was within the exclusive power of God, and that God never delegated His powers and attributes to any of His creatures, lest His unity be stultified.⁶⁷

Instead of the literal interpretation he held that the account of the creation of a bird signified spiritual rebirth or transformation, and that the raising of the dead referred only to spiritual regeneration or the healing of a person sick unto death by means of prayer.⁶⁸

✓ Veneration of people.--This is the third type of shirk delineated by the Ahmadiyyas and includes ancestor worship, saint worship, the worship of parents, and blind obedience given to religious leaders. In the Qur'an there is a reference that some Christians have taken "their doctors of law and their monks for Lords besides Allah" (Surah 9:31). One of the early Muslims who was acquainted with the Christian faith objected to Muhammad that the Jews and Christians did not worship the doctors of law and the monks. Muhammad replied that their blind obedience to teachers and monks constituted shirk.⁶⁹

⁶⁶Surah 3:48, in Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 156.

⁶⁷B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyya Movement.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 52.

⁶⁹Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 147.

Various forms of fine idolatry.--The Ahmadiyyas define this as "hidden" shirk and approximate Luther's explanation of the First Commandment. B. Mahmud Ahmad explains:

It must not, however, be understood that idol-worship consists in worshipping images only. ✓ Every man who loves any one other than God as he ought to love Him, or fears anyone as he ought to fear Him, or trusts in anyone as he ought to trust in Him, is really guilty of idol worship and must suffer the consequences thereof.⁷⁰

In another place the same author applies this thought not only to persons, but also to things.⁷¹ ✓ Muhammad Ali carries the idea further and includes blindly following one's own "low desires."⁷²

The unity of God and morality are closely related

With many Muslims the confession of the unity of God is a perfunctory duty mechanically performed. Their affirmations of the oneness of God are profuse. One is reminded of the statement in James 2:19: "You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder." The Ahmadiyyas recognize that the doctrine of unity has moral implications and criticize their own co-religionists for mere lip profession of the existence of one God.

The Promised Messiah drew attention to the fact that God did not raise prophets for the object

⁷⁰B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 215.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 528.

⁷²Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 147.

merely to propagate the doctrine that there is no God beside Him, for the acceptance of this doctrine alone can make no deep impression upon a man's life All sins and weaknesses in the world proceed from two causes, either because a man loves an object with such intense love that he regards his existence as useless without it, or because he regards an object as so injurious and hateful that he imagines his salvation depends upon its destruction, and this unreasonable excess of love and hate leads him to do things that are incompatible with purity. But a person whose faith in the Unity of God is perfect prefers not the love of any other object or person to his love for God, and hates nothing so intensely as being led away from God. To such a person sin becomes an impossibility, and this is the true doctrine of the Unity of God, which is the real object of religion to teach, and not the mere lip profession of the existence of One God, which can neither please God nor have any practical effect on a man's life.⁷³

✓ The Ahmadiyyas evidence a great interest in advancement and progress, not only in the physical sphere, but also in the moral sphere. ✓ In their treatment of the life after death they uniformly stress that moral growth and improvement continue on an ascending scale in the life beyond. ✓ The keystone for this earthly and heavenly progress is the unity of God. Muhammad Ali stresses that the message of the divine unity frees man from all slaveries which would hold him in subjection and defeat. ✓ He defines such slaveries as bondage to animate and inanimate objects, forces of nature, and above all, slavery to man.

Thus all the bonds which fettered the mind of man were struck off, and he was set on the road to progress. A slave mind, as the Holy Qur'an plainly says, is incapable of doing anything good and great, and hence ✓ the first condition for the advancement of man

73B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyya Movement, pp. 49-51.

was that his mind should be set free from the trammels of all kinds of slavery, which was accomplished in the message of the Divine Unity.⁷⁴

✓ A further moral implication of the doctrine of the unity of God is the unity of the human race. If there is only one God, who is also the one creator and origin of all things, then all men proceed from one source and are related to one another through Him who gave them being. The Ahmadiyyas actively promote this message both theoretically and practically in their mission endeavors, particularly in contrast to various forms of racism, nationalism, and colonialism found in the West.

The Attributes of God

✓ In the Qur'an there are many epithets, both nouns and adjectives, used to describe God. For example, He is called Lord, the Mighty, the Wise, Ruler, the Merciful, et cetera. In addition, there are many verbs used to describe His activities such as speaking, knowing, helping, et cetera. ✓ The Muslims have gathered these various epithets and verbs together and use them in their devotional life and formal theology. They are called the Beautiful Names (al-asma al-husna) of God, and are traditionally numbered as ninety-nine. ✓ Many Muslims use a rosary with ninety-nine beads in their prayers, and meditate upon God as they finger the beads and remember Him with His Ninety-nine Beautiful Names.

⁷⁴Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 152.

Under the influence of Greek philosophy the Muslim theologians later described God according to His essence and His attributes. Aside from His name (Allah) and His unity the theologians did not actually say much about the essence of God. Their main interest was in the attributes of God and in the relationship between His essence and His attributes. The attributes were especially identified with the Names of God mentioned above, and included both a description of Himself and His works. In Muslim theology, therefore, there is usually no division between God and His works; they are both treated together under the head of His attributes.

The Ahmadiyya Muslims follow this practice of describing God and His works according to His attributes. However, there are significant differences in the selection of important attributes and in the exposition of the meaning of the attributes. In classical Islam Muslims divided the attributes of God into His "terrible" and His "glorious" attributes. The terrible attributes are those which produce awe in man and emphasize God's superiority and "otherness" from the world of creation. The glorious attributes are those which relate to His kindly dealings with men, such as His mercy, forgiveness, and patience. In Ahmadiyya writings these different attributes are divided into those which create fear and those which create love, or into those which are unique to God, and those

which find some resemblance in His creatures.⁷⁵ Other divisions, which are noted below, are also suggested.

✓ The four chief attributes

In addition to the divisions mentioned above, the older theologians designated seven attributes as the essential eternal attributes of God; man cannot conceive of God without them.

✓ These attributes are life, knowledge, power, will, hearing, seeing, and speech. The Ahmadiyyas, however, stress the importance of four chief attributes. In stressing these attributes they minimize the traditional importance of the Ninety-nine Beautiful Names of God and also find fault with those Muslims who use a rosary in prayer. ✓ The Ahmadiyyas take their cue for the four chief attributes from the first part of the first chapter of the Qur'an called the Opening (Al-Fatiha), which reads:

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.
 (All) praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.
 The Beneficent, the Merciful,
 Master of the day of requital.⁷⁶

The first line of the quotation is an invocation called the Bismillah (In the name of Allah) which occurs at the head of all the 114 chapters of the Qur'an except the ninth. The text of the first chapter proper begins with the second line. The

⁷⁵B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 29, and B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 968.

⁷⁶Surah 1:1-3, in Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, pp. 5-6.

four chief attributes, according to the Ahmadiyyas, are indicated by the words Lord, the Beneficent, the Merciful and Master. Muhammad Ali states "that the Holy Qur'an looks upon these four names as the chief attributive names of the Divine Being, and all His other attributes are but the offshoots of these four essential attributes."⁷⁷

Lord.--The Arabic word for this epithet is Rabb and occurs some 960 times in the Qur'an. It ranks next to Allah itself as the name for God and is called the greatest of the attributive names of God.⁷⁸ In the Qur'an it is associated with the idea of lordship over the world. This lordship for the Ahmadiyyas includes creating and sustaining the universe, and leading it toward perfection stage by stage. This stage by stage progress toward perfection is identified with the principle of evolution and described as a purposeful development which "makes creation all the more marvellous and God all the more deserving of praise."⁷⁹ But it is not to be identified with the theory of evolution.⁸⁰ Rather it is presented in contrast to the "erroneous" doctrine of the fall of man "which holds that an original state of perfection has given place to degeneration."⁸¹

⁷⁷Muhammad Ali, The Religion of Islam, p. 161.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 158-159.

⁷⁹B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 10.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 4.

In addition to bringing the universe into being and nourishing it in providence the attribute Lord suggests universality for God as revealed in the Qur'an.

It is obvious that this attribute means that God is not the Creator and Sustainer of any particular class or nation, but that He is the Creator and Sustainer of the whole Universe, and that, so far as the attribute of creation is concerned, all men are equal and no nation can claim any particular relationship with God. He provides for the people of Asia in the same manner as He provides for the people of Europe, and He looks after the people of Africa, just as He looks after the people of America; and as He provides for our physical needs, so does He provide for our spiritual needs.⁸²

According to Qur'anic and Ahmadiyya thought the Lord provided for the spiritual needs of men by sending a prophet or warner to every nation. "There is not a people but a warner has gone among them."⁸³ The Ahmadiyyas recognize Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucius, Moses, and Jesus as such prophets. Although the ministries of these men were valid, the Ahmadiyyas regard the God proclaimed by Muhammad as superior to any of these because He is a God for all, and because the book which reveals Him (the Qur'an) is a more reliable record of His revelation than any of the previous holy books. The God of the Old and New Testaments is designated as a "national" God. The God of Islam is the Lord of the worlds; He is above all tribal deities and national gods; His Lordship extends with equal love and equal providence over all mankind. This thought,

⁸²B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 31.

⁸³Surah 35:24, in Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 850.

say the Ahmadiyyas, makes the name Lord superior to the name Father used by the Christians.

The paternal care and affection contained in the word Father dwindles into insignificance before the all-embracing beneficence and love of the Rabb of all existence.⁸⁴

Instead of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man the Ahmadiyyas speak of the lordship of God and the brotherhood of man.⁸⁵

The Beneficent (Ar-Rahman).--Different translators render the word ar-Rahman in various ways. B. Mahmud Ahmad's translation uses "gracious" instead of "beneficent" and Arberry translates "merciful."⁸⁶ Muhammad Ali claims that it is difficult to find an exact equivalent for this word in English and defines it as representing an all-comprehensive love and goodness.⁸⁷ It includes some of the ideas connected with grace, and is an attribute which is unique to God and His nature.

According to the attribute of beneficence God created everything needed by man and provides everything necessary for his development and progress. This provision includes both

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 3-4.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 4.

⁸⁶B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 5, and Arthur J. Arberry, The Koran Interpreted (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), I, 29.

⁸⁷Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 5.

the means of subsistence, such as food and drink, as well as the faculties required by man for life in this universe, such as will and intelligence. In His beneficence God also supplies divine revelation for man's spiritual growth. "He who requires His weak creatures to show mercy to others cannot be so merciless as to leave mankind unprovided with the means of spiritual guidance and advancement"88

A unique feature of this beneficence is that it operates independently of the existence and works of man. The provisions for man's life were made before he was born; their continuous supply is not conditioned by man's work or effort.

God's beneficence applies to believers and unbelievers alike.

The idea is similar to the biblical, "He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."89 Zafrulla Khan defines God's beneficence as

"that aspect of God's grace which precedes, and is independent of, human action."90 Muhammad Ali writes that it "signifies

that love is so predominant in the Divine nature that He bestows His favours and shows His mercy even though man has done nothing to deserve them."91 Under the attribute of beneficence

88 B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyya Movement, p. 25.

89 Matt. 5:45.

90 Zafrulla Khan, p. 94.

91 Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 159.

the Ahmadiyyas therefore include God's goodness, love, grace and mercy.

✓ The Merciful (Ar-Rahim).--The Arabic word for "merciful" comes from the same root as the word for "beneficent." The root idea of both words is that of "tenderness requiring the exercise of beneficence."⁹² In describing God as merciful the Ahmadiyya Muslims think especially of His mercy toward believers. Whereas God's beneficence extends to all creation and is independent of any human action, His attribute of mercy operates to reward the believers for their righteous actions. ✓ These rewards of mercy include blessings in this world as well as in the life to come. The rewards inspire believers with a desire for further good actions, and thus set up a chain reaction of "unending avenues of progress and development."⁹³ As the Beneficent, God supplies all the materials for man's constructive actions in this world; as the Merciful, He rewards those who put these resources to good use. ✓ The first quality is unique to God; the second may be manifested among men.

✓ The Master (of the Day of Judgment).--The epithet of Master is the fourth of the chief attributes of God described by the Ahmadiyyas. The Arabic word is Malik. The attribute of Master indicates that God will have the last word on everything

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 11.

in the universe. "Everything owes its origin to Him and the end of everything is also in His hands."⁹⁴ As Master of the Day of Judgment He will reward good and punish evil. Since the rewarding of good is treated more under God's attribute of Mercy, the Ahmadiyyas say that the epithet of Master has more to do with the punishment of evil.

As submission to the law results in the advancement of man which brings reward, disobedience to the law must result in retarding his progress or bringing down punishment upon him. In fact, the punishment of wrong is as necessary in the Divine scheme as is the reward of good . . . Therefore, just as Rahim is needed to bring his reward to one who does good or submits to the law, there must be another attribute to bring about the requital of evil.⁹⁵

According to Ahmadiyya thought this punishment of evil is always remedial for "ultimate good is still the object."⁹⁶ Vengeance has no role in this inflicting of punishment; rather it is regarded as the "treatment of a disease which man has brought upon himself."⁹⁷ God's motivation in punishing is love, and His aim is to set the guilty party back on the road to spiritual progress.

Ghulam Ahmad emphasized that God Himself judges the whole world and has not entrusted the business of judgment to any other being.⁹⁸ In this life men are often judged by fellow

⁹⁴Ibid., p. cclvi.

⁹⁵Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 160.

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 167.

⁹⁸Ghulam Ahmad, Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, p. 92.

human beings, such as kings and other rulers, who may err in their judgment. But in God's judgment there are no errors. He Himself is the sole Master.

The Ahmadiyyas stress that God is Master rather than Judge on the day of judgment.

The final judgement . . . rests in His hands and these judgements are arrived at by Him in His capacity of Master of the universe and not merely as a judge who adjudicates upon the rights of the parties before him. A judge is bound to make an impartial adjudication upon the matter in dispute between the parties having regard to the rights and obligations of each. God is not so bound, for though when He pronounces His judgement no man is wronged or cheated of his due, He is free to remit as much as He may choose out of what may be due to Himself. He does not insist upon the proverbial pound of flesh He is both claimant and judge. As a claimant He is entitled to remit the whole or as much as He chooses of His claim. Such a remission relates to God's own claim and does not operate to deprive any person of his right. This is in perfect accord with reason.⁹⁹

It is seen then that the Ahmadiyyas emphasize the title of Master because it enables them to temper God's justice with His mercy. A judge is "bound to do justice and must punish the evil doer for every evil, while . . . the master can exercise his discretion, and may either punish the evil doer or forgive him and pass over even the greatest of his iniquities."¹⁰⁰ If God punishes, He punishes in accordance with the offense committed, but He is not bound to punish if He

⁹⁹B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, pp. colvi-colvii.

¹⁰⁰Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, pp. 160-161.

knows that the reformation of the guilty party will be accomplished by forgiveness.

It is true that the operation of all Divine attributes is in accord with the requirements of justice, but the concept of justice leaves ample scope for the operation of other attributes such as, for example, Mercy, Bountifulness, Appreciation Justice demands that all shall have their just due, that is to say, that no penalty shall be severer than that which is appropriate to the default or offense, and that no reward, remuneration, or compensation shall fall short of that which is deserved or has been earned. The reduction of a penalty, or its total remission, is not inconsistent with justice, nor is the multiplication of reward in conflict with its spirit. God's Mercy and His Grace and Bounty are without limit His Law is that He chastises where chastisement is needed for reformation, but that His Mercy encompasses all things.¹⁰¹

✓ This exposition of God as Master is directed against both Hinduism and the Christian faith. According to the tenets of Hinduism the laws of reward and punishment are such that the reward cannot exceed the merit; the law must work itself out over an almost endless cycle of reincarnations. According to His role as Master God can bestow more reward than is merited. ✓ The attribute of Master, according to the Ahmadiyyas, also obviates the need for an atonement as held by Christians. "Failure to appreciate this attribute of God has led to the adoption by Christians of so untenable a doctrine as that of Atonement."¹⁰²

✓ It is here that the makers of the Christian creed have made their greatest error. They think that the Son of God is needed to atone or make compensation

¹⁰¹Zafrulla Khan, pp. 94-95.

¹⁰²B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. colvi.

for the evil deeds of humanity, since God, being a judge, cannot forgive sins unless somebody can be found to provide a compensation. In the Holy Qur'an we are told that God is a Master and He can, therefore, forgive. In fact, the Lord's Prayer belies the Christian's creed, because there we are told to pray that God may forgive us our sins as we forgive our debtors. How do we forgive a debtor? Not by pocketing the money, but by relinquishing the debt. And if man can forgive, why not God?¹⁰³

Summing up, the Ahmadiyyas see a twofold purpose in the use of the attribute Master. For those who have sinned in a moment of weakness, the word Master is to serve as encouragement against despair. God, being Master, has the power to forgive. For those who are flaunting God's mercy by continuing to live in sin, the term Master is to constitute a warning. "God, the Master, inspires man with both hope and fear, and this is essential for man's spiritual progress and development."¹⁰⁴

The other attributes of God

In their discussions of the four chief attributes the Ahmadiyyas include ideas that arise from a number of the other attributes mentioned in the Qur'an or inferred therefrom.

Therefore they do not describe the other attributes of God in such detail as the four chief attributes. The classification below follows the classification of Muhammad Ali; special

¹⁰³Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, pp. 160-161.

¹⁰⁴B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 13.

thoughts will follow the bare list under each grouping. The Arabic article "al-" will be omitted.

Attributes relating to the Person of God.--The Unique (Ahad or Wahid), the True (Haqq), the Holy (Quddus), the Perfect (Subbuh), the Independent (Samad), the Self-sufficient (Ghani), the First (Awwal), the Last (Akhir), the Ever-living (Hayy), the Self-subsisting (Qayyum), the Possessor of staidness and gravity (Dhu'l Waqar), the Subtle, the One who endures forever (Baqi), the Patient (Sabur), the Equitable (Muqsit), the Majestic (Jalil), the Just (Adl), the One Who Speaks (Mutakallim), the Incomprehensible (Latif).

The Unique (Ahad or Wahid): These words were mentioned under the treatment of the unity of God. However, in addition to unity they also have the connotation of uniqueness. God is not only one; He is unique. Though there may be a resemblance between the attributes of God and the attributes of some thing or person, this resemblance is only apparent and superficial. There is no comparison, for instance, between the existence of God and the existence of His creatures.

When we say that God exists we mean that He is Self-Existing and perfect in Himself and is not dependent for His existence upon any other being or thing. But when we say that a man exists . . . all we mean is that so long as those causes and conditions continue the interaction of which resulted in the creation of the man or of the animal or of the thing, they will continue to exist; but that if those

causes and conditions are removed or are materially affected, the man and the animal and the thing would also cease to exist or be materially affected.¹⁰⁵

✓ God is above the limitations of time also. The Ahmadiyyas note furthermore, that many objects of God's creation only function in couples or pairs such as male and female, positive and negative, et cetera. God does not need anything or anyone else to find His fulfilment or to express Himself.

The whole of the universe is dependent for its continuance and for the performance of its functions upon something else, but the Being Who is the Centre of the whole universe is not dependent upon any other being or thing either for His existence or for the manifestation of His attributes.¹⁰⁶

In this connection the author of the above words brings in the Qur'anic idea that God "begets not, nor is He begotten,"¹⁰⁷ and says that "only those beings that are dependent or are liable to extinction . . . stand in need of children."¹⁰⁸

✓ Since He is unique in His self-existence, He has no father either. This is stated in opposition to the supposed teachings of Christianity.

✓ The Holy (Quddus): The Ahmadiyyas define this attribute as God's comprising "in Himself all aspects of purity and holiness."¹⁰⁹ It is also associated with the idea of majesty

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. cclii.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. ccliii.

¹⁰⁷Surah 112:3, in Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 1235.

¹⁰⁸B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. ccliii.

¹⁰⁹B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 29.

and freedom from all defects.¹¹⁰ In describing his father as a manifestation of God's attribute of holiness, the son of Ghulam Ahmad mentions his purity, righteousness, blameless character, good morals and conduct, virtues and merits, goodness, sense of justice and truth, honesty, love of humanity, and integrity. The same author says that God's attribute of holiness is really the essence of all other attributes.¹¹¹

✓ The Independent (Samad): According to this attribute God is the one on whom all depend while He does not depend on any. He "stands in no need of help or assistance from any source, inasmuch as all sources and means proceed from Him."¹¹²

All have need of Him and He has need of none. He needed the help of no being or material to create the universe. So when all things and beings are dependent on Him and to Him we have recourse for our needs and requirements and He fulfils them, then where is the necessity of any other God?¹¹³

✓ In expounding God's lack of need for anything or anyone the Ahmadiyyas again bring in the argument against sonship. God does not need a son to assist Him in His duties, nor to perpetuate His name, nor to provide for unforeseen contingencies.¹¹⁴

✓ The First and the Last (Akhir, Awwal): God is the first

¹¹⁰B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 74.

¹¹¹B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, pp. 92-96, passim.

¹¹²Zafnulla Khan, p. 94.

¹¹³Abdul Hamid, p. 36.

¹¹⁴B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, pp. ccliv-cclv.

cause of all things; He will also put an end to whatever He wishes. Both creation and destruction are His alone.

✓ The Ever-living (Hayy): God is alive Himself and gives life to others; He does not require sleep or suffer from fatigue. He is eternal.

✓ The Subtle: God cannot be seen with human eyes, but can be known from the manifestation of His attributes through the eyes of reason.¹¹⁵

✓ The Just (Adl); the Equitable (Muqsit): The introduction to the translation and commentary of the Qur'an sponsored by B. Mahmud Ahmad includes the attribute of justice in its list of 103 attributes. But the commentary itself denies that it is an attribute of God, claiming that it is an "ill-devised" attribute which Christians ascribe to God.¹¹⁶ ✓ The Ahmadiyyas seem to sense the necessity for the atonement if the attribute of justice is given its full worth:

✓ The description [sic] of this attribute to God would imply that His justice should demand that He must always punish sinners. But He is not bound to do so, because He is Forgiving and Merciful and He can pardon any sinner. In fact, God is not like a judge bound by the Law to deal by men according to their deeds. But He is Malik or Master of His creatures and Master of His law as well. He can forgive the sins of His servants as and when He pleases. By calling

¹¹⁵B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, pp. 33-34.

¹¹⁶B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Qur'an, p. 852.

God "just", the Christian Church had to enlist the aid of a so-called redeemer who, by his supposed death on the Cross, should atone for the sins of men to satisfy God's attribute of justice.¹¹⁷

Ghulam Ahmad defines God's justice as "being firmly established upon the true path of Divine Unity without deviating a hair's breadth from it."¹¹⁸ He associates it with the Golden Mean.

Zafrulla Khan, as was seen in the section on God as Master, holds that the demands of justice mean that "no penalty shall be severer than that which is appropriate to the default or offense, and that no reward . . . shall fall short of that which is deserved or has been earned."¹¹⁹ The reduction of a penalty or the multiplication of a reward is not deemed, therefore, as injustice. B. Mahmud Ahmad agrees with this definition when he says:

Surely, injustice means to reward a man in a measure less than he has earned, or to punish a man in a measure larger than that he deserves, or to give to one man that which is due to another, and God never does any of these things.¹²⁰

Attributes relating to the act of creation.--The Creator (Kaliq), the Maker (Bari), the Fashioner (Musawwir), the Originator (Badi'), the Beginner (Mubdi'), the Life-giver (Muhyi), the Giver of light (Nur), the Reproducer (Mu'id).

¹¹⁷Ibid., pp. 852-853.

¹¹⁸Ghulam Ahmad, Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, p. 97.

¹¹⁹Zafrulla Khan, p. 94.

¹²⁰B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 39.

✓ The Creator (Khaliq): God is the Creator of all things, including matter and soul. ✓ The inclusion of matter and soul is directed against the Hindus who hold the eternity of matter and soul. Furthermore, God's creation is a planned creation; it is not accidental or copied from somewhere else. God has arranged all things in order and ✓ controls the universe by a system. Many forms of creation, such as seeds, have inherent faculties of development which come into play at the proper time according to the laws of nature set up by God. The creation of God also includes such aesthetic realities as "the beauty of a scene, the charm of a voice, the fragrance of a flower, the softness of a bed, and the daintiness of a dish."¹²¹

✓ The Maker and Repeater or Reproducer (Bari, Mu'id): God starts out various forms of life which go on repeating and multiplying their species in obedience to His appointed laws.

✓ The Fashioner (Musawwir): God gives shape and form to the objects of His creation.

✓ Attributes relating to God's love and mercy.--The Affectionate or Compassionate (Ra'uf), the Loving (Wadud), the Benignant (Latif), the Oft-returning to mercy (Tawwab), the Forbearing (Halim), the Pardoner (Afuww), the Most Appreciating or the Multiplier of rewards (Shakkur), the Author of Peace (Salam), the Granter of Security (Mu'min), the Benign

¹²¹Ibid., p. 27.

(Barr), the Exalter of ranks (Rafi al-darajat), the Great Sustainer (Razzaq), the Great Giver (Wahhab), the Bountiful (Wasi), the Great Forgiver (Ghaffar), the Most Forgiving (Ghafur), the Bestower of favors (Mun'im), the Healer (Shafi), the Honorer (Mu'izz), the Acceptor and Answerer of prayers (Mujib), the Enricher (Mughni), the Bestower (Mu'ti), the Guide (Hadi), the Director to the Right Way (Hashid), the One Who brings forward (Muqaddim), the Benefactor (Nafi').

The Loving (Wadud): The Ahmadiyyas often refer to man's love for God, but much less frequently to God's love. Ghulam Ahmad speaks of God's love for man, but it is a love which comes into action when man's love reaches out first.

When man reaches the highest point of his love, when he burns his selfish sentiments in the fire of love, then, all of a sudden like a flame of fire, the love of God, i.e., the love with which God loves man, settles upon his heart and rescues him from the evils of a worldly life¹²²

This pattern of God's love responding to man's love finds root in the Qur'an which says, "Allah loves the doers of good."¹²³ Many of the activities of God's love, however, are covered under other attributes, such as His beneficence and mercy.

The Author of Peace (Salam): Since God is free from every defect, adversity, and hardship, He is able to provide

¹²²Ghulam Ahmad, Fountain of Christianity, p. 49.

¹²³Surah 2:195, in Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 90.

security and peace for others. If He were hindered by any sort of weakness or opposition in carrying out His own designs, no one could look to Him in the time of trouble with the hope of deliverance.¹²⁴

✓ The Granter of Security (Mu'min): The believer in the true God may consider himself safe on every occasion.

✓ The Great Forgiver and the Most Forgiving (Ghaffar, Ghafur): Muhammad Ali states that the word Ghafur in its noun and verb forms occurs some 230 times in the Qur'an. This makes it next to God's lordship, His beneficence, and mercy in point of frequency of usage in that book.¹²⁵ ✓ The main condition for obtaining forgiveness is repentance. God forgives

a repentant creature who, having realized the error of his ways, gives up his evil course of life and presents himself before the Throne of Divine Mercy supplicating for forgiveness with a beating heart, trembling lips, streaming eyes, a head bowed with shame, a mind bursting with tumultuous thoughts, and a determination to lead a pure and unsullied life in future.¹²⁶

Immediately following this description the author introduces the outline of the story of the Prodigal Son. Then he continues with the words:

What the fire of hell can effect in the course of a hundred thousand years, true remorse may effect in the course of a few minutes. When a man appears before God truly repentant and with a determination

¹²⁴ Ghulam Ahmad, Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, p. 97.

¹²⁵ Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 161.

¹²⁶ B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 39.

to lead a pure life in future, the Merciful God must take pity on him. ✓ Shall the Merciful and Forgiving Lord turn away from, and reject a servant of His who throws himself down at the door of His Mercy, all remorse for the past and hope for the future? Surely, No!¹²⁷

A similar thought is expressed with an illustration from one of the Muslim traditions which has some biblical overtones:

Whenever a servant of His commits a sin or does an evil act and then sincerely repents and asks His forgiveness, he always finds Him most Forgiving and Merciful. Ah, what a loving God! Truly has the Holy Prophet said that the joy of God at the repentance of a sinful servant of His is greater than the joy of a lonely wayfarer who, while travelling in the desert, loses his camel laden with provisions and despairs of life but then suddenly finds it.¹²⁸

Attributes relating to God's Greatness and Glory.--The Grand (Azim), the Mighty (Aziz), the Exalted or the High (Aliyy or Muta'al), the Strong (Qawiyy), the Supreme (Qahhar), the Subduer (Jabbar), the Possessor of Greatness (Mutakabbir), the Great (Kabir), the Noble (Karim), the Praiseworthy (Hamid), the Glorious (Majid), the Powerful (Matin), the Ascendant over all (Zahir), the Lord of Glory and Honor (Dhu'l-Jalali-wa'l-ikram), the Most High (Muta'ali), Lord of the Throne (Dhu'l Arsh), the Master of the Kingdom (Malik-al-Mulk), the Sufficient (Kafi).

The Supreme (Qahhar): All things are subject to God's power.

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 40.

¹²⁸B. Mahmud Ahmed, The Holy Quran, p. 560.

✓ The Subduer (Jabbar): According to this attribute God sets things right with His supreme power; He remedies all ills and disorders. One of the Ahmadiyya writers objects to the fact that a Christian writer has rendered Jabbar with "Haughty."¹²⁹

✓ The Lord of the Throne (Dhu'l Arsh): In the early years of Islam this expression and similar anthropomorphisms in the Qur'an which speak of the hands and the eyes of God caused considerable hermeneutical controversies. The Ahmadiyyas by-pass some of these controversies and in this instance, for example, interpret God's throne as His power.

✓ Attributes relating to God's Knowledge.--The Knowing (Alim), the Wise (Hakim), the Hearing (Sami'), the Seeing (Basir), the Aware (Khabir), the Witness (Shahid), the Watcher (Raqib), the Knower of Hidden Things (Batin), the Guardian or Protector over all (Muhaimin), and Recorder or Numberer (Muhsi).

✓ The Knowing (Sami'): B. Mahmud Ahmad writes that God hears everything: the slightest whisper, the sound of a crawling ant, and the coursing of blood through a man's veins.¹³⁰

✓ The Protector (Muhaimin): God guards and protects men from evils and sufferings which they may not even know about.

¹²⁹Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 163.

¹³⁰B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 28.

The creation of antibodies to fight disease and germs is part of His activity under this attribute.

Attributes relating to God's power and control.--The Powerful (Qadir, Muqtadir), the One Having All Things in His Charge (Wakil), the Guardian (Waliyy), the Keeper (Hafiz), the King (Malik), the Opener or Greatest Judge (Fattah), the One Who Takes Account (Hasib), the Avenger (Muntaqim), Controller or Preserver (Muqit), the Straitner (Qabidz), the Amplifier (Basit), the Exalter (Rafi'), the Abaser of the Haughty (Mudhill), the Raiser of the Dead (Ba'ith), the Causer or Controller of Death (Mumit), the Gatherer (Jami'), the Withholder (Mani'), the Inheritor of Everything (Warith), the One Who Governs (Wali), the Abaser (Khafidz), the Discoverer (Wajid), the Delayer (Mu'akhkhir), the Inflicter of Punishments (Dzarr).

The Powerful (Qadir, Muqtadir): As noted above, God's power and knowledge are the key attributes to His control of the universe. Many of the Ahmadiyya thoughts about God's power occur under their treatment of Him as Master and Lord, especially in the act of creating and sustaining the universe. God's power extends over everything and is limitless. He has the endless resources of heaven and earth to work with. God's power is a comfort to believers: "How could man center all his hopes in Him if He Himself were weak?"¹³¹ In words which

¹³¹Ghulam Ahmad, Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, p. 96.

resemble the biblical "If God be for us, who can be against us?" one writer says, "If such a being willed the triumph of a party, who was there to thwart His way? The promised victory must come."¹³² The fact of God's power is also associated with His longsuffering: "The powerful are never in a hurry to punish, for they know that they can punish whenever they will."¹³³

The Ahmadiyyas follow orthodox Islam in making a close identification between God's power and His will. "God has power to do all that He wills."¹³⁴ B. Mahmud Ahmad's commentary amplifies this thought and writes, "(1) God is the final authority in the universe (2) His will is the law (3) His will manifests itself in a just and benevolent manner for He is the possessor of perfect attributes"¹³⁵ B. Mahmud Ahmad circumscribes the power of God with other attributes: God "can accomplish all that is not incompatible with His Holiness and Perfection."¹³⁶ Such incompatible activities are described as God's speaking a lie, willing His own death, and making someone else equal to Himself.¹³⁷ In

¹³²Abdul Hamid, p. 35.

¹³³B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 699.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. cclv.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 353.

¹³⁶B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyya Movement, p. 26.

¹³⁷B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 53.

circumscribing God's power with His other attributes the Ah-madiyyas are moving away from orthodox Islam.

Another way in which they move away from orthodox Islam is in their balancing of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. Orthodox Islam has emphasized the power of God to such an extent that a spirit of fatalism illustrated by one of Omar Khayyam's verses has developed:

'Tis all a checkerboard of nights and days
Where Destiny with men for pieces plays,
Hither and thither moves and mates and slays,
And one by one back in the closet lays,¹³⁸

In the Qur'an there are many verses which appeal to man's responsibility, inviting him to believe and do good works. But there are also a great number of verses which emphasize God's overruling power and sovereignty. Early in the history of Islam there arose a party which taught determinism and absolute predestination. This group, called the Jabriyya (compare God's name Jabbar, the Subduer), held that God was the Creator of both man's good deeds and his evil deeds, and believed that man had no choice, power, or will "to swerve a hair's breadth from what God had decreed."¹³⁹ In reaction to this party, and perhaps stimulated by contact with Christians,¹⁴⁰ another

¹³⁸Quoted in Samuel M. Zwemer, Islam, A Challenge to Faith (2nd revised edition; New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1909), p. 96.

¹³⁹Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 320.

¹⁴⁰See Morris S. Seale, Muslim Theology (London: Luzac and Company Limited, 1964), pp. 30-35

group, known as the Mu'tazila, challenged the position of the Jabriyya and defended man's freedom and responsibility. The Mu'tazila became known as the rationalists and free-thinkers of Islam. As a result of the interaction of these two streams of thought orthodox Islam finally accepted a position formulated by a theologian called al-Ash'ari (873-935). According to this formulation God creates man's acts, but man has the power to appropriate the acts which God has created for him. This appropriation or acquisition is called kasb. But this kasb is not actually a free acceptance on man's part, for he cannot say, "I don't want to act thus." Man's every thought and will, his every intention and purpose, are created by God. Several thoughts from one of al-Ash'ari's creeds, the Maqalat, will illustrate the point.

They [Muslims] confess that there is no creator at all, save God; and that the evil actions of creatures are created by God; and that the (good) actions of creatures are created by God; and that creatures are unable to create anything

They confess that God helps believers to obey him and abandons unbelievers; and that He favors believers and has compassion on them and makes them righteous and guides them, but does not favor unbelievers or make them righteous or guide them; and that, if He were to guide them, they would be guided. But God can make unbelievers righteous and favor them so that they will be believers. However, He has not willed to make them (unbelievers) righteous, and not to favor them so that they will be believers, and has rather willed that they be unbelievers, as He foreknew, and He abandons them and leads them astray and sets a seal on their hearts.

They confess that good and evil are by God's decision and determination; and they believe in God's

decision and determination; its good and its evil, its sweet and its bitter.¹⁴¹

In spite of the concession to man's power of appropriating the acts which God has created for him, the above lines indicate a strong stream of determinism in Islam. Al-Ash'ari's formulation is still held in many parts of the Muslim world today and has been compared to the Council of Nicea in Christian history as far as importance is concerned.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was appalled at the decadence and lethargy of nineteenth century Indian Islam, especially in comparison to the vitality and progress of the Western nations. In his effort to reawaken and revive Islam he and his followers struck at the determinism of Islam and again stressed some of the freedom and human responsibility which was promulgated by the Mu'tazila. Muhammad Ali, for instance, says that predestination (jabr) has never been the belief of the Muslim community, and that a "strict predestinarian, who believes that man has no control at all over his actions, would deny the very basic principle of religion, that is, the responsibility of man for his actions."¹⁴² Actually, orthodox Muslims usually do not speak of God's predestination in terms of jabr, but in terms of qadar and tagdir, which are words related to

¹⁴¹Ali ibn Isma'il al-Ash'ari, The Theology of Al-Ash'ari, translated and edited by Richard J. McCarthy (Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, 1953), pp. 239-241.

¹⁴²Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 350.

God's power. ✓ Muhammad Ali reinterprets these words to avoid the idea of predestination. According to his interpretation qadar is not God's power in the absolute sense of foreordination but in the sense of "creating things subject to certain laws."¹⁴³ For instance, He has created the seed of a date tree in such a way that it produces a date palm and not an apple tree. The sperm of man is created in such a way that it produces a man and not some other animal. In other words, His power is exhibited in the laws of nature. These laws prevent confusion in the world and provide a basis for man's enterprise. If he wants to cook food, he knows that fire generates heat and not cold; he also knows that water extinguishes fire and does not increase it. These constant properties of nature are by God's creative foreordination.¹⁴⁴

These laws of nature do not only apply to the physical universe, but also to the moral universe. There are certain consequences which follow sin. God has foreordained these consequences, but not the sin itself.

✓ The Ahmadiyyas also interpret qadar and taqdir in the sense of limitation. ✓ For example, a man cannot turn himself into a solid block of unfeeling matter nor can he suddenly become an ethereal being like an angel. In that sense he is "predestined" to walk through doors instead of through walls,

¹⁴³Ibid., p. 315.

¹⁴⁴B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 28.

to feel pain when pricked rather than to be without sensation.

✓ But such laws of nature and limitations can never remove man's responsibility for his own actions. Denying the doctrine of predestination in the sense of an absolute decree of good and evil by God, Muhammad Ali writes of man's will as follows:

He can exercise it under limitations and laws, and there is a very large variety of circumstances which may determine his choice in each case. Yet it is not true that the choice to exercise it has been taken from him; and the fact is that, notwithstanding all the limitations, he is free to exercise his will, and therefore, though he may not be responsible to the same extent for anything done in all cases, and a variety of circumstances must determine the extent of his responsibility, which may be very small, almost negligible, in some cases and very great in others, yet he is a free agent and responsible for what he does.¹⁴⁵

✓ B. Mahmud Ahmad writes of two parallel laws for the governance of the world, the law of determination (taqdir) and the law of freedom (tadbir). Each law has its own orbit, and there is no need to confuse them. Such confusion takes place when people use the law of determination as an excuse for their own sins.

When people try to project on to God and His eternally ordained laws their own evil deeds, their laziness, their omissions and commissions, it is then that we raise our voices of protest. What we are free to do is our concern and our affair. Whatever God has left to us is our responsibility. To fail to discharge this responsibility and to attribute the consequence of our failure to Tagdir is wrong and unjust. So we think it is wrong for Muslims to sit idle, to do nothing for their amelioration, and yet trust God and His Tagdir to look after their affairs. Muslims

¹⁴⁵ Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, pp. 321-322.

have suffered far too much for this wrong conception of Taqdir. They have relied on it too long. The result is they first lost their faith, and they now stand threatened with the loss of all the fortunes of this world. Had Muslims remembered that Taqdir and Tadbir are two separate universes, one the concern of God, the other their own concern, they would not have suffered to the extent which they have.¹⁴⁶

✓ The King (Malik): Under this attribute Ghulam Ahmad says that God is never put into the awkward position of earthly rulers who sometimes have to decide between the lesser of two evils. "But it is not consistent with Divinity that God should be driven to an extremity in which the adoption of one or two defective courses should become inevitable." He goes on to say, "The mighty vessel of His power floats upon the ocean of justice and equity."¹⁴⁷

Mercy the overruling attribute

It has been seen from the foregoing that the Ahmadiyyas describe God in considerable detail. At the end of their presentations of their doctrine of God ✓ they usually emphasize God's mercy as His overruling attribute. They base this emphasis upon such Qur'anic passages as Surah 7:156, "My mercy encompasses all things"; Surah 40:7, "Our Lord, Thou embracest all things in mercy and knowledge"; and Surah 7:151,

¹⁴⁶B. Mahmud Ahmad, What is Ahmadiyyat? (Rabwah, West Pakistan: The Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1962), pp. 30-31.

¹⁴⁷Ghulam Ahmad, Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, p. 93.

"Thou art the most merciful of the merciful ones."¹⁴⁸ Muhammad Ali also calls attention to certain Traditions of Bukhari which picture God's mercy. According to one Tradition God set down the following policy at the time of creation itself: "His mercy shall take precedence of His displeasure." According to another Tradition Muhammad saw a woman pressing a child to her bosom and then said to his companions, "Do you think that she can throw this child into the fire?" Upon their negative reply he added, "God is much more merciful to His creatures than this woman to her child."¹⁴⁹

Although the Qur'an speaks very much about the punishment of sinners and tortures of hell, the Ahmadiyyas stress that God's mercy exceeds His punishment. In words reminiscent of Luther's conclusion to the Ten Commandments, Muhammad Ali writes:

It is true that the punishment of evil is a subject on which the Holy Qur'an is most emphatic, but its purpose in this case is simply to impress man that evil is a most hateful thing which ought to be shunned; and, by way of set-off, not only does it lay great stress on the reward of good deeds, but goes further and declares over and over again that evil is either forgiven or punished only with the like of it, but that good is rewarded ten-fold, and hundred-fold, or even without measure.¹⁵⁰

Another Ahmadiyya writer, however, indicates that this mercy is not entirely gratuitous.

¹⁴⁸Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, pp. 361, 907, 359.

¹⁴⁹Muhammad Ali, The Religion of Islam, p. 336.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 166.

Therefore, whenever God warns people of His punishment in the Quran, He makes it a point to remind them of His attributes of Forgiveness and Mercy also, thus showing that these attributes predominate over His other attributes and only await a gesture of goodness on the part of man to show themselves.¹⁵¹ [*italics ours*]

The accent on God's mercy in Ahmadiyya thought seems to be partly a reaction to Christian criticism of the Islamic doctrine of God. Judging the Muslim idea of God not only on the basis of the Qur'an, but also on the basis of the Traditions and formal theology of Islam, Christian students of Islam have come to the conclusion that there is an over-emphasis on God's power in Islam. One writer has called Islam a "pantheism of force" and referred to its God as a "tremendous Autocrat," an "uncontrolled and unsympathetic Power."¹⁵² Another writer compares Him to a Bedouin sheikh:

Man judges the unknown by the known and gives it the name derived from this. The great authority to the Bedouin in earthly affairs has always been the Sheikh, a ruler possessing absolute power, and entirely without responsibility in its exercise. He conceived God as the Great Sheikh. It is the infinite power of God and the inscrutability of his methods that impress him most in the solitude of the desert. Before the awful power of God, man is no more than the merest insect. God does with him what He will. To resist God is impossible, to question Him, absurd. And to love Him is an idea that would never occur to the Bedouin. To transpose the words of the Apostle, perfect fear casts out love, renders it impossible and inconceivable.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 654.

¹⁵²N. S. Palgrave quoted in Samuel M. Zwemer, The Moslem Doctrine of God (New York: American Tract Society, 1905), pp. 65-69.

¹⁵³Frank Hugh Foster, "The Fear of God in the Koran," The Moslem World, XXI (July 1931), 86-87.

Muhammad Ali refers to such opinions as "obsessions on the part of Christian writers that the God of Islam is an embodiment of cruelty, tyranny and frightfulness." He furthermore chides them for believing "that a Loving and Merciful God is peculiar to the Christian religion."¹⁵⁴

✓ Not only do Ahmadiyyas emphasize God's mercy as a corrective to an overemphasis on His power; they also have an interest to exalt His mercy above His justice. Christians often explain the necessity for the atonement on the basis of balancing God's justice and His mercy. By stating, "Mercy is not opposed to Justice but is above it,"¹⁵⁵ the Ahmadiyyas are able to dispense with the atonement. ✓ "So great is His love that He requires no compensation for its exercise, as the Christian doctrine of the atonement teaches."¹⁵⁶

The manifestation of God's attributes

✓ The Ahmadiyya Muslims speak of a twofold manifestation of God's attributes. ✓ First, there is the manifestation of God by Himself. This is referred to as "descent." God provides for man and makes Himself known. ✓ Secondly, there is the manifestation of God's attributes by the believers, referred to as the "ascent." In the former God comes down to man, and in the

¹⁵⁴Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 163.

¹⁵⁵B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 39.

¹⁵⁶Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an, p. 2.

latter man ascends to God.¹⁵⁷ It is primarily the manifestation of God's attributes by man which comes under consideration at this point.

According to Qur'anic thought man was created as God's vice-regent on the earth. The Ahmadiyyas build upon that thought and also bring in a Tradition attributed to Muhammad, "Equip yourselves with the attributes of God."¹⁵⁸ This theme becomes the principal theme of Ahmadiyya practical life. Man shall become a manifestation of the attributes of God.

The purpose of man's creation is that he should receive the impress of God's attributes and should become a manifestation of them within the limits of his capacities.¹⁵⁹

In line with this injunction Muhammad Ali states that the numerous attributes of the Divine Being are meant for the perfection of human character and "serve as an ideal to which man must strive to attain."¹⁶⁰ Man should exhibit lordship by serving humanity; he should manifest beneficence by doing good to all men, even to those from whom he has not received anything; he should show mercy by returning good for any benefit which he has received from another; he should reflect God's mastery by being forgiving rather than vengeful in dealings with others.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 13.

¹⁵⁸Zafrulla Khan, p. 97.

¹⁵⁹Ibid.

¹⁶⁰Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, p. 167.

¹⁶¹Ibid., pp. 167-168.

This manifestation of God's attributes through man seems rather out of harmony with the earlier descriptions of the uniqueness of God mentioned in this study. Compare, for example, this statement in B. Mahmud Ahmad's introduction to the translation of the Qur'an:

God is unique in all His powers and attributes. On occasion one may discover a resemblance between the attributes of a thing or person and some of the attributes of God but the resemblance is only apparent and superficial.¹⁶²

The emphasis on the uniqueness of the attributes is more in harmony with orthodox Islam; the manifestation of God's attributes through men is a departure from orthodoxy.

A greater departure from orthodox Islam is indicated by another thought involving an unusual admission, namely, that revelation in the usual Islamic sense of book revelation is not sufficient to provide certainty of faith; an incarnation is required. Although the word "incarnation" is not used, the implication is the same. After distinguishing divine revelation from mental derangement, subjective fantasy, and diabolic suggestion, B. Mahmud Ahmad, the third head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, in his book Ahmadiyyat or the True Islam, writes as follows:

Still, as there is yet left some room for doubt and confusion here, revelation is not as perfect and as sure a means of Divine realization as is required

¹⁶²B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. cclii.

for absolute certainty of faith which should exclude every possibility of doubt or misgivings.¹⁶³

The author then goes on:

For instance we are told that God is All-knowing. Can we have a certain proof of His knowledge? Until we can see with our own eyes the workings of this attribute, how can we, with confidence, nay, how can we with honesty, say that He is All-knowing? We are told He quickens the dead to life, but if we have no evidence of it how can we honestly say that He brings the dead to life? We are told that He is the Creator, but we observe that the whole creation is governed by certain laws of nature. How can we, then, believe that God has had a hand in the creation of this universe, and how can we honestly assert that He is the Creator? Again we are told that all things are in His hands, and all things acknowledge His might, but, when we find that thousands of men deny His very existence, how can we, in the absence of some clear sign of His might, say with certainty, nay, how can we say with honesty, that He controls the universe? The same is the case with all His attributes. Unless we are convinced that the attributes of God manifest themselves in a manner which excludes all possibility of chance or coincidence, how can we believe that those attributes exist at all? We cannot perceive God by our physical senses, but can know Him only through His attributes. If we possess no certain proof of the manifestation of those attributes, how can we honestly say that God does exist and that our universe is not based on the operation of some complex but perfect Law of Nature?¹⁶⁴

At this point orthodox Muslims would reply that they know because the Qur'an says so. But the author has already excluded the Qur'an as the sure proof. He goes on to answer his own questions:

¹⁶³B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 72.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 73.

✓ This doubt is resolved in Islam alone, for it constantly produces men who are manifestations of the attributes of God, first receiving a reflection of these attributes in their own beings and then leading others to the perfect knowledge and realization of God by demonstrating in their own persons the working of those attributes.¹⁶⁵ [*italics ours*]

✓ The sum and substance of this thought is that God reveals Himself through the lives of men. The plural form is important here. Muhammad is one of the men; Jesus, with some reservations which will be noted later, is another. ✓ But in Ahmadiyya Islam the foremost manifestation of God's attributes, at least according to the Qadian/Rabwah group, is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

In the present age God sent the Promised Messiah . . . so that men might be enabled to attain to a perfect knowledge and realization of Him and be freed from doubt and despair. . . . He manifested in himself the attributes of God in such a certain and perfect manner that all who saw it marvelled, and all who hear of it are filled with wonder.¹⁶⁶

✓ The son of the Mirza makes the strong claim that his father manifested every attribute of God by signs and miracles.¹⁶⁷ As proof of this claim the son describes the Mirza's mastery of the Arabic language without formal education as a manifestation of God's omniscience. He recounts how a prayer of his father produced a child for a childless family as a manifestation of God's creative power; the protection of his house

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 73-74.

¹⁶⁷B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyya Movement, pp. 137-138.

from the plague shows God's mastery. Healing miracles are demonstrations of God's power. There are even qualified claims that the Mirza raised the dead to life.¹⁶⁸ It is seen from these references to the life of Ghulam Ahmad that the Ahmadiyyas are thinking of something more than revelation through words when they talk about manifesting God's attributes. They are talking about revelation through human life in a sense similar to that of Jesus when he said in John 12:45, "He who sees me sees him who sent me." The Ahmadiyyas are claiming the same thing about their founder and themselves.

It is not the purpose of this paper to investigate and analyze these various claims, but the recourse which the Ahmadiyyas take to an incarnational type of thinking is significant in view of their oft-stated opposition to the Christian doctrines of incarnation and sonship. The emphasis on manifestations of God's attributes also has implications for the Christian response to Ahmadiyya Muslims.

The Problem of Evil

The problem of the origin and continued existence of evil is one of the most difficult questions in any religion. Orthodox Muslims usually trace the origin of evil back to God Himself and describe Him as the Creator of both good and evil.

¹⁶⁸B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, pp. 75-108.

One of the Muslim creeds formulated by al-Nasafi (died. 1159) and commented upon by al-Taftazani (1322-1389) states as follows:

Allah is the Creator of all the actions of His creatures whether of unbelief or of belief, of obedience or of disobedience. And they are all of them by His Will and Desire, by His judgment, by His ruling, and by His decreeing. His creatures have actions of choice for which they are rewarded or punished. And the good in these is by the good pleasure of Allah and the vile in them is not by His good pleasure.¹⁶⁹

Another Muslim theologian, Ibn Rushd (Averroes), who was also a philosopher and read by medieval Christian theologians, tempered the Muslim doctrine of God's creation of evil by distinguishing between His primary purposes, which are good, and His secondary purposes, which may be evil, but eventually serve the purpose of the good.

So they (the masses) must recognize that He is the creator of both things together (good and evil) and since misguidance is evil and there is no Creator beside Him, it is necessary that evil should be attributed to Him just as there is attributed the creation of good. But it is not fitting that this should be understood absolutely but only as He is the Creator of good for its own sake and the creator of evil for the sake of the good, i.e. for the sake of the good associated with it. It is on this account that His creation of evil is justice on His part.¹⁷⁰

✓ The Ahmadiyyas avoid the perils of directly attributing the creation of evil to God. Their reflection on this subject

¹⁶⁹ Sa'd al-Din al-Taftazani, A Commentary on the Creed of Islam, translated and edited by Earl Edgar Elder, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), p. 80.

¹⁷⁰ J. Windrow Sweetman, Islam and Christian Theology, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1967), I, Part II, 172.

is more in line with the thoughts of Ibn Rushd than the older dogmatic formulations of al-Ash'ari and al-Nasafi. They also update the problem by bringing in more modern examples.

B. Mahmud Ahmad has the most complete treatment of the problem of evil in his book, Ahmadiyyat or the True Islam.

He first of all takes up the difficulty of a beneficent Creator creating things like "wild and savage animals, worms and reptiles, pains, troubles, ailments, and pestilences."¹⁷¹

According to his explanation these various things are not evil in themselves; they only seem evil to man because he does not know enough about their true nature and God's purpose.

If their true nature is considered, they add to the praise and glory of God and do not in any way detract from it . . . they have all been created for a useful purpose and . . . man ought to praise God for their creation.¹⁷²

Just as arsenic, strychnine, and morpnine are deadly poisons but still have healing properties in medicine, so animals such as snakes and scorpions have a beneficial aspect even if man does not know about it. "Further research is bound to disclose the fact that their existence is of great value from the scientific and medical points of view."¹⁷³

Secondly, B. Mahmud Ahmad identifies evil as a departure from the laws of nature. God did not create the transgressions

¹⁷¹B. Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat, p. 35.

¹⁷²Ibid.

¹⁷³Ibid.

of the laws of nature, but He created the consequences of failing to observe the laws. ✓ The evils which result from failure to abide by the laws of nature help man to understand the principles of those laws better and to avoid transgressions in the future. Thus the evil consequences which follow transgression serve a beneficial purpose. Man advances. This is a leading theme in Ahmadiyya thought. "God has not, therefore, created disease, but has created the law of Nature which is indispensable to man's progress, and disease is the result of an infringement of the Law."¹⁷⁴ B. Mahmud Ahmad then goes on to say that the disease which may result from ignorance or infringement "does not in any way detract from the perfection of God's Beneficence."¹⁷⁵

Continuing his thought, B. Mahmud Ahmad moves into the subject of sin and defines it in the same category as an infringement of one of the laws of nature. ✓ "An infringement of a moral or spiritual law is termed a sin."¹⁷⁶ Just as disease is no reflection upon the perfection of God, so sin also is no reflection upon the perfection of God. ✓ Sin is a transgression against the Golden Mean of the laws of nature or of morals, an affront to humanity more than an affront to God.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁷⁵Ibid.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., p. 37.

The names which have been used in the Holy Quran to signify sin, indicate either excess or default, none of them being an underived noun, which shows that according to the Holy Quran sin has no independent existence, and signifies merely the absence of righteousness. Excess and default are the direct result of man's action or omission, his failure to use of his misuse of God's bounties or his attempt to infringe the rights of others.¹⁷⁷

The definition of sin as a lack of righteousness is significant in light of the Ahmadiyya denials of the need for an atonement.

In general, this treatment of the problem of evil is more imaginative than the older treatments which were content to ascribe evil to the direct creation of God.

Problems of Inconsistency

Although the Ahmadiyyas often appeal to reason, it is evident that their doctrine of God as culled from their literature and described in the preceding pages suffers from some inconsistencies and even contradictions.

The problem of God's uniqueness and manifestation

First of all, there seems to be a contradiction between their description of God as unique and the manifestation of His attributes in persons. Quoting the Qur'an, they say that nothing is like God and that He does not depend upon anyone for the manifestation of His attributes. They furthermore hold that the resemblance between the attributes of God and

¹⁷⁷Ibid.

those of a person is only apparent and superficial. But, as we have seen in the preceding section, they also claim that God can be known with certainty only through the manifestation of His attributes in persons.¹⁷⁸ If God is completely different, how can His attributes be manifested clearly in persons?

This apparent contradiction touches upon one of the great problems of both Muslim and Christian theology, namely, the nature of God and His knowability by man. Those who over-emphasize the transcendence of God and His uniqueness tend to remove God from the knowledge of man. Even though the same words may be used in describing God and man, such as "living" or "loving," the similarity between God and man is in the words only; the actual Life and Love is completely different and cannot even be compared. Christian dogmaticians define this as speaking about God equivocally. God and man share the name but not the matter which is designated by the name. Such thought leads to deism and agnosticism. On the other hand, there are those who over-emphasize the immanence of God and tend to erase the difference between God and man by speaking of the attribute univocally, that is, as if the attribute could be applied to both God and man in the same manner and degree. This type of thought leads to mysticism and pantheism. Christian theology has tried to avoid both of these extremes by speaking of God's attributes analogically. According to

¹⁷⁸Supra, pp. 19, 38, 39, 60, and 62.

analogical predication of attributes, there is a similarity between attributes in God and in man, but a difference in manner and degree. In God the attributes are absolute, primary, and perfect. In man they can only be secondary, derived, and imperfect.¹⁷⁹ The analogical distinction preserves both the uniqueness of God and His knowability.

✓ The Qur'an pictures a transcendent God, but also assumes that He is knowable in a meaningful way. Otherwise there would be no reason for enumerating and differentiating His attributes. This is illustrated by an anecdote.

A maulvi was asked the meaning of certain names which are found to be in the list of the 99 beautiful names of God in the Qur'an. "What is meant by the name Ar-Rahim (The Merciful)? Can one form an analogy between this name and the quality of mercy possessed by a good man?" "No," was the reply, "because this name applied to God is la thani, i.e., unique." "How then should one distinguish between al Kabir (The Great) and Ar Rahim?" "They are distinguished in the Book, they are written differently, they are pronounced differently, but the real distinction is known to God alone. All the names of God are la thani (unique)." "Then why not reduce the 99 names of Allah to the one name la thani?"¹⁸⁰

This is a good example of the equivocal definition of God's attributes. ✓ The mere fact that Muhammad used different words to describe God indicates that he regarded God as knowable in some sense and would have rejected the equivocal type of definition.

¹⁷⁹See Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c. 1950), I, 431-432; and The New Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1967), I, 465-468.

¹⁸⁰J. Windrow Sweetman, Islam and Christian Theology (London: Lutterworth Press, 1947), II, Part I, 47.

The question of the nature and knowability of God came to a head early in Islam when the Muslims were forced to face the interpretation of the anthropomorphisms in the Qur'an. Some wanted to interpret these literally and in the process entertained crude physical conceptions of the Deity. Others wanted to interpret them figuratively or metaphorically so that God's eyes, hands, face, and throne became His knowledge, power, beauty, and protection. The metaphorical interpreters (Mu'tazila) tended to apply rational judgments to the Qur'an and often to read their own pre-conceptions into the text. Some of these pre-conceptions were colored by a type of Greek philosophy which emphasized God's transcendence at the expense of His knowability and the reality of His attributes. Orthodox Islam finally rejected both the literal and the metaphorical/rationalistic interpretation of the anthropomorphisms and accepted a doctrine of "difference" which comes close to the equivocal method of describing God's attributes.

✓ The vividness of the Quranic description of Allah developed logically into an anthropomorphic doctrine of Allah, while the emphasis on Allah's transcendence resulted in a doctrine of kenosis which divested God of all attributes. ✓ Both of these doctrines were rejected by the Muslim majority. In their place, a doctrine of Difference was proposed early in Islam's theological development and has since become the doctrine about Allah most widely accepted and most strongly held by all but the Sufi Muslims. ✓ The dogma of Allah's Difference (al-mukhalafah) means that every term used to describe Allah has a sense of its own, different from the meaning of the same words when they are applied to anything other than

Islam: A History, Islamic Theology and the Christian Theologies," *The Hibbert Journal*, XLIX, 247.

183 *al-Isn'ari*, p. 237.

Allah. The result is that Allah in all His being, attributes and activities is utterly removed from any measure of knowledge on the part of man.¹⁸¹

The doctrine of difference was defined by the Muslim theologian al-Ash'ari, and is also called the doctrine of "amodality," from the Arabic expression bi-la kayf which means "without how" or "without manner."¹⁸² According to this doctrine the anthropomorphisms in the Qur'an are accepted because they are revealed in the Book, but no attempt is made to understand the rationale of these expressions. They are accepted without asking how and why. In the creed called the Ibana al-Ash'ari said,

We confess that God has two hands, without asking how, as He said, "I have created with my two hands."

We confess that God has two eyes, without asking how, as He said, "Which moved along under our eyes."¹⁸³

Eventually the uniqueness of God led to an extreme agnosticism in some circles, or to a barren method of describing by the via negativa in others.

God is one, without a peer, hearing, seeing. He is not a body, not an object, not a mass, not form nor flesh nor blood, nor person, nor substance, nor accident. He has neither color, taste, smell, texture, heat, cold, moisture nor dryness, nor length, breadth and depth, nor concourse, nor separation, nor does he move or rest. He is neither divided nor possesses parts, organs or members. He has no direction either to left or right, or before or behind or up or

¹⁸¹Edwin C. Calverley, "The Fundamental Structure of Islam," The Moslem World, XXIX (October 1939), 382.

¹⁸²W. Montgomery Watt, "Islamic Theology and the Christian Theologian," The Hibbert Journal, XLIX, 247.

¹⁸³Al-Ash'ari, p. 237.

down. No place encompasses Him and time does not pass over Him. Contact is not possible to Him and neither is withdrawal or inherence in a suppositum. He is not qualified with any one of the attributes of creatures which indicate their temporality or creatureliness, and it cannot be said that He is circumscribed. He is neither begetting nor begotten. He is not contained in dimensions. Veils do not hide Him, sense cannot perceive Him. No one can form an idea of Him from analogy. He is in no way resembling creatures. No calamity can befall Him. Nothing which occurs to any mind or which fancy can frame is like unto Him. He has not ceased to be the First, the Foremost, who preceded created things, and existed before creation. He has not ceased to be knowing, deciding, and living, and neither will He cease so to be. Eyes cannot see Him, sight cannot perceive Him, and imagination cannot conceive Him, neither can He be heard by the ear. He is a thing, but He is not like other things. He knows, decides, and lives, but not as the knowing, powerful, living things are known. Only He is eternal. Beside Him there is no eternal nor is there any God like unto Him. He has no share in His Kingship and no minister in His government, nor is there anyone who helps Him in producing what He produces and creating what He creates There is no sort of connection between Him and anything which would benefit Him, and no harm can touch Him. Joy and sorrow do not move Him, and He feels neither hurt nor pain. No limit can be set to Him whereby He should become finite, and the idea of ceasing to be is not applicable to Him. He is not subject to weakness or diminishment. He is exalted above all contact with women, above taking a mate, and above begetting children.¹⁸⁴

What, or who, then is God? The answer of this school of thought is summed up by a little ditty chanted even today by beggars in the Near East:

Whatever conception your mind comes at
I tell you flat
God is not that.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴Sweetman, II, Part I, 43-44.

¹⁸⁵Charles Roger Watson, What is This Moslem World? (New York: Friendship Press, 1937), p. 80.

The Ahmadiyya, Muhammad Ali, is in this same thought-world when he quotes approvingly as a basic principle that "God does not resemble His creatures in anything, nor does any of His creatures resemble Him." When the other Ahmadiyyas emphasize the uniqueness of God and say that His attributes resemble those of man only superficially or when they say that nothing is like God, they are following in this same tradition.

But there were many people in Islam whose religious needs were not met with such a remote idea of God. By emphasizing the nearness of God as described in some passages of the Qur'an, as well as man's creation in the image of God as mentioned in one Tradition, these people moved away from the orthodox emphasis on God's transcendence and stressed His immanence. They were the mystics of Islam. The early mystics emphasized the nearness of God and began to speak in terms of love and union with God. But they nevertheless maintained a respectful distance between God and man. Later mystics, however, were influenced by non-Islamic types of thought, such as Neo-Platonism, and introduced "emanation theology" into Islam. They tended to speak of God univocally, as if the attributes of God and the good qualities in men were of the same nature. According to this theology

the divine Essence, though transcendent, absolute and ineffable, is nevertheless, through the process of emanation, the source and fount of all essences,

186Calverley, III, p. 383.

187Quoted in Becker, Muslim Doctrine of God, p. 81.

with a continuity of being that makes the phenomenal world simply the manifested aspects of God.¹⁸⁶

✓ When the Ahmadiyyas speak about man manifesting the attributes of God, they are following in this mystic tradition.

✓ Fortunately, they do not carry this emphasis so far as to identify all earthly phenomena with the essence of God and end up in the pantheism typified by the following Muslim poem of Jalaludin-ar-Rumi:

I am the Gospel, the Psalter, the Koran;
I am Uzza and Lat--Bel and the Dragon.
Into three and seventy sects is the world divided,
Yet only One God; the faithful who believed in Him am I.
Lies and truth, good, bad, hard and soft
Knowledge, solitude, virtue, faith,
The deepest ground of hell, the highest torment
of the flames,
The highest paradise,
The earth and what is therein,
The angels and the devils, Spirit and man, am I.¹⁸⁷

✓ The Ahmadiyya emphasis on the manifestation of God's attributes through persons is actually a somewhat moderate form of Islamic mysticism, but it is still inconsistent with the way in which they describe the uniqueness of the attributes of God.

In the next chapter it will be seen that there was later a certain blending of the orthodox and the mystic tradition in Islam, but this blending did not result in the resolution of this problem of the nature and knowability of God. ✓ There has never been a real resolution of this problem in Islam, and the Ahmadiyyas with their apparent contradictory stance in this

¹⁸⁶Calverley, XXIX, p. 383.

¹⁸⁷Quoted in Zwemer, Moslem Doctrine of God, p. 61.

instance are a reflection of the existence of the problem in all of Islam.¹⁸⁸ What is God like, and how can men come to know Him? In their writing the Ahmadiyyas do not seem to sense the inconsistency of holding to the absolute uniqueness of God's attributes and the manifestation of those attributes in persons. Nor do they make any attempts to explain it.

The problem of shirk

A second contradiction relates to the principle of shirk, or idolatry. They define one form of shirk as the ascription of the unique attributes of God to any other thing or being. They say that Christians are guilty of shirk for ascribing Divine attributes to Christ and the Holy Spirit. But at the same time they ascribe the manifestation of exclusive Divine attributes such as omnipotence and omniscience to Mirza Ghulam Ahmed.¹⁸⁹ In all fairness, it must be said that the Lahore Ahmadiyyas would probably not exalt the Mirza to such a high degree, for they regard him only as a reformer.

Other inconsistencies

Thirdly, it has already been noticed that they include the attribute of God's justice in one of their lists of the

¹⁸⁸Cf. a recent book on the subject: Fadlou Shehadi, Ghazali's Unique Unknowable God (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964).

¹⁸⁹Supra, p. 22, with pp. 62-63.

names of God, yet deny or downgrade the attribute of justice in other places.

Finally, we note that they minimize or explain away the miracles of Jesus, but do not hesitate to make miraculous claims for Ghulam Ahmad.¹⁹⁰

Harold Spencer, in his book Islam and the Gospel of God, claims that the Ahmadiyyas do not have a systematic or coherent theology, "because they are not interested in theology but wish to bring about a political and social strengthening of Islam."¹⁹¹ It may be agreed that their theology is not coherent, but can one say that they are not interested in theology? The space devoted to theology in their writings is not insignificant. Their efforts to explain the sources of their faith, to prove the existence of God, to describe His unity, His name, and His attributes--all these indicate an interest in theology. Moreover their attempt to link up faith with action is laudable. It is not lack of interest, but perhaps excess of zeal to promulgate their own views which has landed them in the contradictions noted above.

¹⁹⁰Supra, p. 23, with pp. 62-63.

¹⁹¹Harold Spencer, Islam and the Gospel of God (Delhi: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1956), p. 47.

CHAPTER II

AHMADIYYA DOCTRINE AND ISLAMIC ORTHODOXY

Before beginning to compare the Ahmadiyya doctrine of God with Islamic orthodoxy, it will be necessary to define Islamic orthodoxy. The Ahmadiyya group in St. Louis, Missouri refers to itself as the True Islam, and yet it is adjudged as heretical by other Muslims. Who are the "other Muslims" according to whose standards the Ahmadiyyas are regarded as heretical?

The main body of Muslims are usually referred to as Sunni Muslims. The word sunni comes from the word sunna which means "custom" or "usage," specifically the custom or usage of Muhammad. The Sunnis are therefore those who follow the faith and practice of Muhammad. Muslims have not always been agreed as to who the true followers of Muhammad are, but in the course of time the term Sunni has come to be applied to those Muslims who follow in the doctrinal tradition of the Four Imams mentioned previously and the two important theologians, al-Ash'ari (873-935) and al-Ghazali (1059-1111).

Al-Ash'ari started his life as a Mu'tazila, those who applied reason to the interpretation of the Qur'an and the formulation of theology. In the interest of God's justice and human responsibility the Mu'tazila tended to limit God's power. One day al-Ash'ari asked his Mu'tazila teacher, al-Juba'i, a question which he was not able to answer. He posed the case

of three brothers who died. The one brother entered Paradise, the second brother went to the Fire, and the third, who died as an infant, went to the limbus infantum. When the latter brother asked God why he had not been permitted to live longer and thus have a chance to enter Paradise, God replied that He knew that he would have fallen into sin and ended up in the Fire if he had lived longer. Upon hearing this answer, the brother who was in the Fire complained to God and asked, "Then why did You not allow me to die young?" Al-Juba'i, who believed in the Mu'tazila principle that God does what is best, was speechless. Following this experience al-Ash'ari left the Mu'tazila group and thereafter devoted his efforts to support orthodoxy. He put his Mu'tazila opponents to silence with their own rationalistic methods and applied reason and canons of logic to formulate the Muslim faith. His theology is expressed in two creeds called the Maqalat and the Ibana. A portion of the Maqalat which indicates deterministic tendencies has already been quoted.¹ Some further samples of al-Ash'ari's theology as found in the Ibana are given herewith:

We confess that God is one God, and that there is no God at all save Him, and that He is the unique and eternal, and that He has not taken to Himself consort or child.²

¹ Supra, pp. 51-52.

² Ali ibn Isma'il Al-Ashari, The Theology of Al-Ashari, translated and edited by Richard J. McCarthy (Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, 1953), p. 236.

After accepting the anthropomorphisms of the Qur'an without trying to explain them, and affirming the knowledge, hearing, sight, power, and speech of God, the creed continues:

We hold that there is nothing good or evil on earth, save what God wills; and that all things are by the will of God.³

Al-Ghazali, the second important theologian of orthodox Islam, started his life as an Ash'arite. However, by that time Muslim theology had degenerated into a form of dry scholasticism. Al-Ghazali could not find spiritual peace in that atmosphere and turned to the Sufis, the mystics of Islam who were seeking to satisfy their religious longings in asceticism and various types of mystical experience. Whereas the Ash'arites had emphasized the transcendence of God, the Sufis emphasized His immanence, basing their doctrine partly on a Qur'anic verse which says that God is nearer to a man than his jugular vein. Al-Ghazali found the answer to at least some of his problems in Sufism. Eventually he worked out a synthesis between Sufism and Ash'arite orthodoxy, and in the process succeeded in making Sufism respectable in Islam. Until that time it had been regarded as heretical, and one of the Sufi saints called al-Hallaḡ, was executed by crucifixion because he said of himself, "I am the Truth"--a statement which in orthodox ears was tantamount to identifying himself with God.⁴

³Ibid., pp. 238-239.

⁴Fazlur Rahman, Islam (London: Weidenfall and Nicolson, c. 1966), p. 137.

Al-Ghazali's great theological work was called Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din (The Revival of Religious Sciences). The religious significance of al-Ghazali is summed up by Fazlur Rahman in his book Islam:

The influence of al-Ghazali in Islam is incalculable. He not only reconstituted orthodox Islam, making Sufism an integral part of it, but also was a great reformer of Sufism, purifying it of un-Islamic elements and putting it at the service of orthodox religion. As such he represents a final step in a long developing history. Sufism received, through his influence, the approval of Ijma', or consensus of the community. Islam received a new vigour of life and a popular appeal which won large areas in Africa, Central Asia and India to the Faith.⁵

The significance of al-Ash'ari and al-Ghazali is described by Gibb in his book Mohammedanism, which incidentally is described as an admirable book by Fazlur Rahman:⁶

The life-work of al-Ghazali bears a striking analogy to that of al-Ash'ari. Both of them, at a time when orthodoxy was in conflict with another current of thought which strongly attracted the minds and wills of religious thinkers, forged a synthesis that allowed the essential principles of the other movement to find accomodation in the orthodox system.⁷

It should also be mentioned that al-Ghazali stressed obedience and devotion to God in daily life.

✓ In the Ahmadiyya Movement the three strands of early Muslim theology, mysticism, and the application of reason to

⁵Ibid., p. 140.

⁶Ibid., p. 1.

⁷H. A. R. Gibb, Mohammedanism: A Historical Survey (2nd revised edition; New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 140-141.

religion are identifiable. Sometimes the results are within the pale of accepted orthodoxy; sometimes not.

✓ Early Muslim Theology

It is not within the scope of this study to describe early Muslim theology, but suffice it to say that the Ahmadiyyas are well within the spirit of that theology when they:

- (1) Look to the Qur'an as the authority for their faith;
- (2) Appeal to the Traditions for explanations and amplifications of the Qur'an;
- (3) Regard Muhammad as an example of faith and life;
- (4) Emphasize the unity of God and the sin of shirk;
- (5) Define God according to His essence and attributes;
- (6) Stress the uniqueness of God's attributes;
- (7) Emphasize the transcendence and majesty of God, and when they (8) Criticize Christian teachings about the death of Jesus on the cross, His Sonship, and the Trinity.

✓ Mysticism

The mystics of Islam emphasize the immanence of God, though not necessarily His knowability. The Ahmadiyyas are following more in the mystical tradition when they magnify the attributes of God's mercy and kindness to men. Some of the terminology of Muslim mysticism is similar to Christian terminology. When a Christian first hears such phrases as the "love of God" or the "grace of God," he may think that the Ahmadiyyas are borrowing Christian vocabulary; such phrases

are usually not found in early Islam. It is true that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad held many conversations with missionaries of the Church of Scotland in his youth, but such contacts are not necessarily the source of such phrases as "love of God" and "grace of God." These phrases can be duplicated in Muslim mystic literature. Ma'ruf al-Kharkhi (died 816), for instance, is reported to have said, "Love is not to be learnt from men, it is a gift of God and comes of His grace."⁸ Inasmuch as Ghulam Ahmad addressed God as one near to him, and used mystical language in devotion, he was within the pale of Islam as modified by al-Ghazali.

But it is when Mirza Ghulam Ahmad himself, together with his followers of the Qadian/Rabwah group, ascribe prophethood to him that the boundaries of Muslim orthodoxy are crossed. According to orthodox Islam the Qur'an is the perfect revelation and Muhammad the perfect prophet. He is the last and "seal" of the prophets. In speaking with Christians the orthodox Muslims usually say that Muhammad in the Qur'an included everything that was of value from previous revelations such as the Bible, and that no further revelation is required. They believe that the Qur'an is the eternal Word of God. By claiming that the Mirza was a prophet and also the recipient of revelation in the form of wahi the Ahmadiyyas threaten the all-sufficiency of the Qur'an and of Muhammad.

⁸Fazlur Rahman, p. 130.

By designating himself as the expected Mahdi of Islam and the Promised Messiah of the Muslims and the Christians, the Mirza also runs counter to orthodox beliefs that the Mahdi will be a bloody eschatological world figure and that Jesus will return again, fight for Islam, get married, and finally die with burial next to Muhammad in Medina; Muslims are even reserving an empty tomb to receive his body!

Furthermore, the syncretistic claim that a Hindu god like Krishna was also a prophet of the unity of God is the opposite of the orthodox Muslim classification of Hinduism as a religion of shirk. In early Islam the world was divided by the orthodox into the realm of Islam (Dar ul-Islam) and the realm of warfare (Dar ul-Harb). It was one of the obligations of the orthodox to convert the Dar ul-Harb into the Dar ul-Islam, by force if necessary. Hindus were classified as polytheists of the Dar ul-Harb. While one may be appreciative of the Mirza's reinterpretation of the practice of Holy War (jihad), it must nevertheless be admitted that the inclusion of Krishna into the rank of authentic prophets seems strange, even to a Christian. This would be one of the excesses of Sufism which al-Ghazali opposed.

Enough has already been said about the novel idea (for a Muslim) that God can be known better through persons than through the Qur'an. When one considers the high pedestal on which the Muslims place the Qur'an, the statement that the Qur'an is an insufficient revelation of God sounds radical

indeed. It is as heretical to Muslims as the belief of the crucified mystic al-Hallaj who thought that Jesus was a more glorious pattern for life than Muhammad.⁹

✓ The Ahmadiyya tendency to regard repentance as a work of man falls short of the definition of repentance set forth by one of the famous mystic saints of Islam, a woman named Rabi'a (died 801). "Repentance," she said, "is purely an act of Divine Grace coming from God to man, not from man to God. Only God has power so to touch the sinner's heart that he will turn away from his wickedness and repent."¹⁰

Application of Reason

The Ahmadiyyas apply reason both to buttress Islam as a whole, and to tear down traditional concepts which they consider inadequate or false, both Muslim or otherwise.

In buttressing Islam the Ahmadiyyas go to great pains to establish a foolproof case for the textual purity and authenticity of the Qur'an. ✓ In another direction they accept the findings of radical biblical criticism to undermine the authority of the Bible.

✓ They also try to express their doctrines in ways which will appeal to modern man. It has been seen how they even

⁹Wm. Theodore de Bary, editor, Sources of Indian Tradition (New York: Columbia University Press, c. 1968), I, 405.

¹⁰L. Bevan Jones, The People of the Mosque (3rd revised edition; Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1959), p. 154.

bring in the idea of evolution to their doctrine of God and His creation. ✓ Their message of universalism--eventual salvation for all--based on God's mercy, also finds many sympathetic ears today.

✓ The Ahmadiyyas regard the deterministic character of orthodox Islam as detrimental to the faith as a whole. Hence they apply their minds to a study of the original text of the Qur'an in an effort to get behind the doctrinal formulations of orthodoxy. ✓ The conclusion of their study is that God's power is not described in a deterministic way in the Qur'an. ✓ In their rejection of the orthodox position they do not hesitate to conclude that the traditions which speak of a rigid form of predestination are spurious. There is one Tradition in particular that ✓ they reject. ✓ It speaks of God creating some people for salvation and some for damnation, and not having a personal interest in either case. Muhammad Ali writes that "this hadith discloses such a distorted picture of Divine dealing with man that there should not be the least hesitation in its rejection."¹¹

✓ In a similar effort to alter the usual impression of Islam as a deterministic religion the same author tries to show that all passages in the Qur'an which speak of God "leading men astray" or "sealing their hearts" (hardening) refer to the

¹¹Muhammad Ali, The Religion of Islam (Lahore, India: The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1936), p. 336.

punishment of men who are already sinners and unbelievers; it is not a predestination to evil and damnation.¹²

Thus reason is put to the task of defending man's responsibility. Incidentally, a non-Ahmadiyya Muslim who later became a Christian, namely Daud Rahbar, in his book, God of Justice, also came to the conclusion that the Qur'an does not teach an arbitrary predestination to good and evil:

We have found no statement among all the contexts examined . . . which may be quoted to prove that all human action is by an arbitrary decree of God. The very basic sense of qadar and tagdir is arranging things by due measure, and excludes the idea of arbitrariness.¹³

In their application of reason to the interpretation of the Qur'an the Ahmadiyyas often exhibit the same tendency which Luther found in Erasmus, namely, to rely on figurative interpretations and to read their own pre-conceived ideas into the text. For example, in one passage which speaks of two seas, B. Mahmud Ahmad interprets them as the law of freedom and the law of responsibility, while Muhammad Ali says that they represent the believers and the unbelievers.¹⁴ B. Mahmud Ahmad recognizes that some rules of interpretation are

¹²Ibid., pp. 329-335.

¹³Daud Rahbar, God of Justice (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960), p. 119.

¹⁴Cf. Surah 25:53 in Muhammad Ali, The Holy Qur'an (2nd edition; Lahore, Punjab, India: Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Islam, 1920), p. 721; and Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, What is Ahmadiyyat? (Rabwah, W. Pakistan: The Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1962), p. 29.

required when the right of private interpretation is claimed. In one place he gives the principle that unclear passages are to be interpreted on the basis of clear passages, and that the interpretation should not contradict the "analogy of faith."¹⁵ It is to be feared, however, that these rules are not always followed. Canon Edward Sell, for instance, in his little book, Criticism of a Qadiani Commentary shows how Muhammad Ali's interpretations are often fanciful and contradict the rules of logic, as well as the findings of recognized Muslim expositors of the text.¹⁶

Finally, it is noted that the Ahmadiyyas apply their reason to a destructive criticism of the Christian faith, particularly the Christian doctrine of God and His works as revealed in the Bible and the Ecumenical Creeds. The next chapter will take up this negative aspect of the Ahmadiyya doctrine of God.

¹⁵Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, editor, The Holy Quran with English Translation and Commentary (Qadian, India: Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, 1947), I, 367.

¹⁶Mufattish [Edward Sell], Criticism of a Qadiani Commentary (Madras: Christian Literature Society for India, 1923), pp. 1-36.

CHAPTER III

THE AHMADIYYA ANTI-CHRISTIAN POLEMIC

It is known that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had considerable contact with missionaries of the Church of Scotland in Sialkot, India, during his youth. It is also known that he had a great interest in raising Islam from its state of degeneracy and lethargy to catch up with and surpass the Western "Christian" nations in social and economic progress. Whatever contact he had with both the Christian religion and Christian culture seemed to make him more decidedly an advocate of Islam. In his mind Christianity was representative of something which had to be crushed and defeated. Although he did not accept the idea of physical Holy War, he did initiate a very militant campaign of argument and thought against the Christian faith. His followers in the Ahmadiyya Movement have continued in the tradition of their founder. The Christian doctrine of God with its associated doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, Deity of Christ, and the Atonement have come under particular fire. Indeed, when one reads Ahmadiyya literature he gets the impression that the assertions of the Christian faith are the almost constant foil to which the Ahmadiyya affirmations are addressed. Of course, the basis for much of this polemic lies in the Qur'an itself, but the Ahmadiyyas expand upon the Qur'anic themes with a vehemence and aggressiveness which is usually not so evident in other Muslims.

In the following pages both the Qur'anic foundation and the Ahmadiyya superstructure of this anti-Christian polemic will be presented.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

The Qur'anic basis

It has already been pointed out how important the idea of the unity of God is in Islamic thought. It was in the interest of the unity of God that Muhammad opposed the Christians for upholding a doctrine of Trinity. The key verses are as follows:

People of the Book, go not beyond the bounds in your religion, and say not as to God but the truth. The Messiah, Jesus Son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him. So believe in God and His messengers, and say not, "Three." Refrain; better is it for you. God is only One God. Glory be to Him-- that He should have a son! To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth; God suffices for a guardian.¹

In his translation of these verses A. Yusuf Ali, a non-Ahmadiyya Muslim, has the word "Trinity" instead of the word "three."² In another place the Qur'an says:

They are unbelievers who say, "God is the Third of Three." No god is there but One God.

¹Surah 4:169, in Arthur J. Arberry, The Koran Interpreted (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1955), I, 125.

²Surah 4:171, in Abdullah Yusuf Ali, The Holy Qur-an, Text, Translation and Commentary (3rd edition; New York: Hafner Publishing Co., 1946), I, 233-234.

If they refrain not from what they say, there shall afflict those of them that disbelieve a painful chastisement.
 Will they not turn to God and pray His forgiveness?
 God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.³

Instead of the expression "Third of Three" Yusuf Ali translates "one of three in a Trinity."⁴ To complete the picture another verse should also be cited.

And when God said, "O Jesus son of Mary, didst thou say unto men, 'Take me and my mother as gods, apart from God?'" He said, "To Thee be glory! It is not mine to say what I have no right to. If I indeed said it, Thou knowest it, knowing what is within my soul, and I know not what is within Thy soul; Thou knowest the things unseen."⁵

From the foregoing verses it is evident that Muhammad in the Qur'an conceived of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity as a sort of triad in which God, Mary, and Jesus are each one-third God. Samuel Zwemer in his book The Moslem Doctrine of God expresses the opinion that Muhammad had the opportunity to know the real Christian doctrine of the Trinity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that he deliberately rejected the Christian idea of the Godhead.⁶ But when one considers that the Scriptures were not translated into Arabic at the time of Muhammad and that many Christians freely spoke of Mary as the

³Surah 5:77, in Arberry, I, 140.

⁴Surah 5:76, in Yusuf Ali, I, 266.

⁵Surah 5:116, in Arberry, I, 147.

⁶Samuel M. Zwemer, The Moslem Doctrine of God (New York: The American Tract Society, 1905), p. 92.

✓ Mother of God, it is not difficult to understand how he could have arrived at a false impression legitimately. Judging from extravagances in Christian devotion to Mary in other countries such as India, one might even agree with the terse comment of Yusuf Ali, "The worship of Mary, though repudiated by the Protestants, was widely spread in the earlier churches, both in the East and the West."⁷

✓ If Muhammad had a false impression, most Christian students of Islam tend to blame the Church rather than Muhammad. The fact that the Syriac word for "spirit" was in the feminine gender, and that Syriac-speaking Christians therefore referred to the Holy Spirit as "she," would also tend to muddy the waters.⁸

✓ The fact is that Islam opposes the idea of a Trinity in the Godhead, and even Muslims who know that the Trinity is not made up of the Father, the Mother, and the Son nevertheless reject the concept of Trinity on the basis of their conception of God's unity.

Ahmadiyya amplifications

✓ The doctrine of the Trinity is one of the favorite targets of the Ahmadiyya Muslims. According to their belief the Trinity is a corrupted departure from the faith of Jesus who

⁷Yusuf Ali, I, 280.

⁸Lawrence E. Browne, The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1933), p. 21.

taught that "God is One, without any partner."⁹ They accuse Paul of introducing the doctrine of the Trinity into the Christian faith, claiming that Paul originated the idea of three persons in order to win the Greeks who believed in three gods. Ghulam Ahmad flatly states that Christians believe in three gods even though he is aware of the Trinitarian formulation of "One Essence and Three Persons."

So far as the Christians are concerned they are clearly opposed to Tauhid (unity), i.e., they believe in three gods--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Their explanation, however, that they believe the "three" to be "one" is absurd; no sane man would accept this explanation. The three gods having separate and permanent existences, and each being by himself a complete god, what arithmetic can make them "one"; what school or college teaches this principle? Can any logic or philosophy clear the mystery of the "three" permanent "Persons" becoming "one"?¹⁰

Sometimes the Mirza became almost vicious in his virulent derision of the Christian idea of God as expressed in the doctrine of the Trinity.¹¹

Although the followers of Ghulam Ahmad do not seem to be so personally involved in their opposition to the Trinity, they nevertheless carry forward his thoughts and bring them up to date with all the resources which they can muster in the way of logic or literature.

⁹Ghulam Ahmad, Fountain of Christianity (Rabwah, Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1961), p. 43.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 41-42.

¹¹H. A. Walter, The Ahmadiya Movement (Calcutta: Association Press, 1918), pp. 94-95.

In a Malayalam monthly magazine published in Kerala State, India, one of the authors addresses Christian pundits as follows:

Isn't it true that the Christian faith says that there are three gods--the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? Is each Person among these three the almighty Creator and complete God? Or is God only complete when they are all three operating together? If such is the case, doesn't it mean that each one individually is incomplete? Is it right to imagine that God is incomplete?

If each Person is the complete and almighty Creator Himself, why is it necessary to have three persons to create and preserve the world? Is it really reasonable to believe that God is One and at the same time to hold that the Father, Son, and Spirit are three Gods in such a way that one is three and three is one?¹²

One of the more recent American publications by an Ahmad-
iyya indicates that the author, Abdul Hamid, has done more
study in Christian theology than is usually the case. He does
not make the mistake of describing the Trinity as a belief in
three gods, but defines the doctrine in terms similar to the
Athanasian Creed:

There is one divine Nature in which there are
three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the
Holy Ghost.

No one of these three Persons is either of the
others; they are distinct; the Father is not
the Son, the Son is not the Holy Ghost, the
Holy Ghost is not the Father.

¹²Abdullah Sahib, "To Christian Pundits," in Sathyadoothan, XXVIII (August 1961), 258-259. (Translated by author of this thesis)

Each person is God; the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God.

There are not three Gods, but only one God.¹³

In spite of better information, Abdul Hamid then goes on to oppose the doctrine as being repugnant to human reason.¹⁴ In developing his thought he calls a number of theologians, historians, and philosophers to his aid.

He quotes Stephen Neill (The Christian's God) as admitting that the doctrine of the Trinity is set forth in a difficult form and was worked out by post-Apostolic Christian teachers and thinkers.¹⁵

He draws from Cyril Richardson (The Doctrine of the Trinity) as witness that the doctrine is a creation of the fourth century and puts a person in danger of losing his wits if he tries to understand it.¹⁶

He quotes Luther (from Ewald Plass, What Luther Says) as saying that the doctrine seems foolish, but that he believes God more than his thoughts and reason.¹⁷

¹³Abdul Hamid, Islam and Christianity (New York: Carlton Press, Inc., 1967), p. 16.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Cf. Stephen Neill, The Christian God (London: Lutterworth Press, 1954), pp. 66-67.

¹⁶Cf. Cyril Richardson, The Doctrine of the Trinity (New York: Abingdon Press, c.1958), pp. 15, 17.

¹⁷Cf. Ewald M. Plass, What Luther Says (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1959), III, 1388-1389.

✓ He cites Walter E. Bundy (Jesus and the First Three Gospels) as stating that Jesus Himself was a unitarian.¹⁸

He appeals to H. G. Wells (The Outline of History) as a witness to the bitter controversies which marked the formulation of the Trinitarian doctrine.¹⁹

He rallies H. A. Wolfson (The Philosophy of the Church Fathers) to his side as an authority against assigning the tripartite baptismal formula of Matt. 28:19, to Jesus.²⁰

The contemporaneousness of Hamid's study is indicated by references to magazine articles on the "death of God" theology in Time and Look, as well as to Bishop Robinson of England, James Pike of California, and Paul Tillich. This all indicates that a Christian discussing the doctrine of the Trinity with an Ahmadiyya Muslim will need to have his feet on solid ground.²¹ ✓ He will not only have to defend the doctrine against charges of tritheism and irrationality, but also know something about the position of various Western authors who have commented on the subject.

¹⁸Cf. Walter Ernest Bundy, Jesus and the First Three Gospels (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1955), p. 568.

¹⁹Cf. H. G. Wells, The Outline of History (4th edition; New York: P. F. Collier & Son, c.1922), II, 610-611.

²⁰Cf. Harry Austryn Wolfson, The Philosophy of the Church Fathers (2nd revised edition; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, c.1964), I, 143.

²¹See Abdul Hamid, pp. 16-31.

The Doctrine of the Divine Sonship

In actual preaching and proclaiming the Gospel to Muslims Christians may meet with opposition to the Divine Sonship of Jesus before experiencing difficulty over the doctrine of the Trinity. Usually Christians do not use the term Trinity in their actual proclamation. But they do often speak about the Son of God, especially when they base their message upon such texts as John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son" When the Christian uses such texts, he is thinking about the love of God and the possibility for eternal life which He has made available to the whole world through Christ. But the Muslim often experiences a mental block when he hears something about God's Son; immediately he thinks of blasphemy and absurd conceptions of God. The reason for this can be understood from Qur'anic references regarding the Divine Sonship.

The Qur'anic basis

It has already been mentioned that the pre-Islamic Arabs worshipped Manat, Allat, and Al-Uzza who were called the daughters of God. Muhammad associated the Divine Sonship of Jesus with such idolatry, understanding the phrase "Son of God" as though God had a wife and produced a child as in the marriage relationship, thus reducing the Christian concept of God in Muslim thought to that of the Greeks, Romans and Arabs who

conceived of their gods in terms of male and female, marriage and offspring. Some of the sharpest passages in the Qur'an are given to this subject:

Surah 4:169 God is only one God. Glory be to Him-- that He should have a son! To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth; God suffices for a guardian.

Surah 19:35 It is not for God to take a son unto Him. Glory be to Him! When He decrees a thing, He but says to it "Be," and it is. Surely God is my Lord, and your Lord; so serve you Him. This is a straight path.

Surah 3:51 Truly, the likeness of Jesus, in God's sight, is as Adam's likeness; He created him of dust, then said He unto him, "Be" and he was.

Surah 9:30 The Jews say, "Ezra is the son of God"; the Christians say, "The Messiah is the Son of God." That is the utterance of their mouths, conforming with the unbelievers before them. God assail them! How they are perverted! They have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords apart from God, and the Messiah, Mary's Son--and they were commanded to serve but one God; there is no god but He; glory be to Him, above what they associate--desiring to extinguish with their mouths God's light.

Surahs 19:91-93 And they say, "The All-merciful has taken unto Himself a son." You have indeed advanced something hideous! The heavens are well-nigh rent of it and the earth split asunder and the mountains well-nigh fall down crashing for that they have attributed to the All-merciful a son; and it behooves not the All-merciful to take a son.²²

According to the above verses the whole idea of Divine Sonship is beneath the transcendent majesty of God. Although Muhammad believed in the supernatural origin of Jesus, specifically in

²²Arberry, I, 125, 333, 210, 337-338.

the Virgin Birth, he wanted to disassociate this birth from any pagan ideas of offspring. That is why he emphasized the command of God "Be" over against any act of God which might suggest sexual relationship. In commenting upon one of the verses of the Qur'an which speaks against the idea of God begetting a Son, Yusuf Ali writes as follows:

It is a derogation from the glory of God--in fact it is blasphemy--to say that God begets sons, like a man or an animal. The Christian doctrine is here emphatically repudiated. If words have any meaning, it would mean an attribution of God to a material nature, and of the lower animal functions of sex. In a spiritual sense we are all children of God.²³

Although Yusuf Ali grants that there may be a spiritual sense in which the phrase "son of God" may be used, he interprets the Qur'anic materials in a physical sense just as Muhammad. The Qur'anic meaning is even clearer in the original Arabic. In Arabic there are two words for son, ibn and walad. The word ibn can be used in both a physical sense and a metaphorical sense.²⁴ One of the kings of Arabia was Ibn Saud. But the Qur'an also speaks of a wayfarer as a "son of the road," ibn us-sabil. In such an expression no marriage relationship is envisioned. In speaking of the sonship of Jesus, however, the Qur'an does not use the word ibn; it uses the word walad, which refers to a child produced through procreation. When the Muslim reads the Qur'an, therefore, he is introduced to a

²³Yusuf Ali, I, 49.

²⁴Cf. W. Montgomery Watt, "Islamic Theology and the Christian Theologian," Hibbert Journal, XLIX (1951), 245.

concept of the Divine Sonship which is indeed pagan. It is actually not Christian at all, but the Muslims are led to believe that it is the Christian conception.

Ahmadiyya amplifications

The Ahmadiyya Muslims follow the lead of the Qur'an in regarding the Christian idea of Divine Sonship as a form of idolatry and a travesty upon the majesty of God. "The pagan Arabs ascribed daughters to God while the Christians hold that God has a son."²⁵ The Ahmadiyyas deny the Divine Sonship on several grounds.

1. They hold that it implies an imperfection in the holiness of God. According to their interpretation, sonship implies sexuality and procreation as well as death. Although the Ahmadiyyas affirm the natural goodness of God's creation and man's physical instincts in other parts of their writings, in this context they seem to regard sexuality as something "low" in itself, and repudiate sonship on the part of God for that reason. "But Islam repudiates all such ideas; for according to it God is holy and free from all defects and weaknesses."²⁶

2. They claim that sonship implies dependence. Following Eastern custom in regarding a son as a family asset and a

²⁵Muhammad Ali, The Religion of Islam (Lahore, India: The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1936), p. 150.

²⁶Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, editor, The Holy Quran with English Translation and Commentary (Qadian, India: Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, 1947), I, 172.

means of continuing the family heritage, they assert, "God is proved to need no son, no helper or assistant to help Him in the work of controlling and managing the universe."²⁷

3. They reject sonship on the basis of God's sovereign attribute of forgiveness. According to this thought the Divine Sonship of Jesus was promulgated as a necessary appendage to the doctrine of the atonement. The doctrine of the atonement requires a sinless sacrifice; this sinlessness is manufactured by making God the father of Jesus.

The word Rahman signifies originally the Lord of immeasurable mercy who requires no satisfaction or compensation for a display of the quality of mercy which is inherent in Him, and the attribute of being Rahman negatives the doctrine of sonship.²⁸

According to this view, then, the Divine Sonship is an invention of Christians to provide a sinless sacrifice for the atonement. According to Islam such a sacrifice is not needed; God can forgive by a free act of His will. Dependence upon a sacrifice would indicate a defect.

Those Ahmadiyyas who have carried on their propagation in the Western world tend to try to reinterpret the sonship of Jesus rather than to deny it altogether. They are acquainted with some of the biblical materials which refer to Adam, Israel, and Solomon in terms of Divine sonship,²⁹ and use these examples to show that the title of Son of God applied

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Luke 3:38; Ex. 4:22; 1 Chron. 22:10.

to Jesus has no unique significance, but merely indicates that "he was a son of God as the other prophets and the righteous ones were the sons of God."³⁰ Their main interest is that the Divine Sonship of Jesus should not be used to support the doctrine of His deity.

The Doctrine of the Incarnation

It has been seen that the Ahmadiyyas and other Muslims have some grave misunderstandings of the Christian teachings on Divine Sonship and the Trinity. The meaning of the doctrine of the Incarnation is also not understood. Whereas Christians believe that the initiative started with God, and that He assumed humanity, the Muslims regard incarnation as man making a man into God. It is this conception which they reject, as a form of idolatry. The key to this understanding is found in the Qur'anic passage previously quoted in which God said, "O Jesus son of Mary, didst thou say unto men, 'Take me and my mother as gods, apart from God?'" The implication of this verse is that Christians have exalted a man to the level of deity.

The Ahmadiyyas understand the Incarnation in the same way as the Qur'an. They find fault with Christians for "deifying Jesus."³¹

³⁰J. D. Shams, Why Did Early Christians Accept Islam (Rabwah, W. Pakistan: Al-Shirkat-ul Islamia Ltd., n.d.), p. 18.

³¹B. Mahmud Ahmad, p. 667.

The Qur'anic basis

The Qur'an is very explicit on the point of the identity of Jesus:

People of the Book, go not beyond the bounds in your religion, and say not as to God but the truth. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him. So believe in God and His messengers.³²

In the above verse Jesus is designated as the son of Mary. It is the label which emphasizes the human identity of Jesus and stands in contrast to the title Son of God. Furthermore, it is clearly stated that He was "only" the Messenger of God. In orthodox Islam He is classified as one of the prophets in the tradition of Adam, Abraham, Moses and David.

Some Christians have tried to establish the deity of Christ on the basis of His being called the Word and a Spirit from God in the verse quoted above. But such attempts have been unsuccessful because the Muslims do not accept the implications of the Logos theology found in John's Gospel nor do they accept Christian interpretations of their Scriptures. Furthermore, it is a perilous undertaking to base any argument on the word "Spirit" because in Islamic theology a spirit is always something created by God. Thus the reference to Spirit could never be applied as a witness to the deity of Christ.

³²Surah 4:149, in Arberry, I, 125.

In the Qur'an the human activities of Jesus are also brought forward to limit his identity to that of mere humanity.

The Messiah the son of Mary is only a prophet: prophets before him passed away; and his mother was a confessor; they both used to eat food³³

In two places Muhammad accuses the Christians of completely identifying God with Jesus.

They misbelieve who say, "Verily, God is the Messiah the son of Mary"; but the Messiah said, "O children of Israel! Worship God, my Lord and your Lord"; verily, he who associates aught with God, God hath forbidden him Paradise, and his resort is the Fire, and the unjust shall have none to help him.

They misbelieve who say, "Verily, God is the Messiah the son of Mary"; say, "Who has any hold on God, if he wished to destroy the Messiah the son of Mary, and his mother, and those who are on the earth altogether."³⁴

In these two verses Muhammad puts a creed into the mouth of Christians which goes beyond the Ecumenical Creeds. Christians would say that the Messiah is God, but not that God is the Messiah, just as they can say that all apples are fruit, but do not say that all fruits are apples. The terms God and fruit are more comprehensive than the terms Jesus and apples. However, it is known that there were Christians in early days who so identified God with Jesus that they spoke of the sufferings of the Father and were therefore called Patripassionists. Most Muslims do not know about the Christian

³³Surah 5:79, in Arberry, I, 140.

³⁴Surah 5:76, and Surah 5:19, in Arberry, I, 139-140, 130.

distinctions between the internal and external relationships of the Trinity or the doctrinal differentiation between the two natures of Christ's person. They tend to follow Muhammad in making a complete identification between God and Jesus in Christian faith.

The Ahmadiyya amplifications

The Ahmadiyyas stand with the rest of Islam in opposing any doctrine which would recognize Christ as being identified with God. B. Mahmud Ahmad refers to such a doctrine as a monstrosity and blasphemous belief.³⁵ In combatting the Christian faith on this point the Ahmadiyyas use both Qur'anic and biblical materials. For example, the Qur'an describes God as all-knowing. But Jesus confessed in Matt. 24:36 that He did not know the time of the Judgment Day. The argument is that since He was not all-knowing, He cannot be God. In a similar way they point to the attribute of God's self-subsistence, but note that Jesus was required to eat food, sleep, drink, and seek shelter. They also point to Jesus' habit of prayer as a proof for their view. If He was God, why did He pray, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Why should God pray to God?

Ghulam Ahmad looked upon the sufferings and death of Jesus as a lack of power and therefore as proof against His deity.

³⁵B. Mahmud Ahmad, p. 613.

The Christian priests too do not believe their God to be the God of power, for their God was beaten by opponents, imprisoned, whipped and crucified. Had he been possessed of power, he being god, would not have had to bear such disgrace. Moreover, in order to procure salvation for his own servants, what need had he (had he been powerful), to think out a plan of suffering death himself in order that servants might get their deliverance? It is shameful indeed to speak of "power" for such a god; and it is strange that while god was three days dead, mankind continued to live for these three days without a god.³⁶

In addition to arguments based on God's attributes, the Ahmadiyyas challenge Christians to produce verses from the Bible which definitely and clearly designate Jesus as God. In a similar vein they try to demolish any arguments which Christians may raise from the Qur'an on the basis of Jesus being called the Word of God and a Spirit from Him.³⁷

The following questions were addressed to Christians in India who sought to establish the deity of Christ on the basis of His miracles:

Does it follow logically that Jesus was God because the Gospels ascribe many miracles to him? If so, what about the prophets of Israel who performed more miracles than Jesus? Shouldn't they be recognized as God also?

The Gospels describe Jesus as saying that if a man has faith as a grain of mustard seed he will be able to perform miracles like Jesus. If any Christian exhibits such faith, doesn't it follow that they also become God?

The Gospels say that false prophets and false christs will deceive believers by performing miracles. If

³⁶Ghulam Ahmad, pp. 40-41.

³⁷

B. Mahmud Ahmad, pp. 394, 590.

Jesus is God because he performed miracles, doesn't it follow that such false prophets and false christs should be regarded as God also?³⁸

It is clear then that the Ahmadiyyas are determined to reduce the Christ of the Christian faith to the mere prophet that He is in the Muslim faith. In order to accomplish their aim they search diligently in the Christian Scriptures, but ignore the evidence which does not fit their theory. Not only the Christian Scriptures, but also such authors as Ernst Renan are brought forth to disprove the deity of Christ. One writer says that the Ahmadiyyas "scour the literature of the world for any statements which seem to throw doubt on the truths of Christianity."³⁹ Another Christian author quotes Ghulam Ahmad as believing that

the greatest evil in the world today is the pernicious doctrine that the son of Mary is the Son of God or God Himself This setting up of the son of a woman as God is the most malignant cancer that is eating into the frame of the human race, and it was to root out this cancer that the Promised Messiah came into the world.⁴⁰

These words indicate that the very raison d'etre of the Ahmad-iyya Movement is closely linked with overthrowing the Christian faith. It is significant that many of the articles in the

³⁸Abdullah Sahib, XXVIII, 260. (Translation by author of this thesis)

³⁹W. R. W. Gardner, "The Ahmadiya Movement," The Moslem World, X (January 1920), 62.

⁴⁰James Thayer Addison, "The Ahmadiya Movement and its Western Propaganda," Harvard Theological Review, XXII (January 1929), 20.

Sathyadoothan, an Ahmadiyya monthly magazine in the Malayalam language of Kerala, India, are written against Christian doctrines, even though very few of the subscribers are Christians.

The Sinlessness of Jesus

✓ Most Muslims regard Jesus as having been sinless. The Qur'anic evidence for this is rather scanty. When the Angel Gabriel announced the coming birth of Jesus to Mary, he is reported to have said, "I am but a messenger come from the Lord, to give thee a boy most pure."⁴¹ But the relative silence of the Qur'an has been followed by definite assertions regarding the sinlessness of Jesus in the Traditions. According to one such Tradition

The Prophet said, "There is no son of Adam born, except Mary and her son, but Satan touches him when he is born and he cries out from the touch of Satan."⁴²

The background of this Tradition is that Muslims interpreted the birth cry of a newborn infant as due to the touch of Satan. A variant of the same Tradition is as follows:

✓ The Apostle of God said, "Every child of Adam is at its birth stuck in the side by the devil's fingers, except Jesus, son of Mary. The devil went to stick his fingers into his side, but stuck them in the membranes enveloping the foetus."⁴³

⁴¹Surah 19:19, in Arberry, I, 331-332.

⁴²L. Bevan Jones, Christianity Explained to Muslims (Calcutta: Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, 1952), p. 144.

⁴³Ibid.

According to another Tradition, Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses will all be unable to help anyone else at the Day of Judgment because of their sins. Although Jesus in this Tradition also passes on the request for intercession to Muhammad, no mention is made of any sin which he committed. Even Muhammad is described as one whose sins God has forgiven. No such remark is made about Jesus.⁴⁴

The Ahmadiyyas, however, do not accept the verdict of the rest of Islam. One of their writers bases his argument upon his birth from a woman, one of the "weaker sex," which he interprets in the sense of more inclination to sin also.

As the formation of the child takes place in the womb of the mother, naturally it is affected by its environment, i.e., the physical and moral condition of the mother. So Jesus, whose body, like that of other human beings, was formed in the womb of a woman, could not escape being affected by the limitations and failings inherent in woman. Now as the Bible holds woman to be morally inferior to man, for it was through Eve that Satan deceived Adam (Genesis 3:12, 13), Jesus could not but have partaken in the failings and weaknesses of his mother. Thus the fatherless birth of Jesus proved, if anything, that Jesus was by nature more inclined to sin than other men.⁴⁵

Even though one Ahmadiyya concedes that Jesus was sinless previous to his claim of prophethood, he does not apply this exemption from sin to his public ministry, but seems to accept the verdict of Jesus' enemies that he was a winebibber and

⁴⁴Samuel M. Zwemer, The Moslem Christ (New York: American Tract Society, 1912), pp. 125-126.

⁴⁵B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, p. 365.

transgressor of the Law.⁴⁶ L. Bevan Jones has listed some of the charges brought against Jesus by Ghulam Ahmad himself:

He "was addicted to drinking," and "opened the way to excess and wholesale drunkenness" (through the use of wine at the Last Supper).

He "insulted his mother" (in addressing her as "woman"), and used "vulgar abuse to the learned priests of the Jews."

He "had free and intimate connections with women of dubious character."

"Some of the ancestors of Jesus were harlots."

He "transgressed many of the precepts of the Law."

He "intentionally caused wrongful loss to an innocent person by destroying his property" (the Gadarene swine).

Jesus "practised deceit", and "was enraged with an inanimate object" (a fig tree).

"Jesus Christ was evil-minded and overbearing. He was the enemy of the righteous. We cannot call him even a gentleman, much less a prophet."

"It should be remembered that Jesus was a liar."

"He was profoundly disturbed through fear of death."⁴⁷

If pressed, the Ahmadiyyas will claim that the Gospel gives such a picture of Jesus, but that the Qur'an protects His reputation. J. D. Shams, for instance, refers to the rudeness of Jesus in addressing His mother as "woman" in John 2:4, and almost disowning her in Matt. 12:48-49, but claims that the

⁴⁶Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmediyyat or the True Islam (3rd edition; Washington, D.C.: The American Fazl Mosque, 1951), p. 93.

⁴⁷Jones, p. 168.

Qur'an clears Jesus of this false charge by describing Him as one who was taught by God to cherish His mother and not to be arrogant.⁴⁸ At the same time the same author will use other parts of the Gospels to prove that Jesus was a mere man. It is a common practice of the Ahmadiyya Muslims to use the Scriptures to prove their points if it serves their purpose and to reject the same Scriptures as spurious and corrupted when the verses run counter to their own ideas.

The Doctrine of the Atonement

In the study of God's attributes in Ahmadiyya theology it was seen that the Ahmadiyyas explained the power, the mercy, and the justice of God in such a way that they obviated the need for an atonement. Polemic against the Christian message of an atonement through Christ's death on the cross is a prominent feature of Ahmadiyya thought and writing. In various places it is described as a doctrine which is untenable, opposed to reason, unintelligible, borrowed from paganism, and unnecessary.⁴⁹ The attack on the sinlessness of Jesus is partly also an attack on the doctrine of the atonement. The opposition to the Christian teaching of the deity of Christ is also closely connected with the opposition to the atonement.

⁴⁸Shams, p. 5.

⁴⁹B. Mahmud Ahmad, The Holy Quran, pp. colvi, colvii, 642, 644, 354.

The bitterness with which Ghulam Ahmad regarded the atonement may be understood from the following excerpts:

✓ Woe to the Christians who deceive the world by saying that they have been purified of their sins by the blood of Jesus, whereas they are soaked in sin from head to foot. They do not know who God is.

How absurd is the doctrine of salvation invented by the Christians. They think that the suicide of the son of Mary has brought them to the door of salvation, whereas they know it as a matter of fact that they are involved in a narrow and dark hell of sin.⁵⁰

In order to undermine the Christian doctrine of the atonement Ghulam Ahmad first attacked the Muslim and the Christian teachings about the death of Christ.

✓ According to orthodox Muslim faith Jesus did not die on the cross, but was taken up directly into heaven and is living there pending His second return to earth toward the end of the world. At that time, according to orthodox Muslim thought, He will help bring about the final victory of Islam, get married, have children, and finally die and be buried next to Muhammad in Medina. An empty grave is awaiting Him even now. ✓ The main feature of this belief, as far as Ahmadiyya Islam is concerned, is that Jesus did not die a natural death and is alive today.

✓ The Qur'an plainly states that the Jews did not kill Jesus on the cross.

And for their unbelief, and their uttering against Mary a mighty calumny, and for their saying, "We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger

⁵⁰Quoted in Addison, XXII, 20.

of God"--yet they did not slay him, neither crucified him, only a likeness of that was shown to them. Those who are at variance concerning him surely are in doubt regarding him; they have no knowledge of him, except the following of surmise; and they slew him not of a certainty--no indeed; God raised him up to Him; God is All-mighty, All-wise.⁵¹

According to orthodox Islam it is not clear what actually happened to Jesus on the cross. According to some Muslim interpretations Judas or Simon of Cyrene were actually crucified instead of Jesus. But God confused the Jews in such a way that they thought they were actually crucifying Jesus Himself. Others deny the fact of the death, saying that he only seemed to die, God raising Him alive to Himself. In commenting on the above verse, Yusuf Ali summarizes by saying,

The Quranic teaching is that Christ was not crucified nor killed by the Jews, notwithstanding certain apparent circumstances which produced that illusion in the minds of some of his enemies; that disputations, doubts, and conjectures on such matters are vain; and that he was taken up to God.⁵²

The Christian faith, of course, is that Jesus really died on the cross, but rose from the dead on the third day and lives as Lord.

Both orthodox Muslims and Christians, therefore, believe that Jesus is living. This immediately puts Jesus into a different category from the other prophets, including Muhammad. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad apparently felt the disparagement between Christians who believe in an ascended and living Christ and

⁵¹Surah 4:155-156, in Arberry, I, 123.

⁵²Yusuf Ali, I, 230.

Muslims who look for guidance to a dead and buried prophet.⁵³ That is one reason why he emphasized the fact that God speaks in revelation even today. But his main effort was directed in another direction, namely to reduce Jesus to the status of all other men by establishing his natural death.

Against both the orthodox Muslims and the Christians he reinterpreted the Qur'anic and biblical accounts of the Passion and espoused the swoon theory with considerable embellishments. According to the Mirza, Jesus did not die on the cross, but merely became unconscious. Later he was revived by a potent ointment called the Marham-i-Isa (The Ointment of Jesus), and then travelled eastward to Kashmir, India, where he preached and lived to a ripe old age and was finally buried in a tomb on Khanyar Street, Srinagar, Kashmir, after a natural death.⁵⁴ By thus rewriting the life of Jesus, Ghulam Ahmad not only put Christ on the same level with all other people who die a natural death, but also removed the death of Jesus on the cross from any objective basis for a doctrine of atonement. At the same time it also gave him an opportunity to exalt himself over Jesus.

What use have we for a religion which is dead; what benefit can we derive from a book which is dead, and what blessing and bounty can we have from a dead god? I swear by Him who is the Master of my life, I am honoured with the certain and the unmistakable Word of the Holy God; I am

⁵³Gardner, X, 60.

⁵⁴Abdul Hamid, pp. 74-80.

so honored almost day in and day out. And as to the God to whom Jesus says: "Why hast Thou forsaken me?" --I find that that God has not forsaken me . . . I do not consider that Jesus Christ in any way surpasses me in this respect, i.e., I have been given the Word of God just as he was given the Word of God But I say it truly that, by rendering complete obedience to this Prophet [Muhammad], one can even be greater than Jesus.⁵⁵

The key to this claim is the natural death of Jesus. Ghulam Ahmad is reported to have said, "The death of Jesus (i.e., his natural death) is the door to my claim. It is the foundation and my claim is the superstructure." And again, "God has ordained that the tomb of Jesus (in Srinagar) should also prove the grave of Christianity."⁵⁶

James Addison, writing in 1929, stated that the followers of Ghulam Ahmad were tending to soft-pedal the Mirza's story of Jesus' journey to Kashmir and subsequent death there,⁵⁷ but such a trend is not discernible today. One of the latest books of the Ahmadiyyas, published in 1967, repeats the whole theory in much detail.⁵⁸ When the Pope visited India a few years ago, the Ahmadiyya Muslims presented him with brochures advocating their view and containing purported pictures of Jesus taken from the Encyclopaedia Britannica, which depicted him as a very old man.

⁵⁵Ghulam Ahmad, pp. 19-20.

⁵⁶Addison, XXII, 21.

⁵⁷Ibid., XXII, 20-21.

⁵⁸Abdul Hamid, pp. 74-80.

Present day Ahmadiyyas devote considerable effort to prove that Jesus did not die on the cross on the basis of the Bible. ✓ One of their favorite texts is the "sign of Jonah." Since Jonah went into the belly of the whale alive and came out alive, they claim that Jesus went through the experience after the crucifixion alive. ✓ They also adduce from the blood and water which flowed from Jesus' side that He was not really dead. The relative quickness of the whole incident together with the fact of his unbroken legs are presented as additional proofs.⁵⁹ The passages which clearly speak of Jesus' death are not mentioned.

The polemic against the atonement continues today also.

✓ If a person sins, the way to atone for that sin is to repent with a sincere heart and ask God for forgiveness. If that is the case, how can the sinless Jesus be a sacrifice and atone for the sins of the world? A sick person must take medicine. A hungry person must eat food. The sick person's illness will not disappear if someone else takes his medicine, and a hungry person's hunger will not be satisfied if another person eats food. If that is the case, how can Jesus atone for the sins of others by his death? The illustration of one person paying a financial debt for another does not hold in the case of sin. Everyone can understand that one man's sin cannot be transferred to another. It isn't just.

Isn't it contradictory to the justice and mercy of God that He would make an innocent person suffer for the guilty? It is neither justice nor mercy to punish a man who has not sinned. Anyone can understand that such action would be crass injustice and cruelty. Are we to understand that God perpetrates

⁵⁹Abdul Ata, Jesus Did Not Die on the Cross (Rabwah, West Pakistan: The Maktaba-al-Furqan, n.d.), pp. 1-12.

an injustice because he does not want to punish sinners? Then how is one to conceive of Jesus atoning for the sins of men by his sacrifice on the cross?⁶⁰

✓ In these and other ways the Ahmadiyyas press their views that the atonement is unnecessary, and that God can forgive sins to the repentant by a fiat of His will.

The Resurrection of Christ

✓ The Qur'an does not say anything about the resurrection of Christ, and it is doubtful if Muhammad ever heard the message of the resurrection. In the Qur'anic history of Jesus, God saves his prophet by taking him alive out of the hands of the Jews.

✓ The Ahmadiyyas also do not dwell much directly on the subject of the resurrection. By denying the death of Jesus on the cross they, of course, remove the whole basis for a resurrection. A man who did not die cannot rise again. Whatever they say about the post-resurrection appearances in the Gospels are either construed as the appearances of someone who did not die in the first place, or as the unreliable records of a corrupted revelation. The Ahmadiyyas, however, understand the significance of the death and the resurrection of Christ if they are facts:

Christ never died on the cross and he never rose from the dead; the preaching of the Christian

⁶⁰Abdullah Sahib, XXVIII, 261-262, 264. (Translation by author of this thesis)

missionary is therefore vain, and vain is also his faith. The Christian religion laid its foundation on the death of Christ on the cross and his subsequent rising; both these statements have been proved to be utterly wrong on the strength of the historical testimony offered by the gospels themselves, and with the foundation the whole superstructure falls to the ground.⁶¹

The Holy Spirit

There is no need to say much about the Holy Spirit in this part of the study because both the Qur'an and the Ahmadiyya Muslims identify the Holy Spirit with the Angel Gabriel. Muhammad Ali says that the Qur'an uses the words Holy Spirit and Gabriel interchangeably.⁶² In Islam the Angel Gabriel (Jibril) is the angel of revelation who revealed the Qur'an piece by piece to Muhammad. The same angel is regarded as the agent of inspiration for other prophets. The Ahmadiyyas claim that this designation of the Holy Spirit as the agent of inspiration is also the Jewish concept as well as the concept of Jesus.⁶³ In all events the Holy Spirit identified with Gabriel and the work of inspiration is a created being and not at all to be identified with God Himself. Muhammad Ali says that the "orthodox Christian view of the Spirit as one of the three persons in the Godhead co-eternal with God, is of later

⁶¹Quoted in Jones, p. 154.

⁶²Muhammad Ali, p. 18.

⁶³Ibid., p. 19.

growth."⁶⁴ Ghulam Ahmad referred in a mocking way to the Holy Spirit of the Trinity as "only a pigeon."⁶⁵

It may also be mentioned that many Ahmadiyyas, at least in India, interpret all the Paraclete passages of John's Gospel as prophecies of the coming of Muhammad. This is not a peculiarly Ahmadiyya approach; other Muslims make the same application. In the Qur'an there is one passage where Jesus predicts the coming of another prophet after him. "Children of Israel, I am indeed the Messenger of God to you, confirming the Torah that is before me, and giving good tidings of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad."⁶⁶ The Arabic root for both Muhammad and Ahmad is the same, namely H-M-D. Ahmad means "Praised One." Because of this prophecy in the Qur'an Muslims expect to find some references to Muhammad in the Bible. Some commentators have suggested that there may have been some original confusion between *παρακλητος* and *περικλυτος*.⁶⁷ The latter word could be translated as "praised one."

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 20.

⁶⁵Walter, p. 95.

⁶⁶Surah 61:6, in Arberry, II, 274.

⁶⁷W. A. Rice, Crusaders of the Twentieth Century (London: W. A. Rice, 1910), p. 405.

Summary of Polemic

It has been seen that the Ahmadiyya Muslims are very aggressive in attacking the Christian doctrines of the Trinity, the deity of Christ, His sinlessness, and the atonement. These are some of the same doctrines which nineteenth-century liberalism found occasion to undermine. The Ahmadiyyas find some of the liberal literature suitable for their purposes, especially those works which undermine the authority of the Scriptures. But there is a particular bitterness, one might almost say viciousness, in the Ahmadiyya polemic which goes beyond the attitudes of most Western critics of the historic Christian faith, particularly in the writings of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad himself. And yet, when one reads the following prayer of Ghulam Ahmad, he gets the impression that his main battle is still with idolatry; he thinks the Christians are guilty of shirk.

Our beloved Allah, save the Christians from worshipping a man as God, and fulfil the promises of Thy prophets for this age. Lift the wounded ones from the thorns. Purify them in Thy knowledge and Thy love. There is no salvation in the blood of man. Merciful God, it has been long that Christians have worshipped a man, but now have mercy upon them, and open their eyes.⁶⁸

⁶⁸Shams, back cover.

CHAPTER IV

ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE

When a Christian reads or hears the anti-Christian polemic of the Ahmadiyya Muslims as described in the preceding pages, he is tempted to become exasperated and dismiss both Ahmadiyya thought and the Ahmadiyyas themselves from his consideration and concern. This attitude, however, is unrealistic and unhelpful. The problems and challenges posed by the Ahmadiyya Movement will not vanish by merely eliminating them from thought and contact. Mere rejection of their ideas will not prevent uninformed Christians from being misled by Ahmadiyya propaganda. Nor will Ahmadiyyas find Christ as the fulfillment of their religious longings if Christians treat them as non-entities or regard them with contempt.

There is a sense in which the Ahmadiyyas may be regarded as the Mormons of Islam. Just as Joseph Smith claimed to have revelations after New Testament times, so the Ahmadiyyas claim revelation after the initial revelation of Muhammad in the Qur'an. Just as later Mormons became more sophisticated and advanced beyond some of the crudities of their origins, so the Ahmadiyyas have become more sophisticated and have organized both themselves and their doctrines beyond the

confusing thoughts of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.¹ In recent years there has also been a similarity in their community development. Just as the Mormons moved into a desolate part of the United States and built up a civilization in the midst of great natural obstacles, so the Ahmadiyyas have moved into a desert area of Pakistan and built for themselves the city of Rabwah. There is a certain dynamic esprit des corps among the Ahmadiyya Muslims² which belies the wistful hope of H. D. Griswold, writing in 1912, that the movement would soon disintegrate.³

Nor is it wise to judge the Ahmadiyya Muslims only on the basis of their anti-Christian polemic. No movement can arise, survive, and grow merely on the basis of its negations. The Ahmadiyya Movement offers something positive or appealing to the many Muslims who accept Ahmadiyya Islam, as well as to the fewer number of Christians who have been converted to that faith. In order to assess the Ahmadiyya doctrine of

¹Cf. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Ahmadiyya," The Encyclopaedia of Islam (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1960), I, 301: "His teachings, over his last twenty years, are multifarious: sometimes curious . . . or well informed, sometimes inconsistent, often polemical and crude, sometimes remarkably spiritual. One discerns in them, in addition to peripheral Hindu concepts and a reaction against Christian influences, but more especially in the pattern of his life and the positive response evoked, a late Indian sufi version of Islam activated by modern-Western infiltrations."

²Ibid., I, 302.

³H. D. Griswold, "The Ahmadiya Movement," The Moslem World (October 1912), II, 379.

God adequately, it is necessary to consider these positive or appealing aspects.

✓ Positive Aspects of the Ahmadiyya Doctrine of God

✓ Its balance of transcendence and immanence

In this study considerable attention has been given to the unique, unknowable God of Islamic orthodoxy, as well as to the immanent God of the Sufi mystics. In the Qur'an there is evidence of both of these accents, though weightage is given to the majesty and sovereignty of God. Later Islam accentuated the majesty and sovereignty of God to such an extent that His kindly attitudes to men and His ample provisions for the universe were sublimated. ✓ By ignoring some of the older doctrinal formulations of the orthodox and drawing their inspiration more directly from the Qur'an the Ahmadiyyas have recovered a more balanced conception of God. Some of the more recent studies of the Qur'an based on modern methods of linguistic and semantic analysis bear out the correctness of this Ahmadiyya adjustment.⁴ It would be interesting to know if this adjustment in thought about God is actually the result of going back to the original source of Islam or due to Christian influence, but that is beyond the scope of this study. The fact remains that the Ahmadiyya Muslims have some constructive

⁴Cf. Toshihiko Izutzu, Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1966); and Daud Rahbar, God of Justice (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960).

things to say about the beneficence of God in providing for the needs of man, and about His kindly disposition toward man in the midst of all troubles, physical and spiritual. It is an improvement over the often barren and sterile descriptions of God in the old dogmaticians of Islam. Though the Ahmadiyyas do not lose the sense of God's majesty, they yet value and draw inspiration from His nearness and concern for men.

Its emphasis on human responsibility

This thought is connected with the previous. In Sunni Islam the emphasis on God's transcendence has often led to a rigid determinism and sense of fatalism. Man becomes a mere pawn and puppet.

According to this view the whole world is very much like a marionette show. We laugh at the antics of the actors as though the antics were theirs, but it is all an illusion; every movement is produced by invisible strings pulled from above. So on the stage of the world, man seems to act, but it, too, is an illusion; God pulls the strings, for he is the only Doer.⁵

The Ahmadiyyas, however, have realized the evils which are inherent in this type of world-view, and have balanced off the doctrine of God's sovereignty with an emphasis on man's responsibility. They also translate this insight into practical action. For example, whereas the Sunni Muslims in some parts of the world have been uncooperative with the World

⁵G. J. Pennings, "God's Decrees and Man's Responsibility," The Moslem World, XXXI (January 1941), 23.

Health Organization in exterminating flies as spreaders of disease because "they would not be there, if it were not the will of Allah," the Ahmadiyya Muslims have been known to lead the community in such efforts as cleaning up the streets of a dirty city. This tempering of God's sovereignty to make room for man's responsibility is wholesome for civic life.

Its moral motivation

The moral motivation of the Qur'an is based on thankfulness to God for His benefits, fear of God and the punishment of hell, and the hope of reward.⁶ In Sunni Islam the motivations of the fear of God and His punishment, the example of the prophet, and the hope of reward are very prominent. Although the Ahmadiyyas also urge some of their ethical injunctions on the basis of these motivations, their main ethical and moral thrust is that man exists to be God's vice-regent on earth and to manifest the attributes of God. This gives a better purpose to life than the fear of hell or the hope of reward. This sense of purpose may explain some of the dynamic esprit des corps of the Ahmadiyya Muslims mentioned above.

Judging from the Ahmadiyya group in Calicut, South India, the Ahmadiyyas are indeed men with a purpose.

⁶Izutsu, passim.

James Mayer Addison, "The Ahmadiyya Movement and Its Western Propaganda," The Harvard Theological Review, XIII (January 1929), 27.

Appealing Aspects of the Ahmadiyya Doctrine of God

In addition to the positive aspects of the doctrine of God mentioned above, the Ahmadiyya doctrine of God has some appealing aspects. The positive aspects have been recognized as wholesome even by non-Muslims. The appealing aspects are more dubious. They are aspects which attract others to the Ahmadiyya conception of God, although they are not valid from the Christian viewpoint.

Its simplicity

The simplicity of the Ahmadiyya Muslim doctrine of God is probably that aspect which appeals most to certain types of Christians who are confused, baffled, and offended by the complexity of the history and formulation of Christian doctrine, especially the doctrine of the Trinity with its associated doctrines of the deity of Christ and the atonement.

There are many people in the West who regard all dogma as some sort of evil; the Ahmadiyya Movement appeals to such persons.

The bare unity of God, from which flow His attributes and His works, appears, on the surface at least, to make religion simple. An English convert to Ahmadiyya Islam is reported as saying, "I wanted a simple, practical faith, free from dogmas and tenets This I found in Islam."⁷

⁷James Thayer Addison, "The Ahmadiyya Movement and Its Western Propaganda," The Harvard Theological Review, XXII (January 1929), 27.

Its Appeal to Reason

Closely related to the appeal of simplicity is the appeal to human reason. The history of al-Ash'ari and the Mu'tazila proves that human reason can become embarrassing to those who espouse it most, but this truth has not yet become existential for the Ahmadiyya Muslims. Many of their doctrinal affirmations about God are backed up with appeals to reason. In an age still permeated by rationalism and the scientific outlook there are many who are attracted by this emphasis.

Its syncretism

The Ahmadiyyas regard all religions as basically one. Following the Qur'anic lead, they believe that a genuine prophet has been sent to every nation, and that the kernel of each prophet's message has been the same. The divergencies of present-day religions are interpreted as departures from the pristine purity of their earlier forms. Thus Hinduism with its idolatry is regarded as a corruption from the original unity of God supposedly preached by Krishna. Christianity with its doctrine of the Trinity is described as an unwarranted declension from the simple unitarian faith of Jesus. Ahmadiyya Islam claims to restore these and other religions to their original perfection. The Mirza with his claim to be the fulfillment of Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam embodies this syncretistic spirit. To people who are confused by the

many competing religions in the world this reduction of all faiths to a basic belief in the unity of God with attributes of power and mercy is appealing.

Its universalism

The Ahmadiyya writings describe the life after death in considerable detail. Building upon their conception of God's mercy, they construct a hereafter of eventual salvation for all men.

Islam . . . teaches that every human being has been created with the purpose that he or she will ultimately attain perfect salvation. The most rabid disbeliever and wrongdoer, after being subjected to certain kinds of reformatory treatment, one of which is the torment of Hell, will ultimately attain salvation and will enter Paradise.⁸

Death is only a transfer from one realm to another, a continuation of progress and improvement in the life beyond. "No nation has ever condemned its warriors for being killed before victory was achieved. Every soldier who sincerely strives for victory is honoured."⁹ This extension of God's mercy to include the eventual salvation of all mankind after death appeals to many.

⁸B. Mahmud Ahmad in his Introduction to Sher Ali's The Holy Qur'an (Rabwah, West Pakistan: The Oriental & Religious Publishing Corporation, Ltd., 1968), p. 132.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Cf. Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1930), I, 417-421.

¹¹Ibid., I, 456.

The Defective Aspects of the Ahmadiyya Doctrine

Although the Ahmadiyya doctrine of God may be an improvement over other conceptions of God currently held in the Muslim world, it is not an improvement over the God revealed in either the Old Testament or the New Testament and as described in the historic Christian creeds. Though the creeds make the doctrine of God sound complicated, both Luther and Chemnitz pointed out that it was not the Christians who produced that complication; it was the critics of the Christian faith who forced the Christians to define their belief in exact terms.¹⁰ Furthermore, mere simplicity is no argument for superiority. The three-word sentences of a small child are simple, but they are not considered superior to the poetry of one of the masters of verse. The essential thing is not superiority, but truth. Which description of God conforms most nearly to the reality?

Weakness in the conception of God's holiness

In Christian theology the holiness of God denotes (1) His supreme majesty and absolute transcendence, and (2) His absolute ethical purity. God is completely separate from sin and opposes man's sin.¹¹ The Sunni Muslims limit God's holiness

¹⁰Cf. Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1950), I, 417-421.

¹¹Ibid., I, 456.

to the first part of this definition, namely to His separation and difference from all creation. ✓ The Ahmadiyya Muslims bring in some of the ethical quality of holiness, describing it with such words as purity and righteousness. But what is the reality behind these words? B. Mahmud Ahmad cites the life of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a manifestation of God's holiness. But what of that life? Was it a manifestation of God's holiness in the biblical sense of complete separation from sin? ✓ The Mirza's first marriage ended in divorce. According to one of the Ahmadiyyas:

He was young when he married. His wife was quite a contrast to him. She bore him two sons. He treated her well, but she being a worldly type of lady, they could not get along with each other for long. The marriage was, therefore, not successful and ultimately resulted in a legal divorce.¹²

Furthermore, ✓ the Mirza attracted much attention by predicting the death of some of his enemies. This seems to be a far cry from the holiness of Jesus who prayed concerning His enemies, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). ✓ Even though the Ahmadiyyas laud the attributes of God's holiness and even describe it as the essence of all the attributes of God, the reality behind their concept of holiness suggests that much of the description is mere rhetoric.

¹²Abdul Hamid, Islam and Christianity (New York: Carlton Press, Inc., 1967), p. 150.

This observation is borne out by the Ahmadiyya understanding of the nature of man. The Ahmadiyyas make special efforts to counter the Christian teaching of original sin and emphasize man's innate ability, purity, and innocence.

Islam says that man is born pure. This helps him to keep up his courage and to try to preserve his nature unsullied. If he believes that he is born sinful, he would not mind so much if he were to become a little more sinful than he already is.¹³

The belief in the innate innocence of man is coupled with a faith that knowledge is virtue.

It is evident that everybody shuns what he knows to be certainly harmful to him. No one thrusts his hand into a hole which to his certain knowledge has a snake in it, nor does anyone devour what he knows to be poison. To shun these harmful things he does not stand in need of any atonement, nor does he ever consider it necessary that anyone should be crucified to save him from these evils. All that he requires is certain knowledge that there is harm in the thing, and this is sufficient to make him fly from it.¹⁴

This optimism regarding the nature of man is belied by the many suicides each day, as well as by daily examples of people who go ahead and do evil in spite of better knowledge. Paul recognized the difficulty of equating knowledge with virtue when he described the plight of sinful man in Rom. 7:15: "I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate."

¹³Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadiyyat or the True Islam (Washington D.C.: The American Fazl Mosque, 1951), p. 142.

¹⁴Quoted in L. Bevan Jones, Christianity Explained to Muslims (Revised edition; Calcutta; Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, 1952), p. 102.

In Ahmadiyya Islam, and in orthodox Islam as well, there is a direct connection between deficient conceptions of God's holiness and weak definitions of sin coupled with optimistic estimates of man's innate moral powers.¹⁵

In the quotation cited above the connection with the atonement is also apparent. According to Ahmadiyya Islam man has power to save himself; he does not need a redeemer. S. W. Koelle, writing on Islam during the last century, pointed out the connection between a weak sense of sin and the claims of the Gospel when he wrote concerning Muhammad himself, "But having no adequate conception of the nature of sin and man's fallen state, he also lacked the faculty of truly appreciating the remedy for it, which was offered in the Gospel."¹⁶

Weakness in the conception of God's justice

The ambiguity regarding the attribute of God's justice in Ahmadiyya thought has already been mentioned.¹⁷ In this connection the remedial nature of punishment in the Ahmadiyya philosophy, as well as the belief in the ultimate salvation of all people, is of importance. According to this view sin is

¹⁵Cf. W. R. W. Gardner, The Qur'anic Doctrine of God (Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1916), pp. 53-55; Samuel M. Zwemer, The Moslem Doctrine of God (New York: The American Tract Society, 1905), pp. 49-60

¹⁶S. W. Koelle, Mohammad and Mohammedanism (London: Rivington, 1889), p. 471.

¹⁷Supra, pp. 41-42.

a stumbling along the way to eternal progress, a transgression against the universal laws of moral and spiritual nature.

Punishment is remedial and can be removed or waived when it is evident that the offender is again on the road to improvement. God's justice gives way to His mercy.

There are several serious deficiencies in this theory. First of all, it contradicts the truthfulness of God which the Ahmadiyyas also affirm. In the Bible God is described as one who does not lie in either His promises or His threats. His truthfulness is the basis of the promise of eternal life to believers (Titus 1:2). His truthfulness stands behind His threats to punish sin. When Saul disobeyed God's command regarding the Amalekites, he expected to receive pardon and maintain fellowship with God as if nothing had happened at all. But Samuel announced Saul's rejection as king by God with the words, "The Glory of Israel will not lie or repent." (1 Sam. 15:29). When God threatens punishment for sin, His truthfulness demands that He carry out His word. The whole Old Testament describes how even single sins rendered men guilty before God and brought down His punishment. The Ahmadiyya concept of remedial justice fails to take the threats of God's Word against sin seriously. Other Muslim students of the Qur'an come up with a stronger statement on God's justice than the Ahmadiyyas.

Such a unity of thought, a central notion that runs through and through, characterizes any great book. In the Bible this central notion is God's Fatherhood and His love for mankind In the Qur'an the

corresponding central notion is God's strict justice. And so on the fear of God's strict justice of the judgement day depends the fulfilling of the law and the whole moral value of Qur'anic duty. It is not fear of God's tyranny. It is fear of God's justice . . . the idea of God's justice is the central theme of the Qur'an, and consistently dominates the book.¹⁸

Secondly, the Ahmadiyya concept of remedial justice does not take sin seriously; the effects of sin are only temporary and can be removed by repentance and the fiat of God. Zaf-rulla Khan speaks of a justice in which "no penalty shall be severer than that which is appropriate to the default or offense."¹⁹ Here there is a radical difference between the biblical and the Ahmadiyya conception of the nature of sin and its penalties. According to the Bible, sin is of such horrendous evil that it merits death (Ezek. 18:4) and damnation (Gal. 3:10). Even one sin makes a person liable to eternal consequences (James 2:11). There is therefore no meaning in speaking of more severe or less severe penalties "appropriate to the default or offense." Every sin is a capital offense. The Ahmadiyya concept of a justice which thinks of sin in terms of lesser or greater penalties hinders men from facing reality, the need for a Savior from sin.

Thirdly, the Ahmadiyya concept of remedial punishment sacrifices God's justice for His mercy. Other Muslims sublimate God's justice to His power; the Ahmadiyyas sublimate it

¹⁸Daud Rahbar, pp. 223-224.

¹⁹Supra, p. 36

to His mercy. To the Christian this suspension of one attribute for the sake of another means that God is not true to Himself. His own being is identical with His holiness and His justice. To suspend these attributes by a mere nod of His will is tantamount to God denying Himself. Even though the harmonization of God's attributes provides problems for Christians also, they prefer to give full worth and expression to all the attributes and hold them in paradox rather than to weaken the perfection of God by limiting or sublimating the operation of one attribute to that of another. The event on the Cross is regarded as the act of God which satisfies both mercy and justice; the demands of God for the punishment of sin are upheld in the death of Christ, and the remission of sins connected with that death offers mercy to all.

R. W. Dale, in his book on the atonement, lists several other objections to the idea of remedial punishment. Although he wrote while the Ahmadiyya Movement was still in its infancy, some of his thoughts meet the ideas propounded by the Ahmadiyyas. In a previous chapter it was seen how the Ahmadiyyas prefer to describe God as a master rather than a judge because a master can overlook the fault of a servant if He knows that His leniency will not damage the character and productivity of the servant. Dale admits that such an attitude may be possible in individual relationships, but points out that leniency may be an impossible way of action when many people are involved or when the "master" is in some official administrative position.

He is the accidental representative of that social authority, the assertion and maintenance of which are essential to the strength and tranquillity of the organization of society. As an individual, he might be merciful. As a master, he cannot.²⁰

He continues in another place:

It must be remembered that the Divine claims which sin resists, and the Divine rights which sin refuses to acknowledge, are essentially different from the claims and rights which are in such a sense personal that they can be remitted at pleasure. They are claims which it is morally necessary that God should maintain.²¹

This is more in the nature of a rational argument, but is readily demonstrated in practical life. If a teacher in school is lax with one child, how will it affect the rest of the classroom? The Ahmadiyyas would probably claim that God is capable of handling this problem on a universal scale. Dale's second argument against the theory of remedial punishment is more convincing. He describes the utter confusion and chaos in the moral order of the universe which would result from the logical application of this theory.

Is punishment to be regarded as a reformatory process, a process intended to promote the moral benefit of the sufferer? If it were that and nothing more, and if the justice of punishment consisted in its fitness to produce a favorable moral impression on the sinner, God would be free to inflict or to remit the penalties of the Law without regard to any other consideration than the moral disposition of the person by whom the precepts of the Law had been violated. The severity of the punishment would

²⁰R. W. Dale, The Atonement (London: Congregational Union of England and Wales, 1894), pp. 380-381.

²¹Ibid., p. 382.

have to be measured, not by the magnitude of the sin for which it is inflicted, but by the difficulty of inducing the sinner to amend. If even the greatest sin were immediately succeeded by hearty repentance, there would be no mercy in withholding punishment; for since, on this theory, the justice of punishment consists in its reformatory power, it could not be justly inflicted where reformation had been already produced by other and gentler influences. It also follows that if there are cases--and such cases are easily conceivable--in which repentance is less likely to be awakened by inflicting pain and disgrace than by conferring new joy and honour, in these cases the lightest penalty would be unjust, and justice would require that the life of the sinner should be made brighter and happier on account of his sin. By a very slight exercise of ingenuity it might be shown that the theory which rests the justice of punishment on its reformatory power, involves the most grotesque consequences, and consequences which are repugnant to our most elementary moral convictions.²²

✓ This is a rather lengthy quotation, but it is produced in full because the concept of remedial punishment in connection with the justice of God plays a major role in Ahmadiyya thought. Dale rightly points out that such a concept vitiates not only the moral order of the universe, but even the mercy of God. What room is there for mercy if punishment is only temporary and can even be dispensed with altogether? ✓ The Ahmadiyya weakness in describing God's justice is critical.

In view of the Qur'anic emphasis on the punishment of hell for unbelievers, is not the assessment of James Addison perhaps correct when he asserts concerning the Ahmadiyyas in England, that they are opportunists?

²²Ibid.

The claims which are made in favor of Islam are obviously determined less by a study of that religion and its history than by a study of what will appeal to the Westerner Its leaders are eager to adapt the message to the convictions or fashions of the present hour.²³

The emphasis on a remedial justice fits that pattern.

Weakness in the concept of God's love and grace

✓ It has already been pointed out that the Ahmadiyyas speak quite often about man's love for God, but much less frequently of God's love for man. ✓ The grace of God which is described under His attributes of beneficence and mercy is primarily a provision for man's physical life on earth or dependent upon man's prior good action. This is a reflection of a general weakness in Islam which is evident in the Qur'an itself. ✓ The Qur'an only speaks of God's love in the sense of approval of those who obey Him. ✓ The concept of God's love reaching out to sinners and operating while men are still in a state of enmity against God is missing in the Qur'an. The mystics spoke more of God's love, but they did not derive their teaching from the Qur'an. Daud Rahbar has summarized the Qur'anic thought on this subject.

✓ In the short chapter on Divine Love we have shown that there is not a single verse in the Qur'an that speaks of God's unconditional love for mankind . . . God loves those who do good, who turn repentant, who keep themselves pure, who guard themselves fearfully,

²³Addison, XXII, 24, 32.

who are patient, who rely on Him, and who fight in His cause. Again, it was pointed out in that chapter that the word yuhibbu in all these verses does not necessarily mean "loves," for the word can equally well be rendered as "likes" or "approves." All these verses represent the idea of God's conditional love or approval.²⁴

The Ahmadiyya concept of God's love falls far short of the biblical picture of God's love in Christ searching out the lost as in the Parable of the Good Shepherd. It does not measure up to the love of God revealed in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. The Ahmadiyya concept of God's love amounts to nothing when viewed in the light of that love revealed on Good Friday and Easter and pointed out by Paul in Rom. 5:8: "But God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," and in Eph. 2:4-5: "But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ."

But in describing God's love for sinners to an Ahmadiyya Muslim, or to any Muslim for that matter, a word of caution is in order. It is pointed out above that Ahmadiyyas and the Qur'an also define love as "approval." Because of this definition Ahmadiyyas get the impression that Christians are preaching God's approval of sinners. This is a blasphemous thought to Muslims and Christians alike. Care must be taken to avoid giving that impression of God's love.

²⁴Daud Rahbar, p. 225.

Weakness in establishing solid basis for doctrine

It is difficult to determine the basic norm for the Ahmadiyya doctrine of God. In Islam the two most important sources for doctrine are the Qur'an and the Traditions. In the discussion on the justice of God it was seen that they do not even follow their own book in defining the justice of God. There is a similar eclecticism over against the Traditions. They reject those Traditions which teach determinism; at the same time they base their extensive teachings on the manifestation of God's attributes on other Traditions. What is the basis of selection?

Furthermore, they claim that God's mercy is the chief of all attributes, the string which holds the beads together. But in rejecting the atonement through Jesus' death on the cross Mirza Ghulam Ahmad appeals to God's power. The cross is considered to be an exhibition of God's weakness and rejected on that account.

The Ahmadiyya bid for rationality is especially ambiguous. While lauding the basic rationality of Islam, the Ahmadiyyas give evidence of irrational, unhistorical, and unscientific handling of sources. For instance, they refuse to take the biblical account of Christ's passion seriously, though it is the nearest account in point of time to the actual events, and accept instead the account of Ghulam Ahmad who lived eighteen centuries after the event. Some of the Mirza's ideas about Jesus' stay in Kashmir were taken from a

book called The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ by a Russian traveler named Nicolas Notovitch. The account of this book was later proven to be a fraud.²⁵ Even if the historicity of the book was accepted, the Ahmadiyyas would have to explain why Notovitch placed the sojourn of Jesus in the Orient before His public ministry in Palestine while Ghulam Ahmad places it after His public ministry and crucifixion. ✓ Is the mere affirmation by the Mirza a sufficient basis for doctrine even when it manifestly contradicts all known history?

For a Christian the Ahmadiyya handling of the Bible is especially disconcerting. They alternately appeal to the Bible as an authority and discount it as unreliable. It is used to try to prove that the God of the Bible is only a national God; it is rejected when it says that Jesus died on the cross. ✓ The Ahmadiyyas have laid down some principles of interpretation regarding the Qur'an, but do not apply these principles to the interpretation of the Bible. One of the principles is that Scripture interprets itself. But both the context and the rest of the New Testament are ignored when Jesus' statement to the Syrophenician woman, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," is interpreted as the final goal of His mission.

For a Christian these methods suggest a word of caution. First of all, it is a questionable undertaking to try to

²⁵H. A. Walter, The Ahmadiya Movement (Calcutta: Association Press, 1918), p. 92.

establish a religious truth upon the book of another faith. Without living and breathing the spirit of that book, it cannot be interpreted adequately. Secondly, in discussing religious truths with Ahmadiyyas it is necessary to lay some ground rules for the conversation. The basic dishonesty of appealing to a book in one instance and rejecting it in another has to be pointed out.

Misunderstandings of the Christian Faith

Some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Ahmadiyya Muslim doctrine of God have been pointed out. In a previous chapter the anti-Christian polemic of the Ahmadiyyas has been described. Though a Christian's first reaction to this polemic may be one of anger, a little reflection on the issue produces another emotion--that of sadness. What Christian is not sad when he thinks about the misunderstandings of the Christian conception of God held by the Ahmadiyya Muslims? For it is these misunderstandings which are serving as barriers to the Gospel which is meant for their salvation. It is good to be aware of these misunderstandings.

Regarding the Trinity

The Qur'an and most Muslims conceive of the Trinity as a triad of three gods, Father, Mother Mary, and Son Jesus. Although the Ahmadiyyas realize that the Christian Trinity is not Father, Mother, and Son, but the Father, Son, and Holy

✓
 Spirit--they nevertheless regard the whole doctrine as either a form of tritheism or a form of idolatry. Because of this misunderstanding the Muslims think that Christianity is a lower form of religion than Islam.

In spite of the extraordinary care taken by the theologians both of the Greek-speaking and Syriac-speaking Church, to emphasize the fact that Christians are monotheists and that the Unity of God is fundamental to any understanding of what we mean by the Trinity, the Qur'an teaches that we are tritheists. Now in the Islamic theology the most heinous of all sins is shirk, i.e., the giving of a partner to God, and as tritheists we Christians naturally come under the condemnation of shirk. So in the Muslim's philosophy of religion we do not stand in the upper stage among the monotheists such as Muslims, Jews and Buddhists. We do not even stand as high as the Zoroastrians who are dualists, for we are tritheists and not very much better than the pagans with their groveling polytheism. So in their eyes the conversion of a Muslim to Christianity, so far from being an advance in religion, is a reversion to a lower stage from the bonds of which their fathers with great travail were delivered.²⁶

Such a misunderstanding cannot be cleared up by silence or unconcern.

First of all, it is imperative that a Christian emphasize that the Bible teaches the unity of God. There are clear passages to this effect in both the Old and the New Testaments. Compare Is. 43:10; Is. 45:5; and 1 Cor. 8:4.

Secondly, the Christian should stress that the unity of God is also the confession of the Christian creeds. The Nicene Creed begins, "I believe in one God" The Athanasian Creed says, "And yet there are not three Gods, but one

²⁶Orientalist, "The Muslim Point of View," The Moslem World, XXVI (January 1936), 27.

God So we are forbidden by the catholic religion to say, "There be three Gods or three Lords."

If it has been made clear to the Muslim that Christians believe in one God, it is advisable to then proceed to describe the works of God for man's salvation rather than to enter into the intricacies of the doctrine of the Three Persons in the One Essence. It is through the works of God that men come to know God as He is. The Trinity cannot be appreciated by someone who is not already a believer in Christ.

Thirdly, if it becomes necessary to define the doctrine of the Trinity, the explanation should be simple. There is some precedent for simple explanations in Muslim theology. In the controversies over anthropomorphisms, for instance, the orthodox Muslims accepted the fact that the Qur'an spoke of God anthropomorphically, but desisted from trying to explain the "how." The Ahmadiyyas believe that the speech of God, His eternal Word, has been given in a book. They hold to the fact, but do not try to explain how the Infinite can be expressed in the finite. The Christian position on the Trinity is somewhat similar. On the basis of the Scriptural evidence the Christian faith accepts the fact of the three Persons in one Essence, but does not attempt to explain how this can be true. The "howness" is left as a mystery and accepted on faith. Christians need not feel defensive about leaving some questions as mysteries.

In discussing such matters with an Ahmadiyya Muslim the Christian will have to check out his terminology. Much of the confusion in the formulation of early Christian doctrine resulted from the difficulty of finding suitable words which conveyed the same thoughts to the various parties concerned. As far as Islam is concerned, Harold Spencer has pointed out that the word "substance," at least to some Muslim theologians, was defined as something which has extension.²⁷ In such a situation Muslims would easily misunderstand Christians if they spoke of the essence of God in terms of "substance." In the Malayalam language of South India it is no problem to find a suitable word for "essence," but there is great difficulty in finding a word for "person" which does not create the impression of a separate being.

One of the favorite questions of an Ahmadiyya is, "If Jesus was God, who was sustaining the universe for the three days that He was in the grave?" Though this question may be asked from doubtful motives, the query itself indicates a lack of understanding of the Trinity and God's spiritual nature. According to the Christian creeds, the whole Godhead resides in all three Persons of the Trinity. Even if Jesus died on the cross, the Godhead did not cease to exist or operate during the time between His death and resurrection. Furthermore, the spiritual nature of God is such that it does not

²⁷Harold Spencer, Islam and the Gospel of God (Delhi: SPCK, 1956), p. 108.

become less by assuming a human nature in Jesus. In their doctrine of unity, the Muslims tend to conceive of unity as a mathematical unity. According to such thinking one orange plus one orange equals two oranges; three oranges less one orange equals two oranges, et cetera. That is the order of mathematical and material unity. However, the order of spiritual unity is different. God's love does not become less because it is given to people. His essence is not reduced or divided when it abides in the Son and in the Holy Spirit along with the Father. The question, therefore, of what happened to the Godhead while Jesus was in the grave is based on a wrong conception of the Trinity and the nature of God.

Finally, there is need for caution in using expressions which might easily lead to misunderstanding. For instance, even though the "Formula of Concord" says that it is legitimate to speak of Mary as the Mother of God, this expression may only confirm a Muslim in the Qur'anic understanding of the Trinity as Father, Mother, and Son. A Christian writing from Egypt reports the reaction of a Muslim friend when he saw a schoolbus passing by with the words, Pensionnat de la Mere de Dieu, painted on the side.

It used to make my friend fighting mad. "God's mother," he would say, "and who, pray, begot Him? Do you expect me in these days of modernity and enlightenment to believe that God Almighty chose some billowy-bosomed Jewess for a mistress and begot Himself?"²⁸

²⁸Orientalist, XXVI, p. 28.

The title "Son of God" can also be easily misunderstood in the same way. It is better to use some other title for Christ unless there is some opportunity to explain the word "son" in this context. The early Christians adapted their vocabulary to the people they were trying to reach with the Gospel. In the Jewish environment titles such as "Messiah" and "Son of man" had particular relevance. In the Gentile environment they spoke more of Christ as "Lord" and "Savior."²⁹ In speaking with Muslims the titles of Savior and Messiah will not lead to such misunderstanding as the title "Son of God."

Regarding the person of Christ

The Ahmadiyya Muslims know that Christians believe in the deity of Christ. But they do not know anything about the Christian doctrine of the two natures in one person nor of the communication of attributes. Because of this gap in their knowledge and understanding of the Christian position they will often ask such questions as, "If Jesus is God, why did He say that 'My Father is greater than I?'" "Why did He confess ignorance of the hour of the Judgement Day?" "Why was it necessary for Him to eat, drink, and sleep?" "Can God suffer and die?"

Though a Christian may not be able to prove the deity of Christ to the satisfaction of an Ahmadiyya Muslim, he can

²⁹Reginald H. Fuller, The Foundations of New Testament Christology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965), pp. 23-98.

nevertheless show that his faith is built on careful thought and "give a reason for the hope that is within him." Article VIII of the "Formula of Concord" offers answers to some of these questions. The essence of this Article is that Christ has both a human nature and a divine nature with each nature having the special attributes or characteristics of that nature. The two natures are combined in one person, the person of Jesus, in such a way that the attributes of each nature are not the property of that nature alone, but belong to the entire person. Whenever Jesus performed any action, it was not just one of the natures which acted, but the whole person. Thus it can be said that the person of Jesus was hungry, became weary, and slept, while it can also be said that the person of Jesus was omniscient and omnipotent.

Some of the other questions of the Ahmadiyyas can be met by distinguishing between the state of humiliation and the state of exaltation. In His state of humiliation Jesus did not always make use of all the divine attributes which were available in His person by virtue of the divine nature. That is why He could be ignorant of the Day of Judgment, endure suffering, and die, even though He was the Lord of Life, and the Word and Wisdom of the Godhead.

Again, these truths are not something which can be appreciated by someone who has not yet recognized Jesus as his Lord and Savior, but they may help the Ahmadiyya to see that the Christian faith is not a ridiculous hodgepodge of irrational

doctrines. The mystery is still there, but it is not a mystery of fact; it is a mystery of "how."

Next to the article of the Holy Trinity this is the greatest mystery in heaven and on earth, as Paul says, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, that God was manifest in the flesh" For since the Apostle Peter in clear words testifies that we also, in mystery, are in Christ, "partakers of the divine nature," what kind of communion of the divine nature, then, must that be of which the apostle says that "in Christ dwelt all of the fullness of the Godhead bodily," so that God and man are one person?³⁰

Regarding the Incarnation

It has been pointed out that the Ahmadiyyas look upon the Incarnation as the deification of a man. This shows that they do not understand the word itself. In their view Christians are guilty of idolatry for making a man into God. This is a reflection of the Qur'anic view. It is necessary for Christians to state plainly that incarnation means the very opposite of deification; it means "humanification." The Christian doctrine is not that man became God, but that God became man.

Sometimes Ahmadiyyas and other Muslims will object and say that it is impossible for God to enter into humanity. It is strange that Muslims use this argument of impossibility for God, because they usually say that God can do anything He wills. In answer to this dictum regarding the impossibility

³⁰"Formula of Concord," in Concordia Triglotta (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 1027.

for God to assume human nature, a Christian may legitimately ask, "If God can make Himself known through a book like the Qur'an, why should it be any different for Him to make Himself known through a human life?" ✓ The argument of impossibility also seems to contradict the Ahmadiyya doctrine regarding the manifestation of God's attributes in persons.

✓ Another type of argument against the Incarnation is based on the misunderstanding that the assumption of humanity is somehow degrading to God. L. Bevan Jones explains the rationale for this attitude and offers a reply:

But his [a Muslim's] jealousy for God is based upon an imperfect conception of the Deity. He feels that the Majesty of the "Lord of the Worlds" must be safeguarded at all costs. We, on the contrary, maintain that, far from it being derogatory to the Glory of God to seek, by such means, to make Himself known to men in a saving way, this is Love's prerogative-- for God is essentially Love. The glory of Power might be sullied by an act of condescension. Supreme Intelligence might hesitate to appear in lowly guise. Sheer Justice might demand some other way. But Love, true Love, does stoop to save, and stooping, is not degraded.³¹

Actually, some of these objections were met by Christians already before the time of Muhammad and the existence of Islam. But the early Muslims either were not aware of these amplifications of the early Christians or were unwilling to consider them as acceptable answers.³² Already in the early part of

³¹L. Bevan Jones, The People of the Mosque (3rd revised edition; Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1959), p. 273.

³²Cf. Laurence E. Browne, The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia (Cambridge: University Press, 1933), pp. 1-23; and Koelle, pp. 135-137.

the fourth century Athanasius anticipated some of the Muslim arguments about the degradation of an incarnation.

Does not the mind of man pervade his entire being, and yet find expression through one part only, namely, the tongue? Does any say on that account that the Mind has degraded itself?³³

And in a similar vein he says:

Some then may ask, why did He not manifest Himself by means of other and nobler parts of creation, and use some nobler instrument, such as sun, or moon or stars or fire or air, instead of mere man? The answer is this. The Lord did not come to make a display. He came to heal and to teach suffering men. For one who wanted to make a display the thing would have been just to appear and dazzle the beholders. But for Him who came to heal and to teach the way was not merely to dwell here, but to put Himself at the disposal of those who needed Him, and to be manifested according as they could bear it, not vitiating the value of the Divine appearing by exceeding their capacity to receive it.³⁴

Athanasius answered doubts concerning the propriety of the Incarnation by directing the non-Christians of his time to the great wisdom of God and His saving purposes.

Regarding the death of Christ

When Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote about the Christian account of the death of Christ, he said, "We do not like such a god at all--a god who was overpowered by a debased people like the Jews who had even lost their temporary sway."³⁵ Ignoring the

³³Athanasius, The Incarnation of the Word of God (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1946), p. 78.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ghulam Ahmad, The Fountain of Christianity (Rabwah, Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1961), p. 18.

anti-Semitism of these words,¹ it is evident that the Mirza looks upon the death of Christ on the cross as a defeat. After speaking of Jesus' death on the cross in terms of a suicide, the Mirza goes on to say, "Had Jesus lived on to preach, he would have benefitted humanity."³⁶ The followers of the Mirza continue to be misled by this shallow estimate of what many people in the world regard as the central event of human history. The Scriptures interpret the death of Christ together with His subsequent resurrection as a victory over all the forces which would destroy man, not least of which is death itself. While the Mirza engaged in prayer duels calling down the punishment of death upon some of His detractors, the Scriptures picture Christ as "abolishing death and bringing life and immortality to life through the Gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10). The resurrection demonstrates the fact of that victory.

Regarding the Holy Spirit

It has been pointed out that the Ahmadiyyas, with other Muslims, regard the Holy Spirit as identical with the Angel Gabriel. By thus dismissing the Holy Spirit as a meaningful influence in life, the Ahmadiyyas are cutting themselves off from the power of God in ethical action.^v Though they have some high ethical goals, the power to attain those goals is primarily relegated to the striving of men.

³⁶Ibid., p. 13.

In reply to a girl of twenty who had drunk deeply of the cup of sin and admitted that she could not repent because she enjoyed her sin, but was still interested in escaping from hell, an Ahmadiyya paper replied,

Turn a new leaf. Lead a righteous life hence forward. This alone can wash off past sins. This is the only true atonement. Sins are washed off, the Qur'an assures us, by good deeds and these alone.³⁷

The Qur'anic verse to which the paper directed the girl was as follows:

And perform the prayer at the two ends of the day and nigh of the night; surely the good deeds will drive away the evil deeds. This is a remembrance unto the faithful.³⁸

Even though God the Holy Spirit reaches out through the Gospel to offer sinners not only the forgiveness of sins, but also the power to overcome sin, the Ahmadiyyas still rely on the efforts of man himself. This is an overestimation of man's power and lack of appreciation of God's grace. It stands in contrast to the Spirit of God described in Romans 8, a Spirit which can set a man free from the law of sin and death and give life to mortal bodies!

Christian Initiative

The Ahmadiyya Muslims, and other Muslims also, have so many misunderstandings regarding the Christian faith that a

³⁷Quoted in Jones, People of the Mosque, p. 107.

³⁸Surah 11:116, in A. J. Arberry, The Koran Interpreted (New York: The MacMillan Co., c.1955), I, 252-253.

person may wonder if it is at all possible to break through this crust with the message of the Gospel. Though the Christian need not give way to a spirit of hopelessness, it is well if these difficulties produce in him a spirit of humility, for Christians themselves are responsible for some of the misunderstandings of Muslims. In addition to the insensitive use of terminology already mentioned and the poor reflection of God and His methods in the Crusades, it may also be mentioned that both Docetism and Monophysitism have served as veils to the understanding and appreciation of Christ. The Acts of John, one of the docetic books written about the middle of the second century, records that Jesus appeared to John in a cave during the crucifixion and said, "John, unto the multitude below in Jerusalem I am being crucified and pierced with lances and reeds, and gall and vinegar is given me to drink. But unto thee I speak"39 It is only a short step between such thought and the denial of the death of Jesus on the cross. A member of the Armenian Apostolic Church has recently made a study of the monophysite Christology of that church and come to the conclusion that it proved a great barrier to the evangelization of the Muslims.

Again, over-emphasis of the Monophysitic definition of the divinity of Christ and the neglect of his

³⁹Geoffrey Parrinder, Jesus in the Qur'an (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1965), pp. 109-110.

completely human personality widened the intellectual and theological chasm between the Armenians and the Muslim world.⁴⁰

It should not be thought that these heresies are limited to ancient church bodies which taught docetic theology and the monophysite error. The tendency to overlook the humanity of Christ and to think of the Godhead primarily in terms of the Second Person of the Trinity is present in the church of today also. It is hard for a Muslim to appreciate the Christian idea of God if a Christian describing the activities of Jesus speaks of God entering the house, God getting into the boat, et cetera. Though such language can be justified on the basis of theological deductions, it is significant that the Scriptures do not speak of the pre-resurrection Christ in that way. Christians would do well to follow the patterns of Scripture.

✓ The above implications are worthy of a special research, but are beyond the scope of this study. They are only mentioned to caution Christians against laying all the blame for the Muslim misunderstandings upon the Muslims themselves, and to promote a spirit of sensitivity which will aid the proclamation of the Gospel. For in that Gospel and the loving, self-sacrificing, and powerful God which it describes there is the answer to the deepest needs and longings of Muslims, Ahmadiyyas and otherwise. The question is: Where to start?

⁴⁰Hagop A. Chakmakjian, Armenian Christology and the Evangelization of Islam (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965), p. 133.

Dr. Kenneth Cragg, modern apostle to the Muslims, suggests that the two main themes of Islamic theology are that God is Sovereign and that God reveals.⁴¹ It has been seen that the Ahmadiyya Muslims also lay much emphasis upon the relevatory nature of God and His sovereignty. Although the Ahmadiyyas frequently use their ideas of God's revelation and His sovereignty to shut out the Christian message, these very closed doors are also places of entrance if the doors are opened.

It takes God to reveal God

It has been seen that the Ahmadiyya Muslims do not limit the revelation of God to the Qur'an. ✓ They believe that He can make Himself known through persons and still speaks today. ✓ Unfortunately they regard Mirza Ghulam Ahmad rather than Christ as a manifestation of God's attributes, but the acceptance of the principle of God making Himself known through a human life is an opportunity. Discussion with Muslims so often degenerates into a "battle of books," the Qur'an versus the Bible as a reliable authority for faith. Such discussions most often prove unfruitful and create a spirit of rancor and bitterness rather than of appreciation. But the presentation of Jesus as the manifestation of God offers more scope for positive communication.

⁴¹Kenneth Cragg, The Call of the Minaret (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 289.

It is almost beside the point to try to compare the relative merits of Jesus and the Mirza as manifestations of God's attributes, for the life of Jesus is its own authentication. The Ahmadiyyas themselves may compare the Mirza's revelation of God's omnipotence in predicting children for his friends and childlessness for his enemies with the majestic figure of Jesus calming the troubled waters of the Sea of Galilee with a mere word of command. The Ahmadiyyas themselves can decide whether the curses of the Mirza against his enemies and even prayers for their death reflect the love of God more faithfully than Jesus' plea for the forgiveness of those who were torturing Him. The Ahmadiyyas themselves can decide if the Mirza's "miracle of healing" in restoring health to a boy who was "almost dead" demonstrates the power of God better than Jesus' raising of Lazarus after he was in the grave for four days. Christians, like Christ, are not particularly interested in proving the truth of God by a dazzling display of outward signs. They are not so concerned to show God's powers of destruction as to demonstrate His love for lost sinners and His ability to again set them on the right way. Jesus reveals how God deals with man's most pressing problem, the problem of sin. The life of Jesus offers opportunities to reveal the fulness of God, for in Him "the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily" (Col.2:9). "He who sees me sees Him who sent me" (John 12:45). The whole Scriptures, and especially the Gospels, demonstrate this truth, and provide ample material for presenting a full

manifestation of the attributes of God to the Ahmadiyya Muslim. This is a much more fruitful theme than arguing about the authenticity of the Scriptures, the variant readings of the Qur'an and the Bible, and real or supposed contradictions and historical inaccuracies in either book. The Scriptures testify that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Jesus is the embodiment of that Gospel, and there is more power in that life than in arguments about books. For "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). God reveals God in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The majesty of God demonstrated in the Cross

Ahmadiyya Muslims and other Muslims have a strong sense of the majesty of God, especially in its creative and preservative aspects. But that is only part of the story of God's majesty. The Bible is not silent about the sovereignty of God. In fact, the prayer of the disciples of Jesus in Acts 4 mentions the very kind of sovereignty in which Muslims are interested, and also refers to God as One who speaks; it begins, "Sovereign Lord, who didst make the heaven and the earth and the seas and everything in them, who by the mouth of our father David, thy servant, didst say by the Holy Spirit" No Muslim would quarrel with this terminology or thought. But then the prayer goes on to a deeper dimension,

For truly in this city there were gathered together against thy holy servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the

Gentiles and the people of Israel, to do whatever thy hand and thy plan had predestined to take place.

All the evil forces of that world were gathered to put an end to Jesus and the work of God. But what did they accomplish? They only accomplished what God had decided and planned long ago--namely, the construction of a solid basis for the exercise of the justice and mercy of God, the foundation for the remission of sins of the whole world, the demonstration of God's power over sin and death. The disciples, of course, were referring to the death of Jesus on the cross and His subsequent resurrection. The events of the Passion are God's acts of gracious sovereignty over evil; they show in a vivid way that God is not only sovereign over His original creation, but also over His fallen creation, and that even the evil in the world cannot but serve His gracious purposes. The Cross is God's way of dealing with the greatest problem of the universe on realistic terms. It does nothing to minimize or underestimate the nature of evil in man and the universe. It is not the product of wishful and baseless optimistic thinking about the abilities of man. It defines majesty and sovereignty in terms which go beyond the ideas of brute force and irresistible power. Speaking of the "invisible and noble effects which the power of the cross has produced in every age and in every land," R. W. Dale continues:

Its power is still unspent. The cross is the very symbol of the infinite righteousness and the infinite love of God. It confirms the severest condemnation which our consciences can ever pronounce on our crimes; it reveals a mercy which transcends all

our hopes. The awful yet glorious fact that the Son of God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the Ruler and Judge of our race, died a cruel death, that we might have the remission of sins, will forever thrill the hearts of men with wonder and sorrow, with devout reverence and great joy.⁴²

Though writing before the time of Islam, Irenaeus understood some of the depth and grandeur of God's majestic dealings through the Cross. He describes it as a Divine "means of persuasion" which upholds the justice of God and yet saves His "ancient handiwork" from destruction.⁴³ In modern times Dr. Kenneth Cragg has described God's way of dealing with evil through the cross.

How did Jesus behave confronted with the worst that men could do? In fidelity to the course he had freely chosen he endured the Cross and suffered the contradiction of sinners against Himself with forgiveness on His lips and in His heart. And from that forgiveness forgiveness flows. Had Jesus died in resentment or in blasphemy, in imprecation or sullen silence, there would have been no redemption. Only by bearing, does the Redeemer bear away the sin of the world The words from the Cross--words which never could have been uttered had Jesus allowed himself to be mercifully stupified by the gall and the reed--illuminate the inner nature of His passion and proclaim the Cross as a supreme deed of redemptive sacrifice. Truly "with His stripes we are healed." Here we find a quality of love which makes an end of evil because it freely takes all its consequences upon itself. In revenge and hatred evil is perpetuated. In pardon and long-suffering it finds its term.⁴⁴

⁴²Dale, pp. 438-439.

⁴³Irenaeus, Against Heresies, V, i, 1, in Ante-Nicene Christian Library (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1869), IX, p. 56.

⁴⁴Cragg, p. 299.

✓ The Ahmadiyya Muslims try to eliminate the death of Christ and the atonement from consideration, but in the process they detract from the majesty of God in His justice and truthfulness. By the same token they rob God of His glory by removing the salvation of man from the act of God to the efforts of man. In effect, man, the crown of God's handiwork, goes to destruction because he cannot save himself. This is a poor exposition of the sovereignty of God.

The Ahmadiyyas look upon the cross as a pathetic picture of God's weakness, but actually it is the demonstration of the strength of His love, a love which seeks to save.

✓ The non-involvement of God as depicted by Muslims is a much greater threat to the majesty of God than the intense identification with man pictured through the history of the crucifixion. Writing with passionate devotion Athanasius played upon this theme:

The human race was in process of destruction . . . The thing that was happening was in truth both monstrous and unfitting. It would, of course, have been unthinkable that God should go back upon His Word and that man, having transgressed, should not die; but it was equally monstrous that beings which once had shared the nature of the Word should perish and turn back again into non-existence, through corruption. It was unworthy of the goodness of God that creatures made by Him should be brought to nothing by the deceit of the devil; and it was supremely unfitting that the work of God in mankind should disappear.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Athanasius, pp. 31-32.

Kenneth Cragg has pointed up the issue in the following way:

So the question moves into the realm of what is most appropriately Divine, what is most truly consonant with the Divine glory? Indeed, we may say, what makes God God and glory glory? How is God characterized as God? So deep do the issues go which are raised by the Muslim attitude to the Cross.⁴⁶

Though reams could be written on the theme of the Cross as the supreme expression of God's gracious majesty, we close this subject with the simple words of Paul, "But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:23-24); and add the words of R. W. Dale, "Let those of us who are called to the ministry of the Gospel resolve that henceforth, with stronger faith and intenser earnestness, we will preach 'Christ and Him crucified.'"⁴⁷ That message illustrates the unity of God in His saving actions and is the most complete expression of God's sovereign majesty.

⁴⁶Cragg, p. 297.

⁴⁷Dale, p. 440.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study comes as an anti-climax to the consideration of the great themes of God's glory revealed in the Incarnation and demonstrated in the history connected with the Cross and the Resurrection. Nevertheless, a few observations may be in place.

1. The Ahmadiyya Muslims have an individual theology of the doctrine of God which deserves study by those who are faced with their message and by those who desire to commend the Gospel to them.

2. The Ahmadiyya Muslim doctrine of God is different from that of orthodox Islam. Some of the old criticisms of the other Muslim doctrines of God as utterly transcendent and deterministic do not apply to the Ahmadiyya doctrine.

3. The Ahmadiyya doctrine offers special difficulties to Christians. It is more directly anti-Christian than orthodox Islam and is consciously directed to Western man.

4. It also offers special opportunities for presenting the Christian message. The slight shift in emphasis from revelation through a book to revelation through a person is a door which is not so tightly closed to Christian affirmations about the Incarnation of Christ as in orthodox Islam.

5. The Ahmadiyya doctrine is still in a state of flux and development. It gives evidence of being influenced from many quarters: orthodox Islam, Sufism, Christianity, Hinduism,

Western secularism, and modern science. The fact that it has broken away from the rigidity and barrenness of past Islam leaves it open to the future. Modifications and amplifications are still in progress. A Christian can take hope from these developments. Those who have already broken away from the tight lines of old Islam, and even endured suffering for that act, may find it easier to devote themselves to a fuller and truer faith if they are made acquainted with it.

6. Even though some of the Ahmadiyyas are born controversialists, there are some with deeper appreciations for spiritual realities. The author has been acquainted with an Ahmadiyya group in Calicut, India, for the past twenty years. He has often thought to himself when surveying the group as a whole, "If only these people had become Christians instead of Ahmadiyya Muslims!"

Finally, a few areas for further study may be mentioned. This study was limited to English and Malayalam sources. Most of the Ahmadiyya literature for Muslims is written in the Urdu language. A study of this literature would reveal whether the Ahmadiyyas have a different approach to Muslims in their other literature. It would also reveal more of Ghulam Ahmad's original thoughts and message, and help to delineate more clearly the Sufi mystic and Christian influences in his life and thought.

Many of the criticisms raised against the Christian idea of God have appeared previously in history. The early Christian

period faced questions regarding the justice and goodness of God, as well as problems relating to what is worthy and what is not worthy of the Godhead. Although a few references were made to this literature in this study, there is much more material of this nature. A study of this material would be rewarding for the Christian dialogue with Muslims.

There are few Christians who have had such a sense of the transcendence and majesty of God as Martin Luther. At the same time there are few Christians who had such a firm conviction about the grace and mercy of God as Martin Luther. Further study in his writings would contribute much to bolster and strengthen the Christian presence in the midst of Ahmadiyya Islam.

- , Jesus Did Not Die on the Cross: The Amazing Story
the Bible. Rawalpindi, West Pakistan: The Ahmadiyya
Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1962.
- , "Jesus is not God," The Jehanmagan, XXXV
(September 1965), 322-325.
- Ahmad, Bashir. Future of Ahmadiyya Movement. Rawalpindi, West
Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1960.
- , Islam and Communism. Translated by Iqbal Ahmad
Ali. Rawalpindi, Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign
Missions Office, 1962.
- Ahmad, Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud. Ahmadiyya Movement. 2nd
English edition. Rawalpindi, West Pakistan: The Ahmadiyya
Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1962.
- , Ahmadiyyat: or the True Islam. 2nd edition. Trans-
lated by Muhammad Saif-ur-Rahman. Washington, D.C.:
Paul Roscoe, c. 1951.
- , Characteristics of Quranic Teachings. 2nd edition.
Gadani, India: The Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions
Office, 1963.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Primary Sources

- Abdul Hamid. Islam and Christianity. New York: Carlton Press, Inc., 1967.
- Abdullah Sahib. "The Atonement of the Christian Religion," The Sathyadoothan. The Malayalam monthly organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement edited and published by N. Abdurrahim for the Kerala Ahmadiyya Jamaath at Cannanore, Kerala, India. XXXI (December 1964), 408-420.
- . "To Christian Pundits," The Sathyadoothan, XXVIII (August and September 1961), 258-264, 311-315.
- Abdurrahim, N., editor. "The Pope in India," The Sathyadoothan, XXXI (December 1964), 448-449.
- Abul Ata Sahib. "Islam and Modern Christianity," The Sathyadoothan, XXXI (December 1964), 439-447.
- . Jesus Did Not Die on the Cross; Ten Arguments from the Bible. Rabwah, West Pakistan: The Maktaba-al-Furqan, n.d.
- . "Jesus is not God," The Sathyadoothan, XXXV (September 1968), 382-386.
- Ahmad, Bashir. Future of Ahmadiyya Movement. Rabwah, West Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1960.
- . Islam and Communism. Translated by Qazi Muhammad Aslam. Rabwah, Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1962.
- Ahmad, Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud. Ahmadiyya Movement. 2nd English edition. Rabwah, West Pakistan: The Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1962.
- . Ahmadiyyat; or the True Islam. 3rd edition. Translated by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan. Washington: American Fazl Mosque, c. 1951
- . Characteristics of Quranic Teachings. 2nd edition. Qadian, India: The Nazir Dawat-o-Tabligh, Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, 1963.

- , editor. The Holy Quran with English Translation and Commentary. Vol. I. Qadian, India: Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, 1947.
- . What is Ahmadiyyat? Rabwah, West Pakistan: The Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1962.
- Ahmad, Ghulam. Fountain of Christianity. Translated from the Urdu by Qazi Abdul Hamid. Rabwah, West Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1961.
- . The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam. Washington: The American Fazi Mosque, 1953.
- . Precious Pearls. Translated from the Persian by Sufi A.Q. Niaz. Rabwah, West Pakistan: The Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Office, 1965.
- Ahmad, Mubarak. Our Foreign Missions. 4th revised edition. Rabwah, West Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions, 1965.
- Al-Ashari, Ali ibn Isma'il. The Theology of al-Ashari. Richard J. McCarthy, editor. Beyrough: Impr. Catholique, 1953.
- Al-Taftazani, Mas'ud ibn 'Umar. A Commentary on the Creed of Islam. Translated with introduction and notes by Earl Edgar Elder. New York: Columbia University Press, 1950.
- Amir Ali, Syed. The Spirit of Islam. A History of the Evolution and Ideals of Islam with a Life of the Prophet. London: Christophers, c.1922.
- Arberry, Arthur J. The Koran Interpreted, a Translation of the Qur'an. 2 vols. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1955.
- Athanasius. The Incarnation of the Word of God. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1946.
- Bashir, Basharat Ahmad. A Selection of the Sayings of the Sayings of the Holy Prophet. 2nd edition. Rabwah, West Pakistan: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions, 1961.
- Bengalee, Mutiur Rahman. "The Tomb of Jesus in Kashmir," The Sathyadootan, XXXI (December 1964), 427-438.
- Goldsock, W. Selections from Muhammadan Traditions. Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1923.

- Hamid, N. "Christmas," The Sathyadoothan, XXXI (December 1964), 420-424.
- Irenaeus. Against Heresies. Vol. IX in Ante-Nicene Christian Library. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1869.
- Muhammad Ali, Maulawi. The Holy Qur'an, Containing the Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary. 2nd edition. Lahore: Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-ishaat-i-Islam, 1920.
- . Islam, or the Natural Religion of Man. Qadian, India: The Sadr Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya, 1912.
- . The Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad. Lahore, Pakistan: Ahmadiyya, 1949.
- . A Manual of Hadith. 2nd edition. Lahore: Anjuman Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, 1951.
- . Muhammad and Christ. Lahore, India: Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Islam, 1921.
- . The Religion of Islam. A Comprehensive Discussion of the Sources, Principles and Practices of Islam. Lahore, India: The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1936.
- Pickthall, Marmaduke. The Meaning of the Glorious Koran, An Explanatory Translation. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., c.1930.
- Sadiq, Mufti Muhammad. The Christian Doctrine of the Atonement. Rabwah, West Pakistan: The Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions, n.d.
- Shams, Jalal-ud-Din. "Jesus Christ in the Holy Quran and the Gospels" and "Muhammad in the Bible," Why Did Early Christians Accept Islam. Rabwah, Pakistan: Al-Shirkat-ul-Islamia Ltd., n.d.
- Sher Ali, The Holy Qur'an, Arabic Text and Translation. Rabwah, West Pakistan: The Oriental and Religious Publishing Corporation, Ltd., 1968.
- Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. The Holy Qur-an, Text, Translation and Commentary. 2 vols. New York: Hafner Publishing Company, 1946.

Zafrulla Khan, Muhammad. The Contribution of Islam to the Solution of World Problems. Qadian, India: Nazir Dawat-o-Tabligh, 1964.

----- . Islam, Its Meaning for Modern Man. Vol. VII in Religious Perspectives, edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.

B. Secondary Sources

Abbott, Freedland. Islam and Pakistan. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1968.

Abduh, Muhammad. The Theology of Unity. Translated from the Arabic by Ishaq Musa'ad and Kenneth Cragg. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1966.

Addison, James Thayer. "The Ahmadiyya Movement and Its Western Propaganda," Harvard Theological Review, XXII (January 1929), 1-32.

----- . The Christian Approach to the Moslem, A Historical Study. New York: Columbia University Press, 1942.

Al-Alousi, Husam Muhi Eldin. The Problem of Creation in Islamic Thought. Baghdad: The National Printing and Publishing Company, 1965.

Al-Faruqi, Isma'il Ragi A. Christian Ethics, a Historical and Systematic Analysis of its Dominant Ideas. Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967.

Andrae, Tor. Mohammed, the Man and His Faith. Translated from the German by Theophil Menzel. New York: Harper & Row, c.1935.

Aziz, Ahmad. Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857-1964. London: Oxford University Press, 1967.

Bakker, Dirk. Man in the Qur'an. Amsterdam: Drukkerij Holland N.V., 1965.

Bell, Richard. The Origin of Islam in its Christian Environment. London: Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., 1968.

Bell, Roy Edison. "Mohammedan Apologetic and Polemic in India since 1880." Unpublished Bachelor of Divinity Thesis, Duke University, 1943.

Bethmann, Erich. Bridge to Islam. A Study of the Religious Forces of Islam and Christianity in the Near East. Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1950.

----- . "Muslim-Christian Relationships," The Muslim World, LI (October 1961), 259-264.

Bethune-Baker, J. F. The Meaning of Homocousios in the 'Constantinopolitan' Creed. Vol. VII in Texts and Studies, Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature, edited by J. Armitage Robinson. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1901.

Bible, Holy. Revised Standard Version.

Bishop, Eric F. F. "Some New Testament Occurrences of Monos with Theos," The Muslim World, LI (April 1961), 123-127.

Browne, Laurence E. The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia, from the Time of Muhammad till the Fourteenth Century. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1933.

Brush, S. E. "Ahmadiyyat in Pakistan: Rabwah and the Ahmedis," The Muslim World, XLV (April 1955), 145-171.

Bundy, Walter Ernest. Jesus and the First Three Gospels. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1955.

Calverley, Edwin E. "The Fundamental Structure of Islam," The Moslem World, XXIX (October 1939), 364-384.

----- . Islam: An Introduction. Cairo: American University at Cairo, 1958.

Chakmakjian, Hagop A. Armenian Christology and Evangelization of Islam. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965.

Cragg, Kenneth. The Call of the Minaret. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956.

----- . Counsels in Contemporary Islam. Edinburgh: University Press, 1965.

----- . The Dome and the Rock; Jerusalem Studies in Islam. London: SPCK, 1964.

----- . The House of Islam. Belmont, Calif.: Dickenson Publishing Company, Inc., 1969.

----- . Sandals at the Mosque, Christian Presence Amid Islam. New York: Oxford University Press, 1959.

- Crossley, John. Explaining the Gospel to Muslims. London: United Society for Christian Literature, Lutterworth Press, 1959.
- Cullmann, Oscar. The Christology of the New Testament. Translated by Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959.
- Dale, R.W. The Atonement. London: Congregational Union of England and Wales, 1894.
- Daniel, Norman. Islam and the West. Edinburgh: University Press, 1960.
- De Bary, William Theodore, editor. Sources of Indian Tradition. 2 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, c.1958.
- Dehqani-Tafti, H. B. Design of My World. London: United Society for Christian Literature, Lutterworth Press, 1959.
- Donaldson, Dwight Martin. Studies in Muslim Ethics. London: SPCK, 1953.
- Dorman, Harry Gaylord. Toward Understanding Islam, Contemporary Apologetic for Islam and Missionary Policy. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1948.
- Fakhry, Majid. "The Classical Islamic Arguments for the Existence of God," The Muslim World, XLVII (April 1957), 133-145.
- Farquhar, J.N. Modern Religious Movements in India. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924.
- Fisher, Humphrey J. Ahmadiyyah, a Study in Contemporary Islam on the West African Coast. London: Oxford University Press, 1963.
- "Concept of Evolution in Ahmadiyyah Thought," The Muslim World, XLIX (October 1959), 275-286.
- Foster, Frank Hugh. "The Fear of God in the Koran," The Moslem World, XXI (July 1931), 244-248.
- Fuller, Reginald H. The Foundations of New Testament Christology. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965.
- Gall, John D. "Principal Sects of Islam; Their Origin and Beliefs," Unpublished Bachelor's Thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1948.

- Gardet, Louis. "Allah," The Encyclopaedia of Islam. I. New edition. Edited by H. A. R. Gibb, et al. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960. Pp. 406-417.
- . Mohammedanism. Translated from the French by William Burridge. New York: Hawthorne Books, 1961.
- Gardner, W. R. W. "The Ahmadiya Movement," The Moslem World, X (January 1920), 59-64.
- . The Qur'anic Doctrine of God. Madras: The Christian Literature Society for India, 1916.
- Gibb, Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen. Modern Trends in Islam. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947.
- . Mohammedanism, An Historical Survey. 2nd revised edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.
- . "Pre-Islamic Monotheism in Arabia," Harvard Theological Review, LV (October 1962), 269-280.
- . "The Structure of Religious Thought in Islam," The Muslim World, XXXVIII (1948), 17-28, 113-123, 185-197, 280-291.
- Gibb, H. A. R., and J. H. Kramers, editors. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1953.
- Gordon, Cyrus H. "The Daughters of Baal and Allah," The Moslem World, XXXIII (January 1943), 50-51.
- Griswold, H. D. "The Ahmadiya Movement," The Moslem World, II (October 1912), 373-379.
- Guillaume, Alfred. The Traditions of Islam, An Introduction to the Study of Hadith Literature. Beirut: Khayats, 1966. Reprint from the original edition of 1924.
- Izutsu, Toshihiko. Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an. Montreal: McGill University Press, 1966.
- Jeffery, Arthur. "Gregory of Tathew's 'Contra Mohammedanos,'" The Moslem World, XXXII (July 1942), 219-235.
- , editor. Islam, Muhammad and His Religion. New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1958.
- . "The Presentation of Christianity to Muslims," International Review of Missions (April 1924), 174-189.
- , editor. A Reader on Islam. Passages from the Standard Arabic Writings Illustrative of the Beliefs and Practices of Muslims. New York: Humanities Press, 1962.

- John of Damascus. "The Discussion of a Christian and a Saracen." Translated by John W. Voorhis. The Moslem World, XXV (July 1935), 266-273.
- Jones, L. Bevan. Christianity Explained to Muslims, A Manual for Christian Workers. Revised edition. Calcutta: Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, 1952.
- . The People of the Mosque, An Introduction to the Study of Islam with Special Reference to India. 3rd revised edition. Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1959.
- Kelly, J. N. D. Early Christian Creeds. 2nd edition. London: Longmans, Green and Company, Ltd., c.1967.
- . Early Christian Doctrines. 2nd edition. New York: Harper & Row, c.1960.
- Klubertanz, G. P. "Analogy," New Catholic Encyclopaedia. I. William J. McDonald, chief editor. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967. Pp. 461-469.
- Koelle, S. W. Mohammed and Mohammedanism. London: Rivingtons, 1889.
- Kretzmann, P. E. The God of the Bible and Other "Gods," St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1943.
- Levonian, Lootfy. "Christian Apologetics in Relation to Islam," Union Seminary Quarterly Review, VII (November 1951), 10-14.
- Luther, Martin. "Zwei Disputationen von der Einheit des göttlichen Wesens und dem Unterschiede der Personen in der Gottheit," Catechesische Schriften. Vol. X in Saemmtliche Schriften. Edited by Joh. George Walch. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1892. Cols. 176-187.
- . "Eine andere theologische Disputation vom Geheimnis der heiligen Dreieinigkeit, von der Menschwerdung des Sohnes," Catechesische Schriften. Cols. 186-193.
- . "Am Sonntag Trinitatis, Rom. 11,33-36," Kirchen-Postille, Epistel-Theil. Vol. XII in Saemmtliche Schriften, 1883. Cols. 628-645.
- . "Am Sonntag Trinitatis, Die erste Predigt, Vom Fest der heiligen Dreieinigkeit," HausPostille. Vol. XIII in Saemmtliche Schriften, 1904. Cols. 664-681.
- . "Am Sonntag Trinitatis, Zweite Predigt, John 3,1-15," Haus Postille, Cols. 680-698.

- Luther, Martin. "On the Bondage of the Will," Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation. Vol. XVII in The Library of Christian Classics. Translated and edited by Philip S. Watson and B. Drewery. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969.
- McDonald, Duncan Black. "Allah," Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol. I. Edited by M. Th. Houtsma, et al. Leyden: E. J. Brill, Ltd., 1913. Pp. 302-310.
- . Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory. Vol. IX in The Semitic Series. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903.
- . "God--A Unit or a Unity? The Answer of Islamic Theology and Its Lesson," The Moslem World, III (January 1913), 11-20.
- . "An Outline of the History of Scholastic Theology," The Moslem World, XV (April 1925), 140-155.
- Marsden, Robert S. "The Creed of Islam," Presbyterian Guardian, XIII (June 25, 1944), 185-186.
- Miller, Roland E. "The Qadiani Ahmadiyya Muslim Movement in Islam." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Conn., 1952.
- Mufatish [Edward Sell] . Criticism of a Qadiani Commentary. Madras: Christian Literature Society for India, 1923.
- Neill, Stephen. The Christian's God. London: Lutterworth Press, 1954.
- North, Christopher Richard. An Outline of Islam. 2nd revised edition. London: Epworth Press, 1952.
- Notovitch, Nicolas. The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ. Translated by J. H. Connelly and L. Landsberg. New York: G. W. Dillingham, 1894.
- Orientalist. "The Muslim Point of View," The Moslem World, XXVI (January 1936), 25-41.
- Padwick, Constance. Muslim Devotions. London: SPCK, 1961.
- . With Him in His Temptations. London: Sheldon Press, 1949.
- Parrinder, Geoffrey. Jesus in the Qur'an. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1965.

- Payne, Pierre Stephen Robert. The Holy Sword. New York: Harper, 1959.
- Pennings, Gerrit J. "God's Decrees and Man's Responsibility," The Moslem World, XXXI (January 1941), 23-28.
- Pieper, Francis. Christian Dogmatics. 3 Vols. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950.
- Prestige, George Leonard. God in Patristic Thought. London: SPCK, 1952.
- Qureshi, Maqbool Ahmad, editor. The Muslim Sunrise. An Ahmadiyya Magazine published by the editor from Dayton, Ohio.
- Rahbar, Daud. "Christian Apologetic to Muslims," International Review of Missions, LIV (1965), 353-359.
- . God of Justice, A Study in the Ethical Doctrine of the Qur'an. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960.
- Rahman, Fazlur. Islam. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966.
- Rice, W. A. Crusaders of the Twentieth Century. London: W. A. Rice, 1910.
- Richardson, Cyril C. The Doctrine of the Trinity. New York: Abingdon Press, 1958.
- Seale, Morris S. Muslim Theology, a Study of Origins with Reference to the Church Fathers. London: Luzac and Co., Ltd., 1964.
- Sell, Edward. Faith of Islam. London: Truebner & Co., 1880.
- . The Historical Development of the Qur'an. London: SPCK, 1905.
- Shehadi, Fadlou. Ghazali's Unique Unknowable God. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964.
- Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. "Ahmadiyya," Encyclopaedia of Islam. I. New edition edited by H. A. R. Gibb et al. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960. Pp. 301-303.
- . Islam in Modern History. New York: New American Library, 1963.
- Speight, R.M. "Some Bases for a Christian Apologetic to Islam," International Review of Missions, LIV (1965), 193-205.

- Spencer, Harold. Islam and the Gospel of God. A Comparison of the Central Doctrines of Christianity and Islam, Prepared for the Use of Christian Workers Among Muslims. Delhi: SPCK, 1956.
- Stanton, H. U. Weitbrecht. "The Ahmadiya Movement," The Moslem World, XV (January 1925), 10-20.
- Sweetman, James Windrow. Islam and Christian Theology, 2 Vols. London: Lutterworth Press, 1945-1967.
- . "Modernism and Polemic in Indian Islam Today," International Review of Missions, XXVI (April 1937), 189-203.
- Thomson, W. "Al-Ash'ari and His Al-Ibanah," The Moslem World, XXXII (July 1942), 242-260.
- . "Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam," A Critique and Appreciation of W. Montgomery Watt's book on the same subject. The Muslim World, XL (July 1950), 207-216; October 1950), 276-287.
- Tisdall, W. St. Clair. A Manual of the Leading Muhammadan Objections to Christianity. London: SPCK, 1904.
- Titus, Murray Thurston. Islam in India and Pakistan. Revised edition. Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1959.
- Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Edited by F. Bente. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921.
- Trimingham, John Spencer. Islam in West Africa. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959.
- Tritton, A. S. The Caliphs and their Non-Muslim Subjects. London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1930.
- Vaglieri, Laura Veccia. An Interpretation of Islam. Translated from the Italian by Aldo Caselli. Washington: The American Fazl Mosque, 1957.
- Walter, Howard A. The Ahmadiya Movement in The Religious Life of India Series. Edited by J. N. Farquhar and Nicol MacNicol. Calcutta: Association Press, 1918.
- . "The Ahmadiyya Movement Today," The Moslem World, VI (January 1916), 66-78.
- Watson, Charles Roger. What is this Moslem World? New York: Friendship Press, 1937.

- Watt, W. Montgomery. "Book Review of 'Introduction a la Theologie Musulmane, Essai de Theologie Comparee' by Louis Gardet and M.M. Anawati." The Hibbert Journal, XLVIII (April 1950), 311-312.
- . Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam. London: Luzac & Co., Ltd., 1948.
- . Islamic Philosophy and Theology. Edinburgh: At the University Press, 1962.
- . "Islamic Theology and the Christian Theologian," Hibbert Journal, XLIX (1950-1951), 242-248.
- Wells, H. G. The Outline of History. II. 4th edition. New York: P. F. Collier & Son Company, 1922.
- Williams, John Alden, editor. Islam. New York: G. Braziller, 1961.
- Wilson, J. Christy. The Christian Message to Islam. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1950.
- Wilson, R. D. "The Use of the Terms 'Allah' and 'Rab' in the Koran," The Moslem World, X (April 1920), 176-183.
- Winnet, F. V. "Allah Before Islam," The Moslem World, XXVIII (July 1938), 239-248.
- . "The Daughters of Allah," The Moslem World, XXX (1940), 113-130.
- Wolfson, Harry Austryn. The Philosophy of the Church Fathers. I. 2nd revised edition. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964.
- Zwemer, Samuel M. "The Allah of Islam and the God of Jesus Christ," Theology Today, III (April 1946), 64-77.
- . "The Holy Spirit and Islam," The Moslem World, XX (July 1930), 221-235.
- . Islam, A Challenge to Faith. 2nd revised edition. New York: Student Volunteer Movement of Foreign Missions, 1907.
- . The Moslem Christ. An Essay on the Life, Character, and Teachings of Jesus Christ according to the Koran and Orthodox Tradition. New York: American Tract Society, c.1912.

Zwemer, Samuel M. The Moslem Doctrine of God. An Essay on the Character and Attributes of Allah according to the Koran and Orthodox Tradition. New York: American Tract Society, 1905.

C. For Further Study

Abdus Subhan. "The Nature of the Summum Bonum in Islam," Islamic Culture, XXI (1947), 353-359.

----- . "The Relation of God to Time and Space as Seen by the Mu'tazilites," Islamic Culture, XVII (1943), 152-165.

Ahmad, Ghulam. "Will," Review of Religions, XLVI (September 1952), 35.

Al-Ashari, Ali Ibn Isma'il, Abu al-Hasan. The Elucidation of Islam's Foundation. Translated by Walter C. Klein with Introduction and Notes. Vol. XIX in American Oriental Series. New Haven: Oriental Society, 1940.

Al-Suhrawardy, Allama Sir Abdullah al-Mamum. The Sayings of Muhammad. London: John Murray, 1941.

Ali, Zaki. Islam in the World. Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1938.

Andrae, Tor. Les Origines de l'Islam et le Christianisme. Translated from the German by Jules Roche. Paris: Adrien-Masonneuve, 1955.

Arberry, Arthur J. "Al-Ash'ari's Tract on Faith," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, XIX (1957), 160-162.

Arberry, Arthur J. and Rom Landau, editors. Islam Today. London: Faber and Faber, 1943.

Arberry, Arthur J. Revelation and Reason in Islam. London: George Allen & Unwin., 1957.

Avicenna. Avicenna on Theology. Edited by Arthur J. Arberry. London: John Murray, 1951.

Aziz, Ahmad. Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964.

Azzam, Abdel Rahman. The Eternal Message of Muhammad. Translated from the Arabic by Caesar E. Farah with Introduction by Vincent Sheean. New York: Devin-Adair Co., 1964.

Barton, James L. The Christian Approach to Islam. Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1918.

- Bethmann, Erich W. Steps Toward Understanding Islam. Washington: American Friends of the Middle East, 1966.
- Board of Missionary Preparation. The Presentation of Christianity to Moslems. New York: 1917.
- Braune, Walther. Der Islamische Orient zwischen Vergangenheit und Zukunft. Eine Geschichtstheologische Analyse seiner Stellung in der Weltsituation. Bern: Francke, 1960.
- Brelvi, Mahmud. Islam in Africa. Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1964.
- Brockelmann, C. "Allah und die Goetzen, der Ursprung des Islamischen Monotheismus," Archiv fuer Religionswissenschaft, XXI (1922), 99-121.
- Browne, L. E. "The Conception of the Unity of God in Islam and Other Religions in the Light of Modern Science," Islamic Culture, XXV (1951), 1-17.
- . The Prospects of Islam. London: SCM Press, 1944.
- Calverley, Edwin E. "Al-Baydawi's Matali'al-Ansar, A Systematic Theology of Islam," The Muslim World, XLIII (October 1963), 293-297.
- Cash, William Wilson. Christendom and Islam; Their Contacts and Cultures Down the Centuries. New York: Harper, 1937.
- . The Expansion of Islam; An Arab Religion in the Non-Arab World. London: Church Missionary Society, 1928.
- Danielou, Jean. The Advent of Salvation. A Comparative Study of Non-Christian Religions and Christianity. Translated by Rosemary Sheed. New York: Paulist Press, 1962.
- Farid al-Din, 'Attar. Muslim Saints and Mystics. Translated by A.J. Arberry. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.
- Faruki, Kemal. "Tawhid and the Doctrine of 'Ismah,'" Islamic Studies, IV (1965), 31-43.
- Frye, Richard N., editor. Islam and the West. Proceedings of the Harvard Summer School Conference on the Middle East, July 25-27, 1955. 's-Gravenhage: Mouton, 1956.
- Gardet, Louis. "Recontre de la theologie musulmane et de la pensee patristique," Revue Thomiste, XLVII (1947), 45-112.
- Ghoraba, Hammouda. "The Dilemma of Religion and Philosophy in Islam," Islamic Quarterly, II (1955), 241-251.

- Ghoraba, Hammouda. "The Dilemma of Religion and Philosophy II, The Problem of God's Attributes," Islamic Quarterly, III (1956), 4-15, 74-87.
- Goldziher, I. "Die Gottesliebe in der Islamischen Theologie," Islam, IX (1919), 144-158.
- . Muslim Studies. Edited by S. M. Stern; translated from the German by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1966.
- Gospel of Barnabas. Edited and translated by Lonsdale and Laura Ragg. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907.
- Griswold, H. D. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Ludhiana: The American Tract Society, 1902.
- Guillaume, Alfred. "Christian and Muslim Theology as Represented by al-Sharastani and St. Thomas Aquinas," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, XIII (1950), 551-580.
- Haydon, A. Eustace. "Islam and Modern Scientific Thinking," in Modern Trends in World Religions, 1943, pp. 3, 94, 115, 191.
- Horton, M. "Der Allah-Begriff im Islam," Archiv fuer Systematische Philosophie, XXXIII (1929), 122-131.
- . Muhammadanische Glaubenslehre; Die Katechismen des Fudali and des Sanusi. Bonn: A. Marcus and E. Weber, 1916.
- . "Theologisches aus dem modernen Islam," Theologische Literaturzeitung, XXXIX (Jan. 3, 1914), 1-4.
- Hosein, Wahed. "The Conception of the Divine Being in Islamic Philosophy," Visvabharati Quarterly, VII (1929-1930), 375-384.
- Hughes, Thomas Patrick. A Dictionary of Islam. Reprint of the 1885 edition. Clifton, N. J.: Reference Book Publishers, 1965.
- Husain, Athar. Prophet Muhammad and His Mission. New York: Asia Publishing House, 1967.
- Ikram, Sheikh Mohamed. Muslim Civilization in India. Edited by Ainslee T. Embree. New York: Columbia University Press, 1964.
- Iqbal, Muhammad. Islam and Ahmadism. Meerut: Y.M.M.A., 1936.

- Iqbal, Muhammad. The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam. London: Oxford University Press, 1934.
- Irving, T. B. "God's Oneness," Studies in Islam, I (1964), 61-70.
- The Islamic Review. An Ahmadiyya periodical published from Woking, England.
- Izutsu, Toshihiko. God and Man in the Koran. A Semantic Analysis of the Koranic Weltanschauung. Tokyo: Keio University, 1964.
- Jacoby, J. A. "Asma Ullah el Hosna, ou les beaux noms de Dieu." Contribution a l'etude de la notion de Dieu dans l'Islam. Revue des sciences philosophiques et theologiques, XXVII (1938), 533-555.
- Jones, W. I. "A Moslem Catechism," Translated from the text used in East Africa and Aden. The Moslem World, XXXV (October 1945), 324-336.
- Kedouri, Elie. Afghani and Abduh: An Essay on Religious Unbelief and Political Activism in Modern Islam. London: Frank Cass, 1966.
- Khuda Baksch. Studies: Indian and Islamic. London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1927.
- Klinge, G. "Die Beziehungen zwischen christlicher und islamische Theologie in Anfang des Mittelalters," Zeitschrift fuer Kirchengeschichte, LVI (1937), 43-58.
- Kremer, Alfred Freiherr von. Geschichte der herrschenden Ideen des Islams; der Gottesbegriff, die Prophetie, und Staatsidee. Reprint of 1868 edition. Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1961.
- Levonian, Lootfy. Moslem Mentality, A Discussion of the Presentation of Christianity to Moslems. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1928.
- The Light. An Ahmadiyya periodical published from Lahore, India.
- Lings, Martin. A Moslem Saint of the Twentieth Century, Shaikh Ahmad al-'alawi, His Spiritual Heritage and Legacy. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1961.
- McDonald, Duncan B. Aspects of Islam. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1911.

- Marrison, Geoffrey E. The Christian Approach to the Muslim. London: Edinburgh House Press, 1961.
- Merrill, J. E. "The Christian Approach to Moslems," International Review of Missions, October 1922, 551-560.
- Morgan, Kenneth William, editor. Islam, The Straight Path Interpreted by Muslims. New York: Ronald Press Co., 1958.
- Muir, William, editor. The Beacon of Truth or Testimony of the Coran to the Truth of the Christian Religion. London: Religious Tract Society, 1894.
- Nadvi, S. Sulaiman. "The Sovereignty of Allah," Islamic Culture, XXII (1948), 237-249.
- Naseem, M. Religious Toleration in Islam. London: London Mosque, 1965.
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. Ideals and Realities of Islam. London: Allen & Unwin, 1966.
- Norton, William H. "The Influence of the Desert on Early Islam," Journal of Religion, IV (July 1924), 383-396.
- Oldham, J. H. The Vital Forces of Christianity and Islam. Six Studies by Missionaries to Moslems. London: Humphrey Milford, 1915.
- O'Shaughnessy, Thomas. The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran. Rome: Pont. Inst. Orientalium Studiorum, 1953.
- Phoenix. His Holiness. A Criticism of Kadiyani Ghulam Ahmad and the Qadiani Movement. Lahore: Islamic Literature Publishing House, 1936.
- Rahman, Fazlur. Prophecy in Islam; Philosophy and Orthodoxy. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1958.
- The Review of Religions. An Ahmadiyya periodical published by M. Masud Ahmad from Rabwah, West Pakistan, for the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya.
- Sell, Edward. Essays on Islam. Madras: SPCK Depot, 1901.
- "God, Muslim," Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. Vol. VI. Edited by James Hastings. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913. Pp. 299-302.

- Smith, Wilfred C. Modern Islam in India, A Social Analysis. Lahore: Minerva Book Shop, 1943.
- Southern, Richard W. Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962.
- The Sunrise. An Ahmadiyya periodical published from Lahore, India.
- Tisdall, W. St. Clair. The Religion of the Crescent; Islam: Its Strength, Its Weakness, Its Origin, Its Influence. London: SPCK, 1895.
- Trimingham, John S. The Influence of Islam upon Africa. New York: Praeger, 1968.
- . Islam in East Africa. London: Edinburgh House Press, 1962.
- Tritton, Arthur Stanley. Muslim Theology. London: Luzac for the Royal Asiatic Society, 1947.
- Unger-Dreiling, E. "Hindernisse der christlichen Islammission," Zeitschrift Missionswissenschaft, XLVI (1962), 102-109.
- Uthman Amin. Muhammad Abduh. Translated from the Arabic by Charles Wendell. Washington: American Council of Learned Societies, 1953.
- Watt, W. Montgomery. Muhammad at Mecca. Oxford: Clarendon Press, c.1953.
- . Muhammad at Medina. Oxford: Clarendon Press, c.1956.
- . Muslim Intellectual, a Study of Al-Ghazali. Edinburgh: Oxford University Press, 1963.
- . "Some Muslim Discussions of Anthropomorphism," Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society, XIII (1947-1949), 1-10.
- Wilms, Franz-Elmar. Al-Ghazali's Schrift wider die Gottheit Jesu. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966.
- Wolfson, Harry A. "Philosophical Implications of the Problem of Divine Attributes in the Kalam," Journal of the American Oriental Society, LXXIX (1959), 73-80.
- Zwemer, Samuel M. The Glory of the Cross. London: Marshall Brothers, n.d.
- . The Glory of the Empty Tomb. New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1947.