

Services to Islam by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad – 6

Friday Khutba by Dr Zahid Aziz, for Lahore Ahmadiyya UK, 2 July 2021

يٰۤاَيُّهَا اِسْرَآءِيْلُ اذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتِي الَّتِي اَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِيْ اَوْفٍ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَاِيَّاى فَاَرْهَبُوْنِ ﴿٤٠﴾

“O Children of Israel, call to mind My favour which I bestowed on you and be faithful to (your) covenant with Me, I shall fulfil (My) covenant with you; and Me, Me alone, should you fear.” — ch. 2, v. 40

The verse I have recited is the first mention of the Israelites in the Quran. It is followed by a long, continuous account of their history which relates how they were given a religion through Moses and were promised greatness in this world and the hereafter if they remained true to his teachings. But it is then mentioned how they deviated and went away from the real spirit of these teachings. In the last *khutba* I read out the views of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who said that, according to the Quran and Hadith, the bad qualities which later spread among the Israelite people, and which reached their worst in the time of Jesus, would also spread among the Muslims of later times and he said that these had spread among Muslims of his time. At another place he wrote: “It is included in the Muslim belief that in the last era (*aakhri zamana*), thousands of Muslims will become of Jewish-like character, and this prophecy exists in many places in the Holy Quran”.

An anti-Ahmadiyya objector has quoted this statement of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and challenged Ahmadis to prove that there is such a prophecy in the Quran. As I said in the last *khutba*, I will quote some famous Muslim scholars of the Quran who have confirmed the view expressed by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote that, in the Quran, “by referring again and again to the many violations committed by the Jews, God repeatedly pointed to the fact that the same would be the eventual condition of the Muslim masses and their religious leaders”. He explained that just as the Jews of the time of Jesus “had strayed very far from real piety, virtue, mutual sympathy, unity and true godliness, their

knowledge and thought was confined merely to formalism and letter-worship ... Precisely this is the condition of the Muslim people at this time, and events before our eyes are plainly testifying that in reality this people (Muslim *Ummah*) and its divines are following in the footsteps of the Jews of the time of Jesus in having lost virtue, piety, spirituality and the ability to see the truth". In other words, they lost the spirit of the religion but on the other hand they adhered very strictly to the letter of the religion. For example, when saying prayers, a person's mind and heart would not be in the prayer, but he would be very careful in correctly performing the *wudu*, wearing the right things during prayer, reciting all the words, remembering which words are to be recited loudly and which silently, having all the body postures correct and exact. But he doesn't learn anything through prayer about how to behave better in his practical life. He thinks that Allah will forgive him because of his mechanical action of prayer.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a great writer, scholar of Islam as well as a political leader in India since the British rule. He was a leading figure of the Congress Party of Nehru and after independence he was India's first minister of education. He is greatly honoured in India. He also produced an Urdu translation of the Quran. In one of his books, entitled *Tazkirah*, covering some aspects of the history of Islam, he writes:

"Today, among Muslims, Islam and faith have been reduced to a few minor issues of belief and doctrine. ... All efforts are directed only towards finding out what are a person's beliefs on certain irrelevant, unimportant secondary matters. No one looks to see what are the deeds of that person, does he make sacrifices of his life and money for the love of God and His Messenger, does he lead a life of goodness, how he treats other people? Regardless of what he is like in these matters, as long as he agrees with us in certain theoretical issues of belief, we consider him to be the best person on earth! **This was exactly how the Jews went astray**, that they were intoxicated with the pride of being Israelites. "And they say: Fire will not touch us except for a few days" [the Quran, 2:80; 3:24]. This arrogance in [believing yourself to be right in] matters of belief is a very great evil and **today it is corroding the backbone of the Muslims.**"

The Jews had come to hold the belief that whatever wrong they did, God would only give them a light punishment at the most. The Muslims had come to believe the same about themselves. In another place, Abul Kalam Azad mentions an incident from history when a Muslim king asked a most scholarly *Alim* to give a religious opinion on a matter. The *Alim* knew that if he expressed his opinion he would face opposition from other *Ulama*. So he made an excuse to avoid giving his opinion. Maulana Azad writes about this: “The deliberate hiding of truth was the curse that afflicted the Ulama of the Jews. [The Quran says about them] “There are many of them who hide the truth while they know” [2:146]. Regrettably, the same became the condition of the evil Ulama of this Ummah, as they followed them every inch and every step of the way. **And they are the Jews of this Ummah.**”

In another place in this book, Maulana Azad writes: “The Holy Prophet had repeatedly and clearly prohibited this Ummah from committing the wrong-doing of the Jews. ... He said clearly: ‘Do not do what the Jews did, that by using pretexts and excuses they declared as lawful what God had forbidden’. But sadly, exactly that happened which this truthful one was anxious about, and **in this Ummah too Sadducees and Pharisees came into existence** who, under the description ‘one shoe matching the other shoe’, created exactly the same pretexts and ways of deviousness in Islam.”

The Sadducees and the Pharisees were two sects of the Jews in Jesus’ time. Each group had its own religious leaders. Roughly speaking, the Sadducees were like our Wahhabis and the Pharisees were like our Barelvis.

I turn now to Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maudoodi, a household name in Pakistan and well-known all over the Muslim world. In his *Tafhim-ul-Quran*, he has a long footnote on the verse of the Quran which I recited at the beginning: “O Children of Israel, call to mind My favour which I bestowed on you and be faithful to (your) covenant with Me, I shall fulfil (My) covenant with you; and Me, Me alone, should you fear” (2:40). As the Maulana says: “From verse 40 to verse 121 is a new discourse in which the children of Israel have been especially and particularly addressed.” In his

explanation of this verse Maulana Maudoodi writes that one aim of these verses is to: “expose their moral and religious degeneration thoroughly”. Another aim is the following:

“Though the appeal is addressed to the Jews, **it is also meant to forewarn the Muslims** against the pitfalls of degeneration into which the followers of the former Prophets had fallen. That is why, on the one hand, the moral weaknesses of the Jews, their wrong notions about religion, their wrong ways of thinking and living, have been pointed out, one by one, while, on the other, the demands of the true faith have been stated so that the Muslims are able to see the Right Way clearly and avoid wrong ways. **The Holy Prophet knew by Divine inspiration** that, by and by, the Muslims also would follow the same ways that had been pointed out in this discourse. Therefore, according to a Hadith, he forewarned that they would discard the Guidance and follow, step by step, the communities of the former Prophets, that is, the Jews and the Christians, in their wrong ways. **It is a pity that they have not paid any heed to this warning and adopted the same ways of degeneration.**”

If, as the Maulana writes, the Quran is *forewarning the Muslims* that they might go wrong like the followers of previous prophets, then it is obviously a prophecy of the Quran about the future. If the Holy Prophet knew *through Divine inspiration* that Muslims would suffer a similar downfall to that of the Israelites, then it is a prophecy which Allah revealed to him.

My third example is Dr Israr Ahmad, well known scholar of Islam, and writer and speaker on Islamic subjects. He wrote an article in the Daily *Jang*, London edition, dated 19 October 1987, which I have kept ever since I read it. In it he writes:

“The Holy Prophet Muhammad foretold that the same evils would arise among his followers as had arisen among the Israelites. He said: ‘*If they, the Israelites, had crawled into the hole of a lizard, you will crawl into it too*’. His words go so far that although one is hesitant to quote them, but they are the words of the Holy Prophet which I put before you. He said: ‘*If there was a wretched man among the Israelites who committed the sexual act with his own mother, then among you also shall arise*

such a wretched man’. The meaning is that all the evils, in terms of religion, doctrine, thought, knowledge and deeds, which came to prevail among the Israelites, shall also come to prevail among the Muslims. The text of the hadith is as follows: ‘*All the things which happened to the Israelites shall also happen to my followers, just as one shoe matches the other shoe*’. This is a most eloquent comparison. Look at a pair of shoes, and because the front parts of the two point in opposite directions, you see one shoe being apparently different from the other. But put the soles of the two shoes together, and they are identical. Similarly, the circumstances of the Israelites and the Muslims appear to be different, because after all, there is the distance of fourteen hundred years, and so there is some difference on the face of it. But if you look between the lines, you find that **there is not a hair’s breadth of difference**. And as to the condition of the Jews described in the Holy Quran, each one of us must look at himself to see whether we are not victims of that condition ourselves, and whether in this mirror [i.e., the Quran’s mention of the wrong-doings by the Jews] we are not seeing our own image.”

In an earlier article in the *Daily Jang*, 3 December 1985, Dr Israr Ahmad has expressed similar views and written that when he reviewed the whole history of the Muslim *Ummah* in the light of the above hadith, he came to the conclusion that Muslim history was an exact copy of the history of the Israelites. He appears to be claiming that this is his discovery, while Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote about it some 90 years before. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad presented this argument that if the moral condition of the Muslims has deteriorated badly to become just like the depraved moral condition of the Israelites at the time when Jesus came among them, then it means that the Muslims need a *Mujaddid* who will do the kind of reform work that the Messiah did. And this is what is meant by Jesus coming again.

بَارِكْ اللَّهُ لَنَا وَكُفِّرْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعْنَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِالآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، إِنَّهُ تَعَالَى جَوَادٌ كَرِيمٌ
مَلِكٌ بَرٌّ رَوْفٌ رَحِيمٌ-
