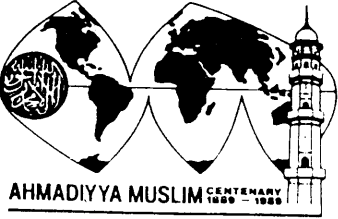


إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ



# THE *Ahmadiyya* **Gazette**

۱۹۸۵-۱۹۰۹ مَسْجِدِ اَلْمَسِيحِيِّ اَلْمَسْمُوعِ

MARCH, 1994

USA

اِسْمَعُوا صَوْتَ السَّمَاءِ جَاءَ الْمَسِيحُ جَاءَ الْمَسِيحُ  
نَزِلْ شَتْوَا زَمِيں آءِ اَمَامِ كَامِگَارِ

LISTEN TO THE VOICE

OF THE HEAVEN:

THE MESSIAH

HAS COME,

THE MESSIAH

HAS COME.

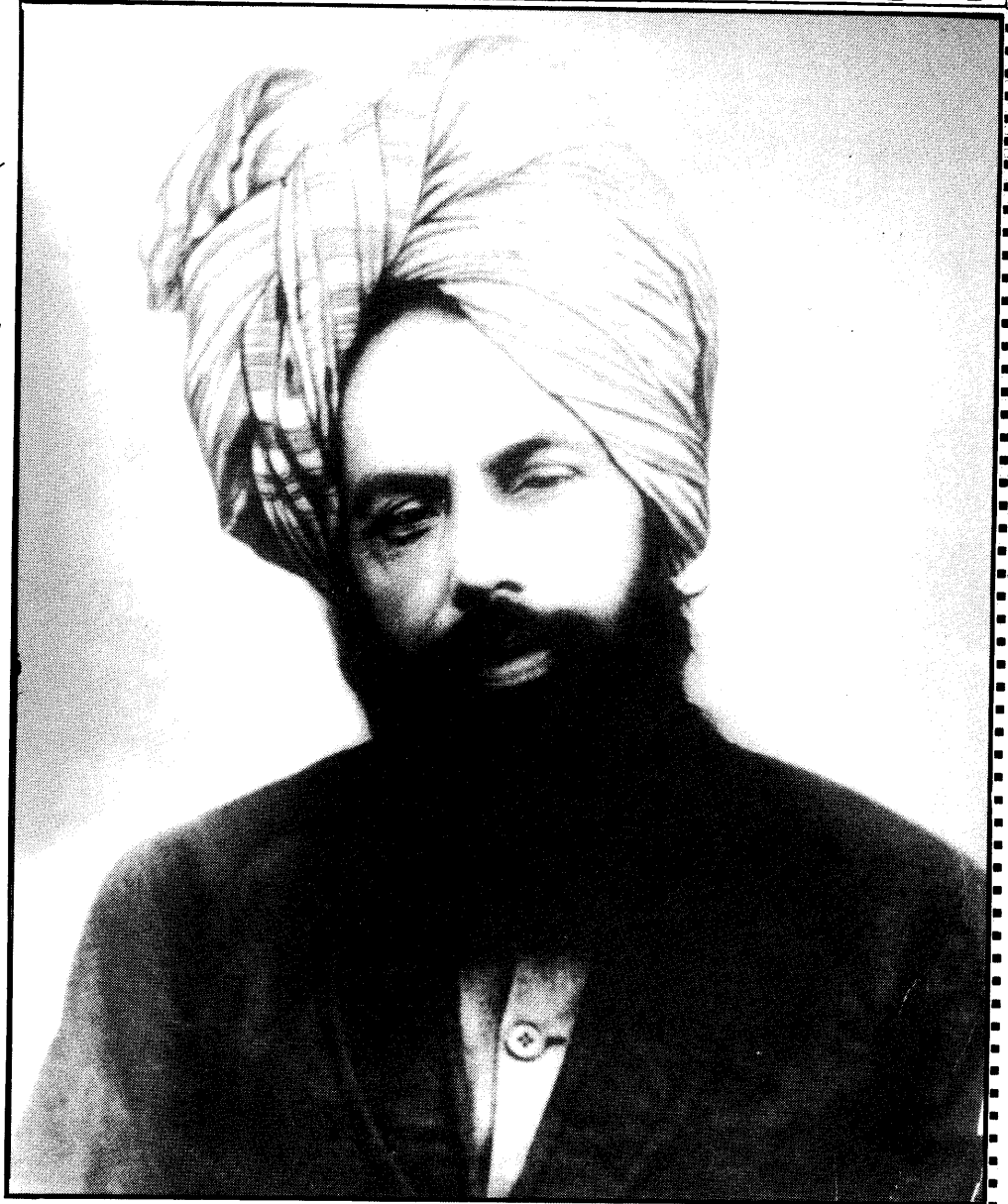
ALSO HEAR FROM

THE EARTH:

SUCCESSFUL

DIVINE REFORMER

HAS COME.



**HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD OF QADIAN**  
THE PROMISED MESSIAH AND MAHDI (PEACE BE ON HIM)

The Ahmadiyya Gazette is published monthly by the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Inc., at the local address: 31 Sycamore Street, P. O. Box 226, Chauncey, Ohio 45719. **SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID** at Chauncey, Ohio. Postmaster, please send address changes to **AHMADIYYA GAZETTE**, P. O. Box 226, Chauncey, Ohio 45719-0226.

## THE HOLY QURAN

When the eye is dazzled,

And the moon is eclipsed,

And the sun and the moon are brought together,

On that day man will say 'Whither to escape?'  
(75:8-11)

فَاذَا بَرِقَ الْبَصَرُ ۝

وَخَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ ۝

وَجُمِعَ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ ۝

يَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَيْنَ الْمَفْرُجُ ۝

### THE SAYING OF THE HOLY PROPHET (S.A.W.)

For our Mahdi there are two Signs which have never appeared before since the creation of the heavens and the earth, namely, the moon will be eclipsed on the first night in Ramadhan (i.e., on the first of the nights on which a lunar eclipse can occur) and the sun will be eclipsed on the middle day of Ramadhan (i.e., on the middle one of the days on which a solar eclipse can occur), and these Signs have not appeared since God created the heavens and the earth (Darqutani, Vol. 1 Part II, page 65)

إِنَّ لِهَٰذَا نَبَأًا يَّعْلَمُونَ لَمْ تَكُونُوا مِنْذُ  
خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ تَنْكَسِفُ الْقَمَرَ لَآوِلَ لَيْلَةٍ  
مِنْ رَمَضَانَ وَتَنْكَسِفُ الشَّمْسُ فِي الْاَوْسَطِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ  
تَكُونُوا مِنْذُ خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ

### THE PROMISED MESSIAH (S.A.W.) SAYS

Glad tidings to you, O community of brothers  
Congratulations to you, O community of friends

سیدنا حضرت مسیح موعود علیہ السلام کا عربی منقول کلام

الْقَصِيْدَةُ (روحانی خزائن جلد ۱۰ - نور الحق حصہ دوم صفحہ ۲۱۸)

The luster of God's Beneficence has become manifest  
And for those who can see, the way has become clear

بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ يَا مَعْشَرَ الْاَخْوَانِ  
تہیں اسے جماعت برادران بشارت ہو

The sun and the moon in these countries have been eclipsed  
According to God's plan in Ramadhan.

ظہرت بروق عنایت الختان  
نہا تعالیٰ کی عنایت کہ چمک ظاہر ہو گئی

And a prophecy of glad tidings of the Chief Prophet of Allah  
Has been fulfilled magnificently without any blemish.

التَّيْرَانِ يَهْنَهُ الْبُلْدَانِ  
سورج اور چاند کو ان ملکوں میں

The Great is the Allah Who showed this Sign  
Who Illuminated the proof of exhibiting the mystery

و بشارتہ من سید خیر الوسا  
اور ایک بشارت رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کی

Is this an act of the Almighty Allah  
Or you consider it a deception of man.

اللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ كَيْفَ اَبْدَىٰ اَيَّةٍ  
کیا ہی بزرگ خدا ہے کیونکہ تم اس نے نشان کو ظاہر کیا

(Noorul Haq Part II, pages 217, 218)

هل كان هذا افعال سرب قادر  
کیا یہ خدا تعالیٰ کا فعل ہے

# THE ADVENT OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH AS VINDICATED BY THE SIGNS OF THE LUNAR AND SOLAR ECLIPSES

(Saleh Mohammad Alladin, Professor of Astronomy, Osmani University, Hyderabad, India)

(Reprinted from *The Review of Religions*, November 1989)

## SUPPLICATIONS

*I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and apostle.*

*After this I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Satan. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds, the Gracious, the Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement. Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help. Guide us on the right path. The path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings, not of those who have incurred Thy displeasure, nor of those who have gone astray.*

*O Allah, shower Thy mercy on Muhammad and his progeny as Thou didst shower on Abraham and his progeny. Verily Thou art the Praiseworthy, the Lord of honor. O Allah, shower Thy blessings on Muhammad and his progeny as Thou didst shower on Abraham and his progeny. Verily Thou art the Praiseworthy, the Lord of honor.*

## THE PROPHECY REGARDING THE LUNAR AND SOLAR ECLIPSES

The coming of a great Divine Reformer in the Latter Days has been predicted in the holy scriptures of various religions. I propose to discuss a very remarkable prophecy made by our lord and master, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, which helps a seeker after truth in recognizing this Divine Reformer. According to this prophecy, lunar and solar eclipses on the specified dates of the month of Ramadhan would serve as Signs of his advent.

Almighty God says in the Holy Quran:

*He (Allah) is the Knower of the unseen; and He reveals not His secrets to anyone, except*

*to him whom He chooses, namely a Messenger of His (72:27-28).*

We learn from these verses that the Messengers of God have a very close relationship with God and they have the distinction of being granted knowledge of the unseen by Him. They are thus able to make remarkable prophecies.

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was granted knowledge of the unseen in abundance. He had prophesied that in the Last Age when the world would drift away from God, a Mahdi and Messiah (Divine Reformer) would come, through whom faith would be restored in the world and the renaissance of Islam would be brought about. He mentioned several Signs which would mark the advent of the Promised Messiah. These have been discussed in detail in the book *An Invitation to Ahmadiyyat*, by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, Second Successor to the Promised Messiah, may God be pleased with him [1]. In this discourse, I shall concentrate on the celestial signs of lunar and solar eclipses.

Hazrat Ali bin Umar Albaghdadi Ad-Darqutani, an eminent authority on Hadees, who lived from 918 to 995 of Christian Era (306 to 385 Hijri), had recorded the following Hadees narrated by Hazrat Imam Baqar Muhammad bin Ali, son of Hazrat Imam Zainul Abedeen (may Allah have mercy on them):

*For our Mahdi there are two Signs which have never appeared before since the creation of the heavens and the earth, namely, the moon will be eclipsed on the first night in Ramadhan (i.e., on the first of the nights on which a lunar eclipse can occur) and the sun will be eclipsed on the middle day of Ramadhan (i.e., on the middle one of the days on which a solar eclipse can occur) and these*

*Signs have not appeared since God created the heavens and the earth [2].*

These Signs are mentioned in the collections of Hadees of both Sunni and Shia sects. Eminent Muslim scholars have been quoting this Hadees in their books. This Hadees is recorded in several books [3] to [14].

Hazrat Sheikh Nematullah Wali, may Allah have mercy on him, who lived in the neighborhood of Delhi about 560 Hijri and is honored as Wali (Friend of God), wrote as follows:

مہدی وقت و عیسیٰ دوراں  
ہر دوراں شمسوار سے بینم  
ماہ را رو سیلہ سے محرم  
مہر را دلفنگار سے بینم

*i.e.*, He will be both Mahdi of the time and Jesus. I see him blessed with both attributes. I see both the moon and the sun obscured [15].

Ahl-i-Hadees dignitary Maulana Hafiz Muhammad bin Maulana Barakallah Lakhoke wrote in his book *Ahwalul Akhirat* [16]:

تیرھویں جن سنہوں سورج ہوسا اس سالے  
اندو ماہ رمضانے لکھیا ایہ یک روایت والے

It has been related that during the month of Ramadhan of that year there would be an eclipse of the moon on the 13th and an eclipse of the sun on 27th.

In this verse the dates of the lunar and solar eclipses are specified as the 13th and the 27th of Ramadhan. It will be explained later that in the light of the Hadees and the law of nature, the actual dates are the 13th and the 28th of Ramadhan.

The Hadees is strengthened by the fact that the Holy Quran mentions eclipses as important Signs of the approach of Resurrection. The Holy Quran says:

*He asks, 'When will be the day of Resurrection?' When the eye is dazzled, And the moon is eclipsed, And the sun and the moon are brought together, on that day man will say, "Whither to escape?" (75:7-11).*

The root of the prophecy thus lies in the Holy

Quran and the Hadees elucidates the verses of the Holy Quran and gives valuable details.

In the New Testament, Jesus, peace be on him, narrating the Signs of his second coming said:

*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light (Matthew 24:29).*

Mahatma Surdasji has mentioned the prophecy that when Kalki Autar would appear, the moon and the sun would be eclipsed. He wrote: (17)

*Both the moon and the sun will be eclipsed and there will be much violence and death.*

In the holy book of the Sikhs, Sri Guru Garanth Sahib, it is written:

*When Maharaj will come as Nahkalank, the sun and the moon will be his helpers. [18,19,20]*

In short, books of other religions also mention of the Signs of the sun and the moon. In the Hadees of Darqutani, quoted earlier, much detail is given, which we shall discuss subsequently.

#### LUNAR AND SOLAR ECLIPSES IN THE LIGHT OF THE LAWS OF NATURE:

Lunar and solar eclipses are phenomena which occur according to the laws of nature. The Holy Quran has repeatedly drawn our attention to natural phenomena. A discussion of the astronomical background is, therefore, appropriate and relevant. It helps in understanding the Hadees.

The earth, the sun and the moon form a system of three bodies. The Holy Quran has referred to this system in a very beautiful way as follows:

*Holy is He Who created all things in pairs, of what the earth grows, and of themselves, and of what they know not. And a Sign for them is the night from which We strip off the day, and lo! they are in darkness. And the sun is moving on the course prescribed for it. That is the decree of the Almighty, the All-knowing God. And for the moon We have appointed stages, till it becomes again like an old dry branch of a palm tree. It is not for the sun to*

*overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day. All of them float in an orb* (26:37-41)

Five verses of the Holy Quran have been quoted here. In the first verse a fundamental fact has been mentioned that Almighty God has created all things in pairs. The second verse refers to the night and the day which arise from the motion of the earth. The third verse refers to the motion of the sun and fourth refers to the motion of the moon. In the fifth verse, the sun, the moon, the night and the day, are all mentioned together, and attention is drawn to the fact that the movements of the sun and the moon have their limits.

We learn from science that the earth and the moon move around each other and complete a revolution in one month, they form a pair. The earth and the moon jointly move around the sun and complete a revolution in one year. Thus the sun and the earth-moon system form another pair. In the solar system there are numerous pairs within pairs. The sun with all its planets and their satellites moves around the center of the Galaxy completing a revolution in about two hundred million years. Like our sun, there are billions of stars in our galaxy which move around the center of the Galaxy with different periods. *Holy is He Who created all things in pairs.*

When the moon, in the course of its motion around the earth, comes between the sun and the earth in such a way that it prevents the light of the sun from reaching the earth, we have a solar eclipse; and when the earth comes between the sun and the moon in such a way that its shadow falls on the moon, we have a lunar eclipse. In astronomical terminology, we say that a solar eclipse occurs at new moon and a lunar eclipse occurs at full moon. At the time of the new moon, the longitudes of the sun and the moon are the same and the moon is said to be in conjunction.

An eclipse does not occur at every new moon and full moon because for the occurrence of an eclipse it is necessary that the sun, the earth and the moon should be aligned. If the earth's orbit around the sun and the moon's orbit around the earth were in the same plane, there would have been alignment twice every month, and hence there would have been one lunar eclipse and one

solar eclipse every month. Actually the two orbital planes are inclined to each other by an angle of about five degrees, on account of which the maximum number of eclipses in a solar year does not exceed seven (four or five being solar and two or three being lunar). The minimum number of eclipses which can occur in a year is two, both being solar. A solar eclipse occurs more often than a lunar eclipse but it is visible from a much smaller surface of the earth than a lunar eclipse. Hence from any given place of the earth, more lunar eclipses are visible than solar eclipses. For further details, see books on Spherical Astronomy.

The motion of the moon is quite complicated. To a first approximation, the moon moves around the earth in an elliptic orbit, on account of which its distance from the earth and its speed vary within certain limits. When the moon is closest to the earth it is said to be at perigee. The speed of the moon with respect to the earth is greatest when it is at perigee. On account of the gravitational attraction of the sun, the position of the perigee changes in space. Thus sometimes the moon moves faster in the early part of the month and sometimes it moves faster in the latter part. Likewise the distance and velocity of the earth-moon pair with respect to the sun also change within certain limits in accordance with the law of gravitation. As the Holy Quran says:

*The sun and the moon run their courses according to a fixed reckoning. (55:6)*

The changes in distances and velocities of the bodies have their effects on the dates on which the eclipses occur. Thus there are limits on the dates on which lunar and solar eclipses can occur.

Astronomers take the time of conjunction as the beginning of the lunar month. At that time the moon cannot be seen at all. The month of the Islamic Calendar (Hijri) begins with the first sighting of the lunar crescent, *i.e.*, when the phase of the moon becomes big enough to be visible. This happens roughly about twenty-four hours after conjunction. An excellent book dealing with the problem of the first visibility of the lunar crescent, has been written by Dr. Mohammad Ilyas [21].

If the Hijri Calendar is used, the dates on

which a lunar eclipse can occur are 13, 14 and 15; and the dates on which a solar eclipse can occur are 27, 28, and 29. According to the prophecy, the lunar eclipse would occur on the first night and the solar eclipse would occur on the middle day in the month of Ramadhan. This fixes the thirteenth of Ramadhan for the lunar eclipse and the twenty-eighth of Ramadhan for the solar eclipse.

In the Hadees, the word *Qamar* is used for the moon and not *Hilal*. The crescent of the first, second and third nights, is called *Hilal* while *Qamar* denotes the moon from the fourth night onward [22]. Hence the interpretation that the first night in Ramadhan implies the thirteenth of Ramadhan and not the first of Ramadhan, is also supported by the word *Qamar* used in the Hadees, thus leaving no ambiguity.

#### THE ADVENT OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH, PEACE BE ON HIM, AND THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROPHECY:

I shall now discuss how the prophecy of the Hadees was fulfilled.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India, peace be on him, was born in the year 1835 of the Christian Era (C.E.). He was a model of extraordinary righteousness. Profound love for the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was the salient feature of his personality. He was grieved to see the onslaughts against Islam by its critics and the poor spiritual condition of the Muslims. He dedicated himself to the service of Islam and prayed fervently for the spiritual regeneration of the world. His epoch-making work *Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya* published in four volumes from 1880 to 1884 is a masterpiece in which are discussed the truth of Islam and the excellences of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of A'lah be upon him.

Hazrat Ahmad, peace be on him, had the privilege of being a recipient of Divine revelation from 1876 until 1908 when he passed away. In 1882 he received his first revelation regarding his appointment as Divine Reformer through the following words:

*Allah bless thee O Ahmad. It was not thou*

*who didst throw but it was Allah Who did throw. The Most Gracious One has taught thee the Quran so that thou shouldst warn the people whose ancestors have not been warned and that the way of the guilty ones might become manifest. Proclaim: I have been commissioned and I am the first of the believers. [23]*

He also received the following revelation:

*Tell them I have with me testimony from Allah, then will you believe? Tell them I have with me testimony from Allah, then will you submit? [24]*

In obedience to Divine command he declared that he is the Mujaddid (Reformer) of the fourteenth century of the Islamic era. Later, on the 23rd of March 1889, under Divine command, he took the first oath of allegiance at Ludhiana and thus formed the Ahmadiyya Community. Hazrat Al-Haj Hafiz Maulvi Hakim Nooruddin, may Allah be pleased with him, who later became his First Successor, had the honor to be the first person to take the oath of allegiance. On the same day, forty people swore allegiance to the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, and solemnly promised that they would give priority to religion over worldly affairs.

Towards the end of 1890 C.E.; Almighty Allah revealed to him that Prophet Jesus, peace be on him, had died and the prophecy of his second advent was to be fulfilled by a person like Jesus, and that he was the Promised Messiah. Among the revelations which he received to this effect was the following:

*The Messiah, son of Mary, prophet of Allah, has died and in his attribute thou hast come in accordance with the promise. And the promise of Allah was bound to be fulfilled. [25]*

After receiving this explanation from Almighty God, Hazrat Ahmad, peace be on him, claimed in 1891 to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose advent was prophesied by the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Hazrat Ahmad, peace be on him, also gave arguments in support of his claim and wrote books. *Fatahi-Islam* (Victory of Islam), *Tauzihi-Maram*

(Explanation of Objectives) and *Izalai-Auham* (Removal of Suspicions). He asserted that the Almighty God had sent him to give spiritual life to people. The contemporary theologians rejected his claims and he met a storm of very violent opposition.

In his book *Noorul Haq* (Light of Truth) Part I, written in Arabic and published in early 1894, Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, made the following humble supplications:

*O God! Am I not from Thee? Curse and denial have now become excessive. Judge between us and our people with justice, for Thou art the Best of those who judge. O God! please send Thy succor for me from the heaven and help Thy servant in the time of adversity. I have become like the weak and disgraced and people have rejected me and reproached me. So Thou come to my help as Thou helped the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, on the day of Badr And protect us, O Best of Protectors, Thou art the Lord, the Merciful. Thou hast taken upon Thyself to show mercy, grant us a portion of it and show the help and have mercy on us and turn to us with compassion and Thou art the Most Merciful of all who show mercy. [26]*

Among the objections raised against him was also the one that the prophecy pertaining to the eclipse of the sun and the moon has not been fulfilled. Then Almighty God manifested this heavenly Sign in the year 1311 Hijri (1894 C.E.) when the lunar and solar eclipses occurred over Qadian on the specified dates of Ramadhan in fulfillment of the grand prophecy of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. The lunar eclipse occurred after sunset on the 13th of Ramadhan (March 21, 1894) and the solar eclipse occurred on Friday, the 28th of Ramadhan (April 6, 1894). Apart from the almanacs, there was mention of the eclipse in the Indian newspapers of the time, *Azad* and *Civil and Military Gazette*. Even now, the dates (of the Christian Era) for these eclipses can be confirmed from Oppolzer's *Canon of Eclipses* [27] and Nautical Almanac, London, of 1894 [28]. The calculations based on the position of the moon

show that the lunar dates of the eclipses correspond to the thirteenth and the twenty-eighth of Ramadhan [41].

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ECLIPSES OF RAMADHAN 1311 HIJRI (MARCH-APRIL 1894):

Soon after the celestial Signs were witnessed, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, wrote the book *Noorul Haq* (Light of Truth) Part II, which is devoted to an extremely enlightening discussion of the accurate fulfillment of the splendid prophecy of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. In this book, he explained in the light of Divine revelation that the true interpretation of the Hadees is that in the time of the Mahdi, the moon will be eclipsed in the first of the three nights on which a lunar eclipse can occur, i.e., on the 13th of Ramadhan, and the sun will be eclipsed on the middle day out of the days on which a solar eclipse can occur, i.e., on the 28th of Ramadhan.

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, drew attention to several properties of the eclipses which make the Signs very impressive. He pointed out that the word *first* and *middle* used in the Hadees were fulfilled in two ways, namely, with regard to date as well as with regard to time. Not only did the lunar eclipse occur on the first of the three nights but also it occurred in the beginning of the night in Qadian. The solar eclipse not only occurred on the middle day but also occurred in the forenoon in Qadian. It did not occur early in the morning and it was over before noon. The word used in the Hadees also means half. According to Calcutta Standard Time, the lunar eclipse was visible in India in the evening between 7 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. and the solar eclipse was visible in India in the forenoon between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. [29]

Aided by Divine revelation, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, elucidated the deeper meaning of the Hadees as follows.

*So the right interpretation and the true meaning of the expression: lunar eclipse will occur in the first night of Ramadhan, are that it will occur in the first of the three full-moon nights and you know the expression*

white nights. In addition to this there is also a hint that when the lunar eclipse occurs in the first full-moon night, it will occur in the beginning of the night and not after a lapse of time as will be clear to an enlightened person. And the lunar eclipse did occur accordingly and many had seen it in this country. [30]

With regard to the solar eclipse, he stated:

*The saying that **the sun will be eclipsed in the middle**, implies that the solar eclipse will manifest itself in such a way that it will divide the days of the eclipse into two halves. It will occur in the second day of the eclipse and its time will not exceed the first half of the day because that is the limit of the half. So just as Almighty God ordained that the lunar eclipse should occur in the first night, so also He ordained that the solar eclipse should occur in the eclipse days in the time specified by half. So it happened as predicted. And Almighty God does not reveal His secrets to anyone except to those whom He chooses for the reformation of the world. Hence there is no doubt that this Hadees is from the Messenger of God, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who is the best of all messengers [31].*

By the grace of Almighty Allah, in the study of this subject, my humble self has been very fortunate to get the valuable encouragement, attention and prayers of our leader, the present Head of the Ahmadiyya Community, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the Fourth Successor of the Promised Messiah. May Almighty Allah aid him with His mighty help and grant him a long, healthy life. While conversing with him in London, I mentioned to him that the prophecy contained in the words *نص منه* was fulfilled in two ways, with regard to date as well as with regard to time. Thereupon he commented that the third way in which the prophecy was fulfilled consisted in the fact that the eclipse was visible from a hemisphere of the earth. He added that the prophecy shows the greatness of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, as well as the truth of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him.

As stated earlier, the Holy Quran also

mentions the lunar and solar eclipses. It is worthy of note that while the Holy Quran uses the word *خسوف* (Khasaf) for the lunar eclipse, it does not use the word *كسوف* (Kasaf) for the solar eclipse, but describes the solar eclipse in a special way by stating that the sun and the moon will be brought together. Commenting on this point, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, said:

*The Quran did not describe the solar eclipse as *كسوف* (Kasof) in order to indicate an additional point. Because this solar eclipse which occurred after the lunar eclipse was an extraordinary and rare one and if you seek witness on this or desire the testimony of the observers on the extraordinary and strange features of this solar eclipse, then the news given in two renowned and reliable newspapers: 'Pioneer' and 'Civil and Military Gazette', should suffice. Both have published this in their issues of March 1894. [32]*

Eclipses are of different kinds. Some are prominent and some are faint. Professor J. A. Mitchell has classified solar eclipses into four categories: (1) Partial, (2) Annular, (3) Annular-Total, and (4) Total. In a partial eclipse the sun becomes partly obscured. In an annular eclipse, the central part of the sun becomes dark but the outer rim remains bright. In a total eclipse, the sun is completely obscured. An annular-total eclipse, as the name implies, is intermediate between annular and total. In this case, the vertex of the moon's shadow just reaches the earth. This is the rarest of the four categories. Professor Mitchell has deduced from the data of the past eclipses that in the average century, the total number of eclipses were 237, out of which only ten were of the annular-total type [33]. The solar eclipse of 28 Ramadhan 1311 Hijri was of the annular-total type. It was therefore different from the usual eclipses as indicated by the Promised Messiah, peace be on him. It was a spectacular eclipse.

It may also be noted that the lunar and solar eclipses were visible from India. A lunar eclipse can be seen from more than half the earth's sphere, but a solar eclipse is visible from a much smaller area. It often happens that a solar eclipse is only seen from a sparsely populated area or from an ocean. The solar eclipse of April 6, 1894,



was visible from a vast area of Asia including India. Professor T. R. Von Oppolzer has given details of the present and future lunar and solar eclipses from 1208 B.C. to 2161 C.E. in his book *Canon of Eclipses* [34]. He has shown by means of maps the paths of only the prominent solar eclipses; *i.e.*, those of annular, annular-total and total categories. The path of the solar eclipse of 6th April 1894 is included in Oppolzer's map (Chart 148) [35]. The Nautical Almanac of 1894 has also shown the path of this eclipse by a map [36]. It can be seen from both these sources that the path of this eclipse passes through India.

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, and his companions, saw this eclipse from Qadian. The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, stated that people should ponder over this fact that the sign was manifested in his country. He thus wrote as follows:

*O servants of God, ponder and think. Do you consider it permissible that the Mahdi should be born in the countries of Arabia and Syria and his Sign should be manifested in our country; and you know that the wisdom of God does not separate the Sign from the person for whom the Sign is meant. Then how could it be possible that the Mahdi should be in the East but his sign should be in the West. And this should be sufficient for you if you are really seekers after truth.*[37]

In short, the prophecy of our beloved master, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was fulfilled with great accuracy in a most elegant manner:

*So blessed is Allah, the Best of creators (23:15)*

Sir Isaac Newton had discovered the law of gravitation in the seventeenth century of the Christian era. Detailed astronomical calculations of the eclipses were not possible before this discovery. But our lord and master, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, made such an amazing prophecy on the basis of the knowledge he acquired directly from the Omniscient God. I cannot conceive a better heavenly sign than this for indicating the advent of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him.

*Holy is Allah, worthy of praise, Holy is Allah, the Great. O Allah, bestow Thy blessings on Muhammad and the progeny of Muhammad.*

### **CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE PROMISED MESSIAH, (PEACE BE ON HIM), ON THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROPHECY:**

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, was thrilled by the fulfillment of the grand prophecy of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Replete with gratitude to Almighty God for His magnificent favor, he wrote a poem in Arabic [38]. The meaning in English of some of the verses are as follows:

*Glad tidings to you O community brothers.  
Congratulations to you O community friends,*

*The brilliance of God's bounty has become manifest. And the way is opened for the person who can see;*

*The sun and the moon in these countries, have been eclipsed, by God's decree, in Ramadhan,*

*And a prophecy of glad tidings of the Chief Prophet of Allah has been fulfilled in such a pure way that there is no blemish in it.*

*Today every enlightened person is shedding tears of joy in remembrance of the bounties of Almighty Allah.*

*And in acknowledgement of the fulfillment of the prophecy of our Prophet. And are reflecting upon the Greatness of Allah, the real Benefactor,*

*Today every person who has pledged allegiance has increased so much in faith as though he has acquired a new faith.*

*Now after Ramadhan has passed, for others there is one Eid (festival) but for us there are two Eids.*

*The moon is showing you the light of guidance and the sun is guiding you towards faith.*

*For your benefit the Signs of the Creator have been manifested. In your own country for the Divinely supported person.*

*Is this a feat of an astrologer or is this a great sign of Almighty God?*

*This is the Hadees of the Holy Prophet, peace and*

*blessings of Allah be upon him, the savior of the creation and the leader of the valiant.*

*O my people, my sign was shown in Ramadhan by our Gracious God and Bestower of reward.*

*So read if you wish the verse of our Lord: The moon will be eclipsed, and leave off transgression.*

*Then the Hadees which is a Hadees narrated by a Holy Prophet's descendant in explanation of the verses of the Holy Quran.*

*These are the words of our Prophet and Beloved, so turn to them and don't bother about low people.*

This is a long poem which ends with the verse:

*O my Lord, bless this for the sake of the countenance of Muhammad, who is the best of all the noble and the purest of all the pure.*

O Allah shower Thy mercy on our leader and master, the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his progeny. Verily Thou art the Praiseworthy, the Lord of Honor.

#### **THE SECOND PAIR OF ECLIPSES OF RAMADHAN, 1312 HIJRI (MARCH 1895):**

According to another Hadees:

*The sun will be eclipsed twice in Ramadhan [39].*

In the following year 1895 C.E. lunar and solar eclipses again occurred in the month of Ramadhan on the 11th of March and 26th of March respectively. These eclipses occurred in the West. They were not visible from Qadian, but when the eclipses occurred, the dates in Qadian were the 13th and the 28th of Ramadhan respectively. The date of an eclipse can differ with the place.

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, made mention of these eclipses also in his book *Haqiqatul Wahi*. He wrote as follows:

*As stated in another Hadees, this eclipse occurred twice in Ramadhan, first in this country and then in America, and on both occasions it occurred on the same dates. Since at the time of the eclipse there was no other claimant on earth as Mahdi Ma'hood (Divine*

*Reformer) and since nobody else declared this eclipse as his sign and published hundreds of pamphlets and books in Urdu, Persian and Arabic, this heavenly sign is for me. Another proof of this is the fact that twelve years before this sign occurred, Almighty God had informed me that such a sign would occur and this news which is stated in Baraheen-e-Ahmadiyya was announced to hundreds of thousands of people before the sign was manifested [40].*

#### **ANSWER TO THE OBJECTION THAT LUNAR AND SOLAR ECLIPSES HAVE OCCURRED MANY TIMES IN RAMADHAN:**

Objections have been raised that lunar and solar eclipses have occurred in the month of Ramadhan several times and hence these could not be a reasonable criterion for the recognition of a Divine Messenger. It is true that both eclipses have occurred in the same month of Ramadhan many times but it is important to note that the Hadees makes mention of specific dates and the presence of the claimant is a vital part of the prophecy. The words

لَمْ نَكُنَّا مِنْزُحًا خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

used in the Hadees clearly show that the prophecy is highly significant.

A study of the frequency of the occurrences of the eclipses shows that in a period of about 22 years, we have a year or more commonly two years, in which both lunar and solar eclipses occur in the month of Ramadhan over some part of the world or the other on any of the eclipse dates. The solar eclipse need not occur over the same place at which the lunar eclipse occurred. But it is worthy of note that the occurrence of both the eclipses on the specified dates of Ramadhan from a given place is quite rare. In the two centuries (1800 to 2000 C.E.) that we (Dr. G. M. Ballabh and myself) studied, we found that both lunar and solar eclipses had occurred 17 times in Ramadhan, but the year 1894 was the only year in which both the eclipses were visible from Qadian on the specified dates. This was also confirmed by Mr. A.K. Bhatnagar, Director Astronomy Center, India Meteorological department, New Alipore, Calcutta 700057. In short, the occurrence of both eclipses

over Qadian on the specified dates is quite a rare event. Out of many pairs of eclipses that occurred in Ramadhan, only one had the specified properties. For further details, see *The Review of Religions*, July, 1987 [41].

Furthermore, the presence of the claimant is a necessary condition for the fulfillment of the prophecy. The words of the Hadees **لَمَهْرَيْنَا** make it clear that this Sign is for the benefit of the Mahdi. Mere occurrence of the eclipses without the claimant is of no significance. The words

**لَمْ تَكُونَا مِنْذِ خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ**

in the Hadees, imply that such a Sign never occurred before. They do not imply that such eclipses never occurred before. The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, said:

*We are not concerned with how often solar and lunar eclipses have occurred in the month of Ramadhan from the beginning of the world till today. Our aim is only to mention that from the time man has appeared in this world, solar and lunar eclipses have occurred as Signs only in my age for me. Prior to me, no one had this circumstance that on one hand he claimed to be Mahdi Mauood (Promised Reformer) and on the other, in the month of Ramadhan, on the appointed dates, lunar and solar eclipses occurred and he declared the eclipses as signs in his favor. The Hadees of Darqutani does not say at all that solar and lunar eclipses did not occur ever before, but it does clearly say that such eclipses never occurred earlier as Signs, because the word*

*تَكُونَا* is used which denotes feminine gender; this implies that such a Sign was never manifested before. If it was meant that such eclipses never occurred before which denotes masculine gender was needed and not *تَكُونَا* which denotes feminine gender. It is clear from this that the reference is to the two signs because signs are feminine gender. Hence if anybody thinks that many times lunar and solar eclipses have occurred, it is his responsibility to show the claimant to Mahdi who declared the solar and lunare eclipses as his sign and this proof should be certain and conclusive and this can only happen if a book

*of the claimant is produced who claimed to be Mahdi Ma'hood and had written that the lunar and solar eclipses which occurred in Ramadhan on the dates specified in Darqutani are the Signs of his truth. In short, we are not concerned with the mere occurrence of solar and lunar eclipses even if they had been thousands of times. As a sign this has happened at the time of a claimant only once and the Hadees has proved its authenticity and truth through its fulfillment at the time of the claimant to Mahdi [42].*

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, further said:

*As a matter of fact, since Adam to the present time, nobody ever made a prophecy like this. The prophecy has four aspects: (1) the occurrence of the lunar eclipse on the first of the eclipse nights, (2) the occurrence of the solar eclipse on the middle of the eclipse days, (3) the occurrence in the month of Ramadhan and (4) the presence of the claimant who has been rejected. Hence if the greatness of this prophecy is denied, then show a parallel to it in the world, and until a parallel can be found, this prophecy ranks foremost among all those prophecies to which the verse*

**فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا**

*can be applied, because it is stated here that from the time of Adam to the end, it has no parallel. [43]*

### THE CHALLENGE OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH, PEACE BE ON HIM

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, also gave a challenge with a reward of one thousand rupees to anyone who could show that such a Sign had occurred earlier. He stated as follows:

*Are you not afraid to deny the Hadees of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, even though its truth has become as manifest as the bright sun? Can you present a Sign like this in any age in the past? Do you read in any book that some person claimed to be from Almighty God and then in his time in Ramadhan, the lunar and solar eclipses occurred as you have now seen?*

*If you are aware then relate it and you will get one thousand rupees as a reward if you can show. So prove it and take this reward and I make Almighty God a Witness on this promise and you also be witness and God is the Best of all witnesses. And if you cannot prove, and you will never be able to prove, then guard against the Fire which is prepared for those who create disorder.[44]*

**THE LOVE OF THE HOLY PROPHET,  
PEACE AND BLESSINGS OF ALLAH BE  
UPON HIM, FOR THE MAHDI, PEACE BE  
ON HIM, AND VICE VERSA**

Hazrat Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the Third Successor of the Promised Messiah, may Allah have mercy on him, used to say that the words *Our Mahdi* in the Hadees, denote the intense love which the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, had for the coming Mahdi.

According to another Hadees, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

*Al-Mahdi, the vicegerent of Allah will appear. Even if you have to go crawling over mountains of ice, you should go to him and convey my Salaams (Greetings of Peace) to the Mahdi and swear allegiance to him because that Mahdi would be a vicegerent of God. [45]*

Muslim divines, therefore, earnestly desired to convey the salaams of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, to the Mahdi, peace be on him. Thus in the court of Hazrat Syed Ahmad Barelvi, the Mujaddid of the thirteenth century (may Allah have mercy on him), the poet Hazrat Momin of Delhi, expressed his longing desire as follows:

زمانہ مہدی موعود کا پایا اگر مومن  
تو سب سے پہلے تو کہو سلام پاک حضرت کا

*If you happen to be in the time of the Promised Mahdi, O Momin. Then first of all convey the holy Salaam of the Holy Prophet. [46]*

While on one hand, we find that the Holy

Prophet, peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, had great love for the Mahdi, on the other hand, we find that Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, peace be on him, had extraordinary love for his most revered master and leader, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, as evinced in his innumerable writings. For example, he has written:

*Bestow on me thy look of mercy and affection. O my master, I am thy most humble slave.*

*O my beloved, thy love has permeated my blood and my life, my feelings and my heart.*

*O my garden of delight, from the remembrance of thy countenance, I am not free for an instant or a moment.*

*My body yearns to go flying to thee. How I wish I had the capacity of flight.*

*My heart and soul are enchanted with the beauty of Muhammad. My body is like the dust of the path trodden by the progeny of Muhammad.*

*I have perceived with the eye of my heart and have heard with the ear of my intelligence that every part of the universe proclaims the beauty of Muhammad.*

*After God I am inebriated with the love of Muhammad, if this is infidelity, then by God I am a great infidel.*

*Our leader, through whom is all light, his name is Muhammad, He is my beloved.*

*I am lost in his light, I have become entirely his; He is everything. What am I? This is the essence.*

*O my beloved God, I swear by Thy Oneness I have forgotten myself in thy (Holy Prophet's) love.*

*I swear by God, the images of all others are wiped away from my heart from the time I planted thy image in my heart.*

*I cannot see at all the weakness of the religion of the Holy Prophet. O my Sovereign grant me success and triumph*

*O my Lord, shower Thy blessings on Thy Prophet forever and ever, in this world as well as in the next world. [47, 48]*

Through this great divine, who annihilated himself in the love of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the world has heard in this materialistic age, the appealing voice of a divine Messenger calling us to God, our Creator and Master, with such heartfelt words as these:

*How unfortunate is the man who does not know yet that he has a God who has power over everything. Our God is our paradise. Our highest delights are in our God, for we have seen Him and found every beauty in Him. This wealth is worth procuring even if one has to lay down one's life to procure it. This ruby is worth purchasing even if one has to lose oneself to acquire it. Oh Ye, who are bereft, run to this fountain and it will satisfy you. It is the fountain of life that will save you. What shall I do, and how shall I impress the hearts with this good news, and by beating what drum shall I make the announcement that this is your God, so that people might hear? What remedy shall I apply to the ears of the people so that they should listen? [49]*

These are the words of the Divine Messenger of this age, replete with the deepest love and sympathy for all mankind. It was about him that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, had said that even if faith were to go up to the Pleiades, he would surely find it [50]. He is the light of this age. He is the long-awaited person whom the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, so affectionately called *our Mahdi* and to whom he conveyed his precious greetings. The sun and the moon have borne testimony to his truth.

#### DECLARATIONS ON OATH BY THE PROMISED MESSIAH

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, also declared on oath that he is the Promised Divine Messenger and that the lunar and solar eclipses are Divine Signs for him. He stated as follows:

*In my age only, in the month of Ramadhan, eclipses of the sun and the moon occurred; in my age only, in accordance with the authentic sayings of the Holy Prophet and the Holy Quran and earlier Books, there was the*

*plague all over the country, and in my age only, new mode of transport, namely railways came into existence and in my age only, as per my prophecies, terrible earthquakes came. Does not then righteousness demand that one should not be bold in denying me. Look! I swear by Almighty God and say that thousands of signs for establishing my truth have been manifested, are being manifested and will be manifested. If this were a man's plan, never would he have enjoyed such support and help. [51]*

He further said:

*And I also swear by Almighty God that I am the Promised Messiah and I am the same person who was promised by the prophets. There is news about me and my age in the Torah and the Gospel and the Holy Quran, it is stated that there will be eclipses in the sky and severe plague on the earth. [52]*

He also said:

*I swear by God in Whose Hand is my life that He has manifested this Sign in the sky to testify my truthfulness, and He manifested it at a time when the Maulvis (theologians) named me Dajjal (Anti-Christ), biggest liar, infidel and even biggest infidel. This is the same Sign regarding which twenty years ago I was promised in *Baraheen-e-Ahmadiyya*, namely, **Tell them I have with me testimony from Allah, will you believe it or not? Tell them I have with me testimony from Allah, will you accept it or not?** It should be remembered that although there are many proofs from Almighty God for vindicating my truthfulness and more than a hundred prophecies that have been fulfilled to which hundreds of thousands of people are witnesses, but in this revelation, this prophecy has been mentioned specifically, i.e., I have been given such a Sign which was not given to anybody else from the time of Adam to the present time. In short, I can stand in the sacred precincts of the Ka'ba and swear that this Sign is for testifying to my truth. [53]*

In his verses, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, appealed as follows:

*To imagine that a Mahdi will come who will cause bloodshed and make religion prosper by killing the disbelievers.*

*O ignorant people, these ideas are completely wrong, they are calumnious and baseless, and they will not flourish;*

*O my dears, the man who was to come, has already come, even the sun and the moon have disclosed this secret to you. [54]*

In another context he said:

*After me, of what use is waiting for others, repent, for one knows not how long one would live. [55]*

O Allah, shower Thy blessings on Muhammad (peace be on him) and his progeny. And we conclude with the prayer: All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

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## FREQUENCY OF ECLIPSES IN THE MONTH OF RAMADHAN

*(This paper was presented in the symposium on Panchang in Calcutta in February 1992 by Saleh Mohammed Alladin and G. Mohan Ballabh—Center of Advanced Study in Astronomy—Osmania University, Hyderabad)*

Reprinted from The Review of Religions, June 1992

### ABSTRACT

Astronomy has its contact with various sciences on one hand and religion on the other hand. The present paper had been motivated by a prophecy found in Islamic literature according to which lunar and solar eclipses on particular dates of Ramadhan would serve as signs for a great Religious Reformer. It is found that in a period of about 22 years, we generally have two consecutive years in which both lunar and solar eclipses occur in the month of Ramadhan over some parts of the world or the other. But the occurrence of both the eclipses on the specified dates of Ramadhan from a given place is quite rare.

The study of the frequency of eclipses dates back to ancient times. The ancient Babylonians noted that eclipses occur in the same sequence after a period of about 18 years, known as the Saros. The sequence of eclipses recurs after 18 years and 10 and 1/3 days or 11 and 1/3 days depending upon the number of leap years these contain. This period corresponds to nearly 243 lunations (a lunation is the interval between one new moon to the next new moon) and nearly 242 draconic months (a draconic month is the time taken by the moon to go from one node to the same node again). Resonance between these two periods produces the Saros period, after which the moon and the sun return very nearly to the same relative position. It also turns out that this interval is nearly equal to 239 anomalistic months (an anomalistic month is the interval between moon's two successive crossing of the perigee).

We appreciate the statement made by Professor Das Gupta in the Inaugural Session that astronomy is a link between science and spirituality. We have been motivated to study the frequency of the eclipses in the month of Ramadhan by a well known prophecy found in

Islamic literature according to which lunar and solar eclipses on particular dates of Ramadhan would serve as signs of a great Religious Reformer. Darqutni, an eminent authority on Hadees, i.e., sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessing of God be on him), who lived from 918 to 995 of the Christian Era (C.E.) had recorded that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of God be on him) said:

*For our Mahdi (Spiritual Reformer) there are two signs which have never appeared before since the creation of the heavens and earth, namely, the moon will be eclipsed in the first night in Ramadhan (i.e., on the first of the nights on which lunar eclipse can occur) and the sun will be eclipsed on the middle day of Ramadhan (i.e., on the middle one of the days on which solar eclipse can occur); and these signs have not appeared since the creation of the heavens and the earth.*

There are prophecies in other religions also that eclipses will serve as sign for a great reformer. [1]

A lunar eclipse occurs at full moon and a solar eclipse at new moon. The month of the Islamic Calendar begins with the sighting of the lunar crescent and not from new moon as given in the astronomical almanac. Hence the dates of the Islamic Calendar may differ from place to place. If the Hijri Calendar is used, the dates on which a lunar eclipse can occur are 13, 14, and 15; and the dates on which a solar eclipse can occur are 27, 28 and 29. [2] The prophecy thus requires that the lunar eclipse should occur on the 13th Ramadhan and the solar eclipse on the 28th Ramadhan.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (peace be on him) claimed to be the Promised Divine Reformer in the year 1891 in Qadian,



Punjab, on the basis of divine revelations which he received. The prophesied eclipses occurred were divine Signs for him. The lunar and solar eclipses both occurred in the month of Ramadhan on the specified dates at Qadian in 1894 (1411 Hijri).

It should be noted that the prophecy does not say that lunar and solar eclipses never occurred on the specified dates of Ramadhan in the past, but it does clearly say that such eclipses never occurred earlier as Signs. Nevertheless it is of interest to study how rare is the occurrence of the lunar and solar eclipses on the specified dates.

We have investigated the following questions:

- (i) How often do lunar and solar eclipses both occur in Ramadhan?
- (ii) How often do these eclipses occur on the same specified dates of Ramadhan at Qadian (75 23' E, 31 49' N)?

We have studied the eclipses of the two centuries 1800-2000. We used Prof. T. R. Oppolzer's Canon of Eclipses [3] to obtain the lunar and solar eclipses that occurred in Ramadhan. The Moon Tracker and the Sun Tracker Software of Zephyr Services [4] were used to obtain maps indicating the regions from which eclipses could be seen.

The times of the new moon preceding Ramadhan were taken from the U.S. Naval Observatory Circular [5]. These were used to estimate the dates of Ramadhan at eclipses at Qadian.

Our results are given in Table 1, given on the next page. It may be noted from the Table that in a period of about 22 years, we generally have two consecutive years in which both lunar and solar eclipses occur in the month of Ramadhan over som

some part of the earth or the other. In the two centuries 1800-2000 C.E., both lunar and solar eclipses occurred in the month of Ramadhan seventeen times. Out of these, nine times neither the lunar eclipse nor the solar eclipse was visible from Qadian, six times the lunar eclipse was visible but the solar eclipse was not visible. Once the solar eclipse was visible but the lunar eclipse was not visible. Only in the year 1894, both the eclipses were visible from Qadian and these also occurred at Qadian on the prophesied dates.

Our study thus shows that although eclipses are phenomena that occur frequently, the occurrence of lunar and solar eclipses on the specified dates of the Islamic Calendar at a specified place on the earth is quite a rare event. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him) made such a marvellous prophecy which was exactly fulfilled in our age.

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- [3] T. R. Von Oppolzer, *Canon of Eclipses*, Dover Publications, New York, 1962.
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- [5] U.S. Naval Observatory Circular No. 112 (dated April 8, 1966) and No. 119 (dated February 23, 1968)

EIDUL FITR IS EXPECTED TO FALL ON MARCH 14, 1994

THE AHMADIYYA GAZETTE STAFF WISHES TO CONVEY TO ALL OUR READERS

**EID MUBARAK**

**Pairs of Eclipses Occurring in the Month of Ramazan During 1800-2000 C.E.**

S. No.	Eclipse Date & type	Date & time(IST) of New Moon Preceding Ramazan Month	First Ramazan at Qadian after sun set	Whether Visible From Qadian	Hijri Date of Eclipse if Visible
1.	1807 Nov 15 L P Nov 29 S T	1807 Oct 31 05:56		No No	
2.	1808 Nov 03 L T Nov 18 S P	1808 Oct 19 22:11		No No	
3.	1829 Mar 20 L P Apr 04 S T	1829 Mar 05 18:17	Mar 06	Yes No	1244, 15 R
4.	1830 Mar 09 L T Mar 24 S P	1830 Feb 23 10:19	Feb 24	Yes No	1245, 14 R
5.	1851 Jul 13 L P Jul 28 S T	1851 Jun 29 11:54		No No	
6.	1872 Nov 15 L P Nov 30 S P	1872 Nov 01 10:57		No No	
7.	1873 Nov 04 L T Nov 20 S P	1873 Oct 21 16:25	Oct 22	Yes No	1290, 14 R
8.	1894 Mar 21 L P Apr 06 S T(A)	1894 Mar 07 19:47	Mar 09	Yes Yes	1311, 13 1311, 28
9.	1895 Mar 11 L T Mar 26 S P	1895 Feb 24 22:12		No No	
10.	1916 Jul 14 L P Jul 30 S A	1916 Jun 30 16:13		No No	
11.	1917 Jul 05 L T Jul 19 S P	1917 Jun 19 18:31	Jun 21	Yes No	1335, 14 R
12.	1937 Nov 18 L P Dec 02 S A	1937 Nov 03 09:45		No No	
13.	1938 Nov 07 L T Nov 22 S P	1938 Oct 23 14:11	Oct 24	Yes No	1357, 15 R
14.	1959 Mar 25 L P Apr 08 S	1959 Mar 09 16:21	Mar 10	Yes No	1378, 15 R
15.	1960 Mar 13 L T Mar 27 S P	1960 Feb 26 11:44		No No	
16.	1981 Jul 17 L P Jul 31 S T	1981 Jul 02 00:33	Jul 03	No Yes	1401, 28 R
17.	1982 Jul 06 L T Jul 20 S P	1982 Jun 21 17:22		No No	

Abbreviations : L : Lunar ; S : Solar ; T : Total ; P : Partial  
A : Annular ; R : Ramazan

CITY TIME

## Cityfolk

# Mixing religion and science

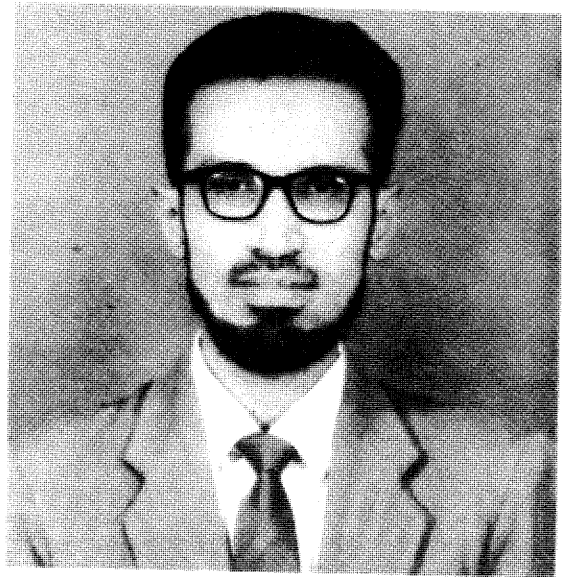
By Raseel Ahluwalia

Professor S M Alladin looks at the clouds above and they are silver. A blue ribbon panel of educators and opinion leaders has just chosen him for the Meghnath Saha award for research in theoretical sciences for the year 1981. At a function to be held later by the UGC, he will be presented a citation and a cash award of Rs 10,000 from the endowment made available by the Hari Om Ashram Trust. For his comprehensive work on dynamics of galaxies, as the letter states. Someone might have added: and also for his extreme simplicity. For humble he is, in homage and in manner, and the recognition seems to have effected him very little.

"I have always believed in prayer and though this (the award) is a big encouragement, it strengthens my faith that God accepts prayer and reveals. His acceptance through his beloved people." This is the only fundamental value he sees in the award, and his voice drops to a conspiratorial tone as he recounts an interesting back story. Two years ago, the Head of the Ahmadiya community (to which the Professor himself belongs) Hasrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad had a dream in which a rare honour had been bestowed on the Professor. The year 1983 also marked the hundredth year of the Kapteyan Laboratory in Groningen (Holland). Now Professor Alladin attended the colloquium along with Professor V Radhakrishna, Director of the Raman Research Institute at Bangalore, on the Milky Way Galaxy. A dignitary at Qadian, the headquarters of the community in India, wrote to the Head, that his dream had been fulfilled. The rejoinder was not long in coming: the Head was expecting a "bigger honour" for the Professor.

Professor Alladin, self-effacing as ever, in a suit that Clark Gable would never have worn, smiles. "I recall now, Professor Salem, when awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics, was asked whether it was by the Grace of God. Yes, of course, he replied, because I can name people who did good work but didn't get the reward. What a hard time it must be for the Judges." Professor Alladin wonders. The child, Saleh Mohammed Alladin had "always been interested in stars. They never ceased to fascinate me and I would spend a lot of time on the terrace, gazing at stars and reading popular articles on astrophysics." Educated in St. Patrick's and Nizam College, he was awarded his doctorate in Astronomy and Astro-Physics from the University of Chicago in 1963. His physics teacher, Dr R Satyanarayan, "who was also our VC for sometime, recommended very strongly to the government for support to go to USA and I got this support from the US-India wheat loan under the educational exchange programme."

At that time, there was no department of Astronomy in Osma-



nia University. This is of a more recent origin—1960—and the professor is now on a UGC fellowship which allows him the freedom to devote all his time to research without the accoutrement of teaching or administration. Being intensely devout, he was rather pained that the Ahmadiya community was "not being allowed to propagate the Kalima, which is that there is no God other than Allah and Mohammad is the messenger of Allah." In fact, so earnest is he on this score, that he politely asks me if I could "bring attention to the fact that the Ahmadiyas are being deprived of this right, just because they are not considered Muslims. To propagate the faith, the Holy Prophet suffered so much and now Muslims are stopping us from propagating it." In fact so committed does he sound to this cause that I wonder how does he ever evade the dichotomy between science and religion in his pursuit of both. "If one understands both religion and science correctly, there can be no conflict. If we find a conflict, then one of the two we are misunderstanding. Scriptures have often been misunderstood, but if there is some disagreement in observation and theory, we should try and remove that conflict."

Seeing stars has certainly brought the Research Assistant at Yerkes Observatory (USA) in 1963 on a long journey to the assignment as the Director of the Centre of Advanced Studies in Astronomy, a post Professor Alladin relinquished when his two-year UGC fellowship became tenable. Sometime ago, the afforestation drive of the Vice-Chancellor, from which the ecology on the campus had benefitted was new. Now, the decision of the UGC to confer this award on Professor Alladin, although first made public several months ago, is news. But the award notwithstanding, his interest in theology will endure. As he presents me a booklet, *The Review of Religions*, he says, "I try to study the Quran and Science and reflect on verses in the Quran which deal with Nature."

# VERACITY OF THE HOLY PROPHET OF ISLAM HAZRAT MOHAMMAD MUSTAFA (may Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) ESTABLISHED BY THE FULFILLMENT OF A GRAND PROPHECY

(Anwer Mahmood Khan, Los Angeles, CA.)

There is a famous phrase which states: "Knowledge is power." This phrase has withstood the tests of time in every walk of human life. There exists, however, a type of knowledge which is perhaps the most powerful of all the known types of knowledge; yet it cannot be taught in any school or university. Man has been trying his level best to acquire it, but with total failure. What is this type of knowledge, that is so powerful and yet out of human reach?

This invaluable type of knowledge is the knowledge of the unseen. The sole reservoir of this type of knowledge is the one All-Knowing God. He Himself bestows some glimpses of the unseen to His select and sacred few—known as prophets or divine messengers. All of the prophets were the torch bearers of this divine wisdom which aided them in guiding all of humanity at large. In the Holy Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, Allah (God) describes this special blessing thus:

عَلَّمَ الْغَيْبَ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ  
أَحَدًا إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَمْلِكُ مِنْ بَيْنِ  
يَدَيْهِ وَمَنْ خَلْفَهُ رِصْدًا ۗ

*He (Allah) is the Knower of the unseen; and He reveals not His secrets (the knowledge of the unseen) to anyone, except to him whom He chooses, namely a Messenger of His. And then He causes an escort of Guarding Angels to go before him and behind him. (72:27-28)*

In light of this Quranic verse, all of the messengers of God were bestowed with the knowledge of the future, which was unknown to mankind. Examining biblical scriptures we find that both the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and the Christian Bible (New Testament) present glad tidings of the coming of an ultimate reformer at a later date. This reformer would bring a message that would be universal in its scope, complete in

its teachings and perfect in its ideology. In the Song of Solomon, even his name—Muhammad—has been mentioned. A few selected extracts from these prophecies are presented below:

The prophet Moses received the following promise from God:

I will raise them up a prophet from among thy brethren like unto thee and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. (*Deuteronomy 18:18-19*)

Further we read:

And he said, the Lord came from Sinai and rose up from Seir unto them, he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousand saints; from his right hand went a fiery law for them. (*Deuteronomy 33:2*)

Jesus Christ said to his followers:

If ye love me, keep my Commandments. And I will pray to the Father and He shall give you another Comforter. That he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of the Truth (*John 14:15-17*)

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. (*John 16:7*)

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but

whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me. (*John 16:12-14*)

All of the above statements, given by God to his messengers, or stated by the messengers themselves, point to the fact that a reformer would be coming at a later date. Subsequent events of the world indicate that all these prophecies were gloriously fulfilled by the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of God be upon him). *In what follows, any reference to the Holy Prophet Muhammad will be followed by the letters S.A.W., an Arabic expression for the phrase: may peace and blessings of Allah be on him* in Mecca, Arabia, as the universal Prophet for all of mankind. The Holy Qur'an comments on this fact:

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الَّذِي جَاءَهُمْ بِبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنْ رَبِّهِمْ يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّهِمْ وَالرَّسُولُ يُحِبُّهُمْ كَحُبِّهِمْ  
عَدَدُ هَمِّ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ

*Those who follow the messenger, the Prophet, the unlettered whom they find mentioned in the Torah and Gospel. ( 7:158)*

An unbiased seeker of truth would like to have additional proof of the truth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) The veracity of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) can be tested on all the criteria mentioned in the divine scriptures. The Holy Qur'an has set forth a very clear guideline to test the veracity of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) We read in Chapter 69 thus:

وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضَ الْأَقَاوِيلِ لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِينِ  
لَوْلَا قَطْعُنَا مِنْهُ الْوَتِينَ لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ الْبِئْسَ الْأَمِينِ  
إِن جازين

*And if he had forged and attributed any saying to us, We would surely have seized him by the right hand, and then, surely, we would have cut his life-artery. And not one of you could have held Us off from him. ( 69:45-48)*

Similar criteria have been mentioned in biblical scriptures. God spoke to Moses and said:

But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak

in the name of other Gods, even that prophet shall die. (*Deuteronomy 18:20*)

These passages clearly indicate that a truthful person succeeds in his mission and God assists his true messenger at every turn. He, in addition, causes His prophets to prevail against all odds. Thus, the prophet's future predictions come true to the letter in every instance.

Now, let us objectively evaluate the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) on the above criteria. A study of his life indicates that he was bestowed with innumerable glad tidings of the future and all of them came to fruition. Too, he was considered even by his worst enemies as a truthful and honest man. Among the people of Mecca he was called "Al-Sadiq", meaning "The Truthful", and "Al-Amin" meaning "The Trustworthy". An eminent Christian author comments about the personality trait of honesty in the Holy Prophet of Islam (S.A.W.):

How could (Muhammad) have dared to preach, in spite of the insults of his countrymen, if he, a man of simple nature, had not been continuously urged on by inner forces? How could he have started a struggle which looked hopeless? How could he have carried it on for over ten years at Mecca with very little success and countless sorrows, if he had not the very deep conviction of the truth of his mission? How could so many noble and intelligent Muslims have believed in him and thrown in their lot with him, joined the new faith and consequently associated themselves with a society made up for the most part of slaves, freedmen and indigent people, if they had not felt in his word the sincerity of the Truth? We do not need to say more, for even among Occidentals the truth is accepted that the sincerity of Muhammad was deep and true. [1]

Perhaps the greatest of his prophecies was about the advent of a Messiah in the latter days. This prophecy had been described at length by both the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet of Islam (S.A.W.). Several signs of the second coming of the Messiah have been cited in commentaries and interpretations of the Holy

Qur'an, and one such sign is expressed thus:

فَإِذَا بَرِقَ الْبَصَرُ\* وَخَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ\* وَجَمَعَ  
الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرَ\* يَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَيْنَ الْمَفْرَجُ\*

*When the eye is dazzled, and the moon is eclipsed, and the sun the moon are brought together, on that day man will say, 'Whither to flee?' (75:8-11)*

The commentators have interpreted these verses to be the signs of the last days. They expect that these eclipses will take place in the times of the advent of the Messiah. The phrase that the sun and moon are brought together signify the eclipses of both in the same month. As occurrence of eclipses is a natural phenomena, to mention these as a sign point out that these will have some special significance and that is the advent of Mahdi in the last days. It is for him that these celestial signs will be shown. Without this link with the Imam of the age, these eclipses have little significance. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) further explained these signs with greater specificity and details thus?

عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَحْيَىٰ إِنَّ لِمَهْدِيْنَا آيَاتَيْنِ لَمْ تَكُونَا مِنْذُ  
خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ. يَتَكَسَفُ الْقَمَرُ لِأَوَّلِ لَيْلَةٍ  
مِنْ رَمَضَانَ وَيَتَكَسَفُ الشَّمْسُ فِي الْتَمَاضِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ  
تَكُونَا مِنْذُ خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ: (دارقطني جداول جزدهم ص ٤٥)

*i.e., For our Mahdi, there are two signs which have never appeared before, since the creation of the heaven and earth, namely, the moon will be eclipsed on the first night in Ramadhan (on the first of its appointed nights of eclipse in the laws of nature) and the sun will be eclipsed in the middle day of Ramadhan (middle of the appointed days of eclipse in the laws of nature). And these signs have not appeared since the creation of heaven and earth. (Darqutni Vol. 1, Part 2, p. 65)*

A closer look at the words of this prophecy reveal the following facts:

- An advent of a person with the title "Mahdi" is predicted.
- It is implicit in the statement that the "Mahdi" will be among the followers of the Holy

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) as the words "Our Mahdi" denote.

- To establish the veracity of this claimant, Allah will bestow the Mahdi with two heavenly signs.
- These signs have never been shown for any claimant since the beginning of time.
- These signs are
  - The eclipse of the moon to take place on the first of its appointed nights according to the laws of nature.
  - The eclipse of the sun to take place on the middle of its appointed days according to the laws of nature.
  - Both of these eclipses will occur in the month of Ramadhan, the holy month of fasting for Muslims.

#### STATUS OF HAZRAT IMAM DARQUTNI IN THE EYES OF ISLAMIC ELITES

Since the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. (known as hadith) have been reported by several people of all ethical standards, it is advisable to study the narrators of this hadith to ascertain the authenticity of the report. This study indicates that Imam Darqutni, the narrator of this hadith, was one of the most respected saints in early Islam and was scrupulously careful in recording the saying of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) Hazrat Shah Abdul Aziz, Mauhaddis of Delhi, another eminent elite of Islam, comments about Imam Darqutni in his book *Naqbatul Fikr* thus:

...Imam Darqutni once said, 'O residents of Baghdad, do not even think that any narrator would be able to refer any false or incorrect statement to the Holy Prophet of Islam during my life time. (*Naqbatul Fikr*, footnotes, p.52)

#### COMMENTARIES OF ISLAMIC SCHOLARS AND SAINTS ON THIS HADITH OF THE HOLY PROPHET OF ISLAM:

As it is customary in all divine scriptures as well as the sayings of the messengers, the words used in the prophecies could be interpreted literally, metaphorically, allegorically, or figura-

tively. Although the text of this hadith is quite clear and specific, it is necessary to review the various interpretations offered by the different scholars of hadith and pious elites of the Islamic past. A summary of this review is presented below:

1. Hazrat Sheikh Nematullah Wali wrote:

مہدی وقت د عیسیٰ دوراں  
ہر دوراں شہسوار سے بینم  
ماہ را رد سیاہ سے نگرم  
مہر را دل فگار سے بینم

He will be both Mehdi of the time and the Messiah of the Age, I see him blessed with both attributes. I see both the sun and the moon obscured. (*Al-Qaseeda*)

2. Maulana Mohammad Ismail Shahdeed stated:

Strange and unusual events are going to happen in the 13th Century and I am visualizing the Eclipses of the Sun and the Moon to occur in this century (*Arbaeen Fi Ahwalil Mahdiyeen*)

3. Allama Sheikh Shahabuddin Ibn Al Hajar-al Hashimi wrote:

Muhammad bin Ali, an elite among the Ahl-e-Bait, narrates that there will be two signs for Imam Mahdi which have never been shown to mankind since the creation of the heavens and the earth. One of these is the eclipse of the moon on the first of its nights in the month of Ramadhan, and the eclipse of the sun will be on the middle of the days. (*Kitabul Fataw Al Hadeesiyya*, p. 31, Egypt)

4. Mohammad Noorul Haq wrote:

The Signs of the advent of Imam Mahdi include: Sinking of the Earth's crust, prevalence of accusations, an increase in women's population, a decrease in men's population, increase of wars and battles, eclipse of the moon on the first of its appointed nights and the eclipse of the sun on the middle of its appointed days. This sign has never been shown since the creation of the heavens and the earth. (*Shajarul Auoliya*, p. 165)

5. Qazi Mohammad Suleman, President of Ahl-e-Hadith, commented on the hadith thus:

Among the distinct portions of the knowledge of Hadith is that section which consists of prophecies. As the knowledge of the unforeseen belongs to Allah alone, the presence of certain prophecies in the statement of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and their complete fulfillment is the clear proof of the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet's (S.A.W.) prophethood and the veracity of the statements uttered by him.

6. Sheikh Abdul Aziz Bahaduri, in the light of divine revelation, wrote:

During the month of Ramadhan, both the eclipses of the sun and of the moon will occur, then the Second Advent of Isa and Mahdi will take place. (*Al-Fazl*, March 23, 1979)

It becomes quite clear from the foregoing reviews that all the various scholars of Islam agree that this hadith has a specific prophecy to be interpreted literally and hence all await the advent of the Madhi.

#### ASTRONOMICAL FACTS ABOUT ECLIPSES

Since the signs described are celestial in nature, it would be advisable to understand eclipses in the light of the laws of nature.

According to today's knowledge of astronomy, the sun is one of millions of stars of our galaxy, the Milky Way. There are nine planets revolving around the sun. Our planet Earth is the third closest planet to the sun in the solar system, tilted on its north-south axis at an angle of 23° 27' and revolving around the sun in a year's time. The moon is the natural satellite of earth and rotates around our planet completely in about 29-30 days.

The moon and the earth rotate on their own orbits and together rotate around the sun. During these rotations, there are times when all three bodies share the same plane, resulting in a situation known as an eclipse. When the earth comes between the sun and the moon, it prevents the light of the sun to be shed on the moon. Consequently, the moon appears dark and the result is a lunar eclipse. Similarly, at other times

the moon comes between the sun and the earth. This situation blocks the light of the sun coming to a portion of the earth and the sun thus appears dark if viewed by an observer standing within that shadowed portion, a phenomenon referred to by astronomers as a solar eclipse.

A renowned Indian astronomer, Dr. Saleh Mohammad Aladin, in one of his articles explained this phenomenon thus:

In astronomical terminology, we say that a solar eclipse occurs at new moon and a lunar eclipse occurs at full moon. At the time of the new moon, the longitudes of the sun and the moon are the same and the moon is said to be in conjunction. An eclipse does not occur at every new moon and full moon because for the occurrence of an eclipse it is necessary that the sun, the earth and the moon should be aligned. If the earth's orbit around the sun and the moon's orbit around the sun and the moon's orbit around the earth, were in the same plane, there would have been alignment twice every month, and hence there would have been one lunar eclipse and one solar eclipse every month. Actually the two orbital planes are inclined to each other by an angle of five degrees, on account of which the maximum number of eclipses in a solar year does not exceed seven (four or five being solar and two or three being lunar). The minimum number of eclipses which can occur in a year is two, both being solar. A solar eclipse occurs more often than a lunar eclipse but it is visible from a much smaller surface of the earth than a lunar eclipse. Hence from any given place of the earth, more lunar eclipses are visible than solar eclipses. (*Review of Religions*, Vol. 86, No. 11, Nov. 1989, p. 7)

The scientific calculation of the possible dates of this specific eclipse correspond to the 13th, 14th, and 15th for the lunar eclipse and the 27th, 28th and 29th for the solar eclipse, with respect to the Islamic calendar (the holy month of Ramadhan)

#### **THE CLAIMANTS OF THE TITLE "MAHDI" IN THE HISTORY OF ISLAM**

Having understood the prophecy, its inter-

pretation and subject matter, we are now ready to investigate whether this prophecy has come to pass or not, since it was presented fifteen centuries ago. The scope of this investigation would include the identification of those who claimed to be the Mahdi, a study of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi's life and his bona fide claims, as well as the occurrence of these celestial signs which the claimant used to demonstrate his veracity.

The records of Islamic history of the last fifteen centuries indicate the emergence of several individual claimants to this high rank of Mahdi, from both within the Islamic faith and outside of the Islamic faith. The text of the hadith restricts our search of such claimants from among the followers of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.)

In this regard, Islamic history records several people who claimed to be the embodiment of the predicted Messiah, most of whom, however, used this title for gaining the political supremacy and/or territorial grounds. It would indeed be illogical to expect them to be the torch bearers of any sort of divine guidance, let alone show heavenly signs in this regard. It is interesting to note that the extremely short span of life each had subsequent to making their claims lend credence to the universal spiritual law cited above from both the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Bible: impostors (i.e., any false claimants who falsely assert that they are indeed from God or appointed by Him) are killed and ruined in the long run. Background information of some of these claimants (including their respective biographical sketches) is now presented below:

#### **Ubadullah Al Mahdi:**

909-934 C.E. (297-322 A.H.)

Abu Abdullah, who intended to build the Fatmid Dynasty, left a message for his son Obadullah at the time of his death, stating that he will be the Mahdi people have been waiting for. The letter further stated that he must establish himself as the Mahdi of the age. In the year 909 C.E., Obadullah claimed to be the Mahdi. He established a city in 912 C.E. and named it Al-Mahdiya, which later became the capital in 921 C.E.. *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* describes Al Mahdi's activities as follows:



The first capital of the Fatmid in Africa was called Mahdiyyah after the Mahdi who founded the dynasty (297 A.H. or 909 A.D.). The conquests which paved the way for his sovereignty were all achieved by an agent, who had ultimately to produce the person to whom he had preached allegiance; and according to the statements of his enemies, the person produced was an impostor, suddenly called to play the part, the real Mahdi having perished on his way to Africa. (Page 338)

It has been reported that Al-Mahdi was killed in his second or third year in prison by the dictator Al Yasa of the Saljaman District. With no spiritual attachment, political motives led him to gain power in the name of his spiritual importance as the Mahdi.

#### **Muhammad Ibn Taumart:**

circa 1130 C.E. (524 A.H.)

Muhammad Ibn Taumart began his career as a moral reformer but was quite upset with the Shah of Morocco. This conflict resulted in his flight from Morocco to Mount Soce (Jabul-us-Soca). Here he formulated a group of people in opposition to the Moroccan Shah's regime under the title Al Mohad. The *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* explains the false miracles claimed to be performed by Ibn Taumart and how he acquired the title of Mahdi:

He appears to have started genuinely as a religious and moral reformer, and to have the title Mahdi when opposition and danger induced him to draw the sword; he is likely then to have been influenced by the prophecy of the appearance of such a reformer, which, as we have seen, had already found its way into an authoritative collection of traditions. The pedigree which brought him into connection with Ali may well be an invention later than his time, and as such his biographer appears to regard it. Some stories told by Ibn Khallikan are characteristic of such adventures, though not perhaps true in this case; he got access to the *Book of Jafr*, in which Ali had prophesied all that was to occur till the end of time, whence he obtained the letters which formed the name of the person destined

to be his chief helper and successor, with a description of his appearance. In order to be armed with a miracle, he persuaded a learned associate to feign illiteracy and ignorance of correct Arabic; one day this person claimed to have learned the Qur'an by heart in a dream, and this miracle convinced the most stubborn; the confederate then proclaimed Ibn Tumart the Mahdi, whereas he had previously been called imam. According to Ibn Khaldun, the only heresy of which he could be convicted was his agreeing with the Imamiyyah sect that the sovereign was infallible. (*Encyclopedia of Religions and Ethics*, p. 338)

As is quite clear from the foregoing, the very attempt to deceive his people nullifies any and all validity to his claim of Mahdi.

#### **Sayyed Muhammad Nurbakhsh of Iran, his disciple Mir Sayyed Muhammad of India (circa 1505), and his disciple Sheikh Alai of India**

These three individuals all claimed to be the Mahdi. Two of them retired from their claim and the third was tortuously killed. The following is an account recorded about these men in The *Encyclopedia of Religions and Ethics*:

The prophecy of a Mahdi assumed special importance at the commencement of the century preceding the first millennium of Islam, especially in India. According to the details collected by H. Blochmann, the Mahdist movement started in Badakhshan, where one Sayyid Muhammad Nurbakhsh gained numerous adherents, defied the Afghan government, was defeated, and fled to Iraq, where he maintained himself till the end of his life. In India it assume a definite form through the action of Mir Sayyid Muhammad of Jaunpur, who found an adherent in Gujarat in Sultan Mahmud I. Apparently this personage was, like Ibn Tumart in his early days, a preacher and reformer, whose doctrines gave offence, and who was forced to leave one place after another. Ultimately he decided that the burden of Mahdi-ship was too heavy for him to bear, and that, if he returned home, he would recant; he died in 911 at Farah in Baluchistan, where his tomb became a place

of pilgrimage. An interesting account of another Indian Mahdi of this century is given by the historian Bada'uni in his *Muntakhab al-Tawarikh*. This person was named Shaikh Alai, and was born in Baiana in Hindustan. To the same place there came one Miyan Abdallah, who was under the influence of Muhammad of Jaunpur. (*Encyclopedia of Religions and Ethics*, p. 339-40)

Sheikh Alai continuously and seriously interfered with the government and was finally told to abandon his claim of Mahdi. When he refused, he was tortured to death.

These individuals had similar claims and aspirations, and had serious conflicts with various governments of the time, but lost in their politically motivated deceptive practices. The *Encyclopedia of Religions* comments:

There are many instances in Muslim history of Mahdi claimants who sought to challenge and overthrow the existing political order by force of arms. Mahdi movements seldom achieved genuine political success unless they succeeded in laying a foundation based on existing tribal loyalties, on a rural or marginally urban sense of dispossession or alienation, or on patterns of sociopolitical opposition. ("Islamic Messianism", *Encyclopedia of Religions* (1987), Vol. 9, p. 480, Mircea Eliade).

#### Mohammad Ahmed of Sudan (1844-1885)

Mohammad Ahmed Ibn Abdullah was born on August 12, 1844 and died on June 22, 1885. He was raised in the Sufi tradition of Samaniya in the Khartoum area. He was discontent with the Ottoman Empire, and used this discontent as a backdrop for his movement. He claimed to be the Mahdi in March 1881. *Encyclopedia Britannica* describes the background of his claim thus:

It was Muhammad Ahmed who converted this diversified discount into a unified movement that for a time would transcend tribalism and weld the faithful into an unconquerable military machine. Gradually, during 1880 and the first weeks of 1881, he became convinced that the entire ruling class had deserted the

Islamic faith and that the *khedine*, the Viceroy of Egypt, was a puppet in the hands of unbelievers and thus unfit to rule over Muslims. In March of 1881, he revealed to his closest followers what he considered his divine mission—that God had appointed him to purify Islam and to destroy all governments that defiled it. On June 29, he publicly assumed the title of Al-Mahdi, who according to a tradition cherished by the oppressed throughout Islamic history, would appear to restore Islam. (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th Edition, Vol. 7, p. 697)

Immediately after his public announcement in Abba, the *Kalima*, or Islamic Creed, was modified. The *Kalima* has always remained sacred. It states "There is no one worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." Byron Farwell, in his book *Prisoners of the Mahdi*, wrote:

Here, for the first time, the new creed was recited by Abdullahi. It added a line to the old creed and some repeated after him: 'There is no God but Allah, and Mohammad is the Prophet of Allah, and Mohammad-al-Mahdi is the Successor of Allah's Prophet.' (*Prisoners of the Mahdi*, 1967, p. 11)

The above excerpt already sheds light that this claimant to the title of Mahdi defied the very creed which he was supposed to uphold. The false Mahdi died within four years after his claim. Although he scored politically by defeating the armed forces of the British Empire (who eventually took revenge 10 years later after his death and the destruction of his Mahdiyya Movement), he lost all his glory by 1898. His tomb was destroyed completely. One of his sons attempted to continue his father's abrupt mission but to no avail.

In addition to these false claimants, history also reveals that the nineteenth century turned out to be quite different than the previous ones, in as much as the coming of a reformer was awaited by many. While Muslims were waiting for the Mahdi, Christians were desperately awaiting their Messiah, and Buddhists and Hindus were also anxious to receive Buddha and Krishna, respectively.

Christians were waiting anxiously for the Messiah to descend from the heavens in 1844. Michael Sours comments about this situation:

There were large numbers of Christians who even thought that the year 1844 would be the year of Christ's return. The expectation was so great and so widespread that historians have called the period immediately following 1844 as 'the Great Disappointment'. Afterwards, many Christians continued to regard 1844 as a significant year, clearly marked by the prophecies of the Bible, but they acknowledged that the Signs which they expected to accompany the appearance of Christ had not occurred. (*The Prophecies of Jesus*, p. 13-14)

### Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian

(1835-1908)

The seventh major claimant to the title "Mahdi" was Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Let us analyze the major events of his life:

Birth:	February 13, 1835
Claim of Reformer:	March, 1882
Claim of Mahdi:	1891
Demise:	May 26, 1908

Hazrat Ahmad began receiving divine revelations in 1876, and in March of 1882, he was commissioned by God as the reformer of the age through the following revelation:

*Allah bless Thee O' Ahmad. It was not You who threw, it was Allah who did throw. The Most Gracious One has taught you the Qur'an so that you should warn the people whose ancestors have not been warned and that the way of the guilty ones might become manifest. Proclaim: I have been commissioned and I am the First of The Believers.*

Unlike the other claimants discussed so far, Hazrat Ahmad, *Alahisalaam*, was quite different as he neither aspired for any power, political or military, nor did he show any rebellious actions against a state or sovereignty. On the contrary, he vehemently opposed the concept of a "Warrior Mahdi," and he denounced all acts of violence which were condoned under the euphemism "Holy War". His life was full of righteousness, extreme

piety, and a love for humanity; and he truly championed the cause of Islam with reason, intellect and Divine wisdom.

In 1891, he claimed to be that Mahdi who was prophesied by Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) to rejuvenate Islam at the time of extreme crisis. He wrote 85 books explaining the beauties of Islam and the concept of the Messiah; he presented the true definition of a Messiah as presented in the Holy Qur'an.

As he declared himself to be the Mahdi, a very strong opposition began due to the fact that he declared the prevailing notions of "Warrior Mahdi" to be absurd and false. Demands of him to show signs and miracles became an almost daily routine of the prevailing Islamic elites. They even demanded the fulfillment of the prophecy of the eclipses as was described by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

Hazrat Ahmad, *Alahisalaam*, was determined to carry out the task he was assigned by Allah irrespective of the magnitude of the opposition and continuously sought assistance from God for the support and success of his mission. In 1882, God told him that he will be bestowed with a heavenly sign in support of the truths of his claim. Twelve years later, in 1894, this sign of the eclipses of the sun and the moon manifested itself exactly according to the prediction of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) In this year, the holy month of Ramadhan saw the occurrence of a lunar eclipse on the 13th day, or March 21, 1894. It began in the early part of the night and lasted two and one-half hours. Similarly, a solar eclipse took place on the 28th day of Ramadhan, or April 6, 1894. It was visible throughout the northeastern region of India including the town of Qadian where Hazrat Ahmad, *Alahisalaam*, lived. This great sign was seen by thousands of people, and *The Civil and Military Gazette*, a daily Indian newspaper, as well as *The Pioneer*, both reported the news of the occurrence of these eclipses.

Several renowned astronomers have recorded these eclipses in their books as well. A few of these references are presented below:

1. Robert Sewel. *Eclipses of the Moon in India*, London: Swan Sommerschein & Co., Ltd.,

1898, Tables E and H.

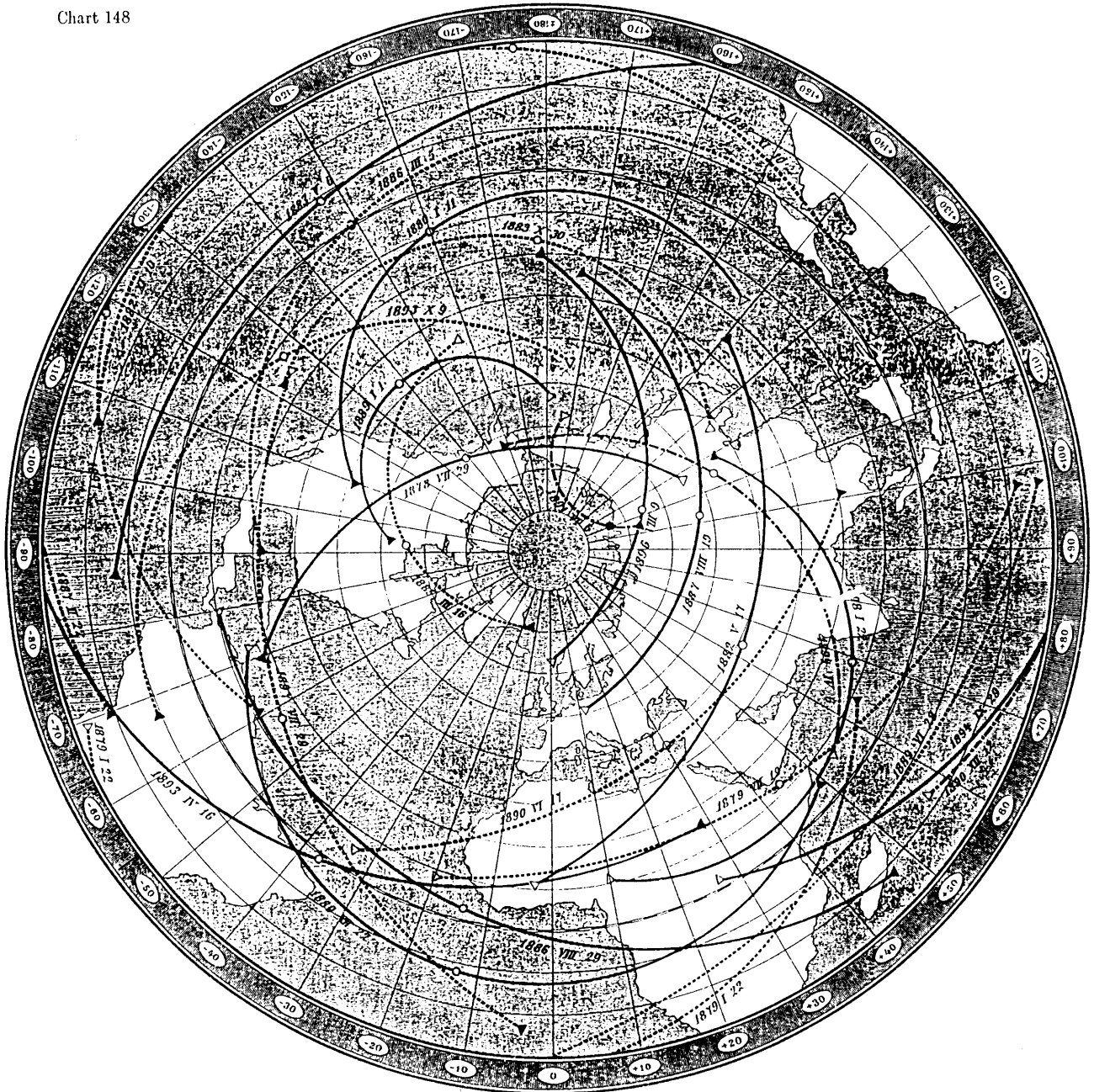
2. Meeus, Jean and Mucke, Herman. *Canon of Eclipses* (2002-2526), Astronomisches Buro Wien Gegrundet, 1907, Page 211.
3. von Oppolzer, Theodor Ritter. *Canon of Eclipses*. Translated by Own Gingerich, New

York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1962. Pages 296-297, 393, and plate 148.

4. *Nautical Almanac*, London, 1894.

The detailed table and the plate appearing in the book *Canon of Eclipses* is reproduced here with the written permission of the publisher.

Chart 148



——— totale  
 ..... ringförmige  
 - - - - - ringf.-totale

Sonnenfinsterniss

Gregorian Calendar

▲ Aufgangspunkt  
 ○ Mittagspunkt event. • Mitternachtspunkt  
 ▲ Untergangspunkt

(1877 III 15 to 1898 I 22)

(This inscription is not found on the original Chart)

To read the Chart:

Locate the region of India on the World Map in the Chart. Locate the two paths shown, both passing through India. The northeastern path is the eclipse of April 6, 1894. The date inscribed reads: 1894 IV 6. The other one is of Jan. 22 1898.

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Table with columns: Nr., Grng., Julian, Welt, I, Z, e, P, logP, ΔI, logE, logY, r0, logC, logγ. Contains numerical data for various astronomical observations.

THE UNDERLINED DATA IS THAT OF APRIL 6, 1894 SOLAR ECLIPSE... (Author)

297 Canon of Solar Eclipses

Table with columns: Nr., γ, Q, K, log sing, log sink, log cosγ, log cons, log sine, log cosec, N, Central Hour, h, m, s, d, e. Contains numerical data for solar eclipses.



As is clear from the chart, the April 6, 1894 solar eclipse passes through India over the specific area where the town of Qadian—Hazrat Ahmad Alashisalaam's place of residence—is located.

The three other astronomers mentioned above have all studied and recorded the eclipses independently from one another, and all have presented the same data about these two great eclipses.

Dr. Saleh Mohammad Alladin, an astronomer at Oosmania University in Hyderabad, India, presented a scientific paper in a symposium in Calcutta, India in February of 1992. He presented new findings he had made about these two eclipses, substantiating their uniqueness. Some of his findings are given below:

In the two centuries (1800-2000 C.E.), both lunar and solar eclipses occurred in the month of Ramadhan seventeen times. Out of these, nine times neither the lunar eclipse nor the solar eclipse was visible from Qadian, six times the lunar eclipse was visible but the solar eclipse was not, and once was the solar eclipse visible and the lunar eclipse not visible. Only in the year 1894 were both the eclipses visible from Qadian and they also occurred at Qadian on the prophesied dates. Our study thus shows that although eclipses are phenomena that occur frequently, the occurrence of the solar and lunar eclipses on the specified dates of the Islamic Calendar at a specified place on the earth is quite a rare event. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) made such a mar-velous prophecy which was exactly fulfilled in our age. (*Review of Religions*, June 1992, 87(6):21-22)

Hazrat Ahmad, *Alahisalaam*, himself stated that this grand prophecy of the eclipses has been shown in support of his truthful claim as the Promised Messiah, and he congratulated all who witnessed the fulfillment of this great sign. His gratitude is embodied in an Arabic poem he wrote in his famous book *Noorul Haq* (Part II). A portion of this poem with its English translation is presented below:

سیدنا حضرت مسیح موعود علیہ السلام کا عربی منظوم کلام

القَصِيدَةُ (روحانی خزائن جلد ۱ - نور الحق حصہ دوم ص ۲۱)

طُوبَى لَكُمْ يَا مَجْمَعِ الْخَلَائِنِ

تمہیں اسے جماعت دوستان مبارک ہو

وَبَدِ الصَّرَاطِ لِمَنْ لَه الْعَيْنَانِ

اور جو شخص دو آنکھیں رکھتا ہے اسکے لئے راہ مکمل گیا

خَسَفًا بِأَذْنِ اللَّهِ فِي رَمَضَانَ

باذن اللہ رمضان میں گرے گا

ظَهَرَتْ مُطَهَّرَةٌ مِنَ الْأَذْرَانِ

ایسے پاک طور پر ظاہر ہوگی کوئی مہینہ اسکے ساتھ نہیں

كَشَفَ الْغَطَاءَ بِأَنْوَارِ الْإِبْرَاهِيمَ

برہان کو روشن کر کے پردہ کو کھول دیا

إِمْرَهْلَ تَرَاهُ مَكَائِدَ الْإِنْسَانِ

یا تو اس کو انسان کا فریب سمجھتا ہے

بَشْرَى لَكُمْ يَا مَعْشَرَ الْأَخْوَانِ

تمہیں اسے جماعت برادران بشارت ہو

ظَهَرَتْ بَرُوقُ عَنَائِتِ الْحَتَّانِ

عذابِ تعالیٰ کی عنایت کی جگہ ظاہر ہوگئی

الْتِيْرَانِ بِهَذِهِ الْبُلْدَانِ

سودج اور پانڈو ان ملکوں میں

وَبَشَارَةٌ مِنْ سَيِّدِ خَيْرِ الْوَسْرَى

اور ایک بشارت رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کی

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَيْفَ أَبَدَى آيَةَ

کیا ہی بزرگ خدا ہے کیونکہ اس نے نشان کو ظاہر کیا

هَلْ كَانَ هَذَا فِعْلَ رَبِّ قَادِرٍ

کیا یہ خدا تعالیٰ کا فعل ہے

Glad tidings to you, O' community of brothers,  
Congratulations to you, O'community of friends

The luster of God's Beneficence has become manifest and for those who can see, the way has become clear

The sun and the moon in these countries have been eclipsed according to God's plan in Ramadhan.

And a prophecy of glad tidings of the Chief Prophet of Allah has been fulfilled magnificently without any blemish.

The Great is the Allah Who showed this Sign Who illuminated the proof by exhibiting the mystery

Is this an act of the Almighty Allah or you consider it a deception of man

(*Noorul Haq*, Part II, p. 217-218)

In another saying of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), we read:

*"The sun will be eclipsed twice in Ramadhan."*

(Alqutbur Rabbani, Sheikh Abdul Wahab Sherani, *Mukhtasar Tazkira Qurtabi*, p. 148.)

The first set of eclipses took place in 1894 and these were observed in the world's Eastern hemisphere. A year later, in 1895, the lunar and

solar eclipses were again observed during the month of Ramadhan on March 11 and March 26. These eclipses were seen in the Western hemisphere in various places. The corresponding dates for the 1895 eclipses in the Islamic Calendar are the same as predicted in the prophecy (13th and 28th days of Ramadhan). Reports from two major U.S. newspapers, *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times* with regard to these eclipses are presented below:

From the Los Angeles Times, Monday, March 11, 1895

## **Los Angeles Times: — Monday, March 11, 1895**

### **MOON'S ECLIPSE**

**As it was seen from the  
Summit of Mt. Lowe.**

**Graphic Description of the Various  
and Beautiful Scenes  
Presented.**

**Startling Phenomenon During the  
Period of the Second Contact--  
Thousands of visitors to  
Witness the Sight**

*By Telegraph to The Times*

ECHO MOUNTAIN, (Cal.) March 10. - (Special Dispatch) The eclipse was observed under most advantageous conditions upon the summit of Mount Lowe with the comet-finder of the Lowe Observatory,

The first contact was not observed. At 6:30 the eclipsed portion near the southern limb assumed a copperish hue, which was not visible at any other portion of the limb. At 6:45 a long, black, prominent and sharply-defined line, nearly parallel to the edge, appeared. Whether this was due to lunar formations emphasized by the phenomenon, or caused by the eclipse, the magnifying power employed would not determine.

Precisely at 6h. 52m. 12s. occurred the second contact. What was perhaps, to your correspondent, the most marked thing about this eclipse was the copperish color remaining bunched in one place at and near the southern limb. This color always accompanies an eclipse of the moon, but is generally spread over the

entire surface, while in this case, except just before the third contact, it was confined wholly to the region adjacent to the southern limb; while diametrically opposite, on the northern edge, the moon was enveloped in the most beautiful pale blue light. These colors maintained their relative position during the major portion of totality.

The celebrated crater Tycho was visible throughout the entire eclipse, and the white streaks radiating from it, some over a thousand miles long, were very prominent. The moon during totality appeared very globular, as a photograph of a sphere appears when viewed through a stereoscopic lens. At 7:14 a faint star appeared from behind the moon on the western limb. The stars in the field of the telescope adjacent to the moon showed brightly and with little diminution of brilliancy. At 7:30 o'clock the copper color became more general, and the blue diminished slightly. After the second contact search was instituted for a comet, and after a few minutes' efforts a nebulous object was discovered in the sickle, but nothing can be ascertained as to the identity until the charts are consulted in the morning. If the earth had no atmosphere the moon would entirely disappear, but the rays encountering the dense medium surrounding our globe are refracted and cause the moon to appear faintly shining with a dull, copper color, but why one limb should have this beautiful, pearly-blue hue is a mystery. At 7:38 came a startling phenomenon. Two small craters, about 2 minutes of arc from the northeastern limb, appeared as brilliant white spots. Why these two should shine like brilliant stars and other craters be shrouded in darkness is another unsolvable mystery as yet.

The third contact occurred at 8h. 26m. 30s., and the



eclipses terminated at 9h 31m. 10s.

The large number of guests on Echo Mountain were royally repaid for their coming, and some who had remained a week to witness the eclipse expressed themselves rewarded by the wonderful sight through the big telescope a thousand times.

The object of making the extended observation on Mt. Lowe was to test the superiority of the atmosphere over that of Echo Mountain for astronomical observations. This was the first telescope ever placed on Mt. Lowe, and the writer predicts a wonderful career for a telescope placed in the most perfect of all atmospheres, the summit of Mt. Lowe.

#### ON MT. HAMILTON

LICK OBSERVATORY (Mt. Hamilton, Cal.) March 10. - The total eclipse of the moon, which occurred this evening, was observed at the Lick Observatory under somewhat unfavorable circumstance, the sky being obscured during the entire time by a thin haze. The moon was obscured by one-half the earth's shadow when it appeared at 6h. Pacific standard time. The totality began at 6h 51m. 55s., and lasted until 8h 27m 30s.

The moon left the earth's shadow at 9h. 25m. 20s. The moon's disc was visible at all times, being conspicuous a greater portion of the totality. The color of the unobscured portion of the disc varied from yellow to a light coppery hue. The times at which the edge of the shadow passed across some of the

prominent craters were noted, and the times of occultation of several small stars were observed.

#### IN CHICAGO

CHICAGO, March 10. - The eclipse tonight was viewed at the Northwestern University Observatory at Evanston by Director George W. Hough and others. The moon entered the penumbra at 7:30. The first contact when the moon entered the shadow, took place at 7:45. Prof. Hough photographed the lunar disc in partial eclipse, and later secured six photographs at various points of contact. The total eclipse took place at 8:52. The third contact, when the moon began to emerge was at 10:27, and the fourth contact occurred at 11:25.

#### IN NEW YORK

NEW YORK, March 10. - The eclipse of the moon was not to be seen in New York in a satisfactory way. Thick, fleecy clouds obscured the phenomenon and no special scientific data was obtained in this city.

#### IN COLORADO

PUEBLO (Colo.) March 10. - Not a cloud obscured the sky in Colorado and the lunar eclipse was observable most satisfactorily.

#### AT SACRAMENTO

SACRAMENTO, March 10.-The total eclipse of the moon was perfect here tonight. The transit lasted from 7:45 till 9:15 o'clock and was witnessed by thousands of persons.

From the New York Times, Monday, March 11, 1895

# The New-York Times

NEW-YORK, MONDAY, MARCH 11, 1895.—TWO PARTS.—12 PAGES.

## CLOUDS WERE IN THE WAY

Clear View of the Total Eclipse of the Moon Not Obtained.

## NOT OF GREAT SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Facts About the Earth's Satellite Prett Well Established, So Astronomers Paid No Attention to It.

The total eclipse of the moon which took place last night was all that it was advertised to be, but, unfortunately for astronomers and star-gazers in

general, the sky was obscured by clouds, which prevented satisfactory observations.

It was what is known as a "light" eclipse. That is to say, the moon, while in the earth's shadow, was visible as a faint, orange-tinted disk, but the clouds were so thick that it was impossible to tell whether the moon was accompanied in its travels by a satellite.

Few astronomical events of recent years have excited greater popular curiosity than this eclipse. Knots of people gathered on street corners and other places of vantage to observe it. Many sat all the evening on their roofs and caught fleeting glimpses of the phenomena

through field and opera glasses. In every elevated railroad car there persons who twisted their necks to stare from the windows at the sky.

The night promised to be unusually propitious for observations. There was not a cloud visible at twilight, and the moon was very brilliant, as if conscious of what was expected.

Exactly at 7:57 the moon entered the penumbra, but it was not until 8:54 that the satellite arrived at the edge of the earth's shadow. At first it looked as if a very small portion had been sliced off with a knife. But the moon slid deeper and deeper into the shadow, until only half of its face was visible. The faint outlines of the darkened portion could just be defined by the eye. More swiftly, then, it seemed that the rest of the surface was swallowed up in the shadow, and at 11:27 the moon disappeared.

Meanwhile the clouds had become more numerous, so that only glimpses of the eclipse could be caught. Whenever they shifted and left an open space the moon could be seen through the shadow hanging like a dull, red ball over the earth. So it remained for an hour, and then it gradually emerged again and shone as resplendently as ever, as if a little thing like an eclipse was nothing to be alarmed about.

The Brooklyn Bridge was an excellent place from which to view the eclipse. Many persons who would never think of walking across the structure at this season went out upon the central span and stood patiently in the chill air to see the sight.

The most disappointed man in the city last night was Prof. J. V. Rees of Columbia College. Prof. Rees is the chief astronomer, and has two observatories - one at the college and the other at One Hundred and Sixteenth Street, and Tenth Avenue, in the old Bloomingdale Asylum grounds. He had made careful preparations to observe the eclipse from the Blooming-

dale observatory, and hoped to settle a number of scientific questions. He wanted particularly to ascertain if the moon has a smaller body moving around it.

Prof. Rees arrived at the observatory at 5 o'clock and remained there until 7. Then he went home, intending to return and take minute observations. The sky then was perfectly clear, but when he left his home an hour later the clouds were passing over the moon so swiftly and in such numbers that he decided it would be useless to return to his Bloomingdale Observatory. He then went to the college. But during the entire period of the eclipse he was unable to obtain a satisfactory view of the moon.

WASHINGTON, March 10. - The lunar eclipse, owing to the thick clouds, was only partially noticeable here. The Naval Observatory authorities paid no attention to it, saying it was of no astronomical value and that the conditions were unfavorable.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., March 10 - The preparations that were made at Harvard Observatory to observe the total eclipse of the moon this evening were baffled by the unfavorable condition of the sky. Prof. Pickering, the Director of the observatory, said that there would probably be nothing of scientific importance in the eclipse. Arrangements had been made to photograph the heavens in the vicinity of the moon in the hope of discovering a satellite or of recording occultations or eclipses of smaller bodies.

CHARLESTON, S.C., March 10 - The total eclipse of the moon, which occurred tonight, was watched in this city by thousands of people. At first the moon was partially obscured by drifting clouds, but later the sky was clear and an excellent view was offered as the total eclipse occurred.

HALIFAX, March 10, - The eclipse of the moon began here at 10 o'clock sharp, and as there was a perfectly cloudless sky there was a beautiful view of its progress.

In this way, the prophecy of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) became manifest all over the globe by the appearance of these great eclipses in both hemispheres of the planet in 1894 and 1895. Hazrat Ahmad, *Alahisalaam*, made the following remarks:

"As stated in another hadith, this eclipse occurred twice in Ramadhan, first in this country and then in America, and on both occasions it occurred on the same dates. Since at the time of the eclipse there was no other

claimant of Mahdi Mau'ood (Divine Reformer), on the earth and since nobody else declared this eclipse as his sign and published hundred of pamphlets and books in Urdu, Persian and Arabic, this heavenly sign is for me. Another proof of this is the fact that 12 years before this, a glad tidings was published in *Baraheen-e-Ahma-diyya* and became well known to hundreds of thousands of people before this sign was manifested."  
(*Haqueequatul Wahi*)

The book entitled "Noorul Haq Part 2" was specifically dedicated by Hazrat Ahmed to detail the explanation and the fulfillment of this great prophecy. In this very book, he also made a bold challenge to all those who had any doubt about the prophecy to present a like thereof and collect a monetary reward of 1,000 rupees, a considerable sum of money in those days. He wrote:

"Are you not afraid to deny the hadith of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, even though its truth has become as manifest as the bright sun? Can you present a Sign like this in any age in the past? Do you read in any book that some person claimed to be from Almighty God and then in his time in Ramadhan, the lunar and solar eclipses occurred as you have now seen? If you are aware of any then relate it and you will get one thousand Rupees as a reward if you could show. So prove it and take this reward and I MAKE ALMIGHTY GOD A WITNESS ON THIS PROMISE AND YOU ALSO BE A WITNESS AND GOD IS THE BEST OF ALL WITNESSES. And if you can not prove, and you will never be able to prove, then guard against the fire which is prepared for those who create disorder."  
(Noorul Haq, Part II)

The challenge has remained open over the last one hundred years. Several hundred opponents of Hazrat Ahmed, to this date, have not been able to bring any example from human history which could account for the actual facts observed.

Before I conclude this short essay, I would like to draw the reader's attention to the universal law which has been observed since the beginning of times to vindicate the truthfulness of a divine Prophet that he always prevails and also that the impostors are severely punished by God. This was outlined earlier in the light of both the Holy Qur'an and the biblical Scriptures. With this background in mind, let us now review the following bold declaration of Hazrat Ahmed Alahissalaam in which he has declared to be the Mahdi under Divine Oath, he writes:

I swear by God in whose hand is my life that He has manifested this Sign in the sky to

testify to my truthfulness, and He manifested at a time when the Maulvis (theologians) named me Dajjal (anti-Christ), biggest liar, infidel and even biggest infidel. This is the same sign regarding which 20 years ago I was promised in 'Baraheen E Ahmadiyya' namely: "Tell them I have with me testimony of Allah, will you believe it or not?" "Tell them I have with me testimony from Allah, will you accept it or not?" It should be remembered that although there are many proofs from Almighty God for vindicating my truthfulness and more than a hundred prophecies that have been fulfilled to which hundreds of thousands of people are witnesses, but in this revelation, this prophecy has been mentioned specifically, i.e., I have been given such a Sign which was not given to anybody else from the time of Allah to present time. In short, I can stand in the sacred precincts of the Ka'ba and swear that this Sign is for testifying my truth.  
(Dafeul Bala'a, page 18)

If Hazrat Ahmad would be an imposter (God forbid), then he would have been ruined according to the universal spiritual law that the false prophets are destroyed. The very awe and majesty visible from the language used by Hazrat Ahmad depict that these words could not be uttered by a false claimant. He himself relates this in his Urdu psalms thus:

*If this would be a human endeavor, the God of universe would have destroyed me Himself.*

In conclusion, I would like to request all our readers to ponder on this great prophecy of the Holy Prophet of Islam (S.A.W.). How beautifully and majestically it has come to fruition. Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) presented this prediction when mankind had no clue of forecasting any of such celestial signs. The great fulfillment of this prophecy proves beyond the shadow of doubt that the Holy Prophet of Islam (S.A.W.) was endowed with Divine Representatives. May Allah shower His abundant blessings upon the Holy Prophet Mohammad Mustafa (S.A.W.) and enlighten our hearts with this Divine light. *A'ameen!*

## DEVELOPING A LIVING RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

(Lt. Col Saied Ahmad Malik)

*[This was handed over to Reverend Moon's daughter by Col. Malik when he attended a reception given in her honor and she spoke on the subject of "Developing a Living Relationship with God"—Ed]*

Almost all major world religions believe in one God who is the Creator, Sustainer, Life-giver, Beneficent, Loving and Compassionate. God is not only Almighty and Supreme, He is all Wisdom, Truth and Beauty. Humankind depends upon God to achieve the very purpose of life, to receive Salvation and Success. Therefore, developing a living relationship with God has always been the most essential requirement for a happy, healthy, prosperous and fulfilled life.

How can we develop an ongoing, meaningful and vibrant union with the Loving and Almighty Creator? The supreme objective would have remained unattainable, had God himself not assured us that it is possible for all of us to become One with Him. Throughout the ages, the prophets, seers and sages, the men of God, have clearly conveyed to us the good news that a living relationship with God is possible in this life on this earth.

Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (s.a.w), to name only a few out of millions, have

had demonstrated in their earthly journey that the goal is achievable. Constant prayerfulness, unpretentious humility, unconditional love and selfless service for others are time-tested vehicles that make the journey fast and secure, ending in a sure success. One has to open up one's heart to receive the beams of light in thousand colors of God's numberless attributes. The more the mirror of heart reflects the attributes of God in one's person, the closer the person gets to God. God created mankind in His image; one has to sharpen the image of God's character in one's heart and to mould one's life in God's image by illustrating God's attributes of Love and Mercy.

Once the impress of God's Beautiful characteristics is fully developed in our personalities, we share God's everlasting bliss, forgiveness and nearness. An unbreachable bond with God provides us security from grief and fear. We become godly persons with evergreen joy in our hearts. A living and loving relationship with God makes our lives worthwhile.

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### ANNUAL IJTEMA, MAJLIS ANSARULLAH, USA

The Annual Ijtema of the Majlis Ansarullah, USA, will be held at

**NASIR MOSQUE, PHILADELPHIA { (215) 455-4655 }**

On MAY 14 and 15, 1994

**The Ijtema will start at 8:30 a.m. on May 14 (Saturday) and will end at 1 p.m. on May 15 (Sunday)**

The Program will include:

**Religious Competitions:** (Recitation of the Holy Quran, Poem, Impromptu and Prepared Speeches). The topic for prepared speech (5 minutes) will be: Striving Against Immoral and Evil Practices in Contemporary Society

**Games Competitions**

**Question and Answer Session**

**Speeches by Ulema on Contemporary Issues**

**Annual Progress Report**

All Zo'ma should make special efforts that maximum number of their members attend the Ijtema.

For Further Information Please Contact:

Karimullah Zirvi      Sadr, Majlis Ansarullah, USA

Tel & Fax #: (201) 794-8122

Dr. Abdul Sami Janjua      Zaeem, Philadelphia Chapter

Tel: (215) 941-0882

## FROM THE DESK OF THE VAKILUL MAL (II) TAHRIK-I-JADID, RABWAH, PAKISTAN

DATED: FEBRUARY 2, 1994

Musies that own property from which they accrue some income were exempt under wasiyyat rule No. 52, to pay chanda on it after they have paid hissa Jaidad in full. However, they were exhorted that for the purpose of attainment of spiritual reward it is preferable to continue paying chanda even after full payment of Hissa Jaidad. This rule required re-consideration and Huzoor Ayyadollah has approved the following amended version of rule No. 52:-

"If Hissa Jaidad on such a property has been paid

in full then payment of Hissa Amad at the rate of chanda Aam on such income shall remain obligatory."

Please do the following:

- 1) Convey to each Musi this amendment of rule No. 52.
- 2) Make sure that those Musies who have already paid in full Hissa Jaidad continue paying Hissa Amad at the rate of chanda Aam (1/16) on its income, if any, regularly.

*Jazakomullah*

## FROM THE DESK OF SAHIBZADA M. M. AHMAD SAHIB, AMIR, USA

We have a target of 1000 Baits during the year which ends at the time of U.K. Jalsa in July (August 93 to July 94).

At the review of the Bait target at the Amla meeting yesterday (2/5/94) it was reported that the total number of Baits since August are 140. There is some improvement in the number compared to last year but we have yet to go very far before we are anywhere near the target.

All the Jamaats are requested to make determined effort in Tabligh in accordance with the directions received from Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (ABA). The time is particularly opportune for a major effort in Tabligh with satellite transmission of Huzoor's Friday sermons and other

addresses.

It was also agreed at the Amla that between now and July we should hold two Tabligh Days when the entire Jamaat in each locality should fan out for an extensive Tabligh effort. They should go to schools, universities, shopping malls, etc. for distribution of literature and other Tabligh efforts. Further, individuals can invite non Ahmadis and non Muslims to their homes and have a closer and intimate Tabligh Session. The format of Tabligh can be discussed by local Amlas on the basis that the emphasis is on an all out effort and not by holding Tabligh Day in the Mission House with all the Jamaat members and a few non Ahmadis who may turn up on the occasion.

## THE SATELLITE FUND

We are extremely fortunate to receive live transmissions of the Friday sermons delivered by our Imam, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV. These transmissions, however, place an additional financial burden on the Jamaat. In order to see and to listen to Huzoor every Friday we must contribute financially to defray the cost of these

transmissions. Please contribute regularly and generously towards the "Satellite Fund". Contact your local Jamaat's Financial Secretary to get more information and make a contribution.  
*Jazakomullah Ta'ala.*

Dr. Wajeeh Bajwa, Assis. Finance Secretary, USA.

# WASHINGTON NATIONAL MOSQUE PROJECT

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE AS OF FEBRUARY 15, 1994

During this period the unusually severe temperatures, icy rain, snow and sleet has impacted the progress of the scheduled work at the site. The Contractors have tried to complete the following work items:

1. Building Footings and lower level concrete walls completed 100%.
2. Structural Steel columns and Floor Beams have been erected.
3. Precast Concrete wall Panels, are being fabricated at the plant now.

4. Water main tap and the Fire hydrant relocation, completed.

5. Material procurement orders are in progress.

All the brothers and sisters are requested to continue to pray more fervently in this blessed month of Ramadhan that May Allah the Almighty remove all the obstacles in the way of a timely completion and success of this project, Amen.

Manzoor Rehman, Deputy Chairman,  
Mosque Committee.

