

than the clouds. Then he will hand over to the Muslims not only the governance of the whole world but also immense wealth, so much so that they will even refuse it. This in sum, is the philosophy of the Muslims resurgence and ascendancy. *Without moving a muscle, living in blissful oblivions of their decay, they will inherit the earth.* This is a view of Islam's renaissance which Ahmadi Muslims find abhorrent and simply cannot accept. Although the Ahmadiyya belief does not reject the prophecies concerning the descent of the Messiah, it believes that a deep and philosophical message of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has not been grasped. Ahmadi Muslims believe that the prophecies are not literal. **Firstly the Messiah is not the same Jesus sent to the Israelites.** *Jesus died a natural death after surviving the torture of the cross. Hence the second coming will be of a new person amongst the followers of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) who will share the characteristics and personality with Jesus.* *The smashing of the cross means defeating the christian faith with reason and powerful arguments. Similarly the word swine connotes the cultural filth and sexual anarchy sweeping the western world. The antichrist is also symbolic of great and powerful nations which rule not only the earth but also space.* The Traditions say that the antichrist *will be blind in his right eye but his left eye will be large and bright. This is symbolic that these nations will be devoid of spiritual light yet their material attainment will be great. The antichrist's ass is also symbolic of great strides in transport in the days to come, consider the salient features of the ass - it will eat fire (fuel powered)*

it will travel over land, sea and in the air. It will cover a journey which took months in a matter of hours; passengers will travel not on its back but in its belly. And as regards the distribution of wealth by the Imam Mahdi, this will be spiritual wealth of knowledge and wisdom and not worldly wealth.

Thus Ahmadiyyat rejects the philosophy of Islamic renaissance as propagated by other sects which lulls nations into inaction. It believes instead that the reformers have always been rejected and scorned. No ceremonial arches are erected for them, no garlands offered and no lamps lighted. Instead they are persecuted and every type of torture inflicted upon them. You see them returning from Taif bathed in blood from head to foot, they are thrown out of their homes and into exile. They are mercilessly beaten and then put to the sword. This is what happened in the life of the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) and the life of every prophet before him. But thus is man granted a new spiritual life. This is the path that leads to **the revival of religion.** *The history of religions teaches that prophets have always been ordinary people. They do not descend from heaven, and so it was to be for the Promised Messiah and Mahdi.*

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THE PROMISED MESSIAH & MAHDI HAS COME

The great religions of the world are looking forward to the second advent of a great teacher and believe that the return would be in his physical body. In Christianity particularly, the belief in the second coming of Jesus is an important article of faith. This belief has been responsible for great confusion.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community regards the prophecy of Jesus' advent as a figure of speech. It believes that someone, resembling the personality and characteristics of Jesus will come at a time when morality and religious behaviour will be akin to Jesus' time. This belief is supported by the history of all religions. As an illustration, a similar situation has been described in the Holy Bible. The Jews believed that Elijah was taken to Heaven alive (2 Kings 2:11,12) and would come back from heaven before the advent of the Messiah. (Malachi 4:5). The disciples of Jesus raised this question, "Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah has to come first?" Elijah is coming first," answered Jesus, "and he will get everything ready. But I tell you that Elijah has already come and people did not recognize him but treated him just as they pleased. In the same way they will also illtreat the son of man." Then the disciples understood that He was talking to them about John the Baptist." **(Mathew 17:10-13)** Thus, Jesus made it clear that the second coming of one who has passed away means the coming of someone in his power and spirit. Jesus also indicated that the signs of the time would be earthquakes, plagues, epidemics, wars and general tribulations.

These Signs have been manifested from the end of the 19th century onwards. Among several christian denominations the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century have been considered as the time of the second coming.

On 13th February 1835 in a small town called Qadian in India was Born **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad**. He was born of a noble family and from childhood was preoccupied with spiritual values. Constant divine worship and prayer became the pattern of his life.

In 1889 he claimed under divine direction that he was the **reformer of the age** appointed by God Himself. Thereafter it was revealed to him that he was also the **Promised Messiah and the Prophet** whose advent had been foretold in the principal religions of the world. He stated that all prophecies mentioned in the Quran and the Bible for the time of the coming of the Messiah had been fulfilled. In the same way as Jesus explained the second coming of Elijah, **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad also proclaimed that in him was fulfilled the second coming of Jesus**. He stated, *I have been informed that I am the reformer of the age and that my spiritual excellencies bear a resemblance to the spiritual excellencies of Jesus, son of Mary*. I announce having been informed of it by God through revelation that the real and true Promised Messiah tidings of whose appearance are to be found in the Bible and the Quran and whose coming is promised in the sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), is **myself**. I have been commanded by God to invite people with

humility and gentleness to God who is the true God, Eternal and Unchangeable, who has perfect Holiness, perfect Knowledge, perfect Mercy and perfect Justice. I am the light of this dark age; he who follows me will be saved from falling into the pit prepared by the devil for those who walk in darkness. *God has provided me with heavenly signs for the satisfaction of seekers after truth*. No doubt this is a life giving message for everyone wishing to tread the true path leading to God.

In accordance with divine direction, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founded the **Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam**. The first forty followers have become millions, a mathematical increase unequalled since the rise of Islam. Ahmadiyya today is regarded the most potent religious force in the world. An immense missionary organisation has established the Movement in nearly 150 countries in the world.

After the death of the Promised Messiah in 1908 the Ahmadiyya Movement has all along been headed by an elected **khalifa (successor)**.

Revival of Islam

Religions are always revived through Divine intervention. A reformer is sent by Allah the Almighty to turn people away from materialism and towards the creator. Such a reformer calls for immense sacrifices. He prepares them for a long and painful struggle against blind opposition and persecution. This indeed is the real and eternal philosophy of religious revival; every other philosophy is mere fantasy. The present decline of the Muslims and their internal strife are matters of which the Holy prophet (peace be upon him) was not uninformed. Through

divine revelation, he prophesized over 1400 years ago that Muslims would split into seventy three sects. He described the pitiable plight of Muslims in such detail as if a view of our era had been unfolded before his very eyes. He said: **Islam will have nothing left of it except its name. Mosques, though full of worshippers will be devoid of guidance. The Muslim religious scholars will be the worst creation under the canopy of Heaven**. However, along with these terrible predictions he also gave glorious news. He said that inspite of this distess, the Islamic nation will not perish.

How can my followers be destroyed when I am at their beginning and Jesus, son of Mary is at their end?

All Muslims thus believe that the resurgence of Islam is linked with the advent of Jesus and the appearance of Imaam Mahdi. This point of apparent concord actually generates two opposed views. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community regards the prophecies as parables, containing great wisdom and truths. In complete contrast, the other sectsof Islam insist on a literal fulfillment of these prophecies. This is the fundamental difference that sets apart the Ahmadiyya Community from the other sects.

According to the other sects, the same Jesus will descend bodily from the sky and will immediately with sword in hand, hack to death all enemies of Islam. His first objective will be to destroy the cross on every church, home and around any neck. Then he will exterminate every swine.

Thirdly, he will kill a one - eyed Colossus riding an ass of extraordinary proportions with his head higher