



THE EARLY WRITINGS

(Purānī Taḥrīreih)



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(Purānī Tahrīrīn)

Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi^{as}

Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

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The Early Writings
(Original Purānī Taḥrīrīn)

Written by Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
The Promised Messiah and Mahdi, peace be on him,
Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

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Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian
The Promised Messiah & Mahdi^{as}

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} was born in 1835 in Qadian, India. From his early life, he dedicated himself to prayer, and the study of the Holy Quran and other scriptures. He was deeply pained to observe the plight of Islam, which was being attacked from all directions. In order to defend Islam and present its teachings in their pristine purity, he wrote more than ninety books, thousands of letters, and participated in many religious debates. He argued that Islam is a living faith, which can lead man to establish communion with God and achieve moral and spiritual perfection.

Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} started experiencing divine dreams, visions, and revelations at a young age. In 1889, under divine command, he started accepting initiation into the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. The divine revelations continued to increase and he was commanded by God to announce that God had appointed him to be the same Reformer of the Latter Days as prophesied by various religions under different titles. He claimed to be the same Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose advent had been prophesied by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{ṣas}.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is now established in more than 200 countries.

After his demise in 1908, the institution of *Khilāfat* (successorship) was established to succeed him, in fulfilment of the prophecies made in the Holy Quran and by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{ṣas}. Ḥaḍrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba} is the Fifth Successor to the Promised Messiah^{as} and the present head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

FOREWORD

The Promised Messiah^{as} spent the whole of his life in the defence of Islam, tirelessly conveying its message to the ends of the earth. In order to establish the Unity of God and conclusively prove the truthfulness of Islam, he strove courageously in the spiritual field of battle by engaging through written and spoken word, and demonstrated through his practical example that he was a true Champion of Allah bearing the qualities of all the Prophets. His written work spanning thousands of pages encompasses his letters, announcements, essays and books and serves as a shining testimony of his magnificent service to Islam.

The Early Writings or *Purānī Taḥrīrīn* are a compilation of some essays written by the Promised Messiah^{as} published in various newspapers in 1879 when the Arya Samaj movement was at its peak. In these eloquent expositions, the Promised Messiah^{as} has written his views on various Hindu doctrines and particularly the beliefs of the Arya Samaj. Ḥaḍrat Sheikh Ya'qub Ali Sahib Irfani^{ra} first published these Urdu essays in book form in 1899.

It was a custom in those days for the Arya Samaj to raise allegations against Islam, the Holy Quran and the Holy Founder of

Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and today even after a century and a half has passed, proponents of atheism are engaged in the same efforts. Atheists raise objections in an attempt to discredit and falsify the belief in God's existence, in revelation and the need for religion. We trust that the English translation of this book will prove to be beneficial and blessed for those who are academically inclined.

Various people were involved in preparing this English translation, but Ayyaz Mahmood Khan is particularly worthy of gratitude for reviewing the initial translation with the Urdu, thoroughly revising the English text and translating the last essay in this book. Abdul Quddus Arif is also deserving of thanks, who formatted the layout of this book.

May Allah the Exalted abundantly reward all who brought this work to fruition. *Āmin.*

Al-Hāj Munir-ud-Din Shams
Additional Wakīlut-Taṣnīf, London
July 2025

PREFACE

It is by the sheer favour of God Almighty that He has given me the opportunity to print in book form and present to the public a portion of these rare and precious writings of my leader and master, the Imam of the Age, His Holiness, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib, the Promised Messiah and Awaited Mahdi. These writings first came to light for the religious world to see some twenty-two or twenty-three years ago. On reading these writings wise and astute readers, and those whose dispositions are deeply perceptive will see the degree to which Ḥaḍrat Mirza Sahib was absorbed with a desire to defend the Faith, his indignation for Islam and his devotion. Such readers will find in these writings a magnificent sign in favour of the truthfulness of the claim of His Holiness. For these writings are from a time and age when the Promised Messiah^{as} had not yet appeared before the world with his current claims.

It is my intention, insofar as possible to collect the earliest writings of his Holiness, whether they are letters or essays. As such, this booklet is the first of this collection. In publishing this booklet, my brother Zafar Ahmad of Kapurthala offered invaluable

support. May Allah the Exalted reward him for this assistance, which he provided solely for the sake of God.

I also request all those who avidly collect and read the early writings of our leader and guide to assist me in this task insofar as possible. I am certain that they will not refrain from offering their support. At present, I cannot print these essays and writings in too great a number because of financial constraints. This is why when questions are raised in respect of the price of these invaluable gems—which are distributed for only a few pennies anyway—all I can do is apologise to my readers. Ultimately, my desire is that Allah the Exalted accepts this service and grants me a blessed end. May God keep me attached to this Imam, and cause me to die whilst in his service, and raise me as one from among his followers.

Peace be on you.

Humbly,

Yaqub Ali (Editor Al-Hakam)

30 May 1899

هو الذی ارسل رسوله بالهدی و دین الحق
لیظهر علی الدین کله و لو کفر المشرکون

حصہ اول

المیس اللہ بکاف عبدہ مرزا غلام احمد

سبح و قیت دہدہ کی تمام نمبر و درجہ کرم

حضرت اقدس

ﷺ

پُرانی تَحْرِیرِ

تین قابل قدر مضامین

یعنی وید و فرقان کا مقابلہ الہام کی حقیقت اور آیون کے مسئلہ قدر اربع کی مہلیت

مرتبہ

شیخ یعقوب علی تراب ایڈیٹر المحکم قادیان دارالاسلام اللہان

۳۰ مئی ۱۸۹۹ء

انوار احمد پریس قادیان میں شیخ یعقوب علی ملک مطبع فی چھپو اگر نثر کیا

He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may make it prevail over every *other* religion, even though the idolaters may dislike *it*.

Part One

Is Allah not sufficient for His servant?
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

The Early Writings of *His Holiness*

The Messiah of the Age, the Mahdi and the
Reformer of the Century.

Three Invaluable Essays:

*A comparison between the Vedas and the Holy Quran,
the Philosophy of Revelation & the Reality of the
Arya Doctrine on the Eternity of Souls*

Compiled by

Sheikh Ya'qub Ali Turab, Editor Al-Hakam Qadian,
the Abode of Peace and Security

30 May 1899

Printed and Published in Anwar-e-Ahmadiyya Press Qadian
by Sheikh Ya'qub Ali, the owner of the press

THE TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS REFUTED AND A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE VEDAS & THE QURAN

An Announcement Regarding the Essay on *The Refutation of the Transmigration of Souls and A Comparison between the Vedas and the Quran* along with a Handbill announcing a Reward of 500 Rupees, which was distributed at the time of the debate with Respected Bawa Sahib as well.

I submit respectfully to fair-minded readers that it ought to be clear that this announcement is being published because some days ago Pundit Kharak Singh, who is a member of the Arya Samaj of Amritsar, visited Qadian and requested a debate. Therefore, to comply with his wish, it was decided that a debate would be held on the subject of reincarnation and a comparison would be drawn between the Vedas and the Quran. Therefore, I wrote an

essay, which is being reproduced below after this announcement. The essay, which was written in refutation of reincarnation, was compiled in such a manner that all the arguments mentioned in it were taken from the Holy Quran. I did not present even a single argument in this essay as did not have its origin or foundation in the Holy Quran. The essay was then presented to Pundit Sahib in a public gathering so that he could—in accordance with the method I had adopted myself—also present his arguments in favour of reincarnation citing verses from the Vedas. The purpose was to settle the issue of reincarnation once and for all, and also to manifest the reality of the Vedas and the Quran, and determine which of the two books emerged truly victorious in this contest and which was vanquished.

After having listened to the entire essay of mine the Pundit, was completely unable to present any arguments from the Vedas and quoted only two verses of the Rig Veda which he believed spoke of reincarnation. He thus failed to disprove any of the arguments presented by me. He acted in this manner despite the fact that he ought to have expounded something of the philosophy of the Vedas before me so as to counter the arguments of the Holy Quran and prove the credibility of Pundit Dayanand's claim which he has been making for quite some time now saying that the Vedas are the fountain-head of all fields of knowledge. Sadly, Pundit Kharak Singh Sahib failed to say even a single word on this subject. He became absolutely dumbfounded, and felt so helpless and powerless during the debate that he eventually fled to his village. Having arrived in the village, he sent to me another essay of his, which shows that he is still eager to have a debate with me and wishes to compare the teachings of the Vedas and the Holy

Quran on the issue of reincarnation, and he wants this to be done through a newspaper.

I hereby welcome his proposal, as I am already prepared in this respect. My essay in refutation of reincarnation, which I had read before Pundit Sahib in a public gathering, was written entirely with arguments and proofs from the Holy Quran and contained countless references to Quranic verses. Pundit Sahib, therefore, is also obliged to ensure that the essay he writes to counter mine is based on arguments from the Vedas, and that he publishes it in a newspaper like the *Safir-e-Hind*, *Barādar-e-Hind* or *Āryah Darpan*. In this way, the wise shall be able to judge for themselves. It would be advisable that the organisers and the judges appointed for this debate, which is aimed at a thorough comparison of the excellences of the Vedas and the Quran, are two noble and scholarly persons from among the followers of the Christian faith and Brahmu Samaj, inasmuch as they do not belong to the faiths of the two parties involved in the debate. In my opinion, one such person is Reverend Rajab Ali, who is a well-read and scholarly person, and the other is Pundit Shiv Narayan who is considered to be a learned and insightful person among the Brahmu Samaj. To serve as judges and give a verdict on the debate, these two persons are most suitable and qualified.

A discussion conducted in this manner would engender four benefits: **First**, the debate regarding the issue of reincarnation would be settled for all times to come. **Secondly**, a comparison and investigation done in this way would excellently make evident the merits of the Vedas and the Quran. Their distinctive features which the judges would determine following the comparison could then be treated as the touchstone for a final judgment.

Thirdly, by virtue of this arrangement, those who are ignorant would be able to fully ascertain details about the doctrine of the Vedas and the Quran. **Fourthly**, this debate on reincarnation will not be seen as the opinion of an individual alone, rather when it is published in the form of a book and thus established as authentic, no one will doubt its credibility or consider it to have been forged.

It is not necessary for Pundit Kharak Singh Sahib to single-handedly bear the burden of penning a response to my arguments, rather I hereby make a general announcement that any of the distinguished and learned men whose names are mentioned in the essay being produced herewith under the title *Reincarnation Refuted* can come forward to write a response. However, if someone does not pay attention to this request despite being reminded of it so persistently and instead continues to put forth arguments in favour of reincarnation merely on the basis of Vedic philosophy; or being unable to find any arguments from the Vedas, fails to write a response based even on his own wisdom and rationale, then the followers of the Arya Samaj will have to acknowledge, for all times to come, that belief in reincarnation is baseless and that the Vedic claim that it comprehends all branches of knowledge is simply unfounded and untrue.

In the end, by way of reminder, I would also like to say that the announcement I had published earlier in February 1878 in refutation of reincarnation and for which I put forth a challenge with a reward of 500 rupees, is equally relevant to the present essay of mine. If Pundit Kharak Singh Sahib, or any other person for that matter, is able to rationally disprove all my arguments, taking them up one by one and quoting arguments from the Vedas, he will surely be worthy of the reward mentioned in the announcement.

Here, I would like to specifically request Pundit Kharak Singh Sahib, who claims that he can refute my arguments in a matter of minutes, to demonstrate his intellectual prowess before the learned and celebrated scholars of the Christian and Brahm Samaj faiths and show the excellences hidden in his distinguished personality. Otherwise, mere boasting before the ignorant masses is of no value. I would now like to produce below the essay I had promised to write:

The following is an essay in refutation of reincarnation and a comparison between the Vedas and the Quran. It seeks a response from the learned scholars of the Arya Samaj, such as Pundit Kharak Singh Sahib; Swami Pundit Dayanand Sahib; Bawa Narayan Singh Sahib; Munshi Jiwandas Sahib; Munshi Kanahya Lal Sahib; Munshi Bakhtawar Singh Sahib—Editor Arya Darpan; Babu Sarda Prashad Sahib; Munshi Sharampat Sahib—Secretary Arya Samaj Qadian and Munshi Inderman Sahib. A reward of 500 rupees is hereby promised to the winner of this debate.

The first principle of the Arya Samaj on which the belief of reincarnation is based is that the world was not created by anyone and that all souls are as ancient and eternal as Parameshvara [God] Himself, rather all souls are their own Parameshvara.

In my view, this principle is false and to build the edifice of reincarnation on it would be to erect a weak building on a weak foundation. The Holy Quran—on which the truth of Islam is entirely based and the arguments of which I have promised to present as a rebuttal to the arguments of the Vedas and to draw

a comparison between the Vedic and Quranic philosophy—categorically establishes the necessity of God Almighty being the Creator [of the universe]. I hereby present the said arguments of the Holy Quran in detail.

The first is a *propter quid* demonstration, which is an argument that moves from cause to effect. See *Sūrah Ra'd*, part 13:

اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ¹

That is, God is the Creator of everything, for He is One and Unique in His person and attributes, and He is One in the sense that He is also All-Powerful, i.e. He causes everything to remain under His control and thus He reigns over them. This argument proves to be valid, firstly, by a clear method which is evident through the minor premise that God is the One and All-Powerful, and its major premise is that anyone who is the One and All-Powerful would be the Creator of everything except His own person. Hence, the conclusion is that God is the Creator of all creation.

The first proposition that constitutes the minor premise can be validated thus that the principle that God is One and Unique is accepted not only by the opposing party but also by the entire world.

The second proposition which constitutes the major premise is that if God, on account of His being the One and Omnipotent, is not the Creator of everything excluding His own self and if the

1. Allah *alone* is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the most Supreme. (*Sūrah ar-Ra'd*, 13:17) [Publisher]

existence of all things is eternal like Him, then He cannot be the One, the Omnipotent Lord. The reason He cannot be the One in this case is that the very definition of the Oneness of God Almighty is that He has no partner whatsoever. Now, if God is not the Creator of the souls, this would constitute association of partners with God in two respects. First, if all the souls in their entirety are not His creation, then they would have to be accepted as being akin to Him and thus eternal like Him. Secondly, one will have to believe in their connection that like God, the True Lord, they too enjoy eternal existence which is not dependent on anything. This is the inherent definition of associating others with God, and to hold an associate with the Creator in respect of creation is evidently false in terms of rationality, for this would mean that there is a partner to the Creator, while the concept of a partner to the Creator is utterly impossible and unthinkable. Therefore, any premise which results in an impossibility is inherently flawed. What is more, a God with a partner cannot be the All-Powerful Lord either. For the attribute of being the All-Powerful Lord means that He has full command over everything, and rules and prevails over everything. As such, God cannot bring under His control such things that are not His creation—including the souls. The reason is that such things which, with respect to their persons, are eternal and are not His creation are by necessity independent of Him in respect of their existence, as they do not require any other cause for the substantiation of their personal existence. This, in other words, is the concept which is known as the concept of the ‘necessary being,’ who, in turn, is known in Persian as *Khudā* [God], i.e. the Self-Subsisting Lord.

Hence, if souls are akin to the Creator as ‘God’ and if they are

‘necessary beings’ like Him, it would rationally be impossible and unthinkable for them to be subordinate to Him. For one ‘necessary being’ cannot be in the control of another ‘necessary being’, as this would constitute circular logic and entail infinite regress.

However, the current position, on which both parties are in agreement, is that all souls are being controlled by God and none are out of His control. This proves that they all have been brought into existence and have been created, and that none of them is God or the necessary being. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

The second is a *quia* demonstration, which is an argument that moves from effect to cause. Refer to *Sūrah al-Furqān*:

لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكَ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدْ رُءَاهُ تَقْدِيرًا¹

That is, He has no partner in His sovereignty. He is the Creator of everything and the evident proof of His being the Creator is that He has created everything according to a fixed measure beyond which a thing cannot overstep; rather it must stay within and remain confined to a fixed parameter. In the language of logic, we can say that each body and soul is limited and confined within a particular parameter. And, everything that is confined and restricted to a particular parameter is bound to be subject to a restrictor and confiner. Hence, the conclusion is that for each body and soul there is a restrictor and confiner.

Now, the proof of the first premise, i.e. all things are confined and working within a fixed parameter, is that rationality could suggest that there be greater qualities and characteristics

1. *Sūrah al-Furqān*, 25:3 [Publisher]

in bodies and souls than those that are found in them at present. For instance, man has two eyes, and the human intellect may view it as a possibility that he might have had four: two on the front of the face and two at the back, so that he could see what was behind him just as he is able to observe what is in front of him. And, there is no doubt that to have four eyes instead of two would be far more beneficial and advantageous. Likewise, man does not have wings. It could have been possible that he too had wings like birds. Similarly, the human mind is confined within specific parameters of activity. Just as it cannot easily fathom hidden realities without the instruction of a teacher, and just as it cannot function properly if affected by an externally oppressing force such as madness or intoxication due to which it quickly begins to lose its abilities and faculties; similarly, it cannot easily perceive the infinitesimal particulars of a thing as the learned scholar and researcher Avicenna has explained in the seventh chapter of his book *Remarks and Admonitions*,¹ even though it was rationally possible for man to have been preserved from such shortfalls and inadequacies. Therefore, the question is what is the underlying reason in man being deprived of a whole array of capabilities and merits which, as rationality suggests, he could have possibly possessed? Is it because someone else proposed these shortcomings for man or is it because man voluntarily proposed them for himself? If someone says that man himself opted for them, this would surely be false, because no one prefers to be deficient. On

1. This is comprehensive philosophical work entitled *Al-Ishārāt Wat-Tanbīhāt* which was originally written in Arabic by the renowned philosopher Ibni Sinā (Avicenna) on logic and metaphysics. [Publisher]

the other hand, if someone says that it is because someone else has proposed them for him, then I would like to congratulate you, for this proves the existence of the Creator of souls and bodies. *Quod erat demonstrandum*.

The third argument is based on *reductio ad absurdum*. To elaborate, *reductio ad absurdum* is the kind of argument in which the credibility of a conclusion is proved by showing that the contradictory would be impossible. In the study of logic, this kind of argument is called *absurdum* because the term ‘absurdum’ implies a meaning of ‘falsity.’ Hence, under this method of argumentation, if the proposition that is put forth as being valid is not accepted to be true, then the conclusion will necessitate falsity. Here is an example of this kind of argument. Refer to *Sūrah at-Ṭūr*, part 27:

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمْ الْخَالِقُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَلْ
لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَبِّكَ أَمْ هُمْ الْمُقْصِرُونَ ¹ ﴿٤٠﴾

Meaning, Have these people, who do not believe that God is their the Creator, come into being without anyone having created them, or are they their own creators, or are they the cause of all causes who created the heavens and earth, or are they in possession of infinite treasures of knowledge and wisdom by which they have come to know that they are eternally existent, or are they free and not subject to anyone’s control so that it should be held that when there is no one who stands above them as dominant and powerful, then how can there be a Being who might have created them?

This verse puts forth profound argumentation whereby each

1. *Sūrah at-Ṭūr*, 52:36-38

premise of the five part argument in favour of the eternity of souls can be seen by the reader to have immediately negated itself. And, the profound points that have been made in the aforementioned verse are as follows:

Firstly, the concept of a non-existent coming into being without the agency of an agent is false because this would necessitate preference without the agency of a preferer. This is because to don the cloak of existence from nothingness requires a determining cause that would favour existence over non-existence. However, in this case, no credible reason for such a preference has been established. Therefore, without the agency of an active preferer, the occurrence of preference by itself is also impossible.

Secondly, it is impossible to be one's own Creator, for this necessitates the existence of a thing prior to one's own existence. The reason for this is that if it is accepted that the causative factor of everything is its own self, then the acceptance of such a notion would essentially require all things to be in existence prior to their own existence, and to exist before coming into existence is an impossibility.

Thirdly, if every entity was believed to be the cause of all causes and the creator of the universe in the likeness of God's being, this would necessitate a plurality of Gods, and it has already been agreed that a plurality of Gods is not possible. Secondly, the said process would also result in a circular argument and necessitate an infinite regress, and that too is not possible.

Fourthly, it is impossible for man to encompass infinite knowledge by virtue of the argument that the being of man, if seen from the standpoint of other entities in external existence, is finite in its

nature, and the infinite cannot be encompassed by the finite, for this would necessitate the limiting of that which is limitless.

Fifthly, it is not possible for a person to be independent and beyond the command of another. For the human self is in need of a perfecter for its own perfection. Hence, one who is in need of another cannot be independent. This would be contradiction in terms. Hence, while it is absolutely and categorically impossible for creation to come into being without a Creator, it must be admitted that all things as are confined within and restricted to a limit have been created by a Creator who is God Almighty.

And, the final form of this inference which logically develops on account of the minor and major premise is that we understand it to be an established fact that nothing can come into being except through the agency of a Self-Existing being. And, if this is not true, its opposite, i.e. everything can come into being without the agency of a Self-Existing being, would have to be true. And, the proposition that any possible existent coming into being is impossible without the help of a Self-Existing being, has already been proved to be valid in light of the five parts of the preceding argument I have cited above.

In short, if the conclusion that nothing can come into existence without the agency of a Self-Existing being is invalid, we will have to conclude that the existence of all things is established by the five impossibilities mentioned above. However, the existence of all things through the five impossibilities aforementioned is itself an impossibility. Hence, the conclusion is that the existence of all things without the agency of a Self-Existent being is a sheer impossibility. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

The Fourth Argument: The Holy Quran also puts forth

argumentation by way of conjunctive syllogism. One ought to know that syllogism is the first of the three kinds of argumentation. And, conjunctive syllogism is a kind of syllogism wherein the conclusion or its contradictory is not explicitly stated in the premise, rather it is implied. This type of syllogism is called conjunctive in the sense that its terms, i.e. the minor, middle and major, are connected. Generally, syllogism is the best and foremost of all kinds of argumentation, for it helps a person reach conclusions about a specific part of an object by studying various parts of the object as a whole, thus the study becomes coherent and comprehensive and leads to perfect certainty.

In short, the kind of syllogism that has been spoken of above has been employed by the following verse testifying that God is the Creator. The verse is from *Sūrah al-Hashr*, part 28:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ¹

God is the Creator, i.e. He brought everything into existence. He is the Maker, i.e. He is the One Who brought the souls and bodies into existence from nothingness. He is the Fashioner, i.e. He is the One who granted everything a form in terms of the physical and in kind because all good qualities are proven to exist in His person, that is to say, all perfect attributes which wisdom can propose for Him based on His perfect powers are found in His being. He, therefore, has the power to bring things into being from nothingness, for to create a thing out of nothing is a great merit indeed among the excellences of the All-Powerful. Hence, the logical sequence of the premises in the first figure of this syllogism,

1. *Sūrah al-Hashr*, 59:25 [Publisher]

would be that we say that to bring something into being or grant it existence based on one's own power is an excellence, and that all excellences are possessed by the Perfect and Necessary Being. The conclusion, therefore, is that God also possesses the excellence of bringing into existence. Proof of the validity of the minor premise, i.e. that it is an excellence to create something based on one's own power, is that if its opposite were true, i.e. to be unable to create anything by one's own power until and unless some foreign substance comes to one's aid and support, would prove to be an extreme defect. For, if we were to suppose for a moment that the available substance had all been exhausted on one thing or another, we also have to suppose that God was now absolutely unable to create anything further. To ascribe such a flaw to the Infinite and All-Powerful God would be tantamount to the very denial of His divinity.

In addition, it has been proved with ample evidence in theology that in order for the Self-Existent being to be established as God, it is necessary for Him to comprehend all excellences. In other words, no excellence that the mind can fathom or conceive can be absent from the perfect being of God. Hence, reason demands that the excellence of God's divinity lies in the excellence of every creation culminating in His being and this excellence not being undermined by the so-called eternity of created beings or the division of the One True Being into various partners.

Moreover, aside from all these arguments and proofs, any pure-minded person can understand that any work that is superior in nature requires greater excellence to perform as opposed to work of lesser significance. So, while the joining of all the components of the universe together proves the excellence of God Almighty,

how great an excellence it would be to create the universe without having relied upon any means—for this proves that God possesses infinitely greater power and omnipotence. So this proves the validity of the minor premise in this figure of the syllogism.

Evidence of the major premise, i.e. the proposition that the being of God is possessed of all excellences is that if He is not possessed of certain excellences, one may ask whether He is devoid of those excellences on account of His own will or because someone else has forced Him to be so. If it is said that He is devoid of these excellences out of His own volition, this would be false because no one willingly agrees to keep oneself devoid of an excellence. Secondly, if this shortcoming is found in Him from the very beginning, there remains no question of His pleasure or displeasure. As such, if one says that He was compelled to be in this condition, then one must acknowledge the existence of a coercer, who forced Him and prevented Him from enforcing the writ of His divinity. Or even if we suppose that it is His own weakness and helplessness that forced Him to be so and that there is no external coercer, we would still be forced to conclude that He is helpless and powerless. Hence, under these circumstances, such a being is not worthy of being God. This necessarily proves that God is pure and free from the blemish of compulsion or powerlessness as this renders His divinity false and that He is possessed of the perfect attribute of being capable to create a thing out of nothingness. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

The Fifth Argument: In the Holy Quran evidence of God Almighty being the Creator is established also by way of exceptive syllogism. Exceptive syllogism is a form of logical reasoning wherein either the conclusion (*quaesitum*) or its contradictory are

stated explicitly in the premises. This argument is composed of two types of premises, i.e. conditional and exceptive. As such, a verse of the Holy Quran that is based on this manner of reasoning is found in *Sūrah az-Zumar*, part 23, as follows:

يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِّن بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِي ظُلُمٍ
ثَلَاثٍ ۖ ذِكْرُكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ¹

That is, He creates you in the wombs of your mothers under the darkness of three veils, and the perfect wisdom working behind this is that He bestows upon you one kind of creation and then bestows upon you another kind of creation. In other words, He gives every organ a different shape and bestows upon it different qualities and capabilities. Then, He blows life into a lifeless object. Neither does darkness stop Him from accomplishing His task, nor is it difficult for Him to create different kinds of organs with diverse capabilities, nor does He face any difficulty or incur a loss in eternally continuing the process of creation. This is why He says,

ذِكْرُكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ²

In other words, it is He who eternally keeps this system of nature in function; hence He is God your Lord. In other words, this Perfect Omnipotence proves that He is the Perfect Lord who can

1. He creates you in the wombs of your mothers, creation after creation, in three-fold darkness. This is Allah, your Lord. (*Sūrah az-Zumar*, 39:7) [Publisher]

2. That is Allah, your Lord. (*Sūrah az-Zumar*, 39:7) [Publisher]

create a thing out of nothingness and bring it into existence and then guide it from mere existence to a level of perfection. For if He were not the Lord of all things and if he were not the Perfect Lord and if He acted only like a carpenter or some other craftsman who for the sake of his work collects materials from one place or another, He surely could not be the Perfect Lord and would not always be successful at all times. In such a case, he would definitely be prone to face failure on one occasion or other and thus become unable to create. In a nutshell, the verse proves that He whose actions do not spring from perfect providence, i.e. he who is personally unable to create, can never possess perfect omnipotence either. God, however, is indeed the Omnipotent Lord, and the reason for this is that to create things of diverse nature and to go on creating them one after the other and to continue this process without fail is surely a clear sign of absolute omnipotence. This proves that God is the All-Powerful Lord, that in reality, He is the Lord of everything and not merely a carpenter or builder. Had this not been the case, the workings of the universe could not have continued to function without interruption since its inception and would have met its end long ago. For he who cannot act out of absolute choice, can never be capable of creating a thing at all times and in an infinite number.

The logical sequence of this argument as presented in the Holy Quran in the verse quoted above is as follows: If a person whose action of creating an object emanates from perfect omnipotence, then he must also possess the attribute of perfect providence, that is, he must be able to bring into existence a thing out of nothingness; but since God's action of creating a diverse range of things

requires Him to be possessed of perfect omnipotence, therefore, He must also possess the attribute of perfect providence.

The minor premise of this argument states that a creator for whom it is necessary to possess perfect omnipotence must also possess the characteristic of divine providence. This premise is validated by the fact that reason necessarily requires that a creator about whom we have accepted that he faces no difficulty in creating a thing and that when he decides to create a thing, he has available to him all the necessary means to do so, should also have those means available to him at all times and in any number that he requires. Now, this kind of perfect authority cannot be fully established unless the creator of an object is also able to create all the required parts of an object. The reason for this is because the availability of those required parts at all times and in any number that is required—in the case of a creator who does not have absolute power to secure those parts—would be a potentiality which may not occur. As such, no philosophical argument can be built on a proposition that may not occur in certain circumstances. And if this manner of argumentation can be constructed, then someone ought to show us an example. The reason for this is obvious. To say that X does not possess perfect command over the creation of an object is synonymous with saying that it is possible that there may be a time when he is simply unable to create that object at all.

Hence, this proves that a perfect maker cannot create anything unless he also has absolute power over everything. This is why no worldly artisan can claim that they are perfect makers. Instead, it is always witnessed in the case of all such craftsmen that when a person makes repeated visits to their workshops and presses them

to immediately make a thing, they ultimately become frustrated by these demands and are compelled to retort by saying that they are not God who can create a thing by a mere command and that they will make the required item only when they are able to procure the necessary materials.

In short, everyone knows that to be the Perfect Maker, one must possess absolute omnipotence and providence. The Perfect Maker need not wait for X to die before bestowing a child upon Y. Nor is He compelled to wait for X to expire before He blows life into the foetus of Y who is in a womb. Hence, this establishes the validity of the minor premise.

The validity of the major premise that God must possess perfect omnipotence if He is to be the Creator of all forms of creation is established by the minor premise itself.

Further, it is evident that if God does not possess the absolute power that is necessary over everything, His omnipotence would depend merely on the occurrence of certain coincidences; and as I have stated, it is simple for reason to grasp that in such a case there is a possibility that such things whose availability depends on chance may not be available to Him at a particular time, for they are incidental and not necessarily acquirable at all times, whereas it is essential for the soul to be connected to the foetus at a specific time during the stages of its development. Hence, this proves that if God is to act at the right time, it is necessary for Him to possess the perfect omnipotence.

This argument also proves that God must be All-Powerful because we can, for instance, in view of the established rules of philosophy, suppose that for a certain period of time all existing

souls remain attached to their respective bodies for as long as they must. This supposition, however, would also make it necessary for us to believe that until this time passes, no soul can enter those other foetuses which have developed in the wombs of mothers at present. Yet it would be evidently false in terms of rationality to believe that a foetus can remain idle and detached from its soul in this manner. Hence, when the necessary result that follows from a certain proposition is proven false, the proposition itself is also established as false. Hence, in light of the fact that both premises have been established to be valid, it is proven that God is the possessor of perfect providence. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

The Sixth Argument: The Holy Quran presents another argument also by way of compound syllogism. A compound syllogism is constructed with such premises the conclusion of which does not necessarily prove a point to be valid; however, the point can be established if the conclusion is put together with another premise to form a new syllogistic argument. Hence, the required result might be obtained either from the second syllogism developed, or by constructing other syllogisms by linking premises in this manner, to arrive at a final conclusion. In both cases, this type of syllogism is called a compound syllogism.

The verse which is comprised of this kind of argument is the one in *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, part 3:

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا
فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ¹

That is, God, in His person, is ever worthy of being worshipped

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:256 [Publisher]

by all creation, and there is no partner to Him. This is based on the categorical argument that He is the Living God who is Eternal and that it is due to Him that all things exist, i.e. the existence and survival of everything depends upon His existence and presence. He alone continues to support the existence of all things. He does not suffer slumber, nor sleep. In other words, He is never negligent regarding the protection of His creation. Hence, when the survival of everything depends upon His existence, this proves that it is He who is the Creator and Lord of all things in the heavens and in the earth.

The logical sequence of this argument, as put forth in this verse of the Holy Quran, is (the first part of the compound syllogism and the minor premise) that God has the right to be worshipped eternally by all creation without any partner and (the major premise is that) He who deserves to be worshipped eternally by all creation is the one who is Ever-Living and Eternal, and is the Source of subsistence for all things; therefore (the conclusion is that) God is Ever-Living, Eternal and Provider of subsistence to all things.

In the second part of the compound syllogism the conclusion of the first part of the syllogism has been put forth as the minor premise; (and the minor premise is that) God is Eternal and Provider of subsistence to all things, whereas (the major premise is that) He who is Eternal and provides subsistence to all things is necessarily the Creator of all things, therefore (the conclusion is that) God is the Creator of all things.

The minor premise of the first part of the compound syllogism—the proposition that God, without having any partner, deserves to be eternally worshipped by all creation—is valid

because even the other party accepts this fact. Hence, there is no need to further establish this argument.

The major premise of the first part of this compound syllogism, i.e. the proposition that he who eternally deserves to be worshipped by all things is the one who is Ever-Living, Eternal and Provider of subsistence to all things, stands proven in the sense that if God is not Eternal and Ever-Living, then one must presume that He came into existence at some time in the past, or that He will no longer remain at some time in the future. In both cases, it would be false to state that He is the Eternal being who is worthy of worship. The reason for this is that when He does not exist anymore, He cannot be worshipped either. For the worship of a thing which does not exist is futile; therefore, when God does not exist and is no longer present as the Eternal being that is worthy of worship, the proposition that God has the right to be worshipped eternally is also rendered false, whereas it has just been proved that the proposition mentioned above is valid and credible. Hence, it must be accepted that he who has the right to be eternally worshipped by all things is the Eternal and the Ever-Living.

Further, if God is not the Provider of subsistence for everything, that is, if the life and survival of all other things does not depend upon His life and existence, His presence will not be necessary for the survival of any kind of creation. In such a case, His role will essentially become ineffective. He will not be the real, essential cause for the survival of other things, for an ineffective being is one whose being and existence is not a necessary condition for the survival and existence of a thing under its influence. For example, if person A throws a stone and then dies immediately after throwing the stone, it will invariably continue to move for some time

even after the person would have died. Hence, if, as the people of the Arya Samaj suggest, we should believe God to be nothing more than an ineffective being this would necessitate, God forbid, that even if we suppose Parameshvara to be dead, this would not adversely affect the souls and particles. The statement of Pundit Dayanand which he has recorded in *Satyarth Prakash* has completely ruined the concept of divine Unity and Pundit Kharak Singh, has followed him without having properly pondered over his statement. According to them it is written in the Vedas that all souls are completely independent of Parameshvara for their survival and life, and that their relationship with Parameshvara is like the relationship of a carpenter to a wooden chair or of a potter to a clay pitcher. In other words, the handicapped Parameshvara runs his business by merely joining things together, and He is not the Sustainer of creations. However, every wise person knows that by believing this to be the case, the being of Parameshvara has only as much significance as ordinary potters and carpenters, inasmuch as things made by them do not rely upon them for their survival. In other words, as is the case with potters and carpenters, when they have died, the pitchers and chairs that they have created will continue to exist; and so, in the same way, even in the case that Parameshvara died, the existence of things will remain unaffected.

This shows that the proposition of Pundit Sahib that in his role as the creator Parameshvara may be likened to a potter or a carpenter, is a false analogy. If only the Pundit had believed God to be the Provider of subsistence to things and had not considered Him to be like ordinary carpenters, he would not have felt compelled to state that even if Parameshvara was presumed dead, this would not cause any harm to the souls. However, this is what

the Veda probably states as well; otherwise, personally I find it difficult to believe that Pundit Sahib could doubt the most manifest fact that God is Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining. And, if Pundit Sahib truly believes Parameshvara to be the Provider of sustenance to everything, then what kind of a good act it is on his part to reduce Him to the likes of potters and carpenters, and what argument is advanced by the Veda in this respect?

One can see that the Holy Quran, at a number of places, has proved that God is Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining, as He states it once again in the following verse:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ¹

Meaning, God is the light of the heavens and the earth. It is due to Him that the lower and higher realms are illuminated with the light of life and sustenance. Hence, this discourse proves the validity of part one of the aforementioned compound syllogism. The minor premise of part two of the said compound syllogism is the conclusion of part one of the said syllogism, and the validity of part one of this compound syllogism has just been established. Hence, the conclusion has also been proved.

Moreover, the major premise of part two, i.e. that he who is Ever-Living and Eternal, and the Provider of subsistence to everything is the Creator, can be proved thus that he who is Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining must be the one whose life and existence is the necessary condition for the survival and life of all other things, and for providing everything else that they need for their survival. What this means is that if the necessary condition

1. *Sūrah an-Nūr*, 24:36 [Publisher]

just mentioned was assumed to be absent, then the absence of the contingent would have to be assumed as well. In other words, if there is no such thing as the being of God, then nothing else can exist either. Hence, to say that if God does not exist, no other thing will exist is synonymous with saying that if God would not have existed, no other thing would have existed either. This proves that the being of God Almighty is the very cause for the existence of other things and the essential definition of being the Creator is that the existence of the Creator must be the cause for the existence of creation. And so, it stands proven that God is the Creator. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

**The author,
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
Chief of Qadian**

CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING THE ISSUE OF REVELATION

Revelation is an inspiration from the unseen, the receipt of which does not rely, in any way, upon a person's own thoughts, reflections, contemplation or deliberation. It is a clear and evident experience which is discernible like the interaction of a speaker and listener, or someone who strikes another, or like a person who is touched by another. Revelation does not cause any inner distress to the self which may be likened to the burden caused by mental exertions of the mind, rather just as a lover freely and delightfully enjoys meeting with their beloved, in the same way the soul holds an eternal and everlasting connection with revelation, and the soul derives a pleasure in this relationship. In a nutshell, it is a profound expression from God Almighty which, in other words, is referred to as inspiration or revelation.

First *Propter Quid* Argument for the Need of Revelation

We have no such absolute law whereby we can truly safeguard ourselves from error. This is why even the philosophers who formulated rules of logic and debate, and constructed philosophical arguments have always made errors, and have left behind hundreds of absurd notions, flawed philosophies and meaningless discussions to remind the world of their ignorance. This proves that it is utterly impossible for a person who depends solely upon their own investigations to reach the essence of every truth and arrive at a reliable opinion about a thing without making any error in judgment. I say this because I have never seen or heard of, or found in any book of history the name of any such person who was perfectly free from every error and mistake regarding all their conclusions and judgments. In light of inductive reasoning, we arrive at the correct and truthful conclusion that the existence of such people who have reached the pinnacle of truth in their investigations—by contemplating and reflecting only on the laws of nature and reconciling their own judgement with the phenomenon of the universe—such that it is impossible to find any error in their understanding, is itself an impossibility, as observation has always demonstrated.

Nonetheless, the only way you could argue my assertion, which you have the right to challenge, would be for you to put forth an argument against the inductive argument I have made and thus disprove my conclusion. In other words, the correct approach in presenting a response is that if, in your view, my inductive reasoning is flawed, you ought to show me, so as to refute my reasoning,

an example of a perfect individual from among the learned, intellectuals and whose every opinion, conclusion and judgment cannot be faulted in anyway, and whose tongue and pen are free from even a single error, so that I too am able to see whether such a person is truly faultless, or whether the actual state of affairs is something else. If such a person emerges to be truly free from fault, you will surely be proven true in your claim, and I will be considered wrong in my claim. Otherwise, it is quite evident that if man is unable to protect himself from error merely by his own knowledge and judgement and if we accept that God too (Who is Gracious and Merciful and free of every error and fault, and is the Knower of the truth of every matter) does not help His servants through His true revelation, then how can we, who are His helpless servants, emerge from the veils of ignorance and misguidance, and gain deliverance from the calamities of doubt and misunderstanding? Hence, based on my firm and considered view, I would invite you to accept that the wisdom, mercy and compassion of the Omnipotent Lord demands from time to time, whenever He deems it necessary to raise such people who receive revelation from God so that they are enlightened in respect of true beliefs and morals. The inherent capability of understanding divine teaching ought to be deemed a bestowal of God, so that the souls of the people, which have been created to receive true guidance do not remain deprived of the blessings ordained for them.

Sincerely,

The Author, Ghulam Ahmad (may Allah forgive him)

21 May 1879

[Pundit Shiv Narayan's Reply]

Respected Mirza Sahib!

I have received your kind letter as well as the essay attached to it. Sadly, I cannot agree with what you have stated regarding the definition of revelation and its need. I write herewith the reasons for my disagreement:

Firstly: Putting aside the issue of whether or not your argument (which you refer to as *propter quid*) can prove that there can be a cause for revelation, which you claim is an effect is a blatant error, which contradicts reality. For instance, you have written:

We have no such absolute law whereby we can truly safeguard ourselves from error. This is why even the philosophers who formulated rules of logic and debate, and constructed philosophical arguments have always made errors, and have left behind hundreds of absurd notions, flawed philosophies and meaningless discussions to remind the world of their ignorance.

By this statement do suggest that all the investigations and efforts that man has made thus far over the course of thousands of years have produced nothing except false notions and philosophies, and absurd theories, and have thus failed to put forward any sound notion or theory or credible proposition; or do you mean that the researchers who are now engaged in investigations about nature are only adding to a collection of 'ignorance' and that they are simply unable to reach any truth? If you do not answer these

questions in the negative, it would become manifestly evident that you are in clear denial of hundreds of branches of knowledge, and thousands of credible pieces of information and authentic facts regarding these various fields of knowledge, which more or less benefit almost every nation of the world. I trust, however, that this is perhaps not the purport of your statement. What you most probably intend to state is that the possibility of man committing errors and misjudgements in his investigations is plausible, but not that man has been created, inherently by nature, in such a manner as restricts him from acquiring any information that is true. For you must have seen or heard of such people or even read about them in books of history as were not free of error or misjudgement in 'all their conclusions and judgements,' yet their knowledge in many areas has proven to be categorically sound and true.

Moreover, hundreds of investigations that have been conducted in the past or are being conducted today are such that it is absolutely impossible to find flaw with them. And, this you can surely confirm by looking at hundreds of pieces of information which relate to the natural sciences, mathematics and morality. Nature has provided all of the means that are required by any person to obtain the entire range of information that man has so far been able to obtain or will ever obtain in the future. Now, the more man continues to develop these means on an individual and collective level, by continuing to refine them and make them more effective through the best use of his capacities, the more he will continue to succeed in the acquisition of sound knowledge through investigations into nature.

Having read this brief statement of mine, I hope that you will

not deny the fact that although it is possible for man to err in his investigations; this does not mean that *all* his investigations are flawed. Rather, many of his investigations are established as being true. It evidently follows that if he has not erred regarding a certain piece of information, the rule or method that was employed to obtain that specific fact must also have been free of error. The reason for this is that the use of a flawed method can never produce a correct conclusion. Hence, if a certain piece of information known to man is correct, then it follows that the means provided to him by nature for the acquisition of that knowledge were also used in a proper and reasonable manner. On the contrary, wherever a person fails to ascertain correct information, they must have failed to make use of the relevant means in a correct manner. This can be likened to the condition of a person who has a telescope and knows how to open it but is unable to see an object in front of him or see it clearly because of his inability to properly adjust the focus of the telescope.

Likewise, at times, a person remains unable to properly adjust the focus of the telescope of the means that nature has provided him. Consequently, he either remains totally deprived of witnessing the sight that reality displays or he witnesses it only unclearly.¹

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1. There are hundreds of thousands of people in the world who, despite being fully functional and healthy, spend a life of slothfulness and inactivity, and are only obsessed with eating. Likewise, there are millions who, despite having at their disposal all the necessary means for research that is provided by nature, do not want to bother themselves with any such pursuit. They make no effort to learn what they can discover even through minor deliberation. Like the blind, in fact, they continue to inadvertently following the same old traditions. This is the reason why the mistake made by one person in the world is seen to be indiscriminately affecting millions of others. (Author)

However, he who is able to properly adjust the focus discovers the error committed by the people of previous times and thus discovers the truth of the matter at hand.

Now, this statement (which is a clear and unambiguous one) evidently proves that in some cases, man, having appropriately put to use the means provided to him by nature, quickly discovers the reality of a matter. Secondly, if he does not or is incapable of appropriately putting to use the said means and commits an error, someone else who finds the opportunity to put them to appropriate use is able to remove the misunderstanding of the one before him.

The history of humanity's quest for knowledge is therefore replete of these sorts of interesting accounts. In this context, our experience spanning thousands of years clearly demonstrates that it is not at all difficult for any researcher to reach the conclusion that man who is equipped with all the necessary physical organs, and is blessed with mental and moral capabilities, is quite fit to seek a path for himself in this world (such that suits his disposition and is in harmony with his needs and requirements) and should himself obtain knowledge of the means necessary for his physical and spiritual well-being and progress and thus utilize them to his full advantage.

Hence, if we ignore this law of nature or seek to present a hypothetical argument against the wisdom of the True and Wise Lord by suggesting that it is a need of man to see in all four directions but he has only two eyes on his face, and due to this when he is looking at a thing in front of him, he cannot see behind even if danger lurks behind him; so since man only has two eyes at the front, he cannot see what is happening behind him; hence, was

it not possible for God, who is Gracious and Merciful and Wise, to grant him two eyes in the back of his head as well, so that he could be alerted to the danger and try to protect himself from it? Therefore, you claim that when there is a need for two eyes at the back of the head as well, it would be necessary for God to provide man these two eyes so that he is able to further protect himself. Additionally, if someone were to argue that the intellect of man is prone to error and cannot even know, in advance, that the ship on which he is going to travel from Bombay to England will face a severe storm in the sea a week or so after its departure, which is bound to destroy it; so while man, on his own, is unable to safeguard himself from the destructive and fatal impact of the storm and while only God (who is Gracious and Merciful and free of every error and flaw and is the knower of the reality of every matter) can forthwith help His servants through His angels, how can we—His weak and helpless servants—safeguard ourselves from the fatal storm? The wisdom, mercy and compassion of that All-Powerful Lord, therefore, demands that He keeps informing us of the storm well before it has actually hit us, so that we can save ourselves and our ship.

Now, evidently, those who are blessed with the ability to sufficiently fathom the deeper reality of things and are well-versed in principles of logic would consider the two aforementioned arguments of mine to be categorically absurd and unfounded. The reason for this is that in the first place the argument constructed to prove the ‘need’, which I have declared to be the cause for the conclusion I have drawn, is an argument based merely on my imagination and fancy, and is not supported by the laws of nature. Rather, in doing so we neglect the laws of nature altogether, and put forth

our own explanations to describe the wisdom of God. Secondly, since the cause I have put forth is hypothetical, the conclusion I have drawn from it is also purely hypothetical and the laws of nature reject this proposition. This is the reason why in the first example just as our conclusion is contrary to facts, inasmuch as man does not have two extra eyes at the back of the head; similarly, in the second example also, despite the fact that hundreds of ships have been destroyed in the sea and hundreds and thousands of people have lost their lives in such disasters, God, to this very day, has never sent any angel to the captain of a ship informing him of an imminent disaster.

Hence, we can say that in both cases the reasoning constructed by us in relation to ‘need’ were not in accordance with the wisdom of God or the laws of nature, therefore the conclusions we drew from them also proved to be contrary to the laws of nature, as they were at odds with the wisdom of God, and proved to be nothing more than hypothetical. Evidently, the argument you have put forth in favour of the need for revelation is quite similar to the arguments I have put forth above. You state:

If man is unable to protect himself from error merely by his own knowledge and judgement and if we accept that God too (Who is Gracious and Merciful and free of every error and fault, and is the Knower of the truth of every matter) does not help His servants through His true revelation, then how can we, who are His helpless servants, emerge from the veils of ignorance and misguidance, and gain deliverance from the calamities of doubt and misunderstanding? Hence, based on my firm and considered view, I would invite you to accept

that the wisdom, mercy and compassion of the Omnipotent Lord demands from time to time, whenever He deems it necessary to raise such people who receive revelation from God so that they are enlightened in respect of true beliefs and morals.

In this argument of yours, the reasoning that you have presented regarding 'need' is similar to the arguments that I have presented; whereas the laws of nature do not support them. Hence, such reasoning proves nothing, and is merely hypothetical and imaginary in nature. The reason for this is that one can cite a hundred such 'needs.' The question, however, is whether divine wisdom accepts those 'needs' to be genuine, or not. According to the intellectuals, only that 'need' is a 'true need' which is acknowledged by nature or the wisdom of God Almighty. For instance, our need to eat in order to satiate our hunger or our need to breathe air is not a hypothetical one; it is rather a natural requirement. That is why God has provided both resources to us in reasonable amounts to support human life. But a need which nature does not acknowledge as a genuine need of man and which we, on our own, consider to be a need is a hypothetical one. This is why when we cite it as a cause for a conclusion, the conclusion too is proved false in light of observation. I have amply explained this in the examples cited above.

Secondly, as for the degree to which your statement seeking to define revelation is relevant to the argument you have presented, it would be sufficient to write that the very 'need' on which you have based your argument in support of revelation is baseless, i.e. nature does not consider such a need to be a valid one. Now, even if we accept that the building you have raised on such a foundation

has been constructed with quality material, it does not have a solid foundation and cannot stand on the baseless foundation built by your imagination. Just as the foundation is imaginary, so is the building that has been constructed upon it.

I hereby wish to shed light on the damage that has been caused to the people of the world due to this erroneous belief about revelation and the evils that it has given rise to, and also the impediments it has posed to human progress; however, as this matter is not directly related to the point being discussed, I put this aside for the time being.

Sincerely,

Shiv Narayan Agnihotri

Lahore

3 June 1879

[A Reply from the Promised Messiah^{as}]

Respected Pundit Sahib!

I have received your kind letter. I was eagerly waiting for your response. I must write with the deepest disappointment that you were made to suffer such inconvenience, yet I have not received a proper response either. My point, in nutshell, was that since the means of our salvation (which even you accept is something for which we must search) is based on our discovering the right set of beliefs, the right morals and good deeds, which are absolutely free of all forms of falsehood. Therefore, we cannot achieve salvation until our religious knowledge and insight of the divine law has been acquired through such a secure source as is completely free from all forms of corruption and error.

In response to this, if you had followed the right path and kept in view the etiquettes of debate (in the case that you reject my arguments) you ought to have formulated your rebuttal, as rationality dictates, in accordance with one of the three principles that follow.

Firstly, you could have outright refused to acknowledge that there was any such thing as salvation and declared the means for its attainment to be non-existent and unobtainable, and thus considered its need to be merely as useless a pursuit as one's desire to have four eyes.

Secondly, you could have said that you believed in salvation but did not believe that the doctrine and deeds required for salvation must be free from all forms of falsehood and corruption, and thus you considered such means as are absolutely false, or

ones which are a muddle of both truth and falsehood, sufficient to attain salvation.

Thirdly, you could have declared salvation to be dependent upon absolute truth (which is perfectly free of every kind of falsehood) and then claimed that rationality alone is the means to attain absolute truth and sufficient for salvation. In this case, to prove your claim, it would have been necessary for you to show an example of such a wise man who was absolutely free of error and you would have been required to present his writings containing such knowledge stemming from his own ideologies and rationality, and thus prove my inductive argument (which is the third kind of argument among the three categories of argumentation which we have presented in our previous paper) to be invalid. By this method, if you had successfully disproved my inductive argument, and if I had failed to point out any flaw in the said piece of writing, certainly you would have largely clinched the argument against me. Regrettably, however, you did no such thing. You did say that there were thousands of writers but you did not mention the name of even one of them, nor did you present any examples of their writings on logical or theoretical matters.

Now, from this discussion, what I mean to convey to you is that if you still hold any reservations regarding the reality of revelation, you should choose one of the above-mentioned three options so that it is clear what course you have chosen and then provide evidence to support your view. The reason for this is that while I have proved that there is a 'need' for revelation, you must, as per the rules of debate, prove my point to be invalid. And, as I have said, you only have three options, out of which you are bound to choose one. It should also be clear to your good self that my

only desire is for the truth to be manifested through this debate. I am not predisposed to prejudice or egotism as is the way of the foolish. It is with a sense of heartfelt affection and friendship that I engage in this discussion with you, and I hope for a response from you with the same sentiments.

Sincerely,

The Author, Ghulam Ahmad (may Allah forgive him)

5 June 1879

[A Reply from the Pundit]

Respected Mirza Sahib,

I am in receipt of the reply you wrote to me in the fifth month of the current year. I am extremely saddened to know that you have not been satisfied by what I had written in my reply to you regarding the nature of revelation. My regret grows even more when I see that you have not put forward any clear and logical reason for your dissatisfaction with what I had written to you. This shows that in reading and understanding my response you have not reflected and contemplated fully.

Then, another interesting aspect in your reply is that you do not appear consistent in your own point of view. In the first place, you sought to prove the 'need' for revelation by arguing that since the human intellect is unable to find truth on its own, and since it is prone to error in its investigations; therefore, it is necessary for man to receive revelation from God. When I proved that your argument regarding this 'need' was based on a mere assumption, and when I clearly demonstrated that divine wisdom does not acknowledge this 'need' to be a genuine one, you turned away from your initial stance and adopted a new one. Instead of either acknowledging the soundness of what I had written to you or then presenting a reasonable argument if you had any objection, you confused the discussion with the issue of salvation. In other words, you put aside the actual subject of debate, which is the nature of revelation, and have begun to discuss the issue of salvation. Having done so, you have now made a new claim and have begun a completely new discussion. And then the real marvel is that towards the end of your letter you have written:

If you still hold any reservations regarding the reality of revelation, you should choose one of the above-mentioned three options so that it is clear what course you have chosen and then provide evidence to support your view. The reason for this is that while I have proved that there is a 'need' for revelation, you must, as per the rules of debate, prove my point to be invalid.

For me, this was like suffering one misfortune on the heels of another. I have already once refuted the argument you presented for the 'need' of revelation and proven that the very foundation on which you have built your so-called edifice of revelation is baseless. Regretfully, as you have developed over a long period of time the habit of supporting this point of view, this prevents you from reaching the truth in spite of your claim that your 'only desire is for the truth to be manifested through this debate.' I would like to remind you that the search for truth cannot be credible unless one develops the ability of reconsidering one's own deeply ingrained opinions and welcoming new findings. The young child of a Christian sees the water of the River Ganges to be nothing more than the water of an ordinary river and does not consider it capable of purging people of their sins. However, as far as the belief of a conservative Hindu is concerned, he believes that even one dip into that water purges man of all his sins. On the other hand, a Christian considers the belief in Trinity to be an established truth while a Muslim or Brahmu Samajist deems this belief to be absolutely absurd. Even if a person holds a debate with a Hindu or a Christian and proves his beliefs to be absurd (which is not at all difficult to do), the latter will not acknowledge the absurdity

of his beliefs, so much so that when he finds himself unable to argue, he would simply say: 'Although I am unable to provide a valid refutation, I hold this belief nonetheless and consider it to be true from the core of my heart.' In fact, this voice from his heart reflects the same old habit of man which philosophers refer to as 'second nature'.

Hence, the same is the case with your belief regarding revelation. Since you have by way of habit, held this belief for such a long period of time, it has become so firmly ingrained in your heart and has become so creditable in your view that you consider even the strongest of arguments which I have presented against your view to be unimpressive. Furthermore, when you find your argument to be weak in some respect, you seek to change the course of the debate and jump to another subject. It is impossible to arrive at a conclusion in this manner. Neither has anyone succeeded in doing so in the past, and neither will they be able to do so in the future.

You have asked me to provide you the names of such writers whose books or investigations are free from error. You have said this despite the fact that academics in the fields of knowledge to which I had made reference are convinced of the authenticity of their writings. Have you not studied books on mathematics? Have you not gone through books on physics? Of course, you may not have gone through more modern literature that is still to be translated from English into Persian or Arabic, but you would perhaps know about the writings of some Greeks such as Euclid's principles of geometry; and it is obvious that no scholar of the world (whether a believer in revelation or not and whether a believer in God or an atheist) has ever denied the authenticity and soundness

of these principles. If, you believe them to be flawed, you may please point out their flaws to me.

Also, you have written that in my response to you, I have not observed the proper rules of debate. To this I consider it sufficient to say that when all of our writings are published in the newspaper *Barādar-e-Hind*, the fair-minded will judge for themselves whether or not your statement is true or not. If you write back to me agreeing to the aforesaid proposal, I can begin publishing our exchange in the aforesaid newspaper from next month.

Sincerely,

Shiv Narayan Agnihotri

Lahore

12 June 1879

[Reply from the Promised Messiah^{as}]

Respected Pundit Sahib,

I received your kind letter at a time when I am about to leave for Amritsar in connection with a few important court cases. As it is difficult for me to spare even two hours now, I will reply to you, God-willing, when I return in about three days or four at the most. I will write to you as soon as I am back. You have written that these letters ought to be published in the *Barādar-e-Hind*. My advice is that they should be published only when they are accompanied by the opinion of two arbitrators. However, it is not easy to find arbitrators. Hence, in my opinion, the most appropriate course is for you to choose a well-known author from among the scholars of the Brahmū Samaj, i.e. one who is pious and unassuming, investigative and who is selfless and unbiased. You should also choose one Englishman, as you believe that they are wise and that they are in fact a matchless people. Having done this, you may inform me about the persons you have chosen. It is likely that I will approve both the persons you select. I have heard that from among your sect, the Brahmū Samaj, Keshub Chandra, is an educated and able man. If what I have heard is true, I approve his name as well. However, propose the name of an Englishman along with him. The arbitrators, for their part, should not be free to merely give their opinion, rather, they will be required to either refute the arguments of each party or substantiate them with their own.

Secondly, it would be appropriate not to publish this essay in the newspaper in parts, for the arbitrators will then have to wait for quite a long time to see the remaining parts published.

It would rather be wise to publish all these essays together in one edition of the *Barādar-e-Hind*, that is, there will be three essays from me and three from you along with a detailed analysis of both the arbitrators. And, if you think that it would be difficult for you to publish the opinion of the arbitrators this time, it would be preferable if you waited for my third essay which I will send you after I have returned, by the grace of Allah, from Amritsar. You may also pen a brief response to the third essay of mine and then publish all the three essays along with your responses together in one edition. At the end of the essays, you should also write that you request such and such arbitrators to give their esteemed opinion on the essays. Two copies of the essays should also be sent to the arbitrators free of cost.

Kindly let me know, preferably as soon as possible, how you would like to proceed with this matter. I have written this letter while I am also preparing myself for the journey. So, please excuse me if you find some words to have been omitted or written unclearly.

Sincerely,

The Author, Ghulam Ahmad (may Allah forgive him)

17 June 1879

A Rebuttal to the Reply written by Bawa Narayan Singh Sahib (Secretary Arya Samaj Amritsar)

Published in the *Āftāb* newspaper on 18th February

To begin with, Bawa Sahib has put the question to me that what proof is there that God is the Creator of the souls, and that He has the power to create them? Before I proceed to pen my response to this question, it is necessary to mention that according to the established rules of debate, you are not entitled to demand from me the proof that God is the Creator of souls. Rather, the right is mine to seek from you the proof that souls are born without a Creator. The reason for this is that you yourself have admitted, in the same newspaper, that God is All-Powerful and that He alone maintains order in the entire universe. Evidently, it now falls upon you to prove this subsequent assumption that while initially God was All-Powerful, now He has become powerless. It does not fall on me to prove that God, who has been Omnipotent from the very beginning, is still Omnipotent. So, my good sir, it is in fact your responsibility to provide comprehensive evidence of how God, despite being the All-Powerful Lord, would be unable to create the souls. I cannot be asked about how much capacity God (Who has already been accepted as being the Omnipotent) has

for creating the souls. For you and I are already believers that God is All-Powerful. To this extent, there is no matter of contention between us. The contention has arisen on your account when you suggested that the All-Powerful God is unable to create the souls. Hence, under these circumstances, you ought to judge for yourself as to who is responsible for providing evidence.

If, for the sake of argument, we assume that the burden of proof was on me even though you are the one who has made the claim, I would hereby like to give you the good news that I have already provided categorical proof of God being the Creator in the issue of *Safir-e-Hind* dated 21 February. When you study the aforementioned edition of the newspaper with justice, you will be fully satisfied. Moreover, it is self-evident that only that being can be God who brought into existence the whole of creation, not one who, like despotic rulers, establishes His divinity by simply dominating others.

As for your apprehension that since God cannot create another being like his own, so too, He is also perhaps unable to create the souls, I have penned a befitting answer to this in the same newspaper mentioned above, in the edition dated 9 February. To summarise, God does not perform such actions as may undermine His eternal attributes. For instance, He cannot create a partner like unto Himself; He cannot destroy Himself, for if He does, His eternal attributes such as His Oneness and everlasting existence will be rendered false. This is why the Lord of Holiness will never perform any such act as would contradict His eternal attributes. Apart from this, He can do whatever He wills. Hence, you are mistaken when you draw an analogy between the creation of souls and the creation of partners with God. I have already stated that

this is a false analogy. If, however, you had proved that the creation of souls is contradictory to an attribute of God, or is opposed to His grandeur and majesty, as it is for God to create a partner like unto Himself, your claim invariably would have proved to be valid. So, your demand that it is for me to prove how God created the souls clearly demonstrates that you are in total denial of God's natural powers and consider Him, like man, to be dependent on means. And, if, by what you have written, you mean to state that you fail to rationalise how God manages to create the souls, I have already refuted this objection by saying that in order for it to be established that God is the All-Powerful Lord, there is no precondition that man must also be able to understand all His works.

There are thousands of such phenomena in the world as are beyond human comprehension. Besides, there is a difference between a phenomenon being incomprehensible and for it to have been established as being impossible. Lack of evidence in respect of how God created the souls does not establish that God is unable to create the souls. For absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Is it not possible for our flawed wisdom to remain unable to comprehend the secrets behind a particular act of God while God possesses the power to perform that act? In fact, the very definition of divine power is to be free and pure of the blemish of dependence on means, and to be beyond the scope of human comprehension. To state, in the first place, that God is All-Powerful and then to suggest that His providence cannot act beyond the limits of material means amounts to the denial of His very Being. For if, by inherent nature, He is All-Powerful, what would be the meaning of this if He is dependent on the help and support of another? Do the Hindu scriptures you believe

in describe the All-Powerful and Omnipotent God as one Who depends on means to sustain the workings of the universe and who can do nothing solely by His own command? Perhaps this is written in your holy books but we do not believe in such a weak God. Ours is the Omnipotent Lord Who possesses the attribute that as He willed, so it was, and whatever He wills, so it will be.

Then, in his reply to me, Bawa Sahib has written that just as I believe that God cannot create another God like Himself, I should also believe that He also cannot create the souls. In the face of such wisdom and at such a remark, what shall I do if not be astonished? Good Sir! I have already refuted this objection of yours on a number of occasions. How much more shall I write on this, again and again? It amazes me as to how you cannot understand the obvious difference between the two and why this veil cannot be lifted from your heart.

It is wrong to compare the creation of the souls to the creation of another god. To make another god would destroy the eternal divine attribute of being One and without partner. However, creating souls does not necessitate the annulment of any necessary attributes of God Almighty. Rather, His inability to create something would render His necessary attributes useless. For, in such a case, His attribute of being the All-Powerful, which is a fact that we both agree upon, would remain hidden and unproven. The reason being that if God has not created anything out of His own inherent power and without having relied on any means, then how can we come to know that He is by inherent nature the All-Powerful? If you say that He is not All-Powerful in His nature, this would make Him dependent, that is, He would have to rely upon somebody other than Himself, which is evidently and rationally false.

In short, it is so crucial for God to be the Creator of the souls that if this were not the case, the whole system of God's divinity would be ruined. However, to create another god is against the attribute of divine oneness. How, then, can God commit an act that would undermine an eternal attribute of His? Secondly, if one believes that the souls have not been created by God and are eternal, then they all become partners with God in terms of His eternal and infinite nature. Moreover, one will have to believe that God, who, from the very beginning, possesses the attribute of creating without dependence on any means, is deprived of this quality, thus one will have to admit that God only supervises the souls and is not their Creator and the Necessary Being.

After this, in his same reply, Bawa Sahib has addressed the issue of the infinite nature of souls. This is despite the fact that I have already refuted this idea in the *Safir-e-Hind* edition dated 9 and 16 February with as many as fourteen compelling arguments. Yet, Bawa Sahib continues to persist in his denial. I would, therefore, like to make it clear that it is easy to reject and deny an argument and everyone is definitely free to hold fast to whatever belief they choose. However, I would have acknowledged Bawa Sahib's scholarship if he had refuted any of the arguments I presented and if he had given proof for his belief on the infinite nature of souls. You ought to understand that since souls are not found everywhere, they cannot be infinite. Do you believe that a boundless thing is such that if it moves from one place to another, the place where it earlier rested would become empty? If your Parameshvara too is infinite in the same sense, then I am sorry to say that His divinity is in danger. Sadly, you have not reflected and pondered upon the sound arguments that I have presented in this regard and have

written a response without due care. In fact, fair-mindedness would demand that you ought to have taken care in your reply to quote each one of my arguments and then put forth your own arguments alongside them. But, how could you have done this while you had nothing to say in your defence?

What is even more surprising is that in your rebuttal you accept that undoubtedly in the beginning of the universe all souls are born on earth, and the world has a lifespan of only four and a quarter billion years—no more than that. Now, my friends and dear ones, reflect for yourself and ponder upon your statement, and explain to me how can something that is born at a specific time and in a finite place, and the reproduction of which comes to an end after a particular period of time be infinite? You must have read that one of the established rules of philosophy is that even if certain entities of finite nature multiply for a limited time, ultimately, even after their increase in quantity, they will still remain finite all the same. This establishes that if a few animals continue to reproduce for a period of time, their number, as per the afore-said principle, will not exceed a specific number.

Moreover, even in light of mathematics, every wise person can understand that whatever rate of birth is assumed to occur within a timespan of four and a quarter billion years would clearly be double in number if it was hypothetically assumed that this period was increased to eight and a half billion years. However, it is an obvious reality that an infinite number cannot be doubled in quantity.

If souls were infinite, how could they be confined within a finite timespan with a number that can logically be multiplied twofold? No intelligent person would term an entity that is

limited in time and space to be infinite. Would Bawa Sahib kindly explain to me that if the amount of birth that occurs in four and a quarter billion years is what he calls infinite, then how would he quantify such birth which takes place over a period of eight and a half billion years? Therefore, it is a categorical misstatement to say that the existing souls, in spite of being confined to a limited period of time and space, are infinite. For such reproduction as occurs within a limited period of time cannot exceed a fixed number. And, if you say that all souls are born instantly at once on the earth, this too would evidently be false. According to you, the earth is limited while souls are unlimited in number. How then can the infinite exist within the finite? If you say that some animals, due to their having not achieved salvation, do not appear in the new world, this would be against your own principle. For it has already been mentioned above that as per your own principle, all such souls that fail to find salvation during an earlier cycle of creation, are reborn once again so that they may taste the fruit of their past actions, and no soul is exempt from this process of rebirth.

Now, putting all other arguments aside, if we were to reflect over just this argument alone of being confined in time and space, it is clearly established that you have no choice but to accept that souls are limited in number—you must concede on this point. If all the arguments given by me in answer to Question Number 1, and those cited by me in answer to the question being addressed now are read collectively, any fair-minded person would conclude that to deny such categorical arguments is to, as if, deny the existence of the sun. It is unfortunate, therefore, that Bawa Sahib still believes that souls are infinite and will never cease to exist even

after they have obtained salvation, whereas we have come to learn by your own position that all souls in fact cease to exist within a period of five billion years, and that at the time of each doomsday they are met with death.

Hence, if souls were infinite, why is it an established creed of the Arya Samaj that they cease to exist when they undergo the two states just mentioned? It is utterly surprising to see Bawa Sahib turning away from his own principle. He does not even realise that such things which cease to exist in one state maintain the same inherent nature in other states as well. Bawa Sahib also fails to understand that the contents of a vessel cannot be larger than the size of the vessel itself. Therefore, when all souls, by entering into the vessel of time and space, clearly demonstrate that they have a specific period of existence after which they will appear in a new world, and when they are always measured against the yardstick of time and space, it is strange that Bawa Sahib still has doubts about the finite nature of souls.

Here, I would also like to ask Bawa Sahib that if, as you have stated, all these souls—which in your view are eternal—naturally move towards the earth for their existence, what rational impossibility hinders their movement towards those who have already obtained salvation? What logical argument proves that they cannot move towards those who have already obtained salvation? Which *propter quid* or *quia* argument is there to prove that it is only towards the earth that these souls are permitted to return after each cycle of creation and that their departure towards the abode of those who have already obtained salvation is barred and impossible? I cannot see which well-paved road leads to this temporal world on which all souls, to the exclusion of none, easily

come and go from the earth, but what sort of a boulder is blocking their way to the abode of those who have already obtained salvation. If God can cause all the souls to die or be born, why is He unable to grant them salvation? While He can change their condition in one respect, why is He unable to bring about a change in their condition in the other respect? Is it impossible for God to declare all of them to have obtained salvation, just as He has, until now, declared them to be deprived of salvation? For all such entities to which the absence of a certain characteristic can be attributed, may be characterised with an attribute in the affirmative sense as well.

Moreover, it should also be clear that the proposition that all souls which exist at present can obtain salvation is not under discussion here because the predicate of this proposition—salvation for all—is debatable like the particular of a general issue. What is actually being discussed here is a universal concept. In other words, my discussion on the issue at hand is from the aspect of totality; that is, whether or not, in accordance with the belief of the Arya Samaj, all souls that exist at present, which are yet to obtain salvation, are subject to a universal occurrence be it salvation or some other phenomenon. In this respect, I would like to thank the people of the Arya Samaj, for they have on their own acknowledged that in certain circumstances, a universal condition does extend over the souls as a collective whole, just as the state of death or birth can overtake all souls existing at a given time. Bawa Sahib should now give a just verdict and explain that while he acknowledges that a common state in two cases can affect all existing souls in their entirety, why does he deny the possibility of their experiencing a third state—the state of salvation for all?

Bawa Sahib further says that apart from the earth, animal life is found abundantly in the sun and moon, and in all the stars; and this, for him, is sufficient evidence to establish that souls are infinite. It ought to be clear to Bawa Sahib that firstly this theory has only been put forward by some philosophers and has been adopted particularly by European thinkers. Our discussion, however, is in light of the belief held by the Arya Samaj. However, even if I do grant that the Arya Samaj also holds the same belief, this does not benefit them, for this too does not serve their purpose. All this proves is that the creation of God Almighty is abundant. How is the aforementioned argument relevant to the infinite nature of souls? Perhaps under the influence of common perception Bawa Sahib also believes that things found in abundance are the same as being infinite. Bawa Sahib needs to understand that while all earthly and heavenly bodies are limited and finite in their scope, as experts of astronomy and geography have shown, how can things that dwell within their sphere be infinite? While God has numbered all the earthly and heavenly bodies, along with the entities that exist in both, how could such things that reside within them be excluded from His count?

In short, such arguments on your part do not establish the truth of your claim. Your claim will be valid only when you prove that all existing souls are beyond every limit, confine, and every sphere of time and space, and beyond the realm of the heavens. The reason for this is that God is called Infinite on the basis of this very principle. Hence, if the souls are infinite, it should be proven that they too possess the same qualities because you state that the word 'infinite' is applicable to both the souls and the being of God Almighty, and that this word has one absolute definition. That

is to say, the word does not carry a different meaning when used with reference to God and when used with reference to the souls.

After this, Bawa Sahib says that so far no one has been able to fully count the souls, which means that they are innumerable. To prove this, he also quotes a law of mathematics—which has nothing to do with the point being discussed. Then he concludes from this that an infinite number cannot be decreased. It should be clear to Bawa Sahib that in light of his own belief, I have already given an estimated number of the souls and I have already discussed their being restricted within the bounds of space and time according to Bawa Sahib's own principles. However, Bawa Sahib puts before us calculations of things which are unknown and incomprehensible. If Bawa Sahib suggests that just as a treasurer knows of every rupee and penny present in his account, only if man is aware of the total number of souls in the same way, can there be a possibility of that number being decreased, then I would say that he is mistaken. This is because any intelligent person knows that when the total number of a thing is estimated by some form of measure, rationality would establish that when we subtract an amount from that estimated total, the number that is taken away from it would decrease that estimate. What logic can be presented in favour of the notion that when a large host of those souls that have been granted salvation will join those who have already obtained salvation, the total number of souls will neither decrease nor increase here or there, despite the fact that both are limited in number and confined within the spheres of space and time?

The statement of Bawa Sahib that we must know the total number of souls and only then will we be able to subject them to

the rules of addition or subtraction, also deserves the attention of our worthy readers. It is evidently clear that it is God who adds or subtracts, and He is aware of the total number of existing souls and He possesses knowledge of each and every one of them. So what doubt can there be in the fact that when a soul will leave the first group to join the ranks of those who have obtained salvation, God will surely know about the resulting decrease in the former number and the resulting increase in the number of the latter. How strange is it to suggest that despite the souls leaving one group or another group, their total number will remain the same and that there will neither be any addition to the souls that have obtained salvation nor any decrease in the total number from the others after some will have left their group. Apart from this, there is no logical argument that would prevent me from reaching a conclusion on the clear and established fact that such things about which we know are bound by the limits of time and space are subject to a decrease or increase in number depending upon their entry into or exit from a specified grouping. For example, if there is a large stock of grain piled in a room and people take a portion of the grain, even if we do not know the exact weight of the grain, one can easily say—as the grain is limited—that as people take it away, its amount will obviously decrease.

Then you have written that since God's knowledge is infinite and souls are also infinite in number, this is why God is unable to determine the total number of the souls. This is an irrelevant statement. My good sir! Who is denying the infinite nature of God's knowledge? The contention and dispute rather pertains to the information He independently possesses regarding entities which may be specified and exist at any given time—confined within the

limits of time and space—and whether or not the specific number of those existing, limited and finite entities is within His knowledge. Your points would be relevant only if you prove that those present and finite entities transcend the realm of existence and are infinite. For it cannot be said that just because God's knowledge which encompasses both existing and non-existing entities is limitless, therefore, a certain entity which may be specified in number is also limitless.

Alas, how infinite you have shown God's knowledge to be whereby He can neither encompass the souls, nor count them, and this is despite the fact that all these souls are within the realm of existence, they are not non-existent. How astonishing that while heaven and earth have announced in practical terms the number of souls—by containing them within itself—but God is unaware of this number. Strange indeed is such a God and even stranger His knowledge! My question to you is whether the knowledge of God regarding the existing souls constitutes only a part of His limitless knowledge or the whole of it? If your answer is that it constitutes the whole, then this would necessitate that God possesses no knowledge of anything except for His knowledge of the souls and that no one possesses a greater knowledge than Him in this regard. However, if your answer is that it only constitutes a part of His knowledge, then this would imply a limitation, for a part is always smaller than the whole. Hence, this also leads to the conclusion that the souls are finite, and in reality, this is the truth. He, whom God has enlightened with understanding, knows well that out of His boundless ocean of knowledge, God's knowledge concerning existing souls does not even make as small a part of

His knowledge as the amount of the water that remains on the tip of a needle after it has been dipped into the ocean.

Then, Bawa Sahib says:

It is unreasonable to raise the objection that being infinite and eternal is a divine attribute, and that if the souls too are believed to be infinite and eternal, they will become equal to God, because partial similarity does not constitute equality. For instance, both man and beast see with their eyes; but the two can never be the same.

This argument put forth by Bawa Sahib is false and misleading. For every sensible person knows that all the attributes found in God's being are, in fact, unique qualities of His Peerless Being.

There can be no equal or partner with God in respect of His attributes. For if association was deemed possible in one attribute, then there could be partners with God in all His attributes. And, when it is possible to be a partner with God in all His attributes, this would essentially justify the existence of another God. How do you explain that while it is possible for the eternal attributes of God Almighty, namely, His being without beginning and infinite, can exist in beings other than Him, yet His other attributes are exclusive to Him alone? You will have to think about whether you consider all the attributes of God Almighty to be of the same stature or whether some differ from others in respect of their significance. Evidently, if partnership is possible in terms of one specific attribute, then it is possible in any number of other attributes, and if not, then the same principle applies to all of them. You present the example that although animals too see through their eyes like

human beings, yet in doing so they cannot be deemed equal to or comparable to human beings. The example you have cited here is not a befitting one. Had you pondered even slightly in this regard, you would not have presented such an example at all.

My honourable sir! Who says that contingent beings cannot possess similarity and resemblance so far as external characteristics are concerned? The matter of contention here, in fact, is whether anything other than God can share with Him in His divine attributes, or whether His attributes are exclusive to Him alone? As regards this disputed issue, you are the one who makes a claim; however, the example you have cited pertains to contingent beings, whereas this has no relevance to the debate at hand. You are obliged to put forth an example which relates to the issue at hand. Only then will your argument stand proven. Otherwise, to speak of partnership and resemblance in terms of contingent beings cannot serve as a clinching argument against me. Moreover, it is not appropriate to judge the inherent qualities of God against characteristics possessed by contingent beings. In addition to this it should also be noted that even in the case of contingent beings, their inherent attributes are related distinctly to their essences. For instance, the complete definition of man is that he is a rational animal and this quality of being 'rational' is from among his essential characteristics; it is the differentia that distinguishes him from other species. The differentia of man is not his faculty of sight or his ability to see with his eyes. For even if he were to become blind, he would still remain a human being. In reality, the essential characteristic of man may be defined as that which subsists even after his soul has left the corporeal body.

It is true, nonetheless, that since contingent beings are similar in respect of their basic elemental constitution—certain characteristics they possess are beside their fundamental essence and so they do share certain traits with each other. For example, a human being, a horse, and even a tree share a similarity in substance, three-dimensional form and in their faculty of growth. Further, in terms of their ability to feel and move by independent choice man and horse are alike. However, in their fundamental essence the two are surely different from one other. In short, the accidental properties of contingent beings is in addition to their fundamental essence and at times a similarity or difference can exist in various cases between such beings. Moreover, despite their differing fundamental essences and natures, at times, on account of shared properties, they may be classified as falling under the same genus. As a matter of fact, sometimes on account of even one essential property, entities can become one genus. Do you know why this is the case? This is because their material constitution is in addition to their fundamental essence, and the essence of their material constitution is the same. Now, it is perhaps clear to you that this sharing of traits between contingents, does not imply equality in their essential properties; rather, this is an external similarity in accidental properties. Other animals can never be partners to man in terms of his inner eye which may be described as insight of the heart (enlightenment).

Towards the end of his essay, Bawa Sahib chose to remain silent after having stated that all the arguments presented by me were mere fallacies and thus unworthy of refutation. From this statement, every wise and intelligent person has perhaps immediately understood why Bawa Sahib felt compelled to utter such words.

The fact of the matter is that our esteemed friend, the honourable Bawa Sahib, came running initially to refute my arguments and exerted his best efforts, kicking and jumping, but unfortunately when he could not succeed, and when he ultimately failed to untangle the knot before him, he sat down, panting and out of breath, simply to say, 'What is the use of refuting these arguments, they are mere conjectures anyway.' However, any sensible person knows that arguments which are based on categorically established propositions cannot be brushed off as mere conjecture. I now conclude this exposition and shall not write any further unless it is necessary to do so again.

**The author,
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
Chief of Qadian**

An Important Response to the Query Published in the *Āftāb* Newspaper on 16 May 1878

**by Munshi Gardiyal Sahib, the Middle School Teacher from
Chiniot**

Having expressed his thoughts on the issue of the eternity of souls, Munshi Gardiyal has emphatically demanded that I too write my response to his views. I stated previously, at the end of my last article, that I would not write on this subject again unless it becomes necessary. However, respected Munshi Sahib has very keenly requested me to remove his misunderstandings and I too consider this to be a worthy endeavour of scholarship which will also prove to be beneficial for the general public. Therefore, as an exception, I agree to briefly put forth my response to his views as it is necessary and required, and will serve to benefit the general public.

The first idea held by Munshi Sahib which he considers to be an argument for the eternity of souls is that God is the complete cause of all His creation and that the whole of creation is an effect of the cause, and since no effect can fail to follow in the presence of its complete cause, this proves that the souls which exist at present are as eternal as the being of God and were, therefore, not created by Him.

My answer is that this argument of Munshi Sahib is absolutely false and does not benefit him in any respect. On the contrary, instead of proving his claim to be true, it disproves his argument. The reason for this is that the Holy and Merciful being of God is undoubtedly Infinite and Boundless; the complete cause of the creation of souls is the very same Infinite Being Who is God Almighty. Now, in view of the argument presented by respected Munshi Sahib, if we suppose that the non-occurrence of an effect in the presence of its complete cause is an impossibility, this would necessitate that existent souls (which he says have been present since the very beginning) are also countless and infinite in their existence. For if the complete cause is limitless, the effect too should not be confined to any limits. Otherwise, we would have to accept that a perfect cause produced a deficient effect. However, I have already proven, with as many as fourteen arguments, that the souls in existence are not limitless, and Swami Dayanand Sahib has been compelled to concede this point as well, as he was unable to refute my arguments. How can an argument put forth in favour of the infinite nature of souls, once proven false, be valid in proving that souls are eternal?

In addition to this, our observation of Allah's actions also testifies against this notion. The reason for this is that our daily experience and observation of the law of nature has categorically established that the actions of God which are performed by Him at a given time and moment, and which continue to be manifested on different occasions—at times we witness sunshine and at times we find the sky to be overcast; there is night and day; at times we suffer distress and at times we are happy; there was a time when we were non-existent and now we exist and live on the earth,

and after this, a time is to come when we will cease to exist; it is evident, therefore, that all this occurs by the will of God and all these phenomena and temporary conditions come forth by the will of the very same Complete Cause. Hence, if we suppose, as per the statement of the honourable teacher, that their must be a complete conformity between the Creator and the creation, this would necessitate that all such occurrences that transpire in the world from time to time should remain in the same state with no change whatsoever. However, any sensible person knows that the world continues to undergo change and that the elements of all such events cannot come together in the same moment and that no creation remains in the same form forever. This proves that even the arguments presented by the honourable teacher are untenable and absolutely false.

Now, let us return to the second part of this discussion. It is suggested that when one reflects over whether there is any robust argumentation for the eternity of souls one finds that such strong and categorical argumentation exists that man is unable to deny this fact. I would like to state that I have already written on this subject at length in my previous essay; there is no need for repetition here.

However, a novel argument which categorically disproves the belief in the eternity of souls and in fact, manifestly exposes its absurdity is mentioned herewith in this exposition as well. The premise of this argument is that the Arya Samaj themselves acknowledge as an established tenet of their faith that the time which has elapsed since the present souls came into existence is no more than four and a quarter billion years—irrespective of the total number of these present souls, they begin to exist and then

cease to exist within this period. The Arya Samaj also states that the permanent abode of all these souls is this very earth, which is a known and finite sphere, and that all souls are taught and imparted knowledge in this very school, as it were; in fact, all those souls which have so far been conferred the position of salvation passed through this small institute of learning. Hence, these admissions evidently show that the souls that exist today are not eternal; rather on account of their being confined to a particular time and age they are bound to a limited lifespan.

Now, when this is the case, worthy readers should reflect as to how the statement of the honourable teacher, whereby he suggests that souls are eternal in their existence, can carry any weight. For when I have proved that souls are not infinite and rather fixed in number, we surely are bound to admit that their transmigration and salvation began at a particular time in history, i.e. at the time when one particular soul was born or granted salvation. Hence, when we believe that transmigration and salvation began at a specific time, we also must believe that the souls are not eternal. The reason being that the term eternal is applied to a thing that has no beginning. Hence, it stands proven that the souls are not eternal. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

In response to this, some have sought to respond (so perhaps you too will continue to call the souls eternal) by saying: it is possible that initially the souls were suspended in an idle state for a limitless period in time and then Parameshvara thought it inappropriate for the souls to remain idle, so from the very day when Parameshvara arrived at this realisation, He turned the souls into human beings and different animals such as donkeys and horses, and subjected them to the pain of birth and death, and in this

way the time-bound phenomenon of salvation came into existence. Such people hold that if the transmigration of souls and the attainment of salvation began in this manner, this would not invalidate their belief in the eternity of souls.

Glory be to God! What an astonishing answer! It appears that the followers of the Arya Samaj have made great progress in hatching the profoundest mischiefs hence the reason they have begun to put forth such remarkable answers. Sir, might I ask that if all the souls, before they began to transmigrate and obtain salvation, were living in pain and misery or living in comfort and peace? If they were suffering in a state of misery, which action on their part resulted in that condition? And, if they lived in comfort, what good deed of theirs created such a condition for them? Moreover, if, prior to having gained salvation, they were already living in peace, then to desire salvation again is but to seek that which they already possessed. So, by this account one must accept that the souls were once non-existent. Now, someone may argue that although they were already living in peace, they were subjected to the cycle of transmigration so that they might obtain cognisance of God Almighty. The obvious answer to this would be that when they could not obtain cognisance of God despite having lived with Him and spending time in His presence—as His eternal partners—for an immeasurable period of time, what treasure of divine insight would they have possibly amassed once transformed into worms and insects? In fact, to punish someone without having been guilty of a crime; to subject them to various kinds of afflictions and make them undergo the miseries of life and death is against the very teachings of the Arya Samaj. In fact, it is this very principle in light of which they believe that the cycle

of transmigration eventually comes to an end. Furthermore, the concept of souls remaining in an idle state is contrary to the belief of the Arya Samaj. How then could the souls have been in an idle state for an eternity? Hence, the belief that souls are eternal is absolutely false.

Then, the honourable teacher has written that the continuous birth of souls is an impossibility, rather all the souls that can come into existence are already present since the very beginning, and that now God's power of creation is has ceased to function any further. This is a statement which, we would describe in other words as.....

A REBUTTAL OF ATHEISM

Atheist Question: If God does not have a body, than what is He?

Answer: A body is something that can be weighed in pounds and kilograms, or measured in length and width. God is a light that is free from all forms of defect. God Almighty states:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ¹

When we reflect upon the soul we come to know for certain that there are also such things in the world that do not have a physical body, yet they exist. Allah the Exalted says:

وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ²

One argument in favour of the existence of God Almighty is that

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1. Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. (*Sūrah an-Nūr*, 24:36) [Publisher]
 2. And *also* in your own selves. Will you not then see? (*Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt* 51:22) [Publisher]

we must definitively accept that time had a beginning. For if time had no beginning then we would have observed the entire surface of the earth full of human beings, without a single corner vacant. However, scholars have estimated by observation that the human species can multiply enough from one man and woman to cover the land area of the earth in seven thousand years. If more than seven thousand years elapse, another earth would be required. Every individual can ponder over the extent to which the people of their respective nations are spread throughout the world. For example, eight hundred years ago there was a man named *Maghūl*, whose children are known as the Mughals. Now just count how many Mughals there are in the world. Similarly, there was a man named Bawa Nanak Sahib who lived just three hundred years ago and his progeny has multiplied to the thousands. This argument establishes that the world has a beginning and an end. The beginning is proven by the fact that when we look back at the ages, we are able to estimate the duration of time. The end is proven by the fact that the world is a finite space which cannot accommodate within itself infinite birth. Therefore, we have no choice but to accept that one day this world will come to an end. As such, anything that has a beginning and an end must be a created entity, it cannot be eternal. So when the world is a created thing, it must have a creator and that Creator is God.

If someone were to suggest that certain families do not have very many children and remain limited in number, the answer to this would be that such cases are an anomaly. Otherwise, observation would show that when someone purchases even a single goat, it multiplies to become an entire herd. It is also a general principle in this world that natural death usually occurs around the age

of sixty or seventy years. Moreover, population multiplies after a period of fifteen years. A clear proof of this fact is that islands which were previously uninhabited have now become populated.

The second argument in favour of the existence of the Necessary Being is that no creation can be observed to exist without the agency of a creator. Even a small room cannot be constructed without a builder. Then, how can this large 'room' the floor of which extends over a distance of more than 24,000 miles and the roof of which is built in a most flawless and reinforced manner, adorned with lamps that give light—all ordered in such a way that one of them stands superior with others subservient to it in brilliance have been self-created, without someone having created it.

An atheist would respond by saying that we can visually observe the people who create physical rooms in this world, but we cannot see the creator of heaven and earth. I would say that if the argument is that a worldly builder can be physically seen, then what need is there to provide evidence of his existence? The need to provide evidence arises only when something that cannot be physically seen must be proven. One observes that many ancient buildings are present in Egypt which the people of this age cannot recreate. However, it can still be accepted with certainty that it was worldly builders who erected those structures. These created structures themselves are proof of the existence of a builder, irrespective of whether one can see those builders now or not. If a man were the first to invent a certain machine, and no one had ever built this type of a creation before him, even if we had not seen that individual ourselves, would we deduce that the creation in question built itself? Every intelligent design proves

the skill of an intelligent creator. It would be extremely biased and close-minded for someone to accept on the one hand that a certain creation possesses characteristics of intelligent design, yet reject the fact that an intelligent designer created it. There is always a difference between the actions of an intelligent creator and the unintelligent. Moreover, if any creation shows within it signs of a creator who demonstrates a conscious consideration of his own objectives and whose action does not appear useless, then sound reason lends evidence of the fact that the creation in question springs forth from the action of an intelligent creator. For example if there was an ink spill on a piece of paper, it is possible that the ink could have been spilled by a particular person, or a mouse, or even by itself as chance. However, if the text of a book were written on the piece of people conveying some important meaning, no wise person would say that this text was written all by itself without the action of a scribe. Taking this further, even if the letters on the paper were so different in appearance that we had never seen such letters before, but when it is established that these too are letters of some sort, and the text continues for hundreds of pages, even if we had not seen the scribe ourselves and even if we had not seen such unique letters before, there would be no doubt in the fact that these letters were the creation of some scribe.

You see, for example, if all of heaven and earth had been like a small room, you would definitely observe its extreme beauty in entirety and say that some wise individual had created it. Now, one ought to reflect that when even a small room cannot be built without the agency of a builder how can the entire realm of heaven and earth be without a creator?

The third argument in favour of the existence of God Almighty is that we observe in the world that one thing develops with the help of other elements. For example, trees are nourished by water and rain occurs with the help of the sun. Certain animals are created by the agency of other animals. No creature is born except through procreation. Therefore, we must accept the existence of one Necessary Being who supports the creation of all other creations.

Humans are created from a droplet of sperm, and sperm is produced by consuming food, and food is grown from the soil, and how is soil produced? If someone were to say that soil has always existed since the beginning, this would be false, because only such a thing may be described as existing independently by itself which does not depend on anything else in any circumstances. However, in order to maintain its form, soil requires water. If soil had not contained water, the wind would blow it away. So even the soil depends on water in order for it to grow vegetation and no dependant thing can be eternal. Moreover, a dependant thing cannot be described as a necessary entity existing independently. Moreover, the soil produces trees and trees are a superior creation. So a deficient thing cannot be a necessary creation.

The fourth argument is that God Almighty states:

فَتَبَرَّكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ¹

Then, He also says:

1. So blessed be Allah, the Best of creators. (*Sūrah al-Mu'minūn*, 23:15)
[Publisher]

أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ¹

The meaning of these two aforementioned verses is that evidence is furnished by an observation of the universe that all things are created by one Creator and Maker. For example, the heat of the sun causes vapours, which in turn forms the clouds. The clouds then produce water and water creates fruit. However, God is the Best of Creators, He is the Maker of the heavens and earth, Who brings all of these things into existence from nothing.

Moreover, if God did not exist, the door to all goodness and benefit would come to a close. The reason being that all people do good because this is beneficial to them. In fact, no one performs any action without first considering the benefit or harm that it entails because certain actions are useless in a person's estimation. Similarly, a person who does not believe in the existence of God cannot fear evil. For evil is only evil when it results in ill consequences. If the consequences of a certain action are not deemed to be harmful, the heart will never consider it to be evil. If no one were to fear the ill effects of evil, how could anyone prevent the people from committing wrongdoing. If someone were to suggest that kings and rulers can prevent people, I would say then who would prevent the kings and rulers themselves? Those who possess authority and power fear no one. Moreover, kings and rulers are not omnipresent, nor do people believe that they are watching their every action at all times.

Additionally, the proposition that we do not believe in a

1. Are you in doubt concerning Allah, Maker of the heavens and the earth?
(*Sūrah Ibrāhīm*, 14:11) [Publisher]

Creator of heaven and earth because we cannot see him, is nothing but deception. For if we could see the Creator in this world, then the world would no longer serve any purpose, nor would anyone receive spiritual reward for doing good. The reason being that an individual is only worthy of spiritual reward until they act with righteousness and believe in a God Who is Hidden. If God had shown Himself openly to everyone then what merit would there be in believing in Him? Allah the Exalted states:

هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ¹

Another argument in favour of the existence of God Almighty is that the thoughts of all humanity converge on the fact that there is One Being Who is the Lord of all the worlds. Moreover, all of humanity agrees that the creation of the heavens and earth is one which could not have come into existence without the hand of a Creator. So when many wise people agree on a point, it is always the truth. As the saying goes: the wise always hold one view, but the foolish one each his own.

Atheists will say that we have not seen the Creator of heaven and earth, whereas we observe the creators of everything else; so how can we believe with certainty in the existence of a Creator. The response to this is that even though you cannot see the Creator, you can see the creation. Now if there is a certain creation that is built with great skill, but we cannot see its creator, we would still invariably conclude that someone must have created

1. *It is a guidance for the righteous, who believe in the unseen. (Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:3-4)* [Publisher]

the thing in question. The debate relates to whether a creation lends evidence of a creator or not. Atheists assert that even if a highly intelligent design possessing all the characteristics of intricate workmanship is present before them, until they physically see the creator of that thing, they will not accept his existence. This is nothing but deception, for there is no need to see the creator. When it is proven that an intelligent phenomenon possesses the qualities of intelligent design our heart accepts without question that some intelligent creator must have designed it.

When we observe the world around us, we can see with our own eyes that everything is created with the help of something else and one thing is sustained by another; in fact, it is through heaven and earth that all these things exhibit their powers. Now when this is the case, an atheist must answer the question: with whose help and support was heaven and earth created and who has sustained them for all this time? The atheist will respond by saying the very existence of heaven and earth is testimony itself that they are sustained themselves. However, we draw their attention to the fact that the nature of a father is reflected in the son. Similarly, all the creation present in the world is like the offspring of heaven and earth, and cannot exist without support. So this demonstrates that the real testimony of heaven and earth is in line with the principle mentioned above, because the nature of a son cannot be different from that of the father, as it were. An intelligent phenomenon that is proven to possess characteristics of intelligent design does not require us to see its creator with our eyes. The proof of this statement is that any action displaying manifest signs that it was performed by someone who consciously did so to create something with a particular objective in mind,

cannot be deemed an action of chance, even by the most foolish of people. On the contrary, one would consider such an action to have been performed by an active entity. For example, if there was an ink spill on a piece of paper, we would not be sure how this happened. However, if one or two pages were filled with words that express an objective of the writer, then no intelligent person would say that these words were written all by themselves. The atheist should also tell us, who develops them to adulthood and then old age? What effect brings about this phenomenon?

Then, we also ask the atheist that the sun, moon, earth and air, all of which are in your constant service and do not stop serving you even for a moment, do you owe them your gratitude for doing so? If you were to say that these elements serve you without understanding this would be false, because any action that is caused without understanding or without any kind of supervision, ultimately turns into chaos. If you were to say that these elements serve you with understanding, then you ought to be thankful to them.

We also ask atheists: does the rising of the sun or rainfall occur by chance or through someone's control? If it is all by chance, then what reason is there for the world to remain at all? Why should excessive rainfall and heat not cause random seasons? After all, a thing of chance is always prone to error. However, if this entire phenomenon is by some control, then this proves the existence of God, because the control we see on earth is essentially God Himself.

Atheists repeat the allegation that no one has seen God; if God existed someone ought to have seen him. The answer to this is that God shows Himself to the people through the eye of their

heart. Those who follow these people and submit, ultimately reach the station where God blesses them with divine understanding. The claim that no one has seen God is like the example of a blind person who rejects the existence of the sun and says that until he sees the sun himself, he will not accept that it exists. The response to such a person would be that since you are blind, you cannot observe the sun with your eyes; therefore, the manner in which you can reach the truth is by trusting the statements of those who have in fact seen the sun; when your eyes are cured, you too will be able to see the sun.

We also ask atheists to tell us whether pleasure and pain is caused by someone else or whether we control this. If humans control this phenomenon, then why are people unable to prolong their lives according to their own wishes? Why can they not increase the pleasure in their lives? One person dies in old age, whereas the other dies when they are young, even though everyone desires a long life. On certain occasions a man desires pleasure, but they are struck with grief. This demonstrates that a higher being controls the phenomenon of pain and grief—and that being is God Almighty.¹

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, dated 21 May 1909, pp. 1-3

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Please note that, in the translation that follows, words given in parentheses () are the words of the Promised Messiah^{as}. If any explanatory words or phrases are added by the translators for the purpose of clarification, they are put in square brackets []. Footnotes given by the publisher are marked '[Publisher]'.

References to the Holy Quran contain the name of the *sūrah* [i.e. chapter] followed by a chapter:verse citation, e.g. *Sūrah al-Jumu'ah*, 62:4, and count *Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥīm* ['In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful'] as the first verse in every chapter that begins with it.

The following abbreviations have been used:

ṣas *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam*, meaning 'peace and blessings of Allah be upon him', is written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{ṣas}.

as *'alaihis-salām*, meaning 'peace be on him', is written after the names of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{ṣas}.

- ra *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu/‘anhā/‘anhum*, meaning ‘may Allah be pleased with him/her/them’, is written after the names of the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} or of the Promised Messiah^{as}.
- rta *rahmatullāh ‘alaiḥ/‘alaiḥā/‘alaihim*, meaning ‘may Allah shower His mercy upon him/her/them’, is written after the names of those deceased pious Muslims who are not Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} or of the Promised Messiah^{as}.
- aba *ayyadabullāhu Ta‘āla binaṣriḥil-‘Azīz*, meaning ‘may Allah the Almighty help him with His powerful support’, is written after the name of the present head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Ḥaḍrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba}, Khalifatul-Masīḥ V.

Readers are urged to recite the full salutations when reading the book. In general, we have adopted the following system established by the Royal Asiatic Society for our transliteration.

- ا at the beginning of a word, pronounced as *a*, *i*, *u* preceded by a very slight aspiration, like *h* in the English word *honour*.
- ث *th* – pronounced like *th* in the English word *thing*.
- ح *ḥ* – a guttural aspirate, stronger than *h*.
- خ *kh* – pronounced like the Scottish *ch* in *loch*.
- ذ *dh* – pronounced like the English *th* in *that*.

- ص *ṣ* – strongly articulated *s*.
 ض *ḍ* – similar to the English *th* in *this*.
 ط *ṭ* – strongly articulated palatal *t*.
 ظ *ẓ* – strongly articulated *z*.
 ع ‘ – a strong guttural, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear.
 غ *gh* – a sound similar to the French *r* in *grasseye*, and to the German *r*. It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the ‘gargling’ position to pronounce it.
 ق *q* – a deep guttural *k* sound.
 ء ‘ – a sort of catch in the voice.

Long vowels by:

- ā* for or (like *a* in *father*).
ī for or (like *ee* in *deep*).
ū for (like *oo* in *root*).

Other vowels by:

- ai* for (like *i* in *site*).
au for (resembling *ou* in *sound*).

The consonants not included in the above list have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe. As noted above, the single quotation mark ‘ is used for transliterating ع which is distinct from the apostrophe ’ used for ء .

We have not transliterated some Arabic words which have become part of the English language, e.g. Islam, Quran, Mahdi,

jihad, Ramadan, and ummah. The Royal Asiatic Society's rules of transliteration for names of persons, places, and other terms, are not followed throughout the book as many of the names contain non-Arabic characters and carry a local transliteration and pronunciation style.

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