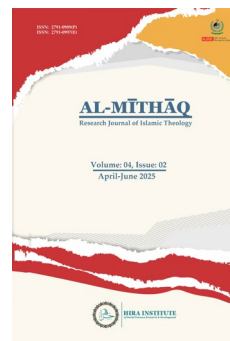




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## ***Belief in the Finality of Prophethood and the Origins of Mirzāiyat: An Analytical Study in the Light of Tafsīr Lahorī by Aḥmad ‘Alī Lahorī***

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## ***Belief in the Finality of Prophethood and the Origins of Mirzāiyat: An Analytical Study in the Light of Tafsīr Lahorī by Aḥmad ‘Alī Lahorī***

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### **Abstract**

The belief in the Finality of Prophethood is a fundamental tenet of Islamic faith, affirming that Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is the last messenger, with no prophet to come after him. This doctrine has been the cornerstone of Islamic theology and is explicitly supported by Qur’ānic verses and Aḥādīth. However, the emergence of Mirzāiyat, founded by Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad Qādiānī in the 19th century, posed a direct challenge to this core belief. This article examines the ideological confrontation between traditional Islamic scholarship and the claims of Mirzāiyat, particularly in light of Tafsīr Lahorī by Maulānā Aḥmad ‘Alī Lahorī. The study explores the theological, historical, and intellectual dimensions of this conflict, highlighting how scholars have systematically refuted Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad's claims using classical exegeses, ḥadīth literature, and logical reasoning. The article further delves into the scholarly resistance led by prominent Islamic scholars such as Maulānā Anwar Shah Kashmīrī, Maulānā Murtaḍa Ḥassan Chāndpūrī, and Maulānā Sanaullah Amritsarī. Their academic and intellectual contributions played a crucial role in countering the reinterpretation of Khatm-e-Nubuwwat (Finality of Prophethood). Through an analytical review of Tafsīr Lahorī, this study provides insight into the importance of safeguarding Islamic beliefs from distortion. The research underscores the necessity of continued scholarly engagement to protect the integrity of Islamic doctrine and counter contemporary ideological challenges posed by movements seeking to alter traditional beliefs.

**Keywords:** *Islam, Faith, Prophethood, Mirzāiyat, Tafsīr Lahorī, Islamic Doctrine.*

### **Introduction**

The belief in the Finality of Prophethood is a fundamental part of Islamic faith, considered by every Muslim to be an essential aspect of belief. According to this belief, Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is the last of the prophets, and after him, no new prophet will come. The movement of Mirzāiyat is based on the denial of this belief, and its impact not only challenged the internal beliefs of Muslims but also gave rise to various intellectual and social issues.

The belief in the finality of Prophethood began from the early days of Islam, with the advent of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), when the importance of this belief was emphasized. The foundation of the belief is based on the Qur’ān and Sunnah, and it is an inseparable part of a Muslim’s faith. Mirzāiyat started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad Qādiānī declared himself as the "Promised Messiah" and "Mahdī", with the aim of challenging the belief in the finality of Prophethood. His movement sought to mislead Muslims, leading to a major intellectual and religious conflict.

The Tafsīr Lahorī by Aḥmad ‘Alī Lahorī is a crucial work that sheds light on the background of Mirzāiyat and its intellectual foundations. Aḥmad ‘Alī Lahorī strongly

opposed the beliefs of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad and declared his claims to be false. His Tafsīr helped raise awareness among the Muslim community that Mirzāiyat is in fact against Islamic beliefs, and it became necessary to enlighten its followers about the truth.

### Necessity and Importance

The importance of the belief in the Finality of Prophethood lies in the fact that it is an essential part of a Muslim's faith, and its preservation is necessary to close the door to any innovation or deviation in the Islamic society. Movements opposing Mirzāiyat are important because they inform Muslims about safeguarding their religious identity and beliefs. Scholarly works like Tafsīr Lahorī serve as an intellectual tool against Mirzāiyat, guiding Muslims towards the correct belief and strengthening their faith.

"مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا"<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad ﷺ is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets. And Allah is All-Knowing of everything.

It is stated that the Prophet (ﷺ) is not the father of any of you, meaning he is not the father of any of the men. Zayd (RA) was an adopted son, and therefore the marriage to the wife of Zayd is not a relationship of a father to his son. The Prophet (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets, which means with his advent, the chain of Prophethood has been sealed. No one else will receive Prophethood after him. Therefore, the era of his Prophethood is the final one, lasting until the Day of Judgment. A Prophet, in terms of kindness and care, is like a father to his ummah, and Allah knows everything he says.<sup>2</sup>

### Research Review

Aḥmad ‘Alī Lahorī, in his interpretation of the aforementioned verses, clearly explained the duties of the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), the status of the Seal of the Prophets, and the concepts of ignorance (*Jāhiliyyah*). He presented these verses from various historical and legal perspectives, providing guiding principles for the ummah.

- **Preaching the Message and the Fear of Allah:** According to Maulānā Lahorī, the most important responsibility of the Prophets was to deliver Allah's message without fear or pressure, as stated in the verse that they "fear none but Allah." The task of the Prophet (ﷺ) was to proclaim the divine commandments and deliver them to the people, no matter the difficulties or challenges that may arise.
- **Explanation of the Seal of the Prophets:** Maulānā Lahorī, while interpreting Surah Al-Ahzab (33:40), shed light on the status of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as the Seal of the Prophets: The End of Prophethood. Prophethood has ended with the person of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), and this is an unchangeable truth until the Day of Judgment. He clarified that after the advent of the Prophet (ﷺ), the chain of Prophethood was sealed forever, and no new prophet will come.
- **The Case of Zayd (RA):** Maulānā explained that Zayd (RA) was the adopted son of the Prophet (ﷺ), and an adopted son does not have the same legal status as a biological son.

### Modern Spirituality

These verses and their interpretation offer several important lessons for Muslims in the present age:

- **The Belief in the Finality of Prophethood:** In the current era, many false claimants have emerged, but these verses provide irrefutable proof of the finality of Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ prophethood. It is crucial for Muslims to remain firm in their belief and not fall into doubt, holding steadfast faith in the finality of prophethood.
- **The Duty of Spreading the Message of Islam:** In the light of this verse, Muslims are taught that they should not fear anyone except Allah when speaking the truth and spreading the message. The duty of propagation is not limited to any specific group but every Muslim should continue to spread the call to truth in their capacity.
- **Courage in Abolishing Customs and Traditions:** From the interpretation of Maulānā Aḥmad 'Alī Lahorī, we learn that it is essential to eradicate ignorant customs for societal reform, just as the Prophet ﷺ reformed the concept of adoption. Even today, there is a need to take practical steps to eliminate practices like dowry, class discrimination, and other such customs.
- **The Message of God-Fearing:** Muslims should consider Allah as their Reckoner in their actions and decisions. Rather than yielding to social pressure or other factors, they should prioritize seeking Allah's pleasure.

### The Issue of the Finality of Prophethood and Mirzāiyat

The issue of the Finality of Prophethood has remained a point of contention between Muslims and the Mirzā's ever since Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad claimed prophethood. Mirzā continuously attempted to reinterpret the concept of the Finality of Prophethood to validate his own claim, ensuring that his self-proclaimed prophethood was not refuted. However, from the very beginning, scholars of truth have consistently countered Mirzā's claims with definitive arguments, systematically dismantling the foundations of his false prophethood.

Many esteemed scholars dedicated their lives to refuting Mirzā's claims and have since passed on from this mortal world to eternal life. Among these prominent scholars were Maulānā Anwar Shah Kashmīrī, Maulānā Murtaḍā Ḥassan Chāndpūrī (both scholars of Dārul 'Ulūm Deoband), and, in Punjab, Maulānā Sanāullāh Amritsarī, who played a key role in opposing Mirzāi beliefs. It was due to the tireless efforts of such scholars that Muslims in Punjab considered their struggle against Mirzāiyat a great honor and a matter of immense pride.

However, in recent times, the withered branches of Mirzāiyat seem to be reviving once again, requiring renewed scholarly and collective efforts to uphold the doctrine of the Finality of Prophethood.<sup>3</sup>

### The Mirzāi Community

The Mirzāi community must understand that just as they attempt to mislead Muslims by presenting Mirzā's misinterpretation of the finality of Prophethood and strive to keep his movement alive by becoming his so-called rightful successors, the scholars of truth—though they have departed from this world and are now enjoying the blessings of Paradise in their graves—have left behind their own rightful successors as well. By the grace of Allah, their legacy continues through scholars such as Maulānā Lal Ḥussain Akhtar and others, who stand firm in the arena of debate and challenge the Mirzāis to come forth and defend their claims.<sup>4</sup>

### Challenge to Aḥmad 'Alī

The Mirzāi newspaper Al-Faḍl, in its issue dated 3rd Dhu al-Qa'dah 1271 AH (26th

July 1952) on page 4, published a challenge by Maulvī Abul ‘Ata, the principal of Jamia Ahmadiyya, directed at me. In response, I believe that a challenge can indeed be presented to Maulvi Sahib as well. However, he must provide an authentic statement from any scholar before the 14th century AH proving that interpreting Khātām (خاتم) as a seal is incorrect.<sup>5</sup>

### First Response

It seems that Maulvi Abul ‘Ata has never studied the book "*Rāshidiya*", which is a part of the formal curriculum in the science of debate (‘Ilm al-Munāẓara)—otherwise, he would never have asked me such a question. According to the rules of debate, the burden of proof lies upon the one making the claim (the affirmative side), not on the one rejecting it. Therefore, Maulvi Abul ‘Ata should provide evidence that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his companions (RA), or classical scholars of Tafsīr have ever interpreted Khātām al-Nabiyyin in the same way that Mirzā Ghulam Ahmad did, i.e., that the door of prophethood has been reopened so that he could be crowned as the king of prophets.<sup>6</sup>

### Second Response: Eight Commentators in Support of the Muslims

I have already proven that, according to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his companion, the meaning of Khātām al-Nabiyyin is that no prophet will come after him. Now, I present references from eight renowned commentators, who also affirm our position:

#### 1. Al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān states:

وخاتم النبيين فهو آخرهم الذي ختم<sup>7</sup>

Thus, he is the final prophet who has brought an end to all prophets, meaning that the chain of prophethood has been sealed, and no new prophet can emerge.

#### 2. Tafsīr al-Bayḍawī indicates:

واخر الذي ختمهم<sup>8</sup>

And you are the last of all the prophets, having brought the chain of prophethood to an end.

#### 3. Rūḥ al-Bayān affirms:

وكان آخرهم الذي ختموا به<sup>9</sup>

And you are the last among the prophets, with who’s coming the sequence of prophethood has been sealed.

#### 4. Tafsīr al-Khāzin explains:

وخاتم النبيين ختم الله به النبوة فلا نبوة بعده اي ولا معه<sup>10</sup>

With the coming of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ Allah has ended prophethood. Thus, no prophet can come after him, nor can any prophet exist during his time.

These references establish beyond doubt that the concept of the finality of Prophethood is unanimously agreed upon by the classical scholars of Islam, leaving no room for misinterpretation.

#### 5. Tafsīr Ibn Jarīr states:

وخاتم النبيين الذين ختم النبوة فطبع عليهم ولا تفتح لاحد بعده الى قيام الساعة<sup>11</sup>

Through the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Allah has sealed prophethood. Thus, a seal has been placed on prophethood, and no one will be granted prophethood after him until the Day of Judgment.

#### 6. Rūḥ al-Ma‘ānī mentions:

والمراد بكونه الصلوة والسلام خاتمهم انقطاع حدوث وصف النبوة في احد من الثقلين بعد تحليه عليه



الصلوة والسلام بها في هذه النشأة<sup>12</sup>

The meaning of the Prophet ﷺ being Khatam al-Nabiyyin is that after he has been adorned with the jewel of prophethood in this era, no human or jinn will ever again be characterized by the attribute of prophethood.

#### 7. Tafsīr al-Madārik explains:

وخاتم النبيين بمعنى الطابع أي آخرهم<sup>13</sup>

Khatam al-Nabiyyin means the one who seals prophethood, the last of all prophets, meaning that no one will be made a prophet after him.

#### 8. Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr elaborates:

وخاتم النبيين فهذه الآية نص في انه لا نبي بعده ، واذا كان لا نبي بعده ولا رسول بعده بالطريق الأولى والأخرى لان مقام الرسالة ارفع من مقام النبوة<sup>14</sup>

This verse clearly establishes that there will be no prophet after the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. If no prophet will come after him, then certainly, no messenger (Rasul) will come either, as the rank of a messenger is even higher than that of a prophet.<sup>15</sup>

In Tafsīr Lahorī, Maulānā Aḥmad ‘Alī has conducted a detailed examination of the doctrine of Khatm-e-Nubuwwat (finality of Prophethood) and Mirzāiyat (Aḥmadiyya beliefs). He provides authentic evidence from the Qur’ān, Ḥadīth, and classical Tafsīr (exegeses) to support the finality of Prophethood. His argumentation is clear, balanced, and based on scholarly reasoning. He refutes the interpretations presented by the Mirzāi community and establishes that the fundamental meaning of Khatm-e-Nubuwwat is that no prophet will come after Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

The central argument regarding the finality of Prophethood is derived from the term "Khātām al-Nabiyyin", which Maulānā Aḥmad ‘Alī has explained through authoritative Tafsīr sources. By referencing renowned Islamic scholars such as Al-Jawāhir, Al-Bayḍāwī, Ibn Kathīr, Al-Khāzin, and Al-Madārik, he clarifies that "Khātām al-Nabiyyin" unequivocally means "the conclusion of the prophetic chain." This position aligns with the unanimous belief of all Islamic schools of thought, affirming that there is no room for a new prophet after Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

#### Prophetic Sayings on finality of Prophethood

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"أنا خاتم النبيين لا نبي بعدي"<sup>16</sup>

I am the Seal of the Prophets; there is no prophet after me.

This ḥadīth serves as definitive proof that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the last prophet.

In another ḥadīth, the Prophet ﷺ further explained:

"إن مثلي ومثل الانبياء من قبلي كمثل رجل بنى بيتا فأحسنه وأجمله إلا موضع لبنة من زاوية، فجعل الناس يطوفون به ويعجبون له ويقولون هلا وضعت هذه اللبنة، قال: فانا اللبنة وانا خاتم النبيين"<sup>17</sup>

My example and the example of the prophets before me is like that of a man who built a house, perfected it, and adorned it, except for a missing brick in one of its corners. People walk around it, admire its beauty, yet wonder why this brick is missing. I am that brick, and I am the Seal of the Prophets.

This ḥadīth illustrates that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the final piece in the divine structure of Prophethood, confirming that the door to Prophethood has been permanently closed.

#### Refutation of Mirzāi Interpretations

Mirzā Ghulam Aḥmad and his followers attempt to reinterpret "Khātām" (Seal) as a

"stamp" to create room for new prophethood. Maulānā Aḥmad ‘Alī, applying the principles of debate and logical reasoning, refutes this argument by negating the Mirzāi stance. He demonstrates that neither the Qur’ān, ḥadīth, nor any reputable Tafsīr supports this interpretation.

### Other False Claims of Mirzāiyat

Rejecting the Aḥmadiyya claim that Mirzā Ghulam Aḥmad, as the Promised Messiah, aligns with the Islamic doctrine of Khatm-e-Nubuwwat (finality of Prophethood), Maulānā Aḥmad ‘Alī clarifies that Mirzā’s claim to prophethood is based on contradictions and falsehoods within his own beliefs.

Furthermore, he exposes the falsehood of statements like "Muslims who do not accept the Promised Messiah are disbelievers," thereby drawing clear intellectual and ideological boundaries for Muslims.

### Conclusion

The foregoing analytical study establishes that Aḥmad ‘Alī Lahorī, through his Tafsīr Lahorī, presented a comprehensive and unequivocal interpretation of the doctrine of Khatm-e-Nubuwwah (Finality of Prophethood). His tafsīr not only consolidates the traditional Islamic understanding of the finality of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ but also systematically refutes the ideological foundations of Mirzāiyat. By elucidating the relevant Qur’ānic verses with clarity and firm adherence to orthodox scholarship, Lahorī offers his readers a robust intellectual and spiritual defence against any deviations from this core Islamic belief.

Furthermore, the analysis highlights that Lahorī's approach was not merely polemical but deeply rooted in the broader framework of Islamic theology, spirituality, and communal protection. He contextualised the emergence of Mirzāiyat as a historical and theological deviation that arose under colonial influences, identifying it as a challenge to the Muslim identity and doctrinal integrity. Thus, his tafsīr served as a vital tool in reinforcing Muslim unity around the essential creed of Khatm-e-Nubuwwah.

In conclusion, Tafsīr Lahorī by Aḥmad ‘Alī Lahorī remains a significant contribution to Islamic exegetical literature in South Asia, especially in the context of preserving the belief in the finality of prophethood against modern heterodox movements. His analytical and spiritual insights continue to inspire scholars and believers alike to uphold the pristine teachings of Islam with intellectual depth, historical awareness, and unwavering conviction.

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