91658 - In defence of Shaykh Ahmed Deedat (may Allaah have mercy on him)

the question

I would like to put my mind at rest concerning the daa'iyah Ahmed Deedat (may Allaah have mercy on him), since there are those who accuse him of having been a follower of Ahmediyyah, whose headquarters are in Pakistan, and they quote as evidence the fact that in some of his debates the Shaykh quoted the theory which says that the Messiah was crucified but did not die on the cross, rather he only lost consciousness, but he died after that in an accident, and his soul was taken up to heaven.
I would like to know what was the view of the well known daa'iyah Ahmed Deedat? Are these accusations true? I am one of those who love the Shaykh, may Allaah have mercy on him, and I follow all his debates and writings. Thank you very much.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

Shaykh Ahmed Hoosen Deedat was born in Surat in India in 1918 CE, and his father migrated to South Africa shortly after he was born. When he was nine years old his mother died and he joined his father in South Africa, where he lived for the rest of his life.

In South Africa, Ahmed Deedat appeared in his first debate in 1977 CE, and later appeared in the Royal Albert Hall in Great Britain. He debated with some of the greatest Christian clerics such as Clark, Jimmy Swaggart, Anis Shuroush, and others. The Muslims benefited from that and affirmed their belief in Islam and the Qur'aan, and came to know the distortions and lies that exist in the distorted religions. Some Christians whom Allaah blessed with guidance also benefited from that.

On Monday August 8, 2005 CE, the daa'iyah Shaykh Ahmed Deedat passed away and met his Lord at the age of 87, in his home in Verulam in KwaZulu Natal in South Africa, after a lengthy struggle with illness.

Secondly:

With regard to Muslim belief concerning the Messiah (peace be upon him), it is based on the evidence of the Qur'aan and Sunnah. The Messiah 'Eesa (Jesus) – (peace be upon him) – is one of the greatest Messengers. Muslims believe that 'Eesa (peace be upon him) was taken up by Allaah into heaven alive, and that he was neither crucified nor killed. He will remain alive until the onset of the Hour approaches, then he will descend to earth and will kill the Dajjaal, break the cross and kill the pigs, and he will rule according to Islamic sharee'ah, then he will die – peace be upon him – like all other humans.

Imam Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Haqq ibn 'Atiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The ummah is unanimously agreed on what is stated in the mutawaatir hadeeth that 'Eesa (peace be upon him) is alive in heaven, and he will descend at the end of time and will kill the pigs, break the cross and kill the Dajjaal; justice will prevail and he will support this nation – the nation of Muhammad – and it will prevail as a result, and he will perform pilgrimage to the Ka'bah, doing Hajj and 'Umrah, then Allaah will cause him to die.

Al-Muharrar al-Wajeez (3/143)

Al-Safaareeni (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The ummah is unanimously agreed that he will descend and none of those who follow sharee'ah disagreed with that. Rather it was denied by the philosophers and heretics whose dissent is of no importance. There is consensus among the ummah that he will descend and will rule according to the sharee'ah of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). No new law will be revealed when he descends from heaven.

Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah (2/94, 95)

Thirdly:

The Qadianis or Ahmadis are a movement that began in 1900 CE as the result of a plot by the British colonialists in India, the aim of which was to distance the Muslims from their religion and from the duty of jihad in particular.

The Qadianis believe that Prophethood did not end with Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), rather it is ongoing and Allaah sends messengers according to need. They believe that Ghulam Ahmed – the founder of Qadianiyyah who was born in 1839 CE and died in 1908 CE – was the best of all the Prophets.

They believe that Jibreel used to come down to Ghulam Ahmed and that he received revelation and that his dreams are like the Qur'aan.

For more details on their beliefs and why they are kufr, please see the answer to question no. 4060.

Fourthly:

The view of the Ahmedis (Qadianis) concerning the Messiah (peace be upon him) is that he was crucified but did not die on the cross, rather he lost consciousness and was buried, then he fled from his grave to Kashmir, where he died a natural death, and his grave is to be found there.

They interpret his being raised up to heaven as metaphorical not literal, i.e., he was raised in status, not in a physical sense.

This belief of theirs is mentioned in two essays of theirs, the first of which is entitled "The Christian Messiah in India" which was written by Mirza Ghulam Ahmed himself. The second is entitled "The death of the Messiah the son of Maryam and what is meant by his descent". This is published by the "World Ahmediyyah Muslim Community", and they put on the cover a picture of the supposed grave of 'Eesa (peace be upon him) in Sari Naghar in Kashmir, India.

They say on page 2 that "the Messiah (peace be upon him) was not taken up alive, and no one

else was caused to resemble him. Rather he was hung on the cross for a few hours, and when he was taken down he was so deeply unconscious that they thought he was dead. Then after the crucifixion he migrated from Palestine to eastern lands: Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Kashmir and India, and he lived for one hundred and twenty years."

Mirza Ghulam Ahmed al-Qadiani claimed falsely that Allaah had revealed this information to him, but it is something that was said by some Christians before him, and it seems that he stole the idea from them.

The purpose of the Qadianis in spreading this belief about the Messiah (peace be upon him) is to make it easier to claim that the ahaadeeth which were revealed about the descent of the Messiah and the appearance of the Mahdi at the end of time refer to the emergence of the liar Mirza Ghulam Ahmed al-Qadiani.

The essay referred to clearly states that on page 6 where it says:

"What is meant by the descent of the Messiah the son of Maryam is the sending of another man from the ummah of al-Mustafa (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), who will resemble 'Eesa ibn Maryam in his attributes and deeds. This promised man appeared in Qadian, India, with the name of Mirza Ghulam Ahmed, a guided imam whom Allah made like the Messiah 'Eesa ibn Maryam (peace be upon him). He was the promised messiah, al-imam al-mahdi for the ummah of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) who the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) promised would be sent when he said: 'There is no Mahdi except 'Eesa.' (Ibn Maajah, Kitaab al-Fitan)." End quote.

According to Islamic belief, 'Eesa (peace be upon him) is a Prophet who was sent, and the Mahdi is a righteous Muslim, not a Prophet or Messenger. The emergence of the Mahdi is one of the lesser signs of the Hour, and the descent of 'Eesa (peace be upon him) is one of the greater signs of the Hour, and there is a difference between them, as is obvious.

The hadeeth which they quote as evidence, "There is no Mahdi except 'Eesa" is not saheeh, rather it is a munkar hadeeth which was judged as such by a number of imams, such as al-Nasaa'i, al-

Dhahabi and al-Albaani, and it was classed as da’eef by al-Haakim, al-Bayhaqi, al-Qurtubi and Ibn Taymiyah, and al-San’aani classed it as mawdoo’ (fabricated).

See: Minhaaj al-Sunnah (8/256); al-Sawaa’iq al-Muhriqah by al-Haytami (2/476); al-Silsilah al-Da’eefah (77).

Fifthly:

As for the notion that Shaykh Ahmed Deedat (may Allaah have mercy on him) followed the view of the Qadianis, nothing could be further from the truth. This is a pure fabrication against the Shaykh, for many reasons:

1-The debates, books and articles of the Shaykh are numerous and there is nothing in them to promote the Qadiani religion or to praise its leader or followers. If he was one of them, that would be apparent in his books.

2-The Qadianis deny jihad in their religion, and whoever calls for that which the Qadianis call for is one of them. Shaykh Ahmed Deedat was definitely not one of them, rather he used to call for jihad and he thought that the sword and the Qur’aan together were the way to protect the honour of this ummah.

Shaykh Ahmed Deedaat (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: Our only weapon in fighting this vicious menace that is called missionary activity is the Qur’aan and wielding the sword for the sake of Allaah to confront this menace. This is a struggle to decide between faith and heresy, between Islam and the forces of evil, between justice and injustice, between light and darkness, between truth and misguidance. This battle cannot be won except with the sword and the Qur’aan together, so that the sword may re-establish what has been forsaken of the Qur’aan and Islam may prevail throughout the world, and the Muslims may come back to their senses and confront this menace from the crusaders and Zionists.

Hawaar ma’a Mubashshir (Debate with a Missionary), p. 30

3-The Qadianis do not believe in prayer, fasting and pilgrimage as they are prescribed in our

sharee'ah. According to them, these things have other meanings. They also think that everyone who is not a Qadiani is a kaafir and they do not allow Qadianis to marry non-Qadianis. They regard alcohol and intoxicants as permissible. Did Shaykh Ahmed Deedat follow what these kaafirs follow? By Allaah, no.

(a)The Shaykh wrote a useful book called The Concept of Worship in Islam in which he spoke of the Muslim's acts of worship such as prayer, zakaah, fasting and Hajj, quoting verses and ahaadeeth, which points to the vastness of his knowledge and the soundness of his beliefs.

(b)The Shaykh was married to a virtuous Muslim woman who served Islam and helped him in his da'wah. She was Sister Hawa'. If it was true that the Shaykh was a Qadiani, he would have been married to a kaafir woman, which is not permissible in their view, rather some of them regard that as disbelief (kufr).

(c)With regard to the prohibition on alcohol and intoxicants, the Shaykh wrote a useful book called "Alcohol between Christianity and Islam" in which he supports Islam and its rulings by quoting from the Qur'aan and Sunnah about the prohibition of alcohol.

It says in this book: "Islam is the only religion on the face of the earth that forbids intoxicants altogether. The Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "What intoxicates in large quantities, is forbidden in small quantities." There is no excuse in Islam for one who takes a gulp or a sip of any intoxicating drink. The holy Qur'aan – the Book of Truth – forbids in the strongest terms not only alcohol and the evils to which it leads, but it also forbids gambling and ansaab (stone altars) on which they used to offer sacrifices, and azlaam (arrows for divination) which they used to tell the future. So Islam forbids alcohol, the worship of idols, fortune-telling and reading of omens in one verse, where Allaah says: "O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), and gambling, and Al-Ansaab (stone altars for sacrifices to idols etc) and Al-Azlaam (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Shaytaan's (Satan's) handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful" [al-Maa'idah 5:90].

This simple command has made the Muslim ummah the greatest gathering of teetotallers in the world.

(Alcohol between Christianity and Islam, p. 18).

4-The Qadianis believe that the Messiah (peace be upon him) died some time after he was crucified, and they believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmed is the Messiah and the Mahdi – as was stated above. Did Shaykh Ahmed Deedat believe that? By Allaah, no.

This question was put to the Shaykh by a Qadiani man about the ending of Prophethood with Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and the belief of the Qadianis. Let us read what the Shaykh (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

“A brother is asking whether I believe that our Noble Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was the Seal of the Prophets. Was he the last of the Prophets and the Seal of the Prophets? I say: Yes, but the Qadianis say that the Messiah will return at the end of time so Muhammad is not the last of the Prophets. This is the question; how should we respond?

The one who has been given the title of Seal of the Prophets can never have this title taken away from him. If I say that I am going to give a gift to the last of one hundred men, and they come one after another, then the last man comes and takes his gift, now if one of the men comes back again after the last man took his prize, he cannot take it from him.

Our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) has been given this title, and he is the last of the Prophets and the Seal of the Messengers. The Qur’aan is the last of the Books that have been revealed from Allaah and we do not need addition to it, and we do not need any other Messenger, and we do not need any other book. That man – the Qadiani who asked the question – wants to regard his leader Mirza Ghulam Ahmed as the Messiah in his second coming, that is why he is stirring this matter up. He wants to make a connection between Mirza Ghulam Ahmed and Deedat! So that he can take the place of the Messiah (peace be upon him) in his second coming, so that Mirza Ghulam Ahmed will be regarded as the messiah. Hence he wants to kill the Messiah – i.e., to say that he is dead – that is why he wants to stir all this up. Now what

does he want from all this? If you want to do something good for the sake of Islam, look at the millions of Christians around you. But it seems that he is not concerned with the Christians, he is concerned with you – the Muslims. If you want to make da'wah then go and make da'wah to the Jews, Christians and Hindus. Are there not millions of them around the world. Why do you want to pick a fight with me? I am Muslim, I believe in Allaah, in His Messenger, in the Holy Qur'aan. You are wasting your time with me."

(Lecture in the Jaami' Mosque, delivered during his visit to Kenya in 1993 CE).

Further support of what we have said refuting the accusations against Shaykh Ahmed Deedat (may Allaah have mercy on him) of being a Qadiani is his writing of a testimonial in which he affirmed his Islam and described Mirza Ghulam Ahmed as a kaafir, and he also described his followers as kaafirs too, and he denied that his centre was involved in distributing some of their tafseer (commentary on Qur'aan).

There were rumours in his country – South Africa – that he was a Qadiani and that he was distributing a tafseer of the Qur'aan attributed to one so-called Muhammad Asad, which compelled Shaykh Ahmed Deedat to issue a statement clarifying the matter, on 23/7/1987 CE, re-stating his view that Mirza Ghulam Ahmed al-Qadiani was a kaafir, as were his followers.

You will find a copy of this disavowal of the Qadianis and the declaration that their leader and followers are kaafirs at the following link:
http://www.ahmed-deedat.net/Files/Articles/Website/B01.jpg

This is the text of the statement:

"Declaration

I AHMED HOOSEN DEEDAT President of ISLAMIC PROPAGATION CENTRE hereby declare before Allah that I subscribe totally and fully to the SHAHADA

LAA ILAAHA ILLALLAAHU

MUHAMMADUR RASOOLULLAH.

There is no god except ALLAH and MUHAMMAD is the Messenger of ALLAH

I believe that Muhammad (PBUH) is the last and final Prophet and messenger. There will be no Rasool or Nabee after him.

I believe that MIRZA GHULAM AHMED of QADIAN was an IMPOSTER and a KAAFIR.

I believe that all those who accept him as a Nabee, Rasool, A Reformer or even as a great man are KAAFIR and out of the Pale of Islam.

My book Crucifixion or Crucifiction has an “AFTERWORD” which clarifies the position of my belief in the second coming of Jesus (PBUH).

The Islamic Propagation Centre has never published, promoted, distributed or sold ASAD’S translation of the Qur’an.

May Allah save us from rumour-mongering, backbiting and spreading falsehood.

(signed) Ahmed Deedat.”

The above supports the idea that the accusation of Shaykh Ahmed Deedat of being a Qadiani can only come from a kaafir who wants to slander the religious commitment of the Shaykh and keep people away from him after he succeeded in bringing thousands of people into Islam, or someone who is jealous of seeing how the people – elite and ordinary folk alike – respect the Shaykh, or an ignorant person who read or heard something of the shaykh’s words and misunderstood it, and thought badly of him.

Sixthly:

What is the attitude of Shaykh Ahmed Deedat about the crucifixion and killing of the Messiah (peace be upon him)?

There is no doubt in our minds that Shaykh Ahmed Deedat (may Allaah have mercy on him) denied that the Messiah was either crucified or killed. He did not go beyond what Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it appeared so to them [the resemblance of ‘Eesa (Jesus) was put over another man (and they killed that man)]…”

[al-Nisa’ 4:157]

(a)Shaykh Ahmed Deedat (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

I do not expect anyone to ask me about my belief as a Muslim with regard to the crucifixion; what I believe is what the Qur’aan says, as stated clearly in verse 157 of Soorat al-Nisa’.

Mas’alat Salb al-Maseeh bayna al-Haqeeqah wa’l-Iftira’ (p. 88), Dar al-Fadeelah.

It should be noted that the so-called Ali al-Jawhari, who is the Arabic translator of the book mentioned above – as well as others – subscribed to the theory that the Messiah lost consciousness, which is what the Qadianis believe. And he defended it fiercely in his footnotes to the book, and he criticized the Muslims for not adopting this view, and he thought that it did not contradict what Allaah says in the Qur’aan.

(b)Shaykh Ahmed Deedat (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

They did not crucify him or kill him, but it seemed to them that they had done so, but they did not crucify or kill the Messiah, because it is certain that they did not kill him. This is how the Muslims understand the confusion about the crucifixion and killing of the Messiah, which is that they did not kill him but this is what they thought and believed that they had done.

Jesus – God, man or myth? (p. 112).

(c)And he (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The one who was crucified was another person who resembled him. The Gospel of Barnabas

confirms the view which says that another person was killed instead of him on the cross. This is in accordance with our view, the Muslims. The confusion arose because they killed another person who resembled him.

Jesus – God, man or myth? (p. 138)

The Qadianis believe that the Messiah (peace be upon him) was crucified, whereas we find the text in the Book of Allaah states that he was not. This is what Shaykh Ahmed Deedat said. If he disagreed with them about the crucifixion then how could he agree with them about the death or killing of the Messiah?!

(d)At the beginning of the shaykh's debate with Floyd Clark, which was entitled "Was Christ Crucified?", the Shaykh stated his sound belief in the Messiah (peace be upon him) by quoting the verses from Soorat al-Nisa', then he began to use their evidence to establish proof against them and prove their beliefs false.

In that debate he said:

As for the Muslims, the matter is settled: the Messiah was not killed or crucified. This is a point on which the Muslims do not disagree, but the Christians' belief is based on an assumption, but they did not kill him for sure.

And he said:

We will prove that the Messiah did not die on the cross as the Christians claim because he was not crucified at all. That is from their books, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "Say (O Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), Produce your proof" [al-Baqarah 2:111].

He said: Whatever the case, he was not killed or crucified, that is according to the Book of Allaah.

(e)At the beginning of his debate with Robert Douglas, which was entitled "Crucifixion of Christ – true or false?" the Shaykh (may Allaah have mercy on him) stated his belief in accordance with the Holy Qur'aan.

(f)and he (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

This means that these people – i.e., the Jews – believe that Jesus claimed to be a Prophet, and they killed him to get rid of him, but Allaah told them that they had not killed him or crucified him, rather it appeared so to them. They did not kill him or crucify him but it seemed to them that they had done so, and they thought that they had done so, but they did not kill or crucify the Messiah.

And he said: “but they killed him not” [al-Nisa’ 4:157] because it is certain that they did not kill him. This is how the Muslims clarify the confusion surrounding the crucifixion and killing of the Messiah, which is that they did not crucify him or kill him, but this is what they thought that they had done. This is what we Muslims believe.

“Was Jesus a man, a god or a myth?” (p. 111, 112).

(g)And he (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

Allaah says: “But Allaah raised him [‘Eesa (Jesus)] up (with his body and soul) unto Himself” [al-Nisa’ 4:158]. This means that the Messiah Jesus (peace be upon him) did not taste death, rather Allaah raised him up to Himself, and I believe that the Messiah will return before the Day of Resurrection.

“Was Jesus a man, a god or a myth?” (p. 118).

Conclusion:

It is no wonder that Shaykh Ahmed Deedat (may Allaah have mercy on him) was accused by the kaafirs of being a Qadiani, as he views them all as being kaafirs. But what is strange is that jealous or ignorant people take some of the words of the shaykh and interpret them in the worst possible way, or at least they pick on phrases that are ambiguous. We have quoted many of his comments with regard to his religious beliefs, his attitude towards the Qadianis and his belief concerning the crucifixion of the Messiah (peace be upon him). Everyone who says otherwise, let him fear Allaah and realize that he is looking at ambiguous words and he should understand them in the light of other comments that are not ambiguous, or he should realize that the Shaykh may have said some

things for the sake of argument or quoted some of his opponents' statements so as to use them against them.

We ask Allaah to have mercy on Shaykh Ahmed Deedat and to honour him and raise him in status.

And Allaah knows best.