

God's Word, Spoken or Otherwise

History of Christian-Muslim Relations

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God's Word, Spoken or Otherwise

*Sayyid Ahmad Khan's (1817–1898)
Muslim Exegesis of the Bible*

By

Charles M. Ramsey



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For Chishti



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Preface

‘Not all those who wander are lost’, as Tolkien’s line goes, but some of us have wandered for a very long time. I am thankful to such dedicated companions, advisors and fellow sojourners without whom I could not have reached this stage of the journey. My initial thanks are to my academic mentor David Thomas, who has been a sagely guide throughout this process. I could not have wished for a more capable and responsive supervisor. I must also thank Clinton Bennett, without whom I would have meandered down other paths. I am profoundly grateful for such wisdom and critical discernment in guiding me to Birmingham. There I was blessed by the company of Andrew Davies, David Cheetham, Christian Troll, John Chesworth, Mustafa Draper, Richard Allan, Selena Su and Azmi Muhammad. Where else can one watch Pakistani cricket in the morning, and stroll the shire in the afternoon?

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Notes on Translation and Transliteration

The transliteration of the words and phrases of the Urdu original follows the Library of Congress system (LOC: Rules in Arabic script). Arabic terms have been rendered according to the rules of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (3rd edition). Terms now commonly used in English are rendered according to the Oxford English Dictionary spelling. The spelling of Biblical names and terms follows the Revised Standard Version. Translations from the Qur'an follow those of M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (2004). Abdel Haleem's phraseology has been followed when necessary to render Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Urdu into English. We have maintained the Flügel numbering system used by Sayyid Ahmad Khan, but have added the corresponding numbers from the standard Egyptian text of the Qur'an in (brackets).

Abbreviations

- TFA Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, *Taṣānīf-i Aḥmadiyyah*, vol. 1 (Aligarh: Institute Press, 1883); vol. 2, 1887.
- TK1 Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, *Tabyīn al-kalām*, Part 1 (Ghazipur, author's press, 1862).
- TK2 Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, *Tabyīn al-kalām*, Part 2, (Ghazipur, author's press, 1865).
- TK3 Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, *Tabyīn al-kalām*, Part 3, in TFA, vol. 2 (Aligarh: Institute Press, 1887).
- TQ Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, Parts 1–6, in TFA, vols 3–9 (Aligarh: Institute Press, 1880–95); Part 7 (Agra: Mufid-i ām Press, 1904).
- TA Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, *Tahzīb al-akhlāq (The Mohammedan Social Reformer)*, Phase 1, vols 1–7 (Aligarh Institute Press, 1871–1877); Phase 2, vols 8–10 (1879–1881); vols 11–14 (1894–1897).
- EI² *Encyclopaedia of Islam (Second Edition)*, edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W.P. Heinrichs (Leiden: Brill, 1960–2007).
- EI³ *Encyclopaedia of Islam (Third Edition)*, edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Everett Rowson (Leiden: Brill, 2007).