

“

Develop compassion for God’s creatures, with the understanding that it is something more than a good deed, it falls into the category of benevolence. Benevolence means not expecting the return of your favours; benevolence is exercised by man purely for the sake of Allah the Almighty. In this way, such a beautiful society will be established where there will be no dispute between husband and wife, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, brothers, and neighbors. Everyone will try to be benevolent to the other. Each person will try to give others their rights with love and care, and will do so purely to win the love of Allah. In today’s society, this is even more urgent than ever before.”

(Conditions of Bai’at and Responsibilities of an Ahmadi, p. 150)



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ABBREVIATIONS OF SALUTATIONS

- sa** Ṣallāllāhu 'alaihī wa Sallam - May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him!
Usage: Salutation written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}
- as** 'Alāihis-Salām/ 'Alaihas-Salām - May peace be upon him/her!
Usage: Salutation written after names of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}, and pious women prior to the era of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}
- ra** RaḍīAllāhū 'anhu / 'anhā/ 'anhum - May Allah be pleased with him/her/them!
Usage: Salutation written after names of Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and Companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}
- rh** Raḥimahullāh - May Allah have mercy upon him!
Usage: Salutation written after the names of deceased, pious Muslims who are not Companions
- aa** Ayyadahullāhu Ta'ālā binaṣrihil-'Azīz - May Allah be his Helper!
Usage: Salutation written after the name of Hazrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad, Khalīfatul-MasīḤ V^{aa}



AḤMADIYYA
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PEARLS O

THE HOLY QUR'ĀN

For those who do good deeds, *there shall be the best reward and yet more blessings*. And neither darkness nor ignominy shall cover their faces. It is these who are the inmates of Heaven; therein shall they abide. (10:27)

لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ۖ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا
ذِلَّةٌ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ۚ

HADĪTH

Hazrat Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-'Aas^{ra} narrated that the Holy Prophet^{sa} said: "The Merciful One has mercy on those who are merciful. If you show mercy to those who are on the earth, He Who is in the heaven will show mercy to you." (*Sunan Abi Dawud, Kitab-ul-Adab, Bab fir Rahmah*)

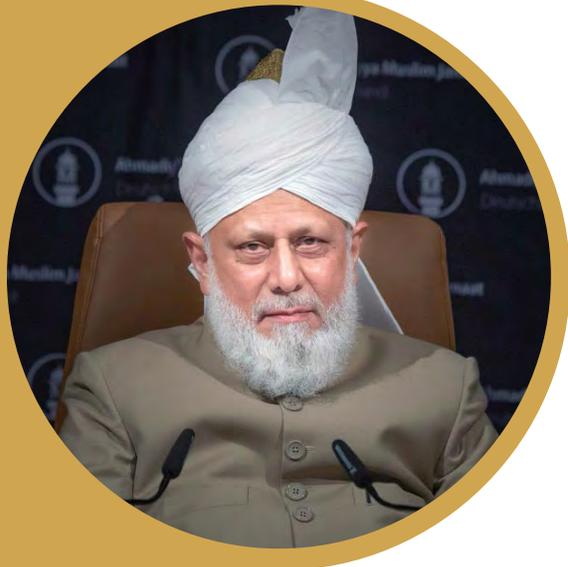
عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، يُبَلِّغُ بِهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
"الرَّاحِمُونَ يَرْحَمُهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ ارْحَمُوا أَهْلَ الْأَرْضِ يَرْحَمَكُم مِّنْ
فِي السَّمَاءِ"

(سنن أبي داؤود، كتاب الادب، باب في الرحمة)

F WISDOM

SO SAID THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

“To be compassionate and sympathetic towards humanity is a great form of worship and it is an effective means of attaining the pleasure of Allah the Almighty. However, I observe that there is much weakness in this regard. People are scorned and mocked. To look after them and assist them at a time of difficulty is a significant act. I fear that those who do not treat the poor kindly but rather despise them might one day be afflicted with that same calamity. It is an expression of thankfulness for those whom Allah the Almighty has favoured to be kind to His creation, to not be arrogant because of God-given bounties and to not trample over the poor like beasts.” (*Malfuzat*, vol. 4, pp. 438-439, published 2003, translated from Urdu)



GUIDANCE FROM HAZRAT KHALIFATUL- MASIH (MAY ALLAH BE HIS HELPER)

Highlights from the Friday Sermons of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!)

1. OCTOBER 7, 2022 – BUILDING OF MOSQUES AND OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

During his tour of the United States of America, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) inaugurated the newly built Baitul Ikram Mosque in Allen, Texas through his Friday Sermon.

After reciting verses 30-32 of chapter 7 from the Holy Qur'an, Huzoor^{aa} highlighted the responsibilities that come with building mosques. The primary responsibility is to establish justice to the extent that one must not act unjustly even towards his enemies. Those who enter the mosque should be mindful of the rights they owe to others, which would in turn foster an atmosphere of compassion and love.

Believers who fulfil the due rights of a mosque are those who establish justice at home and outside, and whose words align with their actions. Such are the lofty standards that must be met, otherwise simply coming to the mosque to be done with the burden of prayer will be of no benefit whatsoever. True servants of Allah, who honour the rights of a mosque, are those who adhere to the commandments of God whilst maintaining the fear of God in their hearts. Hence, a mosque should encourage us to focus on how we can fulfil the rights of others.

2. OCTOBER 14, 2022 – ELEMENTS OF FAITH & QUALITY OF WORSHIP

During the final part of his tour to the United States, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) graced Baitur Rahman Mosque in Silver Spring, Maryland with his presence. There, Huzoor^{aa} delivered the Friday Sermon on October 14 in which he emphasized the importance of adopting high morals.

Huzoor^{aa} said that the Promised Messiah^{as} advised his community to adopt high morals, as this too is a commandment of God. If one does not reflect on how they spent their days—what they did well and where they fell short—then they cannot improve. Using foul language can lead to rifts and enmity, hence one should always be mindful of their language. One should use the faculties given to them by God to display the highest levels and standards of moral conduct.

In regard to fostering an atmosphere of mutual harmony and brotherhood, Huzoor^{as} quoted from the sayings of the Promised Messiah^{as} in which he said that this Community would not flourish until everyone develops mutual love. Rather than treating the weak with contempt and enmity, one should treat them with love and affection. To cultivate a true spirit of brotherhood and community, it is necessary to cover each others' faults. There should not be internal discord within the Community. Hence, high morals demand that due regard must be given to the sentiments of others.

3.

OCTOBER 21, 2022 – THE USA TOUR

After returning from an historic and successful tour of the USA, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) recounted some highlights and sentiments of the tour in his Friday Sermon delivered at the Mubarak Mosque in Islamabad, UK.

Huzoor^{aa} said that the blessings of Allah the Almighty were witnessed at every turn during his tour, having a positive impact not only on Ahmadis, but others as well. There was a youngster who told his friend that he was having some doubts regarding Ahmadiyyat and Khilafat which were completely removed due to this tour.

Mentioning the love and devotion of Ahmadis in the United States, Huzoor^{aa} said that in Zion, Dallas and Baitur Rahman, Maryland, large numbers of men, women and children gathered and waited for prayers. The emotions and sentiments they expressed as Huzoor^{aa} walked to and from the mosque clearly indicated that they have true love for Khilafat in their hearts. People would line up for hours just to get into the mosque for prayers. This clearly indicates that by the grace of Allah these people have love for their faith and Khilafat. Children would stand in line for five to six hours and go through meticulous security checks, yet no one complained. A guest in Zion even commented how smoothly everything was running and despite the various checks in place.

Huzoor^{aa} prayed that may this fervour for prayers remain constant and may these mosques always remain populated. In a worldly place like America, people may think that there is no attention towards faith, however Huzoor^{aa} saw the opposite in the Ahmadis during this tour. At every stop there would be more people present than expected. In fact, at Baitur Rahman in Maryland, at times the numbers exceeded even that of the Jalsa Salana. Huzoor^{aa} prayed that Allah would continue to increase this sincerity and devotion in the hearts of all Ahmadis.



4.

OCTOBER 28, 2022 – MEN OF EXCELLENCE: HAZRAT ABU BAKR^{ra}

Highlighting the faith-inspiring character of Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra}, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) mentioned his special characteristics and close relationship to the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

Once, when he was asked who was dearest to him, the Holy Prophet^{sa} replied, “Aishah” upon which he was asked who was dearest to him after her, and the Holy Prophet^{sa} said, “her father” (i.e., Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra}). An another occasion, the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that Abu Bakr^{ra} was the best of the Muslims, except if there was a prophet.

Huzoor^{aa} stated that during his final illness, the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that no one had been kinder to him than Abu Bakr^{ra} and that if he could have made anyone his *khalil* (i.e., a bosom friend) then it would be Abu Bakr^{ra}.

It is narrated that when the Holy Prophet^{sa} would be seated among his Companions, none would look directly at him, except for Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra} and Hazrat Umar^{ra}, who would look at him and he would lovingly look back at them and they would be smiling. One day, the Holy Prophet^{sa} proceeded to the mosque while Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra} and Hazrat Umar^{ra} were on either side of him and he was holding their hands. The Holy Prophet^{sa} said that they would be raised just like this on the Day of Judgement.

The Holy Prophet^{sa} stated that every prophet has two viziers in the heavens and two on earth. He said that his two viziers in the heavens were Gabriel and Mikael while his two governors on earth were Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra} and Hazrat Umar^{ra}.

Q&A and more...

BALANCING SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS DUTIES

On January 9, 2022, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) held a virtual meeting with members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Students Association (AMSA) in Nigeria.

In this meeting, one of the attendees asked Huzoor^{aa} for advice on how they can balance both religious activities and studies. Huzoor^{aa} replied:

Your first religious duty is offering five daily prayers. Get up early in the morning for Fajr prayer and offer your Fajr prayer. Then recite the Holy Qur'an and prepare for your college, university or school. After attending your school for 6 or 7 hours, when you come back, if there is homework given to you by your teachers or any assignment, then complete it

and after that, if you have time, increase your knowledge by reading some religious books. Alongside increasing your knowledge that will change your mindset. You will try to change yourself and try to be spiritually and morally good. And in terms of volunteer work, if you cannot give some time daily to your volunteer activities to Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, then at least during the weekends you should give time to the works of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. But make sure that being a student, your first duty is to concentrate on your studies. Alongside it, never ever leave the five daily prayers and the reading of the Holy Qur'an.



Photo by Julia M Cameron from Pexel

(Source: ["Ahmadi Muslim Students from Nigeria have Honour of Virtual Meeting with World Head of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community."](https://www.pressahmadiyya.com) Ahmadiyya Muslim Community—Press & Media Office. [pressahmadiyya.com](https://www.pressahmadiyya.com))



STAYING SAFE ONLINE

On January 8, 2022, members of Majlis Atfal-ul-Ahmadiyya from Nigeria were granted a virtual official meeting and audience with Huzoor Anwar^{aa}. During this meeting, Huzoor^{aa} was asked for advice on the issue of cybercrimes that are affecting youth. Huzoor^{aa} expressed his view that when young people become overly involved in online games it can eventually lead them down a dark path leading towards online crime or other vices:

“I have been saying for a long time that you should not involve yourself

in playing online games which can make you go astray or deviate from the right path. The people who are making these type of games on the internet are actually spoiling the life of the people and younger people are becoming addicted to such online games. And as the time goes on, they become involved in some other bad things. So, Ahmadi Muslims should try to avoid these things because ultimately, they can lead people towards cyber crime. So, try to avoid these things if you want to save yourself. Only try to view good programmes on the internet.”

Photo by Photo by Junior Teixeira from Pexels

(Source: [“Members of Majlis Atfal-ul-Ahmadiyya from Nigeria have Honour of a Virtual Meeting With Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.” Ahmadiyya Muslim Community—Press & Media Office. pressahmadiyya.com](https://www.pressahmadiyya.com))

CLEANSING THE HEART OF HATRED

In a virtual meeting with members of Majlis Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya from Singapore on December 19, 2021, a member asked Huzoor^{aa} how to cleanse one's heart of hatred for others. Huzoor^{aa} advised:

We are the followers of the Prophet who is the last of the Prophets (Prophet Muhammad^{sa}) and whose heart was free of all such type of evils and hatred. Further, the Promised Messiah^{as}, who has come in this age as a subordinate prophet of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, said, 'I have come in this age to bring mankind closer to their Creator and secondly to make them realise their duties towards their fellow beings.' He states that we cannot discharge these duties until and unless our hearts are pure and there should not be any enmity, animosity or jealousy in our hearts. Only if that be the case can we discharge our duties towards each other. We cannot achieve this target on our own, we have to seek Allah's help for this. You should pray to Allah the Almighty in your five-time daily prayers that Allah the Almighty purifies your heart and removes all the hatred in your heart for any person.

(Source: "[Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Singapore have Honour of a Virtual Meeting with Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. Ahmadiyya Muslim Community—Press & Media Office. pressahmadiyya.com](https://www.pressahmadiyya.com))





WHY BELIEVE IN GOD?

On December 18, 2021, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (may Allah be his Helper!) held a virtual meeting with members of the Waqf-e-Nau Scheme aged 10 and above from Finland. During the course of the meeting, an attendee asked Huzoor^{aa} how they could respond to their friends who argue that they have nothing to gain from believing in God because they already have all the comforts of life. Huzoor^{aa} stated:

Tell them that this life is but a temporary abode. There is an eternal life that also exists and in that life in the Hereafter, Allah rewards such people who believe in Him. In fact, even in this life, those who believe in Allah and those who fulfil His rights and worship Him, God treats them in a special way. Even in this life Allah deals with those people who believe in Him in a different manner to those who do not. So, we believe in Allah and have a firm faith that this is not the only life and there is a life to come in the Hereafter. This is a teaching that has been given by every religion.

“You can observe that every religion brought the same teaching; to believe in Allah, show good morals and look after one another. It is true that after the religion’s advent, their adherents corrupted the teachings, however the fundamental teaching was the same. Atheists also affirm that the basic moral teachings were brought to the world by the prophets... Therefore, we should believe in Allah and worship Him and also fulfil one another’s rights.

(Source: [“Waqf-e-Nau From Finland have Honour of a Virtual Meeting with Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.” Ahmadiyya Muslim Community—Press & Media Office. pressahmadiyya.com](https://pressahmadiyya.com))

SECOND COMING OF *the Messiah*

The Ahmadiyya Gazette Canada is serializing sections of the book "Invitation to Ahmadiyyat" by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih II^{ra}. Written in 1926, this book serves as a primer of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's doctrinal beliefs.

COMING OF A FOLLOWER OF THE HOLY PROPHET^{sa}

The second objection levelled against us is that, contrary to the accepted Muslim belief, we hold that a follower of the Holy Prophet^{sa} has appeared amongst us as the Promised Messiah^{as}. To hold this belief, we are told, is contrary to the Traditions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, as, according to these Traditions, the Messiah is Jesus^{as}, son of Mary, due to return from Heaven when the time comes.

Now, it is quite true that we regard the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (Gurdaspur, Punjab, India), as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi^{as}. And why not? The Holy Qur'an, the Traditions, and ordinary common sense declare that the first Messiah died in the normal way; so our belief that the Promised Messiah^{as} was to come from among the followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa} cannot be against the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions. The Holy Qur'an declares that Jesus^{as} is dead. The Traditions say the same thing. If, therefore, the Traditions promise the advent of a Messenger described as the son of Mary, this promised one can only be a follower of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, not the Messiah of Nazareth who died in the normal

way. It is said that even if the Qur'an and the Traditions declare the death of Jesus^{as}, son of Mary, we should continue to expect the second coming of the self-same son of Mary. For is not God All-Powerful? Can He not resuscitate the dead Messiah and send him back to the world? If we did not cherish such a hope and such a thought, we should be denying the Power of God. But our position is very different. We do not deny the Power of God. We believe that God is All-Powerful. Because God is All-Powerful, He has no need to resuscitate the Messiah of Nazareth. He can raise a teacher from among the followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, install him as the Promised Messiah^{as} and charge him with the duty of reforming the world. We fail to see how anyone who deliberates over this subject in a proper manner can insist that the Power of God requires God to bring the first Messiah back to life. Such a thing is against all ordinary canons. It is everyday experience that a person who can afford to have a new one hates to have an old coat turned for longer use. If he needs a new coat, he throws away the old one and gets a new one. It is the man who cannot afford one who wants the old coat turned or altered to be used again. It is the poor man who takes excessive care of his things. God is not poor. He is Powerful. If





He finds that His servants need someone to guide them, He does not have to put life into a dead prophet. He is able to raise one from amongst His living servants to reform and lead the rest. From Adam^{as} down to the Holy Prophet^{sa}, not once did God have to restore a dead prophet to life for the purpose of guiding His men. Such a course is quite unnecessary. It might have been necessary if the purification and reformation of a given people at a given time had been beyond the Power of God; if the dominion of God did not extend to all men at all times. God is All-Powerful and His dominion extends to all men at all times. It is senseless to think that for the guidance of a given people at a given time He should have to restore one of the dead prophets to life. God's Power is boundless. He was able to raise a prophet like the Holy Prophet^{sa} from amongst the Arabs. It is not beyond His Power to raise one in our time similar to Jesus^{as} or greater than him from amongst Muslims.

The fact is, therefore, that we deny the physical second coming of the first Messiah because God, according to us, is All-Powerful and can raise anyone to the status of a guide and prophet, at

any time, and from among any people. They are in error who think that God cannot do this, that instead of raising one from amongst us He has to bring back to life a dead prophet. They have not esteemed the Power of Allah as Allah deserves.

The second coming of the first Messiah, therefore, is derogatory to the Power and Wisdom of God. It is also disparaging to the spiritual power of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. To say that the second coming of the first Messiah is inevitable is to say something very strange. At all times in the past, whenever a people went astray and needed divine guidance, it was one from amongst themselves whom God raised for the purpose. Was this time-honoured divine practice to be dropped when followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa} went astray and needed divine guidance? Was the Ummah to be reformed by one of the earlier prophets, the Prophet's^{sa} own followers failing to provide a reformer from among themselves? This means that Muslims would have to follow Jews and Christians who ever cavil at the spiritual competence of our Holy Prophet^{sa}. It is strange that Muslims should distrust the regenerative power of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. If we think that a follower of the Holy Prophet^{sa} cannot guide his other followers—the Ummah—in time of need, we support those who underrate the spiritual influence of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. One lighted torch can light many other torches. It is a dead torch which will not do this. If followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa} were to become so very corrupt that no one from amongst them would then be able to reform the rest, it must be admitted that at that time the spiritual grace and productiveness of the Holy Prophet's^{sa} teaching and example would have come to an end. This consequence cannot be accepted by any true Muslim. Every true Muslim knows that the followers of Moses^{as} needed to be rejuvenated from time to time, and the rejuvenation was brought about by teachers raised from amongst themselves. It was a follower of Moses^{as} who reformed the followers of Moses^{as}. The dispensation of Moses

lasted for as long as God wanted. At last when the time came for the dispensation to end, God turned away from Moses^{as} followers and turned to the progeny of Ishmael^{as} to raise a prophet for the guidance of mankind. If now a prophet belonging to the dispensation of Moses^{as} should come to guide the followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, it would mean that God has decided (God forbid) to terminate the dispensation of the Holy Prophet^{sa} as He terminated the dispensation of Moses^{as}, and that in place of this He is going to initiate a new dispensation. It would mean that (God forbid again) the spiritual power of the Holy Prophet^{sa} is no longer effective, that it fails to inspire even a single follower to receive from the Holy Prophet^{sa}'s teaching and example the illumination necessary for the reformation and guidance of his followers.

Alas! People show intolerance of the slightest offence to conceptions of their own greatness; they cannot accept the imputation of any defect or shortcoming to themselves. Yet they do not hesitate to attribute defects and weaknesses to the Holy Prophet^{sa} while claiming to love the Holy Prophet^{sa}. What use is the love which is loud in professions but finds no echo in the heart? What use are professions unsupported by proper performance? If Muslims really did love the Holy Prophet^{sa}, they would not tolerate the second coming of an Israelite prophet for the rejuvenation of the followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Who would turn to a neighbour for needs which he can fulfil in his own house? Who would turn to another for help when he can help himself? Mullahs, who think and teach that the Holy Prophet^{sa}'s followers would need the second coming of the Messiah of Nazareth at the time of sorest need, have such an excessive idea of their own dignity that in religious debates they would rather lose the argument than accept help from any other. If there is an offer of help they do

not feel grateful: they are hurt and say, 'Are we so lacking in learning that others dare offer us help? But when it comes to the Holy Prophet^{sa}, how casual they are! They are quick to believe and teach that when the Prophet's followers need to reform, the reformation will come not from amongst the followers, not from the Prophet's own spiritual influence, but from the good offices of a prophet from an earlier dispensation, owing nothing to the Holy Prophet^{sa} or his teachings. Have men become so utterly dead and dull? Have they lost all capacity to think or feel? Do they value dignity and self-respect for themselves, but not for God and the Prophet^{sa}? May anger and annoyance be shown to personal enemies but not to those who offend God and His Prophet^{sa}?

We are asked why we deny the second coming of an Israelite prophet. But what can we do? We cannot change our hearts. We cannot show our love for the Holy Prophet^{sa} except in ways which are normal and natural. The honour of the Holy Prophet^{sa} is dearest to us. We cannot accept that, for the reformation of his followers, the Holy Prophet^{sa} should need the help of another and become indebted to him. We cannot believe for a minute that when on the Day of Judgment mankind, from the first-born to the last, will assemble before God, and the deeds and achievements of all will be cited, the Holy Prophet^{sa} would stand burdened by the debt he owed to the Israelite Messiah, the angels making the citation would declare in the hearing and presence of all humankind that when the Holy Prophet^{sa}'s followers became corrupt the Prophet's own spiritual example failed to restore them to spiritual strength and the Israelite Messiah, out of compassion for the Holy Prophet^{sa}, decided to return to the world to reform the Prophet's followers and rid them of spiritual stagnation! We cannot contemplate such a thought. We would rather have our tongues torn out than



AT LAST WHEN THE TIME CAME FOR THE DISPENSATION TO END, GOD TURNED AWAY FROM MOSES' FOLLOWERS AND TURNED TO THE PROGENY OF ISHMAEL TO RAISE A PROPHET FOR THE GUIDANCE OF MANKIND.

attribute such a humiliating proposition to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. We would rather lose our hands than commit to writing such a thing about the Holy Prophet^{sa}. The Holy Prophet^{sa} is God's beloved. His spiritual power can never lapse. He is the Seal of the Prophets^{sa}. His spiritual grace and munificence can never end. He has no need to be indebted to anyone else. It is other prophets who are indebted to him. There is not a prophet whose truth the Holy Prophet^{sa} has not proclaimed to those who denied him. It is the Holy Prophet^{sa} whose teaching has converted millions of human beings to a belief in prophets they had not heard of before. There are about eighty million Muslims in India. A few among them have come from outside. The others belonged to this very land and they had not heard of any prophet. But since they came to believe in the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} they began to believe in Abraham^{as}, Moses^{as}, Jesus^{as}, and others. If they had not become Muslims, they would have continued to disown these prophets, even to remain hostile to them. They would have continued to regard them as pretenders, as indeed Hindus in India continue to do to this day. The same is true of Afghanistan, China, and Iran. The inhabitants of these countries did not know, so they did not acknowledge, Moses or Jesus as prophets. The Holy Prophet's^{sa} message and teaching spread to these countries, and the people of these countries came to believe in the Holy Prophet^{sa} and whatever he taught. They began to acknowledge other prophets and revere them as true prophets. The Holy Prophet^{sa}, therefore, has put all earlier prophets in his debt. Their truth was unknown. The Holy Prophet^{sa} revealed it. The Holy Prophet^{sa} is in nobody's debt. The grace and beneficence of his teachings must continue for ever. For the reform and resuscitation of his own followers he does not need the assistance of another prophet. Whenever such a need arises, God will raise one of his own followers to

lead and guide his other followers. Such a one will owe everything to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. He will have learnt everything from him. Whatever he is able to do by way of reform and reconstruction will be credited to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. What one owes to any one teacher, one really owes to the teacher's teacher. A follower cannot be separated from his leader, even as a pupil cannot be separated from his teacher. The follower who leads other followers will owe a debt to the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

In short, the coming of a former prophet for the purpose of reforming the followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa} is an insult to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Such an event would injure the greatness of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. It would also contradict the teaching of the Holy Qur'an, which says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ

God never withdraws the reward from a people except when the people themselves become undeserving of it. (13:12)

In view of this teaching of the Qur'an, we have to admit either that the Holy Prophet^{sa} (God forbid) has become undeserving of God's promise, or that God Himself has gone back on that promise. With all others, God's practice has been not to withdraw a reward once made; but with the Holy Prophet^{sa}, His way is different! To entertain such a thought amount to unbelief. It amounts to the denial of God. It amounts either to a denial of God or a denial of His Prophet^{sa}. Because of this grave consequence we shun such beliefs. We believe that the Messiah whose coming was foretold by the Holy Prophet^{sa} is to arise from amongst the Holy Prophet's^{sa} followers. It is for God to award this status to whomsoever He likes.

(*Invitation to Ahmadiyyat*, pp. 34-41)

LET'S TALK ABOUT ALCOHOL

Fazal Masood Malik, PEI

Booze, liquid courage, hangxiety ... whatever label you use to describe intoxicating drinks, they all lead to the same result: Loss of self-esteem, severe physical ailments, moral and social disorders and many diseases. This mood-altering, mind-numbing drug is single-handedly responsible for High blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, liver disease, digestive problems, and cancer of the breast, mouth, throat, esophagus, voice box, liver, colon, and rectum¹.

The cost to society in terms of moral and social destruction is also insurmountable. Loss of lives, destruction of homes, traumatized children and families, gambling and other moral ills are all courtesy of using alcohol as your companion. The cost to society in terms of broken households, promiscuity, gambling and other moral ills has not been studied in detail as of yet, but even a casual unbiased observer can identify significant damage attributable to alcohol².

Alcohol is nothing more than a drug, a substance that has a mind-altering effect. Like many words in science that begin with al-, "the cause of (and solution to)," alcohol is derived from the Arabic *al-kuhul* or *al-kohl*. People have been making and drinking fermented drinks for at least the past 13,000 years. However, it is only in the recent half of human history, about 2000 years, that fermented drinks have become widely available, thanks to International trade by Greek and Roman merchants. With the invention of distilled alcohol in the early 9th Century, the alcoholic contents of fermented drinks have increased³. It is unfortunate that in the current society, spirits and other intoxicants have become synonymous with 'happy times.'⁴

ISLAMIC VIEWPOINT

In Islam, not only the consumption of alcohol in any of its forms is forbidden, but Muslims are instructed to avoid even indirect association with alcohol. According

to a hadith, God has cursed different behaviours, including not only alcohol consumption but also the types of acts that facilitate alcohol consumption:

Truly [God] has cursed [alcohol] and has cursed the one who produces it, the one for whom it is produced, the one who drinks it, the one who serves it, the one who carries it, the one for whom it is carried, the one who sells it, the one who earns from the sale of it, the one who buys it, and the one for whom it is bought⁵.

HOW DOES IT AFFECT THE BODY?

Alcohol is a depressant, which means it slows the function of the central nervous system blocking some of the messages trying to get to the brain. This alters a person's perceptions, emotions, movement, vision, and hearing.

Indulging in alcoholic beverages causes changes in the brain, resulting in intoxication. It is normal for many to stagger, lose coordination, and slur their speech. Depending on the person, intoxication can make a person very aggressive and angry. It almost always slows down a person's reaction time. Once a person becomes intoxicated, their perception of reality changes. They may think they're moving properly when they're not and will act totally out of character.

People, especially youth who drink, are more likely to be sexually active and have unsafe, unprotected sex, resulting in unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, which can alter or even end their lives. The risk of injuring yourself, maybe even fatally, is higher when you're under the influence.

HOW CAN I AVOID DRINKING?

The best way to avoid drinking is to avoid being in the company of those who drink. While discussing friendship in the 21st century, our beloved Huzoor

gave us a gem, a guideline to hold on to and follow. He said, “You should be so powerful with regard to your character, that they [your friends] should not influence you. Rather, it should be the other way around. You should influence them so that by seeing you, they leave their bad habits, they stop drinking!⁶⁷”

The bottom line is that you're less likely to drink if you have strong self-esteem. Invest time in yourself and become a better person, a Muslim in character.

WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

If you have a drinking problem, get help as soon as possible. The best approach is to talk to a Murabbi who can guide you, pray for you and be the supportive person to help you get off this poison. If you feel that your drinking problem is too far to do anything about, perhaps seeking guidance from a drug and alcohol counsellor is an option.

IS THERE A GOOD SIDE TO ALCOHOL?

Everything in this world has two sides to it. Day and Night, Good and Bad! Alcohol is no exception. The Holy Qur'an tells us regarding *khamr* that there is good in it, but the bad outweighs the good². As with all creation, we must ponder upon the uses that help humanity. Alcohol is critical in the production of certain medications that save lives; therefore, there is no harm in using those medications. It is the use of Alcohol as a recreational drink to acquire the intoxication effect, which is forbidden in Islam.



Image from Pexel

ENDNOTES

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MERCIFUL GOD & HUMAN SUFFERING – HOW CAN BOTH EXIST?

Imtiaz Ahmad, Missionary Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at

وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالشَّرَاتِ وَبَشِيرِ الضَّالِّينَ ﴿١٥٦﴾
الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾
أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

Looking at this world embroiled in strife, wars, misery, disease and suffering, it is not unnatural for one unacquainted with the deeper philosophy of the Holy Qur'an to ask how such suffering can exist along with the grace and the mercy of Allah? Insha'Allah, I hope to offer some answers to this age-old question.

The Holy Qur'an employs parables, historical facts, stories and even figurative conversations to convey profound and deep lessons about life. I would like to share with you the story of Moses^{as} and Al-Khizr. God Almighty once informed Moses^{as} about how Khizr was abundantly blessed with God's mercy, wisdom, and Divine knowledge. Moses^{as}, of course, eagerly set forth on a long journey to find him and learn from him.

When he finally found him, Moses^{as} asked Khizr, 'May I follow you so that you can teach me the divine knowledge that Allah has bestowed upon you?'

Khizr replied, 'You will not be able to be patient. How can you demonstrate patience in matters beyond the scope of your understanding?'

Moses^{as} said, 'You will find me patient, God willing. I will not disobey you in any way.'

Khizr agreed to let Moses^{as} accompany him on the strict condition that he would not question him about anything until Khizr himself chose to explain the hidden nature of those things to him.

They embarked upon their journey by boat, but Khizr made a hole in it. Perplexed, Moses^{as} asked him, 'Why did you make a hole in the boat? Do you want to drown its passengers?' Khizr replied, 'Did I not tell you that you would not be able to exercise the patience (needed to follow me)?' Moses^{as} sought forgiveness for forgetting his pact and promised to abide by it henceforth if Khizr permitted him to stay with him.

They journeyed onward still, till they

met a young boy, and Khizr killed him; Aghast, Moses^{as} asked, 'How could you kill an innocent person? He had not killed anyone!' Khizr replied, 'Did I not tell you that you would never bear the patience needed for this journey?'

Moses^{as} promised that from that point on, if he questioned him about anything else, Khizr would be justified in banishing him from his company.

So, they continued their journey until they came upon a town. They asked the inhabitants for food, but they refused to offer any hospitality. Noticing a wall, which was about to collapse, Khizr took it upon himself to repair it. Moses^{as} said to him, 'Had you wished, you could have asked for wages for doing that.'

Khizr said, 'This is where you and I part company. Nevertheless, before you go, I will tell you the rationale behind my actions:

The boat belonged to some needy people who made their living from the sea. I damaged it because I knew that a





Image by Alexa from Pixabay

despotic king was coming after them, who was seizing every serviceable boat by force. By damaging it, I saved it for its owners.

The young boy had righteous parents. In the future, he was to oppress them through his wickedness and disbelief. Our Lord was to give them a pure and more compassionate child in place of that boy.

As for the wall, it belonged to two young orphans in the town. There was a treasure buried beneath the wall, which belonged to them. They were the progeny of righteous parents, and our Lord intended for them to reach maturity and then find their treasure as a mercy from their Lord.¹

It is an undeniable fact that there is suffering in the world. Pain and suffering affect many, including the innocent, the God-fearing, and the children, young and old alike. Even you and I may be going through a period of suffering – whether physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual. The current pandemic too became a source

of suffering for the whole world.

Some people, and most often atheists, question that if God is Merciful, then why is there human suffering?

If I were to ask an atheist, I'd ask, 'If God did not exist, what would happen to those who suffer? Those who believe in God, find solace, peace and hope in Him. They believe that a life without suffering awaits them in the next world. Godly people attest to the fact that sincere prayers and supplications alleviate the calamities. For them, the earthly life is not the end.

So the path that atheists take is the path of hopelessness, the path of despair, and the path of misery.

But the path that Islam calls us towards is The path of hope, The path of compassion, The path of mercy, The path that leads to the progress, and The path that leads to the blessings in this world and the Hereafter.

Mercy is a predominant theme in the

Islamic tradition and is prominently mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and the narrations of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}.

According to the Islamic worldview, God's act of creating humanity was an act of mercy and compassion, and the entire creation and existence rests upon a foundation built from mercy. Just as gravity is one of the essential laws of nature, mercy is another essential law emanating from the Ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem God, which are the two chief attributes of Allah: the Gracious, the Merciful.

The Holy Qur'an begins with

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillah has been revealed 114 times in the Holy Qur'an.

The attribute Ar-Rahman appears 137 times.

The attribute Ar-Raheem appears 376 times.

An entire chapter is named after the attribute Ar-Rahman.

The repetition conveys a simple yet profound message that mercy of God is a core truth of Islam, repeated over and over.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says that:

فكل صفة بعدهما داخلية في انوارهما وقطرة من بجارهما

That is, all other Attributes of God Almighty are contained within the light of these two attributes; all others are a drop from these two oceans.²

The Promised Messiah^{as} eloquently explains these two attributes:

"First is the mercy which was manifested for man without any action having proceeded from man; for instance, in the creation of the earth and heaven and sun and moon and planets and water and air and

fire, and all those other bounties upon which man's life and survival are dependent. Without a doubt, all these bounties are a mercy for man which have been bestowed upon him without any (earned) right, through pure grace and beneficence. This is the grace which came into operation even before the coming into being of man who had no kind of hand in it.

The second type of mercy is that which follows upon the good actions of man. For instance, when he supplicates to God earnestly, his prayer is accepted, and when he cultivates the earth laboriously and sows the seed, Divine mercy fosters the seed, with the result that a large quantity of grain is gathered. In the same way, careful observation would show that Divine mercy accompanies every one of our righteous actions whether they are religious or secular. When we labour according to the laws prescribed by God, Divine mercy comes into operation and makes our labor fruitful.”³

In other words, the mercy of God is ever with us. As mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ

“My mercy encompasses all things.” (7:157)

كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ

“Your Lord has taken it upon Himself to show mercy.” (6:55)

The Qur'an has a message of hope for everyone, even in the face of sins and many weaknesses, Allah says:

قُلْ لِعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُوفُ الرَّحِيمُ

“Say, ‘O My servants who have committed excesses against their own souls, despair not of the mercy of Allah, indeed Allah forgives all sins. Verily, He is Most Forgiving, Merciful.’” (39:54)

Atheists may very well ask, “But, what



about the boy who was killed by Khizr in the story of Moses⁴⁵. Where is mercy for him?”

We must remember that God's mercy is not confined to this world only. There is life on this earth as well as in the hereafter. All children, according to Hadith, enter Paradise because they are pure and innocent. Therefore, the child who lost his life at the hand of Khizr, still being in the state of purity and innocence, went to Paradise.

There is a deep connection between the Merciful God and human suffering. Human beings are impelled toward critical and constructive thinking, striving, and working hard to alleviate suffering, and in return the Merciful God rewards human being according to their hard work. The Holy Qur'an describes this phenomenon in the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَفُوفُ

“(God is He) Who has created death and life that He might try you—which

of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving.” (67:3)

Hazrat Amirul Mu'mineen^{aa} explains:

There are many secrets of human progress hidden in these very works of Allah the Exalted. Were it not for these sorrows, afflictions and diseases, man would not even have been moved to think and develop, and he would have become a static object like a stone. These afflictions keep alive the desire for research and enquiry in man. Thus, scientific research and inventions often seem to be driven by a constant struggle to eliminate human suffering and discomfort.⁴

Allah has made it clear in the Holy Qur'an that life's journey on this earth is not intended to be one of stagnant ease:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ

“We have created man to face hardship.” (90:5)

Another lesson we learn from the story



Image from Pixabay

of Moses^{as} and Khizr is patience. In the wake of pain, suffering, hardships, trials, and tribulations, one must remain steadfast and patient. God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an:

“We will try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives, and fruits; but give glad tidings to the patient.

Who, when a misfortune overtakes them, say, ‘Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.’

It is these on whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy, and it is these who are rightly guided.” (2:156-158)

Thus, those who remain steadfast and patient are promised blessings and mercy from God. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} was informed by God about what would happen to such people who would live a life of pain and suffering:

A person from amongst the persons of the world will be brought forward (on that day) who had led the most miserable life (in the world) from amongst the inmates of Paradise, and will dipped once in Paradise and it will be asked of him, O son of Adam, did you face any hardship? Or had any distress befallen you?

فَيَقُولُ لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبِّ مَا مَرَّ بِي بُؤْسٌ قَطُّ وَلَا رَأَيْتُ شِدَّةً قَطُّ

“And he would say: By Allah, no, O my Lord, never did I face any hardship or experience any distress.”⁵

On the one hand, the Holy Qur'an tells us that the human being is weak, and on the other hand, it presents a God that is a Loving and Merciful God who understands this weakness of humans more than anyone, and so finds excuses to forgive people's weaknesses and sins. The Holy Prophet^{sa} is reported to have said that:

مَا مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ تُصِيبُ الْمُسْلِمَ إِلَّا كَفَّرَ اللَّهُ بِهَا عَنْهُ، حَتَّى الشُّوْكَةِ يُشَاكُهَا

“No calamity befalls a Muslim but that Allah expiates some of his sins because of it, even though it were the prick he receives from a thorn.”⁶

As beautifully put into a couplet by Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV^{rh}:

مجھ سے بڑھ کر مری بخشش کے بہانوں کی تلاش
کس نے دیکھے تھے کبھی ایسے بہانے والے

“Who ever saw Someone with (such Mercy), for He is even more eager than myself to find excuses to forgive me.”⁷

God, through His infinite mercy, reserves special rewards and forgiveness for a martyr and grants him Paradise. Who is a martyr? We often think of a martyr as the one who lost his life defending his faith. The Holy Prophet^{sa}, however, gives us a much more inclusive definition of a martyr, by saying that a martyr is one who dies:

In a battle, defending himself or his family, who dies due to a bedsore,

or by a stomach disease, in a fire, in a disaster, in a pandemic, one who drowns, and a woman who dies in childbirth.

Sometimes, the Merciful God puts the believers through hardships, trials, and tribulations not only to test their faith but to reward their steadfastness through trials.

A man lived in the 9th century in a small city in Northern Iran called Bustam. He was a Zoroastrian who converted to Islam. His grandson excelled in faith and came to be known as a great Muslim Sufi saint, Hazrat Ba Yazid Bustami^{rh}. People would flock to him from different places. Once, a man from a lineage of scholars and saints came to visit him. He thought, “This man (Ba Yazid Bustami) is from

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NO CALAMITY BEFALLS A MUSLIM BUT THAT ALLAH EXPIATES SOME OF HIS SINS BECAUSE OF IT, EVEN THOUGH IT WERE THE PRICK HE RECEIVES FROM A THORN.

an ordinary family. How could he possess such miraculous powers that people lean towards him, and do not come to us?" His thoughts were revealed to Ba Yazid by Allah Almighty.

Ba Yazid started narrating that in the form of a story.

He said, "A lamp was burning at night in a gathering. The oil and the water got into an argument. The water said to the oil, 'You are grimy and filthy, and in spite of such filth, you rise above me. I am something pure, and used for purification. However, I am below you. What is the reason for this phenomenon?'"

The oil said, 'When did you ever go through such travails that I did, which caused me to reach such a status? There was a time when I was sown (as a seed). I remained hidden and humbled in the soil. I grew by the will of Allah. I had hardly grown when I was cut down again. Then, I was cleaned through all kinds of hardships and crushed through the mills. Finally, I was transformed into oil and was set afire. How could I not attain elevation after enduring such calamities?'"⁸

Thus, the greater the trial, the greater the reward. A Muslim Sufi saint has eloquently described this phenomenon in his Punjabi couplet:

ہو لکھاں بیر بیرى نوں لگدے تے جھڑ جاندے کچھ کچھ
جیہڑے پکے ہون محمد او بیو کھاندے وٹے

"The lot tree bears thousands of fruits. Some fall off while still unripe. Only the ripe fruit becomes the target of stones." Meaning, only those who attain intellectual and spiritual superiority are targeted for persecution and criticism.

A renowned American writer, Napoleon Hill, once also observed about the subject of trials, that in every adversity there lies the seed of an equivalent or greater benefit.

Look at the life of our beloved master, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, the greatest prophet of all times, about whom Allah has said:

لَوْلَاكَ لَبَا خَلَقْتُ الْاَفلاك

"If I had not created you, I would not have created the Universe."

He went through so many hardships and trials but always remained steadfast and patient. His

parents and grandparents passed away when he was very young; his beloved wife and uncle passed away during a period of boycott by the Makkans; his daughter, uncle, and friends were murdered mercilessly. He himself suffered terrible injuries during the battle of Uhud. He bore the untellable agony of losing 11 infant sons before his eyes. In short, during his whole life, he had to endure pain and hardships. His response to every adversity and every trial could perhaps be summed up in the words that he said at the demise his son Ibrahim:

إِنَّ الْعَيْنَ تَدْمَعُ، وَالْقَلْبَ يَحْزَنُ، وَلَا نَقُولُ إِلَّا مَا يَرْضَى رَبُّنَا

"The eyes shed tears, and the heart is grieved, but we shall not say anything except what pleases our Lord."⁹

Going back to the story of Moses^{as} and Khizr. Who was Khizr that a prophet like Moses^{as} was seeking him for wisdom and knowledge? Who was this man that was given special mercy from God? A man who enjoyed such momentous favor from the heavens that even the great Prophet Moses^{as} could not keep up with his company?

The Promised Messiah^{as} has beautifully explained that Khizr was none other than our beloved Master, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, whom Moses^{as} saw in that powerful spiritual vision. The events shown to Moses^{as} in that vision were to illustrate how one questions the grace and mercy of Allah when one is unaware of the Divine wisdom, compassion, and mercy behind a trial.

The story of Moses^{as} and Khizr offers us a number of fascinating lessons. God is Al-'Aleem and Al-Hakeem i.e., All-Knowing and The Most Wise. Hazrat Amirul Mu'mineen^{aa} has explained:

"Man's knowledge is imperfect and incomplete in comparison to God's, Who is All-Knowing. Therefore, it is impossible for man to understand the wisdom of every action of God Almighty. Thus, it does not behove man to raise such an objection about the Being of Allah the Exalted."¹⁰

Hence, there are two paths. One leads to misery, despair, and hopelessness, which is the path of those who reject God Almighty. The other is of hope, mercy, progress, blessings, and reward that Islam is calling for.

I conclude with the following shining advice of the Promised Messiah^{as}:

“It is inevitable that you should also be tried with various forms of anguish and misfortune, just as the faithful before you were tried. Be on your guard, lest you should falter. So long as you have a firm relationship with heaven, the earth can do you no harm. Whenever harm befalls you, it will be from your own hands and not from the hands of your enemy. Even if you lose all honour on Earth, God will bestow eternal honour upon you in heaven. So do not forsake Him. You will certainly suffer pain and many of your desires will not be fulfilled, but do not lose heart in such situations, for your God tries you to see whether you are steadfast in His path or not. If you desire that even the angels should praise you in heaven, then endure beatings and remain joyful, hear abuse and be grateful, suffer setbacks but do not sever your relationship with God. You are the last community of God, so practice virtue at its best...I gladly inform you that your God truly exists. Though all are His creation, but He chooses the one who chooses Him. He comes to the one who goes to Him. He bestows honour upon him who honours Him. Approach God with sincere hearts, and pure tongues, eyes and ears, for He will then accept you.”¹¹



ENDNOTES

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11. *Noah's Ark*, pp. 25-26

TABLĪGH EFFORTS IN EXTREME CANADIAN NORTH 2022

Kalim Ahmed

Hazrat Amīrul Momīneen Khalīfatul Masīh V, May Allah be his Helper, in his Friday sermon delivered on October 8, 2004, from Glasgow, UK, advised the Jamā'at that we should make greater effort in smaller towns and villages, for the inhabitants of these places are more likely to listen to and accept the message of Islam. By the sheer grace of Allah, the Almighty, since then Jama'at Ahmadiyya Calgary has benefitted from this advice greatly and shifted its focus from holding one large annual event in Calgary to going out in several smaller towns and villages and holding numerous programs annually. This has resulted in tremendous, blessed outcomes in reaching out to a much larger and receptive audience to introduce the peaceful teachings of Islam and developing cordial relations with community leaders, and influencers from all walks of life.

One such initiative which has been established since 2008 is North Tabligh Tour. In this tour a dedicated team from Calgary travels to the extreme northern towns of Alberta, British Columbia, and Northwest Territories and hold various outreach events and interfaith conferences in these regions.

Continuing the tradition, this year a 21-member delegation, 18 from Calgary and 3 from Edmonton, embarked on a four-day journey to hold events in Grande Prairie AB, Peace River AB, Dawson Creek BC, Hay River NT, K'atl'odeeche First Nation Reserve NT, and Yellowknife NT. A pre-event visit to prepare for these events was made earlier, the detailed report of which can be reviewed here.

The theme of the events to be held was “Absolute Justice and Global Peace.” Keeping in view of the current condition where the World is becoming ever more restless, bloodshed and mayhem are increasing. Scant attention is being paid towards discharging the rights of others. Fear and respect of the law seems to be diminishing, street crime is on the rise. Despite the facilities of communication, walls of hatred have been erected and hearts are being distanced from each other. The effects of the economic depression are unfolding day by day and the cost of living are increasing. Animosity and feelings of hatred are growing amongst various strata of society and nations.

The presenters from various faith and non-faith-based communities were asked to address the following questions.





What are the root causes of the unrest prevailing in society/ nations, the looming financial crisis and the increase of selfishness at every level?

Why it is vital to uphold the standards of equity and justice to establish peace on a societal, and global level?

Do scriptures warn of a time where nations would come on the verge of a global calamity and what do they advise to avert it?

What do the scriptures and/or oral traditions say to discharge due rights in fairness on personal, societal, national and global levels to fulfil the obligations of justice?

What are the teachings/ traditions to promote love and affection and to remove enmity from the society?

How to build a peaceful multicultural society, where people of all faiths, race and beliefs can live side by side with mutual respect?



The delegation left Calgary on the evening of September 16, 2022, where respected Local Amir Sahib led the silent prayer at Baitun Nur mosque. The team stayed overnight at Baitul Hadi, Edmonton where three local members also joined the team. From here the team spread in three directions.

Grande Prairie, AB:

The first event of this series was held in *Grande Prairie, AB*. *Grande Prairie* is a major urban centre in northwest *Alberta* located at approximately 456 KM from *Edmonton*. The 7th Annual World Religions Conference was held at the *Northwestern Polytechnic* which is the largest educational institution in the region. Scholars from Christianity, Aboriginal Spirituality, Humanist Philosophy, and Islam presented their viewpoints on the topic. The mayor of the town, H.W. Jackie Clayton, who couldn't attend the event in person, sent her Deputy Mayor to bring greetings to the participants of the conference. The attendees, representing the intelligentsia and general public, showed keen interest in the Islamic perspective and asked various questions. The audience stayed till late after the event and engaged in one-on-one discussion with the presenters and organizers.

Dawson Creek, BC:

The second event was held in *Dawson Creek, BC*. *Dawson Creek* is a city of 13,000 population in northeastern *British Columbia*. It is also known as the "Mile Zero City", referring to its location at the southern end of the *Alaska Highway*. The 5th Annual World Religions Conference was held at the prestigious *Energy House* at the *Northern Lights*

College. This was the first time this event was organized at this leading educational institute, for which the college president and the teaching and administrative staff extended full support. The presenters from Christianity and Islam shared their viewpoints at the conference. The conference was widely publicised through fliers. The local media also published the [conference news](#) causing the peaceful message of Islam reach thousands of readers.

Peace River, AB:

The 3rd event of the day was held in the Northern Alberta town of *Peace River*. *Peace River* is a town of 7,000 population approximately 486 kilometres northwest of *Edmonton*. Calgary Jama'at has developed strong connections with the community leaders in this town. The town council has visited the Baitun Nur Mosque in 2009. The 7th annual World Religions Conference was held at a local Hotel. The conference was widely advertised through fliers. Representatives from Christianity and Islam spoke at the event. Councillor Mark Boychuk presented the special message on behalf of the Town Council welcoming this forum. The attendees took special interest in Islamic presentation and asked various questions regarding Islamic beliefs about the death of Jesus^{as} and his second coming. The participants were served with coffee and refreshments after the event.

After successfully holding the three events, the teams travelled to *Hay River NT*, where Chief April Martel was our host for next three days at the *K'atl'odeeche First Nation Reserve*.

Yellowknife, NT:

After unpacking and spending Saturday night at Hay River, the next event was scheduled on Sunday at *Yellowknife NT*.

This was the 14th Annual World Religions Conference at the capital city of Northwest Territories. By the grace of Allah, the consistent efforts of Jama'at have established its presence and the World Religions Conference is well known among the community leaders, intelligentsia, religious clergy, and citizens from all walks of life. The past three mayors of the city have been participating and moderating the conference for about a decade and a half. The current Premier of Northwest Territories has also attended the event in-person. This year's conference was planned at the prestigious Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre. This beautiful auditorium is offered to Jama'at at no cost due to the educational and community building nature of the event.

The event was addressed by the Christian, Humanist, First Nation, and Islamic representatives. The renowned scholar and Truth & Reconciliation Commissioner Dr. Marie Wilson was also among the speakers. The sitting Mayor of the town, H.W. Rebecca Alty moderated the conference. Members representing a cross-section of the society were in attendance. The event was widely publicised through fliers while local media including *CBC* also aired news and features conveying the message of Islam-Ahmadiyyat to a wider audience.

In her message after the event, Mayor Alty thanked the organizers for another great conference at Yellowknife and their message of support on her being acclaimed as mayor for next term. After the successful conclusion of the conference, a local Jama'at member hosted the delegation at a restaurant for dinner. The team travelled back to Hay River to spend the night.

K'atl'odeeche First Nation Reserve, NT:

On Monday morning, the Jama'at hosted a Friendship BBQ during the lunch hour to





honour our hosts at the *K'at'odeeche First Nation Reserve*. The BBQ was attended by a large number of community members including Chief April Martel and other prominent leaders. The members of the traveling team spent quality time with the leadership and had one-on-one discussion on various matters of mutual interest. The Tabligh team offered to establish a scholarship at the local School at the reserve.

During the day members of the Tabligh team also distributed the fliers at the town centre consisting of Introduction of Islam-Ahmadiyyat.

Town of Hay River, NT:

On the same evening, a World Religions Conference was held in the *Town of Hay River*. The event was moderated by the mayor of the town, H.W. Kandis Jameson while representatives from Aboriginal Spirituality, Christianity and Islam addressed the audience. The participants took great interest in the Islamic presentation and asked several questions during and after the program over the refreshments.

With this last event this blessed tour came to a conclusion; the members of the Tabligh team after spending another night at KFN Reserve, travelled back to Calgary. The Tabligh team experienced the help of Allah the Almighty throughout this travel of four days and nights and approximately 3800 KM.

In the end, it is worth noting a blessed quote of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masih IIIth about Calgary Jama'at spreading the message of Islam to the extreme northern communities of Canada.

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masih IIIth, during his visit to Western Countries in 1980, said that: "By the grace of Allah, there is a very dedicated and diligent Jamā'at established in Calgary . . . They have been enthusiastically engaged in the propagation of the Holy Qur'an, not only in the populated areas around Calgary but also in the extreme northern, sparsely populated, extreme cold regions where only humans to be found are the staff at check posts or a few First Nations settlements. They were able to accomplish a great achievement of distributing the English translations of Holy Qur'an to libraries of these extreme northern human settlements." (*Daura Maghrib* [Tour of the West], p. 452, translated from Urdu).

May Allah enable Calgary Jama'at to always be recipient of the pleasure and prayers of Khilāfat and accept these humble efforts to produce long-lasting results.





ISLAMIC HERITIAGE MONTH

Report by Rashid Ahmed
Secretary Tabligh, Saskatoon Southwest

By the grace of Allah, Islamic Heritage Month event was organized at Baitur Rahmat Mosque, Saskatoon on October 23rd from 12 to 4 p.m. This was the first time an in-person Islamic Heritage month event at Baitur Rahmat Mosque.

We have divided our event into different themes to share vast knowledge to the audience. Following were the themes:

The Holy Qur'an Exhibition

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}

Humanitarian Work done by Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at

First Nation Relations

Women's Role in Islam

Muslim Scientists contributions

By the grace of Allah, more than 50 non-ahmadi guests participated at the event including Honorable Mayor Charlie Clark, Diversity Board Chair Namarta Kochar, Sgt. Patrick Barbar, teachers, professors and many other community members. Our event coverage was done by Global News Saskatoon, a link will be shared soon.

Islamic History Month Canada (IHMC) in October aims to celebrate, inform, educate, and share with fellow Canadians the rich Muslim heritage and contributions to society: Contributions in sciences, humanities, medicine, astronomy, and other disciplines that have greatly benefited human progress.





Image by José Andrés Pacheco Cortés from Pixabay

Guides to Every Nation

THE MAYANS

Zahir Ahmed, Missionary Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at



“And there is a Guide for every people.” (13:8)

“And for every people, there is a Messenger.”(10:48)

“And We did raise among every people a Messenger.”(16:37)

“And there is no People to whom a Warner has not been sent.”(35:25)

Allah has made it clear that Prophets and Guides have indeed been sent to all nations of the world. To ignore this fact and believe that Allah guided some people while leaving others in darkness is utterly illogical. Such a god, who does not have a presence in all areas, places, and times cannot be considered the true God; rather this god would only be an imposter and a fabrication of one’s own imagination. It would be reasonable to believe that God, the Creator of humankind, sent Guides to every part of the world.

It is our duty to find out about such nations and thus prove the truthfulness of the Holy Qur’an in yet another light and fashion. As such, researching other nations and learning about them is a matter of interest to us all. The more we learn about nations, the more we can appreciate the Word of Allah and enhance our faith.

This article will investigate the Mayan nation to determine if we find any hints it had some sort of guide or prophets. But first, let’s learn about the nation as a whole.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MAYAN NATION

The Maya Nation originated around 2,600 B.C. and rose to prominence around 250 C.E. in present-day Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, and El Salvador. Inheriting the inventions and ideas of earlier civilizations, the Maya developed astronomy, a highly advanced and accurate calendar, hieroglyphic writings, ceremonial architecture, and masonry without metal tools.¹ Maya civilization started to decline around 900 C.E., although some outlying centres continued to thrive until the Spanish conquest in the early sixteenth century at which point the

Christian explorers and priests came and destroyed the hieroglyphic texts pertaining to their sacred teachings and forcefully converted them to Christianity.²



The Land of the ancient Maya lies south of the Tropic of Cancer and north of the Equator, in areas now known as the Yucatan Peninsula, Guatemala, Belize, southern Mexico, western Honduras and El Salvador. By the time Maya civilization had reached its peak—the Classic period³—the Maya were spread across an almost continuous territory of roughly 311,000 square kilometers.⁴

There are a number of different habitats within the Maya area. Scholars have simplified it by dividing it into three major geographic zones: the Pacific coastal plain in the south,

the highlands in the middle, and the lowlands in the north.

Concerning the Pacific Coastal Plain, it is stated that the earliest Maya settlements rose alongside these areas that are now mangrove swamps near the Pacific coast. This food-rich environment was ideal for supporting year-round living. There was sea life on the coast and rich farmland not far inland. The coastal plain became a prime location for growing cacao, a plant used to make chocolate. The Maya of the coastal plain were responsible for trading cacao throughout the entire Maya area.⁵

The Highland region was considered the most diverse of the three zones. The southern half of the highlands was volcanically active, and the soil of this land was rich and deep having been formed out of ancient lava flows and ash deposits from the nearby volcanoes. For thousands of years, a large number of people chose to live here despite the dangers of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. It was worth the risk because the volcanic ash made the soil excellent for growing plants while fewer people lived in the mountains in the northern half of the highlands. Here the ancient Maya mined obsidian (volcanic glass), jade, and other semi-precious stones. The rainforest of the northern highlands stretched down into lower elevations and tropical climates.⁶

And finally, the Lowlands were situated along the hills of the southern lowlands, called the Petén region, which were covered by rich forest and laced with rivers. The Petén blended into the dry bushland of the northern lowlands, or the Yucatán Peninsula, where water resources were limited and were found mostly below ground.⁷

LITERACY AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE MAYA NATIONS

Concerning the intellectual standard of the Maya people, it is very common



that at first glance the Maya people would seem nothing more than savage, undomesticated, and illiterate people. An impression held by the Spanish explorers when they first set their eyes upon the Maya people.⁸ However, upon a second and deep glance, they were found to be far more advanced in numerous ways than even European nations of their time. A complex yet easily structured system, the Maya system of Mathematics is one such example of sophistication in Maya society.

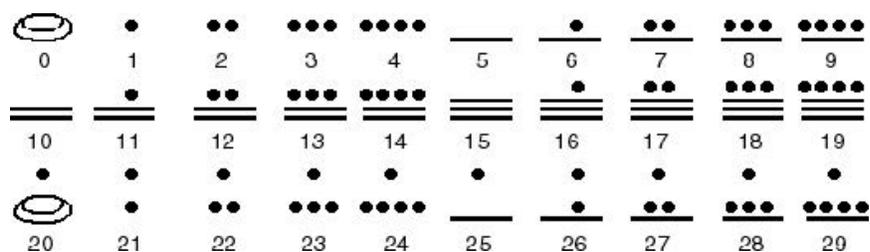
MATHEMATICS – HUN AND HUN IS KA (ONE AND ONE IS TWO)

Maya mathematics is one of the most, well-balanced and easy-to-use systems ever developed in the Americas. The Maya counting system required only three symbols: a dot to represent the number One, a bar to represent the number Five, and a shell shape to represent Zero. These three symbols

were used in various combinations so that uneducated people could do simple arithmetic.

The Maya understood the value of ‘zero’ long before most of the World’s civilizations⁹⁻¹⁰, and it was an incredible advantage to the Maya when used in very advanced calculations. The Maya numbering system is based on 20, rather than 10. This means that instead of the 1, 10, 100, and 10,000 of our mathematical system, the Maya used 1, 20, 400, 8,000 and 160,000.¹¹

Another great development of the Maya was their deep insight into Astronomy. They could calculate the 584-day Venus cycle with only a two-hour margin of error. Maya astronomers did not have telescopes or other powerful tools for observing the tropical night sky, but they found ways to enhance their naked-eye observations. Archaeo-astronomers



studying Maya architecture have come to know the innovations employed by the Maya in tracking the stars.¹²

In Maya cities, ceremonial buildings were precisely aligned with compass directions. At the spring and fall equinoxes, for example, the Sun might be made to cast its rays through small openings in a Maya observatory, lighting up the observatory's interior walls.¹³

Maya Architecture has been classified as having been called the richest of the New World because of the great complexity of patterns and variety of media expressions. Limestone structures, faced with lime stucco, were the stamp of ancient Maya architecture. With large quantities of limestone and flint available, plaster and cement were easily produced. This allowed the Mayans to build impressive temples, with stepped pyramids.¹⁴

All the Maya cities were carefully planned in an East to West orientation and with the major Temples forming a perfect isosceles triangle, as has been documented in the Pre-classic Mirador Basin, as well as the Classic cities like Tikal, Yacxhá, Nakum, etc.¹⁵ The clear distinction among the three divided areas is made apparent by the diverse architectural design differences based on the location.

The Maya developed a highly complex system of writing, using pictographs and phonetic or syllabic elements. Their writing was highly sophisticated, but it is likely that only members of the higher classes were able to read their symbols. The Maya carved these symbols into stone, but the most common place for writing was very likely the highly perishable books they made from bark paper, coated with lime to make a fresh white surface. As recorded by Jill Rubalcaba in her book, *Greatest Empires of the Past: Empires of the Maya*:



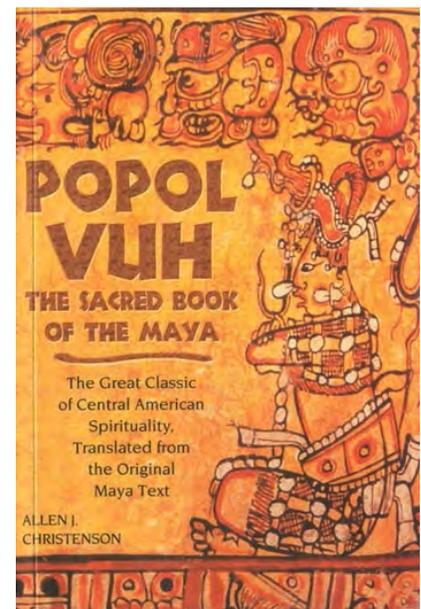
“Diego de Landa, wrote in *Yucatan Before and After the Conquest*, ‘We found a large number of books... and as they contained nothing in which there were not to be seen superstition and lies of the devil, we burned them all, which they regretted to an amazing degree, and which caused them much affliction.’”¹⁶

Thus there are only two major works of the Maya which have been preserved – to a certain extent¹⁷ – one being called the *Book of the People* and has even been referred to as the *Maya Bible*, the *Popol Vuh*. While the other work, in the form of a book present for us today is the *Chilam Balam*¹⁸. *Chilam* is the Mayan word for priest or shaman, and *balam* means jaguar¹⁹, which is a prestigious title.

The *Popol Vuh* – also known as the *Council Book* – is considered to be one of the greatest works of Native American Literature, in part because it is one of the very few records of early mythology in all of the Americas. The first half of *Popol Vuh* is a poem more than 9,000 lines long. The poem is a retelling of Maya creation myths that go back to the very origins of the Maya themselves. The creation myths show how the Maya viewed their universe. The second half of *Popol Vuh* is the history of the *Quiche* kingdom – their kings and

the connection between humans and gods.

The other preserved work is the *Chilam Balam*. There are several *Chilam Balam* books from various cities in Yucatán. The most famous is the *Chilam Balam* of Chumayel and the *Chilam Balam* of Tizimin. However, it was the former that told about the destruction of the Maya and the coming of the Spaniards. The Maya took the prophecies in *Chilam Balam* very seriously. They believed that the gods had revealed to the jaguar priests what would happen in the future, and it was the job of the *Chilam* to relay information to them.



Christenson, Allen. Cover Art. *Popol Vuh*

CHILAM BALAM DE IXIL

Facsimilar y estudio de un libro maya inédito

LAURA CASO BARRERA



ARTES DE MEXICO INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE ANTROPOLOGIA E HISTORIA CONACULTA

Barrera, Laura Caso. Cover Art. *Chilam Balam de Ixil*

One important role of a Maya shaman was to be a diviner — someone who interpreted ancient texts and sacred calendars.

Moving on to the language of the Maya, what was once thought to be a universal language with few distinct dialects, has now flourished into some¹⁷ distinct dialects or more. The languages, while related, are so different that they are considered different languages altogether.

“Among the earliest Maya a single language existed, but by the Preclassic Period, a great linguistic diversity developed among the various Maya peoples. In modern-day Mexico and Central America, around 5 million people speak some 70 Maya languages.”²⁰

The reason for this wide variety of different languages amongst the Maya was in part due to the vastness of the Maya Empire and the varying topography it encompassed. However, the biggest reason for these distinct dialects was likely the fact that there was neither one Maya Kingdom nor was there one chief, king, or ruler for all the Mayas.

THE RELIGION OF THE MAYA NATION

The Mayans, as mentioned above, seem to date as far back as 2,600 B.C. That also applies to their religion. From the *Popol Vuh*, we see that the Maya people were polytheistic in their belief in God²¹. The Maya worshipped many gods. When the gods were depicted, the symbols around them explained who they were. The Maya had Gods for every aspect of their lives. They had Gods for agriculture, for the Heavens, for everyday life, and even dark and gruesome Gods linked to the Underworld. At the same time these Gods could at one-time hold more than one responsibility or have different responsibilities at different times; as mentioned in the book, *Empires of the Maya*:

“It was not unusual for Maya gods to have several different roles. For example, during certain times of the year, Itzamná took on the role of a medicine god and cured the sick. As one of the creator gods, Itzamná played his part in creating the cosmos by placing the third stone in the Cosmic Hearth.”²²

This is further explained by the views that the Maya people held by Lynn V. Foster in the book, *Handbook to Life in the Ancient Maya World*:

“Although more than 250 names of Maya deities have been recorded in sources written during the colonial and modern periods, it is impossible to describe each of these deities as a distinct god. Maya gods cannot be categorized as if they belonged to a Western pantheon in which gods are understood as discrete beings possessing distinctive characteristics, recognizable by individual attributes, and occupying different domains. Instead, Maya gods behaved as fluid beings that manifested sacred qualities in shifting ways. For the Maya, a deity could assume a number of separate aspects of manifestations that could

be expressed in a number of different names, appearances, and qualities. Simultaneously, many deities could overlap in their identities, functions, and roles.”²³

Therefore, we can assume that the Maya peoples’ belief in their Gods was very unique and not constricted to one form or dominion. Instead, it was a very complex and diverse understanding of the Divine.

The Mayan people were deeply spiritual – as is the case with the rest of the natives of the Americas – and in order to reach the spiritual realm they held a belief that only a select few were blessed with the ability to have communion with Gods. Those to perform this duty were usually Maya kings, Priests, and the elites.

“Maya kings, priests, and elites claimed to have special powers. These powers enabled them to mingle with the gods and serve as a bridge between the supernatural world and the human world. Kings were particularly close to the cosmic world. Through trances and other altered states of consciousness, they communicated with gods and dead ancestors.”²⁴

Those Mayans who were gifted with these abilities were called Shamans. They would accomplish making a connection through specific actions which placed them in altered states of consciousness. Trances functioned as necessary phases for the embarking on shamanic journeys to the otherworld. Hallucinogenic plants, fasting, letting (releasing) blood from the genitals or other body parts, self-hypnosis, and various types of rhythmic activities such as dancing, were employed as catalysts and aided shamans into entering dreamlike states. It is from these priests or Shamans that the proof of divine guidance among the Maya people can be discovered and made apparent. In particular, it is the Chilam²⁵ priest and his prophecy that is of interest.

DIVINE GUIDANCE BESTOWED TO THE MAYA NATION - 'A PROPHET'

The appearance of Divine guidance among the Maya Nation can be made apparent once a detailed analysis is made of the Prophecy of Chilam Balam. It states:

“On (the day) 13 Ahau the katun will end in the time of the Itzá, in the time of Tanchah (Mayapan), lord. There is the sign of Hunab-ku on high. The raised wooden standard shall come. It shall be displayed to the world, that the world may be enlightened, lord. There has been a beginning of strife, there has been a beginning of rivalry, when the priestly man shall come to bring the sign (of God) in time to come, lord. A quarter of a league, a league (away) he comes. You see the mut-bird surmounting the raised wooden standard. A new day shall dawn in the north, in the west.

Itzamná Kaul shall rise. Our lord comes, Itzá. Our elder brother comes, (oh) men of Tantun. Receive your guests, the bearded men, the men of the east, the bearers of the sign of God, lord. Good indeed is the word of God that comes to us. The day of our regeneration comes. You do not fear the world, Lord, you are the only God who created us. It is sufficient, then, that the word of God is good, lord. (He is) the guardian of our souls. He who receives him, who has truly believed, he will go to heaven with him. Nevertheless (at) the beginning were the two-day men.

Let us exalt his sign on high, let us exalt it (that we may gaze upon it today) with the raised standard. Great is the discord that arises today. The First Tree of the World is restored; it is displayed to the world. This is the sign of Hunab-ku on high.

Worship it, Itzá. You shall worship today his sign on high. You shall

worship it furthermore with true goodwill, and you shall worship the true God today, lord. You shall be converted to the word of Hunab-ku, lord; it came from heaven. Oh it is he who speaks to you! Be admonished indeed, Itzá. They will correct their ways who receive him in their hearts in another katun, lord.

Believe in my word itself, I am Chilam Balam, and I have interpreted the entire message of the true God (of) the world; it is heard in every part of the world, lord, the word of God, the Lord of heaven and earth. Very good indeed is his word in heaven, lord.

He is ruler over us; he is the true God over our souls. ...Who will be the prophet, who will be the priest who shall interpret truly the word of the book?”²⁶

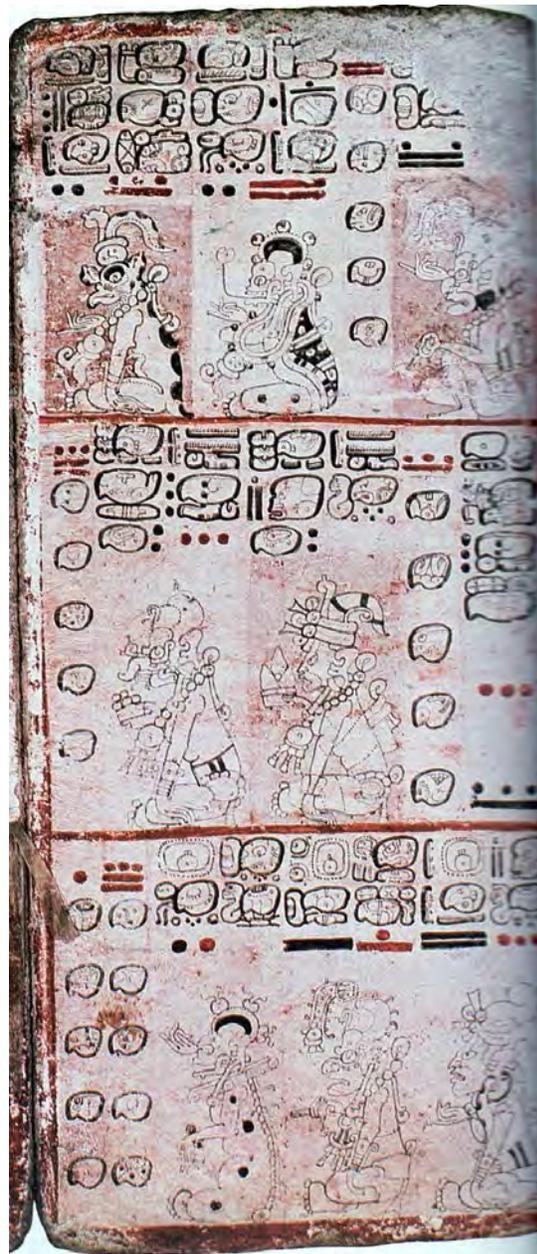
The prophecy is generally speaking of a new religion which shall come with men, who are from the east and have beards. These men will bring the message of the true God; God of the heaven, the earth, and of the entire world. This whole prophecy is related by a Shaman, Chilam Balam, also known as “the Jaguar Priest”. Here, not only is their divine guidance in the form of the personage of Chilam Balam, but also in the form of, a prophecy. At this point, we must do a critical analysis of this Prophecy. Not in regard to legitimacy, however, but rather to whom this prophecy is applicable.

WHO IS HUNAB-KU

“There is the sign of Hunab-ku on high.”²⁷

In the Mayan language “Hunab-ku” means “Sole God” or “Only God”.

Furthermore, “Hunab-ku” refers to such a God for which the Maya have no idol, nor a deity.



Depiction of Itzamná in the Codex Dresdensis , page 10. The deity is depicted in the center lower register

Author unknown - Scan of PD-print in: “The ancient Mexico - history and culture of the peoples of Mesoamerica”, C.Bertelsmann. Wikipedia.org



Image from Pexels

...‘Hunab-ku’ is identified as “the only living and true god, also the greatest of the gods of the people of Yucatan. He had no form because they said that he could not be represented as he was incorporeal.”²⁸

However, in regard to the identity of “Hunab-ku”, there are different viewpoints. William F. Hanks, in his book, *Converting Words: Maya in the Age of the Cross* states while discussing the Identity of “Hunab-ka”:

“The use of hunab ku [‘one’ + suffix + ‘god’] for the singularity of God is linguistically transparent to the oneness of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and occurs widely in the missionary writings.”²⁹

Thus, stating that God which is referred to as One God here is actually referring to the Christian concept of the Trinity. Then another viewpoint is that it is actually referring to the Maya being a monotheistic religion:

“...beliefs about Hunab Ku derive from the work of Mexican anthropologist Domingo Martínez Parédez (1904–

1984), who first presented his interpretation of the concept in 1953 and expanded upon his ideas in a subsequent book, *Hunab Kú: Síntesis del pensamiento filosófico Maya* (1964). Martínez interpreted Hunab Ku as evidence for Maya monotheism...”³⁰

There are two different opinions as to “Hunab-ku” in which one presents it to be one God in three, thus referring to the Christian-based doctrine of Trinity, while the latter viewpoints to one Omnipotent being. A being who far exceeds the Maya’s understanding, as evident from their inability or reluctance to depict him in a visual form. This sort of reverence for an all-powerful being, therefore,

suggests that the Maya may have been a monotheistic people. All taken into consideration, it is much more likely that “Hunab-ku”, refers to One God rather than an understanding of the Trinity. Numerous religions base their belief in One God, however, the trinity is a distinct concept, entirely unique to Christian ideology. In fact, a close examination of *The Bible* reveals that even Jesus believed in the unity of God as he stated himself,

“The First is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’”³¹

Hence, this prophecy of Chilam Balam and the term of Hunab-ku (on high) establish three facts;

1. The Mayan believed in the presence of one God
2. This Supreme Being was invisible, thus no idol exist for it.
3. A true Prophecy about the religious people coming from the East

whether Christian or Muslim shows that there were Prophets among them.

Furthermore, it is clear from the prophecy that Chilam Balam was indeed a Prophet.

“Believe in my word itself, I am Chilam Balam, and I have interpreted the entire message of the true God <of> the world;”³²

“...Who will be the prophet, who will be the priest who shall interpret truly the word of the book?”³³

Now, not only is there a prophecy foretelling of a future event but also, the claimant himself mentions that he has received this message from God and that he is a Prophet. Furthermore, even according to the literal term, not to mention the linguistic term, Chilam Balam would be classified as a prophet.³⁴ Moreover, to further solidify the claim of him being a Prophet, in the book, *Haqiqatun Nabuwwah* written by Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad³⁵, there is a certain criterion set forth, and one who claims to be a prophet should at the least fulfil these criteria. They are as follows:

1. He receives revelation concerning hidden matters.
2. He gives glad tidings or warnings concerning important matters.
3. God specifically names him His Prophet.³⁵

Hence, we see that Chilam Balam would not only be considered a Prophet from a literal point of view, through the linguistic definition but also a prophet by fulfilling the above-mentioned criterion.

THE PROPHECY OF NATZIN YABUN CHAN, THE GREAT PRIEST

“There was the word of the true God in the land. You shall await the coming forth, lord, of his priests who will bring it in time to come. Give

your understanding to his word, to his admonition. Fortunate are you who truly receive it. Forsake those things which you have held sacred, oh Itzá; forget your perishable gods, your transitory gods. Of all things, he is the ruler, lord, the creator of all heaven and earth. It is to your hearts that I speak, oh Maya Itzá. You shall not desire another God <than> the true God according to your <own> words. You shall take to heart the word of my admonition.”³⁶

In another prophecy, a Mayan priest is advising and admonishing the people of his time. The priest begins by praising God and then implores the Maya people to abandon all those Gods who are “perishable and transitory”. Furthermore, just as declared in the previously mentioned Prophecy, here too the priest giving the warning says that there is only one God, and it is He who has created the Heaven and the Earth. This further clarifies the matter that Chilam Balam’s prophecy of Hunab-ku must have been referring to the Oneness of God and not the trinity, as supposed by some scholars. As evidenced by the two quoted prophecies it is likely that the Maya nation believed in one Supreme God, who was beyond the creation of idols and deities.

Hence, this is but another proof that God Almighty did not leave any nation, people, or tribe without guidance. Throughout history, there was always some divine guidance that pulled people towards Allah, and the true concept of God. Such is the case with the Maya who had not just one, but two people who, at different times, in different places, guided the Mayan people and put forth the true picture of God. These guides admonished the Maya of their erred ways, thus fulfilling the following verse of the Holy Qur’an:

“And there is no People to whom a Warner has not been sent.”³⁷

In the personages of Chilam Balam and Natzin Yabun Chun, persons who requested their people to worship one and only God, we find evidence that the Maya people were in fact guided by God.

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3. Archaeologists divide pre-Columbian Maya history into three major time periods: Pre-classic (1200 B.C. to 250 C.E.), Classic (250 C.E. to 900 C.E.), and Post-classic (900 C.E. to 1524 C.E.).
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7. Ibid. p. 8.
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10. Although when we look at history there is evidence of other civilizations who were well versed in application of the number ‘zero’.
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12. Foster, Lynn V. *Handbook to Life in the Ancient Maya World*. New York, NY: Facts on File, 2002. Print. pp. 261-262.
13. Ibid., pp. 234-236.
14. Ibid.
15. Rice, Prudence M. *Maya Political Science: Time, Astronomy, and the Cosmos*. Austin: University of Texas, 2004. Print. pp. 86-92.
16. Rubalcaba, Jill. *Empires of the Maya*. New York: Chelsea House, 2010. 13. Print.
17. It should be noted here that the validity of both of these books being a 100 percent accurate and unadulterated cannot be guaranteed. Furthermore, in regards to the Popol Vuh it is known for a fact that, it is not complete. For only the portions which remains have been compiled in this book.
18. While ‘Chilam Balam’ is also name of the Maya religious book, it also refers to a very high title given to religious priests of the Maya. This will be discussed in further in chapter 4.
19. The title of Jaguar was given to those individuals who excelled above others in any field which they were in, and also showed divine guidance and aid.
20. “The Rise and Fall of the Maya Empire.” History.com. A&E Television Networks. Web. 15 Apr. 2012. <http://www.history.com>
21. Here It would be necessary to point out that the Popol Vuh as mentioned beforehand is not complete but rather only a compilation of those works which were not burned, destroyed, or lost. Thus there is room for ambiguity as to whether the Maya were polytheistic religion to begin with. Furthermore from other Mayan literature which will be mentioned further on we see that the Maya might actually have been Monotheistic in their belief of God.
22. Rubalcaba, Jill. *Empires of the Maya*. New York: Chelsea House, 2010. 13. Print. p. 100.
23. Foster, Lynn V. *Handbook to Life in the Ancient Maya World*. New York, NY: Facts on File, 2002. Print. p.164.
24. Rubalcaba, Jill. *Empires of the Maya*. New York: Chelsea House, 2010. 13. Print. p. 97.
25. Chilam refers to a special branch of the priesthood, the members of which were called chilans. The word means mouth-piece, spokesman or interpreter, and it was the chilans who delivered to the people the responses of the gods. They were held in such high esteem that they were carried on men’s shoulders when they went abroad; and foretelling the future was their profession.
26. Roys, Ralph L. *The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayal*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution, 1933. Print. pp. 96-97.
27. Ibid. p. 96.
28. Ibid. p. 167.
29. Hanks, William F. *Converting Words: Maya in the Age of the Cross*. University of California Press, Berkeley, 2010. Print. p.355.
30. “Hunab Ku.” Hunab Ku. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Sept. 2012. <https://www.princeton.edu>
31. The Holy Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments : New Revised Standard Version. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989. Print. Mark 12:29-30.
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33. Ibid. p.97.
34. An important thing to consider is that there are basic conditions for a person to be called a Prophet and additional characteristics shared by some Prophets and not by others. For example, some Prophets are law-bearing Prophets and some are non law-bearing, some are kings or rulers and some are citizens, some are independent and some reach Prophethood by the grace of another Prophet.
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37. Ali, Maulvi Sher. *The Holy Qur’an English Translation by Maulvi Sher Ali (ra)*. UK: Islam International Publications Limited, 2004. 35:25.

KIDS ZONE

FILL IN THE BLANKS:

1. The Holy Prophet^{sa} received the first revelation in _____.
2. _____ was the first convert.
3. The Prophet^{sa} was born in the city of _____.
4. "Verily, we have in the Prophet of Allah, an excellent _____." (33:22)
5. The conquest of Makkah happened in the year ____ AD.

Solutions:
1. Cave Hira
2. Hazrat Khadija^{ra}
3. Makkah
4. model
5. 630

TRIVIA

1. What is the name of the Holy Prophet^{sa}?
2. When was the Holy Prophet^{sa} born?
3. What was the name of his father and mother?
4. What titles did people give him for being honest and trustworthy?
5. At what age did the Prophet receive his first revelation?
6. At what age did the Prophet pass away?

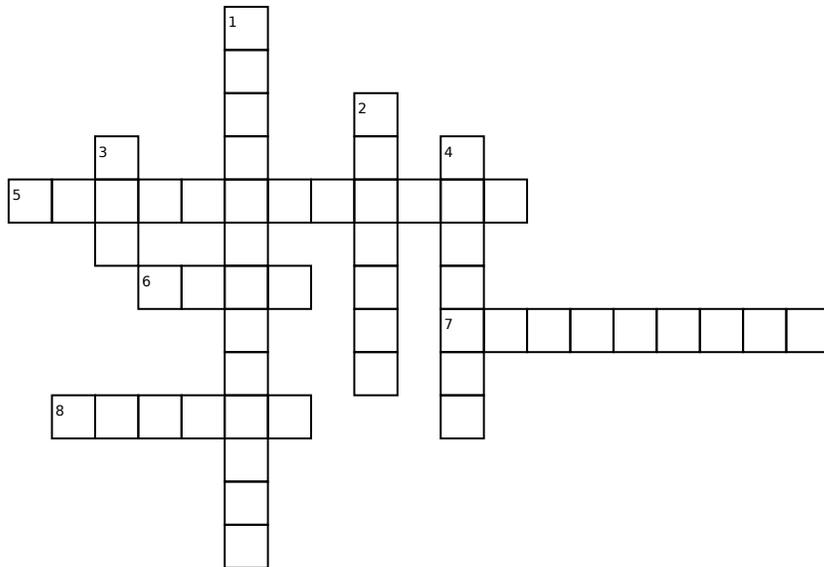
Solutions:
1. Muhammad^{sa}
2. 570 AD
3. Abdullah & Amina
4. Sadig & Ameen
5. 40
6. 63

CHALLENGE: MEMORIZE THIS HADITH:

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَاَلِدَيْهِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ
None of you have faith until I am more beloved to him than his children, his father, and all of the people.
(Sahih Bukhari)

CROSSWORD

THE HOLY PROPHET^{SA}

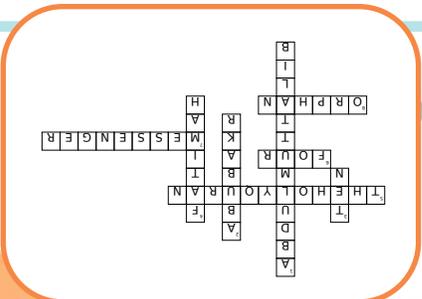


DOWN

1. Name of the grandfather of Holy Prophet^{SA}.
2. The first Khalifa of the Holy Prophet^{SA}.
3. The number of Muslims who marched with the Holy Prophet^{SA} at the victory of Makkah.
4. Name of the Holy Prophet's^{SA} daughter who married Hazrat Ali^{RA}.

ACROSS

5. The holy book revealed to the Holy Prophet^{SA}.
6. The number of times the word "Muhammad" appears in the Holy Qur'an.
7. Muhammad^{SA} is the _____ of God.
8. As a child, the Holy Prophet^{SA} lost his parents and became an _____.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Holy Prophet^{SA} is the only universal prophet (i.e sent for all of mankind)

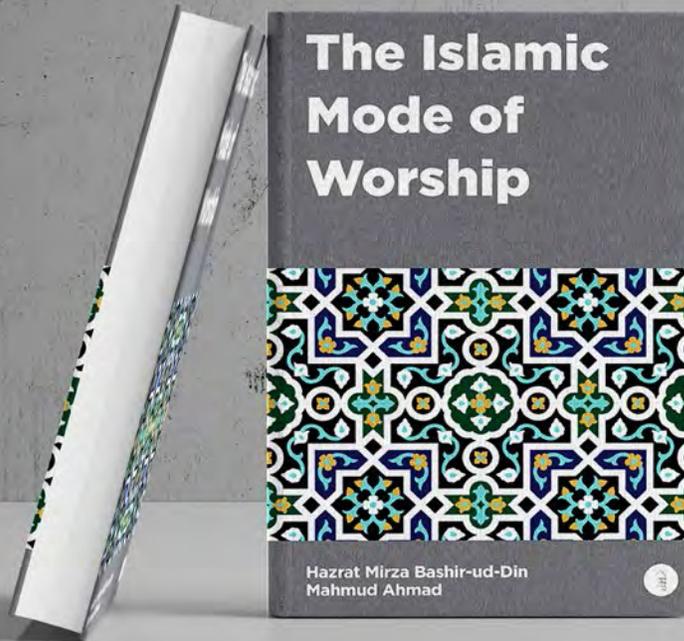


Image by pmvchamara / Freepik

THE ISLAMIC MODE OF WORSHIP

by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih II^{ra}

In *The Islamic Mode of Worship*, Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra} provides a brief but comprehensive overview of the formal Islamic prayer and its primary purpose. Key concepts including the sequence of positions, ablution and prescribed timings are explained in lucid terms and through the use of integrated illustrations. Important verses of the Holy Quran pertaining to the prayer are also highlighted and presented in a simple manner for book is a valuable resource for those who wish to know more about one of Islam's most fundamental pillars.

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